

# The BULGE BUGLE®

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

VOLUME XLIV NUMBER 4 THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN FALL/WINTER 2025



## THEIR STORIES ENDURE: 2025 BOBA REUNION





## Battle of the Bulge Association®, Inc.

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

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

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**Editor:** Christine Guidry Law

**EMAIL:** bulge.bugle.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](http://WWW.BATTLEOFTHEBULGE.ORG)  
FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK!**

## BOBA, INC. BOARD ELECTED OFFICERS

**President and CEO:** Steve Landry

**Executive Vice President:**

Kevin Hinkle

**Vice President Membership:**

Joe Wollet

**Vice President of Chapters & Regional Coordination:**

Leon Reed

**Vice President Military & Veteran Affairs:** Doris Davis

**Treasurer:** Mary Ann Coates Smith

**Recording Secretary:** Gail Larke

### PAST PRESIDENT:

John Mohor

### BOARD MEMBERS

Madeleine Bryant

Kristin Faller

Ken Larke

Craig Stiegemeier

Jim Triesler, Historian

(Appointed Duty)

### APPOINTED POSITION

William Sean Lee, Chaplain

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

**Finance:** Mary Ann Coates Smith

**Membership:** Joe Wollet

**Outreach:** Leon Reed

**Records Management:** Gail Larke

**Strategic Planning:**

Craig Stiegemeier

### PAST PRESIDENTS

David Bailey\* 2010-12

*President Emeritus*

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

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](mailto: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):**

Jan Buerhle

Visit website [gatewayvbob.org](http://gatewayvbob.org)

### NEW JERSEY

**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 INFDR

### OHIO

**Blanchard Valley (42):**

Leonard Skonecki

**Alton Litsenberger (68):**

Tom Tomastik

### PENNSYLVANIA

**Delaware Valley (DelVal) (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?  
A President in Transition? Forming a New Chapter?  
Let Us Know!**

**PLEASE SEND CHAPTER UPDATES TO:**

**[bulge.bugle.editor@gmail.com](mailto:bulge.bugle.editor@gmail.com)**

**Thanks to our vendors who provide valuable services to support BOBA:**

[Apple Press, Inc. \(Printing/Fulfillment\);](#)

[Martha Wasik Graphic Arts \(Layout/Design\)](#)

## ON THE COVER



Top Image (L-to-R): Andre McCoy (DelVal Chapter Vice President), Gary Higgins (Past BOBA President), BG Bart Verbist (Embassy of Belgium Defense Attaché), Steve Landry (BOBA President), Christine Guidry Law (BOBA Bugle Editor & 2025 Reunion Organizer), Jake Ruser (BOBA Veteran), Joe Landry (BOBA Veteran), Andy Waskie (DelVal Chapter President), Col. Stuart B. Helgeson (President, Valley Forge Military College and Foundation), John Mohor (Past BOBA President), Maj. Kenneth R. Seitz (Quartermaster, Valley Forge Military Academy and College), and Albert El (DelVal Chapter Chaplain).

Bottom (L-to-R): BOBA veterans Jake Ruser and Joe Landry share a moment; BOBA treasurer Mary Ann Coates Smith holds a photo of her late father, Pvt. James H. Coates, POW/KIA on December 17, 1944; BOBA veteran Benjamin Berry cuts his 102nd-birthday cake as DelVal Chapter chaplain Albert El looks on; BOBA veteran Frank Hartzell and Her Excellency Ambassador Nicole Bintner-Bakshian (Luxembourg).

## 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:** By email: bulge.bugle.editor@gmail.com (preferred method) or by mail: Battle of the Bulge Association®, Inc, P.O. Box 330, Mechanicsville, VA 23111-0330

**NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE: JANUARY 25, 2026**

**QUESTIONS?** Please contact Bugle editor Christine Guidry Law at bulge.bugle.editor@gmail.com

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## 2025 BOARD ELECTION RESULTS

### *Congratulations to our Recently Elected Board Members*

#### BOBA, INC. BOARD ELECTED OFFICERS

President and CEO: **Steve Landry**  
 Executive Vice President: **Kevin Hinkle**  
 Vice President Membership: **Joe Wollet**  
 VP of Chapters & Regional Coordination: **Leon Reed**  
 Vice President Military & Veteran Affairs: **Doris Davis**  
 Treasurer: **Mary Ann Coates Smith**  
 Recording Secretary: **Gail Larke**

#### BOBA BOARD MEMBER-AT-LARGE

Kristin Faller; Carol Higgins; Ken Larke;  
 Craig Stiegemeier;  
 Jim Treisler, Historian (Appointed Duty)



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Steve Landry, President and CEO

## GREETINGS VETERANS AND MEMBERS

I've just completed my second General Membership Meeting as your President. Thank you so much for the privilege of serving the Association. As the Budget reports presented at the meeting show, we are now financially sound, with our expenses in line with our income. However, despite the great work of our VP of Membership and the Membership Committee, the Membership reports show a steady decline in renewals, as well as the unfortunate loss of many of our dear Veterans. I urge each and every one of you to take advantage of the current membership renewal specials and to redouble your efforts to recruit new members. Sustaining our numbers is essential to ensuring that BOBA can continue its mission of remembrance, education, and support well into the future. See the Treasurer's Report (below) and the Membership Report on page 5.



The recently concluded 2025 Reunion in Philadelphia provided a great opportunity to get together with friends and renew old acquaintances. See coverage on pages 8–9. I want to especially thank Christine Guidry Law and Kathleen Zoll for organizing a terrific event, and Andre McCoy for putting together the very successful Cake Cutting and Celebration side event held this year in honor of Benjamin Berry's 102nd birthday. The enthusiasm and attendance at these gatherings remind us how meaningful it is to come together in person and celebrate both our shared history and the individuals who shaped it. Many thanks to everyone who donated to the Silent Auction, and more thanks to those who claimed the prizes. I also greatly appreciate the attendance of Luxembourgian Ambassador Nichole Bintner-Bakshain and the Belgian Military Attaché BG Bart Verbist. Our bonds with Belgium and the Embassy of Luxembourg remain strong.

Speaking of Luxembourg, my wife Diane and I recently represented BOBA at the Change of Head of State reception at the Luxembourg Embassy in Washington, DC. The event was hosted by Ambassador Bintner-Bakshain and celebrated the ascension of Grand Duke Guillaume.

This past November 11, we once again participated in Veterans Day ceremonies. BOBA, as a member of the Veterans Day National Committee, joined the Department of Veterans Affairs and 48 Veterans Service Organizations at Arlington National Cemetery. As part of the day's events, BOBA laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns. Participating in this solemn tradition is always a powerful reminder of the sacrifices made and the responsibility we carry to preserve their memory. Coverage of the ceremony appears on page 7.

BOBA was also represented by Veteran Member Joe Landry at the American Veterans Center's 28th Annual Conference and A Salute to Our Heroes Gala, held November 6–8, with the Gala having been televised nationally.

Looking ahead, this issue also highlights several important initiatives and commemorations on the horizon, including the 2025–2026 BOBA Election results detailed on page 6, the upcoming 2026 Battle of the Bulge Commemoration in January, and the Gettysburg Battle of the Bulge Conference that will follow. In addition, we are pleased to feature a special Spotlight on the 83rd Infantry Division, honoring their enduring valor and contributions, see page 14.

Finally, I want to thank Madeleine Bryant for her many years of devoted service to VBOB and BOBA as both a Board Member and Chaplain. She has been a constant source of hope and encouragement, and her presence on the Board will surely be missed. Enjoy your retirement, Madeleine!

— Steve Landry, President and CEO

## TREASURER'S REPORT

by Mary Ann Coates Smith, Treasurer



THE 2025 FISCAL year brought steady progress and important milestones for BOBA's financial operations. FY 2024 income taxes were filed as required, and we successfully completed the transition to our new fiscal year model, which now runs from April 1 through March 31. In addition, we closed the traditional January–March 2025 fiscal period with an end-of-year balance of \$113,841.99 and a net income of \$1,206.75.

All invoices presented to the Financial Committee have been approved and paid, and all reports are fully up to date. Regarding the 2025 Reunion in Philadelphia, several

September invoices were processed in October to allow for the removal of sales tax, since nonprofits are exempt from certain taxable charges. The reunion was both meaningful and financially sound, with income slightly exceeding expenses. The silent auction contributed an additional \$1,800.00. This success was due in large part to items from the collection of our late President Emeritus, David Bailey, which were generously donated by his niece, BOBA member Carolyn Truesdale.

It remains an honor to serve as Treasurer. I appreciate the continued support and engagement of our members and remain confident in the strength and stability of our financial resources.

Thank a vet! *God bless America.*

# A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Christine Guidry Law



IT IS MY HONOR to bring you this issue of *The Bulge Bugle*. In these pages, we are privileged to share stories of living history—moments that remind us how extraordinary it is to still be in the presence of our World War II Veterans. Foremost among them is our coverage of Benjamin Berry's 102nd birthday celebration, where six WWII Veterans, ranging in age from 101 to 105, gathered together in a powerful

demonstration of resilience, camaraderie, and the enduring spirit of the Greatest Generation.

This issue also shines a light on the ways our community continues to remember and educate. You'll read about BOBA's collaboration at the Medal of Honor Grove, a place where valor is not just commemorated, but actively interpreted for new generations. We are especially honored to share Roberta Nolan's never-before-told story of her father's service in the Battle of the Bulge—a deeply personal account which adds a new layer of depth and grief to those we lost in Ardennes.

In addition to these features, you'll find coverage of our 2025 Philadelphia Reunion, updates on our 2025–2026 elections, and a look ahead to the 2026 Battle of the Bulge commemoration and subsequent conference in Gettysburg. We also continue our educational mission with a Spotlight on the 83rd Infantry Division, honoring their service and sacrifices and helping to ensure that their stories are not forgotten.

