

The BULGE BUGLE®

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

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THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

FALL 2024



BOBA AT DIVISION REUNIONS AND MILITARY EXPO SEASON





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
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BOBA, INC. BOARD ELECTED OFFICERS

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Barbara Mooneyhan

Vice President Membership:

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Vice President Chapters:

Dr. Andy Waskie

Vice President Military &

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Treasurer: Mary Ann Coates Smith

Recording Secretary: Gail Larke

PAST PRESIDENT:

John Mohor

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Madeleine Bryant, Chaplain

(*Appointed Duty*)

Kristen Faller

Ken Larke

Betsy Rose

Jim Triesler, Historian

(*Appointed Duty*)

APPOINTED OFFICERS

(*non-voting*)

Correspondence Coordinator:

Mary Ann Coates Smith

Public Relations: Gary Higgins

Social Media Manager:

Caroline Paviot

Webmaster: Carl Carraway

Outreach: Leon Reed

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

John Mohor 2019-24

* *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): Jim Gormley

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): [President in Transition]

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 photo, left: VP Military Affairs Doris Davis at 1st Infantry Division reunion. (See article on page 10.)

Top photo, center: Bulge veteran Ted Novak at 83rd Infantry Division commemoration, Gettysburg amphitheater. (See article on page 12.)

Top photo, right: BOBA Treasurer Mary Ann Coates Smith with 80th Infantry Division Bulge vet Burt Marsh. (See article on page 11.)

Bottom photo: 28th Infantry Division band gives concert in Carlisle. (See article on page 10.)

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: NOVEMBER 15, 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)

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Steve Landry

GREETINGS FROM ST. CHARLES! As I write this, we've just wrapped up the 44th Annual Reunion in St. Charles, MO. We'll have complete coverage of the reunion in the next *Bugle*, but I want to take this opportunity to congratulate our Executive Vice President Barbara Mooneyhan, the reunion committee consisting of Kristen Faller, Craig Stiegemeier, and Diane Husk, and the Gateway Chapter led by Jim Gormley, for a job well done! Two weeks before the reunion things looked bleak, but a tremendous last minute effort turned things around, resulting in a very successful and well-attended event.

During the reunion, we held an open Board Meeting at which the Board unanimously approved recommending three sets of bylaw changes to the general membership. The first change is to move the Association's fiscal year to run from April 1 to March 31, instead of coinciding with the calendar year. The current fiscal year breaks the majority of dues and Commemoration income and expenses across fiscal years, which greatly complicates our accounting.

The second set of changes eliminates the **requirement** for annual reunions from the bylaws. This is NOT a decision to eliminate reunions. As our WWII Veteran population ages, and travel becomes more difficult and expensive, holding annual reunions may no longer be viable. We still hope to hold reunions in some form and are currently exploring options that do not commit financial resources the Association can no longer afford.

The third set of bylaw changes is simply to modify the bylaw Table of Contents to reflect the changes above and those approved previously.



The actual wording changes will be posted on the BOBA website shortly.

The Board also approved significant changes to the General Membership meeting and elections format. The General Membership meeting will be held by Zoom on November 2, 2024. The election will be conducted electronically over a two

week period following the meeting, (from November 4-17, with results to be announced by November 24) using a process very similar to that used to conduct online proxy voting for corporate shareholder meetings. **It is therefore critical that we have your email address!** There will be technical support available to assist those individuals requiring help with the voting process. We believe this process will be both easier and more accessible than previous processes. Additional details will be posted on the BOBA website shortly.

Thank you all once again for your support as we transition BOBA to a sustainable organization capable of honoring those who fought in the Battle of the Bulge well into the future.

—Steve Landry, President and CEO

HAS YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS CHANGED?

BOBA communicates with members primarily by email. If you haven't received a current issue of *The Bulge Bugle*® or other news, we may need your current address. Please send a message to bobamembership@gmail.com with your new email address.

BOBA ANNOUNCEMENTS

FROM THE EDITOR

A few excerpts from my *Bugle* report submitted for the BOBA Annual Meeting. This is the fourth issue since the last annual reunion. Although we got a slow start this calendar year, we plan to publish four issues this calendar year.

I'm very proud of the number of writers we've developed to produce for the *Bugle*. Original writing was produced by most board members but also Cory Angell and Aaron Burkle, John Baker, Solange Dekeyser, Fred Faulkner, Sean Hennessey, Nelson McLeod, Linda Miller, Dave Nagle, Sean O'Dwyer, and Pete Weisenberger.



80th Infantry Division historian Andy Adkins presenting at their reunion.

Over the past year, we also featured photographs of veterans David Bailey, Ben Berry, Frank Chambers, Ralph Dinin, Fred Faulkner, Joe Landry, Burt Marsh, Ted Novak, Jake Ruser, Andy Valero, Bob Welsh, and Gerald White on the cover.

New or renewed features include: Division spotlights, done by our VP for Military Affairs, Doris Davis, in conjunction with division historians (see pages 8-9); new emphasis on reporting on division reunions (see

pages 10-12); the new "Parting Words" feature (see page 21); and a new effort to interview our veterans, starting with Harry Miller in this issue (see pages 16-17).

I'm also very proud to announce that my first book in a while just came out. Walter Carr had about as interesting a WWII adventure as anyone—he was something of a patrol specialist for the 80th Division and is best known for a night-time patrol he led into Bastogne to make the first infantry contact with the garrison. Carr worked on his memoirs for about a decade until about 2007, then dropped it. His son, David Carr, gave me the distinct privilege of finishing the project, and I'm very proud of the result. (See an excerpt from the book on page 25.)

Leon Reed, *Bulge Bugle* Editor

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The membership committee has been working to "clean up" the membership list, persuade members to pay their renewal in a timely way, eliminate non-paying and deceased members, and, most important, grow the membership.

	Lifetime	Annual	Lapsed	Total
Veteran	62	24		86
Non-veteran	117	380	78	575
SUB-TOTAL	179	404	78	661
PAID-UP ACTIVE MEMBERS				583

Through August, 254 total memberships payments have been received in CY2024. This includes 46 new members this year. This is an excellent start, but we need to work harder on both retaining members and identifying new ones.

BOBA GENERAL MEETING, NOON EASTERN TIME, NOVEMBER 2, 2024

BOBA will hold its annual meeting, via Zoom, on November 2, 2024. Besides reviewing the organization's progress, activities, and finances, one principal item of business will be election of officers. The Nominating Committee slate, presented to the Open Board Meeting at the 2024 Reunion, is shown below:

- President:** Steve Landry*
- Executive Vice President:** Kevin Hinkle
- Treasurer:** Mary Ann Coates Smith*
- VP of Chapters:** Andy Waskie*
- VP of Military Affairs:** Doris Davis*
- VP of Membership:** Joe Wollet**
- Recording Secretary:** Gail Larke*

Board Members at Large

- Madeleine Bryant*
- Kristin Faller*
- Ken Larke*
- Craig Stiegemeier
- James Triesler*

Additional names may be placed in nomination for any office before October 28. All three steps described below must be taken to place a name in nomination:

- Letter/e mail to the Nominating Committee placing the name in nomination [verification that the nominee is a paid-up member]
- Two supporting endorsement letters/e mails to the Nominating Committee from Active Members of BOBA.
- A letter/e mail from the nominee to the Nominating Committee accepting the nomination.

The addresses to send nominations and follow up materials are:

- E Mail: BobaMembership@gmail.com
- Mailing address: P.O. Box 330, Mechanicsville, VA 23111

All nominations and follow up material are due at 9 pm Eastern time, October 28, 2024. It is the submitter's responsibility to ensure that their materials arrive on time.

* Denotes current incumbent

** Denotes current interim appointment

MEMBERS MAKE APPEARANCES

Our members are active in making presentations and appearances on the Battle of the Bulge and other World War II topics.

Presentations by BOBA Members, August-December, 2024 (those names with an asterisk are Bulge veterans)

Name	Date	Place	Event
John Baker	Sept 14-15 Sept 21-22	Army Expo 24 Eisenhower WWII	Exhibit Exhibit
Christine Guidry Law	Sept 21-22	Ettelbruck (Lux) Liberation Ceremonies	Represented 80th Division
*Harry Miller	Aug 8	Central PA Roundtable	Presentation
Leon Reed	Aug 10 Sept 14-15 Sept 21-22 Dec 8	80th Div Army Expo Eisenhower Eldred WWII Museum	Presentation Exhibit Exhibit Presentation
*Jake Ruser	Aug 19 Nov 14	VFW chapter National D-Day Memorial	Presentation Presentation
Jim Triesler	Aug 10	80th Div	319th Regiment
Tom Vossler	Sept 14-15 Sept 21-22	Expo Ike	Exhibit Exhibit



Veteran Harry Miller (right) at the Central Pennsylvania World War II Roundtable.

HISTORIAN REPORT

BOBA Historian Jim Triesler has been active in promoting awareness of the Battle of the Bulge and Bulge veterans.

- He is working with the Virginia War Memorial Foundation to develop an online Battle of the Bulge Gallery.
- He is transcribing old interviews of Battle of the Bulge veterans, recently completing an interview of PFC John Swenson.
- He is giving a lecture on the Battle of the Bulge at the National

D-Day Memorial, Bedford, VA, on November 14. He will also be teaching a course on World War II at the Chesterfield, VA, Lifelong Learning Institute.

- He is working to develop PowerPoints that could be used by BOBA board members to make presentations to school groups.
- He was recently named Acting Chair of the Virginia World War II Heritage Alliance, the association of Virginia military and aviation museums.

SPECIAL MEMBERSHIP OFFERS

When we switched to mostly electronic distribution of the *Bugle*, a number of readers made it clear that they really missed receiving a paper copy. We're offering a special deal that allows members to receive printed *Bugles* at a discounted price. From now through the end of the year, you can get a new or renewal subscription with *printed Bugles* at a *discounted price of \$100 a year*. That's a \$20 discount off the copy by copy price (\$40 annual membership plus \$20 per copy).

You can order a subscription at this discounted price for as long as three years. That's right, you can make sure you'll receive 4 printed *Bugles* a year through 2025, 2026, and 2027.

Another special membership offer is to continue receiving your *Bugle* electronically and instead receive a BOBA challenge coin at a \$10 savings. That's a \$60 value for \$50 (plus \$5 for shipping).



