

The BULGE BUGLE

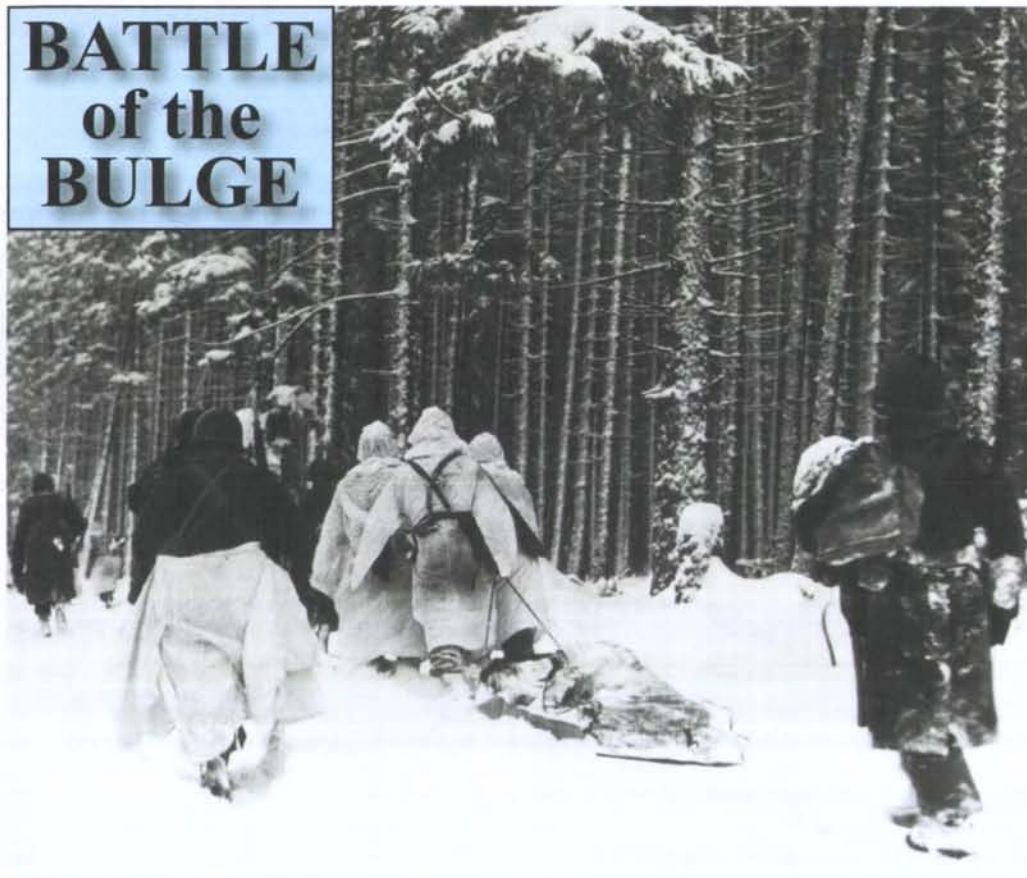
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BATTLE of the BULGE



U.S. TROOPS FIGHT AT ELSENBORN RIDGE

BY RALPH E. HERSKO • Page 16

**VETERANS OF THE
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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

Demetri "Dee"
Paris



VBOB had a productive year in 2009 and most of the credit goes to the associate members of the Executive Council. They are dedicated, hard working and willing volunteers. Without them we could not have conducted our programs nor completed our projects.

And yet we have five or six members who are opposed to associate members holding office. We are undecided as to who is the puppeteer and who are the puppets but we have a good idea. Some are prompted by a massive ego which they want to feed by themselves holding the national offices. This group met and proposed their own slate of officers for the Executive Council. Their proposed slate was carefully considered and rejected by the Nominating Committee.

A major factor in their rejection was that two of their proposed nominees were delinquent in their dues--were not paid-up members of VBOB. Another nominee previously held office when VBOB lost its incorporation status and also lost its non-profit status with IRS but had done nothing to correct these situations while holding office. These are some of the problems we inherited two years ago.

Thanks to yeoman research and work by associate member and Executive VP Ralph Bozorth, VBOB has regained its incorporation status. Ralph also prepared and submitted to the

IRS the eight years of delinquent and long overdue IRS 990 forms with our hope VBOB will not be charged with monetary penalties because of past failures.

We have removed the unnecessary items from paid storage reducing that cost by one-half. Bozorth accepted and is reviewing 12 large boxes of records to determine which must be retained and which can be destroyed.

The U.S. Army Heritage and Education Institute at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, accepted much of the materials from that storage bin. John Bowen, secretary and associate member is cataloging the books which will be offered to Carlisle and the National Archives for use by historical researchers and authors.

Through diligent computer research, John Bowen has discovered scores of life members who are no longer living but their death had not been reported. As a result, we can discontinue mailing *The Bulge Bugle*. This search will continue.

Also, we have identified those members who were entitled to refunds from the 2004 Bulge trip to Belgium and Luxembourg and have sent reimbursement checks to those who responded to my letter.

We have reduced the bank transaction charges on our bank account and are working to reduce them even more or move the account to a more favorable bank.

So much for the good news.

We have lost several chapters who did not have Bulge nor associate members willing to assume chapter office.

We are struggling to maintain the low annual membership dues we've had for many years but we must consider an increase. We'll do our best to keep VBOB going but Father Time is relentless. We must depend upon you to enroll new members--both Bulge veterans and associate members.



Belgian Royal AF Band at
VBOB Monument, Dec. 16, 2009
Arlington, VA

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

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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VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE
WEB SITE: www.battleofthebulge.org

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BULGE...NOT THE LAST

The November newsletter had an inaccuracy. The Bulge was not the last German offensive of WWII. The really last offensive was the sister battle of the Bulge. That battle took place in Alsace. It began on January 1, 1945.

The Bulge was the biggest land battle ever fought by the United States. Alsace was smaller in scope, but it was just as ferocious. The enemy was the same. We were just as out-numbered. The elements were the same. We were also out-numbered.

I was wounded at Hatten (the Bastogne of Alsace) on January 13, 1945. Our 1st Battalion of the 242nd Infantry (Rainbow) Division received a Presidential Unit Citation for our heroic defense of Hatten.

After recovering, I returned to my outfit and we fought through the Siegfried Line. Captured Wurzburg, Schweinfurt, Fuerth in Bavaria (adjacent to Nuremberg) and elements of our division liberated Dachau. We wound up the war in Austria.

We bear the same battle star (Alsace/Ardennes).

Michael J. Diglio
242 INFD B

NO PRETENTION HERE

I, too, as an associate member of VBOB, would like to weigh in on the issue of having associate members of the organization.

My father, Edward Veden, fought with the 28th Infantry Division during the Battle of the Bulge, and has been a member of Chapter 30 in northern Indiana, since its inception. I became an associate member in 1998 of the same chapter, initially because of my father. Since then, I have served as Secretary and Editor of the chapter's publication, *The Bulge Battle News*, for the past eleven years, and have come to know quite a few of the members in the chapter. Many of them have become of my closest friends.

Like Bob Faro, who wrote in the last issue of *The Bulge Bugle*, I know that we associate members will never know what the Bulge veterans experienced during their 41 days in hell—I don't pretend to. But, I do know that it will be up to my generation and others who follow to keep the memory of the battle alive, and the best way we can do that is to hear your stories and learn from them.

Unlike some other associate members, however, I believe that when the national and local chapters cease to exist because of declining membership, the organization needs to end as well. I don't believe there should be any attempt to continue the name, the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, when all the veterans who fought in that battle are gone. It's their organization, dedicated to their needs and hardships, and no one else should be able to share in their glory.

Barry J. Veden
Associate Member

TYP0 IN NAME

Remember the parachutist pictured in the last newsletter, well we messed up his name. It should have been Delbert E. Bordner (not Broder). Sorry.

78TH NOT IN THE HURTGEN

Through *The Bulge Bugle* we have learned of the pivotal exploits of a multitude of units, large and small, and how they influenced the outcome of that great battle. This past issue featured the 78th Infantry Division and their part in the Roer River dams.

A correction is necessary in that account. Fortunately for me, the 2nd Infantry Division never set foot in the Hurtgen Forest. From late September until mid-December we were encamped in the Ardennes until being relieved by the 106th Infantry Division. The Second was probably the best rested division in the 12th Army Group which might explain its getting the dam assignment. For the record, a regiment and a battalion of the 99th Division was also part of that ill-fated venture.

One proven by these accounts over the years is that no one unit and no one battle was decisive or a turning point. It was a team victory for the GI spread over a lot of ground and a lot of units.

Robert L. Thompson
2 INFD 23 INF A

ENROLLING A GRANDSON

I am enrolling my 18 year-old grandson. I have never known anyone with the interest he has in the army.

When he was six years old he watched the movie "The Battle of the Bulge" so much that he learned the German song that the German soldiers sang. He could sing it in German and stamp his foot like they did in the movie, and no one in his family can even speak German.

Herman W. Smith
1 INFD 18 INF E

AN OPINION

I wanted to thank you for the article by Phillip Howard Gray of the 78th. He filled in spaces left open by so many writers, and I was especially intrigued by his use of the word "einstellung" which was new to me. For years I have said too many people, if they believe anything, then for them it is a fact, so now I have a definition. I also enjoyed other articles, some of which I can identify with. I, too, spent a month in the tent hospital at Bar-Le-Duc after a million dollar wound.

We hear so much about the *Greatest Generation*, but for those of us who survived, we should take a deeper look at what was given to us. In that connection, I'm including an article [appears elsewhere in this issue] that I wrote on this subject. We do not pause often enough to appreciate what our survivors have been given. I do not think that another generation has received as much, which says that sacrifice does have its rewards.

You may disagree with me and that's OK, but this is how I think and believe—I do not think that I am alone in this thinking.

Please continue to remind us of those days of sacrifice.

James M. Power
11 ARMD 515 AIB C

THANKS, DAVID

I really want to thank you [Ralph Bozorth] for sending me that David Bailey, of the 106th Infantry Division, took of me.

Please thank him for me. Also, I want to thank you for thanking me for being involved in the battle.

What was never recognized was that the gasoline that you saw soldiers pouring down on the Germans in that movie "The Battle of the Bulge," was the 5,000,000 of gasoline that the platoon of the 3275th Quartermaster Company that I served in SAVED that gas with the help of the Red Ball Express.

When the Bulge organization had a reunion in St. Louis, Missouri, three from my outfit was in a chow line talking loud because no one had ever seen blacks except one guy—Capt. Henry Kimberly, Jr. He said, "I know you guys. I was in charge of a platoon of your outfit that saved that gasoline that you see guys pouring down on Germans and we never got real credit. I made major for our efforts but we never heard about it and it took us 36 hours and we never lost anything but sleep." So I asked him to write to me about what we did. I have that letter but he was dying from heart problems when he wrote it, but I can understand it. He was a good man.

George C. Williams
3275 QM

GETTING THE NUMBERS RIGHT

In the November issue of *The Bulge Bugle*, the President's Message was very good and well appreciated. I just need to make a correction to the part of Dee's message that told of the number attending from East and West. I made the assumption that there were more coming from the East than from the West. That assumption was based on the number of air flights coming into Tucson.

After reviewing the registrations and adding some that were not on the hand-out registration list, I find that the majority were from the West after all. I am attaching a list by states and the numbers registered from each state [not attached] This indicates we had a total of 194 registered with 116 from the West and 78 from the East. Although the number of states represented from the West were 10, there were 19 states represented from the East—I used the Mississippi River as the dividing line.

