

# The BULGE BUGLE

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THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

MAY 2017



## ★ 36<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL REUNION ★ SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

September 23 - 28, 2017

*See pages 16-19 for full registration details.*



**Battle of the Bulge Association, Inc.**  
PO Box 27430, Philadelphia, PA 19118-0430  
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### **ATTENTION: MEMBERSHIP DISCOUNT!**

In order to encourage long-term memberships, we are now offering a discounted 4-year membership for \$50 to non-BOB vets. (Save \$10 off the yearly fee of \$15!)

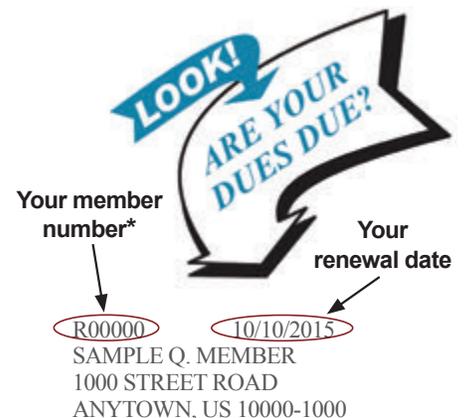
**SEE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION ON THE BACK COVER.**

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### **NOTICE: To cut costs, dues renewal invoices will no longer be mailed.**

Check the back cover address label for your membership dues renewal date to keep dues current.



**\*PLEASE NOTE: If your member number starts with the letter "L," you are a LIFE MEMBER, and therefore do not owe any more dues, ever!**

**RENEWAL CARDS WILL NOT BE SENT**



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Gary Higgins



HERE WE ARE with another exciting issue of *The Bulge Bugle*. This is a great opportunity to communicate with one another, and relay reminders to keep our “new” organization strong. The transition from VBOB to BOBA has gone well for past and present officers. Alan Cunningham deserves a big THANK YOU for his efforts in this endeavor.

Our group has applied for official IRS-recognized 501(c)(3) organization status. *[See below for an update.]*

We are now taking a new approach in reminding members to renew their memberships with BOBA. We have a phone call system being used, and I personally made some reminder calls. This was a great, positive opportunity to have conversations with some of our members. Some were quite happy to hear from their BOBA President. *[Check the date, right below the big arrow on the back page of your most current Bugle, for your membership renewal date. Dues letters will no longer be mailed, in order to save BOBA money on printing and postage.]*

We are happy to announce that we have recently appointed Thea Marshall as our Public Relations Officer, to help us in publicizing BOBA to new audiences. *[See more about Thea on page 7.]*

You may have noticed in our last issue *[February 2017, page 9]* how you too can become an advocate for BOBA. This can be done by handing out BOBA promotional cards. Print your own cards, or have Tracey print and mail some to you. *[Email tracey@battleofthebulge.org or call her at 703-528-4058, to get the cards.]* I've handed some out myself and found it to be a good tool in greeting potential new members, and sharing the story of BOBA. It also prompts second generation people to tell their stories of fathers and family who served in the Bulge.

Social media has made it easier to correspond with our European friends and members. We have a good following of Belgian and Luxembourg citizens, through our Facebook page and website. I want to encourage them to join as members, and submit articles and photos to us for publication. We respect your support and want your input. International friendship is an integral part of BOBA. I also have contact with some overseas friends who have offered ideas for increasing international memberships. This is something our board will need to discuss in the near future.

Please look at the agenda and registration information for the San Antonio, Texas reunion. *[See pages 16-19.]* Barbara Mooneyhan has worked hard in getting this event planned and her efforts are appreciated. Be sure to thank her. I will be looking forward to seeing old and new members in late September. This also gives each of you a great chance to bond with our veterans, their family members, and all attending, who are interested in preserving the legacy of our BOB veterans..

Remember, each of you has a reason why you belong to BOBA. Please tell the story and if possible get it firsthand from the veterans you know, who can give precise details of the time they spent in the Battle. History is at its best when shared on a personal level.

For those who make donations to BOBA, I wish to say, “Thank You!” for these monetary gifts, often made in honor or memory of a family member or friend who served.

Your board will soon be having a teleconference BOBA Board meeting. Any matters for the board can be addressed, if adequate time is given for the subject to be added to the agenda. *[Email details of your agenda item for consideration to: gary@battleofthebulge.org.]*

**LIKE US ON FACEBOOK:**

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**VISIT OUR WEBSITE:**

[www.battleofthebulge.org](http://www.battleofthebulge.org)

## REORGANIZATION STATUS OF VBOB TO BOBA

- Per the IRS regulations, BOBA is operating as an IRS code 501(c)(3) non profit organization until final written approvals can be obtained from the IRS.
- At this time, any contributions to BOBA are considered tax deductible to the donor. However, if our tax-exempt status is denied (not very likely and any ruling of this nature can be appealed) those donations would no longer be tax-exempt. It takes 4-6 months for the IRS to complete its review and provide our tax-exempt letter.
- Bank accounts have now been set up for BOBA and funds have been moved into Certificates of Deposit that pay a much more favorable rate.
- Progress of the conversion and approval by the IRS will be reported on our web site and will be published in future *Bulge Bugles*.  
—Submitted by Alan Cunningham, Past President

# LETTERS TO BOBA

## DEAR BOBA,

We had a huge success with our scholarship program. Our chapter was able to award scholarships of \$900.00 each to eleven very outstanding descendants of veterans of the Battle of the Bulge! They were excellent students and good citizens also—a group we were proud to honor, and who were very needy and grateful.

One of them had her whole family present to hear the scholarship announcements and presentations! Sadly, we think this may be our last year to do this worthy project. It is difficult for us to finance, since we are all over ninety and have to guard our resources carefully.

After making this decision, we had a call from the mother of another outstanding senior in high school who will graduate in May 2017 and thus ready for college the following Fall semester. She was calling to inquire whether the scholarship program would be available then, so her daughter could add her name and credits to the list. Her daughter has a 35 SAT score out of a possible 36, and her father was in the 101st Airborne Division in combat at Bastogne.

Regretfully, we had to tell the mother this was possibly the last year for scholarships. Jane is a 100% optimist and said, “We have to think of a group or groups that will take up the sword and go with it, so our fallen heroes can be a definitive source of help for the children they left behind. In a country as affluent as ours, surely there is an opportunity for some group to act in the name of the ‘Greatest Generation’.”

Do we have people like this in BOBA who would help? Perhaps a National effort is the way to go?

**Jane and Jim Hunt, MISS Chapter 33**

*See page 2 (chapter listings) for contact info.*

## KNOW ROY HERSHOCK, 8 INF D?



I am a member of BOBA and a son of BOB veteran who was wounded there. I tried many times (without any luck), up until his death several years ago, to get him to share with me what he went through in the war.

My father was Roy M. Hershock, 8th Infantry Division, 13th Infantry Regiment, Company G, and all I know is that he was an foot soldier.

I would like anyone having information about my father, or his units' combat experience in the Bulge, to please contact me.

**Sincerely,  
Bob Hershock  
58 Quaker Hills Rd  
Lancaster PA 17603  
717-871-9919; herke16@comcast.net**

## NOTES ON ROER CROSSING ARTICLE

The February issue had an article by Norvin Vogel of the 134th Infantry. I was also a member of that unit, in C Company, which he mentions in his account. I missed the practice boat crossing, because I was a patient in the 105th Evacuation Hospital in Sittard, Holland, compliments of an eye injury caused by a German grenade. I did manage to rejoin C Company for the crossing of the Roer. We of the 1st Battalion, 134th

had managed to capture the bridge in Hilfarth, Germany before the Germans could blow it up. While the 3rd Battalion crossed the Roer in boats, the 1st Battalion of the 134th captured bridge. I have met Mr. Vogel a couple of times. I joined the 35th division on January 8, 1945 at Martelagne, Belgium, near Bastogne. I enjoy the magazine.

**Sincerely, James Graff, 35 INF D 134 REG CO C**

## SEEKING INFORMATION ABOUT WWII

My name is Patrick and I am 31 years old. I live in Luxembourg and I am very interested in WWII history, to keep the memory alive. I met a few veterans in Normandy, Belgium and Luxembourg a few years ago and stayed in contact with them. They have become good friends of mine, and I have been thrilled that they shared their stories with me. I was even able to make 2 trips to the USA to meet up with WWII Veterans, and it was a great experience.

I would like to make contact with Veterans who fought during WWII in the Battle of the Bulge, especially from units which fought here in Luxembourg for my liberty and for freedom.

If there are any Veterans interested in sharing their stories with me, it would make me very happy. Thank you very much.

**Patrick Dax  
11, rue Jules Wilhelm  
L-2728 Luxembourg  
Luxembourg  
Email: golf2\_power@yahoo.fr**

## How to submit stories for “The Bulge Bugle”

Please continue to send us your Battle of the Bulge stories. All members are reminded to submit stories about veterans you know who fought in the battle. Guidelines for submitting stories, letters and photos to be published in *The Bugle* are:

**Stories and letters:** Please send typewritten (not handwritten) text whenever possible. We reserve the right to edit for length or clarity. Clippings/articles from recent newspapers or other periodicals must contain the name & date of publication, so we can obtain reprint permission. Original stories will be given preference over reprinted articles. NOTE: We cannot reprint from books or pamphlets, unless you are the author.

**Photographs:** Please identify the place and/or people in the photograph. Photos copied on a copy machine are not suitable for publication. Scan photographs at high-resolution (300 dpi.)

**Please include** your e-mail address or telephone number, in case we have to contact you.

**Send material to:** (Preferred method) by email: tracey@battleofthebulge.org, or by mail: Battle of the Bulge Association, Inc; PO Box 27430; Philadelphia, PA 19118-0430

**AUGUST ISSUE DEADLINE: JUNE 24, 2017**

**QUESTIONS? Please contact Tracey Diehl, 703-528-4058, or by email: tracey@battleofthebulge.org**

# LETTERS TO BOBA

## THANK YOU FOR DONATIONS

Thimister-Clermont, February 8, 2017



Hello everyone,

We hope all is well and that 2017 has been good for all of you so far. We are safely back home and busy as usual, hosting Americans from different generations and giving guided tours at the Remember Museum.

We would like to thank the Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation, which invited and welcomed us so warmly at the Events of Remembrance and Commemoration of the 72nd Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge. We would like to thank the members of the Foundation, as well as several other friends, who generously paid for all of the expenses of our trip. If it wasn't for all of you, we would not have been able to attend these events. It gave us a chance to meet the special WWII Veterans who came from close by or far away, knowing that it's sometimes difficult to travel at their age.

You all spoiled us, and it was such an honor to be able to attend the receptions at the Luxembourg Embassy and at the Residence of the Belgium Ambassador Dirk Wouters. Laying your wreath at the Arlington Cemetery with the Belgian Military Attaché MG Johan Andries was a moving moment for both of us. The banquet at the Double Tree Hilton City Hotel was wonderful and we just hope that you enjoyed my little speech. Everyone treated us so well at the hotel, and we think that we don't deserve it, as we are the ones who owe you our freedom. We will never forget the guided tour at the Pentagon and, of course, I mentioned to the guide that 9/11 was such a horrible day for America 15 years ago, but was 72 years ago such a very happy day for us, as that was the day of our liberation after 4 years of Nazi dictatorship.

As you may know, Hope Kirkendall generously donated her WWII Army Nurse uniform, and it is displayed with the uniform of her husband James in our museum. We treasure both of the uniforms.

We would like to again very warmly thank the Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation and all the American friends for their support of the Remember Museum in helping us keep the memory alive, and to remind all of us to "Never Forget."

We hope to see you again in Belgium or in the States.

**Love from Belgium, Mathilde and Marcel Schmetz**

## Contributors to Mathilde & Marcel's Visit

*The Schmetzes, Barbara Mooneyhan and Joe Landry would like to thank the following donors for their generous support of their trip:*

### Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Chapters:

Central Mass. Chapter (22),  
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South Carolina Chapter (7),  
Nelson McLeod, President

### Individuals:

Tony & Cathy Amorin  
J. David Bailey  
E. M. Beck  
Sterling Beckman  
John & Mary Ann Bowen

Madeleine Bryant  
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Barbara Mooneyhan  
Tom & Mary Prost  
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Pete Weisenberger  
Diane M. Williams

## BOBA MEMBER BOOKS

### **Home Front to Battlefront**

New book about late BOBA member Carl Lavin, 84TH INF D



Carl Lavin was a high school senior in Canton, Ohio, when Pearl Harbor was attacked. When he turned 18, he enlisted in the Army, a decision that would take him from training across the United States and Britain to combat with the 84th Infantry Division in the Battle of the Bulge. The book *Home Front to Battlefront*, by his son Frank Lavin, is the tale of a foot soldier who finds himself thrust into a world where he and his unit grapple with the horrors of combat, the idiocies of bureaucracy, and the oddities of life back home—all in the same

day. The book is based on Carl's personal letters, his recollections and those of the people he served beside, official military history, private papers, and more.

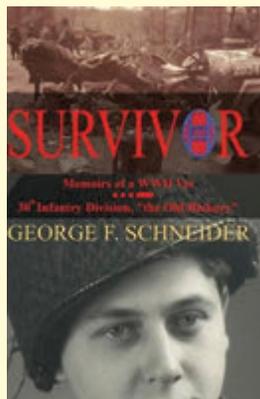
*Home Front to Battlefront* contributes the rich details of one soldier's experience to the broader literature on World War II. Lavin's adventures, in turn disarming and sobering, will appeal to general readers, veterans, educators, and students of the war. As a history, the book offers insight into the wartime career of a Jewish Ohioan in the military, from enlistment to training through overseas deployment. As a biography, it reflects the emotions and the role of the individual in a total war effort that is all too often thought of as a machine war in which human soldiers were merely interchangeable cogs.

The book's author, Frank Lavin, has served as a US ambassador, White House aide, banker, and trade negotiator. He currently works in business in China.

*The book is available at amazon.com and other book retailers.*

## **SURVIVOR: Memoirs of a WWII Vet**

By BOBA Member George F. Schneider, 30 INF D 120 INF 3 BN HQ CO, was published in October 2016, by Outskirts Press



*Author's Statement:* Every generation is built upon the backs of those who came before. Time always moves forward. Yet for me, the past will forever remain in the present. I have met heroes. Have eaten with them around a table. Have watched them die. Then returned home to rebuild the world they fought so hard to protect. Then I have watched as time slowly ravaged that world once more into dangerous territory. But I will not forget. We are known as the Greatest Generation, and I sincerely hope they are wrong.

My life has led me through an incredible journey that has taught me what it truly means to live. The people I have known will forever live on through the words that I now write, and maybe, just maybe, those that follow will learn from our mistakes, embrace our successes, and better endure the trials they will undoubtedly face in the future.

*The book is available at amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com.*

# TWO BROTHERS IN THE WAR

When Joe Bailey Auld entered the Army, he was trained at Sheppard Field, Texas, as a glider mechanic to serve in the 434<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Group, a C-47 transport unit for operations with the Ninth Air Force.

