

The BULGE BUGLE


THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION • VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE, INC.

VOLUME XXVI NUMBER 4

THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

NOVEMBER 2007

☆☆☆ REMEMBRANCE ☆☆☆



PLEASE JOIN US...
DECEMBER 16, 2007
ARLINGTON

“

*...and when you will pass before a military cemetery, when you will see the little white crosses adorning the tombs of the soldiers of Baugnez, of Steumont, of Rochefort and of so many little villages of the Ardennes, from the depths of your heart cry to them...**THANK YOU***”

Andre Defer,
Belgian Writer

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CONTACT THE CHAPTER IN YOUR AREA.
YOU WILL BE GLAD YOU DID.
IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO START A
CHAPTER IN YOUR AREA, LET US KNOW,
WE'LL SEND YOU NECESSARY DETAILS.

President's Message

My term as a 'recycled' President will end December 16, 2007, 'Recycling' means 'reusing.' Experience can be tossed aside, forgotten and wasted; OR, it can be turned into new ideas, new projects, new friendships, new contacts, and keep us from being buried in our own destruction because of lack of loyalty, compassion, optimism and unwillingness to pitch in and help.

It has been my pleasure and privilege to serve this organization for the past two years and I accepted the responsibility of president with 100% determination, making each day an occasion of discovery and new challenge. Challenges, yes; heartaches, yes; but your confidence in me makes it all worthwhile. We learned about teamwork, understanding and mutual respect.

Now, I begin by cruelly letting slip that the news of this past year is not all good. Let's begin with the disappointments, then turn to the highpoints and I think you will agree with me that those bright spots vastly outshine the dull patches. We had a choice. We could deny and ignore the problem but we chose to face the facts and make every effort to make right the wrong, and continue to strengthen the proud and successful organization we've grown to enjoy.

The unspeakable embarrassment due to inappropriate financial accounting of monies invested in the 2004 trip to Europe and unacceptable disorderly conduct during the trip is under investigation. At our July 31st Executive Council Meeting a decision was made to reject the proposal offered as settlement and a unanimous vote by the Executive Committee was recorded directing a letter be sent declaring accountability and restitution as our ultimate goal. To reaffirm the need and effectiveness to keep the line of communication open, on-going confidential legal action prevented a swift flow of information. You are deserving, and you have been patient. Thank you.

When asked "what kind of job did you do as President?" I can proudly and honestly say that although I recognized some of the challenges would be burdensome, I knew, too, that operating in a vacuum would limit our influence, our resources and our power. Therefore, my concentration was on giving a voice to those who some fail to hear and others who do not want to hear. Even though oftentimes working against the tide, we persevered, and made many inroads to areas that still demand further work. With your continued confidence, I remain inspired and eager to meet the challenges we've already identified such as obtaining our congressional charter; spearheading additional investments in history through additional monuments inscribed "TRIUMPH OF COURAGE," while still concentrating on the values of membership rather than the cost.

I act with urgency on behalf of the many calls of frustration and disappointment in failed attempts to communicate with our national office. For the convenience of all, I will ask for immediate installation of a recording machine as another notable

and necessary service for an organization recognized for the hard work and dedication we have proudly achieved together.

The job as president is the most difficult and demanding way I can think of spending 24 hours a day--and I wouldn't have had it any other way! As we welcome the incoming president, I close with "thank you" for your confidence and support and a very appropriate toast.

"Here's to all of us!

For there's so much good in the worst of us,

And so much bad in the rest of us,

That it hardly behoves any of us, to talk about the rest of us,

Here's to us that are here,

To you that are there,

And the rest of us everywhere!"



Stanley Wojtusik

Military Veterans in the United States

Based upon U.S. Census

24.79 Million..... Total in 2004

34.3%..... 65 and older

40.6%..... 50 to 64

17.9%..... 35 to 49

7.3%..... under 35

1.68 Million..... Female Veterans in 2004

Veterans by period of service in 2004

3.9 million..... World War II

3.4 million..... Korea

8.2 million..... Vietnam

4.1 million..... Gulf War

Ethnic background of veterans in 2005

2.4 million..... Black

1.1 million..... Hispanic

293,000..... Asian

170,000..... American Indian & Alaskan

28,000..... Native Hawaiian & Pacific Islander

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VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

WEB SITE: www.battleofthebulge.org

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

[This column is abbreviated this issue, due to the rush to get the newsletter out and coupled with the fact that the reunion cut into our preparation time. This column and the "Members Speak Out" will be covered in full in the next issue.]

As I look back to WWII, and specifically the Battle of the Bulge, I am confounded when I see the battle ending date set as January 25, 1945, by our high command.

The starting date of the Bulge was set as December 16, 1944. This was the date that the first wermacht trooper stepped onto soil held by the U.S. Army in the Ardennes Forest.

Now, if we accept this date as the start of the Bulge, then the date for the end of the Bulge should be recognized as the date the last German trooper crossed the Our River and back into the fatherland.

On my first trip back to the Grand Duchy in December, 1944 [sic] I received a history lesson from Camille Kahn (President of CEBA) and Jean Milmeister (Vice President of CEBA) as we rode to Bastogne.

This was when I learned how strongly they felt about the January 25th date being a grave error. In Jean Milmeister's letter appearing in the May 2007 *Bulge Bugle*, he points to the fighting that took place in Luxembourg and Belgium on specific dates after the January 25th date.

Prof Milmeister lists villages liberated well after the very questionable date of January 25, 1945. On one of my nine visits to Luxembourg, I recall a monument on the bank of the Our River with a February 7th date. This was in Wilderbach. The people were thanking the three divisions that liberated them.

I wonder how many GI's were KIA or WIA and never received a star for their heroism between December 16, 1944, and February 22, 1945, on their Ardennes ribbon.

Harry J. Meisel
565 AAA (AW) BN

MEMORIES

The recent issue regarding St. Vith and Bastogne sure brought back a lot of memories to this 91-year-old.

Bill Watts
10 ARMD 21 TK BN SVC

THANKS

Found this note on my windshield and thought I would share it with the readers:

"Hello-

"I read on your license plate that you served in WWII and in the Battle of the Bulge. Thank you!! I and my family are very grateful for the good life we have and the freedom allowed in this country--because of your self-less service and others like you. I just wanted to thank you!!!!

"A Grateful Mom"

George E. Armstrong
76 FA BN

ENJOYED FORWARD OBSERVER ARTICLE

[I] enjoyed the piece on Forward Observers. I, too, was a forward observer. I attended Indiana University for an engineering degree and on to Fort Lewis, Washington, [to be a part] of the 14th FBO Battalion [with] 460 men--flash and sound. I was a member of flash. Went to Utah Beach August 44 as a part of Patton's Third Army. Went into action the first day. We set up a base using surveyors (4 or 5 ops) with rabbit ears and phones. Some people laid mikes over 1/4 mile. I never saw our guns. There were mostly 155 and 4.5 with 10 to 12 miles range. I never fired a gun. Just ranged and gave coordinates and called "over or under, one click, or left and right."

An outfit like ours was in the Malmedy slaughter and then we took over their positions. We went from Nancy to Ettlebruck, Luxembourg, in two days and spent the Bulge there.

From there we crossed the Rhine into Germany and wound up in Magdeburg. Strange to say, I joined the 84th Division Band in Heidelberg and played for Patton's funeral.

I'm in Florida now but I can still feel the cold in my hands and feet. Every New Year's Eve, I lift a glass and say "Remember." My best to all of you.

Merrill Pollinger
14 FOB BN

THE "LEOPOLDVILLE" TROOP SHIP

Regarding the article, "Battle of the Bulge Casualties at Sea," by Demetri Paris, 14th Tank Battalion, 7th Armored Division, and the sinking of the troop ship "Leopoldville," 24 December, 1944. I had met an army nurse who had attended to the survivors and casualties on that cold December day. She said the Cherbourg beach was lined with hundreds of dead GIs, like fish washed ashore.

The ship's Belgian crew members took to the life boats and all survived. She said this incident was never posted in *The Stars and Stripes* at that time nor at any later date. The *World Almanac's* list of marine disasters records the "Leopoldville" as being sunk by a mine in the English Channel. Not true.

The book, *Night Before Christmas*, by Jacquin "Jack" Sanders (Buccaneer Books, Cutchogue, NY) gives an accurate account of the sinking of this troop ship. This incident was witnessed by Sanders, an infantry rifleman, at the time the "Leopoldville" went to the bottom of the English Channel. Sanders' extensive research uncovered the fact that the German submarine, U-486, was responsible for the torpedoing and sinking the "Leopoldville" troop ship on 24 December 1944.

Jack Sanders was a writer and editor at *Newsweek*, later he joined *The New York Daily News*, as writer-editor, then as an executive.

George Schumacher
87 INF 345 INF D

REUNIONS

ANZIO BEACH VETERANS OF WWII, May 1-5, 2008, St. Louis, Missouri. Contact: John Boller. Telephone: 631-691-5002 or e-mail: juniorjb@msn.com.



*"Go tell th' boys to line up, Joe
—we got fruit juice fer breakfast."*



Veterans Day - Nov. 11

When the band played the Stars and Stripes Forever,
As the veterans marched so proudly down the street,
The crowd cheered them on, with that patriotic song,
Clapping hands with its tempo and beat.

With the stars and stripes, our symbol called Old Glory,
Her bright colors with its red and white and blue,
Waving proudly in the breeze, so everyone could see,
When all the marchers came into full view.

We honor all of those so well-remembered,
Who gave their best, whatever be the cause,
On this special day, the eleventh of November,
To all of those who served in our great wars.

Oscar N. Hemstad - 3rd Armored Division

LOOK FAMILIAR?



*Road from Bastogne
to Wiltz (East)
1944--Bulge*

Received from: Russell W. Ruch
159th Combat Engineer Battalion



159TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

*[The excerpts from the history of the 159th in the Battle of the Bulge were provided to us by **RUSSELL W. RUCH, 159TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION, COMPANY A.]***

The weather was turning cold and our work area was moved to the east, so with these good reasons we decided to take care of the situation by moving to the east and into houses.

The battalion came into Luxemburg on the 7th of October 1944, for what was to be about our longest stay in any one place. Company "A" went to Tarchamps and later to Luxemburg City, Company "B" to Bettborn, Company "C" to luxurious Ansemburg Castle, and H/S Company to Useldange.

...The people of Luxemburg became real friends and we had dances and parties and we worked with them, and the days went by. It was a good place to spend the winter, and in as much as our particular section of the front was not active we sort of hoped we could spend it there.

...The Germans in their retreat had managed to blow some bridges so it was our job to rebuild them. ...On December 15th two of our trucks on a routine run, went up to Diekirch for some rock. They came back without the rock and excitedly told that the rock quarry was under German fire. Some brash Heinie patrol we figured, but then they came in that far in the daytime.

We got the news later on that day. Von Kundstedt was on the march. Remember that VIII Corps had an enormous front and we knew that it was thickly held, but so did the Germans know it, and they came crashing in. We said we'd fight house-to-house to keep them from driving us out of our nice warm billets; we were plenty sore and ready for them.

We got the order to move out the next day. Luxemburg City was in danger and only what was left of the previously battered 4th Infantry Division stood in the path of the Germans. We still thought it was only a flurry and that we would be back in a few days so we only took essentials, left the rest behind and moved out in a hurry.

Four hours later we arrived in an assembly area in the Town of Boulginster, outside of Luxemburg City. We were then attached to the 12th Infantry Regiment of the 4th Infantry Division. After setting up all around security we awaited further orders.

The night of December 17th was a busy one at headquarters for the situation, although not critical, was in need of immediate action. The battered and undermanned 12th Infantry had some of its units surrounded already, and the Germans were pouring into Luxemburg. Small task forces and combat commands of tanks had pulled out to the northeast to attempt to remedy the situation, but the Germans could bypass tanks by going through the woods. They were already in Schiedgen, a small but important town a short distance away. Schiedgen, then, was the battalion's first objective. We were to clear it of Krauts and take the high ground around it. Hill "313" was a part of this high ground.

We thought of our days back in Brittany when we had met and beat the Krauts. We drew our ammunition and grenades. The men of the 159th were confident and ready when they moved out.

The morning of December 18th, the battalion CP moved to

Consdorf about two kilometers away from Schiedgen. "A" and "C" Companies moved into position in the woods south of Schiedgen and "B" Company was in reserve in Altrier.

The weather was certainly against us in those days, the air was wet and cold and the sky hung heavy with dark clouds. We needed an air force to get back and break up the big German columns. We needed it to locate them, and give us a picture of just what was going on, but no, it was Hitler's weather. Sorely need information was obscured by the darkness of it.

When a man wanted to find our battalion CO he had best first look where the going promised to be tough. That is where the courier found Lt. Col. Dick Staefler when he delivered the order for him to take off for the objective. He was up with the lead squad of "C" Company and when the order finally came, the companies advanced. We had some light tanks and TD's with us, but they were road bound and we went up through the woods.

"A" Company on the left received the first enemy fire, but it was small and soon melted away. We continued forward and as we approached Schiedgen from the south the tanks were coming in from the west. We drove into the town, captured a few prisoners and moved on to the high ground. Jerry didn't seem to have any stomach for the fight at this time, but then we didn't know.

The "point" from "C" Company hit heavy small arms fire approaching Hill 313. They had run right into what appeared to be a rear guard for a larger body of Germans. We gradually were able to disengage the enemy and that night of December 18th, both companies assembled in Schiedgen.

The Krauts were wicked with those 88's and mortars; the stuff came crashing in all of the time. Consdorf and Schiedgen were getting plastered at regular intervals. Maybe the weather kept Jerry ignorant of the true situation too, for it was evident he felt that we were in that area in force. He could not have realized how thinly the sector was held. Anyway, he was trying to break up any concentrations of our troops by his heavy shelling. You remember, the roads were getting it too, and any man having to go down them in a vehicle just prayed, crouched low and threw her in high. Yes, we really "highed" down those roads with the stuff hitting on each side and kicking up dirt and smoke. We were not much worried about the MP's stopping us for speeding; no, not in that area we weren't.

In the CP's we were doing most of our work on the floor. We could hear the whine of the shell as it came in; down we would go. The building would shake and the glass would fly and you felt that one was bound to drop right on you. They were hitting all around.

"B" Company had been called down to Michelshof to protect a TD outfit and later down to Bech where they were attached to Task Force Smith. They met no enemy, but again the shelling was heavy.

On December 19th "A" and "C" Companies, each minus one platoon, went out to secure Hill 313. We moved into position on the hill, but the only Krauts we found were dead ones from the encounter we had on the previous day.

