

Fall 2011 Edition

The ORION GALLIVANTER

1917 - 1919

Dickebush Sector
Mount Kemmel
Vierstraat Ridge
East Poperignhe Line
Hindenburg Line
LaSelle River *St. Souplet*
Meuse-Argonne *St. Mihiel*



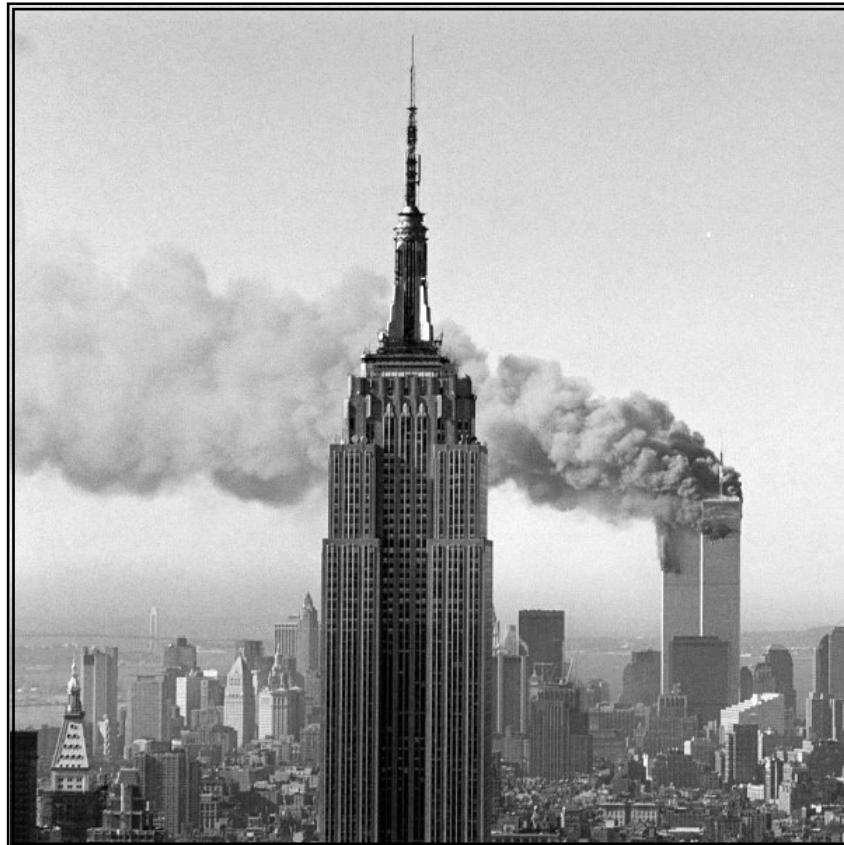
**1940-
1945**

Makin
Majuro
Eniwetok
Saipan
Okinawa

**2001-
Present**

*Enduring Freedom,
Afghanistan*
Iraqi Freedom
Noble Eagle

Orion Remembers



SEPTEMBER 11, 2001 — SEPTEMBER 11, 2011

THE ORION GALLIVANTER



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE 27TH DIVISION ASSOCIATION, INC.

The Orion Gallivanter is published Quarterly
by the 27th Div. Assoc., P.O. Box 2522, Syracuse, NY 13220-2522.
Subscription rates included in annual dues of \$15.00 per year.

**PRESORTED STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID, PERMIT No. 994
SYRACUSE, NY**

All communications pertaining to the Gallivanter, membership dues
and contributions should be sent to 27th Division Association,
Attn: Sec/Editor, P.O. Box 2522, Syracuse, NY 13220-2522

VOL. XLVIII **September 2011** **NO. 118**

HONORARY COMMANDERS

Sgt. Arthur J. Coakley

OFFICERS 2010-2011

Commander: Gary S. Yaple
7576 Poplar Field Circle, Baldwinsville, NY 13027

1st Vice-Commander: Ray Swift Jr.

