

The BULGE BUGLE®

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

VOLUME XLII NUMBER 3

THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

FALL 2023



**OUR VETERANS CELEBRATE
100TH
BIRTHDAYS**

PLUS: OUR 41ST ANNUAL REUNION





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

The Battle of the Bulge Association® (BOBA) 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; and support Chapters of BOBA. BOBA is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. Donations to BOBA are tax-deductible.

The Bulge Bugle® is the official publication of the Battle of the Bulge Association®, Inc.

Editor: Leon Reed
(EMAIL: boba.editor@gmail.com)

BOBA MEMBERSHIP OFFICE

Send all correspondence relating to membership and all BOBA matters to:

EMAIL: BobaMembership@gmail.com
Battle of the Bulge Association®, Inc.; P.O. Box 330,
Mechanicsville, VA 23111-0330

VISIT THE BOBA WEB SITE: www.battleofthebulge.org
FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK!

BOBA, INC. BOARD ELECTED OFFICERS (2023)

President and CEO: John Mohor
Executive Vice President: Barbara Mooneyhan
Vice President Membership: Doug Howard
Vice President Chapters: Dr. Andy Waskie
Vice President Military & Veteran Affairs: Kevin Hinkle
Treasurer: Ken Larke
Recording Secretary: Gail Larke

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD:
Alan Cunningham

PRESIDENT EMERITUS:
David Bailey, 106th INFD

ELECTED BOARD MEMBERS

Madeleine Bryant, Chaplain
Kristen Faller
Steven Landry
Craig Stiegmeier
Jim Triesler, Historian

APPOINTED OFFICERS

(non-voting)
Correspondence Coordinator: Mary Ann Coates Smith
Public Relations: Gary Higgins, Immediate Past President
Social Media Manager: Caroline Paviot
Webmaster: Carl Carraway

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 BobaMembership@gmail.com for their local meeting times and contact information.

CALIFORNIA

Golden Gate (10): Doris Davis

CONNECTICUT

Yankee Chapter (40):
Richard Egan

INDIANA

Central Indiana (47):
Chris Schneider

KANSAS

Kansas (69): Greg Penfield

MICHIGAN

West Michigan (23):
Gary Higgins

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

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):
Nelson McLeod

VERMONT-NEW HAMPSHIRE-MAINE

Tri-State (17): Edward Deverell

VIRGINIA

Crater (43):
Mary Ann Coates Smith

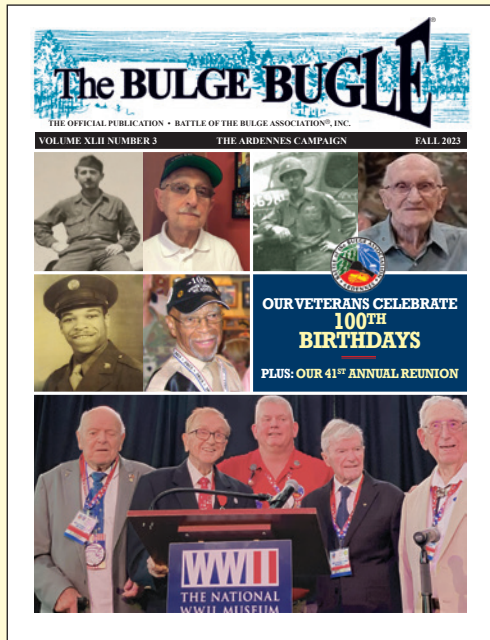
WASHINGTON

Northwest (6): Jim Pennock

**Do You Have a New Chapter President?
Or a President in Transition?
Forming a New Chapter? Let Us Know!**

**PLEASE SEND CHAPTER
UPDATES TO:
boba.editor@gmail.com**

ON THE COVER



Top left photos: Bulge veteran Ralph Dinin celebrated 100th birthday. *Read more about Dinin on page 18.*

Top right photos: Bulge veteran Frank Chambers celebrated 100th birthday. *Read more about Chambers on page 18.*

Middle photos: Bulge veteran Ben Berry celebrated 100th birthday. *Read more about Berry on page 19.*

Bottom photo: Bulge veterans at New Orleans: Joe Landry, David Bailey, President John Mohor, Bob Welsh, Gerald White. *Read more about the New Orleans reunion on pages 8-9.*

How to submit stories for *The Bulge Bugle*®

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

Stories and letters: Please email or send typewritten (not handwritten) text whenever possible, and limit word count to 500 words or fewer. 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: boba.editor@gmail.com, or by mail: Battle of the Bulge Association®, Inc, P.O. Box 330, Mechanicsville, VA 23111-0330

NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE: JANUARY 26, 2024

QUESTIONS? Please contact *Bugle* editor Leon Reed at boba.editor@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)

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INCOMING BOBA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Steve Landry

Happy Holidays to one and all! On behalf of all the recently elected officers and Board members, I wish to thank each of you for your trust and support as we lead BOBA into 2024, a year of transition.

To ensure the survival of the organization, the membership approved significant changes to the BOBA Bylaws at the November 4, 2023 General Membership Meeting. Beginning with this issue of *The Bulge Bugle*®, only Veteran members (i.e. Veterans who served during the Battle of the Bulge) will receive printed and mailed copies of the *Bugle* as part of their membership. All other members, (including non-Veteran Lifetime members) will only receive the *Bugle* electronically via email or by accessing the BOBA website. Therefore it is critical we have an email address to which we can send your copy of the *Bugle*. Note that printed copies of the *Bugle* will be available for purchase online from the Quartermaster Store for a price to be set each year by the Finance Committee (currently \$20 including postage.)

The membership also approved a change to the way we collect association dues. Dues for the upcoming calendar year (2024) are due by the beginning of the year (January 1, 2024.) The current rate is \$20 per year for Veteran members and \$40 per year for non-Veteran members.

We will also be making changes to the way we conduct the General Membership meetings. We are currently investigating accessible online voting solutions that enable all eligible



2024 BOBA President Steve Landry (right), with his father, Bulge Veteran Joe Landry (left).

members to vote in an accurate and timely manner. Meeting invitations and election materials will be emailed to all eligible members for whom we have a valid email address on file. We will not be sending any invitations or ballots via the Post Office. As mentioned above, it is critical that we have your email address on file.

The most important changes will be in BOBA administration. As I've noted previously, we can no longer afford to pay for admin support, and the work formerly performed (with distinction, I might add) by Tracey, Betsy, and Audra will now be done by a committee of volunteers led by our VP for Membership, Wayne Jacobs. Please be patient as we work the bugs out of this new approach and extend your support to the volunteers performing this important work.

Next year, we will celebrate the 80th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge. The 2023 Board selected J.P.P. Holdings (who also ran the 75th Anniversary Tour) as the BOBA-preferred tour provider. Please see the notices and flyers in the *Bugle* and on the BOBA website, and consider joining us on what is sure to be a great tour.

Finally, I want to thank out-going President John Mohor for his four years of service to BOBA and his support leading up to the transition. Without his leadership, BOBA's future would not be nearly so bright. —Steve Landry, Incoming President

OUTGOING BOBA PRESIDENT'S DECEMBER 2023 MESSAGE

As my tenure as President & CEO of the Battle of the Bulge Association® from 2020-2023 will be ending as you receive this, let me take this last opportunity to sincerely say thank you to all the members that I had the honor and privilege to work and serve with over the years. I truly appreciated the opportunity to lead this great organization. I know we'll continue to honor the legacy of the Bulge Veterans. I'm honored to have served in the job so I could honor the memory of my dad, Arthur B. Mohor Jr. I'd like to thank both the Belgian and Luxembourg Ambassadors and their staffs for all their support to our organization throughout the years.

I wish only the best for the 2024 Officers and Board members. Thank you all for remaining members of BOBA.

—John Mohor, Immediate Past President

2024 BOBA BOARD ELECTION RESULTS

BOBA, INC. BOARD ELECTED OFFICERS

President Elect: Steve Landry

Executive Vice President:

Barbara Mooneyhan

Vice President Membership:

Wayne Jacobs

Vice President Chapters:

Dr. Andy Waskie

Vice President Military &

Veteran Affairs: Doris Davis

Treasurer: Mary Ann Coates Smith

Recording Secretary:

Gail Larke

BOARD MEMBERS

Madeleine Bryant, Chaplain (Appointed Duty)

Kristen Faller

Ken Larke

Betsy Rose

Jim Triesler, Historian

(Appointed Duty)

Bylaws: The vote on the change to the By-Laws was carried, with Yes votes being over 96%.

BOBA ANNOUNCEMENTS

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Here it is, another “bulging” issue of the *Bugle*. This one is chock full of news of our veterans and the exciting news about 2024. I’m especially proud of the extended coverage of our veterans and our chapters in this issue. In particular, we were able to give a last word to some of our veterans as they exited the stage.

We start out this year commemorating the 79th anniversary of the end of the Battle of the Bulge January 24-26, 2024, in Arlington and Washington, D.C. This year marks the 80th anniversary of the Bulge campaign. This will be a special occasion and special events are planned throughout the United States and Europe. BOBA is sponsoring a commemorative trip to Europe, which we describe on p 12. The *Bugle* will provide coverage of these events as they happen.

One event I’m especially proud of is the Battle of the Bulge conference being held in my hometown, Gettysburg. It’s being held January 27, which allows people who attend the Commemoration to add a short side trip and take the conference in.

