

The Burman News

Official publication of Merrill's Marauders Association, Inc.

July, 1994

THREE MORE MEMORIES

WEST POINT - MEMORIAL TO GENERAL MERRILL & STILWELL AS COMMEMORATION OF RELIEF OF 5307 SECOND BATTALION AT NHPUM GA HILL, BURMA.

As agreed at the Reunlon, we got together at Gen Merrill's Grave at West Point on Easter Sunday, April 3rd to commemorate the Battle of the Second Bn on Nhpum Ga Hill. Two joint meals - Sunday Brunch at the Thayer.

Saturday night there a Buffet and then meeting at a room to talk over our military history. Mrs Merrill came in time for the Brunch and the Memorial Service. Also for the first time we had the chance to meet the General's son, Tom and his wife. Logan Weston conducted the service at the cemetery.

COLONEL LOGAN WESTON'S MESSAGE

Today you and I have much for which to be thankful. We can see some of the reasons for this as we look around these hallowed grounds. We perceive from many historical facts that from earliest days until now God has intervened on behalf of our freedom. We are a fortunate people. We are a peaceful people and we think today of the reasons that we have peace on this occasion. We think of the casualties of World War I, of World War II, of Korea and Vietnam.

We here today think of the experiences that we observed 50 years ago today in the jungle clad foothills of Burma. We recall the Battle of Walawbum and how God had intervened on our behalf at that time. We think of the Battle of Inkangatawng. We think of Nhpum Ga and I recall how the enemy attempted to take Nhpum Ga from the south before our 2nd and 3rd Battalion people were able to get back from Inkangatawng. I remember seeing General Merrill

and Col Mc Gee standing beside the trail. As Col Mc Gee was placing his men in defensive positions the enemy artillery began pounding us and I recall the steadfastness that the presence of Gen Merrill installed in the men of the 2nd Bn as they approached Nhpum Ga from Inkangatawng and began to dig in. Then after they had been surrounded for two weeks and our Third Battalion, which was at Hsamshingyang, my platoon was ordered to initiate the breakthrough attempt of the trail block by the Japanese.

My men fought for seven days during which time they suffered three killed and four wounded. One of the killed was Dan Carrigan whose brother Joe is here with us today. This occurred 50 years ago and I can recall standing by the side of the trail after we had eliminated the enemy, and seeing the litters, some 75 of them being carried down the trail past my position by men that were themselves scarcely able to walk as they staggered toward the evacuation point a

(Continued on page 3)



At West Point Cemetery. L-R: Phil Piazza, Mrs. Merrill, Logan Weston, Tom Merrill and Roy Matsumoto.



Raymond V. Lyons



David L. Quaid



George M. Rose



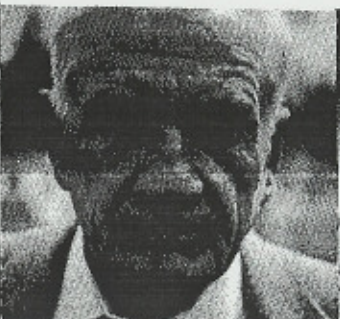
Herbert Clofine



Vito J. Yazzo



Theodore G. Zakotnik



M. Russell Blair



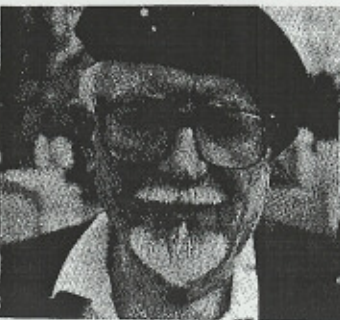
Jackson B. Pokress



Rex Beach



Logan E. Weston



A. Lewis Kolodny



David B. Richardson



Paul Yardley



Philip Smart



Gilbert Howland



Roy Matsumoto



Edward A. McLogan



James Hopkins



Thomas Merrill



Philip B. Piazza



Grant Hirabayashi



Col. Logan Weston and Mrs. Merrill



Tom Bogardus

Hsamshingyang.

We later went into the area at Nhpum Ga that the 2nd Bn had just vacated and I recall the stench of the dead and decaying mules as they lay there, unburied and covered with lime. We could also see the airdrop parachutes on the trees that had fallen outside of the surrounded 2nd Bn perimeter and into enemy hands. We could see how the enemy had bayoneted the food and medical supplies that were hanging suspended in the

trees.

But a lot of people don't realize that what happened at Nhpum Ga was not a defeat. It was a victory because as at Walabum, General Tanaka and his 18th Chrysanthemum Division had failed at Nhpum Ga to outflank our position and retake the Mogaung-Hukawng Valleys that we had fought so desperately to capture.

Present at West Point: Mrs Merrill, Tom Merrill, Phil Piazza, Ed Mc Logan, Tom Bogardus, George

Rose, Dave Richardson, Herb Clofine, Dave Quaid, Roy Matsumoto, Grant Hirabayashi, Jim De Salvo, Ted Zakotnik, Rex Beach, Vito Yazzo, Doc Kolodny, Doc Hopkins, Gil Howland, Paul Yardley, Jack Pokress, Melvin R Blair, Logan Weston, Phillip Smart, Joseph Carrigan, Ray & Sally Lyons.

Letter from Col George Mc Gee: "I have heard good reports on the meeting at West Point on Easter Sunday. Regret that I could not be with you.

Here is a related matter which should be of interest to the Marauders. In Grant Hall at the USMA there is a Regimental Room which is sponsored by the Class of 1937. In this room plaques of Regiments meriting special recognition are displayed. I have provided a plaque so honoring the 5307th, and it is now installed there.

The inscription reads as follows:

5307th Composite Unit (Provisional) WW II Major Strike Unit in International Forces. Merrill's (Class of '29) Marauders All Volunteer Force First US Ground Combat Unit To fight in S.E. Asia Outstanding Performance Receiving Presidential Unit Citation.



The Wreath Ceremony at West Point Cemetery at General Stilwell's grave. R-L: Ray Lyons and Grant Hirabayashi.