2nd Vice-Commander: Geoff Milligan

3rd Vice-Commander: Chris Cronin

Sgt.-At-Arms: Frederick Burke

Historian: Geoffrey Milligan geoffrey.milligan@us.army.mil

Judge Advocate: Hon. Bruce Fein
1904 Preble Road, Preble, NY 13141-9738

Surgeon: Vacant

Gallivanter Editor: Robert F. Romano
633 N. Caswell Rd. Freeville, NY 13068

Treasurer: Joseph Merrill C/O DIV PO Box

Chaplain: Chaplain Knowles

Assistant Chaplain: Robert Wartonick
3412 Lynwood Place, Vestal, NY 13850

Quartermaster: Chris Giebel

Secretary: John Tyler
27th Division Association
P.O. Box 2522, Syracuse, NY 13220-2522

Sr. Past National Commander: Eric Killoran,
12 Cambridge Dr. Clifton Park, NY 12065

Sr. Past National Commander: Paul Hujer
63 Argonne Drive, Kenmore, NY 14217

Jr. Past National Commander: Michael Leonardo
318 Walberta Rd., Syracuse, NY 13219

Jr. Past National Commander: Gregory Gallup
R.D. #3, Song Lake Rd., Tully, NY 13159

DIRECTORS

| | | |
|-----|------------------|-------------------|
| 4 | Ralph Marotta | Amsterdam, NY |
| 4 | Louis Noto | Amsterdam, NY |
| 11 | Robert Wartonick | Vestal, NY |
| 11 | Stanley Gardner | Johnson City, NY |
| 16 | Frank Knapik | Gloversville, NY |
| 27 | Robert Rokjer | Preble, NY |
| 27 | Gary Yaple | Baldwinsville, NY |
| 52 | Vacant | |
| 56 | Dominick DeLucia | Cold Brook, NY |
| 105 | Tiny Jackson | Schenectady, NY |
| 108 | Robert Stabb | Oneida, NY |
| 108 | Benjamin Tupper | Syracuse, NY |
| AL | Thomas Acquilla | Mechanicsburg, PA |
| AL | Thomas Gibson | Utica, NY |
| AL | Edward Sourbeck | Yonkers, NY |
| AL | Gilbert Kosiba | Amsterdam, NY |

Commander's Message

Greetings,

I hope this edition of the Gallivanter finds all of you well and enjoying the wonderful summer sun.

This is my first entry into the Gallivanter as you new commander. I would like to thank Eric Killoran for his great leadership during what can only be described as an incredibly busy year for our membership. As many have heard, the 27th Infantry will head back overseas in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. With that, many of our members are occupied with important tasks and training events that prevent them from focusing on the 27th Division Association right now. We are grateful for their membership, their service to our nation and we stand ready to support them throughout their deployment period.

This year's reunion was designed to be a very casual event centered on the Picnic in Baldwinsville, NY. We had a great time at the reunion picnic hosted at the VFW thanks to the hard work and persistence of Paul Hernandez. Many thanks go out to the reunion committee for a job well done.

As I take the reins of this time-honored organization, I want to lay out a few of my goals as commander. My intent is to pursue the corporate sponsorship program as a key fund raising function for our association. With the proceeds, we will develop and implement a scholarship program for students with immediate relatives who are members of our organization. Coupled with these initiatives, we will be putting a full court press on new memberships and life memberships. By the time you read this, we will have already set up several recruiting tables at 27th BDE pre-deployment events across the state in an effort to attract new members. I hope to have some positive results from these efforts.

I know how much everyone enjoys reading the Orion Gallivanter. It is a great publication and Rob Romano has done an outstanding job editing and publishing it. Like so many others wearing the Orion patch, Rob is preparing to deploy as well. I have also heard your concerns. As such, under my command I will ensure that the Gallivanter is delivered on or before the first week of each quarter. I know that so many of our veterans and long-time members of the association count on this as a highlight in their readings. I know how important it is to so many that I intend to do whatever it takes to see that the arrival of your Gallivanter is predictable and on time. In the coming weeks, Geoff Milligan will begin to transition responsibility from Rob and he will serve as the acting editor of the magazine through the deployment. Rob will retain his position and title as the editor and continue to provide significant input and advice from his post overseas. With this team on the task, I have no worries that we will be successful.

I wish you all great health and good luck throughout the rest of the summer and have a wonderful fall season. Until the next edition...

