

DROP ZONE



Official Bulletin of the *First Allied Airborne Army Command*



2016 No. 1



◀ Gene Gilbreath during a break in the center of Eindhoven in 1944 during Operation Market Garden.

Gene ▼ Gilbreath back in the Netherlands in 2016



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Value Peace & Respect History!



DROP ZONE

**Official Bulletin of the
First Allied Airborne Army
Command**

2016, No 1

www.faaac.nl

AIM: *To inform all members of
FAAAC of activities and news related
to the club.*

*The DROP ZONE Bulletin can and
will also be used to maintain and
strengthen contacts outside the club
with non-members.*

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*The editors have the right to make
alterations to a proposed article as far
as style, format, spelling and authori-
zation is concerned.*

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From the Chairman's Desk

Fred Scheurwater
First Allied Airborne
Army Command

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The Dropzone magazine that you are holding now, or are reading on your computerscreen, is full of interesting articles again. It turned out as more than 30 pages. I would like to thank Bram de Jong for compiling and editing, Johan van Waart for his translations into English and everybody who has contributed with text or photo's.

I will keep my foreword short, also because there is a lot to read on the following pages and there are some pretty special articles in this edition.

What I do want to point out here as something special, although I have already mentioned this last year as well, is the fact that our Living History group has grown considerably in number. The working group SAS has a number of new members and are very active. We are already looking forward to the Amherst 2017 event which they will organise. Our 101st Airborne working group has also welcomed quite a few new members.

Finally, I want to mention that the Yank Re-enactment group has joined FAAAC this year. Their knowledge and specialisations will be a major contribution to the club.

Let's keep up the good work. It is still very important that we keep history alive in order not to forget those who have fought for our freedom.

Fred Scheurwater
Chairman
First Allied Airborne Army Command

Links:

[1] <http://www.faaac.nl/>

[2] <http://www.band-of-brothers.nl>

[3] <http://www.band-of-brothers.be>

[4] <http://www.thememachine.nl/>



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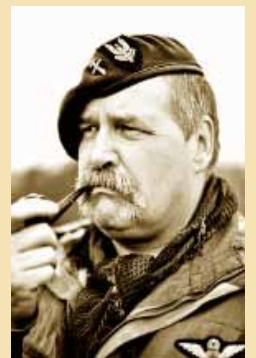
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Danny 'Bones' Frenken

326th Medical Company

My name is Danny Frenken aka "Bones" and I am a member of Triple A since 2009. I am living in Venlo with my wife Carla and the kids Noud and Evi. The first time I came in contact with re-enactment was during an event in Eerde in 2009.

As former member of the Dutch Armed forces, I always had a healthy interest in WW2 and because my immediate family has been through a lot during WW2, I wanted to know everything about reenactment. This way I could remember our liberators and would like to recognize them for what they did for us. So I decided to join Triple A, a way to pass on history that we should not forget, the price that was paid for our freedom by those who fought for it.

Family during WW2

I will tell you briefly about my family and what they experienced during WW2. I do not know all the details. My grandparents and my great aunt never talked about the war.

Early 1942, my grandparents were hiding in the furnace of a brick factory. It was during a razzia when they had to flee. After some research I found out that it was not really a razzia. But the Germans were looking for unusual objects such as art, money and steel. It was on the same day that the church bell was removed by the Germans.

My old aunt lived during the war in Utrecht. She was taken by some Germans to Westerbork. Here my old aunt never talked about. the only thing she wanted to tell ... potatoes, thousands of kilos.

My re-enactor career

As re-enactor, I started as infantry paratrooper . Then I switched to paratrooper medic of the 326th Medical Division. It came from a study that I've done for medical divisions during WW2. Most members call me Doc "Bones." And literally everyone knows where to find my aid station if someone really needs first aid.

The 326th medical company

Like many other Airborne units of the U.S. Army, the 326th Airborne Medical Company can trace its history back to WW1. The 326th Medical Company was initially constituted on 23 July 1918 as the 326th Sanitary Train. It formed part of the 101st Division. After being deactivated on 11 December 1918 following a change in structure of the U.S. Army, it was reconstituted on 24 June 1924 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, as the 326th Medical Regiment, and once again assigned to the 101st Division.

On 30 January 1942, the Regiment was once again re-designated as the 326th Medical Battalion of the 101st Division. The Army, in preparation for the new war in Europe, withdrew the Battalion from the organized reserves and assigned it to the Army of the United States on 15 August 1942, once more reorganizing the unit, now officially designated as the 326th Airborne Medical Company. Major William E. Barfield was assigned as the Commanding Officer of the Company.

The unit began to enlist personnel and was activated officially at



Camp Claiborne, Alexandria, Louisiana, 15 August 1942 as an element of the newly organized 101st Airborne Division. In preparation for the invasion of Europe in 1944, the Company was deployed with the division in 1943. At the time of activation, the unit numbered 20 Officers and 195 Enlisted Men, the vast majority of them were carded from the 82d Airborne Division.

Following activation, the unit moved to Fort Bragg, Fayetteville, North Carolina on 29 September 1942 where its personnel followed airborne and parachute training which was augmented by some time spent at the Laurinberg-Maxton Army Air Support Base at Maxton, North Carolina. A period of approximately 6 weeks was later spent with participation at the Second United States Army No. 1 Tennessee Maneuvers in June 1943. The unit then returned to Ft. Bragg 20 July, prior to it being shipped overseas 5 September 1943.

The Company was organized into a Company Headquarters, two Service Sections, and three Platoons each which carried out the same functions as the Clearing and Collecting Companies in the Medical Battalion of an Infantry Division. Each Platoon had Headquarters, Litter Bearer, Ambulance and Treatment Sections and supported one of the Division's Parachute or Glider Infantry Regiments during combat operations.

The unit finally arrived in England on 15 September 1943 and was located in the general vicinity of Newbury, West Berkshire. Training continued once in the United Kingdom in preparation for Operation "Neptune", which would represent the unit's first combat mission and assignment.

The Regimental and Battalion Medical Detachments entered combat with the following personnel strengths: Parachute Regiments – 9 Officers and 60 Enlisted Men; Glider Regiments – 7 Officers and 64 Enlisted Men; Engineer Battalion – 2 Officers and 17 Enlisted Men; Antiaircraft Battalion – 2 Officers and 24 Officers; Field Artillery Battalions – 8 Officers and 45 Enlisted Men. In addition, Team #20 of the 3d Auxiliary Surgical Group was also attached to the unit, comprising 4 Officers and 4 Enlisted Men, under the command of Major Albert J. Crandall. One element of the Company, 4 Officers and 45 Enlisted Men, landed in the combat zone by parachute. Another group, consisting of 7 Officers and 21 Enlisted Men, with 4 Jeeps and 4 trailers, came in by glider. The remainder of >>>

the Company constituted the seaborne echelon. The Company retained its platoon organization as required by the authorized T/O 8-37. The surgical equipment of the Company was entirely revamped by making each medical chest a functional piece of equipment and devising methods of precombat sterilization of the medical equipment.

I hope you enjoy this reading material.

Now I must quickly get started with the preparations for Operation Market Garden 2016.

I hope to see you all in Son en Breugel.

From a sunny Limburg I salute you,
Currahee and blue skies

Technician 5th Grade (T5)

"Corporal"

Danny "Bones" Frenken

326th Medical Company

• A Medic of the 101st Airborne Division prepares his equipment and puts on his T5 Parachute at the airfield in England. 5 June 1944. N.B. The "RS" marking applied to his B-4 Life Preservers indicates this Medic was attached to the 506th PIR (Col. Robert F. Sink > CO 506th PIR). Col Sink Did this to all of his unit equipment.



Normandy, France - 2016

Normandy 2016

This year, due to various unforeseen circumstances, there was a smaller than usual delegation of our group present in Normandy. The group consisted of Ciska, Roland, Leroy, Max, Robin, Johnny, Joel and Carlo.

Our accomodation was in Chef du Pont, which is a very convenient location for the sights we wanted to see. It was a great place to stay as, from the garden, we could see paratroopers jump almost every morning. As always, we had a great time. We visited quite a few museums and historical sites as Omaha Beach, Arromanches, Ste Mere Eglise, various gun placements amongst others. Too many to mention.

As on other visits to Normandy it was great to meet veterans from several wars and various countries. The stories these people tell bring you closer to the understanding of what war is like when you hear what has happened to them in those days.

