



PFC Mason Hamel Armstrong (D.S.C.), F Company, 119th Infantry Regiment, 30th Infantry Division



The plaque shown below is dedicated to Private First Class Mason Hamel Armstrong (D.S.C.), F Company, 119th Infantry Regiment, 30th Infantry Division for his action at Neufmoulin, Belgium. This fearless bazooka man was a unique and daring individual indeed. PFC Mason was one of 1st Lieutenant Ken Austin's bazooka men. Mason had worked his way from the wooded high ground north of town into the second story of a small white washed house beside the road in the village of Neufmoulin. PFC



Mason hung out of the bedroom window and did some serious damage with his bazooka. Almost single handedly Mason took out two fully loaded half-tracks that constituted one fork of Lt. Col. Joachim Peiper's armored forward spearhead. This action took place on 17- 18 December when Lt. Col. Peiper had divided his armored force at Stoumont in a desperate attempt to reach the river Meuse. 1st Lt Edward C. Arn's rifle Company had halted the westward push of Lt. Col. Joachim Peiper's 1st SS Panzer Regiment of the 1st SS Panzer Division.



The following quote by then 1st Lt. Arn is from his book titled "Am's War." "Within seconds I heard a blast from one of the company's bazookas in Neufmoulin. And then another. I discovered later that one of Austin's bazooka men, PFC Mason Armstrong, had worked his way from the wooded high ground North of town into the second story of a residence and had fired down on two Kraut half-tracks ... knocking out both. Several weeks later, by the way, I put Armstrong in for the Distinguished

Service Cross (DSC), the Nation's second highest award, for this particular action. He got it too!"

I heard a jeep coming down the highway behind me. I nearly fell down into the Grand Mont rivulet when it pulled up and a tall, lean paratroop officer - with two stars on his helmet - leaped out. "Who's in command here?" "I am, sir, Lieutenant Arn, "F" Company, 119th Regiment, 30th Division, at your service!" I was just flabbergasted and showed it. "I am Jim Gavin of the 82nd Airborne Division.". He waved away my salute, which I brought up from about 30 feet under that road, with a grin, "Looks to me, Lieutenant, as if you've had quite a night of it" "Yes, Sir, we have but my men have secured Neufmoulin and we are about to complete its occupation. We have also set up a road block."



General Gavin was particularly impressed with Armstrong and F Company's efforts when he saw the devastation they'd wrought on the German armored column. "Good! You'll be pleased to know that my people will be relieving you here and moving through your positions. We're on the ground now in this emergency. I'll go on up ahead and have a look around if that's alright with you, Lieutenant." "Yes, Sir!" I responded with wide-eyed admiration. Major General James Gavin, Commanding Officer of the entire and very famous 82nd Airborne Division, out ahead of the whole division with only a jeep and a driver! My men and I were dumfounded. We later learned that

Gavin was actually acting CO of the XVIII Airborne Corps which included both the 82nd and the 101st Airborne Divisions.



Old Hickory Mourns the Loss of Two Great Men



Lamar Sibley:



Gentlemen: It is with great sadness that I inform you of Mr. Paul Lamar Sibley's death. Lamar passed away Tuesday morning, February 21, 2012 at St. Dominic's Hospital. Rebecca Sibley, Danny's wife, sent an email to Clint Yarbrough to pass on the sad news. Rebecca asked that we keep the family in our thoughts prayers...especially for Lamar's wife, Mernette and Lamar's three sons...Danny, Calvin and Dwight. Rebecca thanked us for making Lamar feel so 'special' when he attended 30th IDA reunions. Mr. Sibley loved being at the reunions and was always ready to talk to us about his service. He was a true gentleman, always quick with a bright smile and a wonderful friend to us all.