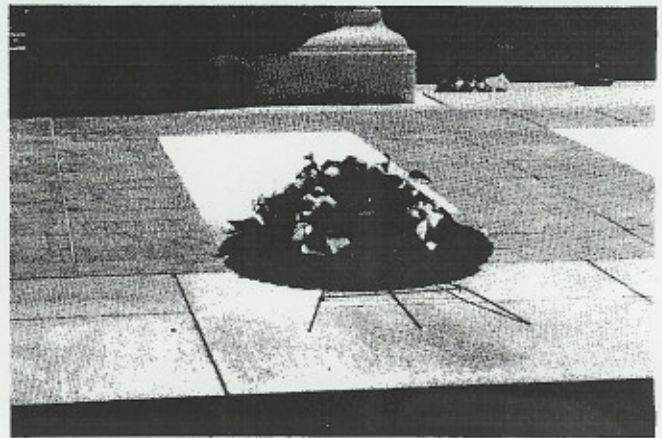


Lt. Ed McLogan, 5307/2/GCT Platoon Leader and Roy Matsumoto, Nisei Interpreter, 2nd Bn Headquarters, associated with McLogan's Platoon on Nhpum Ga Hill.

ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY CEREMONIAL AT TOMB OF UNKNOWN SOLDIER AND TREE DEDICATION.



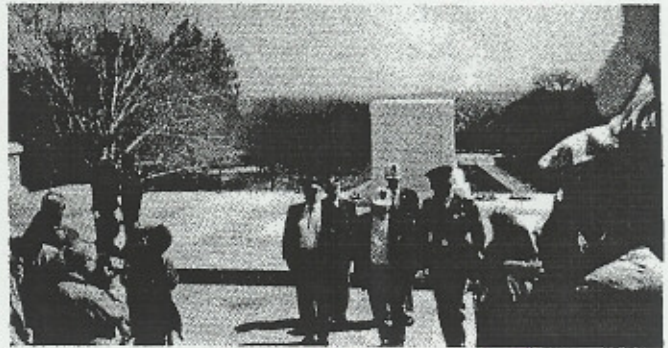
Arlington Cemetery - April 8, 1994



Arlington Cemetery - April 8, 1994



Fr. Glavin and Phil Piazza with Ranger Staff Sergeant Ron Johnson at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Arlington Cemetery, April 8, 1994.



Front row, L-R: Ray Lyons, Dr. Kolodny, S/Sgt. Ron Johnson. Second rank: Phil Piazza, Logan Weston at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Arlington, Virginia.



Tree Dedication, Arlington, VA, L-R: Joe Konopacki, Phil Piazza, Dr. Kolodny.



Msgr. Glavin and Phil Piazza at Arlington, VA, Tree and Monument Dedication.

There was a ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery on Friday, April 8, 1994. We drove in a convoy to a Tree Dedication Ceremony at 11:15 AM. Unveiling of a Monument by Roy Matsumoto &

Grant Hirabayashi at the site of the Hybrid American Elm Tree which we dedicated also. The location is Section 13, near the corner of Farragut and Wilson Drives. Northwest of the Memorial

Amphitheater. We then walked a few feet to the Assembly at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at 11:00 PM. A Wreath Ceremony followed at 12:15. Principal
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Participants were Phil Piazza, Col Logan Weston, Dr A. L. Kolodny and Ray Lyons. Lunch at Ft Myer's NCO Club followed that.

Members present: Phil Piazza, Msgr Glavin, Col Logan Weston, Dr Kolodny, Ray Lyons, Tom Raymond, Toshi Uesato, Mrs Sanford, Linda Rose, Dave Richardson, Jim De Salvo, Ted Zakotnik, Grant Hirabayashi, Roy Matsumoto, Don Delorey, Dave Witten, Joe Konopacki, M/G Milton Pilcher, Russell Hamler, William Kaufman. There were others that I just did not get a chance to list their names. A large crowd was visiting the Tomb at the time of the Ceremony. S/Sgt Ronny Johnson, Ranger/Honor Guard was the leader for the ceremony.

We also made available a plaque with our emblem on it. It is in a glass case to the right as you enter the building at the top of the stairs. The Tomb is a long walk from the Visitor's Parking Lot. Take bus if possible.

RANGER COLUMN

The 1st Battalion of the 75th Ranger Regiment celebrated the 20th Reactivation of their unit during the period of May 24th through 26th. The also recognized the 50th Anniversary of the Capture of the Myitkyina Airfield. Not too many members of the Merrill's Marauders Association attended. Present were Phil Piazza, Ray Lyons, George Rose, David Quaid, Leslie Mc Kie, Johnny Johnson, Roy Matsumoto, Logan Weston, Ranger Charles Findlay, Jim Fletcher (OSS).

On the morning of the 24th, there was a Ranger Parade in Review for the benefit of the Members of the Merrill's Marauders and WW II Rangers who were present. The principal speech was given by Dave Quaid, our Historian. It follows:

During the Spring of 1944, I served as an Army Combat Motion Picture Cameraman with C Battalion - Merrill's Marauders.

Ray Lyons, Merrill's Marauders Association Executive Secretary is fond of saying: "Every soldier sees the war as that area directly in front of his own foxhole." Today, I will try to describe the historic events that took place, 50 years ago, from the point of view of some of the participants as well as some experiences of my own.

In the final stages of the March to Myitkyina, Col Hunter with a brilliant move ordered C Battalion to divert to the East to threaten the Japanese base at Nsozup. The Japs took the bait and engaged C Battalion at Tingkrakawng, thus enabling A Battalion to slide down the North/South trail undetected.

Further South, arriving at the Village of Namkwi situated about three miles Northwest of the airstrip, troops of A Battalion and Kachin scouts restrained the villagers to prevent the Japanese from any knowledge of the Force's presence.

That night, Col Hunter sent S/Sgt Clarence Branscomb of the White CT, I & R Platoon to locate and reconnoiter the airstrip. He was to take a radio, walk down the center of the strip to assess its readiness to accept gliders and C-

47 transport aircraft. In the event that he drew enemy fire Col Hunter would know that the Japs manned pillboxes on the field.

After a few hours of travel, Branscomb and two volunteers saw lights and heard the voices of Japanese work parties. At about midnight, trucks arrived and took the workers off the field. S/Sgt Branscomb, true to his orders, walked the entire length of the runway (5,000 feet) without being fired upon. He radioed Col Hunter that Hunter could notify the Northern Combat Area Command that the field was in shape to land aircraft. Clarence Branscomb certainly qualifies for nomination into the Ranger Hall of Fame.

At 10:00 hours on May 17, A Battalion led the 150th Chinese Regiment to the airfield. Then leaving them to secure the lightly defended strip, Col Osborne's A Bn swung South to engage an enemy force and take the Pamatl Ferry landing on the Irrawaddy River. Control of the ferry prevented expected enemy reinforcement. Total surprise being in favor of the attackers, both operations were successful.

