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THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

NOVEMBER 2009



**ALL OF OUR TOMORROWS
ARE A RESULT OF THEIR SACRIFICES**

REMEMBRANCE & COMMEMORATION OF VBOB • ARLINGTON • DEC. 12-17, 2009 • Page 16

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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

The start of a truly great reunion began when I received the annual report of the Southern Arizona Chapter from President George W. McGee in January, 2008. I responded with praise for their many and varied activities and asked President McGee to consider hosting our annual reunion. He met with his chapter board of directors and, on February 22, 2008, notified me they were willing and anxious to host the National VBOB Reunion.

Then he promptly established a committee, of which two were associates, with himself as the "Coordinator and Administrator." George attended the 2008 reunion in Columbus, Ohio, during which he observed firsthand the functions, duties and operations. He was a magnificent student and the Tucson Chapter Host Committee was superb!

We selected the West Coast location because for several years the national reunions had been held on the East Coast. And therein lies the only disappointment. George wrote to all the chapters in the West but only a few attended. In fact, he remarked to me of his disappointment at this failure and said it was the veterans from the East who responded and attended.

Our 2010 reunion is scheduled to be in Columbia, South Carolina. We shall expect all the chapters East of the Mississippi to attend.

New Subject

All members at the reunion received the first draft of our new bylaws. The Bylaws Committee will continue working on this project to improve this governing document. They welcome all intelligent comments and recommendations which excludes the narrow views of a half-dozen individuals who oppose having associate members hold office as authorized by our bylaws since the beginning of VBOB. We welcome the views of those with vision and concern for the future of VBOB.

Two excellent actions were accomplished at the General Membership Meeting. At the suggestion of George McGee, the assembly voted to replace the Roman numerals with Arabic numbers.

They also adopted a provision of our bylaws which allows the Executive Council to make necessary bylaws changes to meet emergency or necessary situations provided they must submit them for approval within a year or at the next annual membership meeting. ■

SAVE US Check your mailing labels
POSTAGE to see if your
dues are due!



Demetri "Dee" Paris

LOOKING FOR A NEW PAST TIME?

...may we suggest....

Here's what George Williams, 26th Infantry Division, 328th Infantry Regiment, Company C, did to celebrate his 86th birthday.



Delbert E. Broder, of the same unit, sent us the photograph and we thought you would want to know.

George made the jump at 14,000 feet and the parachute deployed at about 9,000. The event took place in Techumseh, Michigan, on June 20, 2009.

George also jumped on his 84th birthday in Arizona and is looking forward to more jumps. *Way to go, George.* ■

You Are the Key to our Membership Growth!

VBOB can't grow effectively unless you help. Our current members are the strength of our continued membership increases. If you know others who were in the Battle of the Bulge, family members of BOB vets, or friends who are interested in keeping the memory of the Bulge alive, tell them about our organization. they will enjoy the comradeship.

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Apology to BM
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VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

WEB SITE: www.battleofthebulge.org

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Associate Members—We Care

I am a proud Associate Member of the Lehigh Valley (PA) Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge and the national "Bulge" organization. I am honored to be a member and I do my best to honor those men and women who served so honorably and well. My membership in no way detracts from those who served in that historic battle. I offer myself up to our local organization in any way that I can serve; that is my pleasure. We have become family to each other and that includes the veterans, their spouses and significant others, other family members, friends and associates like me who had two family members in the Battle of the Bulge. One became a prisoner of war on December 16, 1944. The other was killed in action January 25, 1945. And I, too, am a veteran of the Vietnam era.

Since I belong to many veteran-related organizations, Associate Membership is common. Associates serve in all levels in most organizations. They do not do so for any other reason than that they care to give to the organization. Associates, especially those who never saw combat, do not know in cold, hard terms what veterans of war went through but that does not mean that we who are also veterans served our country any less, nor does it mean we are trying to equate ourselves to you who saw the hell that war is. I personally do not belong to any organization that I do not give 100% of myself; that is just me. Organizations like the Lehigh Valley Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge are as successful and as close knit as they are because veterans and associates each have their place and everyone

respects one another. However, if an associate serves on a board or committee as our own Judge Greenhaigh has as Vice President since the organization was formed, the proof is in the pudding of the success Judy has helped foster. Ask any veteran of our group about Judy and I guarantee that any veteran against an associate serving will have to ask themselves what their problem regarding Associate Members is.

I know our president, Morris Metz, and the Executive Board would welcome anyone to our monthly luncheon/meeting and if you would come and you live within driving distance you will be back for more. I can't believe there is a more active and participatory Bulge organization anywhere else! In 2007, because I care as I do I wanted to honor these men and women who fought and served in the Battle of the Bulge, I did so by going to our state legislators with the culmination, a local highway being renamed the "Battle of the Bulge Veterans Memorial Highway." I did that because I cared enough to see them honored in their lifetime. Seeing their faces as that sign was unveiled was like winning the lottery! I care! Associate Members care! We do not look to equate ourselves to "Bulge" veterans; only to keep your history alive and vibrant.

I welcome any letters or e-mails if the Bulge wishes to publish my contact information and I will answer all letters or e-mails. We need dialog on this subject. (Address: 2483 Blue Jay Drive, Nazareth, PA 18064.)

Bob Faro
Associate Member

CORRECTION:

Correction to page 14 of the August, 2009, Bulge Bugle, should read:

"British typhoons came roaring in and rocketed a woods 800 yards to the east..."
not 80 yards, as printed.

Wes Ross
146 ENGR CMBT BN B

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

It is not my desire to critique the statements of others, but only to verify to add additional information, because I was involved on the events stated on Page 4 of the August, 2009, issue by John R. Schaffner.

I was a member of Battery C and did not function properly due to the topography (mud, snow) and we were encircled. Capt. Rockwell surrendered the battery. He tried to escape and was shot and killed. I escaped and lasted six days before being captured in a motor pool on December 21st.

Vernon E. Brumfield
106 INF 589 FA BN C

GI'S CONTRIBUTIONS

Without any attempt to belittle any GI's contribution to the war effort—after all none of us had much of a choice. It is

my firm belief that there is/was a true difference between a combat infantryman and everyone else. We made up 11% of the military and had 70% of the casualties. In the months that I served in the ETO (from October, 1944, to May, 1945), I slept indoors twice—after we secured Koblenz and were waiting to move out. I had two showers, both in one of those shower trucks where your time is strictly time.

Most of the time we existed on K or C rations—our cooks brought up "hot" food in thermoses when they could—most of the time it was too much to ask.

After the Bulge, we in mummy bags that we carried on our backs, after brushing away the snow and ice—digging in was near impossible. In the morning the bags were frequently frozen to the ground and had to be freed using one's trench knife.

Then into the Ziegfried Line to attack the pillboxes that had the areas around them zeroed in making assaults very dangerous. Except for two or three times riding on a tank, which was like setting oneself up as a target, we walked across Germany to the Czech border. Even when the war was over we were not permitted to sleep in the houses we

(Continued on next page)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: (Continued from Page 4)

captured. We set up tents in the backyards and saw regimental guys move into the houses. I started with a platoon of 42 guys—I was only one of 7 to remain from start to finish. By the time the war was over there were 135 names on our platoon roster. I think every

GI who serves in the infantry knows that if he is there long enough, he will be killed or wounded.

A word about actual combat—you are always in fear: will the next moment bring shelling; will there be a new attack from the enemy; what will happen over the next hill?

Melvin C. Brenner 87 INF 345 INF K

UPCOMING COMMEMORATIVE TRIPS TO EUROPE IN 2010



94TH INFANTRY DIVISION 65th ANNIVERSARY EUROPEAN TRIP MARCH 13-22, 2010

65th Anniversary Tour retracing the 94th Infantry Division's Combat Highlights (see VBOB website Div Fact Sheets) from Brittany to Germany, organized by 94th Infantry Division Alliance member and veteran's grandson, Dan Runde.

Itinerary: USA - Paris - St Nazaire - Lorient - Luxembourg - Saar-Moselle Triangle and Siegfried Line Switch Position - Ludwigshafen - Frankfurt - USA. Airfare and land tour costs are separate.

Tour highlights:

- Participate in official military ceremony at the Arc de Triomphe in Paris.
- Visit combat areas and submarine pens of St. Nazaire and Lorient.
- Attend official reception in Etel, where the Germans surrendered in Brittany.
- Visit the Saar Moselle Triangle and Siegfried Line Switch Position in depth over two days.
- Visit the scene of the 94th's last battle in Ludwigshafen on the Rhine near Heidelberg.
- Travel on famous French TGV high speed train.

Tour Guide: Tony Le Tissier, author of "Patton's Pawns: The 94th US Infantry Division at the Siegfried Line" ("the most comprehensive study to date"). Tony is an expert WWII military author. Until retirement, he was an Allied military police colonel operating in Cold War Berlin and East Germany and also the last Governor of Spandau Prison guarding Hitler's Deputy Rudolf Hess until Hess's suicide.

Contacts: Doris Davis, President VBOB Golden Gate Chapter (dordavis@earthlink.net)
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If no email access, Doris' phone # is:
(650) 654 - 0101 (PST).



BATTLE OF THE BULGE 65th ANNIVERSARY TRIP MAY 3-11, 2010

2010 is the 65th Anniversary of victory in the Battle of the Bulge. May 8 2010 is the 65th Anniversary of VE Day and the end of World War II. The Luxembourg National Museum of Military History, AMBA, CEBA and USFV, US Veterans Friends Luxembourg warmly invite VBOB to celebrate these two momentous 65th anniversaries with them.

Itinerary: USA - Brussels - Luxembourg - 65th Anniversary ceremonies and battlefield visits in Belgium and Luxembourg - Rhine cruise - Frankfurt - USA. Airfare and land tour costs are separate.

Tour highlights:

- 65th Anniversary ceremonies in Brussels, Luxembourg and Belgium.
- Many commemorative visits in the Battle of the Bulge battlefields.
- CEBA reception in Clervaux Castle.
- Official visit to the Luxembourg National Museum of Military History in Diekirch.
- Official wreath laying and taps at Luxembourg American Cemetery with General Patton's grave.
- Chance to visit your 'special places' in the battlefields with your family and friends.
- Spectacular Rhine River cruise.

Tour Guide: Expert veterans tour guide Patrick Hinchy is well known to many VBOB veterans. Multi-lingual with an Oxford University masters degree, he has recently been commissioned to write a book on the Allied 1944-45 liberation of Europe from the German military viewpoint.

Contact: Doris Davis, dordavis@earthlink.net or (650) 654 - 0101 (PST). Doris is a Trustee of National, as well as President of the VBOB Golden Gate (San Francisco) and an Associate Member of VBOB. She says, "It was very meaningful to me to stand on the soil where my Father told me that he was in battle. I can't describe it - you just have to experience it for yourself."

THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE:

The True North Shoulder and How It Upset Hitler's Schedule⁽¹⁾

By Philip Howard Gray
78th Infantry Division

A few months ago, a man who had been knighted by two countries introduced himself to my wife and me. He was the president of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge. The occasion was the gathering of several hundred survivors of the largest land campaign that warfare has ever seen, technically called the Ardennes-Alsace campaign, *En effet*, it had more than 600,000 American soldiers directly involved with another 400,000 as support. Some 50,000 GIs were battle casualties, many more were victims of winter weather, accidents and diseases, and another 20,000 were captured. My certificate of the veterans organization of this battle is bordered with the shoulder insignia of the major American units involved in the defeat of Hitler's last bold gamble: three armies, six corps, 10 armored divisions and 23 infantry divisions. The hundreds of smaller units involved fell under the command of one or another of the larger units depicted.

At the time of the attack, however, these units were scattered throughout Europe, only a half-dozen divisions were actually on First Army's combat line, and these few were either green and untested, or badly battered from the mistakes of the autumn campaign. For his bold stroke, Hitler had amassed 200,000 men in 13 infantry and 7 panzer divisions with almost 1,000 tanks, and in reserve behind this force was another almost as large. The striking force was partitioned into two Panzer Armies to form the spearhead of the attack with two infantry armies supporting the panzer flanks. The panzer armies were to use their infantry divisions to force open a route for the strike across the Meuse River with a swift capture of the seaport of Antwerp to follow⁽²⁾. It's what happened to these German infantry divisions that form the *raison d'être* for the present reanalysis of an often told story.

Bad Intelligence or Distracted IQ?

Allied intelligence failed to see any significance in reports of unusual activity behind German lines, deeming the reported activities as normal defensive preparation of moving armor into position where it could be shifted north or south to meet whatever attack the Americans were sure to launch⁽³⁾. Such is the roundelay that the historians of this battle, many of them military officers of middle rank with their careers still ahead of them, have voiced for the past half century. American military historians glissade around an interpretation of our intelligence failure. Other historians, perhaps because they have less career-involvement in the matter, are more forthright.

The first note that's off-key in the American accounts involves the verified substantial reports of huge tank movements to the Schnee Eifel (which lacked road nets to move armor either north or south). The second off-key note is the modern warfare adage that armor's major responsibility is attack, not defense. The truth is the Allied command up to and including SHAEF had plenty of information that the Germans had spent weeks moving material into position for an attack that had nowhere to go except

west into the Ardennes.

Since the German and Japanese codes had both been broken, the Allied command knew the Japanese ambassador was reporting home that Hitler had a plan to launch a counter-attack as soon as bad weather began, with the main objective of capturing Antwerp. Although Hitler had imposed radio and landline silence about the armies he was moving into position, code-breaker Ultra nonetheless was picking up relevant Reichbahn and Luftwaffe communications which soon established that each time a troop or transport train was to move across the Rhine the German army command asked for fighter cover. British historian Charles Whiting's *Last Assault: The Battle of the Bulge Reassessed* adds information I've not found in any history of an American. Well before Hitler launched his bold move, Number 100 Group of the Royal Air Force had acquired sixty N-17 flying fortresses. Some of these planes were modified to fly at night, not as bombers, but as intelligence gatherers. As well as having jamming equipment, their bomb bays held the newest version of British radar, the H2S scanner. Despite the bad weather, the spy planes were able to look down and observe the large amount of vehicles being moved to, and assembled behind, the Schnee Eifel. This activity was reported to the American 67th Tactical Reconnaissance Group, which relayed the information to Hodges' First Army.

Of the Battle of the Bulge histories I've assembled, Hugh M. Cole's 1965 *The Ardennes: Battle of the Bulge* does mention the Eifel flights of 67th Tactical, noting that SHAEF intelligence dismissed the troop movements as part of the "procession" which had been judged to be defense transitions in preparation. The substantial vehicle traffic via the Reichbahn, especially Tiger tanks, seen by the 100 Group radar scanners and reported to 67th Tactical is not mentioned in this official U.S. Army history, nor have I found it mentioned in any other American history bearing even slightly on the Battle of the Bulge.

Other critics may interpret this failure of intelligence, which was superb in its gathering, as a failure of analysis. However, my interpretation will be psychological, befitting my profession. To me, the problem with the Allied command was they had what German psychology labels an *eingstellung*, that is, a mindset so stubbornly enmeshed in the brain that simple things like facts can't modify it; our commanders were *eingestellt* that the Germans were beaten and must soon surrender, a form of mass hypnosis, as it were, among the starred generals that extended from Eisenhower to Bradley and on to Hodges and Patton and from there to mid-level intelligence assemblers, who were quite willing to second guess reports from the soldiers on the line.

The Ghost Front

The German offensive failed, but at heavy cost to both sides. Media attention was always focused on the first half of the battle when the Americans lost more than 4,000 men killed in action. The most savage fighting in the Battle of the Bulge, however, was in the second half when we suffered more than 6,000 men killed in action. German casualties were even greater. Combat losses to the British, Canadian and French armies were miniscule. This contrast in battle casualties was noted by Winston Churchill as in the order of a hundred to one. To correct the great statesman--it was closer to a thousand American casualties for one British casualty! It was to be the largest land battle ever fought, and it was between Americans and Germans.

