

# The Old Hickory Chronicle

Newsletter of the Old Hickory Association

March/April 1999

## Supporting the 30th Vets Once Again

In what has become an annual event for the Old Hickory Association, we once again participated in the Tar Heel Chapter Reunion of the 30th Infantry Division Association. As always we provided a Color Guard for their Memorial Service and set up a small display.

The Color Guard was comprised of Mark Burfete, Paul Gill, Courtney Johnston, and Don Shupe. The Old Hickory Association unfurled their new flag sets for the first time at this event. In the past we always had to make arrangements to borrow flags and stands. Each year the Color Guard tries to present a different look for the veterans of the 30th. This year the uniform of the day was Khakis.

The display set up this year consisted of footwear and headwear and two mannequins dressed out in winter uniforms. One was an infantryman dressed in wools, five button sweater, wool overcoat and galoshes. The other was a medic dressed in M1943 Field Jacket and Trousers, and wearing Shoepacs. The table with the footwear showed eight different pairs of service shoes and boots. The headwear showed 17 different types of hats, hoods, and caps. Supporting the display were Thomas Amato, FJ Hale, and Mike Owens.

Of course, the greatest part of this event is the opportunity to talk to the veterans themselves. Always in attendance at this event is Medal of Honor recipient Francis Curry. This year I had the privilege of talking with Carl Nunnemaker of Nags Head, who was a member of the MP Platoon. One of his assignments was to guard the field containing the bodies of the victims of the Malmedy massacre. He also showed me a book entitled the "History of the 30th Infantry Division Military Police Platoon". As we are trying to gather information about the MP Platoon, this was a great find. It turns out that copies of the book were available through the 30th I.D. Association and I didn't waste any time ordering one once I got home. (A complete list of items available through the 30th is in the back of this newsletter.) Mike Owens obtained a copy of an article about the accidental bombing of the 30th, which is in this newsletter, and I think Courtney just about filled a note-

book with information he gathered. Hopefully we will see the some of the results of those interviews in future newsletter.

I'll close this article with excerpts from a letter to the Old Hickory Association from Tommy Oglesby, President of the Tar Heel Chapter of the 30th I.D. Association:

*On behalf of the Tar Heel Chapter membership, family and friends, please accept our most sincere appreciation for your participation in the Spring Reunion ...*

*As usual, your performance was outstanding from start to finish. I know it takes many hours to get the stuff together and coordinate everything along with practice as well.*

*The Memorial Service we have is the most outstanding of all of our chapters including the national reunion. Your participation with the uniforms and precision movement stirs the old army blood in the old veterans one more time.*

*Also this time, we had five family groups in attendance for the service for their departed family member. Makes them proud too, the way the service is carried out, thanks to the Old Hickory Association.*

*Thanks again,*

*Fraternally yours,*

*Tommy Oglesby, President*



# Bloodiest Blunder of W.W.II

By: B.W. von Block

As it appeared in True War October, 1956

Prepared by: Mike Owens

A great many veterans warned me not to write this story. They said I'd be sticking my neck into a noose. "Who the hell remembers and who the hell cares?" Many of them grunted. "You'll just get a lot of people hopping mad."

Well, maybe so. But, when the editors of this magazine gave me opportunity to track down, for the first time the full and true story of the greatest blunder in All-American military history, I jumped at the chance.

I don't care who gets mad. I think that the American public has the right to know the truth about the stupid slaughter of American GI's by American airman at St. Lo.

I don't believe the full facts have ever been presented to the public. I know that there have been whispers and rumors and legends that had their basis in fact and then spirit out of the realm of the probable into the stratosphere of fantasy.

Some guys came home from the ETO and said that the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force had killed more than 10,000 U.S. soldiers "by mistake" in a single hour. Others put the number even higher. They pointed to the death of Lieutenant General Lesley J. McNair. Official records still show he was "killed in action during the Normandy invasion". Yet almost every serviceman and many civilians know that he was killed by an American bomb dropped by an American airplane!

If an officer of that high rank was among the casualties, the massacre of officers of junior rank and enlisted men must have been unbelievable! That's the theory of this group, which figures that a Lieutenant General's headquarters is pretty far from the front. To kill him, an awful lot of other troops have to be clobbered.

A famous novelist fed fuel to the flames of rumor. He wrote a controversial book about an imaginary general that spent most of his time in gondolas and Italian bars after W.W.II. In the book, one can find a reference to the St. Lo incident, declaring that the entire Normandy invasion was held up for days while the bodies of the men killed by the Air Force were being removed.

Whispers rumors, half-truths, and flights of fancy. This is about all I had to go on when I began to dig into the story of the bloody blunder at St. Lo. There were conflicting versions – hundreds of them. Almost every vet had his own yarn. I kept running into the same weird tales.

"There were 5,000 KIA's. I know, I had a buddy there...."

"Actually, two whole divisions were wiped out. The Air Force sent 4,500 planes and bombed the living behjeezus out of them...."

"The flyboys even destroyed Corps headquarters...."

Want more - wilder versions?

"The Nazis jammed all communications channels. The Air Force radios went out...."

"A German spy got into 8<sup>th</sup> Airforce Headquarters in England and posed as an American General. He gave the orders, knowing damned well that the ships would dump their bomb loads on U.S. forces"

There are scores of similar yarns. It took me weeks of patient, painstaking digging and interviewing to get the truth. What I learned will take the monkey off some backs, disillusion some of the more blood thirsty rumor mongers and establish a casualty figure that's accurate, or pretty close to it.

But – and it's a big "but" – the information in this story will make the terrible St. Lo blunder look even worse. It will point up and etch more deeply the horror of the useless and needless slaughter. The true story is even more incredibly shocking than some of the rumors and lies!

Let's take it as I did while I was doing my research – step by step. To do so, we have to go back to the last week of July, 1944, when U.S. and allied troops were fighting a bitter, costly war through the hedgerows of Normandy.

