



# 612<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion Association Newsletter November 2005

**Francis C. Hayes**  
Association Chairman

**George Karaphillis**  
Memorials & Flowers

**Tena Phillips**  
Treasurer

**Rick Pidosny**  
Web Site & Roster Data Base  
[www.microrap.biz/612th-tdb](http://www.microrap.biz/612th-tdb)

**Susie Pidosny**  
Newsletters

## *Good Bye Dear Friends*



### **Francis C. Hayes**

We are sorry to report that our dear friend and Association Chairman **Francis C. Hayes** passed away on Thursday, October 13, 2005. As many of you know Francis' health had been declining in the last couple of years – causing him to miss the past two reunions much to his dismay. While he couldn't always be there with us in person he was always with us in spirit.

He was so proud of the 612<sup>th</sup> and loved calling our members to keep in touch, always sharing their conversations in his "Tele Talk" reports. In the two years that my mom lived with us prior to her passing away this past May, **Francis** never failed to call at least once a week to see how she was doing. And he had never met my mom! But that's just the kind of man he was, caring and devoted to his family and his extended family in the 612<sup>th</sup>. He will be greatly missed but will remain in our hearts forever.

Our sympathy and prayers go out to **Francis'** daughter **Martha Wood** and her family. If you would like to send a note to **Martha** her address is:

Martha Wood  
6662 East Bay Blvd.  
Gulf Breeze, FL 32562

### **Tom Didlake**

**Thomas Wofford Didlake**, 87, died September 17, 2005 at Mississippi State Veterans Home in Kosciusko. Services were held at the Welch Funeral Home in Starkville on

Wednesday, September 21<sup>st</sup> with burial in Oddfellows Cemetery in Starkville.

**Mr. Didlake** was a member of First Presbyterian Church, member of the American Legion Post #40 & 8, an army veteran in WWII, in the 612<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion, a Master Sergeant in the Army and received the Bronze Star.

Survivors include: daughter Julia Blakeney and husband Jim of Rochester, N.Y.; three sisters, Mildred Ann Reeves and husband Jim of Littleton, CO., Ruth Currie and husband John of Big Springs, TX., Jean Evans and husband Lewis of Cordele, GA.; two grandsons, Mark and Adam Blakeney both of Rochester, N.Y.; and one granddaughter, Megan Blakeney of Rochester, N.Y.

Memorial donations may be made to Palmer Home for Children in Columbus.

Special thanks to **Ouida Raulins** for forwarding this information to **Tena**. **Ouida** was also able to locate an address for **Mr. Didlake's** daughter **Julia**:

Mrs. Julia Blakeney  
14 Parish Road  
Honeoye Falls, N.Y. 14472

### **Lloyd Hays**



**Lloyd Granville Hays**, age 84, of Oakley, KS returned to His Lord on Aug. 2, 2005. This was the same date as his father's death on Aug. 2, 1992. **Lloyd** was born in a farmhouse north of Campus in Thomas Co., KS, to Granville Marion Hays and Esther Ida Ottken

Hays. He graduated from Oakley High School in the class of 1940.

After farming for a few years after high school, he joined the U.S. Army, and served in the Central Europe and Rhineland Campaigns as a tank driver with the 612<sup>th</sup> TDB until the end of the European war. He shipped home for 30 days leave, and received orders for the invasion of Japan before the atom bomb brought an end to the Pacific war. **Lloyd** was proud to serve his country and enjoyed attending reunions of his 612<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion. He was always eager to help with the local color guard during Memorial Day and other events.

On Aug. 11, 1946, **Lloyd** married **Ruth Mather** in Grinnell, KS at the United Methodist Church. They resided on the farm and ranch 3 miles north of Campus near the place of **Lloyd's** birth. **Lloyd** raised wheat, milo, and alfalfa hay, but his love and passion was raising cattle. To this marriage four children were born, with one son predeceasing **Lloyd** as an infant.