As always, this publication is made possible by the veterans, family members, and friends who send in stories, photos, and reflections. Your contributions keep the legacy of the Battle of the Bulge alive and vibrant. Please keep them coming—your memories and documents are often the missing pieces that complete someone else's understanding of history.

Thank you for reading, for remembering, and for being part of this mission. Together, we honor the past while strengthening the bonds of our BOBA family.

Please feel free to reach out with story ideas, updates, or reflections at my new email address: [bulge.bugle.editor@gmail.com](mailto:bulge.bugle.editor@gmail.com).

# MEMBERSHIP REPORT

## Member Losses Outpace Gains in 2025

By Joe Wollet, VP of Membership

IN THE PAST year, the Battle of the Bulge Association gained 78 new members, but the gains were offset by member losses.

At the 2025 annual General Membership Meeting (GMM) on Oct. 25, 2025, I reported BOBA's membership rolls decreased by 43 members year-over-year since the 2024 GMM on Nov. 2, 2024.

We lost slightly more than half of our Bulge veteran members in that year, going from 90 in 2024 to 42 in 2025. In addition, we archived 75 non-veterans whose membership lapsed last year.

Currently, BOBA has 570 paid-up members, including Bulge veterans and non-veterans, which reflects both lifetime and annual members. At this time last year, we had 613 paid-up members.

With the anticipated loss of our remaining Bulge veteran members in the next few years, it's imperative that all current non-veteran members recruit second- and third-generation relatives, friends from other veteran organizations, and anyone else who has an interest in keeping alive the memories and sacrifices made during the Bulge.

### Email addresses needed

If you are reading this magazine online, but have not received BOBA emails recently, it's likely we don't have a current email address for you. Please send your current email address to [BOBAMembership@gmail.com](mailto:BOBAMembership@gmail.com) to ensure we stay in touch. Postal mail has become quite expensive (\$0.78 for a letter), so most of our communication is done by email.

### 2025 membership promotional prices

Special promotional prices are in effect until Dec. 31, 2025, for new and renewing members.

- A one-year membership with a one-year print subscription to *The Bulge Bugle* costs \$100, a savings of \$20. (Individual copies of *The Bugle* are \$20 each)
- A one-year membership with a BOBA challenge coin costs \$55, including shipping, a savings of \$10.
- The standard annual membership rate for non-veterans remains \$40. The board voted in November to gift 2026 membership to all Bulge veteran members.
- Payments made now are valid through Dec. 31, 2026. Members may renew for a maximum of three years, through Dec. 31, 2028.

## MONUMENT FUND

THE BOARD APPROVED a Monument Restoration Fund. Funded by donations, this fund will be available to maintain, repair, and care for the 46 U.S. monuments installed by VBOB/BOBA. Many of the monuments are in fine shape but some have deteriorated over time and need a little restoration work.

Please help us keep the memory of our soldiers alive by donating to the Monument Restoration Fund. Donors who contribute \$150 or more to the fund will receive a BOBA coin and a photo of the restored monument.

Please consider donating to this worthwhile fund to keep our history alive.

## WELCOME MEMBERS!

*New or Reactivated Members: June – October 2025*

H. E. Amb. Nicole Bintner-Bakshian	Bridget Nolan Roberta Nolan
Bruce Cook	Joan Oshea
Caleb Felder	Charles Shealy
Donald Franklin	Carole Weinstaub
Korine Headlee	John Welch
James Holland	Kathleen Zoll
Bruce Marshall	

# LITTLE KNOWN MILITARY MUSEUMS IN THE U.S.

by Doris Davis, Vice President of Military and  
Veterans Affairs

THIS ARTICLE MARKS the third installment in our ongoing exploration of World War II museums across the United States. Parts I and II introduced readers to a range of institutions dedicated to preserving the people, events, and artifacts of the era. In Part III, we continue that journey by highlighting additional lesser-known museums that keep these stories alive for future generations.

We invite you to visit and support these remarkable hidden gems, and we'd love to hear about any lesser-known museums you've discovered that we might add to our list.

## MIDWEST

### TRI-STATE WAR BIRD MUSEUM

40121 Borman Drive • Batavia, OH 45103  
513-735-4500  
www.tri-statewarbirdmuseum.org  
(25 miles east of Cincinnati, OH)

### RUSSELL MILITARY MUSEUM

43363 Old Highway 41 • Russell, IL 60075  
847-395-7020  
Russellmilitarymuseum.com  
(54 miles N of Chicago, IL)

### MUSKOGEE WAR MEMORIAL PARK & THE USS BATFISH

3500 Batfish Road • Muskogee, OK 74402  
918-682-6602  
www.ussbatfish.com  
(49 miles SE of Tulsa, OK)

### OKLAHOMA NATIONAL GUARD MUSEUM

Formerly The 45th Infantry Division Museum  
(Exhibits on the Tennessee Maneuvers)  
2145 NE 36th Street • Oklahoma City, OK 73111  
405-424-5313  
www.okngmuseum.com/new-museum

## MID-ATLANTIC

### STUART TANK MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

309 North Vine Street • Berwick, PA 18603  
570-350-9675  
Berwickstuarttank.org  
(124 miles NW from Philadelphia, PA)

## SOUTHEAST

### MUSEUM OF AVIATION

1942 Heritage Boulevard • Robins AFB, GA 31098  
478-926-6870  
museumofaviation.org  
(102 miles SE of Atlanta, GA)

### 82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION MUSEUM

Building C-6841 • Fort Bragg, NC 28310  
910-432-3443  
www.82ndairbornedivisionmuseum.com  
(71 miles south of Raleigh, NC)

## SOUTH

### LOUISIANA MANEUVERS & MILITARY MUSEUM

Camp Beauregard • 623 G. Street  
Pineville, LA 71360  
318-641-5733  
https://geauxguardmuseums.com/  
(125 Miles NW of Baton Rouge, LA)

### 12TH ARMORED DIVISION MEMORIAL MUSEUM

1289 N. Second Street • Abilene, TX 79601  
325-677-6515  
www.12tharmoreddivisionmuseum.com  
(182 miles west of Dallas, TX)

## WEST

### COLORADO SPRINGS HISTORICAL MILITARY MUSEUM

"Dragon Man" Museum  
1220 Dragon Man Drive • Colorado Springs, CO 80929  
719-683-2200  
https://dragonmans.com  
(70 miles south of Denver, CO)



## DONATIONS

AUGUST – OCTOBER 2025

H. E. Amb. Nicole & Douglas Bintner-Bakshian – General Donation

Doris Davis – Reunion Donation

Rosa Dye – Ben Berry Birthday Celebration Donation

Kevin Hinkle – Ben Berry Birthday Celebration Donation

Steve Landry – Travel Expense Donation for Reunion Speaker

Christine Guidry Law – Gift Memberships for Kathleen Zoll,  
Bridget Nolan, and Roberta Nolan

Gloria Layne – Veterans Reunion & *Bulge Bugle* Publication Donation

Linda Karen Miller – In Memory of Jake Larson

John Mohor – Wreath Fund

Barbara Mooneyhan – General Donation

Craig Nesbitt – Ben Berry Birthday Celebration Donation

Daniel Ocko – General Donation

Joan O Shea – General Donation

Scott Sigman – Ben Berry Birthday Celebration Donation

Jonathan Smallwood – General Donation

Mary Ann Coates Smith – Gift Membership for Veteran David Poole

SC Military History Club – In Honor of Vern Brantley and  
SC BOBA Chapter

Carolyn Truesdale & Curtis Waechtler – General Donation

Carol Weinstein – General Donation

Pete Weisenberger – In Memory of PFC Charles A. Weisenberger KIA

Pete Weisenberger – In Honor of Marcel & Mathilda Schmetz

Elaine Winters – *Bulge Bugle* Publication Donation

Benjamin Wollet – General Donation

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

# BOBA LEADERS JOIN NATIONAL VETERANS DAY COMMEMORATION

PRESIDENT STEVE LANDRY and his wife Diane represented BOBA at the Veterans Day events in Washington, DC. BOBA is a member of the Veterans Day National Committee which is chaired by Secretary of Veterans Affairs Doug Collins and is composed of 40+ Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs). The day began with breakfast at Joint Base Myer - Henderson Hall hosted by Secretary Collins.

Following breakfast, attendees were bused to the amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery on a cold and blustery day (26-degree wind chill!). President Trump and Vice President Vance laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns, while the crowd in the

amphitheater was serenaded by the Army Band. Following the wreath laying and playing of taps, Secretary Collins, Vice President Vance, and President Trump addressed the crowd.

After the official ceremony in the amphitheater, the VSOs each laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns. Steve and Diane were honored to lay one of the last wreaths. After spending about five hours outside, they happily proceeded to the Women's Memorial where they found warmth and a luncheon hosted by the AMVETS and provided by Mission BBQ. Thanks to Treasurer Mary Ann Coates Smith for ensuring the timely delivery of our wreath.



**BOBA President Steve Landry and wife Diane Landry lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns for Veterans Day Ceremony**



**Secretary of Veterans Affairs Doug Collins, BOBA President Steve Landry, and Diane Landry**

## 3RD ANNUAL GETTYSBURG CONFERENCE

BOBA AND THE WORLD WAR II American Experience Museum are again teaming up to present the country's leading annual Battle of *The Bulge* Conference. The next conference will be held on **JANUARY 25, 2026**, in Gettysburg, PA.

The conference will feature five expert presentations, along with exhibits and planned participation by Battle of the Bulge veterans. The conference speakers include: Stuart Dempsey (discussing the German Army by the Bulge battle); Dr. Walter S. Zapotoczny Jr. (on his new book, *The 28th Infantry Division and the Battle of the Bulge: Combat, Faith, and Perseverance*); Leon Reed (discussing the initial development of U.S. armored capabilities and doctrine compared with actual use in the Bulge campaign).

The other presenters are Dr. Chris Carey (discussing "Catastrophic Success and the Red Ball Express") and



David Brookins (recounting his father's role as playing the "American St. Nick" in 1944, which he reprised decades later for the same Luxembourg town).

