

The BULGE BUGLE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION • VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE, INC.

VOLUME XXI NUMBER 4

THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

NOVEMBER 2002

“The 20th Century’s most outstanding person is all around us tonight. They are from all ethnic backgrounds, all faiths. The most outstanding person of the 20th Century is the World War II Veterans! IT IS YOU!”



**KEYNOTE ADDRESS by
CLAUDE M. KICKLIGHTER (Lt. Gen. Ret.)**

**at the Annual Banquet of
The Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge
Sunday, September 1, 2002
BWI Marriott Hotel, Baltimore, Maryland**

As our nation commemorated the 50th anniversary of WWII, it was my honor to work with this organization on many occasions, and have the pleasure of getting to know many of you. I am very privileged to have some very special friends in this room tonight.

The last time we were together was in St. Louis, at the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, where Dr. Bill Perry, Secretary of Defense, provided your keynote address. He and Mrs. Perry were very honored to have been with you that night.

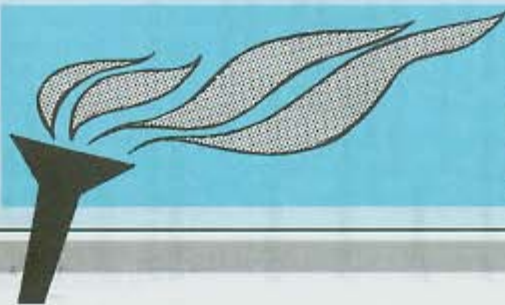
I am also proud to represent the Department of Veteran Affairs tonight, and also to have another opportunity to help a grateful nation continue to thank the veterans of World War II- and especially the veterans of the longest and one of the most critical battles in World War II.

Winston Churchill called this “The Greatest American Battle of the Second World War.”

Before the start of World War II, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt stated in a speech: “To some generations much is given. Of other generations, much is expected. The generation of Americans has a rendezvous with destiny.” And you did. You fought and won the most destructive war in history. This room is filled with America’s greatest heroes.

Although the winds of war were all around us when we were hit with a surprise attack on Sunday morning, December 7, 1941, at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, we were not ready for that war. We had to buy time to get ready, and we bought that time with the lives of young Americans. We should never have to do that again.

(cont’d Page 8)



VBOB REMEMBRANCE

DECEMBER 16, 2002
ARLINGTON CEMETARY
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

SCHEDULE
OF EVENTS
PAGE 16

**VETERANS OF THE
BATTLE OF THE BULGE,
INC.**

**P.O. Box 11129
Arlington, VA 22210-2129
703-528-4058**

Published quarterly, *THE BULGE BUGLE* is the official publication of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge.

Publisher/Chief Editor:
George Chekan
9th Infantry Division

Contributing Editors:
Robert F. Phillips
28th Infantry Division

Historical Research:
John D. Bowen
Associate Member

ELECTED OFFICERS:
President:

Louis Cunningham
106th Infantry Division
Executive Vice President:

Richard G. Guenter
511th Engineer Light Ponton Company
Vice President/Membership:

Thomas F. Jones
818th Combat MP Company
Vice President/Chapters:

Richard C. Schlenker
26th Infantry Division
Vice President/Military Affairs:

Stanley Wojtusik
106th Infantry Division
Vice President/Public Affairs:

Jack Hyland
84th Infantry Division
Treasurer:

William P. Tayman
87th Infantry Division
Corresponding Secretary:

Dorothy S. Davis
57th Field Hospital
Recording Secretary:

John Bowen
Associate Member

Administrative Director:
Nancy Monson 703-528-4058

TRUSTEES:
Three Years:
Sydney J. Lawrence
134th AAA Gun Battalion

Robert F. Phillips
28th Infantry Division
Neil B. Thompson
740th Tank Battalion (Med)

Two Years:
James W. Hunt
1st Infantry Division
Demetri Paris
9th Armored Division
Charles L. Goss
75th Infantry Division

One Year:
Frederick R. Carmichael
87th Infantry Division
Frances W. Doherty
Associate Member
Peter F. Dounis
75th Infantry Division

HISTORICAL FOUNDATION:
President: William T. Greenville
86th Chemical Mortar Battalion

VBOB PAST PRESIDENTS:
Clyde D. Boden* 1981-84
Robert J. VanHouten 1984-86
George Chekan 1986-88
William T. Greenville 1988-90
Darrell Kuhn 1990-92
William R. Hemphill* 1992-93
William P. Tayman 1993-94
Grover C. Twiner 1994-95
Stanley Wojtusik 1995-97
George C. Linthicum 1997-99
John J. Dunleavy 1999-2001

*Deceased

CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

-ALABAMA-
GEN. GEORGE S. PATTON, JR. (XI)
Hoyt T. Barron 205-569-2746
520 Mountain Ridge Rd
Oneonta, AL 35121

-ARIZONA-
ARIZONA (XXVI)
Ponce Long 520-73-0258
648 W Central Ave
Coolidge, AZ 85228

SOUTHERN ARIZONA (LIII)
John G. Westover 520-297-1492
6100 N Oracle #20
Tucson, AZ 85704

-BELGIUM-
5TH FUSILIERS OF BELGIUM (XXXVIII)
Roger Hardy (50) 41.71.13
14, Landijk
8570 Blansberge, Belgium

-CALIFORNIA-
FRESNO (V)
Kenneth Hohmann 559-227-5232
4111 N. Sherman St.
Fresno, CA 93726

GEN. GEORGE S. PATTON, JR. (XIII)
Donald C. Stafford 408-662-0472
101 Via Soderini
Aples, CA 95003

GOLDEN GATE (X)
Irel Barnes 925-432-6212
290 Jimna Ave
Pittsburg, CA 94565-3729

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA (XVI)
John W. Mosley 562-947-1727
15428 Lebo St
Whittier, CA 90603

SAN DIEGO (LI)
Robert D. Schrell
2530 San Joaquin Ct
San Diego, California 92109

-CONNECTICUT-
CONNECTICUT YANKEE (XL)
Richard Egan 203-634-0974
78 Alkove St
Meriden, CT 06451

-COLORADO-
ROCKY MOUNTAIN (XXXIX)
M. Dale McCall 970-576-2508
245 S Golden Dr
Silt, CO 81652

-DELAWARE-
BRANDYWINE VALLEY CHAPTER (LXVI)
Charles Gaffney 302-762-3023
907 Shipley Rd
Wilmington, DE 19803-4927

-FLORIDA-
CENTRAL FLORIDA (XVIII)
Micky Gilberg
(Address needed)

FLORIDA CITRUS (XXXII)
Gerald V. Myers 863-686-2121
320 E Palm Dr
Lakeland, FL 33803-2650

INDIAN RIVER FLORIDA (XLI)
Alfred J. Babecki 561-884-0952
915 Hemlock St
Barefoot Bay, FL 32976

SOUTHEAST FLORIDA (LXII)
George Fisher 561-585-7086
3456 S Ocean Blvd #503
Palm Beach, FL 33480

GOLDEN TRIANGLE (XLVIII)
Samuel Davis 904-343-7975
1104 Todd Way
Tavares, FL 32776

-INDIANA-
NORTHERN INDIANA (XXX)
Robert L. Worthington 219-462-3370
173 Sunland Dr
Valparaiso, IN 46385

CENTRAL INDIANA (XLVII)
Lavon T. McDaniel 317-846-3850
650 1st Ave, NE
Carmel, IN 46032-1324

IOWA (XXXIV)
Pius P. Reis 712-308-2335
103 Davenport St
Holstein, IA 51025

HAWKEYE STATE (XLIV)
Harold R. Lindstrom 515-278-0081
4105 75th St.
Des Moines, IA 50322-2551

-MARYLAND-DC-
MARYLAND/DC (II)
Demetri Paris 301-945-4620
13110 Holdridge Rd
Silver Spring, MD 20906

-MASSACHUSETTS-
L A M A R S O U T T E R / C E N T R A L
MASSACHUSETTS (XXII)
John E. McAuliffe 508-754-7163
425 Pleasant St.
Worcester, MA 01509

CAPE COD & THE ISLANDS (LVIII)
Alexander W. MacIsaac 508-382-6876
21 Freeman Rd
Yarmouth Port, MA 02575

-MICHIGAN-
WEST MICHIGAN (XXIII)
Maurice Cole 231-879-4040
PO Box 81
Fife Lake, MI 49633

GREAT LAKES (XXI)
Chapter now defunct

-MISSISSIPPI-
MISSISSIPPI (XXXIII)
James W. Young 601-898-2893
20 Peachtree Ln
Madison, MS 39110-9647

-MISSOURI-
GATEWAY (XXV)
W. Kent Stephens 618-344-1618
107 Bluffview Lane
Collinsville, IL 62234

-NEW JERSEY-
NEW JERSEY (XII)
Anthony W. Andriola 201-667-9363
33 Clover St.
Nutley, NJ 07110

PICATINNY (LIV)
James K. Cullen 973-584-6126
6 Parkwood Rd
Succasunna, NJ 07876

FORT MONMOUTH (LVI)
Edward Terrell 732-294-5447
3 Chestnut Dr
Hazlet, NJ 07730

FORT DIX (LX)
Lloyd Orth 856-235-0504
10 Locust St
Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054

SOUTH JERSEY (LXI)
Milton Shepherd 609-465-4188
PO Box 185
Goshen, NJ 08218

-NEW YORK-
CENTRAL NEW YORK (II)
James DePalma 315-457-0500
104 Saxon Park Dr
Liverpool, NY 13088-6450

MOHAWK VALLEY (XXVIII)
Robert L. Hyde 315-724-2067
15 Shamlin Ln
New Hartford, NY 13413

HUDSON VALLEY (IL)
Stanley A. Wemer, Jr. 518-798-3697
170-6 Robert Gardens North
Queensbury, New York 12604

STATEN ISLAND (LII)
Carrine D. Burzumato 718-968-3795
630 Woodrow Rd
Staten Island, NY 10312

GENESSEE VALLEY (LVII)
Mitchell Kady 716-424-4746
921 Crittenden Rd
Rochester, NY 14623

MID-HUDSON VALLEY (LIX)
Herbert Goodwin 914-783-3801
PO Box 285
Monroe, NY 10950

LONG ISLAND (LXIII)
David Saltman 516-221-5096
PO Box 7127
Wantagh, NY 11793

-NORTH CAROLINA-
NORTH CAROLINA (IX)
William R. Strickland 910-897-8295
R.D. #3, Box #514
Dunn, NC 28334

-NORTH DAKOTA-
NORTH DAKOTA (XX)
Chapter now defunct
(Address needed)

-OHIO-
BLANCHARD VALLEY (XLII)
Donald E. Zoll 419-424-0420
827 S Cory St
Findlay, Oh 45840

BUCKEYE (XXIX)
Milan A. Rok 330-867-2061
1278 Culppeper Cr
Akron, OH 44313-6840

GEN. D. D. EISENHOWER (XXXV)
Gerald E. Hogue 419-675-2082
18905 State Route 309 E
Kenon, OH 43326-9723

NORTH COAST OHIO (XXXVI)
Edwin J. Stoch 216-731-1258
27101 Edgely Dr
Euclid, Oh 44132

-PENNSYLVANIA-
DELAWARE VALLEY (IV)
Stanley Wojtusik 215-637-4191
9639 Wissinoming St
Philadelphia, PA 19114

SUSQUEHANNA (XX)
Ms. Clara Gustin 717-342-8496
250 Crown Ave.
Scranton, PA 18505-2018

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA (XIV)
John DiBattista 724-837-3755
923 Orchard Ave
Greensburg, PA 15601

OHIO VALLEY (XXU)
Felix J. Cistolo 724-758-3163
111 Franklin Ave
Elwood City, PA 16117-2214

SOUTHCENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA (XLV)
George F. Schneider 717-464-8442
237 Willow Valley Dr
Lancaster, PA 17602-4782

LEHIGH VALLEY (LV)
Peter F. Leslie 908-889-6037
PO Box 41
Changewater, NJ 07831-0041

READING (LXIV)
Samuel B. Scates 610-921-2568
3419 Foster Ln
Reading, PA 19605

CUMBERLAND VALLEY (LXV)
John W. Fague 717-530-8817
306 Lurgan Ave
Shippensburg, PA 17257

-RHODE ISLAND-
RHODE ISLAND (XXIV)
William Gaynor 401-437-1297
PO Box 184
Warren, RI 02885

-SOUTH CAROLINA-
SOUTH CAROLINA (VII)
James C. Covington 803-778-3532
813 Fairwood Dr
Columbia, SC 29209

-TEXAS-
GREATER HOUSTON (XXVII)
James C. Burber 713-783-6148
10312 Briar Forest Dr.
Houston, TX 77042-2407

BEN FREEMAN (XXXVIII)
Ned W. Smith 11399 County Road 2328
Tyler, TX 75707-9541

ALAMO (XLVI)
John Hamilton 210-608-1904
5605 Tioga Drive
San Antonio, TX 78269-1904

LONE STAR (L)
Chauncy L. Hams 75011-2474
PO Box 11274
Carrollton, TX 75011-2474

-VERMONT-NEW HAMPSHIRE-MAINE-
TRI-STATE (XVI)
Alpha A. Chevrolet 603-435-9448
18 Birch Hill Dr
Hooksett, NH 03106-1523

-VIRGINIA-
NORTHERN VIRGINIA (XV)
Robert J. VanHouten 703-273-4168
3745 Chain Bridge Rd
Fairfax, VA 22030-3212

CRATER (XLIII)
W. Bauder Perkinson 804-590-1185
9441 W. River Rd.
Maloesca, VA 23803-1019

-WASHINGTON-
NORTHWEST (VII)
Lola Wick 253-566-7665
PO Box 64388
University Place, WA 98474-0338

-WISCONSIN-
NORTHERN WISCONSIN (I)
Elmer M. Dellenbach 715-845-3951
9202 Highland Dr
Wausau, WI 54401

CONTACT THE CHAPTER IN YOUR AREA.
YOU WILL BE GLAD YOU DID.

IF YOU FIND YOU HAVE A LITTLE TIME,
WRITE TO VBOB AND WE'LL SEND YOU THE
NECESSARY TOOLS TO GET OFF TO A
GOOD START IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A
CHAPTER IN YOUR AREA. YOU'LL FIND
THAT IT'S EASY TO DO AND THE REWARDS
TO ALL OF THOSE YOU BRING TOGETHER
CANNOT BE DUPLICATED.

President's Message

As we look ahead to December 16, 2002, and the 58th anniversary of the start of the Battle of the Bulge, I would like to look back for a few paragraphs to our annual convention over the Labor Day weekend in the Baltimore area.

I do so with a deep sense of gratitude to all of you and your families, who helped make this an outstanding reunion, and one that I will never forget. Let me note at the beginning how humble I have felt to have been your president this past year, and how grateful I am for the privilege you have given to me to serve you again in this coming year.

While it is an honor to serve as president of this great organization, the real honor I feel is that you have the opportunity to work with so many dedicated people at the national level and also to meet with the hard working presidents and members of our chapters throughout the country.

We are pledged to our comrades who gave their lives for our victory in the Ardennes to see that their sacrifices were not in vain and will be forever a part of our nation's heritage.

You are doing that, and from reports at the reunion you are not slowing down but moving ahead at full speed to keep the memory of the Battle of the Bulge alive, enlisting new members and new chapters almost every month.

Our American heritage played an important role in our reunion with its link to the past at Fort McHenry and to the future, taking place with 9-11 just a few days after our close.

That was brought home to me on Friday, August 30, as we gathered in the barracks area at Fort McHenry for a ceremonial raising of our "Star Spangled Banner." We all had the opportunity to gather around one of the largest American Flags I've ever seen. As we stood side-by-side, touching the flag, we all joined in a very loud Pledge of Allegiance, and stood silently as *Taps* resounded over the fort.

Those sentiments were with us again on Saturday when in brilliant sunshine we assembled at the impressive MD-DC Chapter VBOB Memorial at Fort Meade. With John McAuliffe as MC and a welcome from Col. John Ives, the Fort Meade Commander. Col. Tom Sweeney, our good friend from the U.S. Army War College, spoke of the patriotism that motivated GI's in that bitter winter of 1944-1945. It was a patriotism that refused to buckle under in the face of terror and is a patriotism that is still with us and is a source of strength to the American men and women fighting the new wave of terror in foreign lands today.

LTG Claude M. Kicklighter, Assistant Secretary, the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, recalled how that American patriotic spirit came to the fore in the sleet, snow and freezing rain of the Ardennes those many years ago. General Kicklighter, another long-time friend of VBOB, told a hushed audience at our closing banquet that our victory over the three German armies helped end World War II, and helped bring peace and freedom



Louis Cunningham

to a weary world.

Yes, it was a memorable reunion, and I want to thank so many of you for helping when help was needed. While I have thanked many persons, I do want to make special mention of the untiring efforts of John and Mary Ann Bowen as lead scouts for the reunion, and Dorothy Davis, who was always there when help was needed.

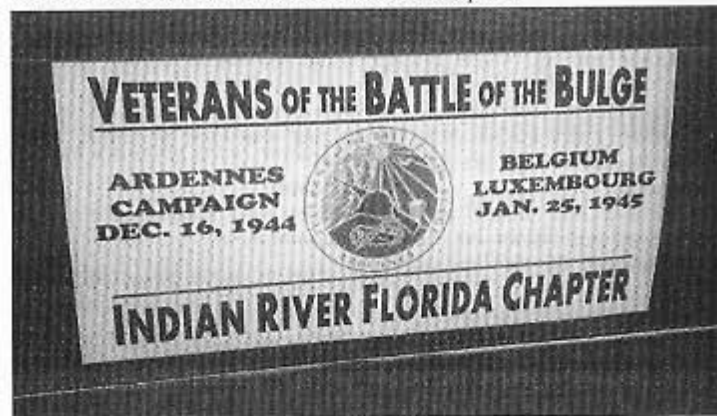
If there was one message that came through to me as I drove home after the reunion, it is that we all seem to be on the same page in our desire to keep the veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, and our heritage, as an important part of our lives.

We have to keep doing the things that have been successful for so many chapters; continuing to make school visits, continue to place new memorials in our home towns, continue to take part in civic functions, parades and ceremonials, and above all, write your memories of your battle in the Bulge for your children and grandchildren. Too many have put doing that off until it became too late. Don't you be one of them.

In closing I hope that I will have the opportunity to see many of you at the Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation ceremonies on December 15 and 16, 2002, and on a personal note, Charlotte and I wish you all a safe holiday season, and a happy and healthy New Year. ■

IT PAYS TO ADVERTISE

Al Babecki, President of the Indian River Chapter of VBOB (Florida) sends us the following car door sign which his chapter has had made to advertise VBOB and the chapter. Al says it creates a lot of curiosity and questions from those who see it and results in a few new members to the chapter.



Al served in the Battle of the Bulge in the 1255th Engineer Combat Battalion, Company C.