We dug in on that hill and it was cold and always there were the heavy clouds. We opened our cold "K" rations up there, checked our ammunition; we waited.

By this time we were starting to get some idea of the setup, and it didn't look too good. The Germans were really on the move in earnest,

(Continued)



Our wire crew laying a line past a knocked out Heinie tank.



The shop truck crew could fix just about anything.

159TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION (Continuation)

as evidenced by the magnitude of their attack in the north. We heard the unbelievable news that they were in St. Vith and Wiltz and driving on Bastogne. These places we had considered rear area only a few days before.

Luxemburg City was a plum and we now realized that the enemy would be after it in force. We had never retreated before and it was hard for us to think in terms of retreat, yet the stunning fact was that Jerry had actually advanced in force against our armies. True, we realized that our lines were thin, but it was hard to believe that the entire German Army could even push back one American squad. That's the way we thought in those days.

The battalion was out on a salient in the line that jutted into the enemy sector. There was a small force of infantry about eight kilometers to our right, and some tanks from a task force about five kilometers to our left. But in between the Germans could parade around back and forth at will.

The infantry in Echternach was cut off and surrounded, and the Krauts were moving down on Schiedgen.

There were too few of us to cover that entire front so we could only hope to deny the enemy the critical spots. Hill 313 and Schiedgen were definitely critical.

We could see the enemy moving around on the road in front of the hill and at night they would slip right into the Towns of Consdorf and Schiedgen. We didn't go out for Sunday strolls in the streets of these towns. The cold went right through you in the foxholes on Hill 313.

The night of December 19th was one we won't forget; that is, those of us that were up there that night. There was one ray of hope. Relief was supposed to be coming up. Fresh infantrymen were on their way that very minute, and by the next day we should be back as engineers again. Well, it was a comforting thought anyway.

By the morning of December 20th things started warming up again. It wasn't that the weather changed. No, those clouds and that cold seemed to be permanently with us, but it was Jerry coming back for Hill 313. He warmed things up with a barrage of mortars, 88's and rockets we called "Screaming Mimies."

(Continued)

(Continuation)

They would crash and whine and sing into the hill and the dirt would fly and branches of the trees went helter-skelter.

They were coming into the towns too, but it wasn't as bad as it was up on that hill. The foxhole seemed small and inadequate and right then there was nothing much we would do except lie there and take it. But it surely made you grit your teeth in anger when one of our boys got hurt.

Later that day, about two squads of Krauts started up the hill. Those of them that were able soon did an about face; it was like shooting ducks--but we knew that they would be back in force.

Those of us not on the hill were doing well out on other missions. A platoon of "B" Company had to go back in where the enemy was, in order to cover the withdrawal of some tanks.

Each group of us was at something, and the battalion was what you might call busy.

On December 20th "B" Company, minus one platoon, went into a position on some high ground about 800 yards west of Hill 313. "A" Company remained on the hill and "C" Company came in to Schiedgen for hot food and what rest they could get.

On the morning of December 21st "C" Company went back to the hill and "A" Company returned to patrol and protect the rear. Our position was such that the enemy could attack from the front and flanks, making it possible to infiltrate to our rear.

The enemy made several small attacks on the hill that morning, but we repulsed them easily. He continued to harass the position with mortar and rocket fire and our patrols reported great enemy activity in all sectors of our front and flanks.

A platoon from "A" Company fought and drove back a strong enemy patrol trying to get in back of us and in general the entire front was more active than usual. We still expected relief from the infantry.

A radio report from "B" Company indicated an enemy column of from 400 to 600 on a road just north of our positions. "C" Company saw a couple of hundred more on the road below the hill heading to Michelshof; they were on bicycles.

Do you remember how those Jerries charged that hill, shouting and screaming and standing up firing "burp guns"? They were tough looking Nazis and they seemed all hopped up. They would come at you in waves and get so damned close you could see their crazy eyes, and we just pumped lead into them. The radio man from "C" Company was walking up and down the line broadcasting the action like it was a football game.

If you had been on Hill 313 that day you would have seen the enemy stack up and fall back, but over to your left where "B" Company was in position you would have heard the fire increase in volume and tempo.

The main force of the Germans had hit "B" Company, minus one platoon, with over a battalion of insane Nazis. They, too, came in screaming and firing "burp guns" and when you shot down the first wave another took its place, and so on until your gun barrel got hot and wouldn't fire anymore.

The Germans managed to drive between the two platoons that made up "B" Company. Captain Chapek was with one out on the flank and they were in trouble. Their guns were going out of action and they were running out of ammunition. Lt. Flowers tried to fight his way through to them, but he was far outnumbered.

Captain Chapek was the last man to go down according to those who saw him. They say he just stood there and fired away

and wouldn't budge one damned inch. He always was a determined guy.

Well, we lost a lot of good men in that engagement, a couple of them turned up later as prisoners of the Germans, but for the most part the company was badly battered. They certainly killed the Germans; the odds were way up, but again one felt there could be no ratio that could even up the toll.

When the Germans occupied the positions that "B" Company had been in they more or less nullified the tactical value of Hill 313 so "C" Company was ordered to withdraw to Schiedgen and thence along with "A" Company to positions slightly to the southeast toward Michelshof. A heavily mauled infantry company was dug in down there and we, with a couple of medium tanks and a tank destroyer, went down there to make a final stand before the City of Luxemburg.

As the companies moved to the southeast, the battalion CP, along with the remnants of "B" Company, went to Altier. It was a lucky move because 20 minutes after a direct hit was made on the building where it had formerly been.

Consdorf and Schiedgen both had received a terrific pounding from enemy shells and they were in shambles. Our artillery was giving it back to them all right; they had given us wonderful direct support all along, but then the Germans had an enormous concentration of fire power on that sector. They wanted it badly.

By December 22nd the companies were in position and waiting at Michelshof. The Germans knew we were there too, and shifted their rockets and artillery over there. Our own artillery was kicking up the woods to our front and in general was discouraging the Germans from concentrating too much stuff at that point.

At about 1700 hours a large force of enemy was seen moving out of the draw in the woods to our northeast. They came out into the field in an enormous "V" formation, and they advanced across our front with confidence. This looked like another mass attack in force, this time they would try to break us once and for all. Capt. Surkamp was in command. We had two companies, minus one platoon in the line. To our north was the depleted infantry company, and in the line were the two tanks and the TD. Surkamp gave the order to hold fire and the big "V" came on, they came out of the woods into the open country to our front. Not a shot was fired.

Our artillery had been alerted and was going to drop them in close and we all sat nervously sighting down our guns until the enemy was about 150 yards away. "Fire," the order was given and everything on the line opened up; this is for "B" Company, and the guys from "C" and "A" Companies and those from headquarters, too, that had gotten it. The big "V" stopped short and fell in its tracks and the bodies flew up in the air as the 10th Armored Artillery dropped them in. The tanks fired everything, even their pistols and very few of the Krauts in that "V" formation ever got away, very few.

The observers could count approximately 150 of the enemy stretched out and that night we could hear the others, those that had been wounded, screaming with pain. It was a blow from which the enemy never recovered in that area.

One of the things you remember about December 23rd was that [when] you woke up that morning and looked toward the sky you suddenly realized that it was clear. Those heavy black clouds had disappeared and when you looked you heard the drone of motors and then they came, thousands of them, our own planes. Boy, they were

(Continued)

159TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION

(Continuation)

headed straight for Germany and they left long, thin trails of vapor in their wake. This was the thing we had sweated out for days and there they were, you then knew that the jig for Herr Hitler was up.

By the 24th of December we were in position again up above Schiedgen and it was still freezing weather. Jerry did not show himself, but his rocket barrage was murderous. It was tough going and we were tired. We again heard that we were to be relieved, but then they said that so many days ago, didn't they?

Well, at last it came; Patton had swung his army up from the south and was pounding on the enemy's southern flank. We could see some of his boys now, part of the 5th Division, coming up the road. There were plenty of tanks and artillery and it made you feel as if you hadn't been forgotten after all.

That night, Christmas Eve of 1944, the infantry came in. We were relieved. Ironically though, just as the last platoon of "A" Company was ready to leave, the Germans sent over a final rocket that killed Lt. Leckman.

Christmas Day and the battalion was back in billets in Luxemburg City. A bunch of us were sitting around the room having a Christmas drink. We weren't saying much, just sort of thinking how lucky those of us were that were here when suddenly the door opened and someone shouted "Attention!" Well, there we were, the bottle was out and we sort of looked a bit sheepish, and stood on one foot and then the other because it isn't often that a general walks into your CP in Luxemburg City on Christmas Day. It was Major General Barton, CG of the 4th Infantry Division, whom we had helped out. He put us at ease and said, "don't hide that bottle men, I want to drink a toast to the 159th."

The evening of Christmas Day the battalion went back to the vicinity of Messincourt, France, to get in shape for another mission.

By this time it was evident that the German drive to our north had been stopped. The Jerries had driven a deep wedge into the American lines getting as far west as the Meuse River, but now our forces were able to concentrate on the German flanks and it was the Germans' turn to worry.

We were now with Patton's Third Army because the First Army was north of the bulge, and we, along with the other few First Army troops on the southern flank, joined with the Third.

Company "A" was in Bouillon, and Company "C" was again in a big, beautiful place, "The Chateau de Amerois."

The Jerries were not yet licked, and in order to prevent a breakthrough by them to Sedan, we were given the mission of creating and manning a barrier line along the Semois River, on the south of the German flank. People were still jittery about that German drive and we couldn't afford to take any chances.

We all remember what a beautiful job the 101st Airborne did at Bastogne. The German drive had gone all around them, but not over them. They had held out against frenzied and determined German attacks, but they refused to budge, although completely surrounded.

The 4th Armored Division had broken through to their relief, but the Germans were still all around Bastogne and displayed their frustration by shelling the city heavily.

By January 2nd some of our unit was sent up to assist the 101st Airborne in Bastogne.

By the 4th of January the rest of the battalion had moved

north. Headquarters were in Habay La Neuve, Belgium, and the rest of the companies were in towns in the vicinity.

Our mission was to clear the debris in Bastogne, to remove the many minefields in the area, and to keep the roads open for the tanks. The latter proved the toughest job for that winter was bitter and the snow and ice piled high.

By January the 9th we were also placed in support of the 4th Armored Division, and we had plenty of work to do, so we moved north again in order to be closer to our work area. The battalion headquarters was now in Bodange, Belgium.

We removed hundreds of mines and worked day and night on the roads; we were in a hurry because it was our turn to drive on the Germans. They still were partly around Bastogne, from the northeast to the southeast, but our big stuff was moving in and they were commencing to crack.

On January 19th the entire battalion moved into Bastogne and vicinity and later headquarters moved up to a chateau in Rolle, just out of town.

We kept at our assigned mission, and sometimes that road clearance job took our dozers right out in front of the tracks over mined roads and into the enemy sector, but we got the stuff through.

By this time the 101st Airborne and the 4th Armored Division had pulled back and we were placed in support of the 11th Armored Division. The work was the same.

On January 28th we were relieved from the 11th Armored and placed in support of the 90th Division. We were now driving west toward the Rhine and the noted German "Bulge" was hardly a pimple, but the roads were bad and most of our fight was with the weather.■

DON'T FORGET OUR NEW YEAR'S TOAST

In tribute to all who served in the Battle of the Bulge, let's all drink a toast again this year (the eleventh year).

The choice of beverage is yours. Again this year the times will be: Noon--Pacific time; 1:00 p.m.--Mountain time; 2:00 p.m.--Central time; and 3:00 p.m.--Eastern time on New Year's Day.

It's our special way to be together again, even it is only in our thoughts. We shared so much so many years ago, we should remember those we were with and be grateful for each and every one.

Comments from our members indicate that many of you join in this special observance. Let us hear from you.

A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR TO EACH OF YOU, YOUR FAMILIES, AND FRIENDS.■

A DUES REMINDER COSTS US MORE AND MORE MONEY WITH THE POSTAGE INCREASES. CHECK TO SEE IF YOUR DUES ARE DUE--SEE THE MAILING LABEL ON THE BACK.

17TH ANNUAL NATIONAL VBOB REUNION

Marty Sheeron 53RD FIELD HOSPITAL

The setting for the 27th Annual VBOB Reunion was the Lincolnshire Marriott Resort, in Lincolnshire, Illinois, on September 25th through the 30th, 2007.

Tuesday, September 25th, 2007: Nancy and Bill Monson greeted all registered VBOB members and their families attending the reunion with a packet designating schedules, times, and places to be visited.

In the evening a "Welcome Wine and Reception" was held in a large all-weather tent, compliments of the resort.

Wednesday, September 26th, 2007: On five star luxury motorcoaches we started the day visiting the Millennium Park, in Chicago, for a short time. A park of unprecedented celebration of sculptures, architectural, and landscaping design. Greeting VBOBers was the monumental "Cloud Gate" (12-foot-high arch) with its mirror-like surface which reflects the city's famous skyline and the clouds above.

From there, we continued our trip to the Chicago Botanic Gardens, in Glencoe, Illinois. At the garden we boarded a narrated tram for a ride through the garden to view the autumn wonderland of blazing colors, woodlands, and prairies. After the tram ride members were permitted to stroll the garden at their own pace to enjoy your favorite flowering plants. At the Rose Terrace, in another large, all-weather tent, we had a prepared luncheon of sandwiches and cold drinks.

The next stop was at Volo, Illinois. Here we visited the Volo Auto Museum with over 300 classic cars. Then, members visited the Military Museum, the Combat Zone, and Military vehicles. During the tour of the military exhibit, several members (Jim Barlow, Kate Nolan, and myself) were interviewed by reporters of *The Chicago Daily Herald*. The museum's military exhibit featured realistic battle scenes and authentic military uniforms, weapons and vehicles. Next, we were homeward bound.

Back at the Marriott we had a luscious Italian buffet dinner, served in the large all-weather tent. During dinner, we were entertained by a video/audio presentation--"A Musical Stroll Down Memory Lane."

Thursday, September 27, 2007: Back on the luxury motorcoaches, attendees were treated to a narrated, driving tour of Chicago's historic buildings, business districts, and high rise condos and a ride under the Chicago Loop.

Lunch was at the Navy Pier. The former WWII navy training center is now the top attraction in Chicago. There were untold numbers of fast food food courts and a galore of plentiful retail shops catering every kind of merchandise to the buyers' tastes. There were many other attractions, such as, museums, theaters, and fine dining restaurants.

