



612th Tank Destroyer Battalion Association Newsletter May 2006

Association Chairman

George Karaphillis
Memorials & Flowers

Tena Phillips
Treasurer

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

Susie Pidosny
Newsletters



2006 REUNION NEWS . . .

Wow! If you are like me you have to be wondering where the time has gone this past year. It's hard to believe that our 53rd reunion is less than 3 months away. I know you are all anxious to hear the details and to make your reservations so I'll get right to it.

Our reunion will be held at the **Holiday Inn in Tarpon Springs, Florida**. The Holiday Inn is located at **38724 U.S. 19 North at Klosterman Road**. For those of you wondering, yes, this is the same Holiday Inn we have stayed at before. This past year there has been a change in management as well as quite a few improvements made to the lobby and restaurant areas of the hotel, but more about that later . . .

This year's reunion will take place from **Thursday, July 27th through Sunday, July 30th, 2006**. The hotel management has graciously offered to extend the same discounted rates for those folks that wish to arrive prior to the start of the reunion.

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. These rates **DO NOT** include taxes.

To make your reservations please call the Holiday Inn – Tarpon Springs directly at 727-934-5781. Reservations must be made no later than Friday, July 7th. To obtain the discounted rate you must make sure to tell them you are with the 612th Tank Destroyer Battalion reunion. Reservations made after July 7th will be made on a space available basis and will **NOT** be discounted.

Now that we've covered the basics lets go over some general information. As in the past our gatherings will take place in the Tarpon Room. Unlike in the past we will not be allowed to bring outside food into the Tarpon Room except for Friday night when they will allow us to provide our own dinner buffet. Our Saturday night banquet will be provided by the Holiday Inn and will take place in the Tarpon Room.

The hotel will allow us to bring in coffee and soft drinks but for all other meals you will need to make use of the hotel restaurant, dine out in Tarpon Springs or order in your room from the various carry-out services in and around Tarpon Springs.

The new restaurant in the lobby area is open daily from 6:30 to 10:30 a.m. for breakfast. Dinner is served from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m.

There have also been some changes in our committee since the last newsletter was mailed out.

George Karaphillis has been kind enough to make arrangements for our Friday night buffet and he is working on our entertainment for the Saturday night banquet. And I'm certain he'll be eager to lead a tour of Tarpon Springs for anyone that wants to go.

George and Verona Karaphillis are still our "honorary chairpersons" and they are eagerly looking forward to seeing everyone. Now for the part I hate to have to write. Due to family obligations, Rick and I will not be able to attend this year's reunion. Graciously, **Mary Ann Wesoly** has offered to step in and act as our chairperson. Mary Ann and I have been working together and planning for this reunion for the past year. She has put a lot of time and effort in to making centerpieces and decorations and we have bounced many ideas off of each other.

When Rick and I realized we wouldn't be able to attend this year Mary Ann was the first person I thought to contact. And she didn't let us down! I know you will all come together and help her out.

I'll make sure the 612th photos and banners are there. We will also make-up nametags and programs to ship down.

It's going to be rough on us not seeing all of our dear friends this year. We were so looking forward to returning to Tarpon Springs. But we know you'll have a great reunion as always. We look forward to hearing all about it and to seeing you in 2007.

Don't forget your goodies for the Saturday night Flower Fund raffle!

612th Association Chairman

As you know, the passing of **Francis Hayes** has left us without an association chairman. While Rick and I are willing to do anything we can to help the 612th carry on as it has for over 50 years we don't feel we have earned the "right" to serve as the chairman. We are hoping that one of our veterans will step forward to act as our chairperson. I hope this topic will be discussed and hopefully voted on during the business meeting at the reunion.

Goodbye Dear Friend

Our dear friend **DEVERS BRYANT** passed away on January 7th, 2006. Mr. Bryant's granddaughter Dana Burchfield was kind enough to contact Tena and to share with us the following:

Mr. Devers Edward Bryant, 91, of Carrollton, GA., died Saturday, January 7, 2006 at Tanner Memorial Medical Center in Carrollton, GA.

Mr. Bryant was born on November 28, 1914. He was the son of the late Henry Bryant and the late Lou Lavonia Howard. There were 13 children in the family, and they all grew up in Sargent. The family moved to Sargent in 1909 to work in Sargent Mills.

Mr. Bryant worked at the mill in Sargent from age 14 to 28. He was then drafted into the U.S. Army in December 1942. Mr. Bryant was an anti-tank gunner for Company B of the 612th Tank Destroyer Battalion. He departed the states on April 7, 1944, destined for the European-African-Middle Eastern Theater. June 8, 1944, two days after D-Day, he engaged in battle at Normandy on Omaha Beach. From June to December, Mr. Bryant's Company moved through France and Belgium in pursuit of retreating Germans.

Mr. Bryant was wounded and captured on December 17, 1944, at the Battle of the Bulge. While a prisoner of war, he was held at camps in Limburg, Hammelburg, Nuremburg and Mooseberg, Germany. He was liberated on April 29, 1945.

