

# Old Hickory Chronicle

Old Hickory Association Newsletter

May / June 2008

## 743<sup>rd</sup> Tank Battalion and "The Train"

On April 13, 1945, two US Army tanks from the 743<sup>rd</sup> tank battalion encountered a train near Magdeburg, Germany, with thousands of concentration camp survivors.

George C. Gross, one of the 743<sup>rd</sup> tank commanders, reflected on the moment many years later: "Each one of them was skeleton thin with starvation, a sickness in their faces and the way in which they stood. Little children came around with shy smiles, and mothers with proud smiles happily pushed them forward to get their pictures taken.

I walked up and down the train, seeing some lying in pain or lack of energy, and some sitting and making hopeful plans for a future that suddenly seemed possible again. Major Clarence Benjamin took this photo just as a few of the prisoners realized they had been rescued.



Tank Battalion buddies George Gross of California and Carrol Walsh, formerly of Johnstown, NY were commanding the tanks that freed more than 2,500 Bergen-Belsen concentration camp survivors from the train.



The U.S. Army was driving its way eastward through Germany at the end of the Second World War, when a small task force came upon a strange, despairing scene in a wooded ravine. The two tanks, one commanded by Walsh, stopped dead in the morning sun. There, on the tracks, was a gathering of exhausted, starving people, lying on the ground near the stinking sidcars of a freight train. Some were already dead. "We were moving forward, pursuing German troops, cleaning up pockets of resistance," said Walsh, now 87. "We were in combat, on the move, and somehow we just came across this train." Alexandra Keston, now 67, who was on the train with her parents, remembers watching the few remaining SS soldiers her captors, drop their guns and run without a firefight. Keston was just a child, but knew she was free. "The only thing I remember of that day was picking up the gun," Keston said. "I was only 6, but I wanted to shoot the Germans." A great stir went through the strange camp. According to witnesses, on that day, Friday, April 13, 1945, the sickly figures began to comprehend their liberation. They laughed and cried in a simultaneous display of happiness and hysterical relief.

A 743<sup>rd</sup> Tank Battalion officer ordered nearby farmers to stay up all night to get food to the survivors, and saw to it that bedding was made available. They stood proudly, introduced themselves to the Americans and offered their hands for shaking. They took advantage of a cold stream nearby to wash. Piece by piece, over the next 24 hours, the story emerged. Nearly 2,500 people had been packed into boxcars a week earlier at Bergen-Belsen, the notorious death camp where Anne Frank was buried in an unmarked mass grave. The train had gone back and forth across Germany, avoiding Allied air raids and interceptions -- its human cargo to be used in exchange for German prisoners, or exterminated. The taking of the train was a small police operation, but it would not be forgotten easily.

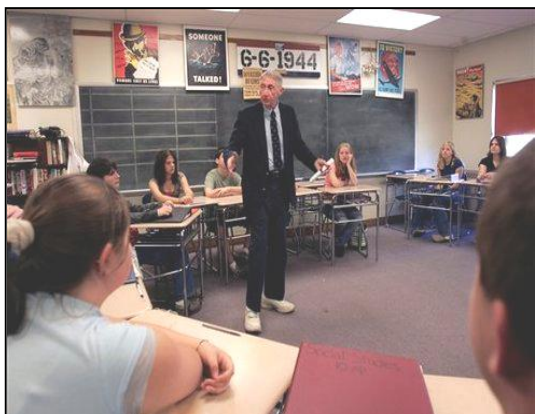
It would be remembered vividly 61 years later by Alexandra Keston, who was living in Australia; by Carrol Walsh, in Florida; and by Walsh's family, in Hudson Falls -- thanks to Matt Rozell, a teacher at Hudson Falls High School. Walsh, now a resident of Florida, lived for a long time in Johnstown, and his grandson, Sean Connolly, was one of Rozell's students. A few years ago, after Connolly came forward, Rozell interviewed Walsh for two hours. That's when Rozell first heard the tale of the "death train." From there, Rozell spoke with one of Walsh's war buddies, George Gross of California, who had written about that day extensively and constructed a detailed account of the event: **"A Train Near Magdeburg."**

