



612th Tank Destroyer Battalion Association Newsletter

October 2007

Fayne Haynes
Association Chairman

Tena Phillips
Treasurer /
Memorials & Flowers

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

Susie Pidsosny
Newsletters



2007 Reunion

Our 54th Reunion was held at the Fairfield Inn in Murfreesboro, Tennessee from August 2nd through the 5th. This was our second visit to the Fairfield Inn and the fine folks that work there were just as wonderful and welcoming as they were on our first visit. We look forward to returning!

Our hosts the **Fayne Haynes** and **Avery Sanders** Families outdid themselves once again in showering us with true Southern Hospitality. This was by far one of our best reunions yet owing greatly to the hard work, endless dedication and love for the folks of the 612th shown by **Janice Bellamy**, **Anita Stanley** and **Dianne Kelton**. What an outstanding job these ladies did! We just cannot praise them or thank them enough!

Tena Phillips, **Glenda Millar**, **Hazel Scott** and **Judy Ramhoff** were the first to arrive on Wednesday. I believe first time attendees **Jesse** and **Hazel Weaver** along with their daughter **Mary Hartman** arrived Wednesday as well. Most of the festivities kicked off Thursday morning. Guest who checked in at the Hospitality Room were greeted with name badges and a lovely gift basket filled with local products – Goo Goo Bars, Moon Pies, candies, soda and more. Every family group also received an orange folder with a schedule of events and loads of informative (facts on Arlington Cemetery and what the flag draped coffin means) as well as humorous information about Tennessee and quotes by Jeff Foxworthy.

Thursday afternoon brought the arrival of **Glyn** and **Earl Sain** along with sister-in-law

Dorothy Tomlinson and tag-along **Susie Pidsosny**. (Thanks for the ride Dee!) **Iris Morris** and her friends **Flo Lefton**, **Carolyn VerHoeven** and sister-in-law **Greta Childs** arrived Thursday evening followed quickly by **Pearl Noland** and her daughter **Nancy Ewing**. A short time later **Iona Nix**, daughter **Judy Odum** and niece **Wanda O'Kelly** came in.

Friday morning kicked off bright and early with a complimentary continental breakfast at the hotel.



At 10 a.m. there was a tour of the **Haynes Museum** followed by a noon picnic on the grounds at Oakland Mansion where our host **Jim Bellamy** manned the grill and served up some “man size” burgers. Those things were huge but delicious! Thanks Jim! While **Jim** prepared our burgers the ladies got busy putting out baked beans, sliced watermelon and all kinds of burger toppings. Oh I almost forgot about those amazing brownies!

While the temperature was busy breaking records – if I recall correctly it was 101 that day – we were quite comfortable under the covered pavilion. It also helped that **Janice** (who thinks of everything - Bless her heart!) brought electric fans.

After a lovely lunch some folks headed back to the hotel while others headed out to do some shopping and a few others went back to the **Haynes Museum** to make some purchases.



Weaver Family

Sadly, the **Weaver Family** had to leave for home after lunch. They had a family reunion on Sunday and had to head back to Birmingham. We

were all sorry to see them go but so pleased that these fine folks were able to join us this year and that Jesse was able to reunite at long last with some of his 612th buddies. As our dear old friend **Jack Flanagan** liked to say "God willing, we look forward to seeing them again next year!"

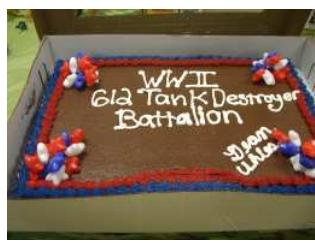
As some folks were heading home others were just arriving. **Ed Winslow** and his daughter **Sandy** were just coming in as we arrived back at the hotel. We ran into **Talmadge and Ruth Riley** along with middle son **Dennis** and his friend **E.J. Abell** who

were heading out in search of a meal after checking in. Poor **Talmadge** looked as if he had been kicked by a mule – and in fact he had just that morning been butted in the head



by his son Dennis' baby mule. Thankfully, Talmadge wasn't hurt worse than he was but as each day progressed his eye and nose seemed to get blacker and bluer!

A short time later our "**Moon Pie Lady**", **Geneva Smith** joined us - looking lovely as always.



In addition to all the pies, cakes and cookies, **Dean Uhles** provided us with this beautiful sheet cake.

Mary Ann Wesoly outdid herself with the table centerpieces for the Friday night buffet. The various centerpieces depicted photos of men

from the 612th as well as tanks and posters for War Bonds, etc. You could tell she had put a lot of work into these. **Thank you Mary Ann!**

Dinner was followed by Bingo and more fellowship. Half way through the Bingo game we were all pleased by the arrival of **Jewel and Ouida Raulins**.

Our dear **Tena** who has experienced one serious health problem after another since the last reunion was the last one out of the Hospitality Room on Friday night! I think these reunions are just the medicine she needs. I know she loves coming to them and it was so good to see her feeling good and looking so well.

Saturday morning dawned bright and early with the promise of another record breaking day! I think it hit 102! (I'd like to offer my thanks to who ever it was that invented air conditioning)!