Yours in the 27th,

GARY S. YAPLE
27th DIV Commander

Editor's Corner



Mailing Addresses:

27th DIV ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

- Unit & Personal Remembrances
 - 80 Plus Club to the Editor
 - Historical stories
 - Reunion Notices
 - Mailbag items
 - Taps
 - New Membership application
 - **Membership Dues—\$15.00**
 - Memorial Fund Donations
 - Gallivanter Donations
 - Change of address

(The Post Office does not tell us you have changed address, you must let us know.)

Mail to this address:

27th Division Association

Attn: Secretary

James Caggy

P.O. Box 2522

Syracuse, NY 13220-2522

Email: James.Caggy@us.army.mil

Make checks payable to:
The 27th Division Association, Inc.

To all the 27th Veterans,

Every one of us has moments in their lives that they can flash to in their minds without hesitation. You stare off into the distance or close your eyes and you can remember the oddest of details—the smells in the air, a particular sound, the ground beneath your feet. Turning on the news that warm Tuesday morning ten years ago and seeing the burning towers brought me instantly back to a weekend trip with my relatively new wife and my “old” friends from high school so many years ago. It was the last time I had seen the towers against the skyline. It was the same sort of sunny weekday and sitting at the base of the Statue of Liberty, what better place to take a group photo to remember the day?

As the 10th anniversary came and passed, I was somewhat saddened by the lack of coverage and concern for the day. That pivotal day has effected countless millions across the world. It has seen sons and daughters of our State and Nation fight on distant and unfortunately on our own shores to stem the dark hatred that those with evil intent have nurtured and have tried to spread.

We should remember that day just as easily as any other held in our minds. We should remember the dead, the wounded, the maimed from the Towers, The Stone Building, the field in Pennsylvania—and the sands and roads of Iraq to the mountains and plateaus of Afghanistan. For the most part, we are an optimistic people and we try not to dwell on the past. But if we let the 9-11's and the Pearl Harbors slip from our memory we do a disservice to the civilians and warriors alike who died.

The closing lines of an Australian ballad written about the survivors of the Gallipoli Campaign in WWI, “*And the band played Waltzing Matilda*” describes what happens when we forget and time moves on...lest we forget.

*And the old men march slowly, old bones stiff and sore
They're tired old heroes from a forgotten war.
And the young people ask, “What are they marching for?”
And sometimes I ask myself the same question.*



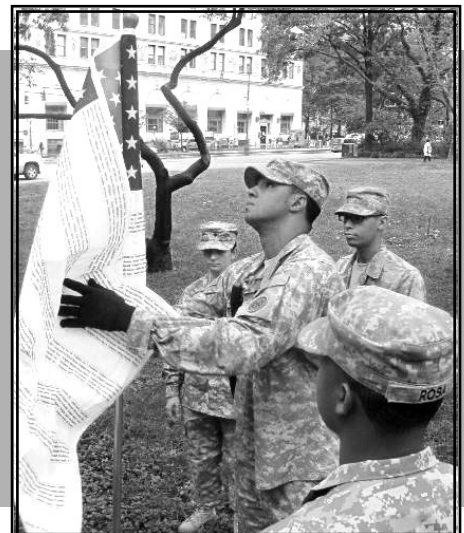
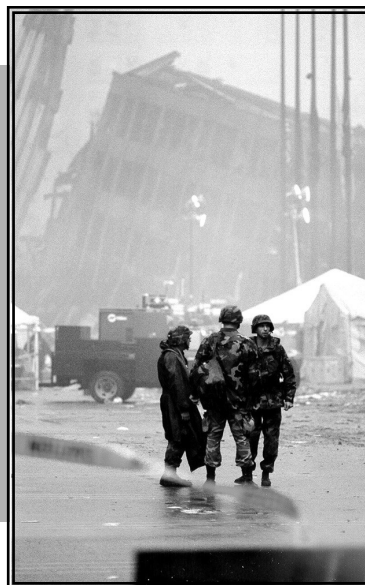
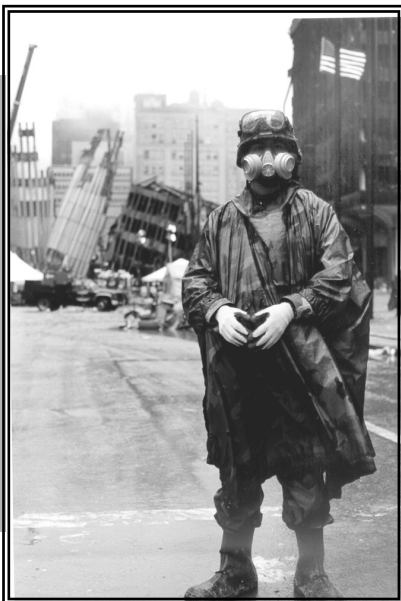
*In memoriam to the 3000 lives lost...
 TWTC Towers, / The Pentagon / Shanksville, PA*