**Lloyd** loved to spend time in his pickup checking the cattle, and did his best thinking in the peace and quiet of the countryside. He would make the rounds and many times stop at the elevator to share a cup of coffee and catch up on the news. He was a hard worker and a good cattleman and farmer, and loved what he did. The fondest memories of life on the ranch were the spring cattle drives to new pastures with the delicious picnic lunch that followed its completion. **Lloyd** also enjoyed the hay harvests and was always diligent in getting it cut and put up in a timely fashion.

**Lloyd** always greeted everyone with a smile, loved to laugh, and never had a harsh word for anyone. One of **Lloyd's** trademarks was the way small children were always drawn to him, which is no surprise for those who know that children can sense a tender heart. He always had a good joke or trick for the little ones.

Those who knew **Lloyd** will fondly remember his compassionate spirit, generous heart and selfless nature.

Services were held at the First United Methodist Church in Oakley, Kansas on August 6<sup>th</sup>. Military graveside rites were conducted by

the 1<sup>st</sup> Engineer Battalion, U.S. Army, Ft. Riley, KS and Oakley V.F.W. Post 2981

**Lloyd** is preceded in death by his parents Granville and Esther Hays, a son, Daryl Lynn Hays and a brother-in-law, Harry Roemer.

**Lloyd** is survived by his loving wife **Ruth**, of Oakley; his son Ronald Hays and his wife Debra, their children Ryan and Erin of Fort Morgan, CO; daughter Janice Soderlund and husband Steve, their children Kellie and Paul of Parker, CO; and son Stuart Hays and wife Carla, and their children Zachery, Andrew and Benjamin of Junction City, KS.

**Lloyd** is also survived by his sisters: Wanda Summers and husband Bert of Oakley, Inez Miller and her husband Robert of Delta, IA, and LoRee Roemer of Castle Rock, CO.

Following is a loving tribute to **Lloyd** from his family:

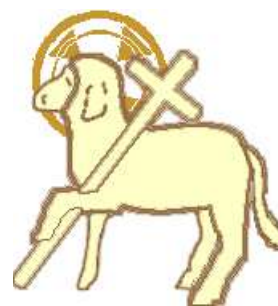
*“Leaving a Legacy”*

*“My life and purpose on earth is complete. I've seen my heavenly Father and now I understand why He made me the way I was. Smile easy, enjoy a joke, get on the floor to play with children, work hard but not too late, be honest, stick to your word, trust your neighbor, love well and pass on the important things – that's what I know now.”*

*“Those who loved and knew me most often heard me ask “Have I done it right?”*

*To this question, we answer . . .*

*Yes, Lloyd, my love, my daddy, my friend – you have done it right! Thank you for leaving a legacy that will spring eternal life for generations. Enjoy now Christ's riches in glory!*



## C.W. "Bill" Townsend



**Charles William "Bill" Townsend**, 88 of St. Petersburg, FL died Sunday, October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2005 at St. Petersburg General Hospital. He was a native of St. Petersburg and graduated from St. Petersburg High School in 1934. He was the manager of Townsend Dry Cleaners and worked in retail sales for Easton Furniture Company and Maher Furniture Company. He was a member and a lifetime deacon of First Baptist Church of St. Petersburg. He served in the 612<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion in WWII. Captured at the Battle of the Bulge, he was held prisoner of war in Germany. He received a Good Conduct Medal, the Purple Heart, and the Bronze Star in connection with combat at St. Lo, France. Survivors include his wife of 61 years, **Ruth Woolley Townsend**; two sons, Robert C. "Robb", St. Petersburg, and Richard C. "Rick", Milford, N.J.; a daughter, Julia A. "Juli", Tanner, Charleston, S.C.; three sisters, Olive Bowyer and Florence Mullinex, both of Bakerville, N.C., and Ruth Amiro, St. Petersburg; eight grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren. Arrangements were made by Anderson-McQueen Funeral and Cremation Centers-N.E. St. Petersburg.