Actually, neither Germans nor Americans wanted it that way.

(Continued)

THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE (Continuation)

The Allies wanted peace and quiet along what came to be known as the "Ghost Front," which stretched nearly a hundred miles from the Aachen salient down along the Siegfried Line to the Luxembourg frontier. As noted, the allied command expected the war to virtually be over by now; but approaching the middle of December 1944 the enemy still showed force. The ETO Quartermaster Command had the same mindset, with the result that it had declined efforts to convert its summer uniform supply to warmer clothing, incorrectly believing the latter would not be needed. Field Marshal Montgomery's error in not securing the land approaches to the Antwerp supply port was a major reason for the poor supply train to the Hurtgen-Ardennes front. As a result, it would take the Allies some time yet to provision their troops for the eventual assault into the Ruhr, the industrial heartland of Germany.

These were errors affecting supply. Other errors had affected manpower.

The decision of First Army's General Hodges to drive through the Hurtgen Forest, where American supremacy in tank and air force could not be utilized, had almost destroyed the 1st, 2nd, 4th, 9th, and 28th Infantry Divisions which gave the Germans exactly what they needed; time to recoup from their mauling across France. This story of disastrous generalship is well delineated in Edward G. Miller's *A Dark and Bloody Ground*.

It was primarily the lack of good supply lines delaying the assault over the Roer-Rhine plain desired by Field Marshall Montgomery for the glory of his British and Canadian armies (and himself). Fortunately so, for it wasn't until late November that Allied command finally realized that if Montgomery had ventured onto the Roer-Rhine plain in force, he could have been washed out to sea by the German release of the more than 20 billion gallons of water locked up behind a chain of dams on the Roer River. A description of these dams, and how they were discovered, is thoroughly explained by Frank A. Camm in *The Flash* [newsletter of the 78th Infantry Division], April 2006, p 92ff.

Quiet ghosts are good ghosts, so the American command hoped the Ghost Front would remain so, while it resupplied and recuperated, and figured out what to do about the Roer River dams.

At this point, two ambitious schemes conflicted.

On the American side, the somewhat rested 2nd Infantry Division was moved up from its quiet position on the Schnee Eifel to attack toward the upper and smaller dams, while the new and wholly green 78th Infantry Division was to fight through the fortified Siegfried Line to capture the lower and largest of the Roer dams. These two divisions, one trying to recover from its brutal mauling in the Hurtgen Forest, and the other with no combat experience whatever, were probably all that General Bradley could spare from the stretched front of his 12th Army Group.

On the German side, Hitler had planned what turned out to be the greatest counter attack in the history of warfare, the planning beginning almost as soon as he realized that Germany could not hold France. On the eastern front, the Soviet army had exhausted his supply pipeline and needed to rest and resupply. Hitler's scheme, built on his bazaar but accurate insight into the frayed relations among the Allies, was to marshal the last of his capabilities to launch a massive attack across the Ardennes plateau. The goal to capture Antwerp would deprive the

Americans of their seaport for food and ammunition while splitting their armies from the British and Canadian armies to the north, thus perhaps yielding a separate truce. Such would permit the Germans to concentrate their strength against the Soviets. Hitler managed to stage virtually all his attacking units a few miles behind the apparently quiet Ghost Front, not moving them to forward positions until just before the attack upon which he was staking the survival of the Third Reich. The irony is that this strategy almost succeeded.

Order of Battle

There are three arguable reasons why it didn't. First, Eisenhower was able to make significant military decisions days earlier than Hitler believed possible. Second, the American soldiers stood their ground and fought doggedly, even when separated into small units, whereas Hitler was certain they would cut and run when confronted with the force of two Panzer armies suddenly in front of their thin front lines.

Military historians concentrate on these two reasons for Hitler's failure. Flushing out their accounts of military movements are anecdotes of individuals remembering what their part of the battle had seemed like, while at the other end of the command chart the top officers were portrayed in favorable lights, with special accolades to General Patton for his role in lifting the siege of Bastogne. In his *Battle of the Bulge Then and Now*, French historian Jean Paul Pallud has diminished Patton's glory by explaining: "Bastogne was not a prime objective for 'Wacht am Rhine' but an important road centre to be taken on the way, as is clearly shown by the fact that when the 2 Panzer Division could have easily taken the town on December 18 it was ordered to by-pass it, pushing on westward." Nonetheless, Bastogne was a talking point for a media that wasn't otherwise very favorable to the conduct of the American soldier and his officers. Relevant to today's scene is Eisenhower's quip that if all he knew about the early days of the battle was what he got from the media he'd deem the war lost--evidently some things about warfare and the media don't change much.

The third reason why the Hitler strategy failed is not mentioned in any of the several dozen histories of the Battle of the Bulge that I've managed to accumulate, including the official Army history by Hugh M. Cole. Nor did the Germans in retrospect seem aware of the significance of the 78th Infantry Division's Kesternich salient as indicated in *Hitler's Ardennes Offensive: the German View of the Battle of the Bulge* edited by Dupuy et al. When I mentioned to 78th historian Stanley Polny my discomfort over the omission of the 78th from most of these histories, he sent me a copy of the relevant portion of the Command and General Staff College report concerning the German winter offensive. I quote part of this, both to demonstrate its emendations to the official history by Cole, and to set the stage for how the two ambitious schemes mentioned earlier conflicted:

"The Sixth Panzer Army was to have nine divisions, four of these armor, to penetrate the US V Corps and make its dash for the Meuse. These were organized into three corps, I and II SS Panzer Divisions, the 12th and 277th Volks Grenadier Divisions, and the 3rd Parachute Division. The II US Panzer Corps had the 2d and 9th SS Panzer Divisions and the LXVII Infantry Corps had the 246th and 326th Volks Grenadier Divisions. The I SS Panzer Corps was to make the initial penetrations in the south, and the LXVII Corps, in the north. The II SS Panzer Corps was to follow the I SS Panzer Corps.

(Continued)

THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE (Continuation)

"The German attacks began before dawn...with a long and heavy artillery preparation. Within 10 minutes after the end of the preparation, German infantry moved forward to breach V Corps defenses. In the north, LXVII Corps attacked north and south of Monshau against the 38th Cav Sqn and one battalion of the 99th Inf Div. LXVII Corps did not, however, have both of the divisions with which it was supposed to overwhelm these few defenders. The unexpected V Corps attack by the 78th Inf Div had prevented the 246th Volks Grenadier Division from being shifted south for the attack, and the 2nd Inf Div attack held a part of the 326th Volks Grenadier Division at Wahlerscheid. This left the LXVII Corps barely four battalions with which to make the penetration and then try to set a shoulder for the breakthrough from Mutzenich to Eupen as planned. The V Corps units further frustrated these plans by having extremely well prepared defense positions from which they halted the German assault with much hard fighting."

This analysis is the best I've seen. It still has errors, however, particularly in the Order of Battle.

The Sixth Panzer Army had eleven divisions rather than nine. Staff College missed the 3rd Panzergrenadier Division (Denkerk), which was part of LXVII (67th) Corps. The Staff College analysis also missed the 272nd Volksgrenadier Division (Kosmalla), which was part of the LXVII Infantry Corps, according to the organization chart given on page 40 by Jean Paul Pallud in his hard-to-acquire *Battle of the Bulge Then and Now*, but is assigned (I think erroneously) to I SS Panzer Corps by Danny S. Parker whose Order of Battle is favored by Charles B. MacDonald in his highly popular *A Time for Trumpets*. Regardless of Corps assignment, however, the 272nd was part of General Dietrich's Sixth Panzer Army, the hammer to Hitler's anvil.

The True North Shoulder

In summary, Hitler had his massed units open with an artillery barrage all along the Ghost Front, starting at 5:30 a.m. and continuing until 7:00 a.m. on the morning of 16 December 1944. This was Hitler's timetable, which Allied Command accepted as the beginning of the Battle of the Bulge. Militarily, the argument can be made that the Battle of the Bulge actually started three days earlier when, at 6:00 a.m. on the morning of 13 December 1944, the 78th Infantry Division launched its attack toward Kesternich for the largest of the Roer River dams. I believe the consequence of the 78th Division attack was militarily important far beyond what small notice of the 78th Division's operation in the Monschau Corridor can be found in the extant histories.

With the exception of Miller's *A Dark and Bloody Ground*, which covers the 78th at Kesternich while missing the connection to the Sixth Panzer Army, the military histories drop the 78th from sight as soon as it is mentioned, its accomplishments merged into that of the 2nd Infantry Division so far as the Battle of the Bulge is concerned. In these histories, the 78th and its upset at Kesternich of Fieldmarshall Model's elaborate planning might never have existed. Even the best of these histories fail to encompass what I've just quoted from the report of the Command and General Staff College. None of them are aware that a substantial part of the infantry components of Dietrich's Sixth Panzer Army passed through the Battle lines of the 78th Division, although *Hitler's Last Gamble* by Trevor Dupuy et al notes that the 272nd VGD was unable to participate in the attack

as planned because of involvement with the 78th Division at Kesternich and Simmerath. The later notice seems to be the closest the historians have come to solving a puzzle they never saw in the first place.

On this salient point, while *Lightning: A Dark and Bloody Ground*, which covers the 78th at Kesternich while missing the connection to the Sixth Panzer Army, the military histories drop the 78th from sight as soon as it is mentioned, its accomplishments merged into that of the 2nd Infantry Division so far as the Battle of the Bulge is concerned. In these histories, the 78th and its upset at Kesternich of Fieldmarshall Model's elaborate planning might never have existed. Even the best of these histories fail to encompass what I've just quoted from the report of the Command and General Staff College. None of them are aware that a substantial part of the infantry components of Dietrich's Sixth Panzer Army passed through the lines of the 78th Division, although *Hitler's Last Gamble* by Trevor Dupuy et al notes that the 272nd VGD was unable to participate in the attack as planned because of involvement with the 78th Division at Kesternich and Simmerath. The latter notice seems to be the closest the historians have come to solving a puzzle they never saw in the first place.

On this salient point, while *Lightning: The History of the 78th Infantry Division* is a helpful reference for background, a meaningful review of the Battle of Kesternich must be based on the declassified After Action Reports for December 1944 and January 1945 of the 78th Infantry Division.

Although the official Army history by Cole does refer to After Action reports of some units, it is a serious factoid that none of the histories of the Battle of the Bulge I have inspected ever mention the After Action reports of the 78th Infantry Division, for it is from these declassified reports that we get a fuller indication of how important the assault of the 78th toward Kesternich really was.

If the American command regarded Kesternich as a stepping-stone to the Roer River Dams, the German command regarded it as something else. The few historians who pay attention seem agreed that the Germans fought so hard for Kesternich because it was on a supply route for material. And there, I think, is the analytical error. Kesternich was a supply hub, all right, but not for logistical supplies. It was instead a transit point for infantry divisional components heading south from Duren railroad transportation center to join the LXVII Corps as Dietrich secretly staged his Sixth Panzer Army behind the Ghost Front. These historians pay so little attention to Duren as an important transportation center that the only time it is mentioned as more than a point on a geographical quadrant defining the Hurtgen Forest is when *Hitler's Last Gamble* by Dupuy et al noted that "Hitler had decreed that the Duren bridgehead was crucial to the success of the Ardennes offensive" (p 18).

The military historians ignore the role of Kesternich maybe because, like John S. D. Eisenhower in his *The Bitter Woods*, they note that since some captured German troops came through Furst Germund the tacit inference must be they transitioned directly south from a transshipment area near Cologne. Only if one has actually been in that area, as I have, will it be obvious that Model would not have sent whole divisions across the Cologne-Vlatten plain to be readily spotting, but would instead have routed them secretly through the forests and ravines beyond the Kesternich road hub. We can deduce the route by noting that the 326th VBD was encountered

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THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE (Continuation)

by the 78th near Kesternich and by the 2nd near Forests Wahlerscheid (the village itself no longer exists).

A totally new division to the ETO, the 78th spent the early part of December moving into position south of the Ninth Army under Gen. Courtney Hodges' First Army. Its virgin operational mission was to secure the last and largest dam on the Roer River. Per Field Order #1, the 78th was to crack the Siegfried Line, capture the Towns of Rossesbroich, Bickerath Simmerath, and Kesternich. Then it was to swing behind the Siegfried Line and secure the Towns of Konzen, Ingenbroich and Eicherscheid. The Division was then to turn north, capture Strauch and Steckenborn, then capture the significant small City of Schmidt. From there it was to take over the largest of the Roer dams (bearing the almost impossible name of Schwammanuel, which I never remember hearing announced aloud!).

As an aside, if the German sector had been thinly protected, Field Order #1 might have been a reasonable goal. However, this Siegfried Line sector was anything but empty of German soldiers, as the After Action Reports show.

In a linked operation, the 2nd Infantry Division was to attack toward the upper of the Roer dams. However, the attack by this battered and still recuperating unit stalled, and after seeing what danger it faced from the German assault after December 16 along the route of Hitler's Plan A, V Corps moved it out of harm's way to a better defense on the Hohe Venn, along with what could be salvaged to the infantry and armored divisions engaged. This movement, now regarded as brilliant, involved many rear guard battles famous in the context of the larger battle, although its success would have been unlikely had not Montgomery, now in command of the northern forces and maintaining a capable liaison known as the Phantoms, overruled the battlefield command by ordering the tactical withdrawal. Of this command decision, *Hitler's Last Gamble* says: "American historians are often reluctant to give Monty the credit that he deserves. It is clear in retrospect that in this instance the British field marshal was absolutely right, and his decision saved the equivalent of two American divisions from disaster" (p 158).

All this left the 78th Division in its lonely position of hanging on to the salient into German soil obtained with its drive through the Siegfried Line; it could not be extracted; it could not be rescued; it was on its own.

Sixth Panzer Army's Mission Divisions

At this point let's look at the 78th Division's "Narrative of Operations" in its December 1944 AAR. First, the division was not up to strength by some three thousand combatants, its 311st Regiment having been detached and put in support of the 8th Division to help XIX Corp to the north. Jump-off hour was for 0600 December 13 when the green division faced the Siegfried Line proper, in this area highly organized and fortified. The fortifications consisted of the dragon's teeth (huge cement blocks that tanks could not get over without bridging), strung wire, interconnected pill boxes with bunkers and firing trenches, and some mine fields (for which I could find no archival photos, although my mental picture of them still seems vivid sixty plus years later).

The 78th soon found that within the division zone were elements of two Volksgrenadier divisions, the 272nd and the 277th. This much the *Lightning* history tells us, but tells no more and doesn't explain why. We can find more vital

information in the "enemy order of battle" section of the divisional After Action Reports. The regiments of the 272nd VGD were 982, 980 and the 981 and their locations in the area were ascertained, meaning this was not part of an infantry division at rest, but a full division at that particular location for a purpose--my guess is that when Field marshal Model heard of the 78th attack he diverted the nearest transitioning division to block the advance toward Kesternich. If this surmise is correct, it isn't noted as such in any of the histories of the Battle of the Bulge I have examined.

After the onset of the 78th attack, elements of the 277th Volksgrenadier Division were also encountered. On December 16, prisoners of war were captured from several battalions of the 326th VGD. This division was nearly reformed and had arrived in the sector from Duren. After a brief interaction with the 78th, the 326th sideslipped south. On the same day, elements of the 89th VGD were encountered. Information was then obtained that the 277th VGD had also sideslipped south. The last actual contact with 272nd VGD was made about 20 December.

