



**Corporal Harold F. Watt
862 Aviation Engineers
Army Corp of Engineers
Chambley AB, France
1954**

Harold Watt was born on February 6th 1934 in Princeton, Indiana. Princeton is a small city in Patoka Township, Gibson County, in Indiana. As of the 2000 census, the city population was 8,175 and is part of the greater Evansville, Indiana metropolitan area. The city is the county seat of Gibson County. Harold first entered the service in November of 1953 and took basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. Home of MANSCEN (Maneuver Support Center) and the home of the U.S. Chemical, Engineer and Military Police Schools. It is also the Center of Excellence for Homeland Defense & Rapid Assessment and Initial Detection (RAID).

Harold attended eight weeks of Heavy Equipment Training and was then assigned to Germany. He landed in Bremerhaven, Germany in April of 1954. He was then assigned to Rhein Main Air Base, Germany with the 862 Aviation Engineers. He was then transferred to Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, C Company Building Perimeter Roads and Rifle Ranges. His main assignments were to build extensions to airways and air fields. At that time they took up many of the ESP runways that they built during WWII and replaced them with concrete. Harold was a Heavy Equipment Operator and worked many air bases to include Etain, Chambley and Falsburg.

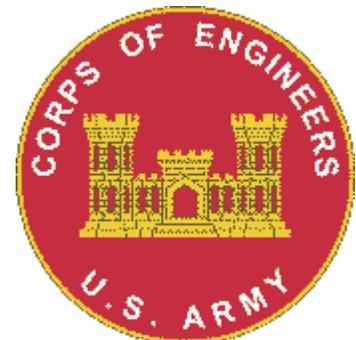
He arrived at Chambley Air Base, France in 1954 and was assigned there for about 3 months. Some of the projects he performed was the dirt work for the trailer park and also hauled dirt for the runway extension prior to the 21st Fighter Bomber Wing aircraft arriving.

Although he was a Heavy Equip Operator Harold also had the skills to perform maintenance on the equipment. Because of the skills he was required on several occasions to perform repairs during break downs. He also adjusted fire control units and all of this was because the unit had lost its mechanics and he became the maintenance man by default. He also performed vehicle field maintenance for the organization.

In 1954 he moved equip through Luxemburg, Nancy, Toul and down to Chambley in order to get the trailer park ready. Harold recalls that he performed the construction work during the big freeze in France at that time.

One evening Harold was coming in from Germany and the mess hall at Chambley was closed when he got there. He was cold and hungry and went to guest house outside Chambley and stopped there to eat sandwich and have a beer. An air policeman came into the Guest House looking for the driver of the military vehicle in the parking lot. He would not listen to anything that Harold had to say and literally embarrassed the Army soldier in front of the French nationals. He wanted to know why Harold was using a military vehicle to eat and drink but he would not listen to any explanation and he directed Harold to report to the Chambley Air Base Provost Marshall morning next morning.

The Provost Marshall Officer had a vendetta against the Army Corp of Engineers because of their speeding with their dump trucks and heavy equipment in order to meet the short time schedule to get the park ready. He threatened to report him to his commanding officer but decided to let him go with a warning. However when Harold returned



to his duty station, he was called into his commanding officers office because of the infraction. After Harold explained to his CO what actually had happened he told Harold to forget it but if they ever ask he was to tell them that he received two weeks of extra duty.

In November of 1955 Harold returned to the USA landing at McGuire Air Force Base and the shipped to Fort Sheraton, Illinois for discharge.

Harold went back to farming in Princeton Idaho where he still has 100 acres of land. E then went to work for a coal company. In 1957 he married his wife Patsy and in 1974 he retired.

Harold has been blessed with three wonderful children Kathy, Kim and Steve. He has four beautiful grandchildren as well as three fantastic grand daughters.

He retired completely in Oct 1999 at age of 59 and settled in Princeton, Indiana were he now happily reside on East Taftown Road with his loving family. Although Harold was stationed there with the US Army he said at the 2008 reunion in Dayton, Ohio that he felt a part of the Air Force personnel family stationed at Chambley. Air Force or Army – God Bless the United States of America.

The photo on the right was taken of Harold during the 2008 reunion in Ohio.