In August 1943, when he was stationed at Alliance Army Air Force Field in Alliance, Nebraska, his Group moved to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, and prepared for overseas assignment. They boarded the *Queen Mary* and sailed from New York on 9 October 1943 for the British Isles, landing in Scotland. All their supplies and the Gliders (in boxes) were loaded on trucks and moved to RAF Fulbeck, England, and they were assigned to the 53<sup>rd</sup> Troop Carrier Wing, 71<sup>st</sup> Troop Carrier Squadron, 434<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Group.

From November 1943 through 14 May 1944, they engaged in an intensive training program with the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne at RAF Aldermaston, England, in preparation for the invasion of northern France. On 3 March 1944, Joe received flying status, serving as glider co-pilot.

In February 1945, Joe's unit moved to Mourmelon-le-Grand Airfield, northeast of Paris, France, where they were stationed until the end of the war. His list of battles and campaigns included Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes, Rhineland, and Central Europe.

Joe's brother, V. L. Auld, served as Liaison Pilot with the 909<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery Battalion of the 84<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. His training began at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, where he received basic training and completed the Field Artillery Officer Candidate School. After completing the Liaison Pilot Course at Pittsburg, Kansas, his training continued at Ft. Sill and at Camp Howze, Texas. Then, the Division participated in the "Louisiana Maneuvers."

In September 1944, the 84<sup>th</sup> Division received orders to report to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, for overseas embarkation. The 335<sup>th</sup> Infantry and units of the Division Artillery boarded the *Sterling Castle*, an English ship. They were in a collision with another ship at sea during the first night out and had to return to port for repairs. The accident ripped a hole in the bow about 40 feet high, and all 7,000 soldiers went back to Camp Kilmer while the ship was being repaired. Then, they re-boarded the ship and headed for Southampton, England.

Since Joe was still serving in England when V. L. arrived, they met in London for one weekend. They stayed at the Savoy Hotel and managed to locate the Piccadilly Square,



**Brothers V. L. Auld and Joe Bailey Auld, in Piccadilly Square, London.**

the Queen's Palace, and other points of interest. They did not see each other again until they returned to Tishomingo, Oklahoma, at the end of the War.

After arriving in England, Liaison Pilots became the Air Section of the Division Artillery Headquarters, and V. L.'s job changed from Battalion Air Officer to Assistant Division Artillery Air Officer. The Liaison Airplanes (L-2s) arrived in England in crates. After assembling, they had only ten airplanes, but they had eleven pilots. The Division Air Artillery Officer, Major Paschall, did not want to ride an LST across the English Channel, so they gathered up parts from all over the United Kingdom and put together the eleventh airplane so all could fly across together.

First units of the 84<sup>th</sup> Division landed on Omaha Beach, France, on 1 November 1944 with the remainder arriving the next three days. The Germans had put up long poles on the beach to prevent the L-2s and gliders from landing. The L-2s landed on a road. However, the wind was too strong for V. L.'s plane to land, so two jeeps were sent out to help. They ran along beside his plane and grabbed the struts to pull the plane down.

Most of the units of the 84<sup>th</sup> moved through France into Belgium in less than 48 hours. They became a part of the Ninth Army and worked with the British, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored, and 102<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division in the capture of a section of the Siegfried Line. After breaching the Siegfried Line, the 84<sup>th</sup> was closing in on the Roer River when the Germans launched their biggest offensive, the Battle of the Bulge.

The air strip for the L-2s was moved several times during this battle. At one point, they moved back from the front to a place just outside of Liege, Belgium, and occupied a chateau with about 20 bedrooms. The Germans were trying to hit the big ammunition dump close to Liege, and this chateau turned out to be right in the line of fire of the buzz bombs. The chateau was not hit, but one bomb landed

about 15 feet from V. L.'s plane and twisted it up like you twist a newspaper.

From the Roer River to the Rhine River, it was move, shoot, and communicate. V. L.'s air strip moved several times, reaching the Rhine about 5 March 1945. Then, the plan was for the 5<sup>th</sup> Armored to drive toward the Elbe River, with the 84<sup>th</sup> Division close behind. As they moved forward, German POW Camps and camps for displaced persons were literally starving to death. General Eisenhower had made an agreement with the Russians to allow them to take the territory on the other side of the river, so the 84<sup>th</sup> sat there for several days, since they beat the Russians to the Elbe.

The war ended 8 May 1945, and the Division moved to an area near Heidelberg, Germany, and began a phase of military occupation. The Air Section (L-2s) became a courier service, more or less. In November 1945, V. L. was assigned about 200 men, and they were sent to Frankfurt, Germany. From Frankfurt, they traveled in boxcars to Marseilles, France, where they boarded a ship for home.

V. L., as Liaison Pilot, took part in three major battles, including the Battle of the Bulge. With an observer, he flew over the frontlines, spotted targets, and directed Artillery fire, flying 123 missions over the enemy lines.

—Submitted by Mrs. V. L. (Lorene Walker) Auld, Member

## WELCOME ABOARD!

**Thea Marshall was appointed BOBA Public Relations Officer.** Thea has designed and developed educational programs, exhibits, products, and presentations for the Smithsonian, FAO Schwarz, Neiman Marcus, Harvard, National Science Foundation, SONY, Chicago Museum of Science and Industry, and many other organizations.

A certified Toastmaster and award-winning artist, she has generated publicity in diverse media such as *Denver Magazine*, *the Frederick News-Post*, *the Seattle Times*, *ThinkTech Hawaii*, *WBAL*, and more.

Thea has served on various Boards in Chicago, Seattle, and Honolulu, where she now lives and works.

Later this year, Thea will publish *Healers and Heroes*, a frontline account by her father, 1st Lt. Robert T Marshall, a Medical Administrative Corpsman with the 26th Inf. Division (Yankee Division), who was awarded a Silver Star at the Battle of the Bulge. [See more on p. 25.]

# MEMBERS IN MEMORIAM

Please notify us when you hear that any member of our organization has recently passed away, so that we may honor them in a future *Bulge Bugle*. Also, kindly notify us of any errors or omissions.

Please send notices by mail: BOBA, Inc., PO Box 27430, Philadelphia, PA 19118-0430; or by phone: 703-528-4058; or by email: tracey@battleofthebulge.org.

We have been notified, as of March 24, 2017, that these members of the Battle of the Bulge Association, Inc. have also recently passed away:

Borowski, Raymond	80 INFD
Buck, Paul C.	75 INFD
Bootcheck, Richard	87 INFD
Boudreau, Armand	150 ENGR CMBT BN
Capozzoli, Anthony	87 INFD
Carrig, John	285 ENGR CMBT BN
Clooney, Vincent	94 INFD
D'Atrio, Charles	344 BOMB GP
De Angelis, William J.	6 ARMDD
Fergusson, Robert C.	28 INFD
Foster, Gene K.	11 ARMDD
Goodrich, Ward	123 ORD CO
Jester, James R.	94 INFD
Knuth, Donald J.	56 SIG BN
LaBar, William	80 INFD
Lambert, Edward	6 ARMDD
Lewis, Harley G.	9 ARMDD
Masiello, Dominic J.	11 ARMDD
Metz, Dorothy	Member
Nemecek, William	17 ABND
Pfeil, William E.	94 SIG BN
Reames, Calvin E, Sr	126 AAA GUN BN
Rodriguez, Luis R	17 ABND
Rosati, Louis	1 INFD
Rose, Elliott S.	284 ENGR CMBT BN
Solomon, Seymour	9 ARMDD
Stamos, John J.	130 GEN HOSP
Stone, Walter J.	291 FAO BN
Torrieri, Anthony	83 INFD
Wintenberg, Harry	87 INFD
Woodside, Jr., Nevin	342 ORD DEPOT CO

## A MIRACLE AT ST. VITH

by John R. Coyne,  
634th AAA AW BN



John Coyne in Paris.

After leaving Easton, PA for basic training at Fort Eustus VA, I was sent to England with the 1st Army, 634th AAABN. Next, I landed at Omaha Beach on D-day.

It was around the 3rd day of December, 1944, about a week and a half before the Battle of the Bulge. We had just cleaned the 40mm gun. The weather was clear

on a beautiful day when Cpt. Wilmount and Col. Rachs came to me and asked me to be the Col's aid. At first I said, "No sir, I want to stay with my gun crew." But, after more conversation, I accepted the offer.

This decision saved my life. My gun crew were all killed by Tiger tanks, and D Battery was captured. Later, when going through Malmedy, we came upon a field where a massacre had taken place. It may have been the men of the 634th D Battery who were killed there. This was my miracle at St. Vith.

Afterwards came the bridge at Remagen, where we crossed before the bridge came down.

Later, I was in northern Germany, and with the 3rd Army, 443rd AAA BN in southern Germany, where another soldier and I captured 60 high-ranking soldiers of the German Army.



Some of the many military tools on display at the museum.

## MILITARY HONOR PARK AND MUSEUM, SO. BEND

The mission of the Military Honor Park and Museum, located at the main entrance of the South Bend International Airport, is to recognize, acknowledge and pay tribute to all veterans, living and deceased, from each of the five military branches.

The Military Honor Park began as a dream of a few in 1995. A mounted RT-33 Lockheed trainer jet marked the visual beginning of the park. A "pentagon" design would be used, representing each branch of military service, with five bronze service plaques and flags. Also on display, a five-sided black granite monument. As the park grew, a collection of other military hardware was integrated. They would include:

Mark 14/17 WWII submarine torpedo; single 3” anti-aircraft gun; twin 3” anti-aircraft gun; AM General 2 1/2 ton utility truck; M60 Patton tank; M42 “Duster” tank; 155MM Howitzer; Hummer “Humvee”; Tartar missile; UH-1 Huey helicopter; and two Talos missiles. There are also 3,500 bricks naming military personnel.

The Honor Park Museum is home to military artifacts representing the five military branches and all U.S. conflicts. Uniforms, weapons, and objects as small as buttons, to as large as motorized vehicles, are on display. The museum also houses a research library and video room.

The Park also includes a granite Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Monument, dedicated in May 2011, with the financial assistance of late BOBA member Geza Csapo, 32 CAV RECON SQD.

For information, go to: [militaryhonorpark.com](http://militaryhonorpark.com), or call 574-232-4300.

Military Honor Park



## FORT INDIANTOWN GAP: We Honor and Remember The Battle of the Bulge

On January 26-29, 2017 elements of the WWII Historical Association (WWIHA), dedicated to promoting, preserving and respecting the spirit and memory of the World War II soldier, met at Fort Indiantown Gap, a National Guard Training Center northeast of Harrisburg Pennsylvania, to recognize and recreate the service and sacrifice of both Allied and German soldiers who fought during the Battle of the Bulge. Reenactors from all over the east coast, mid-western states and even a few “Tommys” from the United Kingdom, gathered on a windy and cold weekend. Beginning on Thursday night, the troops stayed in WWII-era barracks—although modernized since the ’40s—and throughout the weekend, they operated in WWII vehicles, both German and American, and Jeeps, Half-tracks and a Sherman tank. Thankfully for the Allies, Tiger tanks were unavailable.

Chow halls hummed with activity to feed the troops, which numbered near 1000, and included U.S. Army, German and civilians dressed in uniforms or other clothing of that era. Armed Services Radio provided (FCC-approved) radio broadcasts consistent with the times. A USO called the “Drunken Monkey,” the GIs “home away from home” offered appropriate refreshments to all Allied soldiers, just as long as they had their approved passes! The MPs were on patrol.

For a fee, various vendors supplied troops with all types of equipment, clothing, and other sundries. To boost morale, “Classic Pin-up” girls stopped by to boost the sagging morale of those frontline troops returning for R&R. They were every bit as welcomed as Jane Russell, Rita Hayworth, and Betty Grable would have been in their day.



**Battle of the Bulge reenactors at Fort Indiantown Gap, January 2017, taken with a vintage 1940's era camera.**

After breakfast and necessary equipment and vehicle checks on Friday morning, Allied units departed for the field at 0800. They received their safety briefing and either mounted assigned vehicles or where bused to the training area. Upon arrival, the troops disembarked, formed up according to their assigned command, and then stepped off into history.

Friday’s event consisted of small-scale troop movements and focused on securing three bridges by elements of the 82nd, including the 327th Glider Infantry Regiment and 101st Airborne, who were reinforced by the 28th and 106th Divisions. All three bridges changed sides several times that afternoon,

with a final—and, of course countered—as-sault by German infantry, supported by light armor, resulting in the surrender or capture of the attacking units. The great movie directors John Ford and John Huston wouldn’t have had it any other way.

Saturday’s event involved all attendees, and fitting of January weather and of the conditions during the Bulge, snow began to fall. Many motorized units of the American defenders became lost due to the lack of road signage, and at one point ran into a German patrol: “Nuts!” Yet, due to the heavy snowfall, most units were able to escape. As the morning dragged on, the weather began to clear enough to allow the Allied forward observers to spot enemy armor and infantry in the open. A platoon of the 327th GIR, equipped with three mortar teams, were able to drop sufficient HE rounds, resulting (according to the ground empires) in a 500% casualty rate of the enemy, halting any more armor or infantry advances in their sector. Many more engagements continued throughout the day.

By 1430 hours, the event was declared over and both Allied and Axis troops began to assemble in the roadway for the long march out of the training area.

Thus concludes another successful “Battle of the Bulge” at the “Gap” re-enactment. Many participants remarked that this was the best event they’ve ever attended, and in the end, we achieved our objective to honor and remember those who served and sacrificed at the Battle of the Bulge.

—Submitted by Chris Hennen, Member;  
story by John Cronin and Joe  
Colombo; photo by Marc Herman

# GERMANS IN OUR UNIFORMS

by Bill Armstrong, Service Battery, 263rd Field Artillery Battalion, 26th “Yankee” Division, Third Army



BELGIUM, 1944. Bob Zelmer (co-driver of our ammunition truck) and I had a chance to go back to Service Battery for a hot meal because the guns (105 howitzers) were not going to move that night. But, when the 1st Sgt (Laing) saw me, he told me that I had guard duty from midnight to 4 AM and to take “Porky” with me. (Porky was one of our cooks.) The temperature was well below zero, which meant I had to put on every stitch of clothing

I had. Also, I knew that Porky wasn’t going to be very reliable—he’d often wander off, claiming he had to go to the toilet, but I’d find out later that he’d been hiding. (I knew he was afraid of the dark.)

When I heard the sound of a jeep coming from the East, Porky said, “I’ll cover you from the barn,” and he hustled off. I knew he wouldn’t be able to see me from any part of the barn but it was too late to say anything—he had already disappeared. I stopped the jeep, but when I saw the American Officer’s uniform and the glint of medal on the “Officer’s” shoulder, I knew immediately that they were Germans in our uniforms. Our officers never wore metallic symbols of rank in combat, because it would be too easy for a sniper to see. There was someone in the back seat, who had a cover pulled up to his neck and I strongly suspected that there was a gun under that cover—a gun that could be used on me. Knowing Porky was out of sight and not able to cover me, I was faced with either being a dead man or letting them go. But before I let them go, I needed to challenge them, because if they were truly Americans, they might think I was the German.

