Spring has sprung. Along with Spring comes my annual issue of WINGS. It was going to be a semi-annual publication but things just got in the way. Just wait till next year.

Thanks to Charley Pugh who passed along many of the pictures and some of the letters there is much news. I can say honestly that without his pushing me with many letters and phone calls the issue would be even later or possibly handed out to those who attend the 517th MT Reunion in June of this year.

That is number one priority this year. The reunion of the 517th Regimental Combat Team. It is being held at the TURF INN in ALBANY, N.Y. We know you have been informed of the meeting in the issue of THUNDERBIRD but this is a gentle reminder. Registration should be mailed to William Boyle, 26 Michael Drive, Saratoga Springs, N.Y. 12866. Send along a check for fifty dollars. All room reservations should be sent to the Turf Inn, Wolf Rd, Albany, N.Y.

Charley Pugh has challenged all the other companies of the 517th to an attendance contest. He said we will have the largest turnout. So, we all must be there especially the men on the East coast. -- WE WILL SEE YOU THERE.

With good news there is always bad. The bad news is that we lost two troopers this year. Ray Morgan passed away on January 28, 1987. As you know we saw him in the V.A. Hospital in La. last year and he was doing quite well. The other loss was George Sebring who we lost on January 24, 1987. He fought a tough battle against lung cancer.

Our sincere condolences to the families.

The cover on this issue is an enlargement of a Christmas card sent by LAYTON and BARBARA MABRY. It shows the 59thers in action, clearing mines, with a 517th Infantryman in the foreground. There was some beautiful poetry in side the card with the Christmas greeting. We thank Layton for the beautiful print.

Those of you who remember Father Alfred Guenette will be glad to know he has recovered from his illness and is back in Chile. Below is a short excerpt from his last letter to me in March:

"Impossible for me to make that Albany Reunion in June, especially after spending eight months on a rest cure in the States. May you really enjoy yourself with the War-Buddies you will meet! Yes our number is definitely dwindling from year to year. I must state that I am now feeling much better even though I'm still on medication. At 73 I shouldn't be complaining too much. I do know that my pace from here on in must be slower than what it has been during my 32 years in Latin-America."
Anyone who wishes a 596 patch three inches in diameter can order one from Charley Pugh, just send him a check for $5.00. Jim Moses has a 596 hat to give to all men who attend the Albany Reunion in June. That is worth the trip. See you there.

The following is an excerpt from one of Charley Pugh’s STATIC LINE column.

Although the AIRBORNE WALK MEMORIAL at Fort Benning has been officially dedicated it is not completely finished. I’m sure it is nearing completion and I can assure everyone from first hand observation at the Dedication Ceremony, it is magnificent in concept design and execution. In the years to come you will be seeing many photos of this unusual monument to all Airborne troopers, past, present and future. A part of you is in the Airborne Walk and I hope you have cared enough to send at least $10.00 to Don Lassen, [Address Redacted]

(After typing this I immediately sat down and wrote a check for Don and the AIRBORNE WALK. I hadn’t sent any donation before - )

Take a note of the letter printed elsewhere in this issue regarding the issuance of a stamp to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Airborne Forces. Please take the time and send a card or a letter asking that such a stamp be issued, Send mail to:

JOE MILLER is deeply involved in the planning of the Airborne celebration in Washington D.C. during the year of 1990. This is the Airborne’s 50th Anniversary year. He has hosted a luncheon meeting with Senator Wendell Ford. Invited to the luncheon meeting were Senators Terry Sanford, Mitch McConnell, Lloyd Bentsen, Representative Larry Hopkins, Postmaster General Preston Tisch, Archivist Frank Burke, Secretary of the Army John Marsh, Dr. John Zapp of the AMA, Mr. Don Lassen, Editor of the STATIC LINE and Charles Pugh, D.D.S. Quite an impressive list.

We look forward to more information of this very important event. Joe Miller is also very busy with a group to make the archives of the government, especially those records of military history, more accessible to everyone. He has done a fantastic job on this project also. Those of us who belong to Veterans organizations should look into this cause and get our organizations behind the project.

Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee
/o Postmaster General
U.S. Postal Service
Washington, D.C. 20260

SEE YOU IN ALBANY IN JUNE
Here's hoping that all 596ers will make a special
resolve to attend the reunion at the Turf Inn, Albany,
NY, 25-27 June 1987. There are several 596ers living
within a few hundred miles of Albany who have not
attended many or any previous reunions, quite possibly
because of the distances and expense involved. This
time the north easterners will not have that reason,
so we can expect to see several new faces. That makes
it all the more enjoyable for all of us because we
know that the first reunion one attends is the absolute
best. It has an effect on the first-timer that is
difficult to describe with words other than exhilara-
ting, profound, moving and memorable.

A look at the 596 mailing roster indicates that
we should expect between 40 and 50 of our 596ers
to be there. If we do have that many, it will be
a record for us. Yes, this counting expects YOU to
be one of those hooked-up for Albany. Let's let some
of those memories we share live again— with one another.

Dear Bill,

I am hereby serving notice on "P" Company and the rest of the Combat Team that
the 596th Parachute Combat Engineer Company in laying down a challenge. Our numbers
will be so great at the Albany reunion that the "Largest Company Attendance Award"
may be retired for lack of competition from the rest of the Combat Team.