Two of BOBA’s officials, historian Jim Triesler and myself, are giving presentations and many of our members will be attending. See p. 11 for more on this event.

There is a natural connection between Gettysburg and the Bulge. They are generally considered the U. S. Army’s two greatest battles and two of its greatest victories. We also share Ike, Gettysburg’s hometown president who guided Allied armies through the Bulge campaign. Finally, several dozen American heroes who died in the Bulge campaign rest in eternal peace in our Gettysburg National Cemetery.

Leon Reed, *Bugle Bugle* Editor

BOBA 2023 THIRD QUARTER BUDGET REPORT

The BOBA third quarter balance sheet showed our cash asset accounts of \$73,799. This was an increase of some \$10,805 from our second quarter report. This improvement was a result of not printing a summer *Bugle Bugle* and consideration of going to an on-line/e mail version in the future. Additional cost savings were a result of going to a more volunteer organization to save future labor expenses.

A review of the third quarter budget showed a year to date income of \$62,848 (includes \$38,994 income from our Commemoration and Reunion events.) We had a significant increase in donations during the quarter, \$7,512 over budget expectations. Our biggest concern was income from membership dues. At the beginning of the year, we doubled membership dues to \$40 annually, which should have generated some \$26,280 from 657 paying members. Through the third quarter, we have received only \$7,900 from paid dues.

Expenses through the third quarter were \$68,070 (includes \$37,209 expense from our yearly events.) The net result was a loss through three quarters of \$5,222, a significant improvement over our forecasted losses at the beginning of the year. This was also a result of the changes mentioned in the first paragraph.

In summary, we began the year with \$79,302 in cash value assets; at the end of the second quarter that balance had fallen to \$62,993. As previously reported, we are back to \$73,799. Hopefully during the fourth quarter, we can get back to the balance we started with and balance the budget going forth into 2024.

Ken Larke, BOBA Treasurer

Explaining Dues and Renewals

We know the situation has been confusing with regard to cost, frequency, and format for the *Bugle*, membership dues, etc.

Why did my dues increase? The Board of Directors realized that the Association was on an unsustainable path. Dues had stayed at a level where they didn’t begin to cover the cost of producing, printing, and mailing the *Bugle*, let alone cover the other expenses of the organization. At its existing burn rate, BOBA would have been out of business in two years.

When is my renewal due? We are going to a January 1 renewal date. Basically, the staggered renewal is too much of an administrative chore. Those who joined late in the year will get an extension. Contact BobaMembership@gmail.com with your membership questions.

Will I get a print *Bugle*? The world is rapidly moving away from print editions. Even venerable institutions like *The New York Times* and *The Atlantic* magazine depend on digital or online circulation for a substantial part of their readership and income. Basically, the cost of printing and mailing a magazine, especially a full color version on good quality paper, is becoming prohibitive. We will continue to provide a print *Bugle* to veterans and by

Membership Differences 2023 vs. 2024 (2024 CHANGES IN RED)

4 BOBA Membership Categories	2023	2024
1. Lifetime members (Tier 1) -Bulge vets	No dues - mailed hardcopy & emailed copy (if email available)	Same
2. Lifetime members (Tier 2) - Family, Friends, non-Bulge veterans	No dues for emailed copy \$20 for mailed hardcopy per year	No dues for emailed copy \$20 per issue for print Bugle on web store ONLY IF available
3. Annual dues-paying (Tier 1) - Bulge vets	\$40 dues for emailed copy \$20 extra for mailed hardcopy per year	\$20 per year & no more extra hardcopy fee - mailed hardcopy & emailed copy (if email available)
4. Annual dues-paying (Tier 2) -Family, Friends, non-Bulge veterans	\$40 dues for emailed copy \$20 extra for mailed hardcopy per year	\$40 dues for emailed copy \$20 per issue for print Bugle on web store ONLY IF available

special order. The positive side is seen in this issue, with a full 15% more content than in our usual 24 pages. Without the constraint of printing cost, we can provide more content in issues of the *Bugle*.

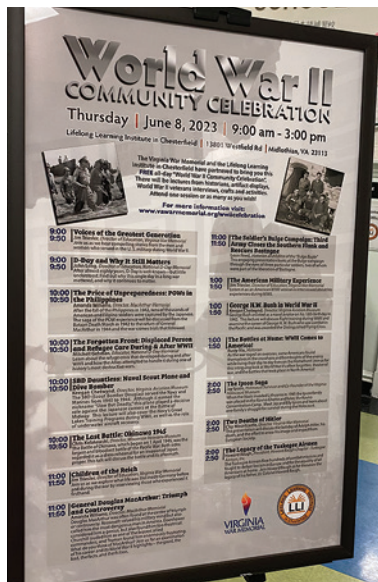


LEFT PHOTO: Lois Lembo and *Bugle* editor Leon Reed had a BOBA booth in Midlothian. Photo: Betsy Rose
 RIGHT PHOTO: BOBA volunteer Betsy Rose visits Crater Chapter president Mary Coates Smith’s exhibit. Photo: Leon Reed

BOBA AT MIDLOTHIAN

by Betsy Rose

Kudos to our BOBA Historian and VWM Education Director Jim Triesler who hosted a WWII Community event on June 8 in Midlothian, VA, at the Lifelong Learning Institute.



BOBA had a strong presence! Our Bugle Editor Leon Reed led one of the sessions and he and his wife Lois manned a BOBA display.

VA Crater Chapter President Mary Ann Smith also manned a display about WWII, her father’s service, and other local veterans’ service.

I was able to attend one fascinating session facilitated by Jim where he interviewed two men who grew up in Germany (one who was drafted into the German Army when he was only 15.) I wish I could have attended more. Leon had a great turnout for his session about

the 80th division and the Battle of the Bulge. All the displays were amazing.

Congrats to Jim, Leon, and Mary Ann for a wonderful event and keeping BOBA’s name out there!



Welcome, New Members!

We salute these new members who joined BOBA between May and November:

John Baker
 Patricia Bowers
 Ash Duncan
 Ted Glogovac
 Sue Greaves
 Gary Hurwitz
 Mercy Lawler
 Barbara Mosel

Trevor Moss
 Lyman Rate
 David Shortt
 Marjorie Tucker
 Tom Vossler
 Richard Weaver
 Suzanne Webber

Members, please consider purchasing gift memberships and recruiting new members to help BOBA continue its vital efforts to perpetuate the memory of those who sacrificed their youth at the Battle of the Bulge.

MEMBERS COMMITTED TO SPREADING THE WORD

by Leon Reed

The Battle of the Bulge Association has an outstanding story to tell. And, with more veterans passing away and a new generation achieving adulthood that even regards 9/11 as a distant historical event, it is all the more important to tell the story—of the incredibly high stakes, the weeks of bitter cold weather, the desperate combat, and, most of all, the bravery and sacrifices of the American GI.

Even without a formal outreach program (or a formal mechanism to report such activities), BOBA has developed an ambitious set of outreach activities. Active participants included Bulge veterans Ben Berry, Jake Ruser, Richard Weaver, and Robert Thompson, and other members Al Cleghorn, Lois Lembo, Leon Reed, Betsy Rose, Steve Savage, Mary Ann Coates Smith, and Jim Triesler.

Our veterans did everything from talks to a World War II Roundtable

to meet and greets at several WWII exhibitions to appearing as Veterans Day parade grand marshals. Other members represented BOBA at a variety of events, including the Eisenhower National Historic Site WWII weekend, the Reading Air Show, and Army Expo 23, veteran Darrell Bush's 80th wedding anniversary, and talks before a variety of audiences.

The younger generation, which did not grow up on a steady diet of *The Longest Day*, *Sink the Bismarck*, and *Battle! Story of the Bulge*, needs to be exposed to this story. We have made connections with New Oxford (PA) HS and Marion (AL) Military Institute, with additional contacts with high schools in Ohio, Virginia, and Pennsylvania.

In 2024, we'll try to get more people involved and develop resource packages for speakers. Please contact boba.editor@gmail.com if you are interested in helping.



ABOVE LEFT PHOTO: *Bugle* editor Leon Reed interviews BOBA member Richard Weaver, 17th ARBN, at Army Expo 23. Photo: Patricia Bowers
ABOVE RIGHT PHOTO: Bulge veteran Jake Ruser speaks to crowd at Central Pennsylvania WWII Roundtable. Photo: Leon Reed
BOTTOM PHOTO: Jake Ruser and Ben Berry with Magnolia Sadies and re-enactors at Eisenhower NHS WWII weekend. Photo: Magnolia Sadies





1



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3



4

1. One of the Victory Belles sits on Bulge veteran Gerald White's lap.

Photo: Barbara Mooneyhan

2. Joseph Dondelinger and 3. BOBA historian Jim Triesler gave historical presentations.

3. Bulge veteran David Bailey and Board Chaplain Madeleine Bryant

LOOKING BACK AT OUR NEW ORLEANS REUNION

JULY 28 - AUGUST 1, 2023

by Barbara Mooneyhan

What a good time we had in the Big Easy! South Carolina Chapter had the largest contingency in attendance and boy were we everywhere! Beginning with the Wine & Cheese reception that we helped sponsor (as did the SC Military History Club and Mechanical Engineering Consulting) to the very end!

