




ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratulations are in order:

★ **BG John Andonie** – New York National Guard Director and former commander of the 1st Battalion 69th Inf – New York City’s “Fighting 69th” was recently promoted to Brigadier General in November 2018. (Photo by Capt. Jean Marie Kratzer, New York National Guard)



★ **Capt Max Rose** – C Company – is newly elected Congressman of New York’s 11th Congressional District (includes borough of Staten Island and parts of southern Brooklyn). (Photo from website – maxroseforcongress)



Other news:



➤ **General William “Wild Bill” Donovan Memorial Highway**

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo signed legislation, on 9/25/2018, naming a portion of the state highway system in honor of General William Donovan. The bill designates State Route 104 in the town of Lewiston as the “General William “Wild Bill” Donovan Memorial Highway”. Highlights of the press release include (dated 9/25/2018):

“General Donovan provided an incredible service to our nation and had a profound impact on World War I, World War II, and the modern American intelligence community”, Governor Cuomo said. “It is a privilege to honor General Donovan’s service and valor through this legislation, ensuring his legacy will remain in our memory for generations to come.” General Donovan, a native of Buffalo, New York, known as the Father of American Intelligence, is the only American to ever be awarded this nation’s four highest military awards:

- The Medal of Honor
- The Distinguished Service Cross
- The Distinguished Service Medal
- The National Security Medal



Letters, Emails, and Conversations:



Tom Fitzsimmons, Past Commander

★ **Ruth Neidinger:** Received a Christmas card from Ruth with a memorial donation in memory of her late husband Al. He was first sergeant of B Company. Ruth goes back to the days when Veteran Corps meetings were also a social gathering. The members, their wives/friends

would show up and we would have as many as 50/60 people in attendance. The “gas range team” would prepare a meal and we would have a wonderful time.

- ❖ **Dick Beyrer**: Dick, who is a long time member of the Veteran Corps and also a member of the “Friendly Sons of St. Patrick” of Putnam County, has again made a very generous contribution to the Family Support Fund. It is well appreciated and we send our best wishes to Dick for a happy and healthy new year!
- ❖ **Daniel Flynn**: your kind remarks about me are very much appreciated. Now, for that trip down “memory lane”. You mention as a medic with HQS looking forward to being attached to a company for AT. You brought back such great memories. Tom Gordon, who was a friend growing up as teenagers, that friendship lasted until his passing (over 70 years), the green light parade. We were a crazy bunch but we did our job and did it well. Thank you for remembering those days gone by but not forgotten. Also thank you for your continued participation in the Family Support Fund. Wishing you a happy and healthy new year!
- ❖ **Edward Kneafsey**: Ed is also a long time supporter of our various programs. It is donations such as these that allow us to offer some financial assistance to the soldiers of the battalion. We are now preparing to award another \$10,000.00 to our scholarship program this coming St. Patrick’s Day.
- ❖ **Bill Finan**: Bill has been a member of the 69th since about 1949 and remained a member of the Veteran Corps also serving as our recording secretary for 22 years. Bill has made a donation in support of the battalion shooting team in memory of his long-time friendship with Vincent Sheehan.
- ❖ **Dennis Hearn**: Dennis, who is our current recording secretary, an avid rifle and pistol shooter, and a former member of the 69th Rifle & Pistol team presents a donation to the battalion shooting team in memory of his close friend Richard Low, also a former member of the 69th Rifle & Pistol team.
- ❖ **Charles O’Neill**: Charlie is a former company commander of Charlie Company and a long-time member of the Veteran Corps. He was always the guy to go to when we had some legal questions. He also was a tremendous help in the writing the current Veteran Corps constitution. For that we are very thankful. Charlie also has made a contribution to the Family Support Fund.
- ❖ **Gerald Steakin**: Jerry, great hearing from you, hope all is well. Could use a little tune up myself but hope that is down the road a little bit. You have been one of the most steady members of the Veteran Corps and actively participating in the Family Support Fund. It is members like you, who keep our Corps with our heads held high. I wish to thank you for your continued support of the Family Support Fund.
- ❖ **Kevin Maxwell & Pat Aubert**: just want to say thank you for your everlasting concerns about the Veteran Corps. Although not residing locally, you both have made efforts to represent the Veteran Corps when needed. May you both have a very happy and healthy new year!
- ❖ **John Walsh**: the humorous emails continue and how I enjoy them; the phone conversations are also well received. I do have a correction to make in the last bulletin I posted John’s age as 96 years old - he reminded me that he is actually 97 years young!
- ❖ **Tom Fitzsimmons**: I just want to thank all of you for the support you have given me over the past 15 years. Your contributions to the letters and conversations segment have been a wonderful experience for me. The commander, Jose Flores has asked me to continue with this segment. A few years ago the letters and notes would seem to have no end to them. Lately

things have slowed up, but we need the activity back again. I'm looking for your assistance with even the smallest story about the battalion. My email address is tomandlilfitz2@verizon.net. In the meantime may you all enjoy a very happy, healthy new year!