The 596 won this award in Orlando and San Mateo but was nosed out in either
a fluke or miscount in San Antonio by "P" Company. In Albany, we plan to have our
own poll-watcher double check the counting ability of "P" Company.

Airborne,

December 8, 1986
Charles Pugh
596 PCEC
The Turf's Temptations...

- VIP Cards
- Free on-site parking
- Lighted outdoor championship tennis courts
- Year-round heated indoor swimming pool in a beautiful garden setting
- Outdoor solar swimming pool with adjacent sundock snack bar for tropical cocktails and summer food fare
- On-call courtesy limousine to and from Albany Airport and Wolf Road area
- Gift shop and unisex hair salon on premise
- Valet, room and bellman services
- Barrier Free/Handicap approved facilities
- Ice & soft drink machines on every floor
- Video game area
- Elevators
- Sauna
- Complimentary morning newspapers
- Patio sports bar with cable color TV
- Reduced weekend and package plans available.
Our Charlie Pugh writes the 517th PRCT column for the STATIC LINE. It is a terrific job he does and keeps us up with the news and announcements pertaining to the 517th---- For you 596ers the STATIC LINE is a monthly newspaper with news of all the parachute outfit's past and present. A very interesting publication which keeps one informed of what is going on in the world of the combat paratrooper. So, with the 517th THUNDER-BOLT, the 596 WINGS and the STATIC LINE all we veterans can keep up with the news of our comrades-in-arms of the past.

Below are some excerpts from Charlie's columns of the past year.

The proposed All-Airborne 50th Anniversary meeting in Washington, D.C., July 6-9, 1990, to celebrate the birth of Airborne Troopers in July, 1940 comes in off-year between regular 517 PRCT reunions. Our Combat Team is on record as supporting this proposed 1990 meeting and a meeting hotel and rooms have been reserved by Bill Lewis in anticipation of the participation of a large number of our members. More detailed information will be forthcoming provided there is the expected enthusiasm for this idea in the airborne community. In order to help the organizers know how much interest there is in this once-in-a-lifetime All-Airborne reunion and marching parade, please drop a note or card to Don Lasse ex pressing your interest.

This event will receive wide media coverage and will probably be the "last hurrah" of this magnitude for the WW II era Korean War Airborne Troopers. Those who have served since those years are still young enough to look forward to similar celebrations on future significant anniversaries.

It's a thrill for me to just think about seeing and being a part of an All-Airborne parade marching down Pennsylvania Avenue and singing "Blood Upon the Fissures." These exemplars of military expertise, even in their 60's and 70's, will cause a swell of pride in the hearts of all American patriots.

Bill Lewis informs me that our Association is now incorporated in the state of Florida and that we have been approved by the Internal Revenue Service as a not-for-profit organization. This means that those of you who itemize deductions on your income tax form can legitimately deduct charitable contributions to the 517 PRCT Assn., Inc. Since we charge no annual dues, any money sent in is a tax-free deduction. Now Uncle Sam will be paying a percentage of your periodic gift to our Association. In gratitude, we will henceforth consider Uncle Sam an Honorary Member. So when the spirit moves you, send a few bucks to Bill Lewis.

After the Christmas bills arrived, I learned that my wife, Ann, has been inducted into the MasterCard Hall of Fame. A friend of mine has nicknamed his wife "Congress" because she introduces so many bills.

CHARLES E. PUGH
632 So. Henson
 Ft. Worth, TEXAS 76104
SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

On 18 November, I talked with military author and historian Ed Luttrell and he told me that Brian and Gayle Pinkerton had just had an announcement as of late 2018 that they would have published a book, "Operation DRAGON," several months ago, had some internal business problems. As a result, they have repeatedly postponed the publication of 17 scheduled books, including "OVERCOMING," which is a book that Brian and Gayle Pinkerton had planned to publish. Unfortunately, the book or more planning to do so must await a better time for them to return from their "day job." The book has been put on "hiatus" but they have a lot more work to do to get it published.

Congratulations to our very own Terry Sanford upon his election to the United States Senate from North Carolina. We wish Terry and Margaret Knox a happy and prosperous career in public service. Terry is our kind of politician. He is a man of integrity and a man of the people.

"If you have ever wondered if anyone still appreciates America's WW II efforts, visit Belgium. We were visiting with Belgian friends who we had never met before. These super people, in particular Laci Carrier, Serge Fontaine, Edgard Delesis, George Gaspard, Fernando Albert, Irme and Arnold Tormoen, Remacle and many others, hosted, guided, and befriended us every moment of our five day stay.

"They are teeming in great detail with every combat action in Belgium of our Combat Team. Several of them served in the Belgium underground resistance. As they showed me around the various sites and towns, I was amazed by the complete accuracy of their memory of any combat action. More than once when we were going through their stories, I realized that I had been there before. I saw the buildings, the roads, the fields, the people, the events, as they described it to me. I often had to ask them to repeat themselves. I always wanted to know more. Their stories were so rich and so complete that I often had to let them get ahead of me just so I could catch up with them. They were like a walking encyclopedia of military history. I was always so impressed and always so grateful to them for their time and their hospitality. The Belgians are a wonderful people and I hope I get to return to Belgium again someday."