A world away, Keston found the story on her home computer. "I put the story up on our Web site," said Rozell, "but I didn't have any inkling something like this would happen." Nor did Walsh, it would seem. "I never imagined that I would ever contact or hear from anyone who was on that death train so many years ago," Walsh said. "It's amazing. Hard to believe. I never thought much about it through the years. At the time, it was just another day in combat." Alexandra Keston remembers little about life in a concentration camp. She remembers lining up for roll call every morning. She remembers falling ill. But she doesn't remember the horrors of her week in a boxcar on that train. After her liberation, Keston and her family lived in Belgium for a time, then moved to Australia when the Korean War threatened to erupt into a world conflict. She kept her story close to her chest for many years. "I felt -- how would say it? -- unfortunately unique. I couldn't cope with it," Keston said. "When you were growing up, no one identified that they had Holocaust experiences. In Australia, I thought I was the only one. There was no support network."

When her parents finally passed away, Keston realized a great chunk of her personal history had died with them, so she joined a child survivor movement and began researching her past. Staff at the Bergen-Belsen Memorial filled her in a little. Keston (then Friedman) had arrived at the camp with her parents in 1943, and was placed in the "Sonderlager" -- a special camp for Jews with foreign connections. They were kept in strict isolation, but they did not have to work. They were to be used in exchanges for German prisoners. The people at the Memorial didn't know much more. One of them, however, had read a story called "A Train Near Magdeburg," on the Living History Web site of a little school in upstate New York. The Web site even had pictures. "When I opened the Web site and looked at the photographs of the place of my liberation, I was in a daze," Keston said. "It didn't trigger anything. It's so deeply blocked. But the whole experience, viewing them. I just burst into tears." Sixty years after gaining her freedom, Keston had found a pivotal moment in her life re-created in words and pictures. Numbers were called, e-mails were exchanged and, within weeks, the circle was complete. "It's just absolutely incredible that all of this has happened," she said. "Matt Rozell has done a beautiful thing for me. I've always had a deep love of the Americans, and that's stayed with me. Making this connection with these men, and finding them to be such lovely people, has completed that picture. It has just been a beautiful ending."

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***World War II veteran Carrol Walsh talks to a history class at Hudson Falls High School in Hudson Falls, N.Y., Thursday, Sept. 13, 2007. The retired state Supreme Court judge will be reunited with three of the survivors of the Nazi death train Walsh's unit liberated near Magdeburg, on the Elbe River about 50 miles southwest of Berlin.***



Article By Chris Carola, Associated Press Writer ... AP Photo/Mike Groll

Carrol "Red" Walsh didn't know what to expect when his patrol came across a train stopped along a hillside during the U.S. Army's dash across northern Germany in the final, chaotic days of World War II. In and around the abandoned line of freight cars milled some 2,500 emaciated and ragged Jewish prisoners from the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. There were scores of children. "They were just jammed, crammed in there," said Walsh, a 24-year-old tank commander in April 1945. On Friday, the now 86-year-old retired state Supreme Court judge reunited with three of the survivors of the Nazi death train his unit found near Magdeburg, about 50 miles southwest of Berlin. The train was on its way to another concentration camp. The veteran and the survivors were to take part in a daylong program hosted at the high school in this Hudson River village north of Albany. The reunion has its roots in a class project launched by Matthew Rozell, a history teacher at Hudson Falls High School. In the early 1990s, he created a special project to collect stories from

local veterans and post them on a Web site. One of Rozell's students was Walsh's grandson, who told the teacher about his grandfather's wartime service. Several years ago, Rozell interviewed Walsh and George Gross, a fellow tank commander from Spring Valley, Calif. Their account of the train liberation was posted on the project's Web site, along with black-and-white photographs taken that day by Gross and the major leading their patrol. That's where some of the child survivors of the Nazi train, now in their 60s and 70s, found their story.

"All of this to a large degree came out of a high school project. This to me is fascinating," said survivor Micha Tomkiewicz, a Polish Jew from Warsaw who was 6 when he and his mother and uncle were liberated. Tomkiewicz had an earlier reunion with Gross and his family. He said he's looking forward to meeting Walsh, and he credited Rozell for the reunions. "It's pretty humbling," Rozell said. Tomkiewicz was to be joined by fellow survivors Peter Lantos, a neurologist from London, and Fred Spiegel, an author from Howell, N.J. For Walsh, it will be his first face-to-face meeting with anyone from the train since he came upon them on what turned out to be their lucky day -- Friday the 13th, April, 1945. "I had almost forgotten about the incident itself, really, over the years," Walsh said. "It was almost like another day in combat. Nothing surprised me by then." As a result of the worldwide publicity garnered by the attention to this story, eighteen more child survivors have contacted our school and their liberators since the reunion took place on September 14th, 2007.



