



Pro Patria Press

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Newsletter of the 31st Infantry Regiment Association

31st Infantry's Reactivation Changed to 12 April

After several delays, reactivation of the 4th Battalion (old Company D) 31st Infantry will finally take place on **12 April**. The battalion will replace the 3d Battalion 14th Infantry as part of the 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum (near Watertown, New York). The division invites former members of the 31st Infantry to join in welcoming their old unit back to the active rolls. A dinner in honor of 31st Infantry veterans will be held on the evening of 11 April. Us "old timers" will get a chance to get to know soldiers of the "new" battalion. On the morning of 12 April, the reactivation ceremony will be held on the Fort Drum parade ground, followed by an indoor reception. Those interested in attending should contact **Jack Considine** at 209 New Rd, Tolland, CT 06084 or phone (203) 875-9032.

Looking Back



oldest member (turned **100** in November) was in the same company. Raymond was killed in an auto accident in 1958, but had been a member of the *Veterans of the AEF Siberia*.

In our June 95 newsletter, I invited members to send pictures, news clippings, and written memorabilia to become part of the living history that is our association. Please keep it coming. As promised, each newsletter will have a "**Looking Back**" column with one of your personal histories. Please write or make a legible copy of whatever you wish to see included in the column, send it to me at 5101 Portsmouth Rd, Fairfax, VA 22032, and I'll print as much of it as possible.

George Kinney (32d Infantry, Korea) provided memorabilia from his father, Raymond Kinney, who served with the 31st Infantry's Machinegun Company in the Philippines and Siberia. Alf Thompson, our association's



31st Infantry Basketball Team Philippines 1920

George also sent a copy of the "Bear Facts", dated 21 October 1951, reprinted by the Veterans of the AEF Siberia. It included the following poem written by MAJ Joe Conmy (S-3, 1951).

*Three friends were sitting around a bar,
each one smoking a big cigar,
each one guzzling down a beer,
each one's eyes were wide with fear.
Each had decided to go to war
To keep the foe from his back door.
But each by some earthly chance
Had joined up in a different branch.
The marine rose steady on his feet,
His eyes were filled with much conceit.
"When this war's over we'll meet again,
and I'll tell you stories of real men."
The sailor smiled, "You will learn,
and you will hear of my return."
The soldier didn't say a word,
He looked as if he hadn't heard.
"I'll neither brag nor boast my men,
Until I'm sure I'm back again."
And then they made a farewell bet,
A bet they never would forget.
The one whose story was the best,
would buy a beer for all the rest.*

*Many years later, they were back,
drinking beer in the same old shack.
The sailor with ribbons on his chest,
stood up before the rest.
"Friends I really saw the fight,
in Sicily, Normandy, and the like,
and I saw action in the far south seas,
where I shot snipers out of trees.
Drowned them like a bunch of fleas,
Now try and beat that if you please."
The marine arose with a great smile
and laughed at the sailor for a while.
"I killed the enemy to my delight,
far more than I could recite
But you would lose your appetite
if I told you of my every sight."
The soldier didn't say a word
but looked as if he hadn't heard
Then hit the bar with a slam
and said "I was in Korea by damn'".
The marine jumped up and the sailor too,
"Brother we owe the drinks to you."
For each had heard, and each knew well,
There sat a man who returned from hell!*

Apologies to Don Monterosso for errors I made in our last issue. When A Company withdrew toward the coast via the Sinhung Valley, they were nowhere near Hagaru-ri. Also, when Don was transferred from A Company to I Company, it was to help rebuild the latter because it had taken such heavy losses at the Chosin Reservoir. Hope I got it right this time Don.

Searching

Anyone who served with Company L at the Chosin Reservoir and remembers **MSGT George R "Pete" Housekeeper**, please contact his brother John B. Housekeeper at 855 Gettysburg Dr., Lansdale, PA 19466-3103 or call (215) 855-1656. Pete participated in the Inchon and Iwon landings and was lost during the withdrawal from Chosin. Since members of all 3d Bn elements became intermingled during the withdrawal, anyone who fought at Chosin might have encountered him. Pete was listed as missing in action on 12 December 1950. John would like to learn more about his brother's fate. If you can help, please drop him a line.

Otto Whittington (K Co - Bataan) would appreciate any assistance we can give Christy Hatch, a 9th grade student in Durant, OK. Christy is doing a history day project next year on the 31st Infantry and would appreciate news clippings, personal accounts, and photos of the regiment from its formation to the present. Christy's sister, Angela did a similar project on Bataan last year, winning the 1995 Oklahoma State History Day competition and a permanent display in the Ardmore Museum. Lets support those who support us. Send your material to Otto Whittington, 22720 Imperial Valley #803, Houston, TX 77073, phone or FAX (713) 443-6364. *Mabuhay* to Angela, Christy, and Otto.

Book Review

William Holinger (511B Longwood Towers, 20 Chapel St, Brookline, MA 02146) served as S-3 of the 1st Battalion 31st Infantry in Korea in 1968-69 while North Koreans were ambushing American GIs along the DMZ and setting the stage for a "second Asian theater". Bill wrote a novel about that era called *The Fence-Walker*, (State University of New York Press, 1985), for which he won SUNY's Associated Writing Programs Novel Award. *The Fence Walker* was reissued in 1995 to coincide with the dedication of the Korean War Veterans Memorial and is available in hardcover for \$18.50. I'll pass along one of the book's many excellent reviews. "It's Korea 1968, and twice a day Art Richardson, lieutenant, 1st Battalion, 31st Infantry, walks the fence between North and South Korea.. And when he's off duty, he walks a far more precarious line, reconciling his past with his present." "I don't know of another military novel set in a time of hostilities below the threshold of war that uses the naturalistic details of Army life as cunningly as Holinger's, not since maybe, Styron's *The Long March*, perhaps not since James Jones's *The Pistol*." - Alan Cheuse, Professor at George Mason University and frequent reviewer for National Public Radio.