"We visited the Airborne Memorial State. The 22-foot cross memorial to the 517th at Lorraine is kept so neat and beautiful by the Airborne Memorial State. It was an emotional experience for me to see the names of so many who perished places flowers at our memorial, thanks to the generosity of Shirley Kwan."

"I hosted a small dinner party for about 30 of our Belgian friends. Lots of food and drinks and laughter. It was a great time and I hope we can do it again someday."

President Frank Grinch has recently appointed an ad hoc committee chaired by Bruce Christoff to look into the possibility for us to erect several bronze markers in town to honor the Airborne Memorial and to provide a local reference to the history of the town.

The communication media liked the story of the origin and the purposed use in part of the All American Historical Place." "You know, the thing is that we have never been able to get the people to do the honors. It's like we're missing something."

"I am so proud to be paying taxes in the USA. The only thing that I would say is that I would just be proud for half the money!"

"QUOTE OF THE MONTH: Arthur Godfrey said, "I'm proud to be paying taxes in the USA. The only thing I would say is that I would just be proud for half the money!"

Sincerely,

Terry Sanford
for the past several months, the redoubtable Clark Archer has been engaged in archival research, voluminous correspondence, and personal contacts in an effort to document and nail down the unit decorations awarded elements of our Combat Team by France and Belgium. His efforts have been quite successful and follow-

WITNESS is a summary of his findings. You may wish to place this col-

umn in your personal copy of PATRIOTRES ODSSEY.

Because these foreign decorations were awarded after the war

was ended, many of you are no doubt unaware of them until now.

BELGIAN CROIX DE GUERRE was awarded under the

following Decrees by Charles, Prince of Belgium Regent of the

Kingdom:

[1] DECREES NO. 6188, 4 June 1949, to:
517th Parachute Infantry Regiment
460th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion
596 Parachute Engineer Company

"During the crucial period of the general offensive of the

Ardenne, in 1944, the 7th Armored Division and the units at-

tached to it were attacked by enemy forces estimated at eight
divisions, five of them armored. They held the important junc-
tion of B. 19th and prevented the German advance and ex-

ploitation of this axis. In this manner, it doomed the German

offensive by checking it and permitting, through its sacrifice,

the allied forces to undertake a general counterof-

fensive. In assuming the attack on 20 January 1945, these

units took an active part in the counteroffensive by driving

the enemy out of their positions and away from our boun-
daries. They inflicted severe losses upon them and, more par-
ticularly, they captured more than one thousand prisoners."

[2] DECREES NO. 1356, 7 November 1945 to:

First Battalion 517th Parachute Infantry Regiment "Operating

under the orders of the XVII U. S. Airborne Corps, it resisted the

enemy break-through in the south of Spa, at the same time preven-

iting an advance toward the north. From 20 to 25 December 1944,

the Division and the attached units effectively resisted the enemy

in the course of the first phase of the Ardennes offensive. From

26 December 1944, and during all the months of January 1945, these

units were broken up into task forces and attached to the infantry
divisions. They fought stubbornly, cleared north, destroyed others,

and succeeded also in preventing new penetration by the enemy.

[3] DECREES NO. 2735, 13 July 1946, to:

Second Battalion 517th Parachute Infantry Regiment.

"Passing over to the attack on 20 January in the Second

VIIIth sector where it had fought previously, the 7th Armored

Division pushed the enemy out of the positions that it had been

organizing for two weeks and pushed it without respite seven

kilometers beyond the Belgian frontier. Inflicting heavy losses on

the enemy. During these nine days it captured more than one

thousand prisoners." Awarded under French Decision No. 147,

12 July 1946, by the President of the Provisional Government of the

French Republic.

[4] FRANCE NO. 12924, 11 December 1946, to:

"First Battalion 517th Parachute Infantry Regiment them to:

"This attack organiza-

tion and coordination was by its bravery and endurance during

the campaign in the south of France. Parachuting on the morning of

15 August 1944, into Provence, in the vicinity of Draguignan, with

the mission of protecting the right flank of the landing forces,

it vigorously conducted the combat for 94 days in succession. They

pushed back the opposing forces to the Italian frontier, in spite of

heavy losses and a lively enemy reaction. This greatly contributed to

the success of the landing in Provence.

[5] Executive Order 9596 and Department of Army General

Orders Number 15, 30 January 1949, awarded PRESIDENTIAL

UNIT Citation — Streamer embroidered SOY-HOT-70 to:

The First Battalion, 517 PIR.

Since the 40th Anniversary visit of Combat Team members to

southern France in 1984, I have been a member of the group of

members to Joe Robinson Post No. 5 of the American Legion,

Twenty or more of us belong to it. I have just received word from

Commander Joe Tucci that in October the Post named me as

Honorary Vice-Commander of Post No. 5. I am indeed honored by

this appointment and will henceforth consider myself the "Official"

American recruiter for Post No. 5.

One hundred of our troopers belong to 17th Ann Div.

Assn. If you would like to become a member send your name,

address, unit affiliation, and $8.00 annual dues to Ed Siergier, 62

Folly Acre Rd., Danbury, CT 06811.

