

DROP ZONE



Official Bulletin of the *First Allied Airborne Army Command*



2015 No. 2



*Bertogne Ceremony, December 2015
WWII Honor Guard Team Band of Brothers - FAAAC*

• Photo André Jans

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Value Peace & Respect History!



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Official Bulletin of the
First Allied Airborne Army
Command

2015, No 2

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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zation is concerned.*

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From the Chairman's Desk

Fred Scheurwater
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The magazine you have in front of you, or read on your computer screen is, again, filled with **valuable information**. I would like to thank **Bram de Jong** for his good work, and **also everyone** who contributed to this magazine.

I would like to start this preface with a retrospective view of 2015. When I look back over the past year, the **training camp in March** organized by **Carlo Heezen, Joel Jansen, Leroy Hezemans and Max Lamers** springs to mind, which was a good beginning of events. It would be good to repeat this training in 2016 as we all still need **more training**. Maybe we can also organise a **single day** of training on a **Saturday or Sunday**, as it does not always have to be a whole weekend. We can do a lot in just one day. This would specifically be beneficial to the new joiners.

Our own event "Liberation Brielle" in May was again very special, in particular due to the fact of several **WWII veterans** attending the event. The vehicle tour was a great success. When I think of the large number of people lining the roads to watch the parade and waving at us, I get chills again. It was great.

Early 2015 the **French SAS** working group organised a beautiful commemoration and display in **Westerbork**. **John Danker** has contributed an article on this. The working groups **Band-of-Brothers** and **French SAS** have **cooperated** on a number of events, most recently in the Ardennes and the **mock battle** in Bertogne.

The event in Eeklo (Belgium) called "**Railway to Liberty**", was organized by our Belgian friends of **Call Of Duty (CODUS)** and they did a particularly good job capturing the interest of approximately 200 school-children who all had to take part in a quiz and had to perform tasks. For the mock battle they had secured use of a steam train (complete with a car with a mounted **German anti aircraft gun**) that was part of the scenario. Well done CODUS.

In between these events I was **also invited** to the event "**Wings of Freedom**" in **Ede** for which our **RAF working group** was invited and was represented by **Frank Zwerver** and **Andre Jans**. Someone who was also spotted there was **His Royal Highness Prince Bernhard of Lippe Biesterfeld**, a re-enactment by **Martin Trouborst** who does this very well and who is receiving a lot of invites to events to play this role.

In September the Market Garden event in **Son** was organized by **Triple-A**. In particular I would like to thank **Michael Daniels**, who was the centre of the organization for the event. As the event could not be nationally publicized it turned out more as an **Airborne training** event. And training we did! Highlights were also the visit to a **school** in Eindhoven, where we also met some **WWII veterans**, and an impressive **battlefield tour**

organized by **Cor Geluk, Tom Timmermans and Tom Peeters**. They told us some great stories. **Harry van de Bogert** had made some reproduction **D-rations** that were be handed out during this tour. Another highlight was **the parade in Eindhoven** which we were asked to lead. During the parade through a busy Eindhoven city centre people **were applauding** and it was quite an honour to be welcomed **as the first** group on the square by the applauding dignitaries and guests.

I am writing this preface having **just returned** from the Ardennes, where we had a weekend that we will not quickly forget, having stayed in the stables of the historic castle **Château de Rolley**. The owner of this Château is also a living history enthusiast. We obtained permission to stay through a **tip from Reg Jans** and charming negotiation by **Beatrice Pialoux (Cor Geluk's spouse)** as they could conduct this **all in French**. Being able to stay in these historic surroundings secured a great turn-out for this weekend. Several **FAAAC working groups** also took part in a mock battle at Bertogne organized by **Patrick Brion**.

The **large number** of members in attendance was also due to several new members. We are still receiving **requests from** potential new groups to join. I personally think that our group will continue to grow, mainly because of the quality level that we are trying to achieve in **appearance and behaviour**. In addition, we are viewed by **other groups** and organizations as **reliable** and **well organized**. We always try to reply quickly to **any requests** and run an accurate administration department. Our members are regularly asked for advice and help with information or communication within the **Living History world**. I am **very proud of that** as it is a sign of our **efforts and good work**. We will look back on this year with a sense of satisfaction of what we have done and achieved. There is obviously **still a growing** need for people and organizations that work on **WWII related issues** and events.

I would like to **thank every member** of this club and specifically **Eric Ommering** for the entire **weapon administration** and its management; **Johan van Waart** for his translations, mediation and **lobbying** umbrella organizations as LPLG and the Airborne platform; **Nicolette Mol** for many administrative formalities; **Ad van Vugt** for being an excellent First Sergeant and almost single-handedly running the entire workgroup Band of Brothers; **Roland Ravens** for organising Brielle and controlling the finances; **all the ladies** of the club for pampering us every time on events; **Rob Scheurwater and Richard Corstjens** for maintenance of the **motor pool**; **our sponsors** for often just giving a little push and all the working group representatives.

First Allied Airborne Army Command

Wish you all a
A Merry Christmas

&
A HAPPY NEW YEAR



Dutch WWII Re-enactment & Living History Club
www.FAAAC.nl

Undoubtedly, I am sure someone forgot to thank, so **please accept** my humble apology.