At 11 a.m. we held our formal Business meeting.

After some talk as to whether this would be our last reunion it was voted unanimously to continue meeting on a year to year basis. **The dates for our next reunion are July 31st through August 3rd.**

Thanks to the kindness and generosity of the **Haynes and Avery Families** we will once again be gathering together in Murfreesboro, TN at the Fairfield Inn in 2008.

As we have located or been "found by" several more veterans of the 612th in just this year alone, **Iris Morris** is planning to add additional names to our 612th quilt which she so lovingly designed and made. We will be working on an updated list and I will post it in the next newsletter prior to our reunion.

As of now the names we need to add are:

George Gaut
Kyler B. Smith
Jesse Weaver
John W. Sowers, Jr.

It was also decided and voted on that we would continue to collect membership dues and hold the **Flower Fund Raffle**. Extra monies will

be used to defer expenses for those in attendance at our reunions.

After the business meeting we had the afternoon free to do as we please. Most folks stayed around the Hospitality Room to visit and only left when it was time to set up for the dinner banquet. Then we just relocated down the hall in the main lobby and breakfast area and visited some more.

At 5:30 everyone (well almost everyone!*) gathered together in the main lobby and breakfast area for our annual group photo. ***Donn Fischer** dozed off during the business meeting and didn't hear that the time was changed for the group photo – **Donn** was finally located and he made it down for the photo Someone had the wonderful idea to hang the 612th quilt in the background and it does look lovely in the photos.

Special thanks to our photographer for kindly forwarding the photos to **Rick** by e-mail so he could download them to our 612th website.

Following the group photo session we filed into the hospitality room once again, this time for our **Dinner Banquet**. **Mr. Ernest Burgess, Rutherford County Mayor** was our guest speaker. Following yet another outstanding meal it was time for our annual **Flower Fund Raffle**. All too soon it was time to call it a night.

Sunday morning seemed to go by much too quickly with a final continental breakfast and hurried goodbyes! The past few days, like always, seemed to have flown by!

I hope that **Jim and Janice, Dianne and Jimmy and Anita and Randy** had a chance to put their feet up and rest some after we all left! **Thank you all again for making us feel so welcome! You did an outstanding job as always!**

Those in attendance this year: (names of our 8 veterans in attendance are highlighted)



Donn Fischer catching a few ZZZZs

Representing "A" Company

- Susie Pidsosny
- Hazel Scott
- **Jesse Weaver** and wife Hazel
- Daughter, Mary Hartman
- Mary Ann Wesoly

Representing "A" & "B" Company

- **Jewel Raulins** and wife Ouida

Representing "B" Company

- **Fayne Haynes** and wife Beatrice
- Daughter Janice Bellamy and husband Jim
- Daughter Anita Stanley and husband Randy
- Iris Morris
- Flo Lefton
- Carolyn VerHoeven
- Greta Childs
- Iona Nix
- Daughter Judy Odum
- Niece Wanda O'Kelley
- Pearl Noland
- Daughter Nancy Ewing
- Tena Phillips
- Glenda Millar
- Judy Ramhoff
- **Talmadge Riley** and wife Ruth
- "Middle" Son Dennis Riley and lady friend E.J. Abell
- **Earl Sain** and wife Glyn - Medic
- Sister-in-law, Dorothy Tomlinson
- Don Smart and wife Clara

Representing "C" Company

- **Avery Sanders** and wife Sara
- Daughter Dianne Kelton and husband Jimmy
- Grand-daughter Candice and husband Matt Northcutt
- Great grand-daughters Chloe and Celina Northcutt
- Dean Uhles and Guest

Representing HQ

- Geneva Smith
- **Ed Winslow**
- Daughter Sandy Winslow

Representing ReCon

- **Donn Fischer**

55th Reunion

The Haynes and Sanders Families have graciously offered to host our 55th Reunion again next year in Murfreesboro. The dates for next year's reunion are July 31st through August 3rd. Fayne Haynes has confirmed these dates with the Fairfield Inn and they have graciously offered us the same rates as 2007.



I am Fine - - How are you?

I'm fine, How are you?

*There's nothing the matter with me,
I'm just as healthy as can be.*

*I have Arthritis in both knees,
And when I talk, I talk with a wheeze.
My pulse is weak, my blood is thin,
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.*

*All my teeth have had to come out,
And my diet I hate to think about.
I'm overweight and I can't get thin,
But I'm well for the shape I'm in.*

*And arch supports I need for my feet,
Or I won't be able to go out in the street.
Sleep is denied me night after night,
But every morning I find I'm all right.
My memory's failing, my head's a spin,
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.*

*Old age is golden I've heard it said,
But sometimes I wonder, as I go to bed.
With my ears in a drawer, my teeth in a cup,
And my glasses on a shelf, until I get up.
And when sleep dims my eyes, I say to myself,
Is there anything else I should lay on the shelf?*

*The reason I know my youth has been spent,
Is my get-up-and-go has got-up-and-went.
But really I don't mind, when I think with a grin,
Of all of the places my get-up has been.*

*I get up each morning and dust off my wits,
Pick up the paper and read the obits.
If my name is missing, I'm therefore not dead,
So I eat a good breakfast and jump back into bed.*

*The moral of this as the tale unfolds,
is that for you and me, who are growing old,
is it better to say 'I'm Fine' with a grin,
than to let people know the shape we are in.*

I AM FINE - - - HOW ARE YOU ?