I hope we get to see everybody in our group in Normandy next year, that will make it even more special. I have already heard that will happen.

See you at the dropzone!

Carlo Heezen



Researching American WWII Soldier Service



Written by **Jennifer Holik**
<http://wwiirc.com>
info@wwiirc.com

Researching the service of a WWII soldier can take many paths. Often, researchers run into a brick wall because “All the records burned!” In 1973 there was a fire at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, which destroyed approximately 80% of the Army, Air Force, and National Guard Official Military Personnel File (OMPF), also known as the service file.

I have been working with clients for several years and wrote the only authoritative books on the market which teach researchers how to navigate the maze of available records. I’m also the only speaker in the U.S. teaching at the level I am, on research and writing the stories of service. To help you research the service of an American soldier, from America or Europe, I have created several resources.

For those living and researching in America, *Stories from the World War II Battlefield* series. Volume 1: Reconstructing Army, Air Corps, and National Guard Service. Volume 2: Navigating

Researching From America

Stories from the World War II Battlefield Volume 1: Reconstructing Army, Air Corps, and National Guard Service

You can purchase this at <http://wwiirc.com>.

“ALL THE RECORDS BURNED!”

Have you heard that phrase regarding the status of Army, Air Corps, and National Guard records from World War II? Roughly 80% of these records did burn in a fire in 1973. This is not however, the end of the road for researchers. Many other record sources exist to reconstruct the service history of a World War II soldier. All the tools researchers need to start exploring their World War II soldier’s service are included in this volume.

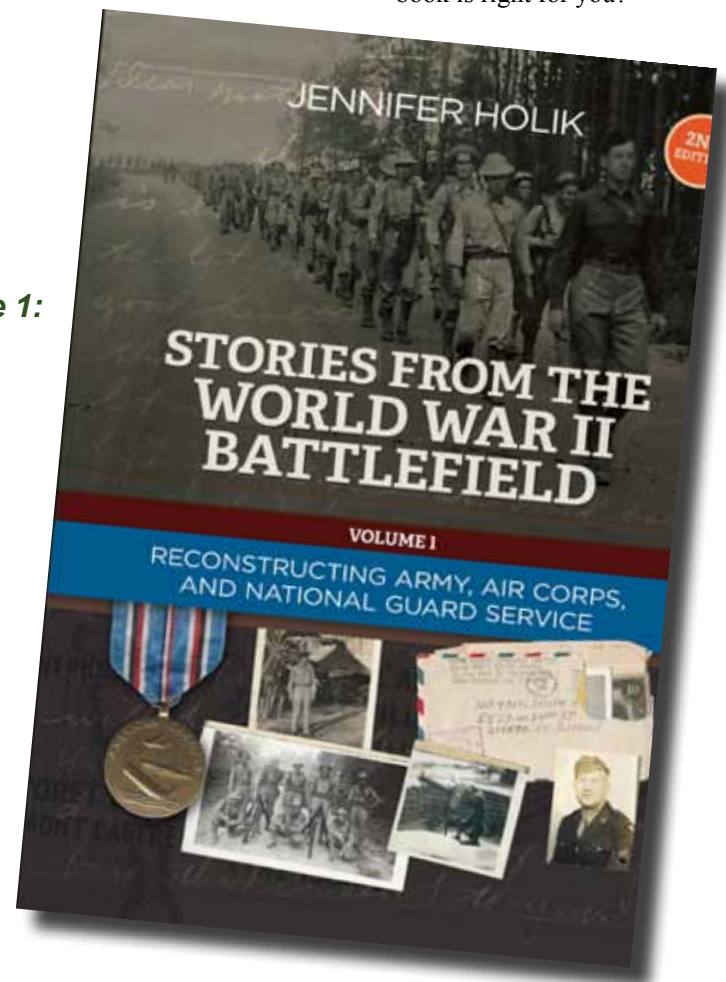
The tools include:

- The basics of starting research.
- Tips for online and offline military research. Instructions for ordering the Official Military Personnel File and collateral records to reconstruct service history.
- Tips on researching from Europe.
- Tips on researching the service history of women who served in the Army and Air Corps.
- And, tips for placing the soldier into historical context using higher level records.

Service Records for the Navy, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Merchant Marines.

For those living and researching in Europe, *Faces of War: Researching Your Adopted Soldier*.

There is a specific process to the research process and I describe it in my books to help researchers understand how to navigate the spider web of available records. No other resources exist like this to help you locate the story of your soldier. As a bonus, there are scanned service records and educational materials on my website, The World War II Research and Writing Center located at <http://wwiirc.com>, which will help advance your research. Which book is right for you?



Through dozens of examples, checklists, and document images, researchers are taught how to analyze the Official Military Personnel File, records created for the Missing, the Prisoners, and the Dead, and numerous other records which may help reconstruct the service history. This is the most important reference guide researchers need to begin researching and writing the story of their Army, Air Corps, and National Guard World War II soldier available today. >>>

Stories from the World War II Battlefield Volume 2:

Navigating Service Records for the Navy, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Merchant Marines

You can purchase this at <http://wwiirwc.com>.

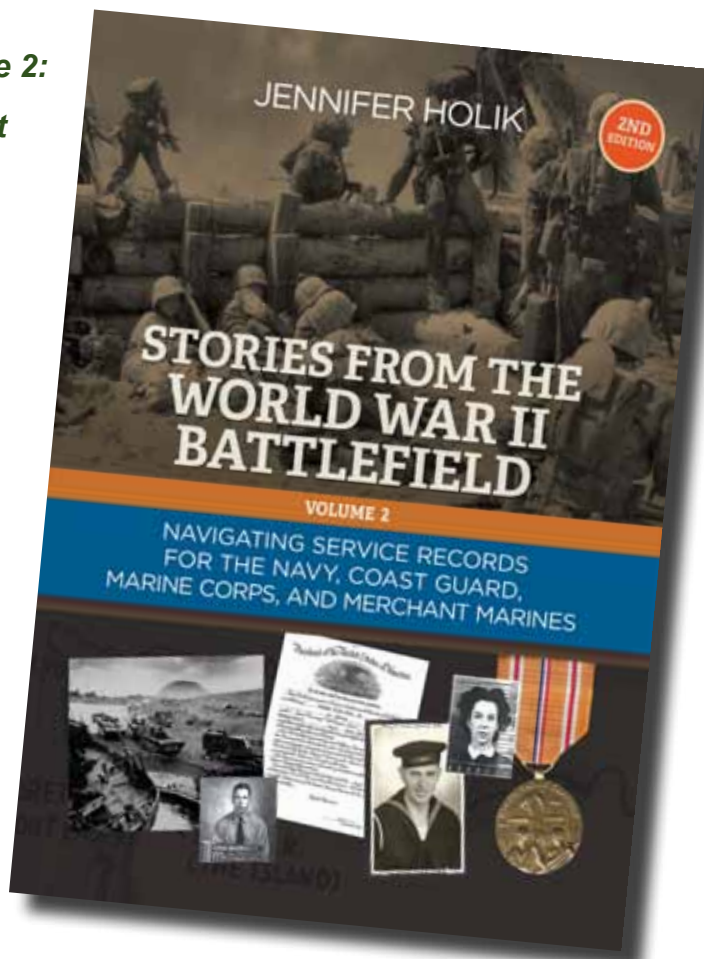
“ALL THE RECORDS BURNED!”

Have you heard that phrase regarding the status of Army, Air Corps, and National Guard records from World War II? Roughly 80% of these records did burn in a fire in 1973. The Navy, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines, and Marine Corps records were unaffected, except for a very small percentage. Researchers with family members in these branches have access to complete military service histories. All the tools researchers need to start exploring their World War II sailor or Marine's service are included in this volume.

The tools include:

- The basics of starting research.
- Tips for online and offline military research. Instructions for ordering and using the Official Military Personnel File and collateral records to reconstruct service history.
- Tips for researching from Europe.
- Tips on researching the service history of women who served in the Navy, Coast Guard, and Marine Corps.
- And, tips for placing the soldier into historical context using higher level records.

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Military Personnel File, records created for the Missing, the Prisoners, and the Dead, and numerous other records which may help reconstruct the service history. This is the most important reference guide researchers need to begin researching and writing the story of their Navy, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Merchant Marine World War II sailor or Marine available today.