COIN FRONT



COIN BACK



DONATIONS

We are so grateful for these generous donations received through August 2024. (Donations to reunion will be listed in next issue)

- A & D Development LLC
- Barbara Mooneyhan
- In Honor of Kristen Faller, Diane Husk, and Craig Stiegemeier for their help planning the St. Charles reunion
- In Honor of Joe Landry's 100th birthday
- In Honor of Vernon Brantley's 100th birthday
- Leon Reed
- Rosslyn Sei
- Lucinda Shields
- Elaine Winters

Please use the form on the back cover to make a donation today! Or go to our website: battleofthebulge.org/store/donate/

WELCOME, MEMBERS!

New or Reactivated Members (through September 20, 2024)

- James Amor
- Caitlin Armstrong
- Bob Babcock
- Emily Bontrager
- Carrick Brooke-Davidson
- Bruce Clark
- Serena Denson
- Willard French
- Ken Johnson
- Greg Jones
- Kathleen McGinnis
- Anthony Messano
- Susan Moran
- Kelly Norton
- Ted Novak (Bulge veteran)
- Katy Pauley
- John Payne
- Thomas Rehkop
- Jim Soria
- Alyssa Weber
- James Wilson

Please pay your dues for 2025 today! And, memberships make a great gift. Use the form on the inside back cover, or go to our website: battleofthebulge.org/store/join-boba/

BULGE VETERAN MEMORIES BOOKLETS AVAILABLE

The Bulge Bugle® has been collecting GI stories since 1982. Recently, we began compiling these stories in booklets about a specific event (the defense of Monschau or the Malmedy massacre) or unit. The booklets provide the most comprehensive accessible collection of GI experiences in the Bulge. For information or copies (\$9 plus postage), contact boba.editor@gmail.com.

AVAILABLE BOOKLETS

Infantry Divisions: 1st, 2nd, 4th, 26th, 28th, 30th, 35th, 75th, 80th, 83rd, 84th, 87th, 99th, 106th

Armored: 3rd, 4th, 10th

Airborne: 17th, 101st

Events:

- Monschau
- Lanzerath/Lausdell/Twin Villages
- Parker's Crossroads
- Elsenborn Ridge
- Malmedy/Wereth Massacres
- Closing the Southern Bulge

Groups:

- Quartermaster
- Engineers

PRAISE FOR THE BOOKLETS

“This is really great information and very interesting for the region.”

—Luxembourg museum director

“Love that account of the 12th Infantry’s fight at the Berdorf hotel. I’ve heard various stories from those veterans but never one as complete as that.”

—Longterm 4th Division historian

“There are some phenomenal accounts here.

I plan to bring this along on my deployment and share with my unit.”

—28th Division historian

“This is the best piece on the 106th I have read.

I’ve known parts of this story but not been able to put it all together, and I’m getting a lot out of reading it.”

—Descendant of 106th Division veteran



Bugle article about the 106 INF D



VETERAN MEMBER VIDEOS

Watch videos about our veterans on our website at: <https://battleofthebulge.org/category/vbob-video/>

28TH INFANTRY DIVISION



American troops of the 28th Infantry Division march down the Avenue des Champs-Élysées, Paris, in the 'Victory' Parade.

Photo: Wikimedia Commons; Poinsett / Signal Corps

BRIEF HISTORY

Originally organized in March 1879 as a Division of the National Guard of PA. In 1917, after the entry of America into WWI, the Division was re-designated as the 28th Division. On 17 Feb 1941, HQ and HQ Detachment, 28th Division was inducted into Federal service. Today, it is part of the PA Army National Guard, MD Army National Guard, OH Army National Guard and NJ Army National Guard. It is the oldest division-sized unit in the Army.

Arrived ETO: 18 Oct 1943; Arrived in Normandy: 22 Jul 1944

Major Campaigns: Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes, Central Europe

Days in Combat: 196 days

From the U.S. Army Center of Military History:

Casualties: Total 16,851 (KIA 1,678; WIA 7,379; MIA 740; POW 159; Battle Casualties: 9,956; Non-Battle Casualties: 6,695)

Distinguished Unit Citations in WWII: Medal of Honor (Francis J. Clark). Distinguished Service Cross (29); Silver Star (435); Legion of Merit (27); Soldier's Medal (21); Bronze Star (2,312) and Air Force Medal (100). In addition, the 109th Inf Rgt received the French Croix de Guerre from Charles de Gaulle.

Commanders in WWII: MG Lloyd D. Brown (Oct 1943 - 13 Aug 1944); BG James E. Wharton (13-14 Aug 1944); BG Norman D. Cota (14 Aug - 26 Sep 1944); MG Norman D. Cota (26 Sept 1944 - May 8, 1945)

* * *

Originally nicknamed the "Keystone Division." (PA was known as the Keystone State). During WWII, it was given the name of the "Bloody Bucket" division by the German forces because of the blood-red keystone insignia. Today it goes by the name given to it by General Pershing during WWI – the "Iron Division" The 28th INFD is one of the most decorated infantry divisions in the U.S. Army.

The Division was called into federal service on 17 Feb 1941 during WWII. The Division trained at Fort Indiantown Gap. Further training was in the Carolinas, Virginia, Louisiana, Texas and Florida under the command of MG Omar Nelson Bradley.

The Division left the U.S. on 8 Oct 1943 and arrived in South Wales, England for more training. On 22 Jul 1944 (7 weeks after the D-Day invasion), they landed on Normandy. They pushed eastward toward Paris through the Bocage. The Division's infantry regiments (109th, 110th, 112th) participated in the march down the Champs-Élysées and around the Arc de Triomphe on 29 Aug 1944 in the Liberation of Paris. The 28th fought through the Siegfried Line, crossing the Our River bridge from Luxembourg to Germany. They were the first of the Allied armies to reach German soil. They entered in the Battle of the Hürtgen Forest on 2 Nov 1944 and suffered heavy casualties.

Needing rest and refitting, the Division was sent to what the Allies thought was a quiet sector along the Luxembourg/ German border. When the Germans crossed the Our River and attacked, the Battle of the Bulge began.

Facing overwhelming German forces, without sleep, often without food, the soldiers of the 28th Infantry Division fought nonstop. Often until the last bullet and the last man, they delayed the Germans long enough for the Allies to send the 101st Airborne Division to Bastogne to bolster its defenses.

Had the 28th soldiers not upset the German timetable; it is likely they would have captured Bastogne by the 18th before the 101st Airborne arrived. The 101st arrived in Bastogne just four hours before the German troops. If the German logistics would have held up, and had they been able to go on through Bastogne, which would have led them straight into the wide highway N4, they would have had a clear path to Antwerp. Eventually overpowered by the Germans, the Division withdrew to Neufchâteau on 22 Dec 1944 for reorganization.

On 19 Jan 1945, the Division went into action in the Colmar Pocket, supporting the 3rd Infantry Division (who had been there since late Nov 1944). Despite bitterly cold conditions, they prevailed in reducing the pocket by half. This led Adolf Hitler to order the German troops to retreat partially. By 2 Feb 1945, the 28th had cleared Colmar's surrounding areas and the French 5th Armored Division led the way into town. On 9 Feb, the final organized German troops were pushed back across the Rhine.

The Division returned to the U.S. on 2 Aug 1945 and was inactivated 13 Dec 1945.

—Compiled by Doris Davis, Vice President of Military and Veterans Affairs and Walter Zapotoczny, 28th Infantry Division

TO LEARN MORE, go to: <https://28id.org>.

The 28th Infantry Division Association is open to all who have served or supported the 28th Infantry Division. For membership: <https://28id.org/default.asp?nid=13739> or call (717) 497-0765 on Tuesday from 10 AM – 2 PM EST. To view veteran interviews and stories from the 28th Division archives, visit <https://28ID.org/history>.

• Book: *The 28th Infantry Division and the Battle of the Bulge: Combat, Faith and Perseverance*. This book will be available in November 2024. Author: Dr. Walter S. Zapotoczny Jr.

VOICES OF THE 28TH INFANTRY DIVISION

Clarence Blakeslee, 28th INFD, 112th REGT, Co M, *Bulge Bugle*, November 1990

After a few nights I noticed some new guns on our right front, they had a different sound like they were mounted. Also there was more truck activity and sometimes voices.

I went back to the dugout to warn the boys. I told them to keep their shoes on because something was happening. Switzer told me to quit scaring the h--l out of the men. They were mostly new, replacements for the ones we lost in the Hurtgen forest. I countered by saying that the Germans weren't lighting up the place just to [be] nice to us and went back out to the perimeter to listen.

Now I could hear the Germans talking; apparently their leader's name was Carl because the men kept calling his name. I found our sentry and used his phone to call the CP. They thought it must be one of our "white cow" patrols. I said they were talking in German and their leader's name was Carl. The Lt. said it would be "hell to pay" if I was wrong and he alerted the company. I said it will [be] worse if I am right and you don't alert the company. He said you stick with them and keep us posted and I will alert the company.

There was a stunning explosion near me, the blast went over my head, huge chunks of concrete began falling around me. I was scared. They had blown up the big bunker beside me. Now everyone was alerted for the beginning of "The Battle of the Bulge." We had a front center seat.

Charles A. Haug, 28th INFD, 112th REGT, Co B, "A 424th Anti-Tank Crew Saved Our Lives," *Bulge Bugle*, August 2014

Of the 200 men in our Company "B" – 112th Regiment, there was only 25 of us who made it back to the 82nd Airborne on Xmas Eve. The Germans pushed through "C" Company on our right on December 16th. Our company lost contact with the rest of our division on that day and we retreated with the 424th Regiment of the 106th INFD for the next 7 or 8 days. We lost over 100 men (killed and wounded) the first day and the rest during the retreat.

The 25 of us who survived owe our lives to an anti-tank crew that was with the 424th Regiment. On December 16th from 5:30 a.m. to noon we lost over half of our men. About 2:00 p.m. about 60 Germans surrendered to us and we sent them back to battalion with 2 guards. However, the Germans had pushed through "C" Company, 112th REGT, on our right and they ended up recapturing the 60 Germans we had just captured as well as the 2 guards who were with them. About 5:00 p.m. December 16th, the second wave of Germans hit us and they

were led by 5 or 6 tanks. The lead tank had a flame thrower which terrified our men. We had only rifles to defend our positions and when the tanks were about 200 yards from the outpost which Frank Jordano, our 1st Sergeant and I were in, we suddenly heard an Anti-tank gun firing from our left. It knocked out all 5 tanks and the Germans coming on foot turned around and did not attack any more that evening. The next day as the Germans started their attack again we began our retreat with the 424th Regiment.