IN THIS ISSUE

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 3. President's Message | 21. 344th Bomb Group |
| 4. Letters to the Editor | 22. Christmas Mass |
| 7. South Central PA Chapter | 24. 106th Cavalry |
| 8. General Kicklighter's Address | 25. Reflections |
| 10. 526 Armored | 26. Books you Might Enjoy |
| 11. Members Speak Out | 27. Roadway Honors Bulge Vets |
| 12. Pictorial Highlights | 28. Stephen Ambrose |
| 14. VBOB Convention Minutes | 29. WWII Memorial |
| 16. VBOB Events | 30. VBOB Quartermaster |
| 18. Certificate | 31. Heroism Etched in Granite |
| 19. 740 Tank Btn | |

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FORWARD OBSERVERS

I would like to thank Ross H. Rasmussen for his article about artillery forward observers. Too much of some infantry attacks depend on artillery support. The forward observer is always with the lead company on the attack. When one company of infantry is pinned down and a second company takes up the attack the forward observer must pick up his equipment and go with them, this leaves the forward observer always on the attack.

I do hope they have changed that under the new military system of shooting artillery for the infantry. As a forward observer with my battalion, I can tell you that you are on target.

Robert Fowler, Jr.
84 INF 909 FA BN

HO HUM

I have been humming *Lili Marlene* for 60 years and playing some on the organ. This is the first time I have ever seen the English and German words written out.

All I have to do now is learn the correct pronunciation of the German words.

Thanks much for printing both languages.

Ray Brassard
774 TD BN

'LILI' PERVERTED

Your article in the May 2002 *Bugle* about 'Lili Marlene' was most informative for me because I had never learned the proper words to the song. Instead I had learned the anti-Nazi version, (or perversion according to loyal Germans) during the Bulge, and later when I stayed for the occupation. It happened this way:

Fortunately for us, our battalion had moved out of St. Vith in late November so none of our units was in the direct path of the German offensive. Looking for better radar coverage, we sited near Aacen, Liege, and Neuville. V-1's were concentrating on Liege but none of our equipment was hit. I was in Liege either the first or second week of December and stopped at a little bistro for a beverage. There was a table of people singing and laughing and they invited me to sit down. It was there that I heard the words to 'Lili Marlene' that I still remember:

An die Laterne, vor die Reichskanzlei
Baumeln alle bonzen, auch Adolf ist dabei.
Und alle Leute bleiben stehen, sie wollen Adolf hangen sehen
Und wir sind wieder frei, und wir sind wieder frei.

My imperfect German translation:

On the lamppost in front of the Reichschancellery
All the big-wigs are hanging and Adolf is there too.
And all the people remain standing there, they want to see Adolf hang
And we are free again, and we are free again.

I heard this version a number of times during the year and a half that I spent in the occupation, presumably from anti-Nazis. Yes there were some.

Since discovered VBOB only recently there is a possibility that you have already published this. In which case feel free.

Owen A. Knorr
583 SAW BN

P.S. Similarly, all I remember of the standing orders for guard duty is the last, unauthorized, one.

MANHAY...A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

In response to Milton J. Schober's article, "Attack on Manhay Christmas Day 1944", that appeared in the May 2002 issue of *The Bulge Bugle*, I would like to offer a few comments. Having researched, for several years, the fighting east of the Ourthe River possibly my findings will present a somewhat different picture of particular events that occurred there.

Mr. Schober states that the attack by 2 DD Panzer Division began at 9:00 pm (2100 Hours). In fact, the assault up the Manhay Road was

launched at 2200 on Christmas Eve while, unfortunately CCA-7 Armored Division had been ordered to begin its retrograde movement at 2230. This can be established by American and German reports. Thus it was the closeness of the timing with respect to attack and withdrawal that was a major cause in the losses suffered by 7 AD.

Further, Mr. Schober refers to the Germans' employment of a captured Sherman as the lead tank in the movement up the Manhay Road (N-15) on Christmas Eve, and a factor in the debacle that followed. When queried separately in correspondence, both Ortwin Pohn, CO-4 Company, 2 SS Panzer Regiment and Ernst Barkmann, who actually commanded the lead tank in the assault up N-15, adamantly denied the existence of such a ruse.

During the movement up the Manhay Road, which was bathed in a full moon's reflective light of the snow, Ernst Barkmann became separated from his company. He passed 7 AD positions, knocking out two tank destroyers and one Sherman and reached the Village of Manhay. Although his company's objective was Grandmenil and beyond, Barkmann was unable to turn west because of Shermans approaching along the leading from Grandmenil.

Forced to continue north through Manhay, the German tank commander found himself hip deep in 7 AD vehicles lined up on both sides of the road, preparing to evacuate the village. Amazingly, Panther 401 was not initially recognized for what it was. Now isolated and in his haste to leave, Barkmann's panzer ran over a jeep and was spotted by Corporal Morris Powell (see "The Cold Never Quit" Powell-pg. 24, *Bulge Bugle*, November 1993). Moments later the German Panther passed Lieutenant William Goldie, who alerted Headquarters, 40th Tank Battalion.

Reaching the northern outskirts of Manhay, Ernst Barkmann directed his gunner to fire back into the village. As a result, six American tanks were destroyed. With his Panther's transmission giving off smoke, Barkmann ordered his driver to leave N-15 and take cover among trees on the left (western) side of the road. Here, the German crew remained until early Christmas Morning, when they drove back to occupied Manhay, now filled with wrecked and abandoned vehicles of all makes.

Mr. Schober refers to a road side monument that represents the furthest point of German penetration north of Manhay. Whether this marker denotes Barkmann's incursion or not, it would appear to be misplaced. Seeking the memorial's location, I accompanied Ernst Barkmann to Manhay several years ago. He drove through the village, stopped at the memorial stone, shook his head and continued moving up the road. He finally halted his car and pointed to the place where he and his crew had hid 50 years before, some 800 years beyond the location of the present memorial stone.

George J. Winter
U.S. Navy-WW II

IT WAS NO DREAM

Thank you Mr. David A. Levine. I thought the name Monschau was a name I must have dreamed. I remember that they took our machine gunners to help the 38th Cavalry. We were told a division of German tanks was coming up this Snake Road Hill. The officer of the 38th Cavalry dispersed his machine gunners (we heard there were 34 plus 186 FA machine gunners (six) in perfect spots to stop the German tanks). The rumors were the Germans had a must to take Monschau at any cost.

I was with the 186th FA, 155 Howitzers. We kept firing at a low elevation then we got orders that we were going to use our guns as anti-tank guns if the Germans broke through the 38th Cavalry. Back in Tennessee or North Carolina we had one day of instructions on how to use the 155 Howitzer as an anti-tank gun. Then we got orders from our forward observers with new instructions, fire at will and report to the Sgt. when you are down to 5 pieces of ammunition. We had to give them an account after every fire mission. The machine gunners and the 186th FA machine gunners received Bronze Medals in the field and we received papers from the Army Commander. The 186th FA unit also received a Bronze Star plus the Distinguished Unit Citation. I am so glad that this was but a real true story and you, David, brought it to life.

Later on we heard by stopping the Germans at Monschau the Bulge had a dent in their lines and they could not go much further or the 1st Army V Corps would be in position to cut this particular division from the rest of the unit. I am so grateful to the 38th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron (Macs) acknowledged our presence as we were a bastard outfit of about 525 men including A, B, C Batteries, HQ Battery, and Service Battery.

This bastard outfit landed on D-Day plus one with the First Division, when they went for a rest we were transferred to support the Second Division to clear those hedgerows. Each hedgerow was a battle in itself and then to the Fourth Division at St. Lo. At the Rhine River we moved to Patton's Third Army. At the Remagen Bridge to cover their advance when the bridge collapsed we crossed over the longest platoon bridge (at the time by some brave engineers I'm sorry to say I don't remember their outfits' names) and stayed with Patton's Army under the Commander (I think) General Leonard. He recommended and gave several citations from the 3rd Army Commander. This bastard outfit, the 186th FA, fought wherever they needed help, never coming off the front lines.

We went back to our own Army (the First Army, V Corps), and when we met the Russians at the Elbe River we waited days for the Russians to meet us, as we were not allowed to cross the river. In the meantime, the 2nd Division went back to a deserved rest area and the 9th Division replaced them. They had a band with them when the Russians finally crossed the Elbe River, the band came out and played for them. I think this show meant the war was coming to an end but I remember seeing a picture "One Minute Before Eleven"--it was about WWI. So many GIs were killed in that minute the war was over at 11:00 am and I reminded everyone about the picture and we went digging our foxholes a little deeper. The 186 FA was federalized from the 106 Infantry--a National Guard outfit back in January 1941 and the selected service draftees in April 1941 the new draftees all from Brooklyn. I think it was the only outfit that was 99 percent from Brooklyn, New York. Most of us stayed close to five years together during the war, and after the war.

Max Brudner
186 FA BN B

THE ROLE OF THE ARMY AIR FORCE

Please accept my thanks for President L. Cunningham's remarks concerning the part of the 8th Air Force played, on December 24, 1944 in assisting in stopping the German Army and Luftwaff, during the Battle of the Bulge. This is the first occasion that I have seen or read, where the 8th Air Force was given credit for their effort during this battle. This is of great interest to me, for I flew on that mission of Christmas Eve, 1944, with the 487th Bomb Group, Station 137, Lavenham, England. Our group was chosen to lead the 8th Ar Force on that mission.

Just as we were approaching our target, we were hit by over 50 German fighter planes. The leader that day was Brig. General Fredrick Castle, who was shot down on the first pass and our losses for that mission were 13 B-17's shot down, 34 KIA, 41 MIA's. One of bombers shot down had a crew that we banded with, they had 5 killed, 4 bailed out. Chuck Haskett, member VBOB, wrote his story for newsletter last year. We were very frustrated, for the weather kept the 8th Air Force on the ground, but we made up for it when we flew on Christmas Eve, for we did complete our mission.

The story about 'Lili Marlene'--I remember that song very well. I still have a copy on an old 45 record I bought after the war. The singer on the record is Lale Andersen, do you think this is the same person in the story, Lala Anderson? Remember hearing the song when spending the night in London, Rainbow Gardens, and to this date when I hear this song it brings back many memories, especially when our group visited the City of Bastogne and villages where a memorial was dedicated for our group, where many of the bombers shot down crashed.

Walter A. "Mike" Quering
487 BOMB GP H 838 SQD

THANKS

I just received the August issue of *The Bulge Bugle* and could not wait to read all the letters from other veterans. I was pleasantly surprised when I turned to page 18 and saw the information I had submitted concerning "Impressions, Fleeting Moments and Memories of a Field Artillery Combat Medic." I want to thank you and your staff for including this in the latest issue and am happy to share my feelings with all the other Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge who survived this historical experience. Thanks again and I am looking forward to your next issue.

Frank Bressler
78 INFD 307 FA BN A 307 MED DET

[Incidentally, in the original article, Frank's last name was

MORE ON MANHAY

This is in response to a letter in the February 2002 issue written by Jacob Bran Sperry, 75 INFD, 291 INF 1BN regarding Information on Manhay. The first battalion headquarters of the 291st Regiment was positioned in Vaux Chavanne on December 29, 1944 with C Company.

B Company (of which I was a member) was dug in on the ridge between Vaux Chavanne and Manhay which was approximately 1-1/2 miles to the west.

I have returned to this area three times and the people in Vaux Chavanne are extremely grateful to the Americans. I remember when we relieved the 7th Armored Division there were two dead civilians laying 10 yards behind our foxholes. Someone covered them with a blanket but before long it got so cold the blanket disappeared, probably to help the living.

When I visited the area in 1996, Eddy Montfort, who wrote "L'offensive des Ardennes," showed a group of us a memorial in the place where their bodies lay. He indicated they were killed by German troops on December 25. His book has their pictures and names. They were brother and sister, Leon and Theresa Danloy, on their way from Manhay to Vaux Chavanne when they met their unfortunate fate. I would also like to add that in 1991 we found one foxhole that belonged to our squad. It was about 18" deep and surrounded by a herd of cows. Al Kitts claimed it was his foxhole so we awarded it to him--droppings and all.

Charles Woodman
75 INFD 291 INF B

CARLSON'S KEYNOTE ADDRESS GREAT

I am a charter/life member of VBOB, my membership number is 28...so I've been around for a while.

In the February 2002 issue you have an article on BGN Carlson's remarks as keynote speaker of your Orlando reunion.

It is without a doubt one of the finest articles I have read in regard the Battle of the Bulge. I'd like permission to use excerpts from his remarks for publication in the next issue of our *Checkerboard* which is the official publication of the 99th Infantry Division Association. [Permission granted, of course.]

In your recent issue you also have two articles from my good friend and fellow 99'er Thor Ronningen. I'm particularly pleased that Thor shared with your readers the story about our On Site Search Team in Belgium. We are extremely proud of our Diggers.

Bill Meyer
99 INFD 371 FA BN SVC

WE MUST HAVE BEEN CLOSE TOGETHER

In the August issue I just received, one article in "Living Legends" caught my eye. It was from William Gilliam, 2nd Armored Division, 66th Armored Regiment, Company G.

I was with the 2nd Armored Division, I Company, of the 66th.

Our company had been ordered back from Aachen in Germany to help in fighting the Germans in what was latter called the Battle of the Bulge.

I was wounded two days after William Gilliam, so we must have been very close to one another. It was cold and snowy, and the Germans had laid a mine field right on top of the snow, as our tank commander skirted the mines and ordered the driver to come back on the road, we were an easy target for the Germans who had zeroed in on just that spot. We had an inexperienced tank commander, as we were the lead tank. Our company commander had transferred to the second tank when the first tank bogged down in the snow.

The Germans hit our tank with two shells, and I was able to get out although my left leg had been badly damaged. In fact I spent 2-1/2 years in the hospital before being discharged. I was wondering if William knew anyone in my company. This all happened on January 5, 1945

Louis H. Brill
2 ARMD 66 AIR I

[Louis' address is 10026B Landrea Lane, Boynton Beach, Florida, in case anyone can provide information on his company.]

A SIMILAR EXPERIENCE

I read with great interest your letter by Milton F. Bartlett, 5th Infantry Division, 2nd Battalion Company G, Medic, written for Dave Stevens, 30th Infantry Division.

I had a similar experience on 15 March 45 in the woods around Gremerith, Germany. A little after daybreak on March 15, 1945, I know this was after the Bulge, but it was very similar. I was also in the Bulge from 16 December 1944 until it ended in January 1945.

Since I was a machine gunner in I Company, 317th Infantry Regiment, 80th Division, I was called upon to stop the Jerries from sniping at our troops from a bunch of pine trees across the road from the woods where we (our squad of the 3rd Squad of our company being pinned down by these Snipers). I had a light 30 cal. machine gun and set up the gun on the edge of the woods and got a box of ammo from one of my ammo bearers. I started to put the belt into the chamber, but nothing happened. I felt in the breech and there was ice in the breech. I took out my small knife from my pocket when my head started to spin. I thought for sure I was going to heaven to meet with my maker. Then, I realized what had happened. The bullet (which I still have somewhere in the house, but do not know where) kept spinning around in my helmet but it never penetrated the helmet liner. I had to carry everything so I discarded the helmet and picked up another from a dead GI. After regaining my senses I cleaned out the ice from the breech and inserted the first round and must have killed about 20 or so Germans. I mowed the tops out of all the tall pines and I could see the Jerries fall out of the trees--about a 20 to 30 feet fall.

Earlier in that day I lost one of my good buddies--Pvt. Eddie Cross. As we were in these same woods the Germans were firing at us and when the one machine gun stops we automatically shift position because the other machine gun will start to fire. I yelled to Eddie to shift and simultaneous saw the shells cutting through his body. I immediately ran to him and turned him over, but he was dead. By the way, the graves registration did not get his body until July 1945, after they came to our company to see if anyone knew him. I said I knew him and they said they had him as being AWOL. Later that same day we advanced to the other side of the field and I was hit by German anti-tank weapons and they picked me out of my foxhole and I woke up approximately four hours later in a hospital outside Paris, France. With a concussion and a punctured ear drum (left ear). I was awarded the Purple Heart.

John P. Firestone
80 INFD 317 INF I

BUZZ BOMB ALLEY

[Article in response to February article in *The Bugle*.]

Did you know there were two buzz bombs that hit the 76th? The first hit an area that had previously housed the motor pool. No damage done.

The 76th hospital was a tent hospital. The Germans used buzz bombs--they did not know where they would land, but knew they caused fear and did do damage. The area that the hospital was located was known as buzz bomb alley. As long as you could hear the jet-like sound of the motor you knew you were safe, but when the motor stopped and you could hear the swish of air of the dropping bomb you knew it was landing close.

It was the second bomb that caused the deaths. How do I know all this? I am Jean Walker Bellis (N783367), a nurse who was stationed at the 76th. Some things you wish you could forget! I can close my eyes and see the debris and death in the area.

The hospital was also strafed. The plane went over the nurses' tents rat-a-tatting his machine guns. Thank heavens no one was hit--but holes in the tents told the story. The plane was shot down and the pilot was brought to the 76th. The officials sent him to another hospital--I can still see the corps man standing on a chair with a long handled broom sweeping the snow off the red cross painted on one of the tents.

Thanks for making me remember.

Jean W. Bellis
76 GEN HOSP

THE 75TH IN MANHAY

This letter is in response to Jacob Sperry, 75th Infantry Division, 291st Infantry, letter "Info on Manhay." Mr. Trengrove asked why no one mentions Manhay, Belgium.

My outfit was Company C, 291 Regiment according to Major Joseph Missal, Battalion Executive Officer documents. Documents on 28 December 1944 the 29st Regiment Combat Team was enroute to relieve elements of the 7th Armored Division at Vaux Chavanne, Belgium. The 1st Battalion was on the left flank to the 82nd Airborne Division, 3rd Battalion, the right near Manhay tying into elements of the 106th Infantry Division.

Vaux Chavanne is a small town located 3 kilometers north of Manhay which is located on the main highway N 30 north of Bastogne, Belgium.

During the severe barrage of mortars shortly after we arrived on the first day we lost Melvin McNew, BAR man, who was hit by a mortar shell and was probably our first casualty. A Belgium couple who stayed behind to tend to their cows were also killed.

I don't know if Manhay ever fell to the Germans. I believe it was the high water mark of the German offensive. This was my company's (C), first defensive assignment. We went on the offensive shortly afterwards.

I hope this clarifies the question on Manhay, Belgium.

Sal Frascello
75 INFD 21 INF C

LEADERS AND PUSHERS

While re-reading the February 2, 2002, of *The Bulge Bugle*, my attention was grabbed by Alfred Alvarez' letter in which he tells of pushing (like wet spaghetti) an infantry platoon." Maybe he should have tried pulling (leading) them.

I had the unfortunate experience of serving under officers of that ilk (pushers) during the BOB. An operation that comes immediately to mind was clearing woods south of Baffe on January 7, 1945. I was lead scout for first platoon, the other scout was a poorly trained replacement from a service unit who didn't understand the M-1 rifle and was next to useless.

When I encountered and fired at a German soldier, the lieutenant ordered me to stop firing because I was shooting at B Company. A German machine gun changed his mind and I was left to deal with the enemy.

After calling on my squad leader(?) and getting no response (whatever the lieutenant had must have been catching), I told the lieutenant that if someone did not join me, I was going to join him. The lieutenant then told Haynes to do something and be bravely told Spuck, our BAR man, to move up. Spuck's BAR ended German resistance and he and I were the only ones that fired our weapons.

This encounter was reported in detail in *The Bulge Bugle* and that account was appropriated by the authors of *Hitler's Last Gamble*, who without consulting me, changed completely the actions of the lieutenant, including calling him the platoon leader. He wasn't even a good pusher.

The next day we reached Marcourt and two acting NCO's were appointed from the non-participants as a reward.