(Thanks to Elnora Leininger for sharing the preceding ode to growing old.)

WORLD WAR II VETERAN SAYS INSCRIBING GI'S NAMES ONLINE SERVES AS A LASTING MEMORIAL

BY JOHN COLLINS

NASHUA — Considering the amount of love and adoration that Red Sox legend Ted Williams generated during his baseball career and retirement years, it's no surprise that Joe Arseno, the person responsible for listing Williams' name in the official World



Dick Mohrmann's mission is to raise awareness of the currently underutilized World War II online registry.

War II online registry (www.wwiin1memorial.com), describes himself as a baseball fan.

What is surprising, however, is that neither Arseno, nor any member of Red Sox nation, nor Ted Williams' own family members, has sprung for the \$10 fee to post a photo of Ted in his military uniform on that same official WWII memorial Web page. "This omission is more evidence of just how underused and underappreciated the WWII online registry continues to be, three years after it was established, according to World War II veteran Dick Mohrmann of Nashua.



Dick Mohrmann holds printout of James Arness web page from WW II online registry. Arness, of TV's Gunsmoke fame, who changed the spelling of his last name to "Arness" during Hollywood years, served in the U.S. Army in Italy during the war

"The World War II Memorial (located in Washington) has an electronic registry where all WW II veterans and civilians who contributed to the war effort can have --- their names and military units recorded for future generations to look up their family members," Mohrmann explained.

With Veterans Day approaching, Mohrmann thinks it's an appropriate time to

make more people aware of the registry's existence

"I have found that there are many veterans who do not have their names registered," Mohrmann said. "I believe that many of them are not aware that they can put their name in free of charge, either by mail or online."



World War II Memorial in Washington opened to the public on April 29, 2004. To complement the physical monument, an electronic memorial is now available online.

having fought in the Philippines as a member of the 33rd Infantry Division, 136th Regiment, Company E. He also took part in the postwar occupation of Japan.

"I have a little address book that's 60 years old with addresses of the buddies who were with me in the service back then," added Mohrmann, who grew up in Beachlake, Penn. "I tried to look up as many of them as I could online and I couldn't find any of them in the online registry. I just thought what a shame that they're not in there because all their relatives in the future could look up a part of their family history that way, too."

Mohrmann said he has spent many fascinating hours searching the WW II memorial online database and has discovered some interesting names and faces there. He demonstrated for the *Broadcaster* last week that the site is searchable by a veteran's hometown or

Family members can put a deceased veteran's name into the online registry also,

Mohrmann pointed out. They can also add a photo of the veteran for \$10. Mohrmann is a U.S. Army veteran of World War II,

last name. By typing the name "Aurness" in the last name box, Mohrmann brought up individual web pages honoring some of the more famous veterans of WWII.

These include TV and movie actors James Aurness — who later dropped the "U" from his last name as the actor of *Gunsmoke* fame and Clark Gable. There is also a page honoring actress Carole Lombard Gable, Clark's wife, who died on Jan. 16, 1942 while returning home from selling war bonds overseas. Lombard was considered to be the first woman known to have been killed while serving her country during World War II, according to Betty Samson Andrews, Lombard's cousin, who paid the extra \$10 to post Lombard's photo on the registry site.

"But the site is not just for people who were killed in action," Mohrmann explained. "It's for any veteran that was in World War II, or any civilian who contributed to the war effort. Their name can be put in there. Too many of them are not (online) right now, and for the future I think it's worthwhile."

To register a WWII veteran or civilian war effort honoree, go to www.wwiimemorial.com; then click on "Registry"; then click on "Register an honoree."

Thanks to **Mary Ann Wesoly** for forwarding the WWII Registry article. If any of our members or their families need help with registering one of our veterans on the WWII site please contact **Susie Pidsosny** and I will do my best to help.

Generally, the information needed is the veterans full name, hometown and the name of the person honoring the veteran.

Here is a copy of my father **Willard Webb's** registry just to give you an idea of what it looks like and the information you need to provide.

Willard Athel Webb

BRANCH OF SERVICE
U.S. Army

HOMETOWN
Lexington, TN

HONORED BY
Susan Pidsosny,
Daughter

ACTIVITY DURING WWII
TANK DESTROYER DRIVER WITH COMPANY A, 612TH TANK DESTROYER BATTALION. FOUGHT IN 5 MAJOR BATTLES, INCLUDING THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE. AWARDED FIVE BRONZE STARS AND THE PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION.



Now We're Cooking!