On 21 December, a regiment of the 246 VGD appeared at the front of the 78th before following the 326 on the southern transposition. Note this date was almost a week after the unit was supposed to be placed as the vanguard for Dietrich's Sixth Panzer Army! The 78th interrogators ascertained that the 272 had been constituted near Berlin, mainly of air force, navy and men older than normal draft age; near 277 had been formed near Munich with personnel similar to 272; the 246 had been formed near Prague with personnel including convalescents and defense workers; the 326 was formed in Hungary and had been in the 78th vicinity for only a short while before moving. Although the fitness levels of the personnel were under par, all were well armed, often with automatic weapons.

What the 78th G-2 didn't know was that these German divisions were on their way to join Dietrich's Sixth Panzer Army. The 272 was to join Dietrich's LXVII Infantry Corps. The 277 was meant for the I SS Panzer Corps, which spun off the four thousand men and a hundred tanks for Kampfgruppe Peiper. The 326 and the 246 were slotted to LXVII to be used to clear the way for Peiper's strike force. The absence of these units, because of the attacks by the 78th and 2nd Divisions toward the Roer dams, obliged Peiper to force his own opening, causing him delays which he never could ameliorate. There was an intelligence report that the 12 SS Panzer Division had moved from in front of the Ninth Army; ending up as part of Dietrich's I SS Panzer Corps, somehow eluding the attention of the 78th.

The After Action Reports of the 78th Division for the month of December show it had taken prisoners from these German units.

- (a) 272 Volksgrenadier Division (en transit to LXVII Corps).
- (b) 277 Volksgrenadier Division (en transit to I SS Corps).
- (c) 326 Volksgrenadier Division (en transit to LXVII Corps).
- (d) 426 Volksgrenadier Division (en transit to LXVII Corps).
- (e) CT von der Heydte (overshot airborne to Hohe Venn).
- (f) 89 Volksgrenadier Division (not seen in any major battles--apparently one of the "phantom" divisions created by Jodel to meet Hitler's

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THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE (Continuation)

demands since Cole says it "amounted to the strength of a single rifle battalion."

Verily, the 78th Division, assigned a simple operation--simple to Hodges' planners, that is--found itself astride one of Model's transportation hubs, probably the most important one possible considering that these units were to be used as the battering ram to break a hole in V Corps Elsenborn defenses through which the Panzer elements could drive their way to the Meuse, with Joachim Peiper's strike force in the lead. This could easily have been done with the aid of the infantry divisions that could not be brought into timely play because these German divisions were delayed by an unanticipated blockage in the true north shoulder of the Battle of the Bulge caused by the 78th Infantry Division's disruptive battle at the Kesternich hub.

The exigencies of this action by the 78th Division can be seen in a summary of the casualties engendered. The AAR for December reports daily medical statistics under the headings (no unit designations) for battle casualties, trench foot, combat exhaustion and common respiratory. For 12 Dec these are: 13 battle casualties/15 trench foot/0 combat exhaustion/ 4 common respiratory. For 13 Dec: 238/8/6/1. For 14 Dec: 198/36/5/1. For 15 Dec: 173/208/30/3. For 16 Dec: 132/105/19/2. For 17 Dec: 91/54/12/4. For 18 Dec: 87/34/4/4. For 19 Dec: 46/21/4/3. The battle casualties are tapering off as the 78th grinds to a defensive position and the focus of combat shifts to the south. However, in this week the division suffered nearly a thousand battle casualties. For the whole month of December this statistic was 1235. Total battle casualties in January were only slightly less--938. For January, however, I'm able to calculate the portion of battle casualties for several organic (no attached armored) units of the division that might be of interest. These figures with tab separators are as follows with Units/Strength, Casualties/Percentage of Casualties to Unit Strength:

- (a) 78th Division Overall/11/408/938/8.2%
- (b) Infantry/7,099/890/12.0%
- (c) 303 Engineers/560/26/4.4%
- (d) 303 Medics/435/3/0.06%

As an aside, I note that other units had negligible battle casualties. Two statistics, which I may never have another occasion to use, are interesting. The battle casualties for the engineers are nearly half that of the infantry, a factoid evidently ignored when a badge for combat engineers was denied by army brass. Combat medics did have influence enough to be granted a badge, for courage and dedication, surely, but not for the risk of life that Ken Burns alluded to when he co-wrote in *The War: an Intimate History 1941-1945* that "medics suffered proportionally higher casualties than riflemen." In the months I was on the front line I never saw a medic or a medical vehicle deliberately targeted, so Burns has put before the public a myth the public will easily embrace--one often sees medics in movies, but who ever saw a combat engineer in a movie? And what are combat engineers anyway?

Thus, in summary, Dietrich's plan to use five infantry divisions to secure the northern flank of Sixth Panzer Army for his quick thrust to the Meuse had a major problem: four of these five divisions had been interdicted in their transit south by the 78th Infantry Division with at least some delay, and surely some crippling readiness.

With this knowledge of how much of the strength of Dietrich's Sixth Panzer Army was passing through the Kesternich area, we can understand why the Germans so bitterly fought the intrusion of the 78th Infantry Division. General Hodges of First Army and General Gerow of V Corp couldn't have done more to interfere with Hitler's plans if they had known exactly what they were doing. A good point to remember, though, is that if the untested, green 78th Division hadn't put up such a strong fight, then Dietrich and his Kampfgruppe Peiper could have gotten a lot closer to Hitler's ambitious goals.

Foot Notes:

(1) Invited lecture given at the 100th anniversary meeting of the Wyoming Sons of the American Revolution.

(2) This is a quick summary of forces involved. Three slightly different lists of forces, called Order of Battle, may be found in the Pallud, MacDonald and Depuy et al books I've cited, with some more recent information given inter alia in the brochure written by Roger Cirillo for the U.S. Army Center of Military History as part of its campaigns of WWII series.

(3) The touted legend is that American intelligence was so blissfully aware of what was about to happen it gave their one worrying officer a pass to Paris to cure him of his fantasy that the Germans were up to something big. Regardless of veracity, that story formed the opening motif of the movie "Battle of the Bulge," which Eisenhower judged to be the worst war movie he'd ever seen. Privately, I think "The Bridge at Remagen" was even worse--at least "Bulge" had Robert Shaw doing a sterling impression of Joachim Peiper. ■

HONORING CHAPLAINS

[The following appeared in the May 24, 2004, *Sunday Telegram*, in "The People's Forum" column.]

As this Memorial Day approaches, we recall the sacrifices made on the fields of battle by our many valiant veterans who fought our country's wars.

Little mentioned, are those of the chaplains who ministered and gave solace to our fighting men and women.

We recall the four chaplains who went down with the U.S. A. T. Dorchester in February 1943; the chaplain on the United States carrier Franklin who prayed over dying soldiers on a burning deck; Protestant and Jewish chaplains who ministered to soldiers during many campaigns in both the European and South Pacific theaters of World War II; and the Jesuit chaplain who served in the Battle of the Bulge. He referred to it as a "forested hell," where death came in many forms--cold, hunger and a shot in the dark from an enemy rifle. The overall suffering there he equated to "the shadow of Golgotha."

To these men of the cloth, the combat medic, the operating room nurse--all who placed themselves in harm's way--we are grateful.

John E. McAuliffe
87th Infantry Division
Worcester, MA

CHRISTMAS OF '44

Katherine Flynn Nolan
53rd Field Hospital

The third platoon of the 53rd Field Hospital arrived in a small village in Holland not far from the German border. It was early 1944, and bitter cold. A few women and children and one old man stood staring at us as we huddled under khaki blankets in the back of the truck. "I can imagine what they are thinking of us. We are really a mess," said Marie, our platoon chief nurse. "We sure are. What I wouldn't give for a hot shower," said Laura, "and a hot meal." "The cooks should have the field kitchen set up tomorrow but hot showers? Who are you kidding?" I said. Then the trucks began to move again. We were on the main street passing houses and stores and finally a church. Then we turned into a school yard and stopped. An old priest stood on the steps of the school, a threadbare black coat over his cassock. Our commander approached him. They spoke for a few minutes and shook hands. Turning around to face us the colonel shouted, "We'll set up in the school."

Our long journey had begun at five o'clock that morning. From somewhere in Belgium the convoy had bumped along potholed dirt roads and some paved ones also in bad shape, hour after hour with frequent delays. If we got to a checkpoint ahead of schedule, it would be a wait there while another convoy with higher priority went through first. We had K-rations all day. Cold, tasteless cans--something that was called scrambled eggs and meat and those dog biscuits they called crackers. Some powder to mix with water in the mess kit tin cup. Lemonade it was called. Meanwhile the temperature kept dropping and it looked like snow. The tarp covering the top of the truck gave a little protection from the wind but that was all. We were dirty, weary and chilled to the point of numbness.

The school was a newly-built red brick one-story structure with four wings. After living and working in tents since landing on Utah Beach in Normandy, we were delighted to be moving indoors at last. When the desks and chairs were removed it made an excellent hospital. Quickly the cots were set up, IV paraphernalia in place; receiving, shock wards, post-op and surgery made ready just in time to care for the first casualties. For the next 14 hours there was no let-up. From time to time, we caught glimpses of nuns peeking in the rooms as we worked. They were surprised to see us nursing the patients. They, like the villagers, had taken the six of us for prostitutes since we wore the same uniforms as the male officers including the pants, and these were what camp followers wore.

A company of the 84th Division (Railsplitters) was pinned down at a railroad bed and taking heavy losses. Ambulances kept arriving with more and more until every cot and litter was taken. An invitation was soon extended through the priest who spoke English. The nuns wanted the nurses to move in with them in the convent. Several hours later two of us managed to get off duty to go over and see our room.

The nuns had prepared a large store room as our dormitory. Six of their beds were ready for our use. The nuns and 28 war orphans in their care slept in the basement. They at first expected us to join them there, but at this point we were ready to die in our beds if need be in comfort. To sleep in a real bed under a roof was such luxury that we felt spoiled and pampered.

The doctors and corps men teased us about it and wanted to ask Mother Superior when their turn would be. She spoke little English and when she finally understood she said they were welcome to come one at a time for a hot bath.

Now in order to have hot water for the tub a lot of work was involved. Wood had to be gathered from the woods, broken or cut up with an axe to fit into a small furnace built under the water tank behind the tub. I still think about all this some-times when I turn on a hot water faucet and wonder whether the nuns at our favorite convent still heat water in the same way. Usually, the hospital remained in one place about ten days. When the patients would be evacuated to a general hospital in the rear, or to an evacuation hospital for an airlift to a general hospital in England. The packing up of equipment and supplies, taking down of tents, getting our personal gear in order went swiftly and smoothly by this time, since we had done it over and over till it was routine. When the outfit we had supported went back for a rest period we would be reassigned to a new outfit, just going into action.



However, this didn't happen with the 84th. As Christmas approached things quieted down on the fighting front. As the days passed, the orders to evacuate patients did not come. Tubes were removed, IV discontinued, and for the first time we had convalescent men taking food by mouth, growing stronger and getting into the holiday spirit. There were still a few in serious condition, but they did not want to be moved to a quieter area. Perhaps they felt more secure surrounded by their buddies. I don't know. Whatever

their reason, it worked, because every one of them made it.

A young Dutchman began to visit the hospital each day. He spoke English and soon was helping out in the wards. He finally moved in. An excellent organist, he would play the school organ, moving it from room to room, playing requests and Christmas carols till the atmosphere was really jolly. Leon, our Dutch friend, went out to the woods to cut down little Christmas trees for the wards. The patients made silver stars from K-ration cans. The Red Cross gave out cartons of Life Savers. We used bandages to string them to add to the trees. Everyone had the Christmas spirit.

Meanwhile, the nuns were planning a Christmas treat for the nurses off duty. They baked some special Christmas pastry from ingredients our cooks scrounged up for them. They brewed herb tea from roots of some sort. The feast would follow three Christmas masses in the convent chapel starting at midnight Christmas Eve. On the 23rd of December, orders came in for us to evacuate all patients. Wrapping them up warmly for their trip to a general hospital, much good-natured kidding went on. We had grown close to them all and it was like saying goodbye to family. Several of them were from New York State as were three of our nurses--Laura Ball, from Syracuse; Marie Arsenault, from Schuylerville; and Virginia Stenson, from Brooklyn. We were getting all kinds of promises about visits when the war was over so we pretended to feel slighted until we got assurances of the same.

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CHRISTMAS OF '44

(Continuation)

This would mean a trip to Worcester, Massachusetts, to see me; to Memphis, Tennessee, for Ruth Nolen; and to Clayton, Alabama, for Ruth Stevens. Their intentions were sincere but never did these reunions occur.

Christmas Eve at the appointed hour we assembled in the chapel. The masses seemed to go on forever. Finally, we went to the dining room. The best linen, crystal and china was on the table. Hand-painted place settings with our names completed the beautiful scene. It was a wonderful and strange little Christmas party; with us speaking no Dutch and the nuns speaking no English, except for the tiny bit Mother Superior knew. Somehow, though, we communicated with gestures, nods, smiles or frowns; but we understood one another and that, too, was beautiful.

Just after the tea was poured, we heard sounds of engines. One of the drivers came and said for us to report at once. The tea was too hot to drink; yet we did not want to waste it. Also we would be on the road for many hours and might not have anything hot to drink or eat for days. We would not be cheated out of this last luxury. "Please tell the colonel to give us a few more minutes," said Marie, our chief nurse. "Yes, ma'am," he replied and left. For some reason that tea took a long time to cool off. The driver returned to say that we were holding up the convoy and must come immediately. Then the horns began to blow like mad. Down the street the Red Ball Express was waiting. Trucks stretched out as far as we could see. Headlights blazing, horns blowing, the colonel shouting: "Those damn women are holding up the war." It was quite a sight.

The nuns followed us out to the street, waving and saying Merry Christmas in Dutch. We wished them the same and thanked them for their kindness and hospitality though our friend, Leo. Then we were rolling along toward the border and Germany. That was Christmas Day in 1944—one I am not likely to forget.■

BITTER STRUGGLE IN ARDENNES

[The following article appeared in THE TIMES on December 27, 1944. It was written by a Special Correspondent.]

GERMAN SAVAGERY TO TOWNSPEOPLE

IN THE ARDENNES, DEC. 24

Down here, in country reminiscent of the Derbyshire dales, the northern flank of the German armoured thrust into Belgium is being contained by American troops with no illusions about the power and nature of their enemy, but with no lack of confidence in their own ability to handle him.

As an instance, in the freezing mist of the early morning today, some of their infantry in one fierce rush won back the village of St. Gleize, a few miles west of Stavelot and a little to the northwest of Stourmont, the village that other infantry had recaptured on Thursday night after disputing its possession with the enemy for about three days. In St. Gleize this morning the

attacking Americans rescued a battalion commander and about 300 men who had been made prisoners in the fighting on Wednesday.

On the fir-lined hill road that is dominated by the enemy's mortars on the opposite hill lies the formerly beautiful little holiday town of Stavelot, which, since the Americans retook it on Monday night, has been counter-attacked so fiercely, frequently and fruitlessly that the defenders call it a "little Verdun." This morning, so they at battalion headquarters say, their men hold firmly the three-quarters of the town on this side of the River Ambleve, and are in more or less constant action against the enemy across the stream. The Germans entered Stavelot on Sunday, and on Monday night the Americans pushed them out and back over the river, but not before the Germans had done savage things in the town. The Americans found in one place the bodies of many civilians, including two small children, who had been shot, all piled up, as they say, "like cordwood." These bodies were photographed as they were found.