Finally, I see the future **with confidence** and expect us **to grow** even more. A sign of this is the group "**Yank Re-enactment**" who has indicated they would like to **join FAAAC** from next season onward. I would like to thank "**Yank Re-enactment**" for their great work over the past year as well and **I hope to be able to welcome** you officially at the **New Year party** on Jan 23, 2016. Let's not forget why we are doing this: **to remember, honour, and educate. Keep up the good work!**

I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a good new Re-enactment / Living History year in 2016.

Fred Scheurwater

Battle of Bertogne



• Major Johan van Waart



• Photo André Jans

• Wreathlaying at Bertogne, December 2015



• Photo André Jans

• Bertogne Ceremony, December 2015



Men,

Thank you for a great weekend at Chateau Rolley and for your efforts in the Battle of Bertogne.

I could single out certain units or individuals for praise (the squadleaders, the mortar team, the runners, the MP, all the riflemen, the ration team, the drivers) but I won't as I think you all did a great job.

I hope that the battle participants cherish their English penny as a memento of this great event and the battle we won.

I wouldn't be the CO as is I didn't have a point of criticism: it would be good to have a .30 cal LMG team defending my HQ next time as I now felt a bit naked and exposed!

Please, also realise that for those who we re-enact the battle only started in a couple of days.

On the 16th Dec 1944 the Germans broke through the Allied lines and on the 18th of Dec the 101st started moving out of Mourmelon and taking positions around Bastogne on the 19th.

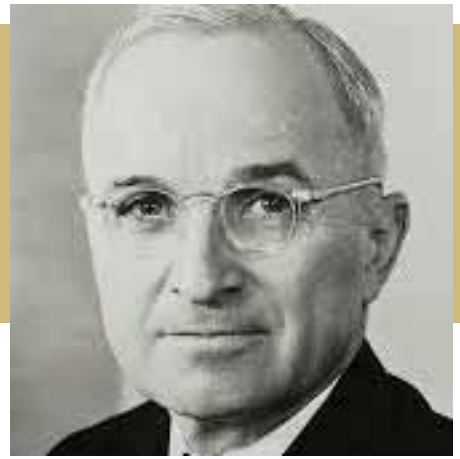
Good luck with cleaning all the mud off your gear and hope to see you all on the New Year reception.

Hang tough!

Johan van Waart
Major, 2nd Btn 506 PI 101 AB.=

On Christmas Eve 1945, President Harry Truman addressed the nation:

President Harry S. Truman,
33rd President of the United States of America (1945 - 1953)



Dear Praying Friends

This is the Christmas that a war-weary world has prayed for through long and awful years. With peace come joy and gladness. The gloom of the war years fades as once more we light the National Community Christmas Tree. We meet in the spirit of the first Christmas, when the midnight choir sang..."Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men..."

It is fitting for us to remember that the spirit of Christmas is the spirit of peace, of love, of charity to all men. From the manger of Bethlehem came a new appeal to the minds and hearts of men: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another."

In love, which is the very essence of the message of the Prince of Peace, the world would find a solution for all its ills. I do not believe there is one problem in this country or in the world today which could not be settled if approached through the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount. The poets' dream, the lesson of priest and patriarch and the prophets' vision of a new heaven and a new earth, all are summed up in the message delivered in the Judean hills beside the Sea of Galilee. Would that the world would accept that message in this time of its greatest need!

This is a solemn hour. In the stillness of the Eve of the Nativity when the hopes of mankind hang on the peace that was offered to the world nineteen centuries ago, it is but natural, while we survey our destiny, that we give thought also to our past--to some of the things which have gone into the making of our Nation.

You will remember that Saint Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, and his companions, suffering shipwreck, "cast four anchors out of the stern and wished for the day" [Acts 27:29]. Happily for us, whenever the American Ship of State has been storm-tossed we have always had an anchor to the windward... [he spoke of Washington, Lincoln, Jefferson and Jackson; their roles in history]

With our enemies vanquished we must gird ourselves for the work that lies ahead. Peace has its victories no less hard won than success at arms. We must not fail or falter. We must strive without ceasing to make real the prophecy of Isaiah: "They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

In this day, whether it be far or near, the Kingdoms of this world shall become indeed the Kingdom of God and He will reign forever and ever, Lord of Lords and King of Kings. With that message I wish my countrymen a Merry Christmas and joyous days in the New Year

This article was contributed by FAAAC Chaplain Oscar Stok



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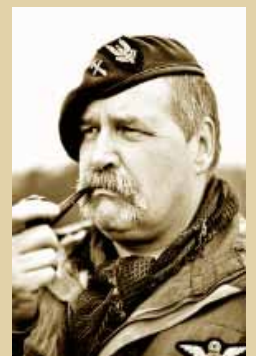
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'WEEKEND WARRIORS'

FIRST ALLIED AIRBORNE ARMY COMMAND

The First Allied Airborne Army Command (FAAAC) in Holland is a Group of re-enactors which is based on the First Allied Airborne Army that liberated Europe during WWII. Within this Group we have members of the 101st Airborne, Troop Carrier Command, French SAS and Ox & Bucks.

