

The 80th anniversary of Allied Invasion of Normandy

Local man recalls his role in the 'Battle of the Hedgerows'

by Lisa Wittmeyer
 Local Historian

For Marvin Parr Blakeman, a long-time Kansas City, North resident, this year marks two important dates – his 100th birthday and the 80th anniversary of his participation in the Allied Invasion of Normandy in World War II.

Marvin grew up in Kansas City, Missouri, where he was born on Jan. 30, 1924. He graduated from Central High School and at age 19, in 1943, he became an Army private. After training stateside, he boarded a Liberty Ship for the dangerous trip across the Atlantic.

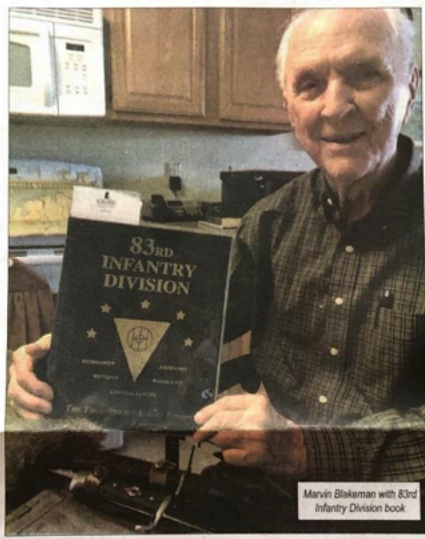
As Marvin explains, "Crossing the Atlantic, we ran into some submarine scares, and I was amazed by how well the Navy was able to change the position of its immense armada of ships to minimize the threat from the German submarines."

On May 24, 1944, they landed in Liverpool, England, and Marvin received additional training here and in Wales. This training included learning some of the German language which helped greatly in his work in intelligence reconnaissance for the 1st battalion, 330th Regiment of the 83rd Infantry.

"Thunderbolt" Division. Marvin experienced many close calls as they moved through Normandy, Brittany, Central Europe, Rhineland and the Ardennes and eventually into Germany.

Before this, on June 5, Marvin witnessed the beginnings of the Allied invasion of Normandy as it unfolded from the skies: "A great armada of planes at tree top level were heading toward the northern coast of France." The Allies' major offensive would occur the following morning on D-Day. "It was such an inspiring thing to see those hundreds upon hundreds of aircraft full of paratroopers and all kinds of munitions. You just had to be there to get the whole idea of what was going on. This was the beginning of the invasion of Normandy."

About two weeks later, Marvin joined several thousand troops who crossed the English Channel and stepped onto



Marvin Blakeman with 83rd Infantry Division book



Marvin Blakeman, WWII



Hwy. 92 bridge closes beginning June 10

Closure expected through the summer



by Ivan Foley
 Landmark editor

City of Platte City officials say the Missouri Transportation has informed them that the Hwy. 92 in Platte City will be closed for repair beginning June 10.

MoDOT also told the city that it expects the work to be completed prior to Aug. 20, the first day of fall. Platte County R-3 School District based in Platte City administrator D.C. ... public works commissioner ... MoDOT officials ... The Landmark State