"It was horrific. As we were coming into the city skyline, you could see the billowing smoke. You could smell the smoke. You could smell the death. You can see, as you got closer to the site itself, the flames, because there was a lot of stuff still burning."

LTC Candiano



"In my mind, (there is) no direct comparison between Pearl Harbor and the destruction of the World Trade Center and the 3,000 people...because that wasn't a strike, a strategic strike between two armed enemies. That was murder. Senseless, pitiful murder. Those people do not deserve an honorable title of soldier. They are simply murderers. Terrorist, murderer, they are synonymous words." COL Slack



HOW IT HAPPENED

Part 6: “Dead Man’s Hill”

The following nights passed quietly except for the roar of the cannon in the near distance and we began to get accustomed to being lulled to sleep by the roar of the big battles. Those real near us sometimes nearly turned us over in our beds on to the ground when they sent a large kiss over to the Kaiser but we became used to these in a short time and could go to sleep very easily even when a heavy barrage was in progress – providing of course that we had the time to sleep. In spare time we were kept busy digging trenches around our camp of pup tents for use in case of an air raid.

Sept. 23rd, I took my first trip up; our trucks were loaded with 155 M M shells; we started at 7 P.M. just when dusk was setting in passed over miles of camouflaged roads, finally reaching a town called Chattencourt (*Chattancourt, in the French Lorraine- Ed.*) and well named as it really was shattered. In France all buildings are of stone structure and for miles and miles no wooden building of any kind can be found. This town of Chattencourt had been so thoroughly shelled that there wasn't a piece of masonry higher than 4 feet standing anywhere in what had previously been a very fair sized town and for some reason the Boche dropped about so many bombs in this town every day. On our way up to the front, shells were dropping around and none dropped too close but on the way back one dropped just off the side of the road as we were going by. I quieted my beating heart after a time but just after that Jerry high explosive landed so close to me, I must admit I wasn't feeling like the bravest man in the world but we became accustomed to it after a time and when they were dropped too close we would just sit tight and hoped they wouldn't land any closer. I also want to state that many and many a silent prayer was said on such a night. The Germans took quite an interest in the roads that we used (as if they could keep us from getting ammunition to the artillery and keep the supplies from being brought forward) and shelled them as much as possible but our artillery was kept supplied just the same. Details of engineers were stationed in dugouts, etc. along the main highways at all times, there were quantities of stone always beside the roads and when a Jerry would land in the road, leaving a large hole, out would rush some engineers, fill up the hole, go back to their dugouts and on the trucks would go.

These black, dark nights were beautiful in a way, all lighted up with Boche and allied start and signal shells. As each shot was sent on it's way, a great

flame would leap from the mouth of the cannon (of which there were thousands) which could be seen in action. We topped “Dead Man’s Hill” many times during the time that we were using it without a single loss, which really was miraculous, as the hill got it's name from the number of persons killed during the time that we were using it but they were always from some other outfit. This hill was so high that it was in view of the Huns and whenever they saw or imagined they saw any activity there, they dropped numerous shells on it. The 104 – 105 – 106 Field Artilleries of the 27th Division



Chattancourt

were situated just ahead of Chattencourt, being on the Argonne flank. French artillery were also in this sector and at this time we of the 52nd artillery brigade were attached to the 33rd. Illinois National Guard Division, the 27th Division being the one on the Flanders front. (*90 years later, the 33rd and the 27th will be side-by-side again- this time in Afghanistan, when the 33rd conducts a relief-in-place with the 27th- Ed.*) We got back from this, our first night on the front, and found the rest of the company all packed up having been ordered to move. After an hour and a half of sleep in the bottom of the trucks we moved out again about 2 ½ kilos to

another woods the other side of Balincourt. We had a rumor that we were to spend quite a few days in this camp, so my bunkie and I found some old sheet iron and built up the sides of our pup tent and made it high enough so that we could at least sit up inside of it. We dug a ditch around the outside of it to keep the rain out, stole some hay to put on the ground to soften our bed up a bit and had quite a comfortable domicile.