As you may know, Mr. Sibley proudly served in the U.S. Army during World War II. He was a machine gunner in H Company (a heavy weapons company), 2nd Battalion, 117th Infantry Regiment, of the 30th Infantry Division known affectionately as Old Hickory. The photo, shown at the left of this paragraph, shows Lamar with some of his pals...you'll easily recognize Lamar by the bright white toothy smile



Funeral Services for Mr. Sibley, age 86, of Benton, MS, will be on Friday, February 24, at the Mt. Olivet United Methodist Church. The Reverend Skipper Maxwell and Reverend John Paul Sibley will officiate. Paul Lamar Sibley was a member of Mt. Olivet United Methodist Church, Owner of Sibley Office Equipment and a true American patriot.

Kenneth E. Hatfield



Gentlemen: Our good friend, Hank Stairs emailed us this very sad news. Hank states, "I just received the sad news from Bea Hatfield, wife of Ken Hatfield of Columbus, Ohio, that Ken passed away on 7 December 2011. Ken was a S/Sgt in "D" Company, 117th Infantry Regiment, 30th Infantry Division. Ken was in the heavy 30 MG's."

Ken proudly served in the U.S. Army during WWII in the 30th Infantry Division. Ken's WWII awards include the Combat Infantry Badge, five Campaign Stars, two Presidential Unit Citations and the Bronze Star with three Oak Leaf Clusters and a Battlefield Commission. Ken retired from the State of Ohio as an auditor and worked the Memorial Tournament at Muirfield Village Golf Club for 18 years. He was a member of the Eastgate Lodge #603, Past President Sojourners Columbus Chapter 10, and O.E.S. Univ. Chapter #462 Past Patron. Ken enjoyed traveling to his 30th Division military reunions, reading, and making stained glass windows.

Ken will be remembered for his integrity, being uncompromising in his morals, great character, and for being very much a gentleman. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his brother Lester. Survived by his wife, Beulah "Bee"; daughters, Linda (Gerry) Schneider and Janet (Mike) Musgrove; son, Kenneth II (Caron) Hatfield; several grandchildren and great-grandchildren; brother, Murl (Marge) Hatfield; and sisters, Vera Regnier and Ethel Henderson. A graveside Masonic service will be held on Sunday, December 11, 2011 at High Lawn Memorial Park.

Old Hickory has lost two fine men. Lamar Sibley and Ken Hatfield may have left us for now but they will always be fondly remembered by all who knew them. We of the Old Hickory Association extend our sincere and heartfelt condolences to both families. Old Hickory.



Mike Pachuta, G Company, 119th Infantry Regiment, 30th Infantry Division



The following is a retyped copy of a letter written by Mike Pachuta to Warren Watson. Mr. Watson, while attending a 30th IDA reunion, met with and asked Mike to write down his experiences. This is Mike's account of his service with the 30th Infantry Division in WWII. As newsletter editor, I've made a few minor sentence structure corrections to Mike's original handwritten letter but only to clarify an issue(s)- no changes were made to the content.

I entered the service from West Virginia October 1942 and was assigned to G Company 119th Infantry of the 30th Infantry Division and stayed with the same until being discharged after the war ended.

The Regiment entered Normandy and I fought as a Platoon Sgt. of the 2nd. Platoon and fought through four of the five major battles that were fought in the ETO. We fought through the hedgerows and I survived the bombing at St. Lo. We then headed for Mortain where we engaged the enemy in a small village and overtook it quite easily. At that encounter, I was awarded a citation for a Bronze Star medal for heroic achievement on 6 August 1944.

We reached Mortain on 9 August and went right into a severe battle with the Germans and I became wounded in the clash. I had advanced out ahead of the front lines to see what was ahead of us. There I observed two of the enemy advancing toward our position. I was lying prone and was ready to dispatch one or both if I could. Just then a mortar shell exploded just ahead of and to the left of my position. I felt the shrapnel impact my face and shoulder. It stunned me briefly. I made a quick check of myself and realizing it wasn't bad I retreated to our position. I gave myself first aid then headed back to find an aid station. I found one but they couldn't help me. I waited for an ambulance to take me back to a MASH unit where I did get patched up and the bleeding stopped.