I first asked for the password. The “Officer” in the front seat said that he wasn’t able to learn it before he left “Headquarters.” I asked him who won the World Series in 1940, but he claimed he didn’t follow baseball. I was anxious to get rid of them before I got shot, so I asked him where he was from. “Oakland, California” he replied. “My gosh,” I exclaimed, “I’m from right next door—Berkeley!”

For some stupid reason that puzzles me still, I asked him where the best place to go in Oakland for a hot dog. “Why?” he asked. Then he said, “Casper’s, across from the roller rink on Telegraph Ave, down by Lake Merritt and out on East 14th!” I knew he was right, because I had gone to those places myself. “Heck,” I said, “Go ahead, you’re Americans!” “What, did you think we were—*Krauts*?” Then they drove off. The driver never looked at me once. It was obvious he didn’t speak English.

Later that night, a bridge over a stream was blown up. I bet my Oakland “friend” and his companions had something to do with that.

Also later that same miserable night, Porky thought he saw something coming toward us past the barn. I thought it was simply a fence post or a stump of a tree, but Porky kept insisting that it was moving toward us and kept saying, “Shoot it! Shoot it!” At night when there’s snow on the ground, dark objects really stand out. Finally, Porky had me believing that the thing was moving. I called out “Halt!” the required three times and then took aim and fired three shots. The dark object didn’t fall down!

Our Captain came running out of the farm house wearing his long johns, untied boots and with his ‘45 in his hand. “What the hell is all this firing about?” he demanded. “Sir,” I replied, “We thought that object

out there was refusing to halt at my command, so I shot it!” “You idiot,” the Captain shouted, “That’s a fence post! I don’t want to hear any more shooting tonight!” and he turned around and stomped off.

I got a lot of ribbing the next morning: “Yah, yah, yah, Armstrong shot a fence post!” I had the pleasure of pointing out that I hit it with all three shot—and in the dark too!—and from at least 100 yards! I was the only member of the Battery to ever fire his weapon in ‘combat’!

## EYEWITNESS TO MALMEDY CARNAGE

*Member Clearys Mullins was going through the papers of her late husband Chester Mullins, 7 ARMDD, 38 AIB, Co A, and came across this startling letter, dated May 28, 1998:*



**Chester Mullins,  
7 ARMDD**

Dear Mr. Mullins:

I just received my May [1998] issue of *The Bulge Bugle* and was reading it, when I came to page 13 and your [inquiry] concerning the 7th Armored Division and the Malmedy incident. I was there, and so was my brother Edward, who was with the 291st Combat engineer Battalion.

First, let me tell you about myself: I was a communication sergeant with Company C, 33rd Armored Engineer Battalion, 7th Armored Division, with CCR. We were through the bulge from December 17, when we came from Holland, and pushed the Germans back to Germany until the end of the war. VE Day was my birthday! It was a long push, but we did what we were supposed to do, and we lost a lot of our buddies.

About the Malmedy incident, I can tell you where I was and what I saw. We were moving around in the bulge to many places. One day we got orders to move, so we’re on the move and came to this crossroad, continued about 100 yards or so until we saw this field to our right. We saw all these GIs laying there, and couldn’t figure out what that was. We took a good look and saw that they were all dead. One guy said it was a graves registration collecting point, but we had seen such points before, and they had laid out all the dead GIs side-by-side in rows. What we saw here were the GIs laying in a scattered manner in an open field. We couldn’t make out what had happened.

Sometime later, we were walking through snow that had fallen the night before, and we recognize the same field. We saw that the bodies were covered with snow, and saw a hand or two sticking out of the snow.

I am one of five brothers who served in World War II—three of us were in Europe. My brother Edward, 291st Combat Engineer Battalion, was in Trois Ponts when the bulge began. His company was called to the Malmedy Massacre site to help the graves registration. When they started to move the bodies, they found that some bodies were booby-trapped, so they called for the engineers to help them. My brother was one of those who had to sweep the snow off of the bodies, and tie a rope to the leg to drag them to a safe place, so that the graves registration could examine them and tag them for removal. A few days later, we found out all about the Malmedy incident; how they were brought to that field and stood there to be machine gunned, killed in cold blood. It got us scared and had us thinking about what it would be like to get captured; to have to stand there and be machine gunned by the enemy.

But I guess the Lord was with us, and it didn't happen. Thank you Lord.

So Mr. Mullins, I hope my little story would be of use to you. Bye for now.

Yours truly,  
Henry S. Runbacki

## THE BATTLE OF THE COLMAR POCKET

by Arnold Cascarano, 291 Infantry Regiment,  
75 Infantry Division



Recently I have read many stories by veterans of World War II explaining how the battles were fought and of troop movements. I was only a PFC so Generals Eisenhower, Bradley, Smith, Hodges and Patton never called me into their meetings and asked me how to move armies. All I knew about our progress was what I read in the *Stars and Stripes*. It wasn't until years after the war that I was informed how the war was fought.

When you are in the infantry, you are confined to your immediate area. So I only knew of 50 yards to my right and left, and 50 yards behind me. That was all.

There has been a lot said about The Battle of the Bulge. Books have been written, movies made, and documentaries have appeared on television, etc. Being a veteran of The Bulge, I know well the carnage that took place, and we should NEVER forget this great battle that cost us so many lives.

However, there were other battles we fought that did not get the attention of The Bulge. As a former infantryman, I can tell you if someone is shooting at you with artillery, mortars, machine guns, etc. it is a big battle.

During the last part of The Bulge, about January, 26, 1945, my division, the 75th Infantry, was shipped to Rhineland, France, to support The American Seventh Army and The French First Army. We were in need of rest, replacements, and equipment, but we were not given rest. We boarded the box cars called "The Forty and Eights." (I believe this term was first used in World War I). They put 40 men and 8 horses in one box car. Remember, the horses were not housebroken. We traveled for two days to arrive in Alsace-Lorraine in the bitter winter. We had no time to really dig in and we had many casualties. This became known as The Colmar Pocket.

We fought with the 28th Infantry Division and the 3rd Infantry Division. We finally pushed the enemy across the Rhine. By the way, this is the battle for which Audie Murphy earned his Congressional Medal of Honor.

While waiting to get shipped to Holland, for some reason my company was given the worst detail, which had a profound effect on me. It still stays with me to this day. We had to go into areas and pick up American bodies and bring them out to the grave registration people at their trucks.

It was then that I realized how many stories will never be told about our very brave boys. We found four Americans' bodies that were close to each other, and there was one body draped over a machine gun. The

other soldiers had a M1's. As we went further out, we discovered about 40 dead enemy soldiers. Of course we had no way of knowing what took place here, but we tried to piece this together. It seems these four men killed about 40 enemy soldiers and then were killed themselves. What bravery!! This is only one of the many stories we will never know about. There have been many stories like this one.

So the Battle at The Colmar Pocket, as it was called, took many casualties. The mission may not have been spectacular, but the fighting was. I do remember how well the French First Army fought to take back the City of Colmar. That was *their* city, and they wanted it back from the Germans.

*Chevalier Cascarano earned two Bronze Stars, Combat Infantry Badge, three Battle Stars, Victory Medals, and Army of Occupation.*



### HELP SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT BOBA TO INCREASE OUR MEMBERSHIP

**It's quick, simple and easy for you  
to do, via the internet**

#### **We often hear stories like this one from our new members:**

"My much loved grandfather Joe never spoke about his time in World War II, except once. A bit before his death, he was watching a history program about the Battle of the Bulge, when he suddenly pointed excitedly at the screen and said, 'That's my outfit!'—but then, nothing more. Shortly afterwards he died, and that is all we knew about his World War II experience. We were desperate to find out more. So I looked up 'Battle of the Bulge' in Wikipedia. I learned a lot, but what was far more valuable to me was in the list of External Links at the bottom of the Wikipedia article. It contained a link to the 'Battle of the Bulge Association.' I immediately clicked through to it and knew that I was home. Here were lots of veterans' stories, all the archived *Bulge Bugles*, and news of local chapters, upcoming reunions and European Tours to Bulge sites—altogether a community of like-minded people who would understand and sympathize with me and my search and could help me learn more."

There are lots of people similar to this in the general public, with just scraps of information about individual veterans, or units, or battle locations, place names, etc. and who very much want to know more. They too will look it up on Wikipedia. It's an important part of BOBA's mission to help them learn more about this great Battle.

All you have to do is to email us the titles of suitable Wikipedia articles and we will add "Battle of the Bulge Association" to their "External Links." This is the easiest, simplest and best way to help all those interested people, and welcome them into the Battle of the Bulge Association.

**Send links to appropriate Wikipedia articles to:  
[tracey@battleofthebulge.org](mailto:tracey@battleofthebulge.org).**

# WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!

We appreciate these folks who became new members of BOBA between January 1, 2017 - March 24, 2017:

Bartusek, Marcus A.	106 INFD	Gilbert, Ronald	Member	Long, J. C.	Member
Becker, Mark	Member	Gregory, Dennis	Member	Morrow, Drexell	627 Engr Light Equip Co
Blevins, William Sr	90 INFD	Hambucken, Denis	Member	Price, Gretchen	Member
Camper, Casey	Member	Harding, Carolyn	Member	Reinhard, Dawn	Member
Colella, Rita	Member	Hershock, Robert G.	Member	Sandacz, Cassandra	Member
Collier, John	Member	Hodges, Thomas	Member	Schultheis, Edgar	Member
Cordero, David	Member	Husk, Diane	Member	Squittieri, Carolyn	Member
Eisenberg, Andrew	Member	Klein, Steven J.	Member	Sullivan, Merle	Member
Ersing, Robin	Member	Krebs, Lester	884 FABN	Van Os, Floris	Member
Gaul, Roland	Member	Krick, Michael	Member	Williams, Diane M.	Member

We certainly are pleased to have you with us and look forward to your participation in helping to perpetuate the legacy of all who served in that epic battle. You can help immediately by:

- Talking to people about BOBA and suggesting that they also join

- Promoting our website: [www.battleofthebulge.org](http://www.battleofthebulge.org)
- Sending us articles to be included in *The Bulge Bugle*
- Plan to attend our 2017 annual reunion in San Antonio, TX.

(See p. 16-19 for full registration information.)

## 5TH INFANTRY DIVISION'S SAUER RIVER CROSSING, JANUARY 18, 1945

### High Praise from General Patton

*A month before his tragic death in an automobile accident, General George S. Patton sent the following letter to the Officers and men of the Fifth Infantry Division on their return home. At the time, he no longer commanded the Third Army, but was postwar commander of the Fifteenth Army and all US Forces in Europe.*

HEADQUARTERS FIFTEENTH U. S. ARMY  
Office of the Commanding General  
A P O 408

17 November 1945

To the Officers and men of the Fifth Infantry Division:

Nothing I can say can add to the glory which you have achieved. Throughout the whole advance across France you spearheaded the attack of your Corps. You crossed so many rivers that I am persuaded many of you have webbed feet and I know that all of you have dauntless spirit. To my mind history does not record incidents of greater valor than your assault crossings of the Sauer and the Rhine.

Concerning the former operation, I showed the scene of your glorious exploits to a civilian for whom I have the highest esteem. After looking at it for some time he said, "I did not believe there was enough courage in the world to achieve such a victory." Knowing the Fifth Infantry Division, I was sure you would achieve it and you did. Now that peace has been re-established I am sure all of you will continue through the remainder of your lives to stand for those great qualities of America which in war you so magnificently demonstrated.

With affectionate regards and sincere congratulations, I am as ever:  
Your devoted commander,  
General G. S. Patton, Jr.

### Crossing of the Sauer, by the Fifth Infantry division

*Roland Gaul is the founder and recently retired Director/Curator of Luxembourg's National Museum of Military History in Diekirch on the River Sauer. He is a professional military historian and Battle of the Bulge guide and has written an expert battlefield study of the 5th 'Red Diamond' Infantry Division's Sauer River Crossing which so impressed General Patton. So he was just the right person to explain it to me. Here is a summary of our discussion. If you visit the National Museum, you can see a dramatic recreation of the "Sauer River Crossing" in the form of a life-size diorama. (Note: A 5th 'Red Diamond' Infantry Division tour is being planned for 2018. See "Tours," p. 13)*



On December 16, 1944, three German armies invaded the Belgian and Luxembourg Ardennes and soon created a 70 mile westward 'Bulge' in the Allied front. The Battle of the Bulge had begun.

But Third Army Commander, General George Patton, had already anticipated the German attack and was able to react fast. On December 20, in a technically difficult and very daring maneuver, Gen Patton swung six Third Army divisions northwards from France to attack the southern shoulder of the German Bulge. He sent three divisions to liberate and secure Bastogne in Belgium from the German Fifth Panzer Army, and three divisions, one of which was 5th Inf Div, to contain and push back the German Seventh Army in Luxembourg. At that time, 5th Inf Div was on the French-German border in the middle of attacking Saarlautern

in Saarland, about 50 miles southeast of Luxembourg. The 5th Inf Div immediately disengaged and within 24 hours was in Luxembourg.

After initial tactical successes and territorial gains in southeastern Luxembourg December 16-22, German Seventh Army units were stopped in their further advance by 5th “Red Diamond” Inf Div and 4th “Ivy Leaves” Inf Div, and had to retreat to the northern bank of the River Sauer (or Sûre), which flows eastwards through central Luxembourg. 5th Inf Div and 4th Inf Div then formed an unbroken line of defense along the southern bank of the Sauer. Its pleasant river valley among forested hills is a formidable natural barrier along which the German-American frontline and southern shoulder of the Bulge was stabilized in late December 1944. Winter 1944-45 was the coldest in 100 years, and the temperature dropped to minus 15 degrees Celsius (minus 5 Fahrenheit) during the day, and even to minus 22 Celsius (minus 7.6 Fahrenheit) at night. There was thick snow everywhere.

But once Bastogne (Belgium) had been liberated and secured, it was time for Third Army to break through the southern shoulder of the Bulge in Luxembourg. Since the 5th Inf Div was considered the expert river crossing unit, it was tasked with crossing the River Sauer, recapturing towns in the river valley such as Diekirch and Bettendorf, retaking the heights on the northern side and cutting the Germans off from reaching the Our River (the Our is a tributary of the Sauer) and thus the safety of the Siegfried Line and Germany.

The Sauer River crossing was a nighttime action by 5th Inf Div’s

three infantry regiments, 2nd, 10th and 11th, jumping off at 0300 on January 18, 1945, without any artillery preparation (not to take away the element of surprise). They were augmented with specialized battalions, namely, Engineers for bridging and ferrying, Field Artillery, Medics, Tanks and Tank Destroyers and Chemical Mortars. 2nd Regt’s crossing sector was Ingeldorf - Diekirch. 10th Regt’s crossing sector was Diekirch - Bettendorf. 11th Regt was held in reserve on two-hour call.

By nightfall on January 18, the 5th Inf Div’s bridgehead was 1.5 kms (about 1 mile) deep with a front of 6.5 kms (about 4 miles). Each regiment had successfully crossed all its battalions. The Germans had been caught by surprise. Despite enemy fire and the terrible winter weather with its snow and mud, the Engineers had been able to throw one treadway bridge, two Class 40 bridges, two assault boat bridges and two foot bridges across the river, enabling Sherman tanks and M-10 tank destroyers to cross the icy waters of the Sauer.