69th Infantry – Historical Perspectives – Submitted by Jack Hallanan:

Lost a Colonel – Saved a Flag!

On April 12, 1861 Confederate artillery fired on Fort Sumter in Charleston harbor. On April 14, President Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers to quell the “insurrection.” Col. Corcoran, released from the threat of a Court Martial over the Prince of Wales honor guard refusal, volunteered the 69th. They left on April 23rd from Prince and Mott streets to the cheers of thousands.

When the 69th disembarked after the ferry ride from New York City, they were bivouacked in what is now the Georgetown area of Washington. The call by Lincoln for volunteers to put down the “insurrection” was seen as a military threat by the Southern states and the secession process continued. When Virginia seceded on May 23 1861, the Union military quickly moved 13,000 troops, the 69th among them, to occupy the Arlington section of Virginia immediately across the Potomac from Washington. It was an elevated parcel of land and, if the Rebel artillery were placed there, the guns would be a direct threat to the government buildings in Washington. Earth and wood defenses were constructed by the 69th and other units at that location. One of these emplacements, named after the Commander, was called Fort Corcoran. There the 69th drilled and waited while guarding a rail line. A Fort Corcoran defensive cannon was “baptized” by Chaplain Thomas Mooney, which caused his recall by his Archbishop in New York.

General Irwin McDowell developed his plan to attack the Rebel forces and move on to Richmond. On July 16 1861, the 69th left Fort Corcoran and began the overland march to what would be its first battle of the war at Manassas Junction or Bull Run, Bull Run being the name of the stream. There were several skirmishes between small units of the two armies as they drew closer together until the main clash on July 21 1861. During the fight, the 69th among other units, participated in several assaults but failed to gain a victory. Two suggested factors for the failure were the commitment of Union troops piecemeal and the surprising arrival of Confederate reinforcements at the critical moment. The result was a disorganized Union retreat, on the part of many of the units, to the safety of Washington.

Tactics of the time involved moving the troops in various formations to march, form an assault line, or form into a “square” when threatened by a cavalry charge. The 69th was in the process of doing this formation change when the Rebel cavalry arrived at the scene. The 69th, while under Rebel fire, and in the midst of the fleeing troops of other Union units and civilians who had left Washington to observe the battle, left the field in good order. The 69th was the last unit to leave the field. During this melee, Col. Corcoran’s horse and he were wounded, and he was on foot. He waved the National colors in an attempt to rally the men and maintain order and regain control, but his position was overrun and he and several others were captured along with the National colors.

At the same time in another portion of the field, Company K, the colorfully dressed Zouave Company under the command of Captain Thomas Meagher, had possession of the green flag,

the Prince of Wales flag. Two color bearers were killed protecting it before a Rebel soldier seized the flag. John Keefe, a Zouave, shot the Rebel and several others in an unsuccessful attempt to recover the flag. Later, the flag was recaptured and returned to the 69th by Captain John Wiley of the New York Fire Department Zouaves.

The last member of the 69th to leave the field was Captain Thomas Meagher who had also lost his horse, and was semi conscious when rescued by a Union cavalry soldier. On the way to Fort Corcoran, he was pitched into Bull Run from a caisson and had to swim to safety to return to Fort Corcoran.

It should be noted the term of the 90 day enlistment of the members of the 69th expired before the battle, but they volunteered to remain for the battle when asked to do so by Col. Corcoran.

On July 25 1861, the 69th started their way back to NYC. They were cheered as they passed through Baltimore and Philadelphia. In NYC, wearing what remained of their uniforms or whatever else they could acquire, they were escorted up Broadway by militia companies including the Seventh Regiment.

Col. Corcoran remained a prisoner, refusing to sign a promise not to again take up arms, until he was released in August 1862. He was one of fourteen captured Union officers to be hanged if fourteen captured Rebel sailors were to be considered pirates and hung instead of being considered prisoners of war and paroled. The Federal Government dropped the charge of piracy and all were released.

Fort Corcoran was eventually razed after the war. Its location is marked by a sign at the intersection of Key Boulevard and North Orde Street in Arlington Virginia.



SERVICE OFFICER'S SICK REPORT:

☛ **Frank Trombino – HHC Co 1967 – 1970; recovering from surgery; his email address: Ftrombino@verizon.net.**

May we join in prayer that our sick have a complete and speedy recovery!

In case of illness or death of a member, please call our Service Officer, Frank Sherry at (516) 536-6756 or leave a message on our recording machine at (212) 686-6556 in a timely manner. If known, please list the Company and dates of service in the Regiment.

**Please direct all correspondence to:
Veteran Corps, 69th Regiment, Inc., P.O. Box 48, Massapequa Park, NY 11762**

Other contact information: Email address: THE69VETERANS@GMAIL.COM



UPCOMING EVENTS



➤ **March 16, 2019 – St. Patrick's Day (Saturday – Mass / March / Gathering afterwards)**

➤ **May 19, 2019 – Unit Memorial Day (Sunday)**

Note information on events – meeting locations and times to be announced in future bulletins.