A new feature of this conference is having the presentations in the museum's "Motor Pool" meeting space, where the participants will be surrounded by their collection of WWII vehicles. Many will be relevant to various presentations.

The conference hotel is the Best Western Gettysburg. An informal gathering is planned there on the evening before the conference. And there will be an informal reception and book signings at the museum following the presentations.

**Ticket info at the museum website: <https://visitww2.org/>  
Or at the BOBA website: <https://battleofthebulge.org>**

# REUNITING IN THE CITY OF BROTHERLY LOVE: BOBA'S 2025 NATIONAL REUNION

By Christine Guidry Law, Bugle Editor & 2025 Reunion Coordinator

THE 2025 BATTLE of the Bulge Association Reunion brought members, families, supporters, and, most importantly, our World War II Veterans together in Philadelphia for a weekend rich in history, fellowship, and remembrance. Set against the backdrop of one of America's most historic cities, the reunion blended meaningful ceremony with moments of joy, discovery, and deep reflection.

## *A Meaningful Welcome and a Powerful Beginning*

The weekend opened on Friday with a warm welcome from BOBA President Steve Landry and an Open Board Meeting, followed by a moving series of guest lectures that set the tone for the days ahead. The program featured Dr. Roberta Lyons Nolan, who shared "The Lieutenant," a deeply personal story of her father, 1st Lt. James O'Boyle Lyons: his service, his captivity during the Battle of the Bulge, and her journey to give voice to his legacy.

Her presentation was followed by noted historian Dr. Walter Zapotoczny Jr., who explored the courage and perseverance of the 28th Infantry Division. Author Glenn Ivers closed the speaker series with "Angels of Bastogne," honoring two Belgian nurses whose heroism saved lives during the siege. These stories—personal, scholarly, and heartfelt—connected all in attendance to the human side of history.

## *A Banquet of Fellowship and International Friendship*

Friday evening's banquet celebrated BOBA's mission and its international ties. Guests heard from representatives of the Luxembourg Embassy and the Philadelphia Director of Veterans Affairs, followed by keynote speaker Dr. Tom Stein, whose address "Gratitude Is Not Enough" brought many to their feet. The silent auction and raffle after dinner offered a lively close to an inspiring first day.

## *Stepping into America's Founding Story*

Saturday's excursions immersed attendees in the history of Philadelphia. Members visited the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall, walked the same paths as the Continental Congress, and reflected on the meaning of freedom in a city built on its promise. The Spirit of Philadelphia lunch cruise that followed offered food, fellowship, and skyline views that many will long remember.

The afternoon continued with a visit to the Union League of Philadelphia—a tour led by DelVal Chapter President Dr. Anthony Waskie, rich with military heritage and symbols of sacrifice.

## *A Triumphant Triple Celebration*

One of the reunion's most joyful moments came Saturday evening at the hotel, where the Association honored three historic anniversaries: the U.S. Army's 250th Birthday, the 80th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, and—most delightfully—Mr. Benjamin Berry's 102nd birthday.

This special gathering also included six attending WWII Veterans, ranging in age from 101 to 105, whose presence elevated the celebration into a living bridge to history. Their smiles, handshakes, and stories created memories that will be cherished by all who were there.



**BOBA Bugle Editor & Reunion Coordinator Christine Guidry Law with BOBA veteran Jake Ruser at BOB monument located at the Valley Forge Military College**



**Embassy of Belgium Defense Attaché Brigadier General Bart Verbist and BOBA DelVal Chapter Chaplain Albert El lay wreath at Pennsylvania Monument in the Medal of Honor Grove at Valley Forge**

continued on page 9

**Reuniting...** continued from page 8.

### ***A Day of Remembrance at Valley Forge***

Sunday's program carried the spirit of gratitude to Valley Forge, beginning with a moving Memorial Service at the Faith of Our Fathers Chapel on the Founding Forward campus. Members wandered the paths of the Medal of Honor Grove for a wreath-laying ceremony and guided tour—an especially meaningful moment for veterans, families, and military historians alike.

At the Valley Forge Military Academy, attendees participated in a ceremony at the Battle of the Bulge Monument, followed by a Mission BBQ lunch that brought comfort and camaraderie. The day concluded with a tour of Valley Forge National Park, connecting the sacrifices of the Revolutionary War to those of World War II in a place that has witnessed both hardship and history.

### ***Honoring Legacy, Sustaining Community***

Throughout the weekend, participants felt the lasting influence of BOBA President Emeritus James David Bailey, to whom the reunion was dedicated. His legacy of service, leadership, and kindness echoed in every ceremony, every shared story, and every moment of remembrance.

The reunion also reflected the tremendous work of the planning committee, sponsors, and volunteers who brought this unforgettable experience to life.

### ***A Reunion to Remember***

The 2025 Reunion in Philadelphia was not just an event—it was a living tribute to the men who fought in the Ardennes, the families who safeguarded their memories, and the community committed to preserving their legacy. From historic tours to emotional ceremonies, from scholarly insights to shared laughter, the reunion embodied the heart of BOBA: remembrance, fellowship, and gratitude.



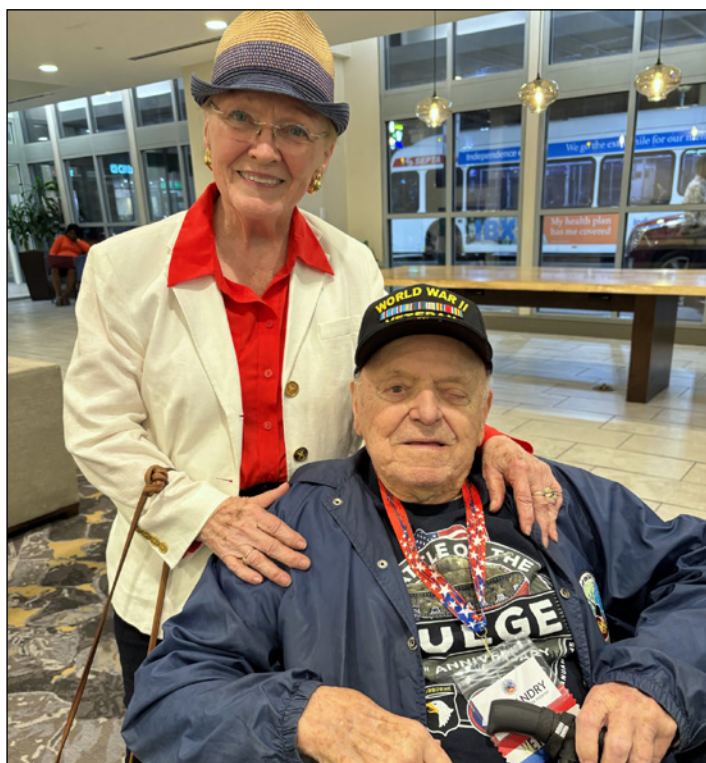
***BOBA DelVal Chapter President Andy Waskie, BOBA veteran Jake Ruser, BOBA veteran Joe Landry and BOBA President Steve Landry at BOB Monument, Valley Forge Military College***



***Bugler Jeff Heagy, Sons of the Union 28th Regimental Brass Band***



***Gold Star Daughter Roberta Lyons Nolan tells her father's story at BOBA Reunion***



***BOBA Treasurer Mary Ann Coates Smith with BOBA veteran Joe Landry***



***BOBA veteran Jake Ruser salutes Army College Cadet Chloe Allen and Cadet Hubert Michon during Monument Ceremony held at the Valley Forge Military College***

# A CENTURY OF SERVICE AND CELEBRATION HONORING BENJAMIN BERRY AT 102

ON SATURDAY EVENING, September 20, 2025, a ballroom in Philadelphia was transformed into something unforgettable—a moment where history felt close, carried by the men who lived it and the community committed to remembering them. As part of the 2025 Battle of the Bulge Association Reunion, members gathered for a triple commemoration: the 250th Anniversary of the United States Army, the 80th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, and, most joyfully, the 102nd birthday of World War II Veteran Benjamin Berry.

It quickly became clear that this was no ordinary birthday party. Six World War II Veterans (ages 100 to 105) took their places of honor at the front of the room, greeted by cheers, applause, and more than a few grateful tears. Among the 102 guests who filled the hall were BOBA members, family, friends, Union League members, Sons of the Union members, and veterans from organizations across several states. The atmosphere buzzed with warmth and reverence, the kind that only forms when generations gather to honor living history.

These six remarkable men represented a cross-section of service in the Second World War:

**Joe Landry**, 776th Anti-Aircraft Artillery, Automatic Weapons Battalion (Red Ball Express)

**Jacob “Jake” Ruser**, Combat Medic, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division

**Harry Jung**, 414th Regiment, 1st Battalion, Company C

**Frank Hartzell**, 3rd Squad, 1st Platoon, Company B, 21st AIB, 11th Armored Division

**Benjamin “Ben” Berry**, 863rd Quartermaster Fumigation & Bath Company (formerly Company A, 310th Quartermaster Sterilization and Bath Company)

**Anthony Grant**, U.S. Army Quartermaster retiree and Quartermaster Hall of Fame inductee.

Sitting side by side, they offered a remarkable portrait of living history. At 100 years old, Frank Hartzell was the “youngster” of the group, while the eldest, Anthony Grant, proudly claimed 105 years. But the spotlight, appropriately, belonged to the birthday man—Corporal Benjamin Berry, whose life of service continues to inspire generations.

## *A Life Rooted in Service*

For those who know him, Benjamin Berry’s story is one marked by humility, faith, and a deep commitment to service. Raised in Philadelphia, Berry was drafted into the segregated U.S. Army in 1943. He finished high school that June after receiving a brief deferment, and by July he was in uniform. Assigned to the 863rd Quartermaster Fumigation & Bath Company, Berry served in a Quartermaster role that—though often overlooked—was essential to front-line operations.