After the Battle of Tingkrakawng, C Battalion and B Battalions moved South through the Kumon Mountains as completely separate units. C Battalion having exhausted all its supplies stopped to take an airdrop of food and ammunition, when a radio message was received from Hunter to proceed to Myitkyina without delay. We left our rations unpacked, booby trapped the stacks of ammo then raced along the trail in a night march. As we pressed on, I heard a loud sigh, a thump and I fell on something warm. Another of our horses had died on its feet.

We came out of the jungle on to the Mogaung-Myitkyina Road and saw a stone road marker - M 13, we were just 13 miles from our objective, the Main Japanese Base - Myitkyina. Our fatigues were rotting on us, almost every man in the battalion suffered from tropical diseases; Scrub Typhus, Dengue Fever, Malnutrition, Dysentery, some with an assortment of same, we had no food for days, our walking wounded were still with us; yet, the morale of the troops could not have been higher. Everyone felt that the battalion could take

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George Rose, Dave Quaid, Dr. Kolodny, Mrs. Merrill, Roy Matsumoto, Logan Weston, Phil Piazza, Grant Hirabayashi, Ed McLogan, Phil Sharp at West Point, NY. April 3, 1994.

the town and finish the campaign begun five months before. On the outskirts of Myitkyina, an L-5 Liaison plane flew overhead. A yellow message streamer was dropped. It read: "Dig in at North Charpate." I was told that General Merrill was in that plane. I have always had the feeling that with the momentum pushing C Battalion forward, had we been allowed to continue, we might have taken the town at that time.

That night, Lt Victor Weingartner's platoon was ordered to lead a Chinese Pack Team to the Airstrip. Dave Richardson, a Yank Correspondent, Warren Boecklen, Stilwell's Photographer and myself decided to join them in order to get our films and stories out to New Delhi and the World. The platoon got confused a couple of times, but after locating the edge of the strip, in order to prevent a friendly fire incident, we all bedded down under a wrecked C-47 until morning. It should be noted that we encountered no perimeter defense. Upon awakening, the familiar pop, swish of enemy sniper fire was our breakfast.

Shortly after the strip was secured, Jap Zeroes effectively bombed and strafed the field damaging a number of C-47's. Under one of these, we found gathered some Signal Corps Photographers, who had come in with the gliders and also a few gutsy members of the civilian press corps. They had food, so we joined them.

For a time after the capture of the strip, there were not enough troops to maintain an effective perimeter defense. We all knew that it might be necessary to walk out. On the night of May 23rd, in the midst of a torrential downpour, the stutter of Nambu machine guns and the glare of parachute flares woke the residents of the C-47. The plane was just off the runway, but quite a distance from some Jap holes at the edge of the field. We grabbed our weapons and packs and headed for the foxholes accompanied by the thunk of bullets hitting the fuselage. The water was at least an inch deep on the field. The Nips were using tracer which reflected in the water providing twice the incentive to get to a hole.

While running across the field, I saw the burning fuse of a climbing flare. My mind clicked back to a

Field Manual I had studied in training. It said that when a flare illuminated an area - to freeze! I froze in mid stride like a statue. It seemed like a year before the flare burned out. Again I took off for the perimeter. Another flare popped. Same routine, statue. Divine Providence got me to the foxhole, not that Field Manual. I was no sooner in the hole when two crawling figures were approaching at a 45 degree angle from the wrong side (Jap side). Training said to be sure of your target. They did not see me, I had the drop on them. I said, "Halt!" One of the figures replied - "Hunter". Col Hunter and W/O Joe Doyer were checking the defenses on the weak side of the field. Training!

C Battalion at North Charpate was also enduring the downpour. A Jap unit coming from Mogaung to reinforce its garrison at Myitkyina stumbled inside the battalion perimeter. A nightmarish fire fight ensued. Steven Komar, a Mule-skinner, by the light of the rifle flashes saw two of the enemy charging him with bayoneted rifles. He gave them the entire clip from his Tommy Gun. They fell dead on top of him, but not before wounding him in the shoulder.

We called Komar the Mad Russian, a reference to the Mad Monk of the Russian Revolution - Rasputin. Photos of Rasputin show a very tall man with a long square cut beard. Steven Komar was his double. Komar finding himself in the focus of the battle decided to leave his hole to the two dead Japs lying on top of him. He bellowed out in a strong East European accent, "Don't shoot, it's the Mad Russian!" The firing by the Marauders ceased momentarily. Komar found another hole. I

wouldn't try Komar's trick, if I were you - Rangers, not unless you look like Rasputin and speak with a strong East European accent!

After the fall of Myitkyina, the US Government asked Father Stuart, the great Columban Missionary, who lived with the Kachins and worked with OSS Detachment 101, to investigate and pay any claims to the Kachins for possible misconduct on the part of the Marauders. The following is his testimony:

"I toured the trails from Nhpum through Naubum over the Naura Hykat Pass through Ritpong and Arang over the routes covered by the Marauders on their march to Myitkyina. This was the end of July and August, 1944. I was asked to check up on claims against the Army by the Kachins. Against the Chinese there were many complaints and claims for losses due to looting. Against some of the Anglo-Burman employees of OSS there were claims also. In all I paid out Ps 22,000 in compensation (In 1944 that would be about \$100,000 - DLQ). There was not a complaint of a single claim against the Marauders. This was extraordinary for such a large crowd of men. One officer said they were usually so hungry that food was all they thought of; women were not considered. Even for food there was no looting. This should be recorded in their favor". So ends Father Stuart's testimony. Merrill's Marauders is considered one of the most effective units in all military history. It bloodied the nose of the great Japanese 18th Division, "The Conquerors of Singapore", in five major battles and in 32 other engagements, but the Marauders still remained civilized men. "Rangers Lead the Way!" David L. Quaid.

FALL IN

Here are the latest additions to our assembly. Remember them?
 ALBERT H BURCHARD, 8731 W Mexdco Av, Denver CO 80232,
 5307/1/RCT/A CO/ 81MM MRTRS; 475/1/A CO
 COL FRANK DAWSON, 312 Hogans Run, Columbia SC 29223, 5th Ranger
 Bn/WW II
 SSG RONNY JOHNSON, 3000 S Randolph St #240, Arlington VA 33311,
 RANGER/ 75 RGT/1/B Co
 HARRY R MALY, 1086 Tahoe Terr, Cincinnati OH 45238, 922-4830,
 613/B/3 Sec
 STANLEY R PLATO, 7 Highland Av, Monson MA 01057, 5307
 JOSEPH H SULKOWSKY, 3722 Woodvalley Dr SE, Smyrna GA 30080,
 404-434-6264, 5307/2/BCT/E Co/PL LDR
 ROBERT E VAN ALLEN, 3390 Arnett Ct, Westerville OH 443081, 5307

OFFICERS ROW

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY - RAY LYONS

We counted 1437 regular members and 310 Honorary members while preparing the 1994 Directory.