# More On The Train Near Magdeburg



*Excerpted from Wayne Robinson's,  
Move Out Verify: The Combat Story of the  
743rd Tank Battalion... pages 162-63:*

There was another sidelight to the death of fascism in Europe. Only a few of the battalion saw it. Those who did will never forget it. A few miles northwest of Magdeburg there was a railroad siding in wooded ravine not far from the Elbe River. Major Clarence Benjamin in a jeep was leading a small task force of two light tanks from Dog Company on a routine job of patrolling. The unit came upon some 200 shabby looking civilians by the side of the road. There was something immediately apparent about each one of these people, men

and women, which arrested the attention. Each one of them was skeleton thin with starvation, a sickness in their faces and the way in which they stood-and there was something else. At the sight of Americans they began laughing in joy... if it could be called laughing. It was an outpouring of pure, near-hysterical relief. The tankers soon found out why. The reason was found at the railroad siding. There they came upon a long string of grimy, ancient boxcars standing silent on the tracks. In the banks by the tracks, as if to get some pitiful comfort from the thin April sun, a multitude of people of all shades of misery spread themselves in a sorry, despairing tableaux. As the American uniforms were sighted, a great stir went through this strange camp. Many rushed toward the Major's jeep and the two light tanks. Bit by bit, as the Major found someone who spoke English, the full story came out.

This had been-and was-a horror train. In these freight cars had been shipped 2500 people, jam-packed in like sardines, and they were people that had two things in common, one with the other: They were prisoners of the German State and they were Jews. These 2500 wretched people, starved, beaten, ill, some dying, were political prisoners who had until a few days before been held at concentration camp near Hanover. When the Allied armies smashed through beyond the Rhine and began slicing into central Germany, the tragic 2,500 had been loaded into old railroad cars-as many as 68 in one filthy boxcar-and brought in a torturous journey to this railroad siding by the Elbe. They were to be taken still deeper into Germany beyond the Elbe when German trainmen got into an argument about the route and the cars had been shunted onto the siding. Here the tide of the Ninth Army's rush had found them.

They found it hard to believe they were in friendly hands once more: they were fearful that the Germans would return. They had been guarded by a large force of SS troopers, most of whom had disappeared in the night. Major Benjamin, knowing there were many German Army stragglers still in the area, left one of the light tanks there with its accompanying doughboys as a protective guard. The Major then returned to Division headquarters to report the plight of these people. For 24 hours, the crew of the tank remained on watch as their charges streamed about the vehicle, crying and laughing their thanks of rescue, and those who could told stories of slavery, oppression, torture, imprisonment, and death. To hear their stories, to see before them the results of inhuman treatment lifted still another corner of the cover which, on being removed, exposed the full cruel spirit of Nazism which permitted such things to be. And this was but one of the many such stories being brought to light as Allied soldiers ripped into the secrets of Adolph Hitler's Third Reich.



The train people badly needed some food that night. More, the promise of plentiful food the next day was also given to them. The commanding officer of the 823rd Tank Destroyer Battalion was seeing to it that such food would be made available. He ordered the German farmers of the surrounding towns to stay up all night, if necessary, to get food to these people. Other Americans concerned themselves with locating living quarters to get the concentration camp victims away from the evil-smelling freight cars before more of them died and were covered by a blanket or just left lying in their last sleep beside the railroad tracks.

On Friday, April 13, 1945, Sergeant George Gross was commanding a light tank in a column of the 743rd Tank Battalion and the 30th Infantry Division, moving south near the Elbe River toward Magdeburg, Germany. After three weeks of non-stop advancing with the 30th from the Rhine to the Elbe as we alternated spearhead and mop-up duties with the 2nd Armored Division, we were worn out and in a somber mood because, although we knew the fighting was at last almost over, a pall had been cast upon our victories by the news of the death of President Franklin D.

