

The BULGE BUGLE

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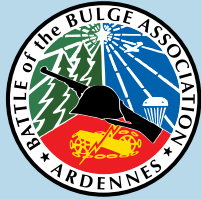
BOBA President Gary Higgins (far left) watches as Veterans Fred Gordon and Joe Landry participate in the wreath laying at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.



REMEMBRANCE *and* COMMEMORATION 73rd ANNIVERSARY of THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

★ December 13 - 15, 2017 ★

For coverage of the events and more photos, see pages 14-15.



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NOTICE: DUES NOW \$20

At our General Membership Meeting at the Annual Reunion in San Antonio, our members voted to increase our annual dues from \$15 per year to **\$20 per year**, effective as of November 1, 2017. We are no longer offering Lifetime Memberships or 4-yr discounted memberships. (Those already purchased will be honored.)

BOBA is now operating at a deficit, and we need your support to keep us going! Sign up your family and friends! See membership application on the back cover.

Memberships make great gifts! One year for just \$20!

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Gary Higgins



IT IS HARD TO BELIEVE THAT 2017 flew by so quickly. It seems I have heard more and more folks saying the older they get, the faster time seems to fly by. I cannot agree more. The BOBA year went by rapidly, but not without many memories.

Our BOBA board had many successful teleconference meetings. There is always business

to conduct, and plans to make for our wonderful events, including our yearly reunions, and this past year we took on planning the Washington D.C. annual Bulge commemorative celebration.

The San Antonio Reunion event in September was lots of fun, and educational at the same time. We had about 70 in attendance. What an honor to meet Dick Cole, pilot with Jim Doolittle, and Sichan Siv, a Cambodian refugee who became a U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. The National WWII Museum of the Pacific impressed our soldiers, who prefer to keep their feet on the ground. The laying of a commemorative wreath in San Antonio made the TV news, so our men will never be forgotten.

The Commemorative event in Washington D.C. was a success, too. It was our first year to honor our veterans by organizing the event, which was formerly organized by the Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation. There were a number of people I have thanked for this, from all across the country. It is amazing what the power of computers and telephones can do. Those in attendance were able to tour the Pentagon, be honored by the Luxembourg Ambassador and representatives of the Belgium Embassy. Our group (with 10 Bulge Veterans) was involved in placing a wreath at the WWII Monument and the Battle of the Bulge Monument in Arlington, and the highlight of laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was my favorite. What a gracious host we had with Major General Howard! He made special changes for two of our Bulge Veterans, so they did not have to walk the stairs. He couldn't take away the bitter cold weather, but our hearts were warmed seeing Fred Gordon and Joe Landry participate in a very solemn ceremony. A special congratulations to Alan Cunningham. He received an honor

from the Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation: the 2017 Person of the Year Award. Well-deserved, Alan!

I had accepted an invitation to the Southeast Florida chapter's annual dinner in West Palm Beach, so I flew directly from D.C. to West Palm. Board Member Doris Davis was also able to attend, and we were warmly welcomed by the Chapter President, George Fisher. A nice dinner with guest speaker Donna Katem-Bahensky welcomed about 200 people. Maybe someday, we too will have this many enthusiastic members and family to honor a great group of Bulge Veterans.

2018 will be full of events to promote our wonderful association. I am planning on making an appearance at the 106th Infantry Division Reunion in January in Kissimmee, Florida. I have a special friend who will also attend, whom I met in 2004 during our Battle of the Bulge tour to Belgium with men from across the U.S. It is hard to believe my first tour was 14 years ago. In just over a year, 2019 will arrive and the 75th Commemoration will be here. Plans will soon be in the works for this important date. Help and ideas will be needed, so please let me [gary@battleofthebulge.org] or other board members know your thoughts. Time will be of utmost importance, because as I said at the beginning, it sure does fly.

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 and photos 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

MAY ISSUE DEADLINE: March 23, 2018

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

LETTERS TO BOBA

GRATITUDE FROM LUXEMBOURG

Most veterans who fought for the Liberation of Luxembourg during the winter of 1944-45 (the Battle of the Bulge) are familiar with CEBA, Centre Etude Bataille Ardennes, the Luxembourg version of our American Association, and their first President, Andre Hubert.

I recently wrote to Camille Kohn of Fischbach, Luxembourg, their second and long-established President, of whom many veterans knew. He was ever-present at the Veterans and Divisions Assoc. return visits to their battlefields in his country. Most all remember their camaraderie with Camille and how he welcomed them in person with gratitude for their service for his country.

His only fault, if you would call it that, was his fear of flying, which he acknowledged and prevented his visits to his friends in America.

I received a nice letter from his wife, Erica, thanking me, so that his American friends—veterans—can read of his appreciation and friendship over the years, since the war.

Dear John,

On behalf of Camille, I thank you very much for the nice picture and wishes, which we recently received from you.

Unfortunately, Camille is no longer in good shape. After open-heart surgery (a biological valve, another reconstructed, and 3 bypasses) in 2011, he got Parkinson's Disease a year later and Lewy Body Dementia (a loss of short-term memory).

Anyway, he is always in good humor and he still remembers the wonderful time he shared with you and all the other veterans who came to Luxembourg to visit their former battlefields.

He is proud he was able, together with the whole CEBA team, to show you the gratitude of the population of Luxembourg.

Our eldest son, Erny will carry on with a new and younger team of CEBA.

Camille and I wish you all the best for the future.

Erica

**John E. McAuliffe, 87 INFD,
President of Central Mass. Chapter 22**

OPEN LETTER TO OUR MEMBERS

I have a special experience that I want to share with you. The Fall luncheon of the Florida Chapter of the Mighty 8th Airforce Historical Society was held in Palm City, Florida and I was invited to be the guest speaker.

The men who flew these B17s knew nothing about the ground forces and we knew nothing about the airplanes. It snowed for the entire Christmas week 1944 and we were in desperate need of supplies, blankets, medicines, ammunition, food, etc.

Members of the 8th Airforce spoke after my presentation and they knew how desperate our situation had been. They said during that snowbound week they awoke each day at 5 a.m., had their breakfast, loaded their planes and sat on the runways for hours, only to find their mission aborted. They felt frustrated because their hands were tied and they knew of the severity of our situation.

General Patton, in desperation, summoned his chaplain to write a special prayer to God and his exact words were, "*Whose side are you on? Why not give us clear weather for battle?*" For some unexplained reason, after the chaplain read that prayer, the sun came out the

following day! As part of the infantry, we welcomed the sight of 2,000 airplanes flying above and dropping supplies.

The infantry will be forever grateful for the aid we received from our brothers flying overhead. In any war, it's not about who's right, but who's left.

**George Fisher, Third Army,
Purple Heart and Bronze Star,
President of SE FL Chapter (62)**

APPRECIATION FOR TRUCK DRIVERS

I recently read an article on page 27 of *The Bulge Bugle* [August 2017 issue, "Boys, We've Just Been Captured!"] by Bill Armstrong. 263rd FABN, 26th Yankee Division. My late husband, Earl F. Turner, was in the Battle of the Bulge, same units.

The message that I'd like to convey to Bill is, that although Earl never talked much of the war, the thing that I remember him saying more than once was that the truck drivers deserved an enormous amount of credit for getting necessary supplies and ammo through mud—deep mud—snow, and ice. Without the trucks making it through, the batteries would have been virtually helpless.

Earl had exclaimed to me, "I don't know how they did it!"

I would like to get word to Bill Armstrong and his family of my late husband's appreciation for the Truck Drivers.

Florence Turner, Member

BELATED HOLIDAY GREETINGS TO ALL!

Some of you, whether old or new friends, may receive belated Christmas and New Year's Wishes, because I fell and injured my right wrist. It is difficult for me to work with one hand! First, the events from the end of 2016. We were invited by Mrs Bauer, the American Ambassador, for Thanksgiving and it was just wonderful to be included in such a small select group. Then we went to the states, as guests of the SC VBOB Chapter, of the American Legion Post 28 at Millsboro, DE and of the national Battle of the Bulge organization. We received several awards during our visit including the 2016 Persons of the Year Award for our outstanding contributions in preserving the history of the WWII Battles, a Certificate of Recognition from the MA State House in Boston, thanking us for honoring U.S. Veterans and for creating a place where young, as well as older Veterans, can go to reflect and remember events of WWII in a meaningful way. Along with a Belgian General, we placed a wreath at the Arlington Cemetery. What a historical and impressive cemetery! We were invited to the Belgian Embassy where the Belgian Ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium to the United States of America gave us recognition for our work. We have received many American Certificates or Awards over the years, but that was the first Belgian recognition which happened to us in the states! Our friends from SC had arranged a visit to the Residence of George P. Waters, grandson of General Patton. Pat gave us a picture of himself as a little boy sitting on the lap of the General. Pat even had a Belgian flag flying outside to welcome us! Maryellen, whose uncle is buried at the Henri-Chapelle Cemetery, invited us to visit the Quantico Marine Corp
(continued on next page)

LETTERS TO BOBA

(continued from previous page)

Base, another beautiful place! Several friends drove a long way just to have lunch or supper with us and they all spoiled us. By the end of the trip, we had received so many gifts that we had an extra suitcase which we couldn't take back home. Pamela, the daughter of a sweet WWII friend, agreed to ship the gifts to an American friend in Germany. That also became a special gift! There are nice people all over this world!!

On January 9, 2017, Mrs Bauer and her husband came for a farewell visit. We miss her, and she is the investigator behind the 30 minute video, which you can view on our new website: www.remembermuseum.be

On April 30th, we went to visit Ken, our WWII British friend, and attended with him the Exercise Tiger Memorial Service to remember the 946 U.S. soldiers and sailors who died in these exercises. We try to imagine what it must have been like for the families of these men, especially the years of not knowing what had actually caused the loss of their loved ones and friends.

On the day before Memorial Day, we honored 2,250 young men by placing red roses on their graves at the Henri-Chapelle American Cemetery. With the help of Belgian soldiers, PA and UT ANGs, FedEx pilots and their families and 17 school children, the 2,250 roses were installed in front of the crosses and Stars of David. Several friends came from the states to attend the Memorial Day ceremony, and they also helped with the roses. We invited all these wonderful helpers to the museum to have drinks and waffles. We want to decorate 2015 graves next year and then do the same at the Ardennes Cemetery.

The 9/11 date (our Liberation day) was special this year because we had a visit from General Scaparrotti, SACEUR, Cindy, his wife and a couple of their friends. They had a drink with us in our kitchen, in memory of all those brave American soldiers who liberated our country on 9/11, 73 years ago. End of September: one of Marcel's dreams came true! We received a free ride in a B-17, thanks to the request of Joe, our 92 year old adopted son, and this was also a gift of the McCollings Foundation. Marcel saw many B-17s flying over his parent's home during WWII, and he never forgot the noise of these big bombers. Being allowed to go inside of one of these planes was very exciting for him, and it brought back many memories. Indeed he saw one B-17 crash on August 17, 1943, in which six young airmen died but four survived.

Eleven years ago we built a memorial on the spot where the plane crashed and we are planning to conduct a special ceremony at the site on August 17th, 2018, since that will be the 75th Anniversary of the crash. You can go to the new museum website to find more information about the B-17 ride.

Our last big event happened on October 28th It was "Discovering the USA through Its Micro Breweries"! We had 80 Belgian people eating and drinking American food and beers, served by some of our American friends. The funds raised will help to pay for a new roof over the Big Red Ball Express display area. We are known for our beers, but you are beginning to develop really good beers, too. The pumpkin pies and the pecan pies were delicious!!

Hope Your New Year 2018 is a Happy One.

Visit us on our new Facebook page: [Facebook.com/RememberMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/RememberMuseum) to send a message/comment/or Like us.

Our new website: www.remembermuseum.be

**Mathilde and Marcel Schmetz,
Remember Museum 39-45**

THANKS FOR DC EXPERIENCES

My background with the Battle of the Bulge (BOB) Veterans and WWII is from my 1st Battalion Commander (LTC Frank Olsen) of the 1st/112th inf. Reg. of the 28th Infantry Division. During the Battle of the Bulge, LTC Olsen was a Platoon Sergeant, and all the remaining members of his platoon were captured. In later years, I met Colonel Wurst, who was assigned with the 505th Airborne Inf. Regiment of the 82nd Airborne Division. During the war, he made three combat jumps, including the Operation Market Garden in Holland. Later, he wrote an autobiography *Descending From The Clouds*, and we became good friends.

My wife Peggy and I had the privilege to attend the Remembrance and Commemoration of the 73rd Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge in Washington D.C. in December 2017. Let me say that it was an exciting experience, and one of the most rewarding, of our travels. We have been to D.C. several times, but did not expect on day one what we would experience the next few days.

The President, Gary Higgins, and the Event Coordinator, Ms. Doris Davis, and all staff and volunteers were extremely welcoming. The ten Battle of The Bulge Heroes were nothing short of being who and what they were on December 16th 1944. We enjoyed every moment,



Ron Gilbert and Peggy Stulc in DC.

from the reception at the Luxembourg Ambassador's Residence and meeting the Ambassador (H.E. Sylvie Lucas) and the Charge d'Affaires a.i. of the Embassy of Belgium (Mr. Christophe Payot), to the laying of the Wreath at the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Memorial, to the finality of wreath laying at The Tomb of the Unknowns (which was especially moving). The Event was well-planned and organized—exceptional in all details, a job well done!

At the Tomb of the Unknowns, Major General Michael L. Howard, Commander of the 3rd U.S. Inf. Rgt. (The Old Guard), and his assistant helped escort two of our Veterans with placement of the Wreath. However, before laying the wreath, MG Howard talked with each Veteran quite personally and he felt that it was his privilege to be there, and was honored to be a part of the ceremony. The escorted Veterans were very proud and humbled that they had the opportunity to lay the wreath. It is not every day when a Major General escorts someone at The Tomb of Unknowns, but MG Howard knew this was something incredible—a day in his life he will always remember.

