

other side of the Rhine, and accepting surrenders from villages.

Our troops were advancing so fast, we missed entire villages. Our task was to go back and accept the surrender of the *bürgermeister* of each town," he said.

"On March 17, a V-2 rocket landed behind our headquarters," Rose said. "It killed or wounded 60 or 70 guys in our unit."

A few hours later, the bridge suddenly collapsed, killing 28 Army engineers and injuring another 90. Although no one is certain, many speculated the impact of a V-2 slamming into the ground at 3,000 mph collapsed the already weakened structure.

Rose easily could have been in either location, but both times he was a few hundred yards away. He was close enough to the exploding V-2 to be hit by a piece of shrapnel. His wound wasn't severe, but Rose said the explosion's shock wave left him stunned and unable to speak for several hours. He and other survivors went through the motions of cleaning up.

"We started picking up bodies. The medics and others started to come in," he said. "We started evacuating the dead and wounded. Most of them were fellows I had trained with back in boot camp. The rest of us were taken off the line for a few days. They gradually built us up with replacements."

A month later and a few hundred miles to the southeast, Rose found himself in the southern state of Bavaria. The last official day of combat, May 7, 1945, might have

been the most memorable. Rose forced himself to forget most of it.

"We put up our last bridge across someplace and ended up in a place called Landshut, and our first assignment was to go down to a place called Dachau — a concentration camp," he said. "Our job was to set up a water unit so they'd have fresh water."

U.S. troops liberated Dachau only eight days earlier.

Rose remembers some U.S. congressmen touring the camp with Gen. Dwight Eisenhower. But that's all he chooses to remember.

"Dachau? I erased it," he said. "I had nightmares. I erased it because I thought about my own children, my family."

The war ended and Rose returned stateside. He attended the University of Southern California and enrolled in the Air Force ROTC. After graduation, he spent 2.5 years in the Air Force during the Korean War. He served as the Air Force's media spokesman during truce negotiations with the North Koreans and Chinese. The Korean War Armistice Agreement, signed July 27, 1953, established a four-mile-wide demilitarized zone between North and South Korea.

"After that, I was offered a commission, but I turned it down, came home to the United States, got married and started on civilian life," Rose said.

Rose and Norma Finn, of Waterbury, Conn., married in 1960. They have three children. He retired in the Lima area in the 1980s.

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