

The BULGE BUGLE

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION ☆ VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

VOLUME V NUMBER 1

THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

FEBRUARY 1986

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING & BANQUET SUPERB!!

On 13 December 1985 some 170 members and guests registered for the 4th General Membership Meeting of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge. It was a happy occasion for many who were seeing old friends for the first time since last year's meeting. The Atrium Lounge proved to be the focal gathering point. Sam Silverman, photographer, displayed photos taken during the past year of VBOB activities.

On 15 December, members gathered at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier to view the 1100-hour changing of the guard, followed by an impressive Special Troop Ceremony. A wreath was presented at The Tomb by Robert J. VanHouten and André Hubert, Centre de Recherches et d'Informations sur la Bataille des Ardennes (CRIBA), Belgium.

That same day a memorial service was held at the historical Christ Church in Alexandria, VA.

read by Clyde D. Boden, Past President, VBOB. As each name was read, a rose was placed in a wreath by Robert J. VanHouten, President, and Dorothy S. Davis, Recording Secretary. Mrs. Bernice Olson was present to place a rose in memory of her husband, VBOB member John A. Olson, who died this past year. The following prayers were offered.

"Father of all, we pray to You for those we love, but see no longer. Grant them Your peace; let light perpetually shine upon them; and, in Your loving wisdom and almighty power, work in them the good purpose of Your perfect will through the grace that You bestow on the faithful departed and on those who mourn. Amen.

"Almighty God, with whom still live the spirits of those who die in the Lord, and with whom the souls of the faithful are in joy and felicity, we give You heartfelt thanks for the good examples of all Your servants who, having finished their course in faith, now find rest and refreshment. May we, with all who have died in the true faith of Your holy name, have perfect fulfillment and bliss in Your eternal and everlasting glory. Amen."

On the first day of this gala affair, a Book/Author area provided an opportunity for members to purchase copies of books written on Battle of the Bulge topics as well as to

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Presiding at the service was the Rev. George W. Hall, Jr. After the sermon, the names of deceased VBOB members were



VBOB MEETS AGAIN IN 1986

Plan now for the 1986 General Membership Meeting in the Washington, D.C. area on November 6 - 8.

VBOB Officers and Staff

THE BULGE BUGLE is the official publication of Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge. It is issued five times yearly.

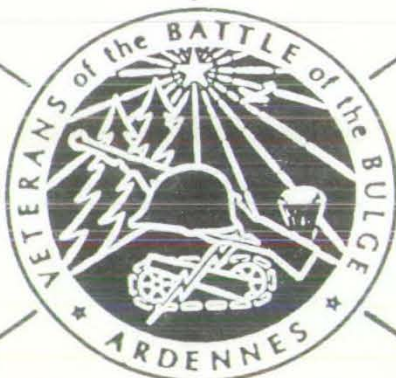
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GEORGE CHEKAN, Promotion, 9th Inf. Div.

OUR OBJECTIVES ARE:

- * To foster international peace and good will
- * To promote friendship
- * To perpetuate the memory of the sacrifice involved
- * To preserve historical data and sites

VBOB LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

\$50 if age 70 or over
\$75 if age 50 thru 69
\$100 if under age 50



Our Middle Name Was Automatic Weapons

By Clyde Boden

Col Clyde D. Boden, AUS-Ret., an Army War College graduate and a freelance writer, was a platoon commander in the 557th AAA AW Bn. He is the past president of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge.

In these days of sophisticated and costly military arms, a flashback of more than 40 years ago brings pictures of fighting soldiers and effective and inexpensive weapons that were easy to maintain.

Our mobile ack-ack battalion—the 557th—provided air, ground, and river-crossing support for a great infantry division—the 84th—while in position and when on the move in all kinds of weather in Europe during World War II.

Because we were usually deployed around the division artillery and advanced with task forces and other fighting elements, we were required often to fire instinctively and accurately at fleeting targets. We had little or no warning of high-speed enemy aircraft flying at tree-top level nor of opposing riflemen hiding behind a tree or in a haystack.

We were successful for several reasons.

First, we were trained. Everyone was in excellent physical condition and was qualified on at least one small arms weapon; the crew who fired the machine guns and the cannons had spent months drilling and on firing ranges.

Second, we were disciplined. Non-commissioned officers had much authority—moreso even in combat—and were respected by the troops and supported by the of-

ficers. The junior officers were closely associated with the soldiers but maintained a proper distance between them and also from the

campaigns and served in the Army of Occupation and for several months thereafter as a unit.

Fifth, we were not burdened administratively. At the platoon level, for example, we had only morning, casualty, and ammunition reports to render and they were submitted verbally.

Sixth, we had weapons that were



Sgt Ray Walstead's 6th gun section of A/557th AAA poses during Battle of the Bulge. Cpls were Daniel Buchan, Henry Chrowstowski, and Steve Shimrak.

senior officers who provided guidance and a minimum of supervision. All members of the unit were conscious of and practiced military courtesy.

Third, equipment and personal gear were maintained. During training, more time was spent in the gun park and motor pool than anywhere and during combat one gun at a time in each platoon was out of action each day for care and maintenance. Vehicles, weapons, and clothing were inspected frequently.

Fourth, we had unit integrity. Following 16 months of training together, we fought in four major

easy to master, maintain, and use—the M1 rifle, the carbine, the .45 caliber pistol, the submachine gun, vehicle-mounted and four-barrel 50 caliber machine guns, and the 40 millimeter cannons. In addition, in combat:

We were well supplied in every class and used our ammunition economically, firing only when targets were deemed to be hostile. We made every shot count.

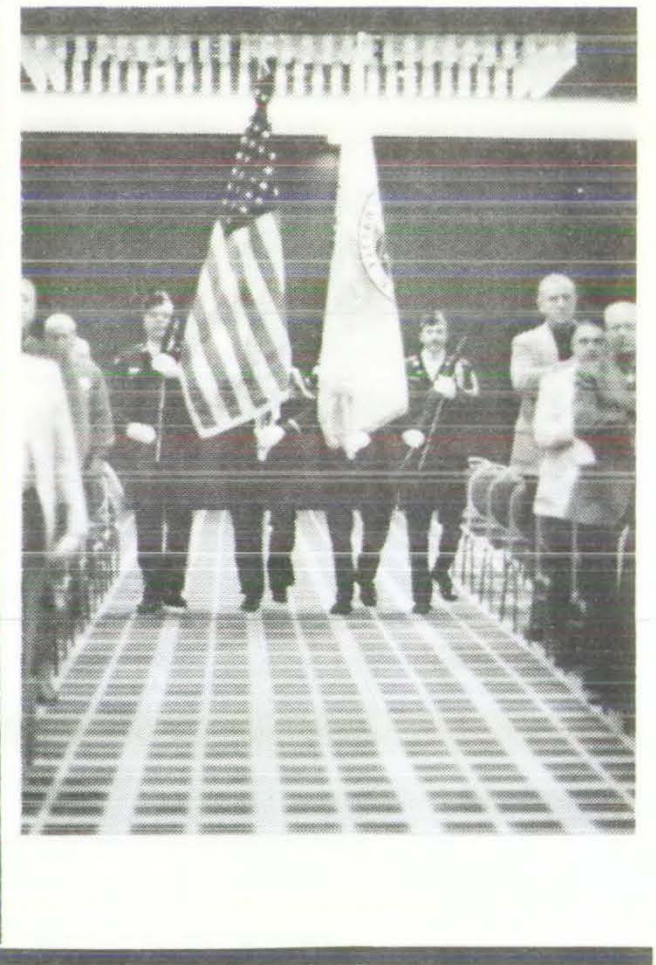
Our sighting was direct—we had no additional equipment and adjustments could be made instantly.

We were proud to be the 557th AAA Automatic Weapons Battalion.

AND...STILL MORE MEMBERS SPEAK OUT!

An Upper Darby, PA newspaper carried an item early this year concerning VBOB member Rev. Charles F. Gorman, Station Hospital, Belgium, who celebrated his 94th birthday in December. Among cards he received was one from the "Survivors of the Battle of the Bulge" where Father Gorman served as chaplain. Thanks to Jack Kearney, 84th Division, for this news.

In January of last year VBOB associate member André Herion, CRIBA, Liege, Belgium, asked if anyone could locate Raymond Garrison, 82nd Airborne Division. M. Herion now tells us that in September he located Garrison while guiding some GI's in Liege and offers his ser-



vices to guide those of us who may find ourselves in Liege. Many thanks, André.

(GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING &
BANQUET SUPERB!! (Cont'd. from
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meet some of the authors -- John Campbell, Charles B. MacDonald, Harold Leinbaugh and Robert Phillips.