From then on we were kept busy feeding our artillery with shells for the 75 millimeter and 155 cannons, also carting 30-30 rifle ammunition to the doughboys. We did our work at night and slept in the day time mostly. There were some negro artillery on this front and they were fighters. They wrote many a note in the shells before sending them on their way across no man's land to disturb the peace and quiet of the Huns. The biggest scare I ever got over there was when going forward one night; for some reason things were fairly quiet; we were rolling along nicely, each occupied with thoughts of home, others getting a few winks of sleep when "Wham" right alongside the road was a heavy explosion and we were enveloped in a cloud of smoke and powder. We all thought that our time had come but as we didn't start on our journey skyward, we began to take inventory and found that it was only one of our own 155's, nicely camouflaged just started firing after a short rest, but it surely kept us awake the rest of the journey and chased away all thoughts of home for the time being. This same night the Huns were shelling some cross roads near Marne quite heavily and it was necessary for us to travel these roads in order to reach our destination.

When we were passing through the heavy traffic at these three main cross roads a truck about 75 feet ahead of us was blown to pieces and three men killed. A short time later a battery position just off the road that we were passing, was hit, sending two more men west and 6 others to "Blighty" as the "Britishers" say. We went through this same performance night after night playing in the same kind of luck always, having shells land real near us, sending other fellows west and we never getting touched.

Many prayers of thanks were sent up after returning from some of these rides and at the time the boys over there were nearer to God than they had been before.

History Corner

A look at documents, memorabilia and collections that help tell the story of the 27th Division

Artifact of the Quarter

"A Soldier will fight long and hard for a bit of colored ribbon"- Napoleon Bonaparte

In WWI, many US Soldiers came home with a French award- the *Croix de Guerre* (Cross of War). The CdG was awarded to Soldiers who were recognized for gallantry and was often a companion award to a US award or citation. There were four levels of the CdG: bronze star, for those recognized at the regiment or brigade level; silver star, for those recognized at division level; silver gilt star, for those recognized at corps level; and bronze palm, for those recognized at army level.



Croix de Guerre c. 1918

The example pictured here is a bronze star variant, and was awarded to Joseph Woska, a Wagoner of the 107th Field Hospital Company, and was based on a commendation by Major General John F. O'Ryan. The commendation was given by the 27th Division Surgeon, LTC (later BG) Walter C. Montgomery on November 12, 1918. Wagoner Woska, of Haverstraw, NY in Rockland County, passed away shortly after the end of the war.

From the Historian:

I am continuing the work of archiving the massive number of newspaper clippings and photos into a searchable database. Quite a project, but we are always looking for more clippings and identified photos of veterans. Contact me if you can help in digitizing or have paperwork or artifacts that are important to the Division. At this stage, preservation of WWI and WWII artifacts is the key to maintaining the history of the Division and our brothers in arms in the 20th Century.

Geoffrey Milligan, Historian

Next: "Battles in the Air"

The Way it was - the Way it is

HEAVY MACHINE GUN OF THE 27TH

M2—The M2 Heavy Machine Gun (“Ma Deuce”) was originally designed at the end of WW1 by famed weapons designer, John Browning. Basically an upscaled version of his M1919 machine gun, the M2 fired a Browning designed .50cal cartridge.

