



612th Tank Destroyer Battalion Association Newsletter June 2005

Francis C. Hayes
Association Chairman

George Karaphillis
Memorials & Flowers

Tena Phillips
Treasurer

Rick Pidsosny
Web Site & Roster Data Base
www.microrap.biz/612th-tdb

Susie Pidsosny
Newsletters



Reunion Update

Our 52nd reunion is almost upon us. This will be our last newsletter prior to the reunion so we will try to include everything you will need to know to make your visit to Murfreesboro a memorable one.

Just to recap a few things:



Our hosts for our 52nd reunion, **Fayne Haynes** and his daughters, **Anita Stanley** and **Janice Bellamy** are eagerly awaiting our arrival

in Murfreesboro.

Our 612th TDB Reunion will be held on July 28th, 29th and 30th at the Fairfield Inn and Suites by Marriott.



The Inn is located at 175 Chaffin Place in Murfreesboro, Tennessee (see page 8 for a hotel fact sheet). In our April newsletter we published the direct phone number to the hotel in Murfreesboro to call for reservations. Due to the fact that the hotel is undergoing major renovations and is not expected to be open until the 1st of July it is now necessary to **call 1-800-228-2800 to make your reservations**. When making your reservation be sure to mention that you are part of the Tank Destroyer Reunion, failure to do so will result in your being charged the full nightly rate. Although our group is getting a very nice discounted rate of \$70. per night plus tax this rate only applies to the days of the reunion. If you are planning to arrive prior to

the 29th or stay after the reunion you will be charged the full rate for those extra nights.

For those of you who will be traveling by air, the nearest airport is Nashville International Airport which is 25 miles away. Driving directions from the airport are provided on the fact sheet.

Don't forget the Saturday night **Flower Fund Raffle!** The raffle is always one of the highlights of our banquet. Our members have always generously donated an outstanding variety of gifts and crafts for us to raffle off. The income does much to carry on the Flower Fund. George Karaphillis is our guardian of these funds and he is doing an outstanding job. We thank him for his dedication.

Roster Updates



Dick and Sherry Leininger
52073 Brookstream Circle Apt. A
Elkhart, IN. 46514
574-264-7469

Mrs. Mary Mitts
3757 Quail Forest Drive
Tarpon Springs, FL 34688-9041

Frank Bertrand Jr.
23481 Leftergate
Spring, Texas 77373
281-350-1408

Mr. and Mrs. Mark Loch
P.O. Box 146
Maple Lane, MN. 55358-0146
320-963-5298

In Memory

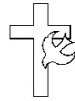
This is always the most difficult part of our newsletter and it is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of our dear friends and comrades, **Ralph Ivan Johnson, Joseph W. Reichel, Carl L. Kotilinek and Paul Darretta.**



RALPH IVAN JOHNSON of Iowa Falls, Iowa passed away on February 17th. C. John Campbell a friend and neighbor was kind enough to notify us of Mr. Johnson's passing and sent along his obituary which follows:

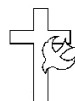
Ralph Ivan Johnson was born April 5, 1914 at Alden, Iowa, the son of Edward and Ellen (Flesbrug) Johnson. He attended the Alden, Iowa Community Schools through 8th grade and the Williams Iowa Community Schools, graduating from Williams High School in 1932, after staying home a year to help his father on the farm. He worked at the Williams Lumber Yard and the Reeds Ice Cream Factories in Des Moines and Omaha before entering the United States Army on March 21, 1942. He served through several campaigns starting with Normandy landing and included the Ardennes and the Battle of the Bulge, receiving five bronze stars for actions in these battles. After his discharge on June 28, 1945 he was united in marriage to Margaret Beecroft at the Bethany Lutheran Church, Iowa Falls. He and Margaret moved to Iowa Falls in 1981. Margaret passed away on December 16, 1994.

Ralph I. Johnson was preceded in death by his parents; Edward and Ellen Johnson; his wife Margaret Johnson; his brother and wife; Jesse and Dorothy Johnson. He is survived by neices and nephews.



Rosemarie Reichel wrote that her husband **JOSEPH W. REICHEL** passed away on January 9th. She thanked us for the newsletters saying that Mr. Reichel enjoyed them.