By January 28, all the assigned regimental objectives had been achieved. After a few days of much needed rest, 5th Inf Div changed sectors in early February to take part in Patton’s Third Army strike into Germany on an 8 km (about 5 miles) front northwest of Echternach, once again across the Sauer River, but this time its lower reaches, directly facing Germany. This was the beginning of the official “Rhine-land Campaign” on February 7, 1945, and the invasion of Germany.

—Submitted by Patrick Hinchy, Military Historian and Tour Director

## TOURS

### Expert tour help from Battle of the Bulge Association Partners



Tours are an excellent opportunity to visit the places where your father, grandfather, uncle or family friend served in World War II. See the battlefields where he fought. Meet the people of the local communities which he liberated. Participate in official ceremonies honoring the Veterans. Tours have ‘transformed’ many 2nd and 3rd generations, as they stand in the very place where their loved ones fought. Tours are also the very best way for today’s and future generations to forever honor, celebrate and memorialize the Veteran’s military achievements, history and heritage.

The Battle of the Bulge Association has partnered with expert, dedicated people to help you. Two of the best known and most experienced are BOBA members **Roland Gaul** and **Patrick Hinchy**. They are also your living link with the past, because both of them became great friends of many veterans over many years, accompanying them back to their battlefields. **Roland Gaul**, founder and CEO of Luxembourg’s National Museum of Military History in Diekirch, is the author of two highly rated military histories of the southern Bulge. He recently retired as full-time Museum CEO to devote himself to military history research. Together with his wife, Silvia, he provides customized in-depth tours of the Southern Bulge in Luxembourg, Belgium and the German border region for small groups, such as veteran family groups. **Patrick Hinchy** has for the past 30 years, specialized in creating, planning and guiding long distance tours for larger US veterans and legacy groups, both in the Battle of the Bulge and throughout Europe. Patrick has a masters degree from Oxford University and speaks German, French and Italian.

Patrick is planning a 5th Infantry Division (‘Red Diamond’) Tour for May 2018. If you have a relative who has served in the 5th Infantry Division, or if you have an interest in the 5th Division or some of the places included in the tour, this would be a great tour for you. It is a 14-day tour starting in Paris and finishing in the Czech capital, Prague. During this tour, you will visit Utah Beach, Caumont and St Lô in Normandy, royal Reims—famous for its champagne, and Germany’s 1945 surrender, Metz with formidable Fort Driant, Luxembourg and the site of 5th Infantry Division’s famous Battle of the Bulge Sauer River Crossing which so impressed General Patton (see page 12 for his letter). Then you will visit historic Nuremberg, with its Rally stadium ruins and International War Crimes Courthouse, and enjoy the spectacular annual Pilsen Liberation Festival celebrating liberation from Nazism and Communism, before flying home from Prague, beautiful capital of the Czech Republic.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION: contact Doris Davis, Member and President of BOBA Golden Gate Chapter. Email: [doris@battleofthebulge.org](mailto:doris@battleofthebulge.org). Tel: (650) 654-0101 (PST)**

# MEET YOUR 2017 BOBA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## Gary Higgins, President



Family members who served in the Battle of the Bulge inspired Gary's involvement in BOBA, and he has been a member for over 16 years. Many of you have met Gary on tours and events across the USA and military

programs. He has spent some years on the VBOB Executive Council as a trustee, had great times doing so, and made many friends.

Gary is a Life Member of the Vietnam Veterans of America, Life Member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and Life Member of the Disabled American Veterans. He was a squad leader with the US Army in the DMZ and in 1969-70, his rank was Sgt. E-5 in the 32nd Infantry Regiment. Gary did the basic infantry duties, patrols, ambush detail, security, and S & D (search and destroy), as so many of our Bulge veterans did in the cold of Belgium and the ETO.

## Barbara Mooneyhan, Executive Vice President



Barbara began attending SC Chapter VBOB meetings 25 years ago with her Dad, James R. Mooneyhan, 502nd Engineers, Light Pontoon Company. His unit was responsible for carrying around a Bailey Bridge. Because

the bridge took a crane to put it up, he was told not to let the Germans capture his crane. He reminisced about how difficult it was to hide a big, tall crane in the forest! After his Captain was wounded, he assumed command of his company and led them through to the end of the war. Barbara has been editor of the "T-N-T Chat" for 15 years and serves in proud memory of her Dad and the brave men of the 502nd Engineers.

## Angela Fazio, Vice President Membership



Angela M. Fazio's father was in the 1st Infantry—"the Big Red One"—fought in the Battle of the Bulge, and was a Purple

Heart recipient. Angela has been an Associate Member of VBOB Chapter #52, Staten Island, for over a dozen years now, serving as their Recording and Corresponding Secretary. Angela has been an educator in the parochial schools for over 40 years, as a teacher, a principal, and the facilitator for the Fine and Performing Arts for the Catholic elementary schools in Brooklyn and Queens, N.Y. Part of her belief in a good education is to foster fine American citizenship. She has served as the BOBA Vice President/Membership since January 2016.

## Sherry Klopp, Vice President Chapters



Sherry's late father, lifetime BOBA member Richard Switzer, was the inspiration for her long involvement in BOBA. He was with the 99th Division, 395th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Battalion,

Company H. Sherry attended school in Fostoria OH and Bowling Green State University, then taught school for 8 years in Fostoria, and 7 years at BGSU. Her leadership positions have included Secretary for the American Association of University Women, President of her local King's Daughters and Sons, as well as Secretary of their state organization. Sherry has also been very involved with her Presbyterian church in many leadership positions, including as an Elder, on their Executive Board, and Chair of Spiritual Life. Sherry especially treasures meeting Veterans at the Annual Reunion.

## Duane Bruno, Treasurer



Duane Bruno entered the United States Navy in 1968 and served on land and at sea through 1972. Besides serving as treasurer for the Battle of The Bulge Association for the last two years, he is also the Adjutant for

Marine Corps League Detachment 1083. He is a member of the American Legion Post 20, and a mentor with the Athens, Ga Veterans Treatment Court. Duane is a member of the Stephens County Historical Society, which is instrumental in restoring the 1942 paratroop

training facility at Camp Toccoa, GA. He is also a Planning and Zoning Commissioner in Madison County, GA. Duane was good friends with now-deceased BOBA member Phil Pollock, 87 IND, who introduced him to this noble organization, and remains proud to assist in carrying on the legacy and history of those brave souls who stood athwart the German war machine at the Battle of The Bulge.

## Doris Davis, Recording Secretary



Doris's father, Leonard J. Schneider, was a Tech Sgt in the 313th Inf. Rgt, 79th Division (the 79th helped defend the Southern Flank of the Bulge). After taking a trip fo-

cused on the 79th Div in July, 2000, and standing in his footsteps in various places in France (including Utah Beach), Doris was transformed. "I appreciated my freedom much more after that trip and thanked my father for his bravery and sacrifice. In appreciation for my father's service, I became involved with the Golden Gate Chapter of VBOB and held various positions (President since 2008), and with VBOB National I have also held various positions. Dad and I shared a special father-daughter bond—especially after that trip."

## Alan Cunningham, Chairman of the Board



*Colonel, U.S. Army Reserve (Retired)*  
*Civilian Degrees:* B.S. Chemistry, Worcester Polytechnic Institute; MBA, Babson College; Masters in Strategic Studies, Army War College. *Major Military Schooling:* In-

fantry Platoon Officer; Heavy Mortar Platoon Officer; Supply Officer; Quartermaster Advanced Officer; Command and General Staff; and Army War College. *Army Positions:* Heavy Mortar Platoon Officer; Battalion Supply Officer; Logistics Assistance Officer to the Republic of Korea Tiger Division, Vietnam; Research and Development Officer (USAR). *Civilian Positions:* Automobile industry consultant to the U.S. Department of Transportation; Plant Manager; Manager of Corporate Planning; Adjunct Lecturer Temple

University Business School; Senior Operations Research Analyst, Fort Lee. *Community Involvement*: President, Willingboro, NJ Lions Club; President Richmond Area Chapter, Military Officers Association of America (RAC-MOAA); President VBOB. Currently on the Board of Directors for RAC-MOAA.

#### J. David Bailey, Board Member



J. David Bailey, Company F, 422nd Infantry, 106th Infantry Division has been National President of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Inc. and currently an active member of the Disabled American Veterans, Inc. Official Army records reflect that he served in the European Theatre of Operation in four campaigns, namely: Northern France, The Ardennes, Rhineland, and Central Europe, and has been awarded the Combat Infantry Badge, Bronze Star and other Army citations. He says what got him through his toughest moments in his military career can be answered in three simple words: "My Guardian Angel."

He says what got him through his toughest moments in his military career can be answered in three simple words: "My Guardian Angel."

#### Thomas L. Burgess, Board Member



At age 17, Thomas Burgess enlisted in the ASTP of Army straight out of High School in June 1943. After a short time at N.C. State College and Basic Training at Ft. Benning, GA, he joined the 87th Division at

Ft. Jackson, SC. He became Sgt and squad leader of 60mm Mortars, Company A-345 just before his 19th birthday, and stayed in that position in 87th Div. through combat in France, Germany, BOB, Luxembourg and Belgium, ending by meeting Russians in Czechoslovakia in May, 1945. Thomas returned to the States in July '45, his division deactivated, and he received his Hon. discharge in Nov. He entered Univ of FL in Jan 1946, then transferred to and graduated from Stetson Univ in August 1948. He was a career professional with Boy Scouts of America for 39 years, mostly as National staff member, retiring in 1987. He's active in and held leadership positions with the Methodist Church, Rotary Club, Sons of the American Revolution and 87th Division Assn.

#### Douglas Dillard, Board Member



Douglas Dillard fought in the Battle of the Bulge with the famous 82nd Airborne Division. Sergeant Dillard ended WWII serving with C Company of the renowned 508th Paratrooper Infantry Regiment, nicknamed the "Red Devils." After WWII, Dillard served in Korea as commander of the Tactical Liaison Office, and led Korean agents behind Chinese Communist lines, collecting tactical intelligence information. Following the Korean War, Dillard was assigned to the U.S. Army's classified intelligence program, serving several tours in Europe, the Far East and Vietnam. He rose to full bird Colonel before retiring in 1977. Colonel Dillard was inducted into the U.S. Army Military Intelligence Hall of Fame, among other notable associations. He served as VBOB National President from 2012-2014.

#### Alfred Shehab, Board Member



Lieutenant Colonel Alfred Shehab served with the 38th Cavalry Squadron of the 102d Cavalry Group ("Jersey Essex Troop") during World War II. His unit was the first into Paris and Germany. The unit held the line during the Battle of the Bulge in Monschau, Germany and earned both the French and Belgian fourragères and Croix de Guerre medals with palms, along with the U.S. Presidential Unit Citation. He was also awarded the French Legion of Honor.

He had troop and staff assignments in Armored Divisions and Cavalry Regiments in the United States, the Caribbean, Europe, and the Middle East, including Armor Advisor to Saudi Arabia, and Special Assistant to the Commander of American Land Forces, Middle East in Lebanon.

Following military retirement, he was employed by NASA at the Goddard Space Center. He is a Past President of the Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation, a Past Commander-in-Chief of the Military Order of the World Wars; he belongs to La Societe Des Chehabi Emirs; the Order of Saint George; the Order of Saint Stanislaus; and he is in the Officer Candidate School Hall of Fame.

#### Ruth Hamilton, Board Member



Lieutenant Colonel Ruth Hamilton served in the Army as an Adjutant General Corps officer for 26 years in worldwide assignments with service in Turkey, Germany, Belgium and Korea. Her unique experiences include service as the first female Honor Guard Commander (Izmir, Turkey) while assigned as the NATO Morale Welfare Activities Officer; Commander, 178th Personnel Service Company (Aschaffenburg, Germany); Assistant Executive Officer to the Supreme Allied Commander of Europe/Commander-in-Chief, US European Command (Casteau, Belgium); and Executive Officer for two The Adjutants General of the United States Army.

She is Recording Secretary of the Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation and a Past Commander-in-Chief of the Military Order of the World Wars.

#### John Mohor, Board Member



John Mohor retired after 26 years of active and reserve duty as a Lieutenant Colonel from the Army Reserve in 2013. He served as a Field Artillery Officer, Ordnance (Maintenance) Officer and Logistics Officer with overseas duty in Germany and Iraq. His Battle of the Bulge Veteran father was Arthur B. Mohor Jr, former Combat Infantryman and Staff Sergeant with AT Company 302nd Regiment 94th Infantry Division. John has memberships in the following organizations: BOBA SC Chapter, American Legion, 94th ID Historical Society and National Eagle Scout Association.

### INTERESTED IN GETTING INVOLVED?

If you'd like to volunteer for a BOBA Board position for 2018, send an email: [tracey@battleofthebulge.org](mailto:tracey@battleofthebulge.org), and she'll pass on to the Nominating Committee. (Board Meetings are held about 5x per year by teleconference.)



# WELCOME TO SAN ANTONIO, TX

## BATTLE OF THE BULGE ASSOCIATION 36th ANNUAL REUNION

**September 23 - 28, 2017**

### HIGHLIGHTS AND SCHEDULE INFORMATION

#### REGISTRATION FEE

All attendees must pay the registration fee (see Registration Form). The fee covers the expenses of nametags, programs, table decorations, Hospitality Room, etc.

#### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

Registration and complimentary Wine and Cheese Reception in the Hospitality Room.

#### SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

Join us for a narrated 1-hour **river barge ride along the famous San Antonio Riverwalk** (each boat holds 35 people). Then tour the **Buckhorn Saloon and Museum**. Established in 1881, it is one of the places Teddy Roosevelt recruited Rough Riders (1st U.S. Volunteer Cavalry) for American involvement in the Cuban War of Independence, and Pancho Villa is rumored to have planned the Mexican Revolution there.

Dinner at **Mi Tierra Mexico Café & Bakery**, serving classic Mexican fare for 75 years, with margaritas and mariachis, located at the “El Mercado” Market Square, a 3-block outdoor plaza lined with shops and restaurants.



Mariachis at Mi Tierra Mexico Café & Bakery

#### MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

After enjoying breakfast, bus departs for Fredericksburg, Texas, home of the **National Museum of the Pacific War** and tour of the **Nimitz Museum**. After touring the Nimitz Museum, enjoy a box lunch from Clear Pecan Sandwich Shoppe in the restored Hotel ballroom. Continue with a tour of the National Museum of the Pacific War and see the state-of-the-art 33,000 square foot exhibit featuring 40 media installations, approximately 900 artifacts in 97 climate-controlled cases, and hundreds of



Statue of Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz

photographs. Central to the experience is a spectacular artifact: the HA-19, one of five Japanese two-man subs that took part in the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Dinner on your own. For those interested, join Barbara & Everett for a trip by water taxi to the **Pearl Brewery**, an abandoned brewery from 1881 with 15 restaurants and lots of shops. Last water taxi runs at 9:00 PM – after that, use Uber or taxi to return to the hotel.

#### TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

**Fort Sam Houston** is a U.S. Army post in San Antonio, Texas opened in 1876. The installation’s missions include serving as the command headquarters for the U.S. Army North, U.S. Army South, the Army Medical Command headquarters, the Army Medical Department Center and School, the Fifth Recruiting Brigade, Navy Regional Recruiting, the San Antonio Military Entrance and Processing Station, and the Medical Education and Training Campus. Many of our WWII Nurses trained here.

The Quadrangle is the oldest structure at the Fort. It was originally a supply depot. During that time, it housed the Apache war chief Geronimo and warriors captured with him, while the Federal government decided whether to treat them as prisoners of war or common criminals.

After touring the **Fort Sam Houston Museum**, enjoy **lunch with the troops** in the mess hall.

Rest up in the afternoon for an evening of Texas-style BBQ and dancing at the oldest VFW Post in Texas! **VFW Post 76** was granted its charter in 1917 for veterans of the Spanish American War and is located in a Victorian-style home. Enjoy a world-famous **Rudy’s BBQ** dinner, and music and dancing with the

band **BlackJack**, who play a variety of music, including all of the standards you would expect, in the Lee Swain Carriage House. Don’t forget to pack your dancing shoes!

#### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

The day starts with a **tour of San Antonio** with a certified guide on board. We will begin by **laying a wreath at the Battle of the Bulge Monument** located at Veterans Memorial Park. This Monument was placed in the park to commemorate “the 50th anniversary of this ever-famous American Victory.” Continue our tour to the **Mission San Jose** (short 23-minute film), **The Alamo**, **Menger Hotel**, and other world heritage sights in the air-conditioned comfort of our bus.



The Alamo

After lunch on your own, please attend the **Membership Meeting** to discuss important issues and vote on the slate of officers for the next governing year. The President will receive nominations from the floor. (Be sure to have the person’s permission and willingness to serve, before nomination.)

All veterans are invited to dress for the **Banquet** and have their picture taken before the **Reception**. Enjoy the music of the 323d Army Band Brass Quintet and vocalists during the reception (with cash bar.) Banquet will follow in the ballroom of the hotel.

#### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

After breakfast at the hotel, stay for additional sightseeing days or depart for a safe trip home.

# BOBA REUNION REGISTRATION FORM

## DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION FOR REUNION: **SEPTEMBER 8, 2017**

**There are two options for registering for the reunion:** Complete this for OR register online at [www.battleofthebulge.org](http://www.battleofthebulge.org) (Click on the “Attend Reunion” and complete the Registration Form.) Registration for the Reunion must be received no later than **September 8, 2017**. There is no penalty for canceling up to the day of arrival. Go to page 19 for the hotel registration information (**Hotel reservation cut-off is September 1, 2017.**)

**BOBA registration desk at the hotel (in the Lone Star Room) will be open on Saturday, September 23 from 12 pm-6:00 pm and on Sunday, September 24 from 8 am-5 pm.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Division, Regiments, etc \_\_\_\_\_

Check box if Associate Member  Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Guest(s) (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if you need a wheelchair  Check here if you will be using your own wheelchair  If so, it motorized?  yes  no

IMPORTANT: Please indicate No. of People attending <i>free</i> events as well!	No. of People	Cost per Person	Total Cost
<b>Registration Fee</b> (all attendees must pay the Registration Fee)			
Adult (21 and Over)	_____	\$45	_____
Child (20 and Under)	_____	\$25	_____
<b>Late registration fee after September 8 - add \$20 per person</b>	_____	\$20	_____

**Saturday, September 23, 2017**

Wine and cheese reception in the Hospitality Room \_\_\_\_\_ free

**Sunday, September 24, 2017**

Riverwalk Barge Rides (leaves from and returns to Wyndham landing) \_\_\_\_\_ \$15 \_\_\_\_\_

Bus Trip to Buckhorn Saloon & Museum \_\_\_\_\_ \$30 \_\_\_\_\_

Shopping at “El Mercado” Market Square & Dinner at Mi Tierra Cafe & Bakery  
(bus fare only, dinner individually paid) \_\_\_\_\_ \$15 \_\_\_\_\_

**Monday, September 25, 2017**

Bus Trip to Museum of the Pacific War (includes bus and lunch only;  
pay Museum admission fee below if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_ \$40 \_\_\_\_\_

Admission to the Museum (WWII veterans at no charge) \_\_\_\_\_ \$8 \_\_\_\_\_

**Tuesday, September 26, 2017**

Visit to Fort Sam Houston (includes bus and lunch) **Gov’t-issued photo ID required\*** \_\_\_\_\_ \$30 \_\_\_\_\_

Dinner/dance at VFW Post 76 (includes bus, BBQ dinner & entertainment) \_\_\_\_\_ \$30 \_\_\_\_\_

**Wednesday, September 27, 2017**

Stay-on Bus Tour of San Antonio with certified guide & wreathlaying at Bulge Memorial \_\_\_\_\_ \$28 \_\_\_\_\_

Banquet (choose entrees:)

Chicken	_____	\$55	_____
Salmon	_____	\$55	_____

\_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL** \_\_\_\_\_

**\* Fort Sam Houston attendees will be contacted by the BOBA office to provide Government-issued photo ID information as needed.**

**Mail this form and check (payable to BOBA) to:** Battle of the Bulge Association, Inc., PO Box 27430, Philadelphia, PA 19118  
**Or, to pay with a credit card, register online at [www.battleofthebulge.org](http://www.battleofthebulge.org), click on “Attend Reunion”**



# 2017 BOBA REUNION IN SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

## SEPTEMBER 23 - 28, 2017

### REUNION PROGRAM

#### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2017

6:30 AM – 12:00 PM Complimentary Breakfast at 111 Bar & Grille (*Must be registered at hotel for Friday night*)  
12:00 PM – 6:00 PM Registration open  
12:00 PM – 10:00 PM Hospitality Room open (Lone Star Room)  
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM Wine and Cheese Reception in the Hospitality Room  
Dinner on your own

#### SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2017

6:30 AM – 12:00 PM Complimentary Breakfast at 111 Bar & Grille  
8:00 AM – 5:00 PM Registration open  
8:00 AM – 10:00 PM Hospitality Room open (Lone Star Room)  
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM Narrated Riverwalk barge tour (*each boat holds 35 people; leaves from & returns to Wyndham landing*)  
1:00 PM – 4:00 PM Bus trip to Buckhorn Saloon & Museum  
5:00 PM – 8:00 PM Bus trip for shopping at “El Mercado” Market Square & Mexican Dinner at Mi Tierra Cafe & Bakery

#### MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2017

6:30 AM – 10:30 AM Complimentary Breakfast at 111 Bar & Grille  
8:00 AM – 10:00 PM Hospitality Room open (Lone Star Room)  
9:00 AM Bus Departs for Fredericksburg, TX, National Museum of the Pacific War  
10:30 AM – 12:00 PM Tour Nimitz Museum  
12:00 PM – 1:00 PM Box Lunch from Clear Pecan Sandwich Shoppe  
1:00 PM – 4:00 PM Tour National Museum of the Pacific War  
4:30 PM – 6:00 PM Bus returns to hotel  
6:30 PM Dinner on your own OR Join Barbara & Everett for a water taxi ride to the Pearl Brewery for dinner (meet in lobby at 6:30 PM – 13 restaurants to choose from) return by Uber or taxi (if enough people are interested, we will rent a small bus)

#### TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2017

6:30 AM – 10:30 AM Complimentary Breakfast at 111 Bar & Grille  
8:00 AM – 10:00 PM Hospitality Room open (Lone Star Room)  
9:00 AM Bus Departs for Fort Sam Houston  
9:30 AM – 1:30 PM Tour of Fort Quadrangle, Museum and lunch with the troops  
2:00 PM Return to hotel  
5:00 PM – 9:00 PM Bus departs to VFW Post 76 for BBQ Dinner Dance

#### WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2017

6:30 AM – 10:30 AM Complimentary Breakfast at 111 Bar & Grille  
8:00 AM – 10:00 PM Hospitality Room open (Lone Star Room)  
9:00 AM – 1:00 PM Bus Departs for tour of San Antonio with certified tour guide on board  
Wreath laying at the Battle of the Bulge Monument at Veterans Memorial Park (Mission San Jose, the Alamo, the Menger Hotel, and other World Heritage Sites)  
2:30 PM – 4:30 PM Membership Meeting (Executive Salon 2)  
5:30 PM Photograph of Veterans (outside Executive Salon 5)  
6:00 PM – 7:00 PM Reception (cash bar) - Music by the 323d Army Band Brass Quintet  
7:00 PM – 9:00 PM Banquet at hotel (Executive Salon 5)

#### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2017

6:30 AM – 10:30 AM Complimentary Breakfast at 111 Bar & Grille  
Depart or stay longer and enjoy beautiful San Antonio

*See Highlights and Schedule Information on page 16 for more details.*



## WYNDHAM SAN ANTONIO RIVERWALK

111 E. Pecan Street  
San Antonio, Texas 78205  
Website: [www.wyndhamsariverwalk.com](http://www.wyndhamsariverwalk.com)  
Phone: 1-866-764-8536

**GROUP RESERVATION LINK:**  
<https://aws.passkey.com/go/BBA2017>

## Hotel Information

### RESERVATION DEADLINE FOR GROUP RATE: Friday, September 1, 2017

Experience the best of South Texas when you attend the Reunion at the Wyndham San Antonio Riverwalk. Conveniently located along San Antonio's spectacular Riverwalk, the Wyndham is within walking distance of the Alamo, Tobin Center for the Performing Arts, The Pearl Brewery Shopping Complex and El Mercado Marketplace. This full-service hotel is just a short drive from the San Antonio Missions, Fort Sam Houston and San Marcos Outlet Center. You will enjoy the variety of services the hotel has to offer. It is located just 8 miles from San Antonio International Airport.

#### ROOM RATE: \$129 single/double occupancy

Our group rate is available for up to 2 nights prior to our Reunion and 2 nights following, but are subject to availability. If you want to extend your stay in beautiful San Antonio, please book your rooms early.

This hotel has 410 luxurious rooms, but only 14 accessible rooms. If you need an ADA room, please book early. You can cancel without penalty within 72 hours of your scheduled arrival date.

#### RESERVATIONS

Reunion attendees must make their own hotel reservations by calling: 1-866-764-8536 or online: <https://aws.passkey.com/go/BBA2017> before the designated cut-off date, **Friday September 1**. They must identify themselves as members of the Battle of the Bulge Association and a major credit card must guarantee rooms.

#### HOTEL AMENITIES

- Complimentary buffet breakfast at 111 Bar & Grill (adjacent to the lobby)
- River Taxi Landing at the Hotel Riverwalk entrance
- 24 hour room service
- Complimentary wireless Internet access in all guest rooms and the hotel lobby area

- 24-hour state of the art fitness facility
- Outdoor pool & whirlpool with views of the San Antonio skyline
- 24-hour business center
- Gift shop/ATM
- Discounted self-parking \$20 per vehicle per day with in and out privileges

#### DIRECTIONS TO THE HOTEL

*No hotel shuttle available. Take a taxi or Uber to hotel from airport.*

**From the North:** Take I-35 into downtown. Exit Main Street and turn left under the highway. Turn left onto Pecan Street. The Hotel is at the corner of Pecan and Soledad, one block off of Main Street.

**From the Airport:** Take US Hwy 281 South to I-35 South and exit Main Street and turn left under the highway. Turn left onto Pecan Street. The Hotel is at the corner of Pecan and Soledad, one block off of Main Street.

**From the South:** Take I-35 or I-37 North into Downtown.

Off of I-35, take Durango Street exit and turn left at Santa Rosa to Martin Street. Take a right on Martin. The Hotel is will be on the left hand side.

Off of I-37, take the Commerce Street exit and turn left onto Commerce. Take a Right onto Soledad (7 blocks off Interstate). The Hotel is 3 blocks down Soledad on the right, at the corner of Soledad and Pecan.

**From the East:** Take I-10 into downtown San Antonio. Take I-37 North and take the Commerce Street exit. Turn left onto Commerce. Take a right onto Soledad (7 blocks off interstate). The Hotel is 2 blocks down Soledad on the right, at the corner of Soledad and Pecan.

**From the West:** Take I-10 into downtown San Antonio, remaining on the lower level of the freeway. Take the Santa Rosa / Downtown exit. Turn Left at Santa Rosa Street, then a left on Martin Street. The hotel will be on the left hand side.



# DELAWARE VALLEY CHAPTER (4) BOB MONUMENT PROJECT

by Anita Keyser

### A Message to All Battle of the Bulge Chapter Presidents and National Members:

Awhile back, I kinda pulled away from all my Chapter VBOB activities, turned my membership records and responsibilities over to others, and worked on my household affairs, but again, one night I woke up and was overcome with an urge to get back to helping to complete the dream that Stan Wojtusik presented to the chapter back in 2006 and again on Nov. 24, 2008. Our secretary, Marty Sheeron, reported that Pres. Wojtusik and Norbert McGettigan are investigating the possibility of erecting a VBOB Monument in Philadelphia's Washington Square Cemetery. One last dream, one last Memorial. I remember that Dr. Andy Waskie, Andre McCoy, the McGettigans, Retired Col. Tom Sweeney, Masterchief Jerry Conrad, Charles DeChristopher (you can help me remember all) came forward to be involved. Then, Pres. Stan Wojtusik formed a Monument Committee. But, disaster struck on Sept 25, 2015, when Pres. Stan passed on, I'm sure to his great reward. That event, along with trying to cope with Edith's passing on April 3rd, 2015 and my health problems kinda slowed me up. But I know I have one more immediate, important task to do on my list.

Our Delaware Valley Chapter IV, may be declining: We have fewer members, but WE ARE NOT FINISHED YET.

Remember how you all rallied around, joined together and worked in great unity to erect a beautiful memorial with the help of Belgium and Luxembourg, on the grounds of the Valley Forge Military Academy? I heard that some of you even stood on street corners to raise funds. The Monument, "Triumph of Courage" stands there, illuminated all night long for all to see, to remember the heroic victory that was obtained through the greatest Army battle ever fought and helped bring about the end of WWII. And the victory continues through the wonderful scholarship you established in the Academy.

I'm sure you all have lists to do, and things you're working on, but wouldn't it be more

wonderful than anything to have a monument standing in the wonderful City of Brotherly Love, for all to see and remember why it's there, during the upcoming USA 250th Anniversary Celebration? Did you know that Congress has established a "United States Semiquincentennial Commission" and that Philadelphia has offered its city as the location? Leaders from all 50 states, governments, industries, philanthropies—everyone—are being called upon to help come plan, renew and advance the equal and inalienable pursuit of Life, Liberty and Happiness. Shouldn't the Veterans of the BOB take part in the celebration of this great nation that they helped form and preserve?

Remember all the wonderful accomplishments you men and women have done over the years to erect memorials and monuments to honor your Buddies where their efforts and sacrifices resulted in the demise of WWII. But would you commit to put out one more effort, for all of us to work together again, to erect this monument in the city where it all began, the birthplace of our great democracy?

