

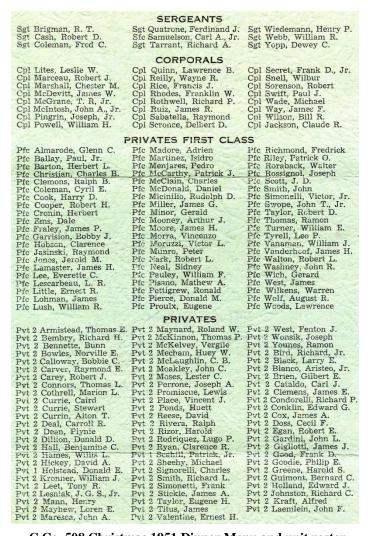
September 2015 www.red-devils.org Vol. 9 No. 3

WARREN R. WILKINS UPDATE By Ken Hamill

Warren R. Wilkins served in C Company, 508 ARCT in 1951-52 at Fort Benning, GA. We know this to be fact, because 9 veterans of the 508 ARCT who served during the same time frame sent documents, photos and statements that prove Warren served at Sand Hill, Fort Benning with the 508. Coordination with the National Personnel Records Center is difficult because - Warren is alive and must sign correspondence and the required forms. Theresa Holt and me prepare the forms. Theresa visits Warren at his Nursing Home and has the forms signed by Warren and then sends the package to NPRC. Our first package was discarded because it arrived at the National Personneel Records Center (NPRC) from two to four days late. Our June 2015 Devils Digest informed you that our second package was received by NPRC on 27 May 2015 and a written response from NPRC would be sent to Warren Wilkins on or about 1 July 2015. Theresa Holt informed me on 18 June 2015 that NPRC needed two more forms - 13075 and 13055. I filled out both forms and sent them to Theresa on 24 June. Theresa had the forms signed by Wilkins and then faxed them to NPRC. Theresa Holt informed me by email on 29 June that she had a NPRC Request Number and the technicians name that was assigned to Warren's case. Theresa Holt emailed me on 29 July 2015 with good news indicating that the search was still under way. NPRC told her that the request number identifying Warren Wilkins current search was still in suspense and they had pushed the date out to 26 August 2015. Theresa Holt emailed me on 17 August 2015 stating that NPRC is again, unable to locate his records. So, Warren remains a non-veteran for now. I called the NPRC twice on 18 August asking for advice. Both NPRC employees' would talk to me after I provided the request number and Warren's mailing address...

...But, they could not forward my request to speak with the technician assigned to Warren's case. The first operator hung up on me. One operator told me she would email the technician assigned to Warren Wilkins case and ask him to call or email me. I have not heard from the assigned technician. Theresa Holt received and sent me a copy of the NPRC denial letter dated 4 August 2015. The second paragraph states -"The information furnished on the enclosed NA Form 13075, Questionnaire about Military Service was able to locate the entrance date of January 3, 1951, but was not able to determine the discharge date, final pay grade, or the final character of service". I take this to mean that the NPRC prefers to assume the worst case scenario about people whose records have not been found. Wilkins has moments of good memory and recently told his old assistant BAR gunner, Aristeo Blanco that he served in George Company, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment 25th Infantry Division in Korea. Aristeo Blanco has corresponded with members of the 27th Infantry Regiment Association looking for news of Wilkins in Korea. Our historian Mark Eckenrode is also searching for info pertaining to Wilkins in Korea. Mark searches web sites and coordinates with 27th Infantry Association members trying to track down people who served with Wilkins in Korea. Meanwhile, we have decided that coordination in good faith with the National Personnel Records Center is Our documents, photos hopeless. statements prove that Wilkins graduated from Airborne Class 44 on 1 June 1951 and served in C Company, 508 ARCT from that date until late 1952. But the Army has been unable to find any trace of Warren in that time span. So we will request a Congressional Investigation through Congressman Lee Zeldin, Representative of the First District of New York where Warren R. Wilkins currently resides. Please send me military orders, documents, photos & statements pertaining to Warren R. Wilkins.