“Service and supplies for the Army, whether it was food, water, or ammunition—that was our job,” Berry often says. Like many Black Quartermaster troops, he and his unit worked tirelessly behind the lines, keeping American soldiers alive and equipped. “We weren’t actually in the war until the Battle of the Bulge. We were always eight miles behind the front lines,” he explains. “We carried rifles, but never had ammunition.”



*Six WWII veterans. L-to-R: Joe Landry, Jake Ruser, Harry Jung, Frank Hartzell, Ben Berry and Anthony Grant*

continued on page 11

## ***Honoring Benjamin Berry... continued from page 10.***

Then, everything changed during the winter of 1944.

“During the Battle of the Bulge, they gave us ammunition. They said, ‘Go out and defend your country.’”

The shift was sudden, jarring, and dangerous. Berry still recalls the bitter cold, the constant uncertainty, and the sobering responsibility of stepping into direct combat. Yet through it all, he credits his survival to one constant: his faith.

“Some of it’s genes, but most of it’s God Himself,” Berry says when asked about his longevity. He calls God his “guiding angel,” the force that brought him home to marry his wife, Lois, in 1945 and raise four children.

### ***A Legacy Recognized—Across Nations***

In his lifetime, Berry has received numerous honors, but one stands out: the French Legion of Honor, presented to him by the Consul General of France. It is the highest award France bestows, given only to those whose actions directly contributed to the liberation of Europe.

“It’s important to express our gratitude to American soldiers who liberated France,” the Consul General said during the ceremony. For Berry, the medal was humbling. “I don’t need any more awards,” he joked. “My head won’t fit in my hat!”

But the truth is clear: his contributions continue to resonate, not only with nations but with younger generations.

Temple University ROTC cadets have met Berry and echoed how much his service means to them. “It gives you a deeper understanding for the people who served before us,” one cadet shared. Berry loves when young people approach him. “That’s remarkable—to have the next generation honor us.”

### ***A Celebration Overflowing With Gratitude***

At the reunion, gratitude flowed freely. As Benjamin Berry entered the room for his birthday celebration, applause erupted, cameras flashed, and voices called out greetings. Friends embraced him. Veterans saluted him. Family members—children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren in spirit—watched him take it all in with the quiet joy he’s known for.

The room needed no elaborate displays; the focus was exactly where it belonged—on Benjamin Berry and the five other

World War II Veterans, seated together at the place of honor. A few simple patriotic touches added warmth, and a beautifully decorated birthday cake stood ready near the front of the room. The evening opened with a dignified Presentation of the Colors by the Baker-Fisher Camp 101, Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW), drawing the entire room to its feet in a moment of reverent silence.

Throughout the celebration, music from the 28th Pennsylvania Regimental Band, Sons of the Union, filled the room with period melodies and patriotic selections that lifted the spirits of all in attendance. Their performance added a meaningful emotional tone—one that felt both historic and deeply personal.

When the moment arrived for the birthday celebration, the crowd rose to its feet as Benjamin Berry stepped forward to cut his 102nd birthday cake, the room falling into a warm hush as cameras lifted and smiles spread across the audience. As he made the first cut, voices from across the room—family, friends, BOBA members, veterans, and guests—joined together in singing “Happy Birthday,” filling the space with heartfelt appreciation. Many later shared that watching Ben, steady and smiling, make that ceremonial cut was one of the most moving and unforgettable moments of the entire reunion.

### ***A Night to Remember—A Legacy to Carry Forward***

Benjamin Berry’s 102nd birthday celebration became more than a party. It became a moment of shared gratitude—a gathering that honored service, family, community, and the bonds forged in wartime and carried forward in peace. The presence of six WWII Veterans, seated together, created a scene that may never be seen again in our lifetime.

As his daughter Linda said, “We’re just real proud of him. He’s a wonderful person—very service-oriented.” Her husband, Fred, added, “Without the history, the real history, it would be lost.”

But that night in Philadelphia, nothing was lost. Everything—every memory, every story, every sacrifice—was remembered, honored, and celebrated.

And at the center of it stood a humble soldier from Philadelphia, smiling at 102, grateful to be surrounded by love, history, and the country he served so faithfully.



***Ben Berry and family***



***Albert El, Ben Berry, Christine Guidry Law***

# LYONSHEARTED: THE ENDURING LEGACY OF 1ST LT. JAMES O'BOYLE LYONS

By New BOBA Member, Roberta Lyons Nolan

THE BATTLE OF the Bulge shaped the course of World War II—but for my family, it shaped the course of our lives. My father, 1st Lieutenant James O'Boyle Lyons, fought, endured, was captured, survived, and ultimately died from the toll of that brutal campaign. I never knew him. He died when I was just five weeks old. Yet his story has been a guiding force—a legacy of courage, sacrifice, and love that has resonated through generations.



*Lt. James Lyons, 106th INF*

My brother and I grew up calling him simply The Lieutenant. Not Dad, not Daddy—he lived in our home through stories, medals, photographs, and the unwavering reverence of those who knew him. Though I never heard his voice, I have spent a lifetime listening for it.

## *A Soldier Called to Lead*

James Lyons was born on September 7, 1909, in Maybrook, New York. One of six children, he grew up in a close-knit family steeped in service—every brother would wear a uniform in World War II. After graduating high school in 1929, he moved with his family to New Brunswick, New Jersey. When war finally engulfed the world, he answered the call, entering the Army on October 18, 1942, at the age of 33.

His maturity made him a natural leader. In basic training his platoon quickly dubbed him “the old man,” and he rose rapidly through the ranks. After being selected for Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, he married my mother, Sally Lepping, on January 16, 1943. Soon afterward, he was promoted to 1st Lieutenant and began training new infantrymen at Fort McClellan, Alabama. My brother, Jim, was born there in December 1943.

In June 1944, he was assigned to the 106th Infantry Division at Camp Atterbury—green troops preparing for deployment to Europe.

## *Into the Ardennes*

Lt. Lyons set sail from Boston in November 1944 and reached the front lines in the snowy, dense Ardennes forest on December 11. The 106th Infantry Division was placed along the thinly defended Schnee Eifel—a so-called “quiet sector.” It was anything but.

Before dawn on December 16, 1944, the German Fifth Panzer Army launched a massive surprise assault. The Battle of the Bulge had begun.

For five days, Lt. Lyons led his 81mm mortar platoon under relentless pressure. Mortar positions were struck repeatedly and destroyed. He gathered his remaining men and consolidated ammunition into a single functioning squad, continuing to fire until every round was spent. On December 21, he and



*James (center) at his wedding on January 15, 1943*

thousands of Americans—overwhelmed by the German advance—were captured. My mother received the official notice on the winter solstice, her birthday. She was four months pregnant with me.

## *POW #71893*

From December 1944 to April 1945, my father was transported from camp to camp by train and truck in freezing weather, eventually arriving at Offlag 13-B near Hammelburg, Germany. Conditions defied imagination: brutal cold, extreme hunger, disease, and abuse from guards. Nearly 15% of the prisoners died; most of the rest were permanently weakened.

General George Patton attempted to liberate the camp—partly because Patton's own son-in-law was imprisoned there—but the mission initially failed. My father, along with many who attempted escape, was recaptured and punished. True liberation finally came on April 16, 1945, when Patton's Third Army returned in full force.

## *Home Again—and Too Late*

The emancipated prisoners were shipped back to the United States. Severely ill, my father was taken to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, on April 28, 1945. There, an extraordinary coincidence unfolded: a young nurse with flaming red hair burst into his hospital room and collapsed, sobbing, onto his chest. It was his sister, Rosemary, who had no idea her brother had been sent to the very hospital where she worked.

She brought him two pieces of news. The first: their father had died just weeks earlier. The second: he had a newborn daughter—me.

My father died on May 15, 1945, from malnutrition and pneumonia stemming from his imprisonment. He was 35 years old.

## *A Childhood Shaped by Sacrifice*

My mother, widowed with two infants, refused to place us in the orphanage suggested to her. Instead, she held our little family together with strength and grace. A few years later she married a good man, Bill Rapp, who became a loving father

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**James Lyons Gold Star**



**Jimmy and Roberta with their father's medals**

to us. Before their marriage, she brought him to meet the Lyons family in New Brunswick. They welcomed him but asked one thing: that we children keep our Lyons name, for it was all we had of The Lieutenant. And so we did.

I grew up in a warm, chaotic household overflowing with extended relatives. Last names didn't matter. Love did. Yet I learned how deeply my identity was shaped by that name in first grade, when my teacher publicly scolded me for having a different last name than my mother. I was six. I didn't even know mothers had last names.

That moment led to the revelation of my father's story—but it also led to fear. If my "father" was not really my father, was my mother really my mother? Would I be sent to the orphanage after all? Those childhood anxieties eventually faded, replaced by pride in the man whose courage I inherited.

### **Lyonshearted**

Throughout my life, people have told me I resemble him—tall, red-haired, strong-willed. I like to think I inherited more than his features. I hope I inherited his courage, fortitude, and lion-hearted spirit. Those qualities anchored our family through illness, grief, and adversity, and they propelled us toward achievements that once felt impossibly distant.

He never knew us, but we have tried to live in ways that would honor the life he gave for ours.

### **Honoring the Fallen**

In recent years, I've had the privilege of representing my family at Memorial Day events at the White House. President Obama told me that he and a grateful nation were blessed by my father's patriotism and that my life had been shaped by his sacrifice "in ways you could not even know." President Trump invited me to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier—a moment of reverence I will never forget.

In 2023, my daughter and I were selected as White House Holiday Decorators. Out of more than 3,000 applicants, only 180 were chosen. Decorating the Gold Star Tree was profoundly personal. I hung a gold star ornament bearing my father's name, a moment later broadcast on HGTV. When the decorations came down, the White House made sure that star came home to me. It now hangs in a place of honor—a symbol of remembrance, gratitude, and love.

