

The BULGE BUGLE

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

VOLUME XXXVI NUMBER 4

THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

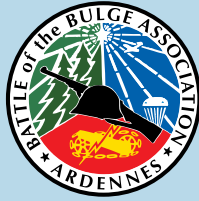
NOVEMBER 2017



One of the highlights of the December event is always the tree decorated with the veterans' WWII portraits. Pictured is Tom Ingram, 90th InfD, in December 2015.

REMEMBRANCE and COMMEMORATION
73rd ANNIVERSARY of THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE
Metro DC Area ★ December 13 - 15, 2017

See pages 10-12 for full details. Register by November 28th!



Battle of the Bulge Association, Inc.
PO Box 27430, Philadelphia, PA 19118-0430
703-528-4058

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Tom Burgess, 87th InfD
Doug Dillard, 82nd AbnD
Alfred Shehab, 38th Cavalry
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* *Deceased*

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NOTICE: DUES NOW \$20

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

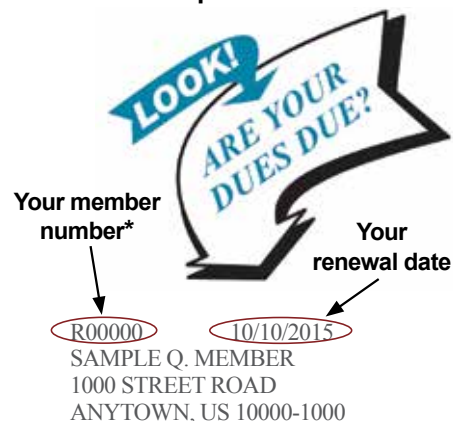
BOBA is now operating at a deficit, and we need your support to keep us going! Sign up your family and friends! See membership application on the back cover.

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

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



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

RENEWAL CARDS WILL NOT BE SENT



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Gary Higgins



TO ALL OF OUR BOBA members, I wish to say it's been a busy summer and beautiful fall color season.

Our reunion in San Antonio Texas has been completed, with lots of activity and great times for those able to attend, sharing some quality time and history. If you have time and did attend, please write in to the *Bugle* and share some new stories, which we all enjoy so much.

The membership business meeting was conducted by your President with two plus hours of discussion, elections and bylaw amendments. Doris Davis and her nominating committee, and Alan Cunningham with detailed reports of our transition to BOBA, were very thorough. Tracey Diehl presented her reports, as did others in regard to finances and membership. Teamwork and delegating makes each position operate easier. *[See below for elected board for 2018.]*

The hotel was great, and lots of tours and sightseeing were enjoyed by all. If you read the recent *Bugles*, you know about these events and what we did. Having Dick Cole as a surprise guest one day was quite exceptional. Mr. Cole was the Co-Pilot to Jimmy Doolittle, who bombed Tokyo in April 1942. Dick only wanted to hear about our BOBA members' war stories! It was a joyous time for all. The Buckhorn Saloon and Museum, National Museum of the Pacific War and more made the trip so wonderful.

Yes, the Alamo was another of our day tours, along with Fort Sam Houston and a variety of fun dining out experiences. The hospitality room provided quality time, with mingling of members and special guests who stopped in. *[See pages 8-9 for more details and photos.]*

I was able to do a Battle of the Bulge presentation at a Navy reunion at our hotel., which resulted in BOBA getting some new members! So we are gaining new members, which we all need to work on.

The final evening's banquet with full military color guard and music was an elegant final touch. Barbara Mooneyhan, your Exec VP, is to be given credit for all she did to bring this together. So be sure to thank her and others who assisted her.

Our banquet speaker Sichan Siv, a Cambodian boat refugee, gave a very inspirational talk. He had our full attention, and his endurance and survival story was indeed motivational. He became an ambassador to the US under President George W. Bush. He has written a couple of books, which you can look up, find and read.

Sadly, we are continuing to lose many of our veterans. Please see the *Bugle* "In Memoriam" pages. We continue to send condolences for those we know of, and share their names and units in the *Bugle*.

Our next BOBA gathering will be in December, with Doris Davis and her team bringing together planned events that we can all be part of. I know of one couple who are new to BOBA and have already made their reservations to attend. *[See p. 10-12 for more information and registration forms.]*

Keep your families' Battle of the Bulge stories alive by sending them to the *Bugle*. Our research resources are limited and we need all the stories we can get directly from you, our members. And whenever possible, try to recruit new members. I was able to give a BOBA talk before almost 1,000 in New Orleans at the Vietnam Veterans National Convention, which resulted in some new memberships.

Our prayers continue for those affected by the devastation of the fall hurricanes, and now the mass shooting in Las Vegas. May we have safer and happier days ahead.

BOBA BOARD FOR 2018

The 2018 slate of nominated candidates, as published in the August 2017 issue of *The Bulge Bugle*, was voted upon during the General Membership Meeting at the BOBA 2017 reunion in San Antonio, Texas. The Immediate Past President is a Bylaws-required board

position and is not part of the voting. The membership approved amendments to the bylaws to designate that position as "Chairman of the Board," and also to add "and CEO" to the President's title. No additional nominations were made from the floor.

OFFICERS

President and CEO:

Gary Higgins

Executive Vice President:

Barbara Mooneyhan

Vice President Membership:

Angelo Fazio

Vice President Chapters:

Sherry Klopp

Treasurer: Duane R. Bruno

Recording Secretary:

Tracey Diehl

BOARD MEMBERS

David Bailey, 106th Inf Div

Tana Van Nice Black

Tom Burgess, 87th Inf Div

Doris Davis

John Mohor

Greg Penfield

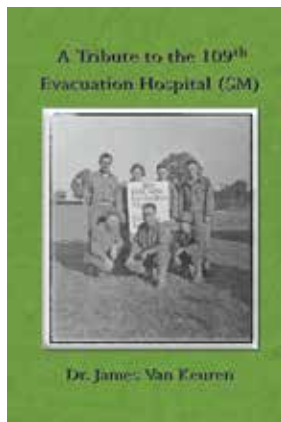
Immediate Past President

and Chairman of the Board:

Alan Cunningham

LETTERS TO BOBA

NEW BOOK PUBLISHED ON 109TH EVACUATION HOSPITAL



I'd like your members to know about a my new book: "A Tribute to the 109th Evacuation Hospital (SM)," by Dr. James Van Keuren, published by JVK-BOOKS LLC. This untold story of the 109th Evacuation Hospital (SM) provides the reader with a piece of history about evacuation hospital semi-mobile units during World War II. The cohesion and respect for one another was evident in the 109th Evacuation Hospital (SM) unit, which held numerous reunions after the war that my father-in-law (Sergeant Allan Dean Bair from Lorain, Ohio)

made every effort to attend, like the rest of the unit members.

My father-in-law's journey and the veteran's interviews paints a picture of teamwork close to the front lines. Here, the danger was so palpable and close to our young soldiers, as conveyed by one nurse: "The boys were only 18 and 19 years old and of course, none of them wanted to die, you know, and they knew that they were dying. They knew what kind of shape they were in, and it was pretty rough watching them." We see the experiences of a unit member witnessing Nazi collaborators being clubbed to death in a small town in Czechoslovakia, and another unit member's chance encounter with General Patton and General Eisenhower.

This photo journal book contains over 100 photos and data points that highlight the experiences of the men and women of the 109th Evacuation Hospital (SM), who put their lives on the line each day to preserve our democratic ideals and values that we cherish today.

Dr. James Van Keuren

The book is available on Amazon.com, by searching the book title or author's name.

ANYONE HAVE INFO ON KENNETH G. MADDOX, 28TH INF?



**1st LT. Kenneth G. Maddox,
28th Inf, 110th Reg, HDQ Co.**

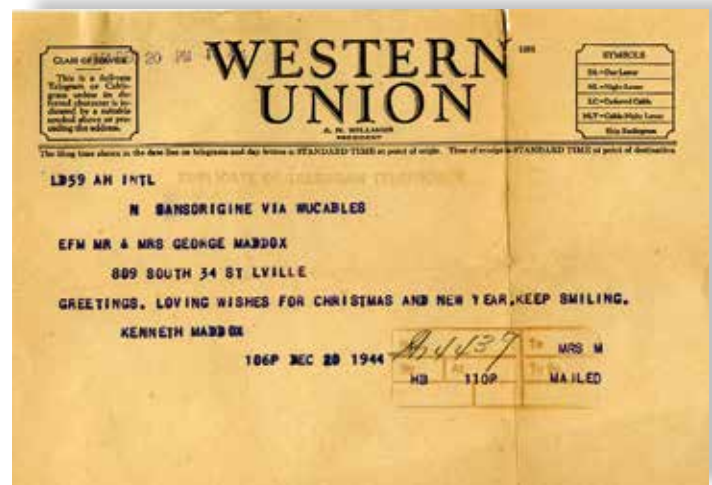
All of this started almost three years ago when one of my nephews asked me about my Uncle Kenny, my Dad's only brother, who died as a result of wounds received during The Battle before the Battle. He had fought in France, Aachen, Hurtgen Forrest and was in the famous Aug. 29th, 1944 parade in Paris. I wanted both of my nephews to know about their Great Uncle, who was an amazing young man in so many ways and ultimately, a war hero. So, I started putting together information to give to them.

Uncle Kenny, 1st LT. Kenneth G.