Joseph W. Reichel, age 83, passed January 9, 2005 at VA Medical Center. Survived by loving wife Rose Marie of 58 years. He leaves to mourn, his children, son Joseph Reichel II of Aurora, CO, daughter Christine Hampshire (deceased), daughter Barbie (Tom) Webb of Tucson; grandchildren Monique Bellew of Phoenix, AZ, Yvette Stefan of San Diego, Stacie Webb and Austin Webb of Tuscon; great-Grandchildren, Alison and Christopher Bellew. Retired from Hughes Aircraft, World War II veteran and member of South Arizona Chapter of Ex-POW's. Memorial gathering Thursday, January 13, 2005 at 1:00 p.m., St. Joseph's Parish Healy Hall, 215 S. Craycroft Road, Tuscon, AZ. The family wishes to thank the health care providers at the Tucson Veterans Hospital where he had excellent care. Donations may be made to Salvation Army or Casa De Los Ninos. Joe Reichel, a man of few words, but who filled our hearts, will be forever missed. We love you.



Tena forwarded this obituary that she received from the family of **CARL L. KOTILINEK**. Mr. Kotilinek passed away on March 18th, 2005. Carl Lawrence Kotilinek was born December 23, 1919 in Maple Lake to George and Lillian (Pavlik) Kotilinek. He served his Country in the U.S. Army during WWII with the 612th Tank Destroyer Battalion. Carl fought in Normandy, Ardennes, and the Battle of the Bulge and received many unit citations. He later met up with the Russians in Czechoslovakia. He married Clara M. Barthel May 7, 1955 in Minneapolis and she preceded him in death May 24, 1989. After the war Carl farmed the Kotilinek homestead in Maple Lake Township until retiring in 1982. Carl lived in Maple Lake all his life where he was a member of St. Timothy's Catholic Church, Maple

Lake VFW Post #7664, and the Maple Lake American Legion Post #131. He loved his family, church, farming, the outdoors and cutting wood.

Carl is survived by a son, daughters, and their spouses, Tom (Wendy) of Maple Lake, Rita Kotilinek and fiancé, Jerry Austin of Greenbush, Amy (Mark) Loch of Maple Lake, Mary (Joe) Ackerman of Silver Creek, and Lisa (Dennis) Georges of Buffalo; and 17 grandchildren. He was preceded in death by brothers, Leo, Mark, and Ralph; and a granddaughter, Caroline Loch.



PAUL DARRETTA passed away on February 19th, 2004. He was a licensed minister and veteran of World War II. He was predeceased by his wife, Mary Darretta, in 2001. Survivors are a son, Paul Darretta of West Harrison, N.Y., a daughter Judith Darretta of Milpitas, Calif., a sister and four brothers. Cause of death was congestive heart failure after suffering a major heart attack. My sincerest apologies to the Darretta family for inadvertently omitting Mr. Darretta's passing in our last newsletter.

Safely Home

*I am home in heaven, dear ones;
Oh, so happy and so bright!
There is perfect joy and beauty
In this everlasting light.
All the pain and grief is over,
Every restless tossing passed;
I am now at peace forever,
Safely home in heaven at last.
There is work, still waiting for you.
So you must not idly stand;
Do it now, while life remaineth-
You shall rest in God's own land.
When that work is all completed,
He will gently call you Home;
Oh, the rapture of that meeting,
Oh, the joy to see you come!*



Susie 's Snippets

Iris (Charles) Morris of Attica, IN., writes that she is looking forward to attending the reunion in Murfreesboro. She said that all of her lady friends that accompanied her to Lexington had such a great time that they will all be returning. I was saddened to hear that Iris' brother has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's. They are having a difficult time hiding his car keys from him as he thinks he still drives just fine. We'll certainly keep you both in our prayers. The proud grandmother also writes that her grandson sang a special hymn at her church on Palm Sunday. He was a big hit and is going to be in a gospel songfest at Meyer's Dinner Theater in June or July. She says he is real good and that "I am very proud of him".

Ruth and Talmadge Riley, of Benton, KY were the grand marshals for this year's annual Tater Day Parade. Ruth sent along several articles from their local papers telling all about this wonderful honor (see "Tater Day Grand Marshal" on page 7). Ruth said it was very emotional as crowds cheered and hollered thank you as the four floats of veterans passed by. Twenty-one members of their family were in a pick up truck behind their float. All were wearing t-shirts with pictures of Ruth and Talmadge when he was in uniform. The truck was decorated with signs of thankfulness from four generations. Seven of their family were missing but they all had fun.

