

Many of the men in the chapter felt that their history did not belong in the 'War Stories' book! This resulted from our non-intended semantic shorthand in calling it that in more or less loose fashion. Those who did endure combat situations are so accustomed to understanding that many, many support troops and just plain lucky/unlucky fellows that got left or caught in the 'rear' echelons, found themselves in the most essential of war's jobs. That of support and aid for the men out ahead. It doesn't matter how or why they got stuck there. The thing that matters is that while they hated being left behind, or were just too late coming into the army/service due to age or draft levels or high school or whatever, to make the front line service, they were essential people. Those who came late were just as important. Men like our beloved Tom Hacker who did great service in developing the Airborne sciences of loading and transporting in gliders and various other contraptions. As well as dropping by chutes, the many heavy additions to the Airborne weaponry, ammunition, food and medical support elements. Without these kinds of guys the front would have been hard to maintain! Even after the various wars ended, these people continued with the far less ego building action. But none of it was any less important. Perhaps it was even MORE important. You may recall that the German Army was directed to kill less and WOUND MORE, because it takes 17 people in the rear to care for a wounded man as well as to support a man who is still 'up front'.

To that end I want to include a letter from Tom Hacker. He sent in it not only resignation, but gratitude and the same spirit of helpfulness he has always shown for the men of the chapter. It is in respect and caring and with regret, that he finds he must lay down his pen and leave off publishing our newsletter! He has done yeoman service and the chapter owes him our deepest gratitude. Read on and think of this as you read.

"This is the last issue of the 'Badger Airborne News'. As you know I have been doing this for the past several years. In that time I have met a lot of the BSC members. When I went to my first meeting in Racine, all I saw was a bunch of old 'Gomers'. At first I said to myself, 'What are you doing with here with these old people'? I was about to walk away when I realized this room was full of history that I could never read about, but I could talk to them about it. Had I walked away I never would have had the honor of becoming friends with people like Joe Klinkiewicz, Jim Pratt, Doc Stolp, Les Schwarm, Ben Rous, Big Ed Moehrke, Walter Pakulski, and many more members of the chapter! I also cherish meeting the wives of these extraordinary men. They too are special people. I, along with my wife Randy have enjoyed travelling around the state attending meetings and other functions. We hope to continue the friendships and meetings in the future.

As my time in the BSC went on and after talking to many of the old 'Gomers', I realized that I wasn't really THAT FAR behind them." (Ed note: See the photo of Tom in the photo pages. It was taken 38 years ago, March 1960.) "I was only 18 years old and that was only 18 years after the Airborne as we know it was started.

So I guess that I am now one of the old 'Gomers' and I am proud to have walked among you!

I leave you with this quote. "Start by doing what is necessary, then do what is possible, and suddenly you are doing the impossible". St. Francis of Assisi.

God bless you one and all.

Tom Hacker

Tom was reluctant to put his story in the book and so I shall put this in for him. It is far more poignant and revealing than some other incidental bit of history and deserves to be here with the other men's tales!

Please turn to Tom's picture at the end of the photo pages guys! It is so important! You will see yourselves there, ready to jump, to prepare yourself for your country's call and needs. To become the thin red line that separates the men from the boys. The patriots who just talk a good game, from the real people who lay it all on the line for everyone else! You are and were amongst those who, in their very first act for their country and people, risked all by throwing themselves out of a perfectly good plane and hoping to make it safely to the ground. Just to later take the risks attendant upon doing this same risk taking in order to bring the battle to the enemy, face to face. And here in his photo is a man, no less brave and no less dedicated to doing the same, for the same reasons and with the same risks! It was only God's good grace that intervened and spared him. He was ready, willing and more than able! He is indeed one of the few! One of the heroes, ONE OF US! We owe him, not only for his volunteering to become one of us, but for following up on it over the years and helping us to 'enjoy' some of the fruits of our efforts. As he enjoyed his efforts to live up to the traditions of those other intrepid men who set all the traditions for those who came, and are still coming, later, to uphold and be a proud and honored son and grandson of the men of WWII!

Our deepest thanks Tom. May you always find a good canopy over your head, your boots remarkably polished, your eye steady and the enemy fully in your sights. Wherever you may find him. "AIRBORNE"! NEVER RETREAT!!

For all the men who went before, God Bless you Sir! We are in your debt! And I speak for all the men of the 'AIRBORNE'. Jumpers, Glider Riders, Pilots, Chopper Pushers, the whole list

---

➤ [Go to Table of Contents](#)

➤ [Go to Photo Section](#)