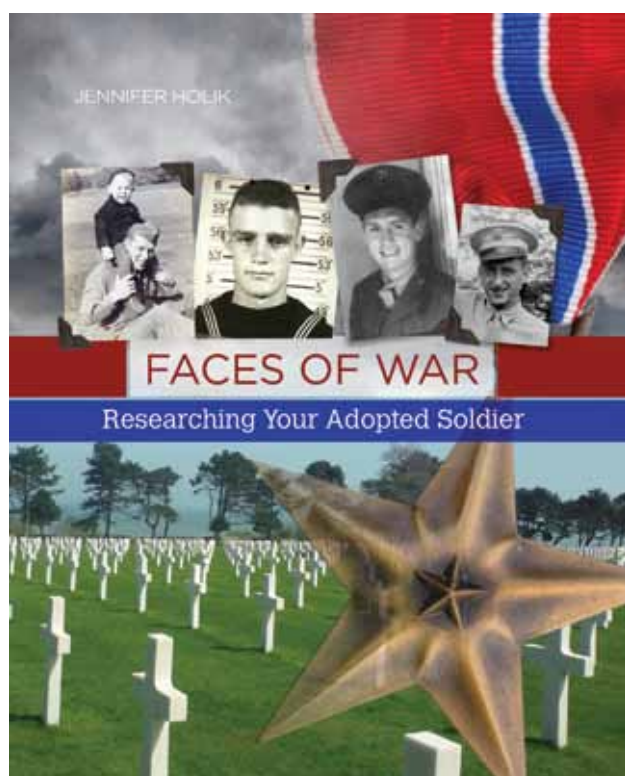
Researching from Europe

Faces of War: Researching Your Adopted Soldier

Purchase your book at <http://bit.ly/29Tj80M> and support the **Foundation United Adopters American War Graves** (*Stichting Verenigde Adoptanten Amerikaanse Oorlogsgraven*.) The foundation will donate all proceeds to its The Faces of Margraten tribute at the Netherlands Cemetery.

The American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) operates and maintains 25 permanent American military cemeteries overseas. In many of the countries in which these cemeteries are located, men and women officially and unofficially, through Adoption Foundation programs, adopt the graves of American service men and women in the ABMC cemeteries.

Researching the service and life of a soldier while living in Europe, has its challenges, primarily because the records they need are located in archives in the United States. There is also the challenge of the 1973 fire at the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, Missouri. The fire destroyed roughly 80% of the Army, Air Corps/Army Air Forces, and National Guard >



personnel files. This is not however, the end of the story where researchers are concerned.

All the tools researchers need to start exploring their World War I or World War II soldier, civilian, sailor, or Marine's service, are included in this volume.

The tools include:

- The basics of starting research and creating a timeline of service.
- Resources and strategies for online and offline military research.
- Resources for obtaining a wide range of information on a soldier's death and burial.
- Instructions for ordering and using military records to reconstruct service history for men and women.
- And, tips for placing the soldier into historical context using higher level records.

Through examples, checklists, and document images, researchers are taught how to locate and analyze records for any branch of the military. This volume focuses more on World War II records, but the process for a World War I soldier and records created, are similar. Once you understand the research process, it can be applied to either war. •



Need to Hire a Researcher?

If you need assistance with your research, I take clients and have the ability to often connect researchers in America with those in Europe when we have completed research. I follow a process with all clients to ensure the foundation is established for a soldier's service before looking for unit level records. If you would like to discuss a project, please contact me at info@wwiirw.com

Biography - Jennifer Holik is an international World War II historian, speaker, and author of numerous books, articles, and courses. She holds a BA in History from Missouri University of Science and Technology. Jennifer offers expert World War II, genealogical, and historical research, writing, and speaking services in the U.S. and Europe. She can be reached at <http://wwiirwc.com> or info@wwiirwc.com.

Para jump over Normandy June 1944

Our editor Bram de Jong recently finished a new painting which shows the jump of paratroopers over Normandy during the night prior to D-Day.

Oil paint on linen, size 80 x 120 cm.
Available

For more information:

www.agdj.nl

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A FINAL SALUTE!



• Photo André Jans

• *Annie Boesjes - Van Dalen speaking with Belgian SAS veterans during a commemoration in 2015. From left to right: Jaak Daemen, Francois Jakobs, Mayor Karel Loohuis, Colonel (ret.) Walter Mertens and Annie Boesjes-Van Dalen.*

Farewell and Tribute

On Thursday 28th July 2016, our SAS troopers David Hoes and André Jans brought a final salut to Mrs. Annie Boesjes-Van Dalen at the church in the village of Dalen, NL. Annie passed away at the age of 85 on 23rd July 2016. This salut was exceptional but honorable to be executed by our members and fulfilled a last request by her relatives. Annie was 14 years of age when the liberators showed up on 10th april 1945, next to her house next at the Oosterhesseler bridge, Drenthe. The Germans had blocked the bridge and after several days of fierce fighting the bridge was taken by the 5th (Belgian) SAS regiment and the 1st Polish Armoured Division. Sadly, all surrounding houses burned down to the ground during this action including Annie's house. All they had left were the clothes they were wearing... Despite this huge loss the Boesjes family survived the war and started life again in a rebuilt house in 1948.

This war experience drew a big line in Annie's life and until her passing, she kept warm feelings for her liberators especially the Belgian SAS troopers. She was a driving force behind the 1990, 2014 and 2015 WW2 commemorations at the Oosterhesseler bridge. Especially the 2015 commemoration drew much attention to the presented WW2 veterans and our re-enactors. Even in 2015, when Annie's health was declining she wanted to be there commemorating her experiences from 70 years ago. For her community service, Annie was awarded the Knighthood in the Order of Orange Nassau.

André Jans



Re-enactmentgroep Franse SAS

Amherst 2016

This article was contributed by Dennis Meijeringh

As in every year around the 7th and 8th of April the re-enactment group "French SAS" of FAAAC commemorated Operation "Amherst". This operation was the second allied airborne operation on Dutch soil during WW2. This drop was executed in April 1945 by the French airborne troops that were part of 2nd and 3rd Regiment Chasseur Parachutistes of the Special Air Services (SAS).

In 2016, as before, on April 8th, an honor guard was formed at the SAS monument in Assen by members of the French SAS re-enactment group.

Monsieur Maurice le Noury, a French SAS veteran, fortunately was present again, as he was in 2015. He was accompanied by family members of the French paratroopers that were killed near Westdorp. For those men a monument was erected in spring 2016 and this monument would be officially unveiled a day after the commemoration in Assen. Some members of our group were also present at the unveiling. >>>



• *Beilen cemetery. One of the graves of the 33 French SAS troops that were killed.*

• *Commemoration at the SAS Monument in Assen.*



Photo Andre Jans
a.g.jans@home.nl



• *The men in position for attack.*

Our group of re-enactors toured the various sites that played a part in Operation Amherst. During that tour we did not forget to stop at gravesites of French paratroopers. At every grave we held a short ceremony and flowers were laid. Mr Jan Bruggink told us about what happened in April 1945 during the tour.

Sunday April 10th there was a mock battle organised in the Spaarbankwood, a few kilometers north of Hooerveen. In this mock battle the French SAS blew up a German ammunition truck which was loaded with ammunition. After this attack the French troops had to withdraw into the woods as the Germans launched a massive counter attack. This mock battle was perfectly organised by Andre Jans, a member of our group. •



• *German ammunition trucks in Spaarbankwood.*

AMHERST 2017 Zuidlaren

Preparations for the event "Operation Amherst 2017 Zuidlaren" are in full swing. During a weekend in the beginning of April we will build a WW2 camp on historical ground and organise two mock battles in Zuidlaren. One battle will take place near the windmill museum De Wachter and the other one will take place on a location where on April 9th 1945 a stick of French paratroopers fought against superior German forces. During this battle one of the paratroopers, Paul Duquesne, was killed. He was the only allied soldier to die in Zuidlaren. At this location a monument for Paul Duquesne will be unveiled. His little brother Michel (92 years old) has let us know that he would like to attend the ceremony.

The requests for permits from the local council are being processed, Any news about this event will follow as soon as it becomes available.

Headquarters 101 Airborne Division
506 PI E-Company

April 18, 2016

SUBJECT: Campaign Report Operation
Spike weekend April 15-17

TO: Commanding Officer Major J VanWaart E-Co, 506PI 101 Airborne Division



- The U.S. forces (Dutch Deuces and Band of Brothers) ▲
- Slowly moving forward, snipers are everywhere! ►

Photo's contributed by Elwin Luijendijk, Erik Homan and others

One Platoon attached to allied forces (British, Canadian and Polish) in effort to free the town of Spijk (Spike) in northern part of Holland. U.S. Forces assembled in church on the edge of town. Friday 15th of April US troops took over church and established CP. No German resistance no enemy activities during the night.