As agreed at the Reunion, we got together at Gen Merrill's Grave at West Point on Easter Sunday, April 3rd to commemorate the Battle of the Second Bn on Nhpum Ga Hill. Two joint meals - Sunday Brunch at the Thayer. Saturday night there a Buffet and then meeting at a room to talk over our military history. Mrs Merrill came in time for the Brunch and the Memorial Service. Also for the first time we had the chance to meet the General's son, Tom and his wife. Logan Weston conducted the service.

There was a ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery on Friday, April 8, 1994. We drove in a convoy to a Tree Dedication Ceremony at 11:15 AM. Unveiling of a gravestone by Roy Matsumoto & Grant Hirabayashi. The location is Section 13, near the corner of Farragut and Wilson Roads. We then walked a few feet to the Assembly at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at 12:00 PM. A Wreath Ceremony followed at 12:15. Principal Participants were Phil Piazza, Col Logan Weston, Dr A. L. Kolodny and Ray Lyons. Lunch at Ft Myer's NCO Club followed that.

Ben Suriano, 4 Apple St, Edison NJ 08817, 5307; 475 advises that he has obtained 10 Ranger Merrill's Marauders watches. Anyone interested send him \$34 to cover his costs.

We have obtained a small supply (so far) of the Combat Infantryman Badge Belt Buckle that you may have noted that I wear. Herb Clofine intends to buy a supply for Reunion sales. In the meantime, they can be purchased from my MM supplies for \$15.

SHARING THE STORY

I arrived at Myitkyina Airstrip about the end of May amid Japanese shelling and small arms fire. Then assigned to 5307th, fought toward City of Myitkyina. About the end of June, we were under attack in some tall elephant grass (I think it was called). I was a B.A.R. man protecting the right flank when the machine gun position called for more ammo. Someone hollered, "Volunteers". I got out of my hole, grabbed some ammo boxes and talked another man into going with me. I am sure he was from the south, somewhere. He said, "Let's crawl," and I said, "Let's run, because they shoot at the bushes when they move and I don't want to be there when they do." We were under heavy sniper fire at the time, also. He grabbed some ammo and we started running. We made it to the machine gun and gave them the ammo. I turned to run back and he said he was going to crawl. I said, "O.K."

I had not gone twenty feet when I heard him say he was hit. I hit the ground and looked around. He had been crawling and was hit in the butt by a sniper and could not move. The bullet went into the hip joint, I think. Anyway, this is what this letter is about. I carried this man to safety and a few days later I

was wounded and went to the same hospital that he was in, and I saw him there. He thanked me. I would like to know if he would remember me and is still around. I don't even know his name, but would like to hear from him. Robert A Emmett, 2360 Cosnina Dr, Lake Havasu City AZ 86403, 5307/2/E Co; 475/2/F Co., 602-855-9534.

WHAT COULD GO WRONG IN BEAUTIFUL BURMA

During the Second, Central Burma Campaign, the following incident took place. We were on patrol, around Christmas time 1944 in the Tonkwa area.

My outfit was 475/2/F Company and along with other units who had taken Tonkwa, F Co had taken up a position near a creek. We had been in this position for about two weeks and were running patrols outside our perimeter. We had been using the creek to drink from. The water was good cold mountain water.

While on patrol one day, our patrol came upon four dead Japs laying in the middle of the creek that we had been drinking from. It was approximately 300 yards upstream from our drinking area. Needless to say, the water didn't taste as good after we found this out! Ben F Arant, "Junior", 1315 Barringer Rd, Rock Hill SC 29730, 803-324-0483, 5307/2/F Co; 475/2/F.

ROBERT NORLING

Volunteering for the draft in 1940 meant meeting the local National Guard and becoming better acquainted with them. Robert Norling was almost a neighbor so we enjoyed being together and talking of home. Robert developed into a machine gun squad leader early.

With the change from a square division to a triangular one, we were separated and it was a surprise to find that he had also decided to throw in with "the dangerous and hazardous mission." He continued as a machinegunner. My attention was directed to the 60mm mortar. We entered Burma as such but soon after the Walawbum Battle, the 60mm mortars were declared unreliable and I too was put in charge of a machine gun.

In the Battle to relieve B

(Continued on page 8)

PASS IN REVIEW

Deaths reported recently

Name & Hometown (Where Known), Organization, Where, When Deceased.

- JOHN R COUGHLIN, 41 Bonad Rd, Stoneham MA 02180-2233, 5307/26 Sig Bn, April 20, 1994
 CARL DENTON, 3020 57th St, Des Moines IA 50310-1217, 5307/1/RCT/CO/3; 475/1/C/3, March 24, 1994
 JESSE L WILLIAMS, 8766 S/E Longview Dr, Hobe Sound FL 33455-7417, 305-546-3719, 5307; 475th, April 8, 1994
 WALLACE RIDDICK, 915 Virginia Av, Suffolk VA 23434, 5307, March 26, 1994
 IRA H ROBERSON, 2710 N Miami Apt 1102, Okmulgee, OK 74447, 918-756-2702, 612/B/PKMSTR, April 1944
 LEROY YARBOROUGH, 459 Hatch St, St Paul MN 55117, 124th Cav, Nov 26, 1993
 NATHAN A CAMBY, Rt 5, box 106, Rutherfordton NC 28139, 704287-3113; 5307/3/OCT, December 18, 1993.

Battalion at Nhpum Ga, Robert was stationed at the most important position near the only trail. His squad was the most active in repelling enemy thrusts and during the skirmishes that lasted several days, his gun was most active. The fickle finger of fate did him and part of his squad in, with an improperly loaded 81mm mortar shell. This we conclude because the mortars were approximately 15 yards behind his position and had kept up the bombardment without error during the struggle.