Mr. Bryant obtained the rank of Sergeant and was awarded the American Theater Ribbon, European - African - Middle Eastern Theater Ribbon with 3 Bronze Battle Stars, WWII Victory Ribbon, Good Conduct Medal and the Purple Heart.

After returning from the war, Mr. Bryant became a brick mason. He enjoyed square dancing, gardening, vacationing with family in Florida, watching the Atlanta Braves and telling war stories.

He is survived by his daughter, Shirley Turner of Carrollton, GA.; son, Joe Gilley of California; granddaughter, Dana and husband Ron Burchfield of Carrollton; grandson, Lance Ragans of Douglas; sisters, Ovie Bryant Johnson of Sargent, GA., and Lavonia Bryant Richards of Newnan, GA.

His caregivers were Lynn Ashley, Sherry Craft and Melissa Gentry.

Mr. Bryant is predeceased by his wife, Eureka Smith Bryant; brothers and sisters, Eunice Bryant, Tommy Bryant, Ada Ward, Pat Bryant, Fannie Duncan, Della Panell, Olin Bryant, Alton Bryant, Maggie McClendon and Elbert Bryant.

Memorials may be made to :

V.F.W.
8 Club Drive
Newnan, GA 30263

Arrangements were being handled by McKoon Funeral Home, 38 Jackson Street, Newnan, GA., where the family received friends 5-8 pm Tuesday, January 10. Memorial service was at McKoon Funeral Home 2 p.m. Wednesday, January 11th with Frank Guest officiating. Interment was conducted by Chris Jiles at Sargent Cemetery in Sargent, GA.

Tidings from Tena



Thanks to all you folks that have sent in your dues for the year. I especially look forward to receiving notes and letters from you and hearing how you are doing and what is happening in your lives.

I am doing well after months of ups and downs. I think I've had every medical test known to mankind these past few months but thankfully I've passed them all. Glenda and I are looking forward to seeing each and everyone of you in Tarpon Springs. I'm trying to talk my grandson Travis and his family into coming along. Jackson and Hannah are growing like weeds and are still their Great-Grandma's pride and joy. I'll bring lots of pictures of them to the reunion! Hope to see you there!

I had a real sweet note from Dana Burchfield, **Devers Bryant's** granddaughter. She had called me previously to let me know of her grandfather's passing. She wrote: "Thank you so much for taking the time to put Papa's (Deb) obituary in the newsletter. Papa always enjoyed the reunions and considered all of you as special friends. I look forward to meeting you in July at Tarpon Springs." With love, Dana

Fares Cordova of Pueblo, Colorado wrote asking if we could help him locate a copy of the 612th history. Susie contacted **MaryAnn Wesoly**

to see if she had any extra copies and Mary Ann mailed one out to him the next day.

I had a nice letter from **Izzie Kemp**. She is doing well. She wrote that she enjoys the newsletters. Izzie said that besides being forgetful, unsteady on her feet, hurting in all sorts of places, not seeing well and being tired all the time – she is doing great! ☺

Robert Behney, "A" Company from Norristown, PA wrote to thank me for the card we sent out following the reunion in Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Bob wrote: "I want to thank you for sending me the card the gang all signed. You are a very special person and we veterans of the 612th really appreciate what you do for us. I know I do." Bob goes on to write, "I am 87, will be 88 in January. I live alone, do my own cooking, laundry and so forth. I use a cane and still drive the car. My daughter and son take good care of me."



DUES

Thanks to those who paid their dues since the last newsletter.

- Henry and Betty Harkema
- Gertrude Flanagan
- Mary Ann Wesoly
- Raymond Wesoly
- Jeanell Bean
- William Groff
- Doris Kelley
- Kenneth Webber
- Sam Patrick
- Monty and Ann Laster
- Herman and Evelyn McCollum
- Helen Rennard
- Robert Behney
- Isabella Kemp
- Fares and Anne Cordova
- Juliana Flynn

Dues are \$5.⁰⁰ 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

The following "snippets" are from phone calls and letters I have received since the last newsletter.

Fayne Haynes, "B" Company, Murfreesboro, TN had cataract surgery in late March.

Clara Harding, "A" Company, Olmsted Falls, Ohio had knee surgery earlier this year and reports she is doing well.

Verona Karaphillis, "A" Company, Tarpon Springs, Florida is still in Peninsula Care and Rehab Center. I know she and George would love to hear from you. Her address is:

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

The last information I have received regarding Mr. **James Boatright**, "B" Company, Whitesburg, GA was that he is now in assisted living. If anyone knows his address we would love to send him our well wishes.

Ruby Anfonson, Hesperia, California celebrated her 97th birthday. Sadly, Ruby recently had a bad fall and is now in assisted living.

Iona Nix, "B" Company, Cleveland, GA., suffered a mild stroke earlier this year. I'm happy to report she is almost 100% recovered.

My good buddy **Earl Sain**, "B" Company, Collierville, Tennessee has had a pretty rough year but I'm pleased to report he is taking a turn for the better. **Earl** recently had a pacemaker put in and **Glyn** says it's a full time job keeping him from doing too much. **Earl** has some additional surgery ahead of him in the next few weeks so please say an extra prayer or two for him and his family.