### **Never Forget**

Though I never felt his touch or heard his voice, The Lieutenant has been with me every step of my life. His bravery in the Ardennes, his endurance as a prisoner, and his love for a family he never got to see again have shaped who I am and who my children are.

I believe he would look at our family today—at our resilience, our accomplishments, our closeness—and say, Mission accomplished.

My father lived and died as a Lyons. We have lived in his honor—Lyonshearted.

In their memory.

Never forget.



**Roberta and daughter Bridget decorate Gold Star Family Tree at White House**



**Roberta and Bugle Editor Christine Guidry Law with James' Gold Star from White House Christmas tree at 2025 BOBA Reunion.**



# UNIT SPOTLIGHT 83RD INFANTRY DIVISION



Compiled by Doris Davis, VP of Military and Veterans Affairs in Collaboration with George Studor, Historian/Archivist for the 83rd Infantry Division Association

THE 83RD INFANTRY Division was activated for WWII on August 15, 1942. They trained at Camp Atterbury, the Tennessee Maneuvers, and Camp Breckenridge before leaving for Camp Shanks. After landing in Liverpool, the headquarters for the division and its three regiments were established at Keele Hall, Erddig Hall in Wrexham, and Tarporley/Oulton Park. The rugged Welsh mountains provided excellent terrain for night operations, rough-ground movement, and live-fire training.

The 83rd left England on June 18 and 19, 1944. While Headquarters and General Macon made it ashore on the 19th, severe storms wrecked the landing areas and kept much of the division from reaching Normandy until June 23, 1944. By then, mine-cleared paths were well-marked, and casualties were few. After recovering from seasickness near Bricqueville, the division arrived at Carentan on June 27, 1944 to relieve the embattled 101st Airborne Division. Artillery bursts and the bodies of fallen soldiers introduced them to the grim reality of war. Inexperienced reconnaissance efforts misjudged enemy strength, the effects of recently flooded swamps, and the brutal challenge of hedgerow fighting.

On July 4, 1944, the 83rd moved into the swamps. The mire concealed ditches far deeper than expected, while entrenched German machine-guns cut them down with devastating accuracy. On that first day alone, 500 soldiers were lost in the assault near Méautis. In the days that followed, some companies suffered 90 percent casualties. Hedgerow by hedgerow, the 83rd lost 2,000 men per kilometer in the fight for the small village of Sainteny—a place that has welcomed its liberators and their families as honored guests ever since.

The 83rd reached the St. Lô-Périers Road on July 25, 1944 and advanced eight miles against strong resistance. The division captured Châteauneuf on August 5 and Dinard on August 7, then advanced upon the heavily fortified stronghold of Aleth guarding the Citadel of Saint-Malo. Relentless shelling, daring infantry attacks, and P-38-dropped napalm finally compelled “Mad Colonel” Andreas von Aulock to surrender on August 17, 1944.

While some elements moved south to secure the north bank of the Loire River, the main body regrouped south of Rennes for patrol and reconnaissance operations. The division reduced the garrison on Île de Cézembre, which surrendered on September 2, 1944. On September 17, 1944, 20,000 German troops surrendered to the 83rd at the Beaugency Bridge along the Loire, aided by the French Resistance and a bold action by Lt. Sam Magill. The division entered Luxembourg on September 25 and took Remich on September 28, 1944. With help from another deception executed by the “Ghost Army,” the 83rd kept German forces on the east side of the Moselle.

After capturing Grevenmacher and Echternach on October 7, 1944, the division advanced across the Sauer River to the Siegfried Line. As the opening move of Operation Unicorn, the 83rd seized Le Stromberg Hill near Basse Konz against fierce resistance on November 5, 1944, then repelled counterattacks. Shifting to the Hürtgen Forest, the division pushed from Gressenich to the west bank of the Roer.

After spending Christmas Day in Aachen, the division joined the counteroffensive during the Battle of the Bulge. The 83rd formed part of the northern pincer in the brutal cold near Ottre

and Bihain. On January 22, 1945, the division moved back to Belgium and Holland for rehabilitation and the integration of new replacements.

On March 1, 1945, the 83rd participated in Operation Grenade. They captured Neuss and became the first division to reach the Rhine. The west bank from north of Oberkassel to the Erft Canal was cleared and secured by March 2, 1945, after which the division resumed training. The 83rd crossed the Rhine south of Wesel, between Wallach and Spellern, on March 29, 1945, then advanced across the Münster Plain to the Weser, crossing at Bodenwerder. As German resistance collapsed, Halle fell on April 6, 1945. The division crossed the Leine on April 8 and attacked eastward, pushing through the Harz Mountains and advancing to the Elbe at Barby.

On April 11, 1945, the 83rd discovered and liberated Langenstein, a subcamp of the Buchenwald concentration-camp system. Only 1,100 starving prisoners remained of the 5,500 forced to labor in an underground aircraft plant; the rest had been driven out on a death march. Barby was attacked and taken on April 12–13, 1945, and the 83rd established the first secure bridgehead over the Elbe River. Believing they might be sent on to Berlin, the division prepared to advance but was held back by Supreme Headquarters.

The 83rd was the first American division to make contact with Soviet forces. As the Nazi regime collapsed, the division aided thousands of prisoners fleeing areas soon to fall under Soviet occupation—including many Germans. The 83rd evacuated the area north of the Elbe to Soviet control on May 6, 1945.

## 83rd INFD RECAP

**Activated:** August 15, 1942 (WWI – Sep 1917)

**Trained:** Camp Atterbury, Tennessee Maneuvers, Camp Breckenridge, KY, Camp Shanks, NY

**Overseas:** Depart NYC, April 6, 1944; Arrived Liverpool April 18. Trained in Wales mountains until June 16.

**Major Campaigns:** Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace, Central Europe

**Days in Combat:** 244

**Casualties:** 15,248 in Combat out of 23,980 / 3,637 KIA

**Commanders:** Maj. Gen. Frank W. Milburn (Aug 42) & Maj. Gen. Robert C. Macon (Jan 44)

**Deactivated:** April 5, 1946

## AWARDS

**Congressional Medal of Honor:** Sgt Ralph Neppel, Co M, 329th Inf, Dec 14, 1944, Birgel, Germany

**Distinguished Service Cross:** 7

**Distinguished Service Medal:** 1

**Silver Star:** 710

**Legion of Merit:** 1

**Soldier's Medal:** 25

**Bronze Star Medal:** 6294

**Air Medal:** 110

# VOICES OF THE 83RD INFANTRY DIVISION

## ANTWERP X AND THE BULGE

By Forest E. Brown, 83rd Infantry Division,  
329th IR, Company I

Excerpt of article originally published March 27, 2014

IN 1943, JUST after my high school graduation in Powhatan Point, Ohio, I was ready to serve. I enlisted in the Infantry during “Infantry Week” when the Air Corps wasn’t an option. Although my parents were heartbroken, they were proud.

Basic training began at Camp Haan outside Riverside, California. For a boy from Ohio, the desert was punishing—120° days and cold nights, rattlesnakes in sleeping bags. But we bonded, and as fate had it, the 125th AAA Gun Battalion became my family. I was assigned to Headquarters Division. Some of us had dads who fought in WWI; they seemed ancient at 45. We were barely 18.

After training, we moved East: Camp Livingston, LA; Camp Edwards, outside Boston. In September 1943, I boarded the SS Mt. Vernon for England. The North Atlantic was rough, and many got seasick. We arrived in Southampton and moved to Dover and Folkestone. That’s where the war became real.

In England, we defended against the German V-1 Buzz Bombs aimed at London. The 125th was credited with shooting down 97.8% of the bombs—269 in total. The V-1s were terrifying—a distinct buzzing, then silence, then destruction. We didn’t have calculators; we used crude rangefinders and our eyes.

Life wasn’t all fear. I played trumpet with a dance band we formed—Ameroanglos—seven American and seven English artillerymen. We played for the BBC and at Lea’s Cliff Hall in Dover. I also met Eddie and Pat Wedgwood who became life-long friends.

On June 6, 1944, D-Day began. Storms battered the English Channel as we crossed—frightened but committed. The landing was nothing like we expected. Our boat couldn’t get close. We went over the sides into armpit-deep water, rifles raised. The beach was red with blood. Bodies were everywhere. Anyone who made it past the surf crawled over the dead to reach cover. It took six days to secure the beachhead; 9,386 GIs were killed at Omaha alone.

We fought toward St. Lo, navigating deadly hedgerows—perfect German hiding spots. Their tanks were superior. Our Shermans were moving graves. GIs improvised tank attachments to break the hedges, and we pushed on.

Later, Patton took command. His advancement was stalled



Forest E. Brown, 83rd ID, 329th IR, Company I

by poor weather and lack of fuel. But when we broke through, we moved farther in one day than in the previous six.

We moved through Paris and into Belgium, where trucks in the Red Ball Express delivered critical supplies. Antwerp was vital. We helped defend it during “Antwerp X,” a secret mission now recognized 50 years later. The Germans bombed a theater there in 1944, killing 500 children. My buddy Russ Elliott and I carried some of them out.

By December, we were sent to the Ardennes. It was the coldest winter in memory. My left foot froze; gangrene was expected. I begged for one more day and survived it intact. We slept in fox-holes and wet clothes. The Battle of the Bulge was hell—600,000 Americans engaged, 19,000 killed.

In 1994, I returned to Antwerp for the 50th anniversary. We dedicated a monument honoring the American AAA battalions who defended the city from V-1s. I was honored to lay a wreath sent by President Clinton. The Belgian government thanked us. It was a moment of pride and memory—a tribute to the lives saved, and to those who did not come home.



Antwerp, BE monument honoring the American AAA gun battalions

### VETERAN MEMBERS: SUBMIT YOUR BULGE MEMORY!

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

Email your responses to: [bulge.bugle.editor@gmail.com](mailto:bulge.bugle.editor@gmail.com)

## **CHAPTERS UPDATE**

**By Leon Reed, VP, National And Regional Coordination (Chapters)**

THE BIGGEST NEWS is that BOBA's board of directors approved the first new chapter in nearly a decade. The Dwight D. Eisenhower chapter is being formed in Gettysburg and will meet at the World War II American Experience museum. Plans are being developed for the chapter's organization and scope.