I spoke with **Francis Hayes**. He is currently not doing as well as he would like but hopes things will be looking up soon. He said he just

doesn't feel well. Since Francis is not up to making his usual "Tele Talk" calls it would be great if we could all take a moment or two to give him a call or drop him a note. I'm sure he would love to hear from his friends in the 612th. Francis' phone number is: 251-867-3179. His address is 504 Evergreen Avenue, Brewton, Alabama 36427. I'd also like to take this opportunity to wish Francis a very Happy 91st Birthday on June 18th. Take care dear friend and we hope to see you in Murfreesboro.

Had a nice note from **Pearl (Rufus) Noland** of Tuscaloosa, Alabama. She wrote that Rufus has been doing well inspite of the fact that he has recently fallen and has a hairline fracture to his left hip. God love 'em they are still planning on attending the reunion. Pearl enclosed a photo of their 6 week old twin great-granddaughters. Virginia Lee and Madaline Mae Edgeworth were born on March 28th of this year.



Please remember in your prayers our good friend **Judy Odum**. Judy is currently undergoing chemo treatments for a malignant tumor in her lung. Judy we wish you all the best and hope the road to recovery leads you and your mom Iona to this year's reunion.



Tena says she is looking forward to seeing us all at the reunion. Grandson Travis and his family are in the process of moving back to Houston and Tena couldn't be happier. She promises to bring photos of great-grandchildren Jackson and Hannah to the reunion.

Judy Ramhoff is doing okay. She had knee surgery but is planning to attend this years reunion.

Hazel Scott also plans to attend. She only lives 30 miles from Murfreesboro.

Spoke with **Gert Flanagan** around Christmas time. If all goes well they plan to attend.

Ouida and Jewel Raulins plan to come.

George Karaphillis says it is impossible for them to attend due to Verona's health. She is now in a wheelchair all of the time and had suffered many falls.

Jeanelle Beane wrote that she enjoys the newsletters. She's sorry she won't be able to make it to this year's reunion. She hopes everyone has a good time.

Don and Clara Smart hope to make the reunion. They are planning another trip to Europe this summer.

Isabella Kemp wrote that she fell and broke her hip last November. As of January she was getting around okay with a wheelchair and walker.

Ed Winslow and his family are looking forward to the reunion.

Mike and Helen Papendick have both been ill. They send their best wishes and ask God to bless all their friends in the 612th.



Amelia and Clara Harding wrote in February that they are having a real old fashioned winter with lots of

snow and cold. A friend of theirs took this photo at their back door and made note cards for them.

Since January 2005 Tena has received dues from the following people:

- Frances Bertrand
- Kenneth Webber
- Ed Winslow
- Isabella Kemp
- Evelyn and Herman McCollum
- Thelma Slayton
- Ruth and Talmadge Riley
- Jeanell Beane
- Sherry and Richard Leininger
- Clara and Don Smart
- Amelia and Clara Harding
- Hazel Scott
- Irene Magnuson
- Helen and Mike Papendick
- Jewel and Ouida Raulins
- Iona Nix

Tena reports that as of April 19th her account balance is \$1,809.85

Haynes turns candy company into county museum.

Not many living people have their life stories on file in the Gore Research Center at Middle Tennessee State University. Nor do they have them on file in the U.S. Department of Defense archives.

Yet, such is the case for 83-year-old **Elmer Fayne Haynes** of Murfreesboro.

Recently Haynes decided to take much of the memorabilia that tells the story of his ambitious life and display it in a museum at his office, located at 401 W. Lytle St in Murfreesboro.

“I just had a lot of things I was collecting,” Haynes said, “I thought I might show it to some of the school children.”

Born to a sharecropper and his devoutly Christian wife, Haynes grew up poor but proud.

“My mother said we couldn’t help from wearing patched clothes,” Haynes recalled. “But we could wear clean patched clothes.”

Yet, being poor caused Haynes to develop a strong work ethic, keen sense of ingenuity and willingness to take risks.

