



## A LETTER TO MEMBERS



Now that peace has been won, the 104th has formed for its last parade. Though the flags have been furled and each of us has gone his separate way, we shall never forget that many of this Division keep their ranks forever as they lie sleeping in the fields of Henri Chapelle.

—Dedication, *Timberwolf Tracks*

Unfortunately, the National Timberwolf Pups Association has had to postpone our 2020 reunion in Kansas City, Missouri, until next year. The new dates are September 7–12, 2021, and will be in the same hotel (the airport Hilton).

The National Timberwolf Association was established in 1945. A mere decade ago, the World War II Veterans of the 104th Infantry Division trusted the next generation with the stewardship of their association. This organization has many

*Continued on pg. 2*

## MISC. NEWS & INFO



### TW Vet Honored by Texas Holocaust and Genocide Commission

My dad, TW Gerald Powell, served with the 104th infantry Company C 329th Medical Battalion during WWII. I thought you might be interested in the following story:

The State of Texas and the Texas Holocaust and Genocide Commission ([www.thgc.texas.gov](http://www.thgc.texas.gov)) has undertaken a project to locate and document the stories of WWII Veterans

from our state. These histories have been shared throughout the Texas Public School System to educate, engage, and remind students of the service and sacrifice of these Veterans.

In November of 2018, Dad, along with five other surviving Texas WWII Veterans, was honored at a special ceremony at the Texas State Capitol in Austin on Veteran's Day.

Dad just celebrated his 96th birthday, and he and my mother still live independently in our family home at Horseshoe Bay near Austin, Texas.

—Julie Harris, TW Pup

TW Gerald Powell with his wife and family after the ceremony



roles: We are the hosts of the annual reunions, we are the custodians of the archives and history of our Veterans, and we are the organizers of the battlefield tours in Europe. Our most solemn role is to conduct the Memorial Service in the same tradition as it has been held by our Veterans for many years.

The determination to not meet in 2020 was the most difficult decision the NTPA has ever been forced to make. The choice to defer our gathering was based upon all available medical information, with the sole basis being the well-being of all.

Although we know that the decision to safeguard our Veterans was correct, we are left with a void in our hearts and still want very much to honor our fallen. With this in mind, we ask all who are able to share in a moment of silence on Saturday, September 12, 2020, per the following schedule:

10:00 am (PST)	Pacific	1:00 pm (EST)	Eastern
11:00 am (MST)	Mountain	7:00 pm (CEST)	The Netherlands
12:00 pm (CST)	Central		

We have also added a video of a recent Memorial Service to our website that we hope you are able to view. Please visit our NTPA website for ongoing information and updates (<https://www.timberwolf104inf.org/reunion-2020.html>).

Thank you, everyone, for honoring those who serve, now and in the past.

—Andrew Lane, NTPA President  
[andrewben.lane@gmail.com](mailto:andrewben.lane@gmail.com)

## NOTES FROM THE REUNION SITE COMMITTEE

### Reunion and Fort Douglas Update

Hello, everyone. Let me echo the sentiment that we are **H**really unhappy that we had to postpone the annual reunion, especially as there has been a Timberwolf reunion every year since the NTA was formed. We felt, however, that it was the prudent thing to do—everyone's health, safety, and comfort level is very important to us. Fortunately, the hotel was very helpful and cooperative, and has rescheduled our reunion in Kansas City to September 7–12, 2021. In the meantime, please stay healthy and vibrant so that we can all get together then. *[\*Important note: If you made reservations with the hotel, you will need to contact them yourselves to cancel.\*]*

I also have an update on our work with Fort Douglas in Salt Lake City. We had hoped to create our exhibit during

the coming year, and to have a ceremony and opening in September 2021 at the fort, where the 104th was constituted and activated in 1921 as an infantry unit with a focus on nighttime combat operations (very prophetic). (It was a unit of the Organized Reserves, with regiments spread throughout the west. The use of the Timberwolf shoulder insignia began in 1924, and in 1942, the unit reorganized as the 104th Infantry Division at Camp Adair in Oregon.) Alas, this 100-year anniversary, too, has had to be postponed. Now, the target is September of 2022. (I guess we could also target 2042 for another celebration—the 100th anniversary of the reorganization at Camp Adair!)

Understandably, everything at the museum has slowed down due to the virus. Staff has been temporarily cut; and the processing of documents, artifacts, etc. has been affected. But we are still working to come up with some designs and a road map to create our exhibit. One good thing: Fort Douglas is now the official designated military museum for the State of Utah; and as a military research facility, connected with the University of Utah, it will be eligible for additional funds and expansion possibilities.

