

# 20th Combat Engineer Association



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December 2004

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## **Edwin Martyn Lutz (1921-2004)**

The founder of the 20th Combat Engineer Association of World War II died September 30, 2004, and was buried at the Arlington National Cemetery. Ed Lutz retired from the U.S. Army in 1970 as Colonel after 32 years of service with the 20th Combat Engineers during WWII as well as service in Korea. In 1985, he retired from more than a decade of civil service as executive assistant to the director of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.

As his widow, Martha Lutz, reported in a message read at our Final Reunion, "My husband is suffering from the early stages of Alzheimer, but I can assure you that his heart has always belonged to the 20th Engineers."

The burial took place at Arlington National Cemetery on November 17th attended by 20th Combat Engineer veterans J. Kenneth Noon (Kansas), Louis Ferraro (New Jersey), and your editor. Also attending were Martha Lutz, their three children (Edward Lutz, Stephen Lutz, and Linda Lutz Freeman), and some 50 other family members and close friends.

Your Association has made a modest contribution in honor of Ed Lutz to the suggested charities: The New Jersey Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, Denville, NJ 07834; and the Fox Chase Cancer Center, P.O. Box 423630, Philadelphia, PA 19161.



### **In Memory of Ed Lutz by J. Kenneth Noon, Association President**

"It is hard for me to believe that it has been 62 years since I first met Ed in Casablanca as commanding officer of B Company. In a telephone conversation I had with Ed several years ago, he told me that while he was attending a meeting at the Pentagon, General Eugene Caffey stopped the meeting to introduce Ed as "a soldiers soldier." This was a real compliment from General Caffey who was commanding officer of the 20th Combat Engineers in Africa. My condolences to Martha and the Lutz family."

## Lost But Not Forgotten

**Fleetus Alden Carrigan (C/1340th)** died October 21, 2004, in Tarkorsville, North Carolina, at the age of 88. Ben and Jean Scronce attended the DAV military service at the Liledoun Baptist Church with internment at the church cemetery.

**John B. Griffin, Jr. (C/1340th)** died September 1, 2004, at the age of 82. Funeral services were held at the Biloxi, Mississippi, National Cemetery.

**Louis W. Morgan (A/20th)** died October 7, 2004, at the age of 86. His son, Bob Morgan, 714 Willowview Drive, Lavergne, Tennessee, reports that his father had been moved to his home about six months ago because of his ailing health, and his father was buried in Nashville, Tennessee, with an honor guard.

## Change of Addresses

**Joseph J. Szvetitz, Jr. (C/1340th)** has moved to 1349 Toboggan Trail, Easton, PA 18040-1137.

In a previous issue of the *Wavy Arrow*, we reported that **Clarence N. Carlisle (B/20th)** has been found, and that he is now at the Veterans Nursing Home, 1601 Kirkwood Highway, Wilmington, DE 19805-4988. However mailing to this address has been returned.

## Letters Received

**Ruth E. Bolliger** writes: "My late husband, Darrell R. Bolliger, was a member of A/1340th and I had hoped to come to the final Reunion, but my son and his wife have been very seriously ill and I was needed here. It is probably too late to get a letter into the book of Memories, but I am very interested in reading about the experiences of the Unit in World War II. I know that he suffered from frostbite in the Huertgen forest and that the soldier beside him was killed. But he seldom talked about these experiences. Now his children and grandchildren would like more information about the 20th and 1340th Combat Engineers. I agree with Tom Brokaw that you are the greatest generation."

**Thomas A. Kerns (A/1340th)** writes: "I am doing O.K. for an 86-year old. I don't do any traveling anymore. I only cut the grass, repair the house roof, and other things around the house. I recently tried to locate Tyler A. Garris (A/20th) whose name and address is in the Charlotte, North Carolina, telephone book. However when I called this number, I was informed that the telephone had been discontinued. Further investigation reveals that Garris was moved to a nursing home. However, when I located this facility, I was told that the nursing home does not provide any information on their patients. Since his name is not listed in their annual Year Book, I feel that Tyler L. Garris (A/20th) is no longer living."

**H A P P Y H O L I D A Y S**

## 20th Combat Engineers in Iraq

(This story is based on an article entitled "Bridging the Gap" by Pfc Erik LeDrew appearing in the November-December 2004 issue of *The Military Engineer*.)

While some soldiers work to bridge the cultural and communication gaps between U.S. forces and the local Iraqi people, engineers are also building and repairing bridges for local residents. The 20th Engineer Battalion was assigned the responsibility to repair a bridge in Baghdad that had recently been damaged by insurgent forces.