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C Co. 508 Christmas 1951 Dinner Menu and unit roster. Front side printing listed the roast turkey, giblet gravy with all the trimmings and all of the Company Officers, Master Sergeants and Sergeants First Class. Photo copy provided by Jim Vanderhoof.



C Co. Party at Columbus, GA L-R: Patrick McCarthy, Norville Bowles, Herbert Cronin, Ray Jasinski, Warren Wilkins & Arthur Mooney. Photo provided by Aristeo Blanco & Patrick McCarthy.

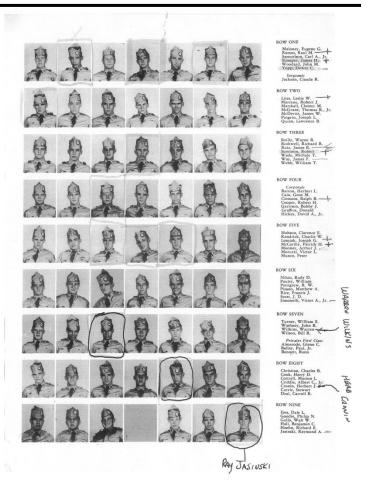


Photo copy pages depicting and listing Warren Wilkins from the 508 ARCT Yearbook June 1951-August 1952 were sent by Aristeo Blanco, Bernard Brown, Frederick Gilliam & Eugene Leonard.



Photo of Warren Wilkins wearing CIB, Wings, SFC Stripes & 25 ID patch was sent to Aristeo Blanco by Warren Wilkins several years after they got out.

Margin note reads "Good Old Days 23 Years Old"

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Warren Wilkins in front of his shelter half. Photo taken in August 1951 was provided by Joe Lesniak



L-R: Warren Wilkins & Patrick McCarthy wearing their guard uniforms. Photo provided by Joe Lesniak

Thank you Roy W. Rohrbaugh of Item and Service Companies 508 ARCT 1954-56 and York, PA for your generous donation to Veterans days at Arlington. Retired Chief Warrant Officer Rohrbaugh served in the 508 ARCT, the 101st Airborne Division and the 82nd Airborne Division. He sent a very nice note with his check as follows: Ken, I think that the Veteran's Day events at Arlington National Cemetery by members of the 82nd Association are perhaps the finest tribute to this nations veterans that I have ever witnessed. Regrettably, I will not be able to be present again this year, but I have enclosed a check in support of the effort. best to all who participate, and you may rest assured that I will be with you in spirit. All the Way - Airborne, Roy W. Rohrbaugh

Gerald "Jud" Haverkost 24 Sep 1935 – 1 Aug 2015

Jud was a dynamic and generous member of the 508 Airborne Chapter and the Support Company 508 ARCT Assn. He was very active in Veterans organizations and community efforts in his hometown of Hopkinsville, KY. There was an out-pouring of respect by well over 100 friends and neighbors that I mingled with at the funeral home visitation on August 4, 2015. Strickland made a great effort to attend. Jim had an electrical cardioversion to correct an atrial flutter of his heart on 3 August. The doctor allowed Jim to travel if someone else drove. Jim got his former Marine brother-in-law David Compton to drive him to Hopkinsville. A former nurse of Jud's and great friend of Sandra and Jud by the name of Jerry served as an energetic and charming co-hostess at the funeral home. Several dozen friends and family members attended the funeral service held on 5 August at the Kentucky Veterans Cemetery in Hopkinsville, KY. This is a new cemetery and quite beautiful. Colonel Jim Heyward drove up from Huntsville and joined us at the cemetery. The beautiful rotunda, built to keep people dry during Jud's celebration of life, did just that as it rained throughout the service. Sharp troops from the 101st Airborne Division supported the military funeral. The 21 gun salute and flag folding ceremonies were conducted very well for Jud. The Haverkost Pastor invited everyone to attend the celebration of life dinner at their church immediately following the funeral service.



Jud & Sandra Haverkost on left & right with their friend and Jud's former nurse "Jerry" just prior to the General Jackson riverboat cruise in Nashville, TN, February 2013.

