

The BULGE BUGLE[®]

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION • BATTLE OF THE BULGE ASSOCIATION[®], INC.

VOLUME XL NUMBER 1

THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

WINTER 2021



★ Honoring Those Who Sacrificed Their Youth ★





Battle of the Bulge Association® , Inc.

P.O. Box 330, Mechanicsville, VA 23111-0330
(703) 528-4058

The Battle of the Bulge Association® is a membership organization instituted to: perpetuate the memory of the sacrifices made by those who participated during the Battle of the Bulge; preserve historical data and sites relating to the battle; promote friendship among Battle of the Bulge veterans, their relatives and others interested in the battle; foster and maintain international relations and good will with all Allied countries who were a part of the battle; support Chapters of BOBA. BOBA is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. Donations to BOBA are tax-deductible.

Published quarterly, *The Bulge Bugle*® is the official publication of the Battle of the Bulge Association®, Inc. **Editor:** Betsy Rose

BOBA MEMBERSHIP OFFICE

Send all correspondence relating to BOBA matters, upcoming issues of "The Bulge Bugle®," or the BOBA website to: Battle of the Bulge Association®, Inc.; P.O. Box 330, Mechanicsville, VA 23111-0330; (703) 528-4058; e-mail: betsy.boba@gmail.com

VISIT THE BOBA WEB SITE: www.battleofthebulge.org



BOBA, INC. BOARD ELECTED OFFICERS

President and CEO: John Mohor
Executive Vice President: Barbara Mooneyhan
Vice President Membership: Angela Fazio
Vice President Chapters: Dr. Andy Waskie
Vice President Military & Veteran Affairs: Allen Cleghorn
Treasurer: Hylton Phillips-Page
Recording Secretary: Gail Larke

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD: Alan Cunningham

ELECTED BOARD MEMBERS

David Bailey, 106th INFD
Madeleine Bryant, Chaplain
Kristen Faller
Steven Landry
Jim Triesler, Historian

APPOINTED OFFICERS (non-voting)

Public Relations: Gary Higgins, Immediate Past President

PAST PRESIDENTS

Clyde Boden* 1981-84
Robert Van Houten* 1984-86
George Chekan* 1986-88; 2003-05
William Greenville* 1988-90
Darrell Kuhn* 1990-92
William Hemphill* 1992-93
William Tayman 1993-94
Grover Twiner* 1994-95
Stanley Wojtusik* 1995-97; 2005-07
George Linthicum* 1997-99
John Dunleavy* 1999-01
Louis Cunningham* 2001-03
Demetri Paris* 2007-10
David Bailey 2010-12
Douglas Dillard* 2012-14
Alan Cunningham 2014-16
Gary Higgins 2017-19
*Deceased

CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

Many members of the Battle of the Bulge Association® belong to individual chapters located throughout the United States. The following is a list of the present chapters, the state in which they are located, and their Chapter President's name. Please contact BOBA at betsy.boba@gmail.com or 703-528-4058 for their local meeting times and contact information.

CALIFORNIA

Golden Gate (10): Doris Davis

Southern California (16): Chapter President in transition

CONNECTICUT

Yankee Chapter (40): Richard Egan

COLORADO

Rocky Mountain (39): A. Wayne Field, 6th ARMDD

FLORIDA

Citrus (32): Minot N. Richardson, 26th INFD

INDIANA

Central Indiana (47): Chris Schneider

KANSAS

Kansas (69): Greg Penfield

MARYLAND

Maryland/DC (3): Chapter President in transition

MICHIGAN

West Michigan (23): Gary Higgins

MISSISSIPPI

Mississippi (33): James W. Hunt, 1st INFD

MISSOURI

Gateway (25): Dave Schroeder
Visit website gatewayvbob.org

NEW JERSEY

Peter F. Leslie, Jr (54): Jerry Manning

Fort Monmouth (56): Larry Lynch

Fort Dix/McGuire (60): Donald "Coach" Brien

NEW YORK

Mohawk Valley (28): Julian Scatko

Hudson Valley (49): Matthew J. Swedick

Staten Island (52): William Abell

Duncan T. Trueman (59): Elliot Hermon, 87th Chem Mortar Bn

Long Island (63): William Mueller, 106th INFD

OHIO

Blanchard Valley (42): Leonard Skonecki

Ohio Buckeye (1): Chapter President in transition

Alton Litsenberger (68): Tom Tomastik

PENNSYLVANIA

Delaware Valley (4): Dr. Andy Waskie

Lehigh Valley (55): Steve Savage

Reading (64): George Moore, 1252nd ECB

SOUTH CAROLINA

South Carolina (7): Douglas Patterson

VERMONT-NEW HAMPSHIRE-MAINE

Tri-State (17): Edward Deverell

VIRGINIA

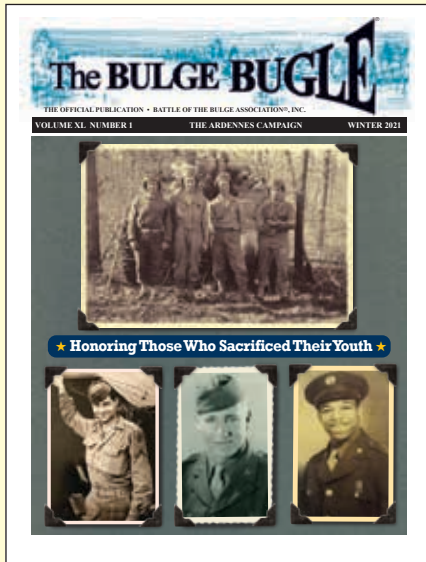
Crater (43): Mary Ann Coates Smith

WASHINGTON

Northwest (6): Jim Pennock

NEW BOBA CHAPTERS ARE FORMING
near TX, MO, MI and in Belgium; contact betsy.boba@gmail.com
if you are interested in participating.
SEND CHAPTER UPDATES TO: betsy.boba@gmail.com

ON THE COVER



Top: A tank crew from the 8th Armored Division, 36th Tank Battalion in combat with an M-4 Sherman tank. *Read more about the 8th ARMDD on page 22.*

Bottom Left: Roland “Pete” Peterson (2 INFD 38 REG). *Read more about him on page 21.*

Bottom Center: Francis Chesko (7 ARMDD & 148 CBT ENGR BN) landed in Normandy on D-Day+1, fought in 5 major battles including the Battle of the Bulge, and was the recipient of 5 bronze stars and a Purple Heart. He attended many recent BOBA events, including his interview on BOBA’s Livestream program in October. He passed away on November 24, 2020. *See pages 10-11.*

Bottom Right: Benjamin Berry (Quartermaster Corps, 3rd Army) is a member of the Delaware Valley Chapter. *See more on page 21.*

How to submit stories for “The Bulge Bugle®”

The Bulge Bugle® is published quarterly in the months that coincide with Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall. 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, and limit word count to up to 500 words. 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. **Stories or clippings will not be returned, so please do not mail originals you want to keep—send legible copies.**

Photographs: Please identify the place and/or people in the photograph. Photos copied on a copy machine, or printed on a laser printer, are not suitable for publication. Scan original photographs at high-resolution (300 dpi), or take a cellphone photo, and send us largest digital file possible. **Printed photos will not be returned, so please do not mail valuable originals—send duplicates.**

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

Send material: (Preferred method) by email: betsy.boba@gmail.com, or by mail: Battle of the Bulge Association®, Inc, P.O. Box 330, Mechanicsville, VA 23111-0330

NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE: MARCH 26, 2021

QUESTIONS? Please contact Betsy Rose, 703-528-4058, or by email: betsy.boba@gmail.com

Thanks to our vendors who provide valuable services to support BOBA: Apple Press, Inc. (Printing/Fulfillment); Eye D Communications (Layout/Design); RBI Services, Inc. (Accounting Services)

IN THIS ISSUE

2. Contacts, Board, Chapters

4. President’s Message

BOBA & BoB Foundation
Featured on Donor Wall
at New Army Museum

5. BOBA Letters

6. BOBA Member Books

A Museum is a Real Gem

7. Members in Memoriam

7. Memories of John Bowen:
Devoted BOBA Member,
Volunteer And Historian

8. Our Heroes Stay Busy!

9. Remembering the Battle
of the Bulge

New Members

10. Donations

11. BOBA Events

12. My Father’s War:
Piecing It Together

13. Priceless Gifts

14. Bulge Memories

18. Chapter News

21. Monuments Commemorate
the Battle of the Bulge

22. 8th ARMDD Association
“Thundering Herd”

23. When Are My Dues Due?

Join the 83rd INFD Association

Membership Application



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

John Mohor

MY FELLOW BOBA MEMBERS: Happy New Year! I hope we can all enjoy a much better healthier 2021. Our first virtual meeting of our membership in November 2020 went well. By all accounts, it even provided some additional benefits. I didn't realize at the time that some of my fellow USG coworkers submitted me for a Diversity & Inclusion Helping Hands Award due to my membership and service with BOBA as your President. The best part of this award, BOBA received \$1,000 from the USG Foundation for our efforts. Thank you to all our members that participated in our Virtual meeting.

As of this writing, our 2021 Board will have had our first meeting virtually in January (thanks to Va War Memorial for sponsoring the support technology!) I am pleased to report we are continuing to develop a better way forward as we navigate the current COVID-19 world. Although we were unable to host our large in-person event in December, the BOBA Board felt it was imperative to continue to commemorate the Battle of the Bulge. Therefore, our Chairman Alan Cunningham, along with a few BOBA members, placed wreaths at the designated locations in DC on January 25th to commemorate the end of the battle and remember those who lost their lives. [See photo on page 21.] Thanks to those who contributed to our Wreath Fund throughout the year to make this possible. We hope to resume our gatherings once the immunizations have greatly reduced or eliminated its uninvented presence amongst us.

The Army Museum finally opened November 11th. Since that opening with recent efforts, the Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation along with the assistance of an anonymous Veteran member of BOBA, our organizations made a contribution that will have a permanent legacy in place at the Army Museum. This is also after the Army Historical Foundation received various smaller donations prior from members of BOBA. A great team effort raising the \$50,000. I do want to clarify that none of this money came from BOBA's current funds. [See sidebar on the right.]

I also want to publicly thank the Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation for their years in support of both Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge and Battle of the Bulge Association. Their main mission has now taken place so on the way to closing, their organization voted to make donations to both the Army Museum and BOBA of over \$19,000. On a more somber note, you will learn that John Bowen died in part from complications due to COVID-19 and was laid to rest in Quantico National Cemetery on 16 December 2020. He was a big part of VBOB, BOBA and BOBHF having last served as treasurer and historian. [See article on page 7.] We also have lost some other beloved members this year. The Taps section will identify them by name. It is to their family members that you have my sincerest condolences. It was a rough year in 2020 that none of us will soon forget.