Needless to say, we will very much miss everyone this year. Yet we continue to hope for the best and trust that we all will get together again next year, to honor our Veterans and celebrate friendships, new and old.

Be well, and take care...

—JeNeal Ann Granieri,  
NTPA Treasurer & Site Committee Chair  
[jjgranieri@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jjgranieri@sbcglobal.net)

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## TW TRACKS IN HISTORY

### On the Roer River: Part 2

On 16 December 1944, when the German army unexpectedly struck the American front line with a vengeance, the 104th Division, just to the north of the attack, switched from offense to defense for the first time in its combat history.

These were tense days for the Timberwolves as they prepared their sector for defense. Frank Perozzi, 414 F, remembers "...dangerous walking through mined fields and wooded areas while setting up F Company's defense line, should the Bulge turn north. Digging defensive positions in the winter was hard physical work, but it was worth it to be three miles from the front lines."

Dick Rigler, C Co, 329th Engineer Bn, writes, "We were on constant alert for fear of a northern offense against us... We laid minefields and prepared obstacles for demolition in case of such an attack. We guarded a bridge over the autobahn and prepared it for detonation if necessary; and we mined the surrounding fields heavily."

All units sent out patrols to search for landed paratroopers. Some parachutists were found dead after their planes crashed. The live ones did not seem very well briefed on

what they were supposed to do. Timberwolf sentries challenged anyone not knowing the password with questions only an American would likely be able to answer. Baseball was a favorite topic.

One hungry paratrooper, who hid out during a bitter cold night, fell in at the end of a 387th Field Artillery Battalion chow line in the morning. George Lombardi remembers, "Mess Sgt. Rappaport almost had a heart attack when he saw a German mess kit shoved under his nose!"

After some early probes, the Germans became fairly quiet along that part of the front; and it was, in many ways, a time for the men to rest and regroup after the punishing fight through the Siegfried Line. Front-line troops made themselves comfortable in basements of damaged and destroyed buildings. Herbert Wheeler, 414 F, writes, "We had orders to dig foxholes near the house and to post a guard at all times... We soon settled into a routine of guard duty; sleep; hot meals from the company kitchen; regular mail and boxes of goodies from home; reading and writing cards; occasional training exercises; and rotation to rear areas for showers, clean clothes, old movies, and coffee and doughnuts from Red Cross ladies."

"While we awaited the ending of the Bulge," he

*Continued on pg. 4*



continues, "the Germans and we pursued an active nightlife in the form of patrols to see what the other side was doing. Two or three men would cross the river under cover of darkness, [and] find and occupy an empty house for periods ranging from an hour to a day, watching and listening for any activity."

John Miller, 414 B, recalls, "We were in a defensive position for over a month. Constant mortar and artillery fire caused a number of battle casualties. Nightly patrols going out were also fired upon with resulting casualties. When on outpost or patrol, men were constantly on edge."

Walter H. Yauk, 415 H, in his book *Blow Your Horn... Or*, remembers one particularly cold night when they changed the guard at their "home away from home" every hour: "Sometime after midnight, Pfc. Marshall Balducci was standing guard in the open doorway of the courtyard, his 'grease gun' (automatic 45 caliber) hanging at his side, hands in his pockets, and his neck pulled down between his shoulders. You could hear a pin drop! In one simultaneous instant, someone pulled the lanyard on a 155mm howitzer parked behind our yard—*WHOOM!!!* A huge cat squatting on the wall above the doorway spooked and flung herself down onto Balducci's shoulders!

'Comrade!' Balducci shouted as he pulled his hands from his pockets and raised them toward the now-quiet sky. He

made a beeline for the house, shouting, 'I just surrendered to a gawd-damn cat!' He was scared stiff!"

Dick Graff, Hq Co, 2d Bn, 415, was grateful for the reprieve from fighting: "We lived in relative 'peace and quiet' for about a month and a half. We received incoming artillery, mortar, and machine-gun fire every day, so were aware there was a war on. But we had time for hours of discussion."

*To be continued...*

—Kathy Clark, NTPA Historian  
[kpclark@vom.com](mailto:kpclark@vom.com)