FINAL MISSION, OCCUPATION AND DEACTIVATION By Mark Eckenrode

After the Ardennes Campaign, the 508th PIR was relieved by the 9th Infantry Division on February 18, 1945 and moved to Camp Sissonne in northern France. After Operation Market Garden this became the 508th's base camp. The Regiment was in dire need of rest, replacements and equipment. But first things first, the men were given passes for a few days of rest and relaxation (R&R).

With replacements fresh from jump school, training began in earnest for their next mission. This included training jumps with one resulting in tragedy on March 14, 1945. The 1st and 2nd Battalions were scheduled for a training jump with the 1st Battalion to jump in the morning and the 2nd Battalion jumping that afternoon. As the 1st Battalion began to jump one of the C-47's lost a propeller and began to lose altitude. In doing so it plowed through a number of paratroopers already in the air catching a number of chutes on its wings and tail. The crippled C-47 crashed into the ground, bursting into flames. Seven paratroopers and four crewmembers died in the flaming wreckage. Marlene Dietrich, a popular movie actress and a huge airborne fan, was present for the jump and was told beforehand the jump was held in her honor. When she witnessed the crash and deaths she became visibly distressed thinking they died for her pleasure.

The 2nd Battalion chuted-up and boarded C-47's for the afternoon jump. Col Lindquist and the Air Corps decided not to inform them so as not to cause them distress. When the men of the 2nd Battalion went out the door they were shaken to see the still smoking remains of the crashed C-47 on the DZ. This was the first they learned of the disaster.

On April 4, 1945 the 82nd Airborne Division reverted back to their original Table of Organization and Equipment (TO&E) consisting of the 504th and 505th Parachute Infantry Regiments, and the 325th Glider Infantry Regiment. The 508th was now officially detached from the Division and came under direct control of the First Allied Airborne Army. The Regiment was given a new mission and departed Camp Sissonne for an airfield near Chartres, France. The mission was to prepare for another combat jump, this time to liberate Allied POW's. There was fear that as the noose closed in on the Germans they would...

...start killing the POW's. On May 8th the services of the Regiment were no longer needed as Germany surrendered and the final combat jump was averted.

Towards the end of May, the 508th moved back to Camp Sissonne to reclaim equipment left behind in storage and waited for a new assignment. The men were concerned that they would be transferred to the Pacific Theater to finish off the Japanese. Many of the American troops felt they had done their job and just wanted to return home. Thus, a point system was initiated to determine who would return home and in what order. A point was awarded for each month one was in the Army and another point for each month spent overseas. Five points were awarded for each decoration or battle star received. Additionally, 12 points were awarded for each dependent child. A total of 85 points were needed initially to muster out of the service. With that, a few began to depart each week, but only a few, since of the many who had originally departed from Camp Mackall years before only a small number now The rest had been either killed or remained. wounded. Those remaining were "low point" men.

The transfer to the Pacific Theater did not happen for on June 8th they were on the move again and by June 10th they arrived at their new duty station, Frankfort–am-Rhine, Germany for occupation duty.

At Frankfort, the Regiment was to serve as the Guard of Honor for the General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower's Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF). SHAEF took over the I.G. Farben building and a number of nearby towns and facilities. Their mission was to guard the Headquarters and to serve as an honor guard for visiting dignitaries. Among the dignitaries included President Truman, Secretaries' of War and State, senior political and military leaders from Russia, Poland, France, Britain and other nations.

The Regiment's main mission at SHAEF was security. One battalion was responsible for the Headquarters proper. Another battalion was responsible for security of the nearby towns of Oberursel, Konigstein and Bad Homburg where 192 Allied general officers were billeted. The remaining battalion was held in reserve in Heddernheim as an honor guard, for parades and security. The three battalions rotated assignments on a two-month cycle. With such a high profile mission the troops spent many hours in close order drill and the manual of arms. In addition, in the performance of their duties white gloves and parachute scarves were worn...

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...The 508th troopers were billeted in the nearby town of Heddernheim where life was good after almost two years of training for combat and a year of fighting in three campaigns to include two combat jumps. The billets were quite comfortable. Two to three men were assigned per apartment consisting of a bedroom, living room, kitchen, a bath complete with hot water and fully furnished after the German occupants were evicted. The quarters were far more preferable than two to three men per foxhole. So goes the spoils of war.

