

WWII tank battalion holding reunion at Battle of Bulge site

Special to Inside the Turret

Former members of the Army's 740th Tank Battalion who participated in the Battle of the Bulge and other advances that finally brought victory over Hitler's Germany are meeting in Liege, Belgium through Saturday.

For many it marks the first time they have returned to this area since the end of World War II.

A key event will take place in the town of Neufchateau, Belgium, where members and family from the tank group known as the "Daredevils" will dedicate a monument. The stone monument, fabricated in Belgium, will bear the names of those 43 who were killed in action, along with the 278 men who returned.

Other tours will focus on sites where the 740th fought in major engagements with the German Army. The battalion arrived in Belgium on the eve of the Battle of the Bulge where they rushed into combat with patched-up tanks.

The 740th Tank Battalion originally consisted of mostly Texans and Oklahomans who completed their basic training in Fort Knox and advanced training in the Arizona desert.

Individual operating units within the 740th are credited with stopping the German Panzer 1st SS Division commanded by Jochen Peiper in its furthest advance at Stoumont Station located in the Ardennes in Belgium where the Battle of the Bulge was fought.

Following the Battle of the Bulge, the 740th met heavy resistance as it successfully penetrated a portion of the Siegfried Line.

Near the end of its service, tanks from the 740th were sent to Witzenna, Germany where they extracted Werner von Braun and his team of German missile scientists known as "Operation Paperclip."

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