

The BULGE BUGLE®

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

VOLUME XLIII NUMBER 4

THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

DECEMBER 2024



Honoring the Veterans on Veterans Day and Other Occasions





Battle of the Bulge Association® , Inc.

P.O. Box 330, Mechanicsville, VA 23111-0330

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

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

Editor: Leon Reed

(EMAIL: boba.editor@gmail.com)

BOBA MEMBERSHIP OFFICE

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

EMAIL: BobaMembership@gmail.com

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

**VISIT THE BOBA WEB SITE: WWW.BATTLEOFTHEBULGE.ORG
FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK!**

BOBA, INC. BOARD ELECTED OFFICERS

President and CEO: Steve Landry

Executive Vice President:

Barbara Mooneyhan

Vice President Membership:

Joe Wollet (*Interim*)

Vice President Chapters:

Dr. Andy Waskie

Vice President Military &

Veteran Affairs: Doris Davis

Treasurer: Mary Ann Coates Smith

Recording Secretary: Gail Larke

PAST PRESIDENT:

John Mohor

PRESIDENT EMERITUS

David Bailey

BOARD MEMBERS

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 2020-23

* *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 (L to R): Diane Landry, President Steve Landry, and Board Member Madeleine Bryant lay wreath at Arlington on Veterans Day; Darrell Bush with Army Chief of Staff James McConville

MIDDLE (L to R): Joe Landry 100th birthday party; Ben Berry and Jake Ruser were Grand Marshals at Philadelphia Veterans Day parade (Photo courtesy Andy Waskie); Harry Miller (right) speaks at National Archives (Photo: National Archives Staff)

BOTTOM (L to R): Paul Goffin 100th birthday; Joe Landry throws out first pitch at St. Louis Cardinals game;

How to submit stories for *The Bulge Bugle*®

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

Stories and letters: Please email or send typewritten (not handwritten) text whenever possible, and limit word count to 500 words or fewer. We reserve the right to edit for length or clarity. Clippings/articles from recent newspapers or other periodicals must contain the name & date of publication, so we can obtain reprint permission. Original stories will be given preference over reprinted articles. NOTE: We cannot reprint from books or pamphlets, unless you are the author. **Stories or clippings will not be returned, so please do not mail originals you want to keep—send legible copies.**

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

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

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

NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE: JANUARY 28, 2025

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

EIGHTY FOR EIGHTY CAMPAIGN

For the Veterans who served...

For the families they longed to return to...

For future generations to learn and remember...

Show your support for the Battle of the Bulge Association by donating \$80 for the 80th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge.

Let's keep the organization that our Veterans founded alive!

Thanks to our vendors who provide valuable services to support BOBA:
Apple Press, Inc. (Printing/Fulfillment); Martha Wasik Graphic Arts (Layout/Design)



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Steve Landry

GREETINGS FELLOW VETERANS AND BOBA MEMBERS! We have much to celebrate as the year comes to a close. As I write this missive, we've just completed a free and fair election, celebrated Veteran's Day and Thanksgiving with Christmas, New Year's Day, and Inauguration Day soon to follow. We cap off January with our 2024-2025 Commemoration in Washington, DC. God Bless America!

Many of our Veterans have recently celebrated, or are about to celebrate their Centennial Birthdays! On behalf of the Board, I wish them all a very Happy Birthday.

We have a lot going on. On November 2nd, we held our Annual General Membership meeting with 31 members attending via Zoom. The meeting included the Treasurer's Report, the Membership Report, presentation of the BOBA Officer and Board candidates and three recommended changes to our Bylaws. Online voting occurred during the period November 4 – 17. See page 5 in this newsletter for the results.

Regardless of the election results, two members of the current Board will not be returning. Long-serving Executive Vice President Barbara Mooneyhan has decided to retire from the Board. I want to express my heartfelt appreciation for her support and her tireless efforts over the last 10 years as VP of Membership and Executive Vice President. For many years, she set a standard for planning reunions that were engaging, entertaining, and welcoming to new and old members alike.

While she served only one year on the Board and Finance Committee, Betsy Rose was Editor of the *Bulge Bugle* for 4 years and Membership Services Manager for 2 years. She could never do enough for our Veterans and she will be greatly missed by all. Our former office manager, graphic artist (for nine years), and Board secretary, Ms. Tracey Diehl, has retired. She also served for three years as *Bugle* editor and is responsible for converting from the newsletter to the current color glossy format. The look and feel of our beloved magazine is largely due to Tracey's efforts. Ms. Martha Wasik took over her duties, beginning with this issue of the *Bugle*.



As I mentioned in the last issue, our 44th Reunion in St. Charles, MO was a great success. Once again, I wish to congratulate the Reunion Committee, including Barbara Mooneyhan, Kristen Faller, Craig Stiegemeier, Diane Husk, and the Gateway Chapter for a job well done. For me, the highlight was watching my Dad, Joe Landry, throw out the first pitch at a St. Louis Cardinals game. Extensive coverage of the Reunion begins on pages 6 and 7.

We recently discovered that the Bulge monument at the Army War College was displaced to make room for a new building. The monument was placed in storage. Member Tom Vossler is leading an effort to have the monument restored to public view. Outreach

Coordinator (and *Bugle* Editor) Leon Reed is now leading an effort to locate all of the Battle of the Bulge monuments and assess the condition and accessibility of each one. If there's a Bulge monument near you, please take some time to visit it and let Leon know what you discover (email: boba.editor@gmail.com).

Leon, our Historian James Triesler, and I have also begun collaborating with the American Overseas Memorial Day Association Foundation, led by Former Ambassador to Belgium, Ronald Gidwitz. The Foundation seeks to use the Battle of the Bulge as the centerpiece of an online learning resource focused on American Exceptionalism.

Financially, I believe BOBA has turned a corner. As a result of shifting our model to a volunteer-driven organization, as well as cost saving measures by the Finance Committee, strenuous efforts of the Membership Committee to solicit membership renewals, and donations, BOBA completed the first nine months of the fiscal year with a net positive income. Completing your 2025 membership renewals on time (i.e., before December 31, 2024) will help ensure we have net positive income for the year.

Finally we are kicking off our "\$80 for the 80th" donation campaign (see page 5) to ensure the continued viability of your Association. Please contribute if you are able. And please don't forget to send us your email address!

— Steve Landry, President and CEO

TREASURER'S REPORT

by Mary Ann Coates Smith, Finance Chair

AS OF OCTOBER 31, 2024, all invoices received have been paid and all deposits have been properly recorded.

BOBA's balance includes our checking account, PayPal account, and the investment of a high yield Certificate of Deposit (CD). The approved change in the fiscal year was to ensure that Reunion and Commemoration expenses and income will be entered in the same financial year.

We are currently waiting for Hilton Rewards points to be applied to BOBA's Hilton Points account. All points generated by our events are applied to this account to be used properly by BOBA.

As of October 31, 2024, BOBA's balance on hand is \$94,352.06, compared to a 12/31/23 balance of \$83,463.48. Significant bills from the 2024 Reunion remain to be paid; on an ongoing basis, BOBA is basically operating on a break-even basis. This is a significant improvement over the 5-figure annual losses of prior years.

It is estimated that the 2024 Reunion will generate a profit of several thousand dollars. We have also done better than budget in *Bugle* sales, challenge coin sales, donations, and publication sales. Membership renewals remain the major uncertainty.

The Finance Committee has identified significant cost savings and will continue to look for ways to operate more efficiently.

2024 ELECTION RESULTS

OFFICERS, AT-LARGE BOARD MEMBERS, CHANGES TO BOBA BYLAWS

by Joe Wollet

THE 2024 ELECTION WAS conducted online during the period November 4-17 using OpaVote software and the results were compiled independently by Mr. CJ Nusbaum. One-hundred-fifty-seven votes were cast by dues-paid and Lifetime BOBA members. The results are as follows:

President Steven Landry, Treasurer Mary Ann Coates Smith, VP of Chapters Andy Waskie, VP of Military and Veteran Affairs Doris Davis, VP of Membership Joe Wollet, Recording Secretary Gail Larke, and At-Large Board Members Madeleine Bryant, Kristen Faller, Ken Larke, and James Triesler were reelected to their positions for 2025.

Kevin Hinkle was elected Executive Vice President, replacing the retiring Barbara Mooneyhan, and Craig Stiegemeier was elected Board Member At-Large replacing the retiring Betsy Rose. We can't begin to thank Barbara and Betsy for their years of faithful service.

All of the candidates ran unopposed.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

THROUGH THE DATE of the board meeting (November 23), there have been 325 new or renewed memberships, with 140 of these coming since September 1. Of these, 47 took advantage of our special offers (29 challenge coins, 18 *Bugles*).

BOBA has a total of 393 members paid through 2025. Renewals and new members are key priorities.

— Joe Wollet

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).

Bylaw Change #1 (Shifting of the Association's fiscal year) and Bylaw Change #3 (Revising the Table of Contents to reflect past and current changes to the Bylaws) were approved unanimously. Bylaw Change #2 (Elimination of the Requirement to hold Annual Reunions) passed 150 to 4, with three abstentions.

Thank you to all who took the time to vote. The online process generated significantly more votes compared to other recent elections. Once again, please be sure that BOBA has your email address and that your dues are paid in order to participate in next year's election.

The following candidates were elected to serve for 2025.

President: Steve Landry
Executive Vice President: Kevin Hinkle
VP Military and Veteran Affairs: Doris Davis
VP Membership: Joe Wollet
VP Chapters: Andy Waskie
Secretary: Gail Larke
Treasurer: Mary Anne Coates Smith

Elected Board Members

Madeleine Bryant
Kristin Faller
Kenneth Larke
Craig Stiegemeier
James Triesler



DONATIONS

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

Mary Ann Coates Smith
Gift Memberships for James H. Coates, John Cameron Wood, Jr., James L. Rock, Anthony Pagano, Ralph Dinin

Joe Landry
Donated the gifts from his 100th birthday

Juanita Miller

Vally Watson Wyman
IMO Loyd E. Watson, 87th INFD, 346th RGT

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



VETERAN MEMBER VIDEOS

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

ST. CHARLES REUNION

THE ST. CHARLES REUNION is history and one for the record books! We began our events with a pre-reunion trip to see the St. Louis Cardinals play at Busch Stadium on Thursday night where our four Battle of the Bulge veterans: Joe Landry (776th AW AA BN), Tom Lacey (99th ID), Bob Welsh and Jack Moran (both of the 87th ID) were welcomed on the field to a roar of appreciation and applause from the crowd before Joe threw out the first ceremonial pitch! The rest of us watched in admiration from the comfort of our own luxury suite where we were joined by four additional WWII veterans from the area: Ralph Goldsticker (B17 Bombardier, 8th AF), Tony Gibbons (P-51 Pilot, PTO), Curt Davison (Destroyer Escort, PTO), and Ken Luttrell (4th Marine Division, PTO). The Cardinals sent a camera team to the suite and videoed all of the veterans to show on the large scoreboard screen during the fifth inning. What a wonderful and meaningful start for our time together.