As the Regiment continued to do their duty, the 101st Airborne Division was deactivated on November 30, 1945. Shortly thereafter the 82nd departed for the United States. This left the 508th PIR as the only airborne unit to remain in theater. As the only US airborne unit in theater many dignitaries viewed a number of parachute jumps as observers aboard jump aircraft. This method of delivery onto the battlefield was still somewhat of a novelty as few outside of airborne units has witnessed such an activity. Sonja Henie, a famous skater and film star of the day, became both an honorary Colonel and a member of the Regiment.

In November 1946 the Regiment departed for the US. They disembarked at Camp Shanks, NJ, on the same dock they departed from in 1943. On November 24, 1946 the Regiment was deactivated at Camp Kilmer, NJ - four years, one month and four days after it reported for duty. The Regiment has done its duty, at least until our Nation needed the Regiment again.

Casualties

Nature	Normandy	Holland	Ardennes	Totals
KIA	307	131	101	539
Died From Wounds	26	15	33	74
Died From Injuries	3	0	0	3
WIA	487	389	398	1274
Injured in Action	173	80	273	526
MIA/POW	165	66	23	254
Totals	1,161	681	828	2,670

"From this day to the ending of the world but we in it shall be remembered, we few, we happy few, we band of brothers. For he today that sheds his blood with me shall be my brother."

William Shakespeare Henry V, Act 4 Scene 3.

"Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, Whom shall I send? And who will go for us? And I said, here I am, send me." Isaiah 6:8.



508th Parachute Infantry Regiment War Memorial, Woollaton Park, Nottingham, England

Chapter Historian's Notes: The Red Devils website contains a list of 11 books totally dedicated to the exploits of the 508th PIR in the "Military Links" section. This list serves as my bibliography as the material for the articles in this series were gleaned from the books contained in this list. If you wish to know more about the Regiment this should serve as your go to list.

Do you know any of these men? I am looking for any information or photos on any or all of the following Paratroopers: Pvt John A. Lockwood D/508th, Cpl Ernest T. Roberts D/508th, SSG Frank L. Sirovica G/508th, and Pvt Otto K. Zwingman D/508th. All served with the Regiment during WW II and all are Distinguished Service Cross (DSC) recipients. Contact Mark Eckenrode, Chapter Historian, at www.haamchang@gmail.com or 719-846-4713.

New Book Release: Phil Nordyke, noted writer and historian on all things 82nd Airborne, is at it again. I just reviewed his new book "The 82nd Airborne Division – A Photographic History Volume Training Sicily Salerno Anzio." This is the first release in a five volume series detailing a photographic journey of the 82nd in WW II. Each volume has approximately 450 photos that show all aspects of a paratrooper's life, not just battlefield shots. Admittedly Volume I does not contain any photos of the 508th as they were not attached to the Division until staging for the invasion in England. But I do expect to see some 508th photos in future volumes, which will be released at the rate of about one per year. Each photo is well captioned. There is no narrative per se, but it does include brief passages from paratroopers who were there. Each successive volume will be of the same format. They say a picture is worth a 1,000 words so it has a lot to say with high impact photos. I enjoyed this book and I'm sure you will too especially if you're a devotee of the 82nd. Copies may be purchased at Amazon for \$25.00.

Reviewer: Mark Eckenrode, Chapter Historian.