• Photo Melvin Mast

NEWBEE

To make a correct appearance during events, everybody should know the do's and don'ts of army life and army regulations. This has to be drilled in the right order. You don't want to make a fool of yourself. We as re-enactors are privileged. We can just sew on a patch or pin, a pair of wings on an uniform and we can portray one of the elite units in WWII. What we should not forget however is how much needed to be done to be able to wear those wings and how proud the men were of them when they were allowed to wear them. Blood has been spilled and men have been killed wearing those wings. We can just pin them on. There are people who served wearing this patch or these wings that say that no-one who did not actually serve is allowed to wear them. We can wear them because we re-enact WWII. But we have to realise the pride that goes with wearing those wings and the honor that goes with them. Never forget the efforts of the men, in training and combat, who wore these wings before you and how proud they were of them. Therefore we went on a long weekend that started on Friday afternoon and ended Sunday in the afternoon.

For me this was also my first time, and as a "newbee" I thought it would be interesting to learn something more about re-enacting and the fellow beside me who is doing the same thing.



• Drill instructor Lieutenant Heezen

To take care of this all we had a young fanatic drill instructor from the British commandogroep. His job was to change these lads into a solid team.

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TREE!!

After building up basecamp the Padre (yes we have one on board!) blessed this weekend and off we went. There were a few instructions, do's and don'ts on the campside. After all, it was clear it was already time for dinner...this meant a simple meal by the campfire, just like 70 years ago.

After quarters inspection everybody was told to go to bed early. At 06.00hrs would be the start of the day... some went to bed, others chose to get a small beer and exchange some news from their own "homefront". At around 23.30hrs everybody was woken up very roughly: "you have 6 minutes to dress up and to fall in!". And what happened? Everybody was there in time, not in a very good shape but ok... then our fanatic instructor suddenly shouted "TREE!!!"...I thought "What the hell is happening now?". This was one of his "jokes". As soon as he shouted "TREE", everybody had to climb in a tree asap (at least 5 inches above the ground was ok) and hug it very closely for 10 seconds. But you had to do this also within 10 seconds. This could happen everywhere, during drills, lessons, dinner, sleep, whatever. >>>

• Photo Martijn Hendal



• TREE!!

• Photo Melvin Mast

06:00 hrs:

The first night everybody was a bit jumpy and we didn't have much sleep. But perhaps the cold, it was almost 0 degrees, also helped not to fall asleep. We were shaking so much that your fieldcot fell apart...then there was some rain (of course), some of the tents were tested and did not pass this test). But hey,...welcome to bootcamp! So we started at 06.00hrs. In the middle of the camp there was some hot coffee! Man, that was very good to start with. After coffee we fell in line and raised the flag. We had to earn breakfast and started around 07.00hrs with morning exercises. A short run and some drills to start. This was not so bad because we finally warmed ourselves during exercises. Of course during this drill we hugged some trees...



• Hot coffee at 06.00 hrs.

• Photo Martijn Hendal

Just after we left the bridge we were under fire from behind!!! Nobody had looked underneath the bridge...Boy,we really screwed up that time...

After that great experience we split up into two teams for vehicle recognition in combination with operating the field-telephone. So we decided to go for cover in the woods and armed with some binoculars we recognized almost every WWII vehicle and phoned it to our CO somewhere in the field. The next thing was crossing an open field in "Wing" formation. And of course we were attacked again from a flank. But we were instructed and our Wing formation was fast enough to bring all fire arms in front of the so called enemy (a tractor from a farm on the other side....).



• Tactical briefing before an attack..

• Photo Martijn Hendal

ON PATROL!

After breakfast we were informed by our instructor what we were going to do for this day. We got some instructions about simply executing a patrol. Defense and attack. What does a patrol even look like? At the front we had two scouts. Everybody was a scout for a while. After that we received some tactical instruction on taking a bridge, finding the enemy and "what if" situations. This was all very helpful and interesting and some things looked very simple but carrying out some orders was sometimes more difficult than sounded in the first place. So after some easy patrols the instructor and his team gave us an assignment: Look for the Jerries, and take them out! A simple task...So off went the patrol with the 2 scouts. There was the bridge...in earlier briefings we had learned how to take and hold a bridge...so we did... First 2 men and they looked over the bridge...sign ok... 2 men across the bridge..still ok...the rest followed and take position on the other side...job well done NOT!!!



• Operating the field telephone during a vehicle reconnaissance mission.

• Photo Martijn Hendal

Now it was time to get some experience in attacking an enemy. And what can you do if you find out that Jerry is too large to overrun...better said: retreat immediately! So we learned something about covering fire and turtling back into safe ground. This was very hard to do because in theory it is all very clear. The other bloke is covering his friend across his side and so on...but what if your covering guy is sitting right behind you...he will shoot you instead of the enemy...again some good lessons. >>>



• Photo Melvin Mast

• Training with dummy rifles (ou peanut carriers), but you still feel the same tention...Jerry is somewhere there...

PEANUT

Next thing was overrunning an enemy. Base of fire, assault team, flanking etc etc... this was a good thing to do and you had to look after each other. Because we were carrying dummy rifles we shouted "peanut". But once on patrol you where acting as a team and covering eachother's back. There we were: some men running

in the woods with helmets on and shouting "peanut" to someone. If you could hear it from a distance you would have thought that the local nut-house had been blown up and everybody was going his own way...After some instructions we were allowed to grab some food and a simple lunch was very welcome. >>>



• Photo Martijn Hendal

• Communication instructions. The Chaplin has his own direct line...

After lunch some basic drills and marching orders were given and later on we received some proper instructions about communications during WWII. We learned differences between the field- and radiotelephone and the different types of codes that were used.