Maddox, 28th Infantry Division, 110th Infantry Regiment, HDQ Company (formerly "E" Company), was in charge of 1 (or more) 57mm gun crews on Dec. 17th, 1944. It was his lone gun crew that was set up directly across the Our River from the Claravallis Hotel in Clervaux, Luxembourg where Col. Fuller's headquarters was located. They were trying to hold off the Second Panzers trying to come down the small winding north road into Clervaux while Fuller and other officers were destroying records in preparation to evacuate the building and the area.

What then happened is described in Robert F. Phillips' book, To Save Bastogne. A Nazi grenadier came over the ridge and was about to fire on his men. Uncle Kenny stepped in front of them and received a blast across the chest from a German burp gun. He fell and his men were able to get away before a Panzer blasted their gun position to bits. They hid and circled back around to try to find Uncle Kenny's body. They found his Jeep but "all of his personal effects were gone" - and no body. At that point, their situation was so dangerous they had to go. Three of his men, Robert Weisenseel, Charles Shumaker, and Joseph Russinbro, visited my grandparents after the war. That's how we know what little details we do know. The strangest part of the story comes next.

My family did not know until sometime in early 1945 that Uncle Kenny had died on Christmas Day 1944 of his wounds in a German field hospital. They thought he was a POW being held somewhere in



The telegram supposedly sent by Kenneth Maddox while he was in a German field hospital.

Germany and the whole family searched the weekly news reels for his face in the pictures of POWs. What we think now is that he was most likely in the Clervaux Sanitarium, on the ridge above Clervaux, which was being used as a field hospital, first by American forces and then by the Nazis after they took the area.

When I started all of this research, I went through and read all of my Uncle's letters home and the very last item was a Dec. 20th, 1944 Western Union telegram to my grandparents. It expressed "loving wishes for Christmas and the New Year." And it was signed "Keep Smiling. Kenneth Maddox" It didn't hit me at first... then I realized that on Dec. 20th, my Uncle was in the German field hospital, most likely in very serious condition and probably unconscious. Having just read all of his letters, the wording sounded just like my Uncle, especially the "Keep Smiling." Only, he didn't sign letters Kenneth or Kenneth Maddox. He signed his

(continued on next page)

LETTERS TO BOBA

(continued from page 5 page)

letters and cards with just Ken or Kenny.

Who reported my Uncle as captured and in a field hospital and who reported his death specifically on Christmas Day in a German “Lazarette” (an infectious disease hospital which the Clervaux Sanitarium was)? I just can’t imagine the Nazis stopping to take such a seriously wounded American soldier for aid? And the biggest mystery of all: Who sent the Dec. 20th telegram? I can’t really see the Nazis doing that either? Were other American soldiers with him at the Lazarette? Were Red Cross workers present? Were civilians from the village where he was billeted working in the Lazarette and recognized him? And on Dec. 20th, when the 110th had reached a place where the headquarters could be re-established, the first Daily Report since Dec. 17th listed my Uncle as Missing in Action so all of this information came from a source other than the U.S. Army.

I would very much appreciate any information, copies of photos or records or reports, memories, suggestions of additional places to search, anything that might help clarify or enlighten or possibly even bring some closure to a long-standing family mystery.

If you have any information, please contact me, by email at: womayn@aol.com; or by phone: 901-681-2151

—Submitted by Ayn Maddox, Member, Niece of Kenneth Maddox

**According to the wishes of his family, 1st LT. Kenneth G. Maddox's body returned home to Louisville, KY, USA in 1948 and was laid to rest in the family plot in the Evergreen Cemetery.*

OOPS! WE GOOFED

In the February 2017 issue, on page 8, we ran an article by Irving Locker, 116 AAA Gun Battalion, B Battery, 4th Division entitled “The Dust Gave Us Away!” We illustrated the article with a generic tank photo he had sent us, and overlooked these personal, and much better, photos he subsequently sent. Here’s Mr. Locker on the left as a young soldier, and on the right a photo he labeled “This is the shell we fired. 3’ tall, 45 lbs.” A belated thanks to Mr. Locker for sending these photos.

—The Editor



Noll C. DeLaughter (center) 735th Tank Battalion, Company A, wearing company “composite flower patch,” August 13, 1945 in Paris.

735TH TANK BATTALION

Member Michael L DeLaughter sent us this brief history of the 735th Tank Battalion, his father Noll C. DeLaughter's unit, from Wikipedia.

“The 735th Tank Battalion was an independent tank battalion that participated in the European Theater of Operations with the United States Army in World War II. The battalion entered combat in Normandy in July 1944 with the 5th Infantry Division and fought across France with the 95th Infantry Division. When reattached to the 5th Infantry Division, the 735th Tank Battalion played a key role in the reduction of the fortifications of Metz. The battalion was also attached to the 26th Infantry Division during the Battle of the Bulge, and fought the last several months of the war as an attachment to the 87th Infantry Division. It was inactivated in October 1945.”

Michael also notes that the 745th Tank Battalion, Company A, 1st Platoon received both the Presidential Unit Citation and the French Croix de Guerre awards.

How to submit stories for “The Bulge Bugle”

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

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

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

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

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

FEBRUARY ISSUE DEADLINE: January 5, 2018

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

R.I.P. DOUGLAS DILLARD, VBOB PRESIDENT 2012-2014

Douglas Clark Dillard, "Doug," a resident of Bowie, MD for 42 years died on Saturday, September 9, 2017 in Annapolis, MD due to pancreatic cancer. Born on September 14, 1925 in Atlanta, GA, Doug earned a Bachelor's Degree in Military Science from the University of Maryland, a Master's Degree in International Relations from Boston University, and attended Catholic University, working toward his Doctorate.

Sergeant Dillard was in the Battle of the Bulge attached to the 30th Infantry Division in support of their defense around Francorchamps and Stavelot. Later they shifted to the 82nd Airborne, supporting the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment with reconnaissance behind enemy lines. Experiencing heavy losses into 1945, the 551st eventually folded into the 508th. Doug earned the Bronze Star, the Legion of Merit and the Distinguished Flying Cross.

He had a long career in military intelligence, serving in Korea and Vietnam. He eventually



Doug Dillard as a young soldier (far left), at Ohrdruf with his wife Ute Dillard (center), and a memorial to Doug which Ute has placed in her garden at their home in Germany (right).



became Chief of U.S. Army Military Intelligence and is in their Hall of Fame. Doug retired as a colonel in 1977.

He served as president of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge from 2012-2014, later served on the Board of the Battle of the Bulge Association, and was a member of the Greatest Generation Foundation. He was also an active

member of the 82nd Airborne Association and the 508, the 504 and the 551 Parachute Infantry Associations.

Doug is survived by his wife, Ute Dillard, BOBA Member, and his four daughters, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his previous wife of 63 years, Virginia H. Dillard.

MEMBERS IN MEMORIAM

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

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

We have been notified, as of Sept 30, 2017, that these BOBA Inc. members have also recently passed away:

ARNOLD, ROBERT E.	9 INF 47 REG 2 BN E CO	LEVIN, M. J.	7 ARMDD 489 ARMD FABN
BOETGER, FRED H.	80 INF 317 REG CO B	LUSBY, JAMES V.	84 INF 335 REG 2 BN CO E
BOST, JR., CHARLES M.	75 INF 730 FABN B BTRY	MASSEY, JOSEPH A.	106 INF 422 REG CO C
CARVER, JACK K.	26 INF 328 REG 2 BN HQ CO	MCGEE, GEORGE W.	109 EVAC HOSP
CHESNICK, FRANCIS	99 INF 395 IREG 1 BN CO A	PENDLETON, JAMES C.	30 INF 119 REG 3 BN HQ CO
DAVIS, F. KEITH	9 ARMDD 16 FAOBN CO A	PENNINGTON, ROBERT E.	26 INF 328 REG 2 BN CO E
DILLARD, DOUGLAS C.	82 ABND 508 PIR CO A	REED, CLEMENT Z.	94 INF 465 AAA AW BN
EDWARDS, JAMES T.	42 INF 232 REG CO F	RIEDLINGER, JR., LOUIS C.	50 SIG BN HQ CO
GEORGE, JR., S. W.	176 FA BN	ROWE, JOHN M.	87 INF 346 REG CO I
HOWENSTEIN, PETER K.	80 INF 319 REG 3 BN CO M	SAKOWSKI, FRANK S.	82 ABND 508 PIR HQ CO
KAPLAN, ISAAC	253 ENGR CMBT BN	THOMSON, HERBERT S.	87 INF 346 REG 2 BN CO G
KENNEDY, GEORGE F.	30 INF HQ CO	VANLANDINGHAM, DEAN M.	26 INF MP PLATOON
KIRBY, HARRY E.	26 INF 104 REG 3 BN CO I	WALKER, JR., WILLIAM T.	8 INF 644 TD BN CO B
KLINGENSMITH, ALLEN	75 INF 289 REG C CO	WATSON, JOHN C.	84 INF 335 REG 2 BN CO F
KRAFT, CHARLES A.	789 AAA AW BN	WENC, CHESTER C.	106 INF 424 REG CO B
KREBS, LESTER	884 FABN BTRY B	WOOLDRIDGE, FRANK	90 INF 315 MED BN



We were honored to have special guest and keynote speaker Ambassador Sichan Siv (center, back row) at our annual banquet, alongside 12 of our WWII veterans, shown here with BOBA President and CEO Gary Higgins (back row, far right).