On Friday night, the Gateway Chapter, the Reunion Committee, and other donors outdid themselves preparing a “Taste of the Region” event instead of just an opening reception. We enjoyed BBQ—St. Louis Style, Goopy Butter Cake, Toasted Ravioli, and Grandma’s Cookies with beverages from the region. Craig Stiegemeier served as our Master of Ceremonies and all enjoyed a slide show featuring our precious Bulge veterans (past and present) looping in the background. Bob Kraus, Chaplain for the Gateway Chapter, gave the Invocation and Bob Welsh led us in the Pledge of Allegiance. We were treated with a beautiful *a cappella* rendition of the National Anthem by Carrie Piotrowski, who is the Music Director for St. Patrick’s Catholic Church. After greetings from Jim Gormley, President of the Gateway Chapter, and Steve Landry, President of the National Organization, Dr. George Despotis introduced the veterans in attendance. The Mayor of St. Charles, Dan Borgmeyer, presented a Proclamation welcoming our group to his city. Marc Vanacht, honorary counsel of Belgium for the region, recalled a few heart-warming stories about how his homeland would always remember the sacrifices made by these men and women. Major Chris Ketcherside was the keynote speaker and talked about how “grit” won the battle and shared multiple examples. During the evening, Myra Miller, owner and founder

of Footsteps Researchers, LLC, provided assistance to members seeking information about their veterans.

Saturday dawned bright and clear for our wreath laying ceremony at the Battle of the Bulge Monument at the historic Jefferson Barracks Park and Cemetery. After a welcome and introduction of our WWII and Bulge veterans by Steve Landry, Madeleine Bryant, Chaplain of BOBA gave the Invocation. The Junior Air Force ROTC provided the Honor Guard for the morning and assisted our Bulge veterans with the laying of the wreath, which was followed by member Jim Dean playing Taps. We were honored to have Congresswoman Ann Wagner from the Missouri 2nd Congressional District give remarks to the group accentuated by her time serving in Luxembourg as the U.S. Ambassador to that country. Afterwards, Jim Gormley gave the history of the Battle of the Bulge Monument and Craig Stiegemeier read from remarks delivered by Gen. John Shalikashvili at the 50th anniversary commemoration, also held in St. Louis.

After a solemn visit to the POW-MIA Museum, where many of us tied yellow ribbons on the replica of a guard tower reminiscent of a POW camp, Diane Husk gave us a windshield tour of the historic Jefferson Barracks Cemetery pointing out the notable sights, including several mass graves.

Next on the agenda was a luncheon at Royale Orleans restaurant where their staff went all out to welcome our group—including a static display from the 2nd Rangers of artifacts of the Battle of the Bulge. The guest speaker, Lieutenant General Hughey, provided a strategic overview of the battle, how it progressed, and was finally won. No one in the room will forget the heartfelt remarks from the owner’s grandson, Simon (only eight-years-old) who thanked all that fought and gave a special thank you to our veterans for his freedom. What an ending to a wonderful event.

But the day wasn’t over! We loaded the bus again and travelled to Smartt Field, where the Commemorative Air Force hosted their annual hangar dance. By design, we got there in time for our veterans and guests to witness two WWII era planes—the B-25 Mitchell “Show Me” and a TBM-3 Avenger—take off and fly around the area. Afterwards, the group enjoyed a 1940s era Big



Honorary Belgium Consul for St. Louis, Missouri, Marc Vanacht



Back row: Joe Landry; Curt Davison; Forrest Miller, Royale Orleans owner with grandson Simon; Bob Welsh; Dr. George Depotis; Guest speaker General Hughey. Front row: Ken Luttrell; Ralph Goldsticker; Tom Lacey



Gilles Bauer, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Luxembourg, shakes hands with veterans

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

Band Orchestra where I believe several of our veterans were caught on the dance floor!

An open board meeting occurred on Sunday, followed by three informational and educational sessions. The first session was about Christmas 1944 during the Bulge where I spoke about my own Dad's remembrances and showed a video with about a dozen other Bulge veterans speaking about that Christmas. Diane Husk followed with a Pandora's box of remembrances that her grandmother kept while her own father was held in a prison camp after being captured during the battle. Paul Dillon, Curator of the POW-MIA Museum, gave a history of the museum and played a video of Lt. Michael Blassie's journey home to Jefferson Barracks Cemetery as told by his sister. As a pilot shot down during the Vietnam War in 1972, he had been entombed at the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington Cemetery in Washington, DC. After advanced DNA testing identified the remains as Lt. Blassie's, the family requested his body be exhumed and returned to his hometown with a proper burial and tombstone with his name. The crypt at the Tomb now remains empty as a symbolic gesture for all unidentified Vietnam War casualties.

Many people have asked me what my favorite event of the reunion was and for me it was the third and last educational session. Bob Welsh talked freely about his time during the Bulge from his book *Two Foes to Fight*, complete with hand drawn maps and illustrations. He was poignant, informational, emotional, and yes, even funny in his remarks. We are so fortunate and honored to have one of our own veterans give a first-hand accounting of their story.

Our annual banquet was held with acting Ambassador of Belgium, Sophie Karlshausen and Deputy Chief of Mission from Luxembourg Gilles Bauer giving personal thanks from their countries and embassies. Both of them even learned a few words of southern slang! Myra Miller, gave our keynote address about how she is able to recreate records of veterans, even after the fire at the National Archives in St. Louis. The event was concluded with a solemn reading of the meaning for the folds of the flag by Interim V.P. of Membership, Joe Wollett, as it was performed by our Boy Scout Troop 72 honor guard.

No trip to the area would be complete without a visit to St. Louis. On Monday, we started our tour in the mist and rain at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis. Opening in 1914, it is known as the "Rome of the West" because of the beautiful and radiant mosaics. We were treated to a private tour by a very knowledgeable docent Larry B. Afterwards, the group made a quick photo stop at the famous St. Louis Arch. We ate lunch on the grounds of Forest Park, location of the 1904 Summer Olympics and the World's Fair, before a self-guided visit to the renowned St. Louis Zoological Park. Over the course of the reunion, we had many moments of silence for our group but when we returned to our host hotel, we had a moment of darkness as well, because the hotel lost power! Without skipping a beat (and with the help of six firefighters), we made it to our dinner at the Lewis & Clark Restaurant along the river on Historic Main Street, St. Charles, where we bid our goodbyes and pledged to meet again soon! Dr. George Despotis said it best, "Each day I spend with these heroes makes me a better person." Well said, Dr. George, well said.



Above left: St. Louis Cardinals pitching legend Al Hrabovsky, Linda Haslett, Diane Landry

Above right: Senate staffer Madeleine Castle on left; Sophie Karlshausen, Chargee d' Affaires, Embassy of Belgium, 4th from left; Gilles Bauer, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Luxembourg, 3rd from right; together with veterans.

Bottom right: Veterans pose at Bulge monument in Jefferson Barracks



ADDRESSING A CRITICAL NEED: THE CAMPAIGN FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

By Steve Landry

AMERICA'S GREATEST GENERATION knew from experience that there can be no enduring peace without freedom, nor enduring freedom without peace. They built a world order that preserves our freedom and peace. However, peace can also breed complacency and our freedom today is threatened. The Greatest Generation is all but gone. We must ensure that the lessons they learned through experience are not forgotten.

Bringing this insight to a more "tech savvy" generation in ways that are engaging and relevant presents a significant challenge. A new, purpose-built, permanent global engagement exhibit within the Bastogne War Museum presents a unique opportunity to connect and engage with thousands of museum visitors and a vast audience of digital visitors. Now, more than ever, this project helps to ensure more people not only understand the price of freedom, but also what each of us must do to ensure that freedom endures today and in the future.

The Story of the Battle of the Bulge epitomizes the threats to freedom that the world faces and America's commitment to defending that freedom. The Bastogne War Museum, in concert with the City of Bastogne and the American Overseas Memorial Day Association Foundation, and with support from BOBA, will use the history of the Battle of the Bulge to teach how precious



freedom is and how we need to defend our freedom today.

The impact of the Battle of the Bulge can be felt in the fields, museums, and monuments in Belgium that are dedicated to its memory. Visiting those sites leaves an impression that lasts a lifetime. However, most people will never have an opportunity to visit Belgium. The digital world empowers us to overcome that obstacle. We can engage young and old alike—no matter where they live—through digital and immersive experiences that they care about, cherish, and pass along to others. In cooperation with the City of Bastogne, a highly impactful, permanent interactive exhibit will be added to the Bastogne War Museum that engages both visitors to the museum and visitors who can engage through the exhibit's linked digital experience from anywhere in the world. This opens the door to unique educational experiences for teachers and their students, among many other interested individuals.

BOBA Outreach Coordinator and *Bulge Bugle* Editor Leon Reed, BOBA Historian Jim Triesler, and President Steve Landry are working with former American Ambassador to Belgium Ronald Gidwitz to determine the best path forward to ensuring the story of the Battle of the Bulge lives on and the legacy of the men and women who fought is never forgotten.

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COIN FRONT



COIN BACK

79TH DIVISION TOURS FRANCE SEPT 11- 21, 2024

by Doris Davis, Vice President of Military and Veterans Affairs of Battle of the Bulge Association

DESCENDANTS AND RELATIVES of the 79th Infantry Division participated the 80th Anniversary of the liberation of several towns in France from Sept 11 - 22, 2024. The 79th INFD arrived at Utah Beach D-Day on June 12, 1944, fought in France, and continued through Belgium and Germany, and ended in Czechoslovakia (now Czech Republic). The Division defended the southern flank of the Bulge.

