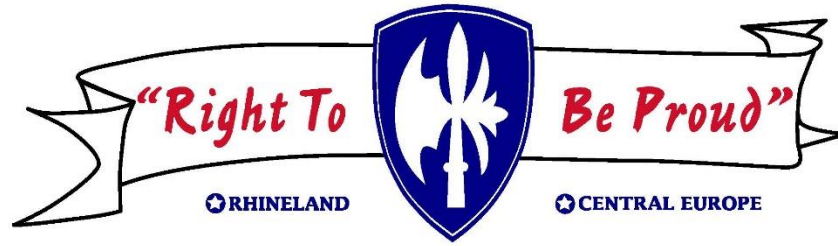


# 65th Infantry Division Association



Membership Meeting Minutes  
Sunday, October 24, 2020  
by Zoom

Charlie Gemeinhardt called the meeting to order at 4:05 EST.

Chaplain Bill Phillips gave a prayer of invocation.

Sergeant-at-Arms Eran Nadler led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Charlie Gemeinhardt welcomed everyone and introduced the Executive Board: Vice President: David Ream, Association Administrator and Halbert Editor/Publisher: Jackie Hanson, Treasurer: Sibyl Ream, Recording Secretary: Joan Pratt, Past President: Jean Pullin, Corresponding Secretary: Barbara DuBois Russell, Membership Chair: Lisa Brill-Nadler, Sergeant-at-Arms: Eran Nadler, Chaplain: Bill Phillips, Halbert Editor/Publisher: Debbie McNiff, Historian: Jim Hanson, Social Media Administrators: Christine Phillips and Steve Schell, and Merchandise Chair: Ben Diaz. Not in Attendance: History Books Chair: Anne Patton.

Charlie Gemeinhardt thanked Yessica Diaz for her time as Recording Secretary and welcomed Joan Pratt who has filled Yessica's remaining term.

**Attendees:** Veterans Ed Lewis and Art Newell, thirty-five Legacy members and 2 guests. Ed Waite was attending his 95<sup>th</sup> birthday party and Eric Montgomery was participating in a military funeral. Both sent regrets.

## **Welcome First Time Attendee – Lisa Brill-Nadler**

Terese Rigodanzo-Kasper daughter of Oswald Rigodanzo who found us through our social media sites.

## **A. Minutes of the Membership Meeting 2019 Dayton OH – Joan Pratt**

Meeting minutes from the Membership Meeting in Dayton OH and reports for 2019-2020 were posted on the 65<sup>th</sup> Association website prior to the meeting for attendees to review.

## **B: Financial Reports:**

### **1. Treasurer's Report – Sibyl Ream:**

Opening Balance on September 23, 2019: \$39,305.81

Total Income: \$7,078.25

Total Expenses: \$11,473.76

Closing Balance as of September 29, 2020 was \$34,910.30

#### **a. Halbert Report - Sibyl Ream**

Income/Donations: \$3095.00

Expenses: \$2,899.72

Difference: +\$195.28

**b. Merchandise Report - Sibyl Ream**

Sales: \$695.00

Expenses: \$337.47

Difference: +\$357.53

**c. History Book Report: no report received from Anne Patton**

**d. Reunion of Remembrance (Camp Shelby Reunion) – Sibyl Ream**

Budget: \$2000.00

Expenses: \$589.92

Balance: \$1410.08

**e. 2019 Dayton Reunion Final Report - Sibyl Ream**

Income: \$9991.00

Expenses: \$8909.25

Difference: +\$1081.75

**2. Auditor's 2019 Report – Jessica Hanson Gamroth**

Assets: \$35,468.80

Liabilities: \$0

Equity:

Balance: \$30,790.18 as of Jan 1, 2019.

Income: \$19,134.99

Expenses: \$14,456.38

Balance: \$35,468.80 as of Dec 31, 2019.

All transactions were found correct for the 2019 fiscal year.

**C. A motion was made by Lisa Brill-Nadler to accept the Financial Reports and minutes of the Oct 6, 2019 Membership Meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Jean Pullin. Motion passed.**

**D. Reports:**

**1. Reunion of Remembrance Report – Charlie Gemeinhardt**

After significant research and in coordination with Camp Shelby, it was decided to postpone the reunion and all non-65th contributing participants have recommitted to the Mar 4-7, 2021 date. This is a training weekend and many organizations including the 41<sup>st</sup> Army Band will be available. The highlight of the reunion will be the presentation of the French Legion d'honneur to Art Newell and Norvin McClure. Camp Shelby is a test site for the continuance of military training and is being monitored by the Center for Disease Control. Bill Phillips has kept in contact with the eight to 12 veterans planning to attend. Scott Russell had coordinated gratuitous flights for 8 veterans plus 1 escort each on American Airlines and will follow up with his contact to make sure the offer is still good for our March reunion. Bill Phillips is coordinating flight and airport transportation needs for our veterans. We will operate vans to the airports for veterans, their escort and then others as space available. Reunion costs, minus transportation, for our veterans and 1 escort is being paid by the Association.

The Central Europe and Rhineland Campaign streamers have been procured for our 65<sup>th</sup> Division flag.