Saturday, we had a full day at the National WWII Museum where many of us found our Dads' bricks! Lunch with the Victory Belles was a highlight as was the Tom Hank's narrated 4-D movie *Beyond All Boundaries*. What a terrible time for the snow machine to be broken in the theatre as it usually snows during the Battle of the Bulge scenes!

Sunday dawned sunny and HOT so we were glad to be inside the air-conditioning for the Annual Business Meeting and educational sessions. After a personal "behind the scenes tour" of the Liberation Pavilion, the last addition planned for the Museum, we were ready for some good food and entertainment! The usual banquet took a different look and feel as we rented out the entire Louisiana Memorial Pavilion, just for our group. With moving speeches from Gary Mannina, Honorary Consul of Luxembourg, Roland Vandeweghe, Honorary Consul of Belgium, BOBA President Emeritus David Bailey, and Col. Peter Crean, Vice President, Education/Access for the Museum, we enjoyed dinner to

the music of the Victory Trio and one of the Victory Belles. David Bailey (age 101) out danced us all! Everyone was having such a good time, it was hard to leave. My evening ended on the roof of our hotel at Rosie's Bar, with Nelson (SC Chapter President) and his family enjoying the evening skyline and a storm building over the Mississippi River.

Monday was no cooler but off we went for a city tour of New Orleans! Driving in the air-conditioned comfort, we were pleased when the tour guide didn't make us get out at Jackson Square, the St. Louis Cemetery or even as we explored the magnificent homes along our route. No one complained, however, when the bus stopped at Café du Monde for obligatory beignets and coffee in the City Park (it was disguised as a restroom stop) nor when we got to the banks of Lake Pontchartrain to enjoy lunch at Felix's Oyster Bar. Our driver showed us some of the areas affected by Hurricane Katrina. One bus continued our tour to Mardi Gras World to see how the famous floats were created, assembled and stored. The evening and our reunion came to a close with the latest laser light show at the National WWII Museum, Expressions of America.

With promises to see everyone again next fall in St. Charles, Missouri, we all went our separate ways.



5. Bulge veteran Joe Landry with bus driver. Photo: Barbara Mooneyhan

6. Bulge veteran Bob Welsh and Victory Belle. Photo: Barbara Mooneyhan

7. Jim Dean plays TAPS at the 87th Division meeting. Photo: Courtesy 87th Division

8. Bulge veteran David Bailey, niece Carolyn Truesdale, and Curtis Waechtler

9. Reunion organizer Barbara Mooneyhan (left) talks with Audrey Paviot and Bulge veteran Bob Welsh. Photo: Courtesy 87th Division



THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE ASSOCIATION® , INC.
Invites You to Join Your Friends for the “Events of Remembrance and Commemoration” of the
79th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

JANUARY 24-26, 2024 | ARLINGTON, VA/WASHINGTON, DC

The Embassy of Belgium will host a reception for veterans, family and friends on the afternoon of Thursday, January 25, 2024 to commemorate the end of the battle. Also included are 3 wreath-laying ceremonies at the Battle of the Bulge Memorial, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and WWII Memorial. And, don't miss our special program on Wednesday evening, January 24th with speakers, raffles and displays! We secured a special Battle of the Bulge Association rate of \$165/night (King) & \$185/night (Double) plus taxes at the Embassy Suites Crystal City/National Airport in Arlington, VA 22202. This rate includes a discounted self-parking rate of \$30/night, free transportation to and from Crystal City METRO and Reagan Washington National Airport, free hotel wi-fi, and complimentary breakfasts.

PLEASE NOTE: ITINERARY SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS NEEDED

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2024

1:00 PM - 10:00 PM Hospitality Room Open (Adams Morgan Room)
2:00 PM - 4:00 PM Registration Open
4:00 PM - 6:00 PM **DINNER ON YOUR OWN**
6:00 PM - 9:00 PM Special Program - Military displays. Bulge veteran panel and book signing.
Featured guest speaker: Andrew Biggio, author of *The Rifle* and *The Rifle 2*

THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2024

6:30 AM - 8:30 AM Complimentary Breakfast with your hotel reservation
8:00 AM Registration Open (Adams Morgan Room)
8:15 AM **BUS BOARDS**
8:30 AM **BUS DEPARTS HOTEL** Arlington National Cemetery, WWII Memorial, Embassy of Belgium, plus more
6:00 PM Arrive at hotel. Gathering in atrium to socialize the remainder of the evening. **DINNER ON YOUR OWN.**

FRIDAY, JANUARY 26, 2024

6:30 AM - 9:30 AM Complimentary Breakfast with your hotel reservation
Depart or stay longer and enjoy the DC metropolitan area

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER FOR THE EVENT AND HOTEL DISCOUNT RATE:
JANUARY 3, 2024**

1. HOTEL RESERVATIONS: *YOU MUST MAKE ROOM RESERVATIONS DIRECTLY WITH THE HOTEL BY JANUARY 3, 2024 to get the BOBA special rate of \$165/night King & \$185/night Double plus taxes. Go to battleofthebulge.org / click on “Bulge Anniversary Events” to find the hotel link. OR call Embassy Suites Crystal City/ National Airport at 1-800-257-6009 or 703-979-9799 and mention the **Hotel Discount Code: BBA**. Complimentary breakfast each morning, free wi-fi and free airport shuttle every 20 minutes is provided to and from Reagan Washington National Airport and to and from Crystal City METRO. Please make your reservations early to secure a room, especially if you want a handicap accessible room. Hotel reservations are based on availability so don't delay!

2. EVENT REGISTRATION: Event registration is **ONLINE ONLY, BY JANUARY 3, 2024 DEADLINE**, at battleofthebulge.org / click on “Bulge Anniversary Events.”

\$150 price includes registration, Wednesday night program/gathering, Thursday wreath-layings, Embassy event and bus tour/museum. All meals are on your own.



Questions? Contact Mary Ann Smith at mcdesk4@gmail.com
or 804-363-3400 (text preferred.)

If you cannot attend, please consider sponsoring a wreath in memory of a Bulge soldier!



BOBA EVENTS

BULGE CONFERENCE IN GETTYSBURG

At least seven BOBA members are playing a lead role in the first annual BOBA-Richard Weaver Gettysburg Battle of the Bulge Conference.

■ *Bulge Bugle* editor Leon Reed is organizing the event and will speak on “Third Army Closes the Southern Bulge and Liberates Bastogne.”

■ BOBA historian Jim Triesler is speaking on “Victims of the Malmedy Massacre.”

■ BOBA Member Tom Vossler is speaking on “Eisenhower and Allied Expeditionary Force Leadership During the Battle of the Bulge.”

■ While not making a formal presentation, BOBA Treasurer Mary Ann Coates Smith, daughter of a man killed at



Conference speakers Tom Vossler, Dan Vermilya, and Leon Reed.

Malmedy, will have an exhibit on her father and on the massacre.

■ Finally, at least four BOBA members, Ben Berry, Joe Landry, Richard Weaver, and Jake Ruser, will participate in a Bulge veterans Meet and Greet.

The conference will take place all day, January 27, with a special event the night before. The conference will be held at the World War II American Experience museum at 845 Crooked Creek Rd., Gettysburg, PA.

The cost is \$40 for non-members of the WWII American Experience, \$25 for members. Lunch

will be available to purchase.

To register: <https://square.link/u/a5YWKBnB>

TRAVEL OPPORTUNITY FOR VETERANS



American Airlines is proud to offer an opportunity for World War II veterans to be a part of the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day landings in Normandy, France. This historic 9-day trip will take them to

Dallas/Ft. Worth for a kickoff celebration, then a flight on a chartered Boeing 787 flight to Paris where they’ll spend two nights, and then a bus ride to the Normandy region, where those who have served and sacrificed as part of our Greatest Generation will be honored. All expenses will be paid for a veteran and a caregiver/companion.

The event starts with a flight to Dallas on May 30, includes a June 2 tour of Paris, Normandy events from June 3-5, and the June 6 D-Day commemoration.

Veterans and their caregivers must pass health tests and must have a passport valid through December 7, 2024. Priority will go to veterans who were a part of the D-Day landings and European theater, but all veterans of World War II, home front workers, holocaust survivors and others will be considered.

The application to be a part of this historic mission at this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/AA80thDDayTrip>.

Old Glory Honor Flight is partnering with American Airlines and will begin the vetting process. Questions can be sent to Randy at Randall.Stillinger@aa.com or Diane MacDonald at diane@oldglory-honorflight.org.



D-Day landing at Normandy. Wikimedia Commons/Chief Photographer’s Mate (CPHOM) Robert F. Sargent, U.S. Coast Guard



Battle of The Bulge Association Tour

80th Anniversary - Official Tour

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THE RIFLE 2

By Andrew Biggio

Excerpts from Chapter 17: "A World of Hurt," about Jacob Ruser, 4 INF, 12 INF REG, 2 BN, Medical Detachment

...As elements of Jake Ruser's 12th Infantry Regiment became known as the 12th Regimental Combat Team, they began to relieve those of the 28th Division. The mission of the 12th Regimental Combat Team was to clear the woods south of the town of Hürtgen. After five days on the ground, and scores of attacks and counterattacks, the 12th Regimental Combat Team had incurred more than five hundred casualties. They were unable to penetrate enemy lines or the enveloping landscape. At this time, Jake became a casualty himself.