The chapter plans to hold a small commemorative ceremony on December 16 to remember Bulge veterans. All other chapters

and individuals are urged to consider holding such a ceremony. We can provide ideas for how to put a ceremony together.

We are also researching the question of whether chapters can fold under BOBA's tax exemption umbrella, without going through a separate application process.

The process of verifying which chapters remain active and which have ceased operations continues.

### **DELAWARE VALLEY, PHILADELPHIA REGION**

**Andy Waskie, Chapter President**

THE DELVAL CHAPTER played a leading role in hosting the 2025 BOBA Reunion in Philadelphia. Christine Guidry Law, Reunion Coordinator and BOBA member/Bugle Editor, organized the event with support from Chapter President Dr. Andy Waskie, Chapter Vice President Andre McCoy—who also helped coordinate BOBA veteran Benjamin Berry's 102nd birthday celebration—and Chapter Chaplain Albert El. Their combined efforts ensured a warm welcome for attendees, including Philadelphia's new Director of Veterans Affairs, Gregory Wright, Jr., who joined the Reunion Banquet.

BOBA veteran Jake Ruser was also featured during Veterans Day activities in the city. At the Union League of Philadelphia's Veterans Day Luncheon, he spoke with U.S. Senator Dave McCormick (PA) following the senator's address. Senator McCormick highlighted the urgent national need to expand personalized and innovative mental-health treatments for service members and veterans, stressing the importance of addressing the crisis of veteran suicide.

The DelVal Chapter continues to demonstrate committed leadership and strong engagement within BOBA and across the Philadelphia-area veteran community.



*Sen. Dave McCormick converses with BOBA veteran Jake Ruser. Chapter president Andy Waskie in background.*



*Chapter Chaplain Albert El, Bugle Editor Christine Guidry Law, and Philadelphia Director of Veterans Affairs Gregory Wright Jr.*

### **GOLDEN GATE, CALIFORNIA**

**Doris Davis, Chapter President**

THE CITY OF Martinez, CA will be honoring Jake Larson, a member of the Golden Gate Chapter, with a statue of him to be erected by November 11, 2026.

Jake Larson, lovingly known as "Papa Jake," was more than a WWII veteran—he was a living bridge between history and modern-day generations. A soldier, hero, storyteller, and viral sensation, Papa Jake inspired millions through his courage, humility, and powerful storytelling. His life reminds us that the past is not forgotten—it lives on through those who continue to share it.

Jake was 102.5 when he died on July 17, 2025. He made five trips to Europe during his lifetime—his last one was just six weeks prior to his passing. He served in the 1st Army, V Corps and is featured in this short film shown by Delta Airlines on their flights on Veteran's Day <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vSn-LiVQLw8>. Jake is shown at timepoints 33 and 51 seconds as well as minutes 2:22, 6:02, 6:44 and 7:11.

The website for the statue: <https://papajakelarson.com/>. Help keep Papa Jake's memory alive with an Honor and Care Brick.



## VIRGINIA CRATER CHAPTER

### Mary Ann Coates Smith, Chapter President

JAMES “JIM” TRIESLER, Education Director at the Virginia War Memorial, BOBA Historian, longtime history teacher, and BOBA member of 21 years, served as a guest speaker at the 6th Annual World War II Conference, held November 7–9 in Glen Allen, Virginia, at the Virginia Crossings Hotel and Conference Center.

BOBA had strong representation at the event. Crater Chapter members Betsy Rose, former 2024 Board Member, and Mary Ann Coates Smith, Crater Chapter President and current BOBA Treasurer, attended. Former BOBA Board Director Al Cleghorn, his wife Zen, and their son, Charles Allen, traveled from Alabama, and Mr. and Mrs. Wood traveled from Florida, contributing to the total attendance of 83.

Two new members joined BOBA during the conference. Alexa O’Hara registered at the table, and shortly afterward, Homer Hodge also became a member.

The conference offered informative presentations and opportunities for attendees to reconnect and meet others. Many participants were returning for their third time. A continuing draw is the policy allowing youth 19 and younger to attend free with a paid adult. The event was organized by Bruce and Lynn Venter, owners of America’s History LLC.

On November 11, Mary Ann Coates Smith attended the Veterans Day ceremonies at the amphitheater of the Virginia War Memorial. Despite cold temperatures and high winds, the event drew a large public turnout. Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin served as the keynote speaker.



**BOBA Crater Chapter Members at 6th annual WWII Conference. L-to-R: Caleb Felber, Mary Ann Coates Smith, Jim Triesler, Betsy Rose, Alexa O’Hara, Patricia Wood, Jerry Wood, Alan Cleghorn**

## SOUTH CAROLINA

### Nelson McLeod, Chapter President

ON SATURDAY, 13 September, the South Carolina Chapter held its quarterly meeting, beginning with a tour of the American Heritage Foundation’s Motor Pool at the Columbia Metropolitan Airport—the former site of the World War II Columbia Army Air Base, first home of the Doolittle Raiders. Gay Suber, a member of both the American Heritage Foundation and BOBA, provided an overview of the AHF and its mission to restore, maintain, and display military vehicles to educate the public about their development and use.

After the tour, the group met for lunch and the business meeting at the South Congaree House of Pizza. September birthdays were recognized, including Bruce Cook (age 100) and Vernon Brantley (age 101). With Charles Shealy (age 102) also present, they were not the senior members in attendance.

The tour held particular significance for World War II Army Air Corps veterans Charles Shealy and Bruce Cook, both of whom served at the Columbia Army Air Base during the war. It was also meaningful for Gay Suber, whose father worked as a contractor during the base’s construction.

Nelson McLeod, assisted by his wife Robin and son Jay, shared a brief report on their May Band of Brothers Tour, which included visits to France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, and Austria, with two days spent at sites around Bastogne connected to the Battle of the Bulge. Nelson noted the strong knowledge of the European campaign among chapter members—gained

through service, travel, reading, study, and film—as well as contributions from their restaurant hostess, a military dependent who grew up in Germany.



**Birthday Boys: Army Air Corps Veterans Bruce Cook, age 100, and Charles Shealy, age 102, alongside 75th Infantry Division Veteran Vernon Brantley, age 101**

## LEHIGH VALLEY CHAPTER

**Stephen Savage, President**

TO COMMEMORATE THE 80th anniversary of the victory over Japan (VJ Day), our Lehigh Valley Chapter #55 of the Battle of the Bulge Association brought together 15 World War II veterans to honor them and thank them for their service. The event was held at St. John's Lutheran Church in Emmaus, PA and was attended by over 60 men and women.

Our special guests included men from the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy,

U.S. Army Air Corps, the Merchant Marines, and Dorothy Trate, a 103-year-old "Rosie the Riveter." We had the distinct honor to celebrate with U.S. Army Air Corps veteran James Haenn, at age 108, the oldest WWII veteran in Pennsylvania and sixth oldest in the country. Sadly, he passed away on October 21, 2025.

The Magnolia Sadies WWII era dance group performed for the event as well, and vocalist Rachel Bailey provided great renditions of WWII era songs.

This was a very patriotic and moving event that we hope to continue every year.



*WWII veteran James Haenn (age 108) and his daughter Judith Herb*



*Lehigh Valley Chapter WWII veterans. L-to-R: Jacob Vanino, Milton Ripple, Frank Stellar sign a flag for members.*



*Lehigh Chapter veterans*



*Dorothy Trate, 103-year-old Rosie the Riveter, and dancers from the Magnolia Sadies dance group*



### WE NEED YOUR CHAPTER'S NEWS!

Please send to: [bulge.bugle.editor@gmail.com](mailto:bulge.bugle.editor@gmail.com)

**NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE: JANUARY 25, 2026**

**THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE ASSOCIATION®, INC.**  
 Invites You to Join Your Friends for the “Events of Remembrance and Commemoration” of the  
**81<sup>ST</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE**

**JANUARY 21-24, 2026 | ARLINGTON, VA/WASHINGTON, DC**

The **Ambassador of Belgium** will host a reception for veterans, family and friends on the afternoon of Friday, January 23, 2026 to commemorate the end of the battle. Also included are 3 wreath-laying ceremonies at the Battle of the Bulge Memorial, Tomb of the Unknowns, and WWII Memorial. And, don't miss our special program on Thursday (full day) January 22 with speakers, raffles and displays! We secured a special Battle of the Bulge Association rate of \$169/night (King) & \$185/night (Double) plus taxes at the **Embassy Suites Crystal City/National Airport** in Arlington, VA 22202. This rate includes a discounted self-parking rate of \$29/night, free transportation to and from Crystal City METRO and Reagan Washington National Airport, free hotel wi-fi, and complimentary breakfasts. **If you cannot attend, please consider making a donation in the amount of registration in honor/memory of your LOVED one. All donations are appreciated.**

**PLEASE NOTE: ITINERARY SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS NEEDED**

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21, 2026**

4:00 PM Guests may check-in to the hotel and socialize in the lobby

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 2026**

6:30 - 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 - 1:30 pm **LUNCH ON YOUR OWN**

1:30 - 4:30 pm Guest speakers TBD – (3:00 pm 15-minute break)

4:30 - 6:00 pm **DINNER ON YOUR OWN**

6:00 - 9:30 pm Installation of 2026 Board Members, interview WWII veterans, raffle, guest speakers (7:30 pm 15-minute break)

9:30 - 10:00 pm Continue book purchase and signings.

10:00 pm Hospitality room closes. Displays packed and removed.

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 23, 2026**

6:30 - 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 for Arlington National Cemetery, WWII Memorial, Belgian Ambassador's Residence, and more. Return to hotel. Gather in atrium to socialize.