One thing about a **612th Reunion** - no one can say they went home hungry! In addition to all of the food **Janice Bellamy** and **Dianne Kelton** and their crew provided, plus those yummy Moon Pies **Geneva Smith** always brings we had tons of lovely pies, cakes and other goodies that our members brought from home. We've rounded up a few favorite recipes from our members to share with you. Thanks to **Iris Morris**, **Hazel Scottt** and **Dennis Riley** for providing their recipes and thanks again to everyone who brought something to share. Recipes are on the last page. For your convenience, we have printed them on a 4x5 recipe card.

TIDINGS FROM TENA



Hello to all of my dear 612th friends. It was so wonderful to see you all at our reunion. For those of you who could not attend we want you to know that you were sorely missed!

One of the highlights of this year's reunion was meeting **Jesse and Hazel Weaver** and their daughter **Mary Hartman**. **Jesse** is a member of "A Company" and this was his first reunion. We are just thrilled to welcome **Jesse** and his family into our 612th Family.

Shortly after returning home I had this nice note from **Hazel and Jesse**.

"Dear Tena,

We wanted to let you know how much we enjoyed the reunion and what a pleasure it was to meet you. Everything was so good.

I'm enclosing a check to go in to the flower fund. I'm also sending some extra so when you have time to send us a copy of the names and addresses of everyone.

Thank you so much for all of the hard work you have done for the association.

I'll go for now so I can get this in the mail. Hope and pray to see you next year."

Love,
Hazel and Jesse Weaver

I spoke with **Edna Showalter** and **Gert Flanagan**. **Edna** always enjoyed the reunions but is unable to attend. She said she does enjoy the newsletters. Son **David** is a grandpa to a beautiful little girl.

Gert said her children wanted to come but because she had been in the hospital she wasn't up to coming and the children didn't want to come without her.

Bob Behney sent along his new address and the following note.

"Hi Tena,

I am so glad to hear from you. Glad all your tests were negative. I had my back operated on. I got a staph infection. I was in the hospital and rehab for 5 months. I got back to my apartment on August 1st.

I am enclosing a check for my dues for 2008. Thanks again for the beautiful get well card from the members. You do a great job and I appreciate what you do."

Love,
Bob

I also received this note from **Nancy Meador**. Nancy wrote:

Dear Ms. Phillips,

My father was a member of the 612th Tank Destroyer Battalion, Company C and was killed in France. Through the internet, we became acquainted with Dick Gaut who was also in Company C.

Through Mr. Gaut, we learned of your newsletter and we would be very pleased to receive the mailings. Enclosed is a check for our dues.

Thank you."

(Read more about Nancy's search for information about her father John W. Sowers, Jr. in Susie's section.)

I had a nice note from **Hazel Scott** just a few weeks ago. **Hazel** wrote:

"Dear Tena,

Just a few lines this morning while I'm waiting to go to church. I'm doing alright and hope you, Glenda and little Emerald are fine.

This has been a hot and dry summer and this October has been the hottest that I remember.

I wanted to send you my dues. I really enjoyed the newsletters. I think this past reunion was one of the best that I remember.

Tomorrow the Visitation Team that I belong to are going to have lunch and tour the Coca Cola Bottling Plant.

I will close for this time, will write again soon. Hope you are well and looking forward to next year's reunion.

Love you,
Hazel

Sadly I had a note from Kim Steffel to tell us of the passing of her father **Otto Lemke** on May 17th of this year. Many of our members remember Otto, who was related to **Herbert Mauritz**. Otto drove Herbert and Elfreda to our reunions for many years. Kim writes of her father:

"Dad mentioned you and the 612th Tank Gang many times and always enjoyed the reunions.

Dad had been in and out of the hospital since February, but I really thought we had him on the right path and expected him to be around for many years. We had moved him into an assisted living facility in April which was close to me so he would have help with his meals and such. He was eating right and exercising, but his body just couldn't keep going, due to the drugs for his Emphazyma. He had considerable pain his last week while he was in the hospital, but once the doctors mentioned hospice, I think dad was just plain worn out and ready to move on. Basically he just went to sleep and was gone within 36 hours. He didn't have any difficulty

breathing and he went peacefully, which is exactly what he and I always prayed for.

Aunt Ruth is still doing well and lives with her daughter Lorraine. I hope all is going well with you also.'

Sincerely,
Kim Steffel

On behalf of the 612th Tank Destroyer Battalion family I would like to offer Kim and her family our sincerest condolences on the loss of her father **Otto Lemke**.

I also had a lovely get-well card from **Juliana Flynn** and would like to thank her for her thoughtfulness.

In June I received this note from **Evelyn Debro**.

"Dear Tena – I was so sorry to learn that you have been so sick and happy you are now recovering. I've had a "not so good" year also.

I went to Florida in January to attend my brother's funeral and wound up in the hospital with congestive heart failure.

My daughter Nancy went to get me and my daughters insisted I couldn't live alone in Pickford, Michigan anymore. I am 87.

So I have a change of address – I'm back in Chicago. Enjoying my family, especially three great-grandchildren here. In all I have 15 great grand children.