"We jumped off on one of our attacks on the tenth of November. We were stopped cold. We got one squad across this highway and then were pinned down. American artillery laid a barrage down for one hour, then the Germans countered it with their own artillery for an hour and a half. During the enemy barrage, the Germans infiltrated the minefield behind us and cut us off from the rear. We were basically surrounded.

"Later in the day we took over a German bunker. We moved the wounded inside. As the day grew long, their wounds really began to bother them. We knew if we didn't get them evacuated infection would set in. One soldier stepped outside to see if there was an escape route he could formulate. He was shot through the head instantly. And this tracer round set his head on fire. His hair smoked from under his helmet."

As the desperate medics huddled over their wounded in the German bunker, it was evident they were surrounded. While rummaging through the bunker, and to Jake's astonishment, they found a large white flag with a red cross on it.

"The coincidence was surreal. Here we were, a bunch of medics, trying to make a break for it, and we found a German medic's flag. One medic got a tree branch just outside the bunker and tied the flag to it. The other seven of us each took a wounded soldier on a litter and left the bunker."

As the medics dragged their wounded, the lead soldier held the red cross flag up high. Miraculously, the Germans allowed them to pass through the lines without being massacred. They carried the wounded 1,500 meters across the lines, down a ravine, up a hill, and another 1,300 meters to the rear echelon aid station.

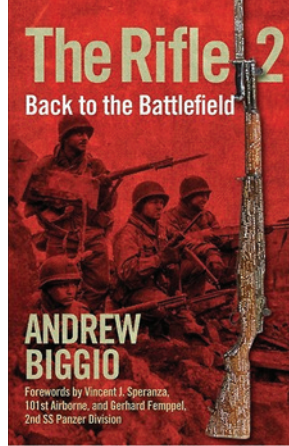
"I will always ask myself, to this day, how we did it. It was difficult to travel that kind of distance with that form of terrain individually, never mind carrying patients. Anyhow, we managed," Jake said proudly.

"As I was making my way back an artillery shell exploded in the tree above me. I was holding my helmet tight to my head and tree-burst hit my hand. Debris collided with my helmet. My head was okay, but my hand was bleeding," Jake recalled.

"Who bandaged you up?" I asked.

"No one. I began to run and administered the bandage to my own hand. It wasn't that bad. The fighting in the Hürtgen was so extreme no one walked away without a scratch. It rained shrapnel every day. The only time you utilized a medic was if you couldn't walk. Everything else was considered walking wounded or self-treatable."

Jake had become friendly with a supply sergeant who made frequent trips to his field hospital. The supply sergeant would travel back and forth by Jeep from division headquarters resupplying Jake's field hospital with much needed plasma, bandages, and morphine. Jake tended the wounds on his hands as the supply sergeant jumped in his Jeep to make another supply run.



Bulge Veteran Jake Ruser (right) holding the rifle at the BOBA reunion in Gettysburg, PA in 2022.



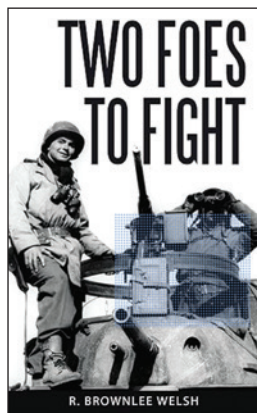
"Shortly after he left, we got word a Jeep had hit a mine down the road. We went to the scene and it was my friend, the supply sergeant. His leg was hanging off by a tendon. We applied tourniquets and bandages to the leg. To his misfortune we had to get rid of what was left of it. I had to cut my own friend's leg off. That's when it becomes personal. When you're close with someone you're treating, and have to amputate part of his body. We took scissors and cut the remaining tendon." Jake shook his head as he described the grisly operation on his friend.

By the time the 4th Division moved out of the Hürtgen Forest, Jake had been there a month. "It looked like a tornado had hit the area before we left. If an infantryman survived three days during the battle you were considered a veteran. They moved us to Luxembourg during the Battle of the Bulge. Even though the Germans were not attacking from that direction, we had to hold the line there. It was considered a break, I suppose," Jake said. ...

Visit thewiirifle.com to get a copy *The Rifle 2* by Andrew Biggio and read more of Jake's harrowing story and others who fought in WWII and the Battle of the Bulge. Among his many awards, Jake received a Purple Heart, a Bronze Star and participated in five campaigns, including Normandy, Hürtgen Forest and the Battle of the Bulge. He is 99 years old and lives in Philadelphia, PA and is an active member of the BOBA Delaware Valley Chapter.

TWO FOES TO FIGHT

By Robert Brownlee Welsh



BOBA member Robert Welsh has published his combat memoirs: *Two Foes to Fight*. We'll excerpt it in the next issue of the *Bugle*. Two reviews on Amazon give a clear picture of this book.

"Welsh has given us a rare view of the day-to-day slogging through both real mud and red tape that our men faced during the Battle of the Bulge, and no doubt throughout the entire war. Some of his opening scenes still make the hair stand up on the back of my neck as though I were the man in the shadows."

"It's important to have a first-hand account of WWII's European theatre that is honest. Robert Brownlee Welsh doesn't gloss over his own fears and flaws. He tells it like it was. At 100, he has a memory of the details like it was yesterday."

BULGE MEMORIES



Paul Hennessey 78TH INFD, 309TH INF REG

The 78th helped capture and cross the bridge at Remagen on March 7, 1945; this was the beginning of the end for the Nazis. The Nazis wired the bridge to blow it up so the allies couldn't cross. When the bomb didn't go off, the U.S. army crossed the bridge for several days before the Germans came back and destroyed it on March 17th. A pamphlet about Remagen in 1945 written by German historians describes how the "major elements" of the 78th crossed the bridge after "tactical elements" of the 9th Infantry Division. Perhaps that's why both groups claim to have been first over the bridge.

There is a memorial plaque for the U.S. 78th Infantry and the German 272nd Volksgrenadier division (assigned to defend the bridge); these two groups met during the war and had reunions at Remagen years later.

Paul Hennessey arrived in Europe in October 1944 and served in the Anti-Tank Company of the 309th; the 309th were on the front lines by December 13th, three days before the Battle of the Bulge began. Paul wrote a very short summary about his battle experience and how they captured Kesternick and other towns.

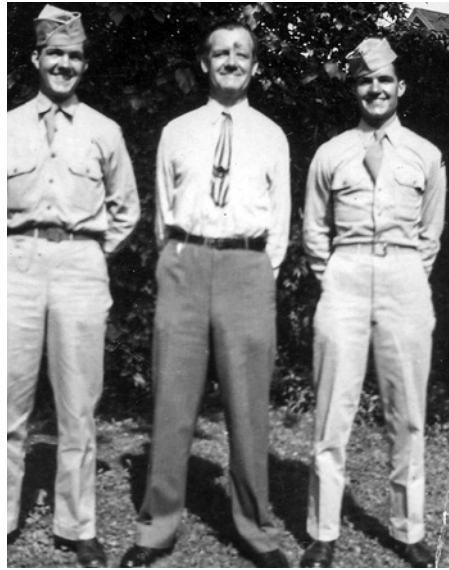
Paul also wrote about how his battalion lost many men due to trench foot amputations, which resulted from not having appropriate winter gear for the bitter cold, snowy and wet Hurtgen Forest and Ardennes..

A summary record of 309th troops and equipment shows that they started the war with 7 officers and 158 troops; by the war's end there were 5 officers and 96 troops. So, 2 in 5 never came back.

VE day was May 8th, 1945. A member of the 78th said there were four constants during the fighting: they were always cold, tired, hungry, and scared.

Paul applied to Villanova under the GI bill, telling me all he did was send a hand-written letter asking to attend. Villanova sent him a letter back telling him he was accepted. He began Villanova in the fall of 1946.

Paul graduated in 1950, completing a thesis which I find totally indecipherable. Probably around this time he began to socialize at mixers. He lived with other young men at the Squires home in Westfield, NJ.



L-R: John Hennessey, Jr. (KIA, Leyte, 96th INFD), John Hennessey, Sr. (WWI vet), and Paul Hennessey.

My dad didn't talk much about the war when I was a kid, but in later years he became active with alumni groups. He went on an anniversary tour for the 78th in 2000 and saved a copy of the speech he gave at Remagen in a ceremony attended by both U.S. and German troops. This tour information gives a good overview of the 78th's movements during the war. He also wrote about how his battalion lost many men due to trench foot amputations, which resulted from not having appropriate gear for the bitter cold, snowy and wet Hurtgen forest.

Paul Hennessey died at the age of 97, at home, surrounded by his family. Dorothy, his wife of 68 years, died 30 hours later at the age of 94. They are buried in Wharton, NJ, at St. Mary's Cemetery, along with my sister Bridget, who died at age 18.

—Submitted by Sean Hennessey



The memorial plaque at Kesternich, Germany, honoring the 78 INFD and the German 272 Volksgrenadier Division.

VETERANS & MEMBERS: SUBMIT BULGE MEMORIES!

If you are a veteran (or family member of one) who participated in this historic battle, **please share a photo, a memory, and/or thoughts** about the impact it has had. It can be a story, or a few sentences or short paragraph with a picture. We will continue to share Bulge Memories in future issues of *The Bulge Bugle*®.