Roosevelt. I had no inkling of the further grim news that morning would bring. Suddenly, I was pulled out of the column, along with my buddy Sergeant Carrol Walsh in his light tank, to accompany Major Clarence L. Benjamin of the 743rd in a scouting foray to the east of our route. Major Benjamin had come upon some emaciated Finnish soldiers who had escaped from a train full of starving prisoners a short distance away. The major led our two tanks, each carrying several infantrymen from the 30th Infantry Division on its deck, down a narrow road until we came to a valley with a small train station at its head and a motley assemblage of passenger compartment cars and boxcars pulled onto a siding. There was a mass of people sitting or lying listlessly about, unaware as yet of our presence. There must have been guards, but they evidently ran away before or as we arrived, for I remember no firefight.



Our taking of the train, therefore, was no great heroic action but a small police operation. The heroism that day was all with the prisoners on the train. Major Benjamin took a powerful picture just as a few of the people became aware that they had been rescued. It shows people in the background still lying about, trying to soak up a bit of energy from the sun, while in the foreground a woman has her arms flung wide and a great look of surprise and joy on her face as she rushes toward us. In a moment, that woman found a pack left by a fleeing German soldier, rummaged through it, and held up triumphantly a tin of rations. She was immediately attacked by a swarm of skeletal figures, each intent upon capturing that prize. My yelling did no good, so that I finally had to leap from my tank and wade through weak and emaciated bodies to pull the attackers off the woman, who ran quickly away with her prize. I felt like a bully, pushing around such weak and starving fellow humans, but it was necessary to save the woman from great harm. The incident drove home to me the terrible plight of the newly freed inhabitants of the train. I pulled my tank up beside the small station house at the head of the train and kept it there as

a sign that the train was under American protection now. Carroll Walsh's tank was soon sent back to the battalion, and I do not remember how long the infantrymen stayed with us, though it was a comfort to have them for a while. My recollection is that my tank was alone for the afternoon and night of the 13th. A number of things happened fairly quickly. We were told that the commander of the 823rd Tank Destroyer battalion had ordered all the burgermeisters of nearby towns to prepare food and get it to the train promptly, and were assured that Military Government would take care of the refugees the following day. So we were left to hunker down and protect the starving people, commiserating with if not relieving their dire condition. I believe that the ranking officer of the Finnish prisoners introduced himself to me and offered to set up a perimeter guard. I think I approved and asked him to organize a guard, set out pickets, and handle the maintenance and relief of the outposts. However it happened, the guard was set up swiftly and efficiently. It was moving and inspiring to see how smartly those emaciated soldiers returned to their military duties, almost joyful at the thought of taking orders and protecting others again. They were armed only with sticks and a few weapons discarded by the fleeing German guards, but they made a formidable force, and they obviously knew their duties, so that I could relax and talk to the people.

A young woman named Gina Rappaport came up and offered to be my interpreter. She spoke English very well and was evidently conversant with several other languages besides her native Polish. We stood in front of the tank as along line of men, women, and little children formed itself spontaneously, with great dignity and no confusion, to greet us. It is a time I cannot forget, for it was terribly moving to see the courtesy with which they treated each other, and the importance they seemed to place on reasserting their individuality in some seemingly official way. Each would stand at a position of rigid attention, held with some difficulty, and introduce himself or herself by what grew to be a sort of formula: the full name, followed by "a Polish Jew from Hungary"-or a similar phrase which gave both the origin and the home from which the person had been seized. Then each would shake hands in a solemn and dignified assertion of individual worth. Battle-hardened veterans learn to contain their emotions, but it was difficult then, and I cry now to think about it. What stamina and regenerative spirit those brave people showed! Also tremendously moving were their smiles. I have one picture of several girls, specter-thin, hollow-cheeked, with enormous eyes that had seen much evil and terror, and yet with smiles to break one's heart. Little children came around with shy smiles, and mothers with proud smiles happily pushed them forward to get their pictures taken. I walked up and down the train seeing some lying in pain or lack of energy, and some sitting and making hopeful plans for a future that suddenly seemed possible again. Others followed everywhere I went, not intruding but just wanting to be close to a representative of the forces that had freed them. How sad it was that we had no food to give immediately, and no medical help, for during my short stay with the train sixteen or more bodies were carried up the hillside to await burial, brave hearts having lost the fight against starvation before we could help them.

The boxcars were generally in very bad condition from having been the living quarters of far too many people, and the passenger compartments showed the same signs of overcrowding and unsanitary conditions. But the people were not dirty. Their clothes were old and often ragged, but they were generally clean, and the people themselves had obviously taken great pains to look their best as they presented themselves to us. I was told that many had taken advantage of the cold stream that flowed through the lower part of the valley to wash themselves and their clothing. Once again I was impressed by the indomitable spirits of these courageous people. We were relieved the next morning and as I started up the tank, I waved good-bye to our new friends and then followed a guiding jeep down the road to rejoin our battalion.

