

Reunion Program

197th CA(AA) 197th AAA GROUP

210th 237th and 744th AAA
BATTALIONS

NEW HAMPSHIRE
NATIONAL GUARD



25th Anniversary of Induction for WW II

15th Anniversary of Induction for

Korean Conflict

NEW HAMPSHIRE
MILITARY RESERVATION

NORTH PEMBROKE ROAD

CONCORD, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Schedule of Events

SATURDAY, AUGUST 21, 1965

New Hampshire Military Reservation and State Armory, Concord, New Hampshire

10:00 AM — REGISTRATION AND BATTERY ASSEMBLIES

11:00 AM — CONCERT — 197th BAND

ASSEMBLY — BATTERIES MARCH TO ASSEMBLY POINT
INVOCATION

INTRODUCTION OF DISTINGUISHED GUESTS

The Honorable John W. King

Governor of New Hampshire

Lt. Col. Peter Richardson

Representing The Honorable J. K. Waller,
Australian Ambassador to the United States

PRESENTATION OF THE COLORS

MEMORIAL FOR DEPARTED COMRADES

12:30 PM — LUNCHEON

VETERANS AND FAMILIES

(ADMISSION BY TICKET ONLY)

3:00 PM — RECREATION AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

VETERANS AND FAMILIES

GUNSTOCK RECREATION AREA, ROUTE 11—A

GILFORD, N. H. SWIMMING POOL,

CHAIRLIFT, PICNIC TABLES, CAMPING

FACILITIES, CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND,

AND LUNCHEONETTE.

8:30 — 11:30 PM — DANCING — GUNSTOCK DANCE HALL

History of the Organization

A BAS L'AVION

(Down with the Plane)

The history of the 197th Coast Artillery (Anti-Aircraft) Regiment is, in part, a history of the United States. Units of the regiment, still perpetuated today as units of the New Hampshire National Guard, can trace their existence as organized units of the State Militia back to the days of the Continental Congress.

The 197th Coast Artillery (AA) was organized in 1922 from existing infantry companies and coast artillery batteries, and became one of the very first units of its type so organized. During its eighteen years of peace-time service, it was called upon many times to serve the State of New Hampshire when floods, fires, and civil disturbances threatened life and property.

Soon after its organization in 1922, a distinctive shield was designed, and was later officially approved by the War Department. This colorful insignia, worn by each member of the Regiment until departure for overseas in 1942, depicts the history of the Regiment. The motto "A Bas L'Avion" later became the title of the regimental march written in 1939 by Chief Warrant Officer Irving Pelletier.

The lion shown on the shield of the regiment is emblematic of the service of several units during the War of 1812.

The lozenge (or diamond) is a corps insignia of the Union Army in which units served in the Civil War.

The fleur-de-lis represents service by units during World War 1.

The field of blue indicates that all of this service was as an infantry unit.

War service not represented on the shield includes service in the Spanish-American War, and on the Mexican Border prior to World War 1.

The Regiment and its components worked with obsolete and insufficient equipment during the peace-time years. The Regiment learned to improvise, to "make-do," to take care of themselves. Dedicated soldiers and officers, recruited and trained for the day when they would be needed. The 197th Regiment, long before 1940, had acquired a reputation as a military organization far beyond the borders of New Hampshire.

September 16, 1940 dawned on the Military Reservation and the 197th CA (AA) mobilizing for service in World War 2. Ten days later, the Regiment was en route to Camp Hulen, Texas, after a farewell by Governor Francis P. Murphy and Major-General Charles F. Bowen the Adjutant General.

The next three months provided as severe a test as ever imposed on citizen soldiers. Mud, snakes, lack of basic items of clothing and equipment, but no lack of guts and determination to make the best possible mess — out of a mess.

Spring 1941, and A Battery to Midland, Texas for one of the best practice records ever established by a Searchlight Battery.

Summer and early fall and the whole outfit to Louisiana — twice. (Orders signed by Lt.-Col. Dwight D. Eisenhower)

Late fall: A Battery back to Midland, Texas, and the Second Battalion to McDill Field, Florida.

7 December 1941! Five days later en route to the Defenses of New York City. Combat positions for six weeks in the cold and snow of New Jersey.