An evening Social Hour provided a relaxing atmosphere for visiting with new and old friends. Edwin Thierry taped oral histories of those wishing to record the memories of their experiences in the Battle of the Bulge. These histories will be placed in the VBOB Museum.

On the second day the meeting was called to order at 0830 hours by President Van Houten. The Color Guard from American Legion Post 248, Oxon Hill, MD and commanded by Capt. John Peterson posted the Colors. Eugene Drouillard led the attendees in the salute to the Flag followed by the opening prayer by the Rev. George Hall, Jr.

Mr. VanHouten then invited the members to introduce themselves by giving their name and military organization served with during the Battle of the Bulge and also where they live today.

President VanHouten then reported on VBOB's activities and growth during the past year and the exciting plans for special events and continued growth in 1986. He encouraged members to consider starting VBOB chapters in their home areas.

After this report, members made the following suggestions: Members should be encouraged to write about VBOB to their Organization Headquarters as a method of increasing interest and membership in VBOB. Publish in THE BULGE BUGLE dates and places of upcoming VBOB events so those wishing to attend can make arrangements to do so. At future membership meetings, publish a list of attendees and their organizations. Develop a simple method for those registering at meetings to sign in under a listing of their organizations to allow members of the same organization to easily contact each other if they so desire.

After a break, movies of the "1984 Return Trip to the Ardennes" were shown.

A highlight of the morning activities of the second day was a panel of former Prisoners of War reporting on their experiences in 1944/45. President VanHouten, a former POW, served as moderator of the panel and

opened the discussion with comments about his four months in captivity. Other panelists were Art K. Gordon, David Schneck, Dr. Charles Stenger and Donald Whitner. This session was recorded and the tapes will be placed in the VBOB Museum.

These men, all captured during the Battle of the Bulge, told of the bitter cold and starving conditions. Some of them had lost weight from 160 to 70 pounds by the time they were freed from the prison camps. Thin soup for breakfast and sawdust-like bread for the evening meal was a usual diet.

So as to prevent the Germans from using the warm GI clothing, many of the men threw their overcoats and boots over a cliff when capture seemed imminent. On work details the prisoners would use the picks and shovels in such a manner as to break the wooden handles. Dr. Stenger told of his experience as a combat medic/prisoner of war. With no supplies or medicines, he struggled to help those suffering from a multitude of physical conditions, such as hepatitis, open wounds, frozen feet, starvation and dysentery. He said he became very good at "stealing things."

Another panelist told of being on the labor detail forced to clean out the crematories in a concentration camp.

After lunch a "Book of Reports" by the elected officers and some committee chairmen was provided to all members at the time of registration. However, brief comments and reports were made as follow:

THE BULGE BUGLE: R. L. Lemmon, editor, reported that two special sections will be added to upcoming issues -- "Top Kick Topics" of interest by "Old Top Kick" and "The Chaplain's Word" by the Rev. George Hall, Jr. Plans are to publish five editions of the paper in 1986. Articles of interest are always welcomed for publication. Deadlines for any material sent to the editor are the 7th of January, March, May, July and September.

Treasurer's Report: William Hemphill stated that 3,692 memberships have been issued. Chaplain Hall made a motion to accept the written report, E. "Lucky" Loiacono seconded the motion and it was approved by the members present.

(Continued on Page 5)

Members Speak Out

Rev. Allen G. Slye, 4 Whipple St., Putnam, CT 06260 desires info on whereabouts of S/SGT VAXMONSKY, Michael P. and PFC BRENT, Carl M. They were last known to be with Co. F, 47th Inf, 9th Div around Bruchhausen, Germany in early March, '45.

Warren Jenson, 793rd Field Artillery Bn., recommends reading ARDENNES-THE SECRET WAR by Charles Whiting, published by Stein & Day, Inc., Briarcliff Manor, N.Y. 10510. The author's approach to the Ardennes is on an intelligence angle of both sides of the battle and its effects. Warren enjoyed A TIME FOR TRUMPETS by our own Charles B. MacDonald written "from the perspective of a former infantry company commander."

Jean E. Hartley of Redding, CA and widow of Herbert L. Hartley, a Purple Heart veteran of the Bulge, is a new Associate Member of VBOB. She writes of a recent visit to Belgium and England and the daughter of a Belgian family who cared for her husband and three others injured near Magerotte, Morhet and Pinsamont on their way back to a field hospital. She also visited Swindon and Winchester, England, where the 17th Airborne was stationed. She also saw the museum and American Memorial at Bastogne and the U.S. Military Cemetery in Luxembourg. She is glad there is an organization such as ours, interested in perpetuating the memory of the sacrifices involved, the preservation of data and sites, and most important -- the fostering of international peace and good will.

Ambrose Collier, Co. I, 422d Regt, 106th Division, writes that he and his wife toured the Bulge area last September and were impressed with the friendliness of the people, especially those of CRIBA and CEBA who went out of their way to help in any way they could. Mr. Collier is one of three former prisoners of war who made the trip.

Emanuel Lamb, 83d Division, writes to report that the 331st Inf, 83d Division was the first unit to reach the Rhine River, capturing Neuss, adjacent to Dusseldorf, Germany. He states that 2nd Bn, Co. E, 331st Inf, were the first troops of both the First and Ninth Armies to reach the Rhine.

(More MEMBERS SPEAK OUT on Page 6)

A CREED TO THE FLAG OF OUR COUNTRY

Cherish and respect it,
To it be always true.
Pledge to it allegiance
Day in and out anew.
Uphold it and defend it
Whene'er the need may be.
Never be ashamed to show
Your pride and loyalty.
Remember that it stands for
Justice and for right,
And that it is the banner
Of freedom's shining light.

...Harold F. Mohn



MILITARY publisher

Armond M. Noble will send a free (no obligation) sample copy to anyone requesting it. The copy he sent to me is most interesting and I have subscribed. It has been published monthly for the past 1½ years. Write MILITARY, 2122-28th St., Sacramento CA 95818.

EDITOR'S
S
Q
U
A
R
E

Wm. A. Simpkins, VBOB VP for Regional Coordination, recently asked the editor of THE STARS AND STRIPES if there is a central location where WWII veterans may write to obtain copies of their official military service health records/medical records. The response was to write Military Personnel Records Center, General Services Administration, 9700 Page Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63132.

I am the proud owner of a recently obsolete computer printout of the membership of VBOB which contains 12 elements of information on every member. Our Treasurer, Bill Hemphill, asked if I'd like to have it; I said I would. Then I wondered what I'd do with it and decided to count how many members we have living in Michigan. Among well over 100 printout pages I identified 130 members in my state, 18 in Belgium, 9 in Luxembourg, 3 in West Germany, two each Canada and England, and one in Mexico. In conclusion, I do not know what all this info means. If anyone wishes specific data (for example, how many of us were born in 1920 or in March, or have a ZIP ending in 7, or whose first name is Arthur), let us know and perhaps Bill's computer can spit it out for you.

(GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING & BANQUET SUPERB!! (Cont'd. from Page 3.)

V.P. for Military Affairs: Eugene Drouillard reported that the VBOB Ribbon and Medalion are available to all members. Plans are being finalized with Arlington Cemetery officials for the planting of two trees, one on either side of a marble and bronze plaque. This memorial will be near the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and will be dedicated to those American soldiers who lost their lives in the Battle of the Bulge.

VBOB Museum, Ft. Meade, MD: Alan Archambault, curator, gave a report on the status of the museum. He stated that there is a need for more artifacts to properly present the story of the Battle of the Bulge. Members are encouraged to contribute any relevant materials they may have. After this report, David Schneck, former POW, donated pictures taken inside of a POW camp. It was suggested that a "museum want-list" be published in our paper.

Nomination of Officers: Ben Layton presented the slate of nominated officers for 1986: President--Robert J. VanHouten, Executive Vice President--William T. Greenville, Vice President for Regional Coordination--William A. Simpkins, Vice President for Military Affairs--Eugene G. Drouillard, Vice President for Membership--Neil B. Thompson, Treasurer--William R. Hemphill, Recording Secretary--Dorothy S. Davis and Corresponding Secretary--Tom Gillis. The slate was accepted by acclamation.

Galaxy Tours: Hal Ryder briefed the group on the plans being developed for the 1986 return trip to the Battle of the Bulge area. The tour will begin mid-September 1986 and start from Amsterdam and end in Paris. Side trips may be arranged for those who desire to stay longer. More information will be forthcoming as soon as final decisions are completed. The route of the tour will be that followed by Hitler in his campaign across Europe.

Many of the members and their guests enjoyed a festive evening at the West End Dinner Theatre complete with dinner and the play, "Fiddler on the Roof."