The tour group visited many towns liberated by the 79th INFD - including La Haye (formerly La Haye-du-Puits), Luneville, Halloville and Fremonville, Niederschaeffolsheim, Batzen-dorf, Wahlenheim, Hatten, Rittershoffen and Laneuveville aux Bois. Following the main tour, the tour participants continued to Normandy and visited Arromanches-les-Baines, Caen, Ste Mere Eglise and the Normandy Beaches (including Omaha, Utah) and Pont-du-Hoc. They met many dignitaries during the tour including 10 different mayors, a General and the President de l'Association US Memory Grand Est France. Communities welcomed the tour group with wine receptions and dinners. Everyone was in awe with the gratitude of the French people. Re-enactors drove tour participants through towns in their jeeps and military vehicles on two occasions. Their arrival had been announced months ahead of time and hundreds

of people and over 1,000 children came out to welcome the group. Children enthusiastically waved their small French and American flags when the group arrived at ceremonies. Participants laid wreaths in Epinal, Foret du Parroy, Luneville, Halloville, Fremonville, Niederschaeffolsheim and Batzen-dorf and Hatten. Two tour participants laid a wreath on the grave of their brother and uncle in St. Avold Cemetery.

The group met French citizens who had been under German occupation and remembered what it was like to regain their freedom when the 79th INFD liberated their towns. They shared their personal stories that were interpreted to English. It was hard for both the story tellers and the listeners to hold back their tears. The group met people who housed 79th INFD soldiers during the war. Remnants of the soldier's foxholes were on their property. They were so glad to share their stories with the descendants of the Veterans.

The tour was well organized—thanks to three people in France (all 79th historians) and Doris Davis, (daughter and niece of 79th Division Veterans) who planned the tour. Eighteen people participated in the tour and they are forever changed from the experience. The group shared tears and laughter and became a family.



French children welcome 79th Division visitors



Monument to 79th Division.

PENNSYLVANIA HONORS VETERANS

DECEMBER 14TH

UNDER THE SPONSORSHIP of Wreaths Across America, a ceremony will be held on December 14th at Fort Indiantown Gap. The Pennsylvania legislature has authorized the award of a special medal to Pennsylvania veterans. At least three of our members, Ben Berry, Jake Ruser, and Richard Weaver, are expected to attend the ceremonies and receive a medal.

DECEMBER 16TH

ON DECEMBER 16TH, a ceremony honoring the 80th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge will be held at the VBOB monument and the 1940s era Community Center at Fort Indiantown Gap. *Bugle* editor Leon Reed is attending the ceremony and will be the featured speaker, speaking on Pennsylvania's military tradition and the role of the 28th Division in particular in the Battle of the Bulge.

The ceremony is the result of legislation sponsored by State Rep. Chris Pielli. Under the same initiative, BOBA is working with West Chester University, which is developing an interactive web site showing activities in the Battle of the Bulge. We'll provide updates on this project in future issues of the *Bugle*.

REMEMBERING HEROES: A WEEKEND OF REFLECTION AND REMEMBRANCE IN LUXEMBOURG

By Christine Guidry Law

ATTENDING THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY commemoration in Ettelbruck, Luxembourg (Sept. 20 – 22, 2024) was one of the most profound experiences of my life. Representing the 80th Division Veterans Association and the Battle of the Bulge Association (BOBA) at this series of events wasn't just an honor—it was a deeply personal journey of remembrance.

The commemorations began with an opening ceremony in the town center, where I was privileged to deliver the opening address alongside Patton Museum President Jos Tholl and Ettelbruck Mayor Bob Steichen. Throughout the weekend, WWII reenactors and historic military vehicles filled the streets, accompanied by displays that brought the history of Ettelbruck and its surrounding areas to life for visitors.

The weekend began with laying flowers at General Patton's grave and culminated with the wreath-laying ceremony at the Patton monument in Patton Square. During earlier events, I had the honor of meeting General Patton's granddaughter, Helen Ayer Patton, and later joined her brother, Benjamin Patton, and his son, Tiger. Their reflections on their grandfather's legacy were powerful and deeply moving, reminding us all of his enduring influence.

One of the highlights of these events for me was meeting Mary Tiel Ziegler, a 93-year-old survivor of the German occupation. She spoke no English and understood little, which made it difficult for visiting dignitaries to converse with her. Noticing she was standing alone, I approached her for a photo and a conversation. After realizing the language barrier, I reverted to the French I learned growing up in my Cajun family and asked if she spoke French. Her face lit up, and I became her translator for the rest of the day. Mary began sharing stories and memories that transported us both back in time.

At nine years old, she had witnessed the German occupation of her town. Boys were taken to be trained for the German army or killed if they resisted, while girls were placed in special schools designed to groom them into supporters of the German soldiers—and eventually bear their children. Mary told me she had two brothers: one was captured, and they never saw him again, while the other managed to escape and was hidden. She recalled being thirteen when two American soldiers appeared in an army jeep, rescuing her and her mother. By the end of the day, Mary had adopted me as her own, calling me "her American granddaughter." Her resilience and the depth of her gratitude for the Allied forces left an indelible mark on me, reminding me of the personal connections and stories that shape these commemorations.

Another meaningful aspect of the weekend was engaging with U.S. Ambassadors Thomas Barrett (Luxembourg), Michael Adler (Belgium), Denise Campbell Bauer (France and Monaco), Yvonne Gonzales (Strasbourg), Jane Hartley (United Kingdom), and Amy Gutmann (Germany). Their participation, along with Luxembourg's Minister for Culture Eric Thill, Minister for Defense Yuricko Backes, and other distinguished officials, emphasized the global importance of these commemorations.

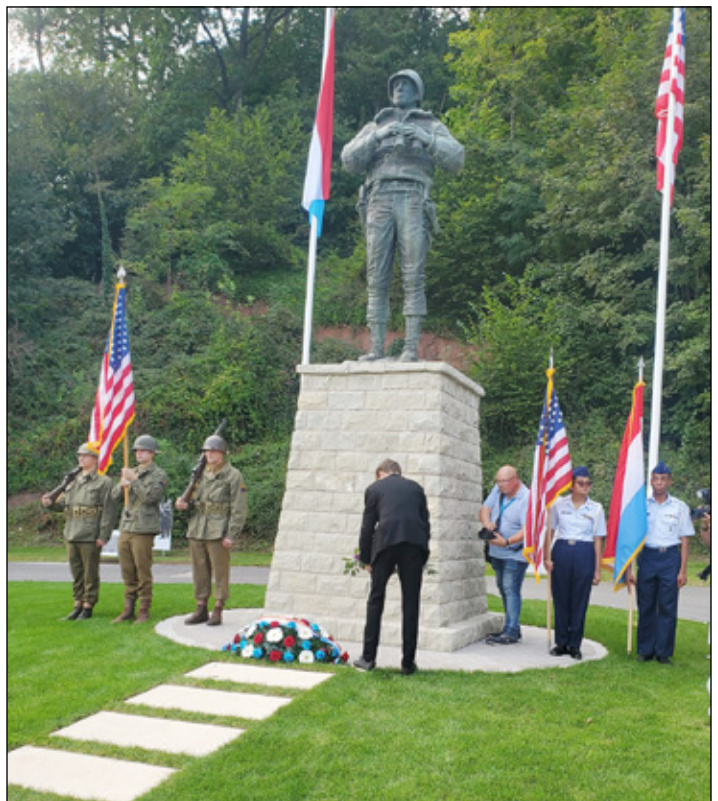
Sharing moments with University of Miami students during a special roundtable to discuss the importance of preserving veterans' stories and listening to survivors of the German

occupation were especially humbling. Their resilience and gratitude toward the Allied forces further reinforced the crucial need to safeguard these histories for future generations. These interactions not only reaffirmed my commitment to preserving this legacy but also deepened my sense of responsibility in ensuring that the sacrifices of those who served are never forgotten.

All photos Christine Guidry Law



Benjamin Patton lays wreath on Patton Square



Wreath laying at Patton monument

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American delegation at Patton's grave. (right) Christine Guidry Law with U.S. Ambassador to Luxembourg Thomas Barrett



Christine Guidry Law and Mary Tiel Ziegler



109th Division group



Jos Tholl and Tiger Patton



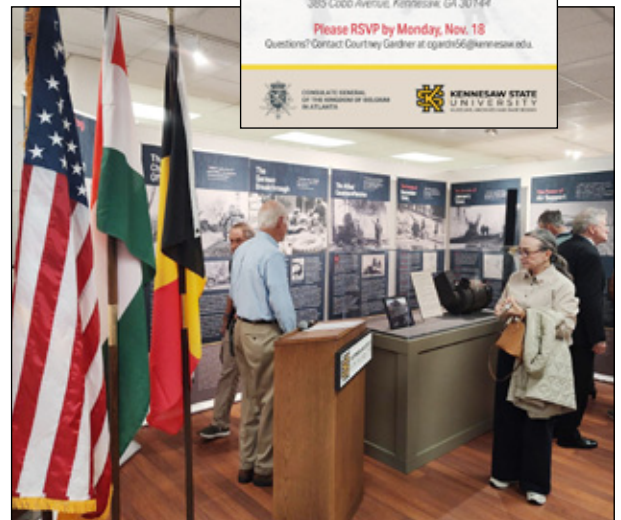
Vehicle parade

BOBA SUPPORTS BELGIAN EXHIBIT

provided by Bob Knight

A STRONG DELEGATION OF BOBA members attended the debut reception of a Battle of the Bulge exhibit developed by the Belgian Consulate in Atlanta and Kennesaw Museum of History and Holocaust Education. Speakers at the opening reception included Katherine Raeymaekers, Belgian Consul General in Atlanta, and Dr. Katherine Lewis, Director of the Kennesaw Museum.

The exhibit was developed as a traveling exhibit and can be duplicated. BOBA is exploring the possibility of bringing the exhibit to our January Commemoration in Arlington, VA, and the Gettysburg conference.



Katherine Raeymaekers, Belgian Consul General in Atlanta, speaks at opening reception.

Visitors tour exhibit. (Above): Brochure for exhibit.

Photos by Bob Knight

BOBA APPEARANCE AT EISENHOWER WEEKEND

BOBA MADE A STRONG appearance at the Eisenhower National Historic Site World War II Weekend on September 20-22. Our volunteers were busy all weekend discussing the battle, BOBA, and family Bulge stories. The National Park Service announced the best attendance ever, totaling more than 4000 the first day alone. BOBA member Richard Weaver of the 17th Airborne was one of the featured guests.



Above: Veteran Richard Weaver tours the site.

Left: Member John Baker talks to a visitor at the BOBA booth.