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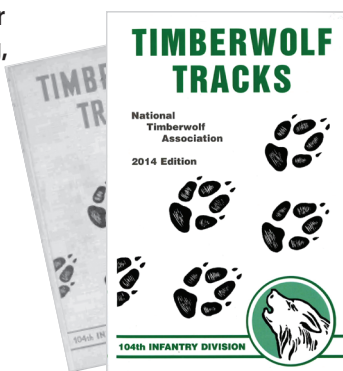
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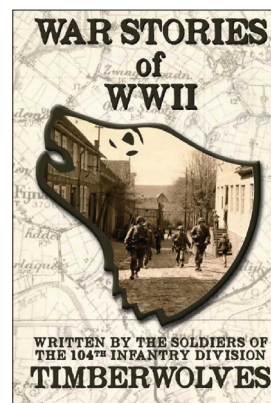
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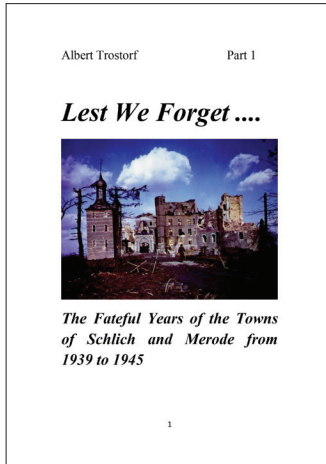
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## Books Written by Historian Albert Trostorf



People who have been on one of the European tours will remember Albert Trostorf from their visit to Germany. Albert has written two books about WWII.

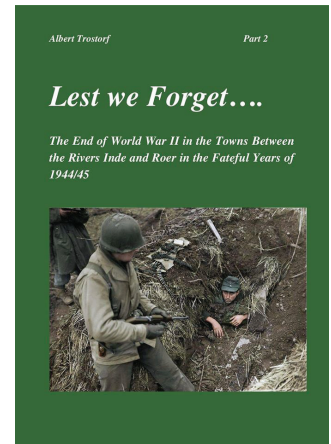
Volume I of the book series *Lest We Forget...* (German title: *Gegen das Vergessen...*) is more or less the story of WWII in his home villages of Merode and Schlich. Since the Timberwolves were stationed here from mid-

December 1944 to mid-February 1945, this is also mentioned in the book. It has about 80 pages and many photos. This book is currently only available in German at a price of 10 Euro, but it should be available in English shortly.

Volume 2 of the book series describes the end of WWII in the villages between the rivers Inde and Roer (Rur), or between the cities of Stolberg and Düren. This area was largely the combat area of the 104th Infantry Division. The book has 184 pages and well over 200 photos, some of which he received from 104th Veterans or their families. The price of this book is 22 Euro.

If you would like more information, you can email Albert (albert-trostorf@t-online.de) or check out his website: [www.gegen-das-vergessen.org](http://www.gegen-das-vergessen.org).

—Esther Eenhuizen



## THE BLACK TIMBERWOLVES

*Editorial note: This article has been reprinted from the June/July 2012 edition of the HOWL*



When I was commanding the 2nd Battalion of the 415th Infantry in the spring of 1945, Colonel Cochran told me a platoon of black soldiers would be integrated into each regiment. The platoon coming to our regiment would be assigned to my battalion, and I was to select one of my lieutenants to be the platoon leader who would then report to the Division Combat Training School forthwith.

The Division ran a training program where newly assigned soldiers would get about two weeks of training before they joined their units. The school imparted to the incoming soldiers the spirit of the division—the Timberwolf spirit. Our shoulder patch had a Timberwolf howling at the moon, and Major General Terry Allen, our colorful division

commander and one of the greatest leaders I have known, called himself the Chief Timberwolf.

At that time, there was no integration of black soldiers in the army. Instead, the army had two divisions in which all the enlisted personnel were black. One fought in Italy, where my good friend, John Horton, was one of their officers, and the other fought in the Pacific. The officers were, for the most part, white. Integrating these platoons into white regiments was said to be the brainchild of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt.

I was there when the black soldiers arrived at the Timberwolf training school and Terry Allen greeted them. He said, “You are my Black Timberwolves,” and they were known as the Black Timberwolves thenceforth.

At the end of their two weeks of training, the platoon joined the battalion. I had been back to the Training Center to welcome these soldiers, and I made it a point to talk to each of them individually. I found that *all* of them had been at least sergeants in their former units; some were master sergeants and one was a first sergeant. These men had taken a reduction in ranks—some to the grade of Private First Class—to have the chance to represent their race in a white man’s world. They were inspired to advance the cause of the black race, and they wanted to erase the myth that black soldiers could not perform in combat as well as their white counterparts.

*To be continued...*

—John R. Deane, Jr.  
General, US Army (Ret.)