On the third day and in addition to the Memorial Service at Christ Church the Gala Banquet was held in the evening with a social hour at 1800. André Hubert, CRIBA,

Belgium, and special guest at this year's meeting, spoke briefly and made several presentations to President VanHouten.

Joseph Langbart, General Counsel, conducted the "Installation Ceremony" for the newly elected officers for 1986. Guest speaker for the evening was Major General John L. Ballantyne, U.S. Army, Commanding General of the Military District of Washington. After the dinner, dancing, visiting and some "fond farewells until next year" concluded the 4th General Membership Meeting.

On the fourth day, many of the members attended the service to commemorate the 41st anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge held at the museum, Fort George G. Meade, MD. Members of the First U.S. Army Band provided music for the occasion. Lt. Gen. Charles B. Franklin, First U.S. Army Commander, Ft. Meade, gave a warm welcome to the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge. Following the brief ceremony, lunch at the Bay and Surf, Laurel, MD, brought to a conclusion the interesting and most enjoyable four-day gathering. Throughout the four days, remembered in our prayers were the 248 men of the 101st Airborne Division who had lost their lives in a plane crash in Gander, Newfoundland several days earlier.

...Robert J. VanHouten, President

Up Front

with Willie & Joe

by Bill Mauldin. Reprinted in The Stars and Stripes Courtesy of Bill Mauldin



"Me future is settled, Willie. I'm gonna be a expert on types of European soil."

Wm. Babik, CCB, 9th Armd. Div. of Ecorse, MI tells us about the poem, "Soldier," published in our September 1985 edition. The poem, he writes, was written by Capt. George L. Skypeck, a Vietnam veteran.

H. E. (Gene) Ratekin, CN Co., 335th Inf, 84th Div, farmer/minister following WWII, would like to hear from any of the men who were in his unit. Write to Treasurer, VBOB.

Leon H. Hancock writes to tell us that during WWI Fort Indiantown Gap, PA was a beehive of soldiers from every State in this country. The Fort is still maintained for use in a national emergency. Soldiers from around the country still come to this Fort for a couple of weeks' training. There is also a large, beautiful National Cemetery for our veterans' last roll-call. A new military museum is now in the planning for Fort Indiantown Gap and will need documented combat items to go in the new facility. If you have anything you think might be of use, write or phone (717) 783-9935, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, P.O. Box 1026, Harrisburg, PA 17108.

Willard E. Losh asks for information concerning his cousin, Harland Eugene Gordon, born in 1918 and inducted into the Army in 1944 and sent to Europe. He was involved in the Battle of the Bulge possibly with Co. K, 26th Inf, 1st Inf. Div, Third U.S. Army. He may well have been wounded or taken prisoner before his death. Anyone with information is asked to contact Mr. Losh at 1011 S. 12th St., Montrose, CA 81401.

Chester J. Gembski, Box 319, Chambersburg, PA 17201 writes that he was a cook with the 3rd Repl. Depot at Malmedy, Liege and many other locations in the Ardennes Campaign. His job was to receive fresh troops from the U.S. on their way to front line assignments. Now retired from Letterman Army Depot, he looks back on 15 years in the mail order business with photos of old movie cowboys.

Reunion~~~

511th Engr. Light Ponton Co, 44th reunion, Corral at Host Farms, Lancaster, PA, 13-15 June 1986. Contact Harold Welch, 1221 Mayfield Rd., Wilmington, DE 19803.

51st Engr. Combat Bn., 1st reunion in 40 years, Ramada Renaissance Hotel, Washington, D.C., 18-20 April 1986. Contact Chas. J. Attardo, Rear 77 Durkee St., Forty Fort, PA 18704.

86th Chemical Mortar Bn., Holiday Inn O'Hare, Rosemont, IL, 1-3 May 1986. Contact John B. Deasy, 1830-30th Ave., San Francisco, CA 94122.

7th Armored Division Assn., 40th Annual Reunion, Harrisburg, PA, 29 Aug-1 Sep 1986. Contact Glenn R. Fackler, 23218 Springbrook Dr., Farmington Hills, MI 48024.

4th Armored Division Assn., 40th Annual Convention, Valley Forge Hilton Hotel, King of Prussia, PA, 17-19 Jul 1986. Contact Samuel A. Schenker, Sr., 2440 Victoria Drive, Sharon, PA 16146.

A. Z. Adkins, VBOB member and attorney in Gainesville, FL, sends a most interesting story of his and a buddy's experiences in the Ardennes Campaign. It will be published in a subsequent edition of THE BULGE BUGLE. A.Z. was a member of Co. H, 317th Inf. Regt, 80th Division. He writes that his Platoon Sergeant from Albuquerque, NM, remembers that temperatures during the Ardennes Campaign were at times 30 degrees below zero. A.Z. would like to know just how cold it really was. If someone has this information, please write the Editor, 1247 Sycamore, Jenison, MI 49428, and specify the actual temperature back then and whether Fahrenheit or centigrade. Look for A.Z.'s story in a near-future edition of this newsletter.

Photos in this edition, those without captions, are candid shots taken during the 1985 General Membership Meeting by VBOB photographer, Sam Silverman.

Commander of First U.S. Army Speaks to VBOB

Lieutenant General Charles B. Franklin's comments upon the occasion of the Battle of the Bulge General Membership Meeting at the museum, Fort George G. Meade, Maryland on 16 December 1985 follow.

Today we honor and remember those soldiers that fought in the Battle of the Bulge. First Army, of course, had a major role in the campaign, and two of the divisions that participated are still with First Army - the 28th Division of the Pennsylvania National Guard and the 99th Army Reserve Command in Pittsburgh which traces its lineage to the 99th Infantry Division. You may have noticed as you came on post that the Flag was at half staff. That's because the soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division, which was under First Army at Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge, are still making the ultimate sacrifice for freedom and peace today. Some 248 of them were on the plane that crashed in Gander, Newfoundland, last Thursday.

It was 41 years ago today, on the 16th of December, 1944 in the Ardennes sector of Belgium that the Germans launched the Battle of the Bulge, their last main offensive of World War II. The Army Flag has the Ardennes-Alsace streamer to show for it. The Germans attacked with some 250,000 soldiers, 970 tanks and self-propelled guns, and 1,900 artillery pieces, causing massive destruction and confusion. It was a time when those of lesser courage might have given up. But that had never been characteristic of the American soldiers, and it didn't happen then, either. In fact, it spurred them on to heights of heroism.

Thanks to the efforts of you people here today, the Germans were defeated. You showed spirit - the same spirit that carried the Army to victory at Yorktown - and again carried us to victory in Europe and the Pacific. In World War II, as in previous conflicts, the Army did what had to be done. Later, General Abrams aptly described the situation when he said, "I came into the Army in 1936. Where I was we were a horseback and rifle Army and a country that was still largely convinced that we couldn't have another World War. We have Pearl Harbor and Bataan to remember for our complacent outlook. The cost dreadful. In Europe, in Africa, in the Pacific, we paid, paid and paid again in lives and in blood for our unpreparedness."

Today's Army is in the best shape it's been in for quite some time. We have high-quality dedicated soldiers and we are in the process of fielding the finest equipment available. Training opportunities are the best ever for all components. It's gratifying that our Country again recognizes the importance of maintaining a strong, effective military capability - a commitment to sustaining improvement in defense. We are talking about defending freedom and freedom isn't cheap. Soldiers alone cannot pay the price. Preserving our cherished freedom is a duty that must be shared by us all. It is a burden that rests on every citizen's shoulders. Our Nation must always be prepared to defend our freedom. History tells us the dangers of being unprepared are great.

Ever since prehistoric man learned he could take what he wanted from other men if he used enough force, freedom has been threatened. And when left unguarded it has fallen. Our forefathers established our freedom and rights in the Constitution. The right to worship as we choose. (Continued on Page 18)



Q -- Will the VA provide a headstone or marker for a veteran's grave in a private cemetery overseas?

A -- Yes. Headstones may be shipped overseas for placement at unmarked graves of veterans buried in private cemeteries. Arrangements for delivery will be made by the National Cemetery System through the U.S. Embassy or consulate offices in the countries involved.

Q -- I receive an annual clothing allowance from the VA. Has it been increased?

A -- As of 1 Dec. 1984, the annual special clothing allowance for veterans with a service-connected disability requiring use of prosthetic or orthopedic appliances was \$349.

Bradley's Oldest Division

As a former combat infantryman in America's oldest division I know that my comrades will never forget our great leader, General of the Army Omar Nelson Bradley. Major General Bradley commanded the 28th "Keystone" Infantry Division from June 1942 to February 1943 and since then we were known as Bradley's Division.