2017 ANNUAL REUNION RECAP

by Barbara Mooneyhan, BOBA Executive Vice President and 2017 Reunion Planner

The 36th Annual Reunion in San Antonio, Texas was held from September 23 – 28, 2017 and was a resounding success! Fourteen veterans attended with their family and friends, with about 70 total attendees registered. Events began with a Wine and Cheese reception in the Lone Star Room, which quickly became our Hospitality Suite for the reunion duration. Sunday started with a Riverwalk barge tour—because no trip to San Antonio would be complete without it! After a trip to the Buckhorn Saloon and Museum, we ended our night celebrating Tom Ingram's birthday at Mi Tierra Mexican Café and Bakery. What a festive celebration!

Monday's trip to the National Museum of the Pacific War and Nimitz Museum held a special treat for our visitors. Everett Davis and Barbara Moneyman had arranged for Richard E. Cole (102 yrs old), the last surviving Doolittle Raider, to join us for some pictures and conversation. As he was walking in, Dick said to Barbara, "I'm ready to hear some real war stories!" We were delighted that Ambassador Sichan Siv joined us for the day.

Tuesday was reserved for the visit to Ft. Sam Houston, where the group visited the museum and enjoyed lunch with the troops. This time, it was Tom Burgess's birthday! That evening, we were guests of VFW Post

76, the oldest VFW Post in Texas, where we enjoyed Rudy's BBQ and the band Blackjack. Many of the veterans enjoyed dancing, but the "Dancing with the Stars" mirror ball unanimously goes to David Bailey for his fabulous dance moves!

The rainy skies on Wednesday morning did not dampen the enthusiasm of our crowd to lay a wreath at the Battle of the Bulge Monument at Veterans Memorial Park. Two TV stations covered the event and interviewed seven of our veterans. We continued on a whirlwind tour of San Antonio, stopping at the Mission San Jose (where the veterans were greeted with the Bell Tower playing patriot music), the Cathedral and, of course, ending at the Alamo.

In the afternoon, we conducted our annual general membership meeting, where we voted on important issues such as the amended BOBA bylaws, plus the BOBA Board Elected Officers and Board Member positions for 2018. On Wednesday evening, our members and guests attended the formal banquet, where Ambassador Sichan Siv gave the heartfelt keynote address. The group adjourned after some more socializing, pledging to meet again next year in Colorado Springs, CO for our 2018 Annual Reunion.

REUNION DONORS

We can't thank enough the 2 very generous donors who made it possible for all WWII veterans to attend our reunion events for free:

Dr. Ed Moore	Member
SC Military History Club	Donor

The following members and supporters also made financial donations to the Reunion:

Bailey, James	106 INF 422 INF 3 BN CO F
Black, Tana	Member
Burgess, Thomas	87 INF 345 REG 1 BN CO A
Eiserloh, Harold	44 INF 71 INF 2 BN CO G
Faller, Michael	Guest
Gordon, Fred	9 ARMDD 3 ARMD FABN CO C
McHale, Robert	Guest
Morfee, Alfred C	1 INF 16 REG 3 BN CO L
Rucker, Gloria	Member
Stitzinger, Jack	87 INF 346 REG 2 BN CO H



Left-right, from top: Wreathlaying ceremony; Bulge items on display in the hospitality room; Richard E. Cole of the Doolittle Raiders; the whole group at Ft. Sam Houston; the hospitality room set up for socializing; our veterans enjoyed lunch with the troops at Ft. Sam Houston.

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to those who joined between June 25-September 30, 2017:

George Bjorling	9 InfD	Judy K Park-McKee	Member
Michael Courtney	Member	Michael Patton	Member
Christopher Edmonds	Member	Sara Rohar	Member
Pierre Franck	Member	Dennis Schueller	Member
Luke Gasparre	87 InfD	Nancy Schueller	Member
Robert Jolliff	Member	Henry Stone	Member
Robert Kauffman II	Member	Lawrence P. Titzler	78 InfD
Steve Kendall	Member	David Vicknair	Member
Ayn Maddox	Member	Michael Wallace	Member
Beth C. Maxey	Member	Patricia Wright	Member

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

- Talking to people about BOBA and suggesting that they also join
- Promoting our website: www.battleofthebulge.org
- Sending us articles to be included in *The Bulge Bugle*
- Plan to attend our December Event (See p. 10 -12 for details.)

REVISED!
Earlier
registration
deadline:
Nov 28, 2017

THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE ASSOCIATION, INC.
Invites You to Join Your Friends for the
“EVENTS OF REMEMBRANCE AND COMMEMORATION”
OF THE 73rd ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE
December 13, 14, and 15, 2017 Metropolitan Washington, DC

We have been invited to a co-hosted reception by the Belgium Ambassador Dirk Wouters and Luxembourg Ambassador, Ms. Sylvie Lucas, at the Luxembourg Embassy, on Wednesday, December 13, from 6:30 - 8:30 PM. See below for the schedule.

December 16 is Saturday and this happens to be the same day as the Wreaths Across America (WAA) Day. Since this event started in 1992, it has never occurred on December 16. Because no vehicles will be permitted in Arlington National Cemetery on December 16, we will be holding our wreath laying ceremonies on Friday, December 15.

The DoubleTree Hotel Crystal City by Hilton, 300 Army-Navy Drive, in Arlington VA 22202 has been selected again for this event. We have been able to secure a rate of \$119/night for Wed/Thurs/Fri. The rates for Mon/Tues are \$139/night and for Sat/Sun are \$99/night. Parking is \$12 a night for Monday through Sunday (It is usually \$30/night). **Please make your reservations early to secure a room.** Please mention the **Battle of the Bulge** to obtain the special rate. If you need a handicap accessible room, please request this early. To make a Reservation: call **800-Hiltons (800-445-8667)** or 703-416-4100 by **December 1, 2017**. Check-in time is 4:00 PM. Any guest checking in after 12 noon will be able to do so for no additional charge, based on the availability of rooms.

This year, we will offer a tour of the Pentagon (<https://pentagontours.osd.mil/Tours/>). This is the headquarters of the Department of Defense, the Pentagon and is one of the world's largest office buildings. Built in just 16 months, the Pentagon is the world's largest low-rise office building. It is twice the size of the Merchandise Mart in Chicago, has more than twice the floor space of the Empire State Building, and the U.S. Capitol could fit into any one of its five wedge-shaped sections. The tour will accommodate wheelchairs and powered scooters. (See "Pentagon Tour Important Information" for more on page 12.)

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2017

2:00 - 5:30 PM **Registration & Hospitality Room open - Lincoln Hall Ballroom** - Pick up Registration Packets with name badges, Banquet/bus tickets. Sign Attendance Books
2:00 - 11:00 PM Hospitality Room/Exhibits, Books, scrapbooks, memorabilia, snacks & beverages open every day
3:30 - 4:30 PM Our traditional **Tree Trimming** "Salute to Bulge Veterans." If you are a Bulge Veteran and haven't submitted a picture of yourself to add to the Christmas tree, please contact Doris Davis (see below for contact info.)
5:30 PM Depart for the **Luxembourg Embassy Reception** from 6:30-8:30 PM. Return to hotel around 9:30 PM.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2017

8:45 AM Depart for a tour of the **Pentagon**
11:30 - 11:45 AM Bus pick-up from the Pentagon and travels to Pentagon City (Fashion Centre)
12:00 N Arrive at Fashion Centre to have lunch (on your own). Many options of restaurants and places to shop.
2:30 PM Depart for DoubleTree Hotel to rest or visit in the Hospitality Room (Should you wish to stay at Fashion Centre longer, the hotel shuttle will do a 'pick-up' at 3:30 PM and 4:30 PM).
6:00 PM Hospitality room closes at 6:00 PM for Banquet
6:00 – 10:00 PM BANQUET AT THE DOUBLETREE HILTON HOTEL, COMMONWEALTH ROOM, (Lower Lobby, South Tower). A limited number of parking passes are available for banquet only attendees.
10:00 PM Hospitality Room re-opens after the banquet

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2017

8:45 AM-12:30 PM Bus departs promptly at 9:00 AM for wreath layings at **World War II Memorial, VBOB Memorial, and Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington Cemetery**
12:30 PM Return to DoubleTree Hotel for annual **BOBA Luncheon** in the Capital View Room of Washington
1:00 PM **Lunch 14th Floor North Tower** of hot soup and sandwich, beverage and dessert. Please indicate on Registration form if you have any dietary restrictions of if you prefer vegetarian. We will have the **Swearing-in** of the new National Battle of the Bulge Association officers for **2018**.
2:00 - 6:00 PM Hospitality Room open

Depart or stay an extra day and take part in the Wreaths Across America Day and lay wreaths on all gravesites at Arlington Cemetery. Contact Doris Davis for details. Email address: doris@battleofthebulge.org; Phone: (650) 654-0101

Notes:

- ❑ **Free Airport shuttle provided by the DoubleTree Hotel every half hour, 3 miles from Reagan Washington National Airport.**
- ❑ **Free shuttle from the Hotel every hour on the half hour to the METRO: Pentagon City (Blue/Yellow Line) and to Pentagon City Mall.**
- ❑ **Early departure: If your reservation plans change, please advise hotel at or before check-in of any change in your reserved planned length of stay to avoid an early departure fee (currently \$75.00) for checking out before your agreed upon reserved length. Any special circumstances of Early Departure Waivers will be on a case-by-case basis and depending on the severity of the situation.**

REVISED!
Earlier
registration
deadline:
Nov 28, 2017

RESERVATION FORM

“REMEMBRANCE AND COMMEMORATION”

OF THE 73rd ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

December 13, 14, and 15, 2017 Metropolitan Washington, DC

Return form and check by **NOVEMBER 28, 2017** to:

Battle of the Bulge Association, Inc.
PO Box 27430
Philadelphia PA 19118-0430

Questions:

Doris Davis, Chairperson
doris@battleofthebulge.org

or Tracey Diehl
tracey@battleofthebulge.org
703-528-4058

Name: _____ Telephone: _____ Cell: _____

Name of Spouse/Guests: _____ ; _____ ; _____

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

Battle of Bulge Unit you (or family member) served with: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

Vets: do you have a WWII picture to send us? (If you haven't sent it before?)