Ed and Joe Quade have worked long, hard and very successful-

ly to locate members of the 17th Ann. Division. In the process they

have located quite a few of our 517 PIR troopers for us.

They put out an excellent publication, THUNDER FROM

HEAVEN. In the October issue, I read the text of the most ex-

cellent talk made at their last reunion banquet by William Mit-

chell. In it are some surprising revelations and statistics, at

least to me. For example, you know that the WW II average

guardian casualty rate for non-Airborne infantry in Europe

casualties was 12 percent. In the Pacific con-

considerably less? Armored divisions averaged about 5 percent

Casualties. Route 82nd, 101st, and 17th Air

borne divisions averaged about 3 percent. Did you know that

during the Battle of the Bulge, the 17th Ann. Div. had twice

as many men KIA as did the 101st and almost twice as many

as the 82nd. The non-fatal casualties in this battle were about

the same for all of these three divisions. I cite these

statistics because I don't think the large numbers of casualties

experienced by the 17th Ann. In Belgium and in the Wesel

drop are as well and widely known as they deserve to be.

Present in Atlanta for the Airborne Awards Festival last April

were: L-R: Helen & Houston Robertson, Gen. Dick Seitz and

Joe Miller. (Photo by Pugh).
Charlie and Ann Pugh received these notes on their Christmas cards and are passing the news on to us all.
From Alice and Al Goodman

We're looking forward to June too. We will be leaving California in April and making a four month trip of it.

From Lyle and Mary Ann Madison
Arrived in our home in Moreno Valley (near Riverside, Ca.)

From Dave and Olga Pierce
Good to hear from you. Read your column every month in the STATIC LINE.
Still driving the school bus, 5 days a week and Olga is working three days. That is retirement.

Plan to see you in Albany in June. We plan to drive there.

From Thelma and Bernie Barnes
Bernie is still holding his own. We will both be home for Christmas. He loved your Christmas card.

Don

The 517th PRCT members salute and thank the men serving on the Airborne Walk Committee for their splendid work on this most important project.

I noted the names of several 517ers on the list of contributors to the construction deficit. I urge all our members to send a few bucks to this long overdue memorial and to all Abn units and the men who have served in them.

Thank you fordevoting the pages of the STATIC LINE to this most worthy cause.

DR. CHARLES E. PUGH
623 So. Henderson
Fort Worth, TX 76104

Rene Body, who jumped with us in 1944 from the plane with Gen. Robt. Frederick, Alme Leocard, who was a resistance fighter in southern France and later the Founder and President of Souvenir Franco-American, and Jacques Laube, who also participated in the invasion as a French paratrooper.

Col. Body sent these photos along with his wish that our members have a good year in 1986 and that he may soon again welcome some of us who may be visiting in the area where we jumped together with him in 1944.

WARREN SANDBERG (596)...You can see by the stationery what I have been up to.

I retired this year at age 62. I had a stroke in 1983 and came out pretty good.

Then a heart attack in 1985, and again I came out smelling like a rose. So I called it quits.

My wife, who works at this hospital, (North Memorial Medical Center) retired in May. We plan to attend the reunion in Albany.
ED PHILLIPS in CHARLIE FUGH'S PUB - 1966
(Triple-double martinis are dangerous)

HANK SIMPSON is FUGH'S PUB
(a private club in Fort Worth, Tx.)

PHILLIPS the morning after
Don Lassen, editor of the STATIC LINE, presenting the Airborne Man of the Year to Joe Miller.

Monument honoring all paratroopers. This is part of the AIRBORNE WALK at Ft. Benning.
Dear Ed,

Your Christmas Wishes was most appreciated. You stated how rushed you were but the effort belied it. I hope this reaches you before next deadline (Ed's note: the way I move you never can be late, Bob)

Pics enclosed are from visits by those noted on the pictures. I'm always tickled pink when I can renew comradship with our special guys and gals. And these were visits appreciated especially.

We had a fine day and a half-two night visit with the Goodmans. They drove us all over the Bakersfield area, which is quite spread out. We did a lot of gabbing and ended up with a fine Banque dinner. Al and Alice are just fine and plan to be in Albany, as we do.

The recent STATIC LINE announces that Charley Fugh and Joe D. Miller will head the Airborne drive for issuance of a commemorative stamp on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Airborne in 1990. We will all have to get behind them and support their efforts.

Hope all is well with you and looking forward to seeing you in June.

Warm Regards
Bob

Mary Miller, Bob & Garnet Dalrymple
Marge & Bill Conger
Green Valley, Az. - Dec-1986

Joe & Mary Miller
(Dec. '86)

Marge & Bill Conger

Bob Dalrymple & Hal Bean
(Ennis, Mt. - Aug. '86)
Dec. 6, 1986

Hi Charley and Mrs,

I don't seem to write very often We are both fine except for my eye sight. I haven't been able to drive a car for six or eight years but we live in this little town and it is about a half mile to the post office and uptown. The walking is good exercise.

We have had a pretty good fall with a little snow and been quite cold, but so far, better than last year. We are sending a picture of me and wife Hazel. We have no children. Well I'll try to write more next time. In this little town they call me Sweede.