I would still love to get four generations or more as members moving well into the future as part of BOBA. Let's make sure BOBA lives on well into the future. Have you personally recruited like-minded individuals into the organization? As of this writing, the membership approved tiered membership categories proposed by the strategic planning committee, which included potential increases in our fee structures. The



longevity of the organization depends on us all being financially responsible. The outcome and details will be covered in 2021 as you renew your memberships. If you want to include a hard copy of *The Bulge Bugle*®, additional fees are coming. We do have some members serving alongside board members on committees working and looking at our strategic and financial posture moving into the future. If you think you can help the BOBA organization on these committees or in other ways, please let us know. We are still looking for some IT savvy folks to help us grow with our online presence as well. I also want to mention, please review the request [on page 5] of Jos Tholl, President of the General Patton Memorial Museum in Luxembourg. The Museum is a member of BOBA.

As our Bylaws' purpose of the corporation includes "...to perpetuate the memory of the sacrifices made by U.S. Military personnel during the Battle of the Bulge". Currently, we are still accepting donations for the 28th ID. Be sure to mark the check for the 28th Division Memorial. The Wreath Fund continues, so if you want to participate this year, please send in your donation, and mark it for the Wreath Fund. Any other donations are also always appreciated. I know we all have our reasons for joining BOBA. We're still looking to have our Annual Reunion in the Fall in Charleston, SC. Stay healthy everyone!

Thank you all for becoming and remaining members of BOBA.

"I'll Try Sir" (5th Field Artillery Motto)

John Mohor, President & CEO

BOBA & BoB Foundation to be Featured on "Circle Of Distinction" Donor Wall at New Army Museum

BOBA member and trustee of the BoB and Army Historical Foundation Kent Menser announced that the Foundation, which is the fund-raising arm of the National Museum of the United States Army, now has \$50,000 from our two Battle of Bulge organizations and a private donor. This qualifies both organizations to be on the "Donor Wall" and for BOBA to be a member of the "Circle of Distinction." This gives us three places that have the Battle of the Bulge listed. At a time TBD, the following will go on the donor wall: "BATTLE OF THE BULGE ASSOCIATION AND FOUNDATION."

Thanks to the efforts of Kent Menser of the Battle of the Bulge and Army Historical Foundation, John Mohor, President of BOBA, and Alan Cunningham, Chairman of BOBA, for making this action a success. The Foundation plans to transfer remaining funds to BOBA and begin the closure process of the Foundation. Also, thanks to Bob Hartman for his assistance in closure actions.

BOBA LETTERS

IN SEARCH OF INFO REGARDING JOSEPH S ZANGLA (28 INFD)

I'm searching for information regarding my uncle Joe's experience as a POW after his capture during the Battle of the Bulge. Joseph S. Zangla, from Greensburg, PA was a member of 28 INFD 110 Regiment formed from the PA National Guard. Records showed him as a member of the "06" which may have been the military code for his Company. He was a "TECH 4" and I think he had some kind of "medic" assignment.

Several thousand members of the 28th were captured by the Germans in the vicinity of St. Vith, Belgium in the early days of the Battle of the Bulge. I know he became a POW on Dec. 21, 1945. I have tried many of the search activities suggested, without success, in determining the POW camp where he ended up in early April of 1945. Based on my research of the histories of many POWs from the 110th, after capture they were constantly being moved East from camp to camp as the Allies advanced.

According to an interview in 1993, Joe's POW experience closely matched those who ended up at STALAG BAD ORB #9. He told the paper that several of his fellow prisoners were shot and killed by the prison guards, and he weighed only 90 pounds when rescued. When he was returned to the U.S., his unit ended up in Jackson MS, where he worked as a printer after the war. I would be grateful if you could pass this info request on to the readers of *The Bulge Bugle*®.

Please contact me if you have any more information:

Ray DiPietro, 4590 Luke Ct, Eureka CA 95503. Phone: 310-292-0167, Email: raydinpvc@aol.com

Ray DiPietro, BOBA member

REQUEST FROM THE PATTON MUSEUM

Dear Mr. President of the Battle of the Bulge Association:

We are in the process of researching the events of our town from 1939-1945, with the support of the municipality. Unfortunately, we have few documents, photos or films about the liberation of our town by the Allied troops. Therefore, we ask you to support us in obtaining important information—documents, photos, etc.—from our liberators, since you have a large number of members from different organizations. We would appreciate it if you would make an appeal in your magazine *The Bulge Bugle*® for members to send photos, documents, or memorabilia—on loan—related to the liberation of the city of Ettelbrück for our exhibition, so that we could remember those young soldiers who gave their lives for our freedom. Our work with the community is to always remember those who liberated us from the Nazi yoke, so that we can live in peace today.

In the hope that you can support us, we thank you very much in advance for your response. Best regards.

Jos Tholl, President
General Patton Memorial Museum
5, rue Dr. Klein
L-9054 Ettelbruck
Tel :+352 81 03 22
patton@patton.lu

EXHIBITION MATERIALS REQUEST: In the framework of the renewal of our exhibition at the General Patton Memorial Museum, we would like to commemorate our liberators who liberated our city on September 10,

1944 and especially those who liberated our city for the second time on December 25, 1944.

In order to install the memorial places, we need a contact with the veterans who took part in these liberations:

1st liberation in September 1944:

5 Armored Division

Counter Intelligence Corps

Lieutenant Chepir 109 Regiment 28 Infantry Division ("Bloody Bucket") Col. James E. Rudder had his headquarters in the girls school Ste. Anne in Ettelbrück

107 Artillery Battalion

Company A/103 Genius Battalion

Company C/707 Tank Battalion

2nd liberation in December 1944:

4 Armored Division

26 Infantry Division

80 Infantry Division

5 Infantry Division

Colonel Lansing McVickar was the commanding officer of the 318th Regiment of the 80th US Infantry Division. When the Germans attacked in the Ardennes on December 16th, 1944, his unit was deployed in Lorraine as part of General Patton's 3rd Army. When the 3rd Army was ordered to counterattack in the Ardennes, the 318th Regiment advanced along the Alzette valley, attacked Ettelbruck on December 22nd and liberated the town after several days of heavy combats.

Colonel McVickar was killed in action on January 14th, 1945 in the vicinity of Ettelbruck when he came upon a German advanced post during the inspection of his troops.

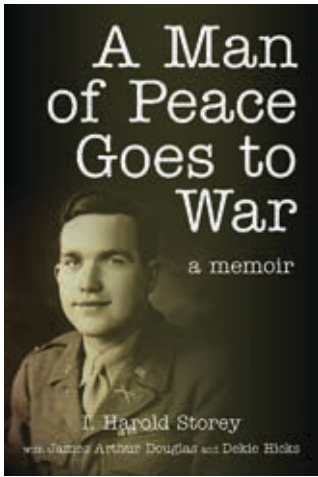
We are also looking to identify the persons/places in photos [such as the one below.]

Visit the BOBA website for more photos: www.battleofthebulge.org.



A MAN OF PEACE GOES TO WAR

By Harold Storey (5 INFD 10 REG C)



An excerpt from BOBA veteran member Harold Storey's memoir about his involvement in the Battle of the Bulge:

Christmas Day: weather beautiful and setting idyllic with snow on every branch of fir trees 10-15 feet tall planted in rows with fire break avenues every hundred yards or so. I was deeply depressed as I tried to offer some encouragement for these weary folks as we approached the forward slope of the mountain, knowing there would be good observation where the trees played out on the approach to the Sauer River, along which there were many mostly damaged and abandoned Bed & Breakfast houses and small inns.

As I stood at the edge of a little road waiting for the rest of my folks to get oriented and catch up using more than one fire break, Pfc. Castle approached me. He was a replacement medic who had endeared himself to all of us. He always wanted to do anything he could—cheerfully—including trudging back a mile or so to bring 5-gallon cans of water when we got messages that water was



Harold Storey (5 INFD 10 REG C)

available. This time he asked my permission to go back to where he had seen two wounded Germans, an officer and enlisted man, and try to “fix up” their wounds. At first I told him I’d rather he not go alone,

that I really should not be left there alone (we tried to abide by the rule about getting separated). He indicated the direction, said it wasn’t far and that he would hurry. I relented with great appreciation for the compassion of this young kid and felt it an appropriate act for Christmastime anywhere. His commitment was to people, not just friends. I became more anxious for us to proceed (mid afternoon now and darkness came very early) and one of my platoon leaders found me and asked about Castle. I told him what had transpired and said I thought I could find him. After searching down a couple of rows I did find him. His hand was under the wounded arm of one of the two still-alive Germans but Castle was dead from a bullet through his helmet. My emotions nearly tore me apart! Of course I would shoot the squirming and begging men—as they expected. As I cocked my carbine and pointed it at the Captain, I still was thinking about the day and my family and the fact there was not much celebration here.

On Christmas Eve, the eighth day of these conditions, the skies became blue and I stood by a snow-laden fir tree and thanked God that I could hear and eventually see a steady line of planes above! (Patton claimed that this was an answer to his own prayers: I wonder how God filters a profane prayer.) Our planes kept coming the next few days and apparently did enough damage to effectively turn the tide.

Somehow I thought that if I did survive, I would never want to remember that I had killed two helpless people on Christmas and I would not want my family to know that I had done such a thing. It was really mostly selfish, with some compassion thrown in. And I knew it would not be a fitting tribute to the short and beautiful life Castle had lived. So I didn’t pull the trigger. (I did not know where Castle was from and have never been able to find his family since, though I was finally able to get his serial number. My request for search of military records has been answered but not successful. It’s very difficult for non-family members to get information on soldiers through army records—rightly so.) We never discovered who had killed Castle, possibly somebody hiding nearby even as I stood there beside his body and the terrified Germans. We found out later that they were evacuated and were safe in a hospital. So glad I didn’t yield to my temptation to take their lives.

Harold is 98 years old and lives in Rome, GA. To order a copy of his book, visit www.goodfaithmedia.org and search Harold Storey.

A MUSEUM IS A REAL GEM

Mathilde and Marcel Schmetz of the Remember Museum 39-45 were featured on a Belgian TV show called “Mon Plus Beau Village,” hosted by Jerome de Warzée. He stumbled upon their museum while filming nearby and was enchanted! This is an excerpt from an article by Samuel Christophe, of the SudPresse newspaper organization, in the “La Meuse” newspaper which was published on 8/12/20. Reprinted with permission.

Another stage of the visit marked Jérôme de Warzée in “My most beautiful village” on the channel “La Une” . . . it is that of a museum that he did not expect to find there. This museum is in fact a surprise. It is located 3 kilometers from the American Military Cemetery of Henri-Chapelle where 7,992 soldiers are buried.

“I obviously did not know at all about this Remember Museum 39-45, which is installed in a former farm in Thimister-Clermont. It is the work of an individual, Marcel Schmetz, but it is absolutely astonishing. He was 11 years old when the Americans came to the area, but he has amassed so many memories, it is impressive. There are the items abandoned by the 110 soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division who stayed on this farm, but there are, reproduced in real size, weapons, shells and then gifts of returning veterans accumulated over time. We also see an “M&M” box signed by Barack Obama. In the end, it’s a larger museum than in Bastogne! It is an invaluable heritage and Marcel refuses to sell. He and his wife Mathilde are so charming, the Americans have even offered to repatriate everything to the United States. This is not what they want—they would like it to become a foundation. All in all, when you see the hangars, you are far from imagining what you will discover.”