Compiled by Sandra Eberhard ([webpup@bellsouth.net](mailto:webpup@bellsouth.net))

*At the going down  
of the sun  
and in the morning...*

*We will remember them.*

Milford A. Allen 555 AAA Btry B	Robert W. Baeslack 413 H	Robert S. Chauvin 415 F	Woodley Hebert 555 AAA HQ Btry
Michael V. Altamura 750 Tank Bn	George W. Bakke 413 AT	Ed Colliten 413 Cannon	Edwin Holbrook 413 I
Joe Amorello 415 E	Lewis V. Barker 415 D	Russell Cox 555 AAA Btry C	Russell G. Huber 555 AAA Btry D
John E. Amoroso 104 HQ	David M. Barnard 329 Engr C	Harold A. Dann 415 HQ 3d Bn	Bob Huffman 555 AAA Btry C
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Armel C. Arseneau 104 Signal	Vincent F. Campbell 415 HQ	Edward Franey 104 Signal	Henry W. Lonnemann 555 AAA Btry D
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Raymond S. Potter 415 B	Karl H. Stelljes 413 G	John Zerka 414 D	Doris L. Elson 415 D (Paul)
George A. Radkte 329 Engr HQ	Donald Warren 414 AT	WIFE OR WIDOW	Ruth Lockhart 104 Signal (Roy)
Lester E. Reid 555 AAA Btry C	Jerome L. Workman 413 E	June Allen 415 M (Richard)	SPECIAL FRIEND
Richard T. Runnells 413 B	John Wright 415 H	Genevieve Bear 555 AAA Btry A (Millard)	T Jos Eenhuizen, Father of Overseas Friend & Honorary Timberwolf Pup Esther Eenhuizen

## SOL & MOLLY, SWEETHEARTS FOREVER

Chance brought Sol Epstein and Molly Lazarowitz together, but WWII and an ocean of separation could not keep them apart.

Solomon Epstein (104 Recon) began his life on the Lower East Side of New York so close to the river that he was constantly serenaded by ships' horns. In Seward Park High School (also on the Lower East Side), he met Molly, who had fortunately chosen the same high school to attend. They became sweethearts soon after.

After high school, the two decided to marry, but the Army—and Molly's father!—decided that they would have to wait. Sol entered the Army and had Mechanized Calvary training at Fort Knox. He qualified for the ASTP (Army Specialized Training Program) and, luckily, was assigned to attend nearby NYU. After two semesters, the Army, in need of additional soldiers to replace those who had already been taken for the D-Day invasion, suspended the ASTP. Sol was sent to the 104th Division at Camp Carson, Colorado, where he proudly became a member of the 104 Recon Troop—"the eyes and ears of the division."

Sol had many harrowing experiences during his service overseas but, luckily, avoided injury and hospitals until he caught the German measles in Germany. Sent to a hospital to recover, he soon discovered that it was on the flight path of German V1 "buzz bombs." Since malfunctioning or disabled rockets would occasionally fall in the vicinity, Sol convinced his doctor to release him, arguing that "he would rather die holding a rifle than a bedpan."

He and a small group of released soldiers were sent to a supply depot to draw weapons, ammunition, and rations, and await transport. A recon of the depot kitchen showed that it was not sanitary, so they consumed their rations rather than eat there. It was a wise choice, as a dysentery outbreak followed. They left and returned to their units on their own.

With the end of the war in Europe and the Division's state-side return to Camp SLO, Sol commenced training—this time for the pending invasion of Japan. While descending a rope net into a landing craft, he experienced great pain and wound up in the hospital again. His diagnosis? Appendicitis. (Later, the doctor congratulated him and then proudly announced that it had been his first surgery!)

Atomic bombs gave Sol and his fellow Timberwolves a reprieve, and the Division began disbanding. When Sol received his separation orders, he immediately sent Molly the following Western Union Telegram: "Left Los Angeles tonight. Be home by 17 [December]. Soon and then forever. All my love, Sol. December 13, 1945." (A copy of this telegram appears on page 8.)

After a seemingly endless train ride, he arrived home to Molly, and they picked up where they left off. On October 27, 1946, they married. Molly's Dad provided the reception, which was attended by 400 well-wishers. Sol and Molly later became proud parents of their son, Austin.

Over the course of thirty years, Sol worked his way up from entry level to the top in the garment industry at Brookfield Clothes. He was also a philanthropic organizer. Molly, who had a beautiful voice, was a trainee singer with the Metropolitan Opera chorus. They enjoyed 68 years of marriage together before Molly died several years ago.

At 95, Sol is still going strong, is active in his community, and has won both gold and bronze medals for table tennis in the New Jersey Senior Olympics Over-90 Division. He misses his Molly, but she still lives in his heart, where they are sweethearts forever.

—Jack Valley, NTPA Board  
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LEFT LOS ANGELES TONIGHT BE HOME BY 17 SOON AND THEN FOREVER  
ALL MY LOVE=  
SOL.

"Soon and then forever..." TW Sol Epstein sent this telegram home to his fiancée upon his return to the States after being overseas. Read more about their story on page 7.

Telegram and photos courtesy of Sol Epstein  
(photo editing courtesy of Art Luque, NTPA Photographer)

