596 Parachute Combat Engineer Company

Chief Engineer/Officer
Earl B. Gillard

Jr. Engineering Officer
Manuel Vertesa

Past Chief Engineering Officer
Don Saunders

517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team Association

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You are receiving an incomplete issue of WINGS. - For many reasons this issue, which was started in May, is being sent to press in October - still unfinished. All of a sudden, time has run out. I must be in Lake Placid on Thursday, October 24th. Today is the the 22nd. I will be attending a meeting of S.P.E.E.S.S.A. On Nov. 4th my daughter expects me to be on a place landing in Sacramento, Calif. for a two week stay. No matter what I do I cannot finish this Spring issue.

There are many wonderful things that I wanted to report. My trip by auto to California this winter. Along the way I had visits with Charley and Ann Pugh, Earl and Edith Dillard, Joe Senter, Manny and LaVerne Ventosa, Hal and Jeanne Roberts, Bob and Garnet Dalrymple, Ray and Mary Morgan and Ray and Mary Mild.

So, the solution to the problem is quite simple. By the first week in Dec. another issue of WINGS will be sent to you which will contain all the items I did not get in this issue.

They include: pictures of Charley's Pub; pictures and a write-up of Joe Miller's award as 517th Man Of The Year; a correct, up to date list of addresses; information about the 1987 reunion at the TURF INN in Albany, N.Y. in June.

Bernie Barnes is in the VA hospital in Albany, N.Y. He had a heart attack and a stroke this winter. I will be in Albany next week and hope to get to see him.

Talked to Ray Morgan the other evening. He is home but confined to a wheel chair, the result of a stroke. He sounded well and his voice is still the voice of Sgt. Morgan.

Joe Miller (R) accepts the award as the 517 Man of the Year from Don Lassen at the Airborne Awards Festival April 19.
Dear Ed,

It was really great to visit with you and Manny when you were in Seattle. Wish it could have been longer.

Jeanne and I have been busy with my contracting and her building those wicked missiles for Boeing. We haven't bought any more investment houses, but are looking all the time.

We are looking forward to seeing everyone in Albany in 1967.

Here is a small contribution so you can buy stamps for the wonderful newsletter....

Jeanne got me the history book for my birthday and I got a chance to refresh, awaken sleeping memories.

Also; it's disgusting to see me getting older, while you and Ventoza don't!

Warmest regards,

Hal Roberts
Dear Ed & Kay,

We received your most informative letter some time ago, 1986. It was most welcomed. We enjoyed hearing from you again Ed and hope this letter finds you and Kay in the best of health. Your letter was postmarked South Faris. Where is that anyway, somewhere north of the Riviera? The name goes back pleasant memories. I am looking forward to traveling up your way sometime, Ed. I bet it is beautiful all throughout Maine.

LaVerne and I received a very nice correspondence from Charlie and Ann informing us that they and the Goodmans were to meet up in Vancouver, B.C. to take in the '86 Expo. They all had a great time, but a tight schedule, so as time would have it we didn't come in close contact with each other, other than by telephone from Vancouver, B.C. They sounded real good and we wished them a happy journey home. They were taking 101 down around the ocean.

We have had a busy schedule ourselves this year or should say, as a lot of traveling with the Shrine unit of Nile Temple, I was so indoctrinated by the Officers and Non coms of the 596 that I never got over the discipline that was so instilled in us. The Legion of Honor Drill Team of the Nile Temple, which consists of Ex and active Military men, we have been invited to drill maneuvers and participate in many parades throughout the areas. This year alone we have engagements in Minneapolis, Los Angeles and our next will be in Tacoma, Washington at the end of this month. We all have a lot of fun and meet a lot of wonderful people, and you'd be surprised to know that these Legion of Honor members belonged to all branches of service and all theaters of Operation. A lot of them are from the 517th A/B combat team, 101st., 82/nd division and some from the Japanese Outfit that caught hell in Italy and also the Canadian Rangers. We are also honored by one

Distinguished Service Cross Paratrooper from our theater of operation in the 517th. A very fine quiet sort of a Gentleman.