D-Day had been June 6<sup>th</sup>. The invasion of Western Europe had been costly – more than 60,000 Allied casualties in the first three weeks. Once the infantry and armor had gotten a foothold in Normandy, the advance was slowed. The Germans were offering fanatical resistance. They held every hedgerow and farm building and ditch, and Allied troops had to fight and die to root them out.

SHAEF invasion plans called for the attacking armies to reach the area near St. Lo by June 11. The forces under General Omar Bradley's command didn't battle their way to that point till late in July.

The battle lines were formed west of St. Lo. Among the divisions in the U.S. First Army were the 30<sup>th</sup> – "Old Hickory" - Division, originally a National Guard outfit that had fought valiantly in World War I in the Ypres – Lys and Somme offensives. The 30<sup>th</sup> had come on Omaha Beach late, not landing until D plus 4 or June 10. But "Old Hickory" was back in France to finish the job that it started in 1918.

The Division was certainly "blooded" by the time it reached the St. Lo sector. The officers and men had seen plenty of combat at the Vire-et-Taute Canal and elsewhere. It was a good Division, on which all the higher echelons of command figured they could count.

The 30<sup>th</sup> was chosen to spearhead the planned breakout at St. Lo, the powerful operation that was to mash the

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German defenses in Normandy and permit the Allies to sweep into France and Germany. The offensive had to succeed. More than a million men were bottled up in Normandy.

The breakout was ambitiously conceived as the greatest combined and coordinated air-ground operation of the war. It was scheduled for July 18. The aerial armada would consist of 350 fighter-bombers that would bomb and strafe the krauts.

Immediately upon their completion of the mission, 1,500 heavies – B-17's and B-24's – were to fly over in tight formation and rain down fantastic quantities of bombs. On their heels were to come 350 dive-bombers. Finally, 45 minutes would be allotted to 396 medium bombers, which were to fly lower than the heavies and knock out whatever was left of the enemy.

The entire vast force of aircraft was to concentrate all its bombs and bullets on a strip of German-held terrain only 6,000 yards wide by 2,500 yards deep!

The full weight of the massive air assault would leave not even a single square inch of the Kraut line untouched. At least that was the theory.

The assault troops – the officers and men of the 30<sup>th</sup> Division – were ordered to withdrawal 1,200 yards behind their Line of Departure during the bombing. The bombers were to come from the east and guide themselves on the St. Lo – Perriers Road.

The attack set for July 18 was postponed to July 21. It was put off again to July 24. In the meantime, heavy fighting continued, with the Nazi making the sector hot and dangerous with fire from massed artillery, mortars, self - propelled guns – to say nothing of infantry in pill boxes and bunkers.

There was no further postponement of the attack. On the morning of July 24, the G.I.'s of the 30<sup>th</sup>'s three infantry regiments, the 117<sup>th</sup>, 119<sup>th</sup> and 120<sup>th</sup> were poised to jump off after the Air Force finished reducing the Nazi position to rubble and dust.

It was a good morning, but there was a slight haze on the ground. To the footsloggers it didn't look like much. "What the hell, we figured we were 1,200 yards back of the bomb line. How far could the flyboys miss? We figured we were safe". That's the way one of the ex Old Hickory dogface remembers it.

The front was comparatively quiet at 1120 hours. There was sporadic artillery and automatic weapons fire but nothing too loud or too dangerous. As long as a man kept his head down.

Then, the roaring drone started in the distance. It grew louder and louder with each passing second. It was 1130 when the first of 350 p-47's snarled in. Behind them – right behind them – came the tightly packed formations of the heavies.

The P-47's started to come down out of the sun, dropping smoke bombs to mark the target. The sleek, fast fighter bombers lanced down from the sky – and the G.I.'s of the 30<sup>th</sup> Division looked up, at first quiet and puzzled and then, an instant later, shrieking with terror.

The ships were coming right for them and the bombs that were falling from their bellies were coming straight for them too!

"They're crazy! They're bombing us! The lunatics are way off target!"

Maybe somebody yelled these things – maybe they didn't. It's hard to know what anyone did in the howling, blasting, bloody horror of the next 20 minutes.

Some of the heavies were emptying their bomb bays now. A hail of bombs of all types and sizes plunged into the positions occupied by the men of the 30<sup>th</sup> Division. The thundering hell continued for 20 minutes. Then the mistake was realized somewhere along the line and the dive bombers pulled up and the B-17's and B-24's closed their bomb bay doors and banked and flew away and there was nothing left but the dead and the wounded and the horrified survivors.

"Dead and wounded were reported throughout the area..."

"Men already in fox holes were not hurt except for close hits which either buried them or scattered them so as to render burial impossible..."

So states the history of the 30<sup>th</sup> Division, which was published by the Infantry Journal. This history of the unit also states that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 120<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment alone lost over 150 men as a result of the tragic error.

*But here is where the story doesn't end! The same thing happened again the next day – with even greater loss! And this is something the general public doesn't know!*

The infantrymen took their losses and closed their ranks. They still had a job to do. Major General LeLand S. Hobbs, the courageous, efficient commander of the 30<sup>th</sup> Division protested to his superiors and begged them to do everything in their power to prevent any chance of a recurrence of the incident.

New instructions were issued to the Air Force. The airmen

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were ordered to bomb **south** of the St. Lo – Perriers road only. Then the whole show was ordered for the following morning once again. God only knows what happened. Says the 30<sup>th</sup>'s historian, "The 25<sup>th</sup> proved to be more of a slaughter than the previous day!"

The planes came in the morning of the 25<sup>th</sup>. *And the horror and carnage were repeated!*

Once more they messed up. The dive-bombers and the heavies roared over in waves and squadrons and groups and there were so many of them the sky itself seemed to be roofed with airplanes.

There were almost 2,000 American Airplanes from the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Air Forces. The bombardiers toggled their bomb releases and the infantrymen were blown and shredded to pieces!

