

# The BULGE BUGLE

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

VOLUME XXVII NUMBER 2

THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

MAY 2008

## JOIN US IN COLUMBUS...

CENTRAL OHIO CHAPTER

Alton Litsinberegger, President

William B. Ruth, Reunion Chairman

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Gene Kohli (202nd Engineer Combat Battalion); Bill Ruth (3rd Armored Division); Lale Ruth; Frank Walsh (705th Tank Destroyer Battalion); Richard Wheeler (517 Infantry Combat Battalion); Katherine Wheeler; Virginia and Alton Litsenberger (257th Field Artillery Battalion, 204th Field Artillery Group, Third United States Army; Ethel and Bob Zimmer (72nd Quartermaster Base Depot; Skip Bissell, Associate Member; K. Nash; Nancy Polisenio (Orange Middle School); John Reichenbach (460th Antiaircraft Artillery Battalion); and Tom Tomastik, Associate Member.

## The General That History Forgot; And One That Popular Lore Created

By Mitchell Kaidy  
87th Infantry Division  
345th Infantry Regiment  
Company D

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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

During the years I was an editor, I exchanged newsletters with other WWII veteran's organizations. I noted that many ceased operations when reunions failed to attract enough members. Of course, one reason was the advancing age of their members.

During its past years, the VBOB reunion location was not known to members until three or four months before the event. Many members had already established their plans for family reunions or vacations. We've changed that faulty practice. We will now announce the reunion locations at least a year in advance.

Another weak factor was that, often, only one city was considered. As an experienced meeting planner and member of an organization of meeting planners, I made connections with the result that Convention and Visitors Bureaus (CV&B) of more than 40 cities invited us to send them our Request for Proposal (RFP).

Our organization has also failed to hold our annual reunions in different geographical locations with too many being held in the Mid-Atlantic area and, over the years, only two in the west or far west. My action meant we could vary our reunion locations by selecting from among the 40 cities who wanted to host us.

I contacted a CVB in a Western city in which we have an active VBOB chapter. The result--we received proposals from 11 hotels in that city of which at least six are highly desirable. The result is that the final plans are being firmed for the 2008 reunion in Columbus, Ohio, and, in addition, we are already planning the 2009 reunion in the far West.

If you have an active chapter, you should give thought to hosting a reunion. The national office can provide experience, advice and great assistance. We shall consider every offer. Address and mail your invitation to host a future reunion to:

**FUTURE VBOB REUNION**  
P.O. Box 101418  
Arlington, VA 22210-4418

### THE CENTRAL OHIO CHAPTER...

...is looking forward to hosting you at the upcoming VBOB Reunion.

So, pack your bags and be ready to participate in the many activities they have planned for you.

In addition to seeing your old friends again, you will meet many new friends from a new location.

The chapter's reunion organizer, Bill Ruth, has been involved in planning many veterans' reunions and has everyone ready and willing to show you a good time. ■

See page 16.



**Demitri "Dee" Paris**

## BATTLE OF THE BULGE DOCUMENTARY

### Independent Film Maker, Larry Cappetto, races to preserve the memories of war veterans

Award winning film maker, Larry Cappetto, and producer of the highly acclaimed public television film documentary series, "Lest They Be Forgotten," will be in Columbus, Ohio, during the 2008 reunion in September to interview veterans of the Battle of the Bulge for his continuing national documentary series.

"Cappetto's search for those surviving veterans has been relentless. In five years, he has interviewed almost 550 combat veterans, assembling one of the largest oral histories ever recorded of Americans at war." (Wyatt Andrews, CBS National News Correspondent)

Veterans interested in scheduling an on-camera interview are asked to please contact Mr. Cappetto ahead of time--spaces are limited.

Contact Larry at: 2145 North 17th Circle, Grand Junction, Colorado 81501. Phone: 970-254-9262. E-mail: [larry@veteranshistory.org](mailto:larry@veteranshistory.org). You can check out his website at: <http://veteranshistory.org>.

### How To Obtain Medals

You will need your discharge paper DD-214 (both sides) but never give up your original. Always furnish a copy. The Army Personnel Center is:

Commander ARPERCEN  
ATTN: DARP-VSE-A  
9700 Page Blvd  
St Louis MO 63132-5200

The personnel center must verify those medals to which you are entitled. The center does not have the medals -- they are at the Quartermaster Depot in Philadelphia. It's a long process -- will probably take at least six months.

[Source: Victory Division News published by editor Will Cook for the 5<sup>th</sup> Armored Division]

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**VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE**

**WEB SITE: [www.battleofthebulge.org](http://www.battleofthebulge.org)**



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### MEMORIES

Kudos to Ray Huckaby, 35th Infantry Division, for his article, "A Soldier Remembers," which appeared in the February 2008 *Bulge Bugle*.

It was one of the most graphic and detailed descriptions of the Bulge I have ever read. Memories came back: been there, seen that, endured that, and done that.

I was leader of a 60mm mortar squad in Company G, 328th Infantry Regiment, 26th Infantry Division. A good share of the time we were bazooka teams, because mortars were useless in the dense forest.

The morning reports for my company indicate I lost two new replacements on Christmas Eve, 1944: Maurice Akers was killed and William Biggs was MIA; January 6, 1945, Vernon Hilt was wounded; January 9, I was shot in the neck; January 10, John Verdugo and William Holshouser wounded--my entire squad was gone.

I returned to the company after two months of recuperation.

At the war's end, I was one of the Lucky few that was still with the original company that landed in France in September 1944.

**Delbert E. Bordner**  
26 INF 328 INF C

### THERMOPYLAE IN THE ARDENNES

I am gratified you published my article "Thermopylae in the Ardennes" in the February 2008 issue of *The Bulge Bugle*.

However, I need to call your attention to the description of the article accompanying the title on the cover page of the issue: "How six battalions of the 99th Division held off five Wehrmacht divisions for six hours."

The six battalions held off the five divisions for **thirty-six** hours, as described on the article (page 6), from 5:00 a.m. December 16 to mid-afternoon December 17. The "held off" time is important because it ties the 99th action to that of the Spartans and their allies in 480 B.C. at Thermopylae, the narrow pass in the mountains leading to the Plains of Thessaly. Some 200,000 Persian soldiers under the tyrant king, Xerxes, were on the march. They tried to break through the ranks of Greek hoplites at the pass, outnumbering them five to one.

Although attacked from the front and back, the Greeks held out long enough for the Greek navy to muster its swift little warships (trieres) and drive off Xerxes' navy trying to land the main body of his huge force on the Greek mainland.

The six battalions of the 99th, outnumbered three and four to one, held off the Germans long enough for Vth U.S. Corps to put in place an impregnable wall of infantry and artillery in front of and on the flanks of the Elsenborn Ridge. The commanders of the 6th Panzer Armee expected the troops and armor of its 1st Ss Korps to be over the ridge no later than dark of December 16, and on their way to capture Vth Corps HQ at Eupen and First U.S. Army HQ at Spa, Belgium. Both of these vital U.S.

command supply hubs were only a few miles west of the Elsenborn Ridge.

The two U.S. divisions, 2nd and 1st, that fought so valiantly and at great cost to beat back the Panzers of the 1st SS Panzer Korps could not have got in place in time to put up the fight they did had not the 99th held the line for those thirty-six precious hours.

**Joseph C. Doherty**  
99 INF 393 INF H

### NEW, GREAT FRIENDS

It is an honor to be an associate member of the Veterans of the Battle of Bulge and receive *The Bulge Bugle*. I read it from cover to cover.

In May 2007, my wife and I traveled to Europe for two purposes: vacation and a WWII tour of the Normandy beaches, museums and cemeteries.

As a side note, we attempted to contact a family my father billeted with 63 years ago during the winter of 1944. My father is T/4 Leonard G. Tuttle (deceased 1999), 654th Engineering Battalion (topographical), Company A. He was fortunate enough to billet with the Mayor of Pepinster, Belgium, Mr. George Duvivier and his wife, Irene. My father, as most GI's, would never offer stories or information about the war--only tears. However, the one story he told over and over again was how wonderful and nice the people of Belgium were. He spoke often about George and Irene Duvivier, they made him feel as if he were back home on the farm in Orangeville, Utah. They cooked homemade meals and many times he and his buddy, Eddie, were given their own beds to sleep in. Battalion operations were set up not far from the middle of town in the Fabrique Ransy, a textile mill--officers' quarters were in the Central Hotel.

My quest was to see if I could contact any remaining family members and thank them for the loving care of one WWII GI (my father). After our incredible visit to Normandy, we traveled toward Pepinster, Belgium. I set out with only a couple of black and white photos and a few names, of which I later found out were maiden names not sir names. My mother did the best she could with the names. Needless to say, I wasn't holding my breath. However, it seems as though someone guided me to the exact spot within 30 minutes of arriving in Pepinster. We entered the city administrative building and the lady behind the front desk, Francoise Julemont, recognized from the photos the faces of Irene and George Duvivier holding their baby girl named Claire. It just so happened that Claire worked with Francoise in the administrative offices as Assistant Mayor. Much to our surprise Francoise called Claire on her cell phone and a meeting was arranged for us the next morning at 10:00 a.m.

We had a very emotional meeting with Claire and her husband, followed by a very tender reunion with her elderly parents, Irene and George (still living at 80+ years). They said they felt my father was there with us. I was shocked to find they had kept every letter and card my father had sent to them during the war and several years afterward. They knew a lot more of me than I did of them. My father was right--they are the most thoughtful, kind people you



could ever meet--and to this day, they honor so greatly the GI's that helped liberate Belgium from Hitler's army.

The next day Claire and her husband took us to the Henry-Chappell Cemetery where I had the opportunity to fold the American flag as taps played at dusk, then to the M&M's Remember Museum, a WWII museum, in Thimister-Clarmont to meet the owner's Marceland Mathilde Schmetz. We became instant friends and this last November they made a trip to the USA to be honored by the military for their work at the museum, and we were fortunate enough that they came to Utah and we were able to donate my father's military uniform, pictures, military papers and dog tags to be displayed in their museum.

Needless to say all of this was meant to be...63 years later...to finally honor one more WWII GI and meet this dear, wonderful family in Pepinster, Belgium. They will be our friends for life.

Dick L. Tuttle  
Associate Member

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### THE 99TH INF IN THE BULGE

The February issue of *The Bulge Bugle* and the article "Thermopyle in the Ardennes" was one of the most complete stories of the 99th Division and the Battle of the Bulge. It brought back some awful memories and things that I was part of.

I had been at Fort Benning, Georgia, for over two years as an assistant instructor in scouting and patrolling in the school of the OCS classes.

One of the former officers I worked with for quite some time requested that I be sent to him. I joined him and the 99th in Belgium. My job was to be the scout. This was my job until March, 1945, when I was MIA in Germany.

Richard Richards  
99 INF 395 INF 1 BN C

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### WE ARE THANKFUL

Oh, Yes, **We will never forget** the middle of December 1944 through almost the end of January 1945. The terror and misery that we experienced in the Ardennes Forest in Belgium. Continuous artillery fire. Our 55 and 105 howitzers, and the German 88's. Very little sleep, and most uncomfortable weather, with snow knee deep, and the temperature below zero. Very cold, horrendous conditions, with only our foxholes to sleep in.

**We readers** were lucky to survive and I am fortunate to have a few buddies that were there living reasonably close in this area: Frank Tichy, 575th Battalion, 11th Armored Division and Frank Witkowski, 75th Infantry. We also occasionally get our good friend Loyd Shelton (who also was there) on the phone from Mesa, Arizona, to discuss and remember those tough times in the Battle of the Bulge.

We are thankful.

Thad Conway  
11 ARMD 575 AAA BN

### A WONDERFUL FEELING

I thank *The Bulge Bugle* for this opportunity to put together this piece for its publication about my visits, since 2004 until today, to the National Naval Medical Center, in Bethesda, Maryland. Let me prelude and write of other things which will help *The Bugle* readers focus better on what has been written.

As a member of Patton's Third Army--our 87th Infantry Division, fought through France, Belgium, Luxembourg, and Germany. After coming across the English Channel during the worst storm in the North Atlantic in 40 years, 15,000 of us landed at La Harve, France, to enter the battle zone on November 27, 1944. We moved toward the City of Metz in Frances' vaunted Maginot Line, capturing the three remaining forts. It was the first time in history that the Line had feel to frontal assault. Nineteen days later, December 16th, the Battle of the Bulge commenced.

On December 23, 1944, the division received orders to proceed to the region of Houffalize. This movement was accomplished in less than 24 hours under bitter winter conditions (20 below zero, lots of snow and fog, in open trucks). We then engaged the German enemy at Moiricy, Belgium, on December 30, 1944.

In rapid succession our division captured and liberated at least 30 towns. From there the division continued its advance East, and left Belgium soil on February 2, 1945, when it crossed over the German border in its push toward Czechoslovakia.

Shortly thereafter, February 8, 1945, after breaching the legendary Siegfried Line in Germany, I was wounded by a German machine gunner aboard a tank near Losheim, and taken to a hospital in Bar Le Duc, France, for medical care. Soon after, I was flown from France to Oxford, England, over the White Cliffs of Dover to the 91st General Hospital for further care--physiotherapy, etc., 64 shots of penicillin over a 16 days' period as a guinea pig experiment. On May 8th, I was in the first convoy to leave England on the Moore McCormick's Line, SS Brazil, bound for New York City. In New York, I was at Harriman General Hospital for a spell and then transferred to Newton D. Baker General Hospital in Martinsburg, West Virginia, for further recuperation and to be near my home in Washington, D.C. Finally, I was discharged on September 4, 1945, from the army with a permanent disability (CDD). I resumed my college education under the historic GI Bill and the rest is history.