# 3/4 TRUST HER DREAMS WERE FINALLY REALIZED. ❓

**Sgt. George Gross comments:** I spent part of the afternoon of 13 April 1945 listening to the story of Gina Rappaport, who had served so well as our interpreter. She spent several years in the Warsaw ghetto watching as the Nazis gradually emptied the ghetto to fill up the death camps until her turn finally came. She was shipped to Bergen-Belsen, where the horrible conditions she described matched those official accounts I later heard. She and some 2500 others, Jews from all over Europe, Finnish prisoners of war, and others who had earned the enmity of Nazidom, were forced onto the train and taken on a back-and-forth journey across Germany, as their torturers tried to get them to a camp where they could be eliminated before the Russians on one side or the Americans on the other caught up with them. Since the prisoners had little food, many died on the purposeless journey and they had felt no cause for hope when they were shunted into this little unimportant valley siding. We were relieved the next morning, started up the tank, waved good-bye to our new friends, and followed a guiding jeep down the road to rejoin our battalion. I looked back and saw a lonely Gina Rappaport standing in front of a line of people waving us good fortune. On an impulse I cannot explain, I stopped the tank, ran back, hugged Gina, and kissed her on the forehead in a gesture I intended as one asking forgiveness for man's terrible cruelty and wishing her and all the people a healthy and happy future. I pray they have had it. Gina told her story well, but I have never been able to write it. I received a letter from her months later when I was home in San Diego. I answered it but did not hear from her again. Her brief letter came from Paris, and she had great hopes for the future. I trust her dreams were finally realized.



## OHA UNIT NEWS

### Greensboro Bicentennial Event Is A “Big” Success!

**Very Small Crowds But Large Camaraderie...**The OHA was able to muster 9 participants for this celebration, so we were very well represented. Our display space in the Melvin Municipal Office Building (MMOB) was fantastic and allowed us a great area to display our stuff which consisted of our usual web gear, weapons rack, uniform displays, footlockers and 2 cot set ups, Clint's engineer and mine detection equipment, Pat Grogan's extensive collection including his commo gear, Don Shupe's field inspection and grenade display. Jay Callaham brought in his usual and eye popping WWI display including the period music which always an added extra. The OHA was also assisted by Scott Willets who brought in his U.S. Navy aviation stuff to supplement our exhibit of equipment used by the WWII U.S. Military. Our out of town participant(s) consisted of Eric Rihl who came down from Virginia. He was joined by two other 199LIB guys . Sean Foster and Jeff Bonemeyer. Eric had a solitary billet at the South Elm Eugene Street VFW which was a deal we had brokered with their Commander, Greg Woodard. Greg, an avid supporter of the U.S. Military, was the guy who invited us to participate in the Greensboro event. Unfortunately, about 10 days before the event, he became very, very ill and was rushed to the VA hospital in Durham and as such, was not able to see the fruits of his labor.+All in all though, we had a great time and I want to thank the following OHA members for their participation to make this event a great success: Neil Trivette, Clint Yarbrough, Matt Koonts, Pat Grogan, Robbie Lamb, Bob Guerrin, Ken Hyatt (Schell Hyatt) and Jay Callaham.



# 30<sup>th</sup> IDV of WWII Reunion Is A Great Success

The 30<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Veterans of WWII held their annual reunion Fayetteville, NC on March 27-30. There were eleven stalwart and handsome Old Hickory men who were in attendance, helped to set the display, man the bar and provide a color guard for the memorial service. Those "Iron Eleven" OHA Members attending were: Neil Trivette, Walt Sowinski, Pat Grogan, Ken Hyatt, Ray Oakes, Chuck Eatmon, Brent Andrews, Charlie Noble, Clint Yarbrough, Tyler Owens and Matt Koonts.