The order was "Sherry move your weapon over here." It must have been a direct hit on the emplacement. The gun was totaled and pushing it aside to replace it with mine, we removed a body from the position and I proceeded to bandage the wounded. When the medics arrived, we got them in shape to move out. It was a sudden shock to learn that it was Robert that I had moved. We did not have occasion to fire a shot that evening and we were the patrol that moved to the top of the hill next morning. Our only sighting was that of a hatless Jap apparently clad only in shirt, trousers and sneakers very slowly approaching our front. He was carrying an arm that looked to have been twisted from a dead friend above the elbow. As we momentarily expected a hotter reception none of us felt inclined to kill him and reveal our position. When no action was forthcoming and we were joined by others, we proceeded down the trail and into the positions of B Battalion. They then took their many wounded down the trail to be sent out to hospitals. The badly mauled unit was in poor shape to be sent on the next and most strenuous trek.

So it appeared that Norling's squad had completed their mission and were rewarded thus. Lester Sherry, Rt 2 Box 132 Oakwood OH 45873, 419-594-2246, 5307/3/KCT

BUDDIES REMEMBER - ON THE TRAIL

From the Saginaw Michigan News, August 21, 1993

LEO ESPINOSA
A PROUD MARAUDER.
WW II vet recalls
special mission

By Miguel Centellas, Staff Writer

Fifty years ago this week, President Roosevelt and Winston

Churchill met at the Quebec Conference. At that meeting, leaders decided to create a special force of Americans to fight behind Japanese lines in Burma. The unit was to use hit-and-run tactics and

receive their supplies by air. It was the unit in which Espinosa would serve. The fighting force to be known as "Merrill's Marauders" was named after its commander

(Continued on page 9)

GENERAL ORDER #8 - PURPLE HEART AWARDS - Continued

Hq 475TH INF, APO 218, GO #8, Sec I, dtd 15 Oct 44 (Cont'd):

ROBERT E SHRIVER, 35049601, PFC - 27 July 1944
ALBERT SIEBER, 32015363, PVT - 1 July 1944
MORTON A SILVERMAN, 33777428, PVT - 1 July 1944
ALBERT W SKAGGS, 35697600, PFC - 31 July 1944
JOHN F SKIMMERHORN, 34377111, PFC - 14 July 1944
EVERETT L SMITH, 35697081, PFC - 14 June 1944
GEORGE E SMITH, 15116223, PVT - 2 August 1944
JOSEPH J SMITH, 33429751, PVT - 28 June 1944
JOSEPH J SMITH, 33500886, PVT - 1 July 1944
RODNEY W SMITH, 35696471, PFC - 6 June 1944
FRANK J SMOLENSKI, 31324427, PVT - 4 August 1944
ELMER L SNELL, 35789732, PFC - 15 June 1944
RAY E SOVIA, 31316196, PFC - 16 June 1944
PETER R SPARDONE, 31325107, PFC - 9 June 1944
CARL R SPRECHER, 37431229, PFC - 12 July 1944
HERMAN J SPRINGMAN, 33501323, PFC - 15 July 1944
ANTHONY F SPRYSSENSKI, 31285129, PFC - 28 July 1944
VONLEE R STALCUP, 39694640, PFC - 3 June 1944
SAMUEL STAMEY, 7001800, S/SGT - 28 July 1944
ANTHONY STARMAN, 35048324, PVT - 1 July 1944
EDWARD J STARKOSKI, 33358588, PFC - 5 June 1944
DONALD A STERNBERG, 20654729, PFC - 28 July 1944
NORMAN STESSIN, 32811419, PVT - 29 July 1944
WILLIAM H STEWART, 34723441, PVT - 4 July 1944
LESTER E STOUT, 35094186, PFC - 23 June 1944
MELVIN L STOUT, 35094168, PVT - 5 June 1944
VITO B STRAMELLA, 33433223, PVT - 13 July 1944
JAMES A STRIDER, 33629876, PFC - 1 July 1944
CLAUDIE J STURMS, 35749440, PFC - 30 July 1944
RICHARD W SWANSON, 35603528, PFC - 21 June 1944
HARRY A TAWYEA, 31315185, PVT - 5 June 1944
BRUCE E TAYLOR, 31297404, PFC - 28 July 1944
WILLIAM TAYLOR, 16040089, PFC - 14 June 1944
SALVATORE TERRANOVA, 32607859, PFC - 4 August 1944
MIKE TETERICH, 33438168, PVT - 14 June 1944
JAMES THEODOS, 32807088, PVT - 27 June 1944
JOSEPH J THOMAS, 35547828, PFC - 16 July 1944
ROY L THOMAS, 11107970, PFC - 11 June 1944
THOMAS W THOMPSON, 34666782, PVT - 5 August 1944
WILLIAM P THOMPSON, 34666866, PFC - 11 July 1944
GEORGE D TIBBETTS, 31319526, PVT - 28 June 1944
JOHN TINSKEY, 64611429, S/SGT - 23 July 1944
ROBERT E TINSLEY, 35697094, PFC - 14 June 1944
RAYMOND TOMLINSON, 32809505, PFC - 1 July 1944
JOSEPH W TOPA, 32935574, PFC - 12 July 1944
FRANK J TRIVETTE, 34606315, PVT - 14 June 1944
MIKE W TURKEL, 35604703, PFC - 22 June 1944
JAMES A TURNER, 15011486, SGT - 2 July 1944
GILBERT E VASQUEZ, 39694984, PVT - 11 July 1944
GILBERT M VIOLETTE, 31319510, PFC - 28 July 1944
JOHN J VUOTTO, JR, 33619510, PFC - 2 August 1944
CHARLES R WALKER, 35093852, PVT - 15 July 1944
CHARLES L WAR, 6970679, SGT - June 1944

ERNEST F EASTERBROOK,
Colonel, Infantry,
Commanding.

(To Be Continued Next Issue)

GO8e

Brig Gen Frank D Merrill.

While Allied troops were island-hopping across the Pacific and trudging up the Italian boot, those fighting in the China-Burma-India Theater were in danger. With other areas taking top priority, these troops were under equipped for most of the war.

After what he called "rough training" in Trinidad, Espinosa was "volunteered" for a special mission and soon found himself on a 36 day cruise to Bombay, India.

The role of Merrill's Marauders was to put pressure on the Japanese while supporting the Chinese 1st Army. After more jungle training in India, the unit marched into Burma - and found themselves miles behind the Japanese lines.

"We did one mission," Espinosa said, "but we got no resistance. So we kept going until we got Japanese resistance." The job of the Marauders was to cut Japanese supply lines and create confusion along their rear columns. "The Japanese did not know how many of us there were," Espinosa said.

The unit originally contained 3,000 men, but the Marauders used tactics that made the force seem much larger. As the Marauders cleared an area of Japanese, Espinosa recalls, the Chinese moved in and the Americans moved on. Conditions were harsh, Espinosa said, "We were sick, tired, exhausted."