Attendees were then treated to a narrated cruise of the Chicago River, viewing up close the many buildings that line the river including a beautiful view of the Sears Tower.

After the cruise, the group was bused to the Memorial Water Wall, a veterans memorial dedicated to all Department of Defense agencies, outside of Soldier's Field. It was a disappointment that we were not permitted to view the re-

modeled Soldiers Field per se. We then returned to the Marriott where dinner was on our own.

Friday, September 28, 2007: Another bus ride to the estate of Col. Robert R. McCormick, named "Cantigny," in Wheaton, Illinois. Col. McCormick, commander of the 1st Bn, 5th FA, 1st Inf. Div., changed the name of the estate from Red Oak Farm to Cantigny in honor of the first American victory of the Great War (WWI). On arrival members were welcomed at the visitors center and given a synopsis of the First Infantry Foundation and the McCormick Estate. The group was divided into two groups: (a) tour of the gardens and mansion; and (b) tour of the First Division Museum.

There was a wreath-laying ceremony in the courtyard of the museum at noon. This took place in front of a replica of the statue "Spirit of America Youth Rising from the Water," at the Normandy American Military Cemetery and Memorial. Pictures of the veterans and the veterans with families were taken.

Lunch was a typical picnic lunch--hot dogs, hamburgers, salads, beans, etc., served buffet style in an all-weather tent on the estate grounds. Musical entertainment was furnished by a four-man quartet playing popular tunes of WWII era. After lunch we were free to continue visiting the many sites. The grounds around the museum are swath with vintage army tanks and vehicles from all wars, from WWI to the present conflict.

Joke of the tour: Where's Zack? Anybody know where Zack is? Stanley D. Zack, 5th Inf Div, 50 FA Bn, got on the wrong tourist bus and headed for Colorado. About 25 miles out, Zack realized he was on the wrong bus. The bus driver notified the 1st Inf Div Foundation. How Zack got back to the Lincolnshire Marriott is the \$64,000 question.

Dinner was on our own.

Saturday, September 29, 2007. Members were treated to a free morning to browse about as you pleased and have lunch on your own.

In the afternoon, the General Membership Meeting was held in a ballroom and President Stanle Wojtusik called the meeting to order. The president announced the slate to serve on the VBOB Executive Council for the Fiscal Year 2007-08. (Nominees had been previously published in the August, 2007, *Bulge Bugle*.) Motion was made to accept the slate as published which was approved. Recording Secretary John D. Bowen presented the minutes of the 26th General Membership meeting which were published and distributed to all members. The membership approved the minutes as presented. In the absence of the Treasurer William P. Tayman, Nancy Monson presented the budget for the 2007-08 fiscal year which had been distributed to the members. The budget was approved by the membership as presented.

President Wojtusik read in detail the actions taken by the National Executive Council to secure return of monies collected by Earle Hart in connection with the 60th Anniversary Tour to Belgium and Luxembourg, December 10-20, 2004. Mr. Hart's offer of restitution was denied and further action by Federal and local enforcement agencies are on-going.

Col. Mike Perry and Col. Tom Sweeney, of the Army Heritage Center Foundation, in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, spoke regarding plans for the future of the center. Col. Perry stated the mission of the center was to honor the heritage of the U.S. Army through the collection, preservation and study of the collected memories of its soldiers with related artifacts, photographs and other documents. Col. Sweeney requested donations from National

17TH ANNUAL NATIONAL VBOB REUNION (continuation)

VBOB, its chapters, and individual members to foster a greater public awareness of the army's contribution to the nation in peace and war.

The Annual Banquet was held in a ballroom of the Marriott. Demetri "Dee" Paris, 9th AD, was Master of Ceremonies. At Vice President Paris' command, the Illinois Army National Guard presented the Colors. The national anthems of Belgium and Luxembourg were played followed by the United States *National Anthem*. Dwight Reed, 221st QM Bn, led members in the Pledge of Allegiance. Invocation was offered by John Bowen, Recording Secretary. *Taps* were sounded. Vice President Paris then retired the Colors.

President Wojtusik welcomed members and honored guests. Kate Nolan, 53rd Fld Hosp, Harold Blajack, 106th Inf Div, and San Santagata, 5th Inf Div, made toasts to our fallen comrades who paid the supreme sacrifice; to our Belgian and Luxembourg friends and allies; and to the President of the United States.

RAdm Willy Temmerman, Defense Attache, Embassy of Belgium, expressed the Belgian Government's thanks to the American veterans who freed their country from the tyranny of German occupation. President Wojtusik presented RAdm Temmerman with a VBOB Certificate in appreciation of his country's cooperation with the U.S. Army.

Vice President Paris introduced guest speaker Charles A. Krohn, Deputy Director, Public Affairs, American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC). Mr. Krohn spoke, aided by video/audio tape, of ABMC's responsibility for commemorating the services of American Armed Forces through the erection of suitable memorial shrines, operating and maintaining permanent American military grounds in foreign countries. President Wojtusik presented Mr. Krohn with a VBOB Certificate in appreciation of ABMC's operation and maintenance of permanent American military burial grounds on foreign soil.

President Wojtusik adjourned the banquet with the singing of "America." A closing video was presented by Ralph Bozorth.

Sunday, September 30, 2007: Members and friends enjoyed a free, private breakfast at the Marriott. Breakfast was provided through the courtesy of National VBOB. Now we take our leave for another year, farewell and a safe journey home to our new friends and old timers.

God willing, we will see you at the 2008 National Reunion in Columbus, Ohio, September 9-13, 2008.

Thanks to the Reunion Committee, especially Ralph Bozorth, for an enjoyable time and excellent schedule of events. Let's not forget Dave Shaw, the steward of the Hospitality Room. ■



**BULGE
VETERANS
AT CANTIGNY
9/28/07**

OPTIMISM

"Since I came to the White House, I got two hearing aids, a colon operation, skin cancer, a prostate operation, and I was shot. The damn thing is, I've never felt better in my life."

— Ronald Reagan, 40th U.S. president

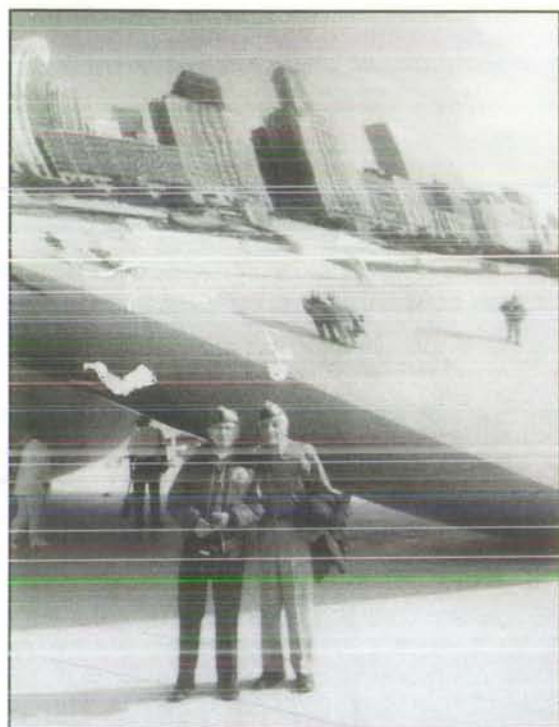


**REUNIONS ARE SUCH A
WONDERFUL EXPERIENCE--**

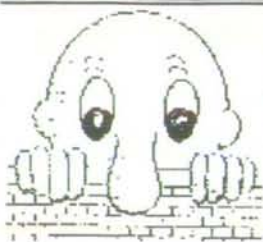
**See you at the next
VBOB REUNION
Columbus, Ohio
Sept. 9-13, 2008**



WREATH-LAYING CEREMONY - CANTIGNY, ILL.,
Home of 101st AB Div. - September 28th 2007.
L/R - Stewart Piper (26th ID) MSG David Merrimen
(101st AB) , Charles Malachosky (5th AD) do the honors.



Millennium Park Chicago- Martin Sheeron, Jim Barlow
under the "Cloud Gate"



Slap your hands and jump for joy.
For you were here before Kilroy.
Beneath it quickly appeared,
Sorry to spoil your little joke.
I was here, but my pencil broke.

-Kilroy



June and Bill Pronzato on cruise ship, Chicago River

VICTORY IN EUROPE **VICTORY ORDER OF THE DAY** **5 MAY 1945**

Men and Women of the Allied Expeditionary Force:

The crusade on which we embarked in the early summer of 1944 has reached its glorious conclusion. It is my especial privilege in the name of all nations represented in this theater of war to commend each of you for valiant performance of duty. Though these words are feeble, they come from the bottom of a heart overflowing with pride in your loyal service, and admiration for you as warriors.

Your accomplishments at sea, in the air, on the ground and in the field of supply, have astonished the world. Even before the final week of conflict, you had put 5,000,000 of the enemy permanently out of the war. You have taken in stride military tasks so difficult as to be classed by many doubters as impossible. You have confused, defeated, and destroyed your savagely fighting foe.

On the road to victory, you have endured every discomfort and privation, and have surmounted every obstacle, ingenuity and desperation could throw in your path. You did not pause until our front was firmly joined up with the great Red Army coming from the East, and other Allied Forces coming from the South.

FULL VICTORY IN EUROPE HAS BEEN ATTAINED.

Working and fighting together in a single and indestructible partnership, you have achieved a perfection in unification of air, ground and naval power that will stand as a model in our time.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower

In recognition of the unconditional and abject surrender of the Nazi barbarians please accept the fervent congratulations and appreciation of myself and of the American people for the heroic achievements of your Allied Army, Navy and Air Forces by their sacrifices, skill and courage. They have saved and exalted the cause of freedom throughout the world. All of us owe to you and to your men of many nations a debt beyond appraisal for their high contribution to the conquest of Nazism.

I send also my personal appreciation of the superb leadership shown by you and your commanders in directing the valiant legions of our country and of our Allies to this historic victory.

Please transmit this message to the appropriate officers of your command and publish it to all Allied Forces in your theaters of operation.

Harry S. Truman, President

25 DAYS IN THE BULGE

By Albert Gaydos
4th Armored Division
66th Armored Field Artillery
Headquarters Battery

[The article Albert sent us was very long. We have excerpted a portion with the hope that what we have left out will not interrupt your understanding.]

[Excerpt] When daylight came, Col. Olden did send into Warnach medium tanks (35th Tank Battalion) with what was left of the 51st. This day was the morning of 24th of December. The mediums went in, took the village, killed 135 krauts, killed and wounded many prisoners. We lost 68 officers and men. It was declared it was an error to use tanks for night action.

We stayed in our position, just on the edge of Warnach. We watched the mediums coming out of the village herding large numbers of kraut prisoners. Our radio went dead. We waited for radio maintenance. They came up from the rear, fixed our problem and that was the last time I saw my brother alive. His tank was repaired and he was rejoining his unit. He waved, giving me the "V" sign, that he was OK. It was December 24 at 2:00 p.m. and we got orders to move up about 1/2 mile from Warnach to join the rest of the light tanks of the 35th. There were maybe 10 tanks left. In this position about 50 feet to our right, out of a thin tree line, up stood 10 kraut paratroopers, hands up. They were there all along and we didn't see them. They came forward and Capt. Ridley searched each one. They had on, underneath their jackets, our OD shirts, our new shoes, cigarettes and gum. Ridley was throwing them to me standing in the turret. He punched everyone of them in the face as he took American stuff from them. One light tank member got out of his tank with his tommy gun. He told the captain to get out of the way, he wanted to kill them. He was wounded early in the war and had just came back from England to duty in the Bulge.

We could see in the distance, across open, flat ground, kraut tanks coming our way. Just then, a squadron of P-47's appeared asking ground liaison for targets. Soon they went into action against those tanks; what was left we could not see.

About 4:00 p.m., we moved up across an open field, stayed off the road and went through pine woods. We took up positions for the night (Christmas Eve) on the other side of these woods. The mediums also took up positions a little to our left. My brother, Paul's, tank, FO #1, was with them. The moon was full and I could see them.

We pulled straws in our crew as to who would pull guard first. Lt. Romig would not join the other officers as we had done. He took his sleeping bag and went into the wood where the infantry dug in to sleep. I was standing first watch in the turret when I heard an explosion, a big fire ball explosion. Capt. Ridley came to our tank and told me that it was two 6x6's loaded with gas, to gas us up. He said that nobody told them not to use that road, that they should've came through the woods like we did. They had hit mines. My time on guard was over; sleep came over me. I was cold and laid on the 75mm ammo and fell asleep. Soon after, we drew artillery, heavy stuff, landing close to the tank.

Lt. Romig left his bag, got into the turret. I heard him tell Lefty to turn the engine over and get ready to move at the same time nudging me to wake up. As the barrage was lifted, he went back into the woods. The rest of the night was quiet.

Christmas Day was quiet and the lieutenant came over to us and he wanted me to see the staff sergeant that was laying near him and had his throat cut. Some krauts got in there during the artillery firing. We spent the day in position. The officers were planning our next move--5 miles from Bastogne. The 35th was still to our left. Rumors were Patton and new people were in the area but we did not see him.

That evening, we were waiting for gas trucks and German 2-engine planes buzzed us. We lost our white paint so we moved onto blackened shell holes. They kept coming back and forth. We had to move fast as the gas trucks came; they went through our circle position hollering out and asking how many cans did we need. They also brought us our Christmas dinner which was one piece of cold turkey, a Hershey bar, apple and a cigar. We gassed up, stayed up the rest of the night, and enjoyed our goodies. That was the end of Christmas Day.

On the 26th we moved up to engage krauts close by in the woods about 100 feet away. We all fired into those woods but did not go in to see.

All of a sudden a P-47 came over us. It was a P-47 that was captured by the Germans and flown by a German pilot. We were surprised when he dropped a 500 pound bomb 50 feet from us into the pine woods. He buzzed us again. Col. Olden on the radio, "If that son-of-a-bitch comes back, fire at him!"

Our Headquarters Battery was in position behind us a few miles. We watched him drop another bomb on their position, killing two men and wounding four. At that time we (FO #3) didn't know it was Headquarters Battery--our people. We then moved along a highway. We engaged a large group in the ditch along the road. They quietly lay there a good while, near us. We killed 19 and captured the rest, including a blond woman. The last thing I saw was one of our men running behind her towards the rear.