Prior to entering active duty, I worked as a boilermaker in a ship repair yard in Tampa, Florida, where skilled tradesmen were supervised by leadermen and unskilled laborers by pushers. Didn't good infantrymen deserve being led instead of pushed?

Charles R. Miller
75 INFD 20 INF A

D-DAY MUSEUM

[A lady I met recently] told me that in New Orleans, Louisiana, they had a great exhibit of memorabilia of the WWII era. Is there any way you can find out just where it is?

Walter F. Mareczko
75 INFD 29 INF

[Ed.: Yep! For information write to: Administrative Office, 923 Magazine Street, New Orleans, Louisiana 70130.]

GRATITUDE AND CORRECTION

I bought a new car several days ago and wanted to have the windows

tinted, so I took it to a local tinting shop. After the work was finished I went over to the owner to pay. He said, "I see by your license plate an frame that you have the Purple Heart, and you were in the Battle of the Bulge. I replied, "That's right." He said, "You have paid for it many times over, and I want to thank you." What a nice surprise to be thanked for just doing a job.

I would also like to correct Msgr. O'Donnell, if I may. When we were at Camp Kilmer, he wrote: "that no one in the division had to lift a hand, even for KP." I spent sixteen hours dishing out food for the whole division. But, I must say I found your story of great interest and very well done.

Robert L. Jacoby
87 INFD 912 FA BN B

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

I made several trips over to help you guys. Sorry we could not have made it sooner.

Lyle Page
8 USAF 388 BOMB GP

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN

The last issue of *The Bugle* had one of the famous "Up Front with Mauldin" drawings--seems not too long ago we were finding many more in our *Stars & Stripes*.

Enclosed please find a news article about Bill's current illness--if possible let the GI's of BoB hear about this and send send him our thanks with our cards and letters as well as our prayers.

Paul Donald Winkler
87 INFD 346 INF SVC

[Paul enclosed a letter explaining that Bill is now in a nursing home where he has been for quite some time. Sometimes days at a time go by without him saying a word, but the one thing that cheers him up is hearing from World War II guys. Please send him a card or drop him a note: Bill Mauldin, care of Dillow of the Orange County Register, 625 North Grand Avenue, Santa Ana, California 92701.]

A FEW CORRECTIONS

Herewith three nitpick corrections to recent items in the BUGLE.

In a recent issue of the BULGE BUGLE (penultimate, I believe) General Knowlton in discussing the selection of a Combat Command of the 7th Armored Division to receive an award stated CCB/7th Armored Division had been selected as it was the first armored unit to reach St. Vith after the start of the Bulge. I presume the reference is to the first unit of the 7th Armored to do so--on December 18, 1944, because CCB/9th Armored Division had been repelling German attacks in the vicinity of St. Vith since early morning of the 17th. Advanced elements of the 87th Calvary Reconnaissance Squadron made contact with the armored division units in the afternoon of the 18th.

General Carlson as been a bit misinformed, I believe, as to the presence of Marlene Dietrich at Echternach in the evening of December 15th. We occupied half that town, the Germans the other half and the only Americans in it on the 15th were a company of the 12th Infantry, 4th Division and, until the 14th a forward observer team from my 3rd Armored Field Artillery Battalion, 9th Armored Division. We would have known had MD been in our area. I believe she was in the vicinity of Spa, Belgium, where First Army Headquarters was located, when the Bulge broke out.

Thanks for the write up on our CCA receiving the PUC finally) but Battery "B", 482nd AAA AW Battalion, was not with us--just "A" there, but at that time they were firing away in support of Combat Command B, 9th Armored Division near St. Vith, Belgium.

Certainly enjoy reading *The Bugle*--no where else could I read such combat tales.

George Ruhlen
9 ARMDD 3 AFA BN

CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL TO SEE IF YOUR DUES ARE DUE.

SOUTHCENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER ASSISTS VA

Chapter President George F. Schneider reports that his chapter collected and presented three large boxes of personal toiletry articles to the VA hospital.

The chapter also presented a check for \$1,200 to the Lebanon VA Medical Center for the purchase of two comfortable lounge chairs for the Oncology Unit. The following picture depicts the presentation.



[Left to right: Dave Charles, Program Co-Chairman; Kathy Trostle, VA Voluntary Program Coordinator; Sohail Ali, VA Staff Physician; Charles Goss, Secretary; George F. Schneider, President; Henry Huber, Chaplain; and David Roseboro, Education Chairman]

The chapter's Education Committee speaks to students, primarily history classes, regarding the Battle of the Bulge. ■

[Note: Many write to us seeking a license plate bearing information regarding the Battle of the Bulge. Such a license plate must be issued by the state department of motor vehicles. We do, however, have a license plate frame which you will find listed on the Quartermaster order form.] ■

VIDEO AVAILABLE

The Gateway Chapter of VBOB (St. Louis, Missouri) has developed a video ("Everyday Heroes of the Battle of the Bulge, WWII") which can be of assistance to you in presenting a program to your local schools. It has two 30-minute episodes including military background archive scenes and music.

It is available for \$14.95 (including shipping and handling) from:

Millworkspost
51 Garnet Lane
Cape Girardeau, Missouri 63701
Contact: John L. Mills
Phone: 573-339-0933 ■

Gen. Kicklighter's Keynote Address

(continued from Page 1)

At the start of WWII, we were fighting against great odds. Our Armed Forces were very small and poorly equipped. As an example, the U.S. Army was about number 17th in the world in size. After December 7, 1941, Americans answered their nation's call to arms. Our Armed Forces expanded very rapidly. They came from the farms, from the small towns, and from the cities. Never has our nation been more united. Almost overnight, our industrial might was converted to produce the guns, planes, ships and tanks needed to fight that war. We also supported our allies with badly needed supplies and equipment, which helped them to stay in the war.

Our enemies did not believe this miraculous transformation was possible. Every American – whether it was Rosie the Riveter who left home to work in our factories, boy scouts who gathered scrap metal; or families who planted victory gardens or bought victory bonds – everyone supported the brave fighting troops at the front – we were one nation united. We were one nation standing with our allies against this great evil.

During the months following D-Day, the U. S. Military Forces had great success on the battlefield in Europe. Early in December 1944, the American Soldier's morale was high and their spirit was sustained by the belief that the war was almost won.

The allied forces were pushing the Germans out of France and the low countries. The Russian Army was closing in on the eastern front. The Americans and British Air Campaign was very successful. The Italian Peninsula had been liberated. And, in southern Europe, the Rumanians and Bulgarians had hastened to switch sides and join the Russians.

Hitler knew the end was close at hand, if the allied advance could not be halted. He commanded his general staff to develop a plan to conduct a major offensive to stop the allied advance. Germany's senior military leaders opposed the plan, but, as usual, Hitler overruled his military commanders. The plan was bad and masterful, and was supported with German's best remaining combat hardened troops.

More than a million troops fought in that battle: The major forces were 500,000 Americans, 55,000 British and 600,000 Germans. There were more than 200,000 casualties: 81,000 American casualties with 19,000 killed in action and more than 23,000 taken prisoner; the British had 1,400 casualties, 200 killed in action; and the Germans had 100,000 killed or wounded.

The German Army launched a powerful counter offensive in the Ardennes. The plan was to drive through the allied forces and split them in half, thereby forcing a negotiated peace.

In the Preface to the official DoD Military History, "THE ARDENNES: BATTLE OF THE BULGE," the author states: "The mettle of the American Soldier was tested in the fires of adversity and the quality of his response earned for him the right to stand shoulder to shoulder with his forebears of Valley Forge, Fredericksburg, and the Marne."

He goes on to say: "This is the story of how the Germans planned and executed their offensive. It is the story of how the high command, American and British, reacted to defeat the German plan once the reality of a German offensive was accepted. But, most of all, it is the story of the American fighting man and the manner in which he fought a myriad of small defensive battles – until the torrent of the German attack was slowed and diverted, its force dissipated and finally spent. "

"It is a story of squads, platoons, companies and even conglomerate scratch groups that fought with courage, with fortitude, with sheer obstinacy, often without information or communications or the knowledge of the whereabouts of friends."

As late as December 15th 1944, the allied forces believe that the German forces could not possibly assemble the forces needed for a serious counterattack.

The Ardennes was called "A Ghost Front." A quote from the Daily Situation Report of the US. VIII Corps for December 15th read: "There is nothing to report!" But that illusion was about to be shattered. Without detection, the Germans assembled an attacking force that numbered more than 200,000 men, 1,000 tanks, 2,000 artillery pieces, and a reserve force that numbered more than 300,000.

Early on the morning of December 16th, the Nazi troops stormed through the thinly defended, stark woods of the Ardennes. Many of you in this room met that attack head on. Others were on airfields waiting for the weather to clear. The allied forces were caught totally by surprise. The battle was launched with an all out attack against the five divisions of the 1st U.S. Army. The attack was led by the 5th and 6th Panzer Armies. They committed 20 divisions against five U.S.

The Sixth Panzer Army pushed north while the Fifth Panzer Army pushed south. The Sixth Panzer Army attacked the two southern divisions of U.S. V Corps at Elsenborn Ridge, but made very little progress. At the same time, the Fifth Panzer Army was attacking the U.S. VIII Corps, some 100 miles to the south. U.S. VIII Corps had only recently arrived in Europe. They were quickly surrounded.

Gen. Omar Bradley, known as "The Soldier's General," stated that: "Bravery is the capacity to perform properly, even when scared half to death." As you also know, Gen. Bradley was also the first Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the first Administrator of The Department of Veterans Affairs.

On December 17, the U.S. 7th Armored Divisions engaged the Sixth Panzer Army at St. Vith, which was the road that led to the Meuse River and to Antwerp. The Americans were successful in slowing the Germans down and altering the timing of their attack plan.

The same day, 140 Americans were taken prisoner, and 86 were executed while on a road headed for Malmedy. Of the 140 men taken prisoner, 43 managed to survive and tell the story of what happened. The Malmedy Massacre was the worst atrocity committed against American Troops in Europe. Word of the Massacre spread quickly through the American Divisions, causing the Americans to stiffen, even more their resolve.

Bastogne was a strategic position. The Germans and Americans both wanted to occupy these key cross roads. This led to a race between the U.S. 101st Airborne Division and the German forces. The Americans got there first, but the Germans were not far behind and quickly surrounded the U.S. forces and laid siege to the city.

On December 22, German troops under the flag of truce delivered a message from their commander demanding surrender of Bastogne. LTC Harry Kinnard (Div. G-3) drafted the response of one word, "NUTS." Brigadier General McAuliff, Acting Division Commander, approved and signed the reply. When the German Commander had difficulty translating the response, the messenger told the Germans it meant they "could all go to hell!"

Gen. Kicklighter's Keynote Address

(continued from Page 8)

Many American units were surrounded and cut off, and the only way they could get supplies was by airdrops. At this time, the weather was so bad, aircraft could not get off the ground. The American troops survived the best they could, hoping and praying for better weather.

They were relieved when the VII Corps moved down and enlarged the U.S. Line. This allowed General Patton's Third Army to counter attack the Germans surrounding Bastogne. And, at 1650 hours on December 26, the 4th Armored Division linked up with the 101st Airborne Division.

The allies launched a counteroffensive two days before the New Year. It involved the Third Army striking to the north – with the First Army pushing to the south. The plan was for the two Armies to link up and trap the German forces. The fighting was tough. Day after day, soldiers trudged through the snow. Newspapers were put under clothes as added insulation.

On January 1st, Hitler launched a plan he called "The Great Blow". The goal was to eliminate allied air power. German fighter planes swarmed over Belgium, Holland, and Northern France. For more than two hours, allied airfields were bombed. The U.S. lost 206 aircraft and many bases laid in ruin. Hitler's plan did a great deal of damage, but, in the end, he paid a devastating price. The German Luftwaffe lost 300 planes and 253 of his best pilots.

On January 8, Hitler ordered his troops to withdraw from the tip of the Bulge. By January 16th, the Third and First Army linked up and the allies now controlled the front. On January 23, St. Vith was retaken, and finally, on January 29th, the Battle of the Bulge was over. Hitler's last ditch attempt to win the war had failed. This allied victory, achieved at a very high price, meant that Germany's final defeat was only months away.

If you had not won this battle, the final solution would have been – the final solution. There would have been no survivors in the death camps.

The Battle of the Bulge could have been a great defeat had it not been for the courage and dedication of the men and women in this room. This decisive victory broke the back of the German army.

There were 32 Medals of Honor awarded for this battle. You and your comrades paid a very high price in blood. With some 80,000 U.S. casualties, the Battle of the Bulge was the bloodiest battle in American History – bloodier than Antietam, bloodier than Gettysburg, bloodier than Pearl Harbor, and bloodier than Normandy.

The Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, and so many more of your brothers and sisters in WWII, fought some of the toughest battles ever recorded in military history. You fought these battles and won the war and not only saved this nation, but you literally saved the world.

Many of your brothers and sisters never returned home. They gave all their tomorrows so that we could live in peace and freedom, and that is a very high price to pay when you are only 18 or 19 years old.

You came home, took off your uniforms, and said very little about the war. You rolled up your sleeves and went to work. Some went back to school on the GI Bill, and together you built this strong, free and beautiful America that we are privileged to wake up in each morning.

It has been said that any nation that forgets its veterans soon ceases to be a great nation. American will never forget its veterans. Tom Brokaw wrote a book, about WWII Veterans and he titled it the "Greatest Generation" – he got it right.

At the close of the 20th century, the New York Times was attempting to identify the most outstanding person of that century. They turned to Stephen Ambrose, one of our great historians, for his recommendation. Without hesitation, Professor Ambrose recommended the one person who, based on all his research and writing, had made the greatest impact during the past 100 years. Would it be Eisenhower? Truman? Churchill? FDR? Gandhi? King? The only nomination made by Stephen Ambrose was "GI JOE" – The WWII Veteran.

Ambrose told the New York Times that these very young men did not fight for fame or fortune. They fought for right. They fought to save their way of life. Wherever the WWII Veterans were stationed, they were respected and loved for their many acts of kindness – by sharing food, passing out candy, and providing medical support. The WWII Veterans knew what they were fighting for – to destroy evil and restore good.

The 20th Century's most outstanding person is all around us tonight. They are from all ethnic backgrounds, all faiths. The most outstanding person of the 20th century is the World War II Veterans! It is you!

This great nation is – once again – at war. The world was changed forever on September 11, 2001, and we now face a new evil. The tragedies of September 11th were horrible, but they did not intimidate the American people. It revived our spirit. America is more unified than ever, once again united against a great evil. As in the past, our Armed Forces will not let us down. They will protect and preserve this great nation, and the American people will continue to live in freedom. And they can't take that away.

In one of his many books on the history of WWII titled, this one titled, *THE VICTORS*, Ambrose wrote: "At the core, the American Citizen Soldiers (of World War II) knew the difference between right and wrong, and they didn't want to live in a world in which wrong prevailed. So they fought, and won, and we, all of us, living and yet to be born, must be forever profoundly grateful."

We thank you for your courage against great odds, and we thank you for your service to our country. We salute you – and we will never forget what you accomplished. We will strive to be worthy of this great gift that came at such a high price. Let there be no doubt – this nation will live up to your legacy as we – once again – stand united as one nation fighting against another great evil – "Terrorism."

May God continue to watch over the United States of America, and other peace and freedom loving people all over the world. God bless you and bless your family. GOD BLESS AMERICA.

Claude M. Kicklighter was sworn in August 10, 2001 as the Assistant Secretary for the Office of Policy and Planning. Prior to that, he served as the Deputy Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, National Cemetery Administration. On January 24, 2001, Mick Kicklighter was designated to lead the office of the Assistant Secretary for Public and Intergovernmental Affairs. On June 27, 2001, President Bush nominated Mick Kicklighter to be Assistant Secretary for Policy and Planning. For the past three years Mick Kicklighter served as Chair of the Board for Habitat for Humanity, International. Mick is married to the former Elizabeth Exley. Mick and Betty have three adult children – Elizabeth, Claude, Jr. and Richard.

526TH ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION

By Tom Hanchett

[The following article appeared in the June 2002 issue of *The Pekan*, the newsletter of the 526th Armored Infantry Battalion which is edited by George Wendt.]

The 526th Armored Infantry Battalion played a unique role in the United States Army in the European Theater of Operations during World War II. First of all, it was the only separate armored infantry battalion (AIB) as they were typically attached to armored divisions. Secondly, the 526th was the only armored infantry battalion to train with the top secret canal defense lights or "Gizmos" in the Arizona desert and in Rosebush, Wales.

In late October 1944 while in Belgium, the 526th was attached to an intelligence organization called T Force, which was authorized by General Dwight D. Eisenhower soon after D-Day. T Force was designed to rush into captured cities and towns and seize information, materials, and German personnel that had intelligence value. The mobility of units like the 526th was exactly what was needed for this kind of special operation.

Company C of the 526th was detached from the battalion and was assigned to provide security to Eagle Tac, the advanced headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Force. In this role Company C provided security to Generals Eisenhower, Bradley, Patton and Simpson among others. At the end of the war, they provided security to visiting Russian Marshals.

One the night of 17-18 December 1944 the 526th was in a convoy heading to blunt the German attack commonly known as the Battle of the Bulge. The 526th was ordered detached from T Force and its units were broken up and dispatched to different towns. A task force comprised of Company A and a platoon from another battalion in T Force, under the command of Major Paul J. Solis, battalion executive officer, was sent to Stavelot. The rest of the battalion under Lt. Colonel Carlisle B. Irwin was ordered to defend Malmedy. As B Company entered Malmedy, some soldiers heard *Yankee Doodle Dandy* being played by the church bells to warn the Germans that Americans were there.

At Stavelot, though outnumbered in an unfamiliar area, Major Solis and Captain Charles Mitchell, Company A commander, set up a strong defense that delayed Colonel Jochen Peiper's German SS panzer regiment. Part of a large fuel depot along their retreat route was ordered burned so it would not fall into German hands. Their efforts bought time for American reinforcements to advance, and time for removal of most of the fuel stores.

Throughout December the 526th AB fought off the German forces that were trying to take Stavelot and Malmedy. Colonel Otto Skorzeny, whose American uniformed commandos spread confusion behind American lines, led one of these attacks.

Just after New Year's 1945 as the Allied command was beginning a large counterattack, units of the 526th were ordered to attack a German position near Malmedy. In a battle that has gone unrecorded in the Battle of the Bulge history books, Company B was ordered to attack a much larger German unit without support.

T Force operations commenced again in March through the end of the war in May 1945 with the 526th seizing the IG Farben plant among others in Germany. The 526th also guarded some top Nazi leaders such as Field Marshals von Rundstedt, Kesselring and Colonel Skorzeny. ■

IS HE OUT THERE?

By Hermann J. Cloeren

Almost six decades ago in Eupen, not far from the Battle of the Bulge, lived a ten year old boy who met an American soldier who became for him and his family simply der Indianer, the Indian whom they remember still. The Americans had been welcomed as liberators in Eupen, a German speaking town, that became Belgian again in 1944 after having been German for years. But the initial euphoria had waned in the dark winter days when the Germans launched their final counter-offensive. Uncertainty ruled--the Americans were unsure whom to trust.