We all get together about twice a year and have a great time at reunion, just like we do in the 596th, and believe me, Ed, we are going to have another great time at our Albany reunion. I'm certainly looking forward to it, as I hope we all are, and I do hope we can get some of our buddies who have drifted away, back into the mainstream. We miss them all and want to see and hear from them before they hit the obituary column, it's too late then and a long time gone. So let's get up and at em, come and enjoy the Fellowship of years gone by and the good years yet to come and be with the fellows of your youth. Your old foxhole and double timing buddies.

I remember the time when Good Old Fred broke us out of barracks after we had loaded up with pop and other p.x. garbage after we finished our jump training exercises for the day at Fort Benning. It was so ungodly hot, Bob was there and so were you, Ed. The order was fall out with boots and running trunks, what a horrible order that was. Our stomachs were so bloated with all that garbage it was shear misery, but orders are orders and we obeyed. It was a five-mile run and I believe it was over the Alabama line and back. Good old Jesse Floyd's stomping grounds, we had a lot of drop outs. We were all in excellent condition except for all the junk sloshing around in our stomachs. But anyway my good old buddy Leo Wrobleski was crowing around as usual and talking in ranks when he should have been silent, we were at attention and I was encouraged to go along with him to kind of kill some of our miseries and in doing so, I'm not sure who it was, either Bob "Captain Dalrymple", or Fred "Lt. Zavattaro", who caught us and ordered us to double time around the Company. We were already at double time, so around we went, good old Leo and I sounding off - I will not talk in Ranks - I will not talk in Ranks, around and around we went, the further we went the
stronger we got. It was amazing we ceased to get tired after while, like we could have gone forever. That was when we first realized what it felt like to get our second wind, just before you're ready to drop but keep on going - then you get it. It's like an extra valve in our heart that opens up and gives you a super charge type energy boost and you never get tired after that. That was the kind of training we got in that outfit - be tough or get out - when the going gets tough, the tough get going, guess that's why we're here today.

Leo, I hope you are reading this and understand what I'm trying to tell you and some of you other company men whom we haven't seen in a long, long time. Come out and be recognized, we all miss you and hope you miss us, at least enough to come to Albany in 1987. We have a lot in common, you know. We have all been there and back, so come around and see us sometime while we are still around.

I wish to extend my greetings and a standing invitation to all in our coming up reunion in Albany. We shall have the time of our lives. Bring warm clothes, as Ed informed me by mail his garden froze in June.

Many thanks to Don Saunders who has taken the initiative considering the circumstances to make the arrangements for the hospitality suite, along with other necessary arrangements for the coming reunion. Our accommodations can be made anytime, thanks to Don, so just let him or me know and we will get with it. Time marches on, you know. We'll be staying at the "RCAF Inn-Albany, NY."

Ed visited LaVerne and I this past March, 1986. We had a wonderful time as short as it was. The weather was perfect for visitingattle and the surrounding area is really a beautiful sight to see and especially to live in. Our climate is very moderate with no radical extremes. With each drop of rain some must stuff is born along with all our other lovely flowers, green forests and our majestic snow-covered mountains. And on the eastern side of the Cascades, we have our plains. With our modern method of irrigation, our plains have become plush valleys, green with alfalfa hay, apples, grape vineyards, hops and many other agricultural benefits, including cattle and to say nothing of our hydro-electric dams and waterways.

While Ed was here enjoying the loveliness of our state, we paid a visit to the Roberts' which was another one of his priorities. We all had a nice time together and took a few pictures which I'm enclosing.

LaVerne and I took the horses out to the farm in Gold Bar Friday, July 15th. We let them there till fall or the first frost. They sure like it out there, belly deep in grass and a whole river to drink up. The farm is right along the Big Skykomish River, on the south side of Stevens pass, lllway 2, west side of the Cascade Mountains, and about one mile east of the town of Gold Bar on Gunn Road. The largest town west would be Everett and then east to Monroe and the farm.

Well, Ed, I guess I've bent your ear or should I say eyes long enough for now. Thanks again for everything, our best of health, wealth and prosperity to you and Kay. We hope you have a wonderful summer, fall and winter, and we'll be looking forward to seeing you in the near future.

