

The Liberation of St. Jacques

Barthell, KY.

July 5, 2008

WWII Living History Show and Battle

This is a first-ever, public living history and battle event honoring the service of Pvt. Wilburn K. Ross and the thousands of other men and women who served in WW2. Wilburn K. Ross, Medal of Honor recipient whose selfless actions under fire near St. Jacques France saved the remnants of his company and inspired his fellow comrades to fight on. (See "Who is Wilburn K. Ross" at the bottom of page) will be honored on Saturday (pending his confirmation of attendance).

Accommodations

There will be period camping and modern camping. Several rental cottages are available with Reservations highly recommended.

Where?

Barthell Coal Mining Camp

552 Barthell Rd.

Stearns, KY. 42647

(888) 550-5748

www.barthellcoalcamp.com

Directions

From 1-75 take exit 11 at Williamsburg.

Hwy. 92 West. go approx. 19 miles.

At US. 27 turn north.

(Look for pedestrian bridge across US. 27) Continue on US. 27 N / 92 N.

Turn left onto Wilburn K. Ross Hwy Continue to US. 1651

Follow road to the left at BP station.

Continue approx. Y:z mile turn right on US. 741

At white church turn right on to US. 742

Follow signs 6 miles to Barthell Coal Camp

All American and German units invited as well as civilian impressions. This town is German occupied. Please bring any German militaria to be displayed in the town, i.e. Flags posters banners, signs, plaques, etc. Period vehicle owners are encouraged to attend. There will be several vehicles from the Barthell collection consisting of civilian 1920s and 1930s cars and trucks to add a sense of realism to the town. These are period looking vehicles. Period vehicle owners and their vehicles are encouraged to attend.

The Scenario

1944 the town of St. Jacques is under occupation of German forces. Their iron grip on the town is stifling. But Freedom is on the way. This very day the American forces are planning an assault to liberate the town from the talons of fascism.

There will be three shows on Saturday, then one show on Sunday.

A night tactical on Saturday is possible.

Who is Wilburn K. Ross?

The President of the United States
in the name of The Congress
takes pleasure in presenting the
Medal of Honor
to

ROSS, WILBURN K.

Rank and organization: Private, U.S. Army, Company G, 350th Infantry, 3d Infantry Division.
Place and date: Near St. Jacques, France, 30 October 1944. Entered service at: Strunk, Ky. Birth: Strunk, Ky. G.O. No.: 30, 14 April 1945. Citation:
For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at risk of life above and beyond the call of duty near St. Jacques, France. At 11:30 a.m. on 30 October 1944, after his company had lost 55 out of 88 men in an attack on an entrenched full-strength German company of elite mountain troops, Pvt. Ross placed his light machinegun 10 yards in advance of the foremost supporting riflemen in order to absorb the initial impact of an enemy counterattack. With machinegun and small arms fire striking the earth near him, he fired with deadly effect on the assaulting force and repelled it. Despite the hail of automatic fire and the explosion of rifle grenades within a stone's throw of his position, he continued to man his machinegun alone, holding off 6 more German attacks. When the eighth assault was launched, most of his supporting riflemen were out of ammunition. They took positions in echelon behind Pvt. Ross and crawled up, during the attack, to extract a few rounds of ammunition from his machinegun ammunition belt. Pvt. Ross fought on virtually without assistance and, despite the fact that enemy grenadiers crawled to within 4 yards of his position in an effort to kill him with hand grenades, he again directed accurate and deadly fire on the hostile force and hurled it back. After expending his last rounds, Pvt. Ross was advised to withdraw to the company command post, together with 8 surviving

riflemen, but, as more ammunition was expected, he declined to do so. The Germans launched their last all-out attack, converging their fire on Pvt. Ross in a desperate attempt to destroy the machinegun, which stood between them and a decisive breakthrough. As his supporting riflemen fixed bayonets for a last-ditch stand, fresh ammunition arrived and was brought to Pvt. Ross just as the advance assault elements were about to swarm over his position. He opened murderous fire on the oncoming enemy; killed 40 and wounded 10 of the attacking force; broke the assault single-handedly, and forced the Germans to withdraw. Having killed or wounded at least 58 Germans in more than 5 hours of continuous combat and saved the remnants of his company from destruction, Pvt. Ross remained at his post that night and the following day for a total of 36 hours. His actions throughout this engagement were an inspiration to his comrades and maintained the high traditions of the military service.