Your old buddy,

Harold

Harold and Hazel Johnson
LUTERAN

Water fountain 2nd Platoon used during stay in barn across the road. Bill Conner standing in front 1956

Leo and Vi Wroblewski
Chuck Walter

Virginia & Elmer Szakacs
Valerie & Ted Heyden
Ted’s Parents
(Valerie's wedding day)

A now friendly German bunker near Sospel
Dalrymple Family
Bob, Mary, Garnet, Joan, George
(Green valley, Ariz. - 1986)

Herb & Marie Reischwald with '28 Model "A" Herb restored

Winston and George Shull

Gene Markley, Joe Senter and Ed Phillips

Charles and Ann Pugh

-San Mateo, CA-Aug. 11-13
Dear Ed,

Dennis Shiple dropped by my office today to drop off a bottle of Christmas cheer for me. While here we called Sgt. Ray Morgan in Louisiana. He had a stroke a few months back and is now confined to a wheelchair. He was in good spirits and said our call made his day.

Shiple asked me to send you the enclosed $30.00. $20.00 is from him and $10.00 is from George Williamson. Please make a note of it in the next issue of "Wings" so they will know the money reached its intended destination.

I must close in haste but with an expression of appreciation and gratitude for your fine work for the 596th.

Warmest regards,
Charley

December 9, 1986

Dear Ed & Kaye;

Just a note to wish you a nice Christmas and that Kaye is better and can be home.

We had a lonesome Thanksgiving but hope to spend Christmas week with Nancy in Chicago, if weather permits.

We're both O.K. here and if I feel as good next year do want to make it to Albany.

Ed, I really enjoyed the last newsletter and you did a superb job on it.

Our thoughts will be with you and we both send all our love.

Sincerely,
Ray

November 3, 1986

Dear Ed,

I don't know what's wrong with me but ever since I retired three years ago I keep putting off doing any thing till the next day and then the next. My wife says that I have not done any of the things that I said I would when I retired. There is an off track betting parlor near where I live and I spend some time there, my wife has suggested several times that if I moved my bed there I could save some time.

Charlie Pugh called me a while back. I think he was giving me hell for not writing.

On November 23rd I have to go in the hospital, they are going to try and open the artery on the right side of my neck, the left side is hopeless.

I am sending a picture of us taken last June at my daughter's wedding.

I have a lot of good memories of the 596th and of course there are sad ones too.

I hope this letter finds everyone in good health.

I remain with care,
Elmer Smykace

(Note from Editor): Elmer reports operation a success - he is fine.
Route 4, Box 370
Markesan, Wi 53946
November 18, 1986

Dear Ed:

Here is a short report on the Mini-Reunion held October 3-5, 1986 at the Dells of Wisconsin:

The reunion turned out to be a super success far in excess of what we thought could happen. We had 73 troopers, wives and friends in attendance and of that there were 4 troopers and wives from the 596th, Warren Sandberg, Leo Wrobleski, Art Von and of course, me. And what was the most exciting part of that was that for Warren, Leo and Art, it was their first reunion.

The hospitality room was a big hit and even opened early to accommodate the five or six couples who registered at the Den of the Dells on Thursday evening, October 2. On Saturday morning, 39 hearty souls braved the rainy weather and took a ride on the Upper Dells of the Wisconsin River. Saturday evening we had a very nice banquet put on by the motel staff.

All in all, we thought everyone had a great time and showed it by voting to meet again in 1988 at the same location.

Herb Reichwald

Enclosed are a few pictures taken in the hospitality room of Leo and Vi Wrobleski talking with Chuck, Walter (Co. H) and Warren Sandberg and I. Unfortunately, we did not get a shot of Art Von.

Both Marie and I were deeply saddened to hear of the loss of Earl Dillard. We certainly had enjoyed getting together with he and Edith at the reunions in California and in France. I also remembered him from the war years with much respect and admiration.

We are attaching a small check to help out on mailing expenses and would like to congratulate you on your "Wings" publication, it is most appreciated.

Since we already have our room reservations at the "Turf" in Albany, we look forward to seeing all of our friends from the 596th in June.

Sincerely,
Herb Reichwald

P.S. I called Charles Courchaine of the 596th who lives in Wisconsin Dells. However, he could not get over to the Reunion as his wife was critically ill.
December 3, 1986

Dear Ed,

Sorry to hear about Kay and you can rest assured she shall be in our thoughts and prayers.

Ann continues to have her day by day problems of peripheral neuropathy which is constant "tingling" of the feet. This has been going on since April following immediately after a cystoscopy which was necessitated by a long period of bladder infection. It becomes almost unbearable at times and it is like hitting your crazy horse and it never going away. With that it is necessary for me to spend much of my time indoors and help with the household chores but I am thankful I am able to do it and have her with me.

With best regards and give our love to Kay,

Herb

Herb & Ann Laymon

November 16, 1986

Dear Ed,

I feel that I owe the 596th a letter after so many years an for reasons completely beyond our control we have been unable to attend the various reunions. Most assuredly we had plans but they were never to materialize.

Never to leave my memory is the day I was transferred from the 596th to the 887th Aviation Engineer Company (Glider) but it led to horizons I would never have dreamed of in the years to follow. A military career was the farthest from me and in spite of the many challenges the military proved my good fortune and there has never been a day of regret since.