American soldiers walked in and out of our house, and my mother was always afraid to be alone and asked our landlady, who unlike us spoke English, to join her when soldiers for whatever reason came in. One day, a soldier entered, a medic, his jeep with its red cross parked in our yard. He was tired, wanted some coffee and some rest. Refreshed and relaxed, he began to talk about where he came from, and I could hardly believe it, there was a real Indian in front of me. You have to understand that German youngsters grew up with stories such as James Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking*, *The Last of the Mohicans*, and Karl May's famous series of adventure stories in which the Indians were noble figures. Still, the soldier's claim to be an Indian was met with considerable skepticism. "If you are an Indian, you must perform a war dance for me." What a request by a child in the middle of an all too real war when the fire of the big guns and tanks was heard in the distance--children care for the world of adults when their imagination is running wild. Our Indian smiled and said he needed drums which, of course, we did not have. He settled for my mother's cooking pans and taught me and my brother to beat a rhythm. Then he began to sing and dance. You could have seen in the faces of us little boys that there was not the slightest doubt that this was a real Indian.

The world of imagination in which we were caught up ended abruptly with the most mundane remark possible. Our Indian declared that I was long due a hair cut and he was going to give me one. It later looked as if he had used one of my mother's cooking pans as a styling device.

Realizing that when he had asked for some coffee, he was given what the Germans called Ersatzkaffee, i.e., surrogate from roasted grain, he came back to bring us real coffee and canned food, precious gifts indeed. We kids were overjoyed to see him back. When he came another time, waking us up at night, my mother was alarmed and asked for the company of our landlady. Through her we learned his story.

During his first visit, our Indian had answered my curious questions about what he was doing at home--whether he was, as I expected, hunting all day and riding his horse or sitting in front of his tepee, smoking a pipe--by telling us that he did not do anything, that he owned a gas station at home, that he sat in front of it waiting for customers while smoking his cigars. His mother had a laundromat and worked for him. I found this disappointing and utterly contrary to the story book picture of native Americans in my mind that I thought he was pulling my leg--something he loved. But this night there was none of the joviality and no kidding. He explained that he had worked hours without end moving casualties from the front to field hospitals, he'd seen indescribable horrors and was exhausted and could take no more. He was, as far as we could tell, AWOL--but did not care. All he wanted was a few hours of sleep before going back to duty. We promised to wake him up early. Just before he left in his red cross jeep, its little trailer and stretchers, he became very serious and swore if he survived the battle, he would come back to visit us and bring us more food. We never saw him again. Did he survive? Is he still alive? Does he, by any wild chance, read this story--his story? Did he ever return? Was he caught by the Germans or MP's? Did he fall trying to rescue others? I have told this story to our daughters--born and raised in the USA after my wife and I came to live here. And told it those who might recognize and remember him. He was good to us. We honor his memory. ■

MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

Associate member, Jerome H. Long, would like to hear from anyone who may have served with the **969TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION** or the **333RD FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION**. His address is 89 Bretton Road, Middletown, Connecticut 06457.

A.C.H.G. Nouens recently purchased a U.S. dog tag which bore the name of **ALBERT D. CLOUSE, 7TH ARMORED DIVISION, 48TH ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION, COMPANY B**, who was killed in action December 19 or 20, 1944, near Rodt, Belgium (St. Vith area). The dog tag further provided the name of Hilda Cauffman, Carlisle, Pennsylvania. If you can provide him with further information to Mr. Nouens, write to him at: Vredestraat 173, 6511 AD Nijmegen, Holland.

Paul Jones is seeking information regarding his grandfather, **HAROLD D. CHENEY, SR.**, who served with the **4TH ARMORED DIVISION, 37TH TANK BATTALION**. Write to Paul at: 210 West Bridge Street, #88, Weatherford, Texas 76086-3266.

Becky Thomas is seeking information regarding her uncle, **THOMAS JAMES MORRIS, JR.**, **90TH INFANTRY DIVISION**. She would like information on her uncle or the 90th Division. Write to her at: 126 Circle Drive, Wichita, Kansas 67218.

Loic Deruell is a young Swiss student who had a paper to prepare. He has a kit of a young soldier which bears the following information: **LEO REYNOLDS (MICHIGAN), 103RD AAA (AW) BATTALION**. Can you provide any information? If so, write to: Loic at: Chemin du Milieu 104; 1920 Martigny, Switzerland.

PATRICK J. KEARNEY, 11TH ARMORED DIVISION, sends us the following information. Mr. & Mrs. Jacques Tourneur adopted the Henri-Chapelle graves of **LEE F. BROWN** (Detroit, Michigan), **JOHN H. HANEY** (Glen Mills, Pennsylvania), and **PATRICK B. LYNCH** (Omaha, Nebraska), all of the **11TH ARMORED DIVISION** and would like any information on these men possible. Write to the Tourneurs at: 7 Avenue Reine Astrid, 4300 Waremme, Belgium. The grave of **JULIUS LA ROSA** (Little Ferry, New Jersey), who served in the **11TH ARMORED DIVISION, 21ST ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION, COMPANY C**, was adopted by Mr. & Mrs. Marcel Ozer. Information on Julius can be sent to the Ozers at: 7 Route de Wanne, 4970 Stavelot, Belgium.

Neil Groth is seeking information regarding his brother, **JACK ROLAND GROTH, 28TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 112th INFANTRY, 1ST BATTALION, HEADQUARTERS COMPANY**, who was killed in action in the Battle of the Bulge. Write to Neil at: 30 South Roosevelt Drive, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80910.

AL BEINEMAN, 83RD INFANTRY DIVISION, writes on behalf of a friend to secure information regarding her father, **CARL J. "JACK" STRAWER, 51ST ENGINEER COMBAT**

BATTALION, COMPANY C. Jack was killed during the Battle of the Bulge. Any information you can provide will be very much appreciated as the daughter has no information regarding her father. Write to Al at: 2405 North 25th Street, Sheboygan, Wisconsin 53083-4432.

Raymond D. "Andy" Anderson writes to see if anyone remembers his friend with the last name of **LAWRENCE** (called "**ARKY**"). They served together across France, Belgium down to the Elbe River, then moved to Molin, Austria, serving in **26TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 101ST INFANTRY, 2ND BATTALION, COMPANY E**. If you can help, write to Raymond at: 310 Windemere Woods Drive, Nashville, Tennessee 37215-2458.

Associate member Bill Keen is a member of an historic military vehicle club and has provided transportation for several parades, etc., in the Philadelphia area. He has graciously offered to forge similar relationships between **VBOB** chapters and military vehicle clubs in other areas to memorialize our nation's military heritage as exhibited by the vehicles they restore and the men who used them. If you're interested, write to Bill at: 265 Shady Nook Road, RR 2, Harleysville, Pennsylvania 19438-2617.

Gerard T. McBride would like to find someone who can provide him with further details about his buddy, **CHARLES HENRY KLEINE, 28TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 112TH INFANTRY, COMPANY B**, who was killed in action January 30th, 1945. Write to Gerard at: PO Box 411, Denison, Texas 75021-0411.

Can some one tell **VICTOR J. DUBALDO, 776TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION, HEADQUARTERS BATTERY**, where he can find information on the 776th? He's particularly interested in learning the cities/towns, units they were attached to, routes taken, etc. He also mentions that he's getting near 80 and hopes you won't put off writing too long. Write to him at: 41 Homestead Street, Manchester, Connecticut 06040-3024.

REUNIONS

The August issue of this newsletter went to press a little earlier than usual due to preparations for the reunion. Therefore, we were unable to print some of the reunion notices we received in a timely manner. We are printing contact names in the event you may wish to locate them in addition to those which might be timely.

3RD CAVALRY GROUP MECHANIZED RECONNAISSANCE REGIMENT--Contact: Bob Hedstrom, Box 134, Wheaton, Illinois 60189.

10TH ARMORED DIVISION--Contact: Tom Bubin, 713 Regency Square-Acton House #A104, Kalamazoo, Michigan 49008.

127TH AAA 90 MM GUN BATTALION--Contact: Allan J. English, 4717 Marlborough Way, Carmichael, California 95608. Telephone: 9160487-7362.

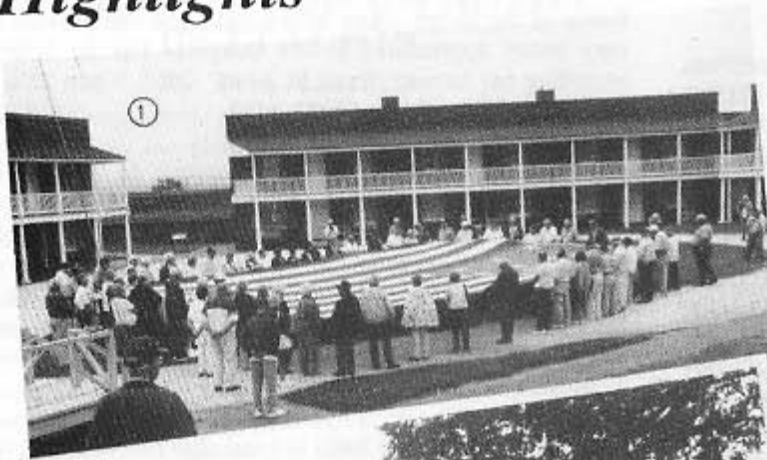
146TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION--Contact: Paul Gray, 3264 Hog Town Road, Collinsville, Texas 76233. Telephone: 903-429-8537.

285TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION--Contact: Nicholas Zillas, 190-12 35th Avenue, Flushing, New York 11358-1918. Telephone: 718-463-1321.

575TH AAA AW BATTALION (SP), D BATTERY--Contact: Roger T. Rhoads, 404 Cambridge Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50313.

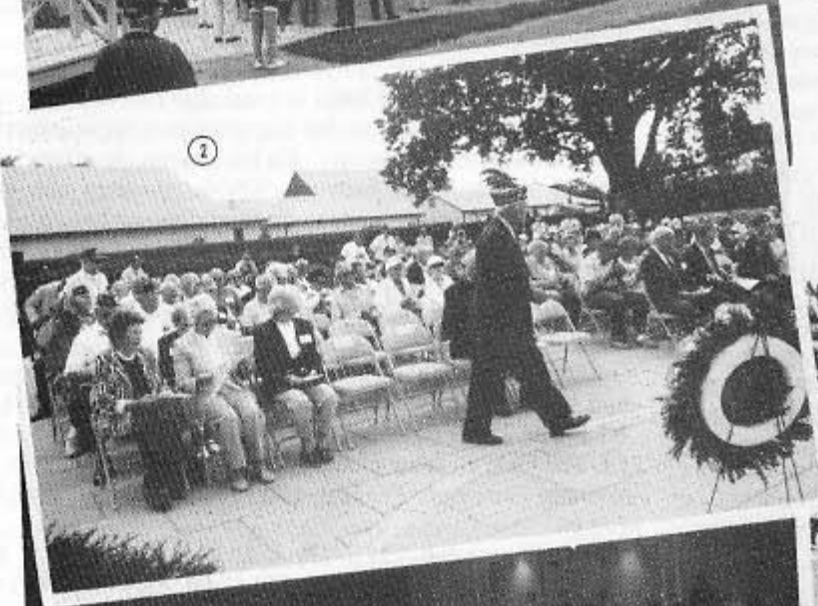
Pictorial Highlights

VBOB REUNION Aug. 29 - Sept 2, 2002 Baltimore, MD



①

1. Inspiring Ft Mc Henry Flag Ceremony.
2. Pres. Lou Cunningham at Memorial Service.
3. Annual Meeting.
4. Col Tom Sweeney, Rtd, War College Professor, Memorial Service Speaker.
5. Cal Patton, MD Veterans Council Chair, presents citation to Pres. Lou Cunningham.
6. Msgr Wm. O'Donnell, 87th InfD, gives invocation.
7. Cpt Agnes Sweeney, Lt Katherine Nolan, and Lt Dorothy Davis, Army Nurses, lay wreath.



②



④



③



⑤



⑥



⑦



- 8. Boy Scout Troop 320, Manchester MD, Color Guard, raise flag, Memorial Svc.
- 9. Trustee Neil B. Thompson, holds wreath for Memorial Service.
- 10. Pres. Lou Cunningham welcomes members and guests. John Mc Auliffe was M.C.
- 11. VBOB members enjoy Baltimore Aquarium.
- 12. Pres. Lou Cunningham presents Mary Ann Bowen, Conv. Cmte with award.
- 13. Late night revelers after the banquet.
- 14. Head table: Msgr O'Donnell, Gen Kicklighter, Mrs. Schmit, Ambassador Van Daele, Charlotte Cunningham.

22nd Annual National VBOB Reunion

The 22nd Annual National Reunion of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge was held Aug. 29th thru Sep. 2nd, 2002, at the beautiful BWI (Baltimore-Washington-International) Marriott Hotel, Baltimore, MD. Maryland/DC Chapter was our host,

Thursday, Aug. 29th was devoted to registration of attendees. The Hospitality Room was open to greeting and meeting old buddies reminiscing their experiences of years gone by and new acquaintances. A camaraderie that extends over 58 years. Many tales could be overheard exploiting the encounters and activities of the BOB. Throughout the Hospitality Room were many posters depicting scenes of cities and towns devastated during the BOB. There were numerous books on hand describing the events and after/action reports. There also were volumes of official Army photographs recalling precise details of units on the move and in action. Some of these photographs were taken by German photographers.

Friday, Aug. 30th, attendees boarded buses for Ft. McHenry. In 1814, Francis Scott Key was inspired to write the verses of our Star Spangled Banner as he viewed the 15 stars and 15-stripes of the huge flag waving over Ft McHenry while it was under siege by the British. Attendees participated in a stirring and moving ceremony conducted by a Ft. McHenry guide. Participants unfurled a huge 30 by 40-foot American flag as the guide narrated the events that inspired the verses to our National Anthem. At the conclusion of the ceremony participants re-rolled the flag for storage. From Ft. McHenry we proceeded by bus to Baltimore Inner Harbor. Here attendees were offered the choice to self-guide and walk the decks of several Navy and Coast Guard ships. The USS Constellation attracting most attention. Attendees were free to shop for gifts and memorabilia. Lunch was available from the myriad selections of eateries at Inner Harbor.

Other attendees took a luncheon cruise of Inner Harbor on the "Bay Lady." On board the "Bay Lady" we experienced a narrated tour, passing such sights as the World Trade Center of Baltimore, the National Aquarium, Ft McHenry, and the Francis Scott Key bridge, while cruising down the Patapsco River.

After the above activities, attendees visited the National Aquarium in a group. Thereafter, everyone was free to view the fascinating inhabitants: brilliantly colored fish, dolphins, sharks, electric eels, sea horses, whales and sharks in their magical settings. We were entertained with an aquatic show. We witnessed the power and charm of Atlantic bottlenose dolphins.

After a long and busy day of touring and sightseeing, attendees returned to the Marriott to rest and select a place for dinner. A group of DVC members and friends with a yen to get away from hotel atmosphere decided to seek another restaurant. With the assistance of the Marriott shuttle bus we departed for little Italy, Baltimore. Obryckis' Crab House and

Seafood Restaurant was our destination- Members had a variety of crab and seafood dinners to chose from. The final consensus was: the food was delicious and the drinks were pleasing to the palate. Members returned via the shuttle bus to the Marriott after a delightful evening.

Saturday, Aug. 31st, attendees boarded buses for Ft Meade, MD, to attend Memorial Services at the MD/DC VBOB Memorial. Boy Scout Color Guard, Aaron Sanner, Michael Talbot and Alec & Josh Trainor, of Troop 320, Manchester MD, did an impressive flag raising and then accepted the National mounted flags from the Bulge Veterans at their posts. John E. MC Auliffe, President of the Central Massachusetts Chapter was Master of Ceremonies. Col John Ives, Ft Meade Garrison Commander, gave the welcoming address. Col. Tom Sweeney, Rtd, US Army War College, gave the keynote address. Laying of wreath was by Lou Cunningham, VBOB President, and Dorothy Davis, 57th Field Hospital; Katherine Nolan, 53rd Field Hospital; and Agnes Sweeney, 2nd Aux- Surg. Group, in honor of the 101st anniversary of the Army Nurse Corps- Taps were by Joe. P. Klopp, Westminster High Band, MD. Closing prayer was by Msgr. Wm. O'Donnell, 87th Inf. Div.

After ceremonies, all were invited to tour Ft Meade Museum and the Battle of the Bulge Conference Room. Attendees re-boarded the buses for lunch at the Olive Grove, in Linthicum, MD. (NOTE: Our George Linthicum is a distant relative of this great statesman of Maryland.) Then, on to visit the famous B&O Railroad Museum, in Baltimore. Railroadng got its start in Baltimore that changed the fabric of America. The museum has one of the finest collections of railroad equipment and memorabilia. From the first horse drawn trains to the iron horses that opened up the West, to huge steam engines, to today's diesel engines, all within walking distance of each other. On the second floor is a working model railroad display of HO trains. This museum is a must for railroad buffs. After this visit, back to the Marriott.

This evening hors d'oeuvre was served in the Hospitality Room. Dinner was on your own. Sunday, Sep. 1st, separate church services for Catholics and Protestants were held at the Marriott. Following religious services the annual meeting and election of officers was held. A floor mike was available for questions and comments as a courtesy to members who have hearing difficulties. Nominations for 2002-03 Executive Council were announced by Past National President George C. Linthicum. Nominees were unanimously approved by membership. Site for the 23rd Annual Reunion of VBOB was announced tentatively as Quincy, MA, Sep. 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th, 2003.

The afternoon was devoted to a free tour of the Historic Electronics Museum adjacent to the hotel. This museum of military electronics contains many things that you may have seen during WW II but never knew what they were; from the first radar to the current AWACs airplane and side-seeking radar that our modern military use today. Of interest

particularly to VBOB is the "proximity fuze" or Pozit, which was first allowed to be used on land during the BOB. The use of ruggedized vacuum tube fuzes that would detonate when in proximity to an object rather than having to hit it was so top secret that it was not allowed to be used on land so as to prevent the enemy from finding out what we had. That is, until the Bulge broke.

A group of DVC members and friends, namely, Jim Barlow, MD/DC Chapter, Kate Nolan, Florida, Al Babicki (DVC), Dan Iannelli (DVC), and Marty Sheeron (DVC) during a lull in events took to the road. Native Baltimorean Jim Barlow invited the group for a social visit to his home in West Baltimore. An enjoyable time was had away from scheduled events. Jim was a perfect host.

In the evening, the VBOB 2002 Reunion Banquet was held in the ballroom of the Marriott, preceded by a reception in the foyer of the hotel. George Fisher, Florida Chapter President was Master of Ceremonies for the evening. The presentation of Colors was by Boy Scout Troop 320, Steven Johnson, Same Peregoy, Keith Price, Aaron Sanner, of Manchester, MD; followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Retired M/Sgt Lloyd E. Orth, Jr. The US National Anthem was sung by the Reverend Matthew S. Schenning, accompanied by the Brass Quintet from Westminster MD High School, Robert Aaron Humbert, Katie Kirkpatrick, Josef P. Klopp, Fritz Kranz & Matthew Van Fassen. The invocation was given by Msgr. Wm. O'Donnell, 87th Inf. Div. Welcome greetings were given by VBOB National President Lou Cunningham. After dinner, remarks were made by Ambassador Fran van Daele, Embassy of Belgium; and Deputy Chief Paul Schmit, Embassy of Luxembourg. Stan Wojtusik, VBOB VP Military Affairs, introduced guest speaker LTG Claude M. Kicklighter, Assistant Secretary, Department of Veterans' Affairs. Gen. Kicklighter's keynote address was enlightening and emotional that held the attention of all in attendance. Joe Zimmer summed up the four-day events in his Reflections. Benediction was by Msgr. Wm. O'Donnell, VBOB Chaplain.