In a letter to the Division of 9 April 1944, General Omar N. Bradley wrote "It is with a feeling of great disappointment that I must say goodbye to the 28th Division for the second time in a little over a year. It has always been my hope and desire to lead you into battle. You are soundly trained; Your morale is of the best, you are equipped as well as any division in history has ever been equipped for battle and I am sure that you will make a glorious name for yourselves." How right he was in his predictions.

The 28th had just come to the Ardennes positions from heavy fighting in the Huertgen Forest. The division had sustained some 6,184 casualties in the 18 days fighting in some of the worst conditions imaginable. In the Ardennes positions the division was in the process of absorbing replacements for these casualties and rebuilding the three infantry regiments which had been decimated. So I believe added tribute is due these men and junior officers, together for only a couple of weeks, who had not trained together, almost total strangers, and yet were soldiers all and fought until killed, wounded or overrun.

As a writer and lecturer on the Battle of the Bulge, I would state that the U.S. 28th Infantry Division held the longest front in the Ardennes on the day of attack; had the least corps support of the U.S. First Army; was attacked by seven German divisions which was twice as many as any other division on the front; suffered more dead and wounded in Bulge than any other division; and inflicted more casualties on the Germans than any other division.

Our Keystone soldiers were greatly outnumbered, few were overrun, and many cut off. Almost 6,000 battle casualties were suffered among the men of America's Iron Division, but 11,000 battle casualties were inflicted upon the enemy. America's oldest division had more soldiers killed and wounded than any other American division in the Bulge, and only a few 28th Division platoons surrendered after being surrounded without ammunition. For four sleepless days and nights the embattled troops of the "Bloody Bucket" division backed grudgingly toward Bastogne buying time with blood for the airborne reinforcement of that anchor position. It was a furious delaying struggle that emphasized the resourcefulness of the American soldier, despite the overwhelming weight and surprise of the first day's attack by seven German divisions of Manteuffel's Fifth Panzer Army and Brandenberger's Seventh Army. It took them four valuable days to get to Bastogne, many days too late for any chance of victory. Gen. John S.D. Eisenhower wrote that all elements of the war were present in the Battle of the Ardennes, including the bravery of the 28th Infantry Division.

PENNSYLVANIA'S 28TH
National Guard Division did not allow the seven German divisions to smash through on the first day of

the attack as was the plan of the German high command. Pennsylvania's Iron Men of the 28th fought with much professional skill and great bravery based on comradeship, pride in unit and love of family and the nation.

The Battle of the Bulge was the greatest battle ever fought by America and the only major one in the winter. The type of resistance offered by the Keystone troops was such as prompted Morley Cassidy, war correspondent, to remark, "The 28th Division has performed one of the greatest feats in the history of the American Army."

Gen. Jacob J. Devers, Sixth Army group commander, wrote, "The officers and men of the 28th Division by their gallant conduct in the fight for freedom demonstrated to the world that there is no finer soldier than the American infantryman."

Raymond George Carpenter

Former POW's Eligibility

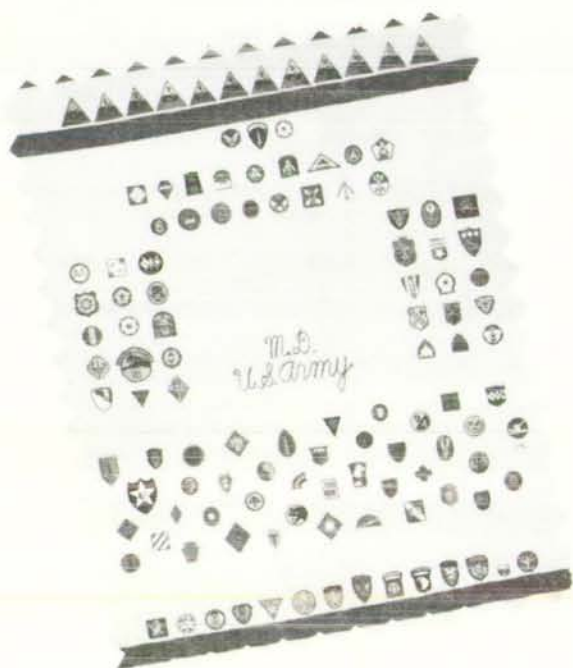
Former prisoners of war who are not service-connected disabled are eligible for VA hospital care without regard to ability to pay. They are also eligible for outpatient care on a priority basis second only to that of service-connected disabled veterans.

While being treated in an approved outpatient treatment program, former POW's are eligible for needed medicine, eye glasses, hearing aids or prosthesis. If a POW internment lasted 81 days or more, they are also eligible for all needed dental care.

Former POW's who were incarcerated for at least 30 days are entitled to a presumption of service connection for disabilities resulting from certain diseases if manifested to a degree of 10 percent at any time after active service, including psychosis and the anxiety states, regardless of when first shown. All such former POW's should seek professional guidance and assistance in filing claims for disability compensation.

Former prisoners of war and their families may obtain factual information on the full range of benefits available to them by contacting the local office of their State Division of Veterans' Affairs. ★

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The Chaplain's Word

With respect to the Memorial Service at Christ Church (page 1), we have come to incorporate in a very real way the spiritual aspects of our devotion to God and to comradeship. We remember the acts, not only of the living, but of those who have preceded us into His presence. As National Chaplain this is my commitment to VBOB that at all times we honor God by remembering and recalling those acts of devotion to God and the Nation which have called for the sacrifice of life and its wounds that are borne by those still living.

We come at this time of year looking forward to the gifts that God gives us and His call to our devotion and obedience to carry them out. We are called as soldiers in that army to be disciplined, faithful and obedient that tyranny and terrorism may be annihilated from the face of the earth.

...The Reverend George W. Hall, Jr.

G-U-E-S-T E-D-I-T-O-R-I-A-L

Our Obligation

The presence and active participation at the VBOB General Membership Meeting in 1985 of four of our authors and the proprietor of a book store provided attendees a wealth of historical data about the Bulge and other interesting military subjects.

We salute them -- John Campbell and Bud Leinbaugh (Men of Company K), Charles B. MacDonald (A Time for Trumpets, Mighty Endeavor, Company Commander, and others), Dave Pergrin (The Damned Engineers), Bob Phillips (To Save Bastogne), and Paul Gartenmann of the Barcroft Book Store.

Other VBOB members have written stories and articles about World War II.

For all of them and for the rest of us there is much opportunity -- though, maybe not too much time -- to write about World War II, in general, and about the Battle of the Bulge, in particular.

It is important that we do this now because we have first-hand knowledge as well as Army friends and other resources to re-

VA MEDICAL CENTERS TO RECEIVE BOOKS COURTESY OF VBOB

In recognition of the unselfish contributions of many former members of the Armed Forces, VBOB has made arrangements to ship to the 172 Medical Centers of the Veterans Administration books that should provide interesting reading.

VBOB members and authors Charles B. MacDonald and Robert F. Phillips have made available at cost their books A Time for Trumpets and To Save Bastogne, respectively.

Copies of The Almanac of Seapower, made available free of charge by the Navy League of the United States through Marketing Representative John Hoshko, are also being sent to medical centers of VA.

Future shipments of books to VA facilities by VBOB authors scheduled are The Damned Engineers by David Pergrin and The Men of Company K by John Campbell and Harold "Bud" Leinbaugh. It is expected that the former will be provided gratis by the Chief of Engineers, U.S. Army, the latter, at cost.

Donations by VBOB members are making many of these shipments possible. Members and friends of VBOB are encouraged to send donations of any amount to Books, VBOB, Box 11129, Arlington, VA 22210-2129. An appropriate entry on a label will be placed in a book for each contribution. The Veterans Administration has advised us that it will not be possible to earmark specific books for certain medical centers.

...Clyde D. Boden

fresh our memories. What we do now will represent the best first-person accounts that will exist and be useful for years to come.

There is something else we can do beside writing about our experiences. We can, as some already have, speak before civic, fraternal, school and other groups.

Yes, this is our obligation -- we could say, our sacred duty -- to provide for future generations all we can about World War II and about the greatest battle the U.S. Army ever fought - the Battle of the Bulge.

...Clyde D. Boden, Past President-VBOB

WORLD WAR II VETERANS REVISIT BATTLEFIELDS (The News & Daily Advance, Lynchburg, Va.)

By Eduardo A. Peniche

After having been in the same vicinity 40 years before, on July 5, 1985, two men finally met for the first time. It was about 4:30 in the afternoon when the two met in Freiburg, Germany. As E. Wilfrid Vits walked up the steps to the second floor of the small Markgräfler Hof Hotel, waiting for him on the hallway in front of Room 24 was Eduardo A. Peniche; both men smiled as they approached to shake hands. As their hands clasped, Vits broke the emotion of the moment with the words "Welcome to Freiburg, Herr Peniche ..." Peniche invited Vits into the room and the two WWII veterans began their conversation with small talk as if they were trying to assert that their meeting was really happening and was not just a trick of the imagination. As the conversation moved along at a more relaxed pace, the two ex-soldiers became comfortable with each other and were able to enter into the main topic of their meeting: their personal experiences in the Ardennes Campaign at the end of 1944.