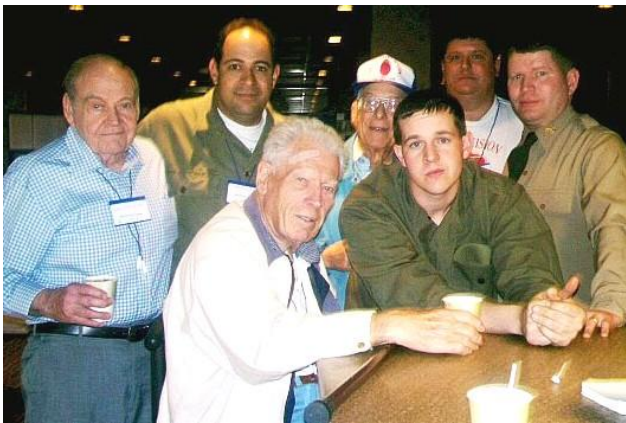


in  
up



We had a great room to set up our display in ... it had a real bar, room for 12 to 14 display tables, two snack areas, a large hospitality room area sporting round tables and chairs for the guests to sit at and the only "down side" was the rather dim lighting. With the sounds of Glenn Miller drifting in, the bar area was always crowded and Matt Koonts, Pat Grogan and the Hyatts made sure no one went away thirsty. It was great to visit with some old friends like Frank Towers, Francis Currey, Buster Simmons and to make new friends like David Gordan formally with the 119<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment who said this was his *FIRST* reunion, Stanley Weber, Dick Lacy, Bill Casey all formally with the 120<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, Douglas Jenney of the 30<sup>th</sup> Signal Company and Emma Potter whose husband served with the 117<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment. Some of the veterans were accompanied by their children and their spouses, some grand children, some close friends and we even had some Navy veterans stop in who were just returning from serving in Afganistan! They didn't have a lot of time to sit and have a drink and talk with the 30<sup>th</sup> vets but they did take time to look over our displays.

One of the most touching and momentous aspects of this reunion was the attendance of the Holocaust Survivors of the "Train Near Magdeburg." These incredible people delivered a moving and memorable account of their liberation by the 743<sup>rd</sup> Tank Battalion in April 13<sup>th</sup> 1945. Ern Kan, Peter Lantos, Micha Tomkiewicz, Elisabeth Seaman and Steven Barry gave haunting accounts of their war time experiences. Oddly enough, none of these remarkable people seemed to harbor dark and dour feelings but rather were fantastically optimistic. As found on the previous pages of this newsletter, these people have found their liberators some sixty plus years later because of a high school teacher and his students who developed a WWII oral history website as part of a school project. You can view this incredible project online by going to [www.hfcsd.org/ww2](http://www.hfcsd.org/ww2).



Dr. Peter Lantos was the guest speaker at the banquet on Saturday night. He continued to relate his experiences of 13 April 1945. He chose to deliver a more light hearted account versus the remembrances his daytime speech covered. All in all, the pervasive tenor of the evening was quite happy. The 1945 Holocaust survivors were presented with Certificates of Honorary Membership in the 30<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Veterans of WWII group by Frank Towers and Buster Simmons. The survivors seemed quite moved and honored to be so designated.



Next year's reunion of The 30<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Veterans of WWII has yet to be announced and Frank Towers has asked our assistance in the planning and organization of the 2009 event. The OHA Board will be considering his request since if we accept the responsibility, it will be a monumental undertaking...to be continued!

**Special Mentions:** The OHA extends special and heartfelt thank you to: Buster Simmons for donating a maps book to the OHA – "U.S. Army Atlas of the ETO in WWII" edited by Donald L. Gilmore, Buster also provided the OHA with a listing of 30<sup>th</sup> Division soldiers buried in European cemeteries to Chuck Eatmon for playing Taps at the Memorial Service, to Don Shupe for allowing us the use of his 81mm mortar, his grenades display and his field inspection display and last but certainly not least, to MSG Rick Jones for arranging Ft. Bragg barracks accommodations for the OHA guys to use in lieu of us having to rent hotel rooms!



**Special Calendar Note:** The 30<sup>th</sup> IDA will be having their 2008 reunion at the Crabtree Inn in Raleigh on August 13-17, 2008. Please do your best to attend, even if it's just for just a day. All of the attending veterans ( both WWII and 30<sup>th</sup> Brigade ) and their family members are about the nicest people you'll ever have a chance to meet. We need to demonstrate our love and support to these special people since time clock is waning for the WWII generation...so let's mark our calendars and try our best to make those dates.