A PARATROOPERS MEMORIES #9 By Ed Slocum of HQ3-508 ARCT 1955-56

All American member Edward A. Slocum of Headquarters Company, 3-508 ARCT 1955-56 and Sumter, SC has written his life story. The book is titled - Searching for the Yellow Brook Road. Ed would like feedback from us. If you spot an error, pass it on back, so Ed can fix it. Article #9 starts now. Quartermaster Airborne Equipment Maintenance. The final phase of this course was basic sewing machine operation, inspection procedures, classification, techniques procedures, and and basic maintenance subjects for airborne equipment. Although we achieved some proficiency in the 154 hours devoted to the subjects, we were by no means experts. On June 12, 1954, I the graduated from parachute packing, maintenance and aerial delivery course. In the short 10 months that I had been in the United States Army, I had spent almost all my time in training to do a job. I had completed Basic Training of eight weeks, another eight weeks of Advanced Heavy Weapons Infantry Training, at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. I next completed The Basic Airborne Course at Fort Benning, Georgia, and now the Parachute Packing, Maintenance, and Aerial Delivery Course located at Fort Lee, Virginia. I had just spent 34 weeks in training. My next stop was to return to Fort Bragg North Carolina and the 82nd Airborne Division. I was looking forward to this because it would be my first meaningful assignment. The riggers badge was originally proposed in the year 1948 but it was not approved until 1986, long after I left the airborne. Back to the 82nd Abn Div Parachute Maintenance Company. returning to the 82nd Parachute Maintenance Company, I was assigned to the third packing platoon. Each day we traveled to Pope Air Force Base adjacent to Fort Bragg and packed personnel parachutes. It was very routine work and almost like a factory. The duties performed were, we picked up a parachute that had already been jumped, laid it on the packing table, untangled the suspension lines and risers, folded it so it would open properly, stored it in a deployment bag. I then signed the Riggers pledge log book that stated that I had packed...

...this parachute and that I stood ready to jump it myself. I continued this routine for the next six months. Although it was somewhat satisfying, it was far from the life of adventure that I had envisioned when I joined the Army. leadership of the 82nd Airborne Division and my unit of the 82nd parachute maintenance company were primarily composed of World War II and Korea veterans. They had a very distinct culture and is remembered today as the Brown shoe Army. My platoon Sgt. was a guy of Greek descent named Sqt. Skalos. He looked upon us much as a father looks on errant children. The troops referred to him, behind his back of course, as "Daddy Skalos." The reason the troops call him Daddy Skalos was because although he ran things his way, he always checked on the troops. I was told that six months before my arrival, Sgt. Skalos had married. On his wedding night at about eight o'clock, He stopped by the barracks to inspect the barracks and ensure that the troops were all right. It takes a special kind of man to leave his new bride and drive back to the post to check on his platoon. Platoon Sergeant Skalos ran things his way. The barracks were two-story temporary World War II wooden structures. The building was designed to house up to 60 soldiers. Normally they would be equally divided between the upstairs and downstairs. This was not to be in Sgt. Skalos' world. Instead, all newcomers were relegated to the second story. The second story contained about 30 soldiers. Downstairs were the 15 to 20 soldiers who the platoon Sgt. considered his aces. He said you have to soldier your way downstairs. Upstairs, the bunks were double decked and it was overcrowded. Today, I am amazed that this was permitted. On payday, the Army paid in cash. In the third packing platoon, a major dice game went on every payday. Gamblers came from all over the division and there were thousands of dollars changing hands. After lights out at 2200 hrs, the game moved to the latrine where the lights were on all night. These games did not break up till the wee hours of the morning. All of this was illegal. One payday, Sgt. Skalos called out the names of several new members of the platoon, me among them.

TO BE CONTINUED



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E: khamill@knology.net



CHAPTER HISTORIAN Mark Eckenrode 721 Nevada Ave Trinidad, CO 81082-2426 Telephone: 719.846.4713 E: haamchang@gmail.com

TAPS - 508th PARATROOPERS RECENTLY DECEASED

Gerald R. Judd Haverkost Hopkinsville, KY Support Co, 508 ARCT 1953-56 1 Aug 2015 Curtis D. Russell **West Virginia Chapter** A Co. 508, 82 Abn Div 17 Jan 2015 Raymond F. Sabatella Largo, Florida Charlie Co, 508 ARCT 1951-52 14 Aug 2015 **Newport, Oregon** Richard E. Smith Item Co. 508 ARCT 1954-56 30 May 2015 Bryce A. Woolsey Independence, Missouri Support Co, 508 ARCT 1953-56 15 Sep 2015

Statistics

Annual Members	23
Affiliate Members	14
All Americans	298
Total Members	335

September 2015 Treasurers Report

Printing expense Jun 2015: \$143.01

Newsletter Envelopes Sep 2015: \$30.87

500 Forever Stamps Sep 2015: \$245.00

Chapter Account 31 Aug 2015: \$1619.60











Jan A. Sokolnicki of Recon Platoon, E Company, 1-508, 82d Airborne Division 1968-1969 and Vero Beach Florida elected to read our Devils Digest on line www.red-devils.org thereby saving Chapter funds of approximately \$2.00 a year. Thank you Jan.