On Jan. 3, 1945, the 502nd Parachute Infantry Regiment (101st Airborne Division) was attacked in force by two regiments of the 9th SS Panzer Division. Providing anti-tank support to the infantry regiment were five AT squads from "C" Battery, 81st Airborne Battalion. PFC Eduardo Peniche, age 19 then, was an AT gun crewman and Bazookaman in one of the squads attached to the 2nd Battalion of the 502nd. They were holding the terrain in the Longchamps-Monville area and in particular the high ground referred to as Hill 497 in the outskirts of Bastogne, Belgium.

Private First Class Wilfrid Vits, 20, was a radio operator in the 9th Panzer Division Headquarters which was launching the attack against the American forces. In other words, the two men, now in their early sixties, sitting in Room 24 at the Markgräfler Hof Hotel, though on opposite sides, had been participants in the bloody Battle of the Bulge.

For Peniche, the Ardennes campaign ended when he fell wounded in action on that date. The Americans held their ground, but the fierce three-hour engagement produced heavy casualties on both sides. Tanks, artillery, mortars, self-propelled guns, airplanes and men fought desperately over the snow-

covered terrain. Sheer misery was shared by combatants on both sides. In the annals of the 101st Airborne Division, Jan. 3-4, 1945, are registered as "the bloody days."

For Vits, the war ended four days later when on Jan. 7 he was captured by the Americans in the town of Vielsalm, Belgium. By this time the Germans were retreating towards the Fatherland under the pressure of the attacking American Third Army. Vits remained a POW for over a year; he was well treated by the Americans. In fact, because of his basic knowledge of English, he became one of the interpreters in the Allied POW camp in France.

Vits rededicated his life to better human relations. Today he manages his own press bureau and is a television editor for a TV station in Cologne, Germany. Peniche became a linguist as a career soldier in the U.S. Army and went on to become a college professor. At present he is a full-time faculty member at Central Virginia Community College and an adjunct instructor at Sweet Briar College. Following are some excerpts of his diary during his recent trip to Europe.

Friday, July 5, 1985

Following our "icebreaking" conversation at the hotel, Mr. Vits suggested that we tour the downtown area of the city. Freiburg, particularly the old part of town, is uncommonly beautiful and enchanting. After strolling for a while through some of the narrow streets, my host invited me for a drink at a private pub. It was here where I asked the question, "How did you end up in an SS unit?"

Herr Vits responded that he had originally been serving in an Engineer Construction Battalion, but in the late summer of 1944, at 20, he was drafted as a replacement into the SS Panzer forces. He became a radio operator. (NOTE: in preparation for the Ardennes offensive, the Germans recruited personnel from the Navy, the Luftwaffe and other sources as replacements; most of these newcomers were untrained and had to undergo accelerated ground combat basic training.) Though he did not participate in the direct assault against our particular sector, Herr Vits told me that he had heard about the fierce fighting in the Longchamps-Monville area and about the resulting high number of casualties. Then, as they were retreating toward the German border on Jan-

uary 7, he was captured by American forces in Vielsalm, Belgium, and much to his relief, he was treated well as a POW. (He had heard about the criminal actions of the Kampfgruppe Peiper at Malmedy, where elements of the 1st SS Panzer Regiment massacred American soldiers of the ill-fated Battery "B" 285th Artillery Battalion.)

We talked about the misery and destruction and, above all, the utter waste of war. We both felt that the terribly cold weather in the Ardennes converted the battlefield into a living frozen hell; he and I agreed that there was simply no way that a soldier could find a single instant of relief from the weather while in the foxholes! We could not avoid misty eyes as we remembered those moments of our youth when we came so close to death and experienced the devastating effects of anger and fear in the fire-fight. Yet, here we were 40 years later at this pub, drinking good German beer and finally agreeing that we had been able to reshape our lives as positive thinkers and as persons who could contribute in a small way to better human relations and understanding. We jokingly toasted to the fact that though we both were in our early 60s, I reached my sixth decade this past June; Herr Vits turned 61 last April, we still felt that zest for life — Salud! Prosit! "Wir mochten zwei Bier. Bitte."

On our way back to the hotel, we stopped by the old city hall where a musical festival was to be held the coming Sunday. Mr. Vits also showed me the Office of Military Research and informed me that the German Archives of Military History were also in Freiburg. Once back in the room he read my account of the Battle of Longchamps where our divisions had clashed on Jan. 3, 1945. He asked to borrow the manuscript to make a copy of it at his office. He also invited me to attend the next day the international motorbike races at the foot of the Black Forest.

Saturday, July 6, 1985

Promptly at 8 a.m., Herr Vits came to pick me up. We drove to the place about 12 kilometers from Freiburg; there were hundreds of spectators al-

(Continued on Page 13)

91ST 4.2 MORTAR BATTALION IN THE BULGE --

The 91st Chemical Mortar Battalion was first committed to action on 19 December 1944 at the Metz front and was on the alert for the coming invasion of the Siegfried Line - objective Homberg. The Battalion motto was "God Help Us to Help the Infantry."

On 22 December the Battalion received orders to accompany the XII Corps, Third Army, from Lorraine to Luxembourg in the historic move of the XII Corps from the eastern front to face the south front of the German offensive.

Upon arriving in Luxembourg on 23 December the companies of the Battalion were in action attached to the 4th Division, 5th Division and the 80th Division and were in action continuously until crossing into Germany to again face the Siegfried Line on 13 February - 53 days of mud, ice, snow and cold. The mortar men supported the Infantry and Artillery with smoke, white phosphorus and high explosives. Some smoke missions lasted close to eight hours. The Wiltz, Sauer and Our rivers were crossed under smoke screens of the 91st Battalion.

A few of the Bulge hot-spots that will always remain in the memory of the mortar men -- Heffingen, Oswiler, Dickweiler, Heiderscheid, Bourscheid, Diekirch, Wiltz, Beaufort, Dahl, Bettendorf, Feulen.

The Battalion was in combat continuously for 117 days - 780 firing missions, a total of 68,786 rounds of mortar ammunition expended.

...Robert F. Fischer, Co. B

(World War II Veterans Revisit Battlegrounds continued from Page 12)

ready there. Mr. Vits, who owns his press bureau and specializes in intensive action photography, gave me a press pass so that I could have easy access to everything. With the press pass neatly attached to my shirt, I was able to move freely and took a few snapshots of the activities. There was plenty of beer, wine and good food for the taking. There was also a lot excitement in the air as the various categories of motorbikes were participating in the races. I took time out to ride the lift to the 1,300-meter elevation (about 4,000 feet); the view was breathtakingly magnificent. Herr Vits' partner and companion, 27-year-old Marissa Edeka, a very talented and attractive young lady, joined us in the afternoon.

Finally it was time for Wilfrid and Marissa to go to the Bureau to process all the pictures of that day. They dropped me at the hotel and reminded me of our meeting for the next day.

Sunday, July 7, 1985

I got up at 9:30 a.m. and had a hearty breakfast. I walked around town taking pictures and went to 11 o'clock mass. (It had been a while since I had been to High Mass; it was beautiful.) I guess the beauty of the cathedral inspired me to go there during mass. The place was crowded and I did remember the ritual of the mass before the altar.

After church I went to the City Hall yard — one of the bands was already going strong and lots and lots of people were there singing, drinking and eating and visiting with each other. Everyone seemed to be in a festive mood. All of these activities were part of the Summer '85 Music Festival.

At 4 p.m. Wilfrid Vits came to join me. We had a drink and then headed for his apartment. Their place was certainly nice, comfortable and modern. Their press bureau is located in the courtyard of the apartment complex. Herr Vits and I talked this time about politics, economics and religion — touchy subjects to say the least. He no longer follows religious beliefs and has strong feelings about the things that have been done in the name of religion. "Look what we did to the Jews..." he candidly admits. "Northern Ireland — the Middle East — and even in America, religion and politics..."

Herr Vits does not associate himself with veteran organizations and is dedicating the rest of his life to his work: high performance photography and television editing and, of course, his life with Marissa. Wilfrid Vits is indeed a well informed person; he has a keen mind and makes one feel at home, at ease. Shortly after Marissa returned and after one more glass of wine, I said goodbye to them. Wil-

frid had to leave for Cologne early the following day and I had an appointment with our friends Wayne and Susan Thompson from Lexington, Va. (Wayne, who now teaches at VMI, used to teach at Lynchburg College and his lovely wife Susan had taught German for us at CVCC.)

