



Chicago Chapter 82nd Division Association

History Report, May 2022

VE Day

From 1943 to 1945, the 82nd U.S. Airborne Division was deployed in all of the major combat operations in western Europe including Italy, France, Netherlands, and Belgium as well as on the territory of the Germany. After the war it was stationed in Berlin as part of the occupying forces.

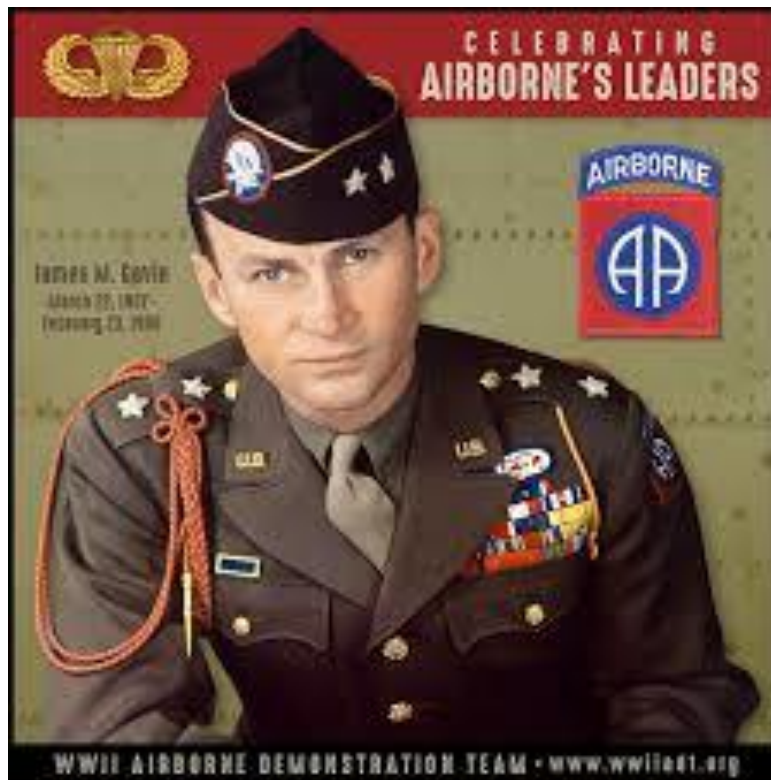
The first wartime deployment of the 82nd U.S. Airborne Division occurred in the summer of 1943, when the Allies landed on Sicily. On 6 June 1944, 12,000 paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne participated in Operation Overlord, the Allied offensive in Normandy. Together with the 101st U.S. Airborne Division they were charged with setting up a bridgehead in the region of Sainte-Mère-Église on the western flank of the Allied assault and securing the segment of coast at Utah Beach. Despite being lightly armed and suffering numerous casualties, the U.S. troops managed to hold the line.

Three months later the paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne were deployed as part of Operation Market Garden in the Netherlands under the command of General James M. Gavin. They were dropped near the village of Groesbeek in order to capture the bridge over the Waal. Although they succeeded after fierce fighting with German troops, Operation Market failed.

In December 1944 the German armed forces began the Ardennes offensive. Despite poor equipment and insufficient reinforcements, the 82nd Airborne Division advanced across Belgium towards Germany. On 7 February 1945 it captured the town of Schmidt in the Hürtgen Forest together with the 78th U.S. Division.

On 2 May 1945 the 82nd Airborne Division met Soviet units near Ludwigslust on the Elbe, 125 miles northwest of Berlin. That same day, General Gavin accepted the partial surrender of the German Army Group Vistula under General von Tippelskirch. The discovery of Wöbbelin concentration camp by American paratroopers also took place on 2 May.

After the war, the 82nd was sent to the American Sector in Berlin, where it remained stationed until returning to the USA on 3 January 1946.





Soldiers of the 82nd Airborne Division meet Soviet units at the Elbe. Grabow, Germany, 2 Mai 1945. Manfred Steinfeld



Operation Market Garden



82nd Airborne Participating in the World War 2 Victory Parade in New York City. January, 2022



82nd Airborne Division Passing in Review for General Patton at the end of WW 2.



Troopers of the 82ND "All American" Airborne Division captured in Sicily and liberated two years later by the same Division. Ronney, Grisez, Rinkowsky, Manual and Lindsey.







Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel signing the final surrender terms on 8 May 1945 in Berlin