

Veteran fashions War Memorial's plaque of 106th

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STAR STAFF WRITER

Visiting the museum in the Indiana World War Memorial a couple of years ago, Win F. Pulsifer noticed a row of 88 plaques along the wall, each for a different U.S. Army division.

But there was a gap. His unit — the 106th Infantry — wasn't there.

"I just wanted to show it to a friend of mine," he said. "The nail was there for the plaque, but the plaque was missing."

He went back recently, and it hadn't been replaced, so he struck a deal.

"I volunteered to make it, if they would hang it," he said.

"I thought it was great. It was a really nice gesture," said retired Col. William A. Scott, executive secretary of the War Memorials Commission. The original plaque had been stolen, he said.

So the new plaque is back in the old spot, right next to the 93rd Division. Eight inches across, the 106th emblem has a lion's head in the middle, etched in brass. The design is identical to the shoulder patch on each man's uniform. Every division had one; the 106th was the Golden Lion division, Pulsifer said.

Pulsifer had planned to paint the lion's head, until he mentioned the project to Ron Breeden, with whom he works at Indianapolis Power and Light Co. That's how Ron's brother, Arnold, ended up etching the lion's head.

"It was something more than

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I bargained for," said Arnold Breeden, called "Bud" by most everyone. "But to see how much it pleased Win, it was really worthwhile."

Pulsifer presented the plaque to Scott last week in a ceremony at the Memorial. He had finished it the night before.

"Talk about the big sweat," he said. It had taken six weeks, but "if you looked at the plaque, you wouldn't believe it."

The letters had to be ordered, and he also changed paints a couple of times to match the original colors.

"The 106th had quite a history," Scott said.

Pulsifer was part of it, serving for more than two years after enlisting in 1943 when he was 21.

In December 1944 he was near St. Vith, Belgium, when Germany launched a last-ditch offensive. Called the Battle of the Bulge, it punched a massive hole through Allied lines in the Ardennes region of Belgium. Pulsifer was one of many captured. He ended up marching in a column of prisoners jammed 10 abreast onto a road.

"I never felt so low in all my life. It looked like we had lost the war," he said, and he didn't want people to forget what his buddies had gone through.

"I just felt the 106th should be represented."



STAR STAFF PHOTO / FRANK H. FISSE

Win F. Pulsifer hangs infantry division's plaque in the Indiana World War Memorial museum, as brothers Arnold (center) and Ron Breeden steady ladder.

1986-11-11 Vet replaces 106th stolen emblem in Indianapolis

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