RESERVATIONS:

	<u>Number Attending</u>	<u>Cost/Person</u>	<u>Total</u>
Registration Fee: Provides for Badges, Programs, Hospitality, Toasts, etc _____	X	\$40.00	\$ _____

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2017

3:30 PM Tree Trimming Lincoln Hall, North Tower _____	X	FREE	
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5:30 PM Bus to Luxembourg Embassy Reception _____	X	\$25.00	\$ _____
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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2017:

8:45 AM Bus to Pentagon* and Fashion Centre _____	X	\$30.00	\$ _____
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Commemorative Banquet: DoubleTree Hotel Commonwealth Room _____	X	\$60.00	\$ _____
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6:00 PM - 10:00 PM Please make your Main Course selection(s):

- ☐ **Salmon** (Names) _____
- ☐ **Chicken Piccata** (Names) _____
- ☐ **Diabetic Meal** (Names) _____

Seating is open except for Head Tables. Plan ahead with your friends to be seated at the same table. Tables are Rounds of 8.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2017:

9:00 AM Departure - Bus for Wreath Laying ceremonies: WWII Memorial, _____	X	\$25.00	\$ _____
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VBOB Memorial and the Tomb of the Unknowns

9:30 – 12:00 Noon Wreath Laying Ceremonies _____			
--	--	--	--

1:00 PM BOBA Luncheon at DoubleTree Hotel _____	X	\$30.00	\$ _____
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(Lunch will include soup and a choice of Turkey or Chicken Sandwiches and desert. If a diabetic or vegetarian meal is preferred, please indicate.) ☐ Diabetic (Name) _____ ☐ Vegetarian (Name) _____

(Enclose check made out to Battle of the Bulge Association, Inc.) **GRAND TOTAL** \$ _____

NOTE: You can register online at: battleofthebulge.org, click on “December Bulge Commemoration DC.”

Permission granted for Hotel to notify Battle of the Bulge Association, Inc. that room reservation has been made.

Signature: _____

NOTES & REMINDERS: Banquet Dress: Business suit/black tie optional (miniature medals encouraged) or military dress uniform
Room reservations must be made for the DoubleTree Crystal City directly, by **December 1, 2017** Telephone 800-Hiltons (800-445-8667).
Return completed Reservation Form for events to Battle of the Bulge Association no later than **November 28 2017**.

No cancellation refunds after November 28, 2017.

Hotel Reservations based on availability. Please do not delay.

Please indicate the number (& names if asked) attending so that we can be advised of the proper number to plan. Thanks!

Please Bring a Picture Id (Drivers License, Passport, or Mil ID

***See next page for specific Pentagon Tour ID requirements.**

PENTAGON TOUR IMPORTANT INFORMATION

At least one form of proper identification, which must be current and contains a photograph, is required for visitors age 18 and older to enter the Pentagon. **A valid form of identification that must be presented at the tour includes:**

U.S. Passport

U.S. Passport Card

Driver's license or identification card issued by a State or outlying possession of the United States, provided it contains a photograph and meets the REAL ID standards, has an extension or contains the notation "ENHANCED DRIVER'S LICENSE"

Identification card issued by Federal, State, or local government agencies, provided it contains a photograph

U.S. Government PIV Card (CAC for DoD Personnel)

DoD Affiliated Identification Cards (Retirees, Dependents, and Inactive Reservists)

Native American Tribal Document

U.S. Border Crossing Card

Permanent Resident Card or Alien Registration Receipt Card (INS Form I-551 or I-551)

Foreign passport with a temporary (I-551) stamp or temporary (I-551) printed notation on a machine-readable immigrant visa

Foreign passport

The following driver's license are NOT ACCEPTABLE forms of ID: Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri, New Mexico, and

Washington, unless the driver's license contains "ENHANCED DRIVER'S LICENSE."

NOTE: Visitors 17 years of age and under require no identification when accompanied by an adult with a DoD Building Pass or one of the above forms of identification.

TOUR LENGTH & DIFFICULTY

The Pentagon Tour is approximately 60 minutes in duration with a walking distance of about one and a half miles through the Pentagon corridors and staircases. Visitors taking part in a Pentagon tour should wear comfortable clothing and shoes. For any additional information, please call (703) 697-1776.

VISITORS WITH DISABILITIES

Ramp access is available for the physically challenged. Tour visitors in wheelchairs must be accompanied by someone who will assist them. A signer will be added to tours to assist hearing impaired visitors provided that two weeks' notice is given. Special tours for visually impaired visitors can also be arranged with two weeks' notice.

RECORDING DEVICES

No photographs may be taken. No video cameras, tape recorders, or any other kind of electronic recording device is permitted at any time.

SECURITY BRIEFING

A security briefing is provided prior to the beginning of every tour, and all visitors must pass through a security scanning device similar to those found at airport security checkpoints.

PENTAGON TOUR ADVANCE INFO REQUIRED: If you'd like to go on the Pentagon Tour, we **MUST** receive your registration form by **NOVEMBER 28, 2017**, including this form for all persons you are registering for the Pentagon Tour (make copies as needed for additional people.) **Please fill out, and mail to address below with registration form on previous page.** You may instead call in this information to Tracey at the BOBA office: **703-528-4058. DO NOT EMAIL** this information, as it puts you at risk for identity theft.

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Middle Name (preferred but not required) _____

DOB _____

SSN _____

Current Residence: City & State _____

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Middle Name (preferred but not required) _____

DOB _____

SSN _____

Current Residence: City & State _____

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Middle Name (preferred but not required) _____

DOB _____

SSN _____

Current Residence: City & State _____

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Middle Name (preferred but not required) _____

DOB _____

SSN _____

Current Residence: City & State _____

MAIL FORM TO: Battle of the Bulge Association, Inc.; PO Box 27430; Philadelphia PA, 19118-0430 OR CALL IN: 703-528-4058

BULGE ARTIFACT TO BE FEATURED IN THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY



The “Cobra King” Sherman tank being put into position at the future site of the National Museum of the United States Army.

The M4A3E2 Sherman “Jumbo” Tank that helped liberate occupied France during World War II has found a new home at the campus of the National Museum of the United States Army (NMUSA) now under construction at Fort Belvoir, Va.

The Sherman tank, nicknamed “Cobra King” by her first crew, was the second of four macro artifacts to be pre-positioned early in the construction process on reinforced concrete slabs in their permanent display locations.

Once hoisted from flatbeds by crane into their positions, the macros were wrapped and sealed in protective containers to protect them from the elements until the Museum’s construction is complete.

“Cobra King” was a variant of the venerable M4 Sherman medium tank and given the designation M4A3E2. It had an additional 1.5 inches of armor mounted on the front of the hull and turret, as well as on the side, to make it more of a match for the heavier German tanks. While most M4A3E2s remained armed with the standard 75mm main gun found on earlier Sherman models, “Cobra King” later mounted a more powerful 76mm gun. Only 254 M4A3E2 variants were built, less than one percent of total Sherman production.

Matthew Seelinger, Army Historical Foundation Chief Historian, pointed out that “Cobra King” led the 4th Armored Division column that broke through German lines ringing the Belgian town of Bastogne, a critical road junction held by the 101st Airborne Division and elements of other divisions. “‘Cobra King’ was part of the 37th Tank Battalion that was led by then-Lieutenant Colonel Creighton W. Abrams, a future Army Chief of Staff. The breakthrough opened the way for Allied forces to begin the counteroffensive that ended the Battle of the Bulge,” Seelinger noted.

After World War II, the damaged “Cobra King” remained in Germany where it was on display at McKee Barracks in Crailsheim. It was “rediscovered” in 2004, after which it was finally brought back to the U.S. for restoration.

The Sherman will be exhibited in the Museum’s Global War Gallery. The three remaining macros that were pre-positioned—a M3 Bradley Fighting Vehicle, a World War II LCPV “Higgins Boat,” and a World War I Renault FT-17 Tank—will be featured in the Changing World, Global War, and Nation Overseas galleries, respectively.

According to Seelinger, the 28-ton Bradley not only led the charge to

Baghdad in 2003 but helped gain control of several key positions including Baghdad International Airport before advancing into the city.

The historical significance of the Higgins Boat and Renault FT-17 Tank are equally impressive and destined to immerse visitors of all ages in the Army’s history and heritage when the Museum opens its doors in 2019.

“The pre-positioning of these four macros while construction is still occurring is impressive and marks another significant milestone toward completion of the Museum project,” said General Gordon R. Sullivan, Army Historical Foundation Chairman heading the \$200 million capital campaign to construct the Museum.

Sullivan noted that there will be other, equally historically significant macro artifacts displayed throughout the Museum, but only these four required pre-positioning before building the Museum’s walls around them because of their size.