We learned a few days later that the Anti-tank crew was from the 106th Division. When the war was over, one of the men who was with us. George Knaphus, decided he wanted to find out the names of the men from the 106th Division who were assigned to this Antitank crew. After much research on his part he located one of them – a fellow by the name of Herbert J. Novotny. Herbert told Knaphus the head man or leader of the anti-tank crew was a man by the name of Paul Rosenthal. However, he learned that Rosenthal was killed in a later battle, so we never did get to thank him personally.

Twelve men of Company "B" who survived the Battle of the Bulge held their first reunion in 47 years at my home in June 1992 and in our memories of the war we all recalled the night we were saved from the tanks by the men of the 106th Division.

Murray Shapiro, 28th INFD, 112th REGT, Co M, *Bulge Bugle*, February 1990, and "Attracted to the Battle of the Bulge," May 2001

It had been snowing rather steadily for the last several days; and we, therefore, had to rely on certain landmarks to find our two water-cooled heavies. We went from our company bivouac area where we had sheltered ourselves in small [hand]-made caves to a road which ran part way parallel to the front line. We had long become conscious of not following the road too far and turned off the road to go behind the hedgerows which formed a solid wall to the rear of our guns, and turning right at the cave of an anti-tank gun crew. My M-1 was strapped to my back as I was carrying a bag of potatoes in one hand and a cup of butter in the other. [It was a long day on the gun and we usually read and cooked food, using our K-ration waxed containers as smokeless fuel. We each carried about 8 to 10 K-rations.]

On this particular cold and snowing morning, I noticed with some concern that no one was standing guard at the anti-tank gun position. I looked down into the cave entrance and there was a sentry sound asleep. Behind him were members of the anti-tank gun crew, boots off and dead to the world. I suggested to McGinnis that we wake him, but he thought they would get mad at us, so we let them all sleep.





28TH INFND BAND THEN AND NOW: (Left photo) These American soldiers from the 28th Division Band and Quartermaster Company stayed and fought Germans in Wilts, Belgium, until their ammunition was exhausted. Shown at Bastogne, Belgium, 12/20/44. Photo courtesy of the National Archives (Right photo) The 28th Infantry Division Band performed free to the public on Sept. 7 at the Army Heritage Center, Carlisle, PA.

28TH DIVISION BAND PERFORMANCE

by CWO3 Aaron Burkle and Lt. Col. (Ret.) Cory Angell

The 28th Infantry Division Band performed free to the public on Sept. 7 at the Army Heritage Center, Carlisle, PA.

With a history of service that predates the American Revolution, the 28th INFND Band, based in Torrance, Pennsylvania, is among the top performing Army National Guard Bands in the nation today.

The band has represented the 28th Division and the nation it serves at functions throughout the eastern United States, Canada and Europe. A flexible repertoire and several combinations of performing groups allow the band to support many different functions and

accommodate hundreds of requests. Although the band only meets once a month, the individual talents of its members allow the band to maintain its high standard of excellence. The Band served with distinction during World War II, earning the Meritorious Unit Commendation for its defense of Wiltz, Luxembourg. Since then, the full 41-member Band has performed in Europe in 1988, 1990, 1994, 2002, 2004, 2023 and 2024. The unit is Commanded by Chief Warrant Officer 3 Aaron Burkle.

“The band is the pride and joy of the division,” said Lt. Col. (Ret.) Cory Angell with the 28th Infantry Division Association in Harrisburg. “They have performed around the

world and have an incredible 146-year history.” Angell said the band is famous not only for their music but their fighting spirit in the Battle of the Bulge as well which will have its 80th Anniversary of remembrance this year.

“These are not just musicians, but soldiers,” said Angell. “They are proud of their history. The band had to set down their instruments and pick up their rifles against the last major German offensive of World War II.”

The 28th Infantry Division band was constituted Sept. 23, 1878, in the Pennsylvania National Guard as the Band, 13th Infantry Regiment, and organized at Scranton, Pennsylvania.

REUNIONS

1ST INFANTRY DIVISION REUNION



Doris Davis, Vice President of Military and Veterans Affairs, attended the 1st Infantry Division Reunion in Albuquerque, NM, July 31 - Aug 4, 2024. The Reunion was a success—more than 250 people were in attendance.

The 1st Infantry Division (“The Big Red One”) was among the first wave of troops to assault the German Army defenses on Omaha Beach on D-Day. The First was among the first units to reinforce the hard-pressed divisions holding the front lines at the time of the German attack and fought vigorously from the first hours of the campaign throughout the Battle of the Bulge.

The First is the oldest continuously serving division in the Regular Army. They have seen continuous service since its organization in 1917 during WWI. Attendees included veterans who served in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan.

—Submitted by Doris Davis



BOBA VP of Military & Veteran Affairs Doris Davis with Vietnam vets at 1st Division reunion.

80TH DIVISION HOLDS 104TH REUNION



The second oldest division veterans association met at Richmond's Midlothian Doubletree Inn from August 9-11, 2024. In attendance were WWII veteran and BOBA member

Burt Marsh, and BOBA representatives Mary Ann Coates Smith, Betsy Rose, and Christine Guidry Law. Editor Leon Reed made a presentation on the 80th Division and the Battle of the Bulge, and historian Jim Triesler was the after-dinner speaker the first night of the reunion.

With attendance by veterans and even their children dwindling, the Blue Ridgers may have shown a direction forward. Taking only two days, the reunion was constructed to appeal to researchers, writers, and enthusiasts, with a heavy emphasis on historical presentations and "how to" research assistance presentations. The presentation-heavy format was well received. The reunion concluded with a joint association 80th Training Command Commanders dining in, which was attended by 180 people from the training command.

As a new member of the 80th Division Veterans Association, Mary Ann Coates Smith, BOBA Treasurer, attended the reunion, as did BOBA board member Betsy Rose. Betsy's grandfather, Edward Wallace Hughes, served and died in the 80th, Dec. 24, 1944.

The 80th Training Command, still active,



BOBA member Christine Guidry Law with 80th Training Command commander Maj. Gen. Patricia Wallace.

hosted the awesome formal banquet on Saturday night. National Commander Major General John P. McLaren, Jr. was the guest speaker. After many awards, honors, recognitions, color guard, and missing man display, the evening ended with dancing.

—Submitted by *Mary Ann Coates Smith, BOBA Treasurer, Proud gold star daughter of Pvt. James H. Coates, POW/KIA Dec. 17, 1944 (just 7 days before Betsy's grandfather was killed.)*



Dr. David Carr with Bulge veteran Burt Marsh. Carr is the son of 1st Lt Walter Carr (see p. 25).



BOBA members Betsy Rose, Jim Triesler, and Mary Ann Coates Smith.

80 INFD Soldier's Story | BURT MARSH

Burt Marsh grew up in New York and played football, basketball and baseball in high school. He was drafted right after his 18th birthday. In Basic Training, he trained with the M1 rifle, grenades, Bazooka, hand grenades, mortars and the water-cooled Browning machine gun.

He crossed on the *Queen Elizabeth*, along with 21,000 troops and arrived to Europe in January 1945. He was assigned to Co. M of the 319th Infantry Regiment, in a machine gun squad. Six men were in a machine gun squad (1st gunner, 2nd gunner, Sergeant, and three ammo bearers). They were always attached to a Rifle Company. Along with the water-cooled Browning machine gun, he carried a .45 caliber pistol and an M1 rifle. I had two hand grenades hanging off his chest and a backpack.

On Feb. 6, 1945, they prepared to cross the "Our" River into Germany and the Siegfried Line at Wallendorf. The engineers were trying

to build a bridge across the flooded "Our" River but were unsuccessful because of extremely high water and German artillery fire. They kept trying, finally getting a footbridge built 3/4 across the river on Feb. 11, 1945. On Feb. 7, the 1st Battalion attempted to cross the river in assault boats, but heavy artillery, rain, and the swift current made it very difficult to cross. Some of the troops made it, but many didn't, those that did established a beachhead in the Siegfried Line. Then 2nd Battalion made a cross on the night of Feb. 8 and 9, again in assault boats under heavy artillery fire. Many assault boats were lost due to the swift current. Finally, the 3rd Battalion, including Marsh, crossed the river on the foot bridge wading, the last 30 yards in knee deep water at 11:00 at night on Feb. 11, 1945, under heavy artillery fire. Many men were lost.

On Feb. 14, 1945, they continued their attack on
(continued on next page)



WWI historian Lee Anthony and WWII veteran Burt Marsh.

REUNIONS

MARSH (continued)

the Siegfried line, taking several pill boxes until they came under a heavy mortar barrage. They held up and held their position. On Feb. 16, 1945, the 3rd Battalion was relieved by another Division and returned to Wälendorf to reassemble the 319th REGT. During all of this, the 317th and 318th REGT of the 80th INFD were south of them, crossing the Sauer near Dillingham, Luxembourg or the Moselle River near Trier, Germany.

On Feb. 19, 1945, the 319th battled their way toward Bitburg, Germany in a northeast direction. Fighting was heavy all the way. Around March 6, 1945, the 80th INFD trucked south about 90 miles

to Saarbrücken and again attacked the Siegfried Line heading East to Kaiserslautern, crossing the Rhine in assault boats then the Main River heading toward Kassel which was the 80th's last major battle on April 3, 1945. (It was also Burt's 19th Birthday.) From here they headed East through Erfurt, Gotha, Weimar, where they liberated the Buchenwald Concentration camp on April 11, 1945; Burt has never forgotten the dreadful sight of those prisoners. The 319th kept advancing East to stop just outside of Chemnitz on April 14, 1945.

After V-E Day, Burt spent more than a year in the occupation of Germany, playing baseball in the summer and basketball in the winter.

83RD DIVISION REUNION



The 83rd Infantry Division Association held its 77th reunion in Harrisburg, PA, from August 14-17, 2024. More than 80 people were in attendance, including WWII veteran Ted

Novak. The *Bugle* editor met the group in Gettysburg.

Highlights of the reunion included a bus tour to Gettysburg, where the group toured the battlefield, held a memorial service at the park amphitheater, and visited the World War II American Experience museum. Later, the group went to the Army Heritage and Education Center, where they presented a set of the division's excellent magazine, *The Thunderbolt*, to add to the library collection. The reunion ended with a Saturday night banquet.



ABOVE PHOTO: 83rd Division attendees examine 83rd Division material at Army Library. **LEFT PHOTO:** WWII veteran Ted Novak signs side of Red Cross club-mobile at WWII American Experience.