Alpha company commander Captain Marc Distefabo reported, "While conducting an assessment of the bridge, we found that the ramps had been blown apart by charges on the south side of the bridge." The damaged bridge is actually two one-lane bridges that support south-bound and north-bound traffic where it crosses the Divala River in northeastern Baghdad. Repair of the heavily trafficked bridge was necessary for both the Iraqi working people and the coalition forces.

The bridge was initially erected in 2003 by a Marine unit who are experts on this type of bridge whose mechanized engineering unit is trained for breaching and explosive ordnance disposal. However since the only damage was to the ramps, and there was no structural damage to the bridge, the 20th Engineers were assigned the task. They were given a 48-hour deadline to complete repairs on at least one of the bridges which included damage assessment; taking parts from one damaged bridge required to fix the other less-damaged bridge; and finally coordinating with a contractor to help make the second bridge functional.

According to 1st Lt. William Abel, "Most of what we had to deal with was corrosion of the bolts securing the ramp. We have a great welder who helped us take care of the rusted bolts." Another task was for the engineers to explain to the local Iraqis why the bridge was closed and why it had to be repaired. After the task was completed, the Alpha Company commanding officer said he hopes that the 20th Engineers will have the opportunity to work on other projects like this despite the time constraints. "A lot of engineers don't have many construction projects like this because the emphasis has been on mobility and breaching. Work like this is well received by the Iraqis and is a step in the right direction."

**Editor's Note:** At least three members of the 20th Engineers have been killed in action in Iraq. Capt. Dennis Pintor, Spec. Jaime Moreno, and Spec. Michael Wegner died on October 12, 2004, in Baghdad. The home base for the 20th Engineers is Fort Hood, Texas.

### Wavy Arrow Contributions

We thank the following for having made a contribution to keep the *Wavy Arrow* coming to you on a regular basis. Please consider one if you haven't made a contribution recently.

Ruth Bolliger (on behalf of Darrell Bolliger, A/1340th) . . . . .	\$10.00
Martha Lutz (on behalf of Edwin M. Lutz, Officer) . . . . .	\$100.00
Truman H. Setliffe (1340th Commander) . . . . .	\$50.00

## **Recollections of Truman H. Setliffe**

The 1340th, of which I was commander, moved to Wiveliscombe, England, on February 10, 1944. Shortly thereafter the V Corps commander General Leonard T. Gerow made a surprise visit to our headquarters. The General and I made a quick informal walking tour of the area. Then we went to my small (8' x 10') office where among other things I briefed him on our three prior campaigns (two in North Africa and one in Sicily); described the status of our equipment and training; and reported on the status of our personnel strength. He promised to provide the needed two officers to bring us to authorized strength.

On March 19, 1944, I received a telephone call from 1171st Group that Generals Eisenhower and Gerow would arrive at my office within the hour, and that Colonel Daley would arrive as soon as he could get there. I then telephoned the company commanders to quickly tidy up their areas and then march their troops over the hills and out of sight.

When Eisenhower and Gerow arrived, we toured the H&S Company area which they found to be spic and span. Then we walked into one of the Quonset Hut quarters. To my surprise, there stood Pfc. Iro Sykes in a freshly pressed OD uniform cleaning his rifle. General Eisenhower asked him where he was from (Columbus, Georgia, and Fort Benning); how long he had been in the Army (four years); and what he had been doing (two campaigns in Africa and one in Sicily with the 20th Combat Engineers). The Generals beamed, and so did I. No one could have staged it better.

After another brief walk and Colonel Daley's last minute arrival, the Generals got into their car. General Gerow leaned around and said to me, "Major, within a couple of weeks I'm going to send you the officers you asked for on my last visit." I responded with a big grin, "I'll believe it when I see them walk through that gate."

My next meeting with General Gerow was on Omaha Beach on June 7th. By noon of D-Day we were told that heavy German resistance would delay our landing. So our LST commander Captain Budd agreed to put his small boat over the side to take me, Captain Renfro, 2nd Lt. Carlton, and two sergeants to the beach. We landed late that day but small arms fire and darkness prevented movement along the beach. Early the next morning we ran into Brigadier General Timberlake who was on the beach with binoculars trying to locate his LTSS and anti-aircraft units. He pointed the way to V Corps headquarters. The first person I saw was General Gerow who welcomed me. After a short discussion, he sent me on to Engineer V Corps where I was briefed on the assignments of the 1340th.

The last time that I saw General Gerow was in Baltimore in 1948 where I stopped by to pay my respects. He died in Florida soon after his retirement. He was a friend of the 1171st Engineer Group and its two Battalions, the 20th and 1340th. I salute him.

Send Contributions, Letters, Articles, Photographs, Obituaries, and other News Items for inclusion in future issues of the *Wavy Arrow* to editor George Griffenhagen, 2501 Drexel Street, Vienna, VA 22180.