Most sincerely, your friend.

Manuel Ventosa
Dear Charly, Henry Simpson and all 596ers,

You said to write if I had some news. I finally got some. I'll let the reports I'm sending along tell the story. I can't write much — broke bone in right hand. I paced off the distance of the chase and it's almost exactly 400 yards.

I enjoyed so much the short visit I had with Hank and Marion. I'm not much for writing, but inside of me is still all 596. One paratrooper asked me what I was trying to prove doing this. After some thought it could only be one thing — Once a trooper, always a trooper. I'll be glad to hear from anyone. Thanks and good luck,

Joe Smith

Editor's note: In February in Minneapolis, Joe Smith (596) ran down and captured a 23-year-old robber/rapist. Joe is receiving a medal from the City of Minneapolis for his bravery. When asked why he did such a dangerous thing, he replied, "I guess it's because of once a paratrooper, always a paratrooper." Way to go, Joe! We are proud of you also.

The following is taken from the staff information Memo of the YMCA of Metropolitan Minneapolis:

WE SALUTE YOU: Joe Smith and Bob Sandberg were coming to work at the Downtown YMCA Sunday, Feb. 2 when they saw a man and woman on the ground on the west side of the parking lot adjacent to the YMCA. The scene they were witnessing was a mugging of a 79-year-old woman by a 23-year-old man. The two engineers started towards the pair and the man took off. Joe chased the assailant while Bob remained with the victim. The chase went down Ninth, north on Hennepin and then east on Seventeenth into the Anfac Hotel underground parking ramp where Joe was able to corner the assailant and apprehend him after a scuffle. Joe dragged the man to street level where Hotel security assisted. Police arrived and jailed the assailant. The victim is in Hennepin County General with a broken hip. Joe was featured last week on Channel 4's 10 p.m. newscast. Minneapolis Police Chief Tony Bouza will be presenting Joe with a medal from the City of Minneapolis as a commendation for his bravery. We salute Joe and Bob for their bravery and service in this matter. (Feb. 10, '66)

Dear Ed Phillips,

Thanks to Warren Sandberg, I received the most recent copies of the 596th newspaper.

I thoroughly enjoyed it, and it is hard to believe 45 years have passed so quickly. Regrets also followed when I saw the deceased roster listing four friends.

God willing, we will meet at Albany in '67. My wife (Mary) and I will be available a day or two before the Albany meeting. If we can be of assistance, please let us know.

I have some pictures I will send on. Good luck to your publishing efforts. Check enclosed can be applied to your printing expenses.

Sincerely, Ed Horrigan
HAROLD JOHNSON - Iowa, 1986

PHILLIPS and LAVERNE VENTOZA

VENTOZA and PHILLIPS

MARY and RAY HILD

Manny with his horses and his cousin
Dear Ed,

Sorry we missed you when you were in Big Springs.

We retired Sept. 30, 1985 and Oct. 8 we were in Arizona. One year ago we bought a mobile home, so we're all set for the retirement.

I spent 80 years with Nebraska Public Power District. The last 17 years were spent in Big Springs. Was just getting to old to go thru winter storms, so retired early.

Several years ago we visited the Albert Schonterga in Detroit. The summer we plan on seeing them. Have corresponded with Gene Markle.

We plan on leaving Arizona late May and return in September. Certainly is nice to have a mild winter.

Our winter address: 834 Sd. Meridian Pueblo NE Space 40, Apache Jet, AZ 85220
It's nice to read about the 596. Keep up the good work.

Bob Anderson

Dear Ed,

Thought you would have learned in the Army never to volunteer, but since you did, thank you. Your efforts are greatly appreciated.

Mid-May I stopped in Bakersfield, CA, to visit Allan Goo man and his lovely wife, Alice, the camp follower. We had a nice Baguette dinner at the Wool Growers' Ass'n. They (Al and Alice) graciously allowed me to sleep on the street in front of their home.

Enclosed is small donation for newsletter expenses. Got my first Social Security check in Sept. and may be able to send more.

Geronimo,

Brantly

P.S. You're a pretty fair bartender.