Registration and lodging reservation deadline is Feb 1, 2021. All forms and social media have been updated.

**2. Corresponding Secretary and Condolence Report – Barbara DuBois Russell**

Invitations and now updated notices were sent to veterans and VIPs. Magazine updates were sent but have not yet been acknowledged. Fifteen condolence parchments were sent to veteran's families.

**3. Halbert Report- Jackie Hanson/Debbie McNiff**

The Halbert content continues to grow in size and quality. Four 65<sup>th</sup> veterans submitted articles as well as several legacy members. Reprints from past Halberts were also included. Two hundred fifty magazine copies were published this year at a cost of approximately \$11 each. Donations are most welcomed. Articles for the next edition should be sent to them by Jan 15, 2021, so that they can focus on the reunion information after Camp Shelby and have the Halbert out by May.

4. Social Media Report – Christine Phillips and Steve Schell

- a. Website: this summer she began work on a new, much improved, more intuitive, and more secure web platform. Completion is expected in Jan. User access will not change. Charlie Gemeinhardt reported that we now own the 65thdiv.com and 65thdiv.org domain names. This avoids others from obtaining the use of our 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Association name in their domains. Reunion information has been updated on the website.
- b. Facebook: The number of followers has grown from 481 to 551 which has exceeded our goal of 500. Steve rolled out a post series which started with the “Atlantic Convoy Cu-54” which he hopes to continue. The August 31<sup>st</sup> post about the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 65<sup>th</sup>'s inactivation drew the largest number of views in the history of the page at 2,700! New member stories continue to be received and interaction with contacts has located veterans, new members, and potential resources. If you have something to share, please digitize it and send it to them.

5. Historian Report – Jim Hanson

Numerous requests have been received for information about the 65<sup>th</sup>. Doug Bowers has donated historical information from his father, Herman Bowers 261L. Veteran John McGowan 260K was able to finally get his Combat Infantry Badge. Bob Resig, son of Ralph Resig 260G, shared historical information he has been able to find via the internet with us. It includes some general orders for Purple Hearts and also a link to missing in action during WWII listed by state.

6. Membership Report- Lisa Brill-Nadler

There are 209 active members: 63 veterans; including a new veteran Pellegrino Tulimieri, 137 Legacy Members and nine Honorary Members of which 2 are deceased. Jackie Hanson has made contact with Larry Weston (aka Weinstein) a veteran of the 261<sup>st</sup> 2nd Battalion who has never been a member. A previous member, Stanley Chow has been located and he lives near Ben Diaz. Ben will do a personal visit. Susan Theisen mentioned that she and her siblings are looking for other children of veterans who attended reunions back when they were all young children.

7. Merchandise Report – Ben Diaz

Fifty-seven items have been sold. The biggest seller continues to be the t-shirt. Members were encouraged to wear 65<sup>th</sup> clothing as conversation starters. Current available items are announced on the website. Orders for Camp Shelby reunion attendees will be available at the reunion to save shipping costs

8. Obituary Archive Report – Joan Pratt

Joan volunteered to continue Jackie Hanson's project of archiving obituaries of our deceased veterans. Over 1200 obituaries are already archived in our TAPS binders. Binders will be available at the reunions. Together Joan and Jackie have identified 7 new living veterans. Joan has made contact on genealogy websites with distant relatives and provided links to the Association.

9. History Books – Jackie Hanson

An Executive Board Committee has corresponded with former chair, Anne Patton, regarding issues with missing and incomplete annual reports. They are hopeful that she will return Association assets with the elimination of the History Book Chair position. We have temporarily halted sales fulfillment and the website has been updated to reflect this.

**E. Old Business:**

European Trip - Jackie Hanson

The tour might be rescheduled at a date no sooner than 2022. Contact Jackie Hanson if interested. The Passion Play has been rescheduled for 2022.

## **F. New business:**

### **1. New Bylaws - Jackie Hanson, David Ream, Bill Phillips Bylaws Committee**

A copy was posted on the 65<sup>th</sup> Association website for review. The forethought of our veterans to create the Association and establish Bylaws as well as documenting customs and practices was tremendous and the revised Bylaws were updated keeping that spirit in mind. Some of the changes highlighted were the addition of the mission statement, the addition of 3 Members-at-Large positions to the Board to provide new input, ideas, and feedback as well as an Association Coordination Team and new committees to keep the Association moving forward.

**Jean Pullin made a motion to accept the 2020 Bylaws as posted on the members section of 65<sup>th</sup> website. It was seconded by Lisa Brill-Nadler. Motion passed.**

### **2. Election of 2020-2021 Board Officers and Chairs - David Ream, Nominating Committee Chair** David Ream, Jim Hanson and Ed Waite assembled a slate of nominees.

All officers, including Joan Pratt, have agreed to continue serving in their current positions. The History Book Chair position has been deleted and the responsibilities transferred to the Historian. Anyone interested in any of the Board positions should contact Charlie Gemeinhardt for consideration by the next nominating committee.