As to the methods being followed by the enemy in his latest offensive, they tell me here that some prisoners have admitted being ordered not to take prisoners, but it is believed that the really atrocious things have been done by small groups of SS men. There is said to be plenty of evidence that Americans taken prisoner have been shot out of hand, though not on this part of the invaded front. I learn that three young German army signal men who were stopped within the American lines in these parts in a jeep, and who were wearing American army uniforms while on a mission to damage allied communications, were convicted by a court-martial and shot yesterday morning according to international law.■

78TH INFANTRY DIVISION RE-ENACTORS

[The following picture of Fort Indiantown Gap re-enactors of 2008, appeared in the February 27, 2009, issue of The New York Times.]



Information regarding the 2009 re-enactment appears elsewhere in this issue.■

34 DAYS IN BUZZ BOMB ALLEY

by Alfred DiGiacomo
926th Signal Battalion Sep. TAC
9th Tactical Air Command
Ninth United States Army Air Force

[Edited] Sgt Alfred DiGiacomo, a switchboard operator has been working shifts on the Ninth Tactical Air Command telephone switchboard since the invasion of Normandy in June 1944.

The Ninth TAC fighter planes, under the command of General Elwood "Pete" Quesada, have been providing air support to the units of the U.S. First Army since the Normandy invasion.

I was assigned to the 926th Signal Battalion. The battalion provided communications for the 9th Tactical Air Command before and after the invasion of France.

After the breakout from Normandy in August, the battalion and the 9th TAC leapfrogged through France. Our advance was stalled and on October 2, 1944, we set up the Command Center for the 9th in Verviers, Belgium.

Starting in late October, we started to see buzz bombs flying overhead heading for Liege at the rate of one an hour. By December, the number of buzz bombs the Germans were sending over both day and night increased in intensity. They not only targeted Liege but the City of Antwerp was also targeted.

(The buzz bomb or V-1 (Vengeance Weapon) was a small pilotless plane powered by a pulse jet. It was armed with a ton of explosives. It emitted a putting noise while in flight and was guided by a simple gyro mechanism which at a prearranged distance would cut off the fuel supply. The noise would stop and everyone waited breathlessly to hear how close it would hit.)

The following are excerpts from the diary I kept during my three years in the service.

December 16: Germans attack! On Saturday, 5:30 a.m. the German's counter attack began in the Ardennes. Winter weather hit us hard just as the offensive began; it turned bitter cold and several days later snowed heavily. Cloud cover limited visibility so our planes were grounded. This morning our Doctor Clugston and the ambulance driver were wounded when a shell from long-range artillery exploded near their ambulance near Spa.

December 17: Much confusion and rumors. Worked at midnight and at 1:30 in the morning of the 18th a phone call from Ninth Air Force G-2 to our G-2 reported that 90 Ju55's and 28 Ju88's were taking off from Germany to drop paratroopers in an area east of Aachen. All units were alerted.

At 0300, our radar picked up the planes; German paratroopers were dropped in three different locations. Most of them were soon captured.

We received a call from "Frontier Baker," a forward outpost of the 555th Signal Aircraft Warning Battalion that the Germans are getting so close that they have to close down and move. Some of our D Company radio and repeated outpost men had to fight their way out. I finished work at 8:00 a.m. and found that we are ordered to pack our bags and be ready to move.

A report came in saying the Germans had captured Malmedy, and are advancing toward Verviers. German planes have appeared overhead and buzz bomb activity seems to have increased. Today we counted 120 V-1's heading for Liege.

December 18: Infantrymen from the 29th Infantry rest camp in town have left to join their units. Units of the 99th Division are moving into town and the tanks of the 7th Armored Division drove through town going to the front. (The 7th Armored held the Germans at St. Vith for many days and six battalions of the 99th held off five German divisions for 36 hours and ruined the plans of 6th Panzer Armee for a quick breakout.)

Administrative section of IX TAC is moving out. Operators Erickson, Unkelbach and others left for Charleroi to staff our back up facilities.

I worked from 4:00 to midnight and the switchboard was very busy for two pilots Al Jaffee and Richard Cassaday from our 67th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron in spite of the poor visibility located a German armored column near Stavelot and radioed their location. Four fighter groups from our 365th and 368th fighter groups attacked the column seven times until it was too dark: 32 tanks and 126 vehicles were destroyed.



We had an air raid warning around midnight but there was no attack. However, some long-range shell fire landed outside the town. The Germans continue their advance.

December 19: Heard that Dr. Clugston has died of his wounds. At 2:30, orders came through for us to evacuate. Packed our bags and bedrolls on trucks and pulled out at 3:30, traveling some 20 miles to Liege arriving at 6:30.

The road to Liege was congested so we did not arrive until late. The weather was near freezing; the rain was changing to snow. Just as we arrived at the school building that housed C Company, a buzz bomb cut out above us, but landed elsewhere.

We had supper and bunked with C Company sleeping on the floor in the school gymnasium.

Liege is an important cross road and the Germans are determined to knock out Liege. The air raid sirens sound several times a day, every day as German aircraft appear overhead trying to bomb the bridges and supply depots. But the worst is the sound of the buzz bombs that one hears day and night. They are coming over ever 12 to 15 minutes. There is an occasional explosion from V-2's as well. It is all very nerve racking and dangerous. As some infantrymen who were on rest leave said to me, "It is like a continuous artillery barrage."

December 20: We are sitting around waiting for orders and still living in the school gymnasium. Most of the operations men are here in Liege, some of A and D Company went to Roux (Charleroi) together with my barracks bag that contains all my clothing. Huntsman and McCrain have arrived from Verviers having shut down the switchboard.

In the meantime our rear emergency system was put into operation. The backup communications in Charleroi provided the communications for the 9th TAC operations. We learned that shortly after we left Verviers our building was struck by long-range shell fire knocking out part of the wall.

We have no indication what is going on to the front lines. But we heard the Germans has massacred a large group of American prisoners in a field.

December 21: We were informed our switchboard van is being set up in a courtyard

(Continued)

BUZZ BOMBS

(Continuation)

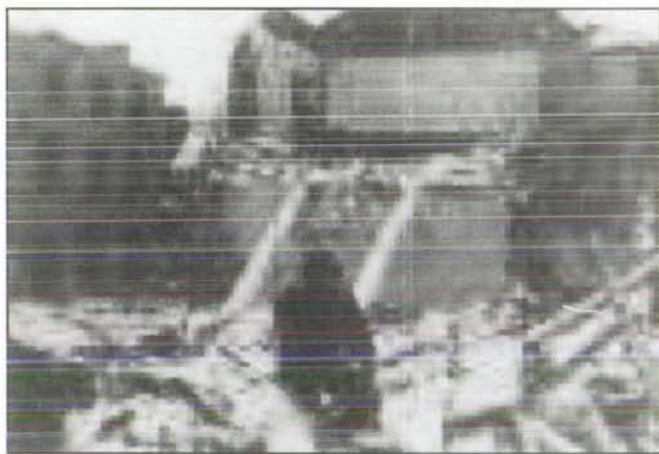
of a school, now occupied by 9th TAC headquarters which is now in Liege.

During the night a buzz bomb landed nearby and broke some windows in our bedroom (the gymnasium). We still have no idea as to what is going on except that Liege is under aerial attack by the Germans. (Little did we know that the enemy was just 20 miles south of us and that on December 22 a unit of the 2nd SS Panzer Division did try to proceed up Highway N15 to Liege but were turned away at Manhay.)

December 22: Liege is now off limits. We moved from the C Company billets to a boy's school across the street. We telephone operators are assigned to a classroom on the second floor of a three-story wing and have cots to sleep on. My bed is next to a partition wall. I was to work at midnight but the schedule was changed.

In addition to the buzz bombs, we had an air raid during the night with the air raid sirens sounding, flares from the bombers lighting up the ground, antiaircraft fire, bombs exploding, the whole works. Some of it was pretty close to us.

December 23: Finally went back to work. I worked in the morning 8 to 4 in the switchboard van in the courtyard. It was a very busy day for today was the first day of reasonably good weather. IX TAC mounted 696 combat sorties and Allied fighter planes shot down 133 German fighters. However, we still have no information on what is happening just south of us where hundreds of our troops are engaged in desperate battles.



**Front wing of our Quarters
in Liege Belgium**

In the evening, we were told there was a rumor that the Germans were going to drop paratroopers into Liege that night. We grabbed our guns and went outside waiting for further news. At 9:00 p.m. the air raid alarm sounded and some German bombers came over. We watched the planes dropping flares to light up the targets. Antiaircraft fire soon filled the sky. We could hear the bombs landing somewhere in the city, but there was still no sign of troop carriers or paratroopers.

During the day, 260 9th Air Force C-47's dropped needed supplies to the surrounded troops at Bastogne.

December 24: That night we had an air raid and then one time during the night we heard a buzz bomb stop overhead. We dove under our beds but it landed elsewhere. Rumors are that IX

TAC may move again as Liege may soon be under attack.

December 25: Christmas Day: Worked from 0800 to 1600 and it was very busy. For on this day, the CCB 2nd Armored Division with the support of our fighter bombers, counter attacked the German Panzers and stopped them just two miles short of the Meuse River.

At our Christmas dinner held in the gymnasium. We had guests as well for we shared our meal with a group of children from town. Besides the buzz bombs, the German air force staged air raids all day long, including strafing the streets.

December 26: Worked in the morning and was on guard duty for two hours. We had a short air raid at night with the usual pyrotechnics, but our main concern was the buzz bomb that landed close by.

December 28: At 0225 in the morning, I awoke to the sound of a buzz bomb diving. A whistling sound that got louder and louder and then came the explosion...a buzz bomb had struck our building. When I realized it was diving, I covered my face with my blanket just before it struck but my hands were exposed. The windows blew out, walls collapsed. My bed was next to a partition, which had a blackboard. The blackboard fell on top of me and on top of the blackboard fell the plaster and brick infill from the stud wall. Flying glass cut my exposed hands, my bags and my blanket.

For a few moments, there was dead silence, and then I heard someone crying to help from outside the building. I was able to crawl out from under the blackboard and in the dim moonlight make out there was plaster and broken glass everywhere. Some or part of the walls and ceiling was gone. All the windows were blown out. Two large wooden ceiling beams straddled Jackson's and Fountain's beds.

I pulled out my trousers from under my head, where it was serving as a pillow and finally dug out my jacket and shoes. My right hand was bleeding badly so I wrapped it with a handkerchief. My left hand has some minor cuts. As I checked with the men, I found we all had received some wounds from the flying glass.

I went down the now rickety wooden staircase to the street with great difficulty. As I walked through the courtyard, I saw that the front wing and the kitchen was a mass of rubble. On reaching the street, I saw a number of men were digging in the debris. I could hear voices calling for help. The GI's were feverishly pulling away with their bare hands the bricks that covered the bodies.

I was limping from the weight of the blackboard as I walked across the street to C Company billets where I was able to bandage the cuts as best I could, as the medics were in the street busy treating many other injured men. There was snow on the ground and I was cold and shaking. I went to the gym, someone gave me some blankets, and I lay my sore body down, got warm, and went to sleep. The rest of the night was a haze. Late in the morning, we went back upstairs carefully dug out and collected our belongings in all the debris.

We had six men killed: three radiomen from A Company; M/Sgt Lloyd Hunt, T/4 Olin Fritz, T/5 Robert Baldwin and one of our cooks, PFC Santiago Gonzalas, and two B Company men T/4 Talisfor Budzeika and T/5 Robert Bevins, who had just joined us having escaped from Bastogne. 57 men were wounded, some 12 serious enough to be hospitalized. I knew Sgt Hunt and was sorry to hear of his death and, of course the death of the other men as well.

(Continued)

(And as happened to so many of us we never really had a chance to attend to the burial of our comrades.)

That afternoon I had dinner with C Company and as I had to work at 4:00 p.m., I left my belongings in the gym to be moved to my new billets in a school on the Boulevard de Avroy. I walked to work on the 9th TAC switchboards and at 4:00 in the afternoon operating with a bandaged hand, sore side and hip and still shaky and nervous. It was very busy as well.

In the afternoon, my belongings were moved to my new quarters that we are sharing with the 327th Fighter Control. After coming off duty at midnight, I went to the address of my new billets and went to my assigned classroom on the top floor. I found I was all alone.

Except for my bed and my belongings, the room and the rest of the floor was empty. It was kind of eerie in being the only one in the building. As there were no blackout curtains on the windows, I had a view of the events occurring outside. It was bad enough that I was still unnerved from the experience I had just gone through, but that night lying in my cot I could see the German bombers dropping flares that lit up the sky, the anti-aircraft fire and the exhaust of the buzz bombs flying by and every so often, the explosions. I did not sleep well that night.

December 29: I discovered that the men had moved to the basement. I went to work at 8:00 a.m. with my hand still wrapped in a makeshift bandage. Our planes were flying again so we were very busy. Worked until 4:00 p.m. and after I finished work, I moved to the basement. I am living in a former coal bin with eight other men. The room is windowless, dark, damp, dirty and cold so we sleep with our clothes on. All of the men in the room are strangers to me. I felt all alone.

January 3, 10, 11, and 19: Buzz bombs stopped overhead but landed elsewhere. In several cases we switchboard operators were at work in the van when it stopped. Most of the unit moved back to Verviers on the 19th.

January 22: I packed up and arrived in Verviers around noon and went to work on the switchboard at midnight.

January 24: I worked from 4:00 p.m. to midnight and on January 25, I worked from midnight to 8:00 a.m.

January 22 to January 25: Ninth TAC flew some 1,500 sorties against the retreating German Army destroying hundreds of vehicles, tanks and armored vehicles. Our telephones were busy.

February 1: There are no more buzz bombs. The buzz bomb attack is over.

[Al's book is "A Soldier's Diary." It is available from www.xlibris.com/ASOLDIERSDIARY.html. Cost is \$19.99 plus shipping.] ■



A Graves Registration Company collect Allied and enemy dead. / US Army

THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE HISTORICAL FOUNDATION, INC.