After fighting and marching for more than 1,000 miles over six months, the unit suffered high casualties, most from disease. "A lot of the soldiers did not take their pills," he adds, "A lot of men got dysentery, malaria, scrub typhus."

The unit traveled a lot by night by compass. "Sometimes I tied a rope to the other guy in front of me so I wouldn't get lost," Espinosa said. (Matsumoto - I witnessed a knee mortar round that exploded and shrapnel hit his knee. The round meant for me was a dud. The other guy tied to the rope was me.

It was a parachute cord. Many times he led me to safety. Thanks to my true buddy.)

He was assigned to a 40 man patrol that stayed in front of his battalion, and carried messages back to his Commanding Officer.

Once he discovered a Japanese ambush. His trail had passed a trail littered with empty foxholes. The Captain assumed that the Japanese had abandoned them long ago. Later, when a message was ready for carrying back to his battalion, Espinosa went, alone.

On the way, he noticed two trees. "They were brown and had leaves," he said, "but they didn't look right. I thought maybe there were Japanese." I decided to shoot at them," noting the Japanese were experts in camouflage. He fired and the "trees" fell dead; they were enemy soldiers. "Then I realized they were hiding in the swamps," he said. "Just like in the movies."

The Japanese were submerged in the swamp, breathing through hollow reeds, but began rising out of the water when they heard Espinosa's shots. "I was out of bullets," Espinosa said. "So I ran back to the patrol." He ran so fast, he recalls that he had to catch his breath before he could say anything. "I just kept pointing" to the swamp.

Eventually the patrol cleared the area with mortar fire. The rest of the battalion then came up the trail.

Espinosa remembers how he ended his involvement in the war. "We were told that to get out of the jungle, we'd have to fight for Myitkyina" which had a nearby air strip. The town heavily defended by Japanese, presented the unit with its toughest battle. Leo Espinosa, 5307/2/GCT. 321 Ellsworth, Saginaw MI 49604

FIRST BATTALION WAS ALSO THERE

After arriving at Walawbum, the fighting had settled down. Headquarters requested our I & R

platoon to provide a volunteer to go back to a village (name forgotten) and contact a Chinese unit and lead them forward to relieve the 5307th at Walawbum. Sgt Come Hawk, our squadleader of the Recon Combat Team I&R Platoon asked if anyone wanted to volunteer for the assignment. After it was explained to the squad what had to be done, volunteered.

Shortly after I had crossed the river on my return and was reporting to Hq that the Chinese unit I was sent back to bring forward was approximately 1/4 mile back with the lead element crossing the river, fighting broke out between the Marauders and the lead Chinese elements that were to replace our units. There were some Chinese seriously wounded.

After the Chinese moved forward and replaced the Marauders in the Walawbum area, the units withdrew back to Lagang Ga, Wesu Ga, then to Shikan Ga to regroup, rest and receive the necessary supplies. After resting and receiving our supplies, the First Bn was assigned a mission to move by trail to Shaduzup area and engage the enemy in combat. After numerous trail ambushes, the first two days, the RCT was to take the point, on the third day a rifle platoon, then the I&R were advancing up the trail and after crossing a river, we were again ambushed by enemy trailblocks. After the ambush encounter, two men from the rifle platoon were killed plus Lt Evans, Platoon Ldr and PFC Chastine, I&R Platoon Radio Operator were wounded.

After a period of time being pinned down, Lt Wilson of the WCT I&R platoon got mortar fire dropped on the enemy ambush to allow the rifle and I&R platoons to withdraw and allow the Chinese unit that was following the battalion to Shaduzup, to engage the Japanese.

The Chinese were to continue advancing down the trail against the enemy ambushes to allow the battalion to bypass the ambush and continue moving around the enemy to complete the mission assignment. This was to contact and engage in combat with the enemy forces in Shaduzup area.

When our mission was accomplished at Shaduzup, the unit was ordered to withdraw back up

(Continued on page 10)

LOST, STRAYED OR WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THESE GUYS?

ROBERT M BAILEY, RT 4 BOX 4026, JEFFERSON GA 30549 (PO SAYS # CHANGED BY COUNTY AUTHORITY)

GEORGE GRABOWSKI, 5307, 5918 MAPLE OMAHA NE 63131, (PO SAYS FWD ORDER EXPIRED)

LAVERNE F GREENACRE, 711 OLD CANYON RD, FREMONT CA 94536 (PO SAYS INSUFF ADDR)

the mountain to a drop area to receive food, ammunition, etc. that was needed. After receiving our air drop the Battalion received orders to force march to Command HQ as expeditiously as possible. As-
sistently as possible. As-
sistently as possible. As-

The Battalion made the forced march and arrived Friday afternoon late. After rest and food received and staying overnight at Hsamshingyang, the battalion was ordered to make a trail around the right side of the troops surrounded at Nhpum Ga. The battalion moved over rough terrain and moved into position cutting the trail leading to Nhpum Ga.

During the early morning hours of Easter Sunday, the enemy ran into our trail block and during the scrimmage with the enemy, Lt Johnnie Johnson of the Red I&R Platoon was killed along with enemy troops.

After the encounter with the enemy, they withdrew and after daybreak, word was received that contact was made with the 2nd battalion - our mission was accomplished.

The battalion was withdrawn back to a rendezvous area where we received food, ammunition and needed rest. After our rest, the battalion received orders to proceed over the Mountains to Myitkyina to capture the South Airfield. After this mission was accomplished, I stayed in the area until August when Dr Seagrave ordered me evacuated to Ledo Hospital for treatment. This is what I remember of the Mission of the First Battalion of the 5307th. Al Fedder, 5307/1/RCT/I&R, 390 Sheila Ln, Sierra Vista AZ 85635

Upon contact with the enemy at Shaduzup, we came under artillery fire for the first time. It did get a little hairy. After leaving Shaduzup and at the drop area, we were told that the Second Bn needed assistance. A forced march of three days and three nights, walking in and out of stream beds, no fires, ten minute rest periods from time to time, up and down mountains. We finally got to Hsamshingyang at night and next morning proceeded around the right flank to cut trail leading to enemy positions beyond Nhpum Ga. The enemy withdrew that morning. Joe Cordeiro and myself were sent down the trail to Nhpum Ga to notify other forces that the

trail was open and safe. We never will forget a Japanese lying alongside the trail on his back with another arm near his body. Also on Easter Sunday morning at Bottom of hill, fog shrouded, air strip nearby, here is this Missionary Priest, Father James Stuart, saying Mass with 10-20 Kachins guarding the area. This is what I can remember of Red I&R from Shaduzup to Nhpum Ga, James Collins, 7813 Jamaica Av, Tampa FL 33614, 5307/3/RCT/I&R; 475/1/A CO 813-935-6276.