Email (preferred method) responses to boba.editor@gmail.com or mail to: BOBA Inc., P.O. Box 330, Mechanicsville, VA 23111-0330.

★ Victor “Guns” Richardson ARMY MEDIC

Below is an article, “The Barn at Cobreville,” that was published in The Bulge Bugle in February 2004, written by Victor himself. He passed away on March 9, 2021. He may not have made it back to where he served during WWII, but his younger brother Don did for both of them.

The story begins when Army Medic Victor “Guns” Richardson was called from the Metz area of France to go to Bastogne during the winter of 1944-1945.

The Barn at Cobreville

It was a long cold motor march from Metz to the corridor leading into Bastogne. Somehow along the way the cooks and quartermasters had set up this delicious Christmas dinner and it was all you could eat. What I remember most is the mess sergeant saying, “Do you want more turkey? Do you want more pie? And lots of hot coffee.” You hardly ever heard a mess sergeant saying things like that—ever.

Finally, it was our turn to do down the hillside into the corridor which led to Bastogne. We set up in a little town called Cobreville outside of Bastogne, in a barn with three big tents outside in the field. Next, we needed to set up a light trap which would hold the ambulance so we could unload the patients without leaking any light for the enemy to see. We had 3 operations stations as well as a shock litter on saw horses, draped with blankets and two lanterns underneath to hold the heat for shock victims. Next, we needed clean water to sterilize instruments. We used the standard gasoline-fuel heaters normally used for washing mess kits and this was used to provide a continuous supply of sterile water.

We were waiting to see what was going to happen next when suddenly out of the dark of night an ambulance backed in the light trap and a load of walking wounded spilled out into our clearing station. The control post was set up to record all patient information. Our first attempt at this procedure was a failure; however, as we became more experienced, we were much better organized and the flow of patients was handled much smoother. Our first day we took in more than 300 patients and the reason was that there was such casualties had been accumulating for weeks in the besieged city of Bastogne. When we were just about overflowing, the ambulances began to arrive from field hospital to evacuate the wounded. After an initial surge we finally reached a steady flow.



Victor “Guns” Richardson (left), and the village of Cobreville, Belgium in 2014. Photo: Les Meloures/Wikimedia Commons

We seemed to have an almost unlimited supply of plasma, blood, and transfusions of whole blood which brought about miraculous results in some of the patients.

Occasionally German prisoners were brought in but the priority was always to aid the American casualties first and then the attention was given to the German prisoners. In one instance, when a wounded German prisoner stood up, his arms dropped and well over a pint of blood poured out of his overcoat sleeve. He had been sitting there quietly bleeding to death. He was attended and was sent still alive to a field hospital.

Again, in one of the ward tents, there was a paratrooper who had just bayoneted a German trooper in a one-on-one fight to the death. He had been sent back from the front lines because he was so upset and a nervous wreck. He seems compelled to tell the story of his battle as though he had to have someone to share this terrible experience with him. I was almost embarrassed to hear him bare his soul and yet feared that if I didn't listen, he would go berserk.

On a happier note, a GI was brought in who looked like he wouldn't last five minutes. He was in severe shock. We had recently received an air shipment of whole blood which was only one day old. He was given a transfusion and within a short time it was like watching a miracle. When I asked the medical officer about this recovery, he said that sometimes this happens after a transfusion. I remember the poem by Robert Service, “The Cremation of Sam Magee.” For truly this soldier “wore a smile you could see for a mile.”

My sleeping quarters were in a hayloft in a stone barn next to the clearing station.

Enemy artillery barrages at time seemed to be all around the clearing station although none of the shells came close to the medical station. The sound of the American counter-battery fire artillery duels would sometime last for an hour.

The barn was built on a steep hillside and underneath was where the morgue was. The dead soldiers would accumulate there until graves registration would come to identify and remove the bodies. The first trip to the morgue was a real shock, it was not too long before seeing dead soldier was just another part of the day's work.

All things considered, everything worked and probably most of all due to the training of the medical people at all levels and ever-boiling coffee pot for the wounded. The end result was that an effective and useful service was rendered.



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**NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE:
JANUARY 26, 2024**



George Allen Skinner 106 INFD, 424 INF REG

Five years ago, I received a collection of military artifacts belonging to the Skinner family of Buffalo, New York. The artifacts span both world wars and consist of photographs, medals, a diary, drawings, and other personal items from the family's veterans. The patriarch of the household, Gerald Robertson Sr., was assigned to a trench mortar battery in the Great War, surviving the blood-soaked Meuse-Argonne Offensive in autumn 1918. His first born, Gerald Robertson Jr., was dispatched to WWII's Pacific Theater and served at a Navy seaplane base near New Guinea. Gerald Sr.'s second son, George Allan Skinner, was assigned to the 106th Infantry Division and experienced the brunt of the German attack at the Battle of the Bulge. Sadly, George did not survive the war.

Born November 20, 1925, in Buffalo, George was anxious to do his part, seeing as he joined the Enlisted Reserve Corps at 17 years old. Entering the regular Army in December 1943, George went to the Army Specialized Training Program until its dissolution in early 1944. In March, George was reassigned to 1st Squad, 1st Platoon, Antitank Company of the 424th Infantry Regiment, then billeted at Camp Atterbury. George arrived on the European continent with the rest of the 106th just over a week before Hitler's final offensive in the West, taking up positions east of Winterspelt, Germany. He was part of a 57mm gun crew facing the imminent onslaught in the Ardennes.

On December 16th, AT Company's 1st Squad, 1st Platoon was precariously located on the 424th's left flank, helping to screen a 4,000-yard gap between the 424th and the next section of the line manned by the 423rd Infantry. At 5:30am, German forces unleashed a one-and-a-half hour, 1,600 gun-strong barrage. Lt. Hugh Muir, AT's Mine Platoon leader and de facto officer-in-charge, recalled in a 1945 letter that George had already been wounded by the time Muir arrived at 1st Squad's emplacement under intense shelling. Realizing the line would soon crumble, Muir hastily ordered the able-bodied and walking

wounded to fall back. Despite this, Sgts. Glen Risk and Robert Walsh, the latter of whom had no gunnery training, managed to knock out an advancing tank. Pvt. Gilbert Thomas and Pfc. Donald Peterson added another Panzer to AT Company's tally before day's end.

As German infantry began to close in, only Muir and Walsh remained with George and Arthur Mondlock, another severely wounded soldier. Muir said that he and Walsh "tried for a considerable time to get Mondlock and Skinner back," but lamented "...it was hopeless. They were both big to begin with." Hearing small arms fire in the woods to their immediate front, Muir determined "it was useless for all four of us to be captured." With a heavy heart, he and Walsh retreated in an attempt to reorganize their men. They never made it to the American lines, and were captured later that afternoon. After his liberation in May 1945, Muir met Mondlock in a Paris hospital, who confirmed the tragic fate of George Skinner. According to his family, Muir would be troubled by this fact for the rest of his life.

George's mother, Mrs. Ophelia Armstrong, received the dreaded Western Union telegram confirming her son's death in March 1945.) However, due to a litany of clerical errors, George's personal effects never came. Initially buried at the temporary cemetery in Foy, Belgium, George was reinterred in 1949 at Forest Lawn Cemetery in Buffalo, his resting place today. He was 19 years old.

Like countless families who have experienced the unimaginable loss of a loved one in war, the Skinners seldom talked about George outside of an occasional mention around Memorial Day. Wishing to find answers to questions the surviving family and I had about a life cut far too short, I began a meandering but incredibly fruitful archival and genealogical journey. Although I found (and continue to find) astounding insights from the family of AT Company veterans, I had long ago set aside hope of finding a surviving veteran from George's unit. As it turned out, I should not have been so pessimistic.

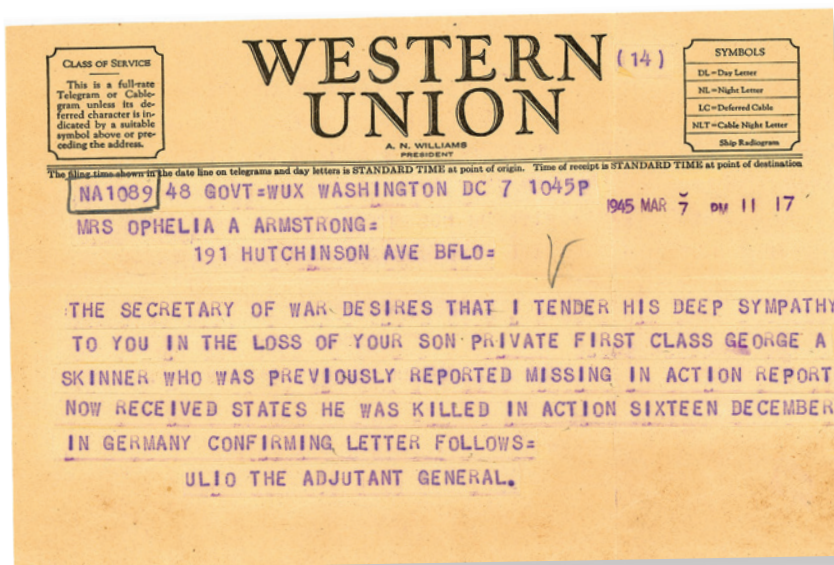
In September 2022, I had the privilege of speaking with Paul Panagrosso, who served with another squad of AT Company's 1st Platoon. The son of Italian immigrants, Paul was a late-comer to the unit in August 1944 and had hardly learned the names of his gun crewmates before heading overseas.