Sorry not to join all of you at the reunion. We had such great times and Eldon loved them so –

Love to all"
Evelyn

I also had a note from Elfrieda (Freddy) Porter:

"Hi Tena,

Haven't sent anything in a long time. I do enjoy the newsletter even though I don't know too many. 612th TD's have always had a special place in my heart since that is where I met John on a blind date while he was at Camp Swift, Texas. We had 58 wonderful years together. Think of you often.

Sincerely,"

Elfrieda

Our dear friend Izzy Kemp wrote before I left for the reunion:

Dear Tena,

I am sorry I haven't sent in my check for the year – I just forgot. Your column in the newsletter jerked me to reality. My memory isn't at its best, but I guess that "goes with the territory" as they say. I never dreamed I'd still be kicking around at 91 – that is old and I still feel it most of the time. But, as you say, the Lord has blessed me too

How many of the men are still left in the 612th? Does anyone have news on Sanford Johnson – we used to exchange Christmas cards, but I failed to send any out during the 2 years I was out of commission during the holiday season and lost touch with a lot of folks. I wish more of the men had recorded their experiences while they were fresh in their minds and while they were ALIVE.

It has been very hot the last few days and we need rain desperately. It has rained around us but our area is bone dry. The county is on a watering schedule to conserve.

I won't be at the reunion but I look forward to the newsletter telling me all about it. Give my regards to all and you all have a great time.

Love, Izzy"

Since our last newsletter I have received dues from the following folks.

- Amelia Harding
- Imogene Williams
- William Redifer
- Bill Groff
- Elfreda Porter
- Dean Ousley
- Robert Behney
- Bobby and Pamela Cason
- Evelyn Debro
- Nancy Meador
- Jesse and Hazel Weaver
- Carson Spencer

The following list is of those who payed their dues at our reunion.

- Nancy Ewing
- Donn Fischer
- Fayne Haynes
- Diane and Jimmy Kelton
- Flo Lefton
- Iris Morris
- Iona Nix
- Pearl Noland
- Judy Ramhoff
- Jewel and Ouida Raulins
- Talmadge Riley
- Earl and Glyn Sain
- Avery and Sara Sanders
- Don and Clara Smart
- Anita Stanley
- Evelyn Tallman
- Dorothy Tomlinson
- Dean Uhles
- Edward Winslow

Our current bank balance is \$4,155.00

For those who have not yet paid their dues our annual dues are \$5. The cost of which goes toward covering postage and printing of our newsletters.

Please send your dues to :

Katherine "Tena" Phillips

Please make your check payable to:

Katherine "Tena" Phillips



Back in June I had a note from Bob Behney Jr. Bob Jr., wrote to let us know that his dad **Robert Behney Sr.**, (A-Company) had moved this past January. (Please see the attached roster for his new address and phone number). He also wanted to let us know that Bob Sr. had back surgery on May 31st. After a few weeks in rehab and then some physical therapy his dad's spirits are good and Bob Jr. wrote that they are all hopeful for a good outcome.

You can read an update from Bob Sr. in "Tidings from Tena".

Pamela Cason of Jasper, Florida emailed me hoping to learn more about her late father **Kyler Brutus Smith**'s time in the 612th TDB. She wrote "He drove the tanks. His records were burned and I have no way of knowing what he went through. He passed away May 20th, 1999." If you have any information that you could share with Pamela I know she would appreciate it. Her home address is listed in the new membership roster. Her cell phone number is 386-623-2179 and her e-mail address is casonpr@hotmail.com.

Don Smart sent the following e-mail:

"Got word after I got home that the article about 'Company A' exploits and trials at Hofen during the Battle of the Bulge will be published in the December issue of Military Magazine. I will try to get enough copies of the magazine to distribute to the members of Company A that I interviewed. Will also send you a copy. Thought you might like to put this in the next newsletter."

Don

Dear Mr. Smart,

Your story is scheduled to appear in the upcoming December issue. Had I known that the reunion was in August I would have scheduled it for that issue instead of waiting until the December issue, I'm sorry about that. Rest assured that it will indeed be in the December issue. Thank you for submitting a great article for the magazine, it is appreciated. Best wishes and have a great day.

*Respectfully,
John D. Shank
Editor*

Congratulations Don! We look forward to reading your article!

I received the following e-mail from **Nancy Meador** regarding her father:

John W. Sowers, Jr.

Through **Dick Gaut** of Company C, we learned of your 612th newsletter, and immediately sent the dues so that we could receive the newsletters.

*Could you ask in your newsletter whether anyone remembers my Dad, **John W Sowers, Jr.** who was in the 612th, Company C, and killed in France? I would be interested in hearing from anyone who does, as I was only three weeks old when he was killed. Mr. Gaut was kind enough to share his memories of my Dad and we appreciated that so much.*

*Thank You!
Nancy Meador*

nmeador@peoplepc.com

According to our current membership roster the following men served with C Company: **Bill Leininger, Avery Sanders, William Redifer, Henry Harkema** and as previously mentioned **Dick Gaut**. Hopefully one or all of them will remember **John W. Sowers, Jr.** and be able to share some memories with his daughter Nancy and her brother John.

Wedding Anniversaries

We have several of our members celebrating special anniversaries this year. We'd like to take a moment to share their good news and to wish each of these fine couples best wishes and God's Blessings for many more years together.