Hereafter, I will not make assumption without getting the true facts. We had 26 States represented and that is excellent. All in all the United States was represented in Tucson. I found the November issue of *The Bugle* to be excellent.

George W. McGee
109 EVAC HOSP

THANK YOU, DEE

As a Life Member of the organization, I wish to congratulate Demetri Paris, President, on his courage to notify the national membership of the problems he inherited from previous administrations. This is true of many organizations of volunteer leadership. Some to which I belong and I am fully aware of the difficulties which are caused. Our sincere thanks for your efforts and dedication

Harry Kane
75 INF 290 RCT 2 BN I&R

MALMEDY MASSACRE INCIDENT

I read with great interest, the Malmedy Massacre article by Ralph Storm in the May (2009) issue of *The Bulge Bugle*. It reminded me of an incident the night of the massacre.

I was a medic in the 99th Infantry, 395th Headquarters Aid Station. A soldier came to an old farm house outside the Town of Rockerath where we had an aid station.

He was as visibly upset as I had ever witnessed in my life. He told us the story of the massacre and how he survived. (That is how we first heard of the shootings.)

We had a part of a bottle of whiskey there. I gave him several drinks to try to settle him down. Then we sent him back for further care.

I often wonder if that soldier is still alive. We never remembered the names of soldiers that we tried to help. Once they were evacuated, we never knew the end results.

Harry McCracken
99 INF 395 INF MED

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS VALUED

John R. Schaffner, historian of the 106th Infantry Division Association, recently reported on their reunion in Indianapolis. John, who is also president of the MD/DC Chapter, included this comment in his report to the chapter newsletter.

"Now in our age group we are destined to lose some [members] each year. The ranks are now being refilled by our Associate members and second generation families. I have to tell you that only about half of our attendees at the reunions are veterans.

"The encouraging thing is that these Associates who are attending are ready to step into positions to continue operating the association. Yes, I know that there are some folks milling about who think that our organization should die along with us. They are outnumbered by a huge margin.

"It is a warm feeling to realize that our history will be perpetuated after we can no longer do it. Our bench is ready to come into the game."

John R. Schaffner
106 INF 589 FA BN

REGUARDING PROXIMITY FUSE

In the May 2006 [sic] *Bugle*, Charles P. Biggio, Jr., took issue with my belief in an earlier article that I had seen the proximity fuse in use at Simmerath, Germany, in mid-November 1944. He stated that its use was not permitted

Letter to Editor (cont'd)

prior to the Bulge and so that this could not have been the proximity fuse.

My believe is based on the following:

(1) The consistency in the airburst patterns of a new type tank destroyer with a long barreled 90 mm gun. The rounds all detonated about 30 feet above the ground, so I was impelled to ask the gunner how he could set his fuses so accurately. I had never seen such airburst consistency!

(2) The gunner explained that a magnet in the projectile's nose detonated the round when it was at the desired distance above the ground. While it was a radio signal and not a magnet that did job, this explanation from an unsophisticated gunner seems reasonable--and so I believe that this was the proximity fuse, even though I had not hard of it until later.

The U.S. perfected the proximity fuse and it was first used against Japanese aircraft in January 1943. It was first used against buzz bombs on 12 June 1944 in England, and in the defense of Antwerp, the Combined Chiefs of Staff removed all bans against future use of the fuse. This was well before the Bulge and should remove any doubt that its use at Simmerath was possible. This tank destroyer may have been at Antwerp and brought along some of its shells to Simmerath.

A large quantity of proximity fuses artillery shells were captured during the Bulge, but the Germans could not believe that they operated as advertised!

Wes Ross
136 ECB

DVD NOW AVAILABLE "MARCHING ONCE MORE"

About the 60th Anniversary of
the Battle of the Bulge,
(2004 trip to Belgium
and Luxembourg)

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plus \$5.00 shipping.

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HONORED GUESTS



Pieter DeCrem
Minister of Defense
Belgium



Nicolas Mackel
Deputy Chief
of Mission
Luxembourg Embassy

We were honored to have Minister DeCrem and Deputy Chief Mackel participate in our 65th anniversary observance.

COMPARING WAR COSTS (VFW Magazine, September 2009)

[From the December issue of "Bulge Battle News"]

According to a Congressional Research Service study, the costs (in inflation adjusted dollars) of America's wars were as follows:

WWII.....	\$4.1 trillion
Iraq War.....	\$694 billion
Vietnam War.....	\$686 billion
Korean War.....	\$320 billion
Afghanistan War.....	\$171 billion
Persian Gulf War.....	\$96 billion

Some of the increased expenses of the recent wars re attributed to the use of an all-volunteer force reuring high recruitment and retention costs. Draftees, on the other hand, comprised nearly two-thirds of the armed forces during WWII. The army consisted of 93% draftees at that time.

CZECH or SLOVAC BULGE VETS

Slovak Public Television Bratislava is preparing a full-length documentary film focused on the last months of World War II. It'll be put on the air in May 2010.

The Director & Scripwriter would like to interview American Veterans with Czech and Slovak roots who fought against the Germans in France, Germany and the Czech Republic in 1944-45. He would particularly like to reach Czech/Slovak-Americans who took part in the Battle fo the Bulge.

Please contact him at dusan.hudec@hotmail.com or

Dusan Hudec
PO Box 21
810 00 Bratislava,
Slovak Republic

A CHRISTMAS TO REMEMBER

Margaret Hammond Walenski
16th General Army Hospital

There was snow, plenty of snow. The air was cold and crisp and clear. A picture perfect setting for the Christmas season. But this was December, 1944, and this was Belgium.

Located between Liege and the German border, the 16th General Army Hospital was in a most precarious position at this time. Row on row of army ward tents clearly marked with big red crosses on each roof stood in the field at the top of the hill. The chateau which housed female personnel was about a quarter mile away. Although the chateau appeared to be a medieval fortress, even surrounded by a moat, we were well aware of our vulnerability.

For weeks, we had watched the glow from artillery fire light up the horizon and had followed the track of anti-aircraft fire as it streaked across the winter skies. The V-2 rockets sputtered at intervals every night. It was when their put-put-put stopped that we held our breath waiting to hear the blast of the landing. When on night duty, someone would race out of the tent at the sound of an approaching buzz-bomb to see what track it was traveling. Once seen beyond our area or on either side, we knew it was not our route and we were not doomed for destruction with that one.

The bombs and V-2s from Germany were directed at the bridges of the Meuse River in Liege and there we were right in the middle.

Casualties continued to roll in. Work continued and so did the snow and cold. That week before Christmas could hardly be called festive but we did manage a few decorations for the wards and a party of sorts at the Officers Club. The enemy had been advancing steadily. We had been ordered to pack our musette bags with supplies for three days and be prepared to leave all else behind should we be forced to evacuate the area.

Some nights we would go to the top floor of the chateau to watch "dog fights" or the trails from anti-aircraft guns as they repelled the attackers. Christmas Eve was different. It was not too noisy. Or had we not heard as we tried to enjoy ourselves? Laughter was there but underneath was the yearning for home and Christmas past. The feelings were not expressed, but each one was aware of what could happen should the Germans suddenly move closer to their objective: Liege.

In our room at the chateau, a tall slender tin water pitcher was bedecked with a few scrawny green boughs and decorated with an odd assortment of small items. A sad imitation of a Christmas tree, but loaded with Yuletide spirit.

Since mail from the States had been delayed, there was little hope of presents from home. Each of us managed to find some small token for the others, although we knew that the gifts would be left behind if we had to move out. Poems and stories accompanied each present and lifted our spirits for awhile as we shared them and laughed together.

The roaring sound of approaching aircraft interrupted our masquerade of merriment. The planes, too close and too low, very definitely were not ours! Repeated rounds of machine gun fire echoed through the Holy Night. Seven stalwart army nurses became motionless and speechless. Slowly conversation resumed with questions tumbling over one another, wondering what was

going on. Had the enemy reached our area? Was anyone hurt? Would we be loaded into trucks and moved? We sat and waited.

It was not until the evening nurses returned to the chateau at midnight that we heard the grim facts. Two enemy planes had made a fast run over our tented hospital, raining down their deadly missiles as they flew. A couple of German renegades had disregarded Christmas Eve and all the rules of the game. Using the big red crosses for targets.

Two corpsmen were killed as they carried coal to fill the pot-bellied stoves in the ward tents. Others were injured, but the toll could have been worse. This tragic news was all we needed after an evening of suppressed sadness.

One by one we wept. Clinging to each other or sobbing quietly alone, huddled in a blanket. The tears flowed without shame. All of the loneliness of Christmas away from home and family, all the fear of imminent invasion, all the weariness of long hours of work, and all the stress of being brave and courageous were released in the streams of tears, as we mourned for our dead and wounded comrades.

Not your traditional holiday season, but then the worst was over. We began to hear good reports from the incoming wounded. There was a breakthrough and our forces had the Germans on the run. The holidays were over and we had survived the Battle of the Bulge!

Now, in a land far away, where there is no snow, no cold, crisp air. Yuletide will see only sun, sand, and heat. Thousands of young men and women will again struggle with loneliness and thoughts of home, not knowing when they will be called upon to give their all.

Perhaps this present time of Silent Night-Holy Night will bring a breakthrough as it did years ago and they will survive and again give thanks for Peace on Earth-Good Will to all. ■

Reprinted From
Stars and Stripes

February 23, 1945

An Editorial

(By GI's who posted this sign at Aachen)



Stars and Stripes Photo by Bjorden

MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

Kevin Morrow, a researcher, is trying to locate anyone who served in the Battle of the Bulge with the **333RD** and **969TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALIONS** or a relative. Contact him at: 6908 Fairfax Drive #302, Arlington, Virginia 22213.

Gary Lucas is looking for any information on his dad: **1ST LT EUGENT E. LUCAS, 9TH ARMORED DIVISION, 60TH ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION, COMPANY A.** Write to Gary at: 2958 DeWeese Parkway, Dayton, Ohio 5414.

David J. Persons is looking for any information he can find on his uncle: **CHESTER "MYRLIN" RUNEY, 2ND INFANTRY DIVISION, 23RD INFANTRY REGIMENT, COMPANY K.** Can you help? Write to David at: 522 E Countryside Dr., Evansville, Wisconsin 53536.

Chris Guyan is looking for information on **ANDREW GUYAN, 28TH INFANTRY DIVISION (or) 28TH INFANTRY REGIMENT.** Andrew was from Cambria County, Pennsylvania. Contact Chris at: 8612 Christing Court, Bridgeville, Pennsylvania 15017.

James Tufts is trying to help his friend: **RODNEY ALLEN, 44TH CAVALRY MECHANIZED, B TROOP RECONNAISSANCE,** locate anyone who may have witnessed it when Rodney was hit by a jeep. He was taken to the **28TH GENERAL HOSPITAL** in Liege, Belgium. If you can help write to James at: 105 Tuelltown Road, West Paris, Maine 04289.

R. P. BROWN, and the remaining seven members of the **372ND ENGINEER GS REGIMENT** would like to hear if there are any other members of their group. Write to him at: 5717 North Oak Drive, Bartlett, Tennessee 38134.

Michel Lorquet writes with two requests: He would like to contact veterans who fought in "Marche on Famenne" during the Bulge--especially in the Verdennes area and, second, to hear for medics to let him hear from them. Write to him at: Chapelle des Anges, 67; B-4890 Thimister-Clermont, Belgium.