Saturday morning Dutch resistance captured German General. Large German force entered town platoon took position in center of town to secure HQ. General sent to HQ. German forces attacked position. German forces withdrew. Entire Saturday some little skirmishes and lots of enemy patrols. Civilian population happy to be liberated but were in our way, not safe! Sgt Heeze and 3 others (Cpl Jansen, Pvt Lamers and Pvt Taken) were captured but managed to escape and found their way back.

In the evening the German forces tried to attack HQ 1st and 2nd Squad and element of our 3rd squad helped to push the Germans out of HQ. Together with M.Sgt. Scheurwater WO Ommering and Pvt Top, I defended our CP against sporadic German attacks. In the end no luck for the enemy forces. During the following night no enemy activities. >>>

- Moving forward under fire ►





© Erik Homan

• Sergeant Heeze giving directions to his scouts ▲

The Sunday started with gathering information about enemy forces. Dutch resistance had information about a huge buildup of German forces.

At 13.15 the allied attack began. The British Canadian and Polish Forces together with armored support attacked the Germans head on. The U.S. forces flanked them and attacked from the north-east. Knocked out a fortified MG-42 position and captured the German HQ.

At 14:00 After some heavy fighting the German forces were defeated and surrendered. •

Author
1st Lieutenant
A. van Vugt



• Orders received, ready for patrol ▼



• Sniper spotted!! Master Sergeant Scheurwater giving orders to take cover ▼

Headquarters 101 Airborne Division
506 PI E-Company

May 30, 2016

SUBJECT: Campaign Report Operation
Brielle Liberated, April 15-17, 2016

TO: Commanding Officer Major J VanWaart E-Co, 506PI 101 Airborne Division.



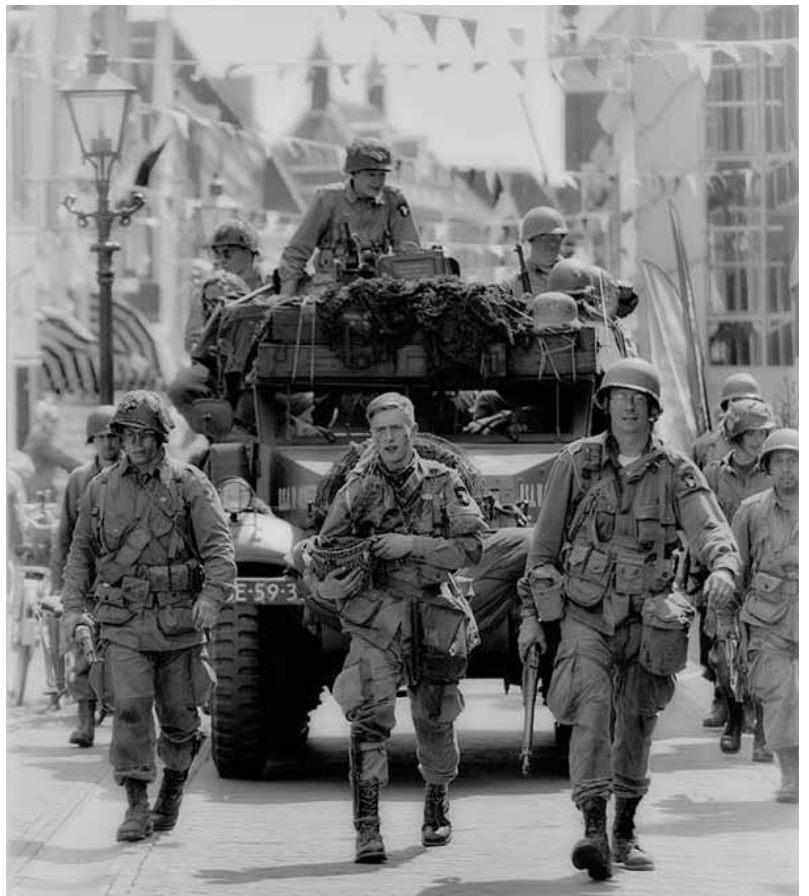
- All Re-enactors who took part in the battle ▲

Overall, the whole event was superb, thanks to the organization, mainly consisting of 1st Lt VanRavens, 1st Lt Mol and Pvt Gerrit "Dumpster" Oldenburg.

Wednesday May 3rd the first troops arrived early to set up camp, which lasted till late in the afternoon. During the day more Troops arrived and quickly filled the camp. Diner was a great relief for the men because Gene Gilbreath had dinner with us all.

Thursday May 4th. Another day consisting of finishing the Camp sites. Unfortunately this was a national holiday and all of the people of Brielle decided to come and take a look. While other fresh troops arrived the camp literally was crowded with people. Still we managed to finish the camp. May 4th is Remembrance day for the Dutch people. That evening we were invited to take part in the town its own commemoration ceremony. After the official ceremony our Honor Guard took part >>>

- Guarding a Half Track during the parade, job well done! ►





• *Posing in front of a Sherman Tank after a tough battle* ▲

in a small ceremony in the church. The rest of the men were trapped inside the church for more than an hour and a half, these where 1st Lt Van Ravens own orders, luckily the thought of a cold beer after this ceremony kept them on their feet. The Honor Guard performance was 1stSgt VanVugt last official public performance since he thinks: "I am getting too old for this and it is time for the young guys to take over".

Friday May 5th Liberation day. The weather gods blessed us with perfect sunny weather for the Dutch people Remembrance Day. The day slowly passed by since the weather became more and more tropical. Patrols were sent out and strategical positions taken. Even the enemy was troubled by the weather and their wool uniform made it impossible to make any action. During the afternoon the Dutch resistance made an attempt to raid a German supply ship. Unfortunately this failed and some were captured and luckily 2 members escaped and where taken to safety. German patrols where sent out an captured >>>

- *Our ladies Corrola and Mieneke* ▲►
- *No planes to fly today, so WASP Geraldine enjoys the sunny weather* ►



a hidden US Pilot, an attempt by the SAS to rescue him failed. At this point we sent out a recon patrol which was stopped by a fierce fighting German forces. Immediately we responded by sending the main body of Allied forces to end the German hostilities. With the help of some armored vehicles (half-track and a Sherman) we quickly rounded up the remaining German troops.

During the evening a C47 transport plane was shot down over Rotterdam the plain caught fire and crashed into the nearby "Brielsche Maes" a river near to our HQ. Dutch resistance told HQ that the 2 pilots jumped out and landed in the nearby field. The German forces alarmed by the crash were spotted trying to capture the pilots. A quick rescue force was formed and where sent out to get the pilots before the Germans did. Luckily they did find the men and brought them back to safety. The night followed with no hostilities.

Saturday May 6th A day without any real meaningful enemy activity. Time to get to know some the people of Brielle. In the morning had a small promotion ceremony where three men received their promotion John VanderSteen became 1stSgt,

JP Hendriks Sgt and I was promoted to 1st Lt. We all received our new ranks from Gene, what made the ceremony very special.

Daytime was spent with patrolling, the weather was perfect and caused very little trouble. In the afternoon there was a victory parade through the main street of Brielle. All Airborne groups were given the task to guard the larger vehicles such as the halftrack and Sherman. People crowded the streets with enthusiasm.

During the festivities that night a group of hooligans decided to wait for all green men (allied as well as German) police was warned and our own guard tripled to make sure nobody entered the Camp. Nothing happened and the guard was reduced to its normal size.

Sunday May 7th the last day of the campaign. A day mainly consisted of a tour through some local villages, country roads and even along the beach. The sun was blistering hot, temperatures around 80 degrees. That became a problem for some vehicles. Problems were quickly solved At 14.30 we arrived back at the Camp where Operation Dust Cloud immediately started.