The weapon is a recoil operated air cooled, belt fed heavy machine gun firing from the closed bolt position. Extremely flexible, the M2 has been used in countless applications including ground mount, vehicle

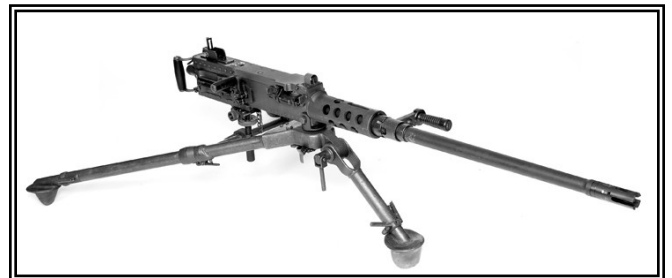


mounted, aircraft mounted and in two and four weapon combined systems.

M2 Heavy Barrel / Heavy Machine Gun

WEIGHT: 83 Lbs
LENGTH: 63 Inches
RANGE: 2,000 yrds

M2A1—In 2009, the venerable “Ma Deuce” went through it first major upgrade since the early 1930’s. The most apparent change was the adoption of a new quick change barrel system with fixed head space - eliminating the need to check headspace and timing. The receiver is made with lighter materials and now includes permanent mounts for optics. For safer operation, the M2 now has a trigger safety. The barrel is now lighter in weight, has increased corrosion resistance and a new “vortex” flash suppressor.



M2A1 Heavy Machine Gun

WEIGHT: 76 Lbs
LENGTH: 61 Inches
RANGE: 2,100 yrds

Author Major Robert Romano has been the 27th Brigade’s “New Equipment Fielding Officer” since 2006 and has been the primary project officer on over 75 fieldings from shotguns to satellite communications equipment.

258th Fires Big Guns at Fort Drum

FORT DRUM, N.Y. -- When most people think of the "Bronx Bombers", pinstripes and baseball gloves come to mind.

But don't tell that to Bronx native and New York Army National Guard Sgt. Tomas Couvertier, a member of Battery A, 258th Field Artillery.

He and his squad members sport a different uniform, one that features digital camouflage and the patch of the 27th Brigade Combat Team instead of pinstripes. And when Battery A takes the field, their equipment packs a bigger punch than the bats of any professional baseball team.

Sgt. Couvertier, alongside his battery mates from New York City and Long Island, conducted a live fire exercise on June 20th with an impressive piece of equipment: the M-198 Howitzer. After completing a nine day certification process under the supervision of artillery specialists from Fort Sill, Battery A fired, for the first time, the M-198 Howitzer.

By training on this artillery piece, Soldiers of the battery were able to further hone their combat skills in preparation for their upcoming deployment to Afghanistan. Battery A, under the command of Capt. Liam Brennan, will deploy and

provide artillery support for the rest of the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, as they conduct their missions in Afghanistan.

The M-198 Howitzer, while new to the 258th Field Artillery, is not new to the Army's inventory. The artillery piece was first introduced in the late 1970's, and has seen service in Iraq and Afghanistan. Four

M-198s howitzers were loaned to the 258th from the Missouri National Guard for this nine day training certification.

While soldiers from Battery A fired only 155mm high explosive rounds during their certification, the piece is capable of firing a wide range of munitions, like illumination, smoke, and white phosphorus.

As part of their training and certification, battery Soldiers received fire missions from forward observers with the 2nd Battalion, 108 Infantry, one of the maneuver elements of the 27th Brigade Combat Team. The battery fired high angle and low angle fire missions, and completed the certification process by conducting a disassemble drill, allowing the artillery piece to be towed away for its next mission.

B. Tupper





MAILBAG

— TAPS —



- John J. Collins -

Resident of Bakersfield CA, passed away on May 13, 2011. John served with an artillery company of the 27th DIV from 1941-1945 participating in the Makin, Saipan and Okinawa campaigns. After the war he continued his education, earning A Masters and Doctoral degrees in Education. He served as Dean of Students and President of Moorpark and Bakersfield community colleges.

After retirement he remained a consultant and advisor for another 27 years. He is survived by his three children, John, Margaret and Charles and their families including three grandchildren and one great-grand child.

- Robert Stefferson -

Resident of Mattituck, NY passed away on December 16, 2010. Born in Astoria, NY, he was a member of Company B, 1-106th Infantry during World War II. After leaving the service he married Florence Lipper. They moved to New Hyde Park and raised two children, Robert and Marilyn. He worked as a photoengraver in New York City until his retirement.