Following is a letter I received from **Ruth Townsend**:

*Dear Susie,*

*Katherine Phillips called me yesterday after she learned of my husband's death. She asked me to mail you the enclosed (obituary) and tell you a little about Bill's illness and death.*

*He had been in and out of the hospital this past year, suffering with pneumonia from aspiration. He was in the hospital when he died very suddenly only about an hour after he had eaten his breakfast of pureed food on Sunday, 10/16. His nurse found him unresponsive and CPR failed to revive him. The doctor said he felt sure that Bill died very suddenly with very little pain. We are grateful for that.*

*After my son talked with the Director at American Ex-POW headquarters and learned all they do to help widows and families, we decided to suggest memorials to that organization. The check I received from George Karaphillis will go to them in the name of the 612<sup>th</sup> T.D.B. Bill enjoyed all the material he received from the 612<sup>th</sup>. Among the memorabilia at his funeral service was his jacket with the 612<sup>th</sup> insignia. That created a lot of interest! Although Bill did not retire from the military, a local VFW asked to give him a military burial with the bugle, gun salute and flag presentation. We all appreciated that as his 612<sup>th</sup> and POW buddies meant so much to him.*

*Our family appreciates your interest in this.*

*Sincerely,*

*Ruth Townsend*

We would also like to offer our belated condolences to **Donn Fischer** and his children. **Donn's** wife **Marilyn** passed away earlier this summer.

### *The Candle*

*A symbol of hope*

*A ray of light*

*A source of warmth*

*A candle can be a source of peace*

*During a time of remembrance.*

*Light one in your loved one's memory*

*Whenever you need warmth and light.*

*Let it give you hope.*

*For even after a candle is snuffed out,*

*It can be re-lit.*

*So, too, after a death,*

*Memories can be brought forward*

*To comfort and guide you.*

To all of our families who have experienced the loss of a loved one this past year we extend our most heartfelt condolences and offer our prayers to guide you through this most difficult time.

## Welcome

While we have suffered many losses in our ranks this past year I am pleased to say that we have welcomed several new families into the fold. Through our 612<sup>th</sup> website ([www.microrap.biz/612th-tdb](http://www.microrap.biz/612th-tdb)) I have received e-mails from family members of veterans that would like to get reacquainted with fellow veterans or just learn more about their loved ones service during WWII.

Please welcome:

**Henry and Betty Harkema**  
16600 Orange Avenue #142  
Paramount, CA 90723

**Henry's** son-in-law **Michael Verrengia** wrote: "*Capt. Henry Harkema USA (ret), was a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. with the 612th when they landed in Normandy. He was the XO of "C" Company. Henry stayed with the unit until the end of the war, finishing in Pilsen in military government. He and his wife recently moved and have lost contact with the association. Could his current address be listed with you folks?*"

We are delighted to add **Henry and Betty** to our roster and welcome them into our 612<sup>th</sup> family.

## ANOTHER E-MAIL CAME FROM DEE-EL DAWE

Hello!

*I am the great niece of a WWII soldier (he served in 612<sup>th</sup> Tank Destroyer Battalion). His name is **Edward C. Dawe**. He was in the European theatre from 29 June 1943 to 24 May 1945. He was a quiet man who passed away without telling his loved ones about his time in the military. I for one am very proud of his military service and would like my family (my three young boys) to know about their Great Great Uncle Edward.*

*I do have Edward's discharge papers. It's amazing what I found out from them. I want to know more though. Hopefully someone remembers him and can give us some information about his time served in the Army.*

*Please, can you help me?*

Thank you,

*Dee-El Dawe*  
HC 79 Box 577  
Burwell, NE 68823-9610  
308-346-5528  
[dawezoo@carrollswb.com](mailto:dawezoo@carrollswb.com)

We are pleased to add **Dee-El Dawe** and her family to our mailing list and delighted to welcome them into our 612<sup>th</sup> family. If you have any information or might remember **Edward C. Dawe** please let me know and I will forward it on to his family. I'm sure they would be delighted to hear directly from one or more of our veterans.

Last but not least, I heard from **Robert Henk, Jr.** He wrote to inform us that his father **Robert L. Henk** passed away on February 14, 2001. He was a member of the 612<sup>th</sup> TDB during WWII. "*We were all very proud of him and his service to our country. I do regret that I did not find your website sooner. Anything you can tell me about him during the war would be helpful. I have kept many items of his (letters, papers, medals) that he kept. Thank you*".