6:00 pm **DINNER ON YOUR OWN**

7:00 - 8:30 pm Closed board meeting.

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 24, 2026**

6:30 - 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, 2026**

**HOTEL RESERVATIONS:** YOU MUST MAKE ROOM RESERVATIONS DIRECTLY WITH THE HOTEL BY JANUARY 3, 2026 to get the BOBA special rate of \$169/night King & \$185/night Double plus taxes. Go to [battleofthebulge.org](http://battleofthebulge.org) / click on “**Bulge Anniversary Events**” to find the hotel link. OR call **Embassy Suites Crystal City/National Airport** at 1-800-257-6009 or 703-979-9799 and mention the **Hotel Discount Code: BBA**. Complimentary breakfast each morning, free WI-FI and free airport shuttle every 20 minutes is provided to and from Reagan Washington National Airport and to and from Crystal City METRO. **Please make your reservations early to secure a room, especially if you want a handicap accessible room. Hotel reservations are based on availability so don't delay! Click link here → [EMBASSY SUITES](http://EMBASSY SUITES)**

**EVENT REGISTRATION:** To register online: [battleofthebulge.org](http://battleofthebulge.org) / click on “**Bulge Anniversary Events**.”

**\$180 PRICE INCLUDES:** Registration, Thursday program/gathering, Friday wreath-layings, reception at the Belgian Ambassador's Residence, and bus tour/museum. **ALL MEALS ARE ON YOUR OWN.**



**QUESTIONS? Contact Mary Ann Coates Smith at [mcdesk4@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://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!***



## THE STORY OF THE 95TH AFABN, 5TH ARMDD

*This is an excerpt of an original article which was taken from the maps, memoirs, and memories of Sgt. Charles Harman, Tank Commander, father of Gail Larke, BOBA recording secretary, and was compiled by Ken Larke (April 15, 2020)*

THE 95TH BEGAN January 1, 1942 at Fort Knox, Kentucky. At the end of February, they were sent to Camp Cooke, California, to help for a possible attack on the West coast.

“I joined the Division from Fort Custer, Michigan in July 1942 when they were on desert maneuvers in the Mojave Desert. Started training with T-19’s and then drew our new M-7 tanks. Then we were off to Pine Camp, Tennessee for more maneuvers, and 90 days of intensive training. Next stop Indiantown, Pennsylvania in late November. Right, more combat training. January 1944, we were on our way to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey. We were there one day, and with all our gear on our backs, we were shuttled across the bay, passed the Statue of Liberty, and on board the USS Edmund B. Alexander for our destination in England. Then on to Perham Downs, Wiltshire where we were billeted in the barracks of the Royal Tank Corps. After more training at Tilshead on the Salisbury Plain. We were here when we heard about the June 6th D-Day invasion. We then headed to Southampton for the next wave across the channel in July. We watched as they loaded tank after tank on the ship. I remember we were strafed once by a German plane, but made it safely to Utah beach in late July 1944.

We were bivouacked at Saint Sauveur-le-Vicomte waiting for our battle assignment. The devastation of the D-Day invasion was all around us. We were still picking up an occasional German POW. Our first battle was the first week of August 1944 at Avranches. Shot down three German planes and headed through the hedgerows. At Saint-Aignan we locked horns with the Ninth Panzer Division and pushed them back. We then met up with the Canadians and another battle with the Jerrys at LeMesle.

By August 30 we had reached Paris. Finally, we were able to cross the Oise River and push on to the Belgian border at Conde on September 3, 1944. Instead of going on to Brussels, we were ordered to drive out some Germans from the Duchy of Luxembourg. Within a period of two days, the Germans were cleared out of Luxembourg. What a welcome we received from the people of Belgium and Luxembourg!

The weather was great, and we had to move in close because their 88s out-ranged our 105s, but the P-47s above us were our guardian angels. On September 13th, we were facing the Siegfried Line opposite Wallendorf and fired our initial rounds on German soil. We were in Germany on September 15. The Germans weren’t ready to give up and pushed us back to our previous position on September 19. We now knew we were in for a real battle. After France, Belgium, and Luxembourg where we fought for miles, we were now fighting for yards. Late in November, we entered the bloodiest battle thus far: Hurtgen Forest.



Everything was difficult: Weather, thick forests, dirt paths like rivers of mud, and then snow. We provided support for our troops who fought through Kliehau, Brandenburg, and Bergstein. After Hurtgen we expected a rest period, not so....The Bulge.

We were ordered south to the Roetgen, Germany area to provide support for a possible attack on the Roer River Dams. It was a quagmire getting our 25-ton M-7’s into position. On the night of December 16th, the Luftwaffe made an appearance and paratroopers were dropping all around us. We killed and captured many that fell in our area. The next morning, we learned that General Von Rundstedt had launched a counter attack against our weaker defenses in the Ardennes. Our Division was ordered to fall back to positions near Eupen, Belgium to protect road blocks against advancing German panzer divisions. The name of our tank was “Alibaba and the 7 Thieves”, probably because we picked up a lot of souvenirs along the way. It was at one of these crossroads that we saw General Patton come by, and he asked us who was Alibaba in that @\$\*%&#@\$ tank! We all pointed to the other guy.

We didn’t have it as bad as our boys in Bastogne. The German Air Force hit us on many days; we averaged shooting one down per day. On one attack, I jumped from my tank and my foot got caught in the camouflage netting. There I was upside down with bullets all around me. I wasn’t hit, but my guys thought I was dead; embarrassing, but could have been worse. Near the end of the campaign we moved to support the crossing of the Roer River. We dug in at Ederen, Germany with our M-7’s only 1500 feet from the front lines waiting for orders. Finally, on February 23, we got the orders and at 2:45 am in the space of four hours, we shot 3,000 rounds of ammunition: Operation “Grenade”. From there, we battled our way toward the Rhine.

On the morning of April 1, we were ordered to support CCR at the Weser River. We experienced heavy resistance at Herford, Germany from the anti-tank guns. We destroyed ten 88’s, and killed or captured all their personnel. On the afternoon of 8 April, we crossed the Weser on our way to the Elbe River, through the town of Hamlin (Piped Piper fame). We were reinforced by the 695th AFAB, and fought some 500 SS troops near Springe. Between us and the Airforce, we completely destroyed the city. The Germans were giving up by the hundreds. Next, at Hannover, we had lots of action. We finally reached the Elbe River where we waited for the Russians.”

**Above: Sgt. Charles Harman, Tank Commander, 95th Field Artillery Battalion, 5th Armored Division**

# WHERE COURAGE LIVES ON: A DAY AT THE MEDAL OF HONOR GROVE

By Lawrence M. Frangiosa, Esq., Vice Chairman, Friends of the Grove

ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2025, the Medal of Honor Grove at Founding Forward in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, hosted a memorial service for attendees of the Battle of the Bulge Association Reunion. A moving tribute was held in the newly renovated chapel, featuring a prayer by outgoing chaplain Madeleine Bryant and a reflective address by Brigadier General Bart Verbist of the Embassy of Belgium. The names of recently deceased veterans were read in memoriam, followed by the solemn playing of TAPS.

After the service, reunion attendees toured the 52-acre campus and gathered at the Pennsylvania state memorial for a wreath-laying ceremony honoring all Medal of Honor recipients, with special recognition for veterans of the Battle of the Bulge. Twenty-one recipients earned the Medal of Honor for extraordinary heroism during that campaign.

The Medal of Honor Grove is a natural woodland dedicated to the more than 3,500 recipients of the nation's highest military award for valor. The Grove's origin traces to 1949, when Kenneth Wells, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, E.F. Hutton, General Omar Bradley, and others at Freedoms Foundation (now Founding Forward) envisioned a living memorial to courage and sacrifice. President Eisenhower formally dedicated the Grove in 1964.

Each state, U.S. territory, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia has a designated section within the Grove. Every Medal of Honor recipient is honored with a stainless-steel marker bearing their name, military unit, and the date and location of their act of valor. Their names also appear on obelisks representing the state or territory where they entered service. Additional memorials include a monument erected in 1985 by the Ancient Order of the Hibernians to honor more than 150 non-U.S. citizen recipients, and the Chaplains Memorial, dedicated in 1979 to the nine chaplains awarded the Medal of Honor from the Civil War through Vietnam.

In 2017, Founding Forward entered a conservation easement agreement with Schuylkill Township, Chester County, and the Natural Lands Trust to ensure the Grove's permanent protection. The Grove earned Level 1 arboretum accreditation through the ArbNet program in 2019 and is recognized as an Audubon Bird Habitat, providing sanctuary for native wildlife and a peaceful place for reflection.

Annual traditions include the Wreaths Across the Grove ceremony, which features a program and wreath-laying at each state obelisk, followed by light refreshments. Scheduled this year for December 13, 2025, the event offers time to honor the courage and sacrifice of America's heroes.

The Friends of the Medal of Honor Grove continue to preserve the landscape and enhance its memorial spaces, ensuring this remarkable site remains a place of remembrance, education, and inspiration.