83 INFD Soldier's Story | TED NOVAK

In May 1943 at the age of 20, Ted was drafted into the U.S. Army and did his basic training at Camp Shelby in Mississippi. He would arrive on Omaha Beach in Normandy, France on June 30, 1944. He was assigned to the 83rd Infantry Division, Company C, 331st Infantry, generally known as the "Thunderbolts."

Ted participated in the following battles and campaigns: Normandy Campaign, Campaign of Northern France, Ardennes Campaign (The Battle of the Bulge), Rhineland Campaign, and Campaign of Central Europe.

On August 13, 1944, Ted was shot and severely wounded, earning his first Purple Heart. He was in the hospital for a month, then returned to duty with the 83rd Division.

On September 13, 1944, just two days after being discharged from the hospital, he received the Combat Infantry Badge for exemplary conduct in action against the enemy in France.

Ted would be shot again on October 14, 1944, during the savage fighting in Hurtgen Forest and earned an Oak Leaf Cluster for his Purple Heart.

The 83rd fought in the battle of Hurtgen Forest and went straight



from there to the Bulge.

Private First Class Ted Novak received his Bronze Star for actions on Christmas Eve 1944 during the Battle of the Bulge. According to his Citation:

"... While under fire from enemy artillery and mortar guns, Private Novak assisted the aid man in the evacuation to safety of ten men who had been hit by fragments from mortar and artillery shells. After assisting in administering first aid he then aided in the evacuation of the wounded by stretcher, cross country to an aid station in another town. His unselfish devotion to duty reflect great credit upon himself and his military service."

The war came to an end for Ted Novak when he was wounded a third time in April 1945. A German mortar shell hit his machine gun nest, killing one soldier and severely wounding Ted and another soldier. Novak received a second Oak Leaf Cluster to his Purple Heart.

He would be in hospitals and a rehabilitation center until October 1945, when he received his Honorable Discharge.

—Submitted by John K. Tiene



Jake Larson in a scene from the documentary film *In the Company of Heroes*, aired during the broadcast of the 2024 Summer Olympics.

JAKE LARSON FEATURED IN VIDEO

Jake Larson was featured in the 24-minute video, *In the Company of Heroes*, which ran several times during the NBC broadcast of the 2024 Summer Olympic Games. The documentary was filmed in part during the 2023 79th anniversary celebrations. Larson appears numerous times, including a visit to two young Normandy children who he befriended on an earlier visit, an interview with him at his home, and the coveted “old veteran stands on the beach and reflects” shot.



The video can be seen at www.youtube.com/watch?v=zBGkeKoh-YU.

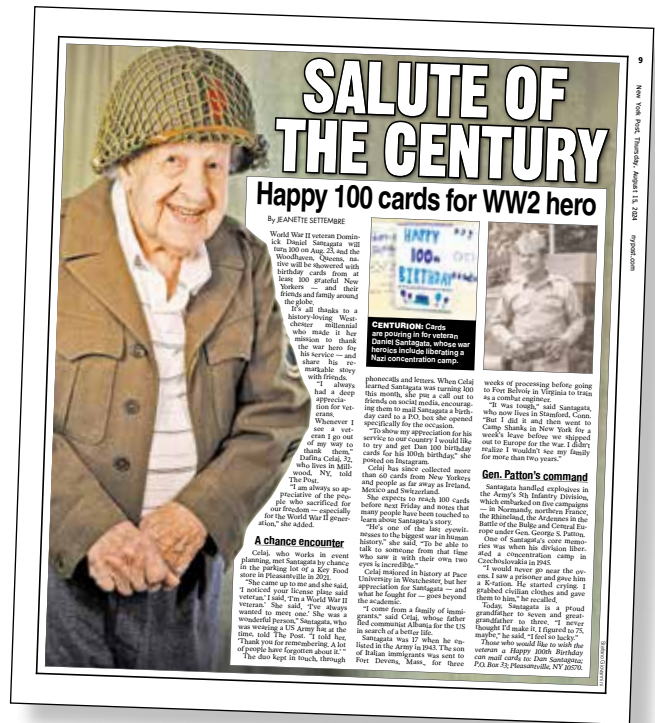
TWO UNUSUAL FRIENDSHIPS FEATURED IN MAJOR NEWSPAPERS

Three BOBA members, **Leo Dormon, Andy Valero, and Dominick (Daniel) Santagata** were featured in major daily newspapers this summer. Santagata was the subject of the story, “Salute of the Century: Happy 100 Cards for WW2 hero,” which appeared in the August 15, 2024, edition of the *New York Post*. Valero and Dormon were profiled in, “I never thought that at 21, some of my best friends would be 99 and 100,” in the August 19, 2024, edition of *The Washington Post*.

The *New York Post* article described the friendship between Dafina Celaj, 32, who introduced herself to Santagata a few years ago when she noticed his “World War II Veteran” license plate. A history major at Pace College, she had always wanted to meet a WWII veteran. They talked, and stayed in touch. When she heard his 100th birthday was approaching, she organized a birthday card campaign.

Santagata was an engineer with the 5th Division and still speaks frequently about his experiences, including liberating a concentration camp in Czechoslovakia.

Dormon’s and Valero’s friendship got its unpromising start with the cancellation of a WWII history class at Randolph Macon College. “I was so disappointed,” said Kayla Smith, now 23, “because I’d really



Dominic (Daniel) Santagata was featured in the *New York Post*.

been looking forward to learning what the Greatest Generation went through.” She and a friend, Hannah Winton, began contacting veteran’s organizations and eventually tracked down Valero, a Bulge veteran who served in the 9th Division, and Dormon, a Navy aviator. Smith and Winton visit the veterans several times a month and have traveled with Valero to several veterans events, including the 2024 BOBA Commemoration in Arlington and Washington, DC.

Valero said he didn’t discuss his experiences for years but felt comfortable talking with Smith and Winton. In turn, Valero has helped talk Smith through some difficult situations. Winton, a self-described “aviation nerd,” has formed an especially close relationship with Dormon. Dormon and Valero both attended Smith’s wedding and Smith noted other ways they had helped each other. “Andy introduced me to Scotch and I introduced him to FaceTime. Helping him has made me feel useful, like I have a spot in the world.”



Standing (left to right): Leo Dormon, Hannah Winton, and Kayla Smith; Seated: Andy Valero (left), with Felix Maurizio.

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!



KENNETH JOHNSON

26 INFD

It's not that unusual to find out about an unpublished World War II manuscript from the soldier's children or grandchildren. Often, people in that situation come across dad's "box in the attic" after he's gone. Walter Carr's story (see article, p. 25) is one such example. But it has become an unusual event to be handed an original, unpublished, first-person account of World War II by the veteran him/her-self. This is the Battle of the Bulge excerpt from Kenneth Johnson's much longer memoir.

We built a lot of bridges across France with just a bit of strafing and 88 shells, nothing serious. We ended up in Nancy, France building bridges. The 26th Infantry Division needed replacements and my company asked for volunteers. I did not, but my name was # one on the list Dec. 16, 1944, the 1st day of the Battle of The Bulge. I was notified at ten thirty to pack my things and that I was leaving at 11:45. Some one with rank just didn't like me.

Maybe the altercation I had with a Sgt. the night before had something to do with my making the top of the list. You just don't argue with rank even if you are right. My 1st. Sgt. had the eight of us that were going to the Infantry, line up facing him. He would walk to each man, put out his hand, shake their hand and say good luck. When he got to me, he put out his hand smiled and said good luck Johnson. I did not shake his hand. I looked him straight in the eye and said, I don't need your good luck Sgt. He looked down at the ground, hesitated for a second, he knew that he was sending me off to be killed or wounded. He then moved to the next soldier. It took about 5 minutes for his good wishes. We then loaded onto the truck and were off for Metz.

I arrived at Metz in the late afternoon and when the paper work was done I was put in company F, a rifle company with the 2nd Battalion, 104th Regiment, 26th Infantry Division, General George S. Patton's 3rd Army. Albert E. Moore was placed in the same company.

We were replacements to fill in for the casualties suffered in the battles in France.

My squad leader said Johnson you are lead scout. I asked, what is it you want me to do, he said I want you to go out and draw fire. My thoughts were, you SOB, you are trying to get me killed. We were put through a bit of training for a couple days and then loaded up for the



trip north towards the Bulge. When we arrived in Luxembourg, my company was the first to contact the Germans. It was the coldest winter, 20 degrees below zero and deepest snow in 25 years.

All my belongings were lost in the move so I asked my squad leader for a sleeping bag. He came back with one with three holes in it and blood all over. I thought are you trying to tell me something. Lead scout who always get shot first, bloody sleeping bag, is this an omen or just my time to think positive, it's just a coincident to be in these circumstances.

After a few days on the combat line, company F was called back a few hundred yards. The Colonel was making a special night patrol group of 12 men. The patrol was organized to go into no mans land at night time, seek out the Germans for location, number of troops, Tanks, weapons and any information so that when we make a charge forward the odds would be in our favor. Albert Moore and ten other soldiers volunteered and they

needed one more. Albert and another soldier said Johnson raise your hand. I said I'm not volunteering for anything. One of them said you might as well you are going to get killed anyhow. I reluctantly raised my hand. Albert and I had become close friends in a short time. Albert was very friendly, intelligent and one fine person, we got along great, almost like brothers.

My first patrol was to a beautiful little town called Esch Sur La Sure. It is situated in the bottom of surrounding hills with a river running around it. Bridges blown!

When we got close to town two men stayed on top of the hill and the Sgt. and I went down a path to town. I was just behind him when I looked up and it looked like a German with his hand in the air ready to throw a hand grenade. I took aim with my rifle and then realized it was a statue. I called the Sgt. and he almost shot it too. I was quick to alert him as soon as he raised his rifle. After patrolling the town, we reported the situation to the Col. and he made the decision to attack that morning. The Germans retreated and we moved into a hotel in town. We stayed in town for two days. The Germans were mad and they shelled us constantly. One dud landed in our building but no explosion. Erie echoes from the 88s made sleeping difficult. If you are tired enough, you will sleep.

Four of us went out on patrol at two in the morning to locate the enemy positions, as we were going from one wooded area into an open field and deep snow a parachute flare shot up into the air making daylight as bright as I have ever seen. Snow made it brighter.