*Robert L Henk Jr.*

I have replied to **Mr. Henk's** e-mail requesting a street address but as of yet I have not received a reply. His e-mail address is [woundedknee229@yahoo.com](mailto:woundedknee229@yahoo.com)



**To our ReCon and HQ veterans.** We are still hoping to compile a complete wartime roster of the battalion. If anyone has a list tucked away somewhere we could sure use it! Thanks for your help.

## Tidings from Tena



It sure was nice to see all of my dear friends at our reunion in Murfreesboro. The only complaint that I have is that the time went by too quickly!

A big **THANK YOU** to **Fayne Haynes**, his daughters, **Janice Bellamy** and **Anita Stanley** and their families for the wonderful job they did as our hosts.

I also have to thank **Beatrice Haynes** for letting me borrow her scooter to get around on. I had a blast zipping around in it, although occasionally a door, wall or person got in my way. Ha-Ha!

I won't get too much into the reunion as **Susie** will be covering that in her reunion wrap-up but I do want to share with you some letters I have received from various members before and after the reunion.

**Anne** and **Monty Laster** wrote to say, "We always have the 612<sup>th</sup> in our hearts and thoughts. Thanks so much for keeping us informed and for all you do for the 612<sup>th</sup>. Our family is fine, still have that hole in our hearts from the loss of daddy and mother. Just for your information my brother Sam has his first grandchild, a little girl, Jessica. Our little grandchild is now 18 and a freshman at UGA. Mother and daddy would be proud of them both. Love all of you. P.S. Are Jewel and Ouida okay after Katrina?"

Had a nice note from **Amelia and Clara Harding**. We sure missed them at the reunion but it looks like it was to their advantage to stay home this year . . . "It was good that we decided not to drive to Murfreesboro because Amelia went to emergency on July 28 and was in the hospital for a few days and went back on August 1 for gall bladder surgery. Fortunately, she got along well and came home the following day. We

missed seeing everyone but were glad to receive the card and your note. With thanks and good wishes always."

**Melvin Barr** writes: "Tena, you don't know how much I appreciate your sending me this message from the 612<sup>th</sup> TDB. I do appreciate your going to the trouble of sending me one with everyone signing it. It was very thoughtful for all of them to sign it. I wish I could have been there. But I just can't drive that far anymore by myself. But I do think of everybody all the time. As ever, a real friend" Melvin Barr

**Edna Showalter** was unable to attend this year's reunion but she sent a note before hand. "Dear Tena, Received the lovely newsletter. Hope the reunion is a success and will be thinking of you all. I am just not able to attend. I haven't been out of town but just glad to be at home. I am glad you are going to be close to your grandson and family. Family is so wonderful and so are the friends I made at the 612<sup>th</sup> reunions. I love you dearly and wish you the very best." Love, Edna

**Elnora Leininger** wrote in June to say "We are not planning on attending the reunion again this year. Too many problems. Bill has arthritis bad in his hip. He can't sit very long for one thing. Uses a cane. Since I had 2 strokes in November ('04) I have had a rotator cuff tear, bursa inflammation, eye problems on one eye where I had a cataract removed over a year ago, had a spur removed from a toe that still hurts like the dickens. But everything is still on the mend so it is easier to stay at home and think about what we are missing. So have fun and tell everyone we said 'Hi' and we will be thinking about all of you." Love, Bill and Elnora

**Ruby Anfenson** of Hesperia, CA wrote: "Dear Tena, It was nice to talk with you this morning. Only wish I could be there with the rest of you to celebrate the big day. God Bless you all and hope everyone has a great time." Love, Ruby O. Anfenson

Thank you all for taking the time to write - I love being able to share your letters with our

fellow members and I know they enjoy hearing how everyone is getting along.