Invites You to Join Your Friends for the

"EVENTS OF REMEMBRANCE AND COMMEMORATION" OF THE 65th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE December 12, 13, 14, 15 16, and 17th Dec 2009 Metropolitan Washington, DC

In commemoration of the 65th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge we have extended the length of the commemoration activities so that those who come from long distances will have an opportunity to partake of more events. The DoubleTree Hotel Crystal City, by Hilton, 300 Army-Navy Drive, in Arlington VA22202 has been selected again, with its panoramic view of our Nation's Capital. This hotel, just off Route 1 in Crystal City is a 7 minute drive from Reagan National Airport and a 2 City block walk to the Pentagon Metro Station and the Pentagon Mall. It provides easy access to Washington DC and underwent a major renovation in 2006 for great accommodations. We have managed to retain the reduced rate of \$99.00, single or double occupancy plus taxes, however food has gone up slightly. We have blocked 50 rooms so it is imperative to make hotel reservations immediately. Parking is Complimentary. This rate is available for any night(s) between December 10 and December 19. For room reservations please call the DoubleTree Reservations (1-800-Hiltons) or 703-416-4100 by **December 1, 2009**. Mention the **BATTLE OF THE BULGE** for the special rate. Some events are presently in negotiations with the government so the right to change or modify based on these negotiation is reserved.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2009

- 2:00 PM – 9:00 PM For those who want to arrive early. Registration (Hospitality Suite), receive name badges, Banquet/bus tickets, and information. (If you are only attending the Banquet, (on the 16th this year) you may pick up your tickets at the DoubleTree by 6:00 PM Dec 16th.)
- 3:00 PM – 10:00 PM Hospitality Room/Exhibits, Books, scrapbooks, memorabilia open everyday. John Bowen & Bob Phillips, BOB Bulge Historians will be the hosts. Marty Feldman will again be in charge of refreshments. Supper will be on your own from 6:30 – 8:00 PM. A time to renew friendships & visit with old friends.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2009

- 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM Registration open/Receive name badges, Parking Passes, Banquet/bus tickets, HospitalityRoom open.
- 12:30 PM Charter buses depart hotel for Newseum Tour
- 1:00 PM – 5:00 PM We will be visiting the new NEWSEUM in Washington which opened last year. You may visit 15 theaters, including a 4-D immersive experience and feature films that highlight the world's greatest stories & moments and 14 major Galleries that blend five centuries of news history – including the people, places and times – with up-to-the-second technology. An incredible new Newseum!
- 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM Back by popular demand - Bus tour of Washington Under the Lites. Washington is a beautiful city not only by day but especially at night with the lites. We will stop at the WWII Memorial with its lights.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2009

- 9:00 – 9:15 AM Load buses and depart promptly at 9:15 AM for a Tour of the White House.
- 10:00 AM Tour of the White House. The home of the President and First Lady is beautiful anytime of the year but it is especially a delight during the Holidays with the exquisite holiday decorations. S. S. # & DOB required.
- 12:00 - 2:00 PM The buses will depart for Union Station where you may have lunch on your own from the myriad of food places and delicacies and enjoy shopping in the Union Station Mall. Be sure to take in the beauty of this restored train station as well as the traditional Norway train exhibit on the Concourse.
- 2:30 PM US Capitol Visitor's Center Tour then return to hotel.
- 5:45 PM Buses depart for Luxembourg Embassy, 2230 Mass Ave NW, for an evening reception by the Luxembourg Ambassador at the beautiful Luxembourg Embassy. This will be a standup reception with finger foods. Business or formal dress is appropriate. Reception will be approximately one to one and a half hours.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2009

- 9:00 – 9:15 AM Load buses for US ARMY Military Review to commemorate the 65th Anniversary of the US Army's largest land Battle ever fought. Event will take place at 10:00 AM at Conmy Hall on Ft Myer hosted by the US Army Chief of Staff. Buses depart for DoubleTree Hotel for lunch after ceremonies
- 12:00 PM DoubleTree Hotel for Lunch of hot soup, Grilled Chicken or Smoked Turkey sandwich, bev and cookies.
- 1:30 – 4:00 PM Load Buses and leave for International Spy Museum. Leave Spy Museum Tour at 4:00 PM
- 5:45 PM Buses leave for an evening reception at the beautiful Belgium Ambassador's Residence, 2300 Foxhall Rd NW. Dress & time similar to Luxembourg Embassy reception.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2009

- 9:00 AM 12:30PM Bus leaves from Hotel for Wreath layings: WWII Memorial 10AM, Tomb of the Unknowns 11AM; Small BOB Memorial 11:30 AM; Large BOB Memorial 12:00 PM. Leave for Capitol 12:30 PM.
- 1:00 PM Luncheon US Capitol Senate Office Building and Swearing-in of new National VBOB officers
- 2:30 pm Tree Presentation Ceremony, Salute to Bulge Veterans and Memorial Service.
- Leave for Hotel No Later Than 4:30 PM
- 6:00 – 10 PM BANQUET AT THE DOUBLETREE CRYSTAL CITY
- 6:00 PM Social Hour/Cash Bar. 6:45 PM Seated for Dinner. 7:00 PM Color Guard & Honors
- 7:15 PM Dinner served: Medallions of Beef Tenderloin OR *Chicken Piccata with lemon caper sauce*

Program: Greetings from Dignitaries and Speaker: After Banquet Hospitality Room open.

Notes: Free Airport shuttle provided by the DoubleTree Hotel every half hour, 3 miles from Reagan Washington National Airport. Free Shuttle from DoubleTree Hotel every hour on the half hour to Pentagon City Metro (Blue/Yellow Line) and Pentagon City Mall. Skydome Lounge, the area's only revolving rooftop lounge, for a spectacular view of Washington at night.

10/23/09

RESERVATION FORM
"REMEMBRANCE AND COMMEMORATION"
OF THE 65th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE
December 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17, 2009 Metropolitan Washington, DC

Return form and check by **December 1, 2009** to:

Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation, Inc.
PO Box 2516,
Kensington MD 20895-0181

Questions:

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

Full Name: _____ Telephone _____ Cell _____

Full Name of Spouse/Guests: _____ ; _____ ; _____

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

Battle of Bulge Unit You Served With: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

<u>RESERVATIONS:</u>	<u>Number Attending</u>	<u>Cost/Person</u>	<u>Total</u>
Registration Fee: Provides for Badges, Programs, Hospitality, etc.	X	\$20.00	\$ _____

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2009

Chartered Bus: Afternoon & Evening bus transportation	X	\$35.00	\$ _____
Afternoon only _____ Evening Only _____	X	\$17.50	\$ _____
1:00 PM – 5:00 PM: NEWSEUM Tour	X	\$16.00 age 19>	\$ _____
	X	\$11.00 age 18<	\$ _____
7:00 PM – 9:00 PM Bus Tour Wash Under Lites	X	\$3.00 Guide Fee	\$ _____

MONDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2009

Chartered Bus: All Day & Evening Bus Transportation	X	\$35.00	\$ _____
Evening Transportation Only to Embassy	X	\$17.50	\$ _____
10:00 AM *Tour of White House	X	FREE	\$ _____

*Full Name, Soc Sec # and Date of Birth required to be provided in advance to White House. Please provide on separate sheet.

UNION STATION Lunch on Own & Shop	X	FREE	\$ _____
02:30 PM US Capitol Visitors' Center Tour	X	FREE	\$ _____
05:45 PM Embassy of Luxembourg Reception Evening	X	FREE	\$ _____

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2009

Chartered Bus: All Day & Evening Bus Transportation	X	\$35.00	\$ _____
Evening Transportation Only to Embassy	X	\$17.50	\$ _____
US Army Chief of Staff Review Ft Myers 10AM	X	FREE	\$ _____
12:00 Noon Lunch at DoubleTree 12:00 Noon Chicken _____ Turkey _____	X	\$28.00	\$ _____
01:30 PM Spy Museum Tour Lv 4:00 PM	X	\$15.00 (65+)	\$ _____
	X	\$18.00 (12-64)	\$ _____
	X	\$13.00 (5-11)	\$ _____

05:45 PM Belgium Ambassador Residence Reception Evening	X	FREE	\$ _____
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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2009:

Chartered bus Transportation All Day	X	\$35.00	\$ _____
11:00 AM Ceremonies: Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers and VBOB Monuments,	No. Attending: _____		
12:30 PM Bus to US Capitol			
1:00 PM VBOB Luncheon US Capitol Senate Ofc Bldg	X	\$28.00	\$ _____
2:30 PM Tree Presentation, Bulge Vets Tribute, FREE	No. Attending: _____		
Commemorative Banquet, DoubleTree Hotel Crystal City		\$65.00	\$ _____

6:00 PM - 10:00 PM Note: Only 225 Place Settings available. Please register early.

Please make your Main Course selection(s):

- | | |
|---|---------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medallions of Beef Tenderloin | (Names) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chicken Piccata with lemon caper sauce | (Names) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diabetic Meal | (Names) _____ |

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

GRAND TOTAL (Enclose check made out to BoBHF 2009 Commemoration): \$ _____

NOTES & REMINDERS: Banquet Dress: Business suit/black tie (miniature medals encouraged) or military dress uniform
 Room reservations must be made with the DoubleTree Crystal City directly, by December 1, 2009 (Telephone (1-800-Hiltons) Block of 50.
 Return completed Reservation Form for events to BOB Historical Foundation ASAP but no later than 1 December 2009.
 Banquet seating is limited to 225 so please get reservations in early. No cancellation refunds after December 8, 2009.
 Please indicate in all places the number & names attending so that we can be advised of the proper number to plan. Thanks!
 PLEASE BRING A PICTURE ID (Drivers License, Passport, Mil ID) for the Washington area

10/23/09

THE ARDENNES OFFENSIVE-- A LAST-DITCH EFFORT

[We received a note from DAVID G. GARCIA, 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION, wanting to know why we had so few stories about his division. We found the following on the internet.]

By late 1944, Germany was unmistakably losing the war. The Soviet Red Army was closing in on the Eastern front, while strategic Allied bombing was wreaking havoc on German cities. The Italian peninsula had been captured and liberated, and the Allied armies were advancing rapidly through France from west to east. Therefore, Adolph Hitler knew that the end was near if something could not be done to slow the Allies' advance.



American soldiers taking up defensive positions in the Ardennes during the Battle of the Bulge.

After the triumphant breach of Normandy in August 1944, the Allies rushed across France with amazing speed. But before they could cross the Rhine River, they would have to face a last-stand German onslaught.

The Battle of the Bulge, so named because of the westward bulging shape of the battleground on a map, lasted from mid-December 1944 to the end of January 1945. It was the largest land battle of World War II in which the United States directly participated. More than a million men fought in the battle--600,000 Germans, 500,000 Americans, and 55,000 British.

The battle was fought on an 80-mile front running from southern Belgium through the Ardennes Forest, and down to Ettelbruck in the middle of Luxembourg. Hitler's real target was the British-American alliance, and he saw the battle as a juggernaut to break apart and defeat the Allied forces. That "surprise attack" would supposedly divide British and American forces, leaving the way wide open for the Wehrmacht (German army) to swing north and seize the port of Antwerp. Thus they could cut off the main supply base for the Allied armies on the Western Front.

Hitler believed that he could force the western Allies to negotiate a peace treaty in the Axis' favor. He also believed that such factors as bad weather, bad terrain, and the Christmas holiday would help him catch the Allies by surprise. In other words, he anticipated it to be a decisive battle to win. After all, the

Allies were very much inferior to the Germans as far as their military strength was concerned. At the battle's beginning, the U.S. Army was equipped with 80,000 men, 400 tanks, and 400 guns, while the Germans had 200,000 men, 600 tanks, and 1,900 guns.

The night before the battle, Hitler sent in soldiers to infiltrate the front. Some were dropped by parachute, others came in driving captured American jeeps. Those German soldiers spoke fluent English and wore U.S. uniforms; therefore they managed to spread confusion by giving false directions, changing road signs, and cutting telephone lines.

The Battle of the Bulge began with a German attack on the morning of December 16, 1944. Under cover of heavy fog, 38 German divisions struck along a 50-mile front. The German army managed to push American forces back nearly to the Meuse River and surround the town of Bastogne in Belgium. At that time, when ordered to surrender Bastogne, Brig. General Anthony C. McAuliffe famously replied: "Nuts." That same day, reinforcements were sent by air drop and Allied airplanes began their attack on German tanks. Lt. General George Patton's Third Army rescued the defenders of Bastogne. Allied leader, including General Omar Bradley and General Dwight D. Eisenhower, were surprised by the force of the German attack.

Much of the battle was affected by the weather. Great snowstorms were a big problem. Trucks had to be run every half hour to keep the oil in them from freezing. Weapons froze, so men urinated on them to thaw them. The temperature during January 1945 was the coldest on record, and casualties from exposure to the cold grew as large as the losses from fighting. The Germans attacked in white uniforms to blend in with the snow.



American soldier in the snow during the Battle of the Bulge

The Malmedy Massacre

On December 17, 1944, halfway between the town of Malmedy and Ligneuville in Belgium, an American battalion was captured by an SS force. About 150 POWs were disarmed and sent to stand in a field. About 80 men were killed by gunfire, and their bodies were left where they fell. Many prisoners escaped into nearby woods. News spread quickly among Allied soldiers, and an order went out that all SS officers and paratroopers should be shot on sight. The Malmedy Massacre is regarded as the worst atrocity committed against American troops during the course of the war in Europe.

Counterattack

On December 23, American forces began their first counter-attack on the southern flank of the Bulge. On January 1, 1945, the Germans launched two new operations in an attempt to keep the offensive going and create second fronts in Holland and northern France. The Luftwaffe (German air force) launched a major campaign against Allied airfields and succeeded in destroying or severely

(Continued)

THE ARDENNES OFFENSIVE (Continuation)
damaging more than 460 aircraft. The Luftwaffe also sustained an incredible number of losses--460 aircraft. The Luftwaffe also sustained an incredible number of losses--277 planes. While the Allies recovered quickly from their losses, the operation left the Luftwaffe weaker than ever. After 20 days of fighting, American forces fell back, having sustained more than 11,000 casualties--but inflicting 23,000.

On January 7, 1945, Hitler agreed with his staff to pull back most of his forces from the Ardennes, thus ending all offensive operations. On January 8, German troops withdrew from the tip of the bulge. Their losses were critical. The last of the German reserves were gone, the Luftwaffe had been broken and the German army in the west was being pushed back. Most importantly, the Eastern Front was now ripe for the taking by the Soviets. With the majority of its air power and men lost, Germany had few forces left to defend the Third Reich. Germany's final defeat loomed just a few months away. ■

WWII HERO TANK'S IDENTITY CONFIRMED

**"Cobra King" led 4th Armored
Division column that relieved
Bastogne during the Battle
of the Bulge**

[The following excerpt was taken from the Newsletter of the 2nd Armored Division Association as it appeared on the web site of the 2nd Cavalry Association News Center. The article was written by Dave Melancon, U.S. Army, Europe Public Affairs Office.]

Vilsek, Germany - A World War II-era warrior with a storied past still stands guard over the back gate of Rose Barracks here. That sentinel is a Sherman tank, nicknamed "Cobra King" by her first crew, that helped liberate occupied France, helped to relieve the embattled 101st Airborne Division at Bastogne, breached the Siegfried Line and battled its way through Germany into Czechoslovakia.

The 37th Tank Battalion, 4th Armored Division fought many hard-won battles in France, but the Cobra King and its crew earned their place in U.S. Army history during the Battle of the Bulge.

One day after Christmas, 1944, Cobra King, its nickname symbolic of the tank corps tradition of naming vehicles with the first letter of their companies' designations--and its five-man crew from the 37th's Company C led a column of infantry and armor that relieved the encircled soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division at Bastogne, Belgium.

On December 24, 2008--just two days shy of the 64th anniversary of its entry into Bastogne, U. S. Army Europe historians announced that the tank's identity and lineage had been confirmed.

A German offensive, called "Watch on the Rhine," began December 15, 1944, when the German 5th and 6th Panzer Armies pushed through U.S. lines along the German-Belgian

border, headed for Antwerp. U.S. forces were pushed westward, but the 101st, held fast in Bastogne surrounded by the enemy.

The 4th, part of General George S. Patton's 3rd Army, began its 19-hour, 150-mile race to rescue the 101st in Bastogne December 18. The Germans continued their attack on the western side of the Bastogne perimeter December 26 but the U.S. lines held firm.

Cobra King and its crew began their 5-mile final push into Bastogne through stiff German resistance, according to a January 1945 interview with Captain Stedman Seny, the division assistant operations officer, on the division association's web site.

The commanders of the 37th and the 53rd Armored Infantry Battalions, Lt. Cols. Creighton W. Abrams, Jr. (39th Colonel of the Regiment Creighton W. Abrams & June 1951-29 June 1952) and George L. Jaques, were ordered to make a break for Bastogne, he said.



The "Cobra King" crew--1st Lt. Charles Boggess, Cpl. Milton Dickerman and Pvs. James G. Murphy, Hubert S. Smith and Harold Hafner--pose for a celebratory photo in the vicinity of Bastogne, Belgium, shortly after the tankers led the armor and infantry columns that liberated the city in December, 1944.

Race to Bastogne

Starting from assembly areas north of Arlon December 22, the 4th's three combat commands, similar in size and organization to today's modular brigade combat teams, battled their way to Bastogne. The division sustained heavy losses along the way.