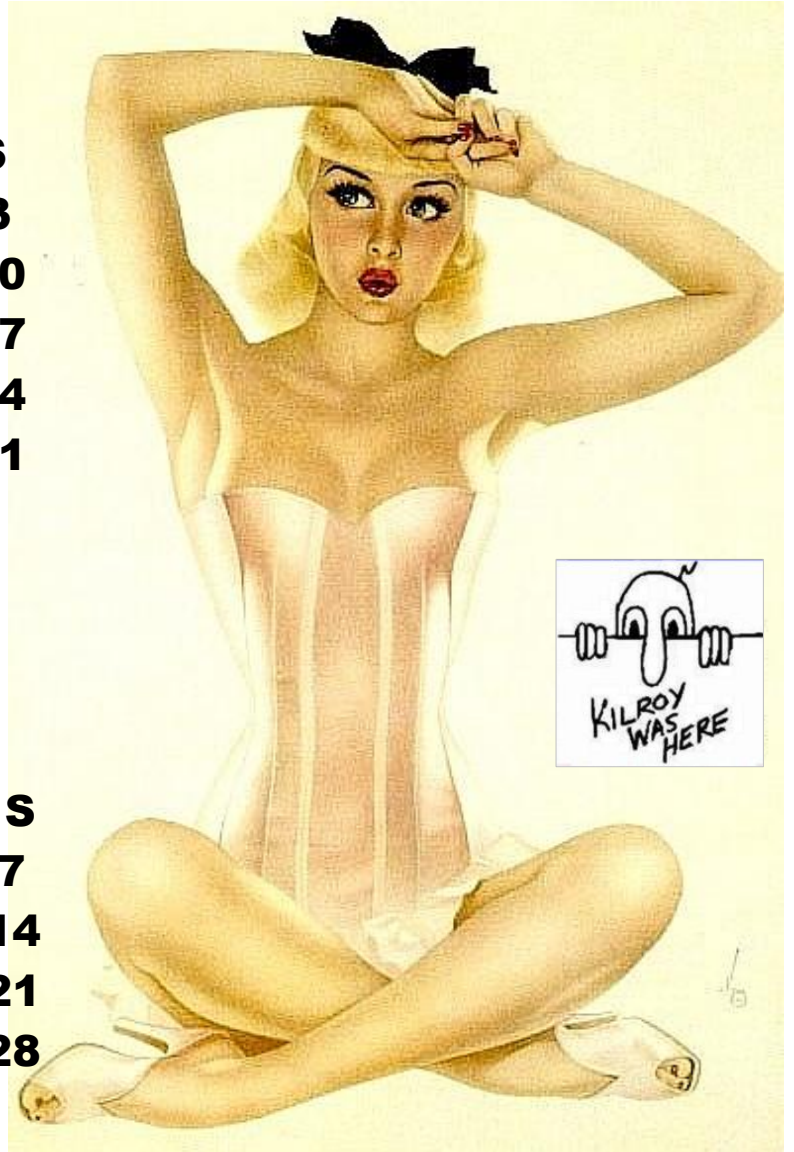
# Old Hickory Pin Up's

## May

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## June

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| 29 | 30 |    |    |    |    |    |



This little honey is looking forward to meeting all of the great guys who'll be attending the August reunion in Raleigh ... so make sure you mark your calendars to be there. You wouldn't want to disappoint this sweet lil' thing would ya?



# It's Time To Vote!

In addition to the current OHA Board members - Neil Trivette, Walt Sowinski, Jim Higgins and Mike Owens ( Clint Yarbrough has declined to run for the Board this time ) ... three (3) new men were nominated to stand for election and were to be added to this years ballot. Unfortunately, two ( 2 ) of the three new guys declined to stand for election.

Jay Callaham is the one electee whose agreed to stand for election and he's provided a brief statement ( see below ) outlining his credentials to qualify as a Board Member, his vision for the OHA and maybe some changes he'd like to see made.

All of you already know what the current Board members have done ( or not done ) and they've opted not to provide brief statements outlining their credentials, or changes they'd like to review. In short, they are all running on their respective records!

Please read this page fully, read Jay Callaham's statement completely and after you've digested all of the information, your must select the names and clearly mark the ballot for the five ( 5 ) men you think will do the best job for the OHA...aaahhhh, there's only five names on the ballot so your voting job will be very easy! No write -ins will be accepted.

**You must address and mail your marked ballot to Neil Trivette to arrive no later than May 23, 2008!** Results of this election will be made at the Annual Meeting held at the NC State Fairgrounds on Saturday May 31, 2008 and published in the July / August newsletter. So, let's get with it guys...time is short, a lot needs to be done and it's important for you to vote.