One last comment. I am so thankful that our many members living in the south came through the ravages of Hurricane Katrina as well as they did. I was so worried about **Ouida and Jewel Raulins**. I couldn't reach them for several weeks. Thank goodness, they were both safe and sound having suffered some wind damage and power outages. I also spoke with **Frances Bertrand** and was happy to hear she was safe and doing well. Please continue to pray for all those folks affected by Hurricane Katrina and all of the other natural disasters that have taken place.



## DUES

Thanks to those who paid their dues prior to and during the reunion:

- Ruby Anfonson
- Melvin Barr
- Mrs. Frances Bertrand
- Mark Coone
- Thomas Coone
- Donn Fischer
- William and Earlene Hawkins
- Fayne and Beatrice Haynes
- Bill and Elnora Leining
- Iris Morris
- Iona Nix
- Rufus and Pearl Noland
- Judy Odum
- Susie and Rick Pidosny
- Judy Ramhoff
- Jewel and Ouida Raulins
- William H. Redifer
- Bob Reighard
- Talmadge and Ruth Riley
- Earl and Glyn Sain
- Avery Sanders
- Hazel Scott
- Edna Showalter
- Geneva Smith
- Dorothy Tomlinson
- Dean Uhles
- Mary Ann Wesoly

Dues are \$5.<sup>00</sup> a year. They help to cover the cost of printing and mailing out our newsletters and rosters. If you have not yet paid your dues please send a check to:

Tena Phillips  
11606 O'Donnell Drive  
Houston, Texas 77076-1008

**Please make your check payable to:**

Katherine "Tena" Phillips



## Susie's Snippets

Before I get into the Reunion Wrap-Up I want to let you all know that **George Karaphillis** called to say **Verona** is in the Peninsula Care and Rehab Center. With her multiple sclerosis worsening it has been harder and harder for George to give her the "around the clock" care that she needs. She has fallen out of her wheelchair so many times he has lost count. I know it's breaking his heart for her to be there but having been through it myself with my mom I know it's the best thing he could do for her. He is there everyday from early morning till late at night. God Bless you both! You're in our thoughts and prayers as always. I'm sure **Verona** would love to hear from you. You can send her a card or note at:

Verona Karaphillis  
% Peninsula Care and Rehab Center  
900 Beckett Way  
Room 248  
Tarpon Springs, FL 34689

**Beatrice Haynes** shared a note that she received from **Amelia and Clara Harding**. Amelia wrote: "Each summer our city, Olmsted Falls, Ohio has "Heritage Days" with a parade and booths, etc. The theme for 2004 was Past, Present and Future, so you can see where Clara and I fit in. We were marshals for the parade and Frank, our driver, built the car."





Best wishes go out to my dear friend **Dorothy Tomlinson**. Unfortunately, **Dorothy** took a bad fall while she was visiting with us in August and broke her ankle. Sadly most of the sights she visited while in Michigan were the Urgent Care and Emergency room at the local hospital! On arriving home she had surgery and has had her leg in a cast from her knee to her toes. She's having physical therapy now and wearing a removable boot that she is hoping will be removed permanently at the end of the month. So hang in there, **Dee!**

## HOW ABOUT SOME GOOD NEWS?

I am absolutely delighted to share with you the latest news from **Judy Odum**.

*"Just wanted to share what God has done for me. I got my test results back today. The big tumor does not show cancer anymore and the other one was not there. The only thing I have is two tiny spots that they said was hot but could be infection. They are so small they couldn't do any biopsies on them at this time so I will be taking antibiotics for a few days and I will have another CT done on December 12<sup>th</sup>. If they are still there they will do a needle biopsy and if they are not it will have just been an infection. Thank you for all the prayers and please continue to pray. I feel so good about it all and I just thank God for it. I just sat and cried and thanked God while the doctor was talking."* Love, **Judy Odum**

If that isn't the best news I've heard in a while I don't know what is! Please continue to keep **Judy** in your prayers.



## 2005 Reunion Wrap-Up . . .

Our 52<sup>nd</sup> Reunion took place in Murfreesboro, Tennessee on July 28th thru 30th. Although it's been almost 4 months since our reunion the word that stills comes to mind is **"WOW"**. What an absolutely fantastic reunion! Our hats are off to **Fayne Haynes** and his family. Fayne's daughters **Janice Bellamy** and her husband **Jim** and **Anita Stanley** and her husband **Randy** did an amazing job! What gracious and wonderful hosts they all were!