That afternoon, our planes were strafing kraut positions ahead of us and large groups of B-17's all day. We watched 3 groups of C-47 planes coming in on our left, a couple of 100 feet from us, dropping supplies. Some of it was picked up by German units. I counted eleven planes shot down by these same units, another group of C-47's came in. We are still five miles from Bastogne. There were still many kraut troops to our left, and in front of us where the supplies hit the ground. Night came and the krauts moved up even closer. It was December 27th, the day my brother, Paul, was killed. We made a move against them. My brother's tank company (35th) and us moved up along the highway. They had crossed to the right side of the road and we stayed with the light tanks on the left. Soon we made contact. We lost some men and captured a lot as they gave up easily. There were some very young and some old men mixed in.

While searching the prisoners, we heard a lot of firing in the vicinity of the 35th mediums. On the radio, there was a desperate call for medics and ambulances. My brother and I had a habit (in all attacks) to talk on the radio when he saw smoke near us as we moved up. We heard (over the radio) this plea for help and I felt something was wrong in FO #1 tank. I called my brother's tank. Hyde, his gunner, answered. I asked, "Who is it (hurt). He answered, "Hyde, it's king (his driver). Al, it's king."

(Continued)

25 DAYS IN THE BULGE

(Continuation)

They were pinned down by kraut mortar fire. Each tank carried infantry on the backs of tanks. They jumped off only to be cut down. My brother's lieutenant, Lt. Mitchell, got out of the tank, laid on the ground with what was left of the infantry, unable to observe the location of mortars.

The firing stopped. My brother, King, the driver, and Hyde, the gunner, got out of their tank and joined another tank crew to scan (on the ground) a tree line edge. They wanted to see if they could locate the mortar positions, so my brother could fire our artillery, that were in position most of the time.

These are the words of Bill Hyde, "We all stood together looking at those woods. I turned to go back to our tank. When the krauts opened fire again, one round landed on them. I went back to see if I could help. They were all dead (6 men) except King, who lived. (We heard later from the hospital that he had 27 pieces of shrapnel in his chest.)

In the meantime, I heard all of this over the radio on the 27th at 3:30 p.m. We moved the prisoners out of our way. Near dark, we received a call from Col. Olden to go to that position to relieve FO #1. They needed an observer...us. Our officer, Romig, commented, "Sir, I don't know if it's proper but I have a brother of Sgt. Paul Gaydos, who was killed, in our tank." Olden again, "I don't give a damn, we have to get to Bastogne."

It was dark now and we moved to that position. The moon was full and I picked out his tank easily. I climbed up and called down his turret, "Paul, Paul, Paul!" Hyde answered, "Paul isn't here." I asked, "Where is he?" Hyde answered, "Paul's dead." I asked where he was laying and he got out and pointed out the direction. Lt. Mitchell still was with the infantry. At least 14 tanks deployed in that moonlight.

It was cold and quiet now, no firing. I walked in the snow to where the men were hit. No one was there, just blood in the snow. I found Paul's tank helmet. They were picked up and taken to the rear. I looked around some more and thought I was in the wrong place. I saw many dead that weren't picked up. This lasted a good many hours before I finally went back to our tank, filled with grief; and the war went on. This all happened near the nearest village on the map of Sanlez, Belgium.

The next morning at break of daylight I again went looking for my brother's body. I found the first aid station that was near the Arlon-Bastogne highway. I lifted many blankets, still hoping I could see him. The graves registration officer in charge asked me who I was looking for. I told him my brother. He asked for his name. He remembered the name when he was picked up the night before. He said he was taken to the next town near Martelange. I do not remember the name. The officer told me to get into the next ambulance that was going there with the dead and wounded.

I found him still laying on a stretcher on the hood of a jeep. A month later, I was notified by graves registration where he was buried and instructions how to get there, to visit his grave with permission from our CO. He was buried in a large cemetery nearby the Villages of Fallex and Grand Falley. His remains were brought back in 1949 to rest in our family plot.

From that position, we moved up again toward Bastogne. It was cold with lots of snow and the temperature was zero to below. We took up position January 1st near a small lake with enemy tanks in the area. We are together now, light tanks with the mediums. We drew much artillery while there. We got a call over the radio that krauts were in the area wearing our

uniforms, driving our captured vehicles. We were told to make sure you identified the person beside you. Kraut artillery landed mostly on the lake on the ice. When it stopped I was talking to some of our infantry about how bad things were up ahead--P-47's strafing the woods.

About 50 feet to our left, I saw a group of about 20, digging in.. Me and my driver, Lefty, walked over there. I asked them, "What outfit?", and "Why are you digging here?" One answered, and I can't remember what he said but we felt something was wrong about those American uniforms and rifles that they had. We walked back the 50 feet to our tank and looked back to that direction and they were gone while our backs were turned.

The next day we moved up a mile or so off the road to our right, to take on German tanks (about two miles from Bastogne). We made contact and the Germans were still strong. We were joined by a company of the 704th tank destroyers with their high-powered 76's. In our position, we could not see the German tanks. It was January 2nd. Conversation on radio, 35th tank commander to Col. Olden, "We just killed a few kraut tanks. We got a couple of more." "Olden..." "What is your rank?" He answered, "First Lt." Olden..."Consider yourself a captain as of now."

It was January 3rd after this tank battle. The weather was without new snow, very cold and we were not able to get warm. Our feet were cold. We got new socks with our rations--Eisenhower's orders--change every day. Keep one set in bosom, next to skin. "Tankers" while inside, pound your knees with fists almost steady to keep circulation in feet. Many men were sent to the rear with black, frozen feet.

P-47's and a large group of B-17's were overhead daily, helping us. Kraut action slowed in our area early in January. We, FO #3 observers, pulled out and were sent a few miles on secondary roads which I thought was a CCB sector. We stayed with a large group bumper to bumper in columns day and night.

Then as FO's the next day, we were ordered by radio to report to tank company of the 35th back where we were to Arlon-Bastogne highway. They were lined up on the road, 14 tanks, engines idling. Our officer to tank commander. Our orders were to go to Bastogne one mile away, up ahead krauts laying 4.5 mortar fire right on the middle of the road. We have to go through that fire. We buttoned up, being that our officer Romig didn't have tank experience. I told our driver, Lefty, "Make sure you were in fifth gear, when we get to that area, we, the Sherman tanks, never had enough speed."

We moved out while the rest of the tankers watched. We made it and shortly entered Bastogne. Maybe it was around the 7th or 8th. As we entered, one of our half tracks was hit in front of us, burning, but we kept going further into the city. The men of the 82d and 101st greeted us with a wave and a smile; the place was demolished.

We stopped and got out to stretch our legs and spotted one of our own men from the wire section in a jeep. Bill Bacon. I said, "How in the hell did you get here?" He said he didn't know. He looked real worn out and said he just followed our tanks' markings. While we were talking, our crew stayed in the tank and all hell broke loose. German artillery was coming in from four sides. Bill and I ran into a bombed-out building, laid down against a wall. It seemed like they kept it up for two hours. We thought this was our end, the first time in the war that I felt like I was in hell. After the fire was lifted, we moved into a house nearby to rest for the night.

(Continued)

25 DAYS IN THE BULGE

(Continuation)

At midnight every one was dead tired, sleeping. A runner found us with a message to go to the area of the Village of Magaret. Our officer Romig was an expert at map reading. We followed the overlay the runner gave us. We pulled out cold and tired at 4:00 a.m., January 9th, after three or four miles north along another road.

We stopped at daylight and joined up with the 35th mediums again. We had the high ground and we could see enemy vehicles down in the valley very good. We fired many missions, accurately. The tankers were very pleased. In front of us, there were nine 10th Armored tanks knocked out. We could not figure out why they were in a straight line together. In our training, we were taught to move in a scattered position. When it got dark we received new orders, to go back to Bastogne and to go south to the position of 30 December. I rode the small fender near the driver's hatch to help the driver see. They stayed off the road and traveled across open fields for fear of mines.

When we stopped, it was after midnight. We were five tired and frozen men but had a bottle of wine. Lt. Romig gave an order to open the bottle. We had saved it for after a tough day.

On January 10th we found out that all of our division (4th Armored) was pulling out of Bastogne. The next day we traveled those cold, slippery roads south until we reached Luxembourg. We then took up positions on the outskirts near the Ouer River, because of strong German activity on the other side and to help the units that were there.

So ends the story and events of five light tank crews, 25 men and of five men in a Sherman medium tank crew, who were artillery forward observers, who fought in the Battle of the Bulge for 25 days. This lasted from December 17, 1944, to January 10, 1945. Those involved were: Lt. Romig, officer; Sgt Albert Gaydos, loader; Norman Thomas, gunner; Joe Kurimsky (Lefty), driver; and Charles Cable, bow gunner.



VBOB, Inc. is non-partisan. It encourages candidates of all political persuasions and incumbents to support legislation important to: National Defense and to Active, Reserve, National Guard, retired members of the uniform services, other veterans, their families, and survivors.

Lilly From Piccadilly

by Micky Balsam, Flying Eagles Orchestra

Dedicated to all the "Lucky" soldiers who spent some *leisure* time at Piccadilly Square

*I took a trip to London,
To look around the town;
When I got to Piccadilly the sun was going down,
I've never seen such darkness,
The night was black as pitch;
When suddenly in front of me,
I thought I saw a witch.*

*I could not see her figure
I could not see her face,
But if I ever meet her,
I'll know her any place.
I couldn't tell if she was blonde
Or a dark brunette,
But Gosh oh gee, did she give me
A thrill I won't forget.*

*They sing of "Dirty Gertie"
and Ma'moiselle in French,
But give me a Commando
In a foxhole or a trench.
And in the thick of battle
You'll find me happy there,
But say, chums, be sure she comes
From Piccadilly Square.*

*Now when my children ask me
"Please tell us, Daddy dear,
"What did you do to win the war?"
I'll answer with a sneer:
"Your Daddy was a hero;
"His best he always fought,
"With bravery he gave to the
"Commandos his support."*

*Refrain:
Oh, it was Lilly from Piccadilly,
You know the one I mean,
I'll spend each pay day,
That's my hey hey day
With Lilly, my black-out-Queen.*



**Don't be
Delinquent...
Pay Your
Dues Now!**

Ben

THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE HISTORICAL FOUNDATION
Invites You to Join Your Friends for the
"EVENTS OF REMEMBRANCE AND COMMEMORATION"
OF THE 63rd ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE
December 14, 15 and 16, 2007
Metropolitan Washington, DC

The DoubleTree Hotel Crystal City, by Hilton, 300 Army-Navy Drive, in Arlington VA22202 has been selected again, with its panoramic view of our Nation's Capital, as the site for activities commemorating the 63rd Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, December 14 - 16, 2007. This hotel, just off Route 1 in Crystal City is a 7 minute drive from Reagan National Airport and a 2 City block walk to the Pentagon Metro Station and the Pentagon Mall. It provides easy access to Washington DC and underwent a major renovation in 2006 for great accommodations, at a reduced rate of \$99.00, single or double occupancy plus taxes. Parking is Complimentary. This rate is available for any night(s) between December 13 and December 17. For room reservations please call the DoubleTree Reservations (1-800-Hiltons) or 703-416-4100 by **December 1, 2007**. Mention that you are attending the **BATTLE OF THE BULGE** events for the special rate and ask for a room with a View of Washington DC.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2007

2:00 PM – 6:00 PM Registration (Hospitality Suite, Van Buren), receive name badges, Banquet/bus tickets, and information. (If you are only attending the Banquet, you may pick up your tickets at the DoubleTree by 6:00 PM Dec 15th.) Plan ahead with your friends to be seated at the same table (rounds of 10 per table).
 3:00 PM – 10:00 PM Hospitality Room/Exhibits, scrapbooks. John Bowen & Bob Phillips, Battle of the Bulge Historians will be the hosts. Supper will be from 6:30 – 8:00 PM. Those wishing to (payment is on your own) can eat in the hotel's Café Restaurant. A time to renew friendships & visit w/old friends.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2007

8:00 AM Registration open/Receive name badges, Banquet/bus tickets, Jackson (Hospitality Suite).
 9:00 AM Charter buses depart hotel.
 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM We will be visiting the home of our Army's first Commander-in-Chief, General George Washington, at Mount Vernon VA. The Mount Vernon Ladies, who own the estate, have just completed an expansion and restoration of the complex and have some wonderful gift shops. They are noted for their beautiful Holiday decorations at the Estate at this time of year. We will leave the Mount Vernon at 2:30 PM for return to the hotel.

BANQUET AT THE COMMONWEALTH ROOM, DOUBLETREE CRYSTAL CITY

6:00 PM Social Hour/Cash Bar. (Hospitality Room closed at 5:30 PM for Military to change clothes)
 6:45 PM Seated for Dinner.
 7:00 PM Color Guard/Members of the Fife and Drum Corps/Ceremonies.
 7:15 PM Dinner served.

BANQUET ENTRÉE

The choice of entrée for the Banquet is:

Medallions of Beef Tenderloin

OR

Chicken Piccata with lemon caper sauce

Program:

Greetings from Dignitaries.

Speaker: Lewis Sorley, noted Historian and Author.

After Banquet

Hospitality Room open, Van Buren Suite, at DoubleTree Crystal City.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2007

9:30 AM Bus leaves from DoubleTree Crystal City Hotel to Arlington Cemetery
 10:00 AM Wreath laying, World War II Memorial, 17th Street NW, Washington DC
 11:00 AM Impressive ceremony and placing of wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns, Arlington Cemetery.
 11:30 AM Ceremony of Remembrance, Battle of the Bulge Memorial, across from Amphitheater.
 12:00 PM Ceremony of Remembrance, Battle of the Bulge Memorial, Porter Avenue, Arlington Cemetery
 1:00 PM Buffet Luncheon, Hosted by VBOB, DoubleTree Crystal City Hotel
 Choose either Grilled Chicken Breast Sandwich or Sliced Smoked Turkey Sandwich
 Swearing-in of new VBOB officers.
 Comments by VBOB President & Farewell.

