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**2014 REUNION
ANNOUNCEMENT**

103d INF DIV WW II



**CACTUSMEN, FAMILIES, AND FRIENDS,
WE'RE GOING BACK TO GAINESVILLE, TEXAS!
MAY 24 – 26, 2014**

The Association received this invitation the board just couldn't turn down—to join Gainesville's big celebration of WW II and Camp Howze, to celebrate our reunion back at the place where the members of the 103d were trained for combat. With an entire city dedicated to hosting the remaining veterans, family, and friends, we had to seize this glorious opportunity. We will time the reunion so that we can all take part in the annual Memorial Day Wreath Laying ceremony at our monument to salute the members of the 103d who gave their lives so that we may all live in peace.

Our reunion will be from noon on Saturday, May 24, through Monday Afternoon, May 26. In keeping with the last year's vote to make reunions more informal, this reunion will be mostly "pay as you go"—though we can assure you that Gainesville will be less expensive than Indianapolis and less restrictive regarding certain activities that our veterans normally participated. Though everything isn't firmed up yet, this is at least some of what you can expect:

★ **Saturday afternoon—Morton Museum of Cooke County tour** (in Gainesville), which features a special exhibit "*Sentimental Journey—Camp Howze and the Men and Women of the Greatest Generation.*" We will arrange a group tour to "step back in history as [you] journey through a re-created Camp Howze. This exhibit will provide a glimpse into a soldier's life on base, as they begin preparing for the battlefields on foreign soil."

★ **Saturday Evening @ 5:00pm - Informal meeting to review this Reunion plus future Reunions followed by Cocktail hour & informal dinner in 103d Hospitality Rm in Civic Center (Next Door to Quality Inn)**

★ **Sunday afternoon—Camp Howze Site Tour.** Members of the Camp Howze Military Vehicle Preservation Association will escort our tour out to the Camp Howze site. This Group has restored many WWII vehicles and works to "support the efforts of the community when involving our Military Past, Present and Future and to help educate the current generation with America's history of the Greatest Generation." Note: They have adopted the 103d I.D. as their vehicle bumper markings

★ **Sunday Evening 5:00pm - Business Meeting @ Civic Center: Discussion of Future Reunions - Including 2015 Location plus New Business. Followed by cocktails and dinner in the 103d Hospitality Room of the Civic Center.**

★ **Monday at 1 p.m.—Memorial Day Wreath Laying Ceremony** at the 103d Monument at the Texas Travel and Visitor's Center north of Gainesville. This will surely be a tribute to the 848 fallen with a wreath laying ceremony at the monument, on what can only be described as a most befitting day—Memorial Day. Most befitting is B.Melton Wright - President Emeritus will represent the 103d ID of WWII Association at the wreath laying for his outstanding performance of total responsibility for the "Call to Duty" Monument from conception to final acceptance by the City of Gainesville.

★ **Monday Afternoon After Wreath Laying - Barbeque Cookout Sponsored by Gainesville VFW @ the VFW Hall** (In planning stages by City) - for ALL That Wish to Attend - Unlikely not finished before 4 pm - with this situation, the 103d Association would not plan a meal function but leave the option open ended.

DUES FOR 2014

We do appreciate if you have already sent your dues. Thank you. However, if you have not sent in your dues for 2014, please send your check for \$25 to:

Pat Lofthouse, Treasurer

103D INF DIV ASSOC WWII

NOTE: Widows of Vets do not pay dues
611 Cedar Street
Park Ridge, IL 60068

LEGACY MILESTONE COMPLETION

In 2010, I asked the membership for funds to acquire microfilm reel copies of the 103d Division Morning Reports from the National Personnel Records Center in St Louis. I'm extremely happy to report that the Morning Report transcription project for all the 103d units from March 1944-July 1945 is now complete—a major milestone in the preservation of the legacy of the 103d Infantry Division of World War II. All of the 103d units' Morning Reports are now posted on the Association website.

