THE National Guardsman
Official Publication of the National Guard Association of the United States, 100 Indiana Ave., N. W., Washington 1, D. C. Phone: District 70141
TWX: WAK28

June, 1954
Vol. 8, No. 6

General offices: 100 Indiana Ave., N. W., Washington 1, D. C. The National Guardsman of June 6, 1954, was published at the post office at Harrisburg, Pa., under the act of March 3, 1879.

Domestic subscriptions: $1.50 per year to members of the National Guard Assn. of the U. S.; $1.00 per year to non-members. (Foreign and Canada $3.00.)

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Address changes should be forwarded to Circulation Dept., The National Guardsman, 100 Indiana Ave., N. W., Secretary, Washington 1, D. C. PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR OLD ADDRESS. WITH INSTRUCTIONS TO CHANGE TO NEW ADDRESS.

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NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES

IT SEEMED altogether fitting and proper in the close proximity of the Fifth Diamond Jubilee General Conference of the National Guard Association of the United States, held in San Diego last October, that the rules would be so far suspended as to permit the introduction of a resolution commemorating in June 1954 the Tenth Anniversary of the Invasion of Normandy. The resolution in question, which was unanimously adopted, instructed and directed the President of the Association to appoint a "Normandy D-Day Observance Commission" to officially organize and publicize any and all ceremonies incident to the greatest military operations in the history of the world.

The story has been told countless times since that fateful day of June 6, 1944, and certain it is that the story will be told and retold until time is no more. Yet, no matter how often the story is told, it will never be told in its entirety, for even the Supreme Commander, his Staff and his subordinate Commanders could not see or know everything that was going on. There were fateful decisions to make, due to weather conditions, and notwithstanding the superb planning and the marshaling of a mighty military force from all the arms and services of the Allies participating, success or failure, nevertheless, would depend on that most elusive of all factors—luck. Fortunately for that matchless force and for the free world, luck smiled benignly. The beaches were stormy; the heights were gained; and then came the breakthroughs, followed by the advance that was to destroy Hitler and the Reich which he had fashioned and which he vowed would never die—never for a thousand years.

Hundreds of thousands of men from the British Commonwealth of Nations, the United States of America, who were to become and are to become the people of France, composed this mighty force. Among them were men who came from ten nations, from our East, the Midwest, the West, and the North and South Guard Divisions which had faced the same foe. From France and Flanders France would again fight over the same ground and be a potent factor in the rapid advance. There would be thousands of casualties, for that was inevitable in such a titanic operation and in face of such a desperate foe. For those who earned a soldier's grave, we bow our heads in prayer for their eternal rest. They who survived, we rejoice in the glory that is theirs.

It is meet, indeed, that the British, French, Canadian and American forces who compose the troops should commemorate the tenth anniversary of this momentous event. It is also meet that the National Guard Association of the United States, which has such a long and distinguished history, should participate in this observance. For the Association has been appointed consisting of some of our most distinguished Army and Air National Guard officers. They are Major General M. A. R. Reckord, Maryland; Chairman; Major General Donald W. McGowan, New Jersey, Executive Officer; the Honorable Franklin L. Orth, Wisconsin, Special Assistant to the Secretary of the Army for National Guard and Army Reserve Affairs; Major General Jim Dan Hill, Wisconsin; Major General William H. Harrison, Jr., Massachusetts; Major General William H. Sands, Virginia; Major General Karl F. Hawkes, Pennsylvania; Major General Edgar C. Rickison, Chief, National Guard Bureau; and Major General M. D. Donaldson, Alabama; Brigadier General Timothy J. Regan, Massachusetts, and Colonel Clarence A. Shoop, California. We are honored that these gentlemen, nearly all of whom participated in the invasion, would consent to serve as members of the Commission, and doubly so that Mr. Orth would accept.

The Association and the Commission are most grateful to the State Department, Department of the Army, Department of the Air Force, and the French Military Attaches in Washington, and to the English and French officers for the many courtesies which have been extended to the members of our Commission and who made it possible for our Association to participate in this great and historic event. We are also very grateful to MATS which is ferrying the members of our Commission to England and France and back to the United States.

The Commission will check in at Grenouere House in London on 29 June. From the following day they will visit the American Cemetery near London to pay reverence to our honored dead and participate in the Memorial Day services. On 31 May, they will tender a reception and dinner to many distinguished Britons and Americans. June 1 will be departure date for Paris, and the following day the Commission will proceed to National Guardsmen from other states. On 3 June, our Commission will attend the ceremonies in the Anglo-Canadian Sector, and later that evening, the official banquet at Caen.

Observance Day, 6 June, the Commission will participate in the Memorial Ceremony at Arromanches, the observance ceremonies at Omaha and Utah beaches, and the dedication of Fort DuRoure at Cherbourg. The next day they will return to Paris, and the day after they will receive a reception and dinner at the King George Y Hotel to a number of distinguished French and American officials and officers. This will conclude the formal part of the Observance Commission. The National Guardsman will shortly thereafter return to continental United States.

It is, indeed, a great occasion, and the Association is proud to participate in that end our Association has been appointed consisting of some of our dear guardsmen:

Books are a hobby as well as a job for Mrs. Hilda Costello, Librarian for the National Guard Association of the United States, at the National Guard Library in Washington, D.C.

Born in New York State's "apple-knocker" country, and graduated from Geneseo State College, Hilda got off to a flying start in her young career and association with a job of helping the headquarters of the National Guard Association of the United States, a library for Poughkeepsie's school system. Came the day when Mrs. Costello's interests were growing in Glen Falls, then back to books at Scranton's in Rochester and Breinestown in Washington.

A little over five years ago when the NGAUS Library consisted of a few hand-me-downs from individual donors, she felt heir to the job of building it up to its present respectable and extremely valuable extent of hundreds of volumes, covering all phases of history, with emphasis on military works, of course. Fifty-speaking literary publications, haunting the House of Congress, public libraries, second-hand book stores, Mrs. Costello tracks down not only new books but some long out-of-print "finds" that enhance the library's value to Service scholars and historians.

She's the kind of loyal woman who can lean on rooting for Washington's Senators "even when they stink" (as they frequently do).

THE STAFF

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Not Guard

Eve Meyer

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OUR COVER

With sounding of the alert alarm, ANG pilots streak for the skies from the ready room of Pennsylvania's 111 Ftr-B Wing, at Philadelphia International Airport's Base Operations. The fliers (L to R) are: Capt Joseph Smith, Comdr, 117 Ftr-B Sq; Capt A Dazigian, 117; and Capt Walter Cope, Comdr, 103 Ftr-B Sq. Start of an all-day practice mission for the Sqs, there are two years of teaching the air to strike and dive-bomb the "enemy" off the South Jersey coast, nearly 100 miles from their base.

JUNE, 1954