Things got off to a great start on Thursday as folks began checking in to the brand new **Fairfield Inn and Suites**. What a beautiful hotel! The young lady at the reception desk couldn't have been nicer. It proved to be just the beginning of the fine "southern hospitality" we would be met with during our entire stay.

Once we got checked in and stowed our bags in the room we headed straight to the hospitality room.

We were pleased to see that quite a few folks were already in attendance. **Tena** was already hard at work selling raffle tickets at her registration table. Good thing we had checked into our room already as she quickly put us to work. Just kidding. She let us say hello to a few folks first and then she put us to work!

The **Haynes Family** had made lovely notebooks for everyone (they were TDB orange at that!) Each notebook held an itinerary, maps and brochures of things to see and an American flag. We were also given a pre-printed nametag to wear.

**Rick** got right to work setting up his computer workstation. We were very fortunate that the hotel provided a DVD player and large television in the hospitality room. **Rick** had previously recorded photos from prior reunions onto discs and was able to play them for everyone.

We also had all of our photo and written history books placed throughout the room so folks could enjoy them.

I can't remember if it was Thursday evening when the food began arriving but I do know that I have never seen so much food throughout the entire weekend.

Every time I saw **Diane Kelton** she was bringing in another huge tray of food. **Diane** I don't know what you do for a living but if you ever want to go into the catering business you'll be a huge success. Just a sample of some of the delicious foods we had:

**Iris Morris** brought a yummy dessert, Salted Peanut Chews. (Recipe is enclosed on a small recipe card, so check the bottom of your envelope.) **Anita Stanley** brought cupcakes, brownies and a jello salad. **Janice Bellamy** provided a wonderful chicken salad. **Hazel Scott** brought a pound cake. **Sara Avery** brought a red velvet cake and a German Chocolate cake. **Diane Kelton** made spaghetti and a delicious peach cobbler (which I was supposed to get the recipe for – Diane if you could send it to me, I'll include it in the next newsletter). She also brought huge loaves of hot bread. **Ruth Riley** brought zucchini bread and **Frances Bertrand** prepared a roast and a fig cake. **Geneva Smith** (our Moon Pie lady) didn't let us down – she brought tons of them! **Ouida Raulins** brought peaches. **Bill Hawkins** brought along some of those delicious Ripley tomatoes.

All that food and it was in ADDITION to all of the wonderful food the **Haynes Family** provided for our Friday night bar-b-q and our banquet on Saturday evening! Thank you to everyone for your generosity in providing us with such excellent meals.

Thanks also to **Mary Ann Wesoly** and her cousins **Sandy** and **Steve Ennis** for providing all of our Coca Cola products.

Luckily the **Haynes Family** had some tours scheduled for us on Friday morning (we had to do something to work off those calories!). Our first stop was a tour of the Haynes Museum. It was awesome. No wonder **Mr. Haynes** is so proud of it. Various sections of the museum cover the history of the Haynes Candy Company

as well as a section of "Life on the Farm" and a section titled "Christmas Parade". Of course the section that was most impressive was the history of the 612<sup>th</sup> from Camp Bowie to present day. What a treasure. **Thank you Mr. Haynes** for sharing it with us.

After leaving the museum we headed over to Cannonsburg Village for a walking tour. Cannonsburg is the original name of Murfreesboro. The Village began in 1974 as an American Revolution Bicentennial project. Cannonsburg Village takes you on a tour through 125 years of southern rural life.

After our enjoyable tour of the homes and buildings in the village we took a quick detour over to an outdoor produce stand. **Glyn Sain** was looking for tomatoes to slice for lunch (**Mr. Hawkins** had not yet arrived with his Ripley tomatoes). While **Glyn** searched for tomatoes I was on the lookout for fried pies. **Dorothy Tomlinson** introduced me to fried pies while we were visiting her in Memphis prior to the reunion. Unfortunately there were no fried pies to be found so it was back to the hotel to greet our latest arrivals.