I was eventually evacuated to an Army Hospital in England. I recovered nicely from the wounds thanks to the wonderful Hospital staff. From their excellent care I declared fit for combat duty and returned to my outfit in February 1945 just in time for the Rhur River crossing. After that crossing we advanced to the Rhine River and crossed it successfully.

Night after crossing the Rhine I took a 12 man patrol down river approximately a half mile to try and contact the British which had crossed the river (Rhine) at the town of Wesel. We had traveled several hundred yards when I stopped the patrol to have a look around. We were paralleling a dike on our right. I climbed to the top and came face to face with a German soldier entrenched in a hole atop the dike. We stared at each other and he started to retreat. I asked him to halt but he refused my order and started to run. I threw a grenade ahead of him and when it exploded six German soldiers came out of the trenches and surrendered.

I had two of my better men to return back to the Company and disclose our situation get us some help out of this mess we were in. We were in the middle of a full Company of enemy. The two men had gone only a short distance when I heard shots fired from their direction. Soon one man came back to tell me they were fired upon from atop the dike and his comrade was shot but not fatally. We carried him to where we were, cared for his wound and made him as comfortable as possible.

Now I had six POW's and a wounded man on my hands. I couldn't go back or forward, I decided that we would go back up river the same way we came down. I hunted two poles to improvise a litter by using the poles and German overcoats. It worked well and the prisoners were to carry our wounded back to the Company area. Our intentions were to go back up river and shoot anyone or anything that tried to stop us. All went well and we returned safely.

After the Rhine we advanced to the Elbe River. This was our final objective and where we were to contact the Russians. We finally made official contact and waited there for the fighting to end. Thanks, Mike Pachuta



T/Sgt. Mike Pachuta
Co. G, 119th Infantry

P.S. The photo - upper right - was taken on the banks of the Elbe River in 1945 April.



January 2012 - Fort Indiantown Gap, Battle of the Bulge Event



Soldiers who served in the Battle of the Bulge were honored and saluted this January 2012 at Fort Indiantown Gap, PA. Hundreds of "WWII re-enactor soldiers" participated in this salute by taking part in a simulated reenactment of the 1944-45 battle of WWII. These WWII re-enactor soldiers slept in the the 1940's barracks, wore authentic uniforms that were correct for the period. Their clothing, weapons, packs, web gear, trucks, jeeps, motorcycles all had the look of real 1944 Government Issue (GI) equipment. The same held true for the



German WWII re-enactor soldiers who looked like they had just been trucked in from across the Rhine river. Other WWII re-enactor soldiers were dressed out as Allied units including British, Polish, French and Russian. Our good buddies from the Old Hickory Association were there to prominently represent the 30th Infantry Division known as Old Hickory.



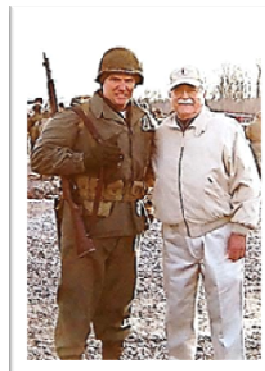
The battle was scheduled to be a two (2) day event but the first day had to be canceled because of inclement weather that had the potential of creating personal injury to the participating troops. However, the second day dawned cold and clear ... a perfect day to start the engagement. All the troops were called into formation, gear was checked over by their respective NCO's, ammunition (blanks) was issued, orders were given to board waiting buses and the "GI's" were trucked to the battle sites.