LUXERY

By now we all needed the luxury of a hot meal. Our host from the campside prepared a BBQ and with a few beers -on the side- it would become a very nice evening along the campfire. Most of the men went to bed very early because of the exhausting day. Next day would start at 07.30hrs.

That night it was also very cold (about 2 degrees) and everybody loved the smell of fresh coffee in the early morning. You appreciated these simple things doing these kind of exercises. With some Music from the '40s we all got up (some still in a bad shape because of the party the night before) and started with raising the flag.

After that it was a very good thing to get some exercise to keep warm. After some drilling and learning how to make some turns and to get familiar with commands like column right (left), mark time and counter-march. We were doing ok. Even the CO and NCO's were drilling along with us (just to keep warm).



• Raising the flag with honour.

• Photo Martijn Hendal



HONOR GUARD

After a short coffee break some serious stuff: we were trained how to behave and received instructions during a Honor Guard, including firing a weapon. Because of the fact we are not allowed in Holland to use real arms in Holland, we practised with a wooden repro. But during all excercises this piece of wood was respected by every man and treated like a lady. Firing was simulated by shouting "click" during this exercise. "peanut" would not be suitable in this case... >>>

< If you didn't obey, severe punishment was the result!



• Photo Martijn Hendal

• Photo Martijn Hendal



• Photo Martijn Hendal

THE END OF BEGINNING

This was also the end of this long and interesting weekend... The End? For myself it was just the beginning... And after a group photo we all hugged a tree of course...

During this weekend we didn't only learned how to act like WW2 soldiers, but we actually bonded with each other. Everybody was helping other guys getting their stuff together, to do the drilling correct and cook a simple meal. Maybe... just maybe... we got a very small fragment of the feeling that our liberators also experienced during that time 70 years ago.

*Watch the movie on
YouTube by scanning
the code with your
tablet
(This does not work
with a cell phone)*



WWII Re-enactment & Living History Club



First Allied Airborne Army Command

Mail your articles/photographs, advertisements, comments etc. for DROP ZONE to:
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Department: W.A.A.A.C Women's Army Auxiliary Corps

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In the previous edition of Dropzone Bulletin in the summer 2015, I wrote about Mrs. Oveta Culp Hobby. She was appointed on May 14, 1942 as Director and was promoted to the rank of Major of the W.A.A.C. in the United States.

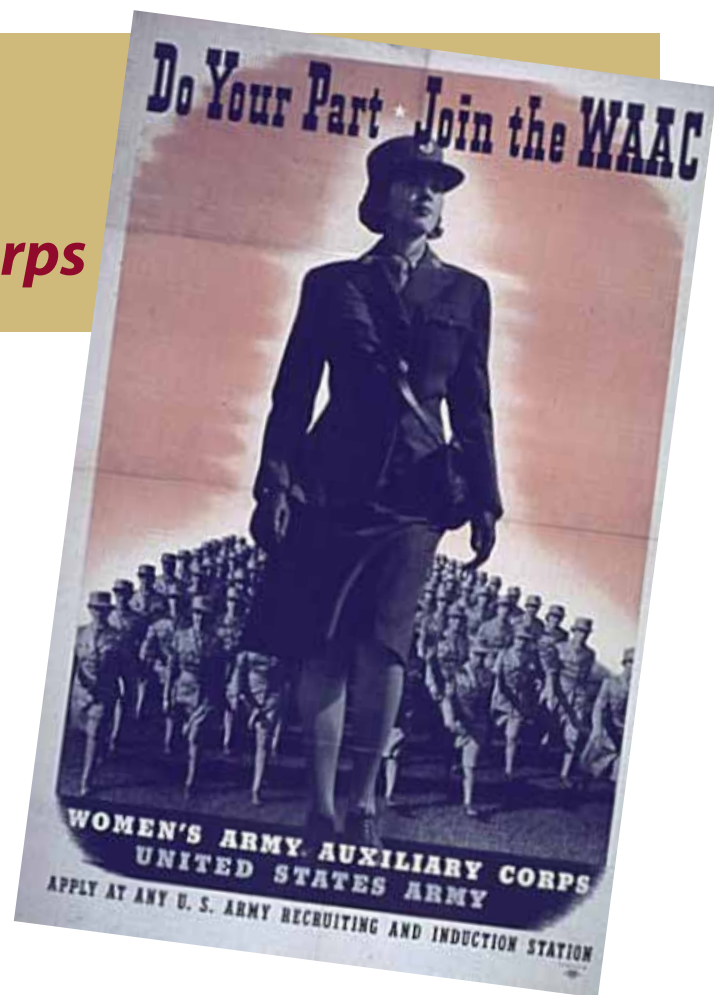
On May 14, 2015 I'm a member of F.A.A.A.C. and I learned a lot this year. My motivation is to be an active member! I think it's important that I get the opportunity to teach you about the international efforts of W.A.A.C. women in WWII.

In this edition I want to inform you about recruitment and training. I hope you enjoy this information and hopefully I meet you next time in F.A.A.A.C. time!



• Photo Andre Jansz

• Renée Stok-Land (The lady on the left). Taste of '44 in Welten on 4 October 2015



Recruitment and Training

Why they join the W.A.A.C.?

Many with family members in the armed forces believed that the men would come home sooner if women actively helped win the war and that the most efficient way a woman could help the war effort was to free a man for combat duty.