Bernie Mrugala is looking for information regarding his dad--**JOHN MRUGALA.** If you can provide information regarding or his unit--**18TH CAVALRY RECONNAISSANCE SQUADRON MECHANIZED,** write to Bernie at: 1310 South Galena Avenue, Freeport, Illinois 61032.

→ The Russian Federation is looking for members of the U.S. veterans population who took part in the northern convoys, airmen who too part in operation "Frantic Joe" and "Frantic," and soldiers who took part in the historic meeting between Soviet and American troops on the Elbe River. Contact: Captain (N) Vladimir Belyaev, Deputy Military Adviser, Russian Permanent Mission to the UN, 136 East 67th Street, New York, New York 10065.

Oliver Gillard, of St. Hubert, Belgium, owner of the 87th

Infantry Division exposition in his basement at home, has for years searched the surrounding former battlefield forests for artifacts, military memorabilia, etc. Found recently was a GI raincoat, in St. Hubert, with the name of **ALPHONS WELBER,** Serial #353434(971). Contact: John McAuliffe, 425 Pleasant Street #1410, Worcester, Massachusetts 01609.

REUNIONS

10TH ARMORED DIVISION, April 29-May 1, 2010, Phoenix, Arizona. Contact: Wayne A. Wickert, Rural Route #1, Tilley, AB T0J 3K0 Canada.

11TH ARMORED DIVISION, August 2-8, 2010, Louisville, Kentucky. Contact: 11th ARMD, 2328 Admiral St., Aliquippa, PA 15001. Phone: 724-375-6295

30TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 4-7 March, 2010, Nashville, Tennessee. Contact: 30th INFD, 2915 W. SR #235, Brooker, Florida 32622-5167.

75TH INFANTRY DIVISION, September 1-5, 2010, Indianapolis, Indiana. Contact: Jim Warmouth, 6545 W 11th, Indianapolis, Indiana 46214-3537.

86TH CHEMICAL MORTAR BATTALION, April 17-18, 2010, Nashville, Tennessee. Contact: George L. Murray, 818 W 62nd St, Anniston, Alabama 36206-1110.

If your association has reached the point where members are no longer able to plan a convention, please consider joining with the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge. We'll be happy to have you. You can take the opportunity to have a day out of the planned activities and get off somewhere with your buddies, or, you can just socialize with them and the rest of the group in the hospitality room.

2010 ST PATRICK'S PARADE

Sun, 14 March 2010

11:30 AM

Washington DC Mall

VBOBers Invited to March

Get your marching shoes shined! Our National Organization and all Chapters have been invited to march in our Nation's St Patrick's Parade, down Constitution Avenue from 7th to 17th Streets NW, in our Nation's Capital on Sunday, 14 March 2010.

We will gather outside the old Smithsonian Castle, on the Mall Side (Jefferson Drive). Look for the VBOB Flag and WWII vehicles and uniforms. Please wear an overseas cap and your medals or ribbons.

Vehicles will be available for the walking wounded, furnished by the Military Collectors Society, however as many of you as feel up to marching are asked to show the younger generations how it is done.

We especially would like to have marchers to show the crowd that you Bulge Veterans still have a lot of kick. The march is about one mile, down Constitution Avenue NW. Each year that we have marched we have had continuous applause from the crowd along the whole parade route, something no other unit other than our active duty troops has sustained. We have now won six trophies.

Please contact our Secretary, John Bowen, at 301-384-6533, or johnbowen@earthlink.net for further information about marching, the parade and getting to the parade.



**17 MEMBERS OF THE
626TH ARMORED INFANTRY BATTALION
AT THE 2009 VBOB REUNION**

[Front row l to r: John Sankey, Glenn Camron, Charles Mitchell, Dick Stone, Gordon MacLeod, and Robert Bertasso. Rear l to r: Barbara Lilley, Sue Oiness, Rick Oiness, Vi Stone, Norma Stejer, Edward Morrison, Sherrie Morrison, Doris Davis, Nancy Goodwin, Jay Sankey and Roman Zarka]

We enjoyed them and they sure seemed to enjoy being in Tucson and together. ■



VBOB MEDALLION

Have you ordered your lovely VBOB Medallion shown below. This beautiful large Medallion of the VBOB Logo Emblem, in enameled colors, is two inches in diameter and comes with a thirty-two inch ribbon in ETO Campaign colors for hanging round your neck.

These Medallions also have been used quite attractively in shadow boxes along with your medals, ribbons, insignia, rank and what have you to personalize your shadow box.

They are available from the VBOB Quartermaster at \$25.00 plus shipping & handling. Please see the VBOB Quartermaster Order Form in this issue of the Bugle. Hurry before they are sold out again.

65th ANNIVERSARY REVIEW REMARKS

MG Karl R. Horst, Commanding General
JFHQ – NCR/MDW

Belgium Minister of Defense De Crem, Luxembourg Deputy Chief of Mission Mackel, Presidents of VBOB, Mr Paris, and of the BOB Historical Foundation, Mr Shehab. Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

I would like to thank our Battle of the Bulge Veterans for inviting me to participate in this auspicious occasion. It is indeed an honor and a pleasure to be here to commemorate the 65th Anniversary of the largest land battle of WW II, The Battle of the Bulge.

For the soldiers of the 3rd Infantry, "The Old Guard" and the US Army Band "Pershing's own," it is likewise an honor, one they will appreciate more as time passes and their own service adds to the "mystic chords of memory" that binds each new generation with those that have gone before.

The soldiers in formation are here today as representatives of today's tribute to the some 600,000 Americans who took the brunt of a desperate attack by a wounded but still determined enemy, surprised by an onslaught that came in the depths of winter at the section of the line where the terrain was most difficult, who bulged but did not break, who held the salient points, and in six weeks were again on the offensive, through Belgium and on to Germany itself. Six Medals of Honor, a Presidential Unit Citation for an entire Division, only begins to scratch the surface of the history written in those days in Dec 1944 and Jan 1945. We are all here to pay tribute to you Veterans.

This morning when I started my physical training run at 0530 I thought of you Veterans – it was 0530 on the 16th of Dec, 65 years ago today, when the German artillery, numbering 2,000 guns started the preparatory fires for the battle they would call "Herbstnebel" or "Autumn Fog," that would last six weeks and claim tens of thousands of lives.

Following the massive prep fires, Hitler's 5th and 6th Panzer Armies, launched an all out, whirlwind attack on four divisions of the First US Army in the semi-mountainous densely-forested Ardennes Region of Eastern Belgium and northern Luxembourg. Hitler devoted some 20 German divisions, seven of them Panzer, in a three pronged attack.

Thinking that the Ardennes was the least likely spot for a German offensive, Am Commanders chose to keep the line thin, a training area for newer units, so that the manpower might concentrate on offensives N and S of the Ardennes.

Even though the German offensive achieved total surprise, nowhere did our American troops give ground without a fight. Without knowing the extent of the attack, Gen. Eisenhower sent two armored divisions to cover the flanks of the German advance and to assist wherever possible in stopping the attack.

The next day, 17 Dec 1944, the 7th Armored Div engaged the German Panzer army at St Vith, a major road that led to the Meuse River and to Antwerp. They were successful in thwarting the German attack, altering the timing, slowing them down and forcing a less direct route to the Meuse River.

That day one of the war's most hideous crimes was committed against American soldiers, the Malmedy Massacre. Of 140 soldiers that were taken prisoner at Baugnez, 86 men were shot while on the way to Malmedy. Forty-three survived to tell the terrible story of what happened that day.

The city of Bastogne, with its cross-roads, was a strategic position, which both the Americans and Germans wanted to occupy. The 101st Airborne and some supporting units managed to get there first but the Germans quickly surrounded the city.

The defense of Bastogne would become legendary as Brig. Gen. Anthony G. McAuliffe replied to an ultimatum to surrender from the Germans. He simply said "Nuts."

After a few intense days of fighting, VII Corps and the Third Army brought much needed relief to the troops at Bastogne and launched a counterattack pushing the Germans past the border of the city.

The Allies then launched a massive counter-offensive two days before the New Year, and fierce fighting continued for days. Hitler then ordered a plan he dubbed "The Great Blow." The goal of this plan was to eliminate Allied air power.

On Jan 1 at 8:00 AM, German Luftwaffe fighters swarmed over Belgium, Holland, and Northern France bombarding Allied airfields. More than 200 aircraft and many bases were destroyed. Hitler's plan inflicted a great deal of damage, but not without paying a heavy price. The German Luftwaffe lost some 300 planes.

Finally, on Jan 8, Hitler ordered his troops to withdraw from the tip of the "Bulge." He realized his great offensive on the Allied Armies had failed. By Jan 16, the First & Third Army had joined in the village of Houffalize. St Vith was retaken Jan 23 and the Bulge was officially over Jan 25.

More than 1,000,000 men, 600,000 Americans, 500,000 Germans and 55,000 British participated in the Battle of the Bulge. Both sides took heavy casualties: 81,000 US troops including 19,000 killed and 23,554 captured along with 1,400 British casualties and 200 killed. And the people of Belgium lost more than 3,000 civilians killed.

Incredible courage, resolve and fierce determination enabled American soldiers to complete their mission. Despite the bitter cold weather and being outnumbered, US troops held a strategic foothold in the Belgium countryside and crushed the German army.

Winston Churchill called the Ardennes "The greatest American battle of the war." Many men and women fought and sacrificed their lives that winter. We are here to remember that what they did was not in vain and to pledge to hold our portion of the line during our time at the front.

To our Veterans I want to say Thank You for your sacrifice, Thank You for your courage, Thank you for allowing us to share this event which commemorates this historic and decisive battle. God bless you and your families. Remember our young men and women in uniform still standing fast, carrying your legacy with them – May God Watch Over Them. God Bless America, God Bless Belgium and God Bless Luxembourg. As you were then, we are today – Army Strong!

Thank You.