We had snow white suits on and when we hit the ground we could not be seen. We were waiting for the flare to come down and burn out





Bulge veteran Kenneth Johnson poses by a jeep.

so we could get out of there. It landed about ten feet from me and was still burning. I crawled over to it and put it out with snow. They started shooting then but they couldn't see us so we made it back uninjured.

They came close but no cigar. We had gone out on one side of our line and the outpost on the other side was informed to be on the lookout for us when we return around 4 am.

When we approached the outpost, we had to walk through a mine field, no problem for an ex-Combat Engineer. We were not sure where we were and no one greeted us. When I saw something move in a fox-hole. I shoved my rifle in his face and yelled in English and German hands up. It was our troops and they were asleep on guard duty. Great protection!

December 28, 1944, Albert and three other soldiers went on patrol towards Buderscheid, Luxembourg. They crossed from a wooded area

thru an open field towards another wooded area. Two German soldiers came out of the woods and everybody took off back to the rear woods. Albert fell knocking himself out for a minute. The two Germans approached him, picked him up and were taking him back to their area when he knocked one down and was fighting the other one and the one on the ground shot him in the upper leg and hip. The Germans left Albert on the ground and went back to their area in the woods, our troops picked up Albert and carried him back to our lines but he bled to death before they got him to the medical station. After that I did not make any close friends. It really hurts to lose a good friend and Buddy. We were not supposed to shoot or make ourselves known while on patrol. In that situation, I would have shot both Germans as they were approaching my friend. I probably would have been up for court martial but at least he would have been saved.



LIKE US ON FACEBOOK:
www.facebook.com/pages/Veterans-of-the-Battle-of-the-Bulge
VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
www.battleofthebulge.org



BULGE MEMORIES



HARRY MILLER 740TH TANK BATTALION

The Bugle met up with Harry Miller at the World War II American Experience World War II weekend and had an extended discussion with him about his experiences in World War II.

Harry: My mom died when I was three, my dad died when I was 13. The Depression was on and things were very tough as far as living conditions went. [material omitted]

Q: You enlisted at 15; how did that work?

A: The way I worked it was I found out they were taking guys from 17 and a half years and up. So I went and checked. And he said, yeah, that's what we're doing. You'll need a birth certificate and I asked where you get that. And they told me to go to your county courthouse.

So I went to the county courthouse and in those days they had a fancy book and someone with really good handwriting wrote the names in a book. They looked and they couldn't find anything about me,

So I went back to see the recruiter and told them they didn't have a birth certificate for me. So I asked, "Does that mean you won't take me?" and he said, "No, we'll take you; you are 17 and a half, aren't you?" And I said "oh yeah, sure."

After basic, they sent me out to Ft. Ord to the amphibious battalion, the 788th. It had a glorious history, never got overseas.

When I got there, they had me put my bag down, you walked through two rows of six medics, they gave you all these weird shots, like elephantiasis, sleeping sickness, I don't know what else. But I'm ready for the South Pacific. When I got to the end of the line, they sent me to see some officer and he said leave your bag there and we'll tell you tomorrow where you're going.

Tomorrow morning they said fall out for reveille, which I did. And some officer said to go down to the Motor Pool and someone will greet you and they'll tell you what to do.

And some grizzled master sergeant says we're going to take all these Landing Vehicle Tracks, LVTs to where they're going. And I asked where we're going and they said "you'll find out." And we put them on railroad flatbed cars and we took 'em to the Brooklyn Navy Yard."

Q: Um, hmm, welcome to the Pacific Theater.

Editor: *They needed this amphibious equipment because the British had taken the Port of Antwerp but hadn't cleared the Scheldt Estuary and the Allies couldn't use the port. Ike ordered Monty to clear the estuary.*

A: The British owned Antwerp, but the problem is they didn't take the estuary ... They finally opened up the port, as I recall the 23rd of September.

Then I got sent to one of the cigarette camps – replacement depot. I was there about four days and a 6 x 6 truck came up. They called some names and said get on the truck. Where are we goin' and they said "you'll find out."

Editor: *The 740th was an independent tank battalion, not assigned to an armored division but instead working independently in support of infantry. The 740th originally trained as a Sherman tank outfit but then was re-assigned as a CDL (canal defense light) unit, so they trained in this new mission. But after they arrived in Europe this mission was terminated so the 740th wound up without a mission—or tanks. They continued to move forward, hoping to be issued new tanks.*

A: Inside they had an arc light. They worked just fine in the desert. Shined its light to the other side of the turret, where there was a concave mirror. ... Somebody in their wisdom said, "We can't use these in France, they have buildings and trees ..."

The battalion commander said "we want to go to France." And he was told, "You can go but you can't take your tanks with you." The battalion landed at Utah Beach and asked "where are our tanks?" And the beach master said, "I'm a Navy person, I don't know about tanks."

Editor: *The unit continued to move forward, hoping to get tanks, and wound up in Neufchateau.*

And the commanding officer asked, "Why are you here?" and explained there

were no tanks.

The battalion commander said, "We don't want to fight as infantry." "OK, stay here in Neufchateau, keep law and order and if we need you we'll let you know," This is about when I joined them.

Fast forward to December 16. We were patrolling whatever it was. We happened to hear a noise, ammunition exploding. It was a foggy night. We wondered what the heck was going on.

Finally on the 17th, we got the word from First Army that we're supposed to join the 30th Division. We said we don't have any tanks. Oh that's no problem, we can get you tanks. Go down to the ordnance depot and you can have whatever you find in there. And we thought, "Oh boy, new tanks."

It was a bunch of junk. We had to put together what we could. The problem is none of the tanks had gunsights, none of them had radios. That was just part of the problem, that was the biggest problem. So we worked all night finding what we could and we managed to put together two tanks and one tank destroyer and waited for orders.

They told us to go down to the railroad station at the town of Stoumont. And they said the First SS Panzer Division is trying to break through. 30th Infantry is in ditches beside the road and they're





Bugle editor Leon Reed interviewed 740th Tank Battalion veteran Harry Miller.

sweating blood and need tank support fast.

So we took the two Shermans and the tank destroyer down to the train station. There was a big long curve by the train station. The infantry was there and the Germans were just coming up the road.

So we sent the first tank down and he came face to face with a Panther. Our first tank pulled up and he knocked it out with the first round. He started to reload and the round got stuck in the breach. So he had to wait for the second tank..

So the second tank pulled up. He came around real slow. He ran into the second German tank. And he fired and knocked that one out.

Then it was the tank destroyer's turn. He had a 90 mm gun and one of the best gun crews in the battalion. They put three rounds of 90mm into that tank and tore it up.

Q: So your first five shots in Europe ...

A: ... in the first half hour ...

Q: With cobbled together equipment.

Yes, after that, word got around and everyone had heard of us and everyone wanted us with their team. They knew we were the best tank crew to get hold of.

The First SS Panzer Division had just come from Malmedy, I think everybody knows about the Malmedy Massacre. They were trying to get into Stoumont. We pushed them back and they found another way into town.

They left one tank there in Stoumont as they were moving over to LaGleize. It was sitting on a hill facing a hospital. It turned out there were some 30th Division troops stuck in that hospital. And every time they tried to get out they got shot at.

We tried to shoot at it but we couldn't raise our barrels enough.

So that night we had everybody in the battalion out and as soon as it got dark we started building a corduroy road. We laid out these logs and worked all night long. Then we brought the Sherman up. The Sherman made a huge amount of noise and they never heard us. The Germans had to be sleeping in their tank.

As soon as we got to the top of the hill, we hit it and knocked it out.

We went in and we freed the 30th Division troops who were stuck in the hospital. Then we went down in the basement and we found something like 92 kids; some Catholic priests were keeping them quiet, because they knew if the Germans heard them they'd all be killed.

We freed them and after that the Belgians taught all their kids to shake the hands of any American and say "thank you for our freedom, thank you for my liberation. And they still do it."

* * *

Then we went to La Gleize. It was just three kilometers from Stoumont; now you just pass from one to the other and don't notice it. We found out the 1st SS Panzer was in there with all their equipment.

Q: You by now have acquired more vehicles? You've been getting more vehicles from the boneyard?"

A: First Army found us some. The battalion commander set up all the assault guns, at that time we had four or five. He saw a second lieutenant with a Long Tom (155). He was bugging out, wasn't going to fight. The battalion commander saw the Long Tom. He sent his driver down to the Long Tom commander and he said, "See that lieutenant colonel up there? Well he said to get your ass up there and set it up or he'll have you court-martialed or executed, or both." So the lieutenant said "Ok, I'll do it."

Q: That was the end for Peiper?

A: The First SS was completely demolished. Knocked every tank.

What was left, they walked back to Germany. We never saw them again.

VETERANS MEMBERS: SUBMIT YOUR BULGE MEMORY!



If you are a veteran 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 few sentences or short paragraph with a picture. We will continue to share Bulge Memories in future issues of *The Bulge Bugle*®.

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



BOBA Treasurer Mary Ann Coates Smith (front left) was along on the Virginia War Memorial August “Insider Trip,” where guests were able to visit the Pentagon and spend time in the National 9/11 Pentagon Memorial. They also spent some reflective moments in the chapel honoring the 184 people who lost their lives at the Pentagon that day 23 years ago.



BOBA Historian Jim Triesler (left) met with Alex Kershaw, author of many books on World War II, most recently *Patton’s Prayer*. They’re planning another meeting to compare notes on each of their extensive classroom outreach activities.



BOBA volunteer John Baker talks to “General Pershing.”



Tom Vossler (far left) and John Baker (right).

BULGE COMMEMORATIONS

BOBA is monitoring plans for special commemorations of the 80th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge.

11/14	National D-Day Memorial	Presentation
12/8	Eldred (PA) WWII Museum	Presentation and Exhibit
12/14	Gettysburg	BOBA, WWII AE, others
12/16	World War II Memorial	Observance
12/16	Fort Indiantown Gap, PA	Official Pennsylvania Commemoration; 28th Division

ARMY EXPO 24

John Baker, Leon Reed, and Tom Vossler took a BOBA exhibit to the Army Expo 24, which was held September 14-15, 2024, at the Army Heritage and Education Center (AHEC) in Carlisle, PA. Army Expo is the Army’s big hardware demonstration, with tank driving and firing demonstrations, helicopters, and an appearance by the Army’s Golden Knights parachute team.

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE: MONUMENT VERIFICATION PROJECT

BOBA has identified a total of 46 monuments that were erected by our members as part of the mission to “preserve the memory.”