Monday, Sep. 2nd. Members enjoyed a free buffet breakfast provided by VBOB in the Marriott Moniker's Restaurant. Now we take our leave for another year, farewell to our new friends and old ones. See you in Quincy, MA, Sep. 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th, 2003.

A big tribute to our own National VBOB President Lou Cunningham for his leadership was demonstrated by the large presence of Del Valley Chapter members and associates at the reunion.

A big thanks to the Reunion committee, John & Mary Ann Bowen, Lou & Charlotte Cunningham, Dorothy Davis, Robert R. Gable, Neil B. Thompson & George Watson for an enjoyable time and an excellent schedule of events. A job well done. THANKS.

In spite of his failing health, our buddy Herb Whitehead, 106th Inf. Div was determined to attend this reunion- This he did. Sadly and sorrowfully Herb made his last "retreat." Herb passed away in the evening of Sep. 2nd, 2002. May he rest in peace.

Marty Sheeron, 53rd Field. Hosp., Del. Valley Chapter



"He's right, Joe. When we ain't fightin' we should ack like sojers."

MEET THEM AT THE FAIR... PICATINNY CHAPTER DISPLAY

Picatinny Chapter President James K. Cullen advises that the chapter's display at the New Jersey State Fair was a big success. The picture below indicates they were well prepared to provide information to prospective members, interested persons, and teachers.



Pictured are left to right: Les Eames and Jim Cullen.

Jim served in the 3RD ARMORED DIVISION, 36TH ARMORED INFANTRY REGIMENT, 2ND BATTALION, COMPANY E. □

WE WISH YOU A...
Happy Thanksgiving

**NOTICE!!
NEW RE-
DUCED ROOM
RATE
NOW \$59.00**

THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE HISTORICAL FOUNDATION
Invites You to Join Your Friends for the
“EVENTS OF REMEMBRANCE AND COMMEMORATION”
OF THE 58th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE
December 14, 15 and 16, 2002
Metropolitan Washington, DC

The Marriott Fairview Park, 1495 (Capital Beltway) and VA Route 50, Falls Church VA has been selected as the site for activities commemorating the 58th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, December 14 - 16, 2002. This hotel, just off the Beltway will provide easy access and accommodations, for a reduced rate of \$59.00, single or double occupancy. Parking is free. This rate is available for any night(s) between December 13 and December 17. For room reservations please call the Marriott Reservations (1-800-228-9290) or Marriott Fairview Park at 1-703-849-9400 or by December 1, 2002. Mention that you are attending the Battle of the Bulge events for the special rate.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2002

- 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM Registration (Hotel Lobby), receive name badges, Banquet/bus tickets. (If you are only attending the Banquet, you may pick up your tickets with table assignment at the Marriott Fairview Park at 6:00 PM Dec 15th.)
- 3:00 PM – 10:00 PM Hospitality Room/Exhibits, scrapbooks. John Bowen & Earle Hart, Battle of the Bulge Historians will be the hosts. A private area in the Hotel restaurant has been reserved for supper from 6:30 – 8:00 PM for the Battle of the Bulge Veterans (payment is on your own).

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2002

- 8:00 AM – 9:00 AM Registration/receive name badges, Banquet/bus tickets (hotel lobby).
 9:00 AM Charter buses depart hotel.
 10:00 AM – 12:30 PM Tour International Spy Museum, 800 F St NW, Washington DC.
 12:30 PM Depart for Union Station, Washington DC.
 1:00 PM -- 3:00 PM Lunch on your own at Union Station .
 3:00 PM Return by bus from Union Station to Marriott Fairview Park..

BANQUET AT MARRIOTT FAIRVIEW PARK, FALLS CHURCH VA

- 6:15 PM Social Hour/Cash Bar.
 6:45 PM Seated for Dinner.
 7:00 PM Color Guard/Members of the Drum and Fife Corps/Ceremonies.
 7:15 PM Dinner served.

Program:
 Greetings from Dignitaries.
 Speaker: Secretary Anthony Principe
 Department of Veterans Affairs.

BANQUET ENTRÉE

The choice of entrée for the Banquet is:
Seared Chicken Breast
OR
Mustard Herb Loin Pork

After Banquet Hospitality Room open at Marriott Fairview Park.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2002

- 9:45 AM Bus from Marriott Fairview Park to Arlington Cemetery
 11:00 AM Impressive ceremony and placing of wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns, Arlington Cemetery.
 11:30 AM Ceremony of Remembrance, Battle of the Bulge Memorial, across from Amphitheater.
 12:30 PM Bus to Marriott Fairview Park, Falls Church VA
 1:00 PM Buffet Luncheon, Hosted by VBOB, Marriott Fairview Park
 Swearing-in of new VBOB officers.
 Comments by VBOB President.
 Farewell.

RESERVATION FORM
"REMEMBRANCE AND COMMEMORATION"
OF THE 58th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE
December 14, 15 and 16 2002
Metropolitan Washington, DC

Return form and check by December 1, 2002 to:
 Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation
 PO Box 2516,
 Kensington MD 20895-0181

Questions:
 Dorothy Davis 301-881-0356
 E-Mail: johndbowen@earthlink.net

Name: _____ Telephone _____

Spouse/Guest: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Battle of Bulge Unit: _____

Korean War Service: (6/25/1950 – 1/31/1955) When: _____

Unit(s): _____ Where: _____

RESERVATIONS:	<u>Number Attending</u>	<u>Cost/Person</u>	<u>Total</u>
Registration Fee	_____	\$10.00	\$ _____

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2002

6:30 PM – 8:00 PM: Marriott Fairview Park Restaurant _____ **on your own**
 Please indicate the number that will be attending so that we can advise the hotel.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2002

Chartered Bus, 9:00 AM – 4:30 PM _____ \$16.00 _____

New International Spy Museum, 800 F St NW _____ \$11.00 _____
 Lunch, On your Own Union Station, Washington DC
 Shopping, Union Station Mall

Commemorative Banquet, Marriott Fairview Park _____ \$44.00 _____

Please make your Main Course selection(s):

- Seared Chicken Breast _____ (Name _____)
OR
 Mustard Herb Loin Pork _____ (Name _____)

Table assignments for the Banquet will be on your name badge. If you wish to be seated with friends, please list their names:

MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2002:

9:45 AM	Chartered bus to Arlington Cemetery	\$11.00	_____
11:00 AM	Ceremonies: Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers/ VBOB Monument	No. Attending:	_____
12:30 PM	Bus Return to Marriott Fairview Park		
1:00 PM	VBOB Luncheon & Installation of Officers Courtesy VBOB	No. Attending:	_____

GRAND TOTAL (Enclose check made out to BoBHF Commemoration): \$ _____

NOTES & REMINDERS:

Banquet Dress: Business suit/black tie (miniature medals encouraged) or military dress uniform
 Room reservations must be made with the Marriott Hotel directly, by December 1, 2002 (Telephone (1-800-228-9290)).
 Return completed Reservation Form for events to BOB Historical Foundation by 1 December 2002, (Telephone 301-881-0356).
 No cancellation refunds after December 9, 2002.
 Please indicate in all places the number & names attending so that we can be advised of the proper number to plan. Thanks!
*****PLEASE BRING A PICTURE ID (Drivers License, Passport, Mil ID)**

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE CERTIFICATE

Have you ordered Yours?

Over 6,000 certificates have been purchased by Battle of the Bulge Veterans. If you haven't received yours then you might want to consider ordering one to give to your grandchildren. They are generally most appreciative of your service now. And they make excellent Holiday gifts. The Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Assn is proud to offer this full color 11" by 17" certificate, which may be ordered by any veteran who received credit for the Ardennes Campaign. It attests that you participated in, endured and survived the greatest land battle ever fought by the US Army.

You do not have to be a member of the VBOB Assn in order to order one but you must have received the Ardennes credit. This beautiful certificate is produced on parchment-like stock and is outlined by the full color WWII insignias of the major units that fought in the Battle of the Bulge starting with the 12th Army Group followed numerically with Armies, Corps and Divisions and the two Army Air Forces. We wished that each unit insignia could have been shown but with approximately 2000 units that participated in the Bulge it was impossible. However any unit, which served in the Bulge, would have been attached to or reported through one of the unit insignias depicted. You may want to add one of your original patches to the certificate, when you receive it. Please allow approximately 3-4 weeks for delivery, they are normally printed at the end of the month. The certificate will be shipped rolled in a protective mailing tube. Please be sure to place your **name, service number and unit, as you would like it to appear on the certificate**. The unit name should as full as possible as you want someone reading it to understand what unit you were in. We will abbreviate it as necessary. It is important that you type or print this information. The unit must be one of the 2000 units authorized for the Ardennes Campaign credit in the Official General Order No. 114 for Units Entitled to the ARDENNES Battle Credit and will be the basis for sale of this certificate. **The cost of the certificate is \$15.00 postpaid.**

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE CERTIFICATE ORDER BLANK

I request an 11" x 17" Certificate and certify that I received credit for the Ardennes Campaign. I have enclosed a check for \$15.00 for the Certificate. Please include the following information that I would like on the certificate:

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Serial Number _____

Rank : _____ Unit: _____

Organization: usually Company, Battalion and/or Regiment, & Division

Signature: _____ Date: _____

I certify that I have received the Ardennes Credit

MAILING INFORMATION:

NAME: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

Telephone: _____ E-Mail: _____

VBOB Member: Yes No (not a requirement). Make checks out to VBOB for \$15.00. Orders should be mailed to VBOB Certificate, PO Box 11129, Arlington, VA 22210-2129. Questions can be directed to John D. Bowen, 301-384-6533, Certificate Chairman. Or by e-mail to: johndbowen@earthlink.net

"The most important war in the history of the world was won through the Battle of the Bulge, and the sacrifices and bravery of its many heroes should be properly displayed on the hallowed grounds of Arlington."

**Robert Wexler, Congress of the United States
House of Representatives, 19th District, Florida**

VON RUNDSTEDT'S BREAKTHROUGH

Submitted by John R. Breth
740th Tank Battalion
Company B

[The following article was taken from Colonel George Kenneth Rubel's book *Daredevil Tankers*.]

December 18: At 1245 hours, we received a telephone call from Lt. Colonel Cox, Assistant Armored Officer, First U.S. Army, to the effect things were bad in the breakthrough area and were rapidly becoming worse. He said a good many outfits had been completely over-run and von Rundstedt was gaining momentum rapidly. It wasn't definitely known how wide the breakthrough was because communications had been out in a good many places. Part of this communication tangle was caused by the over-running of unit CPs. The rest had been caused by German paratroopers who had been dropped in the rear.

Colonel Cox stated the general wanted us to send a reinforced company to protect ordnance installations in the vicinity of Aywaille, Belgium, which was located on the Ambleve River eight or ten miles southwest of Spa. This company was to move as quickly as possible to Sprimont, Belgium, an ordnance vehicle depot, draw any kind of combat vehicles we thought it could use--then take up stations where it could delay the enemy.

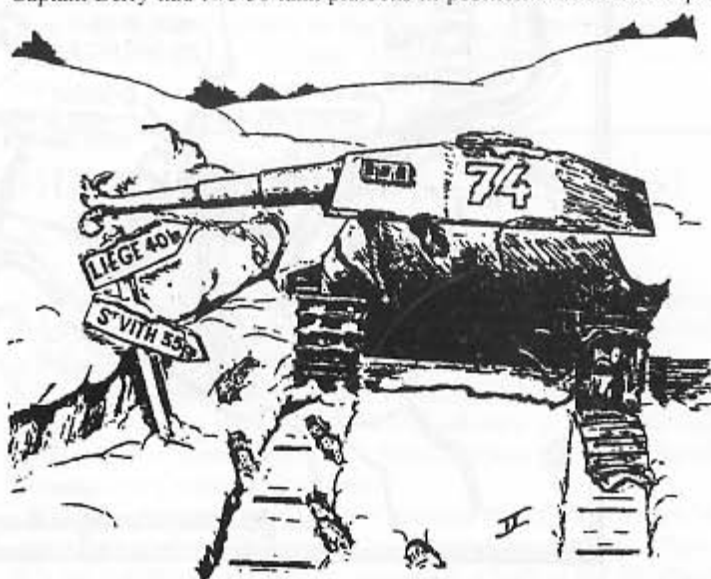
I had alerted the battalion the night before of the suspicion. I had felt sure that we would be used somewhere and we would have very little time to prepare for a move. Company C was to be the first company to move out, followed by A, B, and D. Service Company was to move later when a suitable point had been located. I told Captain Berry, who commanded Company C, to get on the road as soon as he possibly could, and had trucks sent down from Service Company to haul the men without vehicles to Srimont. The company was on the road at 1510 hours and were led by Major Graddy H. Floyd, Battalion Exec. Major Otto, S-3, stayed with the remainder of the battalion at Neufchateau with instructions to be prepared to move the balance of the battalion instantly upon orders. I left at 1400 hours with Lieutenant William S. Wright, Liaison Officer, and two "recon" peeps. The battalion command section was to follow the trail of Company C.

Upon arrival at Aywaille, I reported to Colonel Lynde, First Army Ordnance Officer, who had been charged with the defense of the ordnance depot. An enemy armored task force was advancing west along the Ambleve River and was less than 12 miles away, so it was decided that as soon as C Company could be equipped with combat vehicles it would take up a defensive position east of Aywaille in the vicinity of Remouchamps.

I made a quick reconnaissance of the area we were ordered to defend, and then went over to Sprimont to arrange to draw tanks. I was shocked to find only three Sherman tanks were on the "ready for issue" line, and that these three were short several essential items of equipment. The job of this ordnance unit had been to recondition and repair tanks that had become unserviceable in combat. Of about 25 tanks in the park, only 15 could be made operable. Even these had been cannibalized to some extent. Generators and starters had been removed from engines, breech parts had been removed from the guns, radio transmitters and receivers were absent, not to mention tools, rammerstuffs and other items. None of them had their combat loads of ammo. We had blanket orders from army to take anything and everything we thought we could use. We picked out 15 tanks that appeared to be repairable and worked all night and up until noon the next day robbing pieces from other tanks to put the ones we had selected in running condition.

December 19: The tactical situation was going from bad to worse and at about 1800 hours on the 18th I decided to order the balance of the battalion to move to Sprimont on my own initiative. They moved out at 1020 hours on the 19th of December. Service Company took

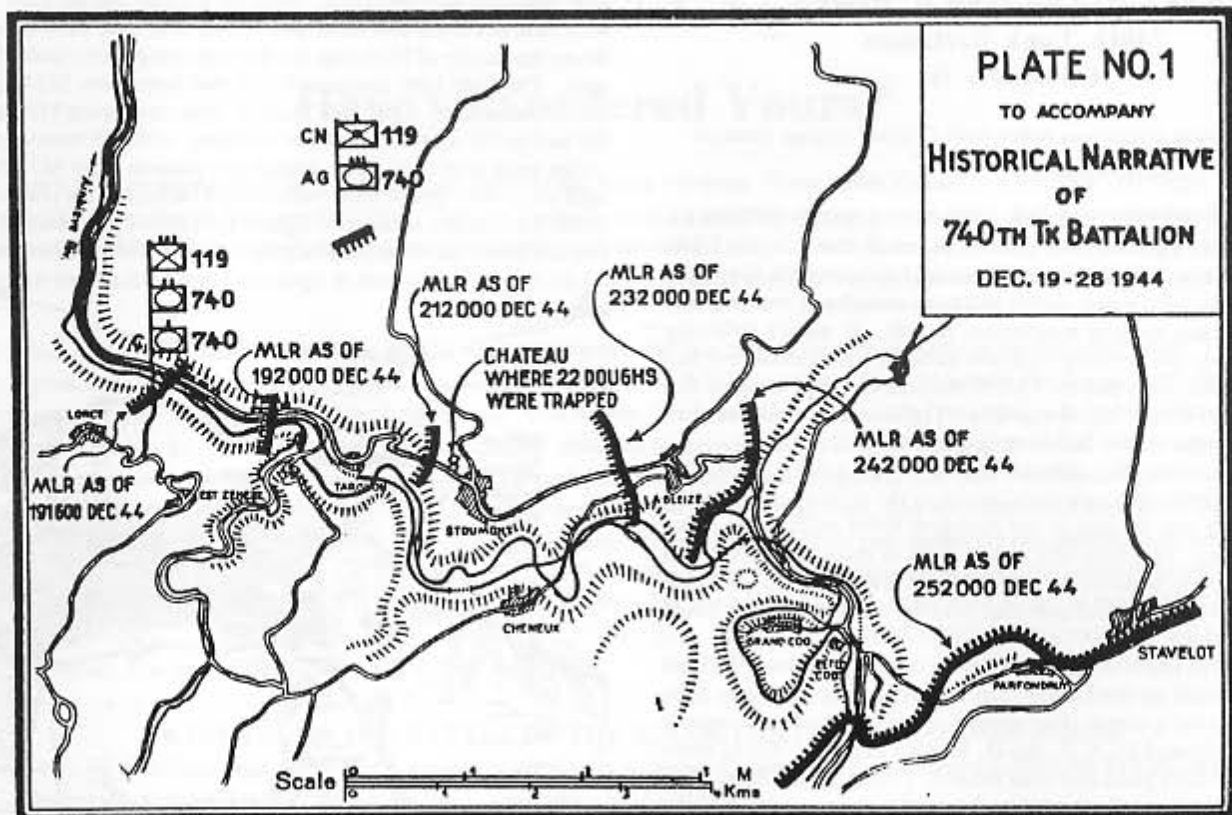
over the ordnance plant at Sprimont and the battalion CP was established there. The combat vehicle situation looked to be a pretty hopeless mess. We assigned a tank crew to any vehicle they thought they could put into operation. Sergeant Loopey and his crew found an M36 tank destroyer and other tank crews took over M10 assault guns. When the supply of M10s ran out the remaining crews took M7 assault guns. The light tank company found two brand new M24 light tanks which had arrived in the area through error, and seven M5 light tanks, but had to fill up the rest of the company with M8 assault guns with 75mm pack howitzers. The assault gun platoon drew M7 105mm assault guns--very few of these vehicles had radios and the platoon leaders found it necessary to use arm signals for control. By noon of the 19th Captain Berry had two 50 tank platoons in position at Remouchamps.



About this time Captain Stonecipher, S-2 of the 119th Infantry Regiment of the 30th Infantry Division, came by enroute to his Regimental CP Stoumont. He asked Captain Berry what outfit it was and what they were doing there, and outlined the desperate plight of the 119th Infantry Regiment. They had had one of their battalions over-run and destroyed. The other two had less than 50% effective strength remaining. Jerry was pushing them back slowly but relentlessly. Captain Stonecipher asked Captain Berry if he could come down with his tank company and help them back slowly but relentlessly. Captain Stonecipher asked Captain Berry if he could come down with his tank company and help them out. I came by a few minutes later and Captain Berry told me of his conversation with Captain Stonecipher. While I was talking to Captain Berry, Captain Stonecipher returned and pleaded for the use of the company. I told him that our orders were to remain where we were and that if any changes were to be made it would have to be done by higher authority.