WAR AIN'T ALL FUN

Two of us OSS-101 pilots were dispatched to assist the 71st Liaison Squadron in flying out a "few" wounded of the 475th Infantry Regiment. We were directed to West of Namhkam over a 6000 foot ridge and into the Hosi Valley.

Upon topping that ridge the sight of that valley left me aghast. The whole area appeared as through a diaphanous smoked curtain. In addition to the burning jungle, village bashas were either in flames or piles of burning ashes. Puffs of scattered artillery fire were everywhere. A full scale battle was in progress.

A smoldering C-47 was nosed into the jungle with its tail showing. The hastily improvised strip on which we were to land was pocked with mortar holes along its sides. The wrecks of two light planes lay adjacent to the strip.

No sooner did my plane come to a stop than the wounded were

rushed out from a jungle cover. "Soldier, you got to be kidding!" was the GI's response to my question, as to whether there were any more. "We got many more here, and many on the way, so they tell us." They helped three wounded into a plane meant for one passenger, and hastened back to the tree cover.

My craft moved so slowly out of that valley that it appeared to be hovering. I sat with grinding teeth and tense thighs momentarily expecting a hit by a Jap shell with our names on it.

Within the plane there was an emotional bruising of another kind. Those bouncing, tossing air currents wrenching the plane in varying angles brought anguished crying out, prolonged groans, sobs, and accusative cursing from my wounded passengers. That horrific scenario was to repeat itself flight after flight in varying degrees of intensity for some three days.

Ever lingering in this memory was that of a baby-faced lad on one trip. His head was resting just to the right of my shoulder. His pained, teary eyes ever fixed on me like my conscience made visible. With every slam of an air current, I ventured a consoling word. Each time he responded with a pain labored nod of understanding. That lad badly bruised my psyche.

In the end 150 wounded were flown out. The enemy retreated. The vital Burma Road was open. We two OSS-101 boys received a note from the Theater Commander, General Dan Sultan, commending us. This entitled us to go home....when our assigned tour of duty ended, that was. Vincent Trifletti, 4439 W Kimberly Way, Glendale AZ 85308, 602-582-8847.

BOOKS

"The Marsmen in Burma"

by John Randolph which covers the activities of all units of the 5332nd Brigade, 475th, 124th, 612th and 613th, has been republished. We have ordered copies for resale to our membership.

At this time, we will sell them for \$25. This is the Fourth Edition to be printed and it is not likely that there will be any future editions. So, think about the person (or local library) you would like to have a copy and put your order in now. We intend to sell them at the Chicago reunion also.

IN OUR BEST BEDSIDE MANNER

The air was full of Z'd nambus, knee mortars, artillery shells.

Comes a call - Medic, Medic.

Oh S__! Ducking down, making a run for it.

Lots of iron screaming by.

Here at last a guy with his two middle fingers shot off - holding by a thread.

What's the matter with you? Medic, medic, you still got your trigger finger.

Don't you realize that I could have gotten killed getting here!

Anonymous. He'll know who it is.

Letters

EDITOR

My Father was T/4 Warren A Olsen, Radioman, HQ & HQ CO, 2nd Bn, 5307th. He came from Trinidad with the other men of the 2nd Bn. I would very much like to locate **anyone** who had served along with my father under Col Mc Gee. I would be very much interested in stories and especially pictures that he was in. If readers would contact me regarding information on my father, they can reach me at the following address. All letters will be answered. Thank you in advance for your help. Delphine Wixon, 29 Albany St, Wilmington MA 01887-2261, 508-658-2585.

EDITOR

My brother Leonard Anthony Ferrara formerly San Antonio, Texas, now living in Chicago, was a Merrill's Marauder at the Battle of Myitkyina. Is there any Marauder who recalls my brother. He was a regular army soldier who was in the 5307/3/Orange CT. My brother is a widower, a semi-invalid working part time as an insurance salesman - drove and walked thru the worst winter Chicago has had

READERS RETREAT

We have published a book in three parts, the Father Stuart Notes, GO #3, and the Staff Sgt Anderson Story. The book is called "The Merrill's Marauders War in Burma, Volume I". Cost is \$12. Send check to Merrill's Marauders Association % Ray Lyons, Executive Secretary.

We have available the Mike Gabbett Book, "The Bastards of Burma". \$10 per copy. Mike was one of the Original Marauders and the book covers in Regular Army Top Sgt style his observations of what went on in the 1st and 2nd Campaigns in Burma.

We had sold out all copies of "The Marauders" by Charlton Ogburn. We recently received our back order. \$8.00 per copy.

Woody Woodruff is working on a re-print (again) of "Marsmen in Burma". Price appears to be going up but that is not news.

in years. Carries nitro glycerine for Angina attacks and radiation for cancer. I'm very proud of my "Gung ho" brother. He hasn't been able to get to the previous meetings but we hope to make this one, a few miles from his home. Frances Ferrara Ball, 1012 1 2 North Blvd, Oak Park IL 60301

EDITOR

My Father, Robert F Nicholson passed away in Scranton PA at the age of 74. He was a Staff Sergeant with Merrill's Marauders and proud of it to the end. He never bragged about his experiences, but loved to rehash them whenever asked. I remember when I was 10 or 11, going to West Point for a dedication to General Merrill, how proud my Dad was to be there with his family. He and my Mom kept a scrap book and a diary and he framed all his patches, ribbons and medals and kept them on the wall of his den. He would never show them off but would readily be willing to recount old stories. Two of his favorite but chilling stories were of when they were cut off from the rest of the company and presumed dead. They had no contact with anyone for days. The other story is about when he was the only survivor of his patrol after the Japs snuck in at night and killed everyone. What a courageous group of men you all were. Thank God for your service. John Nicholson, PO BOX 427, Hopatcong NJ 07843-1266, 201-398-0642.

EDITOR

The February 1994 issue of the BURMAN NEWS was shock to me. Finally, after 50 years I found three names of men I served with in New Galahad, in the 11st of Gen Ord #8, Purple Heart Awards.

If any of these men are still alive, please contact me for I've searched all kinds of records and organizations for you till now, to no avail.

