

WWII TRAGEDY

Shrouded in Secrecy for Decades



70th

Anniversary

763 DEAD

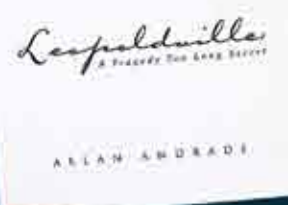
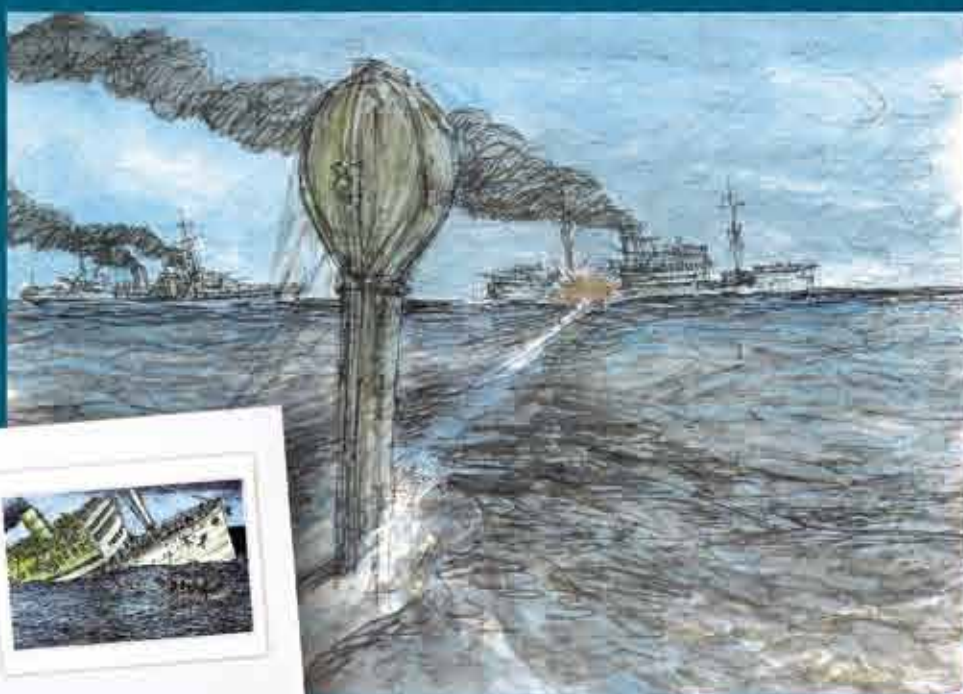
Was your father, husband or relative lost in World War II?

Could it be that they were a member of the 66th Infantry Division and aboard the Leopoldville, a Belgian troopship sunk on Christmas Eve in 1944 by a German U-boat?

On December 24, 1944, the Belgium troopship Leopoldville, left the pier at Southampton, England with over 2,000 American soldiers assigned to the 66th Infantry Division and crossed the English Channel to France. Just 5 1/2 miles from its destination, Cherbourg, the Leopoldville was torpedoed and sunk by the German submarine U-486. There were 763 American soldiers killed and the bodies of 493 were never recovered from the Channel's frigid 48 degree waters.

Because of the cloak of secrecy that for years surrounded the sinking of the Leopoldville, and to a degree still does, little information concerning the specifics of death was given to the families of the 66th Infantry Division who perished in the Leopoldville disaster. Moreover, the Official Casualty Lists were classified "Secret-Priority" until June 25, 1946, but even then, no formal effort was made by the Army or War Department to belatedly communicate to families of those who died on the Leopoldville the circumstances of their deaths. Finally, because the 66th Infantry Division was formally deactivated on November 8, 1945, and enlisted and officer personnel were either discharged or assigned to other units in the Army of Occupation or elsewhere, there could have been no initiative by the survivors to notify families of the circumstances of the deaths of the sinking victims.

Leopoldville.org is dedicated to remembering and honoring the sacrifice of those who died in the disaster and the valor of those who survived. Anyone seeking further information about the Leopoldville disaster or who wishes to contribute a photo and information regarding a relative killed in the catastrophe should e-mail Allan Andrade at agandrade37@msn.com.



Leopoldville
A Tragedy Too Long Secret
ALLAN ANDRADE

Leopoldville: A Tragedy Too Long Secret
by Allan Andrade
Illustrations by Richard Rockwell
(Nephew of Norman Rockwell)

66TH INFANTRY DIVISION



BLACK PANTHERS

LEOPOLDVILLE.ORG