DONATIONS

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

The donations continue to come in after each Bugle and they are really appreciated in helping our income line. With the increasing number of deaths of our members these donations help reverse the dues revenue lost. The response continues to be amazing particularly with the number and the size of donations. Even the smallest amount helps. We again thank all of our past donors listed in the August & November Bugles and thank the following members for their new contributions as of 25 December 2009:

John W. Anderson	Russells Point OH	35 th InfD 135 th Inf A
T. Hunt Armistead	Ft Worth TX	99 th InfD 394 th Inf Med
Alfred J. Babecki	Barefoot Bay FL	1255 th Engr Cmbt Bn C
Marvin S. Bargar	Hamden CT	87 th InfD 347 th Inf K
John J. Boone	Round O SC	80 th InfD 319 th Inf I
R. P. Brown	Bartlett TN	372 nd EC GS 1 Bn
Ausby L. Clements	Robinson IL	5 th InfD 2 nd Inf K
Lenward C. G. Cooper	Winston-Salem NC	75 th InfD 289 th Inf E
Michaeline Corkum	Campton NH	GndDau 3d ArmD Sig
Roberto Costales	Firestone CO	Associate
Christopher Coyne	Edison NJ	Associate
Willis D. Crittenberger	Washington DC	10 th ArmD 420 AFA
Alexander C. Czajka	Middletown CT	110 th AAA Gun Bn C
Michael Diglio	Port Richey FL	Associate
Frank Dobeck	Kensington CT	35 th Inf MP
Donald P. Guerin	Milwaukee WI	90 th InfD 357 th InfHq 2d
Jesse E. Haygood	Dunwoody GA	134 th AAA Gun Bn A
George Hostovichak	Monaca PA	749 th AAA AW Bn C
Virgil R. Jacobs	Hays KS	83 rd InfD 330 th Inf I
John J. Judge	Worcester MA	26 th InfD 101 st Inf M
Phyllis D. Kadlub	S. Royalton VT	Dau 3 rd ArmD Sig
Bob Latz	Canton OH	264 th FA Bn Hq
Roger E. Leavitt	Marcus IA	26 th InfD 328 th Inf K
Earl Liston	Tucson AZ	106 th InfD 106 th Rcn
Ralph E. Logan	Winston-Salem NC	75 th InfD 289 th Inf E
Felix Melleno	Verona NJ	955 th FA Bn
John S. Mischenko	Mineville NY	76 th InfD 417 th Inf L
George L. Murray	Anniston AL	86 th Chml Mtr Bn
James W. Ochs	Holland MI	26 th InfD 39 th Sig Co
Victor K. Olizarowicz	Holyoke MA	49 th Engr Cmbt Bn C
Nancy G. Pohorylo	Enfield CT	Associate
George Migl	Flatonia TX	
Alfred Myhill	Fulton NY	53 rd Fld Hosp/170FA
Frank J. Patullo	Nazareth PA	30 th InfD 177 th Inf F
Paul R. Puff	Centreville VA	Associate
J. Kenneth Rader, Jr.		177 th FA Bn B
Jack Reyome	Phoenix AZ	771st FA Bn
Pamela T. Semanik	Walton Hills OH	Dau 128 th AAA Bn
Merle J. Shank	Newark DE	99 th InfD 99 th Sig Co
William R. Schrader	Tucson AZ	
Albert Sponheimer	East Ryegate VT	197 th AAA AW SP Bn
Edward L. Summey	Cartersville GA	773 rd FA Bn Hq
Harvey Sutherland	Merrimack NH	3 rd ArmD/75 th InfD
Melvin A. Trickey	LaCanada CA	3 rd ArmD 83 rd Rcn D
Frank Vetere	Federal Way WA	1104 th Engr Cmbt Gp

Sheila Murray Glendale CA 83rd InfD 328th Inf B
In Memory of her Husband Richard Murray

Paul Goffin

Former Vice President of the

Belgian - American Association

Address at BOB's, December 16, 2009

Remembrance, Arlington VA

Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Ladies and Gentlemen

This week several towns and villages in the ardennes and in Luxembourg, like we do here this evening, are commemorating the 65th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge and honoring you Veterans who contributed so much in restoring life, hope and liberty. What we are celebrating here, in communion with the Belians and Luxembourgers, is the triumph of freedom, the right to live in liberty, without forgetting the cost of high human sacrifices to maintain these values. That's the real meaning of the Battle of the Bulge.

The people's mood in 1945 was a mixture of sadness, joy and hope. Sadness, because of the sufferings endured during four years of occupation, gratefulness to our American liberators, and hope for a peaceful life. These feelings were so intense that people wanted to give it some form so they could be immortalized. It's in this spirit that the first memorial in honor of all those who participated in the Battle of the Bulge was conceived and born.

It's located just outside of Bastogne, on a hill call the Mardasson, and it is known as the Mardasson Memorial. When the first ground was broken, a bit of earth was placed in a malachite urn and presented by the Mayor of Bastogne on July 4th 1946 to then President Truman. Inscribed on the urn "Belgium will remember. Freedom from fear."

On the 50th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, the malachite urn was on display at the National Archives close to the Declaration of Independence, now it is part of the Truman Library at Independence, Missouri. The Mardasson Memorial was completed and inaugurated on July 25th 1950. It has the shape of a large star and in the middle there is a stone with a Latin engraving; "Liberatoribus Americanis Populus Belgicus Memor." "The Belgian people remember their American liberators."

This short story to remember you that your achievements and sacrifices and our gratefulness are now part of history and are engraved in stone for the future generations.

BOB HISTORICAL FNDN 2009 PERSON OF THE YEAR AWARDEES

The Battle of the Bulge Historical Foundation, Inc. recognized two outstanding individuals as the 2009 Person of the Year Awardees who have made outstanding contributions to the history and the preservation of the Battle of the Bulge.

The Awardees are:

RALPH BOZORTH, Associate Member

&

ALFRED H M SHEHAB, 38th Cav Rcn Trp

Congratulations!

"THE RIDE" WAS OVER 350 MILES, BUT WHO KNOWS THE TRUTH?

By Mitchell Kaidy D-345

When in the movie "Patton", a fictional Gen. George Patton exclaims "No rest, no sleep" for his Army after a "move of 100 miles," then adds "we're going to fight in the morning and in the afternoon," he lifts the lid on the real episode that for over half a century has lain submerged.

The episode involved two of Patton's then-inexperienced divisions which were forced to truck their troops huge distances at breakneck speed to enter the raging Battle of the Bulge at a time of severe anxiety and pressure over the German penetration of American lines and the envelopment of the City of Bastogne.

The divisions involved were the 87th Infantry and 11th Armored. Totalling over 28,000 soldiers with attached units, they were thrown into battle virtually without patrolling, after the Germans delivered a momentous surrender demand to the 101st Airborne Division in Bastogne.

The real Patton knew that those two divisions didn't travel a mere 100 miles. Nor did they, as some recent histories claim, move 50 miles. For the 87th Division the curving journey on backroads from Germany's Saar Valley totaled over 350 bone-chilling miles in open trucks, during which a section of the convoy was bombed and strafed, causing casualties.

The experience is documented in the 87th Division history recorded in 1945: "On Dec. 23, orders were issued ... to break contact with the enemy in the Saar region, turn its sector over to another division and get going to Belgium in a hurry. Brig. Gen. John L. McKee, asst. div. commander, took charge of the movement... in three stages to Dieuze, to a forest near Reims (both France), to the vicinity of Seviscourt and Bertrix (Belgium), a total of over 350 miles, (which) was accomplished with the loss of only five days fighting for the Division."

In the case of the 11th Armored and attached units, it was approximately the same distance and conditions. After crossing the English Channel, landing at the French port of Cherbourg, and hurriedly setting up a defensive line at Reims, the 11th faced the additional challenge of attacking without being fully-equipped with tanks and artillery.

Having been part of the 87th Division forced motomarch, I can say that for those who traveled from the Saar Valley to the outskirts of Reims, then into the Ardennes Forest of Belgium, the experience can never be forgotten. Nor, at least while they survive, will it be.

How can any participant forget the endless rows of helmeted and sardine-packed GI's on wooden benches clutching rifles aboard 2½-ton and ¾-ton trucks and jeeps, all the vehicles shorn of tarps in case the enemy, then in full-throated pursuit of its huge counteroffensive, penetrated toward France? How can any survivor forget the days of near-zero windchill, the sting of flying sleet, and the cold rations for breakfast, lunch and dinner? How can anyone forget that those convoys were so pressured some men were forced to make ablutions from moving trucks—and some didn't make ablutions at all for insufferable periods? And for the 346th Regiment of the 87th Division, which sustained casualties when its column was bombed and strafed? Shouldn't all that be unalterably embedded in history?

Of all the error-laden accounts about that period, the most puzzling was delivered a few years ago by the prizewinning historian Doris Kearns Goodwin. Here is what she wrote about the Battle of the Bulge in her history of the Roosevelt era, "No Ordinary Time": "By Christmas the worst was over... Gen. George Patton, the Third Army commander, was able to move his entire army the 50 miles from the Saar River to Bastogne..." (She is wrong on two critical matters, as well as on her implication that the Third Army alone defeated the Germans.)

In error also is the usually reliable Martin Blumenson's biography of George Patton. Although it doesn't fall into Goodwin's error about the "worst being over" by Christmas, by focusing his account exclusively on the 111 Corps attacks, he loses sight of the newly-reinforced V111 Corps, including the 87th and 11th Armored, and later, the 17th Airborne Division. So he too overlooks those critical attacks, which drew from George S. Patton some of his strongest and most eloquent commendations.

All reliable histories agree that during the Bulge Patton was forced to speedily reshuffle parts of his Army. But the man who above all should know, SHAEF commander Gen. Dwight Eisenhower, refutes the ludicrous notion about the "worst being over" on Christmas. In his classic account, "Crusade in Europe", he writes the opposite: "On the 26th Patton at last succeeded in getting a small column into Bastogne, but he did so by a narrow neck... that gave us only precarious connection with the beleaguered (101st Airborne) garrison. It was after that date that the really hard fighting developed around Bastogne..."

And the official Ardennes historian, Robert Merriam, further shatters Goodwin's delusion about the significance of Christmas by observing: "By the first of the year nine German divisions were closeted around Bastogne, closing in for the kill."

There. On two crucial facts, celebrated historian Doris Kearns Goodwin is blown away. In fact, the worst started, not ended, on Christmas Eve when Adolf Hitler grew increasingly alarmed over his Armies' failure to capture the Bastogne highways and rail terminal in order to funnel supplies to his troops.

After hotfooting it for those 350 miles, the two inexperienced American divisions leapt off their trucks and into their tanks and, with little patrolling, counterattacked the German attempt, nearly successful, to surround Bastogne. The two-division attack is authentically framed by official Army historian Merriam in his book "The Battle of the Bulge": "Their progress was tediously slow, their casualties exorbitantly high; all of them new to combat, they had to fight in the severest cold, on icy roads over which tank movements were almost impossible. These new troops had been moved over long distances, and then immediately committed to action with little time for reconnaissance."

And then Merriam's most salient observation, resonant even today: "But had the attack been delayed long enough for adequate reconnaissance, it is probable the Germans would have launched another attack and surrounded Bastogne."

These blood-strewn events took place from Dec. 28-31, 1944. On Jan. 1, 1945, Patton was able to stand before the

THE RIDE (cont'd)

press and declare: "We hit the son of a bitch...with the result that he is damn well stopped and going back...to me it is a never-ending marvel what our soldiers can do...it is a very marvelous feat: I know of no equal to it in military history."

"No equal in military history?" In 23 histories I've read about the Bulge, I've found only one account about this singular episode, and of the distances plus conditions the two divisions faced. And, except for Patton's account in "War As I Knew It," and V111th Corps Commander Troy Middleton's biography, there's little recognition of the unique "meeting engagement" that caused the "exorbitant casualties" cited by Merriam. A meeting engagement is the extremely-rare clash of two armies in simultaneous attacks.

Why the glaring omissions? Down through the decades, content to copy from one another, even our most reliable historians (like Martin Blumenson) failed to access original sources such as division histories and after-action reports written the year of the battles, so they imply the 87th/11th Armored attacks either didn't exist or travelled 50-100 miles instead of 350 miles to start their assaults; denigrating the two divisions' (later three) decisive and blood-stained feat in liberating Bastogne.

A virtually-on-the-scene record written by the participants is immeasurably more reliable than derivative accounts in which one historian copies from another--or relies on sometimes-erroneous and unenlightening high-echelon records. About the 350-mile roadmarch/meeting engagement, a first-hand record, reflecting subjective as well as objective observations by the participants, has been available for over half a century!

I do not have before me the written account of the 11th Armored Division's 350-mile odyssey, but I have received oral accounts from some of those who made the arduous journey, then teamed with the infantry to prevent Nazi troops not only from surrounding Bastogne, but from capturing the city. For this recounting of the 87th Division role, I rely on my own memory backed by detailed contemporary accounts recorded a few months after the battle by the three regiments of my infantry division.