We recently learned that the monument at Carlisle, PA, was removed some years ago to make way for a new building and is now in storage. BOBA and several partners are working to get that monument re-erected. (*See article below.*)

This raises the question of the status of the other 45. Five (Boalsberg, PA; Jefferson Barracks, MO; Arlington Cemetery; Winchendon, MA; and Staten

Island, NY) have been seen recently, but the *Bugle* would like to verify the location and condition of the other 40. All members are asked to examine the attached list, visit any nearby monument, and verify its status and condition, plus any special notes on access (on a military post; requires sign-in; limited hours, etc.)

The *Bugle* has address information for many of these monuments, so if there’s any doubt, check with us first.

Contact: boba.editor@gmail.com.



VBOB monument at Pennsylvania Military Museum, Boalsberg, PA.
Photo by Leon Reed

VBOB/BOBA MONUMENTS

Local chapters have built at least 46 monuments to the Battle of the Bulge

Arizona: Phoenix, Tucson

California: San Francisco

Florida: Boynton Beach, Eustis, Melbourne, Orlando

Georgia: Thomaston

Indiana: Merrillville, South Bend

Iowa: Boone

Kansas: Abilene

Maryland: Ft. Meade

Massachusetts: Brewster, Ft. Devens, Framingham, Hyannis, Quincy, *Winchendon*, Worcester

Michigan: Traverse City

Mississippi: Hattiesburg

Missouri: *Jefferson Barracks (St. Louis)*

New Jersey: Ft. Lee, Port Monmouth

New York: Camillus, Charlotte, East Meadow, Rochester, Schuylerville, *Staten Island*

Ohio: Rittman

Pennsylvania: Annville (Ft. Indiantown gap), *Boalsberg*, Carlisle, Greensburg, Wayne

Rhode Island: Barrington

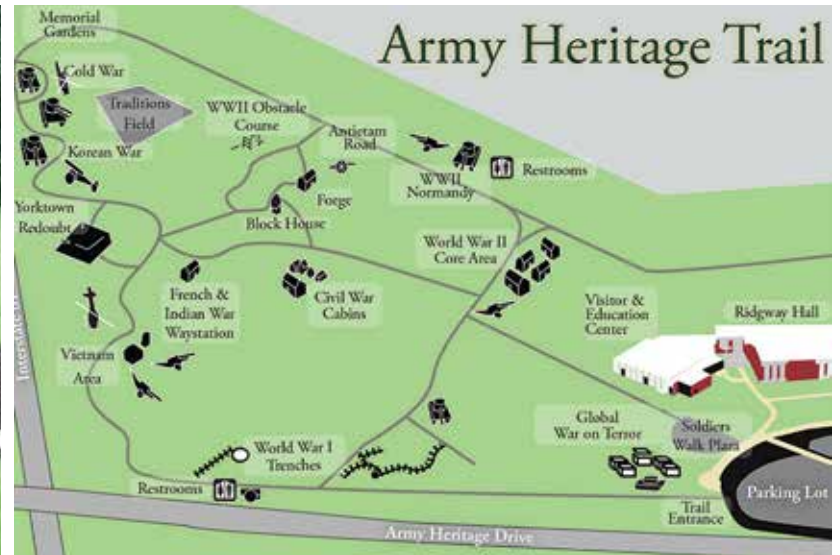
Texas: Dallas-Fort Worth, San Antonio, Fort Cavazos

Vermont: Randolph

Virginia: *Arlington Cemetery*, Fairfax, Ft. Monroe (Hampton)

Wisconsin: Wausau

NOTE: Highlighted (italic) locations were recently verified.



Left: Carlisle monument in its original location at Army War College; Right: Army Heritage Trail, where BOBA hopes to have monument re-erected.

BOBA ASKS WAR COLLEGE TO RESTORE MONUMENT

In 1997, VBOB members gathering for our first Gettysburg reunion made the 25 mile trek to Carlisle to dedicate a monument on the grounds of the Army War College (AWC). BOBA recently learned that the monument was removed some years ago (to make way for a new academic building) and is in storage on base. We were told that there is a plan eventually to re-erect it, but “no time is set and no site has been chosen.”

Along with several other groups, BOBA is working with the AWC, the AWC Foundation, and the Army Heritage and Education Center (AHEC) to facilitate the transfer of the monument from AWC to AHEC and re-erect the monument on the Army Heritage Trail. We hope to accomplish this in time to rededicate the stone during the period (December 16, 2024, to January 25, 2025) of the 80th anniversary celebrations.

• IN MEMORIAM •



ARNOLD DEBRICK,
6 ARMDD

JAMES GRAFF, 35 INFD,
VBOB CHARTER MEMBER

GEORGE GRUNER, 440 AAA BN

RICHARD DONALD KINDT
JAMES HUBBLE, 11 ARMDD

GEORGE MOORE,
1252 ENGR CMBT BN

LOUIS ZOGHBY, 17 ABN

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

Obituary for Lt. Col. James Everett Hubble U.S. Army (Ret.)

James Everett Hubble, 99, of Elgin, SC, died Friday, August 30, 2024 at home surrounded by family. He was born to the late James Everett Hubble and the late Eva Hale Hubble on November 19, 1924 in Parkin, AR.

He was a 1942 graduate of Water Valley High School, Water Valley, MS. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in accounting from Mississippi State University.

He served in the United States Army for 27 years, retiring with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He received a battlefield commission at the Battle of the Bulge in WWII. He received the medal for meritorious service while assigned to the Defense Intelligence Agency from June 1965 to May 1967. The accompanying citation to the medal stated that "During this time his efforts were significant to the effectiveness and success of the intelligence program of the Department of Defense." He arrived at DLIWC from Fort Ritchie, MD, where he worked as an intelligence staff



officer with the Defense Intelligence Agency. In July, 1967, he began his Thai language training, one of 25 languages offered at the Institute. He was a graduate of the Advanced Infantry Officer's Course, Fort Benning, GA, and the Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS. Among his other decorations are the Bronze Star Medal and the Combat Infantrymen Badge.

Following his service in the U.S. Army, he had a 20 year career in banking as the Senior Vice President of Accounting for C&S National Bank. He was a member of First Baptist Church in Columbia after receiving Christ at the age of 92. He was an avid golfer and had reached the ultimate achievement of being able to shoot his own age or better.

He is survived by his loving wife, Susan Weathersby Hubble; two sons, Jim Hubble (Linda) and Bob Hubble (Mary); grandchildren, Melissa Grey (Josh), William Hubble (Melissa), and Kate Duerkop (Josh); and great grandchildren, Madelyn Grey, Jaxson Grey, Luke Hubble, Ashlynn Hubble, and Wyatt Duerkop.

Obituary for Richard “Dick” Kindt

Richard Donald Kindt, known affectionately as Dick, passed away peacefully on July 24, 2024, at the age of 97, at Waverly Heights in Gladwyne, PA. Born on September 7, 1926, in Bethlehem, PA, he led a full life marked by dedication, intelligence, and humility.

Richard was raised during the Great Depression and was a veteran of WWII. Dick served honorably as a Staff Sergeant in the Army, displaying leadership and resilience that would define his later endeavors. Following his military service, he pursued higher education, earning a BA in marketing from Temple University.

Dick dedicated 38 years to the Philadelphia Electric Co, where he was a respected Supervisor of Market Research and Load Forecasting. His work was characterized by a thoughtful and analytical approach, greatly contributing to the company’s development.

Soft-spoken yet determined, Dick found joy in hobbies such as hunting, fishing, golf, and tennis, sharing these passions with friends and family who cherished his company. He was a long-time member of the Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church, where he engaged actively in the community.

Dick was preceded in death by his beloved wife of 71 years, Alberta, and is survived by his nephew, Jonathan Birbeck, goddaughter Judy Harbison, godsons Mark, Gary and George Hughes, and dear friend Cathy Lockyer Moulton. His life was a testament

to his positive and thoughtful nature, leaving a lasting impact on all who knew him.

Obituary for Art Moore

Born on Christmas Day in 1925 to Ethel and Arthur Moore of Aransas Pass, Texas, Art spent his early years moving with his family before settling in Waterproof, Louisiana, where he graduated high school. His sense of duty led him to enlist in the U.S. Army during World War II and in December 1944, he crossed the Atlantic on the Queen Mary enroute to fight in France, Belgium, and Germany during the Battle of the Bulge, contributing to the Allied victory in Europe. Of all his memories of the war, the one he recounted the most was how cold it was. Art returned to the US as a decorated soldier in the 115th Infantry 29th Division.

Following his military service, Art applied his dedication and work ethic to the American steel industry working for Republic Steel, Colorado Fuel & Iron, Jessop Steel, and Mills Wolf. During that time Art built expertise and dedication to quality and excellent service, along with a strong commitment to his customers. Recognizing a need for a company built on these values, Art envisioned and founded American Alloy Steel (AAS) in 1971. Under his leadership, AAS became a leader in specialty steel distribution, known for its commitment to quality and customer service.

Parting Words

All of our departing heroes left a legacy that will live forever in the memories of their family members, their fellow countrymen, and the peoples they liberated. Some left written memories.

James Graff

James Graff was a VBOB charter member and frequent contributor to The Bulge Bugle®. He wrote “My Battle of the Bulge Story” for the May 2013 Bugle. He served in the 35th INFD, 134th REGT, C Co.

On January 4, 1945 “C” Company attacked the German lines in the snow near Luterbois, Belgium, which is south of Bastogne. They overran the German front line and ended up in a bivouac area. Things went from bad to worse, two men, Staff Sergeant Rex Storm from Illinois and Pfc. Dallas Viehe of Indiana killed 30 Germans that day and later received a Silver Star for their actions that day.

The company became scattered and disorganized partly because some 80 of them were recent replacements who had joined the company at Christmas in Metz, France. The result of this action was that 10 officers and 14 enlisted men were killed in action and the



company CO Captain William Danny of Missouri and 72 enlisted men were taken prisoners.

Four days later I joined C Company as a replacement. Later in the month, namely January 23, we learned that six of the POWs were found shot to death by a small caliber bullet to either the head or to the heart. Needless to say this episode did much to pattern our actions later on.

Only recently have we been able to learn these men’s names and the location of their fatal wounds. Three of them also had American first aid bandages on previous wounds before being shot to death. Not all massacres occurred at Malmédy.