Looking back this again was a very well organized edition of Brielle Bevrijd. For next year event we will have to see what changes we need to make for another success full edition. We all agreed that some drastic changes have to be done to secure the success of this event. >>>>

• Some very "Tough Hombres" ▼





• Sergeant Di Ablo as Gene's personal bodyguard ▲

Photo's contributed by Elwin Luijendijk, Erik Homan and others

Author
1st Lieutenant
A. van Vugt



- A Happy Gene, enjoying every minute of Brielle Liberated 2016 ◀
- First Sergeant John and his squad waiting for orders ▼



USMC Ambulance Jeep in WW2



1. History of the USMC ambulance jeep

In 1943 the United States Marine Corps (USMC) decided to design a special jeep for transporting the wounded from the front lines to the rear. Taking a 1942 Willys jeep as a starting point several modifications were made. The biggest change is the addition of a tubular frame to accommodate two stretchers, one stacked over the other. Because of the position of these stretchers on the right side of the vehicle, the passenger seat had to be removed. In its place came a storage box with a lid on the side, that fitted under the bottom stretcher. A little hinged door was made in the left rear of the jeep to allow easy access to walking wounded who could sit on the rear seat which was placed at 90 degrees from its original position. Because of the the tubular stretcher frame left no room for the spare tire, the spare tire bracket was moved to the hood of the ambulance jeep (amb jeep). The alterations changed the look of the jeep completely. When the canvas top was mounted over the superstructure, it looked much more like a box on wheels.

The first photos of the amb jeep, were made at the Holden factory (part of General Motors), in Australia, in 1943. the Holden company got the contract for rebuilding approximately 200 Navy contract Willys jeeps. The earliest photos of amb jeeps in combat •••



• Photo 1: Cape Gloucester 1943 ▲

that we could find, date from February 1944, and are taken on Cape Gloucester.

After this campaign the design of the amb jeep was evaluated and several changes were introduced. One of the most obvious ones, is the increased height of the superstructure to provide more room for the two stretchers. Because new divisions (like the 4th, 5th and 6th marine divisions) had to be supplied directly from the United States, a second order for approximately 500 was placed there. The new ambulances were produced in the San Diego area. The oldest photos we could find of >>>

this second model amb jeep, were taken during the Saipan campaign (June – August 1944). Later photos of Iwo Jima (February-March 1945) and Okinawa (August 1945) show extensive use of the amb jeeps, directly behind the frontlines.

• *Photo 2: Iwo Jima 1945* ▶

After the war the ambulance jeep was used in several theaters of operation. We include here a photo of 1946-47 where they were used by the Royal Netherlands Marine Corps (RNMC) on Eastern Java, Indonesia, during the police actions preceding that country's independence from the Netherlands.

• *Photo 3 rnm on eastern java 1946, Photo: collection Nederlands Instituut voor Militaire Historie* ▼▶



2. Restoration project GPW 231072

On April 16 2010, a boy's dream came true. With the purchase of GPW 231072 (October 20, 1944), a former USMC amb jeep was transported to the home of Cor Geluk in The Netherlands. For a long time we thought USMC amb jeeps had ceased to exist and we had to make do with the wonderful photos of them in Yasuo Ohtsuka's book: *Jeeps over the Pacific*. That is until this one was put on offer on Ebay, by Mike Peeters from NY. The jeep was in such a condition that a complete restoration was necessary. Before Mike purchased it, it was used for years as a snowplow, on Patten Hill Farm in Antrim, New Hampshire, and that is probably the reason why the jeep still had the original ambulance modified closed right side of the body. >>>

• *Photo 4 Arrival in NL April 2010* ▼



Original Details matter

Before starting the restoration we carefully removed all postwar additions to the body. After that we meticulously photographed all remaining original details. Since the jeep's design was significantly altered to serve as an ambulance, and no original drawings or specifications are known to exist, a lot of information was to be discovered by 'jeep archeology'. The biggest and most obvious change is the closed up passenger side.

- *Photo 5 passenger side closed* ►

Because of this the grab handle also had to be repositioned. In the rear of the body a little hinged door is made, requiring the jerry can bracket to be repositioned. Due to the addition of the superstructure, the windshield had to be placed at a more straight angle. This was realized by lowering the windshield brackets on the body. In the right rear of the body, a part of the body was cut out to take the stretcher guiding rails to be put in place. On the body several holes could be found where the brackets supporting the superstructure were once placed. In the same area we found the holes for the hold down hooks. The last detail we found on the body was a repositioned bracket to keep the hand crank in its place. With the jeep came a original GPW rear seat. The seat was still put sideways, in the original ambulance configuration, over the left tool box.

- *Photo 6 correct position rear seat* ►

In order to be able to still use this tool box, a hole had been cut out in the seat. The seat was mounted with three bolts on the body and an extra piece of steel strip was welded on to keep the rear of the seat fastened on the superstructure. On the side of the body a odd looking spare tire bracket had been welded. This turned out to be a part of the original spare tire bracket which was mounted on top of the hood. This bracket was mounted with a hinge on the hood. The four bolts used to fasten the hinge on the hood were still in place.

The other side of the bracket was mounted on the grill. The two holes for this bracket were also still there. Under the hood the radiator guard was used to make an extra strip that would support the hood when put in the opened position.

- *Photo 7 part of the original spare tire bracket* ►

Restoration Frame + Body

After completely dismantling the jeep, the restoration could begin in earnest. We started with the frame by replacing the rear bar, replacing parts of the frame that were too rusted through to preserve, aligning the frame, sandblasting it, and finally give it a coat of red-oxide primer. The second step of the restoration was doing the sheet metal work on the body. Because of its condition, the complete floor had to be replaced, including a new gas tank tub. After that several notorious weak spots on the side of the body, e.g. the spots where the shovel and ax are mounted, were replaced as well.

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Now the body is back in shape, the storage box which goes on the passenger side is reconstructed and put on its place. A long hinge is added and the cover of the box is placed back.

• *Photo 8 : condition body before restoration* ►

• *Photo 9: new floor* ▼



• *Photo 10: construction of the storage box* ►



Construction Superstructure

With frame and body done, we started with the construction of the superstructure. Before we did that, a study was made as to which type of amb jeep, GPW 231072 belonged. The manufacturing date of October 20, 1944 made it clear we were dealing with a second type amb jeep, so the superstructure is the higher model.

• *Photo 11: new superstructure* ▼



Since all the brackets to support the superstructure were missing, an original bracket was borrowed from another amb jeep restorer. Based on this original bracket, new brackets were made. The total construction is based on 9 tubes which are interconnected with a horizontal tube from left to right. Seven tubes are mounted with a bracket on the sides and front of the body and two tubes are mounted on the floor of the body. The top beam which connects the tubes from the front to the rear is made of wood. This beam is only introduced with the second type amb jeep.

• *Photo 12: original bracket to support the superstructure* ►

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Two types of rails were used to support the stretchers: an L-shape rail came with the first type amb jeep and a U-shaped rail came with the second type amb jeep. Since the original cuts in the rear of the body were still in place, it was easy to assess the dimensions for reproducing the right size of U-shape rails. Another difference between the types 1 and 2 ambulances is the way the stretchers are secured: on the first type amb jeep the stretchers were secured in place with a canvas strap, on the second type a spring based metal locking pin was introduced. The last detail related to the stretcher rails is the introduction of a strip of metal on the front side of the superstructure to prevent a wounded soldier from being launched forward when the driver steps on the brake.

• *Photo 13: U-shape rails with metal locking pin* ▲►



In order to fasten the special canvas top to the body, hold down hooks and footman loops were mounted. On the first type amb jeep only three hold down hooks were mounted on the rear of the body while three footman loops were mounted in the middle and on the left front side. On the second type this was changed somewhere in 1945, to six hold down hooks on every position as the new canvas tops now came with hold down ropes in lieu of straps.

• *Photo 14: hold down hooks* ►



Forest Green

The last step in the restoration of frame, body and superstructure was to give it the right color. First the body, frame and superstructure were spray painted in red oxide primer, then the original jeep parts were spray painted army-olive drab (OD). The second type amb jeeps were no longer navy contracted Willys (MB) jeeps but a mixture of Ford (GPW) and Willys (MB) jeeps purchased from the U.S. Army. These jeeps were first modified to amb jeeps and only painted forest green when completely assembled. Parts of the jeep who were out of the way were sometimes missed in the process of repainting and stayed army OD. In our case we chose to leave the firewall, the bottom of the body, and the interiors of glove and toolboxes army OD, while the rest was painted forest green. During the campaign in Okinawa a lot of amb jeeps were camouflaged, but for the moment we stick to the lusterless forest green.

• *Photo 15: forest green on the outside and army OD on the inside* ▲►



Jeep assembled

We don't want to bother you about how to assemble a jeep this time (that will be the next article) but only like to show you this nice detail under the hood, where you can see a special bracket was made to keep it in open position (after you have removed the spare tire).