Each of these attributes helped Haynes to grow and harvest 40 acres of crops before he ever reached the eighth grade, spend time as a country peddler, escape from the Germans as a prisoner of war and become a founding partner in both the Haynes Brothers Candy Company and the Haynes Brothers Lumber Company.

“We was all very ambitious boys,” Haynes said of himself and his six older brothers. “Mother said there was more people that rusted out than wore out”

Haynes has categorized the memorabilia in his museum to reflect the different periods of his life.

Under a banner that says “Life On The Fann” he displays, among a variety of items, the old 80-pound anvil his daddy used to make farm implements; a doubletree, similar to the one he and his brother Grady Haynes used to hitch the mules together the year they attended school and worked the farm by themselves; and a long, cylinder-shaped bucket for getting water out of a well.

A German map is affixed to the wall under the museum’s World War II banner. A fellow prisoner of war passed the smuggled map and a compass to Haynes, after deciding an escape would be too risky for himself.

Risky or not, Haynes reasoned, escape was the only chance he had of making it home alive.

Though unable to read German, Haynes knew the top of a map always signified due north. When the Germans moved the prisoners out of camp to avoid the approaching Russians, Haynes and a battalion buddy took advantage of the situation. Clutching the map and compass, they escaped into the woods. After many days on the run, they found the British front lines.

"I lost 50 pounds of weight in the prisoner-of-war-camp," Haynes said.

Also included in the military display is the Purple Heart medal, awarded to Haynes for wounds he received in the Battle of the Bulge.

Another section of the museum is dedicated to the Haynes Brothers Candy Company.

After his release from the army, Haynes made his way back to Murfreesboro and pondered his future. Before the war, he spent some time working in his brother's general store in Deason., Tenn. and as a peddler trading for chickens and eggs and selling food around Deason. So, Haynes decided his future ought to be in sales. Knowing a little something about the candy business, he and his brothers Haywood Haynes, Charles T. Haynes and Grady pulled together their resources and started the candy company.

For more than 50 years, the company operated as a wholesaler for candy makers like Hershey Chocolate Corp., H.B Reese Candy Company, Mars Inc. and E.J. Brach's.

"We was in the candy business big time," Haynes said. Candy advertisements from various magazines grace the walls of Haynes' museum. A Milky Way bar and Baby Ruth bar are advertised for five cents.

A few years into the candy business, Charles T., who also worked as a homebuilder, got restless.

What Murfreesboro really needed Charles T. said, was a building supply company. So the four

brothers opened Haynes Brothers Lumber Company. Eventually, Charles T. and Grady concentrated their efforts on the lumber company and Haywood and Fayne ran the candy company.

The final section of the museum is titled "Christmas Parade." There, Haynes displays 18 years' worth of Murfreesboro Christmas parade photos.

"We (the candy company) built the float, and furnished the candy and pulled Santa Clause — which was the highlight of the parade," Haynes said.

Five years ago, Haynes closed the candy company. Haywood had died by then and large chain stores were beginning to drive mom and pop establishments out of business, Haynes said.

By 2000, the two grocery stores and four drugstores that used to be on the square in Murfreesboro were gone. In fact, of the 100 Haynes Brothers Candy Company customers that were in and around Murfreesboro, only one is still open, Haynes said.

These days, Haynes keeps busy selling flags and flagpoles, exercising for 30 minutes daily, walking two miles each day, delivering Meals on Wheels and spending time with Beatrice, his wife of 62 years.

He's adamant that the "good Lord" gets credit for his success in life. "(God) was with me all the time," Haynes said.

Haynes' museum is open by appointment. Call 615-893-6961 Monday or Friday during regular business hours.



Tater Day Grand Marshal, Riley, survived being a POW in World War II

Talmadge Riley is a survivor.

An 85-year-old World War II Veteran, Riley was drafted into the U.S. Army at 22 where, after a few years of training, he fought along side of B Company 612 Tank Destroyers as a gunner

On Dec. 11, 1944, Riley and his company entered the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium, and after many casualties, half of his company was captured by the Germans.

The horror stories from being a Prisoner of War are recalled each year when the Veterans reunite. Riley and his men were stripped of the overcoats, shoes, gloves and other warm clothing and were put in unheated boxcars without food or water. The men could not sleep or they would have frozen to death, as it was 30 degrees below zero.