Lt. General McNair, who had voluntarily given up his important stateside post as commander of the Army Ground Forces in order to obtain an overseas assignment, was with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the 120<sup>th</sup>. He was there as an observer and he was one of those killed by bombs dumped on the waiting assault troops!

The entire 92<sup>nd</sup> Chemical was knocked out. The 119<sup>th</sup> Infantry took 133 casualties. The total number of casualties inflicted on the American 30<sup>th</sup> Division by the American Air Force on July 25<sup>th</sup>, 1944 was 662!

No. There were no 10,000 men or two divisions killed or wiped out. The figure has been blown up and multiplied and squared and imagined.

The total casualties for the unbelievable blunders of the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> numbered less than 1,000 – terrible as even that staggering figure appears!

But, it wasn't over! The regiments – battered and bloody – were still able to fight. They went into the attack against German positions barely touched by the massive bombing. The Nazis were in deep bunkers. They had suffered little damage or loss. The Americans had a bitter fight on their hands.

And then, in the area of VII Corps, of which the 30<sup>th</sup> was part, yet another mistake was made. The G.I.'s found the going tough in front of St. Gilles. The Germans had massed artillery in the sector. The guns were pinning the ground – pounders down.

"We need an air strike," the local commander notified higher authority.

"It's on the way," came the swift reply. "A big flight of medium bombers will knock out the artillery."

The medium bombers came over – and dumped their bombs on the assault troops instead of bombing the enemy artillery positions. That was late in the afternoon of

the 25<sup>th</sup>.

In the rugged combat that followed, the 30<sup>th</sup> lost heavily. Sergeants commanded companies and there were companies with only 30 or 40 men remaining in them! But this was combat and war. The enemy inflicted the casualties and those were risks of being a soldier. This G.I.'s could understand, even if they hated and feared it.

But, neither they, nor anyone else, have ever been able to understand why the bloodiest blunder of World War II occurred. No one has yet advanced a logical reason for the thrice – repeated slaughter of July 24 and July 25<sup>th</sup>.

Perhaps, there is no explanation. Perhaps that's where it's got to stay – in the realm of inexplicable, monstrous error. My own researches left me there. I could find no fully believable excuse or reason for the series of colossal blunders.

The bombing – 1,200 yards wide of the target area – on the 24<sup>th</sup> was bad enough. But, then on the 25<sup>th</sup>, after having received explicit orders to bomb only south of the St. Lo – Perriers Road, the airmen repeated their mistake. The pilots and navigators of the mediums did it yet again, later that day, in the vicinity of St. Gilles.

Why? How? By what hideous miscalculation?

With grim irony, the same thing happened again to the 30<sup>th</sup> Division many months later. In late December 1944, the "Old Hickory" was holding against von Rundstedt's attempted counter offensive in the Ardennes – the deadly struggle commonly known as the "Battle of the Bulge." The 30<sup>th</sup> was holding the town of Malmedy. Nonetheless, and despite repeated messages – receipts of which were acknowledged – the U.S. Air Force bombed Malmedy and the men of the 30<sup>th</sup> Division on four separate days!

"American medium bombers burned out the middle of the town (Malmedy) on December 23,24,25 and 27, despite the frantic efforts of the Division to convince headquarters that friendly forces occupied Malmedy..."

So, states the division history!

It would appear that the 30<sup>th</sup> Division was fated to be dogged by the blunders of the Air Force and to suffer and take heavy losses as a result of them.

I personally – and the editors of this magazine – would appreciate hearing from any veterans of the 30<sup>th</sup> Division who were at St. Lo and who could provide data on the incidents. Perhaps with their assistance, some answer may be found to the unanswered questions:

Why?

For what reason?

# UNIT NEWS

## Old Hickory Joins 30th I.D. Association

In a move to demonstrate continuing support of the veterans of the 30th I.D. Association the Old Hickory Association has taken an Honorary Life Membership with the 30th. We donated \$125.00 which has been applied to their Mortain Memorial Monument Fund.

They also supplied a list of 30th Division items that can be ordered from the association. Of special note for members trying to complete their class "A" uniforms are the regimental crests available for \$5.00 each. Remember we do 120th Infantry and you need three crests to complete you uniform.

## Thank You Received

In the last newsletter we reported the pasting of two members of the 28th Infantry during last year, and that we had sent flowers to the family of Dennis Burt who passed at the Fort Indiantown Gap event in January. We have since received a Thank you note from Rebecca Burt for the flowers and a letter of thanks for the Tribute in our newsletter from the Board of Directors of Historical Military Impressions, which Barry Glenn and Dennis Burt were members.

## 30th ID Association Annual Reunion

It doesn't look like we will be participating at the 30th Annual Reunion in Myrtle Beach, SC this October as we had originally hoped. The word we got was that the facility couldn't support any type of participation by us. We are continuing to work with members of the Tar Heel Chapter on the 54th Annual Reunion in Winston-Salem in 2000.

## Chesapeake City Event

The Rhone Valley, Aug. 1944. 21-23 May in Chestertown MD. This is the same site where the 'Duel on the Dutch Levy' was held a few years ago. The event is sponsored by the W2HPG group which is mostly Bob Lawrence's Grossdeutschland group. The main appeal of an event with this group is that they use the Graf Combat System to umpire and judge an event. Courtney went through the system last fall at their event came back with high praise for it. You never know where the umps are so you'd better be reacting

authentically all the time or you'll be penalized. W2HPG has put on several events using Graf so they are experienced with it. Registration is \$20 and must be in by 15 May. Combat Caterers will be supplying the Saturday evening meal and Tim Ketchum will be selling blanks but has no Garand clips. We'd like to see 10-12 guys attend this event. From what I've heard, these are good tactical events. Please contact Paul Gill (704) 948-2884 if you are interested or want more info. Also, visit W2HPG.COM on the Internet for more information including their Authenticity Standards. Please make your check out to W2HPG Inc.. Po Box 12 Seacliff, NY 11579 Cost is \$20

## Training Weekend Planned for Camp Butner

We are planning a joint training and new member orientation weekend at Camp Butner on June 19th and 20th. This would be an opportunity for new members to get familiar with the group and learn about the uniforms and equipment used. It would also serve as a refresher for all those old veterans of the group, as we all need to practice. We are planning a Saturday evening meal and the cost for the weekend should be around \$10 per person. Unfortunately, we have not received conformation from the National Guard about our request for a Kitchen area yet, so there is the possibility that the date could change. This event will be for members of the Old Hickory Association only. New members are not required to wear uniforms but should bring what they have.