• *Photo 16: under the hood* ►



Take it out for a ride

In the spring of 2016 the restoration of the amb jeep was finally finished by adding the specially made >>>

canvas top. Now it was time to take it out for a ride. With Harry, Frank and me dressed up as US marines and Bert as photographer we took the jeep to the former Rotterdam RDM shipyard because of the vintage industrial look. The same kind of area where the first Holden jeeps were photographed in Australia in 1943.

Photo 17a, 17b, reenacting Australia 1943

Photo 18-21: amb jeep reenactment , canvas top removed

Photo 22-25: amb jeep reenactment , canvas top in place (see page xx)

Credits

This project did only get this far with the help of: my wife Beatrice, son Lucas and daughter Sibil, Yank Reenactment members Harry vd Bogert and Frank de Koning, sheet metal worker and mechanic Freek Koster, USMC Amb jeep owners Frank Steele, Andrew Lang and Maarten Sliphorst, Military vehicle restorer Rene Pijper, Military vehicle collector Jaap Rietveld, Writer Yasuo Ohtsuka and Jim Clark from Allied Forces UK who produced the canvas top.



17a



17b



18



19



20



21



*Cor Geluk
Yank-Re-enactment
is the author
of this article*



FACT SHEET

U.S. FIELD COMBAT CLOTHING & UNIFORMS WORLD WAR II



There were a great variety of combat field uniforms developed, issued and used by U.S. Army Infantry, Airborne, Armored and other arms and services in World War II. The Navy and Marine Corps had their own, additional standards and issues of clothing and uniforms. Additional clothing and uniforms were provided for specialized purposes.

U.S. Army Uniform in 1939.

Starting with the array of mounted and dismounted uniforms left over from the pre-war period, standardization was needed to supply the huge manpower buildup of the pending global war. As the World War II progressed uniforms changed, driven by field experience and also by production requirements for efficiency and the need to preserve scarce material.

United States Army Uniforms, 1941.

These pages will cover many of the variations issued and used during World War II, but by no means all. Keep in mind that as new items of clothing and equipment were developed, they only slowly made their way into general use. A year or more could separate the first use of an item by one unit and the receipt of the same item by another unit. Some units were still using pre-war equipment in 1945 while other units had the latest issue.

For an example of clothing issued, see here for the list of clothing for 1943 inductees at Camp Lee, VA. >>>



World War II Inductee Clothing Issue

From the collection of the Quartermaster Museum, memorandum indicating clothing issued to new soldiers at Camp Lee, VA in 1943

RECRUIT RECEPTION CENTER
1303d SERVICE UNIT
OFFICE OF SUPPLY OFFICER
CAMP LEE, VA.

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS TO: ALL NEWLY INDUCTED MEN

1. In this building you will be issued clothing and equipment, FOR WHICH YOU ARE FINANCIALLY RESPONSIBLE, in case of loss or damage. The items are listed below, in the order of their issue. Item marked with a double asterisk (**) will be issued you in your company. Items marked with one asterisk (*) are issued you upon your arrival in camp.

ITEMS

**2 Tags, Identification	1 Hat, Herringbone Twill
*1 Raincoat	1 Liner, Helmet w/1 Neckband and 1 headband
*1 Shaving brush	1 Cap, Garrison, O.D.
*1 Tooth brush	2 Caps, Garrison, Khaki
*1 Comb	1 Cap, Wool, Knit
*1 Razor w/5 blades	1 Meat Can
*2 Towels, huck	1 Knife
*1 Towel, bath	1 Fork
*2 Barrack bags	1 Spoon
5 Drawers, Cotton	4 Handkerchiefs, Cotton
5 Undershirts, Cotton	1 Tape for Ind. Tags, Cotton
2 Shirts, Wool, O.D.	1 Canteen
2 Shirts, Cotton, Khaki	1 Cover, Canteen
1 Jacket, Field	1 Cup, Canteen
2 Trousers, Wool, O.D.	1 Manual, Basic Field
2 Trousers, Cotton, Khaki	2 Neckties, Mohair
1 Pr. Leggins	3 Pr. Socks, Wool, Light
1 Pr. Gloves, Wool.	5 Pr. Socks, Cotton, Tan
1 Belt, Web, Waist	2 Pr. Shoes, Service
1 Coat, Serge, O.D.	
1 Overcoat, Wool O.D.	
2 Jackets, Herringbone Twill	
2 Trousers, Herringbone Twill	

2. As you pass along; the issue line all items will be carefully checked and all that you are not required to wear at that time will be placed in your barrack bags. Upon completion of the issue you will be assembled in the Assembly Room of the warehouse and all items issued you will be checked by an Officer from your company to make certain that you have received all that you are entitled to, NO CLAIM CAN BE MADE AFTER LEAVING THIS BUILDING ---THINK ---

3. Items requiring alteration should be taken to the Tailor Shop in this building upon completion of the issuing of your property. All clothing should be tried on as soon as possible and ill-fitting items exchanged between 1:00 and 2:00 P.M. the following day after completion of all processing.

4. Your appearance as a soldier is largely up to you -- COOPERATE!

RICHARD H. HARDING

Captain, QMC.,

Supply Officer >>>

Paratroopers Uniforms in WW II

From the first, it was recognized that Paratroopers would require special clothing and equipment due to the unique character of their mission. After a slow start, and several revisions, the airborne soldiers were eventually provided with uniforms and boots that met their special needs.



• *Parachute
Infantry
Soldier wearing
the M-1942
parachutists'
uniform*



The development of parachute units was started by the United States Army in 1940, part of the general expansion beginning at that time. Parachutists were classified as infantry, since they were intended to fight on foot although transported by air, and their training was centered at Ft. Benning, Georgia. It was recognized right away that special clothing and equipment would be required.

The first item to be considered was special footgear. A special version of the M-1 Helmet, the 'steel pot', designated M-1C, was produced with the special needs of jumpers in mind.

The M42 Jacket and trousers featured an abundance of cargo pockets and were designed by Lieutenant Colonel William P. Yarborough. Lt.-Col. Yarborough designed the uniforms with slanted bellowed pockets and flaps secured by snaps. The slanted pockets were the key design feature and allowed easier access to the chest pockets under field equipment. Lt.-Col. Yarborough also included a "secret" switchblade knife pocket by the collar. Paratroopers were issued automatic knives to cut themselves from their parachutes in case of emergency.

Development of the parachute jumpers' uniform was started in 1940, but several unsatisfactory designs were tried and rejected before success. The 501st Parachute Infantry Battalion at Ft. Benning participated in most of the tests and contributed heavily to the final design adopted in 1941. The parachutists' suit consisted of a coat and trousers of cotton uniform twill. The "Coat, Parachute Jumper, M-1941" (jacket) had four patch pockets fastened with snaps and a full belt. It was closed by a zipper all the way to the neck and had a stand up collar for extra neck protection. There were roll back button cuffs and shoulder loops with snaps. The matching trousers had large cargo pockets, fastened with snaps, on the side of the legs well down the thigh. The legs tapered toward the bottom with elastic cuffs. This design was well liked but in actual training most paratroopers still wore the one-piece HBT coverall so they could keep the specialized uniform for dress occasions. >>>

Second Pattern of the Paratrooper Uniform, M-1942

The paratroopers' uniform was improved in 1942 with small changes like increasing the pocket capacity by adding bellows and fastening the pocket flaps with two snaps instead of one. The M-1942 version of the uniform was used until the specialized paratrooper uniform was dropped at the end of the war. The M-1942 uniform was worn by parachute infantry as they formed first assault wave of the D-Day landings, 6 June 1944.

• In one of the most famous photos of World War II, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower briefs members of the 101st Airborne Division in the hours just before they were dropped into France as the opening assault of D-Day, 6 June 1944. The photo was taken at the airfield in Newbury England on 5 June.



• First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt inspects the 509th PIR while at Chilton Foliat, England.

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U.S. Army Uniform, M-1943

The U.S. Army developed the M-1943 Uniform Ensemble beginning in 1942 to replace a variety of other specialist uniforms and some inadequate garments, like the OD Cotton Field Jacket. By 1941, soldiers wore a wool flannel shirt and wool serge trousers in winter and a cotton khaki shirt and trousers in summer, both with ankle length russet leather service shoes and OD canvas puttees, and often with the OD cotton field jacket. Armored units still were using wool riding breeches and wore high-lacing boots in some cases, and the Paratroopers were stuck with a general issue HBT overalls with no real suitable footwear.