Friends and other observers had little time to review the troops or visit with them prior to their deployment. Among those friends was Frank Deegan, the current President of the original and still functioning 30th Infantry Division Association, along with his son, Dan who drove there from Eaglesville, PA. Another attending past President of the 30th Infantry Division Association was none other than Hank Stairs who drove to the event from Baskingridge, NJ. Frank and Hank enjoyed a few hours visiting with the Old Hickory guys in the evening prior to the battle. Dan Deegan was not only an interested observer and visiting with the OHA, he elected to join up with our Old Hickory Association pals who provided him with a complete WWII GI uniform, web gear, helmet and M1 rifle. So, next morning, Dan stood in formation, marched with and boarded the waiting transports along with his OHA buddies.



The WWII veterans who attended this year's event were served lunch at the Community Center on the day of the wreath laying ceremony. The day was quite cold and a chill wind was blowing. The sound of helicopters from a nearby airfield didn't contribute much to enhance the ceremony except to dampen the solemnness of the occasion. Noticeable in the ceremony crowd were the gray and balding heads of the WWII veterans who'd attended this event in recent years. It was however with some sorrow that the number of grayed and balding heads was diminished and the presence of more wheelchairs was sadly obvious.

We, Battle of the Bulge veterans, extend our thanks and appreciation to the members of the Old Hickory Association for their contribution and dedication for playing a major part in this event over the past several years. Taking time off from their family life, their jobs, their other "civilian" duties back home, the many hours of preparation, travel and the financial costs do not go unrecognized by us and we applaud your efforts. Finally, the support this group gives to the 30th Infantry Division Association during our annual reunion is likewise fully recognized and greatly appreciated. Old Hickory Association, we return the salute! *Written and submitted by Hank Stairs – Here's two photos of Hank; one at the GAP & one from 1944. Old Hickory!*



This year's GAP attendees included Mark Burfete, Jay Callaham, Aaron Clark, Ron Crawley, Dan Deegan, Chuck Fraley, Brian Illner, Matt Koonts, Robbie Lamb, Henry McMillan, Charlie Noble, Mike Owens, Tyler Owens, Ashley Parker and Clint Yarbrough.

OHA Helps To Celebrate 375th Anniversary of the National Guard

Our own Mike Owens (accompanied by his wife Holly) and close OHA pal, Dan Jutson, joined Gov. Bev Perdue with Army Major General. Greg Lusk, Adjutant General of North Carolina, other members of the North Carolina National Guard, senior state leaders, various historical reenactors in period National Guard uniforms, visiting students and guests celebrated the founding of the guard at a ceremony at the North Carolina State Capitol, here, on December 13, 2011.



Perdue and Lusk gave speeches honoring the centuries of service of the National Guard and militia to North Carolina and nation. This is the 375th anniversary of the National Guard beginning with the first muster of the militia in Massachusetts Bay Colony, December 13, 1636 and serving state and nationwide today.

The citizen-soldiers, of the then militia and now North Carolina National Guard, living and working in the community, but trained to deploy against any threat, still is the best bargain for our state and nation.



SCHIN OP GEUL VILLAGERS SAY “THANK YOU ALBERT COOK.”

The German Nazis occupied our country for almost 5 years. On the 5th of May 1940, they crossed the border and that was the beginning of a very black period in our history. However, in September 1944, our hope started to grow “because the Americans are coming” and we believed that it won't take long to be free again.

Our little village of Schin op Geul, is part of the city of Valkenburg which is down in the south of the Netherlands. Schin op Geul is situated in the valley of the river Geul, in a wonderful countryside blessed with grassy hills and lush forests. It's about 15 miles from the German as well as the Belgium border and people were waiting for the American liberators.

The 30th Infantry Division, called “Old Hickory Division,” is formed by the 117th, 119th and 120th Infantry Regiments. Old Hickory landed on the beaches of Normandie, crossed the northern part of France and Belgium and by 12 September, 1944 they had reached the Dutch border.

On September 14, there was heavy fighting in the town centre of Valkenburg, about 2 miles to the West of the little village of Schin op Geul. On the next day, Friday the 15th, the first American soldiers entered our village and took up positions in the southern part near the river. The Americans had received only small resistance from the Germans, because they had withdrawn and proceeded to dig in on the hills northeast of the river and the railroad lines.

