

Miscellaneous Writings About WWII

Raymond Bones

Written in 2002 - 2003

I was born on April 12, 1923, on Springtown Road near Dayton, Oregon. My father was Walter Joe Bones, and my mother was Anna Marie Call Bones.

When I was about 2 years old my parents moved to a place across the river from Meda Loop called the Foster place. I started school at Meda.

At age 6 or 7, my folks moved on the Blaine Road east of Beaver across the road from what is now the Edwin and Ruth Woods' farm. This was 1929 or 1930. Except for living in Hebo a short time and time spent in the service, I have lived near Beaver ever since making lots of friends that I still have to this day.

In February of 1943, Jack Kellow and I went into the army at Fort Lewis, and that was the last time we saw each other until the war was over. After basic training at Camp Roberts in California, it was on to maneuvers in Louisiana. Then I went on to Fort Sam Houston, Texas, for a few months, and then on to Camp Patrick Henry, Virginia, near Norfolk. I shipped out of there early December 1943, and I landed in Casablanca, North Africa, about Christmas time. Then we went on 40 and 8 railway cars to Gran, North Africa, where we were trucked back in the hills to a place called Marjenta. (Note that I cannot find the names of these cities currently in 2010 to find out if I have them spelled correctly. db)

In February or March 1944, we were taken to Oran, North Africa, and across the Mediterranean Sea and landed at Naples, Italy. We unloaded onto the sides of sunken ships as we had done at Casablanca.

Now for a country boy, this was very exciting. Our division fought all the way to the Austrian boarder where the war ended in 1945. And here I must say . . . if every American could see the sacrifices made by our men you would really love our flag and what it represents.

I met a lot of fine people while in the army and have lots of them as friends to this day. John Gault and I were in the same unit at Roberts. February 1943 was when he and I met for the first time.

I have some memories that have remained with me all my life. I went to Saint Peter's Cathedral in Rome with a catholic fellow, went into the Sistine Chapel and saw Michelangelo's works and had an audience with the pope, Pius XI. I have seen the leaning tower of Pisa in both 1945 and 1980. I also got to see Irving Berlin. I would not have seen these things if it hadn't been for my time in the service.

I forgot to name my unit. I was in Headquarters Company, 313th Combat Engineer Battalion of the 88th Infantry Division. Our line companies, A, B, and C, had it very tough working with mine detectors, building roads and bridges, and in some cases going with the infantry with flame throwers. Thank the good Lord I was in Headquarters company and did not have to do these things.

And now for a funny or two. Ed Ryzner from Tillamook was in my unit from Louisiana until we got out of the Army. I drove up in front of Hi School Pharmacy in Tillamook and saw Ed standing there talking to someone, so I got out of the car and went over to him. I stuck my hand out and said, "Hi Ed."

He looked at me really strange and said, "Who are you?"

I said, "We slept in the same pup tent for 2 years and, and you don't remember me?"

Oh, yes, then it all came back. "You are Ray Bones."

A few months later I was in Hi School Pharmacy when I heard Ed talking loud like me. I looked him up, and he said, "I'm glad to see you as I'm trying to verify something. Remember when I was driving that truck, and I had a fellow with me. The truck upset, and we were pinned in it?"

"No, I don't," I said.

Ed said, "What has happened to your memory?"

Clarice and I were married on May 16, 1943, in Paso Robles, California.