As a result of this lack of proper and suitable clothing, the Armored units were issued general infantry uniforms, although by 1942 the winter coveralls and winter “tanker” jacket had been produced with them in mind. These articles of clothing were made of light green cotton lined with wool kersey.

The paratroopers got their own unique uniform in 1942, also. It was constructed of light green cotton twill, with four front pockets and two pant-leg cargo pockets. They also got a new boot design of their own, a leather boot of similar construction to the infantry shoe, only being mid-shin high.

Generally speaking though, this was unsatisfactory. The infantry uniform was lacking in functionality compared to the M-1942 Paratrooper uniform, and the tanker winter uniforms were sought after by almost every branch in the Army, making supply and production often difficult.

The combat wool, khaki, and paratrooper trousers all did not have adequate locking stitches in the crotch. Often trousers would tear at that stress point. Also, the paratrooper uniform would tear at the knees and elbows.

The paratroopers tried to fix the problem by sewing canvas patches on the elbows and knees, but the Army sought to standardize a better uniform.

• *Major General William M. Miley (left) of Starkville, Mississippi, Commanding General of the 17th U.S. Airborne Division, chats with Brigadier General Floyd L. Parks of Greensburg, South Carolina, Chief of Staff, First Allied Airborne Army, shortly before taking off to invade Germany east of the Rhine River March 24, 1945, in the greatest airborne offensive of the war. More than 1,500 troop-carrying planes and gliders participated in the landings (U.S. Signal Corps photo ETO-HQ-45-22627 - TFH collection).*



The most recognizable part of the uniform is the standardized field jacket. It was longer than the M-1941 jacket, coming down to the upper thighs. It was made in a light olive-drab OD7, later a darker OD9 cotton sateen. It also had a detachable hood, drawstring waist, two large breast pockets and two skirt pockets.

The trousers were made out of the same cotton sateen material and regular cotton twill. They were made similarly to the khaki trousers, with better design features. They also had buttoned tabs at the waist in order to cinch the waist in. >>>>

The uniform was designed to be warm in winter by use of a separate jacket liner and pant liner (this is why the trousers had buttoned waist tabs), both made of “pile” faux fur. The trouser pile liners were dropped in favor of ordinary wool trousers. The jacket liner was a separate cotton-shell jacket with two slash pockets and button and loop fastening, generally in a lighter shade of olive drab (OD3) than the main jacket but in practice rarely issued during World War II. In the ETO this was intended to be replaced by the M-1944 ‘Ike’ jacket, or one of the generic ‘ETO’ jackets which could come in versions that were either near-identical to the M-1941 jacket, but in rough khaki wool outer, or versions almost identical to British Battledress, both versions being produced locally in the UK in several variations.

In all, a number of new items were designed or standardized in 1943 in order to improve the Army uniforms and individual equipment as much as possible:

M-1943 field jacket and hood	M-1943 goggles
Pile field jacket	Field Pack (a redesigned Jungle Pack)
Field trousers	M-1943 Entrenching Tool & Carrier
Field trouser liner (dropped)	Pocket, Cartridge, Cal .30, M1, Carbine or Rifle
Field cap	Rain poncho
Pile cap	Wool sleeping bag & Case
High-Neck Sweater	M3 gas mask (along with its M6 carrier)
M-1943 Combat Service Boots	M1 Economy Helmet

The equipment was issued quickly around to units because it was usually well-made variants of current equipment. The uniform, though, took much longer to issue.

It was tested in Italy in 1943 but some GIs claim that non-combatant officers and enlisted personnel would utilize their position in the rear to get the new uniform, delaying the ultimate field testing in Italy for some time longer. This, along with shipping delays after D-Day because of the European orders for the M-1944 «Ike» jacket, kept this uniform from widespread use in Europe until late 1944. After D-Day, Paratroopers were issued complete M-1943 uniforms, and infantry units began getting the uniform parts here and there.

Paratroopers were generally the only ones to modify the uniform, mainly because they would add their own trouser cargo pockets sometimes and would keep their older paratrooper boots instead of the new buckle boots.

The original cotton trousers were modified in 1944 (addition of trouser cuff tabs) and as M-1945 pattern with minor cut modifications and a move from stud to plastic buttons.

In practice the pile liner was very rarely issued outside initial trials in North Africa during World War II and is mostly seen in photographs worn as outerwear. However it saw use in Korea, although again sometimes as outerwear.

STANDARD EQUIPMENT CARRIED BY EACH PARACHUTIST

1. The following equipment will be carried by all parachutists.

2 Tags, identification, w/necklace		
1 Drawers, wool		
1 Undershirt, wool		
1 Uniform, parachutists, 2-pc.		
1 Gloves, horsehide unlined, pair		
1 Boots, parachutist, pair		
1 Helmet, steel, M1, mod.(I think), w/liner		
1 Belt, pistol or rifle, dismounted		
1 Canteen, cup and cover	...	on belt
1 Knife, trench, M3, w/scabbard M6	...	on belt
1 Pouch, first-aid and packet	...	on belt
1 Tool, entrenching	...	on belt
1 Spoon, M/26	...	In canteen cover
1 Field bag	...	(Under parachute harness)
2 Socks, light wool, pair	...	1 pair in field bag
Toilet set	...	in field bag

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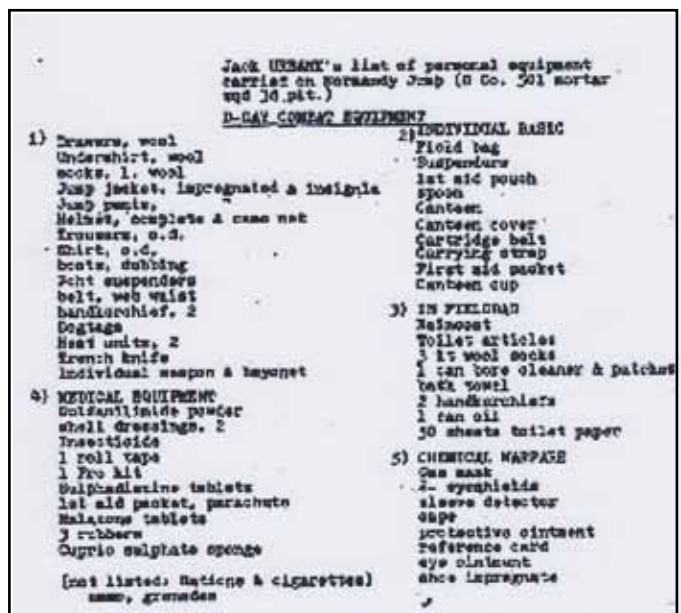
- | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------|---|
| 1 Mask, gas | (If required) | |
| 1 Matches, package | | |
| 1 Cap, wool knit | | |
| 1 Compass, lensatic or watch | ... | Left chest pocket / on belt |
| 1 Knife, pocket, M2 | ... | Center chest pocket |
| 1 Handkerchief | ... | Left chest pocket |
| Tablets, chlorine or halazone | ... | Left chest pocket |
| Tissue, toilet | ... | Left chest pocket |
| 1 Message book, pencil and maps | ... | Right chest pocket |
| 1 Prophylaxis, mechanical, kit | ... | Right chest pocket |
| Tablets, bentadine (?) | ... | Right chest pocket |
| 2 Ration "K" (broken down) | ... | Leg pockets |
| 1 Raincoat | ... | Loop over belt |
| 1 Rope, parachutist, 30' x 3/8" | ... | Looped on belt |
| 4 Grenades, hand, frag. MkII | ... | 2 Waist pockets coat...2 hip pockets trousers |
| 1 Supporter, athletic | (optional) | |
| 2 Tape, ankle | (optional) | |
| 1 Parachute, T-5, complete | | |

2. Following additional equipment will be carried by Officers:

- | | | | |
|---|-----|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Binoculars, M-13 | ... | Over shoulder or on belt | |
| 1 Carbine, cal..30, M1A1 | ... | On belt in scabbard | (except Field Officers) |
| 1 Case, canvas, dispatch | ... | Over right shoulder | |
| 1 Flashlight, TL-122-A | ... | Left leg pocket | |
| 1 Map, template M2 | ... | Dispatch case | |
| 1 Pistol, auto., cal..45 | ... | On belt in holster | (Field Officers only) |
| 1 Pocket, double web.w/clips | ... | On belt | (Field Officers only) |
| 2 Pocket, mag., carbine, cal..30, M1A1... | ... | On belt | (except field Officers) |
| Whistle, thunderer | ... | Left chest pocket | |