Notes: Free Airport shuttle provided by the DoubleTree Hotel every half hour, 3 miles from Reagan Washington National Airport. Free Shuttle from DoubleTree Hotel every hour on the half hour to Pentagon City Metro (Blue/Yellow Line) and Pentagon City Mall Skydome Lounge the area's only revolving rooftop lounge for a spectacular view of Washington at night. Cover & music applies after 9 PM Friday & Saturdays. The Café Restaurant open 6:30 AM to 11:00 PM

RESERVATION FORM
"REMEMBRANCE AND COMMEMORATION"
OF THE 63rd ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE
December 14, 15 and 16, 2007
Metropolitan Washington, DC

Return form and check by **December 1, 2007** to:
Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation
PO Box 2516,
Kensington MD 20895-0181

Questions:
 John D. Bowen, 301-384-6533
 E-Mail: johndbowen@earthlink.net

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Spouse/Guest: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Battle of Bulge Unit Served With: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

RESERVATIONS:	<u>Number Attending</u>	<u>Cost/Person</u>	<u>Total</u>
Registration Fee	_____	\$10.00	\$ _____

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2007

6:30 PM – 8:00 PM: DoubleTree Hotel Café Restaurant _____ **on your own**

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2007

Chartered Bus, 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM _____ \$30.00 _____

9:00 AM – 2:30 PM Visit & Tour Mount Vernon Estate of General George Washington
 3:00 PM Return to Hotel dropping off shoppers at Pentagon Mall

Commemorative Banquet, DoubleTree Hotel Crystal City _____ \$55.00 _____
 6:15 PM - 10:00 PM Commonwealth Room 1st Floor
 Please make your Main Course selection(s):

- ☐ Medallions of beef tenderloin _____ (Name _____)
OR
☐ Chicken Piccata with lemon caper sauce _____ (Name _____)
☐ Diabetic Meal _____ (Name _____)

Plan ahead with your friends to be seated at the same table. Tables are Rounds of 8. Please indicate friends with whom you would like to sit: _____

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2007:

9:30 AM	Chartered bus to Arlington Cemetery	\$15.00	
10:00 AM	Drive to WWII Memorial;		
11:00 AM	Ceremonies: Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers and VBOB Monument	No. Attending:	_____
12:30 PM	Bus Return to DoubleTree Crystal City Hotel		
1:00 PM	VBOB Luncheon & Installation of Officers	No. Attending:	_____ \$10.00*

Choose : Grilled Chicken Breast Sandwich _____
 Sliced Smoked Turkey Sandwich _____

*Total Cost of Luncheon is \$28.00 of which VBOB will fund \$18.00 for active VBOB National Member & Guest.
 VBOB Membership # as shown on your last page of the Bulge Bugle _____

GRAND TOTAL (Enclose check made out to BoBHF Commemoration): \$ _____

NOTES & REMINDERS: Banquet Dress: Business suit/black tie (miniature medals encouraged) or military dress uniform
 Room reservations must be made with the DoubleTree Crystal City directly, by December 1, 2007 (Telephone (1-800-Hiltons).
 Return completed Reservation Form for events to BOB Historical Foundation by 1 December 2007, (Telephone 301-384-6533).
 No cancellation refunds after December 8, 2007.

Please indicate in all places the number & names attending so that we can be advised of the proper number to plan. Thanks!

PLEASE BRING A PICTURE ID (Drivers License, Passport, Mil ID) for the Washington area

09/18/07

COLONEL OTTO SKORZENY'S RAG-TAG ERSATZ GI CONTINGENT

By Peter Burland

[Excerpts from "The Sand Table: The Destruction of Hitler's Fortress Europe and the Atlantic Wall," a copyrighted historical novel in the works by Peter D. Burland, former Master Sergeant, 2nd Armored Division, Military Intelligence Service, European Theater of Operations, Forward Command post. It appeared in the June, 2005, issue of the newsletter of the 2nd Armored Division.]

By the middle of December 1944, the 2nd Armored had fought its way out of the Normandie perimeter through France, Belgium, Holland and the Siegfried line (twice) to within a few miles of the Roer River. The Roer was the last natural obstacle that had to be bridged before reaching the Rhine River where would begin the Allied Army's final push to end the war. On the other side of the Rhine lay Magdeburg on the Elbe River where we were to meet the Russians and end the war. However, in one last desperate attempt to forestall what was the inevitable defeat of Germany, Adolf Hitler ordered an attack of the American forces opposite Elsenborn, St. Vith and Bastogne in the Belgian Ardennes forest. Their objective: Antwerp, Belgium. The capture of Antwerp would split the American and British Armies and deny the Allies the most important deep water port in northern Europe crucial to the supply of our frontline troops which by this time were driving deep into Germany. All the reserves of men, tanks and materiel at his command were thrown into the attack. There were in this force units transferred from every conceivable source: the Russia front where they were not exactly in oversupply; from the Volkssturm, a collection of over-age home guard and very young teenagers, from regiments and battalions put together with men sympathetic to the Nazi cause conscripted from subjugated countries such as Austria and Poland; and from anti-aircraft units whose 88mm guns were ideally suited (by design) to double as an anti-tank weapon by leveling the 'long rifle' so it would fire horizontally.

The Battle of the Bulge attack was the brainchild of Adolph Hitler. It was proposed and conceptually designed in greatest secrecy by only three men: Adolph Hitler; the 6th Army Chief of Staff, Lt. General Gause; the German Army Commander in Chief; and later, Maj. Gen. Kramer. Gause's successor. None of the lower echelons of command had any inkling of the planned offensive until December 12th and 13th just a few days before the jump-off. 'X-Day,' the date of the initial assault on the Ardennes, was first set by the General Staff as December 10th; then again set at December 13th; and finally, December 16th.

After Adolph Hitler described the plan in painstaking detail to German General Kramer, he made it clear that he would accept no alternative and instructed Kramer to begin preparations. Kramer's assessment of the plan, privately, was that it was doomed to failure. The troops, tanks and materiel that Hitler proposed to throw into the battle were non-existent. Hitler presumed that the good old days of plentiful resources still

existed. Hitler's reply to Kramer's question as to where the manpower would come from, was that the Volksturm and the units scavenged in the manner described earlier would be adequate once the breakthrough was accomplished. Kramer, having no choice, proceeded to patch together the strike force. If the counter-attack were to succeed at all, the German thrust had to have the element of surprise, so not even the division commanders were to be briefed on the plan until a day or two before the jump-off.

There have been millions of pages written about the Battle of the Bulge; and, to a man, every author presenting his version and interpretation of the events have taken the sensationalist's view that the aim of Adolph Hitler's plan to drive across the Meuse River with the objective of taking Antwerp, Belgium, would have meant disaster for the Allies. The plan involved splitting the Allied forces into two fragments using this elegantly executed pincer movement followed by the destruction of the isolated pieces of the Allied armies in one great 'triumph of German military might.' Those who are totally ignorant of the critical role that supply and logistics plays in the winning of battles (down to the smallest of firefights) paid no attention to the fact that Hitler's ante in this military blunder was less than 1,500 armored vehicles (tanks, armored cars and self-propelled guns) and between 300,000 and 350,000 men, most of whom were already 'in the line' fighting! The bulk of Hitler's 'breakthrough' force did not as a practical matter even exist! John Eisenhower's *The Bitter Woods* is one of the few, if not the only, detailed account of the Battle of the Bulge that relates the pitiful outcome of the Ardennes battle for the Germans. They had a total inadequacy of troops and equipment to win even the first battle: A battle which they lost within eleven days (on December 28, 1944) of its beginning.

Eisenhower wrote: "On November 7th, General Jodl placed the total number of divisions available for the 'Watch on the Rhine' offensive at 38, plus 9 artillery corps and 7 Werfer brigades. This would have seemed impressive except six of these divisions being counted as 'available' were already fighting in the line around Aachen, and all the divisions of the Fifteenth Army (the defenders of Normandie) were in the line also. So, where was the 'new' force that was to drive the Allies back to Antwerp? To quote John Eisenhower again: 'Self-deception in the Oberkommando Wehrmacht (OKW) achieved a new high.' The estimate of the German Army's military position on the eve of the 'Watch on the Rhine' attack by Hitler's Generals was reported as dismal. In the North, the Ninth Army led by the 2nd Armored had just obliterated Julich. Although taking heavy losses in disabled tanks, they had reached the Roer. The 3rd Armored pounded their way into Duren, also along the Roer. They were prevented from crossing the river only by the flood waters created by the destruction of the Roer Dams by the retreating Germans. The First Army further South led by the 'Big Red One' was encircling Aachen as a prelude to driving on Cologne. Here, too, the German military position was desperate. Patton's 3rd Army in Central Europe was about to encircle Metz. The Germans twice abandoned the town as being indefensible. Twice Patton gave it back by withdrawing from the city hoping to be the first military commander in history to take the fortress city by frontal assault. He never got his wish. The Germans twice gave it back. Much further to the South the German Nineteenth Army was being beaten by French and American forces in the Vosges Mountains

(Continued)

SKORZENY

(Continuation)

in their drive toward Switzerland. So, the very divisions that Adolph Hitler had planned to use in his Ardennes offensive by thinning his existing line of defense could not be moved.

The failure of 'Watch on the Rhine' was indeed predictable and was condemned privately by Hitler's own Generals. The troops nor supplies needed in support of Hitler's plans for this maneuver were not there. The results of the Ardennes battle proved this gloomy assessment of the outcome. Consider just the following: The German attack began December 16th; on December 27th, I witnessed the destruction of the last German armored vehicle (a Mark IV) just a mile-and-a-half from the Meuse River; by December 28th all three original spearheads had been destroyed causing the German advance to collapse in just eleven days. Within 30 days, the original Allied line of advance into Germany was restored. Since the job given to us as scouts for Division Headquarters was to track and locate the furthest advance of our 'picket' tanks, we drive (cautiously) from 82nd Recon Battalion HQ's toward the black plume of smoke roaring out of the burning Mark IV in search of the 67th AR company commander whose guns had just picked off the Mark IV. We found him standing bolt upright in the turret of his Sherman on the bank of the Meuse admiring the view. When Dick Wong and I, too, finally reached the edge of the river, on the opposite bank lined up hubcap-to-hubcap was the most impressive array of armor that I had ever seen: British Churchills from Montgomery's 8th army. There must have been at least 100 tanks visible up and down the opposite side of the river for as far as the eye could see waiting to open up on the German forward elements when they reached the Meuse. I gained a new respect for the Brits that day. In short order, we also radioed back to G-3 and General Harmon what we had seen. It made his day. Gola Sebenar, one of Harmon's G-3 non-com's who ran the tactical operations war room, commented after we got back from our scouting mission, that Harmon high-tailed it over to 'Lightning Joe' Collins, VII Corps commander, to celebrate the victory. Collins' CP was only 12 miles away.

In order for the element of surprise in the German initial attack through the Ardennes to be effective and work to the advantage of their own forces, General Kramer gave strict orders that no hurried movements of troops would take place during the buildup of men, armor and materiel for the push; that the units gathered were to move only at night; and were to be given no explanation whatsoever regarding their mission or their whereabouts. Even division commanders were denied any information, and certainly not a hint of the impending new initiative to counter-attack in the Ardennes was to be given. Strict orders were given to avoid any contact with the American forward units so as to avoid the possibility of German patrols being captured and interrogated. It was a standard tactical maneuver (by both sides) to keep abreast of the enemy's intentions by sending out nightly reconnaissance units in force to capture prisoners for interrogation. No such units were deployed by any of the German forces close enough to make visual contact with the American 99th, 28th and 106th Infantry Divisions. These units held the crucial 75 to 80-mile front that was the target of the German counter-offensive. The disposition of troops in a normal tactical situation would have been across only a ten to twelve mile-front. German scouts, reporting to their commanders after the December 16th breakthrough, said that 99th Division squads of infantry were spread so thinly as to leave 100-meter gaps

between them and the next defensive position.

Curtis Amuedo, my old college roommate that I left behind at LSU when I decided to join the Army, was one of these squad leaders. Early on the morning of December 16th, Amuedo's squad was awakened by the familiarly squeaking and clanking of tank treads grinding against sprocket drives and bogey wheels. In the dense ice fog created by subfreezing weather, the main attacking German tank column by passed Amuedo's position but was hit by enemy light infantry walking in the shadow of their tanks for cover. (There were no real shadows on this day!) The initial German infantry attack was beaten off and took some heavy casualties before breaking off the firefight and deciding to bypass Amuedo's position. The German attackers could not see the dug-in Americans in the morning mist against the heavy white backdrop of snow. German reinforcements and reserves continued to pour through this same gap created by the initial spearhead with the same results. After three-and-a-half days of skirmishes and firefights, Amuedo's squad was down to less than a half-dozen clips of M-1 rifle ammo per man; no food; and having taken two casualties (wounded); the squad walked a mile-and-a-half back to their First Aid Station to get relief for their wounded. Their position had been rendered hopeless. By then, of course, the 99th Infantry Aid Station had been overrun by the Germans and the squad was taken prisoner. Amazed at the stamina and tenacity of the American squad's fight for their tiny piece of frozen Belgian turf, the German interrogators took Amuedo back to the scene of their fight to reconstruct the events of the last three days. As Curtis related the details of each firefight, the German guards accompanying them to the scene counted 54 German dead around the perimeter of the squad's dug-in position, all frozen in the snow where they fell.

During the ensuing euphoria in the planning of Hitler's mad scheme to attack through the Ardennes (dubbed by Hitler as 'Watch on the Rhine') and as soon as a few of the details of the impending counter-attack was revealed to a few more high-ranking staff officers, the German General Staff almost unanimously rose up in opposition. The situation on the Western Front was assessed as critical. As suggested above, the German armies opposite the American 9th, 1st, 3rd and 7th Armies were all in retreat. At every opportunity when confronted with the reality of the battle situation, Hitler dismissed any criticisms and demands, 'No improvisations' or alteration of his plans to drive through to Antwerp would be permitted.

One of the most daring operations devised by the German General Staff on a suggestion by brigade commander Obersturmbannführer Otto Skorzeny was the formation with Skorzeny's 150th Panzer Brigade of an all-American-speaking unit consisting of nine teams of German soldiers that were to infiltrate American lines to spread rumors of non-existent disasters; to disrupt traffic by masquerading as Military Police; and, in general, try to create confusion and panic in the rear areas. His 3300-man SS Panzer brigade was to accompany the lead formations of Generaloberst der Waffen-SS Josef 'Sepp' Dietrich's 6th Panzer Army which was to make a clean breakthrough on the first day of the assault. Then, those in the 'commando' operation, 'Einheit Steilau,' disguised in American and British uniforms would make a dash through Dietrich's forward-most spearhead positions and seize the Meuse bridges at Engis, Almay, and Huy. By the end of the second day the Meuse River shall have been reached and crossed.

(Continued)

SKORZENY

(Continuation)

Skorzeny immediately began to assemble and organize his units. An official directive from Skorzeny's superiors had been sent to all major German units fluent in American slang and regional culture. The response, according to Skorzeny, was pitiful. Only 120 volunteers showed up for this secret operation. To make matters worse, only ten of these volunteers could speak English with any knowledge of American idioms, and less than fifteen captured American and British vehicles were rounded up because of the reluctance of front-line troops to give up hard-won 'spoils of war' that in most cases were superior to or in better running order than their own equipment. In the end, Skorzeny was given twelve German tanks disguised to look like Shermans which he said would only fool an American GI that had never seen a Sherman.