For more information on the National Museum of the United States Army, go to: armyhistory.org or call: (800) 506-2672.

TOURS

75th Anniversary of WWII in Europe:

The 75th Anniversary Years of World War II in Europe have arrived. 2018 will be the 75th Anniversary of 1943, when US forces first went into combat in Europe. This began the steady march of events towards America’s greatest ever land battle, the Battle of the Bulge and the final victory in Europe. December 2019 will be the 75th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge.



We hope to plan a commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium and Luxembourg. BOBA will enlist the services of an experienced military tour company, who will organize and operate the tour, using our input to create the best experience for our Veterans and members and other persons interested in the Bulge.

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

Details will be posted in *The Bulge Bugle* and on the website when we have them. Contact information will be provided with the details. The tour dates will include December 16, 2019.



SC CHAPTER (7) QUARTERLY MEETING

The South Carolina Chapter of BOBA held its quarterly meeting September 9 at Fort Jackson, Columbia, SC. Eleven veterans were present, pictured below, along with our guest speaker, James Scott, author of *Target Tokyo*. Mr. Scott gave an excellent presentation based on this book about the Doolittle Raid, its impact on Japan, and the

consequences following the raid, particularly in China. Seated, left to right: Joe Watson, David Hubbard, Leif Maseng, Tom Farrington, Jim Hubble, and Walter Hedges. Standing, left to right: Chris Carawan, Gerald White, Arthur Bonus, Tom Burgess, Vernon Brantley, and guest speaker James Scott. —Submitted by Rick Hurst, SC Chapter President



SE FL CHAPTER (62) INVITES YOU TO THEIR ANNUAL BULGE COMMEMORATION

Later this year, on Sunday December 17th, the Battle of the Bulge Association Chapter 62 will celebrate the 73rd Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge at the Airport Hilton Hotel in West Palm Beach. George Fisher, Chapter President and Founder, announced that the group was both pleased and honored that Director Donna Katen Bahensky of the VA Hospital has accepted their invitation to be the Guest Speaker. In addition, Governor Scott will dispatch either Lt Col Glenn Sutphin Executive Director of the Dept of Veteran Affairs) or Lt Col Steven Murray (Communications Director) to read and present a proclamation from Tallahassee designating Dec 16th as "Battle of the Bulge Day"

in the state of Florida. As in the past, an open invitation is extended to all returning veterans (from Iraq, Afghanistan or any war), along with their families. They will be introduced and receive a standing ovation. The Chapter also welcomes any members of the following prestigious organizations to attend: Military Order of the Purple Heart, Navy League Palm Beach Council, Combat Infantry Association, Jewish War Veterans and members of the Korean and Vietnam Chapters. As in the past, George expects about 200 to attend this memorable event.

For more information about this event, contact George Fisher: 561-585-7086; georgef:bob@aol.com

MD/DC CHAPTER (3) PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by John R. Schaffner, 106th Infantry Division

Reprinted from Sep/Oct 2017 issue of "The Marcher," the newsletter of Chapter 3, edited by John D. Bowen. We thought that this message would be very relevant to all our members, especially regarding meetings and reunions:

As I write this today, just after the 16th anniversary of 9/11, a lot goes through my mind. As Yogi Berra might say, "It is de ja vu, all over again." It is not so much the anniversary of the attack on the 11th day of September 2001 that dominates my thoughts. It is what has happened here with the loss of two of our revered members of Chapter 3, and several others of our veterans who no longer attend our bi-monthly meetings. Both Mike Levin and Doug Dillard may have left us but their spirits live on. They were regular attendees and we will miss them. Our ranks are thinning. What can we do to keep the chapter

alive and well? If you are reading this and are one who does not attend the meetings, it is to you that I extend the invitation.

If you are one who does attend the meetings, and you enjoy the camaraderie, then why not bring a friend? The lunch is good, the company is good, we have entertainment, what else can you ask for? I think that it is important to keep alive the heritage of those who were involved with the largest land battle ever engaged in during any war.

I was privileged to be entertaining Patrik Dahlberg, a friend from Sweden, recently. While being a world traveler, Pat had not visited this area. I had not visited many of the important historical sights here lately myself, so what better time to do it! One whole day was spent at Antietam with our own chapter members Frank Armiger and Bob Mullauer. We could not have had better guides. Both

of these gentlemen are well-versed on a very wide range of military history. Our Civil War is a specialty for them.

During our trek around the battlefield, Frank covered the movements of the Confederates and Bob took on the Union forces. Pat and I ended the day with a history lesson that enabled us to understand what can happen when two ideologies become so incensed with each other that the only settlement is by force.

The lesson to be learned is to come to a peaceable agreement, or else risk destroying what you have already in hand. One needs only to study history. Unfortunately, history seems to prove that wars are inevitable between countries and even down to some neighborhoods (on a smaller scale).

See you Oct 8th at Basta Pasta when Bob will once again present us with another history lesson. Bring a friend.

GATEWAY CHAPTER (25) NEWS

Here's just a couple of their recent activities:

- This year Gateway Chapter members participated in the "America's Birthday Parade" in downtown St. Louis on July 1, which was attended in person by tens of thousands and viewed on TV by millions more around the country. Then on July, 4 we again took part in the Webster Groves parade, which usually is attended by several thousand spectators. Thanks to Rod Stout again for providing the half-track at each of these events (*see photo, right*).

- The Gateway Chapter will have their annual Christmas luncheon on Saturday, December 16, 2017, at Royale Orleans. The festivities will begin shortly after the Memorial Service, which will be held indoors at Royale Orleans and will start at 10 am. The speaker this year will be Dr. Lynnea Magnuson, Director of Soldiers Memorial in downtown St. Louis. Contact Dave Schroeder (314) 961-7470 or Pat Mohrmann (314) 645-1239 for more information.

—Submitted by Don Korte,
Gateway Chapter newsletter editor



Gateway Chapter members rode in the Webster's Grove, IL 2017 4th of July parade.

WE NEED YOUR CHAPTER NEWS!

Send to: tracey@battleofthebulge.org. NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE: JANUARY 5, 2018

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!

Please encourage your chapter members to join the national BOBA organization.

NINETEEN FORTY FIVE

by John S. Hurst, PFC, 78th Division,
310th Regiment, Company F



Even though this is titled 1945, the story really begins in 1944. That was the year I turned eighteen and so I was required by the Selective Service System to register for service in the Armed Forces. This was done in January 1944 and my thought was that I would be drafted right away. But that did not happen, as the Draft Board sent me a deferment to finish high school. The angels stepped into my life, for I am sure that had I been drafted right away, I probably would have been on the beach in Normandy

or maybe even the South Pacific. Who knows?

Graduation came on May 25, 1944 and I was to report to Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia, a few days later for a pre-induction physical. The final result was that after some time back home to wind things up (what did I have to wind up?), I raised my right hand on July 18, 1944 and swore to uphold the Constitution of the United States and became a member of the "Queen of Battle," the infantry of the U.S. Army.

From Fort Oglethorpe we were sent to Camp Blanding, Florida, for seventeen weeks of basic training. This went well and when it was over my weight had gone from 195 lbs. to 175 lbs. and I was in good condition.

Camp Blanding was terribly hot in those months of 1944 and so we presumed that we were headed for the South Pacific. But no, the Army had need of us in Europe, where the Germans had broken through the Allied lines in December and created what became known as "The Bulge," a situation in which many men on both sides paid the final price of war. After a ten-day delay-en-route home, I reported to Fort George Meade, Maryland, on December 10, 1944, then on to Fort Dix, New Jersey, the port of embarkation.

January 1, 1945 a shipload of G.I.'s on the unescorted Queen Mary said our goodbyes to the Statue of Liberty. We sailed the North Atlantic route on a zigzag course to confuse the German submarine commanders. About midway of the five day trip there was a submarine scare, but it turned out to be a false alarm. There were some very tense moments when we thought the life preservers would be put to use. The angels stepped in again.

We landed in Prestwick, Scotland, the homeport of the Queen Mary, and were put on trains bound for Southampton, England. The Scottish and English countryside are really beautiful, even from the window of a troop train. At Southampton we embarked on Landing Craft Infantry Navy vessels to take us across the English Channel. LeHavre, France, was our destination and it can be said for sure that the channel is one of the choppiest bodies of water on this planet. But, if you are packed in like sardines as we were an overnight trip is not too bad.

LaHavre was victim of Allied bombing and destruction was thorough, at least the harbor area. Again, we boarded a troop train, this time bound for Aachen, Germany. Along the way our train was hit from the rear by another train and our last three cars were badly damaged. No one was seriously hurt though, and after several hours we were underway again. Once again the angels took over.

Aachen was devastated by infantry assaults and bombings. There were only a few large buildings left with roofs but it was here that we were picked up by personnel from our division. I don't know how many divisions were represented but it had to be several. Anyway a group of us got into G.I. trucks headed for our final destination, the 78th Division. On the way to our destination, there was a collision that affected the first three trucks in our convoy. I was in truck #3. One soldier in my truck was hurt when his rifle barrel he had been leaning on went into the roof of his mouth. Other than this man, no one was too seriously injured and we were on the road again soon. We have kept the angels busy, haven't we? Finally, somewhere around mid-January, I reported to the executive officer of Company F, 310th Regiment, 78th Division.