Hi Charlie,

Just a note to let you know that Don Smith is also here at Paradise Park with his Airstream. He was in the 2nd Platoon, but went to the 517th MP Co. before we went overseas. I was really surprised when he stopped at my trailer and told me who he was. I had seen Ed's newsletter that I would be here for the winter.

Regards,

Don Saunders

Dear Ed,

George and I learned of Earl Dillard's death on March 3, 1986, through Charlie Pugh's column in the "Static Line."

We are enclosing a check to initiate an "Earl Dillard Memorial Fund." Perhaps other members of the 596th would like to contribute. The proceeds could be used as needed; flowers or memorials to other 596ers as they make the "Final Jump"; for cards to send to the men or their wives during illness; or for things that seem "needed", but there are no "funds" for!!

We will miss Earl. He and Edith have been and are our dear friends.

George and I are fine. We're looking forward to Albany, the reunion, the friends, and all the other "fringe benefits."

Our best to you and to all,

Winston D. Shull
Ann and I spent a delightful weekend in August in Eureka Springs, AR visiting with Bill and Marge Conger (596). It is a beautiful and scenic mountainous area and a picturesque village. The Congers have been very successful there in the restaurant business. They are in the process of selling their holdings and retiring to their new home in Arizona. Many 57ers will remember Bill as a member of the boxing team. He said that he and his nose will always remember John Lissner’s training sessions on how to throw the left jab. Bill continued his boxing for awhile after the war and fought for a Golden Gloves championship before retiring to less strenuous endeavors.

Charley Pugh

Dear Kay & Ed,

Just a note to say hello. I know I’m not too prompt in my reply to yours, but for me that’s pretty fast. I received a note from Moses in 1966, answered it in 1968 - 22 years to let him know I will stop in to say hello.

Went to the Florida mini-reunion Only 3 from the 596th attended -- Chas. Pugh, Hank Simpson and myself. I thought there would be more from down here as I know of 12 596th that live in Florida, maybe more.

I see Barnes moved to Clearwater, Florida, about 35 miles from me. No phone listed in the roster. Tried to call, but no listing.

Ed, Bill Lewis lives about 10 miles from me and I mentioned the 596th newsletter to him. He would like a copy if you can, as one Editor to another.

Thanks for your efforts. Here’s a little something for paper and ink.

Warmest regards,
Art Starck

Dear Ed & Kay,

We hope you’re safely home by now and Kay is better. You really made us happy by stopping by and we appreciated it. Just wish you could have stayed longer so we could have shown you a lot of Hoosier hospitality.

We both O.K. here and getting ready to go to Richmond for my biannual eye checkup. Weather here still cold and damp with mebbe snow tonight.

Ed, two pix was all I managed to pry loose from my album, both with Billiard in them. Keep them. Also enclosing some more lire to help out on the newsletter, for know you can use it. Your 1st issue was really nice.

We both send all our love,
Ray & Mary
Dear Ed:

I sorry I couldn't get to see you when you were in the Denver area. I've started a letter 3 times, but somehow don't complete them. This time I'll make it.

I feel I've had a very interesting and happy life, but somehow I have trouble with a letter. I can either write about my life, which is quite ordinary for my era, or write about my experiences in service. That presents a problem because I have a very poor memory. I recall very little of the activities in service. When I've read of the recollections of others in the newsletter, it frustrates me.

I do remember well some of the men in the platoon like Whalen, McIntyre, Bennet, Kurch, Schormberg, Williams and Springer & Haddiestad. I've appreciated the newsletter, because then I recall others.

It's strange, but I remember few of the Non Cons except Sgt. Barnes and Sgt. Morgan. At the time I thought they were both sadists. Since then I've realized how wrong I was. They had a real job to do & did it well.

After discharge I returned to Red Wing, Minn, married Dorothy, whom I'd known since grade school. We were lucky in having five children.

We might have had more, except for the last being twins. After service I was never content to stay in that small town, with no opportunity. I got a job with a box plant in Iowa and after many moves with then and subsequent mergers I stayed for 30 years, 20 as Plant Hgr.