Skorzeny's Einheit Steilau commando units were dispatched into the American lines on December 16th and 17th; nine units in all. Two teams were eventually captured, but an estimated six or seven made it through the American lines to do their mischief. A few weeks earlier, during the time these secret commando units were being assembled, the secrecy of their behind-the-lines mission led to all sorts of speculation within the units themselves as to their true purpose. One of the men, as a joke, remarked that it was his feeling that they were a special commando team trained to assassinate Eisenhower, Bradley and Montgomery. Skorzeny's mission had no such objective. Once through the American defenses, Skorzeny's teams cut telephone lines; re-routed supply convoys by reversing highway signs and destroying bridges; and by spreading rumors and wild stories of assassination teams that were after Eisenhower. One team actually reached the Meuse River without encountering one person in its path. Frustrated by its lack of contact with American forces, it turned back toward the fighting to try again. Many of Skorzeny's commandos, wearing rag-tag, ill-fitting, and mismatched American uniforms, were caught in small groups and summarily executed by American front-line units. Ultimately, they were all caught. Operation 'Einheit Steilau,' however, was considered a great success. The confusion and chaos created behind our American lines had the temporary effect of slowing down the defeat of the German offensive.

On December 21, 1944, in a last ditch attempt to take Malmedy, Skorzeny's 150th Panzer Brigade engaged a well-dug-in 1st Infantry Division and was defeated with the loss of his entire brigade. Reinforced by several battalions of U.S. Corps artillery, Skorzeny's Panzer Brigade was decimated by the 1st ferocious bombardment. Trapped in his armored car trying to escape through the shelling, Skorzeny was wounded and subsequently evacuated to a hospital where he was to end his career in defeat. Skorzeny was one of the few SS officers in the German army who escaped with his life after WWII. ■

Please Join Us in Remembering Those
Who Fought in the Battle of the Bulge on

December 16, 2007
Arlington Cemetery, Arlington, VA



Commando Otto Skorzeny, towering over his patron, Adolf Hitler, was given only six weeks by the Fuhrer to prepare his commandos for their disruptive behind-the-lines forays in the guise of American soldiers.

Reprinted from the Washington Post
June 11th 2007

Tales From D-Day

The June 6 editorial "A Note on D-Day" rightly stated that it was the decision and burden of the supreme allied commander, Dwight D. Eisenhower, to order the D-Day landings on France's Normandy coast in June 1944.

Less well known is that he depended on the decision of James Stagg, a 43-year-old group captain in the Royal Air Force who was a weatherman. It was Stagg's responsibility to tell Eisenhower whether the weather — which in the days before the scheduled invasion included gale winds and torrential rain — would clear long enough for the invasion to proceed.

If Stagg had said the weather was not suitable, the invasion would have had to have been postponed at least two weeks because there were only so many days in a month when the tides and the moon were in alignment for a beach landing on the Normandy coast. Anything could have happened in those two weeks.

Talk about pressure. We think that today's meteorologists, with their satellite photographs and Doppler radar, are maddeningly unreliable, yet in 1944 weather prediction was barely above

guesswork, depending mostly on crude radar, weather balloons and airplanes. But Stagg had earned Eisenhower's trust, and when he told Eisenhower that there would be a break in the weather long enough for the invasion to proceed, Eisenhower proceeded.

We know the rest. Eisenhower went on to greater glory. Stagg went back to his weather charts, another unsung hero who helped change the course of history.

BRUCE G. KAUFFMANN
Alexandria

Bruce G. Kauffman writes a weekly history column for 29 newspapers.

■
An interesting footnote to the wonderful June 6 editorial, concerning Dwight D. Eisenhower's character:

The note referred to in the editorial was written on June 5, 1944, the day before the invasion. At the bottom of the document Eisenhower wrote "July 5, 1944."

To me, this small error is an indication of the overwhelming pressures facing this great leader at that historic moment.

JOHN H. ZENTAY
Washington

The P-38

If you soldiered during World War II, Korea, or Vietnam, it's a good bet that somewhere – maybe back in the corner of your dresser drawer, at the bottom of your foot locker or tool box, or attached on your keychain – you still have your “good ole P-38.”

You remember – that “light-weight, folding, hand-operated can opener for severing tops of rimmed metal cans,” as Army nomenclature described it. In reality, the durable, handy-dandy, one-and-a-half inch metal device that opened your hot or cold C-ration cans had more practical uses than a Swiss Army knife (which actually predated the P-38 can opener by more than forty years).

Developed by the Subsistence Research Laboratory of Chicago during the summer of 1942, the P-38 was used by service members in combat and training for four decades until the aluminum foil and plastic laminate pouches of MRE's – Meals Ready to Eat – replaced canned rations in the 1980's.

The P-38 can opener was in no way akin to two other famous P-38's of World War II – the P-38 *Lightning*, the supercharged US fighter aircraft, and the Walther P-38, the 9mm semiautomatic pistol of the *Wehrmacht*. Supposedly, our ingenious little gadget got its P-38 nickname because it took 38 punctures of its hinged metal



tooth to remove the lid of a can of C-rations. But it was also known by many as a “John Wayne” since Wayne showed troops how to use it in a World War II training film.

If you hadn't seen the Wayne training film, you'd learn how to use the P-38 pretty quickly on your own just by reviewing the diagram and following the directions on the brown paper wrapper it came in. The wrapper even included instructions on how to sterilize the P-38 in an immersion heater or with a match before reuse. And even though the P-38 was designed as disposable, once you realized how handy it was for things other than opening cans, you made sure you hung on to it. Whether in training or combat, it also served as a great screwdriver, wire stripper, letter opener, pencil sharpener, muddy boot cleaner, and much more.

Best of all, the P-38 was every GI's meal ticket to that mouthwatering Corned Beef Hash, Meat and Vegetable Stew, Meat and Beans, cold or hot.

-Reprinted with the permission courtesy of the Army Historical Foundation

Editors Note: We thought this article might bring back memories to our Members who may have opened a “Can or two” of “C” rats in the field.

<u>Conflict</u>	<u>Years</u>	<u>Battle Deaths</u>
American Revolution	1775-1783	4,435
War of 1812	1812-1815	2,260
Indian Wars	1817-1898	1,000
Mexican War	1846-1848	1,733
Civil War	1861-1865	214,938
Spanish-American	1898-1902	385
World War I	1917-1918	53,402
World War II	1940-1945	291,997
Korean War	1950-1953	33,686
Vietnam War	1964-1975	47,410
Gulf War	1990-1991	148
TOTAL		650,954

Afghanistan and Iraq

Still dying



ANOTHER CLERK

E. PETE SCALA 775TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION B BATTERY

I had been in college ROTC (City College of New York City), but because I was not a citizen, could not finish to get a commission--I would have gone into the infantry, except that my Ft. Dix interviewer noted that I could type, and assigned me to Ft. Bragg, to train as a clerk-typist. This odd type of assignment was normal procedure, considering I had a BS degree in chemistry and had worked as a chemist. It was God's will that I stayed alive--escaping the infantry.

I was shipped out to Camp Beale in California, assigned as a "replacement" in the 775th Field Artillery Battalion. When the first sergeant interviewed me, his reaction to my MOS as a clerk was simple--"Oh Shit! What...do we need with another clerk?" and assigned me to the forward observer group in Battery B, with an MOS as "a scout" The 775th was a battalion formed in Indiana-Ohio, and as a naturalized Italian with a City College degree, I fit in among these midwest farmers' kids like a square peg. But our FO squadron was a fine and well trained group and I caught up with the fire-control, laying guns, and even learned to double shift a 6x6 truck, jeep, etc., plus scopes and binoculars. Since I was always an outsider, I was given the odd jobs, even when we got through St. Lo and chasing the Germans across France as part of XII Corps of the Third Army, ending the war in Bavaria near The Eagle's Nest, with the side trip to Luxembourg for The Battle of the Bulge.

The article in the BOB newsletter on "88 duds" describes the shelling we received, dug into a hillside vineyard along the Moselle River. The Germans had everything zeroed-in, firing out of sight, behind the hills right into our foxholes. The thuds were close and the next morning we could see they had only missed my foxhole by a few feet.

The following week we found ourselves listening to the rockets coming in from their "nebelwurfer" hidden somewhere in a town. They wiped out our four guns in D Battery. We had half tracks pulling a 4.5 rifle, a British artillery designed for high velocity shells to take out pill boxes, or trains, or their concrete bunkers. In other words, we were always in up tight, backing up the infantry's 105s.

When that mid-December day in 1944 came, we were near Nancy and were turned north. In the two days at constant speed, we ended up in Luxembourg with a foot of snow. We were lucky having been given snow-pack boots and white camouflage, setting up our scopes to watch and listen for the German tanks and guns. But in that ice and snow, if we just moved a hair, we would have brought in their 88 shells. I have quite a few photos, the prints now fading after over fifty years--just an old Brownie.

The day before Christmas, almost dark, returning from the outpost, I spotted a move and froze. It was a little deer, a chamois, creeping along a trail. What I did then was stupid, but since we had only K-rations left, I got off a few shots to bring down what became Christmas Day dinner. Dumb luck would have it, the Germans were busy somewhere else and we were in a quiet sector.

We went on in late January to cross the Rhine River at

Oppenheim, ending the war in Bavaria. Most people never knew that the Third Army ever spent a week in Czechoslovakia, and our FO group managed to find some fine white wine left behind for us. General Patton even managed to bring back the Lipenzer mares, the famous white horses. Their ranch was just outside Trieste, which happens to be where I was born over 85 years ago.

Great to be alive, having survived two years on the line in WWII as part of a great group of mid-Westerners. Very few of them are left now, and I write this in their memory. ■

WEARING MILITARY MEDALS

[This question comes up often. Thanks to DEMETRI "DEE" PARIS, 14TH TANK BATTALION, 9TH ARMORED DIVISION, this will help guide you.]

Army Regulation 670-1, "Wear and Appearance of Army Uniform and Insignia," allows retired soldiers to "wear all categories of medals (described in this regulation) on appropriate civilian clothing.

This includes clothes designed for veterans and patriotic organizations on Veterans Day, Memorial Day and Armed Forces Day, as well as at formal occasions of ceremony and social functions of a military nature.

Personnel may wear either full-size or miniature medals. Personnel who wear medals on civilian clothes should place the medals on clothing in approximately the same location and in the same manner as on the army uniform, so they look similar to medals would on the army uniform.

Source: *Army Echoes Jan-Apr 2007 HQDA DAPE-HRP-RSO, Alexandria, VA 22332-0470.* ■

WWII MAY HAVE BEEN...

THE BIGGEST SINGLE EVENT IN YOUR LIFE

So pass on your experiences to *The Bulge Bugle*.

Don't let your memories go unrecorded. We will ensure that all items presented to us are preserved for future generations and historians.

Long articles are extremely hard to fit in--space simply dictates that articles not be too long. A four page article means that there are three or four other articles that cannot be used.

So, keep them as brief as possible. ■

ARE YOUR DUES DUE?

NINETEEN DAYS OF HELL

Willie T. Green
90th Infantry Division
359th Infantry Regiment
Company B

If I count correctly, only 19 days of the Battle of the Bulge's 44-day battle were mine to endure. It was a horrid experience branded in my memory--never to be erased. In December, 1944, we landed at LeHavre, France, arriving at a replacement depot just inside Belgium a few days later. We were there a few days, hearing German buzz bombs going over nightly but never one landing. Being replacements, we were assigned to wherever we were needed; since I was trained as a rifleman, I was assigned to Company B, 359th Regiment of the 90th Division, as assistant Browning Automatic Rifleman to my buddy, Nathan T. Graves, of (I believe) Florence, Alabama.

We were dug in a very thin line in a holding position across a hill along the Saar River from Dillingen, Germany, through Christmas, 1944, until January 7, 1945, when we were pulled back. On the night of January 8 we loaded on trucks, traveling most of the night in convoy without lights over hill and hollow on back roads and no roads--most of them having been bombed out (bridges especially)--in snow, ice and near-zero temperatures. We arrived at our destination...but where? We didn't know then, but now seems to have been near Metz; and also what we never dreamed of then would be the hard fought Battle of the Bulge.

Unloading from our trucks in complete darkness and getting into our positions as quietly as possible, suddenly about 0400 hours, everything began to explode. It was German 120MM mortar and artillery making trees burst on contact with shrapnel flying in every direction.

Our squad BAR man, Nathan Graves, was hit--bad (I think), because I never heard from him again--even after writing to his family. I guess I was too excited to find out his condition on the spot because I didn't pick up his Browning Automatic as I was supposed to do. Our platoon T/Sgt D. C. Bunker, of Cannon City, Colorado, picked it up and gave it to me, telling us to move forward or we would all be casualties.

Moving forward ever so slowly and by jumps and hops, that first day of combat duty in the cold and snow gets a little fuzzy; but I suppose it is mainly because we endured and saw things we would like to forget forever. I remember seeing one GI where a large piece of shrapnel had hit him in the belly and his intestines were hanging out; he was calling for help and a medic. Another time we were pinned down on a hillside by enemy machine gun fire for hours; finally a German 80MM shell was shot and exploded right in the middle of us, killing one and wounding others.

That night under cover of darkness, we pulled back about 300 or 400 yards and occupied some German foxholes. The Germans had recently left in a hurry even leaving behind their blankets; however, in two or three days some of us, including myself, came up with body lice (so-called cooties)--ha--as a result of not digging our own foxholes. A good hot soapy bath, a complete change of clothes, and two or three dustings of DDT relieved the itching and the "blood suckers."

I, myself, didn't actually see this, but sometimes infantry would

walk in the tracks of a tank or tank destroyer; and, when the tank was fired upon, it would quickly reverse, sometimes catching a GI instantly--mashing him flat.

Also one time about dark, an 88MM shell was fired at one of my buddies, cutting him completely in two parts. I was not an eyewitness but was close by, heard the shot, and was told what had happened.

Well, perhaps enough reminiscing; however, we can never forget, but surely we can learn much from past experiences. We would not go through it all again for millions; yet at the same time, we would not take millions for the experiences.

Thanks be to God at war's end, I came through practically unscathed, except for getting a small piece of shrapnel in one hand at Hollanach, Germany, on February 8, 1945, and received a Purple Heart. Over the years, however, I have had considerable and worsening respiratory disorders from exposure to the extreme cold and snow; my feet were almost frostbitten one night as well. All in all, I am very proud to be alive and happy today, and know all my buddies feel the same. ■

FRIENDSHIP WEEK

HARRY J. MEISEL, of the Golden Triangle Chapter, advises that Bulge veterans are invited to attend Friendship Week activities which will take place June 19-24, 2008 in Luxembourg.