While preparing for their next push, Abrams and Jaques saw the sky filled with cargo planes dropping ammunition and supplies to the surrounded paratroopers. Abrams suggested they try a dash through the Village of Assenois straight into Bastogne.

That afternoon division tankers took the high ground near the Village of Clochimont, about five miles southwest of Bastogne, Seny said. According to his report, the 37th was down to 20 medium tanks and the 53rd was short about 230 men as the two units' C Companies set out. Cobra King, bumper number C-6, led the column of tanks and halftracks with 1st Lt. Charles P. Boggess of the 37th's Company C in its commander's seat.

According to reports, U. S. artillery rained 2,340 shells on enemy positions, tankers and infantrymen and showered the defending Germans with heavy machine gun fire as the column, in Seny's words, "highballed through Clochimont" toward Assenois, the last stop before Bastogne.

Thick woods concealed blockhouses defending the road beyond Assenois.

(Continued)

WWII HERO TANK

(Continuation)

Bogges's company had the job of plowing through those defenses without stopping. The companies that followed, supported by the 53rd, would mop up behind them.

After the first four U.S. tanks continued north through Assenois, the Germans detonated teller mines behind them, knocking out a halftrack and wounding several infantrymen, Seny said.

"The Germans had these two little towns of Clochimont and Assenois on the secondary road we were using to get to Bastogne. Beyond Assenois, the road ran up a ridge through heavy woods. There were a lot of Germans there, too," Bogges said in a December 1949 article in *European Stars and Stripes*. "We were going through fast, all guns firing, straight up that road to bust through before they had time to get set."

"I used the 75 (mm main gun) like it was a machine gun," said gunner Cpl Milton Dickerman. "(Loader Pvt James G.) Murphy was plenty busy throwing in shells. We shot 21 rounds in a few minutes and I don't know how much machine gun stuff."

"We moved full speed, firing straight ahead, with the other tanks firing left and right. We weren't supposed to stop on the way, either," Bogges said in an interview with *strictly-gi.com* during the 40th anniversary commemoration of the battle in 1984.

North of Assenois, Bogges and crewmen Pvs. Hubert S. Smith, driver, bow machine gunner Harold Hafner, Murphy and Dickerman approached a team of combat engineers in U.S. uniforms assaulting a pillbox. Bogges, aware of reports of German soldiers masquerading as Americans called out the engineers' platoon leader, who identified the team as U.S. soldiers.

"We then came across a large pillbox, which we at once destroyed," Bogges said. "There certainly was a lot of confusion, since the Germans hadn't expected us to break (through) via this secondary road. Nevertheless, enemy fire was considerable, and we lost four Shermans on the way."

The siege of Bastogne was broken when the Cobra King crew linked up with the 101st's Able Company, 326th Airborne Engineer Battalion, at the pillbox about two miles from the town center.

At 5:10 p.m., Abrams shook hands with Gen. Anthony McAuliffe, acting commander of the 101st in Bastogne.

The road cleared by the column was the only route in or out of Bastogne. That night, dismounted infantrymen continued to clear enemy stragglers in the woods along the road. Assenois was cleared by 8 p.m. December 16, and by morning the woods on both sides of the road running north from Assenois were secure enough to assure relatively free use.

The relief of Bastogne cost the 4th Armored Division about 1,000 men killed and wounded. The 37th lost five men, with another 22 wounded and five missing. Thirty soldiers of the 53rd died and 180 were wounded. Company C was down to four tanks.

But the fight was not over.

"The corridor to Bastogne had to be held. By now the 37th and elements of the 26th Infantry Division were joined in fighting to hold the road open," according to reports on *globalsecurity.org*. It took two weeks to push the Germans east of Bastogne, and the battle officially ended just more than a week later, on January 17, 1945. The 37th earned a Presidential Unit Citation for its relief of the city.

After the War

Cobra King remained in Germany while the 37th Tank Battalion was reactivated in 1951 and assigned to the 4th in 1953 at Fort Hood, Texas. The battalion would later return to Europe, and a photograph from the division's 1958 yearbook, shows the famed tank on display on McKee Barracks in Craisheim, Germany.

When Craisheim was closed in 1994, the 1st Armored Division units there relocated to Vilsek and brought the tank along, said Steven Ruhnke, 1st Armored Division museum curator. The division later relocated to Bad Kreuznach, Germany, but this time Cobra King stayed behind.

Cobra King maintained its vigil in obscurity for several years until Sgt. Brian Stigall, of the 5th Battalion, 7th Air Defense Artillery, recognized it after attending a Battle of the Bulge commemoration in 2004.

Research by Army historians in Germany and the U.S. confirmed its identity. Cobra King is now expected to go on display at the National Museum of the U.S. Army, scheduled to open in 2013 near Washington, D.C.



"Cobra King" as it appears today. ■

JANUARY 1, 1945, ACTION

James E. Hunter
Company L
347th Infantry Regiment
87th Infantry Division

[NOTE: In an office cleaning spree, I ran into a June, 1997, copy of *Gorden Acorn News* the newsletter of the 87th Infantry Division. I found this story which I thought would be of interest to you.]

Following combat in the Saar and a short Christmas respite in Rheims, France, our company reentered combat in Belgium in the early house of New Year's Day. Transported by truck from a rear area to a point north of Neufchateau, we walked the road north from 2:00 a.m. on through the towns of Freux, Freux-Menil, and Moiricy.

(Continued)

Dawn's light revealed that we passed through open, snowy fields interspersed with dark patches of evergreen forests. About 8:00 a.m., we entered a small village, probably Pironpre, maybe Jenneville, where wildly happy Belgians greeted us in the streets. Someone invited us into a home where we were warmly welcomed. Their leader, a priest, sent to the cellar for a bottle of good wine to celebrate our arrival. We were cautioned to be alert for the Germans who were less than 1 kilometer away.

We turned 90 degrees to the west as we departed the town. We walked beside a dense evergreen woods running along a large open field situated north of our route. This woods extended in a thin line along the near south side of the field and extensively along its east side. The woods bordering the south of the field was triangular in shape with its apex further to the west. Our executive officer, 1st Lt. John McCarley, commanding Company L, halted us a few yards short of this apex. We were well sheltered from view from the field. Lt. McCarley chose my squad to reconnoiter with him down the hill through the woods at the right of the field. The squad, led by Sgt. Bob Brawner in the absence of squad leader S/Sgt Abel Gomez, numbered only 5 men. Brawner designated me, the BAR man, to act as assistant squad leader.

We moved down the hill through the thick evergreens for more than 200 yards shielded from view of the field. Near the bottom of the hill, we stealthily observed a crossroads with its surrounding buildings where Germans walked about at close range. If we had shot them from there, they would have been completely surprised. Instead, Lt. McCarley took us back to the top of the hill where he consulted the artillery liaison officer attached to L Company. Next, we escorted this officer and Lt. McCarley back over the same route we had just traversed to show the artillery man the Germans' position. We returned to the company position at the top of the hill for the second time. Lt. McCarley ordered a lunch break of about 10 minutes duration after which he told the artillery officer to radio for a dozen rounds to be fired on our objective. Soon our shells rumbled overhead, where they landed I don't know for ny ny they took no effect. When the shelling stopped, Lt. McCarley ordered us to move down the hill in a northerly direction. My 15 man 2nd Platoon moved out single file around the point of the woods while the 1st Platoon deployed to our left. Our 3rd Platoon was in reserve somewhere to our rear.

Company L numbered 60 men at the time of our attack. As assistant squad leader at the rear of my 5 man squad, I walked downhill with Headquarters Platoon people: Lt. McCarley; company runner, Glenn Maddy; and radio man, Alvin Redlinger. Our small group was spread over a circle of 30 to 40 feet radius. When we were about one-fourth of the way down the hill, the head of 2nd Platoon including Bill Betts, T/Sgt. John MacElwee and eight privates reached the bottom of the hill where there stood a stone farmhouse and barn. Beyond the buildings, the ground rose in a hill further to our front. I saw a German soldier running along a road from behind the farmhouse to the crossroads to our right which was our objective, Bonnerue. I halted and fired a few rounds at the German, whereupon he fell to the ground, most likely to take cover behind the snow bank at the road's edge. When I resumed walking downhill, I slowly became aware of a semicircle of tiny sparks in the snow two to three yards in front of my feet. Suddenly, I realized the sparks were tracer bullets hitting the grounds. I was being fired on by

a machine gun.

I looked for cover, but there was none. What does one do in such a situation? Nothing would help. Running to the rear wouldn't do. Standing still would only make me an easier target. The only thing possible was simply to keep walking. Through this entire experience the only German I saw after beginning my third descent of the hill was the one I shot at. As we walked Lt. McCarley for some reason said, "Hit the ground, men." So I hit the ground. I lay face down with head lower than feet unable to see anything to the front because my steel helmet hung over my eyes. For a few seconds the four of us lay where we had landed. When Lt. McCarley called, "Come on, men, let's go" We got them on the run," I looked toward him where he lay about 30 feet to my right front. He rose to his feet, stood for a moment, and abruptly spun about on his left leg while kicking his right leg upward. He fell flat on his back and never moved or uttered another word. He was dead before he hit the ground. Needless to say, I did not get up. Months later, I learned that he had been shot directly between the eyes.

My small group of living and dead were about half way down the hill. Lt. Betts, with the bulk of the 2nd Platoon, had reached a position in the barnyard sheltered by a large mound of dirt-covered root crop. This was fodder for the cows in winter. The mound, large enough to shield my friends from machine gun fire emanating from the farmhouse window, blocked their view of the German position. If anyone had so much as extended a finger above the mound, the gunner not 50 feet away could have shot it off. Between our positions lay my friend, Bob Brawner. I heard Bob calling for a medic for a long while as we lay pinned down unable to aid him.

I tried to see out from under my steel helmet, but in doing so I moved about enough to attract the attention of the Germans. I could hear the bullets passing by my ears. When I lay still, the shooting subsided. When I struggled to see, the Germans would shoot again. I heard Sgt. MacElwee shout from behind the root crop mound, "Hunter, for God's sake lie still!" Besides machine gun fire the Germans also fired shells at me. Early in the afternoon a shell hit directly in front of me very nearby. Immediately a second shell exploded right behind me so close I was showered with clods of frozen dirt. I thought they had me bracketed with mortar fire and the next moment a third shell would land between the two. (Continued)



Brig-Gen McAuliffe and his staff at Christmas dinner in Bastogne. McAuliffe is fourth from the left and Harry Kinnard second from the right. US Army

JANUARY 1, 1945, ACTION

(Continuation)

would be dead before I knew what hit me. I was so convinced I was about to die, I prayed, "God, I commend my soul to you. Please take me to heaven when I'm dead." It never occurred to me to ask God to save my life. After I accepted my impending demise I felt no fear, only a deep sense of deprivation and sadness. I was only 19 years old and was going to miss the rest of my life.

While lying there I was shot by a bullet through the flesh of my right forearm. This caused the muscles to contract so I couldn't open my fist for several minutes. At last, the muscles relaxed to allow me to straighten out my fingers. I didn't realize a bullet had passed through my arm into the dirt directly under my face. But I decided Sgt. MacElwee was right, so I quit moving around trying to see.

We were pinned down on the hill around noon. In the late afternoon shortly before sundown I began to have the faint hope I might have a chance to sneak back up the hill after dark. Before this hope could be realized, I heard loud taling in German from the bottom of the hill. I looked up to see two Germans pointing rifles into the hole my fellow platoon members had dug behind the mound. My friends were climbing out with their hands clasped over their helmets. Watching this, my thoughts were: (1) I could shoot the two Germans with my BAR, (2) For sure, the Germans would shoot me, (3) after I'm dead the Germans will send out two more soldiers to capture my friends, (4) the Germans might take out their anger on my friends if I shoot, (5) I might shoot some of my friends while shooting the Germans. This just didn't add up to me, so I didn't shoot. I noticed 1st Platoon men off to my left beginning to turn and crawl back uphill. These men were fortunate to be not so directly in line of fire as we were. Also, they were lying in a slight swale running up the hill which afforded a bit of cover. As I watched men slowly move up the hill, it seemed to me that if I had any courage at all I must try to escape. Surely the Germans would soon come up the hill and capture me. It was my duty to try to get away. To put it mildly, this was bad thinking.

Summoning all my courage, I rose to my feet and began running up the hill to the rear with the forlorn hope I might find some cover as I progressed. What I found, of course, was no more cover than I had observed on the way down the hill; not a twig, a clump of grass, a rock, or a lump of snow to hide behind. I might as well have been on a fairway with someone shooting at me from the green. I had been lying in the snow for more than four hours, carried a heavy load, and could barely move from stiffness. As I lumbered uphill the bullets snapped about my ears sounding like a 22 caliber rifle being fired nearby. I thought, "This is bad form! It's not right to allow oneself to be shot in the back." Without thinking, I dropped to the ground and began to crawl. I hadn't moved three feet when I felt a sensation like a brick thrown and hitting my left knee while I simultaneously received an electrical shock. I had been shot. At that moment I thought, "I'm done for." I probably wasn't, but I didn't know any better. No one ever talked about wounds or their significance.

With the realization I had been shot, I stopped crawling. That was the first intelligent thing I had done since trying to escape. The Germans reacted as I had when I shot a German soldier on the outskirts of Walsheim two weeks earlier. They stopped shooting at me. I thought I might bleed to death, so even as I

had seen the German do at Walsheim, I rolled onto my back and waved to those who had shot me. Sure enough, they didn't shoot. Thus, encouraged, I sat up to survey the damage. My pant leg was ripped from ankle to well above the knee exposing the bone for about 10". There was much blood but no pain or bone breakage. I removed my belt and fashioned a tourniquet with it about my thigh. This must have worked since I didn't bleed to death. I probably would not have even without the tourniquet.

As I sat wondering what to do, I observed the two Germans marching my friends at gun point along the road from the house to the crossroads to the right. While I watched, an American P-47 fighter/bomber appeared to my left and made a bombing run on my friends. Fortunately, the pilot did not strafe or many of them would have been killed. I saw the group of prisoners and guards fall to the ground for cover from the three bombs the plane dropped. While the bombs were in flight, I suddenly decided I couldn't stay seated on the hill. I had to get up and go down the hill to get help for my wound.

I soon reached the place where Bob Brawner lay. I stopped to talk to him and could see that his condition was bad. His color was pallid. He told me he was wounded in his neck and couldn't move. While I stood talking to Bob, Glen Maddy walked up and told me had endured all he could stand of laying on the hill and being shot at. We tried to give Bob sulfa tablets from his first aid kit, but the water in my canteen was frozen solid. We should have covered Bob with blankets but lacked the presence of mind to do so. After a few moments we said goodbye to Bob and began walking toward the farm house.

By then my leg had stiffened so, with my left arm draped around his shoulder, Glenn helped me walk. As we neared the barn yard I glanced upward to my left and saw a P-47 with three bombs under its wing diving straight at us. I looked directly up the propeller shaft while the pilot dropped the bombs. I could see every detail of the plane as well as the pilot's face. The plane passed over and pulled up from its dive. As I watched the bombs fall straight at us and I never flinched. Lucky for us, the pilot neither strafed us nor did he know precisely where to aim his bombs. Glenn was between me and the bomb blast but was not hit, whereas a small fragment struck me right across my buttocks. This superficial wound hurt worse than anything that hit me all day. I yelled, "Glenn, this is too much! Our own guys are after us."