The 887th Engineers seemed to have been forgotten in Southern France and acting as the Executive Officer for the company I soon got in touch with the Engineer Headquarters in Italy. We were soon removed from the "holding action" we were playing in south France and were sent to Lecon to be attached to the 82nd Airborne Division. It was not too long following the Bulge we were shipped back to the United States and to Geiger Field in Washington where most of the Aviation Engineer units were activated. First thoughts were that we were to be re-activated and sent to the Pacific but most of the 887th had already served about 3 years in Africa, Sicily, and Italy. Instead, the unit was disbanded and all of the personnel except me were released from the service following the end of the war in Europe.

My first assignment at Geiger
Field was Tactical Officer for one of the replacement companies. Due to heavy shipments of personnel to the Pacific the company varied in strength from 100 to 1500. Callisthenics proved my strong point and I can still recall having 66 First Sergeants one particular morning.

Following the cessation of hostilities in Asia the REPO company was disbanded and I became Commander of the Officers Squadron with no First Sergeant and not even a company clerk. I was the Orderly Room. I soon found this to be boring and volunteered to be the Police and Prison Officer. Dealing with the deserters and 4Pers proved to be measurable but yet quite interesting in the study of people.

In 1946 our daughter Vicki came into the world. She is now a nurse in Kansas City and is the mother of two fine boys. Our son, Herbert Jr. is a lawyer in New Orleans and he came along in 1952 while we were stationed in Tennessee.

With reductions in the service from time to time and I being in the Reserve the future of the service became quite questionable and I began to acquire rental property in nearby Spokane. I left the service in 1946 concentrating my time on apartment houses and also going to work with a local contractor constructing a railroad test facility. I saw a long slow climb to the top and inquired about the highest possible rank I could obtain by reentering the service. In 120 days I was back in the service and stationed at what was then called Spokane Air Force Base. I was assigned to the Provost Marshal and a field with which I had become quite familiar.

I learned in 1947 when the Air Force became a separate entity there was a shortage of Engineers so I applied for my commission and lo and behold here came orders for assignment to Okinawa where I went in early 1948 and was assigned to what was then the Air Installation Officer or better known as the Post Engineer in the Army. I was assigned as Maintenance Shop Officer with approximately 100 civilians, 150 GI's, and a mixture of 100 or more Okinawans and Filipinos. Although we had 9 typhoons during our two years there, we like Okinawa very much. Ann was able to join me after 8 months but just before she came I lost my father and a brother-in-law with both passing away within a 24 hour period. Ann was at the port with Vicki at the time and since I was unable to get home I told her to come on and that was when she had her first experience with a typhoon as the ship came through one on the way over.

We left Okinawa in late 1950 spending Christmas on the boat but the best Christmas present awaited me at the Pentagon in the form of a promotion where we had gone to see my first born in Okinawa.

Our assignment was Stewart AFB near Nashville. While in Okinawa there was an avalanche of officers of the Corps of Engineers transferring to the Air Force and my boss led off with many of us following. This later proved to be a wise move and led to other good things. My commander at Stewart AFB and I were promoted again and with my having the greater longevity I was to command the Squadron while he remained an Air Installation Officer but now called the Base Civil Engineer.

I then applied for a position as Advisor to one of the European country Air Forces and was assigned to the Turkish Air Force being stationed at Izmir, Turkey. We arrived in Turkey just before Christmas and if there was a low point of my military career, this was it. Spending Christmas Eve and Christmas Day in a Turkish hotel with no gifts, no tree, and nothing but the smell of Sutton grease and open sewers but we had each other and still much to be thankful for.
We found a very nice new apartment on the third floor of a new apartment house. The nightmare of Christmas was not to end shortly after the first of the year the earthquakes began and quite severe at first. The tremors came at all sorts of unexpected hours and they did not seem to lessen with intensity. Our son was then less than one year old and as is natural Ann had a genuine fear for the children. We (four of us) began to sleep in the car and were sometimes accommodated by the few Turks we knew. It reached a state wherein I found it necessary to visit the Commanding General and ask that my family be returned to the States. I accompanied them and we were assigned to Tucson AFB but when we arrived there I found my job as Base Civil Engineer was filled. I was then asked if I would go to Forbes AFB in Topeka, Kansas to which I consented. This was in the year 1953. In the year 1953 the Air Force was re-building and Forbes AFB had just reopened. Two wings of KB 47's were assigned to the base with other complimentary aircraft. It was in need of one more runway, a dozen hangars to modify and others to be built plus renovation of all buildings and roads. We spent money like crazy but I had a good Engineering staff, good officers and a work force of 500 civilians and airmen.

My assignment to Forbes was 3 years and from there I went to the University of Pittsburgh to take their Advanced Management course to last one year. From there I was assigned to Fairchild AFB as Base Civil Engineer and we spent 3 wonderful years there.

My last assignment was to the Institute of Technology at Wright Patterson AFB near Dayton, Ohio. After 4 years as one of the Department Heads I decided to retire, having learned my next assignment was back to SAC for closing one of the SAC bases in New England. A highlight of my last assignment was to serve as technical adviser on an Air Force movie we made for the Institute.