Unlike "No Ordinary Time" and the Blumenson biography of Patton, the movie "Patton" makes no pretense of being historically accurate; it is largely entertaining and theatrical. However indirectly and inadequately though, the movie does call attention to the exhausting forced march/attack. But the most evocative and accurate source remains the record written by the GIs themselves, a source which has been available since its publication the year the events took place, and fully deserves to be quoted and accepted among the never-to-be-forgotten episodes of World War II. #####

(A triple prizewinning journalist, Mitchell Kaidy, the 87th Division historian, served in the Division from March, 1944, until the unit's demobilization after the European War. He holds the Combat Infantry Badge, the Bronze Star Medal, and three battle stars, and is listed in "Who's Who in America.")

MECHANIZED DANDRUFF AND MORE...

By Harold "Hal" J. O'Neill
83rd Infantry Division 83rd Signal Battalion

The 83rd Division was pulled out of Germany and sent southwest across Holland into northern Belgium. Bumper to bumper military vehicles stretched for miles on a road on top of a dike surrounded by flooded fields. Air cover patrolled over head and when a vehicle broke down, it was pushed off into the ditch or field.

I was transferred to a messenger jeep that now required three men instead of two. The MP's stopped us repeatedly to ask about the winner of the World Series or Betty Grable's leading man in some movie. This was to detect English-speaking Germans in our rear areas.

We wore long johns, wool shirt and pants and mackinaws instead of overcoats. Finger gloves were useless, so we traded with German prisoners for their fur-lined mittens and a rabbit-fur vest. The cost was only a few cigarettes. I wore three pair of socks with size 12 boots instead of my normal size nine. Towels with eye holes protected our face. Wet feet meant trench foot and frost bite was a problem. We usually had a pair of socks drying from arm-pit warmth and growing a beard helped.

The messenger jeeps ran between the Division Headquarters and the three infantry regiment Headquarters. With units on the move, the information was often out-of-date and we spent two or three days on the road before returning to Division Headquarters. Thirty-five-year-old Pop did most of the driving and I did the navigation. Teen-aged Elmer did a lot of sleeping. We rotated sitting in the back seat since it was the coldest spot.

The army issued single blanket sleeping bags, so we stopped at an aid station to pick up the blankets with the least amount of blood stains. Outdoors or in a building, we put six or seven blankets underneath and as many above. Only our boots were removed for sleeping.

One bitter night we parked between two blazing buildings for extra warmth and another time we slept on the second floor of a windmill. Heavy Elmer collapsed the staircase so Pop and I used our two rope to get down. We threatened to put him on a diet.

Near the end of the Bulge we picked up an illegal trailer that had no lights or brakes. It carried a small pot-bellied stove, stove pipe, briquettes of coal dust and molasses or something, a 220 volt radio, a 110 volt radio, souvenirs, wine for Pop, rations, a tarp for a ground sheet, army overcoat or mackinaws depending on how close we were returning to Division Headquarters and extra cigarettes or coffee when we passed a farm with people still living there.

None of us even caught a cold and we were happy when told to head to a coal mine for delousing and showers. The lice came from sleeping in barns and were known as mechanized dandruff.

The White House

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

December 16, 2009

Presidential Proclamation 8465 -- 65th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge

A PROCLAMATION

In December 1944, a brave band of American soldiers, stationed in the Ardennes Forest region on the Western Front of Europe, who were surrounded, poorly supplied and surviving in brutally cold conditions, took the brunt of a furious German assault. Their valor defined not just the beginning of the end of a World War, but also one of the greatest generations of Americans. Like patriots before them, they stood resolute, confident in their training, and determined to preserve those enduring American ideals of freedom and justice. On the 65th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, a grateful Nation remembers the fallen who gave their lives in that critical battle, and we pay tribute to the heroes whose indomitable strength led to victory in World War II.

When asked about the Battle of the Bulge, British Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill remarked, "This is undoubtedly the greatest American battle of the war and will, I believe, be regarded as an ever-famous American victory." Confronting not just the advancing German Army, but the elements, American service members withstood the assault and eventually repelled the Nazi forces, but at tremendous cost in lives and wounded soldiers.

On this anniversary, we reflect on the enduring commitment of our Armed Forces in defending our liberty, as inspiring today as it was in 1944. The discipline and courage displayed in the Battle of the Bulge continues in Iraq, Afghanistan, and wherever our men and women in uniform are serving. They represent the best of our Nation and we are eternally grateful for their service and sacrifice.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BARACK OBAMA, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim Wednesday, December 16, 2009, as the 65th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge. I encourage all Americans to observe this solemn day of remembrance with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of December, in the year of our Lord two thousand nine, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and thirty-fourth

BARACK OBAMA

"We are so honored to recognize service to our country. You continue to remind us that the cost of freedom comes at a high price. Thank you for all the sacrifices you made so that we may enjoy the life we have today in this wonderful country, the United States of America."

....a right hand salute from the students and faculty

VBOB Reunion

Orange High School, Columbus Ohio

12 September 2008



THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Early on 16 December 1944, 30 German divisions struck through the Ardennes Forest at the intersections of Belgium, France, and Luxembourg, aiming to blunt an Allied offensive that had begun on the Normandy Beaches. Intent on splitting British and American forces in half, capturing the city of Antwerp, and then encircling and destroying the four Allied armies in detail, this surprise attack to stop the Allied juggernaut failed. It failed because the attackers did not appreciate the courage, the determination, the skill, and the agility of the men who had been sent to liberate the continent of Europe.

Notwithstanding their lack of adequate winter clothing, ammunition, food, and medical supplies, and the resulting unpreparedness for absorbing a massive, six-army attack, Americans, British, and Belgians defeated a superior, better equipped adversary in the largest land battle in American military history. In just a few days of intense combat, American casualties alone were nearly 19,000 killed and 60,000 wounded. Americans anchored the line that stood its ground and refused to fall back. The Germans failed to achieve their objective of Bastogne, signaling a coming strategic collapse.

Today, we honor those who liberated Europe and who suffered and sacrificed heavily in doing so. We are grateful for the courage, strength, and determination of those who overcame seemingly insurmountable odds in winning the Battle of the Bulge.


Eric K. Shinewski



**OPERATIONS IN TENTS,
EVACUATION TO THE REAR**

Inside a tent, surgeons perform a critical operation with the aid of a nurse. In one 63-hour period, this hospital in the Ardennes handled 1,000 casualties.

Battle of the Bulge: U.S. Troops Fight at Elsenborn Ridge

[This article is a great deal longer than those we would normally print; however, it was so informative that we thought you would enjoy it.]

The little road junction of Wahlerscheid was a veritable German fortress. Large concrete bunkers and log-covered pillboxes dotted the landscape, while the forest trails and roads bristled with mines and machine-gun nests. Barricades of barbed wire, piled high and 8 to 10 feet deep, covered all avenues of approach. Out in front of the bunkers, fields of fire had been cleared to provide yet another advantage to the defenders, while the thick trees and dense undergrowth further stymied attackers. For 2 1/2 days the Americans had been stopped in their tracks, but by 0600 on December 16, 1944, the Americans' hold on the crossroads was complete, the mopping up finished. Evidence of the effort expended to capture Wahlerscheid was plain to see—shattered tree trunks stood starkly against the snow-covered ground, and branches littered the forest floor. Large, deep holes made by every type of shell were evident in great numbers. Telephone wire and other communications cables were strung out crazily. Ammunition boxes, empty bandoleers and clips lay all over the torn ground. Then there were the men, tired and disheveled. Some walked around poking through the debris. Others stood smoking cigarettes, silent. Still others, laid out in neat, straight rows, did nothing. The battle for Wahlerscheid was over, but soon the Battle of the Bulge would unfold, and the survivors would call it 'Heartbreak Crossroads.'

Located inside Germany, across the German/Belgian border, the road junction of Wahlerscheid was a key piece of the puzzle. The Roer River dams, long a major source of irritation to Allied planners, had to be captured before an advance across the wide, flat Roer Plain could be attempted. Once taken, Wahlerscheid would provide not only decent roads but also a good axis of attack toward the dams, which lay just a few miles to the northeast.

While the newly formed 78th Infantry Division attacked German positions farther north along the German border between Lammersdorf and Monschau, the task of capturing Wahlerscheid fell to the 2nd Infantry Division, a seasoned outfit that had recently been pulled out of the line farther south. Assembled near the town of Elsenborn the first week of December, two of the 2nd Division's three infantry regiments, the 9th and the 38th (the third, the 23rd Infantry, was held in reserve near Elsenborn), were trucked to Büllingen, then north to Rocherath and Krinkelt, two villages so close together they had been nicknamed the 'Twin Villages.' From there, the two regiments marched north for six miles along the only road to Wahlerscheid. This single road, the main avenue of approach, was the only route by which supplies and reinforcements could be funneled to the forward regiments from divisional headquarters at Wirtzfeld.

For two days the Germans fought with grim determination, until several members of a lone U.S. patrol cut their way undetected through one barricade after another until they were in the bunker line. They later slipped back to report the breach, and late on December 15, first a company, then a battalion, and then another battalion had slipped through the opening in the wire. By early the next morning, the fight for Wahlerscheid was over.

A couple miles east of and parallel to the 2nd Division's line of march, through a dense forest belt, lay the front lines of the green 99th Infantry Division. On the Continent for just over a month, the 99th held a line from Monschau, northwest of Wahlerscheid, to the border village of Lanzerath, southeast of the Elsenborn Ridge, a distance of nearly 19 miles. Except for the area around Höfen, a village located southeast of Monschau, the 99th's front lay inside a thick, coniferous forest. During the first week of December, the forward rifle companies, rather than presenting a solid line, were positioned just inside the forest and parceled out in platoon-sized outposts along the entire line, thus leaving numerous undefended gaps. The longest section of the line ran parallel to a major road, dubbed the International Highway, from a point just west of Hollerath, Germany, south to the frontier village of Losheimergraben. Intersecting the front were two trails that led from the highway west, back through the forest, where they converged about 1 1/2 miles northeast of the Twin Villages. The northernmost trail left the highway just west of Hollerath in an area covered by the 393rd Infantry Regiment. The southern trail entered the forest west of Neuhoef, also in Germany, at a point just north of where the lines of the 393rd and 394th Infantry regiments met.

To support the 2nd Division's attack at Wahlerscheid and to draw away enemy troops, the 395th Regimental Combat Team (RCT), composed of two battalions of the 395th Infantry Regiment and one from the 393rd, had initiated an attack on December 13 against German positions about 1 1/2 miles southeast of Wahlerscheid. Progressing smoothly at first, the diversion began to bog down as German resistance stiffened on December 14. Terrible weather soon brought it to a complete standstill.

First Army and V Corps Intelligence believed that a German counterattack would probably occur along the 99th Division's front. For this reason, when an awesome artillery bombardment rolled over the 99th's front to the south of Wahlerscheid beginning at about 0530 hours on December 16, commanders up and down the line thought the Germans were merely responding to the breakthrough at Wahlerscheid.

To the southeast, along the International Highway, the 99th's two southernmost regiments were shelled. A major in the 12th Volksgrenadier Division remembered, 'We old soldiers had seen many a heavy barrage, but never before anything like this.' The intensity and duration of the shelling came as a surprise to some of the GIs, as Army Intelligence had previously reported that the Germans had only two horse-drawn artillery pieces in the entire sector. Up front, at a forward battalion command post (CP), one of the 99th's staff officers quipped, 'Christ, they sure are working those two poor horses to death.' The GIs had prepared their positions well, however. Deep, log-covered dugouts and foxholes provided good cover, and casualties from the shelling were notably light.