Photos by Leon Reed

BOBA MEMBERS BUSY ON VETERANS DAY

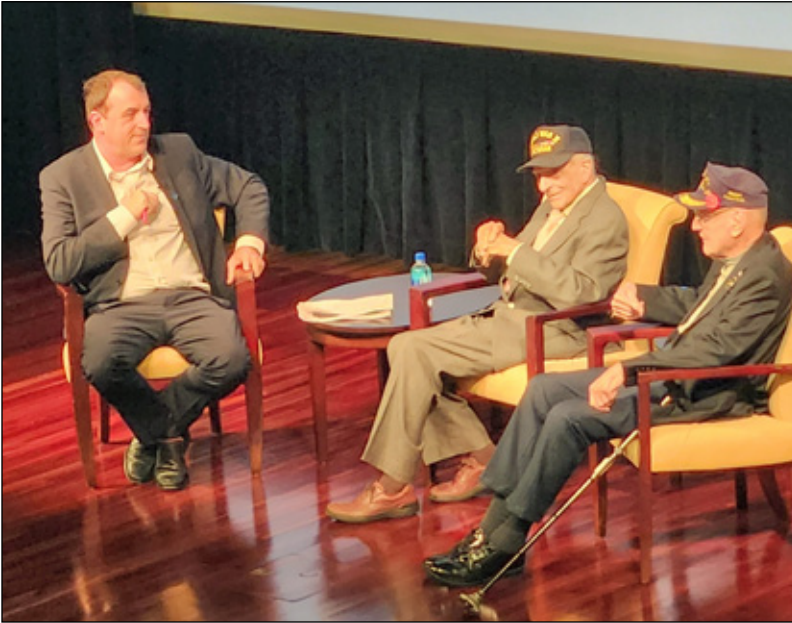
AT LEAST THREE of our Veterans and several Board Members represented BOBA at Veterans Day activities. Ben Berry and Jake Ruser participated in the Philadelphia Veterans Day parade, while Harry Miller participated in activities at the National World War II Memorial.



President Steve Landry and Board member Madeleine Bryant represented BOBA at the official national ceremonies at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.



Two nights later, Harry Miller met at the National Archives for a conversation with best selling author Alex Kershaw. Miller also participated in an honor banquet at the Reading Historical Center.



Harry Miller (right) at National Archives



Madeleine Bryant with bouquet, Arlington Cemetery



Harry and Jake with Tyler Boland at Reading



Jake and Ben at Philadelphia parade



Jake at Philadelphia parade



BERRY AND RUSER STAY BUSY



DELAWARE VALLEY CHAPTER members Ben Berry and Jake Ruser, as well as their driver, Chapter President and BOBA Vice President Andy Waskie, had full calendars the past few months, with many appearances and presentations.

On Sunday, September 29th 2024 Mission BBQ of N.E. Philadelphia hosted a 101st 'Birthday Party' for Battle of the Bulge Veteran Benjamin Berry. Berry is a member of Legion Post 405 at the Union League and of the Philadelphia Chapter of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge/Battle of the Bulge Association. On October 29, the Military Oral History Club of Lancaster County welcomed Benjamin Berry and Jacob Ruser. Both veterans made presentations about their experiences. The Military Oral History Club meets at the VFW Post 2435 (401 Manor Street, Columbia, PA 17512) on the last Tuesday of the month.

On November 3rd Berry and fellow Bulge veteran Jake Ruser (as well as BOBA member Harry Miller) were included among more than 50 veterans hosted at an honor dinner by the Reading History Center.

On November 10, Jake and Ben shared duties as Grand Marshal of the 2023 Philadelphia Veterans Day Parade

On November 11th, Jake Ruser visited the Upland Country Day School, an independent, elite pre-K through 9 school in Kennett Square, PA. Jake visited classes, answered questions from students, and participated in the school's Veterans Day ceremonies.

Benjamin Berry is 101 years old and was one of more than 2,500 black soldiers who served overseas. He was with the quartermaster unit and then his unit was assigned to the front lines, including the Battle of the Bulge.

Jacob Ruser is 99 years old and served as a combat medic with the 4th Infantry Division. He fought in the Battle of the Bulge, took part in liberating Paris, and helped liberate Dachau, the concentration camp. Both Benjamin and Jacob met decades later and sparked a deep friendship. Don't miss their exciting stories!



Jake salutes, at Reading



Ben Berry at 101st birthday



Ben Berry and Jake Ruser at Reading History Center

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Top row L to R: Jake and Ben and other veterans enjoy Reading honors banquet; Jake and another veteran pose with Tyler Boland at Reading



Middle row L to R: Diners at Reading Honors banquet; Jake with Upland students

Bottom row L to R: Ben Berry and Jake Ruser at Berry's 101st birthday; Jake, at Upland





90TH INFANTRY DIVISION

Compiled by Doris Davis, Vice President, Military Affairs; edited by Norm Richards, Historian, 90th Division Association.

BRIEF HISTORY

Constituted in the National Army by the War Department on August 5, 1917, and was directed to be organized with draftees from TX and OK at Camp Travis, TX. In June 1918, the division sailed to England in stages and then to France to participate in the Battle of St Mihiel in September and the Meuse-Argonne Offensive in Oct-Nov 1918. In 4 months of combat, the 90th INFD suffered 7,549 casualties (1,091 KIA and 6,458 WIA). From Dec 1918 to May 1919, the division was stationed near Trier, Germany, in the Army of Occupation.

The Division was activated at Camp Barkeley, TX on March 25, 1942, and re-designated there as 90th Infantry Division May 20. Their original name was the Texas-Oklahoma (T-O) Division but after the division drew its men from every corner of every state in the nation, its name was changed to "Tough Ombres." Their involvement in WWII is recounted below.

Arrived ETO: Arrived ETO: April 4, 1944.

Arrived in Normandy: June 8, 1944

Casualties:

Total 27,617 (KIA 2,963); WIA 14,009; MIA 1,052; POW 442

from <http://www.90thdivisionassoc.org/History/Facts/stats.html>

Major Campaigns:

Normandy, Northern France, Ardennes-Alsace, Rhineland and Central Europe.

Days in Combat: 308

Distinguished Unit Citations in WWII:

From <http://www.90thdivisionassoc.org/History/Facts/about.html>:

The 90th is a highly decorated Division with 4 Congressional Medal of Honor recipients; 85 Distinguished Service Cross recipients; 115 Air Medals; 4 Distinguished Flying Crosses; 1,311 Silver Star recipients; 40 Soldier's Medal recipients; 5,057 Bronze Star recipients; and 21,371 Purple Hearts 3,889 of which were awarded posthumously.

Commanders in WWII: MG Henry Terrell, Jr (March 1942 – Jan 1944), BG Jay W. MacKelvie Jan-Jul 1944), MG Eugene M. Landrum (Jul 1944), MG Raymond S. McLain (Aug - Oct 1944), MG James A. Van Fleet (Oct 1944-Feb 1945), MG Lowell Ward Rooks (Feb 1945), MG Herbert L. Earnest (Mar 1945)

The 359th infantry regiment of the 90th Division (attached to the 4th Infantry Division) assaulted Utah Beach on June 6, 1944. The rest of the 90th attacked on June 10 and cut across the Merderet River to take Pont l'Abbé. Three days later they took Amfreville and Gourbesville. After fierce fighting along the river Douve, they fought the Battle of La Haye-du-Puits followed by intense fighting in the Foret de-Mont-Castre (Hill 122) from July 6-10. In this battle, the division suffered 5,000 men killed, wounded or captured—one of the highest casualty rates suffered in WWII. In early August, Louvigne du Desert and Landivy fell to the racing 90th Division. Following this, they liberated Mayenne as well as several nearby towns and villages. They took Alençon on August 12. They drove across the Sarthe River (near LeMans), and entered the Battle for the Falaise Gap. They created a trap for the German soldiers of the Seventh Army and captured 5,000 prisoners. In the following days, this number



grew to more than 13,000. The division helped close the Falaise-Argentan Gap August 19.

The division attacked behind the 7th ARMD and crossed the Meuse near Etain on September 6, cleared Thionville by September 12, and fought in the Battle of Metz September 14 – 19.

On December 6, the 90th assaulted across the Saar River between Rehlingen and Wallerfangen. The Battle for the Dillingen Bridgehead and West Wall (Siegfried Line) fortifications was fought December 6 – 18.

The Ardennes Campaign

On December 19, the fourth day of the German counteroffensive in the Ardennes, the 90th withdrew from the bridgehead and regrouped back to the west bank of the Saar River. Christmas 1944 found the 90th in the area between the Moselle and the Saar Rivers.

The division attacked on January 9, 1945, and cut the Bastogne-Wiltz Road at Doncels, January 11. The 90th captured Bras on January 13 and fought the Battle of Oberwampach from January 16-18. The division crossed the Our River with the 357th infantry at Oberhausen and the 358th infantry at Stupbach on January 29 and consolidated after taking Heckusheid and Gros Langenfeld on February 1.

After re-grouping, the division renewed its assault through the Siegfried Line fortifications to the Prum River on February 18 and captured Mainz on March 22. They continued across the rivers Rhine, the Mainz and the Werra in rapid succession. In early April, the 90th was halfway across Germany and took the towns of Vacha, Dippach, Oberzella and Merkers. It was in Merkers where thanks to a tip by two midwives, the division's soldiers found a salt mine that housed Germany's entire gold supply and a great portion of its wealth and stolen treasures.

The division was enroute to Prague when its lead units came upon Flossenbürg concentration camp and liberated 1500 emaciated prisoners. There is a memorial wall honoring the 90th INFD at the camp. One week later, the war ended (May 8, 1945).

The 90th Infantry Division has an 11,000 square foot museum at Ridgmar Mall, 1726 Green Oaks Road, Fort Worth, TX 76147. Hours: Thurs-Sun (817) 945-2680. Many books have been written on the 90th Infantry Division. The book *War From the Ground Up; The 90th Division in WWII* by John Colby is about the push through France & the Ardennes, the Battle of the Bulge and into the Rhineland. It has photos, maps, bibliography and index. Another book; *Battalion Surgeon* by William M. McConahey, MD is considered one of the best histories of the 90th INFD.