We now have two great active, willing leaders, President, LTC Jon N. Peterson, US Army (Retired), Commander of American Legion post 405, but he is our very own Chairman of the Monument Committee, and Anthony Waskie, Ph.D., Professor at Temple University. Both have made much progress in the planning and establishment of this great project. Please consider to commit your efforts, ideas and support to this, "Our Project," by writing to: Chairman Jon Peterson, Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge (VBOB) Monument, c/o American Legion Post 405, Union League of Philadelphia, 140 South Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102. Please address your donation to: Veterans of BOB Monument, and send it to the above address. (Write clearly to whom it is in honor or remembrance.) I hope this whole endeavor will be in remembrance of both former President Stanley Wojtusik, and Edith Nowels, Editor of *The Ardennes Voice*, for all the contributions they made to our Chapter and in helping to create and preserve the history of the VBOB.



A scene from the online news video which featured BOBA Kansas Chapter members sharing their WWII experiences.

## KS CHAPTER (69) IN NEWS VIDEO

Kansas Chapter President Greg Penfield alerted us to this local news video featuring a number of their chapter members speaking about WWII, including:

Malcolm Storm, who told his story of driving trucks in support of combat actions; Wallace Jeffrey, who was a radio operator, recalls the bloody beaches of Normandy; Julian Siebert, a POW in Germany, explains how he was later put in charge of German POWs; Arnold Debrick recounts how he helped with the liberation of a concentration camp in Germany; and Jim Sharp relates his experience as an infantryman during the Battle of the Bulge, and later as a guard at the Nuremberg war trials.

To watch the video, go to: <http://www.wibw.com>, and search for "Sharing a Bottle of Wine at Final Battle of the Bulge reunion."

### WE NEED YOUR CHAPTER NEWS!

Send to: [tracey@battleofthebulge.org](mailto:tracey@battleofthebulge.org)

### SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL CHAPTER!

Go to pages 2-3 for the list  
of active chapters.

## LONG ISLAND CHAPTER (63) ACTIVITIES

*We received these bits of news from the Long Island Chapter March 2017 Newsletter; written by Chapter President Bill Mueller:*

On December 1, 2016 the Long Island Chapter members and their ladies met and enjoyed one another's company and a hearty Holiday Luncheon at Domenico's Restaurant in Levittown. Several members and ladies were lucky winners of the raffle prizes.

The chapter's bi-monthly meetings for 2017 commenced at the Marine Facility in Uniondale, NY on Wednesday, March 22, with lunch in the cafeteria followed by a round table discussion of Chapter events.

Mr. Mueller reports that in the future he may not be physically able to attend chapter meetings, but would be willing to continue to edit, print, and mail their newsletter, provided someone else conducts the meetings. He asked for a chapter volunteer to step forward to conduct meetings.

## SO AZ CHAPTER (53) 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

*We received the 2016 Annual Report of the Southern Arizona Chapter 53 from their president George McGee. Highlights of their busy year are excerpted below:*

Our monthly meetings are usually attended by 15 to 25 members and guests. Some of the highlights for the past year's meetings have been some excellent BOB videos and movies. Some of the fine videos and movies included "Winning of World War II: The Road to Victory," and "WWII Monument, A Testament To Freedom."

One of our WWII directors, Bill LaBar (recently deceased), gave a presentation on his trip to Europe where he retraced his steps during the BOB with the 80th Infantry Division. We had an excellent speech by retired USAF Colonel Cesar Antonio "Rico" Rodriguez, who flew in the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, and Desert Storm. He was credited with three kills

of MIG-2gs and MIG-23s. We were also privileged to have the National WWII Museum Historian, Patrick Stephen, attend at least two of our meetings and give us updates on the status of the Museum. He videotaped interviews of several of our WWII veterans to include me and Elmer Nicholson for the Museum archives.

During the past year, we sent both WWII and Korean veterans on Honor Flights to Washington and, as always, they were greatly enthused and overjoyed with the trip. November is always a busy month as we conduct our Board and general meetings and participate in the Tucson Veterans' Day parade and the MOWW's Massing of the Colors at the Tucson Women's Club. For the Veteran's Day parade, several of our members dress in authentic WWII uniforms and drive WWII Willy jeeps. Harper Coleman's son, Jeff, is a WWII re-enactor and he walked with his Garand rifle leading our Chapter banner. We received the 2016 Tucson Veteran's Day Parade "Best Veterans Organization" award. Tucson is a very patriotic town.

Our chapter has a beautiful monument in the El Presidio Park in downtown Tucson, where we have patriotic celebrations and wreath laying ceremonies. The monument can be viewed on the National BOBA Web Site.

*EDITOR'S NOTE: Near press time, we heard from George McGee that he is stepping down as president of the chapter due to health concerns, and is hoping that a chapter member will step forward to take on the President's*

*position. We wish George the best of health, and hope that a new president will take over, to continue the great work of this very active chapter.*

## UPDATES FROM SUNNY FL SE CHAPTER (62)

*Florida SE Chapter (62) Chapter President George Fisher updated us on their activities:*

In February, they donated to the West Palm Beach VA Medical Center and Voluntary Service for general purpose needs, and received a warm letter of thanks from Mary C. Phillips, Chief, Voluntary Service. They have also recently donated to Disabled American Veterans, Forgotten Soldiers Outreach, Honor Flights, the VA Medical Kit program, and many more.

Chapter 62's next luncheon meeting was scheduled for April 23 at the Hilton Hotel, Palm Beach airport. Their planned guest speaker was Major General (ret) John Van Blois, USAF, who served during the Berlin Crisis, Cuban Missile Crisis, Vietnam, and first Iraq War. They expected

to be joined by members of the Military Order of the Purple Heart #717, Combat Infantrymen's Association, the Navy League Palm Beach Council Committee and ROTC Cadets, and were anticipating a large turnout of over 100 people.



### BUY THE VBOB BOOK OF YOUR STORIES

Now available for \$34.99

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**Online:** Amazon: [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com);

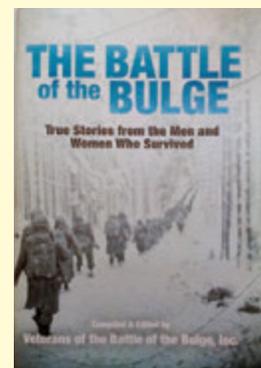
Barnes & Noble: [www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com)

\*To order, provide the ISBN and the title of the book:

ISBN: 978-0-9910962-3-7

Title: *The Battle of the Bulge: True Stories From the Men and Women Who Survived*

**NOTE: The book is not sold by BOBA, but we do receive royalties for the sale of each book, so your purchase supports BOBA.**





### FOUR ROSES

by Vernon Brantley, 75th Infantry Division

In early December, 1944, Company D of the 26th Regiment of the “Big Red One” (First) Infantry Division, had pulled into a bivouac area for some needed rest. The liaison officer had arranged for them to stay for a week or two at the Schmetz family farm near Clermont, Belgium. Marcel, then an 11-year old in the family, was on Cloud 9. He loved visiting with the American soldiers, and particularly sharing their plentiful food. At that time, Four Roses bourbon was issued as a ration to most officers.

When news came that the Germans had launched what is now known as the Battle of the Bulge, the First Division was told to “Pick up what you can carry and move out.” All kinds of equipment, food, personal belongings—and likely most reluctantly, Four Roses bourbon—were left behind by the soldiers, who hastily hid most items, in hopes of preventing the Germans from finding them if they occupied the area.

After some time, young Marcel began retrieving the things left behind, including the bourbon, at his family’s farm. The locals began developing a taste for this bourbon, and it is still appreciated in many parts of Europe today. Later in life, Marcel met and married Mathilde, and together they created a museum in honor of the American soldier, beginning with the items he had collected in 1944. This museum, called The Remember Museum 39-45, which operates today, was opened in 1994 and is managed by Marcel and Mathilde. This museum to the American soldier is one of the premier such museums to be found in Europe.

Two of our SC Chapter members were in Belgium in the fall of 2016. They met Marcel and Mathilde and toured the Remember Museum. The Schmetzes also said that in December, they planned to fly to Washington DC to take part in ceremonies commemorating the Battle of the Bulge. Our Chapter members Barbara Mooneyhan and her husband, Everett Davis, convinced the Schmetzes to depart earlier than planned for the U.S. in time to speak about their museum at the quarterly meeting of the South Carolina Chapter of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, held at Fort Jackson, Columbia, SC.

Upon returning to SC, Barbara told me that some of the bourbon that Marcel had collected in 1944 was on display at the museum, and that he



Photo by Richard Hurst

Vernon Brantley (left) presents a bottle of Four Roses Kentucky bourbon to Marcel Schmetz (center) while Mathilde Schmetz (right) looks on.

had asked her if it was still available. This got me researching this bourbon and solving the mystery of the name. This bourbon, as with all bourbon, was made in Kentucky from corn and limestone water, which gave it a rich, smooth taste. The name Four Roses derives from the 1880’s story of the engagement of Lawrence Lavallo Jones, a distiller by trade, and Mary Peabody. Lawrence had pursued Mary for five years, proposing marriage each time he visited her in Columbus, GA. He finally decided, while there in Columbus for a dance, that he would ask Mary only once more. He gave Mary a dozen roses, telling her it would be his last proposal and asked her to come downstairs for the dance wearing a corsage of roses if her answer was “Yes,” and wearing no roses if it was “No.” She wore four roses, and the memory of that wonderful answer was commemorated by the naming of Lawrence’s most popular brand of bourbon as Four Roses.

Following the Schmetzes’ excellent presentation on the Remember Museum at the December Chapter meeting, I was privileged to present to them a fifth of Four Roses bourbon as a way of thanking them for their visit, and particularly for continuing to remember, preserve and honor the American soldiers for their role in liberating Belgium.

### STILL Looking for VBOB Memorials Information

**Thank you to all the chapters who have already sent in their VBOB Memorials information and photos. Has your chapter?**

We’d like to recognize all the VBOB Memorials (monuments, statues, benches, etc.) that our chapters have erected over the years, by compiling a comprehensive list of them. We will post photos and listings of VBOB Memorials on our website, and in *The Bulge Bugle*. Then our members will know about all of them and can visit them.

**Send digital material to:** [tracey@battleofthebulge.org](mailto:tracey@battleofthebulge.org) (preferred method)

**or by mail to:** Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Inc; PO Box 27430; Philadelphia, PA 19118-0430:

**QUESTIONS? Please contact Tracey Diehl, 703-528-4058, [tracey@battleofthebulge.org](mailto:tracey@battleofthebulge.org)**

## WALK OF REMEMBRANCE IN THE ARDENNES, 2017

Family and friends of the 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion, attached to the 82d Airborne Division during the Battle of the Bulge, just completed its 'walk of remembrance' in the Ardennes. The purpose of the walk was to honor and remember the combat history of the Battalion. The Salm River chapter, C-47 club sponsored the event, a totally Belgian-sponsored event by the local citizens in the Ardennes, who know the history of the Battalion. While expecting about 80 participants, 180 people attended, making the event outstanding. Colonel Doug Dillard, the only 551st veteran present, was accompanied by family members and arrived in Belgium on 5 January and drove to the Ardennes from Brussels. On 6 January, the group visited Bastogne and the headquarters building that the 101st used during the siege of Bastogne. Colonel Dillard was honored by the placing of his photo on the wall with other veterans of the Bulge. On 7 January, the walk of the 100-plus participants started at the point from which the 551st began its part in the counterattack on 3 January 1945. The walk continued, as the weather changed to snowy, freezing temperatures much like it was in 1945. At each significant point along the attack route, Colonel Dillard explained to the participants what had actually happened, and answered many questions about the action. At the location where a monument stands to honor Company A for its bayonet charge, the mayor of Vielsam addressed the group to honor the sacrifice of the men of the 551st. Nearby is the residence of a City Councilwoman who lives in the same building that was the 551st Battalion Medical Aid Station, where Colonel Joerg died from his wounds. She provided a delightful lunch for the group. The walk continued down through the wooded area where a monument was dedicated to honor Richard Field of Company B, who



Colonel Doug Dillard (front left), 82 AbnD, 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion, on the walk of remembrance in the Ardennes, January 2017.

passed away in November. Field's daughter Ginni and granddaughter Rachel attended the event, and after the dedication of the monument, Ginni spread some ashes of her father over the field where his company had fought. On 8 January, the group visited a farm at Noirfontaine, where the 551st infiltrated the lines of the 1st and 9th SS Panzer division defenses, to conduct a reconnaissance in force to collect information needed for the forthcoming attack on January 1945. The infiltration began at midnight 27 December 1944. A German company commander was captured, about 100 soldiers killed, and a captured US half track destroyed. The battalion returned to friendly lines before dawn...mission accomplished! The 551st was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for its actions in the Bulge, but it paid dearly from a starting force of 800 paratroopers to only 98 left on 7 January 1945 attacking the fortified village of Rochelival. Airborne all the way... and then some!

—Submitted by Douglas Dillard, Past President

## AN UNFORGETTABLE NIGHT

by Raymond LaCasse, 87 INFD, 345 INF, 1 BN, CO C

I was one of the original members of the 87th Division, which had been reformed in December 1942, and started basic training at Camp McCain Mississippi in February 1943. We were mostly 18 - 19 year-olds from all over the country. By the time we sailed for Europe in October 1944, many of the original members had left us to go over as replacements, and we had received an infusion of Air Force and ASTP members for infantry basic training. Below is an account of a memorable experience: "An Unforgettable Night."

I was a squad leader in a rifle platoon of C Co. 345th Inf. Reg't., 87th Inf. Div. in Dec. 1944. We were engaged in the Alsace region, poised to attack the west wall about Dec. 16th or 20th, when the break-through occurred up north on Dec. 16th. We were one of the Third Army divisions that Patton swung 90 degrees north to attack the underbelly of the Bulge. We were pulled off the line and after a



long freezing ride of about 200 miles, settled into a bivouac outside the city of Rheims.

On the 29th of Dec., we were trucked to an assembly area near Libramont, Belgium, arriving late afternoon in a pitch black forest. Seems that we had barely finished digging in, when we were called to "hit the road until you run into Germans." Our officers were upset

because we were not given time for a reconnaissance. We were in a column of companies in the approach march, when contact was made with elements of the German Panzer Lehr and 26th Volksgrenadier divisions. As we approached the village of Moiricy, we came under machine gun and artillery fire. In the ensuing action, a flanking movement to the left, my platoon was ordered to clear a hill on our right flank. We no sooner got there when we came under mortar fire that wounded myself and several others. When the firing lifted, the wounded were helped back to a farm house in the village.

Battalion medics were able to evacuate some of the wounded as fighting continued in the village, and we were counter attacked by tanks. Unknown to us, our Battalion commander had ordered a withdrawal of all elements in Moiricy, and he called for heavy artillery including corps (the big stuff), in an attempt to break up the counterattack. We had lost contact with Battalion, so we were trapped in the farm house, and for what seemed like forever, underwent a heavy and lengthy barrage, which did break up the counterattack. Medics returned early the next morning and evacuated those of us who had remained overnight.

My unit endured heavy fighting in the following days, and on January 6, some of my platoon were captured and spent the remaining months in a German prison camp, while I luckily spent 3 months in a hospital in England. On my release from the hospital in early April of 1945, I was classified for limited duty and never returned to my unit.