In spite of the small resistance, 2 soldiers were killed that day. One of those soldiers was Staff Sergeant Albert S. Cook of the 117th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Battalion, M Company. The 3rd Battalion was in Oud- Valkenburg and Strucht, and tasked to assist 119th L Company to cross the river Geul at Schin op Geul and the K Company at Wylre.

On that sunny Friday, Staff Sergeant Cook was talking to some villagers at the intersection of the Grachtstraat and Struchtstraat. Their conversation was not easy, because the villagers did not understand English and much of what Albert told them was probably puzzling. We're sure Albert must have mentioned his name, however, because for many years it was considered that Albert was “military cook!” It was learned much later that “Cook” was really Albert's last name and not his military profession.

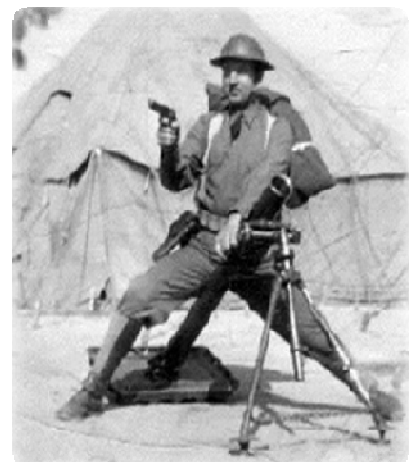
While still talking to the villagers, a German sniper hidden in a grove of fruit trees across the road, shot Staff Sergeant Albert Cook. It was the German sniper's last kill because he was immediately shot out of the tree by some of Albert's squad members. Villagers who witnessed the shooting stated Albert was hit in the stomach and his burial report confirms that the cause of death was an abdominal wound. Albert was raised in Madison County Tennessee, he was born on June 28, 1912 as first son of Jesse Green Cook and Ruby Vera Wilson. He had two younger brothers and one sister. His mother died in 1934 at the age of only 42 years. He entered on active service on September 16, 1940, exactly 4 years before his death at Schin op Geul, before 1940 he joined the Tennessee National guard. On the picture above we can see that Albert wears two Awards.

Albert's body was buried on September 17 at 1930 hours in a temporary American cemetery at Fosses la Ville about 70 miles to the south in Belgium. This cemetery was only temporary, and the next of kin would eventually have to decide where their loved ones remains would be interred. They could elect for the remains to be interred in the U.S. Cemetery of Henri - Chapelle located in Belgium, or they could elect to have the remains be sent back home.

The War Department wrote to Albert's widow Virginia at her last known address in Jackson, Tennessee but by then, she had remarried and had moved to Detroit. His father who was now next of kin had decided he wanted his son to be buried at home but Jesse Cook died in May 1948 so he was not alive when his son come back home.

A brother Henry confirmed the Father's original wishes that Albert's body be returned to the United States and that his remains be delivered to the Pafford Funeral Home in Lexington, Tennessee. Albert's remains arrived in Lexington at 5.17 PM, 29 March, 1949 and soon afterward Albert was buried in the Pleasant Hill Cemetery, in Cedar Grove, Henderson County Tennessee.

Albert, in name of all the people of a little Dutch village, called Schin op Geul, the last village you have known, want to thank you for your sacrifice, God Bless and may you finally rest in peace. We won't forget you.