Since 1964 when I retired from the service we have purchased and sold two businesses but still keep my finger in a few pieces of rental property. The pace of life has really slackened but we have also had our share of physical problems, particularly Ann. Considering what I have put my family through since our marriage in 1943 I feel fortunate to have them all. In the final analysis that's what counts.

We built a new home here in Poplar Bluff just ten years ago and they have been 10 happy and peaceful years.

I appreciate all of the news letters, bulletin, and the like I have received and I so much regret the loss of so many fine men in the 56th, the latest of them Earl Dillard. We had been in touch with the Dillards through Christmas cards and had hoped to see them at the last reunion.

Well, Ed, in just over 45 minutes I have briefly covered just about 45 years of my life. Somehow I made it a small package when literally it would take volumes. My landing in a tree and sitting just as comfortable as I am now tops my stories and entitled "My First Trip to France". The service was good to me and I gave it my best. I催urch in the 56th and the memory of the Unit will be the last to go away. I treasure that issue of the STRATEGIC STRIQUE as concerning the Invasion of Southern France. That was my last jump with the 56th. Give our regards to Kay.

Sincerely,
Herb Larson
November 4, 1986

Hi Ed:

Received the copy of "Wings" today and it was really good to sit down and read it right away before I did anything else.

We left home on Saturday the 25th and arrived in Va. Beach that evening with Airstream in tow. We also stopped to visit for an hour with our son Mike and his family in Rockville, Md. on the way to Va. We stayed at our daughter Eileen's and family and also with our youngest daughter (a twin to Mark) who moved to Va. Beach and just bought her home in August. They are only 5 minutes apart so it was nice to see them.

We left Va. Beach on Wednesday morning and drove to the Fla. Welcome Station on Rt. 95 and spent the night. Thursday AM we hit the road and arrived here at the park 12:30 in the afternoon. Roy was it hot. It only took me long enough to open the trailer and change into my shorts and I was ready to start unhooking and unloading.

Saturday PM Don and Kathy Smith came into the park for the winter also. I brought my photo albums from 43-45 and the reunion for him to look at. Looks like they will be in Albany in '87. He didn't get his copy of "Wings" today so he will probably want to see mine if his doesn't come tomorrow.

I think we are leaving here about December 14th for home and will return sometime around January 1st. I'm not sure if it will be before or after New Year's. Our friends from home own the lot next to us and they are going to ride up and back with us. It is only a one overnight stop trip so we don't mind the trip too much.

I thought I might have seen Al and Alice Goodman when they were in Gaithersburg visiting their daughter but they left a day or so before I visited Mike at Rockville in August. Talked to Lyle Madison and he told me they were there but we just couldn't leave at that time due to an Airstream Rally at Liberty State Park across from Manhattan and next to Ellis Island. We had 320 trailers at that rally and a real nice time was had by all.

Do you know when you will be in this area? Where are you going from here? We are sorry you couldn't make it to Elinora this past fall. We are looking forward to your visit. We plan on going to the Varity (Operation) Dinner this year here in Fla. We went to the one in Syracuse a few times. Smitty is also going I believe. I heard it may be held in Flt. Myers this year. I am going to write to Bill Lewis to see if he has the info. It is always held in March.

Well, time to sign off - Keep me posted - Regards to you

Regards,
Don & Marion Saunders

Ed:

Since October I've been on a partial retirement, working half time. It's a program my employer, the State of California, has for those over 62. I'll continue this for a few years until I fully retire.

We'll go to Santa Cruz, in northern California for Christmas with the grandchildren. My mother-in-law, 97, who lives with us will fly up with our daughter, while Gloria and I will with our 14 year old dog.

We plan to go to the Albany Reunion should our household responsibilities permit.

Bill Hudson
Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee
2 Stamp Development Branch
U.S. Postal Service Headquarters
Washington, D.C. 20260-6352

Attention: Mr. Belmont Parsley,
Chairman of the Citizen's Stamp Advisory Committee of the U.S. Postal Service

Subject: 1940-1990 American Airborne Commemorative Stamp

Mr. Parsley:

U.S. Army Airborne forces were organized on 25 June 1940 with 50 volunteers. Presently, there are about 750,000 active and ex-Airborne troopers. For the past 47 years, Airborne troops have been used consistently in the most hazardous combat situations in Europe, Philippines, Korea, Vietnam, and Grenada. They have a hard-earned reputation as our elite combat soldiers and have been our only Ready Alert forces for many years. They can be deployed ready for combat anywhere in the world within eighteen hours. Their record both in combat and peace-keeping duties has been outstanding and deserving of some special recognition. I would like to request your consideration for the 1990 issuance of a 50th anniversary Airborne commemorative postage stamp. I submit that it would be appropriate and richly deserved.

U.S. Airborne forces have been recognized and honored on the postage stamps of Belgium, France, the Philippines, and Vietnam. At least twenty other countries have issued postage stamps to recognize their own Airborne troops.

Our country has issued postage stamps to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Disabled American Veterans. Stamps have also been issued to recognize and honor the Coast Guard, the Merchant Marine, the Marines, the Women's Military Services, Naval Aviation, the War, Corregidor, and several other deserving military actions, individuals, and organizations.

Active and ex-Airborne soldiers, their wives, children, and grandchildren, etc. represent an interested constituency of at least four million persons. On their behalf, I petition you to please give this request a favorable response.