On the morning of December 16, the mass cannonade opened up on the thinly-defended American lines. Paul recalled that he and his crew took cover in a bunker close by during the bombardment, wondering which shell might have their names on it. Paul was perhaps a few hundred yards away from George at this time.

Almost as soon as the guns fell silent, Paul and his squad mates started to hear German chatter outside. Paul remembered throwing grenades away from their bunker entrance several times, until his sergeant realized the situation was futile. They emerged with their hands up, among the first prisoners of war captured during the battle.



Photo of George Skinner and his Purple Heart



Telegram from Adjutant General James Ulio, notifying family of the death of George Skinner.

Immediately, Paul was separated from his crew and marched east toward Prum, Germany through record-breaking winter conditions. He moved between several camps during his months in captivity, and was liberated shortly before the Nazi surrender. After the war, Paul married, raised a family, and pursued a career in retail in his native Connecticut. He is 98 years old at the time of this writing, and has recently begun to talk about his service. Paul, however, is not the only AT Company veteran I have been fortunate to speak with.

In March 2023, I had the opportunity to interview AT veteran Jack Weingarten. Born in Brooklyn but raised in the Bronx, Jack was drafted in 1943 shortly after his 18th birthday. Jack joined the 106th at Camp Atterbury, and was assigned to AT's 1st Squad, 1st Platoon. Among his squad mates was Private First Class George Skinner.

Although some specifics have faded with time, Jack immediately recognized George by his tall stature and fiery red hair. He remembered George as having a sunny demeanor and being an all-around friendly guy. Until we spoke, Jack thought George had merely been wounded at the Bulge.

Jack was pulling guard duty close to the squad's gun position when all hell broke loose. He recalled that a number of the men were still asleep when shells began raining down. As the fire grew heavier, Jack received orders to fall back. Amid the chaos, he tripped over a communication wire while running alongside two other men. Just as Jack fell, an artillery round exploded feet away, killing the nearby soldiers while Jack lay unscathed on the snow-laden ground. Jack made his way to St. Vith, Belgium, and joined the hodgepodge of scattered units defending the town's vital crossroads. A devout Jew, Jack worried what might await him if he was captured, so much so that he kept his dog tags tucked away in his pocket rather than more conspicuously hung around his neck.

Although only 19 at the Bulge, Jack, like Paul, is also 98 years old. A mere handful of veterans survive from the entire 106th. Locating one from a particular squad is nearly unheard of. It cannot be understated how rare a perspective like Jack's is today, and I am exceedingly grateful both he and Paul allowed me to record their stories.

In a poignant closing observation, Jack felt there was nothing good about his war, with the exception of the friends he made. Among them, George Skinner.

After weathering the desperate early days of the Bulge, the 424th was pulled back to rebuild its lost strength. They saw further combat in Germany and ended the war on occupation duty in Bavaria. Upon discharge, Jack began to build a life in peacetime. He studied law, but opted instead for a career in construction with his brother Irving. He married and raised two children.

—Submitted by Sean O'Dwyer

★
Arthur Schreckengost
16TH INF REG, 4TH INFD

Arthur Schreckengost reflected on his experiences in the VBOB book, The Battle of the Bulge: True Stories from the Men and Women Who Survived, Reading, Aperture Press, 2014. This is an excerpt from his story, "Battle of the Bulge: Along the Sure River Front."

After four weeks of constant attacks against a well-entrenched enemy in the Hurtgen Forest, the Fourth Infantry Division was in dire straits. I mention this because I am convinced the Germans used this delaying action to set up the forthcoming Battle of the Bulge! Some of our most experienced infantry divisions, including the 4th, 28th, and 9th, were depleted by second line enemy units (mainly German allies such as Hungarian and Romanian) who in well-developed defenses and in horrible weather conditions made the advancing American forces pay a heavy price for every yard gained! . . . The Germans had intentionally kept the front quiet by not sending patrols to our side of the river (heavy snow cover would show their tracks) and by lightly manning the Siegfried



fortifications. Thus when they hit us at dawn on the 16th of December we had to quickly react to keep from being overwhelmed. Like all seasoned units they had prepared for the unexpected. A main line of resistance (MLR) had been set using the outer wall surrounding the farm buildings and positions on the upper floor of the house and barn. Here riflemen supplemented our strategically located mgs, BARs, and mortars. When the enemy forces advanced through the cultivated fields surrounding the farm complex they were devoid of most cover except for a few apple trees. I was on the second floor of the house with a clear field of fire on both the north and east sides of the MLR. when the enemy advance reached within approximately 200 yards of our position the order was given to open fire.

The heavy volume of fire must have shocked the enemy. I'm sure they only expected light resistance. Here their lack of information (no recent patrols) on our strength put them at a temporary disadvantage.

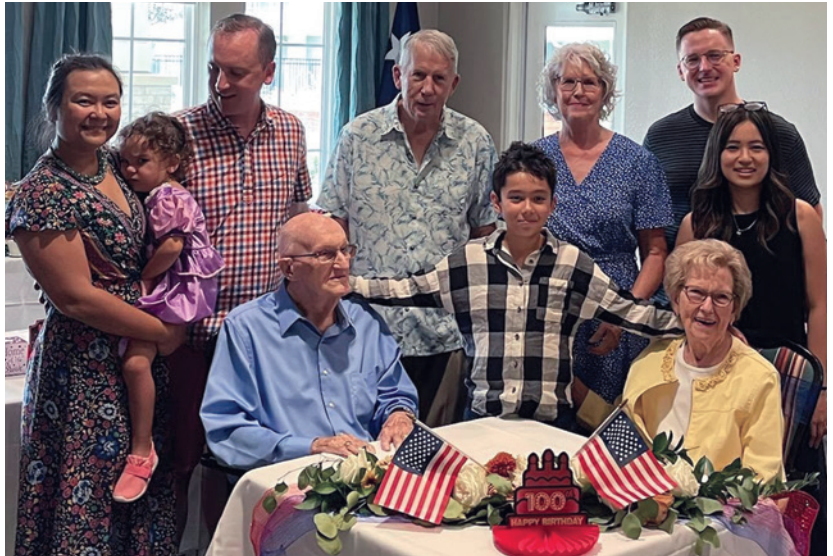
CELEBRATING MILESTONE BIRTHDAYS!

Frank Chambers celebrated his 100th birthday on August 9, 2023. Chambers served in the 75th Infantry Division, 291st regiment during the Battle of the Bulge. He pulled a 105 mm canon behind his 6x6 Jimmy truck. He earned the Combat Infantryman Badge and Bronze Star. Dad was awarded the French Legion of Honor in 2010.

After the service he married Doris Albers, and they had two children, Marjorie Duffield and John Chambers (1956-1984.) Frank has 2 grandsons and their wives, and 2 great grandchildren.

Much of Frank’s career was with the Farm Bureau organizations in Illinois and Nebraska. He also had a 19 year career with the Gallup Organization, retiring at age 80.

He is a life member of The American Legion, and has been active in his church, Scouts, and speaking to public school students about WWII. He resides with his wife in League City, TX. —Submitted by Marjorie Duffield



Chambers Reflects on His Bulge Experience



Excerpt from “A Sudden Change of Plans,” by Frank Chambers, 291st REGT, 75th INFD, Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, The Battle of the Bulge: True Stories from the Men and Women Who Survived, Reading, Aperture Press, 2014.

December 18 brought more unbelievable news: Nazi forces had crashed across the Ardennes, capturing many towns and villages in Belgium and Luxembourg. . . . by the afternoon of the 18th, orders had been issued to the troops of the 75th Division to prepare to move out at a moment’s notice. This was certainly a “sudden

change of plans.” Previous plans for a quiet winter of “border watching” were quickly shelved. The 250 mile journey north into the Ardennes was to begin at daybreak. There was no sleep that night. . . .

The sun could not be seen because of the heavy overcast. Snow had begun to fall during the night. Everyone was happy to leave the mud behind, but their exact destination was unknown. . . . No overshoes had been issued to the troops. The temperature was plummeting. Traveling in a war zone at night was a challenge. No headlights on the trucks could be turned on. . . .

As the convoy proceeded through the darkness, an amazing spectacle suddenly appeared: brilliant flashes of light continually reflected from the low clouds. First impression was a summer electrical storm with vivid bolts of lightning, but, no—it was December. That impression suddenly turned into reality. Those piercing flashes of light were bursting shells from heavy artillery fire, just a few miles ahead!



WWII and Battle of the Bulge Veteran **Dr. Ralph I. Dinin celebrated his 100th Birthday on September 12, 2023.**

Ralph was born September 12, 2023, and was raised in Brooklyn/Bronx, New York. He graduated from Stuyvesant High School and continued his studies at Brooklyn College until 1943, when he entered the Army, serving from February 1943 through January 1946. He served with the 701st and 740th Tank Battalion, 82nd ARBN. He received three battle stars, good conduct medals, a certificate from France for the liberation of France, and the French Medal of Honor. His nickname was “Bulldog” and he was discharged in 1946 with the rank of Technical Sergeant.

