



"From this day to the ending of the world, but we in it shall be remember'd; We few, we happy few, we Band of Brothers..." ~William Shakespeare

After 67 Years, WWII Veterans Reunite



MARCEL & ANTOINE, 2012



HENRI J & DOROTHY, 2012



HENRI J. BERDARD 1945



MARCEL BERTRAND 1945

Henri J. < www.Sunbythesea.com > Marcel

Marcel Bertrand and Antoine Noslier met in March 2009 when Antoine, passionate about the 83rd Infantry Division, contacted WWII survivor Marcel who lives near his hometown in France. Antoine is in the 329th Infantry Regiment and is a Re-enactor of the 83rd Infantry Division. His newfound friendship with Marcel set him on an inspired quest to find Marcel's living "band of brothers." This being the Internet age, Antoine did a Google search, with Wildwood's own Henri J Berdard's name as his only source of information (originally spelling his name with a "y" instead of an "i," temporarily hastening his search). His online pursuit eventually introduced him to the Sun by-the-sea and the story on Henri J that appeared in the Spring 2008 edition of the paper.

The story on Henri J and Marcel began when they served together in WWII. Marcel first met Henri J at the age of 15 when he was a French volunteer in the 83rd Signal Company, 83rd Infantry Division. Marcel, who was born at Dinan in Brittany, France, met and sympathized with the Americans and became of guide for them in 1944, when the Americans liberated the town of Dinan from the Germans. In 1945, he was given the opportunity to become an American citizen but opted to return home to France at his mother's request. Fast forward many decades later, when a nostalgic Marcel, with the help of a determined friend, Antoine, attempted to build a bridge between himself and his past.

Meanwhile, the story on our very own Henri J. began on a dairy farm close to the Canadian border where he was born in October 1923. He would eventually work for the Federal government in Washington, D.C. before being drafted in 1943, ultimately ending up in the 83rd Infantry Division. Following his Army days, he returned to working for the Federal government. He then moved to Philadelphia where he managed a gas and repair station. In 1951, he acquired Henri J's, a service and then-gas station in North Wildwood, where he happily remains to this day, taking care of the vehicles making their way around the Wildwoods.

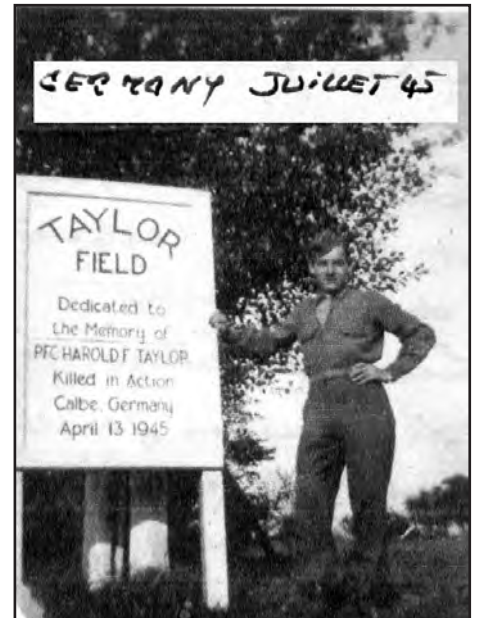
A few days after their e-mail connection, Henri J. received a two-page, hand-written letter from Marcel, who he referred to as the "French kid." Henri J., who speaks French fluently, then sent a letter of his own, making for a happy reunion across the miles.

When the story on Henri J. first appeared in the Sun, we never imagined it would connect people from across the globe or reach as far as France! Bringing people together through our stories is our ultimate goal and a gratifying experience. With the help of God, a 34-year-old man in Brittany, France and the Sun's faithful editor, these two "band of brothers" from across the sea, who have lived a lifetime since their war days, have been able to reconnect after 67 years.

by Dorothy Kulisek and Meg Corcoran



HENRI J. BERDARD 1945



MARCEL BERTRAND 1945

Feb 1, 2012
Bonjour Marcel
C'est avec plaisir que j'ai reçu
la lettre que me raconte ton petit
pays depuis à Paris dans la division 83rd
...
Henri

Mon cher Henri
C'est avec un grand plaisir que j'ai
reçu ta lettre du 20/01/12. Tu me
racontes que tu es dans la 83rd ID
...
Bonne nuit
Marcel