

# Chicago Chapter, 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division Assn. Newsletter

## September 2020



### Chicago Chapter Officers:

- Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary: Mark Mueller
- Vice Chairman, Sergeant at Arms, Historian: Glenn T. Granat
- Service Officers: Mark Mueller and Glenn T. Granat

### Upcoming Events:

- Chicago Veteran's 20 Mile Ruck March: Normally held in May, this event has been postponed due to the pandemic. If the event is cancelled for the year, Vice Chair Granat will do a 20-mile ruck march on his own and make a donation to the Chicago Veteran's organization.
- 13 Sep: Chapter Meeting (Online via Google Meet), 14:00-15:30
- 11 Oct: Chapter Meeting (Online via Google Meet), 14:00-15:30
- 08 Nov: Chapter Meeting (Online via Google Meet), 14:00-15:30
- 13 Dec: Chapter Holiday Party (Tentative; TBA)
- June 2021 (specific date TBD): 3<sup>rd</sup> annual *Granat and Corcoran Airborne Fishing Day*.

Please visit our Chapter website at [www.chicagoairborne.com](http://www.chicagoairborne.com) for a complete calendar.

### Important AIRBORNE days in September

- 01 September 1943: 542<sup>nd</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment formed.
- 13-14 September 1943: Operation Avalanche, Salerno, Italy.
- 17 September 1944: Operation Market Garden. Holland.

## Airborne History **Operation Market Garden**

On September 17<sup>th</sup>, 1944, Operation Market Garden, the largest Airborne Operation in history began. The operation's mission was to secure key bridges across Belgium and the Netherlands while pushing an Allied advance over the Rhine into Germany and ending the war in Europe by Christmas 1944. Many of Market Garden's main goals failed, and a Christmas victory did not happen.

Market Garden was divided into two sub-operations. The first was "Market," an Airborne assault that would capture the key bridges Allied forces needed to advance on German positions and cross into Germany. The second was "Garden," where ground forces crossed those bridges and formed on the other side. In the north, the push would circumvent the Siegfried Line, creating the top part of a greater pincer movement of tanks inside Germany's industrial heartland, as well as a 64-mile bulge in the front line.

The British 1st Airborne Division and Polish 1st Independent Parachute Brigade were dropped around Oosterbeek to take bridges near Arnhem and Grave. The U.S. 101st Airborne Division, (Commanded by MG Maxwell Taylor) was dropped near Eindhoven, and the 82nd Airborne Division, (Commanded by BG James Gavin) was dropped near Nijmegen with the aim of taking bridges near there and Grave.

The Allies thought German resistance would be minimal, as the Nazis were in full retreat after the liberation much of France. Hitler recalled Field Marshal Von Rundstedt from retirement who reorganized the German forces and moved reinforcements near key bridges and major cities.

34,000 Paratroopers and Glidermen of the American 82<sup>nd</sup> and 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Divisions and the British 1<sup>st</sup> Airborne Division caught the Germans by surprise. Although most bridges were taken, some were not, and some were demolished by the Germans. The British engaged their targets with half the men required and the British paratrooper's relief arrived later than expected. British General Sir Brian Horrocks halted his advance on the second day to regroup after assisting in the assault on Nijmegen Bridge and this would keep British troops at Arnhem from getting the forces they needed to be successful and spell the ultimate failure of Market Garden.

American causality estimates are 15,000-17,000 killed, captured, or wounded. The British 1st Airborne Division suffered 1,485 killed and 6,414 captured. In addition, the British failed to take and hold the bridge at Arnhem, encountering stiff resistance from the Germans. Because of this, the invasion of Nazi Germany over the lower Rhine could not proceed. Field Marshal Montgomery was a steadfast supporter of the operation, even after considering all its operational successes and failures. Montgomery still considered the operation a 90% success.

**Two American Paratroopers received the Medal of Honor, both posthumously.**

On 19 September, Private First Class Joe E. Mann of the 101st Airborne Division, while under attack and wounded in both arms, which were bandaged to his body yelled grenade and threw his body over the grenade, and as it exploded killing him instantly

On 21 September, Private John R. Towle of the 82nd Airborne Division, while attack and motivated by his high conception of duty rushed 125 yards through grazing enemy fire to an exposed position from which he engaged an enemy half-track with his rocket launcher. Preparatory to firing on the enemy vehicle, Pvt. Towle was mortally wounded by a mortar shell. By his heroic tenacity, at the price of his life, Pvt. Towle saved the lives of many of his comrades and was directly instrumental in breaking up the enemy counterattack.



American paratroopers receive a final briefing before Operation Market Garden.



Dutch Civilians Place Flowers on  
American, British & Polish Soldiers  
Graves



Canvas boats used by Allies to cross  
Holland's rivers



Paratroopers of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division jumping into Holland.



Nijmegen Bridge



American Paratroopers inspect a  
Damaged Waco Glider.