**I appreciate the honor of being nominated to the Board of the OHA, and humbly accept that nomination. Here are my Credentials:**

**Reenacting** - I've been a reenactor since 1965 with experience ranking from private soldier/bugler to Force Commander. I've organized events at local, regional and national levels, formed and commanded units in multiple time periods, have held national and regional offices in various reenactment organizations. Currently, I'm serving as Inspector of the Southern Department of the Brigade of the American Revolution.

**Fraternal** - I'm past presiding officer of various levels of Freemasonry, held many other presiding offices in various Masonic bodies. I'm a past District Commander in the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of North Carolina and

**Military** - I served in the US Army in 1971-72 as an Armor officer, 1972 - 1982 as an officer in the NC National Guard with service in the 30th Division (1st BN, 252nd Armor & Troop E, 196th CAV), 1982 - 1996 as an officer in the US Army Reserve, being transferred to the Retired Reserve as a Major. I understand leadership at all levels and have demonstrated that I am both a team player and team leader.

**Historical** - I have a BA in History and Political Science, studied military history, collect bugles and donate time as a Taps bugler via Bugles Across America. I collect material pertaining to the Great War with emphasis on items related to the 30th Division. I've consulted for museums, documentary film productions, provided research materials for numerous historical publications and do presentations to historical groups and museums.

**Vision** - The OHA organization works well in support of the underlying goal of commemorating the service of the combat soldiers of "Old Hickory," regardless of the war in which they served. All of our publications, website, PR materials etc must deliver equal reference to all eras of service by the 30<sup>th</sup> Division. The WWII era will continue to receive the greatest emphasis because it has the greatest number of surviving combat veterans of that war and we should never lose sight of that.

**Changes** - I would not change much. My major push will be to expand recognition of the history, the origin of the 30th Division in the Great War, to expand on the historic commemoration, increase performances and publications relating to that era and introduce full support of those brave young men and women who are serving multiple tours in the War on Terror. WWII commemoration is our strong suit but we need to include the War on Terror emphasis and to build on it in a logical and unified way.

**Thank you again for your consideration. If elected, I'll do my best for you and the OHA. Sincerely, Jay Callaham**



The Old Hickory Chronicle is the official newsletter of The Old Hickory Association. It is published 6 times a year in January, March, May, July, September and November. Contacts for the Old Hickory Association are shown below.

**Board of Directors**

President

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Displays, 30<sup>th</sup> ID History –TBD

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## Items For Sale

### OHA Items:

Grey T-shirt w/OHA logo, S-XL \$10., XXL \$12.50

Golf Shirt, White or Grey, w/ OHA logo, S-XL \$22.50 XXL \$25.00

Grey Sweatshirt w/ OHA logo, S-XL \$18.00, XXL \$20.00

Ball Cap, Grey body w/ blue bill w/ OHA logo \$11.00

Prices do NOT include shipping. Brett says to "Order directly" from:

Custom Embroidery Company

123 Wooding Ave. Danville, VA 24541 ph. 434-799-3153

Tell them you are an OHA Member.

### Reproduction Items:

**WWII Reproduction Rations** - Complete reproduction of WW2 K ration, C ration and D bars, as well as other such accessories as Foot Powder, Charms, PK Gum, fuel tablets, batteries and much more.

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**World War II Impressions** – U.S. Army uniforms and accessories. Catalog available.

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238-A Commission Street, Salinas, CA 93901 Toll Free Order Line) – (888 ) 431-2351

Inquiry Line ( 831 ) 754-2351 <http://www.whatpriceglory.com/usunif.htm>

## Upcoming Events

### May 17, 2008...11am

Greensboro Bi-Centennial

Parade of Decades

Contact: Walt Sowinski

### May 24<sup>th</sup> 2008

Timeline of the U.S. Soldier

Kings Mountain

### May 31<sup>st</sup> 2008

Annual Meeting

Fairgrounds, Noon

Raleigh, NC

### July 4<sup>th</sup> 2008

Fourth of July Parade

Faith, NC

Contact: TBD

### August 14 - 17 2008

30<sup>th</sup> ID Assoc. National Reunion

Crabtree Inn

Raleigh, NC

### Nov. 7- 9 2008

Camp Butner

OHA Training Weekend

Contact: Jim Higgins



Anybody gotta bottle?