My health has not been the best. It's puzzling how you can fall apart from age 21. I had cancer in 1978, a heart attack and by-pass in 1981. I also acquired asthma and emphysema along the way. Somehow, with a good wife, fine medical help, I've been very fortunate as with all that I'm not restricted in life's activities, just slowed down. I'm thankful for each morning and each spring.

I retired in January and have enjoyed that much, so far. After all the horror stories I'd heard and friends asking "What are you going to do?" or "Do you have any hobbies?" I was getting edgy.

Sincerely,
Merrill Seeley

P.S. I'm enclosing a picture of Dorothy and me.

MERRILL SEELEY and wife DOROTHY
RAY HILD and ED PHILLIPS
Connersville, In. - 1986

HANK and MARIAN SIMPSON
with MARY HILD

JIM ROGERS and RAY HILD
Connersville, In. - 1985

JEAN and ART START at the 517th Reunion
Orlando, Fl.

AL GOODMAN, ALICE GOODMAN,
& CHAS. PUGH (the suspenders
are red) (the hat is a 596
hat donated by Moses for all
who come to Albany in 1987)

C. PUGH, AL GOODMAN & ANN PUGH
in Victoria, B.C.
Dear Don:

Thanks for the letter. I don’t remember any John Gaiser—must be a distant (and unknown) cousin! The news of Earl Dillard’s death, coupled with the list of others of the old 596 group who are gone, saddens me greatly. I haven’t attended the reunions, but many times my thoughts are filled with the older memories of the war years and associations.

Wayne Horwood stopped and visited with us briefly about a year ago here on the boat at the Daytona Marina. We had a very pleasant evening. He invited me to go with him on a cruise aboard his sailboat while his wife was visiting relatives, but I was unable to accept. Unfortunately I haven’t heard from him since. Sent him an Xmas card but it was returned as “address unknown”.

Since I retired from Bethlehem Steel we have taken our timeboating leisurely south—stopping here and there for a month or two, or even a season. It is a pleasurable, tho’ purposeless, existence. Our 52’ houseboat is comfortable, reasonably fast, and much like a floating mobile home. Two Chrysler 260hp engines can take us almost anywhere our pocketbook can afford. Marinês where live-aboards “are tolerated” here in Florida are few and far between and becoming rapidly out of our price range for a “hole in the water.” At this stage, if we can sell our boat, we will move north, possibly the New England area. The New Hampshire section is being discussed. But that’s a certain amount of dreaming. Boat’s are rather difficult to sell in this area, it was good to hear from you.

My address here is:

"The Wanderlust"

Best regards,

Glenn Gaiser

Dear Charlie,

I certainly appreciate your letter and information on the 596 Parachute Engineer Company. I am happy that you took the time to look me up and send me information on many from our old outfit.

I started as one of the original Cadre officers in old C. Co., at Camp McCall in March of 1943. I stayed with the unit until December, 1943 when transferred to B. Co. and then stayed with the 179 Airborne Engineers through the Battle of the Bulge and Rhine Crossing. I ended up as Company Commander of B. Co. before transferred to 101st Airborne.

Anne O’Connor of Washington, DC and I were married in July of 1943—while most of you were in Parachute School. Ray Hild was the best man and Freddie Zaverto, Ray McMullen and Eddie Philippus attended the wedding. Four daughters and seven grandchildren later, we are about ready to retire from The Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. in Akron. I started with Goodyear right after the war as a Development Engineer and am now Corporate Director of Quality Assurance.

We plan to retire by April 1st of this year and hope to be in our condominium in Florida by July 1. Our new address will be:

Richard & Anne Wollam
6140 Midnight Pass Road
Sarasota, Florida 33571

Again, thanks for your letter and information and please put me on your mailing list so I can make some contributions, both monetary and newswise. Say “hello” to all the gang!

Best regards,

Dick Wollam
Dear Ed,

Sorry I have been so remiss in writing and in sending some financial assistance for the 596 newsletter.