He was proud of his service in the military and spoke fondly of all the men he served with during the war.

- John P. Earley -

Resident of Pine Bush, NY passed away on February 22 in Chelmsford, Massachusetts. John served with the 106th Infantry Military Police, 27th DIV from 1941-1945 in the Pacific Theater of operations. He was a manager at Mastercraft Cravat Company in Pine Bush, NY for 35 years until his retirement in 1986. He was married to Lillian Olsen who predeceased him in 1998. He is survived by his daughter Joan Ladik and his two grandchildren. He was an active member of American Legion Post #1308 for twenty years as well as Post Commander. A memorial service was held in April, 2011.

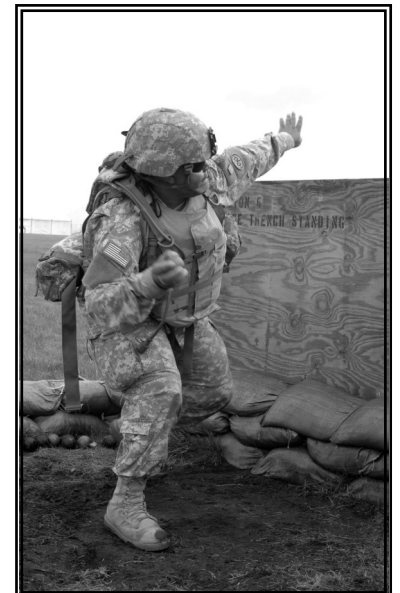
- Peter A. Sawicki -

Resident of Binghamton, NY passed away on April 5th, 2011. He served in B Battery, 104th Field Artillery and was activated with the 27th DIV in 1941. He served with the DIV in the Pacific Theater later transferring to the European theater serving with C Battery, 248th Field Artillery, 3rd Army. In 1947 he was one of the organizers of the 104th Artillery, Binghamton, NY. He retired from the military after serving for 26 years.

He is survived by his wife, Rose, four sons, 2 daughters, seven grandchildren and one grandchild.



THE SHUTTERBUG PAGE



THE ORION GALLIVANTER



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
THE 27TH DIVISION ASSOCIATION, INC.

The Orion Gallivanter, Attn: Sec/Editor
P.O. Box 2522, Syracuse, NY 13220-2522

VOL. XLVIII September 2011 NO. 118

PRESORTED STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT No. 994
SYRACUSE, NY

CHECK YOUR MEMBERSHIP YEAR ON THE LABEL!

If it doesn't say 2011 or LIFE after your name then it's time to pay your dues. Post Members remit payment to your post.

27TH DIVISION ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Full Name _____
(First) (Middle) (Last)

Spouse's Name _____

Address _____
(House Number and Street) (City) (Zone) (State) (Zip)

Current Phone: _____

E-Mail Address _____

Post No. _____ or Check if member At Large _____

Unit Served _____

Date: From _____ To _____ Rank (Optional) _____

*Make remittance (\$15.00) payable to: The 27th Division Association, Inc.
Send to: Attn: Sec/Treasurer; P.O. Box 2522, Syracuse, NY 13220*

LIFE MEMBERS:

Dues paid to National for life memberships are **NATIONAL DUES** only. Remain a member of your local post and pay your **POST DUES**.

REMINDER:

2012 Dues are **\$15.00**
(or *Life Membership*)

At Large Members

Please make checks

payable to:

**The 27th Division
Association, Inc.**

Mail to: Secretary

James Caggy

P.O. Box 2522

Syracuse, NY 13220

Member of a Post?

See your Post Secretary

27TH DIVISION ASSOCIATION LIFE MEMBERSHIP

Full Name _____
(First) (Middle) (Last)

Spouse's Name _____

Address _____
(House Number and Street) (City) (Zone) (State) (Zip)

Current Phone: _____

E-Mail Address _____

Post No. _____ or Check if member At Large _____

Age Please check<30 \$200 ___ 31-40 \$190 ___ 41-50 \$170 ___

51-60 \$150 ___ 61-70 \$120 ___ 71-80 \$90 ___ 81 & up \$60 ___

LIFE MEMBER