The Mission of the Wreaths Across America is to "Remember, Honor and Teach," and how fitting it was to attend the Commemoration ceremonies followed by the presentation of the wreaths at Arlington.

Again, I want to thank everyone that helped. We enjoyed every minute and will be a lasting memory.

**Sincerely, Ron Gilbert, Member
509-290-2405
colron.gilbert@gmail.com**

Editor's Note: Read more about the December Events on p. 14-15.

R.I.P. LOUIS CUNNINGHAM, VBOB PRESIDENT 2001-2003

Louis E. Cunningham, of Chesterfield, VA., died on Monday, November 27, 2017 after a long struggle with Parkinson's disease. Born in Bangor, Maine in 1924 the son of the late Lina Monk Cunningham and Alexander Cunningham, Jr., he was predeceased by three brothers, George, Irving, and Francis; and two sisters, Irene Estabrook and Evangeline Cunningham. He is survived by sister Ida Sites (now 102) and his wife of 72 years, Charlotte Fletcher Cunningham; two sons, Alan (wife Judith) and Timothy (wife Dawn); three grandsons, Richard, Scott, Sean, and step-grandson Gregory Lee; two great grandsons, two great granddaughters, and many dear friends. An honors graduate from Bangor High School Class of 42, he entered the U.S. Army and trained as a radio operator. Serving in Germany as a member of the 106th Reconnaissance Troop, 106th Infantry Division, during the Battle of



Louis E. Cunningham, 106th INFD, Reconnaissance Troop



discharge from the Army in December 1945. After his career of 47 years with Merchants Dispatch Transportation Corp., a subsidiary of New York Central and later Conrail, he retired as Director of Administration. With job transfers, he and his family moved from Maine to Boston where he lived in Malden and Reading, MA to Chicago, living in Lombard, IL, and finally to the Philadelphia area, living in Upper Gwynedd, PA before his move in 2010 to Chesterfield, VA. After his retirement, he volunteered at Valley Forge National Park and served on the Board of the Lansdale, PA Community Concerts. Service organizations he belonged to include American Ex-Prisoners of War, VFW, American Legion, 106th Infantry Division Association and especially the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, which he actively supported for years, serving as National President in 2001-03, and remaining on the Board through 2016.

the Bulge, he was captured along with many others of the 106th Infantry Division and spent the rest of the war in German prison camps, almost dying of starvation. Upon his release by British forces, he recuperated in France before his return to the U.S. in June 1945 when he married his high school sweetheart Charlotte Fletcher, and returned to Maine after his

A Personal Tribute to Lou Cunningham

I first met Lou in 2003 at a meeting of the Delaware Valley Chapter of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge. At that time, he was the national president of VBOB. From that initial meeting, I was fortunate to spend a lot of time with Lou at chapter meetings, reunions, and various trips sponsored by the Delaware Valley Chapter.

Through the years it became apparent that Lou was well-respected by his peers and all who knew him. I am very fortunate that Lou considered me a friend.

For many years the Delaware Valley Chapter would go to the Valley Forge Military Academy & College (VFMAC) in December to commemorate the beginning of the Battle of the Bulge. During those earlier years, Brigadier General Alfred A. Sanelli was assigned to VFMAC and composed the following prayer.

"Almighty Father, we honor this day the memory of those gallant men and women who contributed most to the greatness of our nation—men and women who died in the uniform of the Armed Forces of the United States, especially those who were lost in the Battle of the Bulge. They were the true breeds. They served this great nation to protect our cherished freedom, our

way of life, who endured the dangers of combat, who displayed uncommon bravery and served so valiantly in our wars.

"Their peace has come. May they rest in honored glory in the hearts of their countrymen. We will remember them. They still march, but their footsteps make no sound. They still serve, but do not answer when their names are called. They shall not grow old as we that are left to grow old. Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn. At the going down of the sun and in the morning, we shall remember them.

"May their sacrifices not have been in vain. For those of us who remain, ours is a double burden: to remember the sacrifices of those who went before to ensure the validity of this day, and to strive with all our strength to preserve peace throughout the world. May we know peace in our day. Amen."

This prayer is appropriate for Lou and all others who served during that horrific battle. Lou, thank you for all you did for so many, may you rest in eternal peace—you certainly earned it!

—Submitted by Ralph Bozorth,
Past VBOB Executive Vice President,
and Past Treasurer

NANCY MONSON PASSED AWAY

It is in deep sadness we report the passing of Nancy Monson, who for years served as the Administrative Director of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Inc. One is easily satisfied with the very best, and that is what Nancy Monson represented to VBOB. Nancy had great administrative skills, and was always at ease on the job. As described so well by John Bowen, she handled the office for VBOB for years, having special skills but assuming other duties as well. Case in point: handling VBOB memorabilia for sale to members and the general public.

Nancy moved away from the area, to be near her daughter, and I tried in every way possible to keep her involved with VBOB. Distance was a factor and slowly she faded into the sunset. This great lady represented the heart and soul of our organization for many years and we mourn her passing.

She is survived by her husband Bill Monson and daughter Lynn, both who currently reside in Evan Georgia. We express our condolence to them and our appreciation of her service to VBOB.

—Submitted by David Bailey, Member,
Board Member, and Past President

MEMBERS IN MEMORIAM

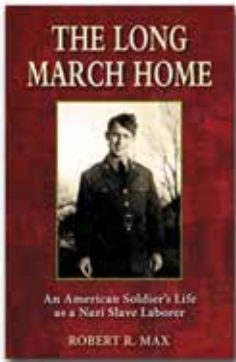
Please notify us when you hear that any member of our organization has recently passed away, so that we may honor them in a future *Bulge Bugle*. Also, kindly notify us of any errors or omissions.

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 December 31, 2017, that these BOBA Inc. members have also recently passed away:

BURDICK, DONALD W.	16 FAO BN CO B	KLINE, ROBERT E.	106 INFD 423 REG 3 BN CO M
CUNNINGHAM, LOUIS E.	106 INFD 1106 RECON TP	LOCKSHIN, JAMES D.	102 INFD 102 SIG
EDMONDSON, THOMAS L.	3 ARMDD 33 ABN HQ CO	MERRIMAN, PAUL F.	736 FABN CO C
FORTE, JAMES T.	94 INFD 301 FA BN SERV BTRY	MONSON, NANCY C.	MEMBER
FRAZIER, RAY E.	84 INFD 334 REG CO M	REED, THOMAS C.	53 FLD HOSP
HILL, WILLIAM D.	99 INFD 393 REG 1 BN CO C	RENNER, CURTIS A.	RESCUE SQUAD
GRAYSON, GENE	87 INFD 347 REG 912 FA BN	ROBBINS, MICHAEL	MEMBER
HERRINGTON, MAX G.	5 INFD 11 REG CO A	VETERE, FRANK	334 HVY PTN BN/1104 FIGHT GP
HORNBERGER, JOHN E.	29 INFD 116 REG 2 BN CO D	WAFFLE, CHARLES W.	4 ARMDD 94 ARTIL BTRY B
KIST, HAROLD G.	99 INFD 394 INF CO K	WEBSTER, C. O.	740 TK BN CO A
KLEMMER SR, BERNARD J.	7 INFD 347 REG CO I		

WWI VET AND SLAVE LABORER FOR NAZIS PUBLISHES BOOK



At age 94, a veteran of World War II—whose story is documented in The National WWII Museum in New Orleans and the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC—has published a memoir describing his fate at the hands of his Nazi captors.

Newly enlisted in the Army during World War II, 21-year-old Bob Max soon found himself recruited into the Fort Dix Swing Band to play alongside some of the top musicians in the country—sidemen who performed with the big bands of Tommy Dorsey, Les Brown, Harry

James, and Benny Goodman. Bob was thrilled.

One day his name appeared on a list of recruits to be shipped out for basic training, preparation for ultimate combat. Bandleader Jack Leonard arranged for the order to be set aside, but feeling the call of duty, Bob chose to ship out anyway. He told Jack that he expected to be back with the band someday. “Kid,” Jack said, “you leave now and you’re not ever coming back...”

To read more about the book and purchase online, go to: hellgatepress.com/robert-r-max/long-march-home

APPLICATION PROCESS FOR NEW VETERANS ID CARD

The VA has announced that the application process for the national Veterans Identification Card (VIC) is now available for Veterans — yet another action honoring their service.

Only those Veterans with honorable service will be able to apply

for the ID card, which will provide proof of military service, and may be accepted by retailers in lieu of the standard DD-214 form to obtain promotional discounts and other services where offered to Veterans.

“The new Veterans Identification Card provides a safer and more convenient and efficient way for most Veterans to show proof of service,” said VA secretary Dr. David J. Shulkin. “With the card, Veterans with honorable service to our nation will no longer need to carry around their paper DD-214s to obtain Veteran discounts and other services.”

The VIC provides a more portable and secure alternative for those who served the minimum obligated time in service, but did not meet the retirement or medical discharge threshold. Veterans who served in the armed forces, including the reserve components, and who have a discharge of honorable or general (under honorable conditions) can request a VIC.

To request a VIC, Veterans must visit vets.gov, click on “Apply for Printed Veteran ID Card” on the bottom left of the page, sign in or create an account. Veterans who apply for a card should receive it within 60 days and can check delivery status of their cards at vets.gov. A digital version of the VIC was slated to be available online by mid-December 2017.

For more information, go to: www.vets.gov/

BUY THE BOOK OF YOUR STORIES

Now available for \$34.99 (hardcover)

Barnes & Noble bookstores: Place an order with ISBN and title*

Online: Amazon: www.amazon.com/;

Barnes & Noble: www.barnesandnoble.com

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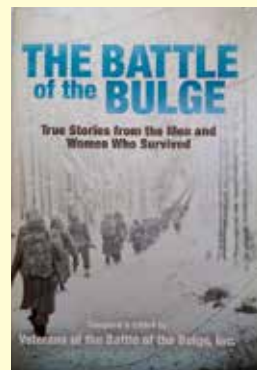
ISBN: 978-0-9910962-3-7

Title: *The Battle of the Bulge*;

True Stories From the Men and

Women Who Survived

The book is not sold by BOBA.



HONORING THE 2ND ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION



Anthony E. Jannace, 2 INFD 2 ENGR CMBT BN, and the Nazi bayonet and US Army-issued bayonet (below) Jannace brought home from the war.



New member William Jannace recently joined to honor his father, Anthony E. Jannace, 2 INFD 2 ENGR CMBT BN. The Second Infantry Division was part of Patton's Third Army and the rush across Europe. From D-Day's second wave (June 7, 1944) until May 7, 1945, the Second Infantry Division spent approximately 303 days in combat. They fought in St. Lo France, Alsace, the liberation of Paris, Belgium, Germany and Czechoslovakia. Like so many of his comrades, Anthony Jannace got frostbite during the Battle of the Bulge. He received the Purple Heart after being hit by a mortar on April 7, 1945.

The Second Engineer Combat Battalion was awarded a presidential citation for its activities from December 13-20, 1944 in Belgium. The citation reads:

"The Second Engineer Combat

Battalion is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action against the enemy during the period, 13 December 1944 to 20 December 1944 in areas around Wirtzfeld, Belgium.

As its initial assignment, the Battalion proceeded to remove numerous road blocks, obstacles, and minefields on the only available supply road for the attack of the Division. This work was done under heavy artillery and mortar fire, within sight of the enemy, against adverse weather and over snow blanketed minefields. This road was cleared and opened up abreast, or even ahead of the assaulting Infantry troops advancing in the woods on either side.

With the sudden German counter offensive in the West, one company of the Battalion was sent from the rear in bivouac and suffered severe casualties. Pulling itself together, this company furiously fought back against the German armored spearhead, destroying several tanks and many Infantrymen. Pocketed elements held out for three days, though completely surrounded, until all ammunition and food was exhausted, when they were finally overcome.

Still other elements of the Battalion were twice thrown into the line as the only Infantry reserves to withstand the German push in the rear flank of the Division. Another company constructed a final barrier and obstacle belt behind our withdrawing Infantry. Mines, road blocks and demolitions were placed under heavy enemy fire and amidst infiltrating enemy Infantry on all sides, thus delaying his pursuit of our withdrawal. Without rest from duties or clearing roads for advancing fighting as Infantry, and placing road blocks and obstacles for withdrawal, the Second Engineer Combat Battalion took up its all important mission of keeping the only escape route for the Division open. This was a newly constructed one way road across swamps and hills which in spite of severest conditions of melting snow and ice, drizzling rain, was kept passable for the never-ending columns of tanks and trucks of the major part of two Divisions which had to withdraw over this route. The men of the Battalion worked unceasingly, night and day, until the last

vehicle of the Division was successfully extricated.

All through the days of attack and withdrawal, the Second Engineer Combat Battalion skillfully, speedily, and courageously executed their tasks to assist and protect the Second Infantry Division in its combat missions. Through the seven day period, the Battalion worked and fought continuously suffering approximately twenty five percent casualties. The outstanding performance of the officers and men of this unit, under exceptionally difficult and hazardous conditions, exemplifies their deep devotion to duty and the highest traditions of the Corps of Engineers and the United States Army."



Marvin Mischnick, 3 ARMDD 23 AEB HQ, with an unexploded 500 lb. bomb, France, 1944. "I learned later that this could be dangerous," he has said.

MARVIN MISCHNICK'S WWII PHOTOS

Member Marvin Mischnick was the 3rd Armored Division 1941-45, Headquarters Photographer. He recently notified us that a selection of his photos from the University of Illinois Archives (3AD WWII collection) and from his personal files, can be seen on the 3rd Armored Division website.

Go to: www.3ad.com, click on "World War II," then click on "Marvin Mischnick Photos" to view more of Mischnick's superb photos from the war.

WWII, ALL IN THE FAMILY

by Joe Landry, 776th Anti-Aircraft Artillery,
Automatic Weapons Battalion



I'm 18 years old, and it's October 1942. The attack on Pearl Harbor occurred just 10 months prior to my 18th birthday. My friends were being drafted. I knew my time was coming. I was ready to serve my country so I went to the draft board to sign up in January, 1943. This is where my story starts...