An information sheet and registration form be mailed to all members as soon as possible.

## Memorial Day Weekend

We are planning a Living History Event at Bond Park in Cary, NC for May 29th. This would involve our members being in character and acting out a first person impression. We would also need members to act as interpreters to explain to the public what is going on. We also plan on a Firing Party for a Memorial Day Salute. The event will be open to the public from 1000 to 1600 hrs.

We are planning a scenario of replacements reporting to a combat unit recently moved off the front lines. We need as much help as we can get for this event and the more people we get the better we can make it. Please plan on arriving no later then 0800. We need a head count by May 23rd for planning purposes and for the town which is supplying lunch. Contact Don Shupe (919) 467-3119 for additional

information or to register for this event.

Directions to Bond Park: Take Exit 287 (N. Harrison Ave) off of I-40. Go south on N. Harrison 2.4 miles to light at Maynard Rd. Take right onto Maynard Rd. At second light take right onto High House Road. Bond Park will be on your left. Follow signs to event.

### **4th of July Demonstration Fort Knox Kentucky**

Everyone who is planning on participating with the OHA squad at Fort Knox needs to E-mail or write to David Stieghen your intentions so he may register us as a group. We will likely serve as an armored infantry squad with a M5A1 halftrack and be assigned to a 4th Armored Division outfit. If you are bringing a NFA/Class III weapon, let David know so we can get you the address for your importation permit. We encourage camping with us around the track and will have a squad tent for those without shelter halves. Motels are available in town. If you are new to the OHA, welcome. Contact David if you need equipment. He rents or sells individual needs and will have extra equipment to "dress up" our impression. David Stieghen (931) 987-0965 or e-mail at dstieghan@aol.com

### **Tennessee Maneuvers**

Don't forget the 1941 Tennessee Maneuvers Reunion and Reenactment at Lebanon, Tennessee, September 11, 1999, hosted by the Tennessee National Guard. The original 30th Infantry Division was a participant in this war game. There will be static displays and a 1944-style afternoon reenactment. Those who have the 1941 impression (i.e., M1917 or M1917A1 helmets, pre-1942 gear, M1903/M1917 Rifles, M1918 BAR, or M1917/1917A1 Browning, etc.) are encouraged to fall in with the 1941 demo squad in the morning and pick up your M1 helmet and M1 Rifle for the afternoon. We are trying to get early jeeps and M3A1 White Scout Cars there for the Demos. Contact David Stieghen (931) 987-0965 if interested.

### **W.W.II Fly-in Asheboro Aviation Museum**

We have been asked to supply support personnel and put up a small display at the Asheboro Aviation Museum the weekend of June 5-6, 1999. I know that is the same weekend as the Raleigh Militaria Show but for you guys that are broke or you own everything in the world that is OD we could use your help. They could particularly use MP's to help with traffic control. This could lead to a weekend display with the OHA being the featured attraction in the near future. Contact Don Shupe (919) 467-3119 for times and directions.

### **July 4th - Greensboro, NC**

Although we haven't yet been invited to this annual event, we have been the past two years and there won't be another newsletter before the event if we are invited. There is a nice short parade and we typically set up a small display and the best part is the town pays us to do it and we can always use the extra funds for the OHA. Contact Don Shupe if interested (919) 467-3119.

### **Shoot at Camp Butner**

Since we won't be doing the 30th Reunion in October we've decided to hold our weekend shoot and Annual meeting at Camp Butner. We don't have a set date yet but it should be the weekend of October 9/10. Further info in future newsletter.

### **Ammo Purchase**

We have been authorized by the CMP to purchase up to 6400 rounds of 30-'06 M2 Ball ammunition at \$.17 a round plus shipping. With shipping it should come out to around \$.21 a round, but we won't know the final price until we receive it. If you are interested in purchasing any of this ammo contact Don Shupe (919) 467-3119

### **30th Division Patches**

We are investigating a quantity purchase of 30th Division shoulder patches. So count up how many you need and contact Don Shupe. Once we have a final count we can contact a supplier and see what kind of price we can get.

### **Unit Roster Published**

A unit roster of the members of the OHA is included in this newsletter. It includes name, address, phone number, and e-mail address. Please review this as soon as possible for mistakes or omissions. Contact Don Shupe with any corrections.

### **Fort Jackson, SC Veteran's Day**

We have been invited to participate in the Veteran's Day Parade and display to be held in Columbia, SC on the weekend of November 6th and 7th. Last year was the first of these events and they pulled out all the stops. They'll be looking for all the vehicles and people they can get again this year. Remember, Fort Jackson is where the 30th was activated. Further details will follow.

## Liberty Ship John Brown

Note on all Liberty Ship Bay Cruises: because of our hard work on the Brown cruise in Charleston last year we might have the opportunity to bring a group of Army troops to Baltimore for one of the day long Bay cruises out of Baltimore. It looks like July is the most likely date at this point. Space is limited and you will definitely have to work for your room and board but its a great experience. Contact Don Shupe ASAP if you are interested so we can get our request in. Anyone interested in the Naval Armed Guard crew for the cruises should contact Jeff Bockert at the USS North Carolina since he is coordinating that aspect with the Naval Historic Interpretive Detachment.