(L-R:) Jerome de Warzée, Mathilde and Marcel Schmetz

Photo courtesy LaMeuse

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., P.O. Box 330, Mechanicsville, VA 23111-0330; or by phone: 703-528-4058; or by email: betsy.boba@gmail.com.

We have been notified as of January 1, 2021, that these BOBA members have recently passed away:

William C. Armstrong	26 INFD 263 FA BN	Eugene J. Harmack	83 INFD 329 REG 1 BN HQ
William E. Ball	134 AAA GUN BN C	Emmanuel Lamb	83 INFD 331 REG M
Lester M. Bornstein	106 INFD 168 ENGR CMBT BN B	William G. Leunig	285 ENGR COMBAT BN
John Bowen	Member	Anders Nelson Madsen, Jr.	106 INFD 422 REG 2 BN H
Jesse Bowman	87 INFD 345 REG D	John Mather	Member
Vincent Capuano	SC Chapter Member	William R. Meacham	99 INFD 393 REG 3 BN L
Francis Chesko	7 ARMDD & 148 CBT ENGR BN	Richard Musselman	Lehigh Valley Chapter Member
George E. Folk	Lehigh Valley Chapter Member	Matthew Reluga	90 INFD 358 INF REG 3 BN HQ
George Greenhalgh	Lehigh Valley Chapter Member	LTC (RET) Alfred Shehab	38 CAV RECON SQDN 102 CAV GP B

MEMORIES OF JOHN BOWEN: Devoted BOBA Member, Volunteer and Historian

by BOBA Chaplain Madeleine Bryant

When I received the call from John's daughter Cheryl that her father had died, the tears began. John was feisty and fiercely independent—always a strong presence! I couldn't conceive of his earthly fight being over.

It is with good reason that some years ago, John and his dear late wife, Mary Ann, were voted "Mr. & Mrs. VBOB." They were passionate about upholding the legacy of all Battle of the Bulge veterans through the Battle of the Bulge Historical Society and the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge (now Battle of the Bulge Association®)—listening to stories, sharing stories and encouraging individual participation. John had assembled a vast collection of videos, books and maps, many of which he would haul by the crate load to our events—a conversation starter for attendees, always a learning experience for each of us. His presentations and the many articles he wrote provided unexpected insights, even for those quite knowledgeable. Over the years, John built an awesome network of international historians, curators, and other contacts. One of his favorite pursuits, time intensive but immensely rewarding, was assisting families to research their military history or help them find a good home for their items of historic interest.

For me, it was also deeply personal. My dad—a Battle of the Bulge veteran, historian, and an active VBOB member since its inception—often spoke of John's extraordinary knowledge and of his kindness. In Dad's later years, John picked him up for VBOB events. In fact, a few years ago when my driving was restricted, John picked me up for a chapter meeting!

My own involvement began in December 2003, after my dad



died. I decided to attend the VBOB chapter Holiday Party at Ft. Meade—just to thank for how much that group had meant to Dad. I figured that would be the end of it—but John made sure it was really only the beginning of my now lifetime commitment to the VBOB/BOBA organization. He introduced me to Mike Levin, John & Lil Schaffner, Al & Dot Darago, J. David Bailey and many others who made me feel so welcome, like family. Soon, I was involved with chapter meetings and then suddenly I was on the national board, thanks to John nominating me. I began meeting wonderful veterans and their families at annual national reunions and commemorations. I made several memorable, eye-opening trips to Europe with VBOB. I owe John & Mary Ann a great deal for their support and encouragement in these, for me, life changing experiences.

My most recent memory of John is his participation on our cold 75th commemoration trip to Europe, December 2019, just before "the world shut down." It was a physically exacting trip for him, but evenings in our hotel, he was in his element. He was teaching history, sharing stories, suggesting resources—all off-the-cuff and with a sense of humor.

Rest in peace, dear friend. You did more than anyone else I've met to keep alive the legacy of our service men and women who fought so valiantly in the Battle of the Bulge for the liberties and freedoms we hold dear today. Your own legacy lives on, John. And we are grateful!

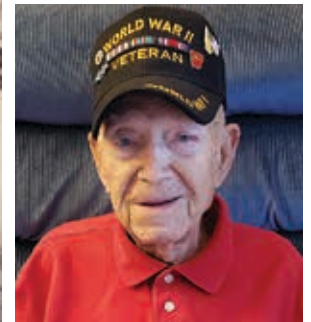
John was editor of The Marcher, the official publication of the MD/DC (3) Chapter. See some back issues on our website: www.battleofthebulge.org/research/the-marcher/

★ **OUR HEROES STAY BUSY!** ★



Irving Locker (116 AAA GUN BN 4TH DIV VII CORPS) and Doris Davis, President of BOBA Golden Gate Chapter, gave an excellent presentation about the Battle of the Bulge to the Northern California Chapter of the Belgian Club in January 2021. It was very well attended by Belgians, who remember the stories they heard from their parents and grandparents, as well as others who have an interest in the Bulge. James Treisler, Director of Education of the VA War Memorial, contributed maps of the Bulge. Irving Locker shared his experience as a Staff Sergeant in charge of four 90mm guns and 65 soldiers who managed the guns. It took that many men to operate the guns because they had to fire a shell every 2.5 minutes. Each shell was 3 feet tall and weighed 45 pounds. Irving just completed a documentary about his experience and it is now available for viewing.

You can find the link on www.battleofthebulge.org.



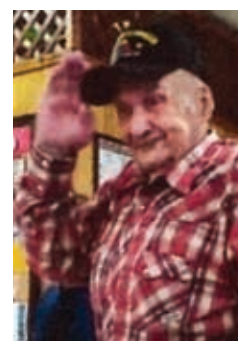
Dale Cooksey (28 INFD 110 REG A) turned 100 on Dec 3 (above) and the local police and fire department helped him celebrate! He is a

proud American and raises his American flag on his flagpole every morning and retires it in the evening—rain or shine. Dale and his buddy Ken Burke, are shown in 1945 (top left).

—Submitted by Jason Ryan, grandson of Dale Cooksey
Read more about Dale at www.battleofthebulge.org.



George Merz (818 MP CO VIII CORPS), at right in photo above, takes a flight on the Missouri “Show Me” B-25 Bomber in Bowman Field, Louisville, KY.



Salute to Bulge veteran member **Bill Strauss (9 ARMDD 73 FA)** upon his 101st birthday! Senator John Boozman and Col (RET) Anita Dearson visited Bill where he lives in Salem, Arkansas. Bill received the French Legion of Honor and is also featured in the Veterans History Project at the Library of Congress.



SC Chapter member **David Hubbard (HQ ADV SECT COMM ZONE SIG)** received his first COVID-19 vaccine at his local VA hospital. Notice not only his WWII hat, but his ever-present BOBA jacket. David celebrated his 98th birthday in December.



Warren Fisher (28 INFD 109 REG) was awarded the “Croix de Guerre” in recognition for the part of the 28 INFD’s defense of the Colmar pocket in France under De Gaulle. In January 2021, he discussed his experiences in an interview by BOBA Historian and VWM Education Director Jim Triesler during the Va War Memorial’s Livestream event.

**Spread the Word About BOBA
SIGN UP FAMILY
AND FRIENDS**

Use membership application form on page 23.

Photos: Betty Daggendorf (Merz); Barbara Mooneyhan (Hubbard)

REMEMBERING THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

Excerpt by Shane Hoover of *Canton Repository*, reprinted with permission.

Michette Thirifays Hietts' family had waited four years for the liberation of their country. Now the Germans were coming back to Belgium.

"And we were scared to death that they were coming back," said Thirifays Hiett, who was 9 during the Battle of the Bulge. She is an honorary member of Buckeye Chapter One. Being with the local vets takes her back to her childhood, she said.

Sitting on a recent afternoon in the kitchen of her North Canton home, she flipped through a scrapbook from the war years. There was George—"very good looking, I tell you"—Jack, Adam, Blair, Jimmy, she said, recalling the names behind the snapshots, portraits and notes she collected from the young soldiers.

"I think that's all I have of my buddies," said Michette, 75. Her home village of Robertville was near the border with Germany, but after Belgium was invaded in 1940, Michette, her parents and three older siblings settled in the town of Verviers.

Food was scarce. Allied bombers flew over the town and sometimes crashed. Later in the war, there were German rocket attacks.

"We had friends that died," she said.

When London-based radio broadcasts an-



Michette Hiett Thirifays was a child living in Belgium during the Battle of the Bulge. (See more photos at www.battleofthebulge.org.)

nounced the D-Day invasion, there was euphoria. "The start of the end of the nightmare was underway," she said. A few months later, in September 1944, the Allies liberated Brussels. Verviers followed.

"We started to make flags with sheets... and hang them out our windows outside," she said. "And we were so happy."

Michette learned some English, and her family routinely had American soldiers stay in their home or join them for meals.

"Nevermind. Bring them all," her mother Jeanne, would say. The soldiers painted Michette's scooter and put a sign on it that said "Jeep." They went sledding with her. She tasted marshmallow for the first time.

"They were great guys. They really were. And we never had a GI that was not correct. They were nice, really nice people," said Michette.

"Many thanks to a charming little lady for many a happy evening during our brief stay in Verviers," wrote a soldier from Philadelphia. "Maybe you may make a trip to the United States. Bonne Chance."

In 1959, Michette married an American serviceman and moved to the United States.

Over the years, she reunited with that soldier from Philly and another of her "buddies." She and her husband, Sam Hiett, are regulars at meetings of the local Bugle Vets.

"You know, I always was happy to be with them," Michette said.

For the full story in the Canton Repository, please go to: www.cantonrep.com/x/1167187307/Area-veterans-remember-the-Battle-of-the-Bulge

Welcome Aboard, New Members!

We are happy to announce these new members who joined BOBA between September 24, 2020 - January 1, 2021:

Johnathan R. Allen	NC	Melisa Heitman	OH	Second Indianhead Division -	
Heath Blackwell	MA	Paul Jannace	NY	Bob Haynes	IL
Judy Breen	NH	Susan Jannace	NY	Second ECBA - Phil Steward	GA
Art Brodin*	CO	Loretta Temple Kessler	TX	Erin Elizabeth Simmons	MD
Elizabeth Byrom	PA	Michael Kovas	IL	Merry Simon	NV
Robert Clark	CT	Katherine Lanio	NC	Herman Skerlong*	PA
(Col) Ruth Collins	PA	John Luksik	VA	Clifford Snyder	MA
Richard Cross	MI	Phil Lusk	WA	James F. Sterner*	PA
Thomas R. Davis	GA	Kyle Manzella	VA	Rex Stoops	IN
Raymond DiPetro	CA	Thomas McManus	NY	Susan Temple	PA
Christopher Donaghy	NH	Museum of American Armor - Gary Lewi	NY	Kevin Wagner	IL
Sandra Doran	United Kingdom	National D-Day Memorial -		Chris Williamson	DC
Fred Faulkner	IL	April Cheek-Messier	VA	Wisconsin Veterans Museum -	
Mark Fields	PA	National WWII Museum - Pedro Torres	LA	Chris Kolakowski	WI
John Fortini	MA	Aris Pavlides	NJ	Paul Woerner	PA
Julia Friar	VA	Reagan Legacy Foundation	CA	Jackson Wood	CT
Alan Gambill	NC	Nancy Bowen Revene	MA	Patrick A. Wood	TX
George C. Marshall Foundation -		Jason Ryan	MO	Steven A. Wood	FL
Paul A. Levensgood	VA	Chris Sciabarra	NY	Harold Youmans	CA

*Denotes Bulge Veteran Member

Special thanks to those who have recruited multiple new members: Al Cleghorn, Doris Davis, William Jannace, Gail Larke, Dr. Linda Miller, and John Mohor



THANK YOU TO ALL OUR GENEROUS DONORS!