Doesn't mean they actually carried it all and a lot was lost during the jump (like the leg-bags being torn off because of the high speed of the C47s)

Personal equipment listing of Jack Urbank from the 501st PIR, 101st Airborne Division



- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1) Drawers, wool
Undershirt, wool
Socks, 1. wool
Jump jacket, impregnated & insignia
Jump pants
Prcht suspenders
Helmet, complete & camo net
Trousers, o.d.
Boots, dubbing
Belt, web waist
Handkerchief, 2
Dogtags
Heat units, 2
Trench knife
Individual weapon & bayonet</p> | <p>2) INDIVIDUAL BASIC
Field Bag
Carrying strap
Cartridge Belt
Suspenders
First aid packet
First aid pouch
Spoon
Canteen
Canteen cup
Canteen cover</p> |
| <p>4) MEDICAL EQUIPMENT
Sulfanilamide powder
Shell dressings, 2
Insecticide
1 Roll tape
1 Pro kit
Sulphadiazine tablets
First aid packet, parachute
Halazone tablets
3 Rubbers
Cupric sulphate sponge</p> | <p>3) IN FIELDBAG
Raincoat
Toilet articles
Socks, 1t wool, 3 pair
Bath Towel
Handkerchiefs, 2
1 Can oil
1 Can bore cleaner & patches
50 Sheets Toilet Paper</p> |
| | <p>5) CHEMICAL WARFARE
Gas mask
Eye shields, 2
Sleeve detector
Cape
Protective ointment
Reference card
Eye ointment
Shoe impregnate</p> |

Not listed:
Rations & cigarettes
Ammo & grenades

• American Paratrooper with standard equipment load boarding a C-47 for D-Day, June 6th 1944.

The Parachute Infantry soldiers got first choice in gear and if it didn't suit their need they had it made up. You see several different style custom ammunition and equipment pouches and bags.

Standard armament for US paratrooper was the M1 Rifle or the M1A1 folding-stock Carbine.

Officers had Carbines as well according to the Tables of Organization, but M1A1 Thompsons SMGs were also common sight.

M1911 Pistols are a bit of a rarity except with field officers. Heavy weapons included 2" mortars and .30 Caliber M1919A4 machine guns and Bazookas.

Demolition packs and Hawkins Mines were also issued.

Pathfinders got even more freedom in picking their armaments and gear as they were specially trained volunteers. Their job was to mark landing locations for the following waves of para-drops. A group would carry a Eureka Transponders that would serve as a homing beacon.



Boots, parachutist, pair

The United States' Airborne Soldiers were one of the most specialized group of individuals during World War Two and were equipped and uniformed as such. Their overall combat uniform was the M-1942 Paratrooper Uniform, which consisted of the M42 Jump Jacket and the first combat cargo trousers issued in the 20th century. The uniform would not have been complete without a nice shiny pair of boots to go with it.

• *The M-1942 Paratrooper Uniform worn w/ "Jump" Boots >*

One of the primary reasons why paratroopers were issued specialized uniforms was due to the nature of their missions. Airborne units would be expected to sustain themselves and fight behind enemy lines for days on end. The cargo pockets on their uniform were needed for extra equipment and ammunition. Their boots however were designed to give extra ankle support for rough parachute landings. They were designed by Lieutenant Colonel Yarborough who also designed the actual Parachutists Jump Wings, the M-1942 Uniform and also various other parachute delivery equipment.

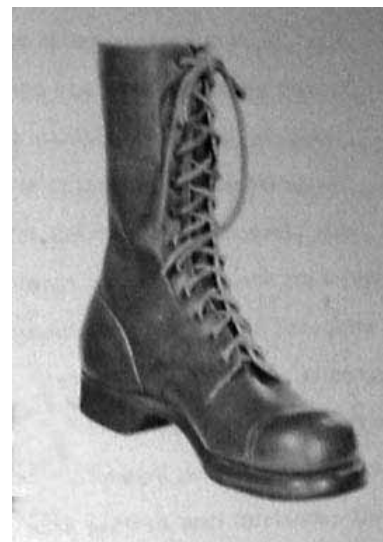
The boots would cause ripples across military history and most recently in the world of fashion. The boots were unique in the sense that they were calf length and completely leather. The reason why this was so unique was that up until this point, American soldiers and the majority of soldiers in the world, were issued low-quarter or ankle boots with some type of wool wrap or canvas leggings/gaiters. This measure was implemented because the low quarter boots needed to be worn with their dress uniform and also in combat.

The actual paratrooper boots became a symbol of the airborne soldiers and were highly sought after by other non-airborne soldiers. Even today in the airborne community and often heard at the United States Jump School a "leg" is a normal or regular soldier. The term originated in WWII and was originally "Straight leg" and this referred to the lack of bloused trousers on non-airborne soldiers. This perpetuated the symbolism of the Jump boots because paratroopers bloused their trousers into their boots. The act of blousing their boots and their M-1942 Paratrooper Cargo Trousers led to German soldiers famously nicknaming Paratroopers "those devils in baggy pants." They were so desired that during the war, non-airborne Soldiers would just about trade anything to get ahold of a pair. This would also cause some fights between real paratroopers and those who would wear them on leave or furlough. A hot set of boots as you can see!

The boots themselves were eventually replaced by the "Double Buckle" M-1943 Combat Boots beginning in 1944, around the time of Operation Market Garden in Holland. Many paratroopers retained their jump boots and continued to wear them until the end of the war and during the early years of Germany and Japan's occupation. Although the American military had converted to the "Double Buckle" boots at the end of the war, the popularity and durability of the Jump Boots was hard to ignore and eventually a version of them were issued to all soldiers in the Korean War and in the early stages of the Vietnam War. •

Sources: GI Intelligence, Olive-Drab, Trigger Time, QM Fashion.

This article was composed by information from the mentioned websites. The photo's have been added from these websites as well.



*This article was contributed by
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Luke Havenport Photographer



Well yes, write something about yourself...

After having “borrowed” several cameras that my father owned, something that did not make him happy at all, I decided to spend my firstly earned money on a Practica camera. One of those Eastern European analog cameras with pretty good features for a hump of East German iron. The beginning of more serious photography was there.

My first marriage did not do much for this hobby as the problem in a marriage is that the man has the hobby but the woman is in control of finances. That was the reason it has been quiet in Luke’s photography hobby for a while.

Outside photography I always had an interest in history, especially the military side over centuries. That was the reason I joined a Roman re-enactment group a few years ago, as “Beneficarius”, a veteran who received a “beneficium” from a highly placed Roman official and served as inspector, customs officer or administrator of a Legion. Regarding my age a very thankful role within the re-enactment world.

Of course I tried to combine photography with the Roman experience which was not always easy. A Roman with a digital camera is a pretty ridiculous sight I can tell you.....

After a few years I decided not to be an active participant in the annual Festival of Living History (LPLG) for health reasons but to go as a visitor with my camera. At the festival I encountered WW2 U.S. re-enactment and after having edited and published the photos I made there I asked “Bones” (Danny Frenken) if I could join his group for an event. The event turned out to be “Volkel in the Clouds” where I met the “Klondikes”. The rest is history...

I sold my Roman junk and bought delightfully light equipment and gear. Since 2013, I am accompanying the Klondikes and was promoted to Second Lieutenant way too early and am having a great time.

The combination of WW2 re-enactment and photography is perfect and I have great pleasure in how easily everybody interacts with each other within WW2 re-enactment. That needs to be said.

Recently, in April 2016, my body indicated that something was seriously wrong and I had emergency heart surgery. This resulted in four bypasses and building up energy and physical fitness from the start by means of heart revalidation. That was quite a job but I am starting to feel even better than before. It may sound strange but you feel very uneasy in a hospital bed when you know that there is a great re-enactment event going on somewhere and you are missing it.

Fortunately the tide has turned and I am trying to be present where I can.

Not only the event itself is fascinating but also the editing of the photos that I have made is something I do with pleasure.

Currently, I have been a part of US WW2 re-enactment for about three years and I am not bored yet. On the contrary, I get more enthusiastic every year.

One thing that I would like to say and leave with you: when a photographer is making a deliberate portrait photo of you, look in the camera and smile.....but when you are in the middle of an intense mock-battle and you are “wounded”... wipe that grin off your face.... that is NOT a good look.

Luc van Antwerpen, aka as Luke Havenport.

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