Taking over three years to complete, this, to my knowledge, is the only transcribed and searchable database of its kind from the World War II era. It will assist historians and your descendants for generations to come. Also from the transcribed Morning Reports, I've created a byname "Cactus Index" that lists all who served with the 103d and what unit they served with during the March 1944-July 1945 timeframe. This can also be found on the website. **Zack Sigler - Archivist**, 103d Infantry Division of WWII Association

103d WEBSITE UPDATE

A New Year has dawned. While these are sad times as we learn of more veterans passing away. We grieve at their loss, and we can take solace in the outpouring of support from family members of veterans of the 103d Infantry Division to support the preservation of the nation's greatest generation.

Recently, I had the distinct pleasure of speaking with a venerable veteran of the 103d. The essence of the conversation went something like this; anyone can go out and buy a Nazi flag, medals by the dozens, bayonets, uniforms, equipment, and yes even guns from WWII. Museums across the country are replete with displays of these WWII artifacts. Heck, even airplanes, tanks, boats, and other large items are displayed. The old vet asked me, "What do these hard items tell you about the men who used them during the war?" The answer is obvious; nothing except to stand as an example of equipment used. Medals don't tell the story of how they were earned. Next the old vet told me he had looked at the 103d website. His comment, "Now buddy boy, that's history."

Reflecting on that comment here's the meat. Zack Sigler, 103d Archivist extraordinaire, has done a remarkable job in transcribing the morning reports of all units assigned to the 103d Infantry Division. Thanks to Zack's efforts the 103d Association is reported to have the most complete website of any Infantry Division of World War II; and this from researchers. What Zack has accomplished is remarkable. Yet there are others who have made significant contributions toward preserving the history of what the men of the 103d accomplished. David Gilbert and his wife, Linda, made a trip to the NARA to obtain Unit Journals and Operation Narratives; as did Larry & Pat Wayne, all priceless pieces of 103d history. These documents tell a story of men who get their leg blown off and lie in the field while medics do a full leg amputation on the spot. They tell a story of a gas mask which lay for 68 years until found by researchers who read the reports and pieced together its location. How many awards did the Division receive? What were the details? General Orders, acquired by the late Al Eucare, tell of the medals awarded and the heroic actions of soldiers to earn them; in many cases heroism unknown by family members. The General Orders reveal staff assignments, movements, and command changes, like MG Hafner replaced by the legendary BG McAuliffe. Battle Deaths record those who paid the ultimate price for freedom; the work of arduous hours by Mel Wright, Rabbit Wilson, and Jim White. There are oral and written stories from veterans, in their own words, that tell about their experiences. These stories are the work of the Martins; Luke, Gary, Carol and Larry. Many photos, provided by Art Flynn and others, that record details long forgotten. The ASTP program documents the shock of waking up one morning in a school dorm room and the next morning hoisting a rifle in an Infantry Division. There is the story of training locations that prepared 103d veterans for war. Morning Reports don't record awards; just promotions, transfers, punishment, and the fact a casualty occurred. These other documents present the story. Thanks to Bob French's and Francine's trips to document the monuments in France honoring the 103d Infantry Division. Their untiring efforts that led to a monument at the horrific Landsberg concentration camp, liberated by elements of the 103d, which led to this Division honored as an official liberating unit by the US Holocaust Memorial Museum and US Army Center for Military History. There exists much more on the website than the sparse coverage I've given in this account. There are many others who have made contributions to the website; too numerous to list in this limited space.

The point here is that the true legacy of the 103d Infantry Division is preserved. It is already there. It is not a medal, a bayonet or a Nazi flag. Yes, these are artifacts of historical importance, but they don't tell a story. The real preservation of the 103d Infantry Division legacy is in place due in no small part to the countless hours of work done by so many people to collect historical data for your site; the website of the 103d Infantry Division Association of World War II.

Larry Wayne, 103d Webmaster
Our 103d website is <http://www.103didww2assn.org>

Where are we staying?



Quality Inn
600 Medal of Honor Blvd.
Gainesville, TX
(940) 665-8800

- Rooms \$79.00 plus tax, with free continental breakfast.
- ▶ Make your own reservations. State for "103d Inf Div ASSN."
 - ▶ Arrive 23 or 24 May. Depart 27 May.
 - ▶ For special rate, reservations must be made before 16 May 2014.