Sincere thanks,

Dr. Charles E. Pugh

517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team Association
Dear Friends,

"But life is worth nothing unless I use it for doing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus -- the work of telling others the Good News about God's mighty kindness and love." (Acts 20:24, The Living Bible.)

We greet you in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Thank you for the opportunity to be your representatives and Christ's ambassadors here in Zambia. As we approach the time for giving our Lottie Moon Christmas offering we hope you will be more aware than ever before of the importance of the task God has given all of us -- the task of sharing the Good News of His Son, Jesus, with the whole world.

Tom is the nation-wide director of the Theological Education by Extension (TEE) program. This is a program of study designed to meet the needs of our local pastors and church leaders - people who will likely never attend the resident program of study at our Seminary. At present there are 104 persons actively enrolled in various TEE centers throughout Zambia. During the past year 153 certificates have been awarded for courses completed. Tom and I both are involved in leading TEE study groups here in Kabwe. He meets Sunday afternoons with a group of the men. I meet on Tuesday afternoons with a group of the ladies. What a joy to see their spiritual growth through these studies.

Another area of the work for which we give thanks to God is the Bible May Correspondence School. It began just over twenty-two years ago here in Zambia. It has spread to many parts of Africa and the world. Never in our biggest dreams did we envision such a wide-spread ministry!

It is a joy to meet people who tell us what the first course (Who Is Jesus!), offered free, has meant to them. Not long ago I was at the post office. A young man came up to me and said, "Mrs. Small?" I answered, "Yes." He hurried to say, "You don't know me but I am so-and-so. I have recently moved to Kabwe as pastor of the Evangelical Church. I have heard of Mr. Tom Small for a long time." Then he went on to explain that in 1972 he had taken a correspondence course from Lusaka, entitled Who Is Jesus, written by Tom Small. As a result of that study he became a Christian.

As time passed he felt God's call to be a preacher. Now after study and preparation, he has been assigned to his first pastors. How we praise God for the many many lives that have been touched through this ministry.

Now a few words about our family. Rather still lives in Richmond, Virginia. She is working in the patient control unit of Richwood Medical Center. Tom, Jr. and his family also live in Richmond. He is technology director, corporate quality assurance at Reynolds Metals Company. He and Pat have two sons - Tom III and David. Roy and his family are still in Harrisonburg, Virginia. He and Cheri have a daughter, Kara Lynn.

Tom and I were able to make a personal trip to the States in September. Our main purpose was to spend time with my parents. Daddy is 88 and mother will be 83 in December. We just praise God that both are doing well. We did have some time with our children, grandchildren and other family members, as well. We agreed it was time well-spent and could not have been better.

In August, 1985, Tom had a viral infection of the thirteenth cranial nerve which has left the right side of his tongue soft. It affected his speech for awhile. However, he has learned to talk around it now. Most people assure us they cannot tell any difference in his speech. For this we are grateful because much of the work he does involves speaking.

May God's richest blessings be yours as you celebrate the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Tom and Mary Small
LEST WE FORGET

Let us honor with our prayers those who have given their lives for our country.

BY MEETING GREAT CHALLENGES, THEY ROSE TO GREATNESS AND ACHIEVED LASTING HONOR. THEY GAVE THE LAST FULL MEASURE FOR US AND THEIR COUNTRY.

1st Lt. George E. Flannery.............Italy
PFC Francis T. Topysak.................Italy
Pvt. Harry L. Springer.................Italy
Pvt. Henry Wilkins...........Jump area So. France
Sgt. Howard D. Jaynes, Jr...............Var Valley - So. France
PFC Ernest R. Coffelt...........Var Valley - So. France
Pvt. Leonard Mathis.............Var Valley - So. France
Pvt. Patrick L. Michaels........Mountain above Nice
PFC William F. Boggan...........Nice, France Airport
Sgt. Wallace P. Englebert........Nice, France Airport
Pvt. Vestal A. Lucas........Nice, France Airport
PFC Herbert H. McLamb........Nice, France Airport
Pvt. Harold H. Miller...........Nice, France Airport
PFC Alois J. Siewierski........Nice, France Airport
Pvt. George (Pappy) Jones........Belgium
John Whalen........................Korea
William Wickersham.............Korea
Louis Barbera......................So. France with 517 F

596 PARACHUTE COMBAT ENGINEER COMPANY
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John K. Berryhill
Jack W. Boyer
Cyrus H. Buchner
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Walter K. Charlton
Adolph A. Correa
Joe Diaz
Milton O. Dorman
Carroll W. Dorothy
Frank R. Ennis
Bill Fisher
Jesse Floyd
Al Foley
Max W. Grana
Francis J. Hale

Alton Wayne Harrell
Kenneth E. Harris
Clyde V. Hoffman
Dr. John T. Holbrook
Gorda L. (Tommy) Landrum
Francis M. Lester
Peter Liberatore
Ralph Longstreth
Durland (Bucky) McCauley
Ray W. McMulien
William J. Metzger
Wilburn T. Montgomery
Ray Morgan
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Elias Nolan
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Walter Waszurka
John Whalen - KIA Korea
William Wickersham - KIA Korea
Fred H. Zavattero