As the shelling stopped or moved on to the rear at about 0635 on the 16th, German troops charged. In the north near Höfen the initial ground assault against a battalion of the 395th Infantry Regiment was so intense that on at least three occasions the bodies of Germans shot at point-blank range fell into the foxholes on top of the defending GIs.

Along the International Highway where the 393rd was positioned, large numbers of German infantry from the 12th Volksgrenadier Division followed closely on the heels of the barrage. Sweeping from behind the bunkers of the West Wall (also known as the Siegfried Line), they streamed up the slopes, dashed west across the road and

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Elsenborn Ridge (Continued)

hit the 3rd Battalion especially hard. As one GI put it, 'It seemed like they were coming right at us and for some reason ignoring everybody else.' One company, positioned where the northernmost forest trail joined the highway, was nearly wiped out—only one platoon escaped.

When notified of the situation near the highway, the battalion commander ordered the remaining companies to fall back on the battalion CP, to prevent it from being overrun. Meanwhile, scores of Germans pushed on down the trail and by dusk had reached the Jansbach Creek, nearly halfway through the forest. During the late afternoon, Maj. Gen. Walter Lauer, the 99th Division commander, ordered a company from the division reserve rushed to the 3rd Battalion's assistance. That company fought its way east along firebreaks running parallel to the trail until darkness forced a halt to the fighting. Although the Germans had punched a sizable dent in the 3rd Battalion's line, they failed to achieve the major breakthrough needed to clear the way for the tanks of the waiting 12th SS Panzer Division.



Just to the south, the 393rd's 1st Battalion underwent the same punishment. There, however, most of the foxholes were positioned on the very edge of the forest with clear fields of fire, and the GIs exacted a greater toll on the advancing enemy. The first wave of grenadiers broke, then fell back in disarray, leaving behind a large number of dead and wounded. Shortly afterward, the second assault achieved several penetrations, forcing one American company to fall back some 300 yards into the forest. After being reinforced in the afternoon, that company counterattacked and pushed the Germans back almost to the original line.

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Early on the afternoon of December 16, the 2nd Division's 23rd Infantry Regiment minus one battalion was attached to the 99th Infantry Division. The 1st Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. John C. Hightower, was ordered by General Lauer to move to Hünningen, several miles northwest of Losheimergraben on the main road to

(Continued on next page)

Elsenborn Ridge (Continued)

Büllingen. Lauer hoped the move would shore up his flagging southern flank. Pulling into position late in the afternoon, the 1st Battalion quickly established defenses south and southeast of Hünningen.

Meanwhile, the 3rd Battalion, under Lt. Col. Paul Tuttle, moved out to the north and east of the Twin Villages. Early the following morning, part of the battalion was to attack east and link up with the remainder of the 393rd's 3rd Battalion, which was still positioned along the northern forest trail. The rest of the battalion was to take up positions astride the southern trail to provide backup for the 393rd's other battalion. However, by the time the 3rd Battalion arrived it was already growing dark, and little movement actually took place. A short time later, Tuttle received orders from Maj. Gen. Walter Robinson, 2nd Division commander, to stay put and establish positions across both trails.

As midnight approached in Lanzerath on December 16, the *Kampfgruppe* of the 1st SS Panzer Division drove into the village. The commander, Colonel Peiper, was furious. After being stalled all day at the rear of a long column, he had finally received orders to break out to the west any way he could. Pushing the men and equipment ahead of him off the road, he had finally reached Lanzerath—several hours later than scheduled. Waiting for the 3rd Parachute Division to clear a path through the 99th's lines, in addition to traversing broken terrain and mined roads, had cost him even more time—time that he feared he might not be able to make up. He was not in the mood for any more delays.

Inside a small cafe, he found the commander of the 9th Parachute Regiment, Colonel Helmut von Hoffman, and demanded to know why he had not moved farther. More than a little intimidated by the SS officer, the paratroop colonel explained that his men had run into stiff resistance and that the woods and road ahead were packed with American troops and tanks. Peiper asked if any reconnaissance had been conducted, and, as he had anticipated, the answer was no. Thoroughly disgusted, Peiper demanded that a battalion of paratroopers accompany his tanks. He was going ahead. Prisoner Lyle Bouck, lying on the floor of the cafe, watched as Peiper stormed out.

Around 0400 on December 17, the lead tanks of *Kampfgruppe* Peiper left Lanzerath and rolled into Bucholz, completely routing the small American garrison there. Only one man, a headquarters company radio operator, remained in the town, hidden in a cellar. He counted the number of tanks as they rolled by and relayed information to division headquarters until he was captured.

His tanks refueled, Peiper proceeded toward Büllingen, just a few miles away. He was met by a hastily formed defense consisting of U.S. engineers, headquarters personnel and a few tank destroyers. Fighting raged in and around the village throughout the morning, but the sheer weight of numbers on the German side finally forced the defenders to fall back. By late morning, a last-ditch effort to block the Butgenbach road took shape. Instead of forcing the issue and driving north, however, a move that would have most certainly trapped the 2nd and 99th divisions, Peiper's battle group turned southwest, completely confounding the Americans. As General Lauer later commented, 'The enemy had the key to success within his hands but did not know it.'

By late afternoon on December 16, the 2nd Division commander's feeling of uneasiness had turned to one of impending disaster.

General Robertson had by then lost his division reserve to the 99th as well as a combat command of the 9th Armored Division, on loan to him to use when the Wahlerscheid breakthrough was completed. Most of his infantry and two divisional artillery battalions were well forward, which would make any withdrawal extremely difficult at best because only a single road led south from Wahlerscheid. Earlier in the day he had requested permission from the First Army through the V Corps to call off the Wahlerscheid attack but was turned down. Since no one at First Army headquarters realized the scope of the German offensive at this stage, there seemed little to gain and much to lose by pulling back from the Wahlerscheid position. Undaunted, Robertson personally called the regimental commanders at Wahlerscheid late that evening and ordered them to hold tight for the night; they were to continue the attack in the morning, but only upon his express order.

The Germans renewed their attack at Losheimergraben early on December 17. Strong attacks from both flanks and the front failed to achieve any significant progress, but the thinly held American line was crumbling rapidly as the remnants of the 394th's 1st Battalion were reduced to small groups able to offer little more than token resistance. Compounding the Americans' problems, German engineers had repaired a bridge along the Losheim-Losheimergraben road, and shortly before noon German armor made an appearance on the road, crawling slowly toward the disputed crossroads. As even more enemy infantry joined the fray, the few remaining GIs pulled back from the woods and took up positions in basements in the few buildings around a small customs house.



Around 1400, a withdrawal from the Losheimergraben area was authorized. Moving back through the woods, men of the 1st and 3rd battalions found themselves in Mürringen, due south of the Twin Villages and just north of Hünningen, where the lone battalion from the 23rd Infantry still held positions.

During the withdrawal, the 2nd Battalion clashed with a large group of Germans. With his ammunition dangerously low, the American commander was unwilling to risk another fight, and he led his troops into the woods southeast of Mürringen until a clear determination of friendly positions was made.

(This article is a great deal longer than those we would normally print; however, it was so informative that we thought you would enjoy it. It will be continued in the next issue.)

DON'T DRINK THE WATER!

Bill Wenzel
75th Infantry Division
290th Infantry Regiment
Medic, 2nd Battalion

[Bill sends us the following article from his book "A Time to Remember, a Combat Medic Looks Back--World War II in Europe". Bill would like to hear from other veterans of the Bulge. We print his address at the end of the article.]

Let me tell you about a crazy thing that happened while I was riding in a convoy somewhere near St. Vith. We'd stopped in a small village for a break and the street was lined on both sides with our troops--most of them standing around shooting the breeze. Two GIs in a weapons carrier just ahead of us jumped out and walked over to talk with an old Belgian who was welcoming his liberators. The Americans had finally driven the hated Germans out and he was mighty happy to see us. He spoke to the GIs for a minute or two, nodded his head and pointed up the village street behind him. The two soldiers walked back to their vehicle, undid some straps that held a five gallon water can to the side of it and handed it and a pack of cigarettes to the elderly villager.

Off the old gentleman went, shuffling through the mud and snow to a house down the street; returning in short order lugging that same five gallon can. It was pretty heavy on the return trip and he was having difficulty carrying it. The two soldiers walked over, took the can and were toting it back to the weapons carrier when a command car with a red flag flying on each front fender came chugging slowly down the village street past our vehicles. There was a small white star displayed on those red flags and as it rolled past, all the GIs standing curbside sprang to attention and gave a snappy salute. Seated in the rear of the open vehicle was a brigadier general enjoying all of this attention. He returned the salutes as he passed but when he came up even with the two fellas carrying the five gallon can, he had his driver pull over and stop.

The two shoppers put their heavy load down and saluted. I was standing near enough to hear the general ask how they were doing and asked them if they were getting enough to eat. He also said a few other things that he thought would keep their spirits up. He said they were doing a great job in the Battle of the Bulge. As he spoke, his eyes wandered to the five gallon water can sitting on the pavement between them and said, "Boys, what do you have in that jerry can?"

Hoping that the general wasn't thirsty at the moment and wanting to hide the fact that the container was full of locally produced apple jack with the kick of a Missouri mule, they desperately searched their minds for an answer. That booze had just cost them \$15, a considerable amount of money in 1945.

After a short pause, they told their lie! "Sir, some water we just got from that village hydrant over there, sir!" They answered.

"Now boys," the general replied, "you know you shouldn't be drinking the water you find in these villages. Most of the time it's contaminated with all kinds of bacteria and you could get sick if you drink it! You men wouldn't want that to happen

would you? We need to keep every one of you men in fighting shape! Open the jerry can and dump that water out on the road right now!"

The two hapless GIs realized that the jib was up! That general was going to sit right there and make sure they followed his orders. Unscrewing the lid, they slowly and reluctantly tipped the five gallon can of happy juice on its side and all of that lovely, belly warming booze went flowing down the slush-filled street; turning that cobblestone pavement into one big aromatic puddle! It was a heart wrenching sight and I felt sorry for the guys who had been lucky enough to find it and unlucky enough to meet a general at the point of purchase.

'Don't drink the water' isn't a rule made just for tourists traveling in Mexico, it was also a rule for GIs in combat areas during World War II. In retrospect, I believe if they had leveled with that one star general and told him it was filled with local apple jack they'd bought from the friendly natives, he probably would've laughed and driven off, pleased with the morale of his troops and the way things were going in his sector. The two GIs would have enjoyed those five gallons of distilled apple squeezings for quite a while. Oh, well, c'est la guerre.

[Bill Wenzel's address is: 675 Grand Avenue, Prairie du Sac, Wisconsin 53578.]

LUXEMBOURG MEDAL OF HONOR

[The following information was excerpted from an article prepared by A. J. Bastarach.]

LELAND J. CRAWFORD, 299TH COMBAT ENGINEERS, returned to Luxembourg for a reunion of other veterans of the Battle of the Bulge to receive the Luxembourg Medal of Honor.

Leland had returned to Normandy for the 60th anniversary of D-Day and was one of only a few who was not in uniform. Determined not to let this happen again, Louise (his wife) contacted a sewing expert, Peggy, to see what could be done.

With the participation of many others, a uniform was finally assembled, complete with unit insignia. In all seven strangers if five states built a uniform for a veteran they didn't know.