We are so grateful for the many donations received between September 24, 2020 - January 1, 2021:

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Grady Crawford
In Memory of W.D. Crawford 987 FA and In Honor of DW McFarland MP*

Robert L. Croye (Chapter 68)
In Memory of Bill Ruth (Ch. 68 vet member)*

Gary Cunningham
In Memory of John H. Cunningham (11 ARMDD)

Defend the Rock (A USG Employee Resource Group) & USG Foundation
Donated through the Helping Hands Foundation - award in honor of their employee/our BOBA president John Mohor for his volunteerism to BOBA

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*In Memory of Julio Fenocchi**

Mary E Fenocchi
*In Memory of Julio Fenocchi**

Wanda Finnell

Gene Fischer
In Memory of Eugene G. Fischer, Sr. (6 ARMDD)*

David and Kathy Fleming
*In Memory of Carroll Demoga**

Geraldine A. Giesler

Ann Gray
In Memory of Dan Boden & Capt. Robert S. Moyer

Judy Greenhalgh
In Memory of Donald H. Heckman (702 TK BN)

Ruth Hamilton
*In Memory of John Shehab**

Frank Hartzel*

Douglas J. Harvey*

Michette & G.P. Sam Hiatt

Ralph T. Hunt*

Kathy Israelian-Fleming

William Jannace
In Honor of BOBA to the International Orthodox Christian Charities for Serbia Area of Greatest Need

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Arthur Nordhoff, Jr.
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John Rieker*
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Steve Savage
In Memory of George Folk

Steve Savage
In Memory of George Greenhalgh

Steve Savage
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In Memory of Beatrice "Betty" Weigle (51 FLD HOSP)

Denny Stumph

Thomas & Marilyn Sweeney

Rebecca Teasdale

Susan Temple
In Memory of Robert LaBrecque (99 INFD 393 D)*

Thomas E. Tomastik
In Memory of Uncle John R. Wood

Wilbert A Young*

The Battle of the Bulge Association® would like to thank the families of the following members who passed in 2020, and who listed us in their obituaries. Memorial gifts were made by the following generous donors – thank you for your support!



In Memory of John Bowen 12/12/1935 - 12/8/2020

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Karen Rismiller
Betsy Rose
Jay & Anne Ryan
John & Kathleen Sluzevich
Thomas & Elizabeth Tempest
United Church of Christ Women's Guild
Patricia Weber

*Denotes Bulge Veteran Member

See an article about John Bowen on page 7.



BOBA EVENTS

BOBA REUNION SET FOR OCTOBER 2021



In the South, we have a saying for good luck “Lord willing and the creek don’t rise!” That is how the SC Chapter is feeling about our planned reunion for October 2021! We are hoping to welcome our WWII Bulge heroes, friends and family from across the world to the city that *Condé Nast Traveler Magazine* has called “The #1 tourist destination in America” for 10 years in a row. While we do not have any specific details to share with you at this time, let this be a “save the date” reminder as we watch carefully the roll out of the COVID-19 vaccine to eradicate this horrible virus. Stay tuned to the next issue for details and continue to stay well, from BOBA Executive VP and event organizer Barbara Mooneyhan.

“LIVE” ONLINE EVENTS WERE A SUCCESS

BOBA’s first-ever online **Livestream educational program** via ZOOM entitled “**Remembering the Battle of the Bulge**” took place on October 15, 2020 in partnership with the Virginia War Memorial (VWM) and the Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI). It was a WONDERFUL opportunity for BOBA to gain awareness and new membership! Over 420 registered and we had at least 6 countries represented: Belgium, Luxembourg, France, Holland, Italy, and the US, with back-to-back AMAZING presenters and veteran interviews! Ambassador Régibeau and Embassy of Luxembourg’s Deputy Chief of Mission Peggy Frantzen presented, and they also attended many of our sessions throughout the day! Additional speakers included: Jim Triesler (VWM and series host), Christopher Kolakowski (WI Vets Museum), Heidi Sheldon, VWM), Leon Reed/Lois Lembo (authors of *A Combat Engineer With Patton’s Army*), Andrew Biggio (Author of *The Rifle*), and Andy Waskie (8 ARMDD Association).



Photo reprinted with permission from *The Republic*

The late Francis Chesko, at left, (7 ARMDD & 148 CBT ENG BN), was interviewed during the BOBA Livestream educational program about his participation in the Battle of the Bulge. Assisting with the technical aspects was his son Jim Chesko, right.

Veteran interviews included: George Merz (818 MP VIII CORPS), the late Francis Chesko (7 ARMDD & 148 CBT ENG BN), and Fred Faulkner (3257 SIG SVS, Composer “Ardennes March”).

Thanks to co-organizers BOBA historian Jim Triesler (also VWM), Morgan Guyer (VWM), Rachel Rodriguez (LLI) and Betsy Rose (BOBA). It was so great for all to come together to honor those who served! If you missed it, go to www.battleofthebulge.org for links to the recordings. **Stay tuned for more Bulge Livestreams in the future!**

We also had a huge turnout of membership for BOBA’s first-ever online **Annual Membership Meeting** via WEBEX on November 7, 2020! Thanks to BOBA President John Mohor’s company United States Gypsum Company, Defend the Rock Employee Resource Group, and their IT Department for sponsoring and hosting the event.

MY FATHER'S WAR: PIECING IT TOGETHER

by Carolyn Boyer Kramer, BOBA member

This is an excerpt from Carolyn's manuscript about her father Ray Franklin Boyer, native of Fort Valley, Virginia who was a Tech Sergeant with the 9 ARMDD 2 TK BN A and passed in 1995. You can find the full version at www.battleofthebulge.org, which also includes Ray's training with the 9 ARMDD and their participation in the Remagen Bridge seizure. Due to space constraints, the following includes only the account from the Battle of the Bulge. Resources cited include Phantom Nine by Dr. Walter E. Reichelt and A Citizen-Soldier Remembers by George E. McAvoy. Carolyn would like to acknowledge BOBA members Robert Kasten and Jim Triesler for their input and suggestions and welcomes comments/corrections from readers at Carolynkramer2@verizon.net.

By the fall of 1944, the German generals pretty much knew they were beaten, but Hitler pulled his resources together for another assault. His aim was to drive a political and geographical wedge between the Allies, cross the Meuse River, and then capture the port of Antwerp, Belgium, which the Allies were using to receive supplies. The operation was called Christrose, Autumn Mist, and Watch on the Rhine. In the United States, it is known as the Ardennes Offensive, or the Battle of the Bulge.

German preparations for this offensive strike were kept strictly secret. Various means of deception were used by the Germans:

- Most of the German movements were to be made at night.
- To avoid leaving tracks and to muffle sounds, men and vehicles moved on roads covered with straw and hay.
- Guns were towed by horses instead of noisy, mechanized tractors.
- The noises of the German tanks coming up to the start lines were covered by German fighters flying low up and down the front line.

Thirty German divisions were assembled along a line of attack of some 88 miles, with 250,000 men, 2,000 guns, 1,000 tanks, 1,500 aircraft (of the 3,000 promised by Goering). In contrast, US troops were settled along their side of the border with no more than six allied divisions totaling some 80,000 men, unprepared to stand up to the unexpected and simultaneous attack of 4 German armies.

At 5:30 a.m at dawn on Sunday, December 16, 1944, German artillery opened up all along this thinly-manned front in the Ardennes Forest. German General von Rundstedt sent his Panzer tank reserves into the weakest section of the line. The Americans were surprised and overwhelmed before they knew what was happening.

These initial German attacks were not only a surprise but also in such overwhelming strength that the Germans quickly moved westward, creating a very large bulge in the allied lines. Their deepest advance took them almost 100 miles from their starting positions. In doing so, the town of Bastogne, Belgium, was surrounded.

Bastogne was one of the transportation and communication hubs. Seven roads converged here, spreading out like the spokes of a wheel. With this important road junction, the town was, in addition to St. Vith, one of the important logistical centers in the Ardennes. By December 20,



Ray Franklin Boyer (9 ARMDD 2 TK BN A)

Bastogne was surrounded by German forces, like the hole in a donut. The German goal at this point was to take Bastogne; Eisenhower's goal was to hold Bastogne until the airborne divisions arrived to relieve the siege.

The 9th Armored Division had no real combat experience. Troops had to contend with the weather; it was the coldest and snowiest winter since records had been kept. By fall, my dad realized that they would likely still be fighting during the winter. He wrote home and asked my grandfather to order and send him some Arctic boot liners. This protection likely saved his feet.

The Allies were widely spaced along the front. The three combat commands (CCA, CCB, CCR) of the 9th Armored Division fought separately. Units of the 9 ARMDD were attached to or fought with more major commands during the Battle of the Bulge than those of any other U.S. Army Division.

CCA – Was initially in the south at Beaufort, Luxembourg, then at Bastogne with the 4th Armored Division.

CCB – Fought in the north to delay the German capture of St. Vith.

CCR – Refers to Combat Command "Reserve." Ray Boyer was a part of this command. CCR fought in the center and aided in the defense of Bastogne December 19 - 30, having been instructed to hold the roadblocks at all cost and to the last man. Along with the 28th Infantry Division and CCB of the 10th Armored, they absorbed the first shock of the German attack and delayed the enemy for days, resulting in losses to the Germans of valuable time, terrain, combat power, and Bastogne.

Within two weeks the Americans stopped the German advance near the Meuse River in Belgium. The Battle of the Bulge was essentially over on January 25, 1945.

The Germans had lacked the troops and fuel to turn their push into a totally successful break-through, and they paid dearly in men, materiel, and morale. The total German casualties were about the same number as their initial assault force—almost 250,000. U.S. casualties were about 75,000. The Germans also lost about 600 tanks and about 1,600 airplanes.