At the time I joined Company F, things were relatively quiet. We were actually at the tail end of The Bulge. That is not to say there was no action. There were reconnaissance patrols and artillery duels all the time day and night, but only sniper activity as far as small arms fire is concerned. Another job was replenishing ammunition, mostly mortar shells. These were packed in what was called a cloverleaf, from the way it looked from the end. I don't remember how many shells were in a cloverleaf, but probably six, and it would weigh maybe 50 lbs. They were much heavier because of the deep snow we had to fight. One day I was trying to deliver some of these to our supply point and as I passed beside a wall, sniper bullets hit the wall over my head. Angels?

Another misery we had to endure was the buzz bombs. These were conceived by some diabolical German and they consisted of a winged bomb with a small engine on top that would just suddenly cut off causing the bomb to fall at no particular target. That's what made them so devilish. You could hear them coming (sounding much like a Model T Ford) and you never knew where they would fall. Our worst enemy was the weather. The snow was very deep and the temperature was below zero by quite a bit. At one point I heard that it was minus 20 degrees F.

It's impossible to describe the miserable conditions during these times. Once we started to move around the first of February, it was only worse because supply lines lengthened and we had little to eat at times and our clothing just could not keep us warm. Foxholes were relatively warm because the wind did not hit you square in the face. Sure, you could work up a real sweat climbing the hills and fighting the snow and cold, but you paid for it when you rested. We just could not get warm and stay warm. Death, injury and destruction were everywhere; people wounded or killed. Just a terrible scene to witness. I'll never forget it.

To compound everything else, we were all essentially boys in a foreign country and even though you have comrades, you are alone. What kept us going was the hope that all of this would be over soon and we could go home and be ourselves again, instead of being soldiers inflicting pain and suffering on others. I know that enemy soldiers must have shared these same thoughts. They didn't want to be there either, and some of them looked even younger than we did.

By this time, late February, the big push across Germany had begun in earnest, but I was not to be a part of it. I had become feverish and sick, and my hands and feet were beyond feeling. The medics sent me to the Aid Station where they diagnosed frostbite and pneumonia. Subsequently, I was evacuated to the Field Hospital in Liege, Belgium. After about a week we were flown to London, England, but on the way we ran into a hailstorm and had to put down in a town named Margate, England. C-47's can't stand this kind of weather and the pilot considered the fact that we were all litter patients. Therefore, we put down. The civilian hospital where we stayed a couple of days was a quaint place and the people were so nice. More angels?

We were moved via ambulance to an Army General Hospital outside

London where I stayed until about mid-March. The Army doctors decided I was to be sent back to the United States and so, strapped to litters again, we were put on a C-54 cargo plane and flown by way of Iceland to New York. Once again the angels interceded, because we had to make two passes at the airport in Iceland, and on the final approach, we kicked up a little snow with our left wing! From Iceland it was a piece of cake to Halifax, Nova Scotia, where one of the most beautiful sights I've ever seen was two rows of blue lights on the runway there.

We refueled and then on to New York where the telephone company let us call home from the hospital free of charge. Next day we headed for Greensboro, North Carolina, and the Camp Butner Convalescent Hospital from which I was discharged on August 10, 1945. It was during this hospital stay that I was given a 30-day furlough from May 10 to June 10. On this furlough I met my life partner, Nena, on May 18, 1945. We

became engaged May 28, 1946, and we married August 26, that same year. See what I mean about angels?

John S. Hurst

February 6, 1996

Postscript: Dad never spoke about his time in service when my siblings and I were growing up. When I was about ten, not knowing any better, I asked him, "Dad, did you ever shoot anybody?" He paused a few seconds and said, "I don't know," which is probably the best answer he could have given. I can still remember the look on his face. As an adult, I asked him to write down his story for the sake of his grandchildren. The above story, dictated to our Mom who typed it, was the result. PFC John S. Hurst passed away October 5, 1997.

—Submitted by Rick Hurst, Member, proud son of our Dad,
a member of the Greatest Generation.

BOBA MEMBER FRANCIS CHESKO HONORED

On September 17th, 2017 in Gettysburg, PA., Sgt Francis Chesko, Battle of the Bulge Veteran, was honored by the members of Charlie Troop 1st Squadron 9th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division (AM) Vietnam 1965-1971. Francis was the honored guest of Patrick and Carol Bieneman, BOBA Member.

Colonel Ed Gruetzenmacher, Retired, presented Francis with a Certificate that read:

Francis entered the Army in February 1943. After his advanced training, he was shipped off to England. From England, Francis landed on Utah Beach on June 7, 1944 as part of the 148th Combat Engineer Battalion. On July 19, 1944, Francis was wounded and returned to England to mend.

Returning to the war, Francis was assigned to the 7th Armored Division in Holland. Here Francis narrowly missed being wounded again when an 88mm mortar shell landed above his bunker but did not detonate.

Francis's unit was dug in at the town of St. Vith, Belgium when the Battle of the Bulge broke out. The Germans attacked on December 17, 1944. His division was told to hold its position for three days, They held it for five. Francis said for Christmas Eve all his unit had to eat was snow.

After the Battle of the Bulge, Francis's unit helped build the longest bridge of the war. It totaled 1,300 feet over the Rhine River.

As Francis and his unit pushed into Germany, they helped liberate 1,200 American Prisoners.

During the war, Francis was not the only Chesko to serve. Three of his brothers served as well. They were all were wounded but all came home.

God Bless Francis Chesko, One of our "True American Heroes."

Carol Bieneman then presented to Francis a Hummel Figurine, "The Soldier Boy," with a brass plate that reads:

*Sgt Francis Chesko, A Proud Member of the Greatest Generation
and a Proud WWII Veteran*

Charlie Troop 1/9th Cavalry

Thanks you for Our Freedoms

At this time, Col Gruetzenmacher called all Charlie Troopers to attention and gave the orders to "Present Arms" and "Order Arms."

On the 18th of September, Sgt Chesko accompanied Charlie Troop to Washington DC. There we placed a wreath and Cavalry yellow roses at the Vietnam Memorial Wall for 117 Troopers. We then viewed the



Francis Chesko (center, white hat) at the WWII Memorial ceremony.

Korean Memorial, prior to going to Union Station for lunch.

After lunch, we returned to the WWII Memorial. Led by Boy Scouts, we proceeded to the Pacific side, Battle of the Bulge location. Behind the Boy Scouts were Troopers carrying a red, white and blue spray with a ribbon emblazoned with "The Greatest Generation." Colonel R. Gene Smith (Retired) read the following:

We are here today to honor the Men and Women of the United States Armed Forces who served during WWII, the men and women who are called the 'Greatest Generation'. We are honored to have with us today, Sgt Francis Chesko, one of the Greatest Generation.

God Bless Francis Chesko, one of our "True American Heroes."

In your honor, Francis, we place this spray as a memento of our appreciation for the sacrifices that you—and all other members of the Armed Forces—gave, in order to secure our freedoms.

Then Colonel Smith called all Troopers to attention, and gave the orders "Present Arms" and "Order Arms."

Sgt Chesko was presented a certificate and coin from the Boy Scouts of Troop 128 Smith Station, Alabama, who are our "Little Brothers." Jack McKibben presented Sgt Chesko with a patch from his Regional Boy Scout Council. Everyone came up to shake Francis's hand, and his picture was taken with many Troopers, guests and bystanders.

—Submitted by Patrick Bieneman



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Thank you to the following members and donors who made contributions between June 25-September 30, 2017:

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HISTORY OF VETERANS DAY



Veterans Day is an official United States public holiday, observed annually on November 11, that honors military veterans; that is, persons who served in the United States Armed Forces. It coincides with other holidays, including Armistice Day and Remembrance

Day, celebrated in other countries that mark the anniversary of the end of World War I; major hostilities of World War I were formally ended at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918, when the Armistice with Germany went into effect. The United States previously observed Armistice Day. The U.S. holiday was renamed Veterans Day in 1954.

Veterans Day is not to be confused with Memorial Day, a U.S. public holiday in May; Veterans Day celebrates the service of all U.S. military veterans, while Memorial Day honors those who died while in military service. It is also not to be confused with Armed Forces Day, a minor U.S. remembrance that also occurs in May, which specifically honors those currently serving in the U.S. military.

The United States Congress adopted a resolution on June 4, 1926, requesting that President Calvin Coolidge issue annual proclamations calling for the observance of November 11 with appropriate ceremonies. A Congressional Act (52 Stat. 351; 5 U.S. Code, Sec. 87a) approved May 13, 1938, made the 11th of November in each year a legal holiday: "a day to be dedicated to the cause of world peace and to be thereafter celebrated and known as 'Armistice Day'."

In 1945, World War II veteran Raymond Weeks from Birmingham, Alabama, had the idea to expand Armistice Day to celebrate all veterans, not just those who died in World War I. Weeks led a delegation to Gen. Dwight Eisenhower, who supported the idea of National Veterans Day. Weeks led the first national celebration in 1947 in Alabama and annually until his death in 1985. President Reagan honored Weeks at the White House with the Presidential Citizenship Medal in 1982 as the driving force for the national holiday. Elizabeth Dole, who prepared the briefing for President Reagan, determined Weeks as the "Father of Veterans Day."

U.S. Representative Ed Rees from Emporia, Kansas, presented a bill establishing the holiday through Congress. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, also from Kansas, signed the bill into law on May 26, 1954. It had been eight and a half years since Weeks held his first Armistice Day celebration for all veterans.

Congress amended the bill on June 1, 1954, replacing "Armistice" with "Veterans," and it has been known as Veterans Day since.