2015 VETERANS' DAYS ACTIVITIES

COL Reuben H. Tucker Chapter
Arlington National Cemetery
9-10 November 2015
Veterans Day Activities POC's
Paul DeVries: (703) 799-4419 (571) 245-5161
pdevries61@hotmail.com

Stephen Couchman: (410) 257-7919 couchman@comcast.net

Hampton Inn & Suites, 5821 Richmond Hwy
Alexandria, VA (703) 329-1400
Additional Information:

www.82ndairborneassociation.org

The 508 Chapter has bought a wreath for \$120 and Ken Hamill will attend to speak at the 508 Parachute Infantry Regiment Memorial Site. To help the Tucker Chapter send your donations to Ken Hamill made payable to Vets Day.

Paraglide annual subscriptions \$30.00.
Subscription Form and Information located at:

<u>WWW.82ndairborneassociation.org</u>

/paraglide/subscribe

Reinaldo Granado of A Company, 2-508, 82d Airborne Division 1976-80 and Corpus Christy, TX elected to read our Devils Digest on line www.red-devils.org saving Chapter funds of approximately \$2 a year. Thank you Reinaldo.

John Barry Clark of B Co, 2-508, 82nd Airborne Division 1963-66 and Hobe Sound, Florida informed me to save the cost of sending him our newsletter by USPS. He will read our Devils Digest on our website www.red-devils.org Thank you Barry for saving us approximately \$2 a year..

Thank you **Jack Unroe** of Hq Co, 2-508 ARCT 1954-56 and Gallipolis, Ohio for your generous donation to our Chapter Treasury. Jack reminded me that he attended the 11th Airborne Division Jump school at Fort Campbell in late 1954 when our regiment was working to get up to strength in order to gyroscope to Japan.











Most things that you need to know about the 82nd Airborne Division Assn can be found at: www.82ndairborneassociation.org/

Page 8, Devils Digest, September 2015 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION 508 CHAPTER, 82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION ASSOCIATION, INC.

FORMAL NAME (No Nickname	es)	DATE OF BIR?	DATE OF BIRTH	
STREET	CITY		STATE	
9-DIGIT Zip	ASN	(or) SSAN (Last 4)		
MARITAL STATUS	SPOUSE'S NAME	NUMBER	OF CHILDREN	
OCCUPATION	HOME #: ()	CELL #: ()	
EMAIL	SIGNATURE		DATE	
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP	FOR YEAR 2015 \$25.00 + Wounded	warrior Ed Fund_	Total Sent	
LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP	(\$250.00 FOR 49 YEARS AND UNDER (OR \$175.00 FOR 50 YEARS	+) \$	
ACTIVE DUTY MILITAR	Y, RESERVE, NAT. GD – Current Rank ar	nd Date of Rank:		
RETIRED MILITARY – Re	etired Rank and Date Departed Active Milita	ary Service		
MILITARY VETERAN – F	Rank and Date Departed Military Service			
508 UNIT: Co: Bn: I	ocation FRO	OM MO/YRT	O MO/YR	
Combat Tour Location:	FRO.	M MO/YR TO	O MO/YR	
NEW	MEMBERS MUST INCLUDE PROOF OF A	AIRBORNE QUALIFICATION	1	

MAIL TO: KEN HAMILL; 2207 Coventry Drive; Columbus, GA 31904-5034



Warren R. Wilkins is pointed out in this photo of Charlie Company, First Battalion, 508 ARCT at Sand Hill, Fort Benning, GA 1951 or 1952. If you are in this photo, please circle your face with a pen and send me the photo. If you recognize anyone, please provide their name and location in the photo and send me the photo. Joe Lesniak of Coventry, Rhode Island provided this photograph, Thank You Joe!