Who was responsible?

Major Hobby immediately began organizing the W.A.A.C. recruiting drive and training centers. Fort Des Moines, Iowa, was selected as the site of the first W.A.A.C. training center.

Screening of Applicants

First screening was the physical examination. Applicants had to be U.S. citizens between the ages of 21 and 45 with no dependents, be at least five feet tall, and weigh 100 pounds or more. Second screening was the aptitude examination. Those who passed the aptitude test were further screened by a preliminary local interviewing board of two women and an Army officer selected by the corps area. To avoid appointment of unqualified women to these boards, the preplanners had sent out instructions that members were to be local personnel directors, business executives, YWCA supervisors, and women of like standing. These local boards weeded out those applicants who were visibly unsuited by reason of character, bearing, or instability. Members were asked to consider the question: "Would I want my daughter to come under the influence of this woman?"

The numbers passing both the test and the first board still hopelessly overcrowded Army medical facilities for the examination of women. It was therefore directed that only the top five hundred applicants in each >>>

corps area be given physical examinations. The examination was not entirely consistent throughout the corps area and it was evident that the Army still had far to go in working out a satisfactory physical examination for women, but it did eliminate those with the more obvious physical disqualifications.



• Screening of applicant for first officer candidate class by local interviewing board at Fort Mc Pherson, Georgia, 20 June 1942.

There then arrived at each corps area headquarters an especially selected woman to be the Director's representative on the final screening board. Among the women selected were Dean Dorothy C. Stratton of Purdue, later head of the SPARS, and Dean Sarah Blanding of Cornell, later President of Vassar.

Special about the military training

The duration of the basic military training was 4 weeks when the W.A.A.C. started. Later it was expanded into 5 and even 6 weeks in 1944. The basic training was given in special W.A.A.C. centers. The first one, Fort Des Moines/Iowa opened on 20 July 1942. The second >>>





• *Beginners' Salute 1942* Author: Rebecca L. Brockenbrough

See more at: <http://marshallfoundation.org/library/photographs/beginners-salute/#sthash.JEuOHavA.dpuf>

one on Daytona Beach, Florida was activated 3 months later. Fort Oglethorp/Georgia, Fort Devens/Massachusetts and Camp Ruston/Louisiana followed. But before the end of 1943 all were closed because of insufficient demand except for Fort Des Moines and Ford Oglethorpe.

The basic training consisted of 23 courses taking up to 176 hours.

For example members of the W.A.C. learned about army organization, map reading, safeguarding military information, mess management, military customs and courtesy and property responsibility.

Additional physical training was given to insure best fitness of the women before they took up their new duties as woman soldiers. Next to gymnastics, games and sports they learned to exercise "close-order drill".

At the end of the basic training every W.A.C. had to pass aptitude tests to determine the type of work of the W.A.C. would be best fitted for. W.A.C. personnel then could be assigned to start the recommended duty work at an Army post or visit a specialist school.

Specialist school training could last another 5 – 12 weeks depending on the chosen work field. For example, among those specialist courses were: clerks' course, cooks' course, medical, surgical and dental tech-

nician course, laboratory technician course, X-ray technician course and Army finance course.

Recruitment brochures

pointed out that every qualified member would have the chance to become an officer. After 3 months of active duty at the earliest enrolled W.A.C. members could apply for the Officer Candidate School. Their appointment as an officer candidate depended on their writing skill, oral examinations, her record and her qualities of leadership as determined by her commanding officer.

The officer training course

took 12 weeks. Officer candidates were taught about requisition and supply, military equipment and company administration in a 21 portion course (total duration of 264 hours). Successful graduates were commissioned as second lieutenants in the Army.

More information:

<http://www.history.army.mil/brochures/wac/wac.htm>

<http://www.blitzkriegbaby.de/homepage.htm>

<http://womenofwwii.com/armywacs.html>

Thanksgiving Day Message



11/23/44

To the men of 2nd Btn, 506 PI, 101st AB

Men,

Today is Thursday November 23, 1944 and it is Thanksgiving Day. "What do we have to be thankful for" I hear you say. I will tell you, we have done everything we have been asked to do, we have held the line against furious German attacks and we have liberated a part of the Netherlands and its people. We can be proud of being the 101st AB.

I hope you enjoy the turkey that our Supreme Commander has ordered us to have. I can also tell you that we will be moving out to France in the next few days for well earned rest, recuperation and resupply. Make sure you get all your equipment and weapons repaired and in order.

I am very proud of what you have achieved since landing in the Netherlands on Sept 17th, 1944 but the job is not done yet. I do not know when but I am sure this Division will be called in action again before the war is over.

Johan van Waart
Major, 2nd Btn, 506 PI, commanding.