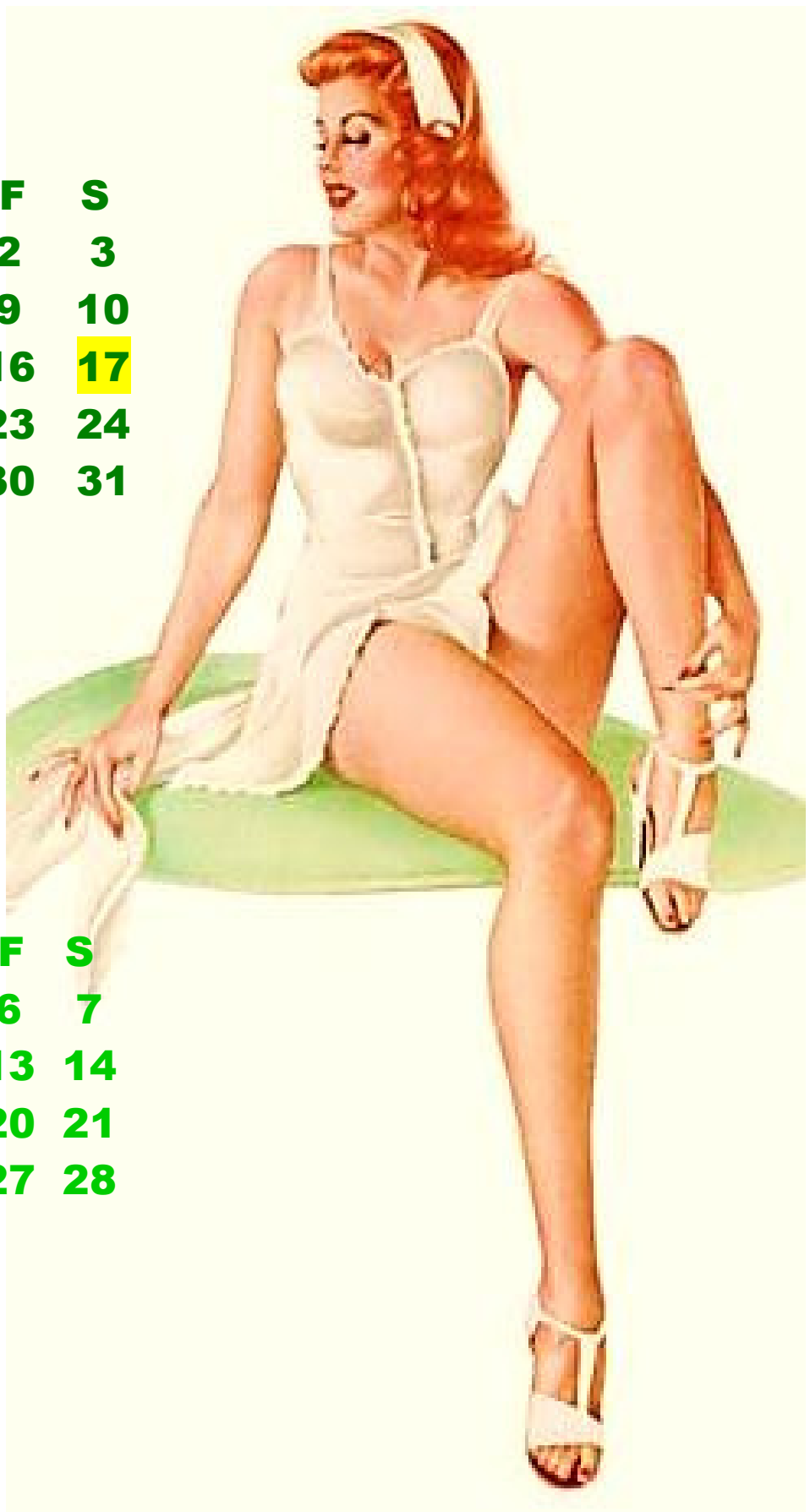
OLD HICKORY PIN UPS

March

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April

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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. Catalog available. . www.angelfire.com/nc/stug or mail to:

Todd Hogan, 225 S. Melville Street, Graham, NC 27253 or you can e-mail me at -thogan@triad.rr.com

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

7165 Adwen Street, Downey, CA 90241 Fax and Phone – (562) 927-6922

Email at – www.wiiimpressions.com/contact.htm

What Price Glory – Reproduction uniforms and accessories. No Catalog available.