*BOBA Reunion attendees gathered for the wreath-laying ceremony on September 21 at the Pennsylvania Monument.*

## BATTLE OF THE BULGE MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

**Dec. 16, 1944 - Jan. 28, 1945**

*The Germans launched a surprise attack through Belgium on December 16, 1944, during World War II. Over the following weeks, their offensive famously "bulged"—but did not break—the Allied lines. Named for that bulge in the lines, the Battle of the Bulge resulted in 21 Medals of Honor.*

Arthur O. Beyer 1945 - near Arloncourt, Belgium	Isadore S. Jachman 1945 - Flamierge, Belgium
Melvin E. Biddle 1944 - between Soy and Hotton, Belgium	Truman Kimbro 1944 - near Rocherath, Belgium
Paul L. Bolden 1944 - Petit-Coo, Belgium	Jose M. Lopez 1944 - near Krinkelt, Belgium
Frederick W. Castle 1944 - Germany	Vernon McGarity 1944 - near Krinkelt, Belgium
Richard E. Cowan 1944 - near Krinkelter Wald, Belgium	Nicholas Oresko 1945 - near Tettington, Germany
Francis Sherman Currey 1944 - Malmedy, Belgium	Curtis F. Shoup 1945 - near Tillet, Belgium
Peter J. Dalessandro 1944 - Kalterherberg, Germany	William A. Soderman 1944 - near Rocherath, Belgium
Archer T. Gammon 1945 - near Bastogne, Belgium	Horace M. Thorne 1944 - near Grufflingen, Belgium
Robert E. Gerstung 1944 - Siegfried Line, near Berg, Germany	Day G. Turner 1945 - Dahl, Luxembourg
James R. Hendrix 1944 - near Assenois, Belgium	Henry F. Warner 1944 - near Dom Butgenbach, Belgium
	Paul J. Wiedorfer 1944 - near Chaumont, Belgium

# • IN MEMORIAM •

## TRIBUTES TO HEROES

### **CHARLES J. TANSITS, JR. – 80 INFD 305 MED BN D**

**OCTOBER 11, 1920 – JANUARY 4, 2025**

CHARLES J. “CHAS” TANSITS JR., 104, was born in Scranton on October 11, 1920 and served with distinction as a medic in the 305th Medical Battalion, 80th Infantry Division, Patton’s Third Army. Landing on Utah Beach (D+90), he supported infantrymen through the battles of Argentan, the Moselle Bridgehead, and the Battle of the Bulge. In the final months of the war, Chas was among the soldiers who helped liberate the Ebensee concentration camp on May 6, 1945, an experience he carried with solemn pride. His decorations included the Good Conduct Medal, EAME Campaign Medal with four bronze stars, and the WWII Victory Medal.

Returning home, he married Eleanor in 1947 and raised five children. A devoted husband and father, Chas was known for his humor, humility, and craftsmanship, spending countless hours in his workshop and serving his community and parish with steady faith. For 40 years he walked daily at Lake Scranton, where many came to know him as a friend. In honor of his 100th birthday, “Charlie Tansits Way” was dedicated near the lake he loved.

His legacy of service, strength, and kindness endures.



### **DREXEL L. MORROW – 627 ENGR LIGHT EQUIP CO.**

**NOVEMBER 24, 1920 – AUGUST 5, 2025**

CPL. DREXELL LYNELL MORROW, 105, of Horton, Alabama, passed away on August 5, 2025 at Shepherd’s Cove Hospice. Born on November 24, 1924, he was the eldest of nine children of Samuel and Nannie Morrow. Drafted during his senior year of high school, he entered the U.S. Army in April 1943 and served with the 627th Engineer Company, First Army, in England, France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany. He fought in the Ardennes, Rhineland, and Ruhr campaigns, including the Battle of the Bulge, and was among the soldiers who witnessed the liberation of the Buchenwald concentration camp—an experience that shaped him for life.

After the war, Drexell returned home to farm, drive a school bus, and later serve 23 years as a USDA grain inspector. A man of steadfast faith, he was a lifelong member, deacon, and Sunday School teacher at Liberty Hill Baptist Church.

Married to his beloved Nellie for 74 years, Drexell was known for his humor, humility, and devotion to family. His children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren remain deeply proud of his service and his exemplary life.



### **ERNIE A. MAYNARD – 734 FA BN**

**MARCH 19, 1924 – SEPTEMBER 26, 2025**

ERNEST A. “ERNIE” MAYNARD, 101, of Enfield, CT entered eternal rest on September 26, 2025. Born on 19 March 1924 in Scitico, he was a lifelong resident of Enfield and a graduate of its school system. In 1951, he married Jacqueline Giguere, with whom he shared 63 years of devotion.

Ernie served in the U.S. Army from 1943–1952, active duty and reserve, rising to Staff Sergeant. He served under Patton’s Third Army and Harmon’s 2nd Armored Division in World War II, fighting across Europe, including the Battle of the Bulge, and later served during the Korean War. His commendations included the EAME Campaign Ribbon with four Bronze Stars, the Belgian Fourragère, the Korean Service Medal with three Bronze Stars, the WWII Victory Medal, and Expert Rifle and Pistol badges.

After the war, Ernie worked 31 years at Monsanto and devoted himself to public service—as a firefighter, Boy Scout leader, church volunteer, and active member of numerous veterans and civic organizations. Enfield honored him as Patriot of the Year in 2005.

Above all, Ernie cherished his family, who remain deeply proud of his life of service, faith, and community dedication.



Please notify us when you hear that any member of our organization has recently passed away, so that we may honor them in a future issue of *The Bulge Bugle*®. Also, kindly notify us of any errors or omissions. Please send notices by mail: BOBA, Inc., P.O. Box 330, Mechanicsville, VA 23111-0330; or by email: bulge.bugle.editor@gmail.com.



## FRANK CHAMBERS, CANNON CO, 291ST IR, 75TH ID

Excerpt from originally published article May 25, 2012

MAY 1945 MARKED both an end and a beginning—peace in Europe, and a new chapter for those who'd served. After Germany's surrender, the combat days of Cannon Company, 291st Infantry Regiment, 75th Infantry Division were over—but the duties weren't. The crucial task now was restoring order in occupied Germany.

Stationed near Bad Driburg, we were assigned Military Government duties: enforcing curfews, appointing non-Nazi officials, disarming civilians, and maintaining roadblocks. The brewery in our sector operated under 24-hour guard—more to deter thirsty GIs than Germans.

Our chow line was set up in the open. When meals ended, German children would approach with pails, eyes pleading for leftovers. Their gaunt faces are with me to this day. I promised myself my own children would never know such hunger. More than that, I vowed to share these memories.

A few weeks later came new orders: prepare for transfer to the Pacific Theater. The war with Japan raged on, and every available man was needed. Our unit was sent to the Assembly Area Command near Rheims, France—Camp New York, one of seventeen camps forming a pipeline to the West. Our trucks made nightly runs to Paris: the Arc de Triomphe, Notre Dame, Folies Bergère—moments of beauty amid uncertainty.

On July 14, Bastille Day, Paris exploded with joy. It was the first public celebration since liberation. Getting my truck full of men back before curfew was nearly impossible.

In late July, I was summoned by the CO, handed a sergeant's stripe armband—"acting sergeant," though I remained a PFC on the books. The promotion came with duties, not pay, but I accepted with gratitude.

August brought two weeks' furlough—our choice of the Riviera or Switzerland. I chose Switzerland, in part to buy watches for family. We stayed in Wengen, beneath the Jungfrau.

On August 9, my 22nd birthday, I stood on the mountain's snowy peak. That same day, we heard incredible news—an atomic bomb had been dropped on Japan.

Soon after: Japan surrendered.

The mission shifted immediately to bringing us home. Troops were processed based on points. My Combat Infantryman's Badge counted for much. At a planning meeting in France, I joined efforts to form a veterans association for the 75th Infantry Division. Bonds forged in war shouldn't be forgotten in peace.

In December 1945, I boarded the Gustavus Victory at Le Havre. It was a rough crossing, and I swore off Spam for years. We made landfall in New Jersey, then on to Camp Grant, Illinois. After three years minus five days of service, I was honorably discharged.

My next journey was home—to family, old friends, and new decisions. The GI Bill offered opportunities. I considered returning to the University of Illinois or Illinois College. But first, I drove down the road to visit my neighbors and fellow veterans, Russ and Jim Albers. We shared stories before each of us began our new lives.

For all that happened—the battles, the hunger, the promotions, the laughter in Paris, the silent prayers at sea—I give thanks. The Lord saw me home.

I proudly served. I proudly remember.



*Frank Chambers, 75th Infantry Division, 291st Infantry Regiment, Cannon Company*

### • TAPS •

**Henry Addison**

4/1/2025 • Childersburg, AL  
78 INFD HQ

**Joseph Binni**

10/18/2025 • Powhatan Point, OH  
264 FA BN HQ BTRY

**John R. Bruner**

4/30/2025 • Clayton, WI  
75 INFD 289 INF G

**Frank H. Chambers**

7/19/2025 • League City, TX  
75 INFD 291 INF C

**Anita Rochelle-Keyser**

8/6/2025 • Red Bank, NJ  
9 ARMD 89 CAV RECON SQD

**Javier E. Ledesma**

2/11/2025 • Tucson, AZ  
35 INFD 137 INF 1 BN CO A

**Ernest Maynard**

9/26/2025 • Enfield, CT  
734 FA BN

**Salvatore W. Micchelli**

1/14/2025 • Freehold, NJ  
94 INFD 301 INF 2 BN F

**John R. Milroy**

1/10/2025 • Alpena, MI  
94 INFD 376 INF 3 BN L

**Drexell Morrow**

8/5/2025 • Horton, AL  
627 ENGR LIGHT EQUIP CO

**Bernard Mrugalla**

3/31/2025 • Freeport, IL  
1970-1973 U.S. Army

**James W. Phillips**

5/5/2025 • Columbia, PA  
80 INFD 312 FA BN A

**Charles J. Tansits**

1/4/2025 • Jermyn, PA  
80 INFD 305 MED BN D

**Maxine Thompson**

3/30/2025 • Bradenton, FL  
Wife of Robert E. R05847

**Jeffrey Wollet**

12/1/2025 • Wauseon, OH  
Son of 75th INFD Vet  
Joseph Wollet, Sr.



# 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.

- Yearly Membership: \$40 (electronic Bugle)**  
 **Yearly Veteran (Bulge Vet) Membership: \$0 for 2026\***

*\* BOBA is gifting the 2026 membership fee to Bulge veterans.*

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.**



## WE NEED YOUR HELP!

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

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

**If desired, please choose:**  **Gift In Memory of:** .....  
 Name Service Units (if applicable)

**Gift In Honor of:** .....  
 Name Service Units (if applicable)

**ALL GIFTS ARE GREATLY APPRECIATED!**