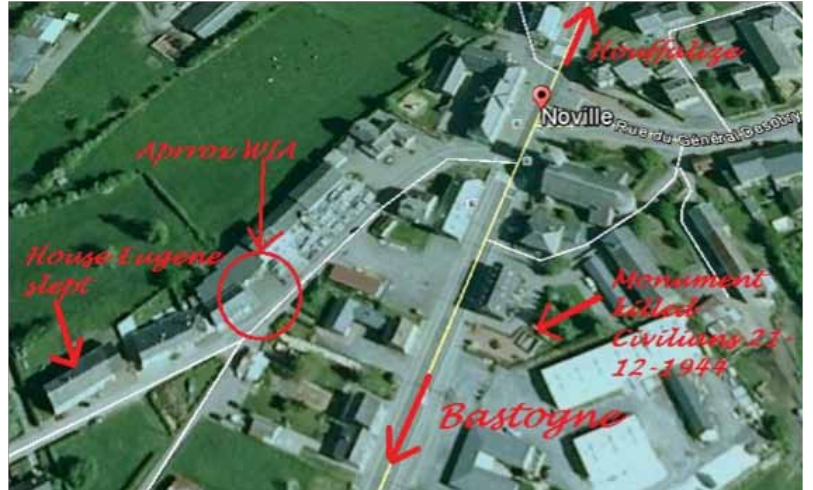
How Eugene Gilbreath got shot by a Sniper in 1945! (Reconstruction)!!

This story was told by Eugene Gilbreath and chronicled for Drop Zone by Ronald Stassen
 Photos from the archive of Ronald Stassen

Eugene Gilbreath was called up for duty on 17 November 1943. After having followed the basic training, he voluntary joined the parachutists at Ft. Benning, Georgia. Gene left the U.S. for England on July 1, 1944 and joined the Hq Company, 2nd Battalion, 506th PIR, 101st Airborne Division on July 12, 1944. He was Private First Class.

COBRU, BELGIUM

Around 3 am on the morning of January 12th 1945, Gene and his squad came up the hill from Cobru and passed between a garage, where they would sleep that morning and a two story house. He says they entered the garage and that he slept for around 3 to 4 hours until he had to pull guard duty from 7 - 8am.



• Eugene Gilbreath, HQ 506 was wounded in the chest by a sniper early in the morning of the 15th of January 1945. To go to the house where it all happened follow the road from the church down the street.



• This is the house where he stayed during early 15th of January 1945.



• This is the house where Eugene slept in the garage in January 1945. Take a good look and see the matching windows, doors and other elements. The barn on the right is where they slept.

By the time his guard duty shift was up, he says all of the “boys” were awake and that he offered/suggested to his Squad Leader, Sergeant Jim Comes, that , because it was so cold he would go look for some blankets or sheets in the abandoned two story homes/buildings. These homes/buildings are now gone and in their place is a marble stone business, next to the garage.



He says says that he exited the barn, turned left and walked on a very narrow sidewalk toward the first house; he went in through the front door, turned left and proceeded to the second house to search it. >>>

He was just about to enter the front door of the second house when he was shot in the upper chest with the bullet exiting his left shoulder. While no one really knows for sure, he assumes that it was a sniper whose location is also unknown or as Gene believes it to have come from the area or steeple of the Noville church.

The current Noville church occupies the same location as the one that was destroyed during WW2, at the intersection of N30 and the Cobru, Noville Road, and is located about 100 yards in a NE direction from where he was shot.



• Where he was wounded in action (WIA) is approximately where the second car, in the photo, so is the assumption. Gene came out of the garage, turning towards the church and went into the first house looking for blankets. He came out and was hit just as he wanted to enter the second house. My opinion (not a fact) is that the bullet came from the church tower.

the cold temperature that he would have bled to death almost immediately.

In the field hospital in Luxembourg a nice nurse came up to Gene one day and asked him: "Wouldn't you want to write to your mother?" Gene can't prove anything but he thinks that his brother, who was serving in the Medical Corps somewhere else in Luxembourg, may have had a hand in that. However, Gene never asked and his brother never confirmed it. He wrote a letter home!



• Private First Class Eugene E. Gilbreath

Bleeding profusely from the wounds, he fell into the street directly in front of the house and hollered for a medic three times. Not far from him was a disabled and abandoned Sherman M4 tank. Unable to get any help in response to his cries for help, somehow he managed to put his Thompson SMG under his right shoulder, get to his feet, and make it back to the garage where the rest of his squad was still resting.

In the garage he was given morphine and Sgt. Comes assisted him in walking back the one mile from there to the aid station. Gene was able to make it about 3/4s of the way to the aid station which was about a mile away before he collapsed and from then until they reached the aid station Sgt. Jim Comes carried him the rest of the way.

Gene says after he collapsed he does not remember anything else until he woke up in a Field Hospital in Luxembourg. He also states, as a matter of fact, that had it not been for



After a few weeks in Luxembourg, Gene was transported back to England. A few months later, he was put on the Queen Elizabeth and experienced his first cruise. He enjoyed the trip on this fabulous ship but wished he had been in a better condition. He still felt lucky compared to some of the other wounded men on this ship. Gene was sent for recovery to a hospital in Memphis from where he could visit his family in Missouri easily.

A long period of recovery and reconstructive surgery on his arm in various hospitals (also in Florida) followed. Gene joked that some of the later retreatments were more painful than getting shot!

Eugene E. Gilbreath was finally discharged in September 1945.



Partial Dinner Units from the 10-in-1 rations

Historical introduction

When WWII broke out the U.S. Army had four types of rations: ration A, B, C and D. In the U.S. Army a ration was the amount of food for one soldier for one day.

The ration type A was served at Army posts and barracks and consisted of freshly prepared food. In the field the B ration was served, fresh vegetables and meats were replaced with canned food and other non perishable foods like powdered milk and eggs.