I was sorry to miss you on your winter-spring trek to CA. I have a brother in Sacramento and would have come up after our Mexico trip, but didn't know how to contact you at your daughter's. We took off again Memorial Day weekend to the Jazz concert in Sacramento. This is a four-day international affair with over 100 groups from many countries playing from 10 a.m. to 2 a.m. all over town and in outlying areas as well. You should time a visit to your daughter to include this. We meandered on up to Expo visiting relatives and friends and sightseeing Oregon and Washington and met the Pugh's in Vancouver on June 21. The four of us had a great time for five days at Vancouver and four more at Victoria.

We spent a few weeks at home and then flew to Maryland (Gaithersburg, just outside of D.C.) and spent the month of August taking care of grandchildren while our daughter and husband attended the Presidential inauguration in Bogota, Columbia, and then visiting with them when they returned. Lyle and Mary Ann Madison stayed over one night on their way from New Jersey to Virginia Beach where they were going to help her sister do some painting. They drove right in to that tropical storm the weekend of August 15-17, so I guess they are still waiting for the paint to dry.

Enclosed are a few pictures from the Victoria stop. The suspenders are a present from Charles--since I kept hitching up my pants--and the cap is the first distributed by Charles on behalf of the most generous Moses who has sent enough to Charles for all the 596ers who make it to Albany.

The beard I grew in Mexico and shaved off after the Maryland grandchildren saw it.

I hope things are better for you and yours and we look forward to seeing you next year.

Your friend,

Al Goodman
Dear Ed,

I am asking darnet to write for me as my arthritis makes my script a bit difficult to decipher.

As I promised you about ten days ago, we are safely in Montana and I have time to collect my thoughts a bit and write to you more leisurely and, hopefully, more meaningfully.

In particular, I have been thinking about our departed friend and comrade-in-arms, Earl Dillard. What a shock it was to hear of his sudden death last March. We are all well aware of such possibility as we progress through the years, but who is ever prepared? God's will will be done.

Earl was an exceptional soldier! Quiet, reserved, methodical, dependable, thorough, loyal, and steady as a rock in the midst of combat. Truly, a leader of the first magnitude and a great boon to any organization. He was always able to accomplish the ugly business of war with minimum lost effort and maximum efficiency.

Earl's 2nd Platoon assumed a great deal of his demeanor and strength of character, proceeding accordingly to insure the defeat of a stubborn enemy.

Earl was not one to be foolhardy, but he was brave and courageous. Too, he could dish out his type of discipline pretty even handedly, all the while commanding respect. May he rest in peace and know of our thoughts and love for him.

And then, I think too of the sudden loss of Wayne Harrell, "Judge", as he was known affectionately, was a fine soldier and much liked by his buddies. They knew he could be depended on to carry his share of the load, whatever the team mission might be.

I didn't know him well as a trooper in the 56th, but it was a real joy to be with him and his lovely daughter in Orlando in 1981; then again in '83 and '85. He had a fine touch of wry humor that we were all privileged to know and enjoy. Joe Senter said it best in a recent Thunderbolt: "We all miss the Judge."

Ed, you are doing us all a fine service with Wings and I know Charlie is pleased particularly. His is a touch act to follow. In fact, my comments above are not nearly as well done as Charlie's in the May '86 Static Line, but none-the-less heartfelt.

Garnet and I enjoyed your brief visit in January. Sorry we were not feeling up to par. We hope you are well and Kay is holding her own.

With love and affection,

Bob and Garnet Dillypoe

P.S. You may want to use the enclosed pic with Ray Hild on the right and I-don't-know-who on the left. It was sent to me after I left the Company. Please return.

P.S.S. I'm sending, separately, a tape (to keep) of my singing group, "The Lonesome Cowboys."

B.

FISHER, DILLARD and HILD
Chablis, France - 1945

The LONESOME COWBOYS is an excellent vocal group...
Bob is their leader and spokesman.

Editor's opinion
Dear Ed,

We lost another great one on 3 March, when Earl Dillard succumbed to a heart attack. Ann and I attended his funeral in Jefferson, Texas. There was a beautiful wreath from the 596 PCEC. He is survived by his lovely wife Edith, daughters Mary and Nancy, two grandchildren, two brothers, two sisters and a host of friends that include all the men of the 596 PCEC.