Once I completed the enlistment process, everything happened fast. After a week at Ft. Devens, MA, I was shipped to Camp Davis, NC on 5 Apr 1943 for training in the 776th Battalion,

learning to shoot anti-aircraft artillery (AAA). The weapons included 40 mm and 50 caliber quad guns as well as the M1 rifle, the 45 caliber semi-automatic pistol and submachine gun. I was also trained to be a heavy truck driver. After training in Camp Davis, our outfit was moved to Ft. Fisher, NC by motor convoy and was there until 27 Oct. Not long after that, our outfit was shipped back to Camp Davis and then to Camp Pickett, Fort A.P. Hill and then Blackstone Air Base, VA. We performed maneuvers until the middle of Nov. We had to live in tents and I remember it being very cold and snowy. On 13 Dec, we were moved to West Point Air Field in Arlington, VA.

On 12 Jan, 1944, we were moved to Camp Edwards, MA for more training and then on 16 Feb, our outfit moved to Camp Miles Standish, MA. On 27 Feb, we boarded the *SS Borinquen* in Boston Harbor and left for Europe the next day. We landed in Gourock Bay, Scotland and boarded a train to Camp Lianmartin Monmouthshire, South Wales. It was there where we received our equipment and we became 'operational' on 9 Apr. We moved to Cornwall County and set up our guns around Carrick Rd and Falmouth Bay. Our HQ was set up in the Trulissick House. The Batteries A, B, C and D were situated nearby. Not long after arrival, we had an air raid. A jerry hit a large oil tanker in the harbor and this caused quite a fire.

At the end of May, we received orders to ship out on 1 June for D-Day but our orders were canceled because the whole battalion couldn't be moved at the same time (there just weren't enough trucks.) Hence, we missed all the action on D-Day. On 14 Jul, we received orders to move to a marshalling area near Chasewater (about 3 hrs away). On the 17 Jul, we were back at Falmouth Bay and loaded our vehicles and equipment on the ship. The ship passed by Cherbourg, France and dropped us at Omaha Beach on 18 Jul. We unloaded the vehicles and equipment, but it took a few days due to the rough seas. We set up our guns in the vicinity of Insigny, France. Many of our men witnessed the bombing of Saint-Lô (nearby). The town had been occupied by the Germans. In an effort to liberate Saint-Lô and eradicate the Germans, hundreds of dive bombers from the 8th and 9th Air Corp from England dropped their bombs Saint-Lô. The town was 97% destroyed (it became known as 'The Capital of Ruins' as a result). Saint-Lô was one of the key cities to the opening of the Falaise Gap, which ultimately allowed Allied forces to expel German forces from Northern France.

After Omaha Beach, I remember going through many towns in a convoy, moving either troops or supplies. They include Bayeux, Saint-Lô, Mont Saint-Michel, Le Mans, Saint-Hilaire, Paris, Reims, Verdun, Étain, then to Belgium: to Malmédy, St. Vith, then to Luxembourg City and then to Germany: to Saarbrücken, Bad Münster, Nuremberg and Munich. At different times during the war, we were attached to the

1st Army, 7th Army, 3rd Army, 8th Air Force, 9th Air Force, 12th US Army Group, 21st US Army Group and the 9th Air Defense Command. When we were attached to the 3rd Army, we were with the 49th AAA Brigade and we protected airfields, ammo dumps and important rail road bridges from German aircraft.

I spent a lot of time on the Red Ball Express, chasing down General George Patton's 3rd Army to provide him with supplies, so I wasn't in one location very long. My brother, Harold, was in the 9th Air Force, 43rd Repair Squadron and was attached to the 3rd Army Field Artillery, but neither of us had any clue where the other one was during the war. When I was in Verdun, a very interesting thing happened. I just happened to see a jeep from my brother's outfit on the bumper and asked the driver to stop. I asked him where the outfit was stationed, and when he pointed and said, "Over there," I set out to see if, by chance, I could find my brother—and lo and behold I found him! It was quite a surprise to both of us. We were able to spend time together before he left for a new assignment. Coincidentally, it was Thanksgiving. Our visit lifted both of our spirits. We didn't get to see each other again until we were back home in Dec 1945. Luckily, we both returned from the war with no major injuries.

Stories that I recollect as a truck driver: One time, we were up by the front line and an MP told us we couldn't go any further—we were blocked by German forces. We weren't sure what was going to happen next but we sat patiently, waited for further word from the MP and could finally move on. Thank heavens the MP was there to warn us. Another time, we were near St. Vith and I was sleeping under my truck (we slept anywhere we could). I could hear shelling and knew it was from the Germans. It dawned on me that the truck had a full load of gas cans on it. If a shell were to hit the truck, I wouldn't be telling this story now. As soon as I realized the danger, I ran as fast as I could into the woods to find a safer spot. When the shelling stopped, I returned to the truck. This was just one of many close calls.

Another time, I was leading a 15-vehicle convoy behind an officer who was driving a jeep. He was in the lead and he was not watching behind him. He drove like crazy and disappeared into the dust. I instructed my convoy to pull over and we'd wait for the officer to come back, because he'd soon realize we weren't behind him. He did eventually return and threatened me with a court-martial because I didn't keep up. I just told him that I was watching out for my safety and the safety of the convoy. Nothing more was said. As he resumed the lead, he paid more attention to us.

I remember it being very cold during the Bulge, at times below zero. I felt more prepared than some of the guys because I was raised in MA. Also, I was 18 - 19 years old and could 'tough it out' more than I can now at age 93. The guys from the warmer states weren't so prepared and they'd try to find ways to keep warm. I remember that they'd empty sandbags and wrap the burlap sack around their feet to keep them warm.

When the war was over, I was shipped back to France to La Havre to Camp Lucky Strike. The plans were that I would be shipped home for leave and then prepare to go to the Pacific. On my way home, orders to go to the Pacific were canceled because of the surrender of Japan. We landed in Camp Kilmer, New Jersey and then eventually, we went back to Ft. Devens, MA. I was discharged on 8th Dec, 1945. I was 20 years old. When I returned home and I felt that I had lived a lifetime in the past 2 years. I was so glad to be home and with my family again. Not everyone was so lucky.

Not only did I serve, but all of my 6 siblings served in the war effort at one time or another. Three of my brothers were overseas in WW II (2 in Europe and 1 in Okinawa); one sister served in the Coast Guard in NY as a secretary; and another sister served in the USO at Ft Devon,

MA. Later my younger brother served in the Navy in Korea and Vietnam (he had been too young to serve in WWII). Of 7 children, my parents had only 2 of them at home in WWII—the rest of us were away. When I came home, my mother's hair had turned grey and I hardly recognized her. All of us stayed near Shirley, MA after the war and resumed our lives. We were a very close family. I married my sweetheart in 1953 and raised 3 wonderful children. My son, Steve, has joined me during many Veteran's events, which I thoroughly enjoy.

REVISITING THE TROOPSHIP

by Robert S. Scherer, 106 INF D ARTY HQ BTRY



It's about 7:15 AM on March 5, 1965 and my friend and I are sitting in slow-moving, toll bridge back-up traffic on the Tappan Zee Bridge over the Hudson River, on our way to work, in White Plains, New York. This morning is bright and clear. Today is my friend's turn to drive and I'm trying to nap. Suddenly he says, "Hey, look at that big ship under us." I look out the window and there it is, moving south towards New York City. It is being pushed by a tugboat lashed to the port side of the stern. As the

ship clears the bridge I can see its name. It is called "Wakefield." I repeat the name to myself—it seems familiar. Then I remember: that's the name of the ship that took me from Boston to Liverpool, England in 1944. I tell my friend and explain the circumstances to him. Traffic has now moved on and we are out of sight of the ship.

The next morning he gives me a newspaper clipping, from the *Nyack News Journal* with a picture of the ship and the title "Old Troopship Fades Away Into The Night."



Evidently, the ship had been in the Maritime Administration's Hudson River Reserve Fleet at Jones Point, New York just south of the Bear Mountain Bridge. This is where they stored old liberty ships until they are sold for scrap. Now it was on its way to the scrap yard In Kearney N. J.

The last sentence in the clipping reads, "Who knows but what some of those commuters once rode on her proud decks?" I jotted down: "I DID." Here's my experience aboard the *Wakefield*:

The 106 Infantry Division was commissioned on March 15, 1943, at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. We trained while the Army took over 7000 troops as replacements for divisions in combat. After maneuvers in March 1944, the division moved to Camp Atterbury outside Indianapolis Indiana. Still more training of replacements.

Then, in early October, the division prepared for an overseas assignment. More training and arms qualification. On or about November 1, 1944 the division traveled by train to embarkation ports. The infantry went to a camp near New York City. The artillery went to Camp Myles Standish just outside Boston, MA. We spent two weeks waiting for our ship. Then, about November 18, we boarded the *Wakefield*. The headquarters battery was assigned to compartment 0 - 2, which was on the bottom deck and in the bow of the ship.

Shortly after arriving in our quarters, a sergeant announced that he needed volunteers for jobs while onboard ship. First, he asked for volunteers to be messengers. I immediately raised my hand. Secondly, he asked for volunteers to man brooms and cleaning equipment. I don't remember how many hands went up for that!

Being a messenger meant taking messages from the radio room to various places on the ship. So, the next morning when we sailed, I reported to the radio room for duty along with three or four others. Messengers wore a white armband which allowed them access to various parts of the ship. For example, being able to go to the head of the mess line. I spent the morning delivering messages to various officers on the A deck and the afternoon sitting on the floor of the passageway playing cards.

Every morning an announcement came over the ship's loudspeakers: "Now hear this, Army sweepers: man your brooms, clean sweep fore and aft!" The message was repeated twice more.

The mess hall was on the B deck, in the center of the ship. It was filled with rows of long tray tables from side to side. These tables were stainless steel with a 3 inch rim, on either of the long sides. The ends had no rim and when the ship rolled, the food trays would slide in that direction. The trays at each end would fall off. You soon learned to hang onto your tray.

The third day was very stormy. The ship was headed into the waves, so it would climb to the top of a wave and then crash to the bottom and so on, as well as roll from side to side. While waiting outside of the radio room, I noticed a door at the end of the passageway and walked over to see outside. But, because there were no windows in the door, I opened it and stepped outside to a platform. I watched as the waves rose and fell before the ship. I hung on to the railing tightly and looked up as we hit the bottom of the trough, and believe me, that wave was at least 40 feet high! I quickly went inside.

On the fourth day of the crossing, in calm seas, I could see we had picked up an escort of destroyer escort vessels. That meant we were nearing our destination. On the fifth day we arrived at the port at Liverpool England and disembarked to travel by train to a camp somewhere in the middle of England. Two weeks later we again boarded a vessel, for another sea voyage—this time an LST to cross the channel.

We sat outside Le Havre for two days and finally the General raised his one star flag. We finally docked about 6:30 PM that evening. The rest is history.

Seventy three years later, I still remember it as though it happened last month.



Students from Morehouse College in Atlanta followed by Belgian students, marching to the Wereth 11 Memorial at the 2017 ceremony.

WERETH 11 CEREMONY SLATED FOR APRIL 28, 2018

The U.S. Memorial Wereth committee wishes that the year 2018 will fulfill your dearest wishes and keep you very healthy.

Thanks to the student exchange program initiated by the American Embassy in Brussels, the 2017 Wereth 11 ceremony was

memorable. The students from Morehouse College made presentations that may easily be described as extraordinary. Hermann Langer's memorial and the Wereth Eleven are no longer unknown in Atlanta, GA.

We were very happy to welcome almost

400 guests. The precious support from the Municipality of Amel, the Belgian Army and guests' presence have made from this day a great success. We heartily thank all who attended.

Because of the many commemorations of the 100 years of the WWI, our next ceremony will take place on Saturday, April 28th, 2018 at 11AM.

Four of the Morehouse students, Christopher, David, Gary and Luka, who were our best ambassadors in Atlanta, have expressed their desire to go on working with our association. This makes us very happy, and will lead to a few small changes in the course of the next ceremony.

Your presence reinforces us in our efforts to honor the memorial, the Wereth Eleven as well as all African-American soldiers. It helps us keep sight of Hermann Langer's goal. Without him, the event of 1944 would have been forgotten.

We hope that you will be able to join us in April 2018.

*For more information, go to wereth.org.
—Submitted by Solange DeKeyser,
BOBA Member and President/Secretary of
the U.S. Memorial Wereth V.O.G.*

MEMBER PAUL WILLIS AWARDED FRENCH L.O.H.

On October 23, 2017, Paul Willis, 97, from Canton, NC, was awarded the French Legion of Honor by the French Consul General, Louis de Corail, at a ceremony in Knoxville, Tennessee. Willis, a Technical Sergeant in Company G, 329th Infantry, 83rd Division, landed in Normandy two weeks after D-Day. During his three years of service, he saw action in Normandy, Brittany, Luxembourg, the Hurtgen Forest, the Battle of the Bulge, and the Rhine River. Although he received a Purple Heart for injuries sustained in the Battle of the Bulge, Willis says the hedgerows of Normandy were his most horrendous experience.



Also present at the Knoxville ceremony, which was held at the Sherrill Hills Retirement Community Theater, were Amelie De Gaulle, grand niece of the late President of France, Charles De Gaulle, and members of the Alliance Francaise Knoxville. Consul General Louis de Corail, who represents France in six Southeastern states and is based in Atlanta, presented the award on behalf of French President Emmanuel Macron. The Legion of Honor, established in 1802 by Napoleon Bonaparte, is awarded for service to France and is its most prestigious honor. Willis and one other WWII Veteran, James Mynatt, US Army Air Force 490th Bomb Group, were presented the Knight's Badge as a pledge of France's eternal gratitude for their courage and fight, after



Young Paul Willis, 83 INFD 329 REG CO G (left), and French Consul General Louis de Corail awarding the Legion of Honor to him (right).

risking their lives for the freedom of France and Europe during the war.

