

Our Monument

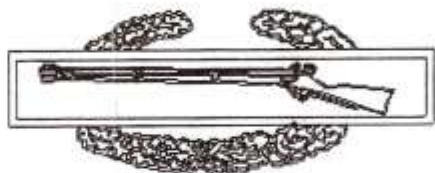
96TH INFANTRY DIVISION DEADEYES

LEYTE
1944



OKINAWA
1945

*IN MEMORY OF OUR FALLEN COMRADES OF THE
96th Infantry Division, U.S. Army
KILLED ON LEYTE, PHILIPPINES AND OKINAWA, JAPAN
AND TO ALL DEADEYES WHO FOUGHT WITH VALOR AND
DISTINCTION TO DEFEAT IMPERIAL JAPAN*



PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION FOR OKINAWA



DEDICATED APRIL 15, 2010
96TH INFANTRY DIVISION DEADEYE ASSOCIATION

The 96th Infantry Division Monument will be installed on the Walk of Honor upon its completion at the National Infantry Museum.

The 96th Infantry Division Deadeye Association wishes to express its sincere appreciation to the 192nd Infantry Brigade, U.S. Army, the National Infantry Foundation and to the National Infantry Museum for their assistance in the Dedication Program.

Major donors are recognized by a plaque on the back of the Monument.

Monument Dedication Program



Introduction

Donald Dencker
Company L, 382nd Infantry

Sound Attention

(Please Stand)

Bugler
U.S. Army

Post the Colors

192nd Infantry Brigade Color Guard

National Anthem

Pledge of Allegiance

Leonard Lazarick
Company K, 382nd Infantry

Invocation

Chaplain CPT Steven Doyle
192nd Infantry Brigade

Greetings

Dick Hagan
Operations Officer, National Infantry Foundation

Keynote Address

COL. Terry McKenrick
Commander, 192nd Infantry Brigade

Veteran Remarks

James Causey
Company C, 381st Infantry

Dedication Remarks

MG (Ret) James Collins
President, 96th Infantry Division Deadeye Association

Unveiling of the Monument

Robert Schmidt and Daughter Barbara Schmidt
Anti Tank Company, 381st Infantry

Placing of Wreath

Karel Knutson
Battery B, 361st Field Artillery Battalion

Taps

Bugler
U.S. Army

Benediction

Chaplain CPT Steven Doyle
192nd Infantry Brigade

Retire the Colors

192nd Infantry Brigade Color Guard

Dismissal

Donald Dencker



The 96th Infantry Division U.S. Army World War II

The Battle of Okinawa, Japan

The 96th Infantry Division was relieved from combat on Leyte, Philippines on February 10, 1945. The Division, now a part of the TENTH Army, on March 27th departed Leyte for Okinawa, Ryuku Islands located 330 miles from the main Japanese island of Kyushu. This was the start of the battle, code named "Operation Iceberg", with a landing at 8:30 am on April 1, 1945, code named "Love Day."

After very light opposition to the 96th Infantry Division landing, on April 4th the Division ran into outlying elements of the Shui line. The Japanese 32nd Army was waiting for us, deeply protected in their underground defenses placed in a successive series of ridges strung across the island and supported by the heaviest concentration of artillery, mortars, machine guns and mines encountered in the Pacific.

Then followed fierce fighting to the end of April at Cactus Ridge, Kakazu Ridge, Tombstone Ridge, Nishabaru Ridge, Tanabaru Ridge, Hacksaw (Maeda) Ridge, Needle Rock and Hill 150. The 96th Infantry Division was relieved on April 30th for rest and replacements.

About May 1st, the 96th Infantry Division received 3,600 replacements, which did not completely make up for April losses. Then followed battles to secure Zebra, Dick, Charlie, Oboe, King, Hen and Sugar Hills. Significantly, the 96th Infantry Division took Conical Hill which broke the right flank of the final Japanese defense line that protected their Shuri underground 32nd Army headquarters.

The Japanese Army then retreated to the southern end of Okinawa. Heavy fighting by the 96th Infantry Division eliminated the Japanese resistance on Yaeju Dake (Big Apple) and Yuza Dake escarpments. The Division concluded the Okinawa Battle with a mop-up of Japanese Army stragglers until June 30, 1945.

On Okinawa, the Division killed over 25,000 Japanese troops and suffered over 10,000 casualties. For its extraordinary heroism, the entire 96th Infantry Division was awarded the Army Presidential Unit Citation. Additionally, Company L, 383rd Infantry and Company E, 382nd Infantry were individually awarded the Presidential Unit Citation. The Division was also awarded the Philippine Presidential Unit Citation. This is the highest possible award to a unit. Four 96th Infantry Division men were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, two of which were posthumous.