The National Veterans Award was also created in 1954. Congressman Rees of Kansas received the first National Veterans Award in Birmingham, Alabama, for his support offering legislation to make Veterans Day a federal holiday.

Although originally scheduled for celebration on November 11 of every year, starting in 1971 in accordance with the Uniform Monday Holiday Act, Veterans Day was moved to the fourth Monday of October (Oct 25, 1971; Oct 23, 1972; Oct 22, 1973; Oct 28, 1974; Oct 27, 1975; Oct 25, 1976 and Oct 24, 1977). In 1978, it was moved back to its original celebration on November 11. While the legal holiday remains on November 11, if that date happens to be on a Saturday or Sunday, then organizations that formally observe the holiday will normally be closed on the adjacent Friday or Monday, respectively.

Because it is a federal holiday, some American workers and many students have Veterans Day off from work or school. When Veterans Day falls on a Saturday then either Saturday or the preceding Friday may be designated as the holiday, whereas if it falls on a Sunday it is typically observed on the following Monday. A Society for Human Resource Management poll in 2010 found that 21 percent of employers planned to observe the holiday in 2011.

Non-essential federal government offices are closed. No mail is delivered. All federal workers are paid for the holiday; those who are required to work on the holiday sometimes receive holiday pay for that day in addition to their wages.

In his Armistice Day address to Congress, Wilson was sensitive to the psychological toll of the lean War years: "Hunger does not breed reform; it breeds madness," he remarked. As Veterans Day and the birthday of the United States Marine Corps (November 10, 1775) are only one day apart, that branch of the Armed Forces customarily observes both occasions as a 96-hour liberty period.

Several commentators have noted that Election Day is a regular working day, while Veterans Day, which typically falls the following week, is a federal holiday. Some people have called for the holidays to be merged, so citizens can have a day off to vote. They state this as a way to honor voting by exercising democratic rights. —Source: Wikipedia

JAMES BINDER, 661st TANK DESTROYER BATTALION



James Binder was inducted into the US Army from Walnutport, PA on April 17th, 1943 at 18. His four brothers, and even his sister-in-law, also served in the military during WWII, and all returned home safely.

James trained to be a combat medic and medical records clerk. He was attached to the 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion, part of the 69th Infantry Division, where he eventually rose to the rank of Staff Sergeant. Jim and his unit of aid men took care of 780 men while overseas.

He and over 5,000 other men boarded a ship for a long 23 day trip to Europe, avoiding German U boats all the way across the Atlantic. The 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion began its tour of duty in Le Havre, France. While in Le Havre, his battalion came across a pack of wild rabbits. Some of the men in his unit picked up one of the rabbits and placed it on their tank destroyer. It became their unit pet and stayed with the men across Europe and through all the combat. They even named the furry pet "Uncle Buck." (When the unit was to return back to the States, Uncle Buck was returned home, too—back to the fields of France.)

After two weeks of training on the coast of Normandy, the unit began a march of over 350 miles through rain and driving snow. After relieving the men of the 99th Infantry Division in the Battle of the Bulge, they continued on into the town of Bulligen, Belgium. His unit fought through the town of Bulligen, and advanced up to and through the Siegfried Line and into Germany, crossing the Rhine River on March 27th, 1945. They were one of the first units to cross the famous Remagen Bridge on that date.

The Battalion as a whole fought its most intense engagement on April 17th, 1945 in the city of Leipzig, well known for its resistance during the battles of the Napoleonic wars in the eighteenth century. They played a crucial role in the surrender of the City Hall, the railroad terminal and the Battle of the Nations Monument. This is where the unit was to see their last fighting of the war.

James and his unit also were recognized as the first Allied unit to meet up with the Russian 58th Guard of the Soviet Army at the Elbe River in Torgau, Germany on April 25th, 1945. This linkup commonly referred to as the day when "East meets West."

As of April 25th, 1945, the Battalion had taken 727 prisoners, destroyed or neutralized over 120 pieces of artillery, and numerous machine gun nests. By the time the war was over, the 661st had marched across the countries of Western Europe for over 1,200 miles.

Sgt. Binder's date of separation from active duty was officially on February 4th, 1946. He received an honorable discharge and was awarded the American Campaign medal, the World War II Victory medal, and the European African Middle eastern medal with 2 Bronze Stars.

His units, the 661st Tank Destroyer Battalion and the 69th Infantry Division still holds an annual reunion—this year held in Virginia Beach and attended by his daughter, Meta, BOBA Member. Jim Binder passed away June 8th, 2015 in Bethlehem, PA and is fondly remembered by all his friends in the BOBA Lehigh Valley Chapter.

—Submitted by Stephen Savage, Member

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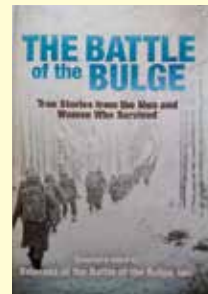
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A FORGOTTEN PASSWORD AND A FROZEN ARM



Robert E. Ornberg,
14th Cavalry Group,
Mechanized

My father, Robert Eric Ornberg, passed away on July 14, 2016 at the age of 92. He was in the 14th Cavalry Group, Mechanized. The 14th Cavalry consisted of two squadrons: the 18th and 32nd Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadrons. He was a radio operator and 50-caliber machine gunner assigned to an armored car in the Headquarters Troop. During the war, the 14th Cavalry was attached at different times to the: 2nd Infantry Division, 83rd Infantry Division, 106th Infantry Division, 7th Armored Division, XVIII Airborne Corp, 1st Infantry Division, 1st U.S. Army, and 3rd U.S. Army.

The 14th Cavalry embarked from New York on the ship Queen Elizabeth on August 28, 1944. The Queen Elizabeth, they were told, was "faster than the German submarines." They disembarked at Glasgow, Scotland and were then transported by train through the beautiful Scottish countryside and on to England, where they saw the bomb-shattered and rubble-strewn streets of the English cities; their first view of war-torn Europe. They stayed in Southampton, England.

They left from Weymouth, England to cross the English Channel on a landing ship tank (LST) with their armored cars and landed at Omaha Beach, Normandy, France on September 27, 1944, almost four months after D-Day. Everywhere on the beach there were signs of the heavy toll that had been paid to gain this foothold on the continent – hulls of ships, beached and sunken landing craft, blackened tanks and trucks, some half-submerged, and above the cliffs were cemeteries with thousands of small white crosses.

They drove on through the battered hedgerow country of Normandy to Paris and stayed there for a few days on the way to Verdun. At Verdun, The 14th Cavalry squadrons split up and the Headquarters Troop moved to Ettelbruck, Luxembourg for about a month. In Luxembourg, they were stationed as the Command Headquarters Troop and quartered in a beautiful Catholic convent. Bob said "the nuns were like mothers to us."

On December 12, 1944, they moved to Manderfeld, Belgium, a comparatively quiet sector guarding the Losheim Gap – the gateway to the Ardennes region of Belgium. Bob received some Christmas packages from family and friends back home. On December 16th, the Germans launched their Ardennes Offensive (Battle of the Bulge) with an explosive artillery and rocket barrage at 0630 hours. Bob recalled, "The morning of the Bulge I had been on radio duty for four hours and I remember sitting in this open armored car and I was so terribly cold. I was wearing every piece of clothing I could get on, waiting for radio messages. I

(continued on next page)

FORGOTTEN PASSWORD *(continued)*

remember looking out down the slope and there were German soldiers dressed in white, coming up the slope.” The Germans wore white parkas for camouflage in the heavy snow. “The next thing I remember is that I was replaced in the armored car and assigned to a 2 ½ ton radio truck with a 50-caliber machine gun turret. Then a Lieutenant came along and told me I had five minutes to get my duffel bag because we were leaving in a hurry.” Those Christmas presents got left behind in the rush. He found out later in the day that “the soldier they replaced me with on the recon car was killed when an 88 shell landed right next to the car and the shrapnel went through his side.”

In a letter to his parents, dated January 1st, 1945, Bob wrote “Two days after the Bulge started, the Jerries caught up with us. Well, they started shelling the town. I was put on a radio and Faris was put on the other. I didn’t like it much, shells were hitting the C.P. across the street, a German machine gun was rattling down the street. Most of the outfits around were taking off down the road to the next town and soon, to my consternation there was no one in sight. My communications chief and I went across the street behind the C.P. and officers and troops were dashing out of town, under fire, in anything that would move. I saw one jeep almost get hit, when a shell landed about five yards in front of it, the jeep jumped up in the air came down and kept on going.”

A few days later his troop was made into three platoons of infantry to fill in a gap. They spent three days and nights in foxholes. In his letter home he said he gained “an appreciation for the hardships they (the infantry) go through.” A shell landed nearby and some of the shrapnel from the bomb ripped through his jacket into his shoulder and seriously injured four other soldiers. The hole in his jacket was rather large, so he was sent to the back of the lines to an ambulance. It turned out that the wound was not as large as the hole in his jacket. The medic put sulfur in his wound and dressed it. He was then used to help carry wounded soldiers on stretchers to the ambulance. He received a purple heart for the injury.