Earl and Edith have made the past several reunions, including the 1984 trip to France. He was the current President (CEO) of our Company and had been very active in the affairs of our Association. Earl had been retired for a few years from his position at Texas tech University.

During the 1943-45 period, no one in our company was better liked, admired and respected than Earl Dillard. He was a soft-spoken, considerate, and caring person who, as a platoon commander, led decisively but gently and quietly with his southwestern drawl. He was a gentleman and I have never met anyone who didn't admire and like him.

Thank God, the euphoria, "the good die young," is not always true. Our feelings of personal loss is eased by the knowledge that Earl had a full and happy life filled with accomplishment and with love for and from his family and many friends. Forever Airborne, till we meet again.

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Charley Pugh

EARL and EDITH DILLARD
Jefferson, Tx. - 1986

ANN PUGH, GEORGE SHULL,
EARL DILLARD, WINSTON SHULL
and EDITH DILLARD
Good friends are a treasure beyond price because they care for you when they don't have to. Friends will love you even when you are being terribly unlovable. They will hang in there through grumpiness and anger and fear, refusing to let you run them off. They have a large capacity to tolerate, to understand, and to accept your eccentricities, imperfections, and weaknesses.

Just being with them starts a healing process for problems that may never be directly addressed. The warm, friendly talk flows back and forth and fears are soothed, hurts are eased, shaken faiths are steadied. If there is one motif to these friendships, it is laughter. Laughter is the keynote, the tongue with which we speak of love to one another.

In the hospitality suites at our reunions all the jokes, the teasing, the witty retorts, the bad puns and the irreverent banter spring out of love—love for laughter, for quick thinking, and for each other. Friends are an extended family and the relationship is held together with ties as strong as those of blood. Even though friends may be separated by great distances and may not see or talk with one another for months on end, they are comforted with the sure knowledge that their friends are there and can be counted on for succor and solace in times of doubt or depression or adversity.

One's friends come in all shapes, sizes, colors, ages and both sexes and they frequently are as different from one another as day is from night. Yet they all have one thing in common, they have all added something to your life, some color or texture that would otherwise have been missing. There must be parts of all of us that can function only amongst particular friends, parts we might not even know we had otherwise. Every friend plays a different tune on your soul. That's why there cannot be one single all-purpose friend. One should have a complete set, like a set of golf clubs. How many, you ask? As a generalization, I'd say as many as you can take care of. That number will vary from one person to the next. Few people know how many friends they have and most people under-estimate the number. The degree of closeness among friends varies so widely that there are differing depths of friendships. You may be counting only the closest ones while I am taking a different census when I count my own.

We in the 517 FRCT were so unusually fortunate to be together in one military unit for three years. In most instances, this was the entire extent of our military experience. This fortunate fact has resulted in a closeness that seems to exceed that experienced in those units that had so many people coming and going.

The love and caring by and for true friends helps greatly to keep our personal world in balance. Friends are a solace and a joy equally for the best of times and for the worst of times.

Let me close with a note of what-the-hell, so-what-if-I-cry-at-the-movies sentiment that is proper to the subject.

"From quiet homes and first beginning; Out to the undiscovered ends, There's nothing worth the wear of winning, But laughter and the love of friends."

Hilaire Belloc, Dedictory Ode

Dedicated to the memory of Earl Dillard, Wayne Narrrell, Ray McNullen, James Nolan, Fred Zavattero, and Dr. John Holbrook.
PODRASKY and SAUNDERS
(regulation laces?)

Never did enjoy
the ride

GEORGE AYLING

SAUNDERS and SHORNBERG
(V-E Day)

STERLING and THOMAS
Charles Pugh
1944 - Verdun Bar
Nice, France -
Have you been there?

Saunders and Herrera

Kaye and Ed Phillips
Southern Pines 1943

LT. and Mrs. Phillips
1944

Ray Hild writes that this picture is:
Hild, Gainer, Dalrymple, Norwood,
Dillard and Boneventura

The Editor thinks it is:
Hild, Gainer, Dalrymple, Zavetoro,
Dillard, Flannery