## Annual Training, June 23-27, 1999 Ft Indiantown Gap Penn.

Tom Williams and the Marine Platoon have invited other Co. K member units to participate in their annual Wednesday-Sunday training session. While this is not a "boot Camp" it is full immersion training so expect to live and train like a W.W.II soldier while there. Basic instruction will be given in close order drill, manual of arms, military traditions and courtesies. You will also qualify on the range with your service rifle and participate in period physical training. You don't have to be superman to attend but you do have to be willing to participate and give a 100% effort while there. Tom and his guys have offered to assist anyone who wants to come and is willing to learn. If you are interested in attending, contact Mike Fox for more information.

## Amphibious Training Demonstration: August 7-8, 1999 Solomon Island, MD

This second annual event is being coordinated by Tom Williams and the Marine Historical Detachment. Once again, it will involve a Marine Platoon and an attached Army section simulating the amphibious assault of a beach after disembarking from a Liberty ship into landing craft. This will be a highly demanding event from a physical and interpretive point of view. Naval Armed Guard crew is also needed. Anyone wishing to participate should contact Mike Fox for more information.

## Ft. AP Hill: 1-3 October 1999 (not yet confirmed)

Hosted by Rick Kiester's 80th IDMA, this event will be a non doctrinal urban combat training weekend. There will be classes on urban combat, practical training and a practical application with both sides having an opportunity to clear the

village. This will be an excellent chance to prepare for the GD's proposed western front event at Ft. Pickett's combat town in November. The fee for Ft. AP Hill has yet to be set but anticipate \$ 10.00 if the Army does not charge a facility fee for the village. Contact Paul Gill if you are interested in attending.

## Camp Davis Event Review

On the weekend of April 24/25 several members of the OHA participated in a weekend of activities commemorating the role of Camp Davis in the Second World War.

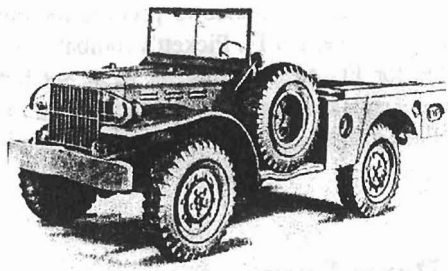
We set up a Command tent, a message center with working switchboard and field phones, and a MP checkpoint. The state set up a HQ tent and a GP medium which contained a display of Camp Davis memorabilia, U.S. Army equipment and Marine Corps equipment. (Toward the end of the war Camp Davis was used by the Marine Corps.)

Though the weather was chilly on Saturday, we had great weather on Sunday and a good crowd turned out. Along with showing the displays to the crowd, uniforms and weapons firing was demonstrated. Also vehicle rides were given in the period vehicles that were present. A mini boot camp was held for the kids in the crowd. Mo Bass, Mark Burfete, and Clint Yarbrough did an excellent job putting the youngsters through their paces.

OHA member Thomas Amato became an instant celebrity when his picture appeared on the front page of Sunday's Wilmington Sunday Star-News. His star dimmed a little when it was discovered that Clint's picture was in the Jacksonville Daily News. Just remember Clint, you didn't make the front page. Thanks to all that helped, partially David Howes who made the three hour drive in his deuce and a half. Only those who have experienced it can appreciate it.



*Clint Yarbrough showing the proper arm position to a young recruit at Camp Davis. Photo by John Althouse/The Daily News*



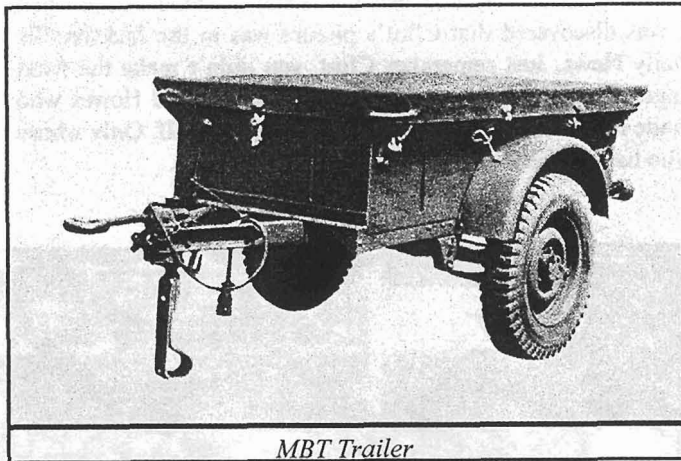
# FROM THE MOTORPOOL

## TRAILERS, TRAILERS, TRAILERS!

What's your best guess of how many different types of trailers were in the U.S. Army inventory in 1943? Most of us should be familiar with the  $\frac{1}{4}$  ton jeep trailer and the 1 ton "Ben Hur" but what about the other 40 trailers that are listed in TM 9-2800. But then again how familiar are you with the  $\frac{1}{4}$  ton and the 1 ton?

If someone was to tell you they knew someone that had a jeep trailer they wanted to get rid of, would you be able to tell if it was W.W.II? There were three different  $\frac{1}{4}$  ton trailers manufactured for the military since 1942. The MBT and Bantam are the W.W. II jeep trailers. In the 1950's the M100 was introduced. Later came the M416 which mated up with the M151 Mutt. Let's discuss the differences between these three.

In the picture below you see the Trailer, Cargo, Amphibian,  $\frac{1}{4}$ -ton, manufactured by American Bantam Car Co. and Willys-Overland Motors Inc., used throughout W.W. II