Willis, who worked at Champion Paper and Fibre Company before retiring, has remained active in the community, teaching Sunday School, speaking at school events, and writing poetry. Of Normandy, he wrote:

The hedgerows are where the fires of hell burned bright
For the shell bursts without letup continued day and night.
This brought the cries of "medic!" as the shrapnel spread
far and wide.

For many there were wounded. Also, many died.

—Excerpt from *Normandy Invasion* by Paul Willis © 2016

For more information about Paul's poetry, contact wetbird@bellsouth.net.

—Submitted by Brenda Hughes, Member

75th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE TOUR



Plans are underway for a commemoration tour of the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium and Luxembourg.

We do not have any details at this time, other than it would include the date of December 16, 2019.

Details will be posted in *The Bulge Bugle* and on the website when we have them available. Contact information will be provided when confirmed.

EVENT TICKETS FOR VETS

Vet Tix provides tickets to events which can help reduce stress, strengthen family bonds, build life-long memories and encourage service members and veterans to stay engaged with local communities and American life. We support our troops by honoring their service and providing positive family and life experiences, during and after their years of service to our country.

Vet Tix provides tickets to all branches of currently-serving Military and Veterans, including immediate family of troops KIA.

Vet Tix secures tickets to sporting events, concerts, performing arts, educational and family activities across the nation. VetTixers sign up online. We verify their service. VetTixers request tickets to events that interest them, then pay a small delivery fee to receive their free tickets.

Every week thousands of tickets are available to veterans, service members, and family members of those killed in action, enabling them go to major sports games, concerts, and a whole host of other ticketed events.

Vet Tix, a nonprofit that channels more than 95 percent of its revenues directly into programs, is committed to helping put veterans and service members (including Reserve and Guard) in empty seats at games and events across the nation. Since 2008, we have had the pleasure to distribute more than 3.6 million free tickets to over 651,857 Vet Tixers.

To become a Vet Tix member, just complete the application form with the veteran's information. Once you have created an account and verified the military service, you can review and apply for tickets to hundreds of other upcoming events across the country.

Vet Tix has both donated tickets and discounted ticket offers. Other than a very small delivery fee, all donated tickets are free! With certain partnerships, once donated tickets have been claimed, additional discounted opportunities will be made available.

For more information, go to: www.vettix.org

HELPING VETERANS HEAL MENTAL ILLNESS THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY

The Veteran Photo Recovery Project (VPRP), an innovative art therapy program at the Veterans Affairs Menlo Park, utilizes photography to help veterans suffering from moral injury, post-traumatic stress disorder, military sexual trauma, and other mental illnesses by giving them a visual language and the tools to express themselves, an important step towards healing.

The project is documented in "Visions of Warriors," a powerful new film released on Veteran's Day 2017 from Los Angeles filmmaker Ming Lai. Ming spent three years following the efforts of Susan Quaglietti, an experienced nurse practitioner who founded the program, and documents her work with veterans including Mark Pinto, a U.S. Marine Corps helicopter pilot during the Gulf War who became a Buddhist priest and then an artist.

"In 2018, the U.S. will be looking at the 17th year of war in Afghanistan with no end in sight," said Lai. "The untold cost is the many veterans who return home suffering from mental illness, including anxiety, depression, substance abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), military sexual trauma (MST), and moral injury."



During the Vietnam War, at least 18.7% of veterans developed PTSD (Dohrenwend et al., 2006). And during the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars, data suggests that 36.9% of veterans were diagnosed with a mental illness—21.8% with PTSD and 17.4% with depression (Seal et al., 2009). Approximately 22 veterans commit suicide each day.

Approximately one-half of the veterans who receive traditional evidence-based therapy still

experience symptoms of mental illness. As result, many alternative therapies are being explored, including art therapy.

"Using art such as photography is visually based and it can assist with expressing suppressed feelings associated with problems such as PTSD and MST," said Quaglietti.

"This type of therapeutic intervention can be highly beneficial for some veterans and some even believe that participating in this process may have saved their life."

The VPRP supplements traditional therapy, helping veterans learn how to relax their body, focus their mind, be in the moment, appreciate beauty, capture their subject, and affirm life, using this process to express their feelings, tell their stories, and assist their recovery.

The film was released on Veterans Day, and will be available through Amazon Video Direct, Apple iTunes, Google Play, Vimeo on Demand, and online at www.visionsofwarriors.com/store.

THE 73RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE EVENT IN WASHINGTON, DC



Our 10 veteran attendees and dignitaries at the Luxembourg Ambassador's residence reception: Seated (from left to right): Irving Locker, Hope Kirkendall, Fred Gordon, John "Tom" Ingram, and Richard "Dick" Whalen. Standing (from left to right): BOBA President Gary Higgins, Athanace "Joe" Landry, Her Excellency Sylvie Lucas, Ambassador of Luxembourg, George Merz, Mr. Christophe Payot, Charge d'Affaires ad interim of the Embassy of Belgium, Alvin Sussman, BG. Georges Franchomme, Brigadier General (Air), Defense, Military, Naval and Air Attache, Francis Chesko, and Peter E. Munger.

EVENTS RECAP

There were about 70 people who came together to commemorate the 73rd Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge Dec 13 - 15, 2017. On Wednesday, Dec 13, we were guests at the Luxembourg Ambassador's Residence and were greeted by Her Excellency, Sylvie Lucas, Ambassador of Luxembourg. Also present was Mr. Christophe Payot, Charge D'Affaires ad interim of the Embassy of Belgium. We were honored to have 9 Veterans and 1 Nurse Veteran who served during the Bulge with us that evening. On Thursday, we visited the Pentagon, and enjoyed our banquet that evening. On Friday, after wreath laying ceremonies at the WWII Memorial, the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Monument



Some stayed on for the Wreaths Across America event on Saturday Dec 16 at Arlington National Cemetery.

and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, we enjoyed a luncheon at the DoubleTree Hilton hotel. On Saturday, approximately 20 people stayed over to lay wreaths on Wreaths Across America Day.

The opportunity to take part in laying wreaths during Wreaths Across America will present again next year—on Sat, Dec



Athanace "Joe" Landry, Jr. 776th AAA AW Bn (second from left) and Fred Gordon, 9th ARMDD 3 FABN (third from left) laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Following behind is BOBA President and CEO Gary Higgins.

15. There were 90,000 participants who laid 244,700 wreaths this year (the largest turnout ever recorded). In the entire US, grateful Americans laid 1,565,000 wreaths at 1,422 participating locations. The wreaths were delivered by 500 truckloads transported across the country through a network of hundreds of volunteer drivers, donated trucking and diesel, and countless hours of dedicated volunteers committed to the mission to Remember, Honor and Teach. —Submitted by Doris Davis

LAYING THE WREATH AT THE TOMB OF THE UNKNOWNNS

Athanace "Joe" Landry, Jr. 776 AAA AW Bn and Fred Gordon, 9th ARMD FABN laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery on Dec 15, 2017. The Tomb is guarded by sentinels from the 4th Bn of the 3rd US Inf Rgt (The Old Guard). The Commanding General of the Military District of WA, MG Michael L. Howard, accompanied the Veterans as they laid the wreath. It was very moving ceremony. It was hard to hold back the tears when the bugler played TAPS, with the drummer quietly adding a special effect.

Joe, Fred and their families share their thoughts on the special day:

Joe Landry: I was surprised and honored.

It brought back a lot of memories, especially from 1944. Never in my 93 years did I expect something like this to happen to me.

Steve Landry (Joe's son): Living far from home for many years, I've seldom been able to see my Dad receive the honors he has gotten for his service, not only for his time in the Army, but for his many years of support to Veterans organizations and causes. It was truly special to see him have the opportunity to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Knowing just how special it was to him, made it doubly so for me and my wife.

Fred Gordon: First of all, I was very surprised and proud to have been chosen for this sacred honor of placing the wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier along with Joe Landry. It was a privilege to have the chance to honor these brave men who not only gave up their lives but also their bodies and identity in battle.

Cheryl Gordon (Fred's wife): I was thrilled when Fred was given the opportunity and honor to place the wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. I know both Fred and Joe were very cold as they waited without shelter for the ceremony to begin. As I watched, it brought tears to my eyes, even behind the camera as I tried to take some photos. And it still brings tears each time I tell someone that Fred placed the wreath in Arlington. What an honor!

—Submitted by Joe Landry, his son Steve, and Fred & Cheryl Gordon

ANOTHER TAKE ON THE EVENTS

My wife Judith Kroll and I felt compelled to write and let you know how impressed we were with the 2017 Battle of the Bulge Commemoration in Washington D.C. As information, my wife's father Joseph M. Kroll Jr. fought in the Battle of the Bulge, but he passed away 45 years ago when Judith was very young. He was in the 99th Infantry Division. He received the Bronze Star and the Combat Infantryman Badge for his service. He was a Mess Sergeant and in the Military Police during the war in Germany and Belgium. It has been one of my wife's quests in life to find out about her father's military service, his experiences as a young soldier, and to meet veterans who may have known her father. We only found out about the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Organization during our trip to Normandy, France for the 70th Anniversary of D-Day,



There were many interesting WWII photos and artifacts on display (left), and a Christmas tree trimmed with veteran photos, unit insignias and other baubles (right), in the Hospitality Room.

and she has been an active member of BOBA ever since we returned. For her, it is an incredible way to honor her father's memory and to keep this important part of American history alive for future generations.

It is always an unforgettable experience to talk with actual veterans of the Battle and we enjoyed every moment spent talking with the 9 veterans and 1 nurse who were in attendance this year. We appreciated having the time every day in the hospitality room to get to meet these fine veterans and their families, with plenty of time to converse with them and hear each of their recollections. These are precious moments for us and ones that we will never forget.

The registration process on Wednesday was organized and easy, allowing for everyone in attendance to seamlessly begin to participate in the festivities. We particularly enjoyed the tree trimming and the interesting stories some of the vets shared while hanging their ornaments on the tree.

The reception at the Luxembourg Embassy was just a joy to attend, especially listening to the dignitaries from Luxembourg and Belgium thank those veterans for their efforts in liberating these two very thankful countries.

The Pentagon tour of course was extremely interesting, and we were truly honored to walk

these hallowed halls with some of the Bulge veterans who are our countries greatest heroes!

The banquet was exquisitely planned, and it brings such a warm feeling to our hearts to see everyone together to celebrate and honor these very special men and women.

The events at Arlington Cemetery and at the WWII Memorial on Friday were a truly humbling experience. Seeing these veterans honored in such a prestigious way was a sight to behold. Also having high-ranking military personnel and foreign dignitaries pay tribute to them and their lost comrades made these events all the more memorable.

We appreciated the extra bonus of Doris Davis organizing our participation on Saturday in the Wreaths Across America event at Arlington National Cemetery—truly a moving experience.

We would hope that everyone—veterans or associated families—would make every effort to participate in this event in the future, and assuredly that they will have an enjoyable and memorable experience. We would also encourage families who have lost these venerable veterans to father time, like we have, to also plan on attending. Their memories will always be held dear to our hearts, and as that wonderful veteran Irving Locker always says, "Lest we never forget."

We wanted to compliment Doris Davis for putting together such a well-planned and interesting event. Thank you, Tracey Diehl, for the ease in registration and Alan Cunningham for your help during the banquet. It's clear that a great deal of time and thought was spent in planning this commemoration. Every detail of the event was well-organized, and I am sure that everyone in attendance had a remarkable time. Please carry on the wonderful work—it is sincerely appreciated.

—Submitted by Tom Gargaro and Judith Kroll, Members



Enjoying the Thursday night banquet were (left to right): Irving Locker, Bernice Locker, Tom Gargaro, and Judith Kroll.



CHAPTERS COMMEMORATE BULGE ANNIVERSARY



Members of the Golden Gate Chapter, the local Belgian Club, and dignitaries from the Belgium and Luxembourg Consulates attended the annual Bulge Commemoration held on December 9.

GOLDEN GATE CHAPTER (10)

The Golden Gate Chapter of the Battle of the Bulge Association held their annual commemoration ceremony on Saturday, Dec. 9, 2017. Those in attendance included: Nathalie Delrue-McGuire, Honorary Consul of Belgium; Hon. Henri Vantieghe, Consul General of Belgium in Los Angeles; Hon. Pierre Franck, Consul General of Luxembourg; Veterans Col. John H. Roush Jr., 83rd Inf Div; Ken Mar, 2nd Inf Div, 23rd Inf Rgt, 3rd Bn; John Althuisen, 7th Armd Div, 23rd Armd Inf Bn; William "Bill" Armstrong 26th Div, 263rd FA Bn; Dr. John Kerner, 320th Inf. Div, Medic; Lou Ravano, 1st Inf. Div, 18th Inf. Rgt.; family members of the Veterans as well as members of the local Belgian Club. There were approximately 45 people at the event. We were honored to have three Consul Generals at our meeting as well as our former Honorary Consul General of Belgium, Ms. Rita Bral. The Consul General of Luxembourg treated us to wine from Luxembourg. The luncheon was prepared by Doris Davis, President and members of the local Belgian Club.

—Submitted by Doris Davis, President of the Golden Gate Chapter



LITSENBERGER CHAPTER (68)

Veteran Wendell Ellenwood (pictured at left), 752th FA Battalion, 3rd Army, attended Ohio's Alton Litsenberger Chapter 68 Battle of the Bugle Remembrance Ceremony held on Saturday, December 16, 2017. —Submitted by Tom Tomastik, Chapter 68 President

GEORGE S PATTON JR CHAPTER (11)

There were 28 remaining members and guests of the George S. Patton Chapter at our annual commemorative banquet in Birmingham, AL on Saturday, Dec 16, marking the beginning of the Battle of the Bulge. Because we have so few members, we are declaring ourselves temporarily inactive, but still plan to have monthly lunches. Wardlow (Stumpy) Watson of the 87th Infantry Division, Bob Burrus of the 87th Infantry Division, and Vern Miller of the 8th Armored Division were the three Bulge veterans who attended the luncheon.