Later in January, 1942, to Fort Dix — Fix up, improvise, "make-do," thaw out the plumbing, and prepare for movement overseas.

9 February on board trains for San Francisco, and a delightful two days in an Oakland warehouse. Then aboard the "Monterey" with new M-1 rifles, overcoats, overshoes, long underwear and everything else the "well equipped" American Soldier could carry.

Sea-Sickness, alerts, drills, poker, bridge, crap games, and a typhoon, and at last—Brisbane docks. First hike, Australian "sing-song," some beer (but not enough) and three days later at sea again.

Melbourne and at dockside to unload some of the troops — but not us. Gen. Marquet aboard to give us a welcome. At sea again with HMAS "Adelaide" as escort.

Finally on 20 March — Fremantle, West Australia. Three and one-half months of hard work and wonderful working relationships with our Australian cousins. Some tragedy and heart-break, and much soldiering. Bad news from Corregidor. Learning from our Australian opposite numbers. The feeling that we were expendable, with a slight assist from "Tokyo Rose."

Back to sea again in July 1942 aboard M.V. "Duntroon" — destination Sydney. Entraining in Sydney, changing trains en route to Brisbane and finally Townsville — 1942, Camp McClung, Garbutt Field, Stuart, Armstrong Paddock, Magnetic Island. Here the 197th Regiment became the 197th AAA Group Headquarters, the 210th AAA AW Battalion, the 237th AAA Searchlight Battalion, and the 744th AAA Gun Battalion. Each of these units made their own history from here. The last unit left Australia for New Guinea in September of 1943, and like the others, "island-hopped" to the Philippines.

Separated they were, but each Battalion carried with it the traditions of the parent unit and added to them.

No element of the Regiment returned to New Hampshire as a unit. Late in 1945, many of the original members were still serving in the Philippines.

A short five years after the Japanese surrender, the 197th AAA Group was called for duty in the Korean Conflict. Many of the old 197th went to serve again. The unit remained in the Continental U.S., but many individuals were sent to Japan and Korea. The same spirit which has always been characteristic of New Hampshire men made them a unit to be proud of.

The present 197th Artillery Group, New Hampshire National Guard, is but another generation of the same stock. They carry our traditions and we wish them well.

UNIT REPRESENTATIVES 197TH REUNION COMMITTEE

August 21, 1965

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| HQ&HQ BTRY. | — Eric Andrews, 18 Rogers Ave., West Concord, N. H. |
| Band | — Irving Pelletier, 120 Allds St., Nashua, N. H.
— Victor Poulin, 35 Balcom St., Nashua, N. H. |
| Service Battery | — Ernest Caron, 20 Front St., Nashua, N. H. |
| HQ&HQ BTRY. 1st Bn. | — Wasil Sadonsky, 2 Providence Ave., Claremont, N. H. |
| BTRY. A | — Nelson Maltais, 109 Pembroke Hill Rd.,
— A. P. Cote, 40 Hall St., Concord, N. H.
Suncook, N. H. |
| BTRY. B | — Albert F. Charbonneau, Manchester, N. H. |
| BTRY. C | — Allan J. Leonard, 258 North St., Lakeport, N. H. |
| BTRY. D | — Herbert H. Erickson, 900 State St.,
Portsmouth, N. H. |
| HQ&HQ BTRY. 2nd Bn. | — Norman Trudeau, Newport, N. H. |
| BTRY. E | — Michael Patinsky, 1 Forest St., Nashua, N. H. |
| BTRY. F | — Henry T. Cote, 59 Norway St., Berlin, N. H. |
| BTRY. G | — Leslie H. Goodnow, 82 Blake St., Keene, N. H. |
| BTRY. H | — Raymond L. Cushing, 53 Rowell St., Laconia, N. H. |
| MED. DET. | — Walter Thibodeau, 104 Vine St., Nashua, N. H. |

GENERAL COMMITTEE

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| CHAIRMAN: | — Wesley E. Haynes, Concord, N. H. |
| VICE CHAIRMAN: | — Francis P. Tucker, Portsmouth, N. H. |
| SECRETARY—TREAS. | — Frederick M. Wood, Concord, N. H. |