I returned to the hotel and promptly at 7:15 p.m. the Thompsons came to pick me up to go to the home of Detlev and Heike Hoffman at Waldkirch about 20 kms. away. The Hoffmanns turned out to be an extremely charming couple; their home was beautiful, modern and had a nice yard and garden. Detlev teaches Latin and political science at the local prep school; Heike teaches English and political science at the vocational high school. Both of them had visited Mexico and Guatemala and Spain and had studied Spanish. Detlev and I hit it off well because of his deep interest in ancient civilizations, including the Mayas, Aztecs and Incas.

Monday, July 8, 1985

Early in the morning I met with Herr Karl Fischer, who had returned from out of town the night before. He is now a retired businessman with whom I have been corresponding. I was glad that I had the chance to meet him personally. I promised him that my German would be better next time that I visited Freiburg. I bought fuel in the Autobahn and was glad to be driving a Corsa-Opel because gas is very expensive in Europe. After crossing the French border, I traveled along French Route 4, the Wine Country route. I stopped at Saverne to go to a bank and to have lunch. I was amazed at how well my French was coming back.

Tuesday, July 9, 1985

As I headed for Bastogne, Belgium, early in the morning, I stopped to visit the American Cemetery at Hamm, outside the city of Luxembourg; 5,076 of our military dead are buried there. I also visited the German cemetery at Sandweiler, two kilometers from Hamm; 10,913 German soldiers are buried there. Most of the soldiers in both cemeteries died in the Ardennes. During my walk among the crosses I identified men from the 101st Airborne, as well as from the 82nd and 17th Airborne divisions. The silence was overpowering and it was impossible to avoid the feeling of deep sadness; some of those men were so young...

I arrived in Bastogne by 1:15 p.m. I went to the Hotel Lebrum where I had reservations and notified Mr. Andre Meurisse of my arrival. Andre is an Honorary Life Member of the 101st Airborne Division Association. His association with our unit began at an early age

under most difficult circumstances. During a strafing run by our fighters in the defense perimeter, Andre, 8 years old then, was hit in the arm. Our medics patched up the youngster and saved his arm. Andre has never forgotten that and has dedicated a great deal of his life to assisting the American liberators of his country when they come to the Ardennes.

Wednesday, July 10, 1985

Andre and his gracious wife Monique came to pick me up at the hotel. After having a cup of coffee, they took me to City Hall where Andre had arranged for me to present my manuscript on the battle of Longchamps to become part of the historical records of the City of Bastogne. While at City Hall I was greeted by the Hon. Guy Lutgen, the senator from the Ardennes and mayor of the city. I presented the manuscript to the deputy mayor and he in turn presented me with a medallion bearing the coat of arms of the city. I was also inducted into the Society of the "Herdiere d'Ardenne."

In the afternoon, the Meurisses gave me the grand tour of the perimeter which we defended for seven consecutive days during the siege of December 1944. The most emotional moment for me came as I stood in the very same place where we had our anti-tank gun emplaced and I was wounded by shrapnel. A rush of memories filled my mind as I looked over the battlefield. Being summer, the fields were green and pretty, but in a moment of flashback I could almost see the snow and the German tanks and infantry advancing against our position. I also visited the house next to our gun emplacement. The present occupants are Monsieur and Madame Luc Feller and their two children. Madame Feller, who was three years old at the time of the battle, is the daughter of the original owners. They had been evacuated during the siege. I described the house to her and told her that I had slept there two or three times and that we had eaten potatoes from their barn, all of which at that particular time had meant a lot to us. I could not hold back the tears when she touched my face as if she were saying "Bless you..."

A couple of kilometers west of Longchamps, we stopped to visit the German cemetery at Recogne; there are 6,776 German soldiers buried there. I saw the grave of Sgt. Norbert Delzeit, B. Oct. 11, 1925, KIA on Jan. 3, 1945. Had this soldier marched against us on that day? In fact, there were several crosses bearing KIA on that same date.

Thursday, July 11, and Friday,

July 12, 1985

On my way to revisit Hell's Highway, a stretch of road from Eindhoven to Arnhem in the Netherlands where we fought for 72 consecutive days (Sept.-Nov. 1944), I stopped at the American cemetery in the village of Margraten where I visited the grave of Pfc. Claudius S. Armstrong, his brother Wendell teaches with me at CVCC. Claudius was killed on April 12, 1945. I also visited the graves of my fellow troopers Trino Mendez and Nicolas Bonilla, both killed in Holland. While there, I knelt before the grave of Pvt. James Drummond, a native of Virginia who was also killed in action with the 502nd PIR in our division.

My host in Holland was Mr. Matthew Van luyt, secretary of the Dutch Society of Airborne Friends. It was with him that I was able to revisit the drop zone where we landed by glider behind the enemy lines during Operation Market-Garden, Sept. '44.

Saturday, July 13, 1985

Following my short visit to the town of Opheusdem where we fought hell along with the 506th and 377th Regiments in October 1944, I visited the British Airborne Museum and the cemetery in Arnhem where the English 1st Abn. Division was decimated by the 9th and 10th Panzer Divisions.

As I got ready to get into the car to drive to Amsterdam where my wife Deanie was to join me, I realized that I was truly at peace with myself. It had been so far indeed an emotional trip. No, it had not all been just an imaginary nightmare — Yes, the war had been very real and I had been part of it, but now it was over for me just as it was for all those gallant men resting in the cemeteries during these past 40 years. I am glad that I was able to have the honor and privilege to go back and pay homage to them. May they rest in peace.

Ed Pineche is a
VBOB member



BOOKS
FOR
VETERANS
ADMINISTRATION
PATIENTS

With reference to the item in our last edition (September 1985) on page 15 captioned as above, Charles B. MacDonald's A TIME FOR TRUMPETS is temporarily out of print, according to the publisher. Thus, TO SAVE BASTOGNE by Robert F. Phillips will be provided to inpatients at VA hospitals (recently renamed VA Medical Centers). Please continue to send your contribution to this most worthy cause to Clyde Boden at VBOB HQ.

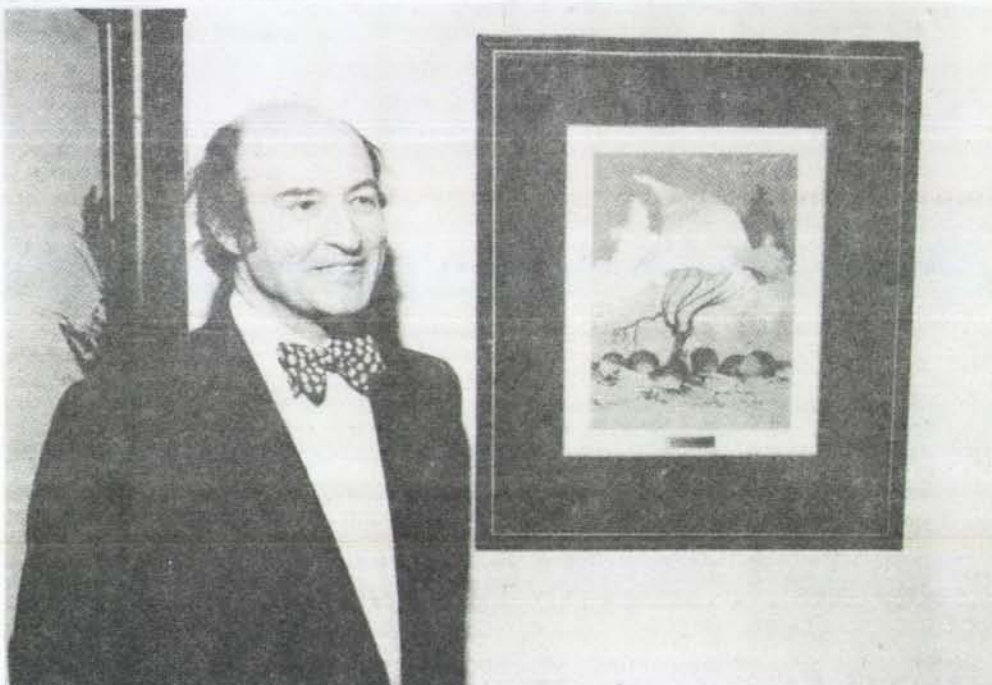
...Ed.

AWFUL, HORRIBLE ...
THRILLING

It was a wild, terrible, awe-inspiring thing...the sweep through Huertgen. Never ...considered that battle could be so incredibly impressive--awful, horrible, deadly, yet somehow thrilling, exhilarating. Everywhere the firecracker sound of small-arms fire, the boom of big guns, the sharp, ear-splintering explosion of shells. Walls and whole buildings collapsed, spraying the landscape with dust, brick, mortar, flame and smoke. Behind hand grenades heaved through doors and windows, rifle-men charged into the buildings. Tanks churned and clattered. Everywhere the smell of burning things--wood, straw, gunpowder, flesh--an acrid, choking, nose-pinching smell. Here and there, dead of both sides. From the new-dead, blood still flowing.