The Quality Inn is in the business district of Gainesville, a few minutes' walk from historic Gainesville Courthouse Square. There are fast-food restaurants neighboring the hotel and a dozen more eateries within a 10-minute walk. Next door is the **Gainesville Civic Center**, where we have reserved space for the 103d Hospitality Room.

Call soon to make reservations! If the Quality Inn is full, your closest option is the **Holiday Inn Express Hotel**, 320 North Interstate 35, Gainesville at (940) 665-0505.

Getting to Gainesville from the airport



- Drive.** If you don't drive, ask one of your children drive a rental car. They should see where you trained before being shipped overseas and the monument erected to commemorate 103d veterans and those who made the supreme sacrifice while fighting for their country.
- Take a shuttle van.** We found a Gainesville shuttle service willing to work with us on service and cost. While Kathy typically charges \$120 for a one-way ride from the airport to Gainesville (compared to Super Shuttle's \$180), she will give a much more economical group rate. If you contact **Texoma Shuttle Service (866-953-4282)**, tell Kathy you're with the "103d Inf Div ASSN."

Ask us for a ride. We also will provide transportation by van and car ourselves on a limited basis.

Contact Patricia Lofthouse at [847-698-9731](tel:847-698-9731) or loftypat@aol.com.

Once you're in Gainesville, we'll make sure everyone gets around!

UPCOMING CONFERENCE TO HONOR HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS & LIBERATORS

The 103d Association has signed on as a Promotional Co-sponsor of the Nassau County Holocaust Memorial and Tolerance Center's June 8 conference, *From Generation to Generation: The Legacy Continues ~ An Event Honoring Holocaust Survivors, Liberators, Righteous among the Nations and Their Descendants*, to be held at Hofstra University, Hempstead, NY. This multigenerational gathering of Holocaust Survivors and WWII Liberators will "honor living witnesses to the Holocaust and celebrate their enduring legacies" as well as educate the public about the history of the Holocaust. If you wish to attend, contact Judy Vladimir, Special Projects Manager at judyvladimir@holocaust-nassau.org or call (516) 571-8040 x 119.



Call to Duty Monument

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US POSTAGE
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MEDWAY, MA
PERMIT NO. 3

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

103D INF DIV ASSOC WW II
C/O Cranston Rogers
17 Deerfield Road
Medway, MA 02053



2014 GAINESVILLE RESERVATION FORM

	NO. OF PEOPLE	COST PER PERSON	TOTAL COST ENCLOSED
REGISTRATION FEE		\$ 25.00	\$
SATURDAY & SUNDAY DINNERS		\$ 15.00/Meal	\$
MONDAY BANQUET <i>Still in the planning stages!</i>		\$ 30.00	\$
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES—2014 (if you have not paid already) <i>NOTE: Widows of Vets do not pay dues</i>			\$ 25.00
DONATION TO SUPPORT RESEARCH TO PRESERVE 103D LEGACY			\$
TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED WITH REGISTRATION			\$
NAME (as you want it to appear on your badge)			
GUEST NAMES			
YOUR ADDRESS			
CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE	
PHONE	EMAIL ADDRESS		
EMERGENCY CONTACT	HOME/CELL PHONE	WORK PHONE	
DISABILITY/DIETARY RESTRICTIONS			
YOUR 103D UNIT	MEMBERSHIP TYPE <input type="checkbox"/> REGULAR <input type="checkbox"/> ASSOCIATE		
ASSOCIATE MEMBER—NAME OF 103D VETERAN RELATIVE & HIS UNIT			
IF YOU NEED SHUTTLE SERVICE BETWEEN AIRPORT & GAINESVILLE (we will try to coordinate to save on costs)			
Which airport? <input type="checkbox"/> Dallas Love Field <input type="checkbox"/> Dallas/Fort Worth Which airline? _____			
Flight number? _____ Day of arrival? _____ Scheduled arrival time? _____			
<p>Please complete registration form & mail with your check for the total <u>by April 15, 2014</u></p> <p>Patricia Lofthouse, Treasurer 103D INF DIV ASSOC WWII 611 Cedar Street Park Ridge, IL 60068</p>			
ASSOCIATION USE:	DATE RECEIVED	CHECK NO.	AMOUNT