Later, they ended up at a cross roads where they were told to do a rear-guard action to allow units to retreat through a town. Bob recalled that “Tim McCoy, a driver, and I were sent out to set up a position on a country road near a farmhouse in our armored car. One U.S. armored company had been caught in a little valley and almost wiped out. They had to abandon their vehicles and they were walking out. Our task was to meet them by this farmhouse and tell them to continue down the road, where trucks would be waiting for them to give them safe passage. When they came up the road from the valley, there was a sergeant leading them. They were walking wounded, some of them with bandages around their heads and eyes, being led by others.” There had been Germans masquerading as Americans in U.S. Army uniforms during the Battle of the Bulge. So, the sergeant pointed his carbine at Bob’s belly and said “You may be alright, but what’s the password?” Bob hadn’t been given the password that day. Tim didn’t know it either. The driver didn’t know it either. So, the sergeant said “who won the big game last night between Cleveland and New York?” Bob knew who won the game and even the final score, and lived to see another day.

Once, while in the 2 ½ ton radio truck they were told to abandon the truck. Jim Ferris, the Master Sergeant in charge of communications, and Bob all took the code machines out of the truck and destroyed them in a little building next to the truck. Bob was handing the code machines out of the truck down to them. He had to be careful because there was a German sniper about a block away in a building, looking out of a second-story window. Three code machines had fallen behind a cabinet in the truck. Bob recalled “I was up over the cabinet reaching down to get them and

my bayonet scabbard got stuck and I couldn’t get out. When I did get free I looked out of the truck and Jim Ferris and the Master Sergeant were gone. I saw a jeep racing by loaded down with Jim, the Master Sergeant, and several other soldiers. They slowed down a little and told me to hurry up and jump in. I was hanging on to the back of the jeep standing on the back bumper as we drove off with the Germans not far behind.”

Shortly after Christmas Day, orders were received to pull back to Villers L’Eveque, northwest of Liege, Belgium. About half of the 18th Squadron of the 14th Cavalry Group had either been killed or captured. They regrouped and got reinforced and refitted with replacement troops and weapons before going back into the battle.

Bob remembered clearly the first day that the fog finally gave way to blue skies since the Bulge started and remembers, “They could see huge formations of bombers flying overhead...and everyone was cheering!” On January 24th, 1945, the 14th Cavalry moved back into the Bulge and fought the enemy all the way back to their original position in the Siegfried Line.

From February 7th until the 27th, they were encamped in the dark and muddy Hurtgen Forest along the Roer River. Bob recalled that “It was very cold –the coldest winter in Germany in many years.” He got frostbite in his right big toe. He said, “We set up headquarters in a little shack with a fireplace. We were gathering firewood. Barney Barnhart came in with an armload of fire wood. He brought it over to the wood stove and dumped it on the floor. It turned out that one of the pieces of firewood was the frozen arm of a German soldier, from the elbow to the hand, and the hand was still intact.”

They pushed on to the Ludendorff Bridge at Remagen, the only remaining bridge across the Rhine River. After the Allies captured the bridge, the Germans tried to destroy it to keep the Americans from crossing the river. The 14th Cavalry was assigned to guard the bridge area from water, air, and sabotage attacks.

After crossing the Rhine, it was on through Germany. The 14th Cavalry went into the Ruhr Pocket, providing communications, and helping with the capturing of thousands of enemy troops.

On their advance through Germany, they commandeered an undamaged house, and lit up a water heater. “We all got showers for the first time in weeks. It felt so good!” Once, when Jim Williamson and Bob had been out on patrol, they came back and stopped by the kitchen. The Sergeant said “how would you like to have some fresh eggs?” A truck full of eggs had come through town too fast and rolled over and they got a case of eggs. After only having powdered eggs for months, Bob ate a dozen fried eggs that night.

Starting on April 18, 1945, the 14th Cavalry charged 250 miles from the Ruhr District to Furth near Nuremberg (Nurnberg), Germany in three days. Bob remembered going by airfields with bombed out German planes. He recalled that Nuremberg was heavily damaged and in piles of rubble. They continued on across the Danube River and stopped on the banks of the Inn River at the Austrian border just prior to VE Day.

After the war was over Bob was on occupation duty in Germany for a couple months. When Bob finally got to leave Germany, they made their way back to Southampton, England, and boarded the aircraft carrier USS Wasp CV-18 on December 27, 1945.

“What a sight it was, to see the Statue of Liberty as it came into view,” Bob remembered, as he arrived in NY.

As a member of the Greatest Generation, Bob answered the call to duty, did his part to help save the world, came home wanting nothing more than to get back to a normal life, and in the end lived quite an extraordinary life.

—Submitted by his proud son, Eric Ornberg, Member

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

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

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SOUVENIR HUNTING CAN BE UNHEALTHY FOR ONE'S BODY!

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

My Division, 26th "Yankee" Division, part of General Patton's Third Army, had arrived at the city of Metz, France December 15th, 1944, and was informed that we were to "rest" for the winter. Severe cold weather and storms were predicted for the area and neither side, German and US, would be able to function properly. This news (about getting rest) was welcomed by all. However, the following day, the 16th, brought news that something had happened up North.

My partner, Bob Zellmer, co-driver of our ammunition truck, and I had turned our ammunition truck over to Battalion Maintenance for badly needed service but when orders arrived directing the Battalion to prepare to move out, the mechanics had little time to put the wheels back on and get the many vehicles of the Batteries operable. December 20 came and we had orders to "Move out" but move where? The response was "north 'til we meet up with the Germans!" There had been a massive assault on our troops in Luxembourg and Belgium. None of us believed that the Germans had the power to assault anybody because, in our minds, they were almost whipped. So it was with the attitude "It won't take long to clean up this mess" that Bob and I joined the line of vehicles and set out for "North."

Bob had driven for just a short while when he remarked that something was wrong with the truck and asked me to look back on my side. Stepping out onto the running board I saw the rear dual wheels had come free and the axle was slipping out and in, out and in! We were going down a slight grade so Bob, knowing that he dared not to touch the brake pedal, allowed the truck to coast until it came to a stop on the slight up grade, and applied the hand brake. We waited for our Commanding Officer (CO) (who was at the end of our column) to arrive to tell him of our problem. He said he would have Battalion Maintenance come back when the Battery had reached its destination. When the traffic had cleared, Bob used the hand brake as needed, let the truck coast back to the low point of the road, and turned off the engine and we began a three-day wait for the mechanic.

Sitting in the truck soon became boring so we got out to view the surrounding area. In a valley across the road were a number of burnt out tanks, apparently the result of a battle. Also across the road was a cart track that ascended a rise to disappear over the crest. I remarked that maybe there might be something of interest, perhaps souvenirs like a luger pistol up there. Bob replied that it wouldn't hurt to go see and we set out, I in one cart track and Bob in the other. The possibility that the path might have mines buried in it never crossed our minds.

Cresting the rise we saw a terrible sight. The bodies of our troops were scattered all over the up slope! At the crest were the machine guns and dead Germans, some partially buried by dirt that artillery fire had thrown on them. Off to the left we saw the body of a German officer and Bob said he bet that there would be a luger pistol on it. We knew

the Germans bobby-trapped such bodies so Bob set off to get some wire from a near-by fence to use to turn the body over from a distance. He had taken but a few steps when I yelled, "Stop! Oh my God, we're in a mine field!" I glanced down and saw the partially exposed fins of a "Bouncing Betty" just a few inches from my feet! (A Bouncing Betty is a mine that when it is triggered, the mine launches into the air and detonates at a height of about 3 feet. The explosion projects a lethal spray of shrapnel in all directions.) I looked around and it was obvious that these were the injuries suffered our boys whose bodies were everywhere. What were we to do? I felt very sick to my stomach. I wanted to sit down but where? Bob was looking at me and his face was white as a sheet. We were in a fix with no way out except to take a step, and then another, and another, but to expect at any moment the blast and certain death.

I don't know how long we stood there. I started to shake, as did Bob, when we heard voices from the cart path and then three soldiers appeared (who happened to be from Graves Registration). The guy in the lead had a mine detector which he swept back and forth and when he'd hear a signal that he'd located a mine, the second guy behind him would hand a little flag on a stiff wire and place it at the site of the mine. They were so focused on the mines that they didn't see us until one of them looked up and exclaimed, "My God! Don't you guys know you are in the middle of a mine field?" I replied, "Yes we do, sir and I'm almost standing on one!" They decided that there were so many mines around that they were going to have to call in the Engineers in order to retrieve all the soldiers' bodies. All the while Bob and I were hoping they would do something to help us. The one guy with the detector finally went to Bob and told him to follow him and step where he stepped. And then he came over to me and guided both of us to the crest of the hill back to our truck.

When we looked back and saw the cart track, I almost wet my pants!!! There were quite a number of little flags planted in both tracks! We realized we had stepped over the mines without being aware of our own danger! We hadn't returned to our truck very long when two of our fighter pilots from a nearby air field rode up on bicycles and asked if we knew of any place they could search for souvenirs. I said "no and don't go off the road, there are mines everywhere!" and I pointed to the little flags. Despite hearing that, they turned and rode onto the same cart track, turned to ride down to the tanks and in the very direction I warned them not to go. Low and behold one of them hit a mine! I saw both his body and his bike lofted into the air. His buddy came running back calling us to see if we could help his friend. I told him "no way!" and that he should get someone else from the air base he came from. What a senseless death!

Three days later, one of the mechanics arrived, put the wheel back properly and we followed him north to the fogs, snow, and the misery of the coldest winter in 200 years.



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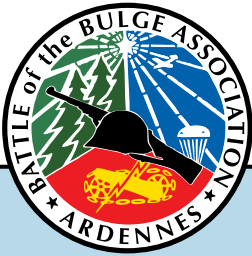
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