I arrived back in the states on September 10, 1945, separated from the service on April 24, 1946, after serving about six months in Company K, 2nd Infantry Regiment, 5th Infantry

Division at what is now known as Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

More about Graff can be read in two lengthy oral history interviews he gave:

<https://ww2il.com/VetStories/GraffJamesG.pdf>

<https://presidentlincoln.illinois.gov/oral-history/collections/graff-james/interview-detail/>

CHAPTER NEWS

VA CRATER CHAPTER (43)

Crater Chapter members attended the “Bring Your Lunch” series of lecture and book signing at the Virginia War Memorial.

Crater Member Alicia DeFonzo spoke at the series. She is the author of *The Time Left Between Us*, the story of her grandfather’s service in WWII and Battle of the Bulge.

—Submitted by Mary Ann Coates Smith



(Standing): Alan Cunningham, past BOBA National President; and Jim Triesler, Director of Education at VWM and BOBA Historian.
(Seated): Judy Cunningham; Alicia DeFonzo, professor of English at Old Dominion University; and Mary Ann Coates Smith, BOBA Treasurer and Crater Chapter President. Photo courtesy Mary Ann Coates Smith



Delaware Valley Chapter President Andy Waskie and Jake Ruser at The Union League of Philadelphia. Photo courtesy Andy Waskie

PA DELAWARE VALLEY CHAPTER (4)

WWII, D-Day, and Battle of the Bulge Veteran Jake Ruser was guest speaker at Legion Post 405 at The Union League of Philadelphia on Monday, August 19, 2024 and spoke to 50 attendees for an hour, with captivating stories of his participation in D-Day and WWII in the ETO. Jake Ruser is a Life Member of Post 405.

—Submitted by Dr. Andy Waskie

Why should a chapter/division association member join BOBA?

Your dues help support many important activities that BOBA carries out.

Support BOBA’s research and publication on the Ardennes campaign

- Booklets of GI memories
- Annual conference
- Local exhibits and presentations
- Local mini-conferences
- Veteran oral histories

Support BOBA’s advocacy and outreach

- Liaison with Army, Arlington Cemetery, embassies, major museums and monuments, European institutes
- Current: restore Carlisle monument

There are also many actions that provide direct benefits to our members:

PUBLICITY OPPORTUNITIES

- BOBA leaders attend/speak at your meetings/reunions
- Chapter/association news in Bugle
- Division/chapter display/presentation at BOBA events
- Division spotlight (published in Bugle and available to divisions as a standalone fact sheet)

RESOURCES

- Bulge resource packet (for speakers)
- PowerPoint templates (for speakers)
- Speakers for your meetings

ACTIVITIES

- Annual commemoration in Washington, DC/Arlington
- Annual conference in Gettysburg
- Local mini-commemorations, mini-reunions, etc.



Robert Suber, ably assisted by his son, shows Chapter members his office and the many interesting maps, posters, novelties, and artifacts that he has on display.

SC CHAPTER (7)

The South Carolina chapter held a special meeting on Saturday, 14 September at 12:30 at Little Pigs Barbecue, 4927 Alpine Road. Following the feast and meeting, the chapter members toured MGS, LLC where chapter member Robert Suber showed his facility and some of the military and historical items that he has collected.

The latest issue of *T-N-T Chat*, edited by Barbara Mooneyhan, had contributions by Rick Hurst, Carolyn and Christy Lomas. A portion of member Lieutenant Colonel Jim Hubble's story is included.

—Submitted by Nelson McLeod



75th Infantry Division veteran Vernon Brantley (left), one week past his 100th birthday celebration, is treated to further recognition of his reaching triple digits by family and friends at the South Carolina Chapter meeting.



Bruce Cook, turret gunner on B-17 "Old Gappy" of the 379th Bomb Group, was presented with a Quilt of Valor. Bruce, who turned 99 a few days after the meeting, has been posting diary entries of his 1944 bombing missions on Facebook.

**WE NEED YOUR
CHAPTER'S NEWS!**

Please send to:
boba.editor@gmail.com

**NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE:
NOVEMBER 15, 2024**

EISENHOWER ONE-MAN PLAY reviewed by Leon Reed

Having finished a successful Off-Broadway run, a one-man play that re-examines our 35th president is making a national tour, appearing in Olney, MD, for the month of October.

Eisenhower: This Piece of Ground stars Broadway stalwart John Rubenstein. It is set at Eisenhower's Gettysburg, PA farm and takes place in 1962. *The New York Times* has just released the first-ever (though surely not the last) set of presidential rankings and Ike isn't happy. With only 31 presidents to rank (JFK hasn't been president long enough and Harrison and Garfield didn't serve long enough to be rated), Eisenhower comes in near the bottom, at 22. He uses the occasion to reflect on his career, on leadership, and on democracy.

Holding a stage by yourself with what amounts to two 40 minute monologues would challenge any actor. Rubenstein's performance is smooth and seems almost effortless. He reviews some familiar and some not-so-familiar incidents in Eisenhower's life: his early military career, his frustration at being assigned to lead a tank training school in Gettysburg during WWI rather than going to Europe, the death of his first son, working as an aide to General MacArthur ("I had the greatest regard for his military achievements. But that was nothing compared to the regard he had for 'em.>"). The emotional high point is at the end of the first act, when he discusses his decision to commit to the Normandy landings. "It's, ah, it's hard to look a man in the eye when you may be sending him to his death. ... But they were thinking of me. 'Now quit



John Rubenstein as Eisenhower. Photo: Maria Baranova

worryin', General—we'll take care of this thing for ya.' ... Well, I saw them off, every last planeload, with a rousing call to victory. What they didn't know is that I had another message in my pocket, just in case. 'Our landings have failed to gain a satisfactory foothold. The troops did all that bravery and devotion to duty could do. If any blame attaches to the attempt, it is mine alone.' I owed 'em that much, at least."

The play's second half mainly focuses on the years of his presidency, necessarily a messier and more complex

affair than military command. Ike notes his accomplishments—created NASA, ended the Korean War, Little Rock, finished the job of desegregating the Army, interstate highway—and acknowledges some mistakes. Throughout, he conducts a master class on leadership ("real leadership isn't throwing your weight around. It's getting somebody to do something because they want to do it.")

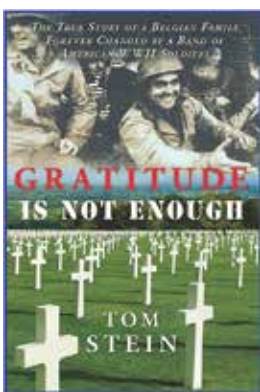
In both the Army and the presidency, many contemporaries of Eisenhower's trivialized his skills, dismissing him as an amiable mediocrity, someone who succeeded because "nobody disliked him; he got along with everyone." Historians' regard for him has risen considerably in recent years. Playwright Richard Helleson, director Peter Ellenstein, and "Ike" John Rubenstein have done an excellent job of bringing that new, more complex Eisenhower to the stage.

Olney Theater, Olney, MD, through November 3. Other venues on national tour.

BOOKS

GRATITUDE IS NOT ENOUGH

By Tom Stein



From first-time author Tom Stein, comes the meticulously researched true story of a Belgian family forever changed by a band of American WWII soldiers. All proceeds from book sales will be donated to the Remember 39-45 Museum, which figures prominently in the story.

It was a crisp, clear day in November 1943 as ten-year-old Marcel Schmetz walked home from school along Route de la Clouse, Hitler's new Belgium-German border. He was about to cross a small bridge over the Berwinne Creek.

To his right, he saw an unassuming loaf of bread bobbing downstream in the creek. Then, peering further over the flimsy bridge railing, he saw her. A young woman was face-down at water's edge with armed border guards standing over her. Water rippled slowly past her

lifeless body, turning pink as it flowed into occupied Belgium. Marcel did not know that poor, young woman. But he did know of her likely desperation to try to smuggle food across the border for her family. For more than three years, Marcel's family and neighbors had been deprived of their basic rights and fundamental needs for survival.

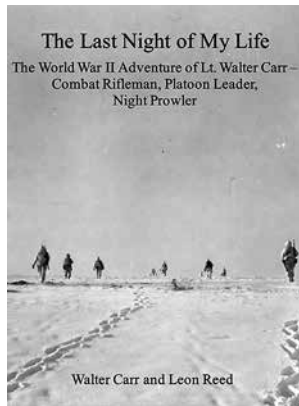
No one knew liberation was still 10 months away, but Marcel's family would persevere as they had for the previous three years. At the time, young Marcel couldn't know the powerful, personal impact those liberating heroes from the famed American 1st Infantry Division would have on him, after they secured his town and later bivouacked on the Schmetz family's farm. Nor could he dream of how he and his future wife, Mathilde, would dedicate their lives to keeping those soldiers, their sacrifices and their bonds alive for future generations to cherish.

This is not a war story, although there are accounts of war. It is not an historic tome though historic events are described. It is the simple story of how war and history shaped a couple's powerful love for each other, for strangers and for a people an ocean away.

Many of us have visited the Remember Museum 39-45 in Thimister-Clermont, Belgium, so please support Marcel and Mathilde by buying this wonderful book. Available on Amazon and Barnes and Noble for \$19.99. Again, all proceeds go to support this wonderful museum and keeping their memories alive.

***THE LAST NIGHT OF MY LIFE:
The World War II Adventure of
Lt. Walter Carr – Combat Rifleman,
Platoon Leader, Night Prowler***

By Walter Carr and Leon Reed



1st Lt. Walter Carr, Deputy Commander of E Co., 318th Infantry Regiment, experienced plenty of hard fighting but seldom more than on December 25-28, 1944. Already severely under-strength due to casualties from the fight for Ettelbruck, the 2nd Battalion of the 318th Infantry was pulled out of that fight on Christmas Eve and trucked 40 miles west to support 4th Armor units push for Bastogne. They began their move toward Bastogne on Christmas Day.

Excerpt from *The Last Night of My Life*

At 9 a.m., we began our advance toward Bastogne. What better way to spend Christmas Day? In 1957, I wrote this description:

The effective rifle fighting strength of the 2nd Battalion for example had been reduced to 200 men. Attacking on Christmas Day, after several days without rest, the battalion began its assault on the enemy positions encircling Bastogne. Through the next four days and three nights the depleted battalions battled their way in freezing weather through strongly held woods and villages separating our troops and the besieged 101st in Bastogne.