We made it back just in time to greet **Bill and Earlene Hawkins** and their daughter **Jeannie** as they were checking in. We all headed down to the hospitality room and were happy to see **Rufus and Pearl Noland** had arrived with their daughter **Nancy Ewing**. **Rufus** was a delight. He kept us laughing all weekend with his memories of the war. On Saturday I was registering our veterans for the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. When I asked **Mr. Noland** what he did in the war he replied, "Run, mostly". He also had us cracking up when he was sitting across from **Iris Morris**. He looked across at **Iris** and asked, "Back when I knew you, who where you?" **Iris** told him her name and that she was the widow of **Charlie Morris**. **Mr. Noland** then went on to entertain us with his stories. To me that is what the reunions are all about. **Thank you, Rufus!**

While I chatted with folks, **Rick** got right to work making a DVD of photos from the tours we had taken that morning. Within half an hour we were all watching photos of our day's adventures.



Before we knew it, it was time to vacate the hospitality room so our hosts could get things ready for that evenings festivities. Once again **Janice** and **Anita** out did their selves. The decorations at the Friday night bar-b-q were resplendent in red, white and blue. After another outstanding meal (we had 51 guests in attendance) everyone had a great time playing bingo with prizes that the **Haynes family** generously provided.

Bright and early Saturday morning folks started bringing in their prizes for that night's Flower Fund Raffle.

We held our annual business meeting at 10:30 a.m. **Jewell Raulins** chaired the meeting for us. I presented the proposed dates and locations for our 2006 reunion. After some discussion is was agreed that our next reunion will be held from July 27<sup>th</sup> through July 30<sup>th</sup> 2006 in Tarpon Springs, Florida.

**Iris Morris** asked to say a few words. Since she made our beautiful 612<sup>th</sup> quilt several years ago - lovingly inscribed with the names of our men - we have been trying to find an appropriate place to donate it to when the time comes. When she had toured the Haynes Museum on Friday she said she finally knew where she wanted her quilt to go. She told **Mr. Haynes** that she would love for the quilt to hang in his museum. **Mr. Haynes** graciously accepted and will proudly display the quilt in the Haynes Museum. He promised to make sure that it is on display at future reunions.

**Tena** reported that our bank balance was \$1,969.<sup>85</sup>. **Iris** made a motion for the flower fund to be available to **Tena** to cover reunion expenses. **Susie** seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

One other item that we touched on lightly was what to do with our leftover funds when and if the time comes that we no longer hold reunions.

We tabled the discussion and decided to include it in this newsletter. We would really like to hear ideas and suggestions from our members. Some possibilities are:

- Establishing a scholarship in the name of the 612<sup>th</sup> TDB

- Donating a memorial stone in memory/honor of the 612<sup>th</sup> TDB
- Donating the funds to Fort Hood to be used for military personnel or their families

So please, give it some thought and share your ideas with us. Hopefully the time will never come but it would be good to have a plan of action.

*After the meeting . . .*

Folks spent the day visiting and catching up with old friends and meeting new ones. I was pleased to finally meet **Dean Uhles**. I have heard so much about her and was really pleased to be able to finally meet her.

Sadly the day passed much to quickly – before we knew it, it was time for the banquet.

But first we all gathered together in the lobby area for our annual group photo. **Rick** managed to get everyone in the picture in a fairly timely manner and we all headed down the hall to the hospitality room.

Once again **Janice** and **Anita** had worked their magic. The room was aglow with orange candles interspersed with black and orange decorations made of ribbons and lace. It was beautiful!

We had a full house with 74 people present.

**Mr. Haynes** made a few brief announcements and welcomed everyone. **Donn Fischer** was celebrating his birthday so we all serenaded him with the “Happy Birthday” song.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Our chaplain, **Earl Sain** led us in prayer.