Elnora and Bill Leininger, "C" Company, Mishawaka, Indiana wrote to say they enjoy receiving the newsletters and hearing information about their friends in the 612th. They were sorry to hear about **Francis Hayes**. **Elnora** said that **Francis** often called to see how they were doing.

Iris Morris, "B" Company, Attica, Indiana has been keeping busy with family. Sadly, her brother has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's. On a good note Iris will be welcoming her 8th great grandchild this year. **Iris** and her friends **Flo** and **Evelyn** are looking forward to the reunion in Tarpon. Hopefully their friend **Carolyn** can join them this year.

I had a nice note from two of our newest members **Henry and Betty Harkema**, of Paramount, California. They wrote to thank us for sending the 612th history and key ring. They said it brought back so many memories. Although they were never able to attend any of the 612th reunions they have gone to several 803rd reunions held in Reno, Nevada. **Henry and Betty** recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. They have three daughters, 6 grandchildren and welcomed a great grandson in April. They report that their health is good and they stay active in community activities. Their e-mail address is bharkema@aol.com. I'm sure they would love to hear from you!

Please remember all of our dear friends in your daily thoughts and prayers.



Passings

As we went to print, we were saddened to learn of the passing of two more of our friends and comrades.

JACK PENUEL passed away on March 19th at the age of 89 years.

ALVIN HARGROVE was honored with a full military funeral on March 21st.

We extend our deepest sympathies to the families of these fine men. If anyone can share any additional information I would be honored to include it in our next newsletter.



A Soldier's Prayer

I saw a soldier kneeling down, for this was the first quiet place he had found. He had traveled through jungles, rivers and mud. His hands were scarred and toil-worn. He had fought for days from night 'til morn. He folded his hands and looked to the sky . . .

I saw his tears, as they welled in his eyes. He spoke to God, and this is what he said:

God Bless my men, who now lie dead, I know not what You have in mind, but when You judge, please be kind ... when they come before You, they will be poorly dressed, but will walk proudly, for they have done their best. Their boots will be muddy and their clothes all torn ... but these clothes they have so proudly worn. Their hearts will be still and cold inside, for they have fought their best and did so with pride. So please take care of them as they pass Your way ... the price of freedom they've already paid.

CORRECTIONS

Please add or update the following addresses to your rosters. New Rosters will be mailed out with our next newsletter in October.

Dana Burchfield	Raymond Wesoly
101 Dunes Court	278 Forest Road
Carrollton, GA 30116	Greenfield, NH 03047
678-378-4052 cell	A Company
770-838-1861 home	
B Company	

Spelling correction for: Robert Behney, "A" Company. The street name was previously misspelled. The correct spelling is:

319 Sterigere Street
Norrictown, PA 19401-3240

"Bumper Sticker of the Year":

"If you can read this, thank a teacher
– and,
since it's in English, thank a soldier".

Michael J. Kardos May He Rest In Peace

The following story should have been followed up on long before now. During my mom's long illness it was one of many things that fell between the cracks. I apologize for the delay but share it's conclusion with you now.

Way back in April 2004 we printed a letter from **Juliana Flynn**. Juliana was seeking information about her uncle **Michael Kardos**. Michael Kardos was a Medic in "B" Company of the 612th. On December 17th 1944 his outfit was overrun by the German SS division in Honsfeld. All of the men in Company B were taken prisoner. Three medics (**T/5 Michael Kardos, Pfc Robert Farley and Pfc James McGinnity**) were pressed into service by the Germans to care for the wounded. As the American POW's marched off, the medics were kept behind. None of the three was ever heard from again. Finally, information surfaced that **Michael J. Kardos** was killed on December 29, 1944 in Stakkyll, Germany and buried in A.B.M.C. Luxembourg.

Since her letter was published, Juliana has heard from **Bob Reighard** who was a personal friend of her uncle and had knowledge of the circumstances regarding his passing. Shortly thereafter Juliana received a letter and additional information from **Don Smart**. Don contacted the Luxembourg National Archives and they sent him the address for the Luxembourg American Cemetery. Through Erwin Frazen the cemetery associate Don learned that TEC5 **Michael J. Kardos** is buried in Plot A, Row 10, Grave 24 in the Luxembourg American Cemetery.

A few months after receiving the information from **Don Smart** regarding her uncle's final resting place **Dan Filippini** sent her copies of two pieces of correspondence her uncle had sent to his mother in November and December 1944. Dan's father (also named Dan) and Juliana's uncle were very good friends during the war.

In a very gracious note of thanks Juliana wrote that it took her over sixty years to finally reach closure regarding her Uncle Mickey's death. She states that this never could have been accomplished without Susie's intervention. While I may have helped in some small way the real thanks goes to **Don Smart** for his relentless research and ongoing dedication to the men and the families of the 612th TDB. Thanks also to **Bob Reighard** and **Dan Filippini** for sharing their memories with Juliana.