—Submitted by Vern Miller, President, Chapter 11



GATEWAY CHAPTER (25)

It was a sunny day in St. Louis, as a crowd of over 180 people assembled on the seventy-third anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge. There were aging veterans of the battle, some in uniforms, with their family members and friends. There were police officers. There were citizens from throughout the metropolitan areas of Missouri and Illinois. All were present to honor the memory of the brave soldiers, living and dead, who sacrificed greatly for our freedom.



The occasion was a solemn one, and it was commemorated by a visual presentation and remarks about the impressive renovation of Soldiers Memorial, erected in 1936. Lynnea Magnuson, Ph.D. (pictured at left), superintendent of the memorial and museum, described how this striking facility in the city center will forever memorialize the service of our veterans of World War I and World War II.

The people in attendance reflected in silence as the names of ten deceased members of the St. Louis Chapter were called. A member of the Webster Groves High School jazz band then rose and trumpeted an extraordinary and stirring rendition of taps.

As a special tribute to the wartime people gathered, the high school jazz band played lively tunes from 1944 and 1945. Smiles and foot-tapping were everywhere.

It was a memorable service, capped by the high school choir singing the timeless Christmas songs of the season.

—Submitted by Ben Weber, Secretary, Gateway Chapter

SOUTHEAST FLORIDA CHAPTER (62)

The Southeast Florida Chapter commemorated the Battle of the Bulge on Sunday, Dec 17, 2017. There were 172 people in attendance. The key speaker was Ms. Donna Katem, the newly appointed Director of the West Palm Beach VA Medical Center. She shared information on the improvements made to help better serve our Veterans. Other speakers included Norman Frajman, Holocaust Survivor and Sonia Foster, President of Navy League, Palm Beach Council. During the luncheon, one of the attendees, General Al Irzyk was inducted in the Florida Veterans Hall of Fame. BG Irzyk is the oldest living veteran of the 3rd Cavalry Rgt. He was the commander of the 8th Tank Bn of the 4th Armd Div, and commander of the 14th Armd Cavalry Rgt during the Berlin Crisis of 1961. He celebrated his 101st birthday during this luncheon.

The attendees included Battle of the Bulge Veterans and family members, Korean War Veterans, members of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, members of the Navy League and members of The Young Marines. The colors were presented by the Young Marines. Gary Higgins, National President of the Battle of the Bulge Association and Doris Davis, Board Member, attended the event.

—Submitted by Doris Davis, BOBA Board Member,
in collaboration with George Fisher,
President of the FL Southeast Chapter



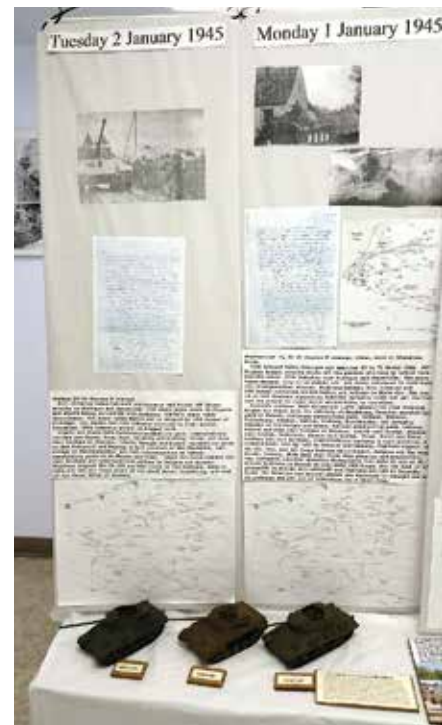
The Indiana Battle of the Bulge Display always includes a reenactment (above), held on the first Saturday in January, and exhibits include boards for each day with a summary of the ground and air battle, maps, lists of veterans first day in battle, photos and other memorabilia (below).

CENTRAL INDIANA CHAPTER (47)

The Battle of the Bulge Display was started by Hugh Ross (WWII USN SeaBee) in 2000. The display was set up at different locations until 2009, when it moved to Fort Harrison State Park in Indianapolis, Indiana. The display opens around 16 December and closes about 25 January. The display has a board for each day with a summary of the ground and air battle, map with the front line at about 0800 hours, list of veterans first day in battle and photos.

US and German tank and tank destroyer models, infantry squad dioramas, tank track pads, tank, anti-tank and artillery rounds, photos of rations and aircraft and infantry small arms are on exhibit. There is a book reading area and a VCR player with movies on the battle. Saturdays have presentations on different engagements by two people dressed as the opposing commanders. The last presentation is always Nordwind. A re-enactment is held the first Saturday in January. Volunteers from Chapter 47 and Museum of 20th Century Warfare staff the display.

—Submitted by Chris Schneider, President, Chapter 47





WEST MICHIGAN CHAPTER (23) ANNUAL BULGE COMMEMORATION

The West Michigan Chapter (23) met at noon December 16 in Traverse City. The luncheon honored the veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, and was attended by children, grandchildren, and a great-granddaughter of the Chapter's members. (The Chapter's two remaining veterans, Richard Rizzio and Maury Cole, were unable to attend this year.)

—Submitted by Tom Mountz, Treasurer and Acting President



The SC Chapter meeting on December 9 at Fort Jackson. Left to right, seated: David Hubbard, Leif Maseng, Chris Carawan, Gerald White, Jim Hubble, Joe Watson, and Walter Hedges. Left to right, standing: Guest speaker Manning Kimmel, Vernon Brantley, Dick Schneider, and Tom Burgess.

SC CHAPTER (7) NEWS

The SC Chapter met December 9 at Fort Jackson, SC. Ten Bulge vets were present. Two vets who had yet to receive them, Walter Hedges and Dick Schneider, were awarded Battle of the Bulge commemorative medals. Our guest speaker was Manning Kimmel, grandson of Admiral Husband Kimmel, who was the commander of the Pacific fleet at the time of the Pearl Harbor attack. Mr. Kimmel spoke on the efforts of his family over many years to restore the honor of Admiral Kimmel's name. He also brought copies of a book on this topic released in mid-November 2016, *A Matter of Honor*, by Anthony Summers and Robby Swan.

Some of our members participated in Wreaths Across America on December 16 at the Fort Jackson National Cemetery. Some members also rode in the Elgin, SC Catfish Stomp Christmas Parade. Others hosted and participated in interviews of 87th Division members who were having a reunion in the area.

—Submitted by Rick Hurst, Chapter 7 President

GOLDEN GATE (10) CHAPTER NEEDS HELP!

The Golden Gate Chapter (10) created a walking path memorializing the Battle of the Bulge behind the VA Hospital in San Francisco. The path is lined with signs that have the names of towns that were involved in the Battle of the Bulge (Bastogne, Arlon, Parkers Crossroads, St. Vith, Malmedy, Stavelot).



The signs have deteriorated with time and need to be replaced. The chapter no longer has the resource (the person who made the signs in the past). I would like to ask if anyone knows a woodworker who could help replace these signs with a more durable, long-lasting wood.

If anyone had an ideas, please contact Doris Davis, Chapter President at doris@battleofthebulge.org.

LEHIGH VALLEY CHAPTER (55) ANNUAL CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON



On Tuesday December 12th, 2017, the Lehigh Valley Chapter 55 held their annual Christmas luncheon meeting at the Best Western Inn in Bethlehem. The theme this year was to reminisce about Christmases from the 1940's and the Big Band dancing era. Special guests this year were the local dancing and singing troupes, The Magnolia Sadies and the Victory Society Ladies. The day was filled with shared memories of Christmas during WWII and the Battle of the Bulge, many Christmas carols led by our longtime member Judy Greenhalgh, and of course, a lot of dancing by the ladies with their WWII veteran dance partners. All of the WWII veterans in attendance received special gifts at the luncheon. Thanks to all the veterans, guests and the dancers for making this Christmas memorable.

—Submitted by Steve Savage, Chapter 55 Member

NW CHAPTER (6) IN THE NEWS

One of our members, Leonard Hitchman, 9 USAF 405 FGTR GP 511 SQD, was able to go to Nampa, ID for the first public flight of the restored P-47 *Dottie Mae*, for which he served as ground crew. He is mentioned a few times in this article.

—Jim Pennock, Northwest Chapter (6) President

THE FLIGHT OF DOTTIE MAE

By Chris Henry and Zack Baughman.

Reprinted with permission of the Experimental Aircraft Association – www.eaa.org

On August 26 the wheels of the P-47 *Dottie Mae* left the Nampa, Idaho ground for its first public flight. This moment was special for anyone who is a fan of World War II history and even more special for lovers of the P-47 Thunderbolt. The aircraft took part in the Warhawk Air Museum's annual Warbird Round Up, where more than a dozen warbirds turned out for a great event. However, the star of the show was *Dottie Mae*.

The story of *Dottie Mae* is fascinating. It first rolled off the assembly line at Republic's Evansville, Indiana plant in 1944 as P-47D-28-RA, serial number 42-29150. The aircraft was then deployed to the 9th Air Force where it joined the 511th Fighter Squadron of the 410th Fighter Group. Pilot Lt. Lawrence "Larry" Kuhl had 17 missions under his belt when he was given the new airplane, which he named *Dottie Mae* in honor of his wife back home. Kuhl commissioned a member of the ground crew to paint the nose art on the left side of the cowling, choosing artwork based on the December 1944 Roberto Vargas calendar pin up "Santa's Little Helper."

On December 16, 1944, *Dottie Mae* undertook her first combat mission, the first of 90 over the next five months. Kuhl flew 39 of those missions. On May 8, 1945, the war in Europe was over. Twenty Thunderbolts from the 410th Fighter Group were sent on an "aerial demonstration" flight to a POW/concentration camp at Ebensee, Austria, which had been liberated by Allied forces only three days prior, to boost morale. Lt. Henry Mohr was flying *Dottie Mae* at the time, and while flying over Traunsee Lake he got too low and struck the water. Although Mohr escaped, the aircraft sank to the bottom of the lake,



where it would spend the next 60 years.

Dottie Mae was rediscovered in April 2005 and recovered by Trojan Aircraft Services and Sandy Air Corp in June of that year. WWII veteran Jack Croul purchased the airplane and together with restoration specialists Vintage Airframes of Caldwell, Idaho; Allied Fighters of Nampa, Idaho; and Anderson Aeromotive, *Dottie Mae* was fully restored using much of its original parts.

The airplane made its first post-restoration flight on June 23, 2017. The Warbird Round Up in August was its first public appearance and flight. A special short film was played inside one of the hangars at the Round Up, explaining the 10 plus year restoration effort that went in to this aircraft.

There to celebrate the public unveiling were three men special in *Dottie Mae*'s past. Two pilots that flew the P-47 in combat, Kuhl and Ralph Vankerckove, and one of its ground crew, armorer Leonard Hitchman. After the short film, the hangar doors raised, and outside sat a shining *Dottie Mae*. The aircraft looks like it did when it rolled out of the factory.

The large crowd cheered when pilot John Maloney started *Dottie Mae* up for its flight. Together with a Corsair, P-38, and P-51 from the Planes of Fame collection, *Dottie Mae* made several passes before coming in to a standing ovation. The tears in the eyes of Larry Kuhl, Ralph Vankerckove, and Leonard Hitchman said it all. Those tears are the greatest compliment that the restoration crew will ever receive.

For more photos, see the story online: inspire.eaa.org/2017/09/07/the-flight-of-dottie-mae/

WE NEED YOUR CHAPTER NEWS!

Send to: tracey@battleofthebulge.org.

NEXT ISSUE (MAY) DEADLINE: MARCH 23, 2018

BELGIAN MEMBER'S ANNUAL BULGE TRIBUTE



As I have written before, I was born on December 16th, 1977. This day has always been special to me, but, as I grew up and learned about history, it became ever more special. Last year I went to light a candle in Losheim, at the exact place and time where the Battle of the Bulge began.

This year, which was my 40th birthday, I decided to again do a ceremony, to which I invited some friends. The senior of us was André Meurisse [also a BOBA Member], 80 years old. He was 7 years old at the end of the war and had his life saved by a US medic, as he had an infected wound in his shoulder caused by shrapnel.

We went to the Losheim Crossroads (Belgian Ardennes) at 5:30 a.m., at the exact place and time where the battle began, 73 years ago, to place a wreath and light a candle to remember all the soldiers who suffered during this horrible battle. This was a very special moment to me. Especially this year [2017], as the 16th of December fell on a Saturday, exactly as it did in 1944.

—Submitted by Jean-Marie Plusquin, Member

CHAPTERS' VBOB MEMORIALS AND MONUMENTS

Many of our chapters have been involved over the years in getting memorials and monuments to the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge erected across the US. We have compiled this list so that you can visit them in your travels. We apologize in advance for any mistakes or omissions—we did our best to find and list them all.

ARIZONA

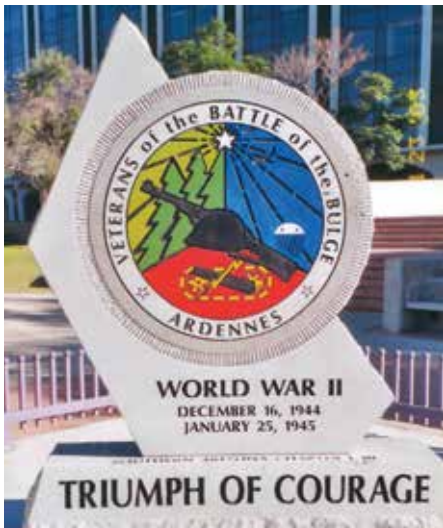
AZ Chapter 26

Wesley Bolan Memorial Plaza
1700 W Washington St
Phoenix, AZ 85007
Maintained by State of AZ
(Chapter closed.)



Southern Arizona Chapter 53

El Presidio Plaza
160 W Alameda St
Tucson, AZ 85701
(520) 791-4873
www.tucsonaz.gov/parks/parks
Chapter Contact: Laura Dwyer, 520-481-1568
The monument is of light gray Georgia granite, six feet high, five feet wide and weighing 2800 pounds. It is engraved front and back with the brilliant colors of our logo and the American, Belgian and Luxembourg flags. The monument cost \$4300.00 and was paid for entirely by donations from members of Southwest Arizona Chapter 53.