...The Battle of the Huertgen Forest-Charles B. MacDonald.

THE STARS AND STRIPES—THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE



Jean Dupont presents his painting Battle of the Ardennes to the public gathered at the Belgian Embassy in Washington, D.C.

Ardennes Commemorative Dedicated by Belgians

During the cold winter months of the Battle of the Bulge, one of the most heartening sights was the sky filled with parachutes carrying supplies to nearly surrounded American forces. These parachutes were brightly colored in reds, greens, yellows and blue to signify the type of supply carried and for visibility against the deep mountain snows.

Veterans returning to the Ardennes this year commemorating this heroic battle were met with windows filled with a magnificent poster created by a local artist in memory of the events of 1944. Recently the artist, Jean Dupont of Liege, was in Washington, DC to present his original painting to the American people.

His sensitivity, his skill for the painting of landscapes inhabited by sensations and the unknown, and

his affection for the Ardennes are the reasons why Jean Dupont has been chosen to convey the images of the Battle of the Ardennes. Through an original and strong painting, he invites each of us to remember and honor the American people for its sacrifice for liberty.

No one other than the poet of the "inhabited night" (his favorite color is blue, the color of the night), could better translate the shout of hope of thousands of civilians and soldiers who gave their own lives to preserve liberty against the ultimate German attack.

Jean Dupont who was born in Herseaux (Belgium) in 1934 and lives today near Liege, very near the Ardennes, has now been working for thirty years at portraying the silence of this country, its serenity and its quiet happiness. The painting "Battle of the Ardennes" is

therefore a natural part of his artistic research. This painting will evoke hope in the memory of a battle which had losses more severe than those of the D-Day invasion of Normandy. This is the essential message of this painting.

The half-dozen helmets on the ground, image of the Ardennes' valleys, are also a reminder of the soldiers who will always be present in our dreams and memories.

The tree, in the middle of the dark-blue sky of war, is a symbol of life and explodes in a great rainbow. This symbol of hope that looks like a parachute also traces the outlines of the battle-fields.

The seven living branches representing the seven fighting nations, dominate the dead branch of this war which is living its last moments under the stars coming out of the U.S. banner.

No detail of this painting is without meaning. The artist's symbolic strength is here at its summit, in a stirring tribute to the American people. ★



VBOB's MARYLAND - D.C. CHAPTER Officers are Sworn in at the VBOB Museum, Ft. George G. Meade, MD.

«TOP KICK» TOPICS

o o o o o o o

You would think that all former GI's would heed the famous phrase passed on from one basic training cycle to the next: "Don't volunteer for nothin'." Well, the Old Top (me) didn't exactly volunteer to write this article; just suggested that it might make some interesting reading. The next thing I knew, five guys on the VBOB Executive Council agreed and that's when I realized that the "Sarg" had done volunteered for extra duty. Be that as it may, I hope you enjoy my rapping with you.

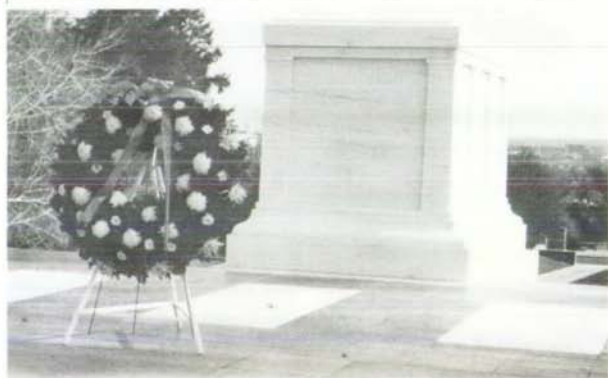
I have to tell you guys, I am real proud to be associated with each and every one of you. Whether you were wrap leggings, cannon-eers, tanker clankers, flyboys, Red Ballers or chairborne, I am happy to be associated with each of you. What really makes me proud is that many of you, following the September 1985 newsletter, decided to become part of the "Buddy System." When it was first suggested that VBOB members would respond to the Buddy System my first thought was, unless you were "ground pounders," you might not understand the term. Not true! Many of you from all branches of the service sent in extra money to help pay dues for our comrades who can't -- which is what the Buddy System is about. Keep it up, troops!

Perhaps I should explain the Buddy System to those of you who have not joined the movement. It's very simply a system of pairing up men so that you have six buddy teams within a twelve-man Infantry squad. The usual outcome is that the two men become inseparable. They eat, sleep, dig together and, yes, they argue and look after each other as would blood brothers and perhaps even moreso. Isn't that what VBOB is all about? If you are in a position to help some guy who just can't afford the dues, as little as they are, DO IT!

"Top" would like to pass on a bit of advice in addition to our President's recent letter, so listen up. If you've heard the rumor that the Veterans Administration is paying dividends on the National Service Life Insurance of WWII, ignore it. The VA is only paying dividends to former servicemen who have retained or converted their GI insurance. If you don't still have an NSLI policy in force, save yourself twenty-two cents and forget about writing to Washington for your cut. This rumor pops up every two or three years.

If you guys have any questions or suggestions (watch your mouth, Soldier!) for the Top Kick, send them to me and I will try to answer them. Meanwhile, take care and FLY THE FLAG!!!

...The Old "Top"



Taps

HASBROUCK, Maj.Gen. ROBERT W., 89, 7th Armored Division Commander, WWII, died 19 August 1985.

DONIGAN, THOMAS, 80th Division, President of the Central New York Chapter, VBOB, died 8 August 1985.

André Hubert is Honored Guest of VBOB

André Hubert, Centre de Recherche et d'Information sur la Bataille des Ardennes (CRIBA), Liege, Belgium, guest of honor at our 1985 General Membership Meeting, made these poignant points in his address to the membership present.

"I am here tonight to speak about CRIBA, but first of all I want to thank your president, Mr. VanHouten, and all your members for giving us the opportunity to explain what our association is, what we are doing and what we intend to do.

"I was born two miles from what, in battle, became known as 'Parker's Crossroad.' I was 18 in December 1944 and living through the second German occupation. My village was liberated 12 January 1945 by the 2nd Armored and 84th Infantry Divisions. Now more than 40 years later, I am here with you in Arlington and I feel very honored and very small. I remember what your past president, Mr. Clyde Boden, said last year at a meeting in Liege -- 'I believe that there is no place tonight where



there is so much science about the Battle of the Bulge than in this place.' Personally, I believe there is no place in the world where there is so much gallantry, so much valor, so much unselfishness than here in Arlington tonight and so I feel very small, but very impressed.

"When I speak of gallantry and unselfishness, I speak of the men and also the women of your country. They were suffering deeply in their hearts because their loved ones were fighting overseas while they toiled at home in the fields, in the factories and in the hospitals to back their soldiers at the front.

"CRIBA, a non-profit, non-political and non-philosophical association, was born in 1980 to get together and spend a part of our time researching testimonies and documents to complete what has already been said and written on this terrible chapter of history in the Ardennes.

"The aims of CRIBA are simple -- To associate with those interested in the events of the winter of 1944-1945. (Forty percent of our members are young people who were not born by that time). -- To document the Battle of the Bulge in detail. -- To inform our citizens and perpetuate memory of sacrifices of our soldiers and civilians. -- To preserve historical data and sites. -- To organize contacts with war veterans other than Germans, though we respect their feelings.

"We take part in the ceremonies commemorating the Ardennes Campaign and especially those of Memorial Day at the American military cemeteries in Laneuville-en-Condroz, Henri Chapelle and Baugnez. One of our most important activities is to welcome American veterans who return to visit the battlefields and to help them find villages, houses, crossroads and people. We recognize that travel agencies cannot take all of you to your foxholes, but we in CRIBA can and will do it!

"Our aims in coming years encompass developing contacts with veterans. (At this point, André said, 'Dear Friends. If you come some day in our Belgian Ardennes, alone or by groups, let us know of your visit and sure we will find a member of CRIBA who'll be happy to drive you along to the places of high interest to you.')

Also, the creation of a museum of the Ardennes Campaign. When the Battle of the Bulge is mentioned, we in Belgium immediately think of Bastogne and MacAuliffe's 'NUTS' and the fantastic rise of one of the greatest soldiers of all times, General Patton."

VBOB members who have not met and talked with André, an Associate Member of VBOB, have missed a most nostalgic point of contact with Belgium a la 1944-1945. Perhaps we can persuade André to return later this year.

...Ed.