We walked toward the house at a faster pace. I looked up again and saw another P-47 begin its bombing run. This time my mind was functioning some what so I shouted, "Hit the ground!" to Glenn. I fell directly onto my wounded knee but it didn't hurt at all. This second load of bombs also fell short. I rose quickly, grabbed Glenn, and the two of us hurried to reach the farm house before the next flight arrived. One more plane dropped bombs before we reached the house. By then, we were more afraid of the planes than of the Germans. We entered a side door of the house into a long hallway. We could hear the Germans calling but saw no one. We opened a door on the opposite side of the hall into the kitchen, which was simply crawling with German soldiers. At the window facing the hill from which we had come was a machine gun manned by two soldiers. The big sergeant in charge of the unit stepped forward to shake my hand say in perfect English, "You are lucky. For you, the way is over." I'm sure he wasn't kidding and would probably have traded places with us.

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JANUARY 1, 1945, ACTION

(Continuation)

The Germans treated us humanely and impressed me as being businesslike and professional. They were part of a Wehrmacht panzer division: Panzer Lehr, I believe.

While I was seated on a gasoline can, a painful experience because of my bomb wound, Glenn bandaged my wound using my first aid compress along with his own and muslin strips supplied by the Germans. During our short stay, the Germans accepted nothing from us for fear of being captured with American goods in their possession. Glenn dismantled my pack for the K rations. When he held up the blanket horseshoed with the top of the pack we saw it had been shredded by a projectile which has passed within inches of my neck.

The Germans said if I could walk they would put me in an ambulance and transport me to a hospital. With Glenn's help I hobbled over the road to Bonnerue. We were interrogated in a house there while a German medic splinted my leg. Back outdoors Glenn labored to boost me into a vehicle while two Germans sat and watched. As Glenn has put it to me, "You kept passing out." We were driven to the next aid station where I was given a shot of captured American morphine. While I lay on a mattress on the floor a German entered the room and sat down at its foot thereby jostling my wounded leg. I was amazed at the shouts of, "Dumkopf!" and the dressing down this fellow received from the other German patients in the room. I was more amazed that when the soldier jumped up from the mattress and apologized to me.

When taken from that place, Glenn and I were separated, but I was reunited with Bob Brawner either in an ambulance or at the next aid station. Bob and I were transported from one aid station to another for two nights and days. We were together in a German military hospital in Rhinebach, Germany, where we both were treated medically. Bob died of his wounds on January 13, 1945, in that hospital at age 19. It was a tragic waste of a potentially highly valuable life.

The 87th Division History lists nine L Company men killed in action on January 2, 1945. These deaths actually occurred January 1, 1945. January 2nd was the first day those killed were not present for duty. Bras, Belgium, is listed as the site of several deaths. I was at Bonnerue, as were those incorrectly listed at Bras. Besides Lt. McCarley and Sgt. Brawner, Radioman Alvin Redlinger was killed. Three of my squad members killed were Pvt. Arthur Burner, Pvt. James Johnston, and Pvt. James Bauer. I am the only survivor of 1st Squad, 2nd Platoon, action that day. Cpl. Charles Ingraham of the 2nd Platoon was killed. Three other Company L members killed were Pfc John Palmer, Pfc Robert Pyle and Pfc. John Wadleigh. January 1, 1945, was by far the worst day of the war for Company L. Summarizing: Nine men killed, seventeen enlisted men and one officer missing in action, and S/Sgt Robert Abel, of 1st Platoon, severely wounded along with three others. On January 2, 1945, 29 men were present for duty in Company L, 347th Regiment.



VBOB GATEWAY CHAPTER INVITES YOU TO DEDICATION

Jefferson Barracks Park
St. Louis, Missouri
(Next to the Powder Magazine Museum)
Saturday, August 15, 2009 - 1:00 p.m.

Stewart Piper, served as Chairman of the GI Statute project and Dave Schroeder was Fundraising Chairman.

Those who plan to attend should bring their own chairs, as seating capacity is limited. Refreshments will be furnished by The Friends of Jefferson Barracks.

The design of the statue is similar to the bronze GI Statue that was erected in 1983 by the people of Luxembourg and in the City of Clervaux, as a memorial to the American GI's who liberated their country during World War II.

Further information may be obtained on the internet at: www.gatewayvbob.org.



NORTH COAST OHIO CHAPTER MEETS

[The following photograph appeared in the July, 2009, issue of *Bulgebusters*, the newsletter of the 75th Infantry Division]



Members of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, gathered May 3 for the group's annual dinner at American Legion Post #451 in Rocky River, Ohio. Appearing in front of a banner bearing their unit patches are: Eugene Hermann, George Doyle, George Tachuk, Rudy Zupan, Albert Pekrul, Fredric Harf, Ralph Youngmann, Don Ceboll and James Gibson.

NIGHT PATROL

Samuel W. Ballinger, Company E, 328th IR, 26th ID

My story begins during the frigid, snowy days in early December 1944 when I was a 23 year old Corporal whose outfit was billeted in the University City of Metz in southeast France, which is about halfway between Luxembourg and the City of Nancy, also located in France. As a member of General Patton's Third Army, 26th Infantry Division, 328th Regiment, Company E, my outfit was taking special training to crack through the German Siegfried Line. The famed 26th Division was called the Yankee Division was a very well respected battle-hardened Division.

On December 16, 1944 about seventy-five (75) miles north of Metz the Germans launched a major surprise attack. The German strategy was to separate the Americans in the South and the other allied armies in the North. Their primary target was to take the busy allied supply port at Antwerp. This was, of course was Hitler's last desperate attempt. The well-trained and heavily armed Panzer divisions advanced and created a Bulge in our lines as they had pushed their way to Bastogne, Belgium.

The 26th Infantry Division, Yankee Division, learned on the night of December 19th that it was going to take part in what future historians will probably describe as one of the most important strategic maneuvers of Gen George S. Patton Jr.'s Third U.S. Army. We moved from the area of Metz and the Saar basin to the virtually unprotected front being opened by the new German counter-attack at the north around Bastogne and the Sure River. It was a lightning-like maneuver and we moved so quickly that we even took a truckload of German POWs. There simply wasn't time to dispose of them through channels, before taking off.

The cloudy weather actually helped. If the Germans had air out, they would have slaughtered the long bumper-to-bumper troop movement. MPs kept the heavy traffic moving. The speed paid off. The Third Army reached its new assembly areas less than 24 hours later and went into action against the surprised Germans within the next two days. General Patton's Third Army stopped the enemy advance and relieved the exhausted American Forces that were defending the critical crossroads at the besieged city of Bastogne. The 101st Airborne Division that defended the city was completely surrounded.

My outfit had arrived at an area between Arlon, Belgium and the small village of Eschdorf, Luxembourg. My little world so to speak was the foxhole of an infantryman. I recall how the engineers came to our assistance and set off quarter (1/4) lb. blocks of TNT to break open the ground so we could dig foxholes. My story took place near a small village called Eschdorf, Luxembourg where my outfit was located. Luxembourg is a small country situated just southeast of Belgium; it's on the German border, only a dot on the map; but a memory in my heart that has haunted me for over sixty years.

On December 22nd or 23rd, two or three days before Christmas day, I was on a night patrol to locate the enemy. The Germans also had their own patrols. The night was dark, dreary and extremely cold. The frozen snow responded with a crunch as we

worked their way through the midnight darkness. All patrols were supposed to be led by an officer, usually a Lieutenant; however, many officers had become casualties and replacements seldom arrived. The night patrol that horrendous night consisted of a Staff Sergeant, a Corporal, (Sam Ballinger), and a PFC, (Bill Elgrim). I had been in the front line for sixty-eight 68 straight days and had only known two Lieutenants in my Company, E. The first one was killed when a sniper shot him, right in the Gold Bar on his helmet. The second just disappeared!

We proceeded to search for and locate the enemy, not to engage them. The frigid night cut through our clothing and our feet and hands were almost numb. The M1 rifle is heavy enough; but carrying it felt like a ton. Keeping our rifles and equipment quiet during the windy and swirling snow became an awesome problem. An occasional moonbeam threatened to reveal our omniscient presence; at times shadows were all around us adding to their fearsome experience. Whose shadows was the big question? We could only see silhouettes. Our overcoats, gloves and regular garrison army shoes and leggings barely did the job. We did not have the combat boots that many of the GI's in the rear echelon had. At this point we had not been re-supplied. So on we went with poor equipment, only an M1 rifle and one hand grenade each. As we carefully maneuvered through the evergreen trees, the thought of Christmas and a tree at home became embraced in my thoughts. It was quickly suppressed as the night sounds filled his brain. The frigid weather can do many things; it absolutely disgusted me. My feet and hands became so very cold. I knew that I had better shake the "I'll be home for Christmas", thoughts. Was my family thinking about me amid their Christmas decorations? Did he survive? Is he living in some bombed out city? Where is he?

After we had advanced beyond the evergreens, we went down and then up a steep ravine that had a frozen ditch at the bottom. That really tired us. We were only in our first thirty minutes of the patrol and we all felt the fatigue. We trudged on until we came to a narrow road that was lined with European type concrete utility poles. They served as our landmarks because everything was just all white or black. We were unable to make out any details or features. We only knew where we were by reading road signs; no one could tell us. After we followed the utility poles for about 45 minutes, we heard a loud vehicle approaching us from behind and coming around a curve in the road. Instinctively we dove into the roadside ditch and we were covered with snow, inside and out. We noticed the cross on the enemy half-track as it roared by.

We were not spotted. The ditch was deep and covered with wintered shrubs; they stopped our fall. After sometime, we finally got up and now we were really cold because the snow had fallen down our backs; but we had to continue.

We shook with shivers from the cold and fear and checked our weapons. We realized that the enemy half-track was most probably on patrol the same as they.

When we got back onto the road and after a few more miles, we heard another vehicle approaching. Now there was no ditch to dive into so we ran as fast as we could through the heavy snow, across a small field and into the forest. This wasn't a good night!

Wow, good heavens, it was like diving into a hornet's nest. All of a sudden it seemed like the whole damned German army was camped there. The sharp, snapping sounds of bullets started flying everywhere. We got separated and ran further into the woods, back toward our lines. As we ran, we stumbled and smashed into trees as the incessant fire continued. Wild enemy bullets and grenades snapped off the snow that covered the evergreen branches above our heads. While we were in the hollow, we knew that the Germans were on both sides on us, with a ridge between us.

The firing continued. Bullets were whizzing by just over our heads. "I didn't even have time to think that we had found the enemy and we had done our job", he said. Having been separated from his Staff Sergeant and PFC Bill Elgrim, I finally came to an opening in the forest when I saw a dark form of a man with his rifle pointed in his direction. I quickly raised my rifle and it seems that the two of us were frozen in this position. We didn't know if we were friend or foe. I finally noticed the outline of an American helmet and then called out "Elgrim". An equally scared voice answered, "Ballinger" what a relief! The sight of his rifle pointed at me, to this day often keeps me awake.

Apparently my Sergeant had run into the woods first. Most probably the Sergeant thought himself to be a bigger target. It's only a guess; in any event he never appeared again. Our only conclusion was that the Sergeant was now among the missing in action. We never heard of him again. At this point, now we were all fired up with adrenalin. It's strange how the body chemistry can cause a person to rise to an occasion. All of a sudden we felt warm; yet we still shivered. We trudged along the several miles back to our CP. Upon our arrival we were cold, relieved, hungry, exhausted and our feet were freezing. We now knew where the enemy was and our ranking officers could plan a strategy of attack or defend ourselves. The patrol had been a success!

Subsequent to receiving our reconnaissance information, the officers' plan of attack was initiated. We did not rest long. The very next night we attacked the village of Eschdorf which was another almost fatal time for me in this Bulge Campaign. Later, the village of Bar-Le-Duc a few miles southeast of Metz became my new home. I was in an American Hospital with frozen feet.



"I THOUGHT WE WERE GETTING OFF THAT BARGE TOO SOON,"
-Sgt. Irwin Caplan

2010 BULGE REENACTMENT 65th anniversary Commemoration Battle TO HONOR WORLD WAR II VETERANS Fort Indiantown Gap PA

26 Jan- 31 Jan 2010

The World War II Federation invites you to their 65th Battle of the Bulge Commemoration Reenactment this coming January and they will be honoring you the World War II Veterans during the week, with special events scheduled for Friday, 29 Jan 2010.

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

Veterans may arrive after 1400 hours on Tues 26 Jan 2010. Registration is in Bldg 12-90 on Clement Avenue corner of Howitzer Road. The Veterans Barracks will be Building 12-15. As usual, the veterans will have a hospitality suite set up in the barracks as well as a memorabilia display brought by individual veterans. Feel free to bring yours.

First thing Wednesday, Veterans will depart for the Schuylkill Haven High School where a program will be held with the students at 0800 hours. In the morning, on Thursday, Veterans and escorts will visit the VA Hospital in Lebanon PA to which the vets there look forward. Lunch will be provided at the VA Hospital. On Friday, the Federation will salute the Bulge Veterans with a VBOB Monument Wreath Laying at 1600 Hours and 21 gun salute, a Tactical Battle Briefing at 1630 Hours in the Community Club and a Reception at 1700.

As usual there will be 1940 Movies and hospitality in Bldg #12-15, the Veterans Barracks, all week. For Veterans who have attended in the past the event will be free.

Registration hours are Tue, 1400 to 2100 hrs; Wed & Thu, 1000 - 1130 hrs, 1400-1630 hours and 1800-2100 hours; Fri, 1000-1130 hrs, 1400-2400 hours; Sat, 0600-0730 hours

On Sat, troops will move into the battlefield at 0900 hrs. Veterans will be transported by bus for a tour of the battlefield 1030-1300 hrs. At 1800 hrs dinner will be served in the Community Club and at 2000 hrs there will be an Evening of Period Entertainment during which the Veterans will act as judges for the 1940's Talent Show.

For those Veterans who have not attended in the past: **Option A** with a bunk in the barracks and with Dinner on Saturday will be \$70 for the 5 days **Option B** with a bunk but without meal will be \$50.00. **Option C** at \$22 is for Veterans only and is for the Sat Dinner Meal & Entertainment only, for those not staying in the barracks.

If you would like a Registration packet contact John D. Bowen, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring MD 20904-3331, e-mail johndbowen@earthlink.net or go to www.wwiifederation.org **Deadline is 31 Dec 2009.**

TRIBUTE TO TWELVE CASUALTIES OF BOB IN LUXEMBOURG

Submitted by:
Marilyn Bowers Jensen
Associate Member

[Marilyn is the daughter of PFC Rex M. Bowers, Company C, 134th Infantry Regiment, 35th Infantry Division, who was killed in action January 25, 1945.]

On June 23, 2009, a special memorial service was held in Luxembourg at the monument to my father, PFC Rex Bowers, and the other eleven men of Company C, who were killed while liberating the Community of Weiswampach, Luxembourg. The ceremony was held in conjunction with the U.S. Veterans Friends - Luxembourg (USVF-L) Friendship Week. (Web site: mbowersjensen@msn.com)

The memorial at Weiswampach is dedicated to the twelve men from Company C who lost their lives on January 24-26, 1945, while liberating the village. On the 50th anniversary of my father's death, my husband, David, and I, and my sister, Diana Schlund, took part in the dedication of this monument. We were guided there by 35th Division veteran, James Graff, and his wife, Alice. Although Jim Graff and my dad went overseas together and were assigned to Company C on the same day, they did not know each other. However, Jim remembers the January 25th battle very well.