My battalion's final objective for the day was not Bastogne, but the village of Chaumont. Chaumont was a key village we had to control to establish a reinforcement corridor on the secondary road that ran through it to Bastogne. The corridor, to be successfully defended, would have to be considerably wider than a secondary road. The Germans were concentrating more and more troops in their effort to remove Bastogne as a significant obstacle to the resupply of their forces attacking toward Antwerp and to block our efforts to reinforce Bastogne. Searching for a vulnerable spot, they shifted their forces to attack from the west, southwest, and south. They had already shifted some forces to the south to block our attempt to relieve the garrison.

The struggle for the village of Chaumont illustrates the vigor with which the Germans were resisting this advance of the 4th Armored. The 4th Armored captured Chaumont December 23, but the Germans were able to retake it quickly because they had received five tank destroyers armed with very effective long-barreled, thus long-ranged, 88 mm guns, which they now used to knock out some of the 4th Armored tanks at such long ranges that our tanks' gunners couldn't effectively respond; under this fire from the tank destroyers, our surviving tankers felt compelled to retreat.

Thus, the Germans were concentrating more and more troops and equipment in their effort to stop our effort to relieve Bastogne and ultimately to reduce the garrison and remove this bottleneck to their resupply.

Commencing the attack at 9 Christmas morning, we captured Chaumont by nightfall. It was a nasty slugfest. The enemy was dug

in throughout the woods south of town and had to be pried out, one by one. Accompanied much of the way by tanks from 4th Armored's CCB, the infantry worked through three separate woodlots. At this point in the war, the Germans generally weren't defending much in the open spaces.

We were now about five miles south of Bastogne. Years later I was able to review the morning reports for this period and learned the company suffered eight soldiers killed on Christmas Day. The struggle for Chaumont brought tragedy not only to Americans attacking the village but also to its Belgian residents. How well I remember the elderly, heartbroken Belgian couple who huddled in their small basement where some of us had taken shelter Christmas night. They had scrimped and saved for a lifetime to be able to buy a new house for their retirement. After suffering through the long German occupation of 1940 to 1944, they had been liberated by the Allies. Now the Germans had returned. Preparatory to an attack by the 4th Armored CCB on December 22 or 23, an armored field artillery battalion shelled the village, and fighter-bombers from the XIX TAC "hammered" it. The vicious fighting over control of this village had wrecked everything the elderly couple owned. The entire village of Chaumont, five miles south of Bastogne, was almost completely leveled after having exchanged hands at least four times between December 16 and December 25. It was a key village U.S. forces had to control in the corridor along the road we were opening as we moved northward from Burnon to relieve and reinforce the encircled American defenders three miles away in Bastogne. The elderly couple's house had been destroyed by the repeated shellings that had preceded one or more of the four exchanges of the ghost-like village.

In addition to the Belgian couple, those who planned to sleep in the turnip-storage basement were Medical Technician Robert L. Schackle, several company runners, and me. Before we lay down, we ate what should have been our Christmas dinner. The still intact concrete floor of what was left of the living room above served as a ceiling for the basement and provided fairly solid protection from artillery fire. The best I could offer the elderly couple for Christmas dinner was a can of cheese and some crackers from one of my K-rations. Their sad eyes brightened long enough to make me feel as if I had served them turkey and dressing with all the trimmings. What a difference a few miles made. Barely 20 miles away, people were rushing to finish Christmas shopping, while here was a struggle for survival. I also ate a cold K-ration, which was all any of us had to eat. We had no way to heat the food. We had no Christmas tree. No one offered to read the Christmas story from a Bible. We were all too sad to sing Christmas carols. And our only candle was too short to burn very long. Some Christmas dinner! Some Christmas! But we were alive. The next morning, I had to be up at daybreak to see that the company was ready to move out for the day's attack. Just as we were about to leave Chaumont, Schackle came up and told me the elderly man whose house we had stayed in had died during the night. I speculated it was mostly from a broken heart.

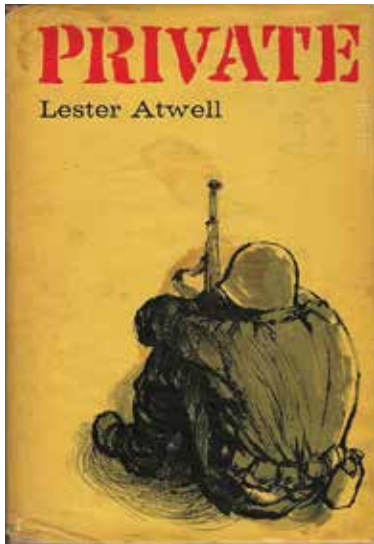
* * *

Later, I was given my second Silver Star for our Bastogne patrol, and the entire battalion earned the right to wear the Presidential Unit Citation for their work from Christmas Eve through the 28th. But the relief of Bastogne came at a horrendous cost. Already under-strength when we left Ettelbruck on Christmas Eve, we traveled in 21 trucks to get there but after three days of heavy combat needed only nine when we returned to Ettelbruck.

The book is available for BOBA members at \$25, shipping included. Contact boba.editor@gmail.com.

PRIVATE

By Lester Atwell



Originally written in 1958, *Private* avoided the “blood and guts” school of literature at the same time it avoided the romanticized “Greatest generation/good war” treatment. In a matter of fact way, he reports the daily life of a soldier, with the drudgery,

Reviews at the time were favorable and it was a finalist for the National Book Award. John K. Hutchens of the *New York Herald Tribune* said, “A remarkable book not quite like any other, so far as I know, that has emerged from the war...one imagines this long, solid, fierce

and tender book living on and becoming, to future generations, what the great Civil War memoirs are to us: segments of another time caught and preserved with an undying intimacy.”

A wife of a Bulge veteran wrote: “He often reads sections to me that represent his own experiences and feelings far more eloquently than he has ever been able to express them. For someone who wants to know more than the conventional accounts of infantrymen’s experiences, this would appear to be ideal. As a woman who was a naive teenager at the time I find the book an antidote to the “greatest generation” idealization of WW 2 and those who fought it.”

Excerpt from *Private*

“There were few tears, few big scenes, seldom any cries even when the pain must have been outrageous. When, as frequently happened, the litter bearers brought in compound fractures, sucking chest wounds, shattered backs, shoulders, necks, and so on, Captain Stettner gave over his supervision and worked on those cases himself. In a respite, he sometimes delivered a short, clear explanation to the two technicians on the nature of the wounds they had just dressed. During the little lecture, he kept up the roaming back and forth, back and forth.

When the ambulance drove up, I’d lift one end of the litter and carry out the wounded man with anyone who happened to be standing about. As soon as the four litter cases were in, the walking wounded were led out and crowded in along the floor of the ambulance.

This was not a large-scale attack, but for hours that night, the litter bearers were carrying men out of the snow-covered forest, across a square moonlit clearing, and up to the beer all. At about nine o’clock Sam Benton, Jr., returned from a haul, his face scarlet with the cold, and told the captain that he had seen several rifles stuck up in the snow, “raht at the end of the woods. Jes standin’ there clear as day. American rifles. He pronounced it more like “raffles.”

“How many?” the captain asked.

“‘Bout five, six. Maybe more, sir.”

The captain turned to me. “Do you think you’d better go out and pick them up? It’s not your job now.” He smiled. “You’re not supposed to go out in the middle of an attack and gather stuff up, but what d’ you think?”

“Well, I don’t mind going – but I don’t want to be searching around.” I turned to Sam Benton, Jr. “Exactly where are they?”

“Raht at the edge of the woods.”

“Sam, you go out and show him.”

I put on my helmet and gloves and we stepped out a back door. The cleared sloping field stood out silvery white against the dark background of trees.

“Raht straight down there,” Sam Benton, Jr., said, pointing. “You can almost see ‘em. See ‘em?” I didn’t. “Well, come on then.” As soon as we reached the edge of the woods, I did see two M1s, their butts stuck in the snow. Why had they been left there? Had the walking wounded abandoned them, seeing the aid station in sight? “An’ see, there’s another one down there near that tree. An’ there’s two more. There’s a pack an’ a gas mask. Want me to take back some of these things?”

“Yes, if you would. I’ll take the rifles; you take some of the other stuff.”

There were hand grenades placed at the trunk of a tree and, farther in the woods, another rifle. Sam Benton, Jr., went back and I became aware of one of C Company’s platoons moving with great caution all through the woods around me. Each man was separate from the other, advancing in what I thought must be the diamond formation, holding his rifle down loosely across his thighs, ready to lift it at a moment’s notice. “Flushing the woods.” The words formed in my mind as I gathered up the rifles and pressed down the frozen locks. Artillery shells were falling, but not nearby. I was somewhere in the middle of one of the advancing diamond formations, and the man called “Lucky,” whose name I remembered mainly because he had appeared one night during a great barrage, gibbering and shouting on the edge of my foxhole in the Saar Valley, was moving abreast of me, turning his head nervously from side to side, trying to keep track of the two men ahead, one to his right, the other to his left. He was whispering the foulest curses, calling himself the most loathsome and hated names, as if he mortally dreaded every forward step he took and had to force himself on. Suddenly, quite close, there broke out the mechanical chattering of a machine gun, and streaks of tracer bullets pierced the dark woods.

Everyone became tense. There was a watchful halt, and silence. Over to my right a twig snapped loudly with a sound like a pistol report, and Lucky instantly brought up his rifle. Had he fired it, he would have shot my head off. Even in that sub-zero cold, I could smell the heavy odor of sweat and fear that came from him. Deciding to get out of there as fast as possible, I picked up a few snowy bandoleers, left the hand grenades at the base of the tree, and, with my arms loaded with rifles, started to hurry back, thinking, So that’s what it’s like flushing the woods. A loud chattering of small-arms fire began as I broke into the clearing, and going up the incline, across the moonlit field of snow. I know I was an easy target if anyone had been looking in my direction. Weighed down as I was, I couldn’t run, and the field seemed endless.

When I sat down again in the Beer hall and resumed the letter I had been writing, I heard Sam Benton, Jr., sitting nearby in the circle, say, “Cliff, ah’m tared. Write a letter for me, will you?” Cliff was always agreeable, and when he finished his own letter, Sam dictated slowly and distinctly: “Somewhere in Germany. Dear Mother and Dad: Ah am well. Today I read Isaiah, chapter ten, verses one to twenty-two. With love, your son, Sam. The other pens had all become still. Eyes slid around to meet other eyes, but no one said anything.”

The reprint of Lester Atwell’s book sells for \$40 on Amazon and other sites. His family is offering the book to BOBA members for half price, \$20, including shipping. To order: <https://tinyurl.com/Private4BoB>

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