FOR MORE BOOKS:

<http://www.90thdivisionassoc.org/History/Books/index.html>

Resources:

<http://www.90thidpg.us/Research/90thDivision/History/di-vhistch5.html>

<http://www.90thdivisionassoc.org/> (for statistics)

World War II Order of Battle – An Encyclopedic Reference to U.S. Army Ground Forces from Battalion through Division 1939-1946 (Revised 2006)

VOICES OF THE 90TH INFANTRY DIVISION

A SECRET TREK

**John Meli, 90th Infantry Division 359th Infantry,
Company F, 5/00 Bugle**

ON DECEMBER 16, 1945, the Battle of the Bulge began. Along a thinly defended front, casualties mounted rapidly, hence replacements were needed. General Patton's order came down to all units to select troops for transfer to infantry regiments. At this time, I was in Bouzonville, France, with the 1103rd Engineers, Third Army sector in communications, which was being shelled by a long range German railroad gun. The 1103rd sent the first six men. A few days later, I was among the next six to go.

The six engineers travelled to Metz, France, where it joined about 2,000 other men. Here, loads of used M-1s were dumped on the floor and we made our own choice. I noticed that some of the rifles carried personal markings like notches or pictures of girls affixed to the stocks. For two days, we held bayonet practice, which served the purpose of keeping warm through exercise. Later on, a general, standing on a podium, delivered a speech and thanked us for volunteering. Volunteering?

In the morning, my name came up. I was assigned to Company F, 359th Infantry Regiment, 90th Division, Third Army. In the Saar River section near Dillingen, Germany, this unit was in light contact with the enemy. We were quartered in houses and I thought: This is the infantry? When are we going to see some action? Within a few days my questions were answered. Orders were received; "Be prepared for movement." We piled into trucks like cattle headed for the deep freeze slaughter-house that was The Bulge (January 5, 1945).

Lest the Germans identify the division as the 90th, it left Dillingen, Germany, undercover and arrived at an assembly area in Luxembourg. Here, we discarded our overcoats, but stayed with our field jackets and doubled the under garments. Unhappily, there was no footwear suitable for protection against the severe cold. We were supplied with trigger-finger mittens and grenades. We filled our pistol belts and hung two bandoleers of ammunition on our shoulders.

Coming down past us were men of the 26th Division making comments about what great targets we were in the snow. Three men in front of the column broke a path so that each man could step in the footprints of the man in front. It was slow going and I thought how snowshoes would have been an appropriate accessory. Passing an area where many GI's and Germans were laying, I knew that we were getting close to the enemy.

We proceeded across a small clearing within the woods, then suddenly an intensity of noise. The Germans had opened with burp guns and machine guns. Part of our column was in the woods past the clearing. The man in front of me fell with a wound in the neck. We hit the ground. Two correspondents behind me withdrew. I kept trying to join the others in the woods who had been cut off from us. The Germans opened fire every time I moved. Bullets cracked through the bushes. About half of the men who had been separated rejoined us. The others were either killed or captured. We learned that we were engaged with SS Panzer units that proved to be stubborn and well dug in. Taking shelter behind trees and shrubbery, we fired whenever an enemy soldier became visible.

Next came the shell fire, both our own and the German rounds. We dug in quickly. The air was brutally cold with temperatures running at zero and below. Men were lost, some killed,

MOVEMENT TO BASTOGNE

**Philip Lee Petersen, 90th Infantry Division 357th
Infantry, May 1998 Bugle**

WHEN THE GERMANS began their breakthrough up in the Ardennes, which would become the Battle of the Bulge, General Patton decided to pull several divisions loose and send them north. Our own 90th was one of them, so we gave up the area east of the Saar River and prepared to go as soon as possible. To cover our division's movement, all identification markings on the vehicles were painted out, our shoulder patches were removed and the small red "TO's" on our helmets were covered with one quarter of a playing card under our helmet netting. Our fresh gear included new overcoats, cleaned weapons, and new field packs which gave the strong impression that we were new arrivals from the States.

Nearing the Bastogne area we met elements of both the 35th and the 26th Infantry Divisions heading south. We had been told to act new and dumb about who we were.

During our brief stay in Bastogne I found a folding-stock M-1 carbine with the wooden section damaged from artillery. Using the good wood from my carbine, I cut off the excess wood and burned a hole so I could attach the folding shoulder part. I now had a better weapon to carry.

The third day after we had jumped off, we captured a German field headquarters where documents warned "Be on the lookout for an unidentified elite battle-hardened division." By the end of January the famous Battle of the Bulge was over and the pressure now was on to get going for the Rhine River. With the extremely cold weather and deep snow it was mighty rough fighting.

others either wounded or captured, and still others owing to the development of trenchfoot. It seemed that we were taking a beating with little gain. For communication pertinent to the accuracy of our artillery shooting, a phone line led from my fox-hole to the batteries. There were no bells. The observer had to blow into the mouthpiece to alert the operator at the other end of the line. Late that night the shelling stopped.

From headquarters came a command: Get out of your holes! We are moving up to reach our objective! This time, we had a tank destroyer with us. Past two unmanned 88s we headed down the road. The Germans were asleep in houses. We met resistance. A German was firing tracers over our heads. Just as we had done at earlier encounters, we hit the ground. The shooter was aiming low in order to keep us down. The tank destroyer rolled up and finished him off.

Foxholes, which we roofed with logs, were prepared for two riflemen in each hole. Blankets and dry socks were brought up to us. All night it was one hour of sleep, then one hour of watch with your buddy. At that point, I sensed that I would be living henceforth with dirt, death, and diarrhea.

Up and down those snowy hills, which we called "bald ass," we flushed out the Germans under fire and gathered prisoners. I learned to speak in German: "Come out with your hands high!" I felt like a policeman. Reaching the Our River at a narrow point, we crossed into the Rhineland. Gone was the Bulge. Now we faced the dragon's teeth and the pillboxes. My thinking ran that I must be performing my new job well: I was given the CIB (Blue Badge) together with a \$10 a month raise in pay.

THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE ASSOCIATION® , INC.
Invites You to Join Your Friends for the “Events of Remembrance and Commemoration” of the
80th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

JANUARY 21-24, 2025 | ARLINGTON, VA/WASHINGTON, DC

The Embassy of Luxembourg will host a reception for veterans, family and friends on the afternoon of Thursday, January 23, 2025 to commemorate the end of the battle. Also included are 3 wreath-laying ceremonies at the Battle of the Bulge Memorial, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and WWII Memorial. And, don't miss our special program on Wednesday (full day) January 22nd with speakers, raffles and displays! We secured a special Battle of the Bulge Association rate of \$169/night (King) & \$189/night (Double) plus taxes at the Embassy Suites Crystal City/National Airport in Arlington, VA 22202. This rate includes a discounted self-parking rate of \$30/night, free transportation to and from Crystal City METRO and Reagan Washington National Airport, free hotel wi-fi, and complimentary breakfasts.

PLEASE NOTE: ITINERARY SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS NEEDED

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 22, 2025

6:30 AM - 8:30 AM Complimentary Breakfast with your Hotel reservation
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM Hospitality Room Open (Adams Morgan Room); speakers, displays
12:00 PM - 1:30 PM **LUNCH ON YOUR OWN**
1:30 PM - 4:30 PM Guest speakers TBD – (3:00 PM 15-minute break)
4:30 PM - 6:00 PM **DINNER ON YOUR OWN**
6:00 PM - 9:30 PM Installation of 2025 Board Members, interview WWII veterans, raffle, guest speakers TBD
(7:30 PM 15-minute break)
9:30 PM - 10:00 PM Continue book purchase and signings.
10:00 PM Hospitality room closes. Displays packed and removed.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 23, 2025

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

FRIDAY, JANUARY 24, 2025

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

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER FOR THE EVENT AND HOTEL DISCOUNT RATE:
JANUARY 3, 2025**

1. HOTEL RESERVATIONS: YOU MUST MAKE ROOM RESERVATIONS DIRECTLY WITH THE HOTEL BY JANUARY 3, 2025 to get the BOBA special rate of \$169/night King & \$189/night Double plus taxes. Go to battleofthebulge.org / click on “Bulge Anniversary Events” to find the hotel link. OR call Embassy Suites Crystal City/ National Airport at 1-800-257-6009 or 703-979-9799 and mention the **Hotel Discount Code: BBA2025**. Complimentary breakfast each morning, free wi-fi and free airport shuttle every 20 minutes is provided to and from Reagan Washington National Airport and to and from Crystal City METRO. Please make your reservations early to secure a room, especially if you want a handicap accessible room. Hotel reservations are based on availability so don't delay!

2. EVENT REGISTRATION: Due to timing of this mailing, event registration is **ONLINE ONLY, BY JANUARY 3, 2025 DEADLINE** at battleofthebulge.org / click on “Bulge Anniversary Events.”

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



QUESTIONS? Contact Mary Ann Coates Smith at mcdesk4@gmail.com or 804-363-3400 (text preferred). Is your friend a BOBA member? If not, please consider joining. See our website. Battleofthebulge.org **THANK YOU!**

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

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!



EMIL FLANDERMYER 6TH ARMORED DIVISION

This is excerpted from an account written by Cpl. Flandermeyer shortly after he returned from his service in WWII.

AFTER TAKING THREE blood tests at regular intervals, I was inducted into the U.S. Army, July 26th, 1943. I was scheduled for the Navy but I needed the 21 day furlough the Army was giving to the 7 days the Navy; so we could sell the goods out of the Holsten Auto Supply. Then I got my 21 day furlough and went back to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas where I was inducted on August 16, 1943.

I tried to get into the Air Force ground crew, but I was over 26 years of age, so the second choice was the Armored force. I had an I.Q. of 114 good enough for O.C.S. but officers in the armored line were not in demand at that time. In fact, ART at Fort Knox was allowed only one candidate per month for the camp.

Then a very thorough 17 week of basic training started in which we fired all the guns of the army and drove all of their vehicles. Guns included: M-1 rifle, Tommy gun, carbine, 30 caliber machine gun, 50 caliber machine gun, 75 MM tank gun and bazooka. I drove the Peep, 2½ ton truck, light and medium tanks, made many hikes including the 15 and 25 mile hike. Got several medals for gunnery and was a Lance Corporal in basic training.

We had one week of regular battle training, there during the X-Mas holidays. I had a three day pass and my wife came down to visit me. We stayed in E-town about 18 miles from the camp. On December 31, 1943 our basic training ended.