At 2 o'clock he returned, bringing General Hobbs, who commanded the 30th Infantry Division, with him. General Hobbs stated that he had talked to General Hodges and had secured authority to attach the battalion to the 30th Division, and that he had in turn attached it to the 119th Infantry Regiment. He ordered us to move at once with everything we could muster to help the situation out. I instructed Captain Berry to get on the road immediately, and I followed Captain Stonecipher down to the Regimental CP. There I reported to Colonel Sutherland, who commanded the 119th Infantry Regiment.

We encountered sniper fire from the ridges paralleling the Ambleve River two miles before we reached the Regimental CP. Upon arrival we found that the enemy was less than 500 yards away. As I arrived, a tank company which had been supporting the 119th was withdrawing from the fight, stating that they were low on fuel and ammo. They also stated that at least five panther tanks were coming this way and were only about 1,000 yards down the river. *(continued on next page)*



The tankers stated that the infantry men were beginning to move back.

Captain Berry, leading his tanks in a peep, arrived at 1530 hours and we outlined the situation. He was ordered to attack at once before the infantry was over-run completely. Lieutenant Powers was to spearhead the attack with his platoon, and Lieutenant Oglesky with his platoon was to follow. We advised Lt. Colonel Hurlong, Battalion Commander of the First Battalion of the 119th Infantry that we were coming in to help, that we would commence our attack at 1600 hours, and asked him to attack abreast of us as we came into his position.

Lt. Powers spearheaded the attack. He had gone scarcely 800 yards when he saw a panther tank about 150 yards ahead at a curve in the road. His first shot hit the gun mantlet, ricocheted downward, killed the enemy driver and bow-gunner and set the tank on fire. Powers kept on moving and about 100 yards further on came upon a second tank. He fired one round which hit the panther's front slope plate and ricocheted off. His gun jammed and he signalled Lt. Loopey (then sergeant) to move in quickly with his TD. Loopey's first round with his 90mm gun set the tank on fire, but he put in two or three more shots for good measure. By this time, Lt. Powers had cleared his gun and had resumed his advance. About 150 yards further on he came upon the third panther. His first shot blew the muzzle brake off the panther's gun, and two more shots set the tank on fire.

All during this action, which occurred within 30 minutes after the attack had started, a slow drizzling rain was falling, and a blanket-like fog covered the whole area. It was difficult to see an object 400 yards away. Lt. Power's platoon had not only knocked out three tanks that had been raising hell with the

infantry, but his machine guns had sprayed the roadsides as well as the sides of the hills and quite a number of enemy soldiers were killed. Our success in 30 minutes of combat had greatly heartened the doughboys of the 119th. They not only stopped giving ground but joined in the attack and recovered better than a thousand yards of terrain that they had lost during the day. Von Rundstedt's thrust had been definitely stopped and hurled back in these 30 minutes, and it was the first good news that had come out of the entire Battle of the Ardennes up to this time. □

DON'T FORGET OUR NEW YEAR'S TOAST

In tribute to all who served in the Battle of the Bulge, let's all drink a toast again this year (the sixth year). The choice of beverage is yours. Again this year the time will be: Noon--Pacific time; 1:00 p.m.--Mountain time; 2:00 p.m. Central time; and 3:00 p.m. Eastern time on New Year's Day.

It's our special way to be together again, even it is only in our thoughts. We shared so much so many years ago, we should remember those we were with and be grateful for each and every one.

Comments from our members indicate that many join in this special observance.

HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES. □

AIR SUPPORT FOR THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

By Carl M. Christ
344th Bomb Group

[The following address was presented to the Long Island Chapter of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge on December 13, 2000, at West Point Military Academy.]

Air support by the B-26 Marauder medium bombers of the Ninth Air Force was reduced by the serious snow falls which carpeted most of Europe. Runways and taxi strips were constantly swept. Planes were often bogged down on the runways and hauled out by tractors. Wings accumulated snow, motors developed bugs from the cold and electrical systems in the planes "shorted out." The number of missions that could be flown were limited. Only eight missions could be flown in the month of December. An additional six missions were flown in January until the end of the Bulge.

Railway and road junctions were the main objects of attack assigned during the Ardennes Campaign to disrupt the enemy's lines of communication and cripple their lines of supply and reinforcements.

Dawn on 23 December brought improved conditions for flying. The Ninth Bomber Division gave the order for the mediums to take off. The bomber crews knew that their sorties were a matter of life or death to the beleaguered Allied troops on the ground.

With the sudden reopening of the Allied air campaign, and with so many bombers in the air, fighter resources were stretched. Mediums would have to brave the defenses alone. Some crews had never seen an enemy fighter in the air. Two days before Christmas many of them saw enough to last an entire combat tour.

One Marauder group, with an escort of fighter planes nearing its target at Euskirchen bridge, was devastated by the Jagdwaffe. Thirty-seven Marauders were shot down that day and 182 planes sustained various categories of damage. In addition, three Thunderbolts were shot down. The day was the worst Marauder losses in the entire war.

When weather permitted, the Ninth Air Force blasted the German rail network. Luftwaffe attacks dwindled under the renewed onslaught from Allied fighters. Help from above--in more than one sense--soon enabled the Allied ground forces to gear up for a final push into Germany.

In the Ardennes campaign, the Ninth Air Force B-26 Marauder groups lost 49 planes, with a complement of six to eight men in each plane, approximately 316 airmen. Some were able to parachute to safety. Some managed to escape and evade capture. Others became prisoners of war.

On 25 January 1945 the last of the surviving German troops retreated to Germany. The supporting American forces from the Third and Ninth Armies went back to their previous battle positions, having accomplished their mission in eliminating the Bulge in the Ardennes sector. Allied air power played a major role in the German defeat as part of the air-ground offensive.

We are pleased to honor on this day, the 18 West Point graduates assigned to the 344th Marauder Group of the Ninth Air

Force. Prior to D-Day, three of the 18 were to lose their lives in combat missions. Of the remaining 15, seven courageously led flights against the enemy during the Battle of the Bulge.

The 344th Bomb Group is very proud of one of West Point's finest--Major Lucius D. Clay, Jr., son of four-star General Lucius D. Clay, who flew and led flights during the Battle of the Bulge. He later became a four-star general himself following in the footsteps of his father.

We are here today to honor and memorialize the gallant men who lost their lives in the air and on the ground in the greatest battle in American history. We also remember the men who returned to the United States and who have since passed away to join their fallen comrades in the Kingdom of Eternal Rest.

May the memory of their courage and sacrifice live on forever. ■

HURRY UP AND WAIT-- A THING OF PAST?

At the National Personnel Records Center in Overland, Director Ron Hindman says he's turning a paper battleship around--but slowly, which is the way battleships turn.

Hindman's operation houses the personnel records of America's military veterans since 1899. When veterans or their families need copies of those records--for housing loans say, or for burial benefits--they write to Overland.

For years, many veterans have grouched about long delays in getting an answer. This spring, the General Accounting Office--it's the watchdog arm of Congress--took a look at the Overland operation.

In a report issued May 31, the congressional agency jotted down some unhappy numbers:

- On average, a veteran had to endure a wait of 54 working days--about 11 weeks--from the time a request went into the time the paperwork came back.

- The records center had a backlog (as of March 31) of 214,000 unanswered requests. *[Ed., Your request is probably one of them.]*

- By December, the backlog could grow to 24,000 unanswered requests.

Hindman replies with a single number: 21,000. That's his count of the backlog as of the middle of this month.

That's not much of a dent--just 4,000 down from what the congressional agency found on March 31. Even so Hindman notes, it's down, not up. Message: The battleship is turning around.

He gets anecdotal support from Carl Hargus, who works for the Missouri Veterans Commission as chief of its Service to Veterans Programs. From his office in the VA center at 400 South 18th Street, Hargus helps veterans get copies of their records.

And in the past year--in the time since Hindman took over the records center--things have improved.

[This article appeared in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch and was written by Harry Levins.] [Many members write to us for assistance in speeding up the process. We regret there is nothing we can do other than forward the letter with a request for an answer.] ■

CHRISTMAS MASS DURING THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

Submitted by William Regis O'Malley
87th Infantry Division

[The following article appeared in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (South Edition) on December 26, 2001, and was written by Vince DiRicco]

...

The Rev. Joseph A Nee holds a special place in the hearts and memories of parishioners at St. Therese of Lisieux Catholic Church in Munhall, where he served as pastor for 30 years from 1947 to 1977.

He is also fondly remembered by thousands of American soldiers as Army chaplain to the famous 2nd Infantry Division from 1941 to 1946.

One such soldier, Col. Matt F. C. Konop of Twin Rivers, Wisconsin, left a written remembrance of the mass that Nee celebrated on Christmas Day in 1944 in Belgium during the horribly bloody Battle of the Bulge that raged from December 16 to January 28.

Historians now know that it was Christmas Day when the allies effectively stopped Germany's last major offensive in what has been described as the largest land battle of World War II. By January 28, the Germans had been pushed completely out of the Ardennes, but at the cost of 19,000 American lives.

Uncertain of his own fate or the outcome of the battle, the colonel had written to his wife describing the mood and situation at the time. When Konop learned of Father Nee's death in 1981 from Agnes Majoris, Father Nee's housekeeper during most of his pastorate at St. Therese, he sent her a copy of the letter he had written to his wife. The following is based on information contained in that letter.

...

It was winter in the Ardennes Mountains. For nine days, Allied forces had been in constant contact with a determined enemy whose armored infantry had pushed deeply into their lines creating a bulge.

The snow was a foot deep, and the cold made life miserable for the infantrymen. Many had died and many were missing and wounded. The living were tired, dirty and hungry but determined to fight.

Col. Matt F. C. Konop did not think there was a man there without thoughts of home and celebrations of Christmas with the traditional church services and songs like *Silent Night*. But the constant zoom of incoming artillery and the crackle of rifles and machine guns made Christmas Eve anything but a silent one.

On the day before Christmas, the colonel had given Father Nee, their chaplain, permission to say Christmas Mass and issued a memorandum indicating the time and place--10:00 a.m. in the basement of a bombed-out country tavern. The strong walls and mounds of nearby rubble provided reasonable safety from enemy fire, but about two inches of snow slush had accumulated in the basement, and the only light was what filtered through shell



The Rev. Joseph A. Nee circa 1978

holes in the walls.

Nee and Konop stood side by side waiting for soldiers to arrive. Neither had much to say. There was nothing merry about the situation. Both men had heard and seen a great deal in the past nine days. They were near an opening to the basement and could see the rolling hills studded with snow-covered evergreen trees, many of which had been blasted by heavy shelling. They watched as soldiers darted from cover to cover to make their way down to the temporary chapel.

Nee remarked: "Doesn't this remind you of the land of the first Christmas when shepherds left their flocks in the hills and went down to the stable in Bethlehem?"

More soldiers arrived in twos and threes, each carrying a rifle or pistol with a grenade or two hanging from his shoulder. They were all dirty, with about a nine-day growth of beard. Their uniforms hadn't been changed for days.

Forty men gathered in the basement. When no more appeared, Nee approached the altar and began Christmas Mass shortly after 10:00 in the morning. Opening his missal, he asked the men to remain standing because of the slush on the floor. General absolution would be given since there was no time for private confessions. He asked for a show of hands of those wishing to receive communion. Everyone raised his hand.

Mass continued in this battered land of Christmas trees and the came time for the gospel and the glad news. Nee read the epistle and the gospel and began his sermon by wishing a Merry Christmas to all, but he stumbled over the words.

He pushed on and recalled the privations of Mary and Joseph in that stable and the similarity of the hills of Bethlehem and the rolling hills outside.

As he talked about the shepherds leaving their posts and coming down from the hills to worship their newborn king, much like the assembled soldiers, his voice began to break. "I'm sorry, fellows," he said. "I can't finish, but I hope my wish for your Merry Christmas will not ..." The soldiers understood.

Wiping his eyes, he turned around and continued with the consecration, the absolution and communion. Blessing the assembled soldiers, he said: "The Mass is ended. Go in peace."

And each one did, giving thanks to Father Nee for giving them a moment of peace as they headed back to the war-torn fields outside.



Infantrymen of the U.S. First Army plod through snowy woods in Belgium's Ardennes Forest as they advance to contact German forces at the start of the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944....

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED AT GROSSLANGENFELD

December 16-18, 1944

by Joseph C. Haines

106th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop (Mechanized)

Since World War II, I have read numerous accounts about the Battle of the Bulge detailing what happened to the various units positioned along the Siegfried Line between Belgium and Germany. None of these accounts mentioned our 106th Reconnaissance Troop or relate the truth about what really happened at Grosslangenfeld from dawn on December 16th until we pulled out the afternoon of December 17th.

Some of the "reports" I've read are Col. R. Ernest Dupuy's book, *St Vith: Lion In the Way* (reprint 1986, pp 50). "As the morning waxed, and the 423rd reports 16 December as 'clear and cold,' it was evident that the enemy had taken Grosslangenfeld in the 424th Infantry sector...." As a matter of fact, we were still fighting in Grosslangenfeld until early afternoon on the 17th!!

Then, on pp 55, Col. Dupuy states "...the 106th Reconnaissance Troop at Grosslangenfeld disintegrated, opening Cannon Company's left flank." The Germans actually advanced between the Cannon Company of the 424th Infantry and the 106th Recon Troop. We did not disintegrate! And, on pp 57, "...Personnel carriers rolling in from Grosslangenfeld disgorged wave after wave of infantry." Later, on pp 58, he mentions "...some infiltrating enemy from Grosslangenfeld...." All of these statements are false! The actual facts are that no enemy troops or vehicles passed through Grosslangenfeld until mid-afternoon of the second day--December 17th. These unsupported statements by Col. Dupuy are a gross insult to the men of the 106th Reconnaissance Troop who fought valiantly in defense of their untenable position at Grosslangenfeld; completely cut off from other American units, surrounded by the enemy, out of communication and nearly out of ammunition.

Unfortunately, these same untruths were repeated by Charles B. MacDonald in his book *A Time for Trumpets*; as well as being noted by several members of our troop in various other so-called "official accounts" written about the Battle of the Bulge (titles and authors not specifically recorded).

The following account has been compiled from my memory of these days; plus, the collective memories of some of the survivors of the troop with whom I have either talked or corresponded over the years, i.e., Paul Thompson, Richard Bradbury, William O. Tower, Arthur LaCroix, Calvin Iezzi, Howard Hughes, Edward Fleming, Robert House, Earl Liston, Michael Gresh, Jr., Willis Selje, Kenneth Booz, Abraham Freund, John Simpson, Robert Fisher, Louis Cunningham, Rudy Aittama, Ralph Pope, Michael Liskiewicz, Bill Roub, Roger Frambs, Rishel White, the late William R. Randall, Roy Mechling, Myron Johnstone, Edward McGee, Gene Hammond, Al Orzolek, Robert Madsen, plus, no doubt others I can't quite recall.

The troop was organized on 15 March 1943 (organic to the 106th Infantry Division) and trained at Fort Jackson, South Carolina. Then participated in the Tennessee maneuvers from January 2 through March 26, 1944.

From the Tennessee maneuvers we moved to Camp Atterbury, Indiana, to complete our training for overseas movement. Beginning 9 October 1944, we moved to Camp Miles Standish,

Massachusetts, for embarkation and shipment to the European Theater of Operations; and sailed on 10 November 1944 aboard the Wakefield. After an uneventful but rough crossing, we landed at Liverpool, England.

In England, we went by train to Stow-On-The-Wold where we received the rest of our authorized equipment, including brand new M-8 armored cars complete with the very latest in radio equipment.

After a short stay in England, we boarded an LST at Weymouth for the Channel crossing to Le Havre, France. Crossing the Channel, we encountered very rough weather. While anchored outside Le Havre Harbor waiting our turn to dock and unload, both anchors were torn loose and we had to return to Weymouth for repairs. After receiving new anchors, we repeated the crossing and a successful landing was made. After unloading, we proceeded by convoy at night across France to the vicinity of St. Vith, Belgium, arriving there on 9 December 1944.

We were attached to the 424th Infantry Regiment, and on 11 December 1944, we were placed on line during a night blackout move to replace a rifle company of the 23rd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division. Our orders were to replace the rifle company...man for man, gun for gun. Plus, we were ordered to maintain complete radio silence; dismount our 30-caliber machine guns from our vehicles; hide the vehicles in various buildings in the Village of Grosslangenfeld, which we were to occupy; then assume the mission of a rifle company in the defense.

(Note: At this time, the troop TO&E authorized

- 6 officers;
- 149 enlisted men;
- 13 - M-8 armored cars;
- 99 - .30 caliber M-1 carbines;
- 13 - .30 caliber machine guns (light);
- 3 - .50 caliber machine guns;
- 30 - .5 caliber submachine guns;
- 5 - rocket launchers AT;
- 9 - 60 mm mortars;
- 26 - .30 caliber M-1 rifles;
- 24 - V 4 ton trucks;
- 5 - M-3 half-tracks; and
- 1 - 2-1/2 ton truck (mess truck).

We were positioned facing the Siegfried Line, with the 424th Infantry Regiment's Cannon Company on our right (we could not see their nearest position to us) and Troop B, 18th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron on our left (nor could we see their nearest position to us either). Most of our vehicles were placed where we couldn't readily utilize them. We had a full complement of officers and about 85% of our authorized enlisted personnel and attempted to man the positions vacated by the rifle company in Grosslangenfeld.

We were forbidden to test fire our machine guns and 37 mm cannons on the armored cars, or to fire in our final protective line. We were ordered to use the range cards previously established by the rifle company so the Germans would believe the same unit was still in place.

There were no provisions for artillery support, or any other supporting fire for us. We were told this was a quiet sector or rest camp! Since we were forbidden to use our radios, our only communication with other units was a telephone line to the 424th Infantry Regiment.

(continued on next page)

106TH CAVALRY RECONNAISSANCE TROOP

(It was years later that we learned all the other units in the area had radio contact with Division.)

The only contact we could recall from the "outside" was the visit by a Red Cross Doughnut Mobile on the 13th or 14th of December which served us coffee and doughnuts, complete with music and the smiles of two American women!

At approximately 5:30 a.m. on 16th December 1944, we came under attack by German artillery, rockets, and mortars. This attack set fire to several buildings in the village, including my Command Post. The barn where our ammunition trailer had been hidden took a direct hit during the night of December 16-17, and our ammunition supply was destroyed except for the small amounts we had placed at various platoon positions.

Shortly after the initial shelling ceased, German infantry began to advance toward our positions in Grosslangenfeld. We were successful in repulsing them with small arms, machine guns, and 60 mm mortar fire; the mortar ammunition was soon exhausted. Later in the morning, another attack was mounted, and again repulsed, with heavy losses to the Germans.

During the shelling and early ground attacks, three of our men were seriously wounded--Sgt. Arthur LaCroix, T/5 Willis Selje, and PFC Robert House. Since our only medical service consisted of platoon medics, the Troop Commander decided to send the wounded to the rear. A half-track was disarmed, and red crosses affixed to the sides, to transport the wounded to the nearest medical facility. Along with the driver, T/5 James Guthrie, volunteers Medic Abraham Freund and Supply Clerk Cpl Howard Hughes accompanied the wounded. The volunteers were to deliver our wounded to a medical facility, report our situation, rearm, draw as much ammunition as they could transport and return to our position. They never returned. Years later, it was learned they had successfully reached St. Vith, delivered the wounded (all survived their wounds), reported our situation, rearmed, drew a supply ammunition, and attempted to return to Grosslangenfeld. Unfortunately, by the time they were able to begin the return trip, German troops had moved into the area between St. Vith and Grosslangenfeld.