So it is that my Military Order of the Purple Heart Chapter 353 in Virginia found out about my medical situation and experience in over seven months of long-term care asked me to help them in there "Welcome Home" Program to meet our returning casualties from Iraq and Afghanistan, who will be in need of vital extensive care over a long period, even in spite of the many advances, procedures, treatment and drugs available today versus what I had in WWII. (Their wounds are much more extensive and serious when compared with generations ago.)

To date, our chapter 353 in Virginia has visited over 24,000 returnees, and I personally have visited over 3,500 of those. (Of note--7,600 were wounded in actual combat action and 16,400 were not battle injured.)

There is one thing I note particularly on our visits. The



families there are so grateful for what we're doing and they and the patients express it in so many ways. Finally, in the recent visits there is a noticeable reduction in patients to see and the hospital staff comment to us in a very pleasurable way: THE SURGE IS WORKING! And the future looks so much better than when we started our program those four years ago.

In closing, I say: the many medals and recognitions I have received for my combat activities from my beloved country, France, Belgium and Luxembourg, fade in importance, compared to how I feel for what I'm doing to give them **hope**, these warriors and heroes of our beloved country, our United States of America, GOD BLESS!!

Joseph F. Zimmer  
87 INF 345 INF B

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### THANKS TO RON

I really enjoy *The Bulge Bugle* reading it from cover to cover. "A Soldier Remembers," from the February, 2008, issue, by Ron Huckaby of the 35th Infantry Division was **exceptionally** enjoyable. I would like to convey my appreciation to him.

I was Battalion Sergeant Major of the 27th Armored Infantry Battalion and our entire battalion headquarters, from battalion commander on down, was captured by the Germans at Niebrück on 22 December, 1944. Nearly all the battalion officers were retaken by our troops the same day, but the enlisted men were all marched off to POW camps for the duration--most of us to 31 March 1945. Mistake there, we were not held until the duration, but until 13 March, 1945.

James I. McGrath  
9 ARMD 27 AIB BN HQ

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### INTERESTING BOOK AVAILABLE

My unit, the 168th Engineer Combat Battalion, was attached to the 106th Division during the Battle of the Bulge, just outside of St. Vith on the Prümberg Ridge.

In 2001, I published the results of my many years of research in a 456-page book which covers not only the Battle of the Bulge but also our time in the Normandy Invasion, the siege of St. Malo, the siege of the submarine pens at Brest, our assault crossing of the Rhine River at a location where no enemy had previously successfully crossed in the last 1,000 years and the march through Germany to the Czech border.

At St. Vith we officially had 9 KIA, 45 WIA, both SWA and LWA, and 179 MIA (mostly eventually determined to be POWs and one BNF (body never found). Of the original complement of 535 who left from Ft. Devens, Massachusetts, very few made it all the way--over 1,600 served in the battalion 1943-1945.

We have a monument on the Prümberg Ridge outside St. Vith which that city has promised to maintain and we also have another monument at the site of the former Ft. Devens with many names inscribed upon it of those who served in our unit.

With the thought that perhaps some of your members or

associates might be interested in obtaining a copy of my book I provide the following information: *Hinder Forward--the 168 Engineer Combat Battalion in the ZI and ETO from May 1943 through November 1945*. The price is \$50.00 per copy in US funds plus \$6.00 for mailing costs and the Maine state sales tax. (Dean J. Jewett, PO Box 148, Saco, Maine 04072)

Keep up the good work, as a life member of VBOB, I hope it will long endure.

Dean F. Jewett  
168 ENGR CMBT BN

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### RIGHT ON, JIM CULLEN

Good for Jim Cullen (Letters to the Editor column, page 5, February, 2008 *Bulge Bugle*). Indeed, "the real story" of the Bulge Battle "will always be the fighting at St. Vith, Trois Pontois," and other points on the northern shoulder of the Bulge. The Germans obviously thought so, too, because their advance plans stress a breakthrough north to Antwerp and they put almost all their armor there.

Thanks to you also for publishing J. C. Doherty's account of the vital defense by the 99th Division near and at Elsenborn Ridge. Their six battalions held off several German panzer divisions December 16-17, thereby bollixing up the whole German timetable and giving other U.S. units time to reinforce the 99th and prevent any breakthrough toward Antwerp. Again, Elsenborn Ridge is on the northern shoulder of the Bulge, nowhere near Bastogne.

All of us already know this. But the public doesn't, and it's important to get this real story out to them.

Bob Bragdon  
2 ARMD 66 AIR 1 BN

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### MEN IN BATTLE NOW

I read all *The Bulge Bugle*.

Yes, I know all about the 99th Division. I had a brother-in-law in that division. I served in the battle too with the 2nd Infantry Division, 9th Infantry Regiment, Company H. There are many men who know a lot about battles there. I was in D-Day+1 until V Day. I received two Purple Hearts, 5 major battle stars, and other ribbons and medals.

I can't sleep now--thing about our men in battle now.

Leonard Huskey  
2 INF 6 INF H

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### CHRISTMAS BREAK

On December 16, 1944, at 5:30 a.m., in Bulligen, Belgium, 30 below zero and 18 inches of snow. The 413th Antiaircraft Artillery Gun Battalion, 49th Brigade, was positioned in the area of Buzz Bomb Alley.

On the 10th of December, three miles or so east of Bulligen we considered our first rest area of combat and Christmas break. It appeared to be almost a dream. We loaned all our spare trucks and drivers out to haul supplies to other units. In this case we were caught with our pants down. I was the gun commander of Battery B and early



that morning every one was asleep in their pup tents and all hell broke loose. The sky lit up with search lights and German gun fire into our bivouac came into our area cutting tops off the trees.

The battalion commander came in from Headquarters and ordered our company to march and retreat to Manchau, Belgium. No spare truck and all spare personal belongs left behind. He ordered me to take a crew of ten men plus a 2 man machine crew and stay put with ammo with 200 shells of armor and air burst shell to protect the retreating convoy and to fire all shells back at the incoming Germans, blow up the gun and walk out if possible.

On the way out I spotted about ten paratroopers in white uniforms about 5 to 15 yards apart and a quarter of a mile away who were encircling my gun crew. I knew something was going to happen. Sure enough they crossed the road behind us and incoming fire was in front of us. About that time several tanks approached up front behind the trees one-quarter mile. I ordered fire and got a kill. Kept firing. Could only see the smoke. We then fired air burst shells parallel with the road in case of following troops. Nothing more came toward us but fire from the front line.

Infantrymen were slipping around the back of the forest and ran into my crew. They captured an SS official and three soldiers who we disarmed. We marched them to Monschau--approximately 15 miles. We managed to get to our outfit at 2:30 and then set up anti-tank fire. We left behind in our retreat about 50 duffle bags and tents.

My gun crew was supposed to be awarded the Silver Star, but that hasn't happened. I got the V for Valor Bronze Star.

**Kenneth L. Reiter**  
413 AAA BN BN

*[Mr. Reiter's article was hand written and we hope we have conveyed it correctly. Mr. Reiter is 93 years-of-age and as he says, "hasn't fell over yet." Thanks for your contribution, Mr. Reiter.]*

## ZACK'S OKAY

*[You may recall, in the November issue Marty Sheeron's article re: the reunion, mentioned that Stanley D. Zack's disappearance from one of the buses had become a topic of conversation. Below is Zack's explanation of his adventure.]*

On that September day, from the Marriott Lincolnshire Resort, we went on a tour of Cantigny Park, Illinois, to visit the First Division Museum. When we finished the tour, I hurriedly made my way to the spot where I had got off the bus, yet not realizing that I had got on the wrong bus.

A few miles out, there was a tourist guide who started to explain in a most wonderful way how the Chicago suburb came to be. She explained why the streets and layouts were different in each suburb. She spoke of the famous people born there--like the author Ernest Hemingway and Frank Lloyd Wright, the designer of those expensive homes in Oak Park, Illinois.

Then she got a call from the VBOB tour and counted her passengers again. She found one too many. Arrangements were made for a taxi to pick me up at our next stop, a rock museum. I was invited to visit the rock

museum but declined hoping my taxi would come.

While we were waiting for the crowd to return, the bus driver and I discovered that, we once born country bumpkins, were now both living the city life. We had an interesting conversation about the adversities we went through during the depression. The people returned, loaded and waited, but no taxi arrived, so we continued to their hotel, deep in the south of the Chicago suburbs.

When the journey ended a taxi was waiting to take me back. When I arrived at the Marriott Resort, going to my room, I could not help thinking about the tourist guide--whoever this young lady was, she gave me \$80 worth of entertainment. And, honestly, I really enjoyed that bus ride.

**Stanley D. Zack**  
5 INF 50 FA BN

## WE SCREWED UP...AGAIN

The February 2008 *Bugle* carried a picture of monument which we identified as having been erected by the Genesee Valley Capter Monument. *[I got my Roman numerals mixed up, I guess.]*

In reality the monument was erected by the VERMONT-NEW HAMPSHIRE-MAINE-TRI-STATE CHAPTER. We picture it again below.



The monument was placed in the Vermont State Veterans Cemetery in Randolph Center, Vermont.

When the cemetery reopens this spring they will have a formal dedication of this beautiful monument.

The efforts expended by a chapter in raising funds, designing and overseeing the erection of a monument should never be overlooked or misidentified and we apologize for our error. ■



## EXCERPTS FROM THE STARS AND STRIPES

*[We have the first pages (only) of some issues of Stars and Stripes, and we thought you might enjoy reading what others had in print.]*

### December 19, 1944--Yanks, Crying in Rage, Tell How Nazis Killed Wounded

Front-line Clearing Station, Belgium, December 18 (AP).-- Muddy, shivering survivors, weeping with rage, told how German tank-men tried with machine guns to massacre 150 American prisoners standing in an open field.

"Those of us who played dead got away later," said T/5 William B. Summers, of Glenville, West Virginia, "but we had to lie there and listen to German non-coms kill with pistols every one of our wounded men who groaned or tried to move."

"Those dirty ----. I never heard of anything like it in my life. Damn them. Give me my rifle and put me in with the infantry. I want to go back and kill every one of those ----."

Summers, who escaped with a gashed hand, was a member of an artillery observation battalion trapped at a road fork by a German armored column which has driven several miles into Belgium since the major Nazi offensive began yesterday.

Heavy guns on the enemy's Tiger tanks quickly shot up more than two dozen American trucks and light armored vehicles. The captured Yanks were then led into a field, and as the German column moved past less than 50 yards away, Nazi gunners deliberately raked the defenseless group with machine guns and machine pistols.

Survivors expressed hope that a majority of the men had escaped with their lives by diving to the ground and lying still, but hours later fewer than a score had made their way back to their own positions.

### December 22, 1944--Monschau Forest's Hellfire Burned Hated Into 1st Army by John Wilhelm

With U.S. First Army, near Stavelot, Belgium, December 20-- In this mist-filled forest outside Stavelot, the tragic story of American soldiers fighting German Royal Tiger tanks with only rifles and bazookas--fighting with tears in their eyes over the extent of the German drive, fighting even when surrounded beyond hope--may be partly pieced together.

The gray-clad hordes, with formations of 70- and 80-ton tanks, were thrown against this area to override the American infantry. The enemy gained much ground, but he has not overrun these soldiers at Stavelot.

East of Stavelot, in the Monschau Forest, is another story--a chaotic story of wrecked American equipment. It is not only a story of American vehicles, bumper to bumper, frantically trying to pull back before the German colossus--it is the story of American troops over-run, surrounded and pounded by guns until a dull glaze formed over their eyes and many surrendered.

**Snap U.S. Prisoners.** German cameramen for the first time in this campaign were able to photograph long lines of American prisoners.

Alongside rows of burnt and blackened American trucks, half-tracks and ambulances, which must have frantically tried to avoid the Luftwaffe, were sprawled American bodies--many American bodies. These were non-fighting units of the First Army who

tried to break away from the German offensive while the ground units fought to hold back the Nazi tide.

Whether it was German artillery or the Luftwaffe which poured destruction into the jammed American columns can only be told by the pictures, but I surmise, from the great air activity on Sunday, when dogfights filled the air, that the Luftwaffe strafed and bombed these columns.

**Only a Few Trails.** To realize what a trap these American columns were in, you must understand Monschau Forest, where there are only a few trails over which equipment could be evacuated. You must visualize huge dumps and large rolling convoys. Then can be seen what happened when the German offensive broke over the area and it was necessary to retreat under bursting shells and bombs.

All this has unbelievably changed the First Army--those still fighting. There is hatred in their eyes, bitterness in their hearts. There are tales of soldiers so filled with lust for revenge that they have fallen on the enemy with knives in their hands.

While more and more German forces are being hurled against the line, the men no longer talk. The sting of defeat is too salty to permit of idle talk--only death to this gray horde will relax these grim faces of men who were once only American youths and business men in uniforms, but now are soldiers from the heart out.