During the Battle of the Bulge, U.S. forces did not have the benefit of prepared defenses, contended with dwindling supplies, and suffered heavy bombing, intense artillery fire, and constant infantry and armor attacks on all sides of their cut-off and encircled positions. It is estimated that every gun in the 9th Armored Division fired every 11 seconds for 11 days. Clerks, cooks, mechanics, drivers, and others manned the line even though they were outnumbered 5 to 1. All did their duty with a "do or die" attitude of commitment and sacrifice and functioned with very little sleep or food for days. Even so, they stopped every German attack during those days, interrupting the Germans' schedule to give time for the 101st and 82nd Airborne Divisions to arrive and lift the siege of Bastogne, and to save much of Luxembourg from another German invasion. But the really significant outcome of the Battle of the Bulge was that it very likely saved the Allies a great many more casualties. If the Germans

had just used the quarter of a million men they lost in the Battle of the Bulge to instead fortify and protect Germany itself, our losses within Germany certainly would have been much greater.

John McAvoy states that “sheer guts saved the allies in the Ardennes. Ninth Armored men are quietly and deeply proud of their part in that heroic defense.” CCR was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for collective combat heroism, having scored a victory that permitted other units to rally and set up positions to defend Bastogne. CCR was also awarded the Belgian Croix de guerre with Palm for bravery and military virtue on the battlefield.

The Battle of the Bulge had been bravely fought and won, with the Allies overcoming the German offensive by late January, 1945. Now think



Soldiers of the 9th Armored Division, with Ray Boyer at far right.

ahead to March 7. Imagine being a soldier of the 9th Armored Division, poised on the bluffs up on the east bank of the Rhine River, above a little town called Remagen. Imagine peering down over and across the river and seeing an intact bridge! A bridge leading eastward, toward the heart of Germany! After the Bulge, there had been much speculation: would American forces swim across, row across, or use a bridge to cross the Rhine? If

only that Ludendorff Bridge could be captured! Just imagine how that might affect the future direction and length of the war! But the troops had to wait—wait for directives, for official permission to take the bridge. If only word would come—and come soon. Just imagine. . .

Check out the rest of the story at www.battleofthebulge.org.

CERTAIN GIFTS ARE VALUED BEYOND THEIR PRICE, VERY FEW ARE “PRICELESS”

by Louise Endres Moore, BOBA member

During Christmas '44 of World War II, the 35 INFD passed through Metz, France. Fifty-seven years later, I used an address from the back page of a tiny military booklet to find a soldier, a beloved friend of my father, Alfred Endres. When I spoke with Ben Lane on the phone for the very first time, he said of my father, “I loved him like a brother. I was with him on Christmas Eve 1944.”

I knew the story Ben was about to share. It was one of the few we had been told about my father's tour of duty, and it involved a rose gold ring that said in French, “More than yesterday. Less than tomorrow.”

In 1944, the frigid Battle of the Bulge had erupted to the north, and the 35 INFD was being rushed to the Bastogne area. The troops stopped in Metz to bathe for the first time in two months, receive packages from home, pick up replacements, and have the luxury of sleeping on a cot rather than in a foxhole. By General Patton's personal order, the 35th was allowed to stay a day longer in Metz for Christmas dinner because the troops had been on the front line continuously for the previous 162 days.

While in Metz, the French manager of the bathhouse confided that he had nothing to give his children for Christmas, so Ben Lane and my father quietly delivered their army rations of fruit and chocolate to the manager's home

on Christmas Eve. They left quickly, so as not to be seen by the children. Ben said, “The manager started to cry and said he would see us when we came back from the fighting.”

Fortunately both soldiers survived the Battle of the Bulge and returned to Metz where Charles DeWald, the manager of the bathhouse, was able to reciprocate a gift for each of the soldiers. My dad received the ring while Ben was gifted a medallion.

Finding Ben after 57 years was a delight, but my hope of reuniting the two aging friends collapsed because of health concerns. My wish had been to find something joyful about the war because my father never found anything good about it. I hoped for him to be at peace and possibly to feel even a bit of pride. I had an idea.

My dad had told me the manager of the bathhouse in Metz travelled to the United States to swim. I wondered how many international swimmers could there be in 1944?

Online I stumbled upon the International Swimming Hall of Fame in Florida. There were no records from 1944, but I was kindly given the email for Fédération Française de Natation. From there, my request was forwarded to a man who would speak with elders in Metz.

Eight days after I had initiated my search, an



Alfred Endres (Lodi, WI), center, Ben Lane (Hustontown, PA), right, and William Notley's daughter believes her father is on the left.

email arrived, “I think I have found ‘our man’.” With translations from English to French and French to English, I connected with one of the children who remembered the ring from 1944. He wrote to the soldiers, “I truly thank you for your kindness.” To honor the soldiers' gifts during the bleak war-time Christmas, a basket of fruit and chocolate was sent to each soldier. During all my research to trace my father's tour of duty, finding one of the children from 1944 was probably the best Christmas gift I ever gave to my father. Indeed, it may have been priceless.

Louise Endres Moore is the author of Alfred: The Quiet History of a World War II Infantryman; www.AlfredtheBook.com

BULGE MEMORIES

BOBA has been collecting memories and photos from veterans who were there so many years ago. If you are a veteran member and have not been featured in our magazine before, we want to hear from you!



Lionel Adda 99 INFD 393 INF D

“Christmas Dinner on Elsenborn Ridge”

Today is my 99th birthday (January 17, 2021), so it seemed appropriate to write a short account of something that happened to me, a member of the 99th Infantry Division, during the Battle of the Bulge.

Late in the afternoon of December 19 what was left of the First Battalion of the 393rd Regiment, after three days of repelling German attacks and even being subjected to friendly fire, moved to occupy positions and holes prepared by the Engineers. We were dug in just at the eastern edge of Elsenborn Ridge and expected enemy action at any time. On the 21st we came under heavy mortar and artillery bombardment, but we did not suffer any infantry or tank attacks. A few days later in our sector two enemy attacks using assault guns were repelled by our artillery. A few days later after dark the Germans mounted an infantry attack up the Ridge, with some of their infantry coming into small arms fire range of our positions. This attack was repelled with the aid of two of our light tanks. Our positions suffered no further infantry attacks for the rest of the week, although artillery bombardments remained frequent.

If history serves me the Germans then shifted their attacks to the south of our positions, so some of us were moved to different locations somewhat more distant from the eastern edge of the Ridge. I recall that on Christmas Eve I was digging a hole to protect myself from mortar or artillery fire. It was quiet, with no sounds of small arms fire or artillery. On Christmas morning clouds began to disperse and through the mist I could see the sun rising to the southeast over the bell tower of the church in the town of Krinkelt. Krinkelt had been the headquarters of the 393rd Regiment but was now in German hands. I did not realize it then, but it was obvious that we were clearly visible to a German artillery observer in the church tower.

During this period our rations (C or K) and water were delivered at night. We did not have our ration for Christmas day, but very likely I had an extra K ration.

As the day wore on I started hearing artillery explosions, three or four closely spaced in time, but also some distance from my location. This pattern continued with the shells falling at locations closer to mine. Suddenly I looked up from my hole to see two GIs, with blood-shot eyes and carrying vermiculite-lined cans used by our kitchens to



(Above) Discarded artillery shell casings litter a U.S. artillery position on Elsenborn Ridge, and Lionel Adda (below).



deliver meals. One of the GIs handed me a turkey drumstick, the other a slice of white bread and two pieces of hard candy. This was our Christmas ration and dinner! I eagerly took a bite of the drumstick, surprisingly still warm, when three or four artillery shells began exploding around our location. Choking on that first bite I now understood what was happening. The Germans were tracking those men delivering the meal, and every time they stopped they knew that at least one man was located at that position. The kitchen men moved on to another location, and again the pattern of fire was repeated. This happened what seemed to me two more times, and I did not see the men after that. As I looked down at the line of positions I hoped that no one subjected to the bombardments was wounded or killed.

After thinking about this I felt a sense of anger that some officer, to be able tell his superiors that every man in his unit had turkey for Christmas, ordered something like this, placing men in danger unnecessarily. Also as an infantryman I must give my respect, grudgingly, to the German artillery team that managed such an attempt in the first place.

Lionel lives in Ohio and is a member of the Lehigh Valley BOBA Chapter.

Photo: Wikipedia/Unites States Army Center of Military History

★
Bill Meacham
99 INFD 393 REG 3 BN L

Over the years, my stepfather Bill Meacham told me countless stories about his service with the 99 INFD during WWII, and the vast majority of those were about his time fighting during the Battle of the Bulge. The following is one of the Bulge stories Bill told me that I've always found fascinating.

When Bill and 99th ID were on Elsenborn Ridge, defending and holding the Northern Shoulder of the Bulge against ferocious attacks from German Panzer and infantry units, Bill was also fighting a constant battle against the coldest, bitter winter conditions to hit northwest Europe in over 50 years. Even occupying and "sleeping" in the foxholes presented hazardous conditions. At night when Bill was lying in his foxhole, his body heat warmed the soil around him, which allowed the moisture to slowly drip downward from the walls of the foxhole. Then, the below-zero temperature air refroze the melted ground moisture, which



created monstrous looking icicles that resembled spikes from a pitchfork, that were pointed downward. Bill learned that he could not rise-up too quickly from the foxhole, or he would impale himself onto the ice pick sharp icicles.

During the day, the soil inside the foxhole refroze, but then each night the "ice pick conditions" repeated itself. Many a soldier had to be evacuated from Elsenborn Ridge due to trench foot, frostbite, hypothermia and even stab-wounds from protruding icicles.

Many years after the war, whenever freezing rain occurred, Bill would be diligent to immediately knock down any hanging icicles that would appear anywhere on his house, no matter the location, for the simple reason of "I prefer to not have to look at those daggers more than I already did." Bill passed away on September 22, 2020.

*—Submitted by Barry Eggleston,
BOBA member*

★
EMMANUEL LAMB
83 INFD 331 REG M

As an infantry replacement, I joined the 83 INFD 331 REG M (2nd platoon) in the Battle of the Bulge, in the Ardennes Forest in late December 1944. The Belgian towns I remember fighting through were Otter, Bihain, Langlir and Petite-Lenglir. Amidst terrible weather conditions of heavy snow and freezing temperatures and even with frostbite and living in foxholes in the woods, which lasted to about mid-January. I managed to somehow survive, with the help of God...

On April 16, 1945 at Hohenlepte, the Germans made one last counter-attack against us in the early morning hours before daylight. I remember this counter-attack clearly. I was stationed at a machine gun dug in, with another gun dug in about 20 yards apart. As it became partially daylight I could see several enemy tanks coming toward us, with infantry directly around these tanks crossing the field directly to our front. I opened fire first aiming at the tanks and then the other gunner "Jim" Leedy, opened fire. Both of us fired away at the enemy and just about then, our tanks and TD's behind our town opened up fire, shelling the enemy tanks and destroying several of them. I saw these tanks smoking and burning from direct hits. The enemy was stopped and could not advance and then came across the field with their hands up and surrendering...

Emmanuel received a Bronze Star for this engagement. He passed away on September 6, 2020.

This is an excerpt of Emmanuel's story, submitted by BOBA member Burt Gursky.



★ **REMEMBERING THE FALLEN** ★

BOBA has been collecting stories of those who were lost during the battle, so if you are a descendant or comrade of the fallen, please share about the soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice, so that we can honor them.