CALIFORNIA

Golden Gate Chapter 10

Battle of the Bulge Memorial Trail
San Francisco VA Medical Center
4150 Clement St
San Francisco, CA 94121
Chapter Contact: 650-654-0101
Wooden trail signs behind the hospital include "Bastogne," "Arlon," "Parkers Crossroads," "St. Vith," "Malmedy," and "Stavelot."
(Read more about this memorial on pg. 18)



FLORIDA

Central Florida Chapter 18

Lake Eola Park
512 E Washington St
Orlando, FL 32801
(407) 246-4484
www.cityoforlando.net/parks/lake-eola-park/
(Chapter closed.)
Dedicated on December 16, 1999, this memorial was the result of hard work by many VBOBs in the area, especially a retired swim

coach and high school teacher, the late Harry Miesel and his wife Jeanette. The memorial is a statue of a G.I. in combat gear. Around the base of the statue are the logos for all the divisions and other units that were at the Bulge. On the ground around the statue are bricks with names of some of the people who were there in December 1944 to January 1945.



Southeast Florida Chapter 62

Veterans Memorial Park
411 N Federal Hwy
Boynton Beach, FL 33435
(561) 742-6650
www.boynton-beach.org/departments/parks/urban_open_civic_spaces.php
Chapter Contact: George Fisher, 561-585-7086
It is a carved Vermont granite monument, includes a map of the Bulge, and lists the names of the Generals involved on the left side of the monument: Dwight Eisenhower, Anthony McAuliffe, Bernard Montgomery (British), Courtney Hodges, George S Patton, and Omar N Bradley.

Indian Valley Chapter 41

Battle of the Bulge Memorial
1601 Oak Street
Melbourne, FL 32902
(Chapter closed.)
Dedicated on 12/16/1997, this memorial reads: "Dedicated to the gallant and victorious men and women who participated in the Battle of



the Bulge, World War II, 16 December 1944 through 25 January 1945 in Belgium and Luxembourg, the greatest battle ever fought by the United States Army. The Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge assembled here on 16 December 1997 to commemorate the 53rd anniversary of this ever-famous American victory.”



INDIANA

Geza Csapo, VBOB Member

The Military Honor Park and Museum
4300 Terminal Dr,
South Bend, IN 46628
574) 232-4300
www.honorpark.org/

A granite monument at the front entrance of the South Bend Regional Airport was dedicated to the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge in May 2011. Mr. Geza Csapo, now-deceased VBOB Member, funded the monument.

Northern Indiana Chapter 30

Calumet Park Cemetery
2305 W 73rd Av.
Merrillville, IN 46410
219) 769-8803
www.mycalumetpark.com/
(Chapter closed.)



The American and Belgian flags flank the memorial stone that was dedicated to the memory of those who fought in the Battle of the Bulge. The memorial was dedicated on Memorial Day 2005 by the officers and membership of Chapter 30, Northern Indiana Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, and is located in the veterans section of the cemetery.

THE BULGE BUGLE



KANSAS

Kansas Chapter 69

Dwight D. Eisenhower Museum
200 S E 4th St.
Abilene, KS 67410
(785) 263-4751
www.eisenhower.archives.gov/
Chapter Contact: Greg Penfield,
785-210-9577

The Kansas Chapter dedicated a granite bench on January 24, 2015 that sits directly across from Ike's statue and is centered between the library and museum. "It is the best location that we could have asked for," said then Chapter President Mark Collins. The bench allows people to relax in the rose garden and gaze at Ike's statue.



MARYLAND

Maryland/DC Chapter 3

Fort George G. Meade
4409 Llewellyn Ave
Fort Meade, MD 20755
(301) 677-2300
www.ftmeade.army.mil/
This granite monument was dedicated at Ft. Meade on the 30th of May, 1999 by the Maryland/DC Chapter.

MASSACHUSETTS

Lamar Souter/Central 22

Holy Cross College
Fission Field
Worcester MA



Chapter Contact:
John McAuliffe,
(508) 754-7183
This Vermont granite monument with bronze plaque was dedicated in October 2003.

21

Town Common
Main Street
Hyannis, Cape Cod
Dedicated by the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge at the Sept. 1996 VBOB reunion at Hyannis. The memorial stone was a gift of Charles de Christopher Monuments; the memorial plaque was donated by Chapter 22.



City Hall, McIntyre Park

1255 Hancock St.
Quincy, MA 02169

Dedicated on September 7, 2003 in conjunction with the VBOB annual reunion. General Patton's grandson Benjamin Patton, and daughter-in-law Joanne Patton, were among the dignitaries attending. The memorial stone was a gift of Charles de Christopher Monuments.



Massachusetts Veterans' Memorial Cemetery
111 Glenallen St.
Winchendon, MA 01475
978-297-9501

Two Memorial Monuments were dedicated on August 20, 2006 by Chapter 22 at the MA Veterans' Memorial Cemetery: The Battle of the Bulge monument and the Wereth II Monument, both bearing the VBOB logo.



February 2018

VBOB MEMORIALS AND MONUMENTS (continued)



MICHIGAN

West Michigan Chapter 23

Grand Traverse Area Veterans Memorial Park
N Division St
Traverse City, MI 49684
www.gtavc.org/memorial/
Chapter Contact: Tom Mountz, 231-326-4830
It took Richard Rizzio, then President, and the monument committee members 7 years to acquire land from the city for their monument, along with monuments of other wars.

MISSISSIPPI

Mississippi Chapter 33

Armed Forces Museum
Camp Shelby
2500 Jackson Ave
Hattiesburg, MS 39401
(601) 558-2000
www.armedforcesmuseum.us/
Chapter Contact: Jim Hunt, 662-328-8959
The veterans of the Miss. Chapter and banks all over Mississippi made contributions by

raising over \$10,000.00 for the project, chaired by Dr. James W. Hunt and Jane Hunt. The Memorial is about 8 feet tall and was designed by the Baldwin Monument Company, and installed on March 17, 2001. The Memorial has the names of all of the outfits that were in the B.O.B. listed and a major contributor was General (Ret) Preston Jackson, writer of the "Tribute To Fallen Comrades" on the Monument.



MISSOURI

Gateway Chapter 25

World War II Plaza
Jefferson Barracks
345 North Road
Saint Louis, MO 63125
Chapter Contact: Dave Schroeder,
314-961-7470

The Gateway Chapter of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge dedicated a monument to the Battle in 1997. In August, 2009, a Bronze statue honoring all veterans who served in World War II was added to the site. At that time, the area was renamed World War II Plaza. The plaza sits high on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi River.



NEW JERSEY

Fort Monmouth Chapter 56

Thorne Middle School
70 Murphy Rd
Port Monmouth, NJ 07758
Chapter Contact: Robert Betz, 732-495-5032
The first location of this Monument was at U.S. Army Base at Fort Monmouth, NJ but, due to BRAC cuts, Fort Monmouth was



shuttered. With the help of the late Edith Nowels and her sister Anita Kaiser, sisters of WWII Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient Horace (Bud) Thorne, the Monument was moved to Thorne Middle School, where it was rededicated on May 26, 2011. The rows of hedges in the design represents the hedgerows that our Veterans had to fight through in France, the pine trees represent the Ardennes Forest, the red stones around the monument represent the blood that was shed by our Veterans. At the re-dedication was His Excellency Ambassador Herman Portocarero, Consul General of Belgium Ltc. Patrick Eecloo, Dpty Military Advisor, Belgium Honorable Mr Francois Knaff, Consul General of Luxembourg.

The Monument also has a Honor/Supporter/Donor Sidewalk of red brick, including a Purple Heart Brick. The gentleman who had etched all of the Donor Bricks was liberated by the U.S. Army and donated the Purple Heart Brick. The VBOB flag flies on Memorial Day and Veterans Day, and on any other special days when deemed appropriate.



Peter F. Leslie Jr. Chapter 54

Constitution Park
Fletcher Ave & Lewis St
Fort Lee, NJ 07024
(201) 592-3750
Chapter Contact: Jerry Manning,
973-983-6985

Veteran Alvin Sussman spearheaded the monument in 2006, and it was unveiled on October 23, 2010. Contributors also included local VFW and American Legion posts. It is 4'8" high red granite, on an 8" black granite base.

NEW YORK

Hudson Valley Chapter 49

Gerald B. H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery

200 Duell Road
Schuylerville, NY
(518) 581-9128

Chapter Contact: Alan Atwell, (518) 371-8449

This VBOB Memorial was dedicated in May 2000 and rededicated on December 16, 2016.



Genesee Valley Chapter 57

Ontario Beach Park
50 Beach Ave

Rochester, NY 14612
(585) 753-7275

www2.monroecounty.gov/parks-ontariobeach.php
(Chapter closed.)



Long Island Chapter 63

Eisenhower Park
Merrick and Stewart Aves.

East Meadow, NY 11554
516-572-0347

www.nassaucountyny.gov/2797/Eisenhower-Park

Chapter Contact: Bill Mueller, 516-731-2488
On December 23, 2015 the Long Island Chapter dedicated this Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Monument in memory of all who fought in that memorable WWII campaign. It was with great display of emotion that many present recalled the terrible conditions and loss of life encountered. 10 veterans present were awarded citations from Nassau County for



their service. Credit for the singular effort of the design, construction and placement of the monument is due David Marshall.

Staten Island Chapter 52

Wolfe's Pond Park

20 Cornelia Ave
Staten Island, NY 10312

(718) 984-8266

Chapter Contact: William Abell, 718-351-9426

The monument was created through a joint effort of Parks and the Veterans of the Battle of Bulge. Council Member Fiala allocated \$450,000 in 1998 for its construction. Architect Anthony Moody, a member of the veterans association, together with Mike Browne, Parks Deputy Chief of Design, conceived the original design of the monument. Construction began in October of 2001 and was dedicated on Dec. 16, 2001.



PENNSYLVANIA

Delaware Valley Chapter 4

VBOB Stained-glass window

Bliss Hall

US Army War College
Check-in: Visitors Center

870 Jim Thorpe Road
Carlisle Barracks, PA

Call (717) 245-3660 for visitor information.

Chapter Contact: Gary Lambert,
856-304-3106

This stained-glass window depicting G.I.s in the Bulge was dedicated on the infamous



9/11/2001. Window by The Willet Stained Glass Studios of Philadelphia; Stan Wojtusik, then VBOB National President of Military Affairs, was chair of the project.

Valley Forge Military Academy

1001 Eagle Road
Wayne PA 19087

(610) 989-1200

The Delaware Valley Chapter erected this monument in 1994 on the northern side of Eagle Rd at the Valley Forge Military Academy and College. The groundbreaking ceremony took place on April 17, 1994 and included representatives from both Luxembourg and Belgium.



Western Pennsylvania Chapter 14

Pennsylvania National Guard Armory

372 Donohoe Rd
Greensburg, PA 15601

(724) 832-5399

Chapter Contact: Leroy Schaller,
(724) 238-2297 (Chapter closed.)

It is an engraved granite stone with the VBOB logo and an inscription. In front is a sidewalk with approx. 170 red memorial bricks. The Guard members take care of it, as the chapter is now closed.



VBOB MEMORIALS AND MONUMENTS (continued)



Southcentral Pennsylvania Chapter 45
 US Army War College
 Check-in: Visitors Center
 870 Jim Thorpe Road
 Carlisle Barracks, PA
 Call (717) 245-3660 for visitor information.
 Chapter Contact: Dan Medbury, 717-392-6334
 Attendees at the VBOB Reunion on September 17, 1997 gathered for the dedication of a monument to all who served in the Bulge. The site was a 4-acre grove designated as "Battle of the Bulge Grove." Plans were to plant fir trees in the grove to simulate the forests of the Ardennes. Southcentral PA chapter members donated the bronze plaque that was placed on the monument. The stone was donated by Charles De Christopher Sr. Major General Robert H. Scales Jr, Commander of the US Army War College, unveiled the monument, along with David Nicholas, then President of the Southcentral PA chapter, and then VBOB National President Stan Wojtusik.

VIRGINIA

National Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge
 Arlington National Cemetery
 Arlington, VA 22211
 877-907-8585
 See website for visitor information:
www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Visit
 There are 2 VBOB Monuments at Arlington National Cemetery. The first one was dedicated on December 16, 1986. The newer one (pictured) was unveiled and officially dedicated on May 8, 2006. The memorial was unveiled by His Excellency Guy Verhofstadt, Prime Minister of Belgium, and His Excellency Octavie Modert, Secretary of State for Culture, Luxembourg. In attendance were approximately 300 Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge and family members.