Ralph and his wife, Pauline, were married 66 years when she passed in 2015. Pauline was the love of Ralph’s life. Ralph and Pauline raised 2 children, Andy and Sue. And now has four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Ralph was active in the American Optometric Society; a charter member of the Verona, NJ, Lions Club; and a volunteer for the Ocean County Library, bringing books to shut-ins.





Benjamin Melvin Berry celebrated his 100th birthday on September 21, 2023. He was one of four children born to parents Hester and James Wallace Berry Sr. He can proudly trace his ancestry back to great-great grandparents Paul and Ameilia Edmonson, whose children Emily and Mary were friends of Booker T. Washington and Frederick Douglass and were active abolitionists in the Washington D.C. area in the 1840's. Their story is told in the book *Fugitives of the Pearl*.

Ben had a great time growing up. One of his first jobs was picking vegetables for 6 cents a bushel basket. He went to Park Elementary, Abington Jr. High and Abington Senior High Schools. In high school, he played the saxophone because as he says, "It was a good way to meet girls." He graduated June 15, 1943, one of only 3 or 4 blacks in his graduating class.

When Ben first started driving, gas was 13 cents a gallon. He charged his friends 10 cents a piece to ride with him. One such friend, Charles Washington, introduced him to Lois Graves who would become his wife of 58 years.

Ben was drafted into the segregated U.S. army in 1943. He served in Germany, Luxembourg, France, England, and Belgium and was in The Battle of the Bulge, the largest battle fought by Americans in WWII. His title was Technical Corporal, with duties of providing equipment and supplies to his company, even water for drinking, washing, and cooking. Blacks were not allowed to fire weapons, but he and his buddies sometimes sneaked and practiced by shooting rats at the dump. Ben prayed if God let him survive this war, he would serve him the rest of his life, and he has kept that promise. He's been a faithful member of First Baptist Church of Crestmont for nearly 90 years. Ben was honorably discharged in 1945 after serving 27 months.

Ben went to Bok Vocational School on the GI Bill to learn paperhanging. Although blacks were not allowed in the paperhangers' union at that time, he became a successful entrepreneur, managing his own business for more than 60 years. He provided apprenticeship opportunities to young people, some of whom opened their own businesses, and did charity paperhanging from time-to-time, for example papering walls at the Ronald McDonald House.

When Ben and Lois were married in 1947, their first place cost \$1.00 per day. Ben got a second job in order to save enough money to buy their first house. Ben has four children, 9 grandchildren, a host of great-grandchildren, one great-great grandchild, and lots of other family that he loves.

Two of the many honors he's received in his life include recognition for 50 years of

service as a deacon at his church and election as president of the Philadelphia Paperhangers Guild. He is a member of the Army Quartermaster Hall of Fame.

Ben has many interests, including genealogy, antiques, and veteran's organizations. He is on the Board of Aces, a veteran's museum in Germantown, and is often interviewed about his experiences in the army. Ben loves to travel. Two of his most memorable trips were a Battle of the Bulge Tour of the places he fought in Europe and a recent cross-country Amtrak trip.

Three things Ben would want you to remember are (1) Serve God and others (2) Save a lot; give some; spend a little (3) Put family first. One thing I would like you to remember is that everyone has a story that others can benefit from hearing. It's important to tell your story.



Members of the Delaware Valley Chapter celebrate **Jake Ruser's 99th birthday.**



ABOVE PHOTO: Pearl Harbor survivor Richard Schimmel plays a spirited version of “Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy.” RIGHT PHOTO: Magnolia Sadies pose with “Rosie the Riveter,” war worker Dorothy Trate, and WWII vet John Ongaro.

PA LEHIGH VALLEY CHAPTER (55)

On Thursday August 15, 2023, more than 40 members of the Lehigh Valley Chapter of the Battle of the Bulge Association held an outdoor event at Macungie Park to commemorate the 78th anniversary of V-J Day, the ending of World War II. It was a way to remember and honor all the service men and women that fought during the war and to celebrate that historic day.

Army and Navy veterans and their families were treated to performances by the 1940’s dance troupe “Magnolia Sadies” as well as the Ritter School “Andrew Sisters” trio. Pearl Harbor survivor, US Army veteran Richard Schimmel even had the chance to blare away on the bugle during a rendition of “Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy.”

A fitting tribute for the celebration.

—Submitted by Steve Savage



BOBA REPRESENTS AT READING AIRSHOW

The Lehigh Valley, Reading and Delaware Valley chapters were out in strength at the Reading Airshow, June 2-4. Veterans Jake Ruser and Ben Berry from Philadelphia joined Richard Schimmel, war worker Dorothy Trate, and 101 year old Army veteran Angelo Bokeko from

the Reading chapter. The veterans did a busy traffic, signing autographs, posing for photos, and talking with visitors. The show also featured more than 80 aircraft, 200 military vehicles, hundreds of vendors, and a WWII swing dance.



LEFT PHOTO: Delaware Valley chapter members Jake Ruser and Ben Berry. CENTER PHOTO: 101 year old Angelo Bokeko. RIGHT PHOTO: “Rosie the Riveter,” war worker Dorothy Trate, and veteran Richard Schimmel.

SOUTH CAROLINA CHAPTER (7)

On September 30, 2023, Brigadier General Jim Chow (South Carolina Air National Guard, Retired) hosted the South Carolina Chapter at his Congaree Hilltop Farm. Members were treated to a great display and demonstration of a variety of World War II era American and German vehicles and equipment belonging to General Chow and to the American Heritage Foundation. Four World War II Veterans attended: Bruce Cook, Vernon Brantley, Gerald White, and 100 year old first timer Charles Shealy.

After a barbecue dinner, guests were treated to a presentation of WWII automatic weapons, a demonstration of WWII German and American vehicles, motorcycles, scout cars, guns, searchlight, and even a field kitchen. Next, guests were able to observe a field demonstration of some of the equipment in action.



Chapter members and guests enjoy BBQ at General Chow's farm.



The vehicles roll.



South Carolina Chapter Past President Rick Hurst presents General Jim Chow a handcrafted cutting board in appreciation for organizing and hosting the September meeting and demonstration.



Chapter members and guests go to inspect the vehicles.

VA CRATER CHAPTER (43)



Crater Chapter members met at Mission BBQ, and brought photos of their Bulge veterans, which will be posted at the restaurant. (REAR) Linda Guilmart, Betsy Rose, Sean O'Brien, and Mary Ann Coates Smith. (SEATED) John Payne and JC Wood.

“More than the constant threat of imminent death, our men had overcome all that the unbridled elements could inflict on them in the way of snow and ice and sleet, clammy fog and freezing rain; all the pain of arduous marches and sleepless watches. They had fought down their own inclinations to rest their tired bodies, to play it safe.

“I believe we can always rely, even as I had to in the Battle of the Bulge . . . on the willingness and readiness of Americans, including young ones, to endure greatly in their country’s cause.”

—Dwight D. Eisenhower



Omaha Beach American Cemetery Photo by Leon Reed

IN MEMORIAM

MALCOLM CHRISTIAN, SEPTEMBER 6, AGE 99
1123 ENGR CMBT GRP
(See page 24.)

TOM FEARINGTON, JUNE 19, AGE 100,
327TH GLIDER REGT, 101ST ARBN; 1ST WAVE AT
MARKET GARDEN; ON THE LINES IN BASTOGNE

ARNOLD GOREN, MAY 7, AGE 97.
*“HIS ARMY SERVICE WAS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT
EVENT IN HIS LIFE.”*

WALTER HEDGES, WEST COLUMBIA, SC,
P-51 PILOT WITH 8TH AAF
(See page 23.)

PAUL M. HENNESSEY, AUGUST 14, 2022, AGE 97;
87TH INFD PAST PRESIDENT ALUMNI GROUP
(See page 14.)

DR. JOHN KERNER JOINED HIS COMRADES ON JUNE 18,
2023, AGE 104; 35TH INFD, 320 REGT
(See page 23.)

ALFRED KOSOW, 424TH REGT, 106TH INFD

JOHN KUHN, LONGTIME MEMBER OF VBOB/BOBA AND
FORMER PRESIDENT OF LEHIGH VALLEY CHAPTER

VICTOR C. RICHARDSON
(See page 15.)

JOHN RILEY RIEKER, 78TH INFD

ARTHUR SCHRECKENGOST, JR., APRIL 1, 2023
(See page 17.)

JOHN SOLHEIM, REDFIELD, SD,
PASSED NOVEMBER 4, 2023; 75TH INFD
*“I’VE NEVER KNOWN A PERSON WHO WAS MORE
AWARE OF WHO HE WAS OR WHERE HE CAME FROM.”*

JAMES A. WILSON

BERT WINZER

JOSEPH J. ZADRA, JUNE 3, AGE 100, 9TH ARMDD

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 issue of *The 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 email: boba.editor@gmail.com.

TRIBUTES TO HEROES

Paying tribute to Dr. John Kerner



Dr. John Kerner, 35th INFD, 320 Infantry Regt, joined his comrades on June 18, 2023. He was 104 years old.