In 1938 a combat ration was introduced consisting of six cans that could be carried by the individual soldier. Three cans contained 12 ounces of a meat and vegetable dish (Meat unit), and three cans packed with biscuits, soluble coffee with sugar and some hard candy (Bread unit). Two cans of either units constituted a meal. The C ration was intended for those troops who were unable to obtain the B ration during combat and was intended to be used for a few days at most. **(foto 1)**

Finally an enriched chocolate bar of 4 ounces that could replace a missed meal in an emergency was called the D ration. This unpalatable concoction was also known as the D-bar.

With the introduction of the blitzkrieg tactics, the U.S. Army needed a lightweight ration for its new highly mobile troops. A ration, packed in three small boxes was developed and was standardized in 1942 as the K ration. This ration was only intended to be used for short periods of time for those units that operated behind enemy lines, like motorized reconnaissance or parachute troops, until relieved by the ground army. As with the C ration, it turned out that the troops lived on those rations for days, if not weeks, on end. **(foto 2)**

In the frenzy of developing new specialized equipment when the United States suddenly found itself in a global war, the Quartermaster Corps developed special rations for feeding small groups of soldiers who were carrying raids out behind enemy lines. In 1942 the Mountain ration, a Jungle ration, and a 5-in-1 ration were developed. A desire for a ration that could feed 10 men, weighing no more than 40 pounds and consisted of food that needed little or no preparation was expressed. This ration could replace all other special rations.

A prototype consisted of a breakfast and an evening meal that the men consumed as a group, the lunch, however, was a K ration unit that could be distributed to the individual soldier and eaten at noon when the men were in the field. The prototype came in three menu varieties, meaning that when used for three consecutive days, each meal would differ from the meal used >>>

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Harry van den Bogert
Yank Re-enactment



• Black & White photos: Archive material

the day before. With each menu a different K ration unit for the noon meal was used. The 10-in-1 ration was born. The 10-in-1 ration was adopted with little modifications, but the number of menus was extended to five. The noon meal, dinner in army parlance, was altered to a small box consisting of chewing gum, biscuits, beverage with sugar and a confection. Its composition was heavily based on the K ration. Since all cans were packed separately from all soft packaging in the 10-in-1 ration, the cans were issued separately with the dinner unit. The noon meal box became known as the Partial Dinner Unit. (foto 3)



Reproductions

Fred, Bert and yours truly joined hands together and have begun working on reproductions of WWII U.S. Army rations. The goal ultimately is the reproduction of the K ration. This is not as easy as one might think. So far we do have the Partial Dinner Unit that we can use. (foto 4)

The Partial Dinner Unit we reproduced is according to the March 1944 specifications. These packages were marked Partial Dinner Unit on the front together with the number of the menu it came with. On the back it carries a warning against malaria. (foto 5)

Each dinner unit originally consisted of two packages of 4 small rectangular biscuits. We used three thicker and bigger square biscuits. A small package containing 23 grams of granulated sugar is included to sweeten the fruit powder drink. An aluminium foil envelope with 7 grams of a powder that when dissolved in water makes a lemonade or an orange flavored drink. Menu #1, #2 and #4 contains the lemonade, the orange powder drink is included in menus #3 and #5. (foto 6)

Partial Dinner Unit #1 included hard candy for a confection. Unfortunately I have not found any indication what these hard candies were. It might have been a roll of Butterscotch or Assorted Charms candies. For now we use a package of Caramels that are also (originally) included in the menu #2 package. A Sweet Chocolate Bar is packaged with the #3 Partial Dinner Unit. We are working on a correct sized reproduction of the chocolate bar, but for now we use a snack size Mars bar packed in the Sweet Chocolate wrapper. Menus #4 and #5 includes the Fruit Bar. (foto 7) >>>



• Color photos by Bert de Jong

This fruit Bar is a compressed bar of chopped dried fruit, placed on a grease proof paper that is set in a tray made of dark colored paperboard. The lettering on this tray is correctly printed with white ink. The tray holding the fruit bar is heat sealed in cellophane. This Fruit Bar is the lesser known component of the ration and we are darn proud of our recreation. It just turned out great!

All these components are sealed in a cellophane bag for fresh keeping and then inserted in the Partial Dinner Unit's box. A stick of chewing gum is thrown in for good measure, wrapped with a correct paper band, of course. **(foto 8)**

Originally the can that goes with each unit would contain 4 ounces (113 grams) of either an Egg product (menu #1 and #4), Cheese product (menu #2 and #5) or a Meat product (menu #3). Unfortunately the only right sized can we could find contains Tuna. Personally, I don't like fish. **(foto 9)**

Oh, there are also a few odd early Dinner units with a fruit bar and soluble coffee instead of the fruit powder drink. See if you can spot them!

Enjoy your lunch, fellas!