BULGE MEMORIES

★ Ron Kimler 9 AIR FORCE

At the time of my arrival the “Battle of the Bulge” had just begun... We had not flown for two months so we were anxious to get in the air again. Over the next week we were given two to three flights to get used to the aircraft and the area. The P-47 that our squadron was flying was a very sturdy aircraft. It was called the Thunderbolt and was originally designed for the Air Force by Republic Aircraft for high altitude combat. Our mission, however, called for low altitude support of tanks and ground troops. It was armed with eight fifty-caliber machine guns and capable of carrying one 500 or two 250-pound bombs and was a real fighting machine. The new arrivals had never fired all the guns because ammunition in the states was rationed. Before leaving to go overseas we were only allowed to fire at targets with two of the eight loaded guns.

Our base was called Y-29 and was located near Asch, Belgium. There were three fighter squadrons assigned to the group—mine was the 389th, the 390th and the 391st. We were all assigned to the 9th and 29th TAC’s (tactical air commands) with the responsibility of supporting the British troops and, as the conflict developed, the tanks commanded by General Patton. We operated off a single runway made of pierced planking. The steel pieces of planking were interlocked and formed a usable excuse for a runway. I would guess that we had between 3,500 to 4,000 feet with which to work, long enough to get airborne with a full bomb and ordinance load, plus adequate fuel for the assigned mission. I joined the squadron the day after the Germans had strafed the field on New Year’s Day. This was to be expected considering that we were only twelve miles from the front. From that day on we always had two aircrafts warmed up, armed and ready. Everyone sat alert duty when we were not scheduled to fly a mission...

Finally the big day arrived when I was scheduled to fly my first mission. They put me in the #2 slot in a four-ship formation. The #2 man was always the least experienced. Later he would become #4, and after getting considerable experience he moved to the element leader in slot #3. Without going into too much detail, the four ships stayed together until a target was spotted, or until we encountered enemy aircraft. At that time the leader and #2 slot worked together and #3 and 4 were a team. It was the responsibility of the flight leader and #3 man to search for targets and plan the attacks while the #2 and 4 positions watched for enemy aircraft. It was their duty to protect their leaders at all cost.

Our briefing began with an intelligence officer reading the orders for the day and outlining the area called the bomb line. It was approximately where the front lines were believed to be. More often than not there was a substantial difference in where it was supposed to be and where it actually was. The German counter attack was well planned and the conditions at the front lines were very fluid. We had to be very careful not to bomb or strafe the good guys. Following the intelligence officer,



the flight leader briefed us. We synchronized our watches and discussed start up signals, taxi protocol, mission details and individual responsibilities. Then it was on to the parachute tent to make sure we had our 45 caliber handgun strapped on and had our escape kit...

I would like to tell you that I eagerly jumped into the cockpit and was not at all nervous, but that was not the way it was. One should realize that we really had no clue as to what was to happen. I would guess that we had only about 300 hours of flying time at this time. We also probably had less than 50 hours of P-47 experience, and here we were about to take on the Germans. It is a good assumption to note that I was nervous and apprehensive. We took off without incident and the four of us joined

in battle formation. This is a fairly loose formation that allows everyone to properly search for targets or watch for enemy fighters without worrying about running into each other. It was a bright, cold day and the visibility was excellent. As we headed toward the Ruhr valley I was lulled into the notion that this was going to be a piece of cake. Just then I saw a flash on the ground and was witnessing something I could not believe. I actually saw a shell fired at us and arching up but a long way in front. I was

thinking how stupid of the Germans, but as I watched almost transfixed, the shell looked as though it was curving toward us. Suddenly it appeared to be coming right at us and then I heard a “CRACK” as it exploded off my left wing. I couldn’t believe that the son of a gun was firing at me. From that time on the war was real and serious. I do not really remember much of what we did the rest of the mission except that we were shooting up a convoy. I was so intent on staying close to the leader that I ended up with several holes in my left wing, not from flak or enemy fire, but from shell casings falling from the leader’s expended ammunition. This was dumb on my part and I never got that close again. The other thing I will never forget from the first mission was the incredible firepower of the eight machine guns. I never could have imagined the incredible effect on a truck, train or vehicle. They seemed to melt anything in range. A truck would literally disappear if we got in a sustained burst...

I did not get to spend too much time thinking about my first mission. Following the debriefing by the flight leader I was then scheduled for my second mission 45 minutes later. This time I was a bit more relaxed and made fewer mistakes. From that time on we all felt more comfortable with the missions and the inevitable battle damage. While we never really got over the loss of a friend, we fully understood the reality of the obvious. Every evening everyone was at the club either celebrating some real or imagined great deed we were supposed to have accomplished, or we were trying to ease the pain of losing someone with whom we had shared breakfast that morning...

Ron Kimler lives in Richmond, Virginia and is a member of the BOBA Crater Chapter.

★

S/Sgt. Guyowen H. Howard

80 INF 317 INF CO B

26 December 1944 – last day in combat – After a cold sleepless night we hit the road at about 6 o'clock. It was still dark. We walked to the east and circled north along a big bank looking down into a deep ravine. We finally held up in a wooded patch just on the edge of a field. In front of us were tanks and the infantry boys of L Co. 2nd Bn. Artillery and mortar were coming in. There were dead and wounded every place. Tanks were burning and planes were overhead. One Jerry plane came from the east but a couple of P-38 got on his tail and in two minutes, the Jerry was headed into old mother earth. The pilot must have been hit because he never tried to get out. We waited around sometime. Once in a while some one would get hit from shrapnel. One man had a piece go through his steel helmet and you could see his brains pushing out the top of his head. But it wasn't too bad. A runner came up from the rear with a walkie talkie and asked me if I would take it to the C.O. who was up front with L Co. Coming out of the woods to the last small hill south of Chammont and where L Co. was dug in I see the C. O. and handed him the radio. Then I sat in an already dug foxhole near the edge of the road coming up out of the ravine. Once in a while a shell would come in close but I just hit the bottom of the hole and came up after the explosion. I had an extra pair of socks so thought I would make a change. As I got one shoe off a German came from my right front with his hands up. He had surrendered and the boys just sent him back. I told him to sit down in the hole beside me while I finished changing my socks. He asked if he could take his shoes off, so I let him. I asked him how Hitler was, he no compre. He was a young kid about 16 yr of age, neatly shaved and his hair was just cut, but his feet were coming through the soles of his shoes and he was afraid. Some lieutenant came past and give me hell for letting the Jerry sit in the hole with me, but I told him he was my prisoner and I would take care of him. After I got my shoes on, I told him to put his back on and started back. I never was rough with them, I figured neither one of us was there because we wanted to be. Of course this didn't go over so big with the other boys. Before I got back to the wooded spot where the rest of the Co. was, I had 27 more Jerries who had joined in with the one I already had. I tried to get someone to take them back to the town in the rear but no one would go. Finally a lieutenant from a tank which was knocked out, who



was wounded, said he had to go back anyway so I let him have the job. I went back to my hole.

We waited around all the rest of the day. Our own wounded were coming back on and off all day. Some were being carried by Germans who had surrendered. Late in the afternoon we got the order to dig in near where the boys had been sitting around all day in the woods. No more had we got dug in than the order came that we would have to relieve L Co. It was about 4 P.M. L Co. moved back through us. The poor boys had taken quite a beating. We moved up and dug in just below the top of the hill. I was on the right and the last hole. Hall was in back of me and the other men were on an even line to my left. After we had been dug in sometime, the call came for litter bearers to get 4 tankers who were wounded to our direct front, more to the left from me. I did not volunteer, I don't know why, but I just sat in my hole and 4 other men went. Soon Collins and the lieutenant came up. Collins gave Hall his Luger pistol and said he and the lieutenant were going up over the hill and he had a feeling he wouldn't be needing it any more. The platoon was to move up as soon as they had looked over the situation. Soon I heard the lieutenant call for help. I told Hall I was going up to help. He said don't do it, but I went anyway. As I worked my way up to the lieutenant, I finally got close enough to ask him if he was hit. He said no but Collins was.

Collins was about 75 yds out ahead. I told the officer to keep me covered and I worked up toward Collins. Soon as I got close enough, I asked him where he was hit. He said in the guts. I didn't dare to move him, so I worked back and got a medic. The medic and I started toward Collins but was fired on. I located where the shots were coming from and kept the bastard down while the medic got Collins back to the rear and below the hill. Then I told the Lieutenant he had better get out. I said when you start out of that hole, take off like a bat out of hell. It was his first 3 days of combat. After he was off the hill,

I took off. There was no one to cover me and I got one through the coat collar.

But no damage was done. I got back to my fox hole and about 10 minutes later, without warning, I was knocked cold. I wasn't out long and it was lucky I wasn't because the blood was running out a good flow. I was covered. I got my first aid packet out and slapped it against my cheek and took off for the medic. When I got there, Hall was dying and two of the other boys were in bad shape. The medic was busy and I wasn't too bad off but another medic came up from the rear and fixed me up. We were only about 100 yards back of my fox hole under a bank. The medic wanted me to lie down but I said no. Then I happened to think of my pistol in my pack. I took off up and got it and when I came back I dragged my pack with me. I made up my mind no Goddamn German was going to eat my K-rations or sleep under a blanket and shelter which I had taken with me that morning. I brought them back and gave them to the boys and started to the rear on foot. I was picked up by a jeep and taken to an aid station about 7 miles back. When I got there, Collins was there also. Only he was lying on a stretcher. That was the end of that.

S/Sgt. Guyowen Howard lived the rest of his life in pain, but continued to work at the General Electric Company and took an early retirement at age 60. He died in 2000 at the age of 89. Collins survived and also lived his life in pain and died in 1989. Hall died. Hall told Howard he was dying. Howard later said that Hall didn't have a mark on him--Howard figured he died when the concussion of the shell got his heart out of rhythm.

—Submitted by Gayalyn Wojtowicz, BOBA member and daughter of Guyowen Howard

A HISTORY OF W. MICHIGAN CHAPTER (23) 1992 – 2020



Chapter 23 members gathered at a Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge monument (left), and frequently participated in local parades (above).

In 1992, a company of friends, all survivors of a seminal WWII campaign, began the process of establishing a local chapter of veterans of that battle. On June 23, 1992, Robert E Kutschu, Stephen Kozelko, Richard Rizzio, Fred Korb, James Pekkala, Louis E. Muse, Wayne Mentier and Maury Cole became the founding members of the nationally affiliated Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge West Michigan Chapter #23.

The membership ranks grew to 36. For 24 years, the chapter officers presided over monthly business meetings held at the VFW Cherryland Post 2780 in Traverse City. Topics discussed were combat caused disabilities, receiving and disbursing donations, scheduling presentations of their histories at community events and schools, projects, parade participation, and Chapter picnics and socials. Upon meeting adjournment, there was an open bar, engaging military stories and a time to share personal news. Their gracious wives were partners in dining projects and social planning, and often attended their presentations and fundraisers. Marie Rizzio had won national cooking contests, and Maxxine Pekkala was adept at high quality and quantity cooking. At meals, observing the cleanliness of the POWs plates was notable. Having had eaten charcoal, and a German prison camp feral cat raw, POWs Bill Nemecek and Wayne Mentier

remained grateful for every meal.