An EAGLE and a TIGER Meet

"Lucky" Loiacono, Assistant Editor of THE BULGE BUGLE, had a pleasant surprise while attending the banquet of the General Membership Meeting on December 16th. "Lucky," who's battalion was in Combat Command B of the 10th Armored when the division was rushed to the defense of Bastogne, Belgium on December 17, 1944, discovered that sitting at the next table was Lt. Gen. Harry Kinnard (retired). The General is a former member of the 101st Airborne Division and was the G-2 (Intelligence Officer) and among those surrounded in the besieged city. "Lucky," editor of the 10th Armored Division newsletter, TIGER TALES for twenty years, has had a haunting question that he wanted to ask any senior officer of the 101st. He has known all along how well Combat Command B performed in the defense of Bastogne, but he wanted to hear it from the "Screaming Eagles." Harry Kinnard was just the person to ask.

On introducing himself as a member of CCB to General Kinnard, the first words uttered by the General were, "We certainly owe you guys a debt of gratitude. We couldn't have done it without you." "Lucky" in turn reciprocated by telling General Kinnard that history has proved that neither could have been victorious without the other. Both agreed that "Eagles" and the "Tiger" made up one helluva team. "Lucky" did not have to ask his question.

As an addendum to the story, and what WWII history books do not reflect, is ironically that when the 101st and 10th Armored Division shared Ft. Benning, Georgia, there was a feeling of animosity between the two divisions. Both had a spirit of being the best. This feeling developed into an aura of competition of who was the roughest and toughest. The field of battle was nearby Phenix City and on the post itself at times. A twist of fate placed them along side each other to stop the Germans from taking a city 3,000 miles away. Respect between these units is still alive and well when veterans of each division meet. There can be no doubt that the Germans were going to be in for a tough battle in their attempt to capture Bastogne. They should have heeded the roar of the TIGERS and the scream of the EAGLES.



Lt. Gen. (Retired) Harry Kinnard, left, G2 (Intelligence), 101st Airborne Division in Bastogne and E. "Lucky" Loiacono, Team O'Hara, CCB, 10th Armored Division, Bastogne

ARMORED FORCE MONUMENT COMMITTEE REPORTS

VBOB is one of several sponsors for the erection of a monument in the Washington, D.C. area honoring those who have served in or with armored units during our past four wars.

A supporting bill, Senate Joint Resolution 43 (sponsored by Senator Thurmond and others), was passed to the House Administration Committee on 20 September 1985 without opposition.

In order to move this legislation in the House of Representatives, we in VBOB can help by asking our own respective Congressman/Congresswomen to co-sponsor House Joint Resolution 167.

This HJR 167 (to erect a monument to the Armored Force) was sponsored by Representative Floyd Spence of South Carolina and 25 others. Some 218 co-sponsors are needed to expedite this action.

We suggest you write a note along the following lines:

The Honorable (name)
U.S. House of Representatives
House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

As a soldier, combat veteran and your constituent, would you please co-sponsor HJR167 (Armored Force Monument)? Your support is needed on this bill to erect a monument
(Cont'd on Page 18)

INTERESTING!!

Two Latin American countries sent troops to the European Theater in WWII - Brazil and Mexico.

Involved in the initial assault of Normandy on D-Day were 185,000 troops, 18,000 paratroopers, 13,175 aircraft, 4,066 landing ships, 745 large ships, 20,000 vehicles and 341 mine-sweepers.

Ernie Pyle and Richard Tregeskis rated General Omar Nelson Bradley as the best Allied general of WWII.

Ack-Ack was the British designator for antiaircraft fire, originating from the British phonetic alphabet of WWI; Ack designated the letter "A" and the Germans used "Flak" for Flieger Abwehr Kanone (antiaircraft cannon).

AND, MORE MEMBERS SPEAK OUT --- LISTEN!

VBOB member Bill Dingfelder of New Jersey has recently coined three new words associated with the Battle of the Bulge and encourages all members, authors, writers, poets and speakers to make use of them in their endeavors to enhance all aspects of the greatest battle ever fought.

ARDENNAIRE -- any individual who participated in the Ardennes-Alsace Campaign (Wacht Am Rhein) 16 Dec 44 - 25 Jan 45.

ARDENNTY -- The study of, or relating to, the BOTB.

ARDENNIST -- A student of; historian, author, writer, speaker, etc.

Bill served in the ETO with the 447 AAA AW Bn, 28th Inf. Div. as gunner on the halftrack quad fifties along

COMMANDER OF FIRST U.S. ARMY SPEAKS TO VBOB (continued)

The freedom to speak out on what we believe in. Through the years Americans have protected that freedom with their lives, when necessary, and passed it on to their descendants. We as American citizens, not just the military but all of us, have an obligation to hand our descendants the same liberty that we inherited. We are the caretakers of liberty.

You veterans of the Battle of the Bulge have upheld that fine tradition. You have protected the cherished gift of freedom. You can be assured that the men and women in today's Army - active duty, Guard and Reserve - stand ready to serve. Ready to defend American freedom.

To me it's quite simple. Thomas Paine summed it up 200 years ago when he said "Those who expect to reap the blessing of freedom must undergo the fatigue of supporting it."

the southern flank of the Bulge in the vicinity of Diekirch-Ettlebruck-Wiltz. He has twice visited the old stomping grounds recently and is a staunch supporter of the Battle of the Bulge and historical museums in Diekirch and Wiltz, Luxembourg.



Armored Force Monument Committee Reports (Cont'd. from Page 17)

honoring those "men of steel" of the American Armored Force who have so ably served in our past four wars and are now serving our Nation worldwide.

Respectfully,

(Your name, District, Permanent Home Address)

Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge
(List your military unit)

James H. Leach
Chairman



BUT FOR THE GRACE OF GOD

In the heat and hell of battle

Death is not far away,

And only by the grace of God

Do you survive the day.

You see your comrades one by one

With wounds from blood flow red

Of all the fallen dead.

And when at last the battle's o'er

You wonder how and why,

You came away untouched unscathed,

And others had to die.

Harold F. Mohn



LEFT: Lt. Gen. Charles B. Franklin, left, William T. Greenville and Robert J. VanHouten

RIGHT: Jimmie Leach, Honorary Colonel, 37th Armor, 1st Armored Division briefs the membership on the proposed Armored Force Memorial



LEFT: Wright Robinson, left, Vice President, Maryland-D.C. Chapter, and Don Breakison, Member, and Neil Thompson, Chapter President

RIGHT: Bud Leinbaugh, left, co-author of "The Men of Company K," CRIBA's André Hubert of Belgium and Crayton Shephard who, with Bud, liberated André's village



VETERANS of the BATTLE OF THE BULGE

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Arlington, Virginia 22210-2129

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February 1986 Edition



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DONATIONS ARE WELCOME

Name _____ Birthdate _____

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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Campaign Ribbons and Battle stars awarded _____

Wounded _____

Captured _____

Make check or money order payable to VBOS and mail with this application to above address

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 (Above for office use only)

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 (first) (last)

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 (no) (street) (city) (state) (zip)

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A 1	Plaque 5"X 6" *	\$15.00	_____	_____
A 2	Plaque 5"X 7" *	18.00	_____	_____
A 3	Plaque 5" Diameter	11.00	_____	_____
A 4	2 Pen VBOB Desk Set	21.00	_____	_____

* Please engrave Brass Plate with:

NAME: _____
 UNIT: _____
 UNIT: _____

GROUP B				
B 1	Patch 2 3/4" Diam	\$ 2.50	_____	_____
B 1A	Patch (W/clutch)	4.00	_____	_____
B 2	Patch 4 3/4" Diam	6.00	_____	_____
B 2A	Patch (W/clutch)	8.00	_____	_____
D 1	Decal 4" Diam	3/ 1.00	_____	_____
J 1	VBOB Lapel Pin (W/clutch)	7.00	_____	_____
J 2	VBOB Tie Tac	7.00	_____	_____
J 3	VBOB Tie Bar (Not Shown)	7.00	_____	_____
N 1	VBOB Neck Tie	10.00	_____	_____

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Above prices effective 1 May, 1985 include postage and engraving of plaques A1 & A2



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P.O. Box 11129
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Your attention, PLEASE...



Use this convenient envelope
to pay NOW and help maintain
our VBOB Association

Your dues are \$10.00

Make check or money order payable to
Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge

Thank You

Dear Comrade...

Our annual dues are the main source of income for VBOB. If the
arrow on the back cover of this newsletter indicates that you are in
arrears, won't you please use this convenient envelope to pay your
dues and help support our wonderful and meaningful organization.

And "Kilroy" says:

While you're at it...how
about putting a note in

the same envelope and letting VBOB know what you've been up to
these past 41 years. Don't forget to mention what outfit you were
in. You may just get your name in the newsletter.