On June 18th, 2009, Leland returned to Luxembourg for the first time since September 1944. Emotions ran high as they drove through streets lined with local children waving American flags in appreciation of the American heroes who liberated their town. When Leland arrived at the ceremony, he realized he was no longer the soldier without his uniform; he was the only veteran in uniform. Everyone wanted to be photographed with the WWII hero looking sharp in his original 1945 "Ike" outfit. ■



CHRISTMAS 1944 - BELGIUM

Eugene Morell
C Battery
591st Field Artillery Battalion
106th Infantry Division

We had not shaved, bathed or ever washed our hands since December 16th. We had been eating and sleeping in dirty holes in the ground and had not had time nor the urge to change.

Just at dawn December 23rd, we opened fire at a road not far away. Our fire was being directed by a forward observer; consequently, we couldn't see our targets. We used up all our shells by firing as fast as possible, and then hooked the big guns behind the trucks. Our whole gun crew was riding on the back of the truck and was told to stick with the truck as long as it kept moving. But if the truck or its driver was disabled then each man would be on his own and escape any way possible. We stayed with the trucks and the whole convoy emerged on the main road. At this point we could see what we had been shooting at and the damage we had done--with the help of our tanks and also the 82nd Division paratroopers.

We saw disabled tanks on both sides of the road, mostly German tanks with dead German soldiers, lying along the road and several tanks had dead Germans on top of them--their clothing still smoking. There were dead American soldiers scattered all along and we stopped among this carnage by a log building to relieve ourselves.

I personally walked among the dead of the 82nd Division, who had already been gathered up and placed side-by-side on a canvas along the side of the road. There were two rows of them having been placed with their feet toward each other. There were eleven men in each row, all lying on their backs, most of them with their eyes still open.

By now we were becoming accustomed to seeing dead soldiers but as I stood by 22 of them in one place, my thoughts were that there would be sadness in 22 families back home when they were notified of the death of their loved ones and I wished that I could talk to the family of each one and tell them what little I knew about his death and that they had died helping to clear this road which we were using to escape capture.

December 23rd: We loaded into the trucks and passed through Belgian towns and villages that had been devastated by fire from both sides. We had not been told that we were moving back to regroup, having lost so many men in such a short time.

We camped in an open field just outside Ville, Belgium. Our clothing included socks and underwear. Our feet were always cold. At Ville we camped in an open field near a large horse barn. The village was just down the road from us. We built a fire and melted snow in our helmets and stood by the fire, pulled up our shirts and washed our upper body, put clean T-shirts and shirts on, then lowered our pants, washed down as far as possible, changed our boxer shorts and pants.

We watched a German an American plane shooting at each other just above us and they disappeared from our sight. Some of us went into the horse barn and wrote our first letter since the start of the battle. I wrote home telling them that I was safe and not to worry about me.

We had come here to get replacements for the men that we had lost and to clean our guns and get ammo and so on. That night

we slept in a warm barn loft and it was a comfortable feeling hearing the horses munching on hay and we expected to be there for Christmas Eve and away from the fighting.

We spent Christmas Eve fooling around and wondered what was going on in the fighting which was only a few miles away for we could hear the shooting. Just before dark we were ordered to mount up and get ready to leave. There had been a break-through near Fays, Belgium, and our artillery support was needed.

It was Christmas Eve and we were on our way back to combat. It was a dark, cold night and there was a feeling of gloom as twelve of us rode on the back of a canvas covered truck with everything we owned riding with us. We wore overcoats and were wedged together so that our bodies were not freezing but our feel were so cold that it was miserable.

Someone asked me to play a Christmas song. My harmonica and I started to play "Silent Night" and I could sense that everyone was thinking of home and their families probably gathered round the Christmas tree. I was thinking of home also as I played and realized it was a sad song--so, I started playing "Jingle Bells" and soon we were all singing as we watched our howitzer trail along behind us.

There is hardly ever a time that the army tells you where you are headed and as usual we rode through the darkness until the trucks stopped and we had to jump down from the trucks and land on our cold feet. It wasn't long until we were warmed up by digging the big gun in and then our four guns started shooting at the unseen enemy. Our fire was directed by our forward observer who was in front of us and saw the targets and where our shells were landing. We spent the night firing the guns and trying to get warm and when daylight came we could see that we were on a hill and were shooting over a valley at another hill.

There was a battle going on out of our sight and we were doing a lot of shooting and no one was shooting at us. There was a Belgian farm house in the valley before us and we were shooting directly over the house and barn. There was smoke coming out of the chimney and chickens running around in the snowy hard.

It was Christmas Day and we were scheduled for another can of beans for Christmas dinner. Pvt. Katz, PFC Bermudez, and I stood looking at those chickens and decided to have chicken for Christmas dinner instead of beans. When the second shift came on to relieve us at the gun, we walked through the deep snow down the hill and approached the house. We couldn't be positively sure that there weren't Germans inside, so we took cover behind trees in the front yard and hollered "Hello." The door opened a small crack and a man's voice was saying something in French. Katz stepped out from behind the tree and using sign language gestured that we wanted a chicken. He made a money sign with his fingers meaning that we would pay. The man waved his arm as if to say go ahead and no pay was expected, so we caught two old hens and started back up the hill. We guessed that the Belgian man had stayed to take care of their animals while the war was going all around over their house.

We took the chickens back to our gun position and wrung their necks and cleaned them and built a fire and stuck a stick through them and took turns holding them over a fire, all the time kidding the guys in the other gun sections about us having chicken for dinner and they were having beans.

We decided that the chicken was cooked enough and each of us used our trench knife to cut

(Continued)

CHRISTMAS 1944 - BELGIUM (Continuation)
off a piece. It was burned on the outside and raw on the inside and not fit to eat but we were bragging how good it was and how smart we were to be having chicken instead of beans. Katz said, "Let's save some for supper" and took it to the truck and later on, when no one was looking, threw it away.

We continued firing all day and it let up some time along toward evening. Chow time came and we walked back behind our position to the chow truck to get our can of beans and much to our surprise we were told to bring our mess kits. As we approached the chow truck we could smell turkey. The cooks were putting turkey and dressing in each mess kit as we took our turn at the tail gate.

We three chicken eaters were not hungry because of the raw chicken. Bermudez, who had a weak stomach, had been complaining about being a little sick to his stomach, but we took our turn and started to eat, while standing around the chow truck with everyone else. We were to find out later that our Christmas dinner had been delivered by plane and dropped by parachute. ■

CHRISTMAS 1944: BATTLE OF THE BULGE After the Hurtgen

**Peter Russo
4th Infantry Division
29th Field Artillery Battalion
B Battery**

*[The following article appeared in the Winter 2009 issue of
The Ivy Leaves the newsletter of the 4th Infantry Division.]*

Badly mauled during the Battle of the Hurtgen forest, the Fourth Division, my division, was ordered to Luxemburg for resupply and a much-needed rest.

In Luxembourg, the artillery battery received new truck-drawn 105mm howitzers in trade for its worn self-propelled. The men were able to shower, and a few troop replacements were integrated. All were treated to a hot meal. This rest period was short-lived, however, and ended early on December 16, 1944, when a fire mission was sounded in the wee morning hours. The fire mission was for 300 rounds covering a 270 degree perimeter, leaving only a free rear.

The German drive, later known as the Battle of the Bulge, struck our depleted infantry line in Luxembourg. Orders for weapons destruction preceded the fire mission. The destruction order was called off, and continued fire missions were called upon the enemy.

Christmas Eve found our gun battery in contact with the retreating enemy when the halt order was sounded. Darkness was approaching, and provisions for the upcoming hot Christmas dinner needed to be completed before nightfall...Cold, Snow and frozen mud would be our bed companions this Christmas Eve.

A few hours into Christmas Day...we found our position bombarded by incoming enemy artillery...inflicting heavy casualties.

Doc arrived in short order and set about his tasks. He responded to a cry for help and then called for help to carry a wounded man back to the safety of the gun position. I crawled

forward and helped him fashion a cover from two raincoats to help the wounded man. The light exposed the wounded soldier's almost severed foot. "Hold while I tape," was the word from Doc. I placed the leg on my lap and applied pressure as Doc poured in sulfur and taped the foot together.

The aid jeep came in an instant. While the stretchers were filled with wounded, Doc and I lifted our man into the back seat. The driver motioned me to the other back seat, thinking I was wounded. Doc and I smiled when we looked at my bloodied uniform.

Later Doc came by to visit, "The guy with the foot is on his way home," was the report. "He will walk with a limp," Doc concluded.

I reflect on Doc every Christmas Day. Doc carried nothing but his Bible and medical kit into each battle. He fired no weapon nor did he kill any of the enemies, yet I rate him the greatest warrior of all. ■

BOB AT HOUFFALIZE

Ed Sammons

2nd Armored Division

17th Armored Combat Engineer Battalion

Company E

After fighting to bridge the Albert Canal in Belgium and our battle for Maastricht, we re-grouped in the November, 1944, wet and cold and then moved near the German border in the City of Aachen for assault.

The German Army broke through the line about 100 miles to our south at Bastogne. We back-tracked with the entire division about 75 miles in blackout at night to meet head-on and stop the German 2nd Panzer Division and 560th Volks Grenadier Division at Houffalize, in its drive to split the Allied and cut off our supply.

The pick and shovel platoon of our company in 10 degree weather cleared a path over the steep hills of blacktop roads covered with 10" of snow over 2" of ice for our tanks to engage in battle.

I was driver and Morse Code radio operator of Command half-track for the company commander. After four days of battle, the 2nd Armored Division completely destroyed the 560th Panzer Division. Hitler's SS Storm Troopers called the 2nd Armored Division - "Roosevelt's Butchers."

A night later (the password was Geronimo), we continued to pursue the Germans and after daylight the next morning, one of our half-tracks with 12 men on board came to a bridge in the road. Before they could check the bridge for explosives a German 88 bullet crossed the bridge and hit the center of the armored windshield--went through and out the rear door. Not a soldier was hurt.

IT WAS CHRISTMAS MORNING. ■

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

VA BENEFITS

[JIM WARMOUTH, 75TH INFANTRY DIVISION, put together some information on benefits that the VA offers. Most of you probably know this already, but you may have missed something. It is republished here for your information.]

James Warmouth: ...urged you to contact your VA hospital nearest you for admission even though you may not have the need now. Just take a copy of your discharge and go there.

You will be classified as for disability and receive the following benefits and service. I'm 88 and receive all medical except dental and travel allowance. You can receive glasses (re-examined every year for replacement), hearing aids (and batteries) which will cost about \$2,000. If you are diabetic you can get shoes (2 pairs) and socks and replacement on shoes when needed. You will receive every test needed: blood, sugar, X-rays (all tests). Your prescriptions are either no charge or at nominal cost (I believe it is \$8.00 now). If you can't afford them, regardless of degree of disability, they will be free. There is a travel allowance--this is any time you go not necessarily for an appointment. You can get a wheel chair or motorized chair upon the recommendation of your doctor. You also can get all surgery--NO CHARGE. ■

YOUR RIBBONS

[The 4TH INFANTRY DIVISION newsletter boiled down the replacement of ribbons in their Winter 2009 newsletter.]

Since Napoleon, it has long been recognized by military leaders that medals and decorations instill a sense of pride and accomplishment. Veterans know these accomplishments by recognition of combat patches, badges and rows of ribbons on a soldier's uniform. If you or you are the next of kin of a veteran, who has lost your medals, the U.S. Army Veteran Medal Unit can help recover them. A written request along with a copy of the DD Form 214 or other discharge papers or orders should be sent to the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC), 9700 Page Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri 63132-5100. You can also use the NPRC website at www.vetrecs.archives.gov.