## RECONNECTING WITH A BELGIAN FRIEND, 72 YEARS LATER

by David Ray Hubbard, HQ Co, Adv Section,  
Comm Zone, Signal Section

The beginning of a very enjoyable few days with two very lovely Belgian sisters, Louise (20), and Edmée (18) Van Espen, as described in the letter below, written to my Father while my unit was stationed in Flawinne Barracks, Namur, Belgium for several months in 1944-1945. Units under our command supplied all support functions required by the advancing Armies, beginning on D-Day.

23 February 1945

Dearest Daddy,

Want to tell you about the most wonderful experience I've had while on the Continent. It came by sheer luck, I guess. Yesterday was my afternoon off and I spent it with my newly found acquaintances from a nearby hospital (Derrick is from Johnston, S.S. and is a very good friend of the Steadmans. The other boy is from Philadelphia). We had tramped around all afternoon taking pictures and had just sat down in the Red Cross Club when one of the American RC girls came over and asked the three of us if we'd like to visit in a nice Belgian home for the night. She pointed out the young girl who was there with the invitation and this convinced the three of us that we'd be delighted to accept the invitation. Directions were given to us and 7:30 was set as the time that we should make our appearance. From the very moment we stepped in the house, we were entirely at ease because of their very good hospitality. Both M. & Mde. Van Esman speak fluent English—in fact they speak much better than lots of Americans I know. The two daughters, Edmée, who is 18, and another whose name I can't recall (she doesn't interest me because she's engaged to be married) is 20. Both speak very good English, especially since they couldn't speak a bit prior to our arrival in the city.

All in all we had a most enjoyable time, since there was absolutely no trouble to converse with them and we learned many very interesting facts that we did not know previously. The three of us plan to return tomorrow night since there is a standing invitation for us to come at any time we wish.

I have about three other letters that I must get off tonight, so I'll sign off for now and will resume again very soon.

Lots of love, David Ray

P.S. The picture is especially for you.

Through all these years, I have often wondered if the Van Espen sisters were still alive. I had kept pictures and memories of the pleasant times my buddy, Jim Derrick and I spent with these lovely girls. Mathilde Schmetz and her husband Marcel have established the Remember Museum 39-45, located in the Belgian town of Thimister-Clermont. This museum is recognized as one of the finest World War II museums in Europe. At our December 2016 meeting of The S. C. Chapter Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge at Fort Jackson, SCI Matilde was our featured speaker, in which she gave many details of the Museum. Afterward, I asked if she could possibly check on any information concerning the Van Espen Sisters. She eagerly agreed to help, since she and



John A. Pildner, Sr. saluting the grave site of Dalton D. Raze, platoon leader in the 290th Regiment, Anti-Tank Co, 75th Infantry Division.

## TRIP OF A LIFETIME

John A. Pildner, Sr., a veteran of the United States Army who fought in the Battle of the Bulge, attended the Inauguration of President Donald J. Trump, Sr. He was accompanied on this trip to Washington D.C. by his son, John A. Pildner, Jr., a veteran of the United States Navy and daughter, Pamela J. St. Angelo. The Pildners' experience of attending a Presidential Inauguration Ceremony together was a rare opportunity to witness a piece of American history.

The Pildners' trip to Washington, D.C. was highlighted by a side trip to Arlington National Cemetery. They visited the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, where the Pildners witnessed the changing of the guard. Here the Pildners were greeted by Marty McFarlin, a Tomb Guard who served in 1973 – 1974, and who emotionally thanked Pildner, Sr. and all of the WWII veterans who fought to preserve, protect, and defend the freedoms of many around the world.

Another highlight of this occasion was locating the burial spot of Dalton Raze, who was a platoon leader in the 290th Regiment, Anti-Tank Company of the 75th Infantry Division. (Pildner served in the same units, in the mine platoon.) Raze rose through the ranks from a 2nd Lieutenant to a Full Colonel at the time of his retirement from the military. At one time during his military career, he had carried the codes for the U. S. President.

—Submitted by John A. Pildner, Sr., 290th Regiment,  
AntiTank Company of the 75th Infantry Division

## DO YOU KNOW ANY OF THESE MEN?

They are medics of the 1st Battalion aid station of the 328th Infantry Regiment in the ETO at Bohmisch Rohren, Czechoslovakia, probably in 1945. The 328th regiment was part of the 26th Infantry Division (Yankee Division) that was part of Patton's Third Army. My Dad, 1st Lt Robert T Marshall, and Staff Sgt Walter German, wrote a frontline account of their work from Normandy Beach through the Battle of the Bulge. I am publishing their story as a book, *Healers and Heroes*, scheduled for Fall 2017 release. I welcome contacts and/or information about any of these men. Contact: [thea@thea-marshall.com](mailto:thea@thea-marshall.com) or go to: [www.facebook.com/HealersandHeroes/](http://www.facebook.com/HealersandHeroes/)



Front row, left to right: Albert Daigle, Herbert Scheinberg, John Warzasz, Edward Geisler, George Trabucco, Samuel Melnicoff. Back row, left to right: Milky (?), Martin Cohen, Angelo Nicolo, Frank Valiga, Daniel Chacchia, James Rullo, Henry Menard, Charles Touchette, Walter German.



David Hubbard with Louise (left) and Edmée Van Eppen (right), March 1945.



Mathilde Schmetz (left) found Edmée Van Eppen (right) for Hubbard in early 2017.

Marcel have a son living in Namur. Through the efforts of Mathilde, from Belgium, I was able to get in touch with Edmée. I have been thrilled to regain the friendship that began 72 years ago. Modern means of communication, such as e-mails, have made this possible.

*I had asked Edmée to write a synopsis of her life, and posed some specific questions. Her response follows:*

It is me behind the desk in the picture at the Red Cross Club. I really don't remember when we met in the Club. You know, I met thousands of GIs while I worked at the Club. We were there to give informations when the soldiers asked what was interesting to visit in town, or what films to see in the cinemas, and how to go to the Citadelle, for instance. Louise and I went only two times walking at the Citadelle with you and James. And another walk with

John S. Twaddell and Ralph K. Younger. I still have many addresses from GIs I met at that time. Maybe I hoped to go once to the States and meet some of them!

Louise got married in 1947. With a "pharmacien" druggist or chemist. They had 2 children, a boy Philippe and an girl Chantal (she still lives in Montreal (Canada.) She got married and adopted 3 children,

one girl and 2 boys. I never saw them but I know they are colored. Philippe got married and has a boy Nathan and a girl Nina. He divorced, and he just had, a few months ago, a baby girl Clara. He lives in Brussels.

Louise's husband died (cancer) in 1987. And she died in June 2016. My brother Roland died in 1995—he was young, he was born in 1928. I don't know the story of the Citadelle. It is a fortress build many centuries ago. To protect the country I suppose. One of the architects is French Vauban. And soldiers lived there—German during the last war, then the Americans and Belgian after the war, and still now, I think.

I got married in 1951 to an architect. My husband died in 2005. We have 5 children: Michel, Dominique, my daughter who died in 2014 in a plane crash in Mali, Etienne, Olivier, and Jean Paul, who lives in London. He is Blue Badge Tourist guide. I have eight grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

That's all I can relate to you about me and my family. I hope you will get this mail soon.

Sincerely yours, Edmée



WHERE IT ALL BEGAN: The American Red Cross Casino Club in Namur, Belgium, 1945, where Hubbard and 2 other American soldiers were invited "to visit in a nice Belgian home for the night."

# GLAD HE WASN'T NAVY

by Claude Davis, 119 AAA Bn, HQ Battery



The threat of war in the early forties made every young man fear entering the service. I did not desire to be in the Navy, so I hoped the Army would draft me. I failed my first physical, but eventually got another notice to report.

We embarked from New York in the fourth largest passenger ship in the world, the *Mauritania*—it held 16000 of us. I never knew water could go so high! We went up and down, waves so big they could hide the whole ship. I had the top hammock of four that would swing back and forth with the pitch of the ship, Eating was an adventure, where we would hang on to a pipe with one hand and eat with the other. 50 gallon barrels were placed every few feet for the guys who got seasick and could not hold their food. Man, I was sure glad I didn't get the Navy!

While in England preparing for the trip to France, we set about the task of waterproofing our trucks. That was sure a chore. While I was there I had a trailer fall on my hand, breaking four fingers. There was no hospital around, so we just wrapped them up and kept going. When I finally got to a hospital, they had to rebreak them and set them in place. I had to fight to get back to my outfit and headed to Normandy with a cast on my right hand.

We left England on four LST's and landed on Utah beach 30 days after the initial invasion. We arrived at 6PM and waited in the dark there. We heard planes overhead and could hear gun fire in the distance. We disembarked and had to keep our lights off, following the truck ahead. It seemed hours before we stopped for the night nearby a bridge we were to protect. The Germans bombed and strafed us all night. I tried to sleep to no avail. I spent most of my time trying to take off all of the waterproofing that I had installed.

The next morning, I saw my first dead German. He had been laying not 50 feet away. He wasn't more than a kid ..... but then, I thought .... so am I. As a scared young man, sleeping under the trucks and in dug foxholes, I found myself wondering why I was there. It didn't really seem to be my fight and these guys looked the same as me. The war was a cruel, confusing thing.

We rolled through France and found ourselves by a farm when the Germans found us. They strafed us and blew the tires on my trailer, which had 500 lbs of TNT in it. The first time they came at us, I got as far as the ditch. The second wave hit the ditch and took out the man next to me—the bullets went right by my side. So, you can imagine that by the time they got back, I was across the farm and into the woods for better protection. It was there that I realized it was kill or be killed. 4 to 6 inches and I would not here today to tell this. After the strafing, I ended up dragging that trailer for some 35 miles before we stopped for the night.

I recall one time when we stopped after dark and we were told to park our trucks for the night. I found this lane with trees on both sides that I felt was a better, secure place and settled in under the truck. In the middle of the night, the Germans hit us with all they had. Their 88s were clipping the tops of the trees that were not that tall. One shell whistled through the canvas back of my truck. It didn't take me long to roll out from under that truck and run down the hill to better protection. We then got our chance

to shoot back with our 90s. We lobbed shells back and forth.

It was about that time that my hand began to itch and smell. I went to see the medics and the doc there got angry—the cast should have come off weeks before. The cast was cut off and I regained use of my hand and fingers but boy, were they stiff. It was months before I got full use of them.

We moved up the Mosselle River in the direction of Belgium where we took part in the liberation of the town of Verdun where WWI ended. The name of our outfit is on a monument there. It was here that we were given a 7 day leave. I went to Paris and into Southern France to an old castle called Mont Saint-Michel.

We then began shuttling infantry to the frontline and prisoners back into France. Most of the prisoners were just happy that they did not have to fight anymore. We did this under the cover of darkness, watching the tail lights of the truck ahead. So, if they went into the ditch, so did you. One truck hit a landmine, killing some and injuring others. We loaded them into our trucks and kept going, leaving the dead behind to be picked up later. I broke down and when they fixed my truck, they kept my co-driver. I had to drive in the dark in unfamiliar territory by myself. It was scary, but I made it.

We were then sent back up to the front during the Battle of the Bulge, where the Germans made one last push back to Belgium. It was a hard and dirty fight, with some Germans dressing like us and driving our rigs. It was hard to know who the enemy was.

On one trip, one of our planes was shot down and landed in a motor pool that I was close by. The plane carried two thousand-pound bombs. The explosion blew a hole in the frozen ground 35 feet across and 15 feet deep. I dove under a trailer and things fell all around me. One of the plane's motors dropped a few feet away from me. When I got my wits about me, I helped with the wounded. Eight ambulances took away the injured. When I got back to my truck, I found a bullet lodged in the padding of my driver's seat. I have kept it all these years.

We crossed the Rhine on pontoon bridges that were just like big rubber rafts. They had metal rails laid out between them around 4 feet. These tracks were just wide enough for our tires and as we pulled out trucks with big guns across the half mile stretch, the trucks pushed down on the rafts so hard that they nearly went under. All this under enemy fire with shells coming down all around us. Somehow we all made it and were now in Germany. We crossed the Danube on May-day of 1945 and moved into our last position. On May 9th, the firing stopped ... the war had ended.

After the war, I didn't have enough points to go home so I was sent to Metz, France to oversee a gas station there. Truck-loads of dead people were shuttled through that station. I had a detail of German prisoners who were tasked with running water and garbage to and from the kitchen. One of the prisoners did not want to be discharged, as he said he had no home to go to.

Finally, it was my turn and I was sent home with four of my buddies. After sailing to New York, we were lined up to go on a plane, but the line stopped some 35 ahead of me and I had to go by train. We later heard that the plane went down near Billings, killing all aboard. On Dec 18, 1945, I was discharged, arriving home before Christmas.

In those three years in Europe, I drove a truck more than 27,000 miles through England, France, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, and even Spain. I had three stripes on my sleeve (one for each year,) five battle stars for five major battles, and several ribbons, but the best being an honorable discharge.

I am Tech Corporal Claude Oliver Davis, a proud member of the "Bend Band of Brothers."

# WE WERE THE EYES & EARS

by Keith F. Davis,

16th Field Artillery Observation Battalion



When the Allies planned the invasion of Hitler's Fortress Europe, they chose the Normandy Coast of France for their landing site and they were code named Sword, Juno, Gold, Omaha and Utah. The English, French, Canadians, and others landed on Sword, Juno, and Gold, and the Americans landed on Omaha and Utah beaches.

I went ashore on Utah Beach and the beach was secure and the fighting was a few miles inland. We were near the town of St. Mere Eglise. We fought in the hedgerows, the towns and villages, and fought our way to the huge Nazi

submarine base at Brest, France. The Artillery fired on this base from the land, the Air Force bombed it from the air, and the Navy fired on it from the sea. After much fire-power, the base surrendered.

I was in the 16th Field Artillery Observation Battalion. We were the eyes and ears of the Field Artillery. We fought our way through St. Lo, up to and through Paris, to the border of Germany. On Dec. 16, 1944, Nazi Field Marshall Von Rundstedt made a counter-attack on a 50 mile front in this area. He came through with the 5th Panzer Army, the 6th Panzer Army and the 7th German Army. We were right in the center of this attack. I was in the area of St. Vith and Bastogne. They really clobbered us. Thousands of Americans and Germans were killed in this breakthrough (later known as the Battle of the Bulge).

It took Gen. George Patton two days to bring in the 101st and 82nd Airborne and the 6th Infantry Division to help reinforce our position. One paratrooper asked me where the frontline was. I told him, "You are standing on it."

The Nazis destroyed much Army material and killed many men. The German High Command sent an ultimatum to our Gen. McAuliffe at Bastogne, and told him to either surrender or be annihilated. Gen. McAuliffe sent a reply with one word: "NUTS." The Germans did not know what to think of (or understand) the word "NUTS." This was his American slang way of saying, "In no way will we surrender."