Many plans have been made to ensure that this will be a very enlightening and enjoyable trip. Contact Harry for further information:

1329 Alfred Drive
Orlando, Florida 32810
Phone: 407-647-4672
E-mail: bluedolphins@msn.com

FLORIDA SOUTHEAST CHAPTER FEATURED IN DOCUMENTARY

George Fisher, President of the Florida Southeast Chapter, advises that the Weather Channel conducted personal interviews with many of the chapter's members. Title of the production is: *When Weather Makes History* and is scheduled to be aired early 2008.

The chapter will receive an advance showing for their 63rd Anniversary Observance on December 16th. In addition to the estimated 300 members and guests the chapter has invited soldiers who served in Iraq and Afghanistan and their families to be their guests.

There will be a display of military vehicles in front of the Hilton Hotel and a display of military equipment.

If you would like information on when this documentary will appear on the air, please give George a call at: 561-585-7086. George tells us "The Weather Channel documentary is realistic and actually depicts what happened. IT is truly fabulous and not to be missed." ■

**CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL
TO SEE IF YOUR DUES ARE DUE**

THE 9TH ARMORED DIVISION FOUGHT GERMAN ARMIES

Three Combat Commands Widely Separated

By Demetri Paris
9th Armored Division
14th Tank Battalion

Units and elements of the 9th Armored Division were attached to or fought with more major commands during the Battle of the Bulge (Ardennes) than those of any other U.S. Army division.

This is based on military records and explains why the German high command called the 9th a "phantom" division after receiving reports from several German armies that they were attacking the 9th AD in separate locations.

The Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation (BOBHF) has identified nine major American commands which fought in the Ardennes Campaign. The 9th AD fought under eight of these commands and, in addition, also fought under the command of the British 21st Army Group.

These findings were the result of studies by Maj. Gen. George Ruhlén, who commanded the 2nd Armored Field Artillery Battalion of the division. Ruhlén, now deceased, was known as an historian dedicated to accuracy.

The three combat commands A, B, and R were attached to:

- three of the 18 infantry divisions
- two of the three airborne divisions
- three of the eight armored divisions

who fought in the Battle of the Bulge.

In addition, smaller units of the 9th AD were attached to or fought under:

- another infantry division
- another armored division

Other 9th AD units supported elements of:

- two other infantry divisions
- a third airborne division
- another armored division.

The only critical Bulge areas where the 9th AD was not involved nor engaged in combat were the far north sector around Elsenborn and in the west from Marche to Celles.

Division Action Not Reported

There are factors which resulted in the combat actions of the 9th AD not being reported.

1. The most likely reason the 9th AD actions were not reported in the press nor in published historical books is the division was under SECRET classification throughout the battle. The attacking German armies knew the 9th was delaying their advance yet American correspondents were prohibited from writing about this combat. Unfortunately, the secret classification was not lifted until about January 5, 1945.

2. It is well known that an attached or supporting unit generally receives no mention in the After Action Report of the unit to which it is attached or is supporting. For example, Combat Command B which delayed the main German attack in the St. Vith area for six days was not included in the award granted the 7th Armored Division with whom they were fighting alongside.

One exception is the 101st Airborne included Combat Command R in their award of the Presidential Unit Citation (PUC) for the defense of Bastogne.

3. Yet a third reason was that none of the 9th AD units were under division control. Maj. Gen. John W. Leonard, the division commander, did not have any of the three commands under his control. All were fighting in widely separated locations, the 9th AD did not fight as an entity as did other divisions except the 10th Armored Division.

Division Separated Before Bulge Attack

On December 9, 1944, Combat Command B (CCB) was relieved from the 9th AD control and attached to V Corps to support the 2nd Infantry Division. The 2nd was to attack and open a gap through which CCB was to advance and capture the Roer River dams and prevent the Germans from flooding the Roer Valley which would establish a geographical barrier to Allied advance.

The status of the three combat commands during the battle were:

•CCB fought in the north to delay the German capture of St. Vith,

•CCR fought in the center and, along with other troops, delayed the German advance at Bastogne until the arrival of the 101st Airborne Division and CCB of the 10th Armored Division...000000

•CCA was initially in the south at Beaufort, Luxembourg, and then at Bastogne with the 4th AD.

When attacking German armies reported action against the 9th in widely separated locations, the German high command dubbed the 9th a Phantom Division. Also, German armies twice reported they had destroyed the 9th AD. They learned the 9th was not a "phantom" division on March 7, 1945, when CCB captured the Ludendorff Bridge at Remagen, Germany, and were the first Allied troops to cross the Rhine River.

It was not until January 8, 1945, that all elements of the 9th AD were joined again under the command of Maj. Gen. John W. Leonard.

PUC Delayed by SECRET Classification

As cited above, CCR of the 9th AD was included in the Presidential Unit Citation awarded to the 101st Airborne Division for the defense of Bastogne. The other two combat commands were denied the PUC because of the lack of records of their combat action caused by the SECRET classification. However, when the cold war ended, the German records were obtained and submitted to the Awards Branch. As a result, CCB and CCA were awarded their PUC 50 years after their Bulge combat action. ■



"Man, that Kilroy sure gets around!"

17TH AIRBORNE DIVISION ASSOCIATION TO DISSOLVE

As you probably know, we glean every association publication received for information that will better inform you regarding the Battle of the Bulge.



The latest issue of their newsletter, *Thunder from Heaven*, contained information regarding their plans for their LAST reunion which was held in October in Hampton, Virginia.

We promptly sent the association an e-mail wishing them well and relating the best wishes of all they served with in the Battle of the Bulge.

We know this will not be the end of their get-togethers as they are a group of brothers.

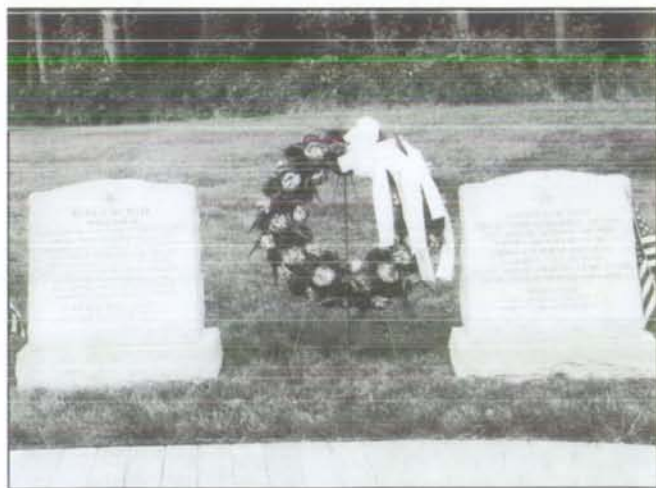
As they have turned all their memorabilia over to Fort Benning, Georgia--you may wish to see it. ■

MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER DEDICATES MONUMENTS

[Associate Member Christian W. deMarcken sent us pictures and information regarding two monuments dedicated by the Massachusetts Chapter.]

Many dignitaries gathered on August 20, 2006, with members of the Massachusetts Chapter to dedicate two monuments in Winchendon Cemetery to the following:

- All who served in the Battle of the Bulge.
- Members of the 333rd Field Artillery Battalion.



Remarks by John E. McAuliffe, chapter president: "We do not have the little white crosses and Stars of David in our Agawam and Winchendon Cemeteries; but across the field you will see the

little white tablets which mark the graves of the veterans of the Commonwealth... When you come to the Winchendon Cemetery and see the little white tablets, cry out to them: Thank you! ■

PROPAGANDA REFRESHER

[NATHAN KRITZER, 70TH ARMORED INFANTRY REGIMENT, sent us the following piece of propaganda received in his battalion headquarters compliments of the Luftwaffe. We thought you would enjoy reading it.]

Hi Yank,

Let's talk turkey, we are lying opposite each other in dirty ice-cold foxholes and we like it as little as you do, but it is "one of them things."

We don't give a damn what you've come over here to fight for, whether it's Poland, Roosevelt and Morgenthau or even better hot dog stands and ice cream sodas.

You know damn well from your own letters that everything back home is going to the dogs. The only guys getting a rake off are the John 4-F's.

Your own position over here is getting worse every day.

Your politicians asked for a war and now YOU are going to get it. Fresh divisions of men, hordes of new tanks and endless columns of guns are moving up to the front. But it isn't that which counts, it's the indomitable spirit of men fighting on their own soil, defending their home and family which will deliver the knock out blow.

We don't want anything from you. We know that you and your buddies are fed up to the gills. Why don't you pack your bag and beat it? Don't be afraid--we won't follow you but do something to finish this bloody show.

If you want us to, we'll help you.

Yours,
Jerry

YOU MAY WISH TO READ...

Through these Eyes
by James Lee Hutchinson

This book is a combat diary of the Eighth Air Force in World War II covering 20 missions aboard the "Fort," the most deadly aircraft in the European Theater, as they join hundreds of other bombers headed deep into the heart of Hitler's Germany.

The "Mighty Eighth" Air Force was the most decorated U.S. Army Air Corps unit of WWII.

Ordering information:

Bookstore order number is ISBN 1-4208-6644-3

E-mail address is jameshutchinson@insightbb.com

Phone number is 812-275-4308

Address is 331 Boyd Lane, Bedford, Indiana 47421

GRANNIES AMONG PRISONERS

[The following excerpts were taken from a story written by Sammy Wright, which appeared in "The Choctaw Sun," on January 19, 2006. It was a lengthy story regarding NATHANIEL BROADHEAD, 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION, 26TH INFANTRY DIVISION, COMPANY F.]

[Excerpts] The regiment held the line for 32 days. The Battle of the Bulge was raging, so the regiment fanned out through the countryside and began to take small towns. Of course, it should be understood that their goal was to cross the Rhine River, and their ultimate goal was to cross the Elbe. One of the small towns was bordered by a small stream that the men had crossed. It was frozen, but the ice broke and the boots of the soldiers filled with water. That happened at 3:00 a.m. and the men could not stop for the next nine hours, so the water in the boots froze. When Nathaniel removed his boots three days later, his toenails came off with them. (Can you see you see now why we have to guard and cherish this freedom that was bought with so much blood and sacrifice?)

The regiment took two small towns and Nathaniel and 200 men were ordered to take the third town. They came under such heavy fire that there were only six men left. The sergeant in charge told the men that they could run through the cross fire of the machine guns or stay put and be captured. Being captured by the Germans was almost as bad as death.



Caption: Infantry enters town--Belgium

Three men decided to stay put, but Nathaniel, the sergeant and another man ran for it. Unfortunately, that man was very short. The three miraculously made it across a field under the cross fire, but they reached a stone wall that was too high for the short one to climb over. As the machine gun fire played upon them, Nathaniel paused and boosted the short man over first.

After two days without food, the three men united again with an element of their regiment, but they were also without food. All the men were in an old building, so Nathaniel found another machine gun and set it up in a window, and the hungry men waited. A convoy that was called "The Red Ball Express"

delivered food to the fighters whenever possible. Incidentally, there was a best-selling book and a movie about these truckers during the 1950's. On the third day, a jeep pulling a trailer load of food reached the house, but the hungry men watched in horror as a German shell landed on the trailer and completely destroyed it and all the food.

The men were forced to leave the building, for they realized that if a shell could destroy the trailer, other shells could reach the building and destroy it. Under cover of darkness, they slipped away to try to find some other units or the lost elements of their own.

They had code words that they used for identification; they were "red apple." If a man or groups approached one another, someone would shout "red" and if the reply was "apple" the men all knew that they were Americans. Tired and afraid, the hungry soldiers trudged on through the deep snow.

Just before dawn, the soldiers stumbled upon a camp. The place was well guarded. The men knew that if the camp was German, they were finished. On his own, one desperate soldier cupped his hand and shouted "Red." What came back was not an echo. Clearly it was--"Apple."

[In Needham, Nathaniel's home town] after breakfast each winter morning, grandmothers took the extra biscuits and rolls into the house. They sat in their rockers beside the fireplaces. When grand children came to visit during the mornings they enjoyed the warm biscuits and rolls. The house usually smelled of cinnamon and spices, and the gentle grandmothers who rocked before the fire were symbols of security and peace.

Nathaniel and a fellow soldier encountered such a scene in Belgium during the Battle of the Bulge as the mighty First Infantry fought its way toward Germany. In one town, a great number of soldiers fell from sniper fire. One house in particular seemed to be overflowing with snipers, and they had already killed a dozen Americans in the street. Nathaniel and his companion stormed the house.



Caption: Entering St. Vith

In a scene that was not at all unlike Needham, two elderly grandmothers rocked in front of a blazing fireplace. The frail ladies were so much like the grandmothers in Needham who rocked away their final years that Nathaniel almost cried. After searching the house and finding no

(Continued)

GRANNIES AMONG PRISONERS (Continuation)

snipers, the men left. In that second, two rifle shots sounded and two American soldiers died in the street.

When they stormed the house again, Nathaniel noticed that the ladies were making some very swift movements. An open door hung loosely against the wall near where the ladies were rocking, well within reach of the ladies. As the men flung the door shut, the two rifles fell to the floor, and the two elderly grandmothers became prisoners.

As the regiment moved out of town, a company was cut off by the Germans. Nathaniel and his machine gun squad and one rifle squad went into the nearby woods to get the men out. The rifle sergeant cracked up and left with some of his men, and Nathaniel had only two of his own left because the others had been killed. He told his two men and the remaining riflemen to get out. Nathaniel pinned the Germans down with his machine gun while the Americans slipped away. That night he took some riflemen back with him and they freed the company.

The division advanced toward the Rhine and met its greatest obstacle; the Siegfried Line.■

GROUND AIRCRAFT OBSERVERS

By Arthur G. Holmes, Jr.
565th Antiaircraft Artillery (AW) Battalion
38th AAA Group

In reference to the headlines on the cover of the August, 2007, *Bulge Bugle*, "the Field Artillery Forward Observer."

I would in comparison uncloak one small unit, not well known, with parallel functions in the WWII, U.S. Third Army. Perhaps there were other units of which I am not aware--"The Forward Observers of the Anti-Aircraft Artillery." I and others as follows held the MOS of #518 designated as "Ground Aircraft Observers." In today's army we have been replaced by radar.