In the mean time I joined the 6 Armored Division which had just arrived from Camp Cooke California. I joined them as a replacement. On February 10th we boarded the Bayfield, a Liberty type ship. In New York harbor, we stayed on the boat one day and then pulled out February 11th, 10 o'clock at night. In New York harbor we saw the Statue of Liberty and the Woolworth building as we left. Everything on the outside was black-out. The convoy collected from different ships was the largest contingent ever sent to Europe approximately 150 ships in all and we could see 32 ships at all times. Nevada, the battle ship with Pearl Harbor and invasion records was with us too.

We went to Wales for about two weeks where we fired all our guns for the last time before actual combat. This was a wonderful range the best in the British Isles. I also took a 6 weeks course on "Indirect firing." There I was assigned to tank 49 as bow gunner.

The channel was pretty rough at times. Ernie Pyle, writer, had previously boarded this boat.

We reached the French shore quickly but we had to wait till the 22nd so the tide could go down. We landed on the American invasion beach called "Omaha". We drove to an assembly area to await our assignment in combat. Then July 28, 1944, we started for combat.

Then we headed east for about 300 miles going thru cities like Troves, Sens and Orleans, near Orleans we stopped and changed all our motors and tracks on our tanks. Then we fought our way thru the old Maginot line and finally finished up at Nancy, France.

Then November 9th was D day for us for the Lorraine drive. It rained very much and the tanks got stuck frequently. We started out with 17 tanks on the line and finished up with 5. We started near Nomeny and our objective was St. Avold, not far from Saarbrucken.

From this point we went to Merlinberg which is about 1 mile from the German border. We lived in apartment houses and had it swell there from about December 8th thru December 27th. From there the platoon would go out about every third day and fire on targets at Forbach and other points at the front. That was only several miles away. We spent our Xmas here to, in these apartments. From now on in I had to do quite a bit of German interpreting. We went back to a little garrison life there and the people were very nice to us inviting us over in their homes. The first night there we had a heavy German artillery barrage. They have a very large coal mine there.

St. Jean Roback, our kitchen crew came up for the first time to serve us the Thanksgiving turkey, as they were preparing the turkey a big shell hit their building and injured the whole kitchen crew except one. So the dinner was cleaned up and served a day later.

And now the Ardennes offensive: On December 27th, 1944 we left Merenberg and headed toward Bastogne. We went thru Metz and headed toward Mersch in Luxembourg, going thru Luxemburg City.

We spent New Years day January 1st, 1945, in Belgium in a very hospitable town. Then on January 2nd, we headed toward Bastogne and met the Germans on the 2nd hill outside of the city. There Germany threw everything at us she could muster and the fighting and winter weather was terrific. It was there that we could not move for 11 straight days. It was there that we ate and slept and stayed in the tank for 21 straight days. It was there our platoon of tanks was knocked out January 16th in about ten minutes.

There I got my first 76mm gun and tank. I was gunning for Lt. Byrd and we did quite a bit of spearheading. We finally drove them toward the German border and on January 26th, 1945, we pulled back to Overwampauch, Belgium where we were a holding force and had a chance to reorganize. Here we stayed till February 14, 1945 and then we took on the deal of crossing the Prum River in Germany.

BULGE MEMORIES



JOHN F. SWENSON 26TH "YANKEE" DIVISION

THERE IS A QUIET place in rural Amelia County, Virginia where a soldier rests. Like many from his generation, he came home from the Second World War, went to work, married, and raised a family. For six decades he kept the memories of war to himself, and then one day...

I was teaching a history class when the school office notified me that a World War II veteran wanted to see me. He heard that I conducted veteran interviews, and he was on one last mission to tell his story. Concerned about America's future, he wanted to tell my students about a generation of Americans who faced the challenges of a financial depression and a world war.

John F. Swenson shared memories from his childhood; of being too poor in grade school to buy milk and graham crackers for two cents and playing stickball with his friends in their Brooklyn neighborhood.

Swenson was drafted into the Army and given a choice of reporting to Fort Sill, Oklahoma for officer training or attending the newly created Army Specialization Training Program (ASTP). He chose the ASTP, but before he graduated the entire program was shutdown. Swenson recalled, "Two weeks later I was a private in the infantry (not an officer) in a ship heading for Europe." He landed in Cherbourg, France as a member of the 26th "Yankee" Division which included members of the New England National Guard. The 26th Division experienced 10,701 battle casualties and 2,136 deaths during the war (USHMM).

"We were always on the front lines. We saw the Germans all the time, killed each other all the time, and I lost a bunch of my buddies. Friends disappeared quickly, so we were all buddies." Serving on the front lines was difficult. "We ate C-rations and K-rations, three boxes a day. We couldn't heat our rations because it would make a target for the enemy, so we ate everything cold. We were dirty as hell. We couldn't shave. We had to carry everything, including a shovel, because we had to dig in all the time. You carried your own ammo, and your belt was loaded with hand grenades. German airplanes flew over at night and fired ammunition to keep us awake. Most of our fire-fights started at sunrise."

One night some of the men of PFC Swenson's Company E were holed up in a farmhouse. "I talked with the captain all night long and when the sun started to rise, we started to advance toward the enemy. Suddenly a mortar shell exploded in front of me and the captain was killed. That was the end of having a buddy there."

Swenson often experienced the deadly German 88mm guns. "The guys on the line used to say that if you hear it coming, don't even bother to talk, because it is too late." During one artillery barrage, Swenson dove for cover and hit his face on an American anti-tank gun, knocking out his teeth. "I was bloody as can be. They carried me back in a jeep, unconscious, and I was off the line for about nine days." He received a new set of teeth which he jokingly said were like the stars, since "both came out at night."

Soldiers attending the ASTP program used to say that ASTP stood for "All Safe Til Peace." Swenson regretfully stated that "it did not turn out that way" and he spoke of the buddies he had lost. "A lot of guys died in my arms. One lived for a couple minutes, and he reached in his pocket and handed something to me. It was a telegram he had received from his wife who had just given birth to twins."

Sometimes Swenson described his encounters with the enemy. "We took a town held by the Germans. One of their tanks had broken down and two German soldiers were trying to repair it. I fired an anti-tank gun between the two Germans, and the explosion killed them both." Swenson still carried the scars from seeing his buddies killed and the scars from the lives that he took. "I was a 20-year-old kid, and I have killed people, and I will never get over it, never." He was haunted by the destruction he saw around him. "We used to have airplanes going overhead all the time to do their bombing raids, big four engine airplanes. They would come over 150 or 200 at a time and start dropping their bombs, but I am drifting into this bad stuff that I don't want to talk about."

The last week of the war, the 26th Division liberated the Gusen Concentration Camp. "There was a barbed wire fence around the camp, and we looked through and there were civilians. They

Swenson visits school children



continued on page 21

couldn't appreciate the fact that they had been rescued. They couldn't talk, they couldn't smile, they couldn't move their bodies at all." Swenson discovered the bodies of a married couple who had lived near the gate to the camp and had committed suicide. He paused and said, "As if I hadn't seen enough dying." A few days later, the 26th Division met the Russians and although the war was over, the killing did not end. "The Russians were dragging civilians out of their homes and killing them."

Swenson told the class, "I am glad that I was able to fight for my country because I love it so much, but I am worried about where we are going these days. Politicians are, well another way of putting it is, old men start wars and young men fight them."

We all felt numb after hearing about the horrors of war. A few days after he visited my classroom Mr. Swenson told me, "When I was here last week, I cried, A LOT, but I always wanted to tell my story. I don't feel that I can tell that story again..."

His story was perhaps the most difficult one that I have experienced. I put the recording away for fourteen years because his story was too emotional, for all of us. Today, some in the media casually question whether America is on the verge of World War III. I decided now was the time to resurrect Mr. Swenson's story.

For some, talking about the war can be therapeutic. This time it caused insomnia and the recurrence of very painful memories. Ten months after sharing his story, John Francis Swenson, was buried in the Virginia Veterans Cemetery in Amelia Court House, Virginia. He was finally at peace.

Compiled by BOBA historian Jim Triesler from Swenson's papers and first-hand memories.

2ND ANNUAL GETTYSBURG CONFERENCE

BOBA AND THE World War II American Experience Museum are again teaming up to present the country's leading annual conference on the Battle of the Bulge. This year's conference will be held January 25, 2025, in Gettysburg, PA.

The most exciting news about this conference is that the featured main speaker will be presidential granddaughter and historian Susan Eisenhower, who will discuss her grandfather's decisions during the campaign.

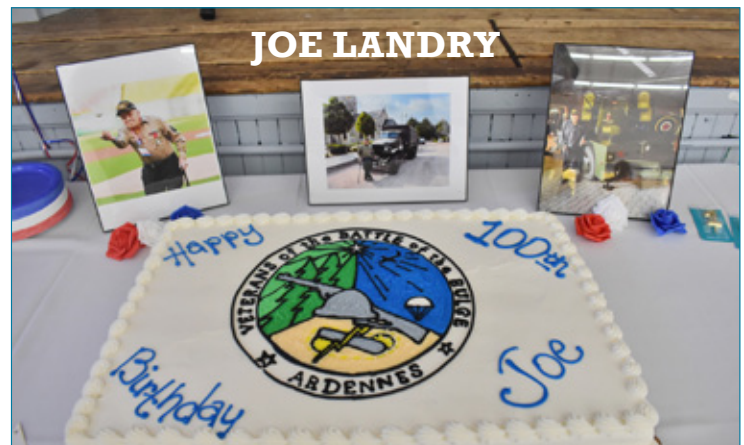
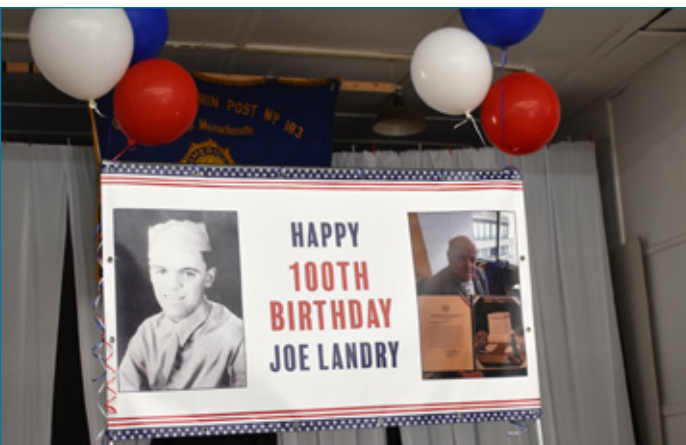
Other speakers include three BOBA members: Leon Reed (discussing the small fights at the start of the battle that delayed the German advance); Walter Zapotoczny (discussing the 28th Division), and Glen Ivers (discussing the fate of volunteer nurse Rene Lemaire).