*Harry van den Bogert
Yank Re-enactment*



7



• Eating rations in Normandy

• Black & White photos: Archive material



8



9

• Color photos by Bert de Jong

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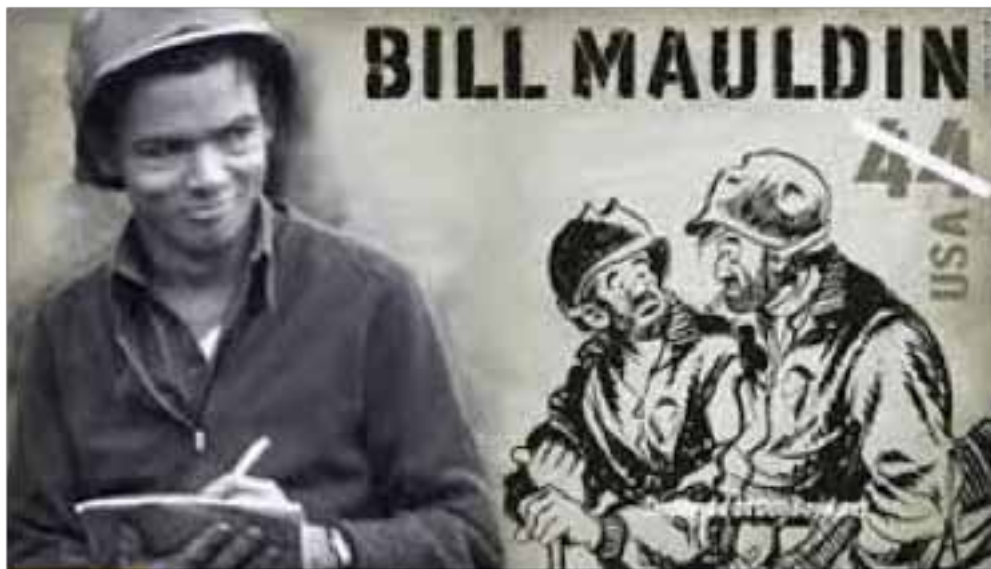
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Mauldin at War, 1943-1945

Source:
*The Library of Congress
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One of the first, and sometime the only, things people think about when they hear the name Bill Mauldin is World War II. His characters Willie and Joe, created for the *45th Division News* in 1940, extended to the Mediterranean edition of the *Stars and Stripes* in November 1943. Mauldin officially transferred to the Mediterranean edition of *Stars and Stripes* early in 1944 and his editor arranged for syndication by United Feature Service as *Up Front* at the same time. He won his first Pulitzer for cartooning in 1945.

Mauldin always called it as he saw it. During the war that led him to more than one confrontation with the military brass, including a famous one with General George Patton. In 1944, while technically AWOL in Paris, Mauldin was set up to meet the famous general who did not appreciate the scruffiness of Willie and Joe. In March 1945, he drove up to Luxembourg, to Patton's quarters. Mauldin recounts the meeting in *The Brass Ring*, in which Patton harangued him:

"Now then, sergeant, about those pictures you draw of those god-awful things you call soldiers. Where did you ever see soldiers like that? You know goddamn well you're not drawing an accurate representation of the American soldier. You make them look like goddamn bums. No respect for the army, their officers, or themselves. You know as well as I do that you can't have an army without respect for officers. What are you trying to do, incite a goddamn mutiny? You listen to me sergeant, the Russians tried running an army without rank once".... "Sergeant," he said, "I don't know what you think you're trying to do, but the krauts ought to pin a medal on you for helping them mess up discipline for us."

Mauldin was permitted to speak his mind to Patton. As he left the general's office, he found Will Lang perched outside. "I said Patton had received me courteously, had expressed his feelings about my work, and had given me the opportunity to say a few words myself. I didn't think I had convinced him of anything, and I didn't think he had changed my mind much, either."

Mauldin earned a Purple Heart at Cassino. He did not spend all of his time cartooning and working for the *45th Division News* during the war. He made sure he spent time with K Company, his fellow infantrymen. In fact, around Christmas 1943, while sketching at the front, a small fragment from a German mortar hit his shoulders, as he noted in *The Brass Ring*, "My only damage was a ringing in my ears and a fragment in my shoulder. It burned like a fury but was very small. The wound hardly bled." Mauldin received a Purple Heart for his injury, and when he protested that he had "been cut worse sneaking through barbed-wire fences in New Mexico," the aid told him to take the medal, which might get him discharged earlier at the end of the war.





Editor & Fine Art Painter



• Mosquito HX 811 - Painting by Bram de Jong, oil paint on linen, size 80 x 120 cm, agdj'15 Copyright. www.agdj.nl

The Havilland Mosquito, HX 81

Drop Zone's managing editor, Bram de Jong, is also a fine art painter. From time to time, he paints military subjects. This year, he painted the famous Mosquito WW2 airplane.

Via his brother, Bert de Jong (The ThemeMachine), he came in touch with the association Oud Limmen and finished the painting using their historic information about this air plane.

Mosquito HX 811 crashed during a night mission to Vechta, Germany, in Limmen on 8 September 1944. The Mosquito HX 811 was probably hit by lightning.

Bram made the painting in memory of the crew; pilot Warren Robert Zeller, RCAF, age 25, and navigator Reginald Tribbeck, RAF, age 28. The pilot and navigator received a WW2 grave at the cemetery behind the Protestant Church (Zuidkerkelaan) in Limmen.


The association Oud Limmen organized an exhibition covering WW2 at the Protestant Church in Limmen on



1 May 2015. Robert Zeller Jr., son of the pilot of the Mosquito HX 811, officially opened the exhibition. Family members of the crew of the Mosquito attended the exhibition and disclosed the painting.

At this moment he is working on a painting of a Dakota C 47 dropping parachutists in Normandy! We will keep you posted!

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*Merry Christmas
and a
happy New Year!*

We would like to thank all authors and photographers who contributed to this December 2015 **DROP ZONE Edition!**