If you never received your medals, there will be no charge. If requesting replacement sets, there will be a nominal fee. After the NPRC processes your request, you will receive a listing of medals authorized and the request will be forwarded to the Veteran Medals Unit. You can find out more information and check your request status at www.veteranmedals.army.mil or call them at 877-827-9026. ■

**CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL
ARE YOUR DUES DUE?
DUES DATE APPEARS
ABOVE YOUR LAST NAME**

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

2010 is the 65th Anniversary of Battle of the Bulge victory and the end of World War II in Europe. Belgium, Luxembourg and the US military in Europe want VBOB veterans and families to come and celebrate. Itinerary: USA - Brussels - Bastogne (protest at threatened demolition of General McAuliffe's HQ) - Bulge ceremonies and battlefield visits in Luxembourg and Belgium - Grand VE Day 65th Anniversary celebrations - Cologne - Rhine cruise - Frankfurt - USA.

65TH ANNIVERSARY VE TOUR 1ST AND 4TH DIVS GO TO NORMANDY AND THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE JULY 23 - JULY 30 - AUG 3, 2010

Follow both divisions through Normandy (JULY 23 - JULY 30, 2010). Then follow them right across the Battle of the Bulge (JULY 30 - AUG 3, 2010) with ceremonies and battlefield visits on the way. 'Special Requests' day for the Bulge, Aachen and Huertgen Forest. Grand Finale Rhine cruise.

65TH ANNIVERSARY VE TOUR SEPT 13 - 24, 2010

JAN '45: US WINNING THE BULGE - BLOCKS HITLER'S COUNTERPUNCH THRU ALSACE-LORRAINE.

2010 is the 65th Anniversary of Hitler's ferocious, failed attempt in Alsace-Lorraine to counterpunch mounting US success in the Battle of the Bulge. Victory and the end of World War II in Europe were in sight. After the great success of US veterans returning in 2009, Alsace-Lorraine and the US military in Europe want to welcome back US veterans again in 2010. Moving battlefield ceremonies and official celebratory events. Hundreds of US WWII military vehicles. If you were in Third Army or Seventh Army fighting in Alsace-Lorraine, this tour is for you, your families and friends.

For more information on all tours, contact: Doris Davis, dordavis@earthlink.net or (650) 654 - 0101 (PST). Doris is a Trustee of National and President of the VBOB Golden Gate (San Francisco) Chapter. She says, "It was so 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 yourself."

POLITICS

"My choice early in life was either to be a piano player in a whorehouse or a politician. And to tell the truth, there's hardly any difference."

— Harry S Truman, 33rd U.S. president
(1884-1972) -

OTHER THOUGHTS ABOUT THE "GREATEST GENERATION"

It was a splendid generation who fought WWII, and then led us through the next 40 years of the Cold War against the Soviet Communist regime. They brought more freedom to more people around the world than any other generation.-- Anonymous

James M. Power
11th Armored Division
515th Armored Infantry Battalion
Company C

[Material indented and in italics are the words of Mr. Power] I have thought for years about the "Greatest Generation" and think that the definition is too broad-based as set forth by Tom Brokaw. (Who am I to take issue with Brokaw? The same GI who took issue with one of the commands issued and was told that I would carry out a mission or be court-martialed. I obeyed.)

I have no desire to downplay the achievements of anyone who truly suffered, was injured physically or emotionally, who did without and who missed their home and family for long periods; rather, I am trying to point out that all positions were not equal and that we also received so much help and so many favorable events to help those who survived unhurt make a better life for many. In other words, I'm attempting to strike a balance.

Let's take another look at Tom Brokaw's description of the *Greatest Generation*. If, as most readers of VBOB, you were in the battle, this is a proper definition as there were so few who were not involved in front line fire. He is correct when referring to many that in combat gave their lives or who were severely physically, mentally, or emotionally wounded. This definition definitely applies to the front line troops of the marines, the army infantry and tankers, those who served in the special services executing daring raids, the field artillery forward observers, medics, the combat engineers, and the many who fought battles wherever they may have been. Flight crews and those sailors when the enemy made their ship a roaring inferno were members of the greatest generation, as were prisoners.

Others, normally in safer surroundings, were sometimes wounded or killed when their position was bombed by enemy airplanes, overrun or shelled by enemy troops. Many servicemen were exposed to some danger, but a low casualty rate for an outfit indicates their situation had less actual danger. For every service person, however, WWII was more than an inconvenience as they were transported many miles from home, with very poor living conditions for many. They were required to work at tasks not of their choosing or liking, some for three or four years, a long time to give up of one's life. However, in some instances, especially since so many were victims of the depression years, the service brought travel, better accommodations, better food, improved health, and association with people from all backgrounds, thus broadening their view of the world. Some learned a trade. Yet their life style was dictated; citizens of our country do not embrace a life forced upon them.

A small percentage experienced brutal conditions, capture, and

prison camps, especially the Japanese camps, while yet others, not trained for combat were forced into that role due to unexpected raids, as in Pearl Harbor, the Ardennes, etc., where everyone was, of necessity, included in the all-out fight. When given sufficient time, the services turned out well-trained recruits, but for those moved to the front line from many rear positions the training was neither proper nor sufficient, leading them to have a higher casualty note. This was due to improper planning by the upper echelon.

The infantry, including the paratroopers, the fighting marines, tankers, and artillery were the cutting edge of the true front line where all that lay ahead was the enemy, whose orders were the same, kill or capture, and do not retreat. The infantry in Europe amounted to 17 percent of the total armed forces and sustained 77 percent of the casualties¹, and not all of the complement of an infantry division was on the front line as there were innumerable support requirements. The army in Europe, numbered 1,588,983 of which six percent were in rifle platoons. These rifle platoons had a 95 percent casualty rate. Not included in the infantry statistics are the armored divisions that sustained a very high casualty rate.

Rest periods were periodically provided for the men who not only needed a break, but required time to maintain and repair their equipment. The army had no plans for rotation home after so many days on the line; the men who were wounded were sent to the rear, restored by the doctors at the hospitals and, if not too serious, sent back to the front where they served unless killed or so seriously wounded that recovery required a better environment. A few made it through, no thanks to the system, which appeared to be: "return men to the fight until captured, killed, or wounded so severely that service was no longer possible." The attacking marines in the South Pacific islands underwent the same experience, while the lucky marines served as guards on the troop ships where some ran the crap games. I am unable to comment on the navy, and do not mean to omit the sailors.

Some supply servicemen, especially truck drivers, were exposed to the combat zones. The rear echelon was always better fed, clothed, and housed, while the end of the supply chain, the front line, did without as they lived in one after another foxhole in snow, rain or heat. "We're behind you" did not impress the front line soldier, who considered rear echelon as anything from company headquarters on up the chair of command and back to the supply bases.

When the conflict ended, all servicemen were welcomed home as they should have been. Families were rejoined and the mood was one of relief and jubilation for those returning. After all, the parents, wives, and loved ones had experienced trauma and worried--they had sacrificed and life had not been easy for them. The veterans did not have the problems experienced by the blue collar soldiers of Viet Nam when many returning soldiers were improperly treated by their more fortunate brothers who in their guilt did nothing to ease the pain of the returning servicemen, some of whom had lived through an ugly guerilla hell.

The veterans of WWII returned home to an entirely different environment. The economy exploded with the pent up demand for homes, appliances, cars, clothes, and all types of goods and services. Anyone desiring work found employment while others took advantage of the GI Bill to get a college degree, or received supplemental income while undergoing on-the-job training, maybe both. The returning soldier was older, more responsible--

GREATEST GENERATION (Continuation)

after all, the army instilled some discipline--and the veterans were motivated to replace those missing years of their life with activity of their own choosing and to get ahead, made more intense by marriage and children.

In short, the veterans who returned without serious wounds, although some memories were most unpleasant, had opportunities as great, or greater, than any previous generation. The "Greatest Generation" for those who were not called upon to pay a high, and especially the ultimate, price could be called the "Fortunate Generation" also. They gave; they received, not in exact proportion, of course, but those of us who remain from that era should always be thankful for the opportunity to serve our country and the gifts that our country gave back to us--gifts that enabled us to start a productive life.

¹These figures are sometimes quoted different, but are always near Praeto's law of 80/20.

A little background on the writer and a caveat:

I recognize that many will take exception to this article, no doubt for good reason, and it is only one man's opinion, but we all need to re-think some of our life's stories. I have no desire to downplay any display of bravery by any service person; instead, I would include them as troopers. Perhaps my thoughts reflect thoughts similar to my great-grandfather who, while he owned a large farm in the middle of Confederacy, remained loyal to the Union. I was an infantryman late to the Bulge and early to depart with simply a broken bone caused by the concussion from a mortar that killed my partner and wounded another so seriously that he was returned to the U.S. for multiple surgeries. While others of truly the "Greatest Generation" served in the freezing weather, I was recovering from my "million dollar wound" in a French tent hospital for five weeks. My combat experience ended in territory that was turned over to the Russians where I was leading an eight-man squad composed of the remnants of two squads and the only original man in the squad. My company was among the first permanent American troops in Austria. After 31 months of military service and earning a college degree, blessed by a marriage, I began my business career at age 22. I did miss some of my childhood. ■

A GRAND GESTURE

[Thanks to James F. Burke, Jr., son of James F. Burke, Sr., for his assistance in shepherding the chapter in this worthwhile endeavor and providing us this information.]

The Cape Cod and the Islands Chapter recently decided that it was unable to officially continue as a chapter in VBOB. They will, however, continue to have get-togethers to keep in touch.

They decided that they would donate what was left in their coffers to a foundation which honored Marine Corporal Nicholas G. Xiarhos, who was killed in action in Afghanistan.

Cpl Xiarhos' father, Yarmouth Police Lt. Seven Xiarhos, established the foundation to honor his son and benefit local

veteran-related causes and local law enforcement scholarships.

On November 28th, 2009, a small ceremony a small group met at the Yarmouth Police Station to make the presentation.



VBOB Cape Members Jim Burke, Sr.; Wesley Ko, Martin Faherty pose with Lt. Xiarhos and the Chapter Flag

GOLDEN TRIANGLE CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Harry E. Kirby reports his chapter in Florida is continuing their year-round activity program, some of which is participation in community activities. These are to make the public aware of the chapter and VBOB and not a publicity vehicle for a single individual.

The October 2009 program started with the Marion County Veterans Memorial Ceremony which honored veterans of the county who have died during the previous three months, generally about 200. The program included an honor guard, 21 gun salute and patriotic music. The chapter handles distribution of the program.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C., was displayed in a 3/5 scale replica October 16-18 which chapter members were encouraged to attend.

The chapter also supports the Honor Flight Program in which veterans are flown to Washington, D.C., to visit the WWII Memorial. The chapter donated \$350 to sponsor a veteran for the trip and members are encouraged to volunteer to assist the boarding for departure at the airport.

Is your chapter president or a designated member reporting your chapter activities? ■

ARE WE GETTING OLD OR WHAT??

We forgot to remind you to carry out the "VBOB New Year's Toast" this year. Did you remember??

We'll try to do better next year.

MONUMENT TO 862 ENGINEER AVIATION BATTALION

[The following excerpts are from The News-Herald and was submitted by STANLEY G. RANNIS, 862ND ENGINEER AVIATION BATTALION]