The conference hotels are the Best Western and Quality Inn. An informal gathering is planned for the night before at the Best Western. There will be a reception and book signing following the presentations.

Last year's conference sold out and tickets are going even faster this year.

Tickets can be ordered at: <https://visitww2.org/event/battle-of-the-bulge-conference-2025/>

CELEBRATING 100TH BIRTHDAYS



ADVOCACY FOR THE VETERANS

VERNON BRANTLEY

Longtime BOBA member Vernon Brantley was recently profiled by WiS-TV, Columbia, SC.

SOMETIMES, “PRESERVING the memory” requires a little more hard work and elbow grease.

A few months ago, BOBA learned that the Bulge monument we donated to the Army War College in 1997 had been removed and put in storage. Our volunteer Tom Vossler has been leading an effort to get the monument re-erected at the nearby Army Heritage and Education Center (AHEC).

Working with three separate commands, Tom asked that the monument be re-erected on the Army Heritage Trail during the period of the 80th anniversary (December 16, 2024, – January 25, 2025).

It appears that our arguments have been successful and that the Army will make every effort to accommodate our request. A big thanks to Tom Vossler for some excellent work. This was a complicated task involving multiple commands, a change of ownership, and a pretty significant unbudgeted expense. Tom deserves a lot of credit for navigating a very complex situation. In the end, the monument will be in a far better place, within an existing monument park at a base open to the public.

Doris Davis, our VP, Military Affairs, also made an important discovery when she visited the Infantry Museum in Columbus, GA. Some years ago, the Museum agreed, in return for a substantial donation, to show BOBA-approved videos on special occasions in perpetuity. Doris learned that the Museum wasn't honoring this commitment and a request was made to the museum. As the Bugle was going to press, we received a letter committing to show “Americans in the Bulge” and distribute BOBA materials. Congratulations to Tom Vossler, Doris Davis, and Steve Landry for superb follow up.



Brantley as he appeared on TV

“HITLER WANTED BASTOGNE,” Brantley said, “like a trophy that he wanted for himself. They came around Bastogne. And they ran into us.” Brantley described coming under enemy fire. “We had no maps or anything else. The instructions were: You go up that road. You ask: How far up that road? And they said: You'll know, they'll be shooting at you. And they did, they really did.” Brantley said.

During the weeks-long battle, Brantley drove a jeep, carrying supplies and the wounded. On one such run, Brantley's jeep was hit by enemy fire, pinning Brantley underneath. “It was the snow and the sand and the concussion that flipped the jeep sideways ... They put me straight on a gurney.”

Somehow he recovered, bolstered by the love of his bride, Doris, waiting back at home stateside.

Doris was determined to be with her husband. Brantley described his last night at Camp Breckinridge, KY, before his deployment. She came to the main gate in a cab, which the guard stopped. As the guard and driver spoke, she left a \$10 bill on the seat and ran into Camp Breckinridge. “She went AWOL in reverse,” he chuckled. Brantley wrote a prayer that night, which he continues to read every night, 80 years later.

Reflecting on his service, Brantley said, “I never considered myself a hero. But I sure did work with a bunch of them.”

<https://www.wistv.com/2024/11/29/100-year-old-world-war-two-veteran-thanksgiving-its-blessing-just-be-here/>

VBOB/BOBA MONUMENTS

LOCAL CHAPTERS HAVE built more than 45 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, 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 (Window, monument), Greensburg, Wayne
- Rhode Island: Barrington
- Texas: Dallas-Fort Worth, San Antonio, Ft. Cavazos
- Vermont: Randolph
- Virginia: Arlington Cemetery, Fairfax, Ft. Monroe (Hampton)
- Wisconsin: Wausau



WE NEED YOUR CHAPTER'S NEWS!

Please send to:
boba.editor@gmail.com

**NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE:
JANUARY 28, 2025**

CRATER CHAPTER:

MARY ANN COATES SMITH, BOBA Treasurer and Allen Cleghorn, BOBA member, attended the 3-day, 5th Annual WWII Conference in Glen Allen, Virginia at the 4-star Hilton Conference Center. Betsy Rose, BOBA board member & Crater, dropped by for a short visit during the lunch break.

There were numerous authors/guest speakers attending and book signings.

Alex Kershaw: *Patton's Prayer*

Rick Beyer: *Beyond the Beaches, Cobra to Paris*

Gina Di Nicolo: *761 Tank Battalion*

Dave Gutierrez: *Co. E 141st Infantry*

Plus six other authors/speakers.

NOTE: The 6th Annual WWII Conference will be held at the same hotel in 2025. Dates to be determined.

Photos right, top to bottom:

L-R: Allen Cleghorn, Mary Ann Coates Smith, and Betsy Rose Attendees, Conference room.



BELGIAN TV FILMS DOCUMENTARY ON THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

A FILM CREW from a Belgian TV station preparing a documentary on the Battle of the Bulge stopped in Gettysburg November 10. The crew interviewed President Steve Landry and editor Leon Reed about BOBA and the continuing meaning of the Battle; toured the World War II American Experience museum; and

interviewed BOBA treasurer Mary Ann Coates Smith at length about the Malmedy Massacre and Mary Ann's father, who was killed at Malmedy.

The next day the crew went to Washington, DC, where they interviewed BOBA veteran Harry Miller.



Belgian TV crew talks to Mary Ann Coates Smith.

WWII American Experience Museum in Gettysburg

photos by Leon Reed

• IN MEMORIAM •

DARRELL BUSH, 75TH INFD

OSCAR ROBERT “BOB” FREESSEN, JR., 83RD INFD

CHARLES HARDY, JR.

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/name/charles-hardy-obituary?id=56633909>

NOBUO ROBERT IZUMI, 101ST INFD

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/sfgate/name/nobuo-izumi-obituary?id=53570813>

WILLIAM MERRILL, 275 ARMD

<https://www.meyerbroschapels.com/obituaries/william-merrill>

WILLIAM MUELLER, 106TH INFD

<https://osheafuneral.com/tribute/details/4916/William-Mueller/obituary.html>

LIONEL ROTHBARD, 80TH INFD

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/chicagotribune/name/lionel-rothbard-obituary?id=53330730>

OSCAR STOLL

<https://www.gareyfuneralhome.com/obituaries/oscar-stoll>

PHILLIP WALSH, 2ND ARMD

<https://www.remickgendron.com/obituaries/Philip-Walsh-3/#!/TributeWall>

TRIBUTES TO HEROES

DARRELL BUSH

ONE OF OUR MOST prominent veterans, Darrell Bush, answered his last roll call on October 22, 2024. He was survived by his wife of 80 years, Dorothy.

Darrell was an active BOBA member and a particular fixture at the annual wreath laying at Arlington Cemetery. He was a staff sergeant in the 75th INFD but through a variety of circumstances, wound up fighting with the 101st ARBN in Bastogne.

He was featured in an article, “Infantryman in Bastogne,” by Kevin Hymel, in *World War II History* magazine.

The Belgian embassy lauded Bush on its Facebook page. “It is with a heavy heart that we announce the passing of Darrell Bush, U.S. veteran of the Battle of the Bulge and cherished friend of our Embassy. It was a true prize to be in Darrell’s presence over the years. In January, we joined Darrell at the 79th commemoration of the Battle of the Bulge at Arlington National Cemetery and honored him at the Belgian residence. Belgium will never forget the bravery of those who fought to protect freedom. Darrell Bush, thank you for your heroic service.”



Dorothy and Darrell Bush celebrate their 80th anniversary with BOBA Treasurer Mary Ann Coates Smith.

WILLIAM MERRILL

IN APRIL OF 1991 William Merrill became Mayor of North Sioux City. He also served as a city councilman in North Sioux City. Bill served in the U.S. Army with the 275th Armored Field Artillery Battalion and was a veteran of World War II. He fought in the Battle of the Bulge. He was very proud of his military service.



NOBUO ROBERT IZUMI

BOB IZUMI WAS JUST a teenager when he was interned with his family. ... After some time in the camp, Bob was offered the chance to finish High School and went to live a long way east in Des Moines, Iowa, where he enjoyed the love and support of a well-intentioned couple, whom he came to call Mom and Dad in due course. His sole focus was to ‘do his bit’, so when he was old enough to sign up for Army service, he quickly did.

... After the war ended, Bob soon reenlisted and this time in Air Force. Over the next two decades, he applied himself to work in Air Traffic Control and achieved many promotions through the ranks until he reached Chief Master Sergeant-the highest level for nonofficers.



WILLIAM MUELLER

William Mueller interrupted his college education to enlist in the U.S. Army after the United States entered World War II. During the war, he was awarded the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Bronze Star medal, the Belgian Order of the Fourragère, and four Campaign Stars for his service in the European Theater of Operations, which included heroic combat service during the Battle of the Bulge.

... While at Grumman, in addition to publishing various engineering papers, Mr. Mueller was the co-inventor of the Lunar Module (LM) Alightment System (landing gear) of the Apollo Space Program.

LAST 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.

Lionel Rothbard, 305th Med Bn, Co B, "A Christmas Story," Bugle, Nov 2014

ON DECEMBER 24, 1944, I was a Second Lieutenant, Medical Administrative Corps, commanding a platoon of ten enlisted men, equipped with ten ambulances and one jeep. Our company, the 587th, had spent a period of rest and recuperation after working in the Alsace region of France, north of Luneville. We received orders to move out and proceed to Luxembourg City.

A few days before we left I had observed very heavy traffic going north. Also, much to my surprise, the vehicles were being driven with their headlights on. Previously we had always driven under blackout conditions using cats eye illumination. Our company consisting of headquarters and three platoons left the area north of Luneville on December 24 arrived in Luxembourg City in the early evening and reported to a medical battalion headquarters. It was freezing cold!

Having been through more than a few Windy City (Chicago) December blizzards, I immediately located a Quartermaster store and bought an army trench coat to go with overshoes I had received from the company supply. The trench coat came down below my knees and I had to roll up the sleeves. I wore an O.D. shirt, an O.D. sweater, a field jacket, the trench coat, G.I. Boots, socks, a helmet with liner and was ready to travel in a jeep with the top down. My platoon was assigned to begin evacuating casualties from the Clearing Station of the 80th Infantry Division at Esch-sur-Sûre. (Not to be confused with another Esch in the south part of the Duchy.) One of my men of the Catholic faith had found a church and decided to attend Mass that evening. The entire platoon waited outside the church and watched as large flakes of snow started to fall. When Mass was over we began motoring north to our destination.