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>



Charlie...what have you done, son?

Looks like you be hanging out with some pretty rough hombres. Well, if you're gonna' get into it, you might as well to hang with the best of the best! Charlie says he'll be reporting to Fort Sill, Oklahoma on 12 June. By August he'll be at Ft. Benning for OCS and hopefully graduating by November.

Congratulations from all of your pals in the OHA, 30th IDA and 30th IDV of WWII. All of us are real proud of you!

Old Hickory

Upcoming Events

March 1 – 4 – 2012 - 30th Infantry Div. Veterans of WWII Reunion, Savannah, GA

Contact: Neil Trivette

March 9 – 11, 2012 - Sons of Valor, Camden, SC

Contact: TBD

April 7-8 , -2012 - Armies Through Time, Historic Camden, SC

Contact: TBD

April 20 -22 -2012 - Great War Spring Offensive, Newville, PA

Contact: Jay Callaham

May 21 - 22 – 2012 Latta Plantation, Huntersville, NC

Contact: Ron Crawley

May 25 - 27– 2012 - Military Timeline, Kings Mountain National Battlefield Park, Kings Mtn., SC

Contact: Ron Crawley

June 2 – 2012

OHA Business Meeting
NC State Fairgrounds-noon

Raleigh, NC

Contact: Neil Trivette

June TBD –

Price of Freedom Museum,
China Grove, NC

Contact: Don Shupe

June 1-3 - 2012

Reading Airshow

Reading, PA

Contact: Ken Hyatt

June 30 - 2012

Troutman 4th Parade

Troutman, NC

Contact: Don Shupe

It's Time for Nominations for OHA Board of Directors



All right, troop, the time has come to select some members to serve on the OHA Board. The how's and why's are explained in the copy directly below. The current OHA Board members are: Neil Trivette, Walt Sowinski, Jay Callaham, Brian Illner and Clint Yarbrough. However, Neil Trivette and Walt Sowinski have decided they will not stand for reelection.

So, Gomer, we need some new blood to step up and assume these leadership positions which will set a course for the OHA over the next two years. Now's your chance to set policy, introduce new thinking and provide the new thinking you believe will make the OHA an even better organization than it currently is. Now, let's get out your thinking caps and select some guys you feel will "fill the bill."

Read the process printed below, do what's described, submit your nominations on time and with all due consideration to insure that the OHA continues to be the premier Living History Association in the southeast.

Nominations: Each regular member shall be eligible to nominate up to five (5) members for the Board of Directors. Regular members may nominate themselves. All nominations are to be returned to the Board President, Neil Trivette, in writing, either by regular mail or by e-mail by March 28th, 2012...Neil's mailing address is: Neil Trivette, 4021 River Rd., Boonville, NC 27011...e-mail is - ntrivette@triad.rr.com

Each regular member with at least two (2) years of membership, who is nominated by at least two current OHA members, will be eligible to stand for election to the OHA Board. The Board President, Neil Trivette, will contact each eligible member by April 11th, 2012 to ask if he is willing to accept the nomination and stand for election to the Board.

Elections: Each eligible member who chooses to stand for election to the Board will be asked to submit a brief statement for publication in the May / June newsletter describing his qualifications or reasons for standing for election to the OHA Board. This brief Word Doc. statement must be submitted to the newsletter editor by email no later than April 23, 2012.

Ballots: Ballots with the names of all eligible candidates for election to the Board will be in the May / June 2012 newsletter. All ballots must be returned to the Board President, Neil Trivette and e-mailed or postmarked no later than May 23, 2012.

Notification: Notification of the election results will be given at the Annual Meeting held at the NC State Fairgrounds on the first Saturday of June ... June 2, 2012 @ 12 noon...usually this is when the Old North State Antique Gun & Military Antiques Show is scheduled. The final Board results will also be published in the July / August newsletter.