Celebrating 60 Years



Earl and Glyn

Earl Sain and Glyn Tomlinson were married Nov. 1, 1947 at the Seventh and Bethel Church of Christ in Memphis. They will celebrate their 60th anniversary with a

family dinner. They have two children, David and Michelle, both of Memphis. They also have five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Earl retired from the V.A. hospital in Memphis and Glyn retired from Sears.



Bill and Elnora

Elnora and William Leininger celebrated their 60th anniversary with a family dinner. William Leininger and Elnora LaFree married June 21, 1947, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church, South Bend. They have three

children, Mary Jester and Ed, both of Mishawaka and Joan Platz of Middlebury. They also have five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Mr. Leininger, a farmer for most of his life, retired in 1981 after 25 years as a bus driver for Penn-Harris-Madison School Corp. Mrs. Leininger retired in 1982 after 33 years with the Indiana Employment Security Division.

Celebrating 65 Years



Talmadge and Ruth

Talmadge and Ruth Agnes Riley celebrated 65 years of marriage on August 29th. They are the proud parents of four children, eight grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. They enjoyed their special day with a celebration at their church with all of their family present. A party given by their children and grandchildren followed.

GREAT GRANDBABIES



Travis Family

At the reunion I promised a couple of very proud Great Grandma's that I would include photos of their great grandbabies in this newsletter.

On March 8th of this year **Tena Phillips** welcomed her third great grandchild Audrey. The picture above is of Grandson Travis and his wife Sara and their three children, Jackson, Hannah and new baby Audrey.

Pearl Noland shared this photo of her twin 2-year-old great granddaughters Mattie and Virginia. What cuties!



Mattie and Virginia

Since I saw so much of these two little sweeties at the reunion I just have to include these photos of our two youngest "hostesses" and the great granddaughters of our host **Avery Sanders**. Here are **Chloe and Celina** Northcutt.



Celina



Chloe

I had a note from Elnora Leininger just before I left for the reunion. Elnora wrote;

Dear Susie,

I hope you are going to be in Tennessee this week. I'm sorry but we are not going to make it again this year - - -

Too many complications in traveling. Also Bill is still using his cane (he has arthritis in his hip!). I am using a walker yet and the doctor says for the rest of my life because he doesn't want me to fall again. My hip broke 15 months ago in the same leg where my stroke ended which has caused me problems!!!! There are still other problems so we will be at home thinking about all of you. Have Fun!!!

Love,

Elnora and Bill

Say HI to all for us please. THANKS!

Iris Morris wrote that she and her friends enjoyed seeing all our old friends again and "Praising the Lord" that we could make it another year.

The ladies stopped on the way home to go see "The Miracle at Pigeon Forge" and Iris writes that "It was wonderful".

Not long after returning home Iris fell at work and fell right into the refrigerator face first. She said "my knees hit the floor first then my face and I didn't even break my glasses. I thought I broke my back. Anyway it was a trip by ambulance to the E.R. where I spent most of the day. I broke a small bone in my left arm by the

elbow and had a knot on my head and a black eye and nose and black and blue arm and knees. I am having a lot of pain in my back which didn't start until 5 days after my fall. But the pain comes at night about 1 a.m. and lasts til maybe 6 a.m. I took a Darvocet at 2 and I am still in pain though not so bad. Through the daytime it is fine. I get maybe 2 to 2 1/2 hours of sleep at night and I take a nap in the afternoon for 2 hours. They took an x-ray and evidently something got stretched a little farther than normal. I could do the back bend when I was 14 not when I was 79! Praise the Lord it wasn't worse."

*Please remember to keep **Gert Flanagan, Bill and Elnora Leininger, Iris Morris** and our other members who are currently going through difficult times health wise in your thoughts and prayers!*

Good Reading



Mary Ann Wesoly asked me to pass along the title of a book she recently came across. It is "The Second Objective" by Mark Forest. It is about the Battle of the Bulge, a second mission and how it was discovered and foiled. You can find it at your local library under Suspense/Action in the Fiction department.

Also for those of you who have access to the internet you might like to check out this site: www.tankdestroyersociety.com

Roster Updates



Instead of listing roster updates, we have included a new updated roster along with your newsletter.

If you have any changes, corrections or additions to this new roster please send them to Susie Pidsosny.



OLD GEEZERS

"Geezers" (slang for an old man) are easy to spot at sporting events, during the playing of the Star Spangled Banner. Old Geezers remove their caps and stand at attention and sing without embarrassment. They know the words and believe in them.

Old Geezers remember the Depression, World War II, Guadalcanal, Normandy and Hitler. They remember the Atomic Age, the Korean War 1950-55, The Cold War and the moon landing, not to mention Vietnam.

If you bump into an Old Geezer on the sidewalk, he will apologize. If you pass an Old Geezer on the street, he will nod or tip his cap to a lady. Old Geezers trust strangers and are courtly to women. Old Geezers hold the door for the next person and always when walking, make certain the lady is on the inside for protection. Old Geezers get embarrassed if someone curses in front of women and children and they don't like filth on TV or in the movies.