WELCOME ABOARD, NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to these folks who joined BOBA through December 31, 2017:

Cole, Candace S.	Member	Kiolbasa, Pat	Member
Cunningham, Judy	Member	Mackey Sr, Roy E	Member
Becker, Donald H	87 InfD	Rutherford-Marshall, Danny	Member
Berg, Mary	Member	Martinez, Tarah	Member
Berkman, Karen	Member	Mercurio, John	Member
Cantrell, David J	Member	Mullins, Jerry	Member
Davis, Richard	Member	Murach, Faith Ann	Member
Doe, Royetta Simmons	Member	O'Fairre, Kitty	Member
Ervin, Louie	Member	Patsy, Francis	Member
Fuller, Patrick	Member	Rose, Elizabeth	Member
Gargaro, Thomas D	Member	Rupp, Benjamin G	80 InfD
Getty, David	Member	Scott, Melissa	Member
Gibson, Scott	Member	Tancin, Charlotte	Member
Godbey, Oral	8 ArmdD	Walker, DeNeele	Member
Groff, Fred	Member	Walling, Mary	Member
Hallam, Tanya	Member	Yankowski, George E	87 InfD
Jannace, William	Member		
Kapp, Bob	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
- Sending us articles to be included in *The Bulge Bugle*

DONATIONS

We appreciate the generous contributions received between October 1-December 31, 2017 from:

BAILEY, J. DAVID	106 INF D 422 REG CO F
BROWN, WAYNE	4 INF D 12 REG CO F
BURGESS, THOMAS	87 INF D 345 REG CO A
GILBERT, RONALD	MEMBER
GOODMAN, HARVEY	8 ARM D D 36 TK BN CO A
GURSKY, BURT	MEMBER
HALVORSEN, WILBUR	6 ARM D D 50 AIB CO A
HODGES, THOMAS	MEMBER
LANDRY, JR., JOE	776 AAA AW BN
LIBERMAN, LEE	95 INF D 320 ENGR CMBT BN
LINCHET, DOMINIQUE	DONOR
MCAULIFFE, JOHN	87 INF D 347 REG CO M
ORNBERG, ERIC	MEMBER
ORTIZ, NICHOLAS	MEMBER
(IMO Nicholas Daniel Ortiz, 706 Tank Destroyer Bn)	
PUFF, PAUL	MEMBER
SAVAGE, STEPHEN D.	MEMBER
SCHUETZ, KENNETH	106 INF D HQ CO
SHOOP, WILLIAM G.	97 SIGNAL BN CO B
TIBBETTS, Nanci O.	MEMBER
VAN EATON, JACK	78 INF D 311 REG CO M
VOGEL, NORVIN	35 INF D 134 REG CO L

BOBA ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

San Antonio, TX, Sept 27, 2017

ATTENDEES

Board Members present: Gary Higgins, President and CEO; Barbara Mooneyhan, Executive Vice President; Doris Davis, Recording Secretary; Alan Cunningham, Immediate Past President and Chairman of the Board, and Board Members: David Bailey, John Mohor, and Tom Burgess; and Member Services/*Bugle* Editor Tracey Diehl. Many members of BOBA were present (this included veterans and non-veterans).

MEETING

This meeting was held during the 37th Annual Reunion of the Battle of the Bulge Association at the Wyndham San Antonio Riverwalk, San Antonio, TX.

Meeting was called to order at 2:35 PM CST on September 27, 2017 by President Gary Higgins.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Tom Burgess.

Invocation was read by Tana Van Nice Black.

President Gary Higgins encouraged all present to feel free to ask questions and to fully engage in the meeting.

Balance Sheet, Profit and Loss Statement, Sales Report and Membership Reports (enclosed in the Registration Packets for the Reunion) were discussed.

Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Statement: Discussion was led by Alan Cunningham on behalf of the Treasurer, Duane Bruno.

Balance sheet was current as of September 15, 2017.

Balance in the Bank of America checking account (-\$4,095.95)

Balance in the Navy Federal Credit Union \$120,427.68

Total amount in checking and savings \$116,284.17

All BOBA funds have been transferred to Navy Federal Credit Union (with a higher interest rate).

Net Loss reported in 2017 to date (-\$21,099.35)

Sales Report: Discussion was led by Tracey Diehl, BOBA Member Services.

QM & Certificate Sales: \$2,617.50 total from Jan 1 – Sept 15, 2017

Membership: Discussion was led by Tracey Diehl on behalf of Angela Fazio, VP Membership.

Membership (reflecting time frame Jan 1 – Sept 15, 2017):

New Members: 67 (44 annual and 23 '4 yr' Associate members);

Made inactive: 360

Net loss in membership: 293

Total Membership as of today: 1,961 (consisting of 1,025 Bulge Veterans; 936 Members)

Old Business:

Minutes of the 36th Annual National VBOB Membership Meeting (held in Seattle, WA, Friday Oct 7, 2016) were presented by Doris Davis, Recording Secretary. Motion made to accept the minutes. Motion accepted.

Transition of IRS status from 501c19 to 501c3 was discussed by Alan Cunningham. He explained that for a 501c19, there must be 95%

veterans in the organization for it to be a tax-exempt organization and for a 501c3, all donations are tax exempt.

Financial viability of BOBA was discussed by Board and membership.

Yearly Membership Dues collected to date were \$6,265.75; Current annual dues are \$15. If net loss continues at the current pace (-\$21,099.35 in 2017 to date), we will run out of funds and BOBA will be extinct. Largest expense is the printing of the *Bulge Bugle* (\$14,672.29 last year). Discussion was held on how the organization can save money. Topics included (a) discontinue life membership; (b) distributing the *Bulge Bugle* via email; (c) returning to black/white *Bulge Bugle* and (d) consider different levels of membership (e.g. gold, silver). After the discussion, a motion was made by Dave Black (Member) to (a) raise the annual dues to \$20; (b) discontinue the '4-yr' membership category (\$50) (c) discontinue lifetime memberships and (c) task the Board to explore ways to make the organization more viable. Motion accepted.

Recent changes to Bylaws were explained to the general membership by Alan Cunningham. Key points included (a) the addition of the Chairman of the Board title (that would be held by the immediate past president) (Article 11, Sect. D); (b) the current president would be considered the CEO (Article 8, Sect. A); (c) immediate Past President or a former president will be Chairman of the Nominating Committee and will appoint 2 other members of the Assn. (c) there would be 6 Board Members (Article 8, Sect. H), and (d) 6 Voting Members of the Board will constitute a quorum (Article 11, Sect. C).

New business:

Election of the Board for Year 2018 held. Results:

President – Gary Higgins; Executive Vice President – Barbara Mooneyhan; Treasurer – Duane Bruno; Vice President Membership – Angela Fazio; Vice President Chapters – Sherry Klopp; Recording Secretary – Tracey Diehl. Board Members: David Bailey, Tom Burgess, Doris Davis, John Mohor, Tana Van Nice Black (new), Greg Penfield (new).

Deadline for submission for the next *Bulge Bugle* was set for Oct 4.

Deadline for registration for 73rd Commemoration of the Battle of the Bulge Event in Washington, DC was confirmed as Nov 28.

Discussion of where to hold the next Annual Reunion was held: Proposed options included Shreveport, LA, Springfield, IL, Colorado Springs, CO, Columbus, GA. Wayne Field proposed Colorado Springs and gave ideas on places we could visit. Motion was made to accept Colorado Springs as the site for the 2018 Reunion. Motion accepted.

Public Relations Officer, Thea Marshall, was introduced to the membership. She explained what she had done thus far, contacting many Division Associations and military publications, and what she proposes to do (with a primary goal of spreading the word about BOBA).

Meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM CST.

—Submitted by Doris Davis, Recording Secretary



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www.facebook.com/pages/Battle-of-the-Bulge-Association-Inc
VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
www.battleofthebulge.org



THANK GOD IT WAS A DUD

by Francis Chesko, 7 ARMDD & 148 CMBT ENGR BN



Sgt. Francis Chesko was a part of the 148th Engineer Battalion, who found themselves temporarily attached to several different divisions and corps of the 1st US Army. As part of the battalion, their unit's primary purpose was to build bridges. They were attached to the 82nd Airborne, 101st Airborne, 2nd Armored, 90th Infantry, VII Corp and VIII Corps. They served in the battles of Normandy, Rhineland, Northern France, Central Europe, and the Ardennes (Battle of the Bulge) - and this is his War Story.

I left New Cumberland, PA on March 2, 1943, for Basic Training in Camp Shelby, MS. We spent our time building bridges, making roads, working with explosives, learning to fire rifles, machine guns & bazookas, throwing hand grenades, burying land mines, searching for mines and detectors and learning how to dig them up and disarm them, learning how to blow up bridges and build tank traps, etc.

I came home in July on a 10-day furlough, and then it was back to Mississippi for more training before traveling to Rhode Island on October 8, 1943 for departure to England. After ten days of zig-zagging in order to fool the German subs, we made our arrival in Gottington, England on October 18, 1943.

Our next home from October to June was in six man tents at Swindon, England. In our training, we built a "Baily Bridge" across the Thames River at 3 o'clock in the morning in 3 1/2 hours—"WOW!!" Then we built a landing strip at Swindon (more about that later).

Promoted to Corporal, and one day I was on C.Q. (Charge of Quarters) at the C.P. (Command Post) when a girl came in. I asked her what she wanted and she said she was looking for a soldier named Chesko. I told her I was Chesko, and she asked if I was Joe Chesko's brother. I told her I was, and she told me Joe was stationed at Devizes, which was about 25 miles from me. Joe and I couldn't write to each other because the enemy might find out where we were (yeah, they knew where we were all the time).

I went to see Captain Zadney and asked him for a Jeep and a weekend pass. Wow, you should have seen the look on his face!!! But after I explained the situation, he gave me the Jeep and the pass. Brother Joe was in the 4th Armored Division and his tank was called the "Coal Cracker."

I got into the Jeep and departed on my journey to see brother Joe. I got to Devizes where he was stationed and found his barracks. I proceeded up the steps and he was sitting on the bunk with his back to me—he was writing a letter home. I snuck up on him and grabbed him with both hands around the neck and wouldn't let him turn around. He said a few unprintable words and then I let go. Boy, was he surprised to see me! I stayed the weekend with him talking about the Army and, of course, of home too. It was just too bad we didn't have a camera!

Shortly after my visit with Joe, our outfit got orders to move south in England to the front of Southampton to leave for France and Normandy Beach sector code-named "Utah." A twenty-year old kid, wet

behind the ears yet, scared to death and seeing mangled bodies all over the place—some alive, but most were dead.

The first night in France, we were going up a road and the Germans started shelling us. We all jumped into a ditch and I landed on a body. It was pretty dark and I couldn't make out if it was a German or an American. I could feel his ear and face but no movement. (Boy, did I get out of there in a hurry!) After going through the dreaded hedge rows, we were advancing on a little town called La Haye-du-Puits. The next thing I know, I'm in a field hospital and doctors are pulling the skin off my legs, face, arms and hands because I had been burned.

Remember a paragraph or so back I said we built a landing strip at an airport at Swindon? Well, on the plane over the English Channel, I asked a nurse where we would land in England and she said, "Swindon." (Thank God we did a good job of building the landing strip!)

The first morning at the hospital, the head nurse asked, "Whose bed is this that isn't made up?" I told her it was mine, but I couldn't make it because every time I tried to tuck in the blankets, I would scrape the skin off my hands. So she was kind enough to find someone to make it up for me. (Wasn't that nice of her?).

After 50 days of recuperating in England, I was back to France on September 7, 1944. I joined the 7th Armored Division on October 16th in Holland. On October 29th, we were attacked by tiger tanks. On December 1st, we were in Aachen, Germany, which was the first city in Germany to be taken in the war. What a sight it was around the outside of the city—hardly a tree was left standing, and holes are all over the ground from all the shells falling from German and American artillery and from American bombs.

On December 16th, we were told to load up our trucks because we were going back about 50 miles. We thought, "Oh boy, a rest at last!" However, we were mistaken because that was the start of the "Battle of the Bulge." It was very cold, with snow and fog, and we had no winter clothing or boots. Boy, did we suffer—sometimes our fingers would stick to our rifles.

One day we were building a small bridge out of logs that we had cut down in the forest when an 88mm shell came over my head and struck about 10 yards away. One buddy of mine, Michael Haase from N.Y., got the full force of the shell. It almost took his head off. He died instantly—what a terrible sight.

While fighting the Battle of the Bulge, we joined up with the British 1st Army. One day we spotted some smoke coming from behind a concrete bunker. We thought it was Germans trying to keep warm, so we crawled on our stomachs through the snow while some bullets were flying. You'll never guess who it was!!! That's right, you guessed it...it was 4 o'clock and the British were having tea! One of them asked me, "Would you care for a spot of tea, Yank?" I accepted.

Another time we were advancing and couldn't figure out where the bullets were coming from. Then we spotted movement under haystacks where the Germans were. One of our tanks blew the haystacks down. When we got to the spot where the haystacks had been, we found one German who was cut in half, with his intestines strung out along the ground. Both of his arms were cut off near the shoulder. He was covered with gun powder and looked like a bust. Now comes the worst part: one of our soldiers picked up an arm and took off the wrist watch. He also tried to pull off the man's ring, but he couldn't get it off. So he hacked off the finger with his bayonet. ("Ugh," and double "Ugh"—gruesome!!!)

Up in Holland, we were on one side of a canal and there were Germans on the other side. There was a bridge across the canal, so we planted explosives on it and left two men to blow it up if the Germans

tried to cross. It was getting dark and most of us went into a house and bedded down. About 6 o'clock in the morning, I was on guard outside of the house and I heard tanks coming down the street. It was just getting light and I could make out that they were German tanks. I went in and got the Lieutenant by the shoulder and woke him up. I told him the German tanks were coming down the street, but he said that they couldn't be, because the guards left on the bridge had orders to blow it up! Just then, an 88 mm shell went right through our truck and the Lieutenant gave the order to grab a bazooka. We aimed it at a tank, but it misfired, so we went out the back door of the house and went into the field. The German tank came right through the house after us. We were running alongside a fence and all of a sudden something hit me and knocked me over. A bullet had hit a fence post and a piece of wood hit my cartridge belt and that was what knocked me over. I was lucky I was not hurt. God was with us. Some American tanks and tank destroyers knocked out the German tanks. The next day, one of the men who was left to guard the bridge caught up with us and told the Lieutenant that the Germans took the bridge by surprise, and he was the only one who got away.

One night the Germans bombarded us with mortars. I was under a ditch overhang alongside a road. When it got light, I saw that there was a mortar stuck in the dirt above me. Thank God it was a "dud"—otherwise I wouldn't be writing this!

THE NIGHT MY HEART BEAT SO LOUD, I COULD HEAR IT!

by William "Bill" Armstrong, Service Battery, 263rd
Field Artillery Battalion, 26th "Yankee" Division

There was one occurrence in France of which I am not very proud. It turned out all right and, as a matter of fact, probably saved some lives. At the time, however, I was very disappointed in my own lack of bravery.