*MBT Trailer*

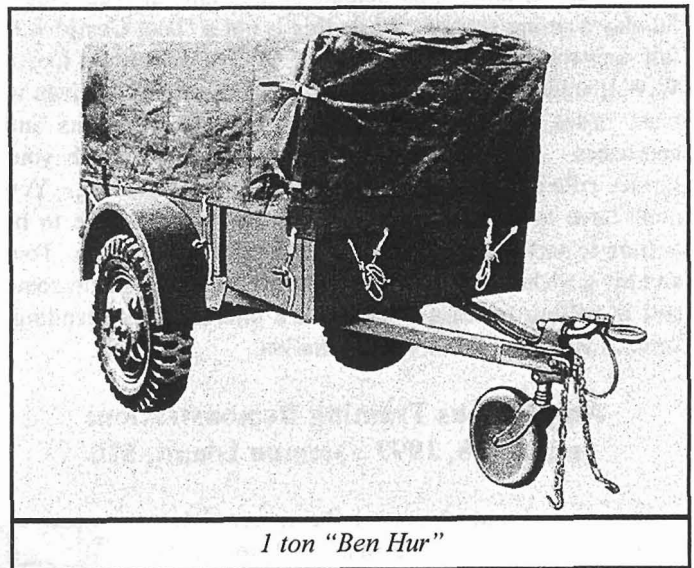
It has a simple hand brake on the front panel and round fenders. It was design to float and have six inches of freeboard when carrying its rated load of 500 pounds. Obviously it was towed by the jeep, but was also towed by the  $\frac{1}{2}$  ton and  $\frac{3}{4}$  ton Dodges.

The M100 is very similar in appearance to the MBT. In fact from a distance it is almost impossible to tell one from the other. But as you get closer you will notice that although the M100 has the same round fenders, it has a grab handle on each corner of the tub. It also has a storage box mounted on the front panel along with the hand brake.

The M416 trailer is easy to distinguish from the MBT and the M100 by its angular fenders.

The tub for all three trailer are the same and none should have a tailgate. There was a civilian version made by Bantam after the war that did feature a tailgate. A lot of the W.W.II trailers have been butchered by people attempting to add a tailgate.

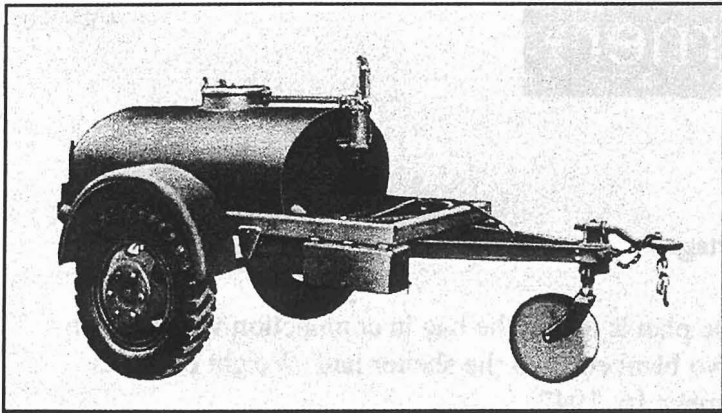
The 1 ton trailer is the second most common trailer seen in W.W.II photographs. There were two versions of this trailer. When the war first started, all the 1 tons were made with a steel tub and tailgate with wooden side, front and rear racks. As the war progressed, steel became more precious



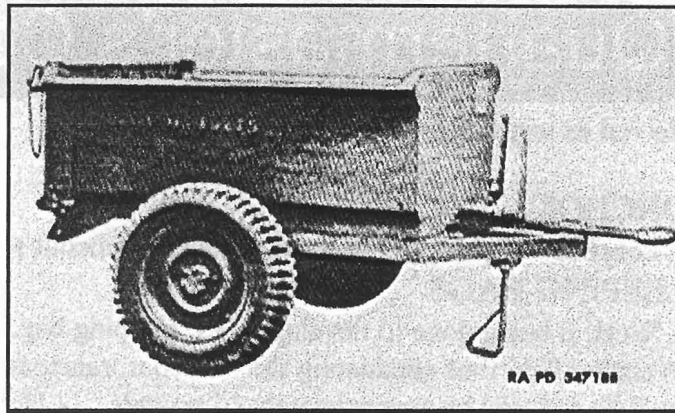
*1 ton "Ben Hur"*

and the 1 tons were then made of a wooden tub on a metal frame with sheet metal corner posts and reinforcements. Even though this trailer is commonly called the Ben Hur trailer after one of its manufacturers, TM 9-2800 lists 23 different manufacturers for the 1 ton trailer. This trailer was typically towed behind the  $\frac{3}{4}$  ton Dodge and the  $2\frac{1}{2}$  ton GMC. You will notice in the picture above that the lunette (that's the round part that attaches to the truck) is offset. This was so it could be rotated to a high or low position to match up with the pintle hook of the towing vehicle.

Another trailer that was based on the frame of the 1 ton was the "water buffalo". This was a 250 gallon water carrier. It used a hand pump to fill it, and gravity fed faucets to distribute the water were inside the boxes mounted to the frame. Note in the picture that this trailer uses the same fenders as the 1 ton. Post war versions have angular fenders.