Dr. Kerner attended the University of CA medical school in San Francisco and during his internship, he was called to active duty on 24 Dec 1943. He was commissioned as a first lieutenant and assigned to the 35th INFD, which took part in the Normandy invasion. He soon became commander of a combat medic battalion aid station. He served on the battlefields of

Omaha Beach, Saint-Lô, Mortain, Le Mans, Chateudun and Nancy. Shortly after Christmas 1944, his battalion (110th Medical Battalion) was sent to Bastogne, where he treated the wounded from the Battle of the Bulge. During the war, he revolutionized the treatment of wounded soldiers, introducing innovations like elastic bandages, now standard in the U.S. Army. For his valiant service, he was awarded the Combat Medic Badge, two Bronze Stars, five Battle stars, and a Presidential Unit Citation. In 2007, he was awarded the Legion of Honor medal by French President Nicolas Sarkozy.

He was a member of the Golden Gate Chapter of the Battle of the Bulge Association and always attended our commemorations of the Battle of the Bulge every December. He proudly wore his uniform to each event.

In his book, *Combat Medic World War II* (2012), Kerner described how he entered Bastogne. “When we got close to Bastogne, an infantry major came by and said that the troops surrounded in Bastogne were low in medical supplies and in medical officers. . . . He said that they planned to force their way into the city, putting some infantry on the outside of tanks, and perhaps we could load a tank or two with medical supplies, a couple of men, and an officer, if available. Well, I figured, what the hell—I’ll try it. They brought a tank to our station and we loaded supplies onto it. . . . it was obvious that the tankers were trying to protect me and my men. They put their tanks in a position to protect us, one on either side of the supply tank. . . . within a few hours, we were in Bastogne, passing cheering troops of the 101st Airborne. We had traveled eighty-five miles in a bit less than two days against stiff opposition. . . . we set up in the main railroad station. . . . Almost immediately wounded poured in. . . . by nightfall we were exhausted, but we knew Bastogne had held.”

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

Battle of the Bulge Veteran George Bliss

Battle of the Bulge veteran George Bliss from Cambridge, Ohio passed away on January 14, 2022 at 98 years old. He was a prominent example of “America’s Greatest Generation” and proudly served his country in the U.S. Army during WWII.

George enlisted in the Army on January 8, 1943 and was assigned to the 2nd Infantry “Indianhead” Division.

George also served at Elsenborn Ridge in the French Ardennes in December 1944 where he battled the brutal cold—26 degrees below zero—and helped turn aside the surprise German assault during the Battle of the Bulge. As a halftrack driver armed with multiple .50 caliber machine guns, George recalled “This lieutenant got a 105 (millimeter) howitzer, several antitank guns and four more half-tracks” to battle the crack 1st SS Panzer Division of the Sixth Panzer Army. As the battle ensued, we just tried to hold the perimeter more than anything. Our infantry took a beating, but the Germans did too...a worse beating than we did, really. We held that onslaught there at the Elsenborn Ridge. They lost lots of tanks and men. They just wouldn’t give up and tried to push on into the perimeter.”



After the war, George opened a service station and remained in business for 43 years. He was a cherished member of the community and mentored many young people in both business and youth sporting activities for over 50 years. His many achievements include the creation of a junior football league, officiating and bookkeeping for various sports, and as a high school officer and volunteer. To honor George for his service, the City of Cambridge, Ohio, dedicated a football stadium in his name at the City Park. There was no better American citizen than George Bliss.

Walter Hedges, from his obituary by family:

Our loving, generous father and a decorated military veteran, Lt. Col. (USAF ret.) Walter N. Hedges, 99, of West Columbia, SC passed away peacefully at his home on August 4, 2023.

As a 10-year-old picking strawberries on the family farm early one morning, he decided his destiny was elsewhere when an armada of military planes flew overhead on their way to a Memorial Day celebration. He “figured” those pilots were having much



more fun than he was. Upon his high school graduation, with letters of recommendation and a clean bill of health, he was sworn in as a Private in the Reserve Corps in November 1942. By November 1944 he was a P-51 Mustang pilot with the Mighty 8th Air Force and flew 40 combat missions over Europe for which he was awarded the Air Medal for Exceptional Meritorious service. For those who knew Walter, he will be

(continued on next page)

TRIBUTES TO HEROES

(continued from previous page)

remembered for educating our Battle of the Bulge Chapter that the date of the beginning of the battle was earlier than what the history books said. He saw the German advances from the air a couple days before December 16, official start of the campaign.

Malcolm Christian, from his obituary:

He met his wife of 76 years, Jacqueline Rady Christian, in high school. He enlisted in the Army and served in the 1123rd Engineer Combat Group. His son William stated that, “He

was proud to have participated in the Battle of the Bulge.” After the war, he practiced law in Richmond and Charlottesville and served as a President of the Richmond Bar Association. He believed firmly in the power of education and was a man of deep faith. He served for many years on the Henrico County School Board.



A EUROPEAN TRIP TO REMEMBER PART I

I had the great fortune in May to experience three weeks in Europe, visiting a number of church, military, farm and other sites, mainly across France and Belgium, with trips into Luxembourg, Germany, and the Netherlands. My traveling companion, Col. John J. Scanlan, USA (ret.), having been on the continent extensively before, knew where to go and what to plan. This was a once-in-a-lifetime trip for me. This was my third trip to Europe, but my first to see the extensive reach of the military presence and the work of the American Battle Monuments Commission.

Following an initial trip to Lourdes, France, we returned to Belgium and began a two-week sojourn, beginning at Waterloo and working our way west to St. Mere-Eglise, Omaha Beach, Utah Beach, Pointe du Hoc, and Normandy American Cemetery.

As we traveled eastward across France, a variety of sites were encountered. French memorials, some German cemeteries, and various church shrines were visited. We toured and viewed the farms and forests along the way and marveled at the beautiful countryside.

The highlight of the journey was the opportunity to visit eleven American military cemeteries, representing both world wars, and which are managed by the American Battle Monuments Commission. Nothing compares with the quality of construction, maintenance, upkeep and care of our American military cemeteries in Europe. The dedication and devotion of the superintendents and staffs of the cemeteries is unmatched. The people we encountered everywhere were welcoming

and so appreciative—eighty years later—of the sacrifice the Americans undertook on their behalf.

Our trip ended with Memorial Day ceremonies on Saturday, May 27, first at Ardennes American Cemetery in Neupres in the morning, followed by Henri Chapelle American Cemetery that afternoon. What an amazing display of patriotism and appreciation from American, French, and Belgian military and civilians.

What made the trip extra special was our time with Mathilde and Marcel Schmetz at the Remember Museum 39-45. Everyone knows M&M, nothing else in the way of introduction is needed here. The weather was excellent ...Chamber of Commerce weather.

At the Ardennes Cemetery on Friday, May 26, we were joined by third and fourth graders from Ecole Communale de Rotheux in Neupres, as we set a rose on half of the graves in anticipation of the Memorial Day Ceremony to follow on Saturday. The students sang the Belgian and American national anthems for us. Mathilde honored me by sharing with the students a picture of my uncle, Charles A. Weisenberger, KIA 21-Jan-1945, in Luxembourg, near the Sure River. He is buried at Henri Chapelle. She gave a wonderful brief talk to the children, explaining what all of the efforts are about. The Belgians honor Memorial Day and in Mathilde's words to me, “We must never forget.” Much more to write about and share with everyone. I'll follow up with additional stories from the trip.

—Submitted by Pete Weisenberger



ATTENTION: DESCENDANTS OF 17 AIRBORNE DIVISION

The Scions (Descendants) of the 17th Airborne Division are in search of any troopers, or family members of troopers, who are not currently involved with our organization. Please contact us at Scion17th@gmail.com or check us out on Facebook: www.facebook.com/17thScions



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In Memory of Keith G. Johnson, who fought in the BOB and was wounded, but never came off the line.

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Mary Ann Coates Smith, Josette Peterson, Lakewood NJ Police Department
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In Memory of PFC Charles A. Weisenberger, 80 INFD, 317th REGT, Co. F

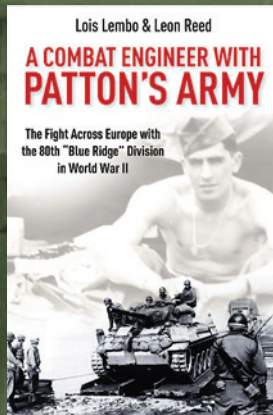
Joseph Wollet
In Memory of Joseph Wollet, 75th INFD, 290th REGT

Wreath Fund

Finally, thanks to Board members and others who responded to the Wreath Fund Matching Game: Madeleine Bryant, Carl Carraway, Al Cleghorn, Kevin Hinkle, Steve Landry, John Mohor, and Mary Ann Coates Smith.

THREE BULGE VETERAN MEMOIRS

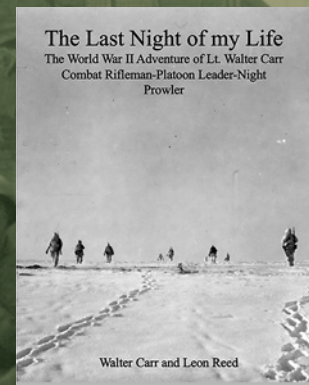
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Betsy Rose - Virginia

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285th F.A.O.B. US Army
POW-KIA 12.17.44
Malmedy Massacre
Daughter - Virginia

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Battle of the Bulge

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