Security was very strict everywhere as there were rumors that the Nazi enemy was infiltrating the American lines with Germans dressed in American uniforms speaking English. Supposedly one of the Germans was Otto Skorzeny, Hitler's favorite commando. At every village we approached, and there were many of them, we encountered sentries coming out of the darkness with loaded weapons challenging everything and anything. All of them had itchy trigger fingers. At one village, I was sitting in the passenger seat of my vehicle and as we stopped the driver was challenged with the usual sign. That evening it was "eagle" and it was to be answered by the countersign of "nest." To my amazement my driver forgot both the sign and the countersign and froze speechless! The sentry kept repeating the sign louder and louder, all the while poking his rifle through the window closer and closer to me. I finally yelled, "You S.O.B. It's NEST! NEST!" And he allowed us to proceed.

It bears mentioning at this point that the 587th was an unusual and unique U.S. Army formation. It was one of the few medical units composed of all black, now known as African-American, enlisted men

commanded by all Caucasian, or white, commissioned officers. One of which was me! The Germans may have been masquerading as Americans but they sure weren't black! The snowfilled roads were treacherous but we finally arrived at the clearing station, located in a Castle, in the early hours of December 25, 1944. Tired and ready to carry out our assignment, but not too tired however to refuse when the cooks offered me a nightcap. They had "found" some medical alcohol (normally used to make cough medicine and other liquid medicines), mixed it with some powdered lemon and Viola, a cocktail. It was the best cocktail I have ever had. I proceeded to find a space on the floor of the castle spread out my bedroll and fall asleep.

Christmas Day. We were treated to a traditional repast of turkey with all the trimmings. The weather had cleared and when we looked up we could see airplanes. To our relief they were American airplanes, the Eighth Air Force B-17s flying east to bomb the Germans. After a few weeks in Esch-sur-Sûre evacuating all kinds of wounded we moved up to Wiltz. Subsequently, we were ordered back to somewhere in France, assigned to what was left of the 28th Infantry Division and continued with our job of moving patients from Clearing Stations to Evac Hospitals.

It was a most memorable Christmas Season. I would like to pay tribute to the junior officers and enlisted men who by their bravery and perseverance won the battle, despite the miscalculations of higher headquarters.

FRAMED LAST WORDS

OSCAR "BOB" FREESON, who passed on October 23, collaborated with then-editor Betsy Rose and contributed his memories to the Summer 2020 *Bugle*. Like most of our veterans, Bob was very proud of his service and enjoyed showing "my article" to every visitor. His daughter in law had a good idea—she had the cover and article framed and displayed.

Framed Bugle article by Bob Freeson



BOOKS

NEW: CHRISTMAS IN THE ARDENNES, 1944

FOR ANY VETERAN of the Battle of the Bulge, Christmas was never again just another holiday. The common denominator of memory for Bulge veterans was the relentless, unforgiving cold. The 24/7 losing battle to keep your feet dry. The impossibility of digging a foxhole. Wearing every scrap of clothing you could dig up and still being cold. The fear of frostbite and trench foot.

For most GIs, the memory of Christmas 1944 was the memory of just another day of fighting, perhaps interrupted at some point during the day with the realization that, "Hey, some Christmas, huh?" But for some, there were genuine moments of tenderness, joy, and "goodwill toward men:" a scraggly Christmas tree with improvised decorations, or singing Christmas carols.

This booklet collects these veteran memories. For information or copies (\$12, includes postage), contact boba.editor@gmail.com.

Also available:

Malmedy and Wereth Massacres (including survivor accounts)

Early Battles: Monschau, Lanzerath/Twin Villages, Elsenborn Ridge, Parker's crossroads, Closing the Southern Bulge

Key support units: Engineers, Quartermaster

Most infantry divisions:

- The December 16th front line: 2nd, 99th, 106th, 4th, 28th
- Bastogne defenders: 10th Armor, 101st Airborne, 4th Armor, 26th, 80th Infantry
- Others: ask



BOOKS FOR KIDS

Submitted by Doris Davis

HERE ARE SOME ideas for Christmas gifts for children and grandchildren about World War 2:

World War 2 for Kids: Amazing Facts, Epic Battles, Heroes & Villains, Secret Missions, Spies & Codebreakers

by James Burrows

The book has loads of trivia, incredible war facts, some amazing, some crazy, some gruesome as well as mid-boggling facts to make learning about this crucial period as exciting as a roller coaster ride! The book has pictures and maps.

The World War II For Young Readers

by Mark Burton

The book has chapters about Pearl Harbor, Midway, Japanese Internment, Rosie the Riveter, Stalingrad, Air Supremacy, Operation Overlord, Battle of the Bulge, The Holocaust, The Manhattan Project and more.

For "young adult" readers:

Battle of the Bulge

by Rick Atkinson, author of the Pulitzer Prize winning trilogy adapted the Bulge story for young adult readers.

Other books for young readers were featured in the Summer 2024 issue of the *Bulge Bugle* (page 11):

Daring Deeds:

WWII Short Stories for Kids, Family Friendly Stories About Friendship, Bravery, Kindness & Love for 8 - 14 year olds (by KLG History)

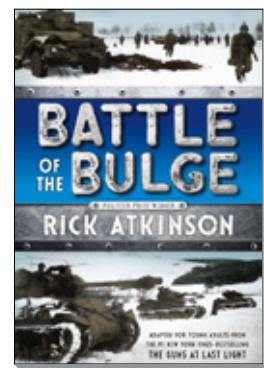
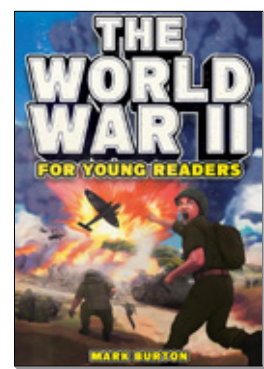
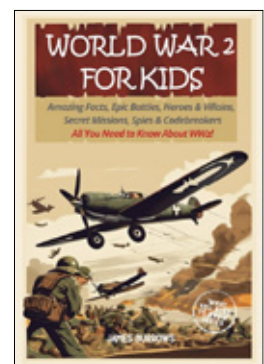
World War 2 History for Kids:

A Timeline of Fascinating Facts, Characters and Stories of Courage that Inspire and Educate (by History Brought Alive)

Additionally:

World War II History for Teens: Understanding the Major Battles, Military Strategy and Arc of War by Benjamin Mack Jackson

The descriptions are from the books. Available on Amazon.



WELCOME, MEMBERS!

New or Reactivated Members (through Sept. 1 to Nov. 15 2024)

Akeley, David	McGinnis, Kathleen
Baraona, Dolores	Norton, Kelly
Bennett, Bruce	Rehkop, Andrew
Bontrager, Emily	Soria, Jim
Flandermeyer, Michael	Weber, Alyssa
Harris, Sylvia	Wollet, Jeffrey
James, Molly L.	Wolloff, Stephanie
Jones, Greg	

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/

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.

1st Lt Walter Carr 318 INF REG, 2 BN 80 INFD Night Patrol Specialist Bastogne Mission	SFC Anthony E. Jannace 2 ENGR CBT BN, 2 INFD Presidential Unit Citation Battle of the Bulge
Charles Astor Cleghorn WW2 US Navy USS New Jersey Born and died in AL Love always, Charles Allen, Zen, Al	Sgt. Frank T. Lembo 305 ENGR CMBT BN 80 INFD Bastogne Liberator Silver Star
James H. Coates 285 FAOB In loving memory	Your tribute to a veteran goes here

BOBA VIRTUAL BRICK WALL

A new way to remember your hero is by buying a brick for BOBA's virtual brick wall of remembrance.

Not long ago, it was relatively easy to honor the veterans of the Battle of the Bulge. We could nod at them and say, "Thanks for your service."

Now that the Greatest Generation is passing slowly from the scene, BOBA is offering a new way to express your admiration and thanks: buy a virtual brick. Each issue, we will publish the greetings and respects for the men who saved democracy and then returned home and created the world we grew up in. The wall will be permanently featured on the Association's web page.

This project gives two options. Three lines, like traditional commemorative bricks, let you provide name and essential information. For a slightly larger fee, you can personalize your greeting with two more lines.

Prices: 3 lines: \$25; 5 lines \$60

For more information, contact boba.editor@gmail.com

Another Way to Support BOBA: BUY AN AD

The BOBA board approved a policy to permit a limited number of ads in *The Bulge Bugle*®. Ads will be limited to 2 pages of external ads per issue, to make sure we don't dilute the content you have come to count on.

Do you want to announce your business to fellow BOBA members? Or just extend best wishes to BOBA? Our rates are \$120 for a quarter page, \$200 for a half page, and \$300 for a full page.

To advertise, contact:
boba.editor@gmail.com



MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION FORM

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

Veteran membership is for those who have received the Ardennes campaign credit. *Membership* is for relatives, historians or others with an interest in preserving the memory of the Battle of the Bulge.

SPECIAL OFFERS (valid through December 31, 2024 only)

- Special Offer, with 4 printed *Bugles*: \$100
- Special Offer, with BOBA challenge coin: \$50

- Yearly Membership: \$40 (electronic *Bugle*)
- Yearly Veteran (*Bulge Vet*) Membership: \$20

Name..... DOB.....

Address..... City..... State..... Zip+4.....

Telephone..... E-mail.....

If applying as a Veteran member (you are a Battle of the Bulge vet), please provide the following information about yourself:

Campaigns.....

Unit(s) to which assigned during the period 16 Dec 1944 to 25 Jan 1945: Division.....

Regiment..... Battalion.....

Company..... Other.....

If applying as a Member, please provide the following information about yourself:

Relationship to the Bulge Veteran (if any)..... Historian Other
(wife, son, daughter, niece, etc. or N/A)

The Bulge Vet's Name and Units.....

Applicant's Signature..... Date.....

Please make check or money order payable to BOBA, Inc. Mail with form to above address.

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★ **Coming in January 2025** ★
WASHINGTON, DC/ARLINGTON, VA
Annual Bulge Commemoration

Details will be posted to our website:
<https://battleofthebulge.org/bulge-anniversary-events/>



WE NEED YOUR HELP!

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