*250 Gallon "Water Buffalo"*

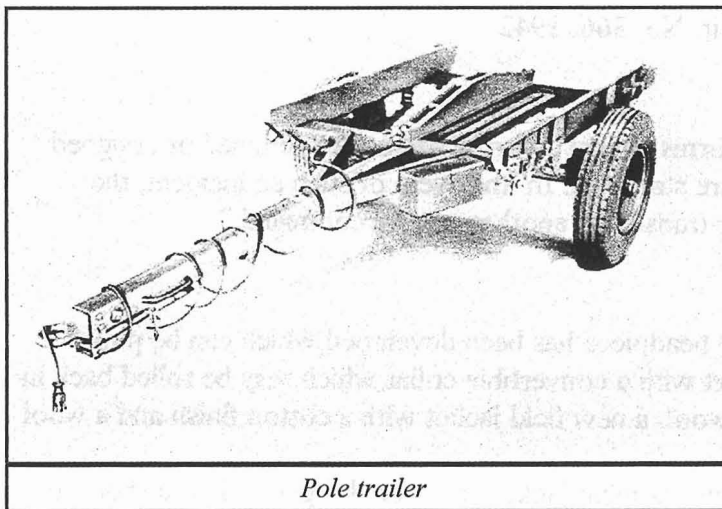


*Converto Dump trailer*

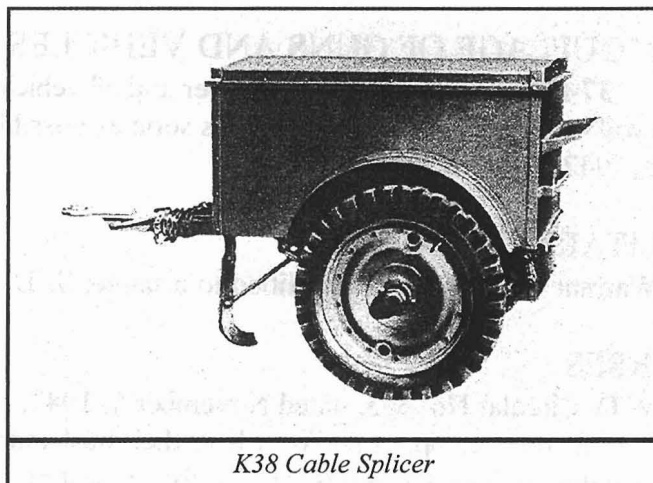
W.W.II versions of this trailer are becoming very rare, and one with the hand pump is almost impossible to find.

Some of the units in the War had their own special use trailers. Anthony Dawkins recently recovered from a friend's farm an Engineer's Trailer, Pole type, 2 ½ ton like the one pictured below. The same basic trailer outfitted with different equipment was used as the following vehicles: Type 1 — Infantry support raft equipment or pneumatic bridge equipment trailer; Type 2 — trestle bat load, 10-ton pontoon bridge trailer (basic trailer plus extra load brackets); Type 3 — triangulation tower trailer (basic trailer plus extra body); Type 4 — utility power boat trailer (basic trailer plus extra bolsters); Type 5 — storm boat trailer (basic trailer plus bolsters).

ton trailer fitted with a generator as a portable power source for some of their van mounted radios, like SCR-299. They also had one of the smallest trailers in the Army's inventory, the K-38. Trailer, Telephone Cable Splicer, ¼ ton, K38 had a body that was only 42" long and 20" wide. It was used to store and transport cable splicers tool equipment.



*Pole trailer*



*K38 Cable Splicer*

This last trailer should look familiar to all of us, and I'm sure you could venture a guess at what it was used for. Commanding General's Private Quarter's? Summer vacation at Yellowstone Park?

Another trailer used by the Corps of Engineers was the ½ ton dump trailer made by Converto Manufacturing Co. It could be towed by a jeep or larger vehicle and featured a manually released dump bed. These are becoming more difficult to find. Russell Pratt recently found one but it was missing the tailgate.

Another big user of trailers was the Signal Corp. They used 1 ton trailers as mobile communications centers, packed with terminal boards and switchboards. They also used the 1



*Trailer, Pigeon Loft, 1-ton, PG45*

# Quartermaster's Corner

Selected excerpts from Quartermaster Bulletins:

## PONCHOS

Ponchos will probably be used to relieve raincoat shortages.

## SLEEPING BAGS

Work is being done to develop a G.I. sleeping bag. The plan is to use the bag in conjunction with the poncho shelter half, thus eliminating the overcoat, raincoat, two blankets, and the shelter half. Weight of packs would be reduced by approximately 14 pounds. - - November 16, 1942

## CANTEEN AND FIRST-AID PACKET LOCATION INTERCHANGED

Section II of W.D. Circular No. 360, October 30, 1942, reads as follows: "Section III, Circular No. 357, War Department, 1942, is rescinded and the following substituted therefor:

In order to avoid excessive wear on the gas mask carrier, owing to friction of the canteen cap, commanders in the field may interchange the location of the canteen and first-aid packet on the field belt, pending the issue of a reinforced gas mask carrier or the gas mask E41R121-E20R48-E12R46."

## CAMOUFLAGE OF GUNS AND VEHICLES

37-MM and guns of larger caliber and all vehicles are to be pattern painted in accordance with FM 5-21. This will be done by all organizations as soon as possible. Training Circular, War Department, No.80, November 4, 1942

## MILITARY COURTESY

Warrant Officers are now entitled to a salute. W.D. Cir. No. 366, 1942

## NURSES

W.D. Circular No. 365, dated November 5, 1942, informs us that "Nurses will not be retained or assigned at the same post, camp, or station where their husbands are stationed. In the event of such an incident, the commanding officer will be responsible for requesting her transfer to another service command."

## WINTER CLOTHES

In place of the wool lined winter cap, duck, a knitted headpiece has been developed which can be pulled down over the ears. Other developments are a flannel shirt with a convertible collar which may be rolled back in warm weather, new leather palmed gloves of olive-drab wool, a new field jacket with a cotton finish and a wool lining which is wind resistant and water-repellent.

For men assigned to really cold stations, a special winter combat jacket has been designed. It is a short coat style, and has a wind-proof outer shell made of specially treated cotton cloth and a thick wool lining. Collar, wristlets, and waistband are of knitted wool and contain elastic to make them fit snugly. - - Army Times, November 14, 1942.

## HATS HBT

When the supply of hats, herring-bone twill, is exhausted, caps, herring-bone twill, will be issued. The caps will replace the hats. - - November 23, 1942

THAT'S ALL THAT FITS, SEE YOU NEXT ISSUE.

# Coming Events

## May 21-23, 1999

The Rhone Valley, Aug. 1944.  
Chestertown MD.

## May 20 -22, 1999

Aberdeen, Maryland. 26th East Coast Military Vehicle Rally. Large flea market/swap meet, Plus an opportunity to visit the Ordnance Museum. Aberdeen Proving Grounds. Exit 85 on I-95.

## May 22, 1999

John Brown Spring Chesapeake Bay Cruise.

## May 29, 1999

Living History Display at Bond Park, Cary, NC.

## June 5 - 6, 1999

Militaria Show  
State Fairgrounds, Raleigh, NC

## June 5 - 6, 1999

W.W.II Fly-in at Ashboro Aviation Museum. Ashboro, NC.