"Next morning (January 25, 1945), we jumped off towards the German-held Town of Weiswampach, Luxembourg. As we moved out of the woods I was with a light machine gun squad and we began to come under machine and tank fire. Some light tanks of the 6th Armored were with us. As we struggled ahead (the snow was knee-deep and in many places deeper) the fire got heavy and accurate. The machine gun squad leader was just in front of me when all of a sudden he fell dead, cut almost in two by machine gun fire. I lay down in the snow and saw some men fall ahead of me. The 1st and 2nd platoons were scattered out to my front with the two machine guns right behind them... Tank fire was hitting us and always those blasted machine guns. I could see the white tracers fly by me (our tracers were red and the Germans white) and heard the bullets hit the snow." James Graff, "Reflections of a Combat Infantryman: A Soldier's Story of Co. C, 134th Inf., 35th Div., 1977.

Another battlefield account sheds additional information.

"On the 25th of January, 1945, elements of the 6th Arm Div, supported by the 134th Infantry, approached the village of Weiswampach. One part of the town is located on a high ground on the eastern side. From there the Germans had a magnificent view round and so they defended this part of the village with stamina and were supported by tanks. Consequently the Americans drew together, leaving the town. The U.S. artillery then bombed the village. The church got hit 8 times, but not the steeple, which was an excellent observation point for the Germans. From that steeple they could observe all the movements of the Americans. Reaching the edge of a wooded area past

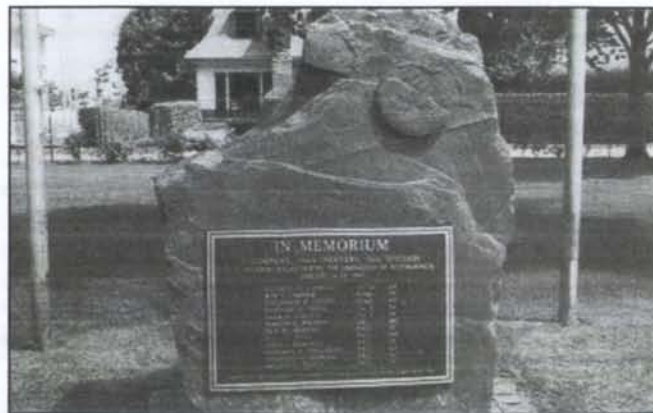
Weiswampach, the 1st Battalion, 134th Infantry was halted by mortar and small arms fire. The woods were studded with enemy anti-tank guns, which prevented supporting tanks from advancing the foot troops. The 1st Battalion being temporarily pinned down renewed the attack the next morning and took the town of Weiswampach." [Letter from Camile Kohn, President, Cercle D'Etudes sur la Bataille des Ardennes, Grand Duchy De Luxembourg, 1994.]

Recently a bronze medallion has been added to the memorial on the granite stone on the right side above the bronze plaque. Roland Gaul, curator of the Museum at Diekirch, indicates that "The bronze additional crest on the Weiswampach 35th US Inf. Div Memorial is actually the 'seal' of AMBA (Association of the Museums of the Battle of the Bulge--(www.amba.lu), a non-profit association founded in 2003 comprised of over a dozen theme-related museums in Belgium, Luxembourg, German border area and northern France. AMBA has selected the Weiswampach memorial as the "Luxembourg pillar" (geographically located at the three-countries' corner, reflecting our cooperation) to adopt it for holding every year on Dec 16 a brief commemorative ceremony." This a great honor to the men who fought there.

Constant Goergen, President of USVF-L and member of the organization have been organizing Friendship Week since 1992, when the organization was formed. In attendance at the ceremony in Weiswampach this year were U.S. veterans and families, 80th Division Army Reserve officers and honor guard, member of the Commune of Weiswampach and members of the USVF-L. Among the American participants were two orphans whose fathers perished in the Battle of the Bulge, and a niece whose uncle was killed during the Bulge. All three of these soldiers are buried in the American Military Cemetery at Hamm, Luxembourg.

Three of these casualties are also buried at Hamm Cemetery (PFC Paul S. Jones, Ohio; PFC John J. Konopka, Pennsylvania; and PFC Michael R. Palladino, New York. The rest (1st Lt Larrieu, Mississippi; S/Sgt Roy Cooper, Virginia; S/Sgt Frederick Crider, Kansas; T/5 Sanford Show, Pennsylvania; T/5 Dale Stacy, Indiana; Cpl Joseph Olson, Missouri; PFC Rex Bowers, Idaho; PFC Charles Patrick, Georgia; and PFC Melvin Scott, Indiana) were returned to their families in 1948 and 1949. All of the twelve (except for S/Sgt Roy Francis Cooper, originally buried at Hamm) were originally buried at the temporary military ceremony at Grand Faily, France--all together, all in a row. Five of the twelve men were fathers. Ten more children became orphans of the Battle of the Bulge (Baby BOBs).

I am grateful that a visit to the monument at Weiswampach where the twelve men of Company C died during the counter offensive of the Battle of the Bulge is on the program each year during Friendship Week and the memorial has been bestowed with the AMBA crest. I am especially honored that my dad is remembered in this special way.



ELECTION OF OFFICERS 2010 VBOB EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

At the 10 October 2009 VBOB Membership Meeting in Tucson Arizona the following Executive Council officers were elected without dissent or abstentions:

President: Demetri Paris
9th Armored Division

Executive Vice-President: Ralph Bozorth
Associate Member

Vice-President, Membership: Wayne Field
6th Armored Division, 86th Recon, Chapter Pres

Vice-President, Chapters: Thomas R. Chambers
9th Armored Division

Vice-President, Military Affairs: Alfred H. M. Shehab
38th Cavalry Squadron

Treasurer: Neil B. Thompson
740th Tank Battalion

Corresponding Secretary: MaryAnn D. Bowen
Associate Member

Recording Secretary: John D. Bowen
Associate Member

Trustee, Three Year Term: J. David Bailey
106th Infantry Division

Trustee, Three Year Term: Madeleine Bryant
Associate Member

Trustee, Three Year Term: Doris Davis
Associate Member, Golden Gate Chapter President

Trustee, Two Year Term: Stewart G. Piper
26th Infantry Division

Trustee, Two Year Term: Bert Rice
Associate Member

Trustee, Two Year Term: John R. Schaffner
106th Infantry Division, Chapter Pres MD/DC

Trustee, One Year Term: Michael A. Rizzo
28th Infantry Division

Trustee, One Year Term: Robert Rhodes
Associate Member

Trustee, One Year Term: Robert F. Phillips
28th Infantry Division

Past Presidents are automatically Executive Council Members.

Respectfully submitted,
John D. Bowen,
Recording Secretary

DONATIONS

We are indeed grateful again and wish to thank our past contributors listed in the August Bulge Bugle and the following new contributors who have sent a contribution, in response to the article about Donations in the February Bulge Bugle. We are still overwhelmed with the response and the size of some of the donations. As we said in the last Bugle, with the many deaths of our VBOB members our dues revenue has declined accordingly and these donations are a big help in the continuation of . It is obvious that these members We are especially appreciative of the following members for their contributions as of 01 October 2009:

Kachadour Avedisian	Cranston RI	28 th InfD 103 rd Engrs B
J. David Bailey	Alexandria Bn	106 th InfD 422 nd Inf F
Robert G. Bass	Walnut IL	243 rd Engr Cmbt Bn
Vernon E. Brumfield	Jayess MS	106 th InfD 589 th FA Bn C
Raymond Bushong	Cape May CrHse NJ	87 th InfD 347 th Inf Hqs
Amos W. Clary	Richmond VA	9 th InfD 47 th Inf I
Garth V. Corbin	Defuniak Springs FL	75 th InfD 290 th Inf H&H
Philip R. France	Mesa AZ	264 th FA Bn C
*Daniel Funk	Washington DC	28 th InfD 728 th Ord
**Henry Gordon	Patchogue NJ	285 th Engr Cmbt Bn C
Stanley W. Gordon	Palm Beach FL	303 Sig Opn Bn Hqs
Hubert L. Jackson	Granbury TX	
John F. Magill	Millerstown PA	17 th Abn 466 th FA Bn Hq
Phil Melleno	Verona NJ	955 th FA Bn
John Olesein	Manhattan MT	280 th Cmbt Engr Bn C
Paul Peters	Dickinson ND	87 th InfD 336 th FA Bn
Stuart L. Preston	Boynton FL	555 SAW BNC
Wesley R. Ross	Lake Oswego OR	146 th Engr Cmbt Bn B
Henry T. Smith, Jr.	East Hartford CT	292 nd Engr Cmbt Bn A
Russell A. Stein	Ocala FL	413 th AAA Gun Bn A
Frank Vetere	Seattle WA	1104 Engr Cmbt Gp
William W. Wenzel	Prairie du Sac MI	75 th InfD Med
Ewald Zurbuchen	Bradenton FL	32 nd Cav Rcn Sqdn E

In Memorium:

Marianne Carr	Wabasha MN	73 rd AFA Father
In Memory of her Father W. O. Snider		
Wilma Kieffer	Malinta OH	130 th Armd Sig Co
In Memory of her husband Regis N. Kieffer		
Barbara Lock	Harrisburg PA	76 th InfD Brother
In Memory of her brother Leon Lock		

* Second Contribution

** Second Contribution. We apologize for misspelling your last name and unit number.

If you have sent in a donation prior to the 1 October 2009 date and your name has not been acknowledged in the Bulge Bugle yet, we apologize and ask you to contact our Recording Secretary at johndbowen@earthlink.net or call 301-384-6533 so that we might check and determine the oversight for which we most sincerely apologize.

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE CERTIFICATE

Have you ordered Yours?

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

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

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

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE CERTIFICATE ORDER BLANK

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

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Serial Number _____

Rank : _____ Unit: _____

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

Signature: _____ Date: _____

I certify that I have received the Ardennes Credit

MAILING INFORMATION:

NAME: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

Telephone: _____ E-Mail: _____

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

TUCSON REUNION

All flights were met at the airport by committee members wearing a red shirt with VBOB logo and carrying a VBOB logo sign welcoming all veterans to Tucson. Not only did they greet them but they provided the hotel shuttle for them. Wheel chairs were donated by a local church.

October 6, 2009 - That evening by compliments of the hotel we had a well attended Margarita, chip and salsa reception.

October 7, 2009. The wreath laying ceremony was attended by approximately 175 veterans and friends, representatives from Belgium and Luxembourg and local dignitaries. Military music was supplied by the US Army Ceremonial Band from Ft. Huachuca. The City of Tucson and personnel from Tucson Meet Yourself supplied chairs and canopies at our monument in El Presidio Park. Local TV stations covered the event. This ceremony was outstanding, the best we have had. What a tribute to our veterans.

In the evening of October 7th, two bus loads, or 110 veterans and guests, went to the Gaslight Melodrama Theater to see "Cronan the Barbarian" or in other words "Take My Sword for it". After the acts all VBOB members were asked to stand amid a rousing applause from the theater attendees.

October 8, 2009. At 8:00 AM two bus loads of members went to the Pima Air and Space Museum. The busses circled around all the 260 aircraft and a guide explained each and every plane. We then de-bussed and walked through the hangars to view many other aircraft and space vehicles.

October 9, 2009. At 8:00 AM two bus loads of members departed for the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum. This was a unique tour for those attending and from all reports everyone found it most interesting and informative in learning about the outdoor world of nature found in the Sonoran Desert region.

That evening approximately 180 attended the Mexican Fiesta Buffet in the hotel ballroom. All types of Mexican food were provided. Entertainment consisted of a dozen students from the Pueblo High School in Tucson. These were the Mariachi Azlan de Pueblo High School and they were dressed in beautiful Mariachi costumes and provided excellent music including a birthday song for one of our members. A video composed of photos of veterans during WWII and recent snapshots accompanied by music from the 40s was shown. The whole evening was well received.



October 10, 2009. On the El Presidio Plaza the annual Tucson Meet Yourself was in full swing and was filled with all types of ethnic foods and festivities. The re-enactors put on a good show and there were many exhibits for all attending.

General membership meeting - the slate of candidates for 2010, as listed in the August issue of the Bulge Bugle was elected to serve without a single dissenting vote. Barbara Mooneyhan, secretary of the South Carolina chapter showed a DVD she created and discussed the 2010 reunion, which will be held in Columbia, SC.

That evening was the annual banquet and it was indeed excellent with approximately 250 attending. Our speakers were RADM Willy Temmerman, Belgium Embassy; Nicolas Mackel Luxembourg Embassy and Roland Gaul, curator National Museum, Diekirch, Luxembourg. The colors were posted by six re-enactors dressed in uniforms from the Revolutionary War to WWII. John and MaryAnn Bowen were presented a resolution proclaiming that they shall be ever known as Mr/Mrs VBOB.

October 11, 2009. Everyone said farewell at the breakfast and said we will all meet again in Columbia, SC next year.

Comments by attendees:

- Best reunion since 1990
- Outstanding job by the reunion committee
- We could not have done it without the associate members
- God bless our veterans
- The hotel staff was excellent in catering to us



Associates and veterans working together

COLUMBIA, SC 2010

Pictorial Review
VBOB 2009 REUNION
TUCSON, ARIZONA
 Oct. 6-11th



Buck & George McGee our hosts



**Mary Ann Bowen, Corr Sec,
 WAC Co., Ft Benning GA**



**John Mc Auliffe's 86th Birthday Treat
 He ate the whole thing!**



AF Graveyard Davis-Monthan AFB AZ



**Katherine M. Nolan, 53rd Field Hosp and
 Mr & Mrs Guadalupe Flores, Jr., 101st AbnD &**



Post the Colors!



**Wreath Laying Ceremony
 Pres Dee Paris, Nicholas Mackel, Adm Temmerman**



Ft Huachuca Army Band



Reunion Hotel Arizona

VBOB QUARTERMASTER ORDER FORM NOVEMBER 2009

Please ship the following items to:

Name: _____
(first) (last) (phone #-will call only if there is a problem)

Address: _____
(no.) (street) (city) (state) (zip)

Item Description	Price Each	Quantity	Total Price
VBOB Logo Patch - 3"	\$ 4.50		\$
VBOB Logo Patch - 4"	\$ 5.50		\$
VBOB Logo Decal - 4"	\$ 1.25		\$
VBOB Windshield Logo - 4"	\$ 1.25		\$
VBOB Logo Stickers - 1 1/2" (in quantities of 10)	10 for \$1.25		\$
Baseball Cap w/3" VBOB Logo Patch - Navy only	\$ 10.00		\$
Windbreaker w/4" VBOB Logo Patch - Navy only Please circle size (they run a little snug): S M L XL XXL XXXL (XXL and XXXL - see prices)	\$ 25.00 (S, M, L and XL) \$ 26.00 for XXL \$ 27.00 for XXXL		\$
VBOB Logo Lapel Pin - 1/2"	\$ 5.00		\$
Miniature VBOB Logo Medal w/Ribbon (pin on type)	\$ 8.50		\$
VBOB Logo Belt Buckle - Silver tone or Gold tone (Please circle choice)	\$ 16.00		\$
VBOB Logo Bolo Tie - Silver tone or Gold tone (Please circle choice)	\$ 16.00		\$
VBOB License Plate Frame w/Logos - White plastic w/Black printing	\$ 5.00		\$
VBOB 100 Sheet Notepad w/Logo - "This Note Is From... A Veteran of the Battle of the Bulge" - White paper with Blue printing	\$ 4.00		\$
BACK IN STOCK Large VBOB Logo Neck Medallion w/ribbon Ideal for insertion in medal shadow box	\$ 25.00		\$
VBOB Tote Bag--SOLD OUT			\$

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NOVEMBER, 2009



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Complete detail of the Historical
Foundation observance of the
65th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge herein.

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☐ New Member ☐ Renewal - Member # _____

Name _____ Birthdate _____

Address _____ Phone () _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

All new members, please provide the following information:

Campaign(s) _____

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

Regiment _____ Battalion _____

Company _____ Other _____

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

Applicants Signature _____

RECRUITER (Optional)