Old Geezers have moral courage. They seldom brag unless it's about their grandchildren.

It's the Old Geezers who know our great country is protected, not by politicians or police, but by the young men and women in the military serving their country.

This country needs Old Geezers with their decent values. We need them now more than ever.

Thank God for Old Geezers!

THOMAS W. CAMPBELL

I only recently (yesterday) found out that my grandfather, Thomas W. Campbell served with the 612th during World War II. I never met the man. He and my grandmother divorced in 1962 and he went home to Ohio. I wasn't born until 1968, and grew up in Illinois. My mom has told me that he drank excessively and she feels it is because of what he saw in the war.

I can only assume that is what led to the divorce. Anyway, fast forward to August 2007. My aunt Mary tells me that grandpa was living at the Ohio Veterans Home in Sandusky when he passed away in I believe 1982. I remember my mom crying when she found out, and she hadn't seen her dad since 1962. Anyway, I jumped on the computer and actually found a picture of his grave stone. From there I contacted the information officer of the OVH to see what information I might be able to get from them about my grandpa. It took awhile, but I discovered a lot that even my mom and her two sisters didn't know. That brings me to your group. Can you possibly offer anymore information about where my grandpa was and what he did during the war? It would be greatly appreciated by me, my mom and her two sisters.

I did find two Campbells listed in the Co. A roster. One Pvt. Campbell on 1st cannon and another in the 1st TD sect. pltn. leader's vehicle as a rifleman.

I'm sorry about the long explanation, but I felt I needed to tell at least a good part of this story. I'm hoping to find out where he was and get an idea of what he went through to help explain why I never got to know him. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Steven W. Kehrer

I did respond to Stevens e-mail and offered him what little I know of A Company's history. I was able to find his grandfather's name listed with A Company on a Unit Battle Honors

Citation. **Mary Ann Wesoly** has sent Steven a copy of our booklet on A Company and I have asked **Don Smart** and **Dick Gaut** if they can assist him in any way.

Perhaps some of our men from A Company – **Bill Groff, Bob Behney and Jesse Weaver** might have some information they could share with Steven. I know he would appreciate it!

Hello, to the 612 Group!!



I was a Gun Commander/Tank Commander in the 612 TD Btn, Company C (from 11/42 through 12/45, European Campaign, D-Day through Berlin). In researching the internet, I came across your website. I see a few of my Company as members of your group (but not showing Company C). I wondered if anyone has a copy of our brochure we received when we were discharged from the service, listing all of the names of the people in the battalion. I would like to obtain one if possible and would be glad to pay any cost. I would also like to see if any of my original tank crew are still alive, and how I would go about researching that.

Thank you for helping me out with this.

Best wishes,
George R. (Dick) Gaut
Sgt., Gun Commander/Tank Commander
612 TD Btn

Since receiving this e-mail from **Dick Gaut** he has been in touch with **Dianne ‘Sara’ Kelton** whose father **Avery Sanders** served with **Dick**.

Dear Sara,

I enjoyed your e-mail, and appreciate your telephone call this morning. It was a real joy hearing from you, and about my battalion group.

I did find a photo that included your Dad and our gun crew. I will have copies made for you and for your Dad and send them on to you. I may be able to find more that included him, and will keep looking.

And, I do enjoy very much doing research on the internet. There is a world of information out there that I have enjoyed studying and doing research on it. I am into prospecting, geology and mineral study. I did this to some degree in the fox holes of France. (Ha! Ha!) By the way, on my e-mails, since I am slow at typing, my wife, Janet does the typing as I dictate to her. She is a "young" girl, just was 27 -- no, that was 72. I made a mistake there. We have been married for 34 years now.

About your Dad's hearing problem -- I share that problem. I fought with the V.A. for many years about my service-related hearing loss due to the high exposure to gunfire and explosions. I tried getting help from the VFW, but it didn't get far. I went to the D.A.V. -- and with the D.A.V.'s help, I finally received a portion of service-related disability. I did, in fact, tell the doctor at my discharge about my hearing loss, and that was a help to me. Still, as one male nurse told me at the V.A. one day, with our MOS for our service, there is not any doubt at all as to what contributed to our hearing loss (our MOS was 610). I did get hearing aids from the V.A. that are supposed to be the best of current technology. The problem is that my (and your Dad's) hearing loss is high frequency, and the aids simply increase the volume, not the tone. I feel sure that if he wanted to try to get the best out there of hearing aids he can at least get those from the V.A. So, your Dad should go to the D.A.V. and I feel sure that they will be glad to help him. You can advise the other people that come to the reunion to do the same thing. As old as we are, the V.A. starts paying us really good checks every month. So, please let all of the attendees to the reunion know about this, even though they have been turned down many times by the V.A. Possibly Susie can add this information to her newsletter, for any of the group that it would help. We can all use a few hundred extra dollars a month, even at this late date.

Hope you all had a wonderful reunion. I send my best wishes and my prayers for everyone there. Be sure to keep in touch.