The committee's endorsed slate of candidates is:

Association Administrator and Halbert Editor/Publisher: Jackie Hanson, Treasurer: Sibyl Ream, Recording Secretary: Joan Pratt, Chaplain: Bill Phillips, Corresponding Secretary: Barbara Dubois Russell, Social Media Administrators: Christine Phillips and Steve Schell, Sergeant-at-Arms: Eran Nadler, Historian: Jim Hanson, Halbert Editor/Publisher: Debbie McNiff, Membership Chair: Lisa Brill-Nadler, Merchandise Chair: Ben Diaz, Members-at-large: Courtney Walker, Ed G Lewis, and Scott Russell. President Charlie Gemeinhardt and Vice President David Ream will be serving the second year of their two year terms.

**A motion was made by Christine Phillips to accept the Nomination Committee's slate of nominees in total and seconded by Jackie Hanson. Motion passed.**

### **3. History Book Program – Jackie Hanson**

The Board has made it a priority to compile, advertise and fulfill book orders with the mission to provide access of our resources to people outside the Association. One suggestion is using Amazon's Print on Demand program. Costs could remain close to current pricing while still sustaining the program. We could still process offline orders. Susan Theisen offered additional books to our collection and offered to digitize anything needed. That offer has been put on hold pending the Committee work on these book issues.

### **4. Holocaust/Concentration Camp/75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Events – Charlie Gemeinhardt and Jackie Hanson**

- a. Charlie Gemeinhardt briefed us that the Holocaust/Concentration Camp Project in Europe has been postponed due to Covid-19 but the Association has and will continue to work with Mazier Bahari. Mr. Bahari, born in Iran, is a journalist and filmmaker who is collaborating with the Holocaust Museum and sharing the stories of the concentration camp liberators; including members of the 65<sup>th</sup>.
- b. Charlie has also shared photos and information and in return received posters and flyers for an exhibition commemorating the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Enns later this year from Wolfgang Neuwirth of Enns Austria. Wolfgang also mentioned that he has met with other mayors in this area of Austria about having similar commemorations. This shows how valuable it is to have family stories on our social media.
- c. Jackie Hanson corresponded with a group in Hersbruck Austria, home to the concentration camp liberated by the 65<sup>th</sup> who had requested information about the 65<sup>th</sup>. A letter was provided and Major Andrew Upshaw, U.S. Army, stationed in Europe, participated at a remembrance ceremony.

- d. Jackie was also in contact with Miriam Meisels Griver whose father was liberated by men of the 65<sup>th</sup>. The ceremony in Pocking Germany has been postponed but a letter has been sent to be read when the ceremony occurs.
- e. Henry Schoepke, a teenage boy with an interest in WWII has reached out to us asking for veteran autographs. Jackie has forwarded the request to some of our veterans.

The contacts from Enns and Hersbruck, mentioned above, have invited us to visit with them and host us in their towns. This will be addressed when a European tour is rescheduled.

5. Future Reunion Sites – Charlie Gemeinhardt and David Ream

Although St Louis MO was the preferred site for 21-24 Oct 2021, the National Archive remains closed. The executive board will continue to monitor. Twenty-three potential sites have been suggested by the board for future reunion site consideration.

6. Other New Business:

- a. Bill Phillips mentioned that the process of having his father interred at a National Cemetery was very positive. He offered to help anyone needing assistance and will provide an article for the Halbert. Ed Lewis added that many cemeteries have a veteran section.
- b. Charlie Gemeinhardt briefed that the Executive Board will add quarterly Zoom meetings to the annual reunion meeting and the possibility of having a Zoom mid-year membership informational meeting.
- c. Susan Theisen has offered to provide members with a badge featuring their veteran's photo that would clip on the reunion lanyard. She is also collecting veteran signatures (living or not) to transpose on to the helmet her son brought to the Dayton reunion. Email Susan if interested at [suezoo14@aol.com](mailto:suezoo14@aol.com).
- d. David Ream provided a "year in review." Our Association has been very active despite many shutdowns. The reunion planning, updating the Bylaws, Zoom meetings, adding members-at-large, starting a coordination team, publishing another great Halbert, social media advances, adding a supplemental domain name, automating forms on the website, establishing a corporate minute book, obituary archiving, receiving emails/calls with ideas for sights, realigned history book duties, merchandise orders online, and proposed working committees are but a few of our accomplishments. Charlie Gemeinhardt stated one of his main objectives is to get more people involved.

7. TAPS – Barbara DuBois Russell

This is the time when we remember our veterans and spouses who have passed away since our last meeting. Barbara read the list of 15 names of veterans and 2 spouses.

**G.** Charlie Gemeinhardt adjourned the meeting at 7:06pm EST

**H.** The Benediction was given by Bill Phillip.

Respectfully submitted,

*Joan A Pratt*

Joan Pratt

Recording Secretary

Distribution:

Charlie Gemeinhardt

David Ream

Sibyl Ream

Eran Nadler

Jackie Hanson

Debbie McNiff

Jim Hanson

Christine Phillips  
Steve Schell  
Barbara DuBois Russell  
Ben Diaz  
Bill Phillips  
Lisa Brill-Nadler  
Joan Pratt  
Ed G Lewis  
Courtney Walker-Saunier  
Scott Russell