I believe I served with the following in the 97th Division: **Dominick Piccinini** (Remember Al Quatro), **Henry J Preckajlo**, (Remember S/Sgt Mick, Sgt Tickachek, Cpl Hershberger, Sgt Bader, our Squad Leader) Louisiana Maneuvers 9/43-2/44.

I believe I served in 3rd Bn, M Company with Lt Alexander B Mc

Fadden and Lt Robert C Newman at Mankrin (1944) and Willard J D Lilly also. William Brader, Rt 3, 3554 Old Phila Rd, Bethlehem PA 18015, 610-867-2201

CHICAGO COME ON!

1994 Merrill's Marauders Association Reunion, Oakbrook, Chicago ILL Friday-Sept 2nd, Saturday-Sept 3rd, ending Sunday Brunch Sept 3rd. At Hyatt Regency Hotel, 1909 Spring Road, Oakbrook IL 60521, 800-2133-1234.

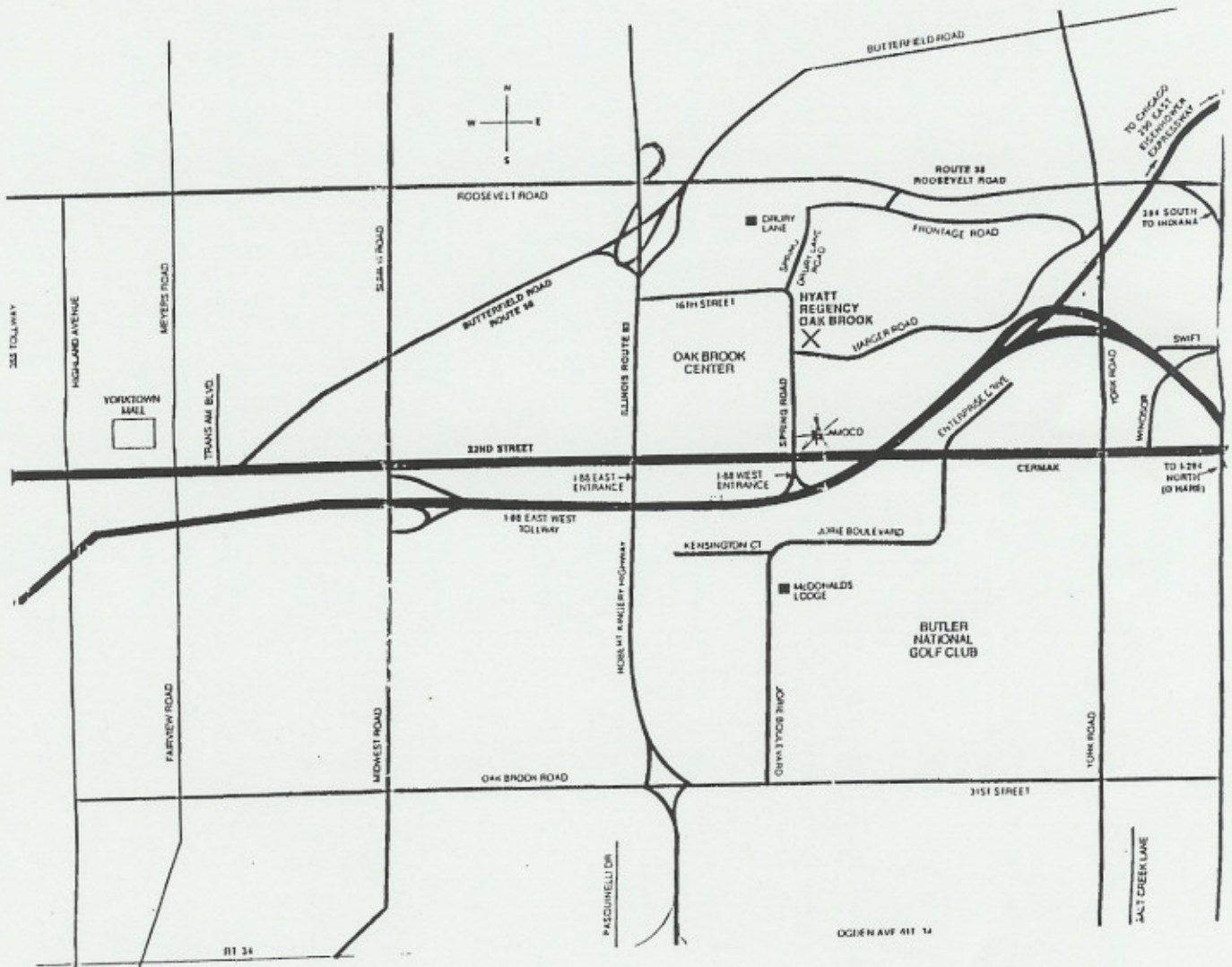
Seven story, 425 room hotel with complimentary parking, including RV's. Heated indoor pool, exercise area, sauna, whirlpool, including facilities for the handicapped. Adjacent to Oakbrook Shopping Center with shuttle buses available to the Mall. Twenty five minutes to downtown Chicago, fifteen minutes from O'Hare International Airport, Limousine \$14. per person. Twenty five minutes from Midway Airport, Limousine \$17. per person.

Downtown Chicago is a showcase with over 35 museums, hundreds of art galleries, specialty stores and a variety of restaurants. To top this off, in nearby Wheaton at Cantigny, is the museum telling the story of the 1st Infantry Division at Cantigny, France. This was the site of the first American victory in World War I. The museum covers the history of the 1st Div. from 1917 to 1991. The invasion of Omaha Beach is preserved through the innovative exhibits and archival collections. On the grounds stand the mansion and 10 acres of beautiful formal gardens of Colonel Robert E Mc Cormick. We can conduct a tour of this historical presentation if enough Marauders are interested.

The Hotel Package includes: Two persons/double occupancy - \$284. inclusive price (*). One person/single occupancy - \$202. inclusive price (*). Extended stay rate - \$59. per day plus 7% tax for 3 days prior and/or 3 days after reunion dates.

* Includes: Two nights accommodations, 1 Continental Breakfast - Saturday AM, 1 Full Service Breakfast - Sunday AM, 1 Full Service Dinner - Friday PM, 1 Full Service Dinner/one hour cocktail reception - Saturday PM. Also special rates for children.

Reunion chairmen Ed Rothchild, Ed Zaino, 312-238-1466.



**MERRILL'S MARAUDERS
ASSOCIATION, INC.**

RAYMOND V. LYONS

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