Susie then wrote to Mr. Gaut asking for more information regarding obtaining disability claims for our veterans. Here is his reply:

Dear Susie,

Thank you again for your interest in all of us 612'ers. I'm glad you had at least 8 of us still around to enjoy being together.

About the disability for hearing loss for those of us who were exposed to extensive gun fire and explosions: I had gone to the V.A. years ago, but had no success. I then went to CIGNA, my health care provider at the time, and had an independent hearing test made. It showed my hearing loss was extreme in high frequency areas. I then went back to the V.F.W. with that information and tried again to get a V.A. hearing test. They tested my hearing and said they found nothing wrong with it. At the time I was discharged in 1945, I called my hearing problem loss to the examiner and it was recorded on my medical record. But, the examiner said it was nothing to worry about. I was like so many others and just glad to be alive and getting home. All the way through college and life, I had problems understanding certain tone ranges, and this became progressively worse. I went again to the V.F.W., but it did not put out enough effort to be of help to me. I then went to the D.A.V., and with its efforts, I got another and very extensive hearing test by the V.A. that did prove my hearing loss was substantial. My army service records were backed up my MOS 610 (which is everyone in the 612 TD Btn). In recent years, the military services have acknowledged that hearing loss of combat veterans is the primary cause for severe hearing loss. The D.A.V. had appealed the decision about my hearing loss being service-related. In 2002, the V.A. finally said that the "preponderance" of the evidence supported my contention that my hearing loss was caused by my service. I then started receiving disability compensation for that hearing loss sometime in 2002 -- late, but welcome. The "preponderance" of the evidence will support ANY WWII veteran

who was exposed to such combat conditions as we all were.

Please tell everyone to go straight to the D.A.V. -- bypass the American Legion and the V.F.W. The D.A.V. is a dedicated group for helping ALL veterans. The D.A.V. did not accept defeat from the V.A. ruling on my hearing loss, and continued its efforts to get me compensation, which is a good amount and certainly worth going after. There was no cost to me whatsoever, and I never had to resort to an attorney to represent me. The D.A.V. did that for me. No matter how long we have to live from here on or how old we are, whether it is 6 months or 6 years, we are all entitled to this long-deserved benefit. The amounts paid runs up into the hundreds of dollars per month, depending on each individual circumstance and the severity of the hearing loss.

My best wishes to everyone. You are a special person to be continuing to help all of us keep in touch with each other.

God bless all,

Dick Gaut

Sgt., 612 TD Btn. (Company C)

(A Texan, transplanted to Kirkland, AZ for now)

Thanks Dick for taking the time to share this information with our members!

VETERANS DAY

As Veteran's Day approaches we would like to offer a salute to our fine group of Veterans of the 612th TDB. We also want to offer our sincerest thank you for the sacrifices you have made to keep our Country strong and free.

We are so proud of each and every one of you!

**God Bless You All!
and God Bless Our Troops!**

Iris Morris' Butter Pecan Cake

1 box butter pecan cake mix	1 Cup waer
1 can coconut pecan icing	4 eggs
¾ Cup vegetable oil	1 Cup chopped pecans

Sprinkle ½ Cup of pecans in bottom of Bundt pan that has been sprayed with cooking spray.

Mix all remaining ingredients together and pour into pan.

Bake at 350 for 50 to 60 minutes.

Dennis Riley's Special Sugar Cookies

1 Cup powdered sugar	1 tsp. vanilla extract
1 Cup granulated sugar	1 tsp salt
1 Cup butter	1 tsp baking soda
1 Cup oil	1 tsp cream of tartar
2 eggs	

4 Cups plus 4 heaping Tablespoons flour
Cream sugars, butter, oil, eggs and vanilla.

Add dry ingredients, mix well. Roll into small balls.

Flatten with bottom of a small juice glass that has been rubbed lightly with oil and dipped in sugar.

Bake at 350 for 10 minutes. Makes approximately 100 cookies.

Dennis Riley's Pecan Puffs

1 egg white, fluffed	
1 Cup brown sugar	
1 tsp Vanilla	
2 Cups chopped pecans	

Preheat oven to 450.

Fold sugar in to egg white. Add vanilla. Add pecans. Drop with teaspoon onto greased cookie sheet.

Place cookies in oven and turn over OFF. Leave in 10-12 minutes.
Makes 40 cookies.

Hazel Scott's Marvelous Pound Cake

1 pkg. yellow cake mix	2/3 Cup vegetable oil
1 3 oz. box orange Jello	1 Tbl. Orange extract
1 Cup very hot water	1 or 1 ½ Cups Confectioners sugar
4 eggs, beaten	Enough orange juice to make glaze like you want it.

Dissolve the jello in the cup of hot water, stir until cool, set aside. Add the beaten eggs, oil and extract to the cake mix, blend well, add jello and beat until well mixed.

Bake in a Bundt pan at 350 for 40 or 50 minutes until firm and brown on top. Prick the top of the cake with a fork or tooth pick.

Mix confectioners sugar with juice and pour overcake. I like to cool the cake before adding the glaze.

(You can also use lemon jello, extract and lemon juice if you prefer lemon cake).