## June 12 - 13, 1999

Militaria Show. Lancerlot Sports Center (Vinton), Roanoke, VA

## June 19 - 20, 1999

Training weekend at Camp Butner

## June 23 - 27, 1999

Ft. Indiantown Gap, PA  
Training

## July 10 - 11, 1999

Militaria Show. Elks Lodge.  
Wilmington, NC

## July 17, 1999

John Brown, summer Chesapeake Bay Cruise.

## August. 7 - 8, 1999

Solomon Island, MD

Amphibious training demonstration.

## August 13 -14, 1999

Militaria Show. Fri. 3-8, Sat. 9-6  
Smoky Mtn. Convention Center  
Pigeon Forge

## September 4, 1999

John Brown, Fall Chesapeake Bay Cruise.

## September 11, 1999

1941 Tennessee Maneuvers Reunion and Reenactment at Lebanon, Tennessee, hosted by the Tennessee National Guard.

## October 9 - 10, 1999

Annual meeting at Camp Butner plus qualification shoot.

## October 20-24, 1999

National Reunion - 30th Division Veterans  
Myrtle Beach, SC

## November 6-7, 1999

Veteran's Day Parade and display in Columbia, SC.



*"Stop collectin' souvenirs an' get down to business"*

*Private Breger's War Cartoons in this, past, and future issues have been generously supplied by David Stieghan*

The Old Hickory Chronicle is the newsletter of The Old Hickory Association. It is published 6 times a year in January, March, May, July, September, and November. The editor of The Old Hickory Chronicle is Don Shupe and he should be contacted concerning any questions or suggestions. Articles are contributed by members of the association.

Other contacts of the Old Hickory Association are:  
Reenactments: Mike Fox (336) 282-6301, Paul Gill (704) 948-2884, Courtney Johnston (919) 833-0426.  
Marksmanship: Anthony Dawkins (919) 575-4622,  
Displays and Newsletter: Don Shupe (919) 467-3119  
Drill and Ceremony: Mark Burfete (919) 677-0990  
Liberty Ship John Brown Information: David Curtin (804) 590-1965

# Marketplace

**For Sale:** 60mm mortar. Complete with sight, bipod, base-plate, dummy rounds w/ cardboard tubes, muzzle cap and sling, cleaning rod, aiming stake, and wooden carrying case for the whole works. BATF approved deactivated. \$750.00  
Les Monroe (910) 425-2617 or LMON@aol.com

**For Sale:** Original leather garrison belts, new in the box in real and larger sizes. David Stieghan (931) 987-0965.

**For Sale:** W.W.II U.S. wool shirt size 16 excellent condition \$40; W.W.II Wool overcoat, size 42 regular, no buttons, good condition, \$25; British Tunic 1945 dated, excellent condition, \$75; British Pants, 50's style, excellent condition, \$25; British dispatch Riders Helmet, excellent condition, dated, \$35; W.W.I US bayonet wood grips, good condition, dated, \$50; Korean War era U.S. wool pants, large size, excellent condition, \$25. Tony Bean (336) 721-0481

**For Sale:** 1944 jeep, very complete, no canvas, needs restoration, \$2200 or best offer; two W.W.II Navy bomb trailers with extra tires, \$1200 for the pair. Frank Brewer (252) 223-3437.

**For Sale:** If anyone needs Navy items contact Greg Bondurant (757) 631-4697

**For Sale:** A Korean -era vet has passed some stuff to me to sell. Here it is such as I can describe and ID it. I'll make arrangement to let you see it as you wish.

- WW2 Marine camo poncho it top shape -- \$125
- Korean era Marine camo pup tent with poles -- ?
- 2 WW2 canteen sets -- 20 each?
- Vietnam flack vest (dated 1974) -- \$50
- WW2 Aircraft headset and hand-held mike -- ??

## T-Shirts Anyone? Everyone?

Brett Bondurant has teamed up with Todd Hogan to investigate getting Old Hickory Association T-Shirts and Caps made up. A number of possible designs have been proposed; from a simple Old Hickory Association with the 30th patch on the pocket., to large patch with Old Hickory Association, 30th Infantry Division. If you have a preference, suggestion, or are just interested in ordering contact Brett at (804) 791 - 2155. As always, price will depend on quantity. If we don't get enough response from you guys it won't happen.

-Model 1951 outer fatigues, OD fair shape -- 15 each?  
Also, I have an Ithica 1911A1 with a Brit Proofed BBL that shoots VERY well for \$500.00 919-787-9955/4965/5233  
-FJ Hale Foxtrot7@mindspring.com

**For Sale:** Original '41 jacket, EC, size 40 with original field modified sock cuffs, \$85. Wool shirt 14 1/2 x 32 \$10. Wool pants with belt W32 L31 \$15. Leggins small size \$5. Original cap toe shoes, used, size 9, \$25. Combat suspenders, khaki, \$10. Pack marked '44, GC, \$20. Meat tin marked '45, \$5. Please include \$3.00 postage with order. Scott sturdy, 800 S. Hawthorne Rd., Winston-Salem, NC 27103,  
batlecry@nr.infi.net (336) 773-1809

### Reproduction Items:

Paper goods for footlocker and field display, includes cigarette cartons, soap boxes, shaving cream boxes, etc. Don Good, 8503 Cherry Heights Court, Springfield VA. 22153, (703)455-3568

K ration crates and boxes. Blank boxes and repacked. Peter Johnson, 69 East Baltimore Ave. Lansdowne, PA. 19050-2209, (610) 623-0888.

World War Two Impressions - specializing in reproduction U.S. Army uniforms and accessories. Catalog available. 7165 Adwen Street, Downey, CA. 90241.  
Fax and phone (562) 927-6922  
e-mail: WWIIMPRESSIONS@MSN.COM

At the Front - High Quality Repro's. Saving Private Ryan overruns. Some original equipment. Complete sets available. 5674 Shepherdsville Road, Louisville, Kentucky 40228  
(502) 969-4440, www.anderfront.com