Shortly after the German attack began early on the 16th of December, our telephone lines were cut to the 424th Infantry Regiment. We were now out of communication with anyone. The Troop Commander sent our mounted patrols to both flanks in an attempt to make contact with adjacent units (Cannon Company of the 424th and Troop B, 18th Cavalry). The patrol to the left flank returned to report they had made contact with Troop B, 18th Cavalry, and were told "...we thought you guys were wiped out!!" Heavy firing was heard on our right flank during this period, and the patrol we sent to the right flank (Cannon Company) did not return; nor did we receive a report from them since we were forbidden to use our radios.

Once the fighting started on the 16th, we uncovered our armored cars and began firing the 37 mm cannon at the attacking German troops. Since these guns were received new in England, we had never had an opportunity of "bore sighting" firing at the enemy! The ground attacks and shelling continued off and on throughout the day of the 16th, but tapered off that night.

Early on the morning of the 17th of December, the enemy ground attacks and shelling resumed. We were successful in repulsing the ground attacks, but were running critically short of ammunition.

Around noon on the 17th the Troop Commander, Capt. Paul Million, called an officer's meeting at his Command Post to discuss the situation and determine a plan of action. After reviewing the situation, it was determined that only two courses of action were available: one, to continue to hold our position until all ammunition was exhausted and be killed or captured; or, two, to break contact with the enemy and attempt to fall back to Schonberg where it was believed the division reserve was located. It was believed if we could get back to contact division, we could get updated on the situation, get resupplied with food and ammunition, and receive new orders. Course of action two was adopted

and orders (verbal) were issued that on a given signal we would break contact, one position at a time, and attempt to reach Schonberg to the north. The order of withdrawal was to be First Platoon (Lt Edward McGee), Headquarters & Headquarters Platoon (Capt. Million and Lts. George Vream and Leonard Prosnick), Second Platoon (Lt. Joseph Haines), and, last, Third Platoon (Lt Myron Johnstone).

Our withdrawal began shortly after 1300 with the First Platoon successfully breaking contact and withdrawing as planned. Headquarters and part of Headquarters Platoon then fell in line behind First Platoon and began their withdrawal. Second Platoon managed to break contact with two thirds of the Platoon intact and joined the withdrawal (the third section of Second Platoon was cutoff by advancing German troops and was unable to complete the withdrawal). The Third Platoon leader had arrived late to the officers meeting and either misunderstood the direction of withdrawal or discovered the planned route was now blocked by the enemy--I believe the latter to be the case; as he attempted to withdraw back the way we had initially entered Grosslangenfeld--from Winterspet to the west and the area of the 424th Infantry Regiment. Their first vehicle in line was struck and disabled by a mortar or artillery shell thereby blocking the road possibly by "friendly fire," since it had been reported to others in our sector that "Grosslangenfeld had fallen" the previous day (on the 16th). Lt Johnstone was "slightly" wounded when a mortar shell exploded on the rail of his half-track. The enemy was able to quickly overrun those still remaining in Grosslangenfeld--which included Third Platoon, part of Headquarters Platoon, and the third section of Second Platoon. During this brief encounter of intensive fighting, several troop members were killed or wounded. The wounded and other survivors were quickly taken prisoner and marched to the rear into Germany. However, one of our severely wounded men was carried to the German Aid Station by a buddy and received immediate, excellent care by the German medical personnel.

The sections of the troop that managed to withdraw proceeded in a northerly direction on the paved road that ran through Grosslangenfeld toward Bleialf. However, attempting to avoid contact with the enemy, we decided to leave this major roadway and travel cross country, with the hopes of making contact with friendly forces. Shortly after leaving the paved road, we entered a deserted village (Winterscheid--in the 423rd Infantry Regiment area) where we stopped to put tire chains on our vehicles. Resuming our trek, we met up with elements of Troop B, 18th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, at a crossroads just outside Winterscheid. They were really surprised to see us--they thought we had been "eliminated" the day before (December 16). It was decided we would join them in the attempt to reach Schonberg. Troop B, 18th Cavalry, attached to the 423rd, had been given approval by radio to withdraw the day before--December 16!! We were not aware of this decision, which left our left flank completely exposed.

We fell in behind Troop B, 18th Cavalry, and continued northward on secondary roads toward Schonberg. During our journey, we were under occasional artillery fire, including some tree bursts, until it began to get dark. We stopped on a wooded knoll just short of Schonberg to confer with the officers of Troop B, 18th Cavalry. After a sort conference, it was decided we would break up into small groups and attempt to infiltrate the lines west toward St. Vith and get back to what we hoped would be American territory.

We disabled our vehicles, guns, and radios; then walked a short distance into the woods to what appeared to be a woodcutter's shack. It was then decided we would spend the night there and see what the situation was in the morning. Just after daylight on 18 December 1944, we were nudged awake by German troops holding submachine guns and rifles and told we were now prisoners of war and the war was over for us!! (Note: I read one story that stated "...they surrendered to a group of 14-year-old without firing a shot..." I wonder if the author of that statement ever looked into the muzzle of a "Burp Gun" and asked the soldier holding it..."How old are you?")

The greatest irony of all is the fact that the 106th Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop

(continued on next page)

REFLECTIONS

These Reflections were written and presented by Joseph Zimmer, 87th Infantry Division at the 2002 VBOB National Convention at the BWI Marriott, Baltimore MD.

Once again we have met to recall and honor those days, women and we men, we warriors who served in the Battle of the Bulge and helped save Western Civilization in the long ago. Our Nations' history is a vivid one, as we discovered when we toured Fort Mc Henry, The USS Constellation, the USS Torsk, the Coast Guard Cutter Taney; all reminders of wars, battles, and dark days of the past. How touching it was to see Dorothy (Davis), Katherine (Nolan), and Agnes (Sweeney), our Army Nurses placing a wreath at our Memorial Service, along with our President Lou (Cunningham), yesterday, at Fort Meade. I can personally attest to how much they and, nurses like them, together with doctors and surgeons contributed to the survival rate of the wounded. It was 97%, once the soldier arrived at the battalion aid station, my research shows.

I am a witness to their kind of effort, having been paralyzed for four months and recuperating in hospitals in France, England and the USA.

Now we are in the initial of our first war of the 21st Century – the war against terrorism, Operation Enduring Freedom.

Our VBOB organization, some 20 years old now, remains a vessel for each of us to pour our memories and values into. Our founders present and past officers, our leaders, are owed a debt of gratitude, to afford us such a vehicle. Each of these reunions in the company of our companions, to once again gather together keeps alive in the special vault of the national imagination, the gallantry, uncommon glory and sacrifices displayed during our service in World War II. It is good to be reminded that there are such men, that there always have been and always will be. Historian Stephen Ambrose in one of his books, reminded us that we sometimes forget, I think, that you can manufacture weapons, and you can purchase ammunition, but you can't buy valor and you can't pull heroes off an assembly line.

We are grateful for our friends from Belgium and Luxembourg, who join us to express their thanks for freeing their countries from the Nazi horde. We look for their continued support as we fight the war on terrorism and, whatever may lie ahead to stamp out weapons of mass destruction. We are always treated so well when we visit your countries. Thank you.

Every place we meet becomes hallowed ground; we belong here, in our vintage years. There is honor and respect in looking back. We are old soldiers, as General MacArthur said: "Who never die, they just fade away." We, who live as survivors, must represent those who didn't make it. How very long is the mourner's bench upon which we must sit arms linked in undiluted friendships, all of us brief links now, ourselves. As in Guiseppi Verdi's Aida, for our fallen comrades may we say: Farewell earth – "Farewell valley of tears, Oh to drink in the joy of life again." The simplicity and honesty of their short lives, untainted and unstained with life's shortcomings, multiplies their loss.

Our Reunion, a pilgrimage of sorts, will soon end. We will return to our homes, to the towns, villages, hamlets, not unlike those we freed in Europe in that horrible war that saved Western Civilization. For us, surely, it was the end game of the 20th Century, our book of life in a way. Taking our leave from this Reunion will be like putting down a really good book when you finished the last chapter. No matter how long you've been reading, you wish there were a few more chapters to go. Our connection and bonding continues and nurtures us, unit by unit, as we tell our stories and tales, mostly true, even with some exaggeration from time to time.

Thank you all for coming. As we go now, let us take a small measure of comfort in who were then and, are now. Our age is not for sissies, that is sure. Let us keep and display proudly the crow's feet and, the furrows of our brows, for they are the record of valor, courage and dedication of our difficult lives. Nothing wrong with wrinkles, we avoid the quest for youth, the youth we never had. We don't need to read any self-help books either.

The question of our lives, then, is not how much time have we? The question is what shall we do with what time remains. Surely, you couldn't have spent it better these past few days than to be here together and to commemorate the memory of we band of noble warriors, both living and dead, who did remarkable things those many years ago. Finally, our wives, families, companions, significant others in today's parlance, those who have seen us through these years, deserve our utmost thanks, and are in our debt. Have a safe journey home, one and all, as you return and, await another reunion next year. America must not lose its faith in itself. God Bless America!! Thank you.

106TH CAVALRY RECONNAISSANCE TROOP

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24)

was deployed as infantry (replacing a rifle company in the defense) prior to any combat activity in the area. And, we fought as infantry--although we had not been trained or equipped as infantry--yet, we were not considered eligible for the Combat Infantry Badge. Nor, have we ever been considered for any of the other medals or accolades deservedly heaped onto all the other units in the area on that day that did their duty exactly as we did because of all the inaccurate and misinformation recorded about us in so-called "official" records!!

I have had no contact with anyone from the troop who said they had ever been interviewed "officially" about what we did or did not do during this period of December 16-18, 1944, at Grosslangenfeld!! After my release as a prisoner of war, I was "debriefed" by being asked these three questions: (1) Did you see any acts of heroism by any member of your troop (this was the point at which I related the "act beyond the call of duty" performed by S/Sgt Roy Mechling at Grosslangenfeld; recommending he be awarded the Silver Star for his bravery. On 16 May 1996 (about 52 years later!!!), S/Sgt was finally awarded the Bronze Star Medal with "V" device in an appropriate ceremony at Fort Jackson, South Carolina); (2) Did you see any cowardice by any member of your troop? (I answered: absolutely not); (3) Were you treated in a human manner while a prisoner of war!!!

This account as written is the truth of what really happened, and to prove the 106th Reconnaissance Troop did not disintegrate on 16 December 1944. ■

Soldiers generally win battles; generals get credit for them.
—Napoleon I, attributed.

ARE YOUR DUES DUE?

BOOKS YOU MAY ENJOY

The following books have been donated to VBOB for the archives. Some are available for purchase and they will include ordering information. The others are not available for purchase and are for donation purposes only.

Eisenhower Between the Wars--The Making of a General and Statesman, by Matthew F. Holland, 272 pages. Eisenhower achieved prominence as a military leader during WWII and as a statesman following the conflict, but less is known about his ambitions and preparation between the wars that served as the foundation for his later success. The first modern analysis of Eisenhower's career before his rise to fame, this study examines Ike's intellectual ideas concerning politics, military strategy, and history in the decades between the wars. Holland details Eisenhower's quest to make himself the best officer in the U.S. Army and to prepare for the next war--which he firmly believed was coming. Available from Greenwood Publishing Group, PO Box 5007, Westport, CT 06881-5007 (order #ISBN 0-275-96340-3). Cost is \$62.00.

Odor of War, by Andy Giambroni. This book is a "moment-in-time" first person account by one of the many dogfaced infantry soldiers who helped secure victory in Europe during WWII (3rd U.S. Army). Andy writes: The purpose of this book is to show the brutality and ugliness of war. It also serves to show the important part infantry soldiers play in the defense of our country. An infantry soldier's equipment and weapons should be first class. He should be in the highest paid bracket of our military and he should be lured into the service with special benefits and opportunities. Can be ordered from Amazon.com for \$20.00. Or, if you wish a signed copy send \$20.00 (personal check or money orders only) to: "Odor of War," PO Box 459, Red Bluff, CA 96080.

The Gentle Warrior--General Oliver Prince Smith, USMC, by Clifton LaBree. Using the general's own notes and diaries, LaBree describes Smith's long and distinguished career, his command in Iceland in 1940, in the Pacific campaigns, and in Korea. LaBree acknowledges the key role the army's 31st Regimental Combat Team played in conducting a successful withdrawal from the Chosin Reservoir and discusses Smith's wartime dealings with military and political leaders. Book can be ordered from Kent State University Press, PO Box 5190, Kent, OH 44242-0001. Cost is \$32.00 (Further info can be obtained by e-mail to Shani Bell at sbello@kent.edu.--the "0" is a zero not an "o").

The Combat Record of the 253rd Armored Field Artillery Battalion, sent for the archives by Boyd O. McNeil, Jr., who served in Service Battery.

A History of the 279th Engineer Combat Battalion, sent for the archives by Norman E. McGaha, who served in the 279th.

The Battle of the Bulge: The Losheim Gap, Doorway to the Meuse, compiled by Hans J. Wijers. This book describes the combat at the Losheim Gap, part of the sector of the 99th Infantry Division from December 16 to the establishment of American defensive positions along Elsenborn Ridge. It is based on official U.S. Army documents (AAR, After Action Reports), combined with

interviews of members of the 99th Division and its supporting troops. These are complemented by testimonies of several members of units who fought in the area. Official documents from the German side also grace this story, as well as testimony of several former members of German combat units. Price is \$40.00, including shipping and handling. It may be ordered from Hans Wijers; Zegerijstraat 27; NL-6971 ZN Brummen, The Netherlands. (E-mail address: wijers@wxs.nl.)

Pictorial History of the 75th Infantry Division--1946. Now in production, a reprint of the 75th's pictorial commemorative book originally released in 1946. This 9x12 inch, "coffee table" book will contain 450 pages of authentic photographs with detailed narratives of the 75th Division in Europe. This will be a limited edition printing, with the number of copies based upon reserved orders. Order by December 30, 2002--books released 2nd quarter 2003. Only \$54.95, plus \$7.00 shipping. Contact: Turner Publishing Company, PO Box 3101, Paducah, Kentucky 42002-3101.

Once Enemies, Now Friends, by Charles S. Miles and Felix Pfaeffle and Edited by Donna Eichstaedt. It is the winter of 1944-45 and World War II is coming to an end. While the Battle of the Bulge is raging 100 miles to the north, two teen-age soldiers, one American, the other German, are caught up in the final battles along the Rhine in southern Germany. At Christmas of 1944, they find themselves within 5 miles of each other, the American with the 63rd Infantry Division, the German of the Luftwaffe Flak Anti-aircraft corps. By April, the war is finally over for Chuck Miles when he is wounded outside a small German village. Felix Pfaeffle, having lost his home and older brother to the war, finds peace at last when encountering American troops offering smiles and candy in the outskirts of Heidelberg. And now, 56 years later, Chuck and Felix have met, purely by chance, in Las Cruces, New Mexico, and collaborated to share their story with others. Book is available in paperback for \$15.00, plus \$2.00 postage and handling from Red Sky Publishing Co., 7440 Arroyo Seco, Las Cruces, New Mexico 88011. ■

THE ANTITANK PLATOON LEADER'S ADVICE TO HIS MEN

"Our 57 AT gun is a weapon far outclassed
by the high velocity 88, a killer unsurpassed.
And a Tigar tank with an 88 is not a sitting duck . . .
to cripple one with a 57 takes marksmanship and luck.

So if your first shot misses, or doesn't damage that gun,
don't reload for a second; forget your pride and run
away from your position, away from the 57.

For if you don't you'll all awake in Hell
(or perhaps in Heaven),

for our 57 AT gun is a relic far outclassed
by the modern 88, a killer unsurpassed.

So don't try any hero acts. Remember what I say ;
"Try to make your first shot count,
then get the hell away."

Dale Carver, 106th Inf. Div.

Roadway Honors Bulge Vets

By Steven H. Foskett, Jr.
Worcester Telegram & Gazette Staff

WORCESTER As the ceremony progressed yesterday morning, veterans of the Battle of the Bulge in World War II recalled the frigid conditions they faced 58 years ago.

"It was very, very cold," Rodney Perkins said. "Most of us froze our hands or feet."

Several surviving area veterans attended the ceremony designating the Massachusetts Interchange at Route 146 as "veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Central Massachusetts Chapter Interchange."

Mr. Perkins says it makes him feel good that Battle of the Bulge veterans are being remembered.

Mr. Perkins of Warren, fought and was wounded in the battle in Belgium, which lasted from December 1944 to January 1945. More than 19,000 American soldiers died fighting in that battle.

Drafted out of Leominster after turning 18, Mr. Perkins followed a steep learning curve when he went into battle with the 87th Infantry Division. Heavy casualties and few replacements meant they had to make do with what they had.

"My first day in battle, I was a first scout," Mr. Perkins said. "But the next day, I was moved up to squad leader."

At the ceremony, state Rep. John P. Fresola, D-Worcester, and state Highway Department Commissioner Matthew J. Amorello spoke from beneath a tent, and several local veterans spoke and shared their memories.

Shepherded through the Legislature by Mr. Fresola and state Sen. Guy W. Glodis, D-Auburn, the designation of the interchange with Route 146 is the first of its kind on the turnpike according to Mr. Amorello.

The Battle of the Bulge is considered a pivotal battle of World War II. More than 1 million soldiers, including 600,000 Americans participated in the battle, which spread out over eastern Belgium and northern Luxembourg.

Taking advantage of the foggy weather and totally surprising the Allies, the Germans penetrated deep into Belgium, creating a dent, or bulge, in the Allied lines and threatened to break through to the Belgian plain and seize Antwerp.

The US First and Ninth Armies attacked the Germans from the north, while the US Third Army attacked it from the south. Improved flying weather facilitated Allied counterattacks. By Jan. 16, 1945, the German forces were routed.

Heavy casualties made medical care an often grizzly affair, and Helen Russ of Paxton saw firsthand the horror of battle. As a nurse at an Evacuation hospital in the Army Nurse Corps in France during the battle, Ms. Russ said, yesterday's ceremonies brought back memories good and bad.

As the country debates going to war with Iraq, Ms. Russ said, she is wary of American soldiers returning to battle.

This dedication ceremony at the Exit 10 Interchange of the Massachusetts Pike (I-90) & Route 146 Highway into I-290 Worcester, took place Friday 27 Sep 2002 at 9:00 AM. VBOB Members met at the South Works VFW Post on Ballard Street and were bused to the Interchange. About 50 plus seated under a huge tent in inclement weather. John Mc Auliffe, Chapter President of the Central Massachusetts Chapter spoke as well as Kathy Fleming, daughter of a deceased veteran and Charles Iraelian of the 7th Armored Division. It was a great day despite the bad weather. A great tribute to the Battle of the Bulge veterans. John Mc Auliffe

Special to the Bugle

Roger Marquet, an Associate Member and researcher in Belgium writes:

"On December 26th, 1944, the 37th Tank Battalion (Lt Col Creighton Abrams/ Reserve Command (Col Wendell Blanchard)/4th Armored Division (MG Gaffey) made the breakthrough in the Bastogne perimeter. The lead tank was the "Cobra King" whose crew members were:

- Tank Commander – Charles P Boggess
- Diver – Hubert J. Smith
- Gunner – Milton Dickerman
- BOG – Harold Hofner
- Loader James G. Murphy"

I would like to know if any of these men are still alive and would like to receive news from them or about them. Unfortunately Lt Charles Boggess died some years ago but I do not know anything about the other crew members. If you can help would you please write Roger Marquet at Chenogne, 1D B6640 Sibret, Belgium, or send him an e-mail at rogermarquet@wanadoo.be

On another research matter Roger is trying to locate three men, Ralph Mahngren, Robert E. Robinson, and Perry E. Hollowell. These men were members of the 630th Tank Destroyer Battalion (probably Company A) and they were for a while billeted at Bertrix, Belgium in 1944. Please contact Roger Marquet at the above address.