Bill and Wayne discovered they had more in common than only the POW experience during the war. They had been in rival gangs as teens in Detroit's Corktown neighborhood, and likely had "rumbled" in an alley or vacant lot.

Visiting schools in their Army uniforms, walking the halls to the students respectful applause, answering probing questions, and later receiving thank-you notes from the students gratified the Vets. On Bulge Veterans lecture days, smiling teachers would say "that's the best the kids have been all year." The Veterans illustrated their lectures with maps, photos, and artifacts. After explaining the Battle, they read students' questions and answered them expansively, making sure students understood the gravity and consequences of combat. Jim Wibby silently exhibited his four fingered hand. A tightened face, a quick wipe of an eye, a stammering word search for a painful memory were observed by full classrooms. The kids learned about digging a foxhole, and sleeping in a big wool coat under a shelter half on frozen ground. At the end, Richard Rizzio would lighten the atmosphere by explaining how to catch a chicken and cook it in a helmet while crouching in a muddy foxhole.

Traverse City's annual National Cherry Festival Parade always included the Bulge Veterans. Humvees displaying VBOB banners

and flags came from the Michigan National Guard Camp in Grayling. The VBOB banners brought prolonged standing ovations and hats-off along the entire parade route. Children to seniors saluted or covered their hearts. Rizzio was chosen Grand Marshal in 2009, and flew in a P-51 during a flight demonstration.

Chapter Treasurer Jim Pekkala successfully led the drive to purchase and install a large granite monument with a message and VBOB logo. It took some time to generate the substantial funds needed. His committee members approached donors in person as they felt a private interaction gave donors ownership. The Chapter had also worked long and hard to convince the Traverse City City Commission a proper Veterans Park was needed, and it was eventually approved.

Over time, health decline and relocation reduced the membership and meeting attendance. Sometimes only two attended. Meetings had been up to two hours long with a lively agenda, but slowly the agenda disappeared. Doctor appointments became the sole subject. The men discussed mortality realities openly and frankly. Comrade's funerals were taken in stride as members endured a trusted friend's loss. Many had lived with combat acquired chronic discomforts, often exacerbated by northern Michigan's winter cold. The December 16th annual supper became challenging due to difficulties with night driving on icy roads, so they moved the reunion to noon. Richard Rizzio had relocated three hours away, and was the last Bulge Vet to attend the reunion in 2018. He passed away a week later.

The Chapter's descendants and friends

continue to meet on December 16th at noon for lunch at the Park Place Hotel in Traverse City. Toasts and hugs, laced with phenomenal enduring memories saturate the reunion.

EPILOGUE

Bulge Veteran Fred Faulkner has moved to Florida, is involved with community military events, and has written "The Ardennes March" as a tribute to those lost in the Battle of the Bulge. The audio video orchestral performance can be found under a web search "Ardennes

March Faulkner" then select the VIDEOS tab. His last two successful music tributes are the "Pearl Harbor Memorial" and the "Viet Nam Tribute."

The Michigan Chapter's scrapbook is locked in the Traverse Area District Library, Call Number 1182.021412, Accession Number 1111028993667.

Traverse City *Record-Eagle* newspaper journalist Loraine Anderson was invited to every function by the Chapter. She understood, appreciated, and honored the men personally

and through many captivating newspaper feature articles. The men adoringly appreciated her sincerity and compassion. She was a deeply valued friend to the Chapter.

—Written by Tom Mountz, Past Chapter President, with Betsy Gits. The full article, with photos and memorabilia, is located at www.battleofthebulge.org. Past BOBA National President Gary Higgins is organizing meetings to revive the chapter with descendant members. Contact betsy.boba@gmail.com if you are interested.

BROTHERS IN THE WAR

by Steve Savage, President/Treasurer of the Lehigh Valley Chapter (55)

In the beginning of the coldest winter that Europe had ever seen in many years, the German 6th Panzer Army began their march December 16, 1944 through Belgium at the start of the largest land battle known as the Battle of the Bulge. Standing in their way were the men of the 99 INFD and the soldiers of the 2 INFD, the Indianhead Division. Their job was to hold and defend the area called the Twin Villages, the towns of Krinkelt and Rothenrath, Belgium, just East of the Ridge known as Elsenborn.



George E. Folk, brother of Bulge Vet Donald W. Folk, and Lehigh Valley Chapter member

Part of that unit of the men from the 2 INFD was a Private from Reading, PA, Donald W. Folk. He was an Infantryman from Company C, 38th Regiment, Field Artillery Battalion. Donald had done some of his training at Camp Haan, CA, part of Battery A, 316th AAA Battalion. While there, he spent many a day writing letters to his family. He was one of 10 children and wrote many a letter back and forth to his mother and brother, fellow WWII veteran and Navy man George E. Folk. Donald was a kind-hearted character, and often tried to censor his own letters to his family while in the States, probably just to have fun with the real US Army censors. He even used to sign some of his letters, "The Future Doughboy."

During the Bulge on December 17th, 1944, Private Folk's unit (3rd Platoon of 2 INFD 38 REG C), sent two squads of men to occupy two farmhouses in the town of Rothenrath to give adequate warning of the approaching German

forces. The men had only been in the farmhouse for a short time when they heard the sound of tanks and German troops drawing near. With German SS Panzer grenadiers surrounding his farmhouse, PFC John T. Fisher and the rest of the squad were sent reeling, and PVT Donald Folk was wounded in both legs. Before any of the seven men in the house could escape, the Germans entered, capturing Fisher and five others. Marching the prisoners outside, the Germans asked if anyone else was inside the building. One of the men told an officer about the wounded man still inside, and carrying a machine pistol, the SS man entered the home. Moments later, there was a burst of automatic gunfire and the German came out alone.

PFC Fisher was wounded during the attack, survived the war and actually returned to Germany after the war to testify at the war crimes trials. PVT Donald W. Folk was laid to rest in Belgium but later brought home to rest with his family in Allentown, PA.

George Folk was extremely proud of his brother Donald and had recently joined the local Lehigh Valley Chapter #55 of the Battle of the Bulge Association in his honor. Sadly, US Navy Master Chief Petty Officer George E. Folk passed away in November 2020. He was a gentle man and a true patriot, and a huge supporter of the Battle of the Bulge veterans. All of us in our chapter will miss his presence and smile.

MORE LEHIGH VALLEY CHAPTER NEWS



Although they have not been meeting during the pandemic, Lehigh Valley Chapter President/Treasurer Steve Savage has been keeping busy visiting veterans. Pictured with Steve (above right) is Dick Cole (above left), who was co-pilot for Jimmy Doolittle in the raid on Tokyo in 1944.

And, pictured below is Charles Kukoda, who our History Project group interviewed recently. He was WWII Army and believed he witnessed part of the Malmedy Massacre. He passed a few weeks after we spoke to him.

Find Chapter 55 by searching "Lehigh Valley Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge" on Facebook.



HOUSE WHERE CO ROCKY MOUNTAIN CHAPTER (39) PRESIDENT HID FROM THE GERMANS FOUND!

The following is an excerpt of an email sent to President of the Colorado Chapter, Bulge veteran Wayne Field. Wayne stated, "After about 75 years I received this email giving me answers that I haven't had before. WOW!!! I expect now to learn more about his great grandfather. The record shows that the 6th Armored Division chased the Nazis out of there the day I was there, and the only American there. I guess I had something to do with getting rid of the Nazis."

Dear Sir Wayne Field,

I hope this e-mail will find the Wayne Field I am looking for. The Wayne Field that served the US military in WWII in West Europe and eventually in Germany. More precisely in the small city Hessisch Lichtenau located in the state Hesse in middle Germany. If you are the person, then you'll probably already know what story I am talking about.

First off, I hope you are doing well! My name is Valentin Kliebe, I am 22 years old, go to College in South Carolina but was raised in the house you were looking for, but couldn't find, when you visited this small town years ago. We as a family passed along from generation to generation the story how you were hidden in our house to protect you from the German Soldiers. I was told this story many times by my grandparents and by my mom as well. We believe it is a shame that our city was not able to show you the place that saved your life. You were so close... the city mayor's office is literally just about 200 yards away. I want you to know that we all would have been excited to show you this place, we all believe you deserve to see this place. We are proud

that my great grandfather was brave enough to hide and help you!

Today, my mother found an old newspaper article reporting about your visit from years ago including a picture of you and the mayor. I will attach a picture of it to this email. This article gave me at least some information like your full name, your wife's name, and that you are from Colorado Springs, CO. That's all I got and will try to use this information to do further research to find a way to contact you!

I really hope this email will find you! Hearing back from you would mean a lot to all of us! We would love to give you more information, pictures, etc. about this time.

Best regards, Valentin Kliebe



The Kliebe family home (right) in Hessisch Lichtenau, Germany, where Wayne Field (above) was hidden from the Nazis during WWII.



CA GOLDEN GATE CHAPTER (10) MEMBER RECEIVES GOLD MEDAL FOR CHINESE-AMERICAN VETERANS



NOW (left): Ken Mar in November 2020 with his Congressional Gold Medal for Chinese-American WWII veterans, and THEN (above.)

Ken Mar (2 INFD 23 REG 3 BN), a member the Golden Gate Chapter, received a Gold Medal for his WWII service in November. He also received a Bronze Star for his heroism, as well as the European Campaign Medal. The Gold Medal is one of the highest honors the United States Congress can award civilians, and it often goes to military veterans. Ken was one of 10 people to receive the special Congressional Gold Medal for Chinese-American WWII veterans, made possible by a 2018 Congressional Act to recognize Chinese American contributions to the war.

Ken missed the onset of the Battle of the Bulge by 2 days because he was in Belgium—he had just been discharged from the hospital and was waiting to be picked up to return to his Division. When he returned to the front, he found out that most of his Division had been annihilated in battle but it kept going with replacements. At the end of Feb, 1945, he and 2 of his buddies were captured by the Germans. He was taken to Stalag XIII A in Limburg, Germany and was there until V-E Day, May 8. He says he feels very lucky to be alive today. He lives in Sacramento, CA with May, his wife of 72 years. They have 1 son, 2 daughters and 2 grandchildren. We are very proud of Ken!

—Submitted by Doris Davis, Golden Gate Chapter President

To read Mar's experience as described to a local newspaper, search for: "95-year-old Sacramento Chinese American awarded Congressional Gold Medal for WWII service."

MONUMENTS COMMEMORATE THE BATTLE OF THE BUGLE



Photo: Jean-Pol Grandmont

ABMC ACCEPTS BATTLE OF THE BULGE MONUMENT AS 31ST FEDERAL MONUMENT

In December 2020, the American Battle Monuments Commission officially accepted the Battle of the Bulge Monument as their 31st Federal Monument. Known before as the Mardasson Memorial (above), the monument stands as a tribute of the Belgian people to the American soldiers who died during the Battle of the Bulge. The ABMC will assume responsibility for preserving, for generations to come, this heartfelt tribute from the people of Belgium to the American Soldier. The newly named Battle of the Bugle Monument at Mardasson is the sole memorial commemorating all American forces who fought during the Battle of the Bulge.

ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

Two of our PA Delaware Valley Chapter veterans Benjamin Berry, T5 Quartermaster Corps, 3rd Army (front row, left), and Jacob Ruser, 4 INFD 12 REG 2 BN MED (far right), laid wreaths in ANC to commemorate the end of the battle and those who sacrificed their lives 76



Photo: Andy Waskie

years ago. THANK YOU for your service, Ben and Jacob!

Also in attendance were Belgian Ambassador to the U.S., Jean-Arthur Régibeau, Ambassador Gaston Stronck of Luxembourg to the U.S. and Ambassador Ronald Gidwitz, former US ambassador to Belgium, BOBA Chairman of the Board Alan Cunningham, BOBA VP of Chapters Andy Waskie, and Chapter 4's members Albert El, Andre McCoy and Scott Sigman. Thank you all!

**BOBA has monuments across the US and Europe.
You can find a listing at [www.battleofthebulge.org/
photo-gallery/vbob-memorials](http://www.battleofthebulge.org/photo-gallery/vbob-memorials).**

Visit one and send us a photo of yourself!

PA DELAWARE VALLEY CHAPTER (4) NEWS



The Delaware Valley Chapter recently mourned the loss of veteran member Matt Reluga (pictured, left, along with the Bulge Vets wreath displayed at his service, below). His niece Joanne Moss wrote a beautiful tribute to him in the last issue of the *Bugle* (Fall 2020). He will be missed!

At a recent meeting, the Chapter celebrated the 97th birthday of Veteran member Ben Berry (pictured on the cover and at bottom right). Ben, along with Chapter members, Albert El, Andre McCoy, Scott Sigman, Jacob Ruser, and Andy Waskie, travelled to DC on January 25, 2021, to commemorate the 76th anniversary of the end of battle by laying a wreath at the Battle of the Bulge memorial in Arlington National Cemetery.

The Chapter remains very active and meets in person on the last Wednesday of each month at the Chapel of the 4 Chaplains at the Philadelphia Navy Yard. COVID-19 restrictions apply (social distancing and masks). The group's officers include Andy Waskie (President), Lisette Tarragano (Memorial Committee), Patricia Lowe (Secretary), Sean Owens (Treasurer) and Joanne Moss (Newsletter Editor). If you are interested in attending a meeting, contact Chapter President Andy Waskie at awaski01@gmail.com.



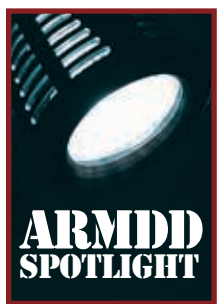
VA CRATER CHAPTER (43) MEMBER SEARCHING FOR FATHER'S HISTORY

Roland (Pete) Peterson (2 INFD 38 REG - "The Indianheads") served at the Battle of the Bulge and "Bloody Bucket." His son Ron, a member of Crater Chapter, has been researching his father's history. His father "Pete" never spoke of the horrors of the war. According to Ron, when he asked him about the war, his father began to cry, so Ron never asked again. Pete never spoke of his awards: The Bronze Star, Victory Medal and Combat Infantryman Badge. Pete was from Roanoke Rapids, NC and was 21 years old during the war. He served 2 years and lived a long life until he passed in 2007 at age 83. Not much is known about his service, but according to research, Pete's unit fought in an offensive campaign at the Roer River Dams on the "eastern front" and was quickly switched to a critical defensive role in holding the "northern shoulder" in Belgium. If you have information about Roland (Pete) Peterson or the 2 INFD 38 REG combat history, please email Ron at Ronaldw.peterson@comcast.net.



**SEND YOUR CHAPTER NEWS TO:
betsy.boba@gmail.com Deadline: March 26, 2021**

8TH ARMDD ASSOCIATION “THUNDERING HERD”



The 8th Armored Division Association (incorporated 2011) supports the preservation of the history of the 8th Armored Division and the gallant service and heroic sacrifices of the men of this unit in defeating tyranny to preserve our freedom in WWII. BOBA recognizes the 8 ARMDD's participation during the Battle of the Bulge and supports the mission of their division association. A few of the original veterans of the 8th Armored Division and descendants

have continued to memorialize the record of the “Thundering Herd” by keeping the association active and promoting their efforts.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE 8TH ARMORED DIVISION IN WWII

Activated: 1 April 1942

Overseas: 7 November 1944

Major Operations: Rhineland, Ardennes, Alsace, Central Europe

Days of combat: 63

Awards: SS-143; LM-4; BSM-825; AM-23

Commanders: Maj. Gen. William M. Grimes (April 1942-September 1944), Maj. Gen. John M. Devine (October 1944-August 1945), Brig. Gen. Charles F. Colson (August 1945 to inactivation)

Returned to US: Nov 10, 1945

Inactivated: Nov 14, 1945

After training at Tidworth, England, the 8 ARMDD landed in France, starting on January 1, 1945. Then Division raced 350 miles across France to Pont-a-Mousson to help stem the German drive for Strasbourg and the Bulge salient but, was halted and went into training. Elements of the 88th Cavalry Reconnaissance Battalion and the 53rd Armored Engineers were engaged in the Battle of the Bulge, until in mid-January one element, Combat Command A, took part in the Third Army drive against the Moselle-Saar salient, supporting the 94 INFD attack on Nennig, Berg, and Sinz, 19-28 January 1945. On 19 February the Division moved to Roermond, Holland, and launched a diversionary attack, pushing the enemy north of the Heide woods and east of the Roer River. The 8 ARMDD crossed the Roer, 27 February, and began its drive to the Rhine, taking Tetelrath, Oberkruchten, and



On Thanksgiving 1944, the men of the 8 ARMDD were in training at Tidworth Barracks, England, preparing for transfer to combat in ETO.



Lintfort in hard fighting. After a period of rest and training in mid-March, the Division crossed the Rhine, 26 March, and attacked Dorsten, which was cleared in the face of stubborn resistance.

It crossed the Lippe River and entered the battle for the Ruhr Pocket, taking Neuhaus and cleaning out the Soest sector.

The Division then shifted south to Wolfenbuttel, mopping up resistance in the area, continued south to Blankenburg, clearing the Harz Mountain region. On 23 April the Division went on occupation duty in the Harz Mountain area. In June, 1945 the Division was transferred to the 3rd Army and was stationed in the Pilsen region of Western Czechoslovakia on occupation duties until November, 1945, when the last elements of the Division were sent home and the unit was deactivated.

TO LEARN MORE: Visit www.8th-armored.org and visit them on Facebook—search “8th Armored Division.”

JOIN THE 8th ARMORED DIVISION ASSOCIATION by contacting Andy Waskie, Jr. at 8thArmoredDivision@gmail.com. Anyone interested in their mission can join.

ATTEND THE 8 ARMDD 2021 REUNION: May 14-16, 2021 (deadline to register is 4/19/21.) The group will tour the new Museum of the Army at Ft. Belvoir and attend a dedication of a Memorial Granite plaque to the 8th Armored Division, which will be on permanent display there. The reunion will also include a wreath-laying in Arlington, a banquet and a tour of DC to see the new Eisenhower Memorial, WWI, WWII and Korea memorials and related sites. Visit www.8th-armored.org to register.

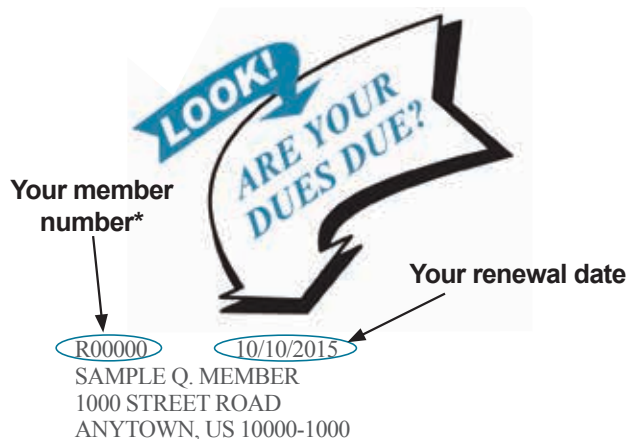
SUPPORT CONSTRUCTION OF 8 ARMDD MEMORIALS: Funds are being raised to erect a bronze memorial plaque to be placed at the Army Heritage & Education Center (AHEC) at the Army War College in Carlisle, PA. It is a beautiful bronze sculpture of elements of the 8th Armored Division in action in the spring of 1945 in Germany. All members and friends of the 8th Armored Division Association are encouraged to make a donation. Visit www.8th-armored.org for more information.



A group of soldiers of the 88th Cavalry Recon Battalion in a “greyhound” M-8 armored scout car in combat in the Ardennes.

WHEN ARE MY DUES DUE?

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***PLEASE NOTE:** If your member number starts with the letter "L," you are a LIFE MEMBER, and therefore you do not owe any more dues. However, please consider an annual donation to help support our good cause!

Join the 83 INFD Association

The *Thunderbolt* Winter edition is devoted to the 83 INFD's role in the Battle of the Bulge. **Any member of the Battle of the Bulge Association® who joins, whether as an Associate, Legacy or Regular member, will now receive a \$5 discount on membership.** Sign up at www.83rdassociation.com and get your copy, plus another edition later in the Spring. Also, join them for their 2021 reunion on track for the Washington D.C. area, July 28 – 31, 2021. BOBA members are invited to attend. For more details: www.83rdassociation.com



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Battle of the Bulge Association®, Inc.
P.O. Box 330
Mechanicsville, VA 23111-0330

YOU CAN JOIN OR RENEW ONLINE:
www.battleofthebulge.org
Click on "Join BOBA/Renew"

Veteran membership is for those who have received the Ardennes campaign credit. **Membership** is for relatives, historians or others with an interest in preserving the memory of the Battle of the Bulge. Both have the same rights and privileges. **NOTE: Memberships are \$20 per year.**

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(wife, son, daughter, niece, etc. or N/A)

The Bulge Vet's Name and Units _____

Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____

Please make check or money order payable to BOBA, Inc. Mail with form to above address. Questions? 703-528-4058



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WINTER 2021

BOBA Reunion ★ October 2021
CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA
Read more on page 11.

WE NEED YOUR HELP! As with all non-profit organizations, BOBA depends on the generosity of our donors to help support our mission. Please consider a donation to help sustain our mission of perpetuating the memory of the sacrifices made by those who fought in the Battle of the Bulge. You can also use the membership form on the inside cover if you have an address update or want to include a gift subscription to our magazine. All donations are tax deductible and are listed in *The Bulge Bugle*[®]. Battle of the Bulge Association[®], Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. Donations can be made online at www.battleofthebulge.org > donate OR complete the form below and include a check made payable to: Battle of the Bulge Association, PO Box 330, Mechanicsville, VA, 23111.

Donation Amount: \$25 \$50 \$100 OTHER **Your Name:** _____

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