I was an ammunition truck driver and my primary duty was to keep one of our three firing Batteries supplied with 105mm ammunition. My buddy, Bob Zellmer, and I drove one vehicle and we were with two other vehicles in a convoy when we got lost on the way back to our Battery. It was getting dark, so we decided to 'hole up' at the first place we could find. We saw a walled village that was situated on the top of the small hill off to our right. It looked like a good secure place to spend the night, provided we could get through the huge closed wooden gates. We had no idea if the gates were locked. Maybe we'd find a deserted village behind the gates, as so many villages had been abandoned.

As we approached the doors, the smaller door opened and a strange looking man appeared. He was dressed in dark clothing with black smudges on his hands and face. "You guys want in?" he called out. After hearing our surprised "Yes!," the large doors swung open and our two trucks entered and parked. This strange man turned out to be an American soldier. He said he'd been watching us through a peep hole and was glad we decided to pull in.

I looked around and I will say that I never saw a place quite like this one. It looked very medieval. There were 12 houses in a rectangle and the whole area was surrounded by the fortress. The farmers who lived

in this town must have worked in the surrounding fields during the day and then brought their livestock through the gate at night. They must have felt protected by the walls that were about 15 - 20 feet high. There was one thing that we noticed, though, and that was a big hole in the wall that was probably the result of artillery fire.

The American soldier told us that he was part of a unit of 8 men who were holed up in the basement of one of the houses. He led us to one of the houses and then down into a cellar, where there were other men in dark clothing with smudged hands and faces seated around a table playing cards. The men hadn't shaved in long time and they smelled as though they hadn't had hygiene in months. The lighting consisted of a number of burning candles placed about the room. It was definitely a very eerie scene.

The soldier said to one of the other guys, "Sir, these guys want to spend the night here. They could help guard the hole for us." We couldn't tell which of the men at the table he was addressing. There were no bars on their clothes or other means to identify the officer until he spoke to us. He explained that they were all Military Intelligence and worked behind the German lines at night—hence, the dark clothing and black smudges on the skin. He said that the hole in the wall needed to be guarded because German patrols came by there every night. He asked if we'd guard it that night so he could take all of the men on night patrol.

We agreed to guard the hole in the wall. He explained that although the German patrols came by every night, there was a mutual understanding that if they (the scouts) wouldn't bother them, they wouldn't bother the scouts. Regardless, he felt that it was better that someone was there on guard, just to make sure this agreement was kept. Should the Germans decide not to honor the agreement and force their way in, he gave us two hand grenades to protect ourselves. We wouldn't be able to use our guns, because that would give our position away.

The hole was in the back wall of the blacksmith's forge. There was fuel for the forge and one of the guys lit it to have a fire to heat our K-rations. We all agreed upon a schedule to guard the hole with each of us assigned a 2-hour shift. My buddy, Bob, had the first shift, 10 PM to 12 midnight. After our 'dinner,' we spread our blankets on the ground around the forge. Talk soon stopped and we went to sleep, with Bob guarding the hole. It seemed I had just closed my eyes when I felt someone shaking me. It was Bob, telling me it was time for my shift—midnight to 2 AM. He added that he had seen no Germans, and that was good news. I got up, put on my overcoat, slung my carbine on my right shoulder, put on my steel helmet and clambered over the pile of bricks that had been blasted out of the wall so that I could view the "lay of the land." The town was on a low hill with what appeared to be a brush-lined stream at the foot of the slope. The distance to the stream was about 100 feet. The land between the stream and the wall was filled with vegetation that looked like oats, and that was a perfect setting for someone to sneak up on their belly and surprise us.

It was foggy and the air was chilly. The warmth of my bed roll soon dissipated as I stood in the cold air. There was enough moonlight filtering through that I could see the trees lining the small creek at the foot of the slope. The thought of seeing a German patrol, and the possibility that they might approach and cause trouble, made me grip the grenade tighter. This was a job for an infantryman who had been trained for close combat, I thought, not for me—a truck driver! Sitting down on the pile of bricks, time crept by slowly—minutes felt like hours. It was very quiet and I made sure to listen intently to all the sounds of the

(continued on next page)



MY HEART BEAT SO LOUD (continued)

night. I thought I heard footsteps, but soon realized I was hearing my own heartbeat! Then I heard swishing in the oats, but realized that was just a breeze that had come through.

Without being aware of it, I found that I had edged my way back away from the hole. I found that I was just a few feet from the place where my buddies were sleeping. How I wished I was back in my warm bed roll! But, I had a job to do, so I must get closer to the hole to guard it. I just got back to the hole and heard a voice “Just checking—is everything OK?” The voice startled me—it turns out that it was one of the American soldiers just checking on me. He had come over rubble without making a sound. No wonder these guys were selected to do what they did—they were very skilled at being silent. I thumped my chest and caught my breath and whispered back, “Please don’t startle me again!” He just chuckled and said he wouldn’t. I told him that I might have pulled the pin on the grenade in my panic! After he left, it dawned on me that the Germans could be just as good as he was with sneaking up very quietly, so I listened even more intently after he left.

I waited and waited. Dead silence. I had time to think. It was then that I realized that I was trembling with fear. What if Germans came? Would I panic? The more I thought of it the worse it got. I was feeling truly afraid! It was the first time I had ever felt fear that intense! “Was I a coward?” I asked myself. I had one of the grenades in my right hand with one of my fingers on my left hand in the safety ring. One jerk and the pin would be out and I could throw it. My carbine was over my left shoulder. I was as prepared as I could be, but I knew I was rattled with fear and wondered if I would screw up.

Berating myself, I returned to my post and it wasn’t but a few moments later that I saw movement along the creek. Seven dark shapes. “Oh God!” I thought, “Here they come!” Two of them separated from the others and turned toward the hole. I’m in trouble now. Time for action! Gripping the grenade in my left hand, I tried to pull the safety pin. No matter how hard I pulled, the pin wouldn’t budge. I put it between my knees and pulled with all of my might. Why wasn’t it pulling? In my struggle to pull the pin, the butt of my carbine struck the wall and the two shapes paused. I broke out in a sweat. Did they hear that sound? Was I going to be overrun by both of them? There was no way I could call my buddies. I just had to be as quiet as a church mouse and

pray. Slowly, the 2 Germans turned and went back down the slope to join the others. It was a great relief to see their column continue and get out of sight!

I realized I was bathed in sweat and that only made me colder. I just sat on the bricks and tried to stay as warm as I could and regain my composure. My heartbeat returned to normal. When my time was up, I woke up my relief and told him that everything had been peaceful. (I was too ashamed of myself to tell him of the incident). At daybreak, I asked the last guard to hand me the grenade, so I could see it in the light of the day—to see if there was any clue why it malfunctioned. I could see that the pin had been hammered down making it impossible to remove. When I returned the grenade to the lieutenant, I said, “Thanks a lot, Sir! It was a damned good thing I didn’t need it!” He replied, “I knew you men were not trained for close combat. Had you used it, it would have created an incident, and my scouts would have suffered retribution. The gentleman’s agreement with the Germans had to be honored.” I thought of all of the angst I had—all for naught.

I’m not proud to say that I didn’t feel courageous that night. For a long time, I couldn’t share this story with anyone. I wonder if other soldiers had similar experiences?



VA'S VETERAN OF THE DAY

BOBA Member, Board Member, and Past President David Bailey was the VA's Veteran of the Day on their website blog “VAntage Point” and Facebook page on Christmas Day. The salute to David, submitted by Tracey Diehl, *Bugle* editor, read:

“Today’s #VeteranOfTheDay is Army Veteran J. David Bailey. David served during World War II from 1942-1945.

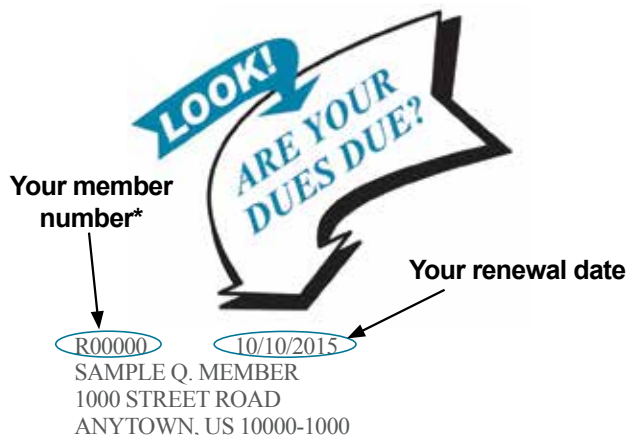
David served in Company F, 422nd Infantry and the 106th Infantry Division. In the European theatre, he served in four campaigns: Northern France, the Ardennes, the Rhineland, and Central Europe. David is decorated with the Combat Infantry Badge, the Order of Saint Maurice, and two Bronze Stars – one for Valor, in addition to several other military citations.

David is involved with various Veteran organizations: he was the national president of the Battle of the Bulge Association, Inc. from 2010-2012 and currently serves as a board member. Over the past few years, David has served on the President of the United States Commission overseeing Veterans Day events held at the White House and Arlington National Cemetery. At 95 years old, David rarely misses board teleconferences, and tirelessly advocates for all Veterans.

Thank you for your service, David!”

To learn how to nominate your favorite vet, go to: www.blogs.va.gov/VAntage/28415/contribute-veteran-day/

WHEN ARE MY DUES DUE? Look at the back cover address label:



***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!**

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OR ORDER ONLINE: WWW.BATTLEOFTHEBULGE.ORG [NO PHONE ORDERS]**

FIRST RECONNAISSANCE + GOOD NEWS FROM HOME

by Norvin Vogel, 35 InfD, 134 Reg, Co L



I remember only too well some of the details of my military service in Europe, and the first time I went on a reconnaissance (and not the last one). Every time L company made a counter attack with the 3rd Platoon leading the way, the first squad was on the left flank, the second squad on the right flank and the third squad with Sergeant Vogel leading the way as the point guard and the Platoon Officer and First Sergeant in the middle of the triangle.

I remember I was placed in charge of the 3rd squad of the 3rd platoon in L Company, 134th Infantry Regiment. A few weeks after we made the counterattack from the Ardennes Forest, one morning when we were standing for roll call, everyone was present except the 3rd squad. About 5 minutes later, the men from the 3rd squad came walking in. There was a Corporal in charge of the squad. The first Sergeant said, "Corporal, this is the last time the 3rd squad will be late for roll call. Sergeant Vogel, you are in charge of the 3rd squad." I talked to the men of the 3rd squad and told the soldier with the BAR (Browning automatic Rifle), he's 2nd in charge and where I go, he goes.

A few weeks later, L Company arrived at a small village by truck. The kitchen was already set up for hot coffee. We had 'K' Ration and hot coffee. I was sitting with the 3rd squad, drinking coffee, when the first Sergeant told me to report to the Company Commander. The Company Commander was standing by his JEEP with some maps. I reported, "Sergeant Vogel reporting as ordered." The Company Commander said, "Sergeant, let's take a walk across the street. See that large group of trees behind the houses on our left?" (They were about 1000 yards away). I said, "Yes, Sir." He said, "Take the 3rd squad and check them for German soldiers. The First Sergeant will give you white sheets and a radio to keep in touch." I replied, "Yes, Sir." I walked around the one house with the 3rd squad. There was a large open field between me and the forest, but on the right side of the field there were large bushes for some protection. We decided to walk down the right side of the field. It was a good thing we did, because we were only about half way down the field when a barrage of mortars started exploding all over that open field. I started calling the company on the radio to stop the mortar firing. A few minutes later the firing stopped, and we could proceed to the forest. Every step of the way, we were waiting for the Germans to start shooting.

I was the first one in line and I told the soldier with the BAR to start

shooting, and the rest of the squads to try and get back to report to the Company Commander.

We had no problems, and entered the woods and heard a lot of Germans talking. We proceeded through the woods and discovered we were about 60 feet above a road where there was a large group of German Soldiers running for trucks, and an officer giving all kinds of orders. One of the trucks had a large field gun connected to the back of the truck. This was the first time I saw German soldiers. We did not start shooting, because we were only too glad they were on the run. We returned to the company and I made my report to the Company Commander. He said, "Thanks, Sergeant. Get your men into a truck—we are moving out."

I think my next reconnaissance (as I mentioned before), the Company moved into a wooded area with a few empty houses. It was after midnight when the First Sergeant woke me and told me to take the men of the 3rd squad and check a small village for German soldiers. We were given white sheets and the password. We walked to the edge of the wood and the First Sergeant pointed out the small village down over the hill. There was at least 1 1/2 or 2 feet of snow on the ground. We walked through a field to the first house. We found three women sleeping in one bed. They said, "No soldiers in here," but I made a complete check of the house anyway. We checked the other three houses—no German soldiers. We started to go back when the tanks with a big spotlight turned on us. We identified ourselves. I talked to the officer in the first tank before returning to L company to make my report.

I think my next adventure was at the end of March. L Company was on the offense (walking—we were always walking). We came to a broken-down steel bridge (I mentioned it before). The First Sergeant walked up to me and said there was a concrete bunker on the other side of the bridge. He asked, "Can you get the 3rd squad across the bridge and check that bunker?" I said, "No problem." I placed my rifle across my back and said, "3rd squad, let's go." I was the first one to start across the broken-down bridge. We could see a machine gun pointing out of the bunker and we knew if they started shooting, we were "dead ducks." After crossing the bridge, we were on a hill above the bunker. We all laid down on the ground and I fired two rifle grenades into the bunker entrance. Out came a white flag, and four German soldiers with their hands on their heads.

We marched the German soldiers down the street to L Company Headquarters and turned the Germans over to the first Sergeant. There was a member of the Red Cross waiting for me, and handed me a telegram (and a blank form so I could write a letter to my wife to let her know I received her telegram and I was very happy,) informing me of the birth of our little daughter. Mother and daughter were both doing fine.



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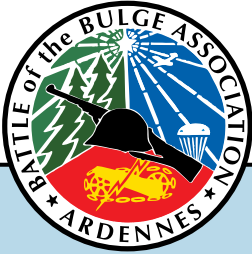
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