DOES THE DISTINGUISHED HISTORIAN, STEPHEN AMBROSE HAVE FEET OF CLAY

by Murray Shapiro
28 INF D 112 INF M

One hesitates to criticize the distinguished American historian Stephen Ambrose, for many reasons. He has published extensively; he has extolled, publicized and venerated the generation of veterans who fought in World War II, and especially those who fought in the Battle of the Bulge. And he has lent his tremendous prestige to the founding and publicizing of museums and projects which attempt to keep alive our sacrifices.

Nevertheless, he does seem to have a few serious flaws that need to be addressed; and I am not referring to the recent allegations of bits of plagiarism which have surfaced. What I think is more serious are instances of very sloppy research plus repeated attempts to portray our enemies in almost benevolent tones.

I have received phone calls and letters from other veterans pointing out such flagrant reaches. One letter written to Ambrose from Dennis E. Leslie, I will cite: "After listening to your speech during the opening of your Pacific War Section of the D-Day Museum, I was astounded at your remarks as to our fighting men who were prisoners of the Japanese...you...make a libelous statement that 'our leaders in Washington told us lies about the torture the Japanese put our GI's through...' I know your son did a second-rate job of research when interviewing our guys [of] the Battle of the Bulge; but I thought you would have checked these stories before printing them as fact....Your speech....saying that the Japanese soldiers were not the butchers and savages that we all knew they were made by blood boil."

My own personal experience of Professor Ambrose's errors has to do with his book *Comrades* [New York: Simon and Schuster 1999]. On page 127 he writes "Hugh [Ambrose's son] tells the story of Corporal Hans Herbst and Sergeant Murray Shapiro, who had been involved in a costly firefight and damn near killed each other as each squad lost a number of men. They fought in a cemetery and later became friends. Hugh writes, 'When think about how much a soldier's comrades meant to him, I wonder how the veterans can ever put the past behind them.' But the story reveals more than just two men swapping tales. It is the conversation of two men who have learned to forgive. The American soldier can take a great deal of credit for making that conversation possible. He fought hard to win the war. But every step of the way, he strove to create peace. Such a tribute is perhaps as fine as any old soldier could wish, especially when it comes from his former opponent. I only want to add," said Herbst with a chuckle 'that today I am lucky to be alive. I tell them I'm lucky that they are such poor shots.'"

These quotes from the Ambrose book bear no relationship to the facts; nor are they consistent with my own attitude towards the enemy. Indeed, I never did "fight for peace" I joined high school ROTC in 1938 to prepare for war! I wrote a flaming front page editorial in my high school newspaper calling for preparedness and war against fascism. I continued to express such feelings as a member of ROTC and Pershing Rifles elite unit, and in my column at UCLA [*Daily Bruin*]. The point is that neither Ambrose, nor his son, Hugh, ever interviewed me as to my feelings or to the firefight which took place at the bridge

at Ouren which we were ordered to hold.

As I wrote to Professor Ambrose a few months ago in the most respectful terms: "On page 127 of your book, *Comrades*, you describe a battle, a meeting, and a subsequent friendship between myself as Sergeant Murray Shapiro, and an enemy, Corporal Hans Herbst. The description is quite faulty. Let me set the background for this event. The day before the battle where I engaged in a firefight with Herbst's tank column, I and another sergeant, McGinnis, were leading our replacements to our heavy machine gun section facing the Seigfried Line. We were covering a 300 yard gap between K and L companies of the 112th Infantry Regiment, 28 Division. McGinnis and I were part of M company. The Germans had already knocked out our two guns and about 40 of them were approaching us four during the very dark morning of December 16, 1944. We retreated, our two gunners swinging wide to alert the company, McGinnis and going straight back to warn a sleeping anti-tank group. McGinnis was killed during a German hand grenade and bayonet attack; I escaped squirming through a thick hedgerow and working my way back to regimental headquarters. Early the next day I was placed in command of the lower third of a 40-member rear guard and ordered to hold the bridge at the town of Ouren. Two other "refugee" sergeants commanded the middle and upper third of the group strung out along a ridge overlooking the road leading to Ouren. A river paralleled the road, both of which turned sharply at the bottom, so that at no time did we see the bridge we were defending.

By late afternoon a German tank column began its approach, the first two tanks escorted by a platoon of infantry coming into view at the top of a rise to our left. I did not think we had been left anything to stop a tank column. I was the only person armed with a rifle, the rest of the men having side arms. We had a few boxes of grenades, and that was it. The lieutenant in command approached me, seeing my rifle, and asked if there was anything he could do. Reluctantly leaving my well camouflaged and protected foxhole, I went down the slope to a cleared piece of ground to get a field of fire, and standing upright in full view of the enemy emptied a clip at the approaching infantry.

Suddenly five of my men took off running down the slope and down the road. Much to my everlasting shame, I cursed them out for seemingly deserting. I soon discovered they were anti-tankers. As soon as they got to the bottom of the road they began ripping off the netting of a well-concealed anti-tank gun.

By this time the first tank was coming close to where I was standing; it stopped and turned its turret and 88 gun right at me. I froze in fright like a dumb a___. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw the five anti-tankers loading and traversing their gun. So did the tank commander who turned his turret from me to them, letting off a blast that blew netting and GI's over the landscape. Then the turret began to traverse back to me again. I and the Kraut tank commander saw one GI get off the ground and on to his gun. Again the turret turned away from me as both American and German fired at once, each hitting their targets. The German tank blasted anti-tank gun and gunner; but the American put the German tank on fire. I began to empty a few other clips through the black smoke and fire as the second tank and Kraut infantry retreated back over the rise.

Late that night the remainder of our group tried to get back to our lines, the lieutenant telling us the best way was to go back toward the German lines, circle around, and try to cross the Oure River at another

(continued on next page)

AMBROSE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 28)

spot since the Germans did take the bridge during the night coming in behind us. When I finally did get back five days later, Colonel Nelson told me I was the third and last person to survive.

On Saturday, June 10 1994, at a meeting arranged by two Belgian boys who had made a hobby of studying this battle, my wife and I did meet two soldiers from this tank column, one of whom as Corporal Hans Herbst mentioned in Ambrose's book. We looked at each others' photo albums and I reluctantly shook hands. It was from the German diaries that I discovered that I had shot the German major commanding the column in the knee.

FACTS: At NO time did I ever fight Corporal Hans Herbst in a cemetery (as Hugh describes it). There wasn't even an exchange of fire except for my anti-tankers, my rifle and the German 88 gun. I never became buddy-buddy with Herbst and still have a hard time forgiving SS men. I am also rather skeptical of other things mentioned in this chapter, especially Ambrose's description of Colonel Hans Von Luck. If he did not know of any extermination death camps, he certainly knew that Jewish prisoners were shot. I have this information from several of my friends who were POW's, particularly from the "ghost" division to our north, the 106th. Even the so-called more tolerant arm, the Luftwaffe, discriminated. A captured pilot told me that when he became stalag prisoner commander, he was immediately visited by the German commander demanding to know who were the Jewish American airmen. There was one in the group, but the American officer lied saying that there were no Jews here.

I can forgive Ambrose's few errors in attributing sources in some of his books; but to completely miss the facts of a battle and to ascribe attitudes to me that I have never held is a little outrageous, particularly since neither he or his son have ever seen me, interviewed me or communicated with me in any form. I wrote him a letter pointing all this out on August 31, 2001. I have yet to receive any acknowledgment.

**STATEN ISLAND CHAPTER
REMEMBERS**

On June 7th, members of the Staten Island Chapter gathered at the Long Island Museum in Stony Brook to remember the invasions of D-Day and the Battle of the Bulge.



Pictured left to right: David Saltman, Chapter President, John Dwyer, Carl Crist and Bob Olsen. ■

The World War II Memorial in Washington DC will be dedicated on the 29th of May 2004 with appropriate ceremonies and honors to World War II Veterans.

In order to plan for this event the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge would like to arrange for a hotel with a reduced rate of under \$90 plus tax. We need to get an estimation of folks who would be planning to attend and would want to stay at the VBOB hotel. We must ask the hotel to hold a given block (number) of rooms at the reduced rate. As you can expect there will be a great demand for rooms in the Washington Metropolitan area during this event so the hotels are going to be reluctant to hold rooms if we cannot guarantee them a given amount.

You will not be committing to the room at this time but we do need to know your intention to come. We most likely would arrange a three or four day event with tours of local sights, Arlington Cemetery, Union Station, Spy Museum, and Smithsonian Museums. We would also have to plan bus transportation to the Memorial Service and elsewhere as it will be impossible to drive to the WWII Memorial by private auto. Buses will be at a premium unless ordered far enough in advance. We would like to negotiate with the Hotel and Bus Companies by the end of November 2002, so we ask that you send us your thoughts about coming and mailing them to John Bowen, VBOB Secretary, by Veterans Day 11 Nov 2002, at 613 Chichester Lane Silver Spring MD 20904-3331, Tel. 301-384-6533 or e-mail at johndbowen@earthlink.net Please do this as soon as possible before it slips your mind.

I will be attending the WWII Memorial Dedication 29 May 2004 and will need _____ single/double room(s).

I would be interested in bus transportation for ____ people.

I would plan to stay ____ nights if there are tours and a banquet.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ ZIP+4 _____

Tel. _____

e-mail: _____

HELP!!

WES ROSS, 146TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION, COMPANY B, is writing a history of his unit. In it he mentions the 38TH CAVALRY DIVISION. He would like to be sure that his history accurately depicts the information on the 38th. Can someone help him by either reviewing the history or by letting him know where he can get a copy of the 38th's history? Write to Wes at: 17411 SW McCormick Hill, Hillsboro, Oregon 97123 (Phone 503-628-0900). ■

VBOB QUARTERMASTER

NOVEMBER 2002

Please ship the following items to:

Name: _____
 (first) _____ (last) _____ (phone #-will call only if there is a problem)

Address: _____
 (no.) _____ (street) _____ (city) _____ (state) _____ (zip)

Item Description	Price Each	Quantity	Total Price
VBOB Logo Patch - 3"	\$ 4.50		\$
VBOB Logo Patch - 4"	\$ 5.50		\$
VBOB Logo Decal - 4"	\$ 1.25		\$
VBOB Windshield Logo - 4"	\$ 1.25		\$
VBOB Logo Stickers (10) - 1 1/4"	10 for \$1.25		\$
Baseball Cap w/3" VBOB Logo Patch - Navy only	\$ 10.00		\$
Windbreaker w/4" VBOB Logo Patch (Navy only) Please circle size (they run a little snug): M L XL XXL XXXL (XXL and XXXL - see prices)	\$ 25.00 (M, L & XL) \$ 26.00 for XXL \$ 27.00 for XXXL		\$
VBOB Logo Lapel Pin - 1/2"	\$ 5.00		\$
VBOB Logo Belt Buckle - Silver tone or Gold tone (Please circle choice)	\$ 16.00		\$
VBOB Logo Bolo Tie - Silver tone or Gold tone (Please circle choice)	\$ 16.00		\$
VBOB License Plate Frame w/Logos - White plastic w/Black printing	\$ 5.00		\$
VBOB 100 Sheet Notepad w/Logo - "This Note Is From... A Veteran of the Battle of the Bulge" - White paper with Blue printing	\$ 3.00		\$
VBOB Tote Bag - 18" x 15" natural (off-white) color tote bag with navy handles and large navy VBOB logo	\$ 8.00		\$

Only Cash, Check or Money Order Accepted

Make Checks Payable to "VBOB" - Mail Orders to VBOB-QM, PO Box 11129, Arlington, VA 22210-2129

DO NOT INCLUDE ANY OTHER MONIES WITH QM PAYMENT

Please allow 3-4 weeks for delivery

Shipping and Handling: _____ Cost of Items: \$ _____
 \$0.00 to \$5.00 - \$ 2.00
 \$5.01 to \$10.00 - \$ 3.00 S&H: \$ _____
 \$10.01 and over - \$ 4.00 Total: \$ _____
 Please add an additional \$1.00 to regular shipping and handling for all items shipped outside the USA.

Office Use Only - Do Not Write Below This Line

Date Received: _____

Date Mailed: _____

Payment: Cash Check MO

Check No.: _____

HEROISM ETCHED IN GRANITE

[The following article appeared in The Staten Island Advance on December 17, 2001, and was written by Frank Williams, Advance Staff Writer]

Battle of the Bulge Memorial in Wolfe's Pond park is unveiled on the epic conflict's 57th anniversary

As U.S. soldiers, so far from home during the holidays, continued to fight in Afghanistan, hundreds of Staten Islanders and some international dignitaries gathered in Wolfe's Pond Park yesterday to dedicate a memorial to Battle of the Bulge veterans.

"I've never seen as big a crowd at something like this in my 15 years as Parks commissioner," said Henry Stern, who presided over the dedication ceremony, which was held on the 57th anniversary of the first day of the World War II battle.

Two black granite slabs, symbolic of steadfast Allied troops who refused to break under a last desperate Nazi offensive, form the memorial's centerpiece and stand 16 feet tall like twin towers overlooking Raritan Bay.

The slabs are linked by a glass star representing hope and peace. The five-pointed star's dichroic glass, developed by NASA for space travel, changes color, so that in daylight the glass is cyan (blue) and then shimmering gold at dusk.

"The monument is expressive and artful," said Stern.

A granite wall containing the 45 shoulder-patch logos of American units that fought the battle provides an arching backdrop. The wall is inscribed with the words of Winston Churchill: "This is undoubtedly the greatest American battle of the war and will, I believe, be regarded as an ever famous American victory."

"All those men who fought and didn't come back are looking down on us and sharing in this moment," said Carmine (Buzz) Burzumato, president of the Staten Island Chapter of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge. "The monument also represents those who survived and returned home to loved ones."

The 30 members of the Bulge veterans group have been planning the monument since 1998, along with the Parks Department and then-City Councilman Stephen Fiala. The group's ceramic logo is at the center of the memorial plaza.

The \$450,000 memorial pays tribute to the 600,000 American men and women who participated in the epic battle.

In the early morning hours of December 16, 1944, three powerful German armies plunged into the Ardennes region of Belgium and Luxembourg. Their goal was to reach the sea, trap four Allied armies and force a negotiated peace on the Western Front. The American line on the Ardennes was thin, the troops mostly inexperienced or battle-weary. American manpower was concentrated on offensives north and south.

Although it was a surprise attack, the Germans fell short of their objective. Fighting in dense fog snow and bitter cold, ill-equipped American forces stubbornly resisted all-out German attacks and stalled their advance. After penetrating more than 40 miles into Allied territory, forming a "bulge" in the American line, the Germans were stopped on Christmas Eve.

Bitter fighting continued until January 25, 1945, when the "bulge" was erased. The Allies were now poised for their final assault into the German heartland and eventual victory in Europe.

About 19,000 American soldiers were killed in the battle.

Seven of the memorial plaza's cobblestone rings were donated by the people of Luxembourg and Belgium, who remain grateful for their liberation.

"Luxembourg has not forgotten and never will forget the sacrifices made by so many Americans," said Vice Consul Alain Weber of the Luxembourg Embassy in Washington.

"We must educate the young people. They must know how terrible it was," said Brig. Gen. Guy Melchior, defense attaché at the Belgium Embassy in Washington. "Freedom gives us joy, but freedom is not free."

Staten Island architect Anthony Mood, a decorated first lieutenant who fought with the 28th Infantry Division in the battle designed the memorial.

"I am so overjoyed to be here, after three years of intense work. When we started talking about this, we knew what we didn't want to see--most memorials look like tombstones," said Moody. "That's why we included the evergreen trees and landscaped setting, to recall the hills and forests of the Ardennes. Banks of white flowers will be planted in spring to represent the snow on the ground."

"Monuments are here to tell a story. This one tells of a moment in history that should never be forgotten--fascism and totalitarianism would have taken over the world," said Fala. "I want my nephew to come here with his grandchildren." The site is also intended as a teaching tool, so a stand with a map of the battle and a timeline was included in the design.

"This is one of the most peaceful settings in New York City, which is part of the inherent conflicts in life. Compare that with the hell you endured so we can live in this peace," said Republican Rep. Vito Fossella to the veterans. "You did it not for fun, not because of self, but for love of country and freedom. That same spirit and valor is in the men and women in Afghanistan today--thank you for my freedom."

Also speaking at the ceremony were Assemblyman Robert Stranieri (R-South Shore) City Councilman Andrew Lanza (R-South Shore), City Councilman-elect Michael McMahon (D-North Shore), and John Antoniello, chairman of Community Board 3.

The Marine Corps League Staten Island Detachment, the Staten Island chapters of the Korean War Veterans and Vietnam Veterans and the Curtis High School Junior ROTC provided color and honor guards for the ceremony.



PLAZA OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE
WOLFE'S POND PARK • STATEN ISLAND • NEW YORK



VETERANS of the BATTLE of the BULGE

P.O. Box 11129
Arlington, Virginia 22210-2129

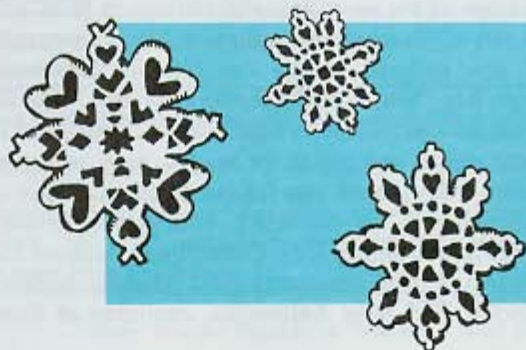
ADDRESS SERVICE
REQUESTED

NOVEMBER, 2002

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Arlington, VA
Permit No. 468



LC0071 LIFE
NEIL BROWN THOMPSON
525 PATRICIA CT
ODENTON MD 21113-1716



MAY THE HOLIDAYS
BRING YOU MUCH JOY,
HAPPINESS, AND LOTS
OF GOOD HEALTH



- Detach and Mail -

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

OFFICIAL USE ONLY



APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP
VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE
P.O. Box 11129, Arlington, Virginia 22210-2129

Annual Dues \$15

Do not write above this line

Do not write above this line

New Member Renewal - Member # _____

Name _____ Birthdate _____

Address _____ Phone () _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

All new members, please provide the following information:

Campaign(s) _____

Unit(s) to which assigned during period December 16, 1944 - January 25, 1945 - Division _____

Regiment _____ Battalion _____

Company _____ Other _____

Make check or money order payable to VBOB
and mail with this application to above address:

Applicants Signature _____

RECRUITER (Optional)