### December 24, 1944--Cooks, MPs Save Luxembourg City

With U.S. Forces, Western Front, December 23 (UP). With cooks, company clerks and MPs fighting side by side, a thin line of doughboys from a battered regiment staved off the attack of an entire German division December 16, it can now be revealed. The action saved the city of Luxembourg from being encircled.

The battle took place in the vicinity of Echternach where GIs fought off waves of German infantry for 48 hours.

"The Germans attacked at dawn after an all-night artillery barrage," the regimental CO said. "We knew they were coming but didn't know where, when, or how many," he added.

"My regiment was spread over ten miles when the division hit us. At the end of the first day they had penetrated our lines nearly a mile. That night they infiltrated our artillery positions.

"I contacted a nearby division for reserves. They sent 60 MPs. We fought like tigers because we were the only troops between the Germans and the city of Luxembourg."

"The men's morale was amazing. They really stacked up a lot of dead Germans," the CO said.

### January 12, 1945--First Red Cross Girl Killed on Duty at Western Front by Arthur White

Ann Kathleen Cullen, of Larchmont, New York, the first American Red Cross girl to die through enemy action on the Western Front, was killed December 20 when a German shell struck a U.S. hospital in Belgium.

She was the second American girl killed by enemy action in a hospital area here. 2/Lt. Frances Slinger, an Army nurse, lost her life October 21 when German guns shelled her field hospital.

Member of a clubmobile group, "Katie" Cullen, 25, joined the ARC in June, 1943, and came to the Continent after a year's service in Britain.

She is buried in a military cemetery in Belgium. ...■

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CHECK TO SEE IF YOUR DUES ARE DUE.



## A SOLDIER AND A PERFECT STRANGER

December 16, 1944

It was December, of 1944, that my regiment of the 106th Infantry Division was plundered in the Battle of the Bulge. As one of the few survivors of 5,000 men of the 422nd Infantry Regiment, I had lost directions as I wandered into a small Belgium village called Anthisnes (Province of Liege).

Being homeless, without rations and needing shelter, it was only natural to seek help in this remote European village in friendly territory. I knocked on the closest entry I could find. On that December morning during the Christmas season, a young 19 year-old Belgium girl named Adele Orban opened her door and heart to me. Indeed, I truly believe that in this life someone guides and watches over us, and their protective spirit is "always" present.

Yes, it was my guardian angel who had pre-arranged this unusual encounter between Adele and me. We both came from two separate worlds; however, we did indeed share a mutual concern--the ravages of war! Our friendship has lasted over a half a century and with such a strong bond we consider ourselves now to be more like brother and sister.

As a young citizen soldier I had the memorable experience of participating in the most decisive battle on the Western Front during World War II. Also, I was able to share that reality with my new Belgium friend, recently liberated from German hands by our own army. It was a remarkable experience that happened during my lifetime and a reminder that indeed--truth sometimes can be stranger than fiction.



The Battle of the Bulge lasted longer than any battle in our nation's history with the largest number of casualties. The official historian of the U.S. Army, Charles MacDonald stated that it was the greatest battle in American history.

America's World War II generation did save the world--not for glory, not for honor and not for lasting tribute. For my buddies who did not return, they deserve

our blessings.

**J. David Bailey**  
106th Infantry Division  
422nd Infantry Regiment  
3rd Battalion  
Company F

*[David advises us that his dear friend, Adele, passed away in April of 2006.]*

## A FOWL STATE OF AFFAIRS

**Kenneth Lenke**  
928th Field Artillery Battalion

*[In the February, 2008, issue we promised you an excerpt from Ken's book U.S. Army Serial Number 37531447. Here it is.]*

Everyone had the German offensive on their minds. Our intelligence section needed information about what was taking place with the enemy in our sector. The best way to obtain this information was to take some prisoners. The task was given to the black 761st Tank Battalion. They, like the 614th Tank Destroyers, were always close by when needed.

Earlier in the campaign, I noticed one of the 761st tanks had a bushel basket secured to the tank near the rear of the run turret. Whenever the tank "wound up" its big engine, a chicken having a short cord tied to one leg and the other end of the cordage secured to the basket, would stand up and loudly squawk its objection. When the tank began to move the chicken would settle back down into the basket as if it enjoyed the ride. Up to this time, the appearance of the tank with the basket and chicken was the object of much good-natured joking and interest-ing black/white commentary. It was definitely a morale booster for all who witnessed the uncommon decoration adorning the Sherman tank driven by the black tankers.

When attached to General Patton's Third Army, the chicken and the basket suddenly vanished. General Patton did not "cotton" to such antics from soldiers under his command. As for the fate of the fowl--I can only surmise it became genuine.

*[Ken has asked for information on the catalytic cigarette lighter in the last issue. I am happy to report that **JOHN M. WELCH, 4TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 12TH INFANTRY REGIMENT**, sent several picture on e-mail and we have forwarded them to Ken.]*



**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.**



# Home Is Where the Yanks Make It



## SHELTERS-- Pre-Ardenne Breakthrough

By Billie Houseman  
561st Field Artillery Battalion

We, the 561st Field Artillery Battalion, arrived in the Ardennes on October 4, 1944, from reducing the submarine pens at Brest, France. We were told this was the ghost front, nothing ever happens here! We went into positions behind the 106th Infantry Division to give longer range fire support.

Our weapon was the 155mm long rifle, better known as the (Long Tom). Since the weather was getting increasingly colder and we did not know how long we would be in these positions, we started to build huts. Since some of the Ardennes was part of a forestation project, many of the trees were in a straight line and thus you could pick how big you wanted to make your hut--10'x10', 10'x20' and so forth.

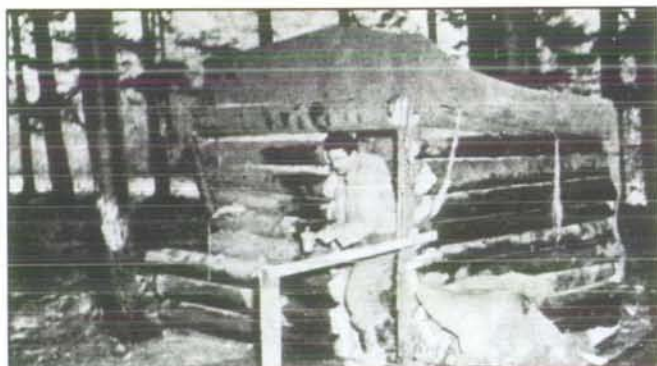
The huts came in many shapes and sizes, based on the ingenuity and materials available to the builder. They ranged anywhere from a square hole in the ground with a pup tent over the top, to a more elaborate hut built from cut trees, to several doors, removed from houses, and nailed together to form a box, with tarpaulin for a roof, pine branches were used for camouflage on the roofs and sides. These did not have to be replaced as the extreme kept them green.

I, personally, was sleeping on the front seat of our kitchen tank. The weather was getting colder each day. Cpl T/5 Arthur Turner, our cook from Chattanooga, Tennessee, had started a hut 10'x10'. He asked me to help him finish it and said it would be big enough for both of us. We acquired rough, sawed lumber from under the Germans' noses and built the hut from these boards. They were about 12"x1" different lengths, they still had the bark on the outer edges. You had to handle them carefully otherwise you got some nasty splinters. These boards were nailed into the tree trunk. Because nails were so scarce, only

one nail was allowed at the end of each board. Turner had already liberated (never stole) a small stove, a window with six small panes, and a door. We made hinges out of leather belting. Turner kept his canvas cot from our days in England and I built a cot from tree branches. This I covered with cardboard.

Some of the fellows came up with an ingenious way of making a roof. Since our powder charges came in a heavy cardboard to be 8" in diameter by about 4' in length, the cannoneers split them down the entire length on one side, then scored them on the opposite side. When you flattened them you had two semi-circular pieces. Since they were impregnated with pitch (to keep the powder dry) they did not leak. They overlapped them to simulate a Spanish tiled roof. We also lined the inside of our hut with flattened cardboard from cartons that our canned goods came in. This made good insulation.

One of the men from our 5th section (the fellows that did a terrific job keeping us supplied with projectiles and powder



*The boys show versatility in architectural styles. Emerging from his cabin, which he built in one day, is Pvt. Winford Heaton, of Elizabethton, Tennessee, in search of food.*

*(Continued)*



## VBOB MARCHES ON Nation's St Patrick's Parade

Our VBOB MD/DC Chapter marchers were a hit again in the 37th annual St Patrick's Parade, in our Nation's Capital, on 16th March. They were well received as they marched down Constitution Avenue from 7<sup>th</sup> Street to 17<sup>th</sup> Street NW.

They were preceded by the outstanding Randolph-Macon Military Academy Band and AF ROTC Marching Unit in order to give a military beat. Our marchers, again dazzled the on-lookers as they marched to this outstanding beat of the Randolph-Macon Band

The theme of this year's parade was "Volunteers Weave Communities Together." The Grand Marshal was Mark H. Tuohey, former Commissioner of Sports and Entertainment of the District of Columbia for the 2008 parade

The Gael of the Year was Anne Burns, recently retired Special Asst at the Embassy of Ireland. Though the weather was sunny there were 35 mile per hour wind gusts which made it challenging for flag carrying.

After a minute of two, our marchers had picked up the beat of the drum with their left foot and were off and in step (mostly)! It is amazing how you never forget that training of so many years ago. A tip of the Irish Top Hat goes to Griffen Diday and Cailleigh Dintino who carried the VBOB banner, Morris Schulman (10th ArmD) in his WWII uniform, John T. Worthington III (295th Engr Combat Bn B Co), Mike Levin (489th Armored Field Artillery, 7th Armored Division), John Bowen, Associate (Flag Bearer), Emmett Lang, (84th InfD), Warren Horn (USMC), Bill Stocket (84th InfD, 784th Ord Co) and his son Randy, and Glenn H. Lahman (6th ArmD 68th Inf). Unfortunately our loyal marcher Warren Chase (38th Cav Rcn) passed away the beginning of February. He and his wife, Millie, could always be counted on to march. This year we had two military vehicles to support us and most of our members rode to the delight of the crowds. Each of the restored vehicles, WWII Jeep, and 3/4 ton Truck were driven by reenactors Tim Ketchum, and Jim Scott respectively.

It was a beautiful Irish Parade. The public again was particularly pleased to see these veterans and applauded and cheered the group continuously all along the parade route. The reviewing stand gave our veterans the only standing ovation of the parade. Many of the younger generation were hollering 'Thank You' among the applause which was appreciated.

Any of you with access to the Internet can see pictures of the parade at <http://www.dcdstpatparade.com>

**OUR SURVIVAL WILL DEPEND...**on our Associate Members. So, to our Regular Members, we ask that you encourage your sons, daughters, wives, other relatives and those interested to join us. They, and they alone, will carry forward the story of the Battle of the Bulge for future generations.

So encourage them to join. You can use the application on the back of this newsletter. Thanks

## Home is Where the Yanks....

(Continuation)

charges) came through a small town that had a hardware store. He liberated 5 or 6 railroad type lanterns and sold them to the highest bidder. Turner bought one (I have no idea how much he paid). But we built a shelf for it. Our dehydrated potatoes, carrots, red beets, etc., were packed in a moisture proof material, that was paper on one side and aluminum foil on the other with a pitch substance in the middle. We put the foil side behind the lantern. Just as we were getting things cozy, Hitler had other ideas and, as everybody knows, all hell broke loose on the morning of December 16, 1944.

Just before dark, one of our L-4 cubs got airborne and reported that the Germans were in our huts, and had fires going in our stoves. ■



Front: Cailleigh Dintino & Griffen Diday; 2nd row Mike Levin, Ienn Lahman, Emmett Lang & Moe Schulman; Back row: Bill Stocket & Warren Horn and John T Worthington III in the truck.



VBOB unit lines up on Mall ready to step off.





# GENERAL ORDERS

## 38th Armored Infantry Battalion

Department of the Army  
Washington 25, D.C.  
12 July 1949

General Orders  
No. 48

II BATTLE HONORS--As authorized by Executive Order 9396 (Sec. I, Bul. 22, WD, 1943), superseding Executive Order 9075 (Sec. III, Bul. II, WD, 1942) the following unit is cited under the provisions of AR 260-15 in the name of the President of the United States as public evidence of deserved honor and distinction. The citation reads as follows:

Combat Command B, 7th Armored Division, composed of the following units:

\*\*\*\*\*

38th Armored Infantry Battalion

\*\*\*\*\*

is cited for outstanding performance of duty in action from 17 to 23 December 1944, inclusive, at St. Vith, Belgium. Combat Command B, 7th Armored Division, was subjected to repeated tank and infantry attacks, which grew in intensity as the German forces attempted to destroy the stubborn defenses that were denying to them the use of the key communication center at St. Vith.

By the second day, the flanks were constantly threatened by enemy forces that had bypassed the St. Vith area and pushed far to the rear in an effort to encircle the command east of the Salm River. The attacking forces were repeatedly thrown back by the gallant troops who rose from their fox holes and fought in fierce hand-to-hand combat to stop the penetrations and inflict heavy losses on the numerically superior foe. As the command continued to deny the important St. Vith highway and railroad center to the Germans, the entire offensive lost its initial impetus and their supply columns became immobilized.

By 21 December, the German timetable was so disrupted that the enemy was forced to divert a corps to the capture of St. Vith. Under extreme pressure from overwhelming forces, this command, which for 6 days had held the St. Vith area so gallantly, was ordered to withdraw west of the Salm River.