The weather was very cold and the fog was over the whole battlefield. The Nazis pushed us back from the German border, back through Belgium, Luxembourg and into France. The fog was so thick, we could not tell if an American Sherman tank or a German Tiger tank was coming toward us. Two weeks after the Bulge started, the fog began to lift and the sky was clear again. At this time the Air Force sent hundreds and hundreds of fighter planes over the frontlines and they flew thousands of sorties, destroying supply lines, gun emplacements, infantry, tanks and everything they could see. We began to hold our position and slowly, very slowly, advanced again toward Germany. The Nazi SS troops captured the 285th Field Artillery Observation Battalion. Our 16th FAOB was to meet up with the 255th, regroup and form a new battalion. This never happened. The SS herded almost 100 men of the 285th into a snowy field and machine gunned them down in cold blood. This was not war, this was murder. This was later known as the Malmedy Massacre.

One January 25, 1945, we were at the same position we were when

the Bulge started on Dec. 16, 1944.

I was on an observation post in the city of Koblenz, Germany, and 12 Catholic nuns came up to me and in perfect English asked me to tell them when the war would be over. *How would I know?*

I watched the Army Engineers build a pontoon bridge over the Rhine River. The river was fast, deep and over a mile wide. It was scary to watch our heavy Sherman Tanks and Heavy Artillery guns being pulled by large prime movers and Army trucks loaded with supplies and soldiers cross this bridge. The bridge held, and supplies and men continued to cross the Rhine River.

I was at the liberation of the Ohrdruf Nazi Concentration Camp, just near Ohrdruf, Germany. The sights we saw were horrible and the smell was only a smell that can be made by torture and death. The Nazi guards fled the camp and machine-gunned many prisoners in the courtyard. I looked closely at a naked body with four bullet holes in it, with not a drop of blood coming out the bullet holes. They were starved to skin and bones. Bodies were stacked like cord wood. The live ones, with large eyes and sunken stomachs, reached out to us.

We fought our way through Nuremberg, and the smell of death was everywhere. We zig-zagged back and forth through Germany and fought in the Sudatenland, and fought our way into Czechoslovakia, where we met the Russian army. This is where we heard the war in Europe was over on May 8, 1945.

From the time I went ashore on Utah Beach until we met the Russians in Czechoslovakia, I was on the frontline. I know that "Freedom is not free."

*To listen to a BBC audio interview with Keith Davis, go to: [bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02f8lvh](http://bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02f8lvh)*



**71st Annual Reunion**  
**83RD INFANTRY**  
**DIVISION**  
**ASSOCIATION**  
**August 2 – 6, 2017**

The 71st Annual Reunion of the 83rd Infantry Division Association will be August 2-6, 2017 at the Cleveland Renaissance Hotel (located at 24 Public Square) in the heart of downtown Cleveland, Ohio.

The Association plans to honor our living veterans and memorialize those of the Greatest Generation who sacrificed so much. We welcome new members, living veterans of the 83rd and attached units, retired 83rd reservists, active 83rd AARTC members, family members, descendants, and European friends.

As part of our reunion, we will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the raising of the 83rd Infantry Division and its origins as the "Ohio Division." A focal point of the reunion will be a public historical exhibit highlighting the history of the 83rd and those who proudly wore and continue to wear the insignia of the 83rd. Many activities and educational workshops are planned.

Hotel accommodations may be made by calling the Cleveland Renaissance at: 216-696-5630; or online at: [www.83rdassociation.com/HTML/Reunion2017.html](http://www.83rdassociation.com/HTML/Reunion2017.html). The reunion registration information and form may be found through the same link. For any additional questions, you may email [info@83rdassociation.com](mailto:info@83rdassociation.com).

# BOOBY TRAPPED, AND OTHER TALES



**Mark W. Kistler,**  
4th Cav Recon Sq,  
A Troop, 3rd Platoon

After being drafted on April 10, 1943, Mark W. Kistler boarded a train to begin his basic in Florida. While at Camp Blanding, FL during boot camp, Mark was sent 2 separate telegrams from his family to go see his sick mother back home in Pennsylvania. His 1st Sgt. apparently had torn them up. Kistler never knew why. He finally got a letter from his brother asking him when he was coming home. Mark showed the letter to his Lieutenant and he told Mark to immediately head home, where he spent 2 weeks with his ailing mother.

When he returned, he discovered his 1st Sgt. had been busted down to Private and transferred out of the unit.

Kistler's unit was shipped on the ocean liner *Queen Elizabeth* from New York in April 1944 to Scotland and then England. He landed at Normandy on Utah Beach on June 11th, 1944.

His first major combat mission was in Cherbourg, France where along with the 101st and 82nd AB, they were able to cut off and capture over 20, 000 Germans soldiers. His troop's main objective was to find the enemy, get information, and to capture prisoners. They advanced so fast that often his platoon never had time to dig in to foxholes.

On September 11th, 1944, Sgt. Kistler was driving in an armored car with his superior officer, Lt. Thompson, when upon reaching an intersection near Spa, Germany, they came across a German patrol. A German soldier hiding in a ditch by the side of the road, wielding a potato masher, hurled his grenade toward the jeep. Lt. Thompson turned and fired at the enemy, killing him. The gunshot threw off the direction of his grenade and it exploded near Kistler, wounding him, sending shrapnel into his legs. Sergeant Kistler believes that Lt. Thompson's quick action saved his life.

After spending time in a field hospital, he was wounded again a few weeks later on September 30th, when he stepped on a booby trap trip-wire and the explosives blew up a tree nearby. He was thrown to the ground from the blast and wounded in the face and legs. After being taken to an aid station to get patched up, in three days he was back up on the line. His unit needed replacements so badly they sent him back, otherwise he may have stayed in the hospital. To this day he still carries pieces of the shrapnel and debris in his legs.

While passing through a small village, Sgt. Kistler was driving in his jeep and came cross a Frenchman, who came walking down the



**VBOB VIDEOS:** Watch Bulge veterans tell their battle stories at: [battleofthebulge.org](http://battleofthebulge.org). Click on "Veterans' Video Stories."



## DONATIONS

We thank the following people who donated between January 1-March 24, 2017:

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Vogel, Norvin	35 INFD
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middle of the road with a large object in his hands. It turned out to be a large goose that he held. He walked up to Kistler and said to him, "This is all I have left in the world. I would like you to have it for liberating my village from the Nazis and the Italians." The Frenchman hugged and kissed the Sergeant and walked on. Kistler really disliked the hash in the C-rations, and he accepted the goose and proceeded to tie it to the hood of his jeep. After advancing for several days, with the live bird still tied to the front of the jeep, his unit drove into a village where he met a French woman. He offered the goose to her to butcher and cook it for him and his men, in exchange for a bottle of wine. But unfortunately before they had the chance to feast on it, his unit was ordered to move out, and the goose was never seen again.

Fighting through the hedgerows, his unit came up through St. Lo, where over 3,000 planes leveled the town. In September of 1944, his troop made their way north, near the town of Aachen, to battle the Germans in the Hurtgen Forest. For two to three weeks they fought through the thick mud and artillery shelling. The Allies suffered heavy casualties during this battle, Kistler himself almost becoming one again when an artillery shell landed at the very spot he had abandoned only moments before.

During the battle, an American reporter requested to go into the frontlines of the forest with Kistler's unit. They took him through the enemy lines and returned him safely. That young man's name was Andy Rooney, the future "60 Minutes" reporter.

Kistler will always remember the sound of the hob-nail boots on the road as the German soldiers marched past him on the crossroads in Germany.

Marching through Belgium, he was surprised his unit met so little opposition from the German army. The reason was, they were amassing outside of Malmedy, preparing for the ambush that would soon be known as the Battle of the Bulge. Kistler and his unit had just been transported back to Liege, Belgium for R&R, but that was the same day that the Bulge began. No rest for the soldiers.

*Mark W. Kistler received 2 Purple Hearts, Good Conduct medal, European African Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with Silver Service Star, WWII Victory Medal, American Campaign Medal and a Presidential Unit Citation for efforts during the Battle of the Bulge.*

—Submitted by Steve Savage, Lehigh Valley Chapter

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# THE VBOB CERTIFICATE: Have you ordered yours?



The Battle of the Bulge Association, Inc. is proud to offer this full color 11" by 17" certificate, as a legacy item for any veteran who received credit for the Ardennes campaign. It attests that the veteran participated, endured and survived the largest land battle ever fought by the US Army. (There is also a version worded for those who were killed in action or died of their wounds. Be sure to check the appropriate box on the form.) If you haven't ordered yours, then you might want to consider ordering one to give to your grandchildren. They are generally most appreciative of your service, and the certificate makes an excellent gift—also for that buddy with whom you served in the Bulge. You do not have to be a member of BOBA to order one, but the veteran must have received the Ardennes credit. This beautiful certificate is produced on parchment-like stock and is outlined by the full color World War II insignias of the major units that

fought in the Battle of the Bulge, starting with the 12th Army group, then followed numerically with Armies, Corps and Divisions and the two Army Air Forces. We wish that each unit insignia could have been shown, but with approximately 2000 units that participated in the Bulge, it is impossible. However, any unit that served in the Bulge would have been attached to or reported through one of the unit insignia depicted. You may want to add one of the veteran's original patches to the certificate when you receive it. **Please allow approximately 4 to 6 weeks for delivery.** The certificate will be shipped rolled in a protective mailing box. **Please be sure that you write the name, service number and unit as you would like it to appear on the certificate.** The unit name should be as complete as possible, because you want someone reading it to understand what unit the veteran was in. We will abbreviate it as necessary. It is important that you type or print this information and the unit must be one of the 2,000 units authorized for the Ardennes Campaign credit that is in the Official General Order No. 114 for units entitled to the Ardennes Battle Credit and will be the basis for sale of the certificate. **The cost of the 2 certificates is \$15 postpaid.**



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I request an 11" by 17" certificate and certify the veteran named below received credit for the Ardennes campaign. I have enclosed a check for \$15 for the certificate. Please include the following information on the certificate:

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**ANNUAL AIRBORNE BALL:** Col. Doug Dillard (right) was guest speaker at the Annual Airborne Ball at Fort Benning, GA, attended by 400 parachutists. At left (with his wife) is Command Sergeant Major Christopher Lewis, whose combat deployments include three times to Iraq (including Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm), and three times to Afghanistan. Col. Dillard spoke of the 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion in the BOB, and his experiences in the Korean War.

## IN SEARCH OF MY FATHER

by Dianne Hickey Rose, Member



**Thomas Rye Hickey,**  
9th ArmdD Inf Bn

My father, Thomas Rye Hickey, died November 4, 1951, after falling 1,200 feet down a mine shaft. He was working for the Tennessee Copper Company in Copperhill, Tennessee at the time of his death. He was 39 years old; I was 3. My mother, Ollie, was left a widow at 30, with 3 young daughters and no means of support.

Since mother seldom talked about him, and there were few photos of him, he somehow never seemed quite real to me. But as I was nearing retirement age, I became interested in knowing more about him and their life together. And I wanted

to put my family mementos in order, to pass on to my sons and granddaughter. When I began, I never dreamed what the end result would be.

I started by sorting the 182 letters, postcards, and v-mail he had written to my mother during World War II into chronological order. As I sorted, scanned, and copied the fragile pages, I read them. I was fortunate that he had dated each letter and written his location on it. After a while, I started a spreadsheet to keep track of his location and what was happening to him.

These letters enabled me to know him better in some ways than many people who have lived decades with their fathers. Through his letters, I followed his service from draft notice, through basic training, sleeping outside in Kansas in February without a tent, to a 26 mile march in the Mojave Desert. There were gaps in the letters when mother was able to join him for a few months. I was fascinated to hear him “talk” about his ambivalence at qualifying on the machine gun or about the time he almost sat on a rattlesnake in the Mojave Desert. He

wrote that 10-11 men went “over the hill” every day, but that he never would, no matter how bad it got.

I quickly became obsessed and began researching about the places he was stationed. He served with the 9th Armored Infantry Battalion. When he mentioned in an October 1944 letter that he had sailed to England on the *Queen Mary*, I began to suspect the extent of his service.

Early in my research I wrote to the NPRC to obtain a copy of his military records. That’s when I learned that 10-16 million military records were destroyed in a warehouse fire in 1973. My father’s records, along with those of his 3 brothers, were among those destroyed. I was able to get a copy of his discharge document, which showed he fought in the Ardennes. There was the proof of what I had begun suspecting from his letters. My father fought in the Battle of the Bulge and no one in the family was aware of it! He called the Battle of the Bulge “the storm” in his letters. He was awarded a Purple Heart for a shrapnel wound he received while he was driving a half-track in Luxembourg. He mentioned it briefly in one letter, but said he “kept going.”

My parents had been married less than two years when he was drafted into service in August 1942. Every letter home reflected his homesickness and love for my mother. When my sister was born in 1943, he talked of his love for her as well. He smoked Camels, liked chicken and chocolate cake, and had a weakness for shooting craps. He never mentioned the hardships he endured. He worried about his brothers Joe and Dick, who were also fighting in Europe. Dick was wounded in Sicily and Joe was a German POW in Stalag VII in Moosburg, Germany.

In his letter dated April 26, 1945 he wrote that his outfit was the first to cross into Germany. That would have been across the Remagen Bridge. On May 8, he was in Czechoslovakia when word came that the war was over. The Army had been massing in Czechoslovakia for the next front. He returned to the States in early October, 1945. I inherited my father’s Purple Heart and Army Good Conduct Medal from my mother. I spent a lot of time researching the other awards and medals he was entitled to and spent a full year corresponding with the NPRC before I received them all.

*This is the full list:* Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Army Good Conduct Medal, American Campaign - WWII, Europe-Africa-Middle Eastern Campaign with 3 bronze stars, World War II Victory Medal, Combat Infantry Badge 1st Award, Expert Badge with Machine Gun Bar, Sharpshooter Badge with Rifle Bar, Marksman Badge with Carbine Bar.

My son Scott, who served 10 years with the Navy, helped me organize a shadowbox to display them appropriately. I wish my mother was still alive to see it.

In 2014, my son Jeff and I traveled to Germany, Luxembourg, and Belgium. For me it was a pilgrimage. We visited Coburg, Germany, which was mentioned many times in his letters. At our hotel, we were fortunate enough to meet a woman who remembered where the American Army had camped and marked it on a map. I have no idea where in Luxembourg he was when wounded, but we did see the American memorial and walked down Franklin D. Roosevelt Boulevard.

Before leaving the U.S., I arranged a tour guide, Roby Clam, for our visit to Bastogne, Belgium. Roby took us to each of the roadside memorials dedicated to American troops, the Mardasson War Memorial, and to the place where the 9th Armored Infantry Battalion fought during the Battle of the Bulge. It was a moving experience to see where my father fought and to realize how grateful the Belgians still are to the Americans who fought and died there.

I am so very proud of my father and wish more than ever that I could have known this truly remarkable, courageous man.

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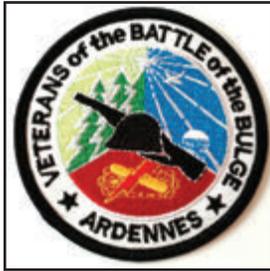
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*See details and registration forms on pages 16-19.*

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The Bulge Vet's Name and Units \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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