Allow me to state at once, although the two operations should seem similar there was a distinct difference. The Field Artillery FO had the responsibility of placing destructive force onto an opposing force with accuracy immediately. We, on the other hand, were required to identify enemy aircraft, plot their course by compass points, their altitude and numbers and report same in a timely manner. Friendly aircraft were identified by using a coded phrase preceding the same vital information. Our position was pre-designated on a grid map, as our reports were received and the aircraft were plotted and relayed to the proper AAA, units and destructive force was thus applied.

The proper weapons to best accomplish destruction of each target were greatly determined by the altitude at which the aircraft were flying. The 90mm batteries consisting of four weapons and attached M51 mounts were assigned the higher flying targets. The automatic weapons batteries were made up to eight 40mm cannons on a wheeled carriage towed by a 2-1/2 ton truck and eight M51 units. An M51 was four, caliber .50 machine guns mounted two over and under on each side of an electrically operate swivel mount, all on a special trailer pulled by a 2-1/2 ton truck, these weapons covered medium and low flying aircraft.

Our "Out Post" so designated, consisted of three enlisted personnel, a corporal was responsible for our actions. We were assigned to one of four gun batteries. Ours was Battery B of the 565th AAA AW Battalion, Third United States Army. We were recognized by assigned call numbers. Another OP was also assigned to B Battery and two each to the other three lettered batteries, A, C, and D.

We arrived in Luxembourg on the 21st of December, 1944. B Battery was assigned the protection of an emergency/fighter field, now the Luxembourg International Airport. I believe that C Battery provided the defense of the towers of Radio Luxembourg. The two remaining batteries and Headquarters were set up in Luxembourg City with other AAA units to protect the 12th Army Group Headquarters, General Omar Bradley, commanding.

That was our MO until the Third Army Headquarters--General George Patton, commanding, moved into Luxembourg City nearing the conclusion of the Battle of the Bulge. The eight OP's of our battalion were then assigned positions forming a ring around the city some 40 to 50 miles out, to provide early warning for protection of the two headquarters. Later, as the fighting progressed into Germany, we then changed from static positions to being highly mobile.

Our equipment in Europe consisted of one Willy's Jeep, one trailer equipped with ribs and cover and a pole antenna attached to the side, one radio receiver with associated gasoline motor powered generator, and remote controls on cable, plus personnel gear and firearms and necessary supplies.

From then on, we were each day assigned map location coordinates, usually a position on high ground. In many instances we were joined by or shared or were in close proximity to field artillery forward observers. On some of the more ambitious assignments we were not able to reach precise site for we were advised by the infantry and or tank units that the locations were still in enemy territory. The three of us hop-scotched northwest from Luxembourg, across Germany to a location just west of Weimar and beyond the Buchenwald Concentration Compound. Then southwest into Austria to a position overlooking where the Danube and Iser Rivers joined.■



"How would you like a real challenge?"



The Parc Hotel - A Wartime Saga of Deliverance

By Mitchell Kaidy, D-345



Four D-345 GIs and one 106th Division GI, with their wives on the front porch of the 70 year old Parc Hotel in Berdorf, Luxembourg, last year.

It's a miracle that the tiny but charming Parc Hotel, nestled on a "site isole" or little plateau in Berdorf, Luxembourg, survived the Battle of the Bulge.

In one of the opening rounds of the five-week battle, a battalion of German soldiers almost surrounded a company of American signalmen using the hotel's upper floors as a lookout. Although lacking the artillery brought up by the Germans, the GIs, benefiting from the high ground, inflicted heavy losses on the German battalion.

One of the first signs of the scope of the Battle of the Bulge appeared here, as Americans who were using the hotel as a lookout caught sight of a trickle of Germans drifting out of the woods. The Americans, who had outposted guards at tactical locations as well as on the hotel roof, could only watch with mounting amazement and concern as the trickle kept swelling.

Unfortunately for the Americans, at that time their radio was out of commission. So the first lieutenant in charge, John L. Leake, ordered his second in command to jump into a jeep and notify higher headquarters of the approach of a "possible enemy patrol." While he was successful in this, on his return the second-in-command was trying to use off-road

tactics when he was captured.

Not only was he taken prisoner, but the Germans, who were now beginning to increase their fire, were using him as a human shield. By this time the Nazis had brought up artillery, and together with rifles, were exchanging fire with the Americans who had positioned themselves in the hotel windows and roof.

Here's where the U.S. Army dictum "hold the high ground" paid off. "It's like a shooting gallery," Lt. Leake exulted as his men picked off the Germans from the hotel windows and rooftop. According to historian Charles MacDonald, who relates the story in his book "A Time for Trumpets", one of the American signalmen drawing a bead from the Parc Hotel "was new to the front and reluctant to kill anybody." But he aimed at a German sergeant's buttocks and dropped him. During the American countervolley, the second in command was freed by sharpshooters picking off Germans from little portals in the roof.

In the meantime, the Germans, who had been experiencing reverses and heavy losses elsewhere in the Bulge, began recalling their besieging forces, and the Americans liberated all their captives.

It's been a long time since the artillery-crushed rooftop and part of the top floor of the Parc Hotel were repaired. Since those days the lovely little hotel has been expanded, with a spacious new dining room, tennis courts and swimming pool set into a lushly-landscaped garden.

Even without the story of its connection with the Bulge, the Parc Hotel in Berdorf (one of three with that name in Luxembourg), remains an attractive and economical lodging, with first-rate food and dining facilities. The storied Parc is located east of Bastogne and Diekirch, and only a dozen kilometers northwest of Echternach.

Visitors will find that the two-story 1930s hotel hasn't forgotten its dramatic wartime encounter. As four returning 87th Division and one 106th Division GIs and their spouses learned on their return to Luxembourg recently, the story of the hotel's near-death and deliverance is posted on its bulletin board.

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE CERTIFICATE

Have you ordered Yours?

Over 6,500 certificates have been purchased by Battle of the Bulge Veterans. If you haven't received yours then you might want to consider ordering one to give to your grandchildren. They are generally most appreciative of your service now. They make excellent gifts for that buddy that you served with in the Bulge. The Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Assn. is proud to offer this full color 11" by 17" certificate, which may be ordered by any veteran who received credit for the Ardennes Campaign. It attests that you participated in, endured and survived the greatest land battle ever fought by the US Army.

You do not have to be a member of the VBOB Assn in order to order one but you must have received the Ardennes credit. This beautiful certificate is produced on parchment-like stock and is outlined by the full color WWII insignias of the major units that fought in the Battle of the Bulge starting with the 12th Army Group followed numerically with Armies, Corps and Divisions and the two Army Air Forces. We wished that each unit insignia could have been shown but with approximately 2000 units that participated in the Bulge it was impossible. However any unit, which served in the Bulge, would have been attached to or reported through one of the unit insignia depicted. You may want to add one of your original patches to the certificate, when you receive it. Please allow approximately 3-4 weeks for delivery, they are normally printed at the end of the month. The certificate will be shipped rolled in a protective mailing tube. Please be sure to place your **name, service number and unit, as you would like it to appear on the certificate**. The unit name should as full as possible as you want someone reading it to understand what unit you were in. We will abbreviate it as necessary. It is important that you type or print this information. The unit must be one of the 2000 units authorized for the Ardennes Campaign credit in the Official General Order No. 114 for Units Entitled to the ARDENNES Battle Credit and will be the basis for sale of this certificate. **The cost of the certificate is \$15.00 postpaid.**

We no longer have frames available but if you have an A. C. Moore Craft Store near you they sell a 16 X 20 Inch Floating Glass Frame which these certificates fits into nicely and are quite attractive. They also sell an 11 X 17 Inch frame with a slim plastic black border which can also be used. The 16 X 20 Inch frame normally sells for \$20.00 but is sometimes on sale for \$15.00.

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE CERTIFICATE ORDER BLANK

I request an 11" x 17" Certificate and certify that I received credit for the Ardennes Campaign. I have enclosed a check for \$15 00 for the Certificate. Please include the following information that I would like on the certificate:

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Serial Number _____

Rank : _____ Unit: _____

Organization: usually Company, Battalion and/or Regiment, & Division

Signature: _____ Date: _____

I certify that I have received the Ardennes Credit

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NAME: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

Telephone: _____ E-Mail: _____

VBOB Member: ☐ Yes ☐ No (not a requirement). Make checks out to VBOB for \$15.00. Orders should be mailed to VBOB Certificate, PO Box 101418, Arlington, VA 22210-4418. Questions can be directed to John D. Bowen, 301-384-6533, Certificate Chairman. Or by e-mail to: johndbowen@earthlink.net
10/18/2008

**2008 BULGE REENACTMENT
63rd Anniversary Commemoration Battle
TO HONOR WORLD WAR II VETERANS
Fort Indiantown Gap PA
22 Jan - 27 Jan 2008**

The World War II Federation invites you to their Battle of the Bulge Reenactment this coming January and they will be honoring the World War II Veterans during the week, with special events scheduled for Friday, 25 Jan 2008.

This is a great week for veterans which allows you to relive your initial days in the Army, living in genuine GI bunks in original WWII barracks. You need only bring a set of sheets and a blanket or sleeping bag and your pillow. All sleeping is on lower bunks. It gives you an opportunity to enjoy the camaraderie of fellow veterans, enjoy WWII videos, peruse material on the Bulge and partake of the hospitality. It will also give you an opportunity to visit the reenactors barracks which they will have transformed back to the days of WWII and be able to interact with them. You are their role-models and they are trying to learn about what it was like back in the 1940s. They do this to honor you.

Veterans may arrive after 1400 hours on Tues 22 Jan 2008. Registration is in Bldg 12-90 on Clement Avenue corner of Howitzer Road. The Veterans Barracks will be Building 12-15. At 2000 hrs, on Tues, they will be showing 1940 Movies in Bldg # 12-15. As usual, the veterans will have a hospitality suite set up in the barracks as well as a memorabilia display brought by individual veterans.

On Friday, the Federation will salute the Veterans with a Reception at 1600 Hours and a Tactical Battle Briefing at 1630 Hours in the Community Club. This will be followed by a Wreath Laying at the VBOB Monument and 21 gun salute at 1700 hours, near the Community Center. In the morning on Friday, Veterans and escorts will visit the VA Hospital in Lebanon PA to which the vets there look forward.

As usual there will be 1940 Movies and hospitality in Bldg #12-15, the Veterans Barracks, all week. For Bulge Veterans there is a discount coupon of \$20.00 from prices of Option A & B below. Contact John Bowen for the coupon.

On Wed, 23 Jan the Flea Market will open at 1400 until 2200 hrs, Thurs., 1300 to 2400 hrs, Fri. from 1000 to 2400 hrs and Sat from 1100 to 1600 hrs.

Registration hours are Tue, 1400 to 2100 hrs; Wed & Thu, 0900 - 1130 hrs, 1400-1630 hours and 1800-2100 hours; Fri, 0900-1130 hrs, 1400-2300 hours; Sat, 0600-0700 hours

On Sat, troops will move into the battlefield at 0900 hrs. Veterans will be transported by bus for a tour of the battlefield 1100-1300 hrs. At 1800 hrs dinner will be served in the Community Club and at 2000 hrs there will be an Evening of Period Entertainment during which the Veterans will act as judges for the 1940's Talent Show.

Option A with a bunk in the barracks and with Dinner on Saturday will be \$67 for the 5 days **Option B** with a bunk but without meal will be \$47.00. **Option C** at \$22 is for Veterans only and is for the Dinner Meal & Entertainment only, for those not staying in the barracks.

If you would like a Registration packet send a self-addressed stamped envelope to John D. Bowen, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring MD 20904-3331, e-mail johndbowen@earthlink.net or go to www.wwiifederation.org

Deadline is 31 Dec 2007.

**The Statue of
the Bulge GI in
Clervaux, Luxembourg**

Could He But Speak

He proudly stands in battle dress
Here in Clervaux today.
What would he say if he could speak
To those who pass his way?

Would he say the men who died
Did not do so in vain,
And would he say the price they paid
Was worth the grief and pain?

Would he caution us of wars
And lessons of the past?
Would he say a future war
This world's could be the last?

Would he say the peace today
Though threatened that it be,
Must be defended and preserved
If we love liberty?

We ponder and we wonder
What would this GI say,
If he could only speak to us
Here in Clervaux today.

...Harold F. Mohn



Their stockings were hung on the branches to dry
in the hopes that the Supply Sgt. soon would be by -

Reprinted from **BULGEBUSTERS**
75th Division Assn. Newsletter
Submitted by Emery B. Antonucci - 75th Div

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NOVEMBER, 2007**

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VBOB Logo Decal - 4"	\$ 1.25		\$
VBOB Windshield Logo - 4"	\$ 1.25		\$
VBOB Logo Stickers - 1 1/2" (in quantities of 10)	10 for \$1.25		\$
Baseball Cap w/3" VBOB Logo Patch - Navy only	\$ 10.00		\$
Windbreaker w/4" VBOB Logo Patch - Navy only Please circle size (they run a little snug): S M L XL XXL XXXL (XXL and XXXL - see prices)	\$ 25.00 (S, M, L and XL) \$ 26.00 for XXL \$ 27.00 for XXXL		\$
VBOB Logo Lapel Pin - 1/2"	\$ 5.00		\$
Miniature VBOB Logo Medal w/Ribbon (pin on type)	\$ 8.50		\$
VBOB Logo Belt Buckle - Silver tone or Gold tone (Please circle choice)	\$ 16.00		\$
VBOB Logo Bolo Tie - Silver tone or Gold tone (Please circle choice)	\$ 16.00		\$
VBOB License Plate Frame w/Logos - White plastic w/Black printing	\$ 5.00		\$
VBOB 100 Sheet Notepad w/Logo - "This Note Is From... A Veteran of the Battle of the Bulge" - White paper with Blue printing	\$ 3.00		\$
BACK IN STOCK Large VBOB Logo Neck Medallion w/ribbon Ideal for insertion in medal shadow box	\$ 25.00		\$
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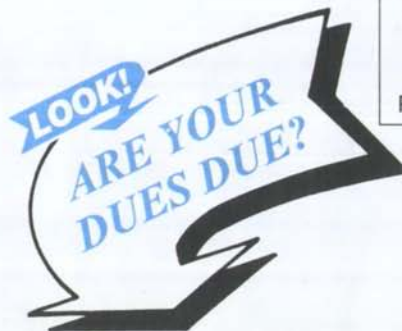
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NOVEMBER, 2007



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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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Unit(s) to which assigned during period December 16, 1944 - January 25, 1945 - Division _____

Regiment _____ Battalion _____

Company _____ Other _____

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

Applicants Signature _____

RECRUITER (Optional)