The men were forced to march across Germany to POW camps, imprisoned in a concrete horse barn and suffered starvation. They were covered with lice and were only kept warm with the 12 lumps of coal they were given each day

To survive, the men wrapped around each other to keep from freezing, and to combat starvation, ate peas, bugs and a black bread made with sawdust, sugar beets and twigs. They were given boiled potatoes and a loaf of bread on Sundays which was divided among 14 men. Some would fight over the breadcrumbs.

Many men did not survive the conditions in the war camps, but Riley did.

After being released on April 29, 1945, Riley remained overseas for two months before returning home on June 16. He was too weak to

draw water from the well, but he hung on to a horse drawn plow and planted a corn crop as his father was on his deathbed because of a stroke he suffered while Riley was a POW

Riley was honorably discharged on Oct. 5, 1945 as a Buck Sergeant. He earned the EAME Theater Ribbon with four Bronze Stars, the Good Conduct ribbon, a Purple Heart, the Belgian Fourragere and four Battle Stars.

Riley was also a carpenter that helped build the Paducah Atomic Plant, the tire plant in Union City, Tenn. and worked for the TVA at the Shawnee Steam Plant, as well as several plants in Calvert City. Riley also built houses and farmed on the side.

This year, Riley as one of the last surviving Prisoners of War, will represent his fellow World War II Veterans as the grand marshal of the Tater Day parade.

"I'm very honored to be the grand marshal this year," Riley said.

"I think our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren are going to be riding in something behind us, too," said his wife Ruth.



Riley and his wife of 63 years, Ruth Agnes, live on Slickback Road in the southern part of the county. They have four children; Ronnye Riley, Dennis Riley, Darlene Miller and Craig Riley. They have eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.



Fairfield Inn & Suites Murfreesboro

175 Chaffin Pl
Murfreesboro, Tennessee 37129 USA
Phone: 1-615-849-1150
Fax: 1-615-849-8585

call 1-800-228-2800 to make your reunion reservations

Directions

From Airport

Nashville - BNA

- Hotel direction: 30.0 mi SE
- Driving directions: Take I-40 towards Nashville. Merge left onto I-24 to Murfreesboro. Go 25 miles to exit 78b. The ramp will loop over I-24. At the light, turn right onto Chaffin Place. The hotel is located 500 yards on the left.

Arrival Information

Check-In and Checkout

- 3:00 PM; 11:00 AM
- Checkout

Parking

- Complimentary on-site parking

Pet Policy

- Pets not allowed

Hotel Details

- 4 floors, 69 rooms

Accessibility

- Service animals allowed for persons with disabilities

Guest Room Information (may vary by room type)

General Room Amenities

- Air conditioning
- Alarm clock
- Coffee maker/tea service
- Crib
- Individual climate control
- Iron and ironing board
- Pillows: foam
- Pull-out sofa bed
- Rollaway bed

Bathroom Amenities

- Bathroom amenities
- Hair dryer

Room Entertainment

- Cable channel: CNN
- Cable channel: ESPN
- Cable channel: HBO
- Cable/satellite TV
- Color TV
- Movies/videos, pay-per-view

Business Amenities

- Phone feature: speakerphone
- Phone feature: voice mail
- Two-line phone

Services

Complimentary Services

- Coffee in lobby
- Coffee/tea in-room
- Continental breakfast
- Newspaper delivered to room
- Newspaper in lobby
- Phone calls: local
- Phone calls: toll-free

Guest Services

- Full-service business center
- Safe deposit boxes, front desk

Recreation

Swimming

- On Property
- Pool, heated
- Jacuzzi
- Whirlpool

Activities

- Jet-skiing (15 mi)
- Jogging/fitness trail (1 mi)
- Miniature golf (1 mi)
- Tennis (1 mi)
- Water-skiing (15 mi)

Golf

- Indian Hills (5 mi)
- Old Fort Golf Course (1 mi)

Attractions & Landmarks

- Calsonic
- Calsonic Horse Arena
- Middle Tennessee State University
- Tennessee Miller Coliseum
- Nashville Superspeedway
- Oaklands Mansion
- Sam Davis Home
- Stones River Battlefield
- Big Springs Clay Target Sports