Our excellent buffet supper was followed by another treat – “Sisters of the South”. Members Sophie, Louise, Floyd and David provided us with excellent musical entertainment. Following the music we had a guest speaker – who I apologize too as I can't recall his name! He was a Vietnam veteran who trained and worked with bomb and drug sniffing dogs during his tour of duty.

Of course no 612<sup>th</sup> banquet would be complete with out our Flower Fund raffle. The gift tables were piled high with wonderful prizes that our folks had donated. I think **Iris Morris**

and her friends **Evelyn Tallman** and **Flo Lefton** needed to rent a U-Haul to get all of their winnings back to Indiana. The **Riley's** did pretty well also! **Wanda O'Kelley**, **Iona Nix's** niece, was the winner of one of **Talmadge Riley's** coveted rocking horses, lucky girl!

Sunday morning arrived much to quickly. It was time to wipe away a few tears and for one last hug goodbye to our dear 612<sup>th</sup> friends. But thankfully there is always next year and the plans are already set in motion for our 53<sup>rd</sup> reunion.

I'm pleased to report that we had 8 of our veterans in attendance this year. Those in attendance were:

- Donn Fischer - ReCon
- William "Bill" Hawkins – "B" Co.
- Elmer "Fayne" Haynes – "B" Co.
- Rufus Noland – "B" Co.
- Talmadge Riley – "B" Co.
- Jewel Raulins – "A" and "B" Co.
- Earl Sain - Medical
- Avery Sanders - "C" Co.

Family members and friends in attendance were:

- Tena Phillips (Travis) "B" Co.
- Glenda Millar
- Glyn Sain (Earl) Medical
- Russell Ford and Betsy
- Dorothy Tomlinson
- Hazel Scott "A" Co.
- Judy Ramhoff "B" Co.
- Iris Morris (Charles) "B" Co.
- Flo Lefton
- Evelyn Tallman
- Susie and Rick Pidosny "A" Co.
- Mary Ann Wesoly "A" Co.
- Iona Nix "B" Co.
- Judy Odum "B" Co.
- Wanda O'Kelley
- Ouida Raulins (Jewell) "A" & "B" Co.
- Sara Sanders (Avery) "C" Co.
- Diane and Jimmy Kelton "C" Co.
- Candice and Mat Northcut
- Chloe Northcut
- Steve and Judy Sanders
- Melissa, Tony and Tyler
- Jessica and Jonathon Sanders
- Geneva Smith "HQ"
- Ruth Riley (Talmadge) "B" Co.
- Ronnye and Janice Riley "B" Co.
- Frances Bertrand (Frank) "A" Co.

- Joni and Frank Bertrand Jr. "A" Co.
- Wanda and Mark Coone ReCon
- Earlene Hawkins (Bill) "B" Co.
- Jeannie Hawkins "B" Co.
- Pearl Noland (Rufus) "B" Co.
- Nancy Ewing "B" Co.
- Thomas Coone ReCon
- Beatrice Haynes (Fayne) "B" Co.
- Janice and Jim Bellamy "B" Co.
- Anita and Randy Stanley "B" Co.
- Don and Eileen Haynes "B" Co.
- Melvin Haynes "B" Co.



## 2006 REUNION NEWS . . .

I am currently in the process of finalizing our arrangements for our next reunion. It will be held at the Holiday Inn in Tarpon Springs, Florida. Our dates are Thursday, July 27<sup>th</sup> through Sunday, July 30<sup>th</sup>. 2006.

Room rates are \$69 per night for your choice of a basic King, basic Double, King efficiency or Double efficiency. Rates are \$99 per night for a King Suite or Double Suite.

Look for full reunion details in our April newsletter.

**George Karaphillis** and his family will be our "honorary hosts". **George** graciously invited us all back to Tarpon and we were eager to return. With all of **George's** energy going to care for **Verona** I didn't think it was fair to expect him to take on this extra workload. **Rick and I** will take over most of the reunion duties. **Mary Ann Wesoly** and **Dorothy Tomlinson** have kindly offered to help as well. And I know we can rely on our members to help out as needed. We're looking forward to seeing everyone next year in Tarpon Springs.



*and*

*Best Wishes for a Happy and  
Healthy New Year*