By their epic stand, without prepared defenses and despite heavy casualties, Combat Command B, 7th Armored Division inflicted crippling losses and

imposed great delay upon the enemy by a masterful and grimly determined defense in keeping with the highest traditions of the Army of the United States

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Official:  
EDWARD F. WITSELL  
Major General  
The Adjutant General

OMAR N. BRADLEY  
Chief of Staff,  
United States Army

[This citation was sent to us by MORPHIS A. JAMIEL, 7TH ARMORED DIVISION, 38TH ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION.]



"Tell him to look at the bright side of things, Willie. His trees is pruned, his ground is plowed up, an' his house is air-conditioned."

"This is undoubtedly the greatest American battle of the war and will, I believe, be regarded as an ever-famous American victory."



SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL, addressing the House of Commons following the Battle of the Bulge.



# REUNIONS

**1ST INFANTRY DIVISION**, August 20-24, 2008, Colorado Spring, Colorado. Contact the society at: 1933 Morris Road, Blue Bell, Pennsylvania 19422. Telephone: 215-661-1969.

**3RD MARINE DIVISION**, July 30-August 3, 2008, Iselin, New Jersey. Contact: Bill Krueger, 7622 Highland Street, Springfield, Virginia 22150-3931. Telephone: 703-451-3844.

**4TH INFANTRY DIVISION**, July 14-20, 2008, Indianapolis, Indiana. Contact: Bruce Gass. Telephone: 217-543-3641.

**5TH ARMORED DIVISION**, August 21-24-2008, Louisville, Kentucky. Contact: Patrick DeMico, 2216 Longview Drive, Geensburg, Pennsylvania 15601. Telephone: 724-834-0367.

**8TH ARMORED DIVISION**, July 8-12, 2008, Annapolis, Maryland. Contact: Lowell Mock %S. B. Bishop, 1416 Laurel Hills Circle, Jefferson City, Tennessee 37760-5241. Telephone: 865-475-2883.

**11TH ARMORED DIVISION**, August 10-17, 2008, Boston, Massachusetts. Contact: 11th Armored Division, 2328 Admiral Street, Aliquippa, Pennsylvania 15001.

**14TH ARMORED DIVISION**, August 27-31, 2008, Kalamazoo, Michigan. Contact: Harold Kiehne, 927 Wilson Ct, LaCrosse, Wisconsin 54601. Telephone: 608-783-1931.

**30TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION**, June 5-8, 2008, Dallas, Texas. Contact: Randy Hanes, 6490 Ridgmont Drive, Dallas, Texas 75214-1619. Telephone: 214-363-3826.

**78TH INFANTRY DIVISION**, September 24-28, 2008, Louisville, Kentucky. Contact: John Pittenger, 1434 Rosewood Avenue, Louisville, Kentucky 40204. Telephone: 502-451-3731.

**80TH INFANTRY DIVISION**, August 13-16, 2008, Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Contact: Eugene O'Neil, 4718 Colonel Darnell Place, Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772. Telephone: 301-627-1793.

**84TH INFANTRY DIVISION**, August 29-31, 2008, Branson, Missouri. Contact: Daryl Mitchell. Telephone: 417-725-1053.

**90TH INFANTRY DIVISION**, August 14-17, 2008, Irving, Texas. Contact: James R. Reid, Sr., 17 Lake Shore Drive, Willowbrook, Illinois 60527-2221. Telephone: 630-789-0204.

**101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION, 501ST PARACHUTE INFANTRY REGIMENT**, June 17-22, 2008, Albany, New York. Contact: Ann McKendry, 16 Overhill Road, Melville, New York 11747. Telephone: 631-673-1014.

**297TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION**, June 4-6, 2008, Owensboro, Kentucky. Contact: Hal Miller, 5251 Windy Hollow Road, Owensboro, Kentucky 42301. Telephone: 270-785-4088.

**501ST PARACHUTE INFANTRY REGIMENT**, June 18-22, 2008, Albany, New York. Contact: Ann McKendry, 16 Overhill Road, Melville, New York 11747.

**771ST FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION**, May 1-4, 2008, Hunt Valley, Maryland. Contact: Chris Christofferson, 4020 - 36th Avenue Court, Moline, Illinois. Telephone: 309-762-37881.



## 2008 VBOB Reunion September 9 – 14, 2008 The Ramada Plaza Hotel and Conference Center 4900 Sinclair Road Columbus, OH 43229

Room rate \$89.90 per night includes all taxes  
Free shuttle to and from the Columbus Airport  
Reunion highlights:

- City tour, including the Motts Military Museum.
- US Air Force Museum – see over 300 aircraft and missiles and roar into space in the IMAX theatre.
- The Olentangy School District Veterans' Day program will honor VBOB

## COLUMBUS STYLE...

### ARTS AND CULTURE

Experience Columbus' thriving performing and visual arts scene with touring Broadway performances and professional ballet, symphony, opera, acting troupes and world-class museums. Downtown's **Theatre Row** showcases the city's performing arts in a trio of lavishly restored historic theaters.

### DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS

Downtown is filled with vibrant districts, full of shopping, restaurants and entertainment spots—all within walking distance of the Greater Columbus Convention Center. The ever-growing **Arena District** surrounds Nationwide Arena, while the **Short North Arts District** houses the best collection of art galleries between New York and Chicago. South of downtown are the historic **Brewery District** and **German Village**, filled with charming brick homes, shops, restaurants and nightlife.

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My esteem in this country has gone up substantially.  
It is very nice now--when people wave at me, they  
use all their fingers.

--President Jimmy Carter



## THE BULGE: A REMEMBRANCE

*[The above titled article appeared in the November-December 1993 issue of Infantry magazine. It was authored by Lt Col Albert N. Garland (USA-Retired).]*

On the morning of 20 December 1944, I was a first lieutenant commanding Company L, 334th Infantry Regiment, 84th Infantry Division. For the past month we had been in almost continuous action as part of the U.S. XIII Corps, Ninth U.S. Army, in and around the North German towns of Prummern, Beeck, Wurm, and Lindern. (For part of that month, we were under the operational control of the British XXX Corps, then commanded by Lieutenant General Brian Horrocks.) Our primary objective from the beginning was the Roer River, and we were getting close to it despite strong German resistance and miserable weather conditions.

I had been told the previous evening that our battalion--the 3rd Battalion--was being pulled out the lines for a short stay at the division's rest center at Eygelshoven, a small Dutch town that lay just across the border some 10 or 12 miles from our present location. I had also been told that my mess crew and its equipment was going there right after it had delivered a hot breakfast on the 20th, and that I could expect a number of two-and-a-half-ton trucks to reach me shortly after the mess crew departed. These trucks would take my company to Eygelshoven, at which time I would release them to their parent unit. (If I remember correctly, these trucks belonged to a quartermaster truck company, one of several such units then supporting the division.)

My mess crew arrived with our hot breakfast early on 20 December and left about an hour later. This mess sergeant and I talked about his going to Eygelshoven, and he promised he would have a good meal ready for us when we got there about noon.

At about 0900 the trucks arrived and I soon had the company loaded and ready to go. As we pulled out to become part of the battalion's convoy, my soldiers were in good spirits, thinking ahead to several days in war, dry billets among a civilian populace that really seemed to care for them.

We did not reach Eygelshoven that morning. (We did get there eventually, but much later--February 1945.) I did not know at the time, but shortly after we started out the battalion commander received orders to head for Aachen, which lay in the opposite direction.

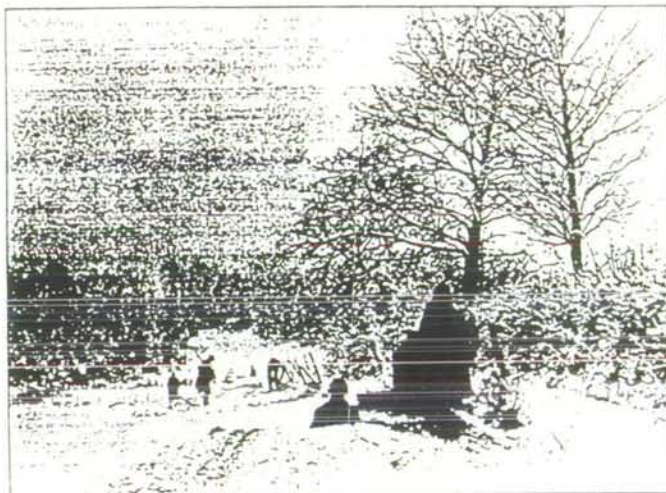
When we reached Aachen we were told we were going to Belgium, but where in Belgium no one seemed to know. Why we were going was another unanswered question. My main concern was for my mess crew: I kept wondering if the mess sergeant had been told about the changes in plans, and whether I would ever see my cooks again.

I don't think anyone in the convoy that day had any idea of the extent of the German breakthrough, or what steps were being taken to counter it. (We found out much later that we had followed the 7th Armored Division, another Ninth Army Unit, to Belgium. We did run across some of that division's rear echelon units, but never encountered any of its combat elements.)

We paused for a short break in Liege, where I had to turn over to the MPs a truckload of my soldiers who were designated to

serve as guides along the way to our final destination. We still did not know where that was, and I screamed and hollered about giving up my soldiers, but lost the argument. With the way things were going, and with so little information, I feared I would never see those men again--the same fear I had about my mess crew. (The soldiers did get to me in the next few days, seemingly none the worse for their experiences.)

From Liege we headed almost due south and reached the town of Marche early in the evening. (It seems to me that we traveled almost 130 miles.) We were ordered off the trucks and into defensive positions on the outskirts of the town. We had no maps of the area, we did not know where the Germans were, and we did not know what we were expected to do. We knew there were other U.S. units around but did not know where they were. A 7th Armored Division aid station was just closing down and leaving, but the medical personnel could tell us little about the situation.



*[Apologies for the quality of the photo which appeared with the article.] Caption: U.S. Infantrymen of the 84th Division in the Battle of the Bulge. Units of the division are supporting troops crippled by the German counterthrust, 4 January 1945.*

Two days later my company was defending a three-mile front that ran from one small Belgian town--Marenne--to another equally small one--Menil. We weren't sure who was on our left, but a sister company was on our right, across a small valley, in the town of Verdenne. It, too, had a wide front to defend.

I kept one platoon in town with me, plus a platoon of tank destroyers that had been sent up by someone in the rear. My other two rifle platoons occupied strong points along a wooded ridge that ran almost to Menil. They used foot patrols to keep in touch with each other, with me, and eventually with a U.S. unit that appeared in Menil. We also had wire communications with each other, but we could communicate with battalion headquarters only by radio.

We did know we had one heck of a lot of artillery in support and were told to call for it on the slightest German provocation. That we did, in a big way, even when one German force broke through the Verdenne defenders and circled to our rear. There it stayed in a wooded area

(Continued)



**THE BULGE: A REMEMBRANCE** (Continuation)  
about 1,000 yards away until the day after Christmas. Actually, that German unit's advance had been halted by our battalion's reserve company and by other companies from the regiment that had been fed into the fight. The only thing we knew for certain, however, was that we were to stay where we were as long as we could.

We received a welcome surprise early on 26 December when our mess crew arrived with a Christmas dinner, which featured turkey and all the trimmings. (Well, almost all of them!) My mess sergeant told me he had been trying to get in touch with me for several days, but had not been able to do so. He had finally found a back road into Marenne that skirted the German force in our rear, and had received permission from battalion to try to get to us with some hot food. He and his crew were a most welcome sight, and the platoon carrying parties were soon on their way to pick up their share of the food.

Unfortunately, before we could distribute the food, and before the carrying parties arrived, I was told by the leader of the platoon I had kept in town that the German force that had been in our rear was now coming in our direction, down the valley between Marenne and Verdennes. It was still early in the morning, and he told me that while he could not make out the German vehicles, he was sure--from the sound of their engines and the noise their tracks were making--that they were headed for our town.

I instructed him to pull his "daisy chains" (antitank mines tied together) across the street (there was only one in town), and I alerted the tank destroyer platoon leader to get his vehicles cranked up to take on the approaching German armor. From what information I had, I assumed we still had some time before the Germans came in. It was a sizable force headed our way. I knew because we had been dueling with those people for the past several days.

I was sadly mistaken about how much time we had; I had no sooner finished talking with the tank destroyer commander than the lead German vehicles were coming down the street. Apparently, my platoon had not been able to place its mines across the roadway, and tank destroyers were now practically helpless, since each was in a separate building and not prepared to fight.

Our few bazooka rounds bounced harmlessly off the side of the lead German tank, which was a monster, so I did the only thing I could: I called for an artillery concentration right on top of us. Fortunately, we had plotted just such a concentration, thinking we might need it at a future date. I had some difficulty convincing the artillery liaison officer at battalion headquarters that I knew what I was doing, but he finally approved the shoot.

I managed to get word to my other two platoons as to what was happening in Marenne, and told the farthest one out to alert the U.S. unit it had made contact with in Menil. I ordered the nearest one to take up positions on the west edge of town where it might pick off any German stragglers, but I warned the platoon leader about the concentration that was about to come in. Those of us still in town headed for cellars.

I don't know how many artillery battalions fired that concentration for us, but there must have been quite a few. Any German soldiers and vehicles that did not see their end in Marenne fled the town, only to be mopped up by my two platoons and the unit in Menil. Unfortunately, I think we took the second stories off most of the houses in Marenne and deposited them in the street.

But I came up out of my cellar grinning from ear to ear and very happy to be alive. So were the few men I still had with me, including the mess crew, none of whom had ever been through anything like this. To our sorrow, though, we saw that a German tank had flattened the trailer that held our Christmas meal.

My company was relieved several days later, and we moved to a reserve position, strangely enough in what was left of Verdennes, the town just across the valley, although it took us several days and lots of walking in what seemed to be circles to get there.

Still later, beginning on 3 January 1945 in a driving blizzard, our battalion was committed as part of a large U.S. counter-attacking force (the VII Corps) to close the bulge the Germans had driven in our lines. (Three days later, I was lying in a roadside ditch trying to hide from the effects of a German artillery bombardment that was shredding the tops of the trees that bordered the ditch and covered the surrounding hills and valleys. My radio operator, just behind me tugged on one of my boots. When I turned toward him, he motioned that I had a call on the radio, which was on the battalion command net. I inched back to him, reached for the mike, and gave my call sign. Our battalion S-1 was on the other end. He said he just wanted to let me know that Headquarters First Army had just approved a battlefield promotion to captain for me, effective 4 January. Rather sarcastically, I suppose, I accepted the news, which was the last thing I needed to hear at the time, and asked him to get me a set of captain's bars for when and if I ever got out of that ditch alive!)

We took part in the rest of the so-called Battle of the Bulge and ended our stint in Belgium in late January in the small town of Beho. (I don't remember when I got my bars.)

In early February, we finally made it to Eyselshove and those warm, dry billets. And for those of us who were left--there weren't many--it was good to be home.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Lt Col Albert N. Garland, U.S. Army Retired, served as editor of INFANTRY before his retirement from the Army in 1968 and again as a civilian from 1983 to 1992. During an earlier assignment to the U.S. Army Center of Military History, he co-authored *Sicily and the Surrender of Italy*, a volume in the Army's official World War II series. He edited several other military books, including *Infantry in Vietnam*. ■*

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The H-bomb rather favors small nations that don't as yet possess it; they feel slightly more free to jostle other nations, having discovered that a country can stick its tongue out quite far these days without provoking war, so horrible are war's consequences. *E.B. White*

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**PACK YOUR BAGS AND BE READY  
FOR THE VBOB REUNION  
COLUMBUS, OHIO  
SEPTEMBER 9-14, 2008**



**VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE, INC.  
RAMADA PLAZA HOTEL AND CONFERENCE CENTER  
COLUMBUS, OH  
SEPTEMBER 9- 14, 2008**

**REUNION PROGRAM**

• **Tuesday, September 9, 2008**

- 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm** Registration headquarters Ramada Plaza Hotel and Conference Center
- 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm** Wine and cheese reception (compliments of the Ramada Plaza)  
Dinner on your own

• **Wednesday, September 10, 2008**

- 12 noon – 5:00 pm** Registration headquarters Ramada Plaza Hotel and Conference Center
- 8:30 am** Bus departs for Motts Military Museum. Columbus City driving tour. Return to hotel about 1:00pm. Lunch on your own.  
Dinner on your own

• **Thursday, September 11, 2008**

- 9:00 am** Bus departs for Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. Tour the US Air Force Museum. Lunch on your own. Return to the hotel about 4:30 pm.  
Dinner on your own

• **Friday, September 12, 2008**

- 8:30 am** Bus departs for Orange Middle School, lunch included; return to the hotel about 3:00pm.
- 6:30 – 9:30 pm** Oktoberfest buffet dinner with music  
Video presentation; photos of veterans, family and friends will be shown during dinner.

• **Saturday, September 13, 2008**

- Free time and lunch on your own
- 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm** General membership meeting
- 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm** Reception (cash bar)
- 7:00 pm** Annual banquet

• **Sunday, September 14, 2008**

- 7:30 am** Farewell breakfast

**Hospitality Room:** Location and times will be posted in the registration room, 6<sup>th</sup> floor

See “Highlights and Schedule Information” sheet for details



VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE, INC. ANNUAL REUNION

# REGISTRATION FORM

REV 3/26/08

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Division: \_\_\_\_\_ Regiment: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Wife/Guest Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Airline \_\_\_\_\_ Flight Number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Arrival date \_\_\_\_\_ Arrival time \_\_\_\_\_  
 Departure Date \_\_\_\_\_

	People	Cost/ Person	Total Cost
<b>Registration Fee</b> (all attendees must register)	_____	<b>\$ 20</b>	\$ _____
<b>Tuesday, September 9, 2008:</b>			
Wine and cheese reception (compliments of the hotel)	_____	<b>Free</b>	
Dinner on your own			
<b>Wednesday, September 10, 2008:</b>			
Motts Military Museum and City tour	_____	<b>\$35</b>	\$ _____
Lunch and dinner on your own			
<b>Thursday, September 11, 2008:</b>			
US Air Force Museum, lunch on your own	_____	<b>\$35</b>	\$ _____
Dinner on your own			
<b>Friday, September 12, 2008:</b>			
Orange Middle School, lunch included.	_____	<b>\$25</b>	\$ _____
Octoberfest buffet dinner	_____	<b>\$35</b>	\$ _____
<b>Saturday, September 13, 2008:</b>			
Free time in the morning			
General membership meeting	_____		
Reception (cash bar)			
Banquet (indicate preference)			
Prime Rib _____ or Salmon _____	_____	<b>\$40</b>	\$ _____
<b>Sunday, September 14, 2008:</b>			
Farewell breakfast	_____	<b>\$15</b>	\$ _____
<b>Total amount enclosed</b> (all taxes & gratuities included)			\$ _____

- See Highlights and Schedule Information Sheet for Details

Mail registration form and check to  
 Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge • P.O. Box 101418 • Arlington, VA 22210-4418  
**REGISTRATION RECEIPT DEADLINE-SEPTEMBER 1, 2008 - AFTER  
 THAT DATE BRING FORM.**

(Refunds for cancellations, will be honored in whole or in part, depending on availability of funds.)



# EXPERIENCE COLUMBUS

## VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE 26TH ANNUAL REUNION

### COLUMBUS REUNION HIGHLIGHTS AND SCHEDULE INFORMATION

#### INTRODUCTION

We are planning to have people from the Central Ohio VBOB Chapter assist people at the airport when they arrive. Therefore please fill in the blanks about arrival time, etc. on the Registration Form.

Our Annual VBOB Reunion will convene at the Ramada Plaza Hotel and Conference Center to continue with the 63rd Anniversary celebration.

The Hospitality Room is there for you to socialize and enjoy the many exhibits, photo books and Battle of the Bulge memorabilia. The Hospitality Room hours will be posted in the lobby of the hotel.

#### REGISTRATION FEE

All who attend the VBOB Reunion must pay the registration fee. Wreaths, nametags, programs, table decorations, hospitality room, etc., are paid for from this fee.

The Quartermaster will also be available for your purchase of BOB items.

#### •TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2008

##### • Welcome Wine and Cheese Reception (6:30 pm – 7:30 pm)

Compliments of the Ramada Plaza Hotel

- Dinner is on your own. The hotel has a restaurant.

#### •WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2008

• Motts Military Museum and Columbus City Tour – Bus departs hotel at 8:30am – **The Motts Museum** contains exhibits, artifacts, etc. from the Revolutionary War up to the present. We will conduct our wreath laying ceremony at the Museum. The **Columbus City** tour includes the Brewery District, German Village, The Short North, Italian Village, Victorian Village, Ohio State University (including the Ohio Stadium-Schottenstein Center-Bill Davis Baseball Stadium, Jessie Owens Memorial Stadium, Woody Hayes Athletic Center), Jack Nicklaus Museum, Ohio State House, Ohio Veterans Plaza and Battelle Riverfront Park. Return to the hotel at 1:00pm. **Lunch on your own.**

- Dinner is on your own. The hotel has a restaurant.

#### • THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2008

• **The US Air Force Museum** at Wright Patterson Air Force Base is the largest and oldest military aviation museum in the world, boasting more than **400 aerospace vehicles** -- many rare and one-of-a-kind. The **Air Power Gallery** houses one of the world's top collections of World War II aircraft and a variety of engaging and evocative exhibits to tell the proud story of the U.S. Army Air Forces during the war. **The Missile and Space Gallery** is contained in a silo-like structure that stands 140 feet high. Visitors can view missiles such as the Titan I and II and Jupiter. **Lunch on your own. Return to the hotel at 4:30pm**

- Dinner is on your own. The hotel has a restaurant.

#### •FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2008

• **Orange Middle School** – The students will prepare a program to honor the veterans. At the conclusion of the assembly the students meet with the veterans to learn more about the battle of the bulge. Lunch included.

- **Octoberfest buffet dinner with music.**  
6:30pm to 9:30pm

#### •SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2008

- Free time and lunch on your own
- **General Membership Meeting (2:00 pm – 4:00 pm.)**  
Location will be posted in the lobby.
- **Reception (6:00 p.m.) cash bar**
- **Annual Battle of the Bulge Military Banquet (7:00 p.m.)**

#### •SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2008

• **Farewell Breakfast (7:30 am)** - come and say goodbye to all the reunion members at a private breakfast buffet. Don't forget to bring your cameras for last minute pictures.

**Bus departure times will be in the packet that you receive when you register.**



## **Ramada Plaza Hotel and Conference Center**

4900 Sinclair Road – Columbus, OH 43229

Tel. 614-854-6008 – Fax 614-846-3251

Toll free 1-877-609-6086

[www.ramadaplazacolumbus.com](http://www.ramadaplazacolumbus.com)

# **WELCOME**

## **VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE**

September 9 – 14, 2008

## **HOTEL RATES**

The hotel is offering a two-day window before and after the reunion dates at a rate of \$89.90 per night, single or double occupancy. This rate includes all taxes. In lieu of using the toll free number listed above for making your reservations you may call the Ramada Plaza Hotel and Conference Center at 614-846-0300, ask for Annetta Chesney and say you are with the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge group. We suggest you guarantee your reservation with a charge card. Check-in time is 3:00 p.m. and checkout is 12:00 p.m. In the event you need to cancel your reservation, please inform the hotel 48 hours prior to the day of scheduled arrival. Reservation requests received after September 1st will be confirmed on a space available basis.

### **Complimentary shuttle service to and from Port Columbus Airport**

**Hotel amenities:** Complimentary shuttle service within a 5 mile radius of the hotel, based upon availability. Indoor pool, spacious whirl pool, fitness center, full service restaurant and lounge. Free wireless Internet service. Ample free parking. RV's are welcome, however, we do not have hook-up facilities. Hotel requests that you do not use your RV for overnight sleeping.

**Sleeping room amenities:** coffee, tea, and decaf, with coffee makers, irons and ironing boards, hair dryer

### **DIRECTIONS TO THE HOTEL**

**FROM PORT COLUMBUS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (about 12 miles):** Exit the airport, take I-670 to I-71 North. Take I-71 North to Morse Road Exit (Exit 116). Turn left under freeway to the first street, Sinclair Road. Turn right, one block to hotel.

**FROM EAST OR WEST:** Take I-70 to I-71 North. Take I-71 North to Morse Road Exit (Exit 116). Turn left under freeway to the first street, Sinclair Road. Turn right, one block to hotel.

**FROM NORTH:** I-71 South to Morse Road Exit (Exit 116). Ramp ends at Sinclair Road. Turn right to hotel entrance

**FROM SOUTH:** Take I-71 North to Morse Road Exit (Exit 116). Turn left under freeway to the first street, Sinclair Road. Turn right, one block to hotel.



## MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

Gregory C. Hodges has contacted us to ask if any of you could provide information regarding his grandfather's cousin: **GENERAL COURTNEY HICKS HODGES, COMMANDER, 1ST UNITED STATES ARMY.** Gregory also had a relative who served as a B-17 radio operator in the **8TH UNITED STATES ARMY AIR FORCE.** If you can provide any information or know of any association for either of these groups, please contact Gregory at: PO Box 82, Llalla, Washington 983359.

Penny Winehold, daughter of **JOHN B. LUTZ, 10TH ARMORED DIVISION, 3RD TANK BATTALION, B,** would like to determine if her father is the oldest living veteran of the Battle of the Bulge--particularly in the State of Pennsylvania. John is 99 years old and will be 100 December 25th, 2008. If you know someone older write to Penny at: 704 South East Street, Coudersport, Pennsylvania 16915.

**EDWARD CARVALHO, 244TH ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION,** would like to know if the Belgian Government is going to give a Belgian Medal for those who participated in the Ardennes. If you can help, write to Edward at: 56 Shove Street, Fall River, Massachusetts 02724.



"You say it's a bum liver, Berrydingle, and I say it's a split spleen. Well, I suppose your guess is as good as mine!"

### REMEMBRANCE

*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.*

*Ed's note: Hey o'timer, kinda brings a tear  
to your eye, doesn't it?*

## MALMEDY

Milton wrote of Man and God,  
Khayyam, of Pots and Potter —  
my verse has a lesser theme,  
an act of human slaughter.

The scene, a cross-roads clearing,  
a forest of towering fir;  
the captured men of the 285  
and a column of German armor:

The show began with a pistol shot.  
A surgeon in line fell dead.  
A private was the next to fall,  
a pistol slug in his head.

Rifles began their staccato fire  
at the men now clutching ground.  
Machine guns joined the chorus,  
from Hell, the sight and sound.

A writhing sea of human flesh,  
shuddering with each blast —  
machine guns lashed the anguished waves  
till all were still at last.

Then to finish the deed begun,  
the killers walked the field,  
with pistol and with rifle butt,  
bayonet and boot, spike-heeled.

The self-appointed super men,  
Teutonic warriors bold,  
bungled, and some lived to tell,  
the story I have told.



### Up Front Bill Mauldin

*"Why th'  
hell  
couldn't  
you have  
been born  
a beautiful  
woman?"*



## How Active Is Your VBOB Chapter?

An active chapter is one that is likely to retain members. Particularly when it exposes them to the public and results in good publicity for them and the veterans who are members of The Greatest Generation.

The Southern Arizona Chapter in Tucson has monthly luncheon meetings which include a speaker or a video presentation. They have a summer picnic with members and Their chapter board of directors meets every month.

On November 12, 2007, they were awarded the "Best Veterans Theme Trophy" by participating in a parade with more than 100 entries. They also received the First Prize Sweepstakes Trophy.

The chapter participated with 20 other veterans' organization in a massing of the colors on November 11<sup>th</sup>. The colors were carried by local ROTC AND Cub and Boy Scouts.

On Veterans' Day, the chapter was guest of honor at an event hosted by the Tucson office of the F.B.I.

The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual (note 11<sup>th</sup> annual) State Wide VBOB reunion was held on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2007 in Case Grande, Arizona. The VBOB contingent included 26 members of the Tucson Chapter and 20 members of the Southern Arizona Chapter. The two chapters rotate in hosting this annual reunion.

The Chapter has a monument in Presidio Park in downtown Tucson which was pictured in the August 2007 issue of The Bulge Bugle.

**NOTE:** Article VI of our bylaws requires every Chapter to conduct an appropriate service such as a memorial service in remembrance of the December 16<sup>th</sup> attack of the Battle of the Bulge. Does your chapter?

### WHEELCHAIR RENTAL AT REUNION

If you will need a wheelchair during your stay at the reunion you can call either of the following:

Frances E. Welsh: 614-873-3497  
Columbus Medical Equipment: 614-294-5385 or 800-282-1395

Cost is \$45.00 for the length of the reunion.

## "M" COMPANY MEMORIES...

### THE LOAF OF BREAD

Lou Balin was the mess sergeant. He was a solidly built man with a round face who reminded one of Babe Ruth.

The weather was miserable. Road traffic was non-existent. The Air Corps said, "Ceiling's too low for flying." The Germans had a secret weapon. How else could we be strafed when the "ceiling's too low to fly?"

The line of troops of "M" Company, 346th Regiment, existed on K-Rations. K-Rations made you do things...like open the waxed box and discard everything except the high energy bar, the four cigarettes, heat tab and toilet paper that had been colored khaki. (The dictionary defines khaki as brownish yellow.) (Yes!)

The cooks had turns standing guard as Lou Balin sought a way to get something hot to the line troops. Rations were low and with weather conditions continuing to worsen, he ordered the kitchen truck to park alongside a low, stone farm building.

During the night the snow stopped and the winds diminished. Shortly after dawn the barn door opened and out stepped a farmer leading a cow. The cow was staked out with a bale of hay. That night as the cooks walked post, Balin said, "I'm going to look about." Fifteen minutes later a shot rang out....

The next morning a messenger came up to the dug-in line troops. The messenger said, "Small groups should take turns going behind the hill for food." Miracle! The cooks were there with warm cans of food...and what food--Swiss steak!

Balin said, "I was checking on the farmer and decided to enter the barn. A large, dark shadow moved toward me. "Password," I said three times. Still there was no answer and the figure came on. I squeezed the trigger. Some sort of clanging occurred as the form fell.

One of the cooks mentioned how compassionate Balin was concerning the missing cow, as he handed the farmer a loaf of bread.

*[This story appeared in the 87th Infantry Division's newsletter "Golden Acorn News," September, 2000. It was submitted by GEORGE WATSON, 87TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 346TH INFANTRY REGIMENT, COMPANY M.]*

### AFGHANISTAN AND IRAQ

Several of the association newsletters we receive indicate that they have members serving our country in Afghanistan and Iraq.

The thoughts of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge are with them everyday and we pray for their safe return. ■

**Oh, they may walk with a little less spring in their step and their ranks are growing thinner but let us never forget, when they were young, these men saved the world.**

President William J. Clinton



## STUDENTS' CONCERN PROMPTS WWII SUMMARY

*Recently I received a surprise package from Ms. Jill Klasson, a social studies teacher from Calhoun High School in Merrick (New York). She reported that her father had served in an infantry unit during the Battle of the Bulge. She was inspired by an article by Saul Friedman in the December, 2007, issue of Newsday, and shared it with her class in global studies. After she completed the WWII phase of instruction, her students knew nothing about the Battle of the Bulge but were keenly interested in knowing more. Seven students wrote letters thanking veterans for the important part they played and the hardships they suffered to break Hitler's grip on the world. The teacher concluded saying, "Please share these small expressions of gratitude with other veterans."*

*Therefore, I have undertaken to write a brief summary of some of the features of World War II that make it stand out.*

Adolf Hitler mesmerized Germany with his persuasive oratory and his grandiose scheme for world domination. He assumed the title of Fuhrer, and the German people went along with him. His holocaust campaign, mainly consisting of the Jewish population for extinction, was brutal and his victims ran into the millions. How could anyone have predicted that this very simple man, who entered the German army as a private in World War I, would only attain the rank of corporal four years later!

Hitler started World War II in September, 1939, with the conquest of Poland and proceeded with other countries of Europe. Although his objective was the conquest of Moscow, Stalin kept throwing reinforcements in Hitler's path, making the capture of the Russian capital impossible.

On Sunday, December 7, 1941, the United States was attacked without warning by Japan. Early on that fateful date, they attacked Pearl Harbor, sinking many of our ships with heavy personnel casualties. At 1:00 p.m. the Japanese ambassador delivered a message to Washington declaring that Japan was at war with the United States. Two days later Germany declared war on us. We were now in World War II.

Starting on December 8th, volunteers flooded the recruiting stations, not waiting for their draft numbers to be called. All branches of the service knew that expansion required a large influx of new officers and invited troops in the enlisted ranks to apply for officer candidate school. (At that time, the air force was under the command of the army and because a separate branch of the service in 1947.) The Army Chief of Staff was General George C. Marshall, who took office on September 1, 1939, and stayed in that position until fall 1945.

Intensive training and materiel manufacturing was at its peak. On June 6, 1944, a large contingent of troops invaded the Normandy Coast of France, with heavy casualties particularly on Omaha Beach. General Dwight D. Eisenhower, the allied commander in Europe, was pleased with army progress and predicted that the war in Europe would end by Christmas. That proved to be wishful thinking. Despite stiff resistance on the part of American troops particularly, Nazi Germany assembled three field armies and made a surprise attack on Belgium and Luxembourg on December 16, 1944. Hitler chose the Ardennes

(Forest) for that date because he knew that the weather would be bad, denying the air force access to good flying weather.

The Nazi army succeeded in making a quick penetration because we were inadequately prepared for what was named by the U.S. as "The Battle of the Bulge." Germany amassed 500,000 troops and the American army hastily picked troops from American Third and Ninth Armies, mainly to reinforce the American First Army, which was under heavy attack. The buildup continued in a fierce battle in bitter cold weather, with the American troops unprepared for the minus 20 degrees. At the peak of the buildup, there were over 1,000,000 men in bitter fighting--the greatest single land battle in American history. The German army penetrated half of Belgium but never succeeded in reaching Antwerp, the principle Belgian port which unloaded military supplies necessary to sustain the conflict. We drove the German army back to Germany by January 25, 1945.

The war ended in Europe on May 8, 1945. In the Pacific, heavy battles ensued with the Japanese as General Douglas MacArthur's forces fought their way back to the Philippines. While the war in Europe was over, the troops were sent back to the U.S. to be redeployed to the Pacific Theater, mainly for the invasion of Japan. Morale was low. After fighting fierce battles in the European Theater, the troops felt that they had done their part. I can never forget a discussion with an army nurse stationed in the Philippines who was on the staff of an evacuation hospital. A huge tent was erected, housing 1,000 army cots, empty, waiting future casualties when the Japanese invasion would take place....

In a surprise event, the U.S. had succeeded in building an atomic bomb which was dropped over Hiroshima, Japan. The casualties were heavy, of course, but the Emperor of Japan would not surrender. Another bomb was dropped over Nagasaki, again with heavy casualties. This time the message was clear, and Japan surrendered in August 1945....

This is the only time in history that an atomic bomb had been used in warfare. There is no point to a discussion of justification. We can only hope that will never be repeated.

**David Saltman, President  
Long Island Chapter**

*[Editor: David served with the 638th Tank Destroyer Battalion during the Battle of the Bulge. This would be a good article to reproduce and provide to your local schools. So little is taught about World War II.]*

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## WWII LIVING HISTORY WEEKEND

Visit with WWII veterans, demonstrations throughout the day by re-enactors at Cheat River Byway, Route 72, Rowlesburg, West Virginia on Saturday June 28, 2008 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission on the field is free. Entrance to the exhibit and gallery is \$3.00. Contact the Greatest Generation Society, VMD Studios, Inc., Rowlesburg, West Virginia, or call 304-454-2410 for registration forms.

VBOB member **ELMER V. GIBSON, 526TH ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION, COMPANY C**, has spent many hours assisting in the development of this *Greatest Generation Museum*.

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# 1-1/2 UNFORGETTABLE DAYS IN KESTERNICH

Ervin Hardison  
78th Infantry Division  
310th Infantry Regiment

I&R Section, Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion

*[The following article appeared in the December 1, 2007, newsletter of the VBOB Central Indiana Chapter.]*

Early afternoon of December 15, 1944, word was received by the 2nd Battalion Headquarters that E Company, under the command of Capt Alfred E. Fix, had reached its objective (after heavy losses) on the northeast end of the Town of Kesternich. After receipt of this information, the Battalion S2 (Capt Bruebeck) instructed me to locate Company E and escort Capt Fix back to Battalion CP which had been relocated to near the center of town. The trip down the street alone with my M-1 was a little spooky, but no sniper or enemy fire was encountered. Company E was located digging in along the ridge on the outskirts of town. Capt Fix was found in about the last house on the street on the northeastern edge of town. Soon after we started our return trip we were greeted with a barrage of mortar/artillery fire necessitating a short stay in a small concrete woodshed, but we reached the Battalion CP okay.

The remainder of the afternoon was rather quiet with respect to enemy fire. However, about dusk all hell broke loose as heavy enemy artillery, mortar and small arms fire started coming in. Before this started, it is believe that the company commanders had already returned to their units.

The situation in and around the area of the 2nd Battalion CP was about like this: A contingent of Battalion Headquarters personnel were in the Battalion CP and remnants of Company G, under Capt Sperry were in and around the brick building across the street from the CP. The Battalion Commander, Col Ladd, was in the Battalion CP when the counter-attack started. There was certainly an atmosphere of bedlam, confusion and yelling of instructions. Someone yelled for me to take some men and guard the house next door on the west side (American side). Four others, including John Lanahan, of my I&R squad, joined me in the house next door. We knelt with our guns pointing out the windows overlooking the main street and the action. The German machine gun was firing down the main street toward the west.

Our machine gun, located behind a wall in front of the building occupied by Company C across the street, was firing east down the main street. This was quite a display of fireworks in the dark since both machine guns were firing tracer ammunition with one of every few bullets glowing in the dark. The enemy bullets were zipping past several feet in front of us and appeared to be only a few feet above the street level. Despite the bullets from the German machine gun one of our battalion jeep drivers (I think his name was Chastain from Alabama) somehow made his way back to Simmerath to get reinforcements (truck drivers, cooks, etc.).

It seemed as though only a few minutes had passed from the start of the counter-attack that we heard and saw the explosion of the German hand grenade that was thrown under our machine

gun located across the street. We also heard the yell of pain of those hit by the grenade. Shortly after our machine gun was knocked out, we clearly heard, "We have you surrounded, do you want to surrender?" We could hardly hear the response but apparently Col Ladd, or his representative, gave a positive response as shortly torches were lit by the Germans and we could see our soldiers being marched from the building across the street. At this point, we felt that we could not escape and one of us said, "Let's hide in the hay." All five of us hurried to the rear of the building. Three hid under the hay in front of the door to the outside. Two of us hid on a ledge above and to the side of the door. We were barely in place before the squeaky door was pushed open, a light was shone over the barn and hay and a voice said, "Anyone in here?"

Of course, we remained very silent and felt great relief when the door closed and no bullets were sprayed into the hay. (To me the voice sounded like that of a GI and I guessed it was that of a GI with a gun in his back.) Our hopes of escape diminished as we could clearly hear the enemy troops digging in on the west side (American side) of the building and activity all around. Since it was very cold, we all managed to dig under the hay to get warm and sleep some.

Sometime in the night or early morning of December 16, my buddy John Lanahan nudged me and whispered, "We had better get out of here." We dug from the hay and walked around the loft. We could clearly hear the German activity and talking on various sides of the building. All we could do was dig back under the hay and wait for something positive to happen. Sometimes later the next day we heard a lot of gun fire coming from the west (American side). We all rushed to the front of the house and saw American troops in the street. We then joined in the battle. Shortly after the American patrol rescued us a decision was made to call off pursuit of the enemy.

We, the rescued, were told to remain in the basement of the house diagonally across the street from the building in which we had hit, and that we would be picked up later. This was the same building in which part of Company G was located and in front of which our machine gun was firing when knocked out by the German grenade. By this time, we were pretty tired and hungry, and needless to say we were quite relieved, thankful and happy when we finally boarded a truck to be taken to the rear.

*I would like to note that one of our rescuers was Gordon Kinchloe, from Virginia, of my I&R Section. He and I are the only living members of the original group that entered combat together. We have maintained contact over the years since discharge from the Army. Unfortunately, other than John Lanahan, I did not know the other three soldiers or what outfit they were from who spent the time in hiding with me. ■*

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**Can you find a new member?  
We need your help to ensure  
the organization's survival.**



# The General That History Forgot; and One That Popular Lore Created

By Mitchell Kaidy  
87th Infantry Division  
345th Infantry Regiment  
Company D

Bastogne was under siege and effectively surrounded. The Germans knew it, and the Americans knew it.

Catching thousands of green 106th and veteran 28th Infantry Division troops off guard, the Germans swiftly poured a deluge of terror and death into the Ardennes Forest that mid-December, 1944.

In their resolve to split the Allies and reach Antwerp, an American supply port, Nazi airborne and SS forces encircled Bastogne, a highway juncture critical to funneling supplies and reinforcements from Germany.

In bone-penetrating cold and blowing snow, the 101st Airborne Division fought back with other units which had been hit with the full force of the massive offensive, a drive, which, at its spearheads, initially outnumbered the defenders by six to one.

Though the green 106th and veteran 28th Divisions had absorbed most of the initial shock, the 101st was more gradually sustaining casualties and running out of artillery rounds, requiring its interim commander, Brig. Gen. Anthony McAuliffe, to realign and shrink his defenses. When further shrinkage seemed hopeless, he telephoned his superior in nearby Neufchateau and requested permission to virtually evacuate the city.

"No," came back the crisp order. "If we are to hold onto Bastogne, you cannot keep falling back."

In that view, Maj. Gen. Troy H. Middleton, commander of the VIIIth Corps, was initially at odds with his own superior, the audacious Lt. Gen. George S. Patton, Third Army commander. But Patton, who had considered withdrawing some embattled troops to join with freshly-arrived reinforcements, had an entirely-different, Pattonesque plan in mind.

At a time when all the other top commanders were quaking from the shocking attack, Patton wanted to take the offensive, itching to turn the tables and trap the Nazi salient from behind.

The subsequent meeting between Patton and Middleton was one of the most fateful of the Battle of the Bulge. Perhaps uniquely, it was the soft-spoken, bespectacled subordinate, Troy Middleton, who convinced the impatient Patton that the main highways leading into Bastogne must be severed; that German strongholds around the city must be retaken, and the highway/rail center denied to the enemy.

Patton not only listened; he became a total convert: especially as developments validated Middleton's tactical vision. Patton himself subsequently extolled the plan as "tactical prescience", and wrote to Middleton late in the war: "Your decision to hold Bastogne was a stroke of genius."

But there was still the matter of throwing in reinforcements to bring the Third Army up to Von Clausewitz's much-cited dictum that the victor must outmuscle the enemy in order to triumph. Three untested divisions, the 87th Infantry, the 11th Armored, and 17th Airborne, the 87th having recently left Germany's Saar Valley after a bitter baptism, were available to execute Middleton's tactical vision.

Perhaps it was "tactical prescience" as Patton later characterized it; perhaps it was luck, but a few days after Middleton ordered McAuliffe not to abandon Bastogne, an event occurred that has become celebrated in history. Nazi generals, recognizing that their siege was wearing down their opponents, delivered their famous surrender note to McAuliffe.

"The fortune of war is changing," they wrote in English - at that time a reasonable, if debatable, contention. They went on to cite their key strongpoints as well as troops which stood ready to "annihilate" the American defenders unless a proper response was received within two hours.

Handed the note in his bunker in battered Bastogne, McAuliffe knew what choice he had. Unambiguously ordered by Middleton to hold, (an order approved by Lt. Gen. Omar Bradley, 12th Army Group commander), and promised by Patton air drops of food and ammunition, he dismissed the surrender demand out-of-hand. Despite suspicions that have developed since those days that McAuliffe actually wrote a profanity to the German commander, he later confirmed that he conveyed the word "Nuts" as his terse answer.

In their surrender document, the Nazis had cited their strongpoints: they held Libret, Libramont, Tillet and St. Hubert, all southwest of Bastogne. To dislodge them, the 87th Infantry Division had been ordered under harrowing conditions to execute a 350-mile position change from Germany, circling around France in open trucks, blowing snow, and near-zero weather, an endless motormarch whose tail was attacked by aircraft.

When the 87th and 11th Armored Divisions, (the latter having made its own harrowing 350-mile motormarch after debarkation in France), closed within hours of one another outside Libramont, Maj. Gen. Middleton assigned the 87th to recapture three towns cited by the Germans as strongpoints: Libramont, St. Hubert and Tillet, remaining west of the 11th Armored, which was ordered to stay closer to Bastogne.

For the American cause, the two divisions' arrival could hardly have proved more fortuitous. At precisely the moment they jumped off in attack, the Nazis, harkening to their Feurher's raging orders, launched their fiercest assault, and the American and German armies clashed head-on, an action known in military circles as a "meeting engagement."

From Dec. 30, 1944, through Jan. 12, 1945, fighting raged all around Bastogne. "In snow, sleet, and deepening cold," as Middleton's biography sonorously phrased it, the two-division attack, aided by a 9th Armored Division unit, inched forward on the west against a gradually-tiring and undersupplied German force. Now having added the 17th Airborne Division, the VIIIth Corps finally succeeded in throwing back repeated German attempts to penetrate Bastogne from the west, the 87th Division wresting away Pironpre, Libramont. St. Hubert, and, after a fierce struggle, Tillet. Most of those were strongpoints cited by the Germans in their surrender demand.

Southeast of Bastogne, strong armored attacks were broken up by the 4th Armored and 35th Divisions. But the victories west of Bastogne represented the most fateful success: the first actual shrinkage of the Bulge.

Luck, as George S. Patton admitted in meeting the press a few days later, had played a role in his Army's timely reinforcement and success. But he was inordinately proud of other aspects-their bold spirit, as well as their indomitable will to

(Continued)



win. It is only by reading Patton's memoirs plus his private letters to his wife that one fully appreciates Patton's role in his Army's success. No matter how bleak or hopeless the situation, no matter how often he was urged to delay offensives because of severe losses, Patton refused, insisting with uncompromising regularity on attack, attack, attack.

This resolute spirit permeated his Army and set Patton light years apart from commanders like timid British Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery. Today a re-reading of history and reflection on tactics inescapably suggest that Supreme Commander Dwight Eisenhower and Third Army Commander Patton were right (although the former was not visionary enough), and Marshal Montgomery was tragically wrong in the Allied response to the surprise German offensive.

Montgomery's response was to disastrously advise American forces to retreat and wait until supplies and troops were in an optimum posture for a textbook-like countermove—advice that evoked vile reactions from all the American commanders—especially Patton and his superior, Lt. Gen. Bradley, who both threatened to resign if the Americans were ordered to retreat.

Had not Middleton, egged-on by Patton, ordered unrelenting attacks against the assaulting Nazis, and had not his infantrymen and tankers risen to higher levels of gallantry, the Germans certainly would have overcome the 101st's resistance and been able to re-establish their supply lines leading to Bastogne.

In that case, McAuliffe would not have been able to voice his legendary defiance, and the outmanned American forces would have been overrun. On all sides, this would have led to a bloodier toll, and extended the war for months.

Patton never forgot Bastogne. He went so far as to compare its significance to towering Civil War events such as the Battles of Gettysburg and the Wilderness campaign. It was, he wrote his wife Beatrice, the Third Army's most magnificent victory in Europe, outdoing even the Battle of France and the breakout after D-Day.

A few days before the largest campaign in U.S. military history wound down, Patton again recalled Bastogne. He wrote commending Middleton about exhibiting "magnificent tactical skills" as well as "tactical prescience" in the employment of his divisions, succeeding even though one of his divisions, the 11th Armored, faltered and had to be replaced by the 87th Infantry, later aided by the 17th Airborne Division.

Once more, in the closing days of the European war, Patton took up pen to voice his convictions about that operation. In a masterfully-composed letter, he wrote Middleton: "None of us will ever forget the stark valor with which you and your Corps contested every foot of ground during (Field Marshal) Von Rundstedt's attack. Your decision to hold Bastogne was a stroke of genius."

Though Patton made clear he wasn't limiting his praise to Middleton alone, but included his officers and soldiers, few American generals in any theater of operations have been showered with such unstinting praise—especially from a commanding officer not noted for overpraising.

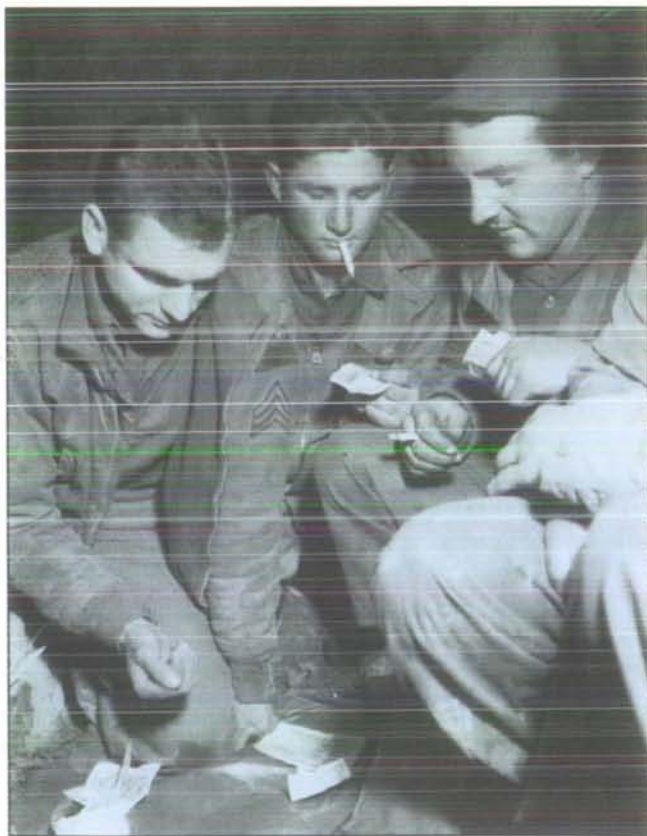
Why has a general who moved Patton to such effusive heights been so studiously ignored by both historians and the public? It is one of history's enduring ironies that a minor

airborne commander, who was in charge only because his superior had been recalled to the US for consultations, came to be identified with imperishable heroism that somehow turned the tide in the key Battle of the Bulge.

But it is immediately clear which commander Patton esteemed most. In his memoirs, "War As I Knew It", the Third Army commander devoted only one paragraph—a clipped one—to McAuliffe. Moreover, in a letter to his wife (recorded in "Patton's Papers" by Martin Blumenson), he derogated the role of the 101st Airborne, declaring that the unit "did well but received too much credit."

And yet popular lore still transforms McAuliffe's single word "Nuts" into some magnificent gesture that rallied bedraggled American troops to victory. In Bastogne, there is a McAuliffe Square, and historians sing his praises. Totally overlooked is the man extolled by Patton as the true architect of the Bastogne triumph and the tactician who crippled the German blow, paving the way for the Third Army's virtually undeflected drive into Germany.

History takes odd bounces. One of the oddest has been the deification of McAuliffe, who had been ordered to stay put, while history has systematically disdained the man labeled "prescient" and a "genius" by the Ultimate Judge himself during the American Army's bloodiest campaign and greatest victory in history. •



Frontline soldiers kill time shooting craps in a dugout in the Ardennes.

**MAKE YOUR PLANS TODAY!  
DISCOVER COLUMBUS**



# THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

[The following was submitted by **DEMETRI PARIS, 9TH ARMORED DIVISION, 14TH TANK BATTALION**. Source for the article: *A Brief History of U.S. Army in World War II*, Center of Military History, U.S. Army 1992, pages 22-23.]

While the Allies bludgeoned their way into the border marches of the Reich, Hitler carefully husbanded Germany's last reserves of tanks and infantry for a desperate attempt to reverse the situation in the west. On 16 December, powerful German forces struck the lightly held sector of the First Army front south of Monschau in the Ardennes. German armored spearheads drove toward the Meuse River, aiming at Antwerp. Aided by bad weather, a variety of deceptive measures, and the failure of Allied intelligence correctly to interpret the signs of an impending attack, they achieved complete surprise.

Elements of five U.S. divisions plus support troops fell back in confusion. Two regiments of the 106th Infantry Division, cut off and surrounded atop the mountainous Schnee Eifel, surrendered after only briefly fighting--the largest battlefield surrender of U.S. troops in World War II.

Partly as a result of the decision to continue attacking throughout the autumn, U.S. forces were spread thin in areas such as the Ardennes, and the Americans had few reserves to meet the attack. SHAEF immediately ordered available units in the threatened area, sending an airborne division into the important communications center of Bastogne.

By 18 December, the magnitude of the German effort was clear, and Eisenhower ordered Patton's Third Army to disengage from its offensive toward the Saar and to attack the enemy's southern flank. Scattered American units, fighting desperate rearguard actions, disrupted the German timetable, obstructing or holding key choke points--road junctions, narrow defiles, and

single-lane bridges across unfordable streams--to buy time. Defenders at the Town of St. Vith held out for six days; V Corps troops at Elsenborn Ridge repelled furious attacks, jamming the northern shoulder of enemy advance. To the south armored airborne troops, although completely surrounded and under heavy German attack, held Bastogne for the duration of the battle. German efforts to widen the southern shoulder of the bulge along the Sauer River came to nothing.

Short of fuel, denied critical roadnets, hammered by air attacks, and confronted by American armor, the German spearheads recoiled short of the Meuse. Meanwhile, Patton had altered the Third Army's axis of advance and attacked northward, relieving Bastogne on 26 December.

On 3 January, First and Ninth Army troops and British forces launched attacks against the northern shoulder of the bulge. Meanwhile, a secondary German offensive, Operation NORTWIND, failed in the south. Eisenhower had ordered the Sixth Army Group to fall back, pulling out of Strasbourg. General deGaulle, the French leader, was enraged. After heated negotiations, Allied troops remained in Strasbourg, and the German attack lost its momentum. By the end of January, the Allies had taken all the ground lost in both German offensives. The Battle of the Bulge was over.

Just as the Allies' breakout had failed to achieve a war-winning decision, so, too, the German attempt to reenact its victory of June 1940 failed.

The Allies, however, could make good their losses, while Hitler had squandered almost all his remaining armor and fighter aircraft. To make matters worse for the Reich, the Soviets on 12 January opened a large scale offensive in Poland and East Prussia that carried their troops to within forty miles of Berlin. German forces that survived the Ardennes fighting had to be hurriedly shifted eastward to meet the growing Russian threat.■

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**SEPTEMBER 9- 14,  
2008**



**Sad Sack: "Double Trouble #1"**



# 2008 BULGE REENACTMENT

## 63rd Anniversary Commemoration Battle HONORS WORLD WAR II VETERANS

Fort Indiantown Gap PA

22 Jan - 27 Jan 2008

The World War II Federation at their Annual Battle of the Bulge Reenactment honored The VBOB Veterans who attended this past January.

Those who arrived on Tuesday were greeted by old friends and new attendees and had their choice of bunks in the authentic World War II barracks. Soon the vets were decorating the poles in the center aisle with replicas of Bill Mauldin cartoons furnished by Mike Petrick and stringing holiday lights along the center aisle also. A hospitality nook had been set up by the entrance of the barracks and shortly there was a TV set up with videos of WWII subjects.

The following morning was early reveille as we were picked up at 7 AM to head to Hershey PA to attend a ceremony at the Hershey Middle School. We were first welcomed to their beautiful cafeteria for a light breakfast. This school cafeteria is carpeted and the students sit at beautiful wood tables of six and well upholstered chairs. This well endowed and beautifully furnished school was set to honor the Bulge veterans at a ceremony in their auditorium and later in visits to individual classrooms so that there could be one on one dialogue between the Bulge veterans and the students.

After these various venues it was time for lunch and the veterans joined the students for a great lunch. It was a truly inspiring day for both the students and the veterans. We then headed back to the Gap for hospitality, entertainment and a nap for some.

The following day we were up early but had an extra hour before we departed for Lebanon PA for the VA Hospital there. This is about the 6th year we have visited this VA hospital and it was good to see so many familiar faces in the nursing home portion of this Medical Complex. It is good to visit with our fellow brothers and sisters who served as we did in various conflicts and bring them some cheer. This is a well run, clean, bright and happy complex. We had lunch there furnished by the VA Associates.

On Friday, the WWII Federation honored the veterans in the Community Club on Ft Indiantown Gap and then at 5:00 PM there was a ceremony and wreath laying at the VBOB Monument outside of the Community Club. That evening we visited the flea market set up in various mess halls and classroom buildings in the regimental area. There is everything for sale by the various military collectors. You can completely outfit yourself, whether Allied or German with the material that is for sale. There is so much stuff that it is said that the reason the Germans lost the war was because all of their equipment was over here in flea markets. In addition to outfitting yourself there are histories and videos for sale.

On Saturday we were up and out to watch the Reenactors falling out in the Company Streets for inspection and to get ready to be transported to the field for battle. The reenactors are in full gear. In addition there are many vintage vehicles, both American and German that are used in the reenactment. We veterans were taken out to observe the reenactment once it was started.

This has now become a recognized event in the area so there are many civilians that come to visit the flea markets, visit the barracks that the reenactors have restored to what they would have looked like in the time frame.

The Veterans Barracks gets a lot of visitors from folks who want to thank the veterans as well as ask questions from those who have had a relative in the Battle of the Bulge.

At 1800 hrs dinner on Saturday everyone puts on their dress uniforms and attend the Dinner Banquet which is served in the Community Club and at 2000 hrs was an Evening of Period Entertainment during which the Veterans acted as judges for the 1940's Talent Show.

A good time was had by all that attended.



Reenactors assemble for maneuvers.



Vintage vehicles, both American and German are used in the reenactment.



Reenactors fall out for inspection in the Company streets.

**ARE YOUR DUES PAID? CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL FOR YOUR DUES DATE.**



## A CALL TO COURAGE

*[The following article appeared January 3, 2008, in The Rippon Commonwealth, and was written by Tim Lyke.]*

When most of us were stringing lights, hanging wreaths and wrapping gifts, Arden Gatzke was placing a cardboard cutout of a tank in the front window of his home.

The Ripon resident was sharing with friends, family and passing motorists a reminder of a holiday season 63 years ago, when his life--and the world--seemed at risk. "I remember that Christmas real well," said Gatzke, 86.

It was the historic Battle of the Bulge, and Gatzke had arrived in Belgium on December 22, 1944. By Christmas eve, his tank had advanced so far into enemy territory that he was strafed by Allied P-38s. "[Our own] pilots thought we were Germans," he recalled.

Suddenly, the enemy shot at a U.S. half-track truck. "I told my gunner to shoot forward the flash," Gatzke said. Gatzke's gunner got one shot out before the gun jammed. The Germans began firing back. The first shot knocked a tree over. So did the second. Gatzke's tank backed off, over a hill and out of the German artillery's range.

He returned to that position January 3, 1945. By then, the Battle of the Bulge was three weeks shy of being one for the history books.

Three days later, Gatzke was outside his tank when a shell landed near him and he was seriously injured.

That nearly ended his tour of duty. He was laying in a hospital thousands of miles from home with a chest--that would one day carry a purple heart--full of shrapnel. Not much of a happy new year.

But Gatzke fancies himself a lucky man; he was able to return to the front and was one of the first of the Allied troops to enter Germany later that year.

And so he places a tank on his window--perhaps reminding the rest of us that the challenges we face in our daily lives are surmountable. They pale by comparison to the sacrifices of those who fight for freedom.

May your 2008 be filled by moments of courage, when you stand up to the enemies of intolerance, injustice, poverty, hatred and ignorance. May your character fortify you just as a tank many years ago protected a Ripon man in a Belgian battlefield.



*Arden Gatzke*

*2nd Armored Division, 66th Armored Regiment, Company H*



## THE ARDENNES WEATHER Winter of '44-'45

Winter came upon the darkened Ardennes Forest on a cold December Dawn, the 16th of December in 1944. The Wacht am Rein was unleashed: it was Hitler's operation CHRISTROSE when the Panzer troops broke through--and they took advantage of the sullen skies; which gave them cover from the 'Jabos.'

The predicted weather forecast of nine days of overcast skies was good for the buildup of forces and the murky fog would conceal the Grenadiers and the Panzer Columns from the Allies.

the poor conditions also denied the 'Allied Punishing Power'; but in the end they did reduce the Panzer attacking forces.

A dismal mixture of snow, rain and fog began to fall which gave way to slippery and treacherous frozen roads as the temperatures plummeted.

The BATTLE wore on in the deep, cold snow of the "BITTER WOODS," a "white darkness" prevailed and a "BLOOD DIMMED TIDE" overlay the frozen fields.

The hanging mists clung to the ground, hampering a soldier's vision, and other times, cold stiff winds cut across the plateaus buffering the faces of the attacking foot soldier.

the 'swirling snow--'the morass or mud' were another enemy: The dense fog soaked-in a hundred airfields. Soon a high pressure 'RUSSIAN HIGH' system came in bringing good weather, and left the German forces naked.

The Allies had a 'field day' in the skies--and the "Battle for the Billets," for the village shelters from the barren fox holes led the counter attack of the Allied Forces.

The battered GIs came forth from the frozen BITTER WOODS to a more somber scene--with the enemy on the defensive--it was a "BITTER WINTER" in the Ardennes.

DECEMBER DAWN. (Return to the Battle of the Bulge, by Col Charles B. MacDonald, Historian)

CHRISTROSE. (Hitler's code word for the Ardennes Offensive)

BITTER WOODS. (John S.D. Eisenhower's book on the Bulge: from Dante's Poem)

A WHITE DARKNESS. (A U.S. officer's description of the winter days in the Bulge)

A BLOOD DIMMED TIDE. (The Battle of the Bulge by the Men Who Fought It: by Gerald Astor).

RUSSIAN HIGH. (The weather system from the east bringing fair clear skies)

*John E. McNuliffe  
87th Infantry Division*

*VBOB Central Massachusetts Chapters-22*



# VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE CERTIFICATE

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10/18/2008



## The Battle of the Bulge

While the Allies bludgeoned their way into the border marches of the Reich, Hitler carefully husbanded Germany's last reserves of tanks and infantry for a desperate attempt to reverse the situation in the west.

On 16 December powerful German forces struck the lightly held sector of the First Army front south of Monschau in the Ardennes. German armored spearheads drove toward the Meuse River, aiming at Antwerp. Aided by bad weather, a variety of deceptive measures, and the failure of Allied intelligence correctly to interpret the signs of an impending attack, they achieved complete surprise.

Elements of five U.S. divisions plus support troops fell back in confusion. Two regiments of the 106<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, cut off and surrounded atop the mountainous Schnee Eifel, surrendered after only brief fighting—the largest battlefield surrender of U.S. troops in World War II.

Partly as a result of the decision to continue attacking throughout the autumn, U.S. forces were spread thin in areas such as the Ardennes and the Americans had few reserves to meet the attack. SHAEF immediately ordered available units in the threatened area, sending an airborne division in the important communications center of Bastogne. By 18 December the magnitude of the German effort was clear, and Eisenhower ordered Patton's Third Army to disengage from its offensive toward the Saar and to attack the enemy's southern flank.

Scattered American units, fighting desperate rearguard actions, disrupted the German timetable, obstructing or holding key choke points—road junctions, narrow defiles, and single-lane bridges across unfordable streams—to buy time. Defenders at the town of St. Vith held out for six days. V Corps troops at Eisenborn Ridge repelled furious attacks, jamming the northern shoulder of the enemy advance.

To the south armored and airborne troops, although completely surrounded and under heavy German attack, held Bastogne for the duration of the battle. German efforts to widen the southern shoulder of the bulge along the Sauer River came to nothing.

Short of fuel, denied critical roadnets, hammered by air attacks and confronted by American armor, the German spearheads recoiled short of the Meuse. Meanwhile, Patton had altered the Third Army's axis of advance and attacked northward, relieving Bastogne on 26 December. On 3 January First and

Ninth Army troops and British forces launched attacks against the northern shoulder of the bulge.

Meanwhile, a secondary German offensive, Operation NORDWIND, failed in the south. Eisenhower had ordered the Sixth Army Group to fall back, pulling out of Strasbourg. General de Gaulle, the French leader, was enraged. After heated negotiations, Allied troops remained in Strasbourg, and the German attack lost its momentum. By the end of January, the Allies had retaken all the ground lost in both German offensive. The Battle of the Bulge was over.

Just as the Allies' August breakout had failed to achieve a was-winning decision, so, too, the German attempt to reenact its victory of June 1940 failed. The Allies, however, could make good their losses, while Hitler had squandered almost all his remaining armor and fighter aircraft. To make matters worse for the Reich, the Soviets on 12 January opened a large-scale offensive in Poland and East Prussia that carried their troops to within forty miles of Berlin. German forces that survived the Ardennes fighting had to be hurriedly shifted eastward to meet the growing Russian threat.

**SOURCE:** "The U.S. Army Campaign of World War II" in "A Brief History of the U.S. Army in World War II" published by Center of Military History, United States Army 1992.

Submitted by Demetri Paris – 14<sup>th</sup> Tank Bn –  
9th Armored Division

## Combat Look...

A soldier who has been a long time in the line does have a 'look' in his eyes that anyone who knows about it can discern. It's a look of dullness, eyes that look without seeing, eyes that see without conveying any image to the mind... (A look of) exhaustion, lack of sleep, tension for too long, wariness that is too great, fear beyond fear, misery to the point of numbness, a look of surpassing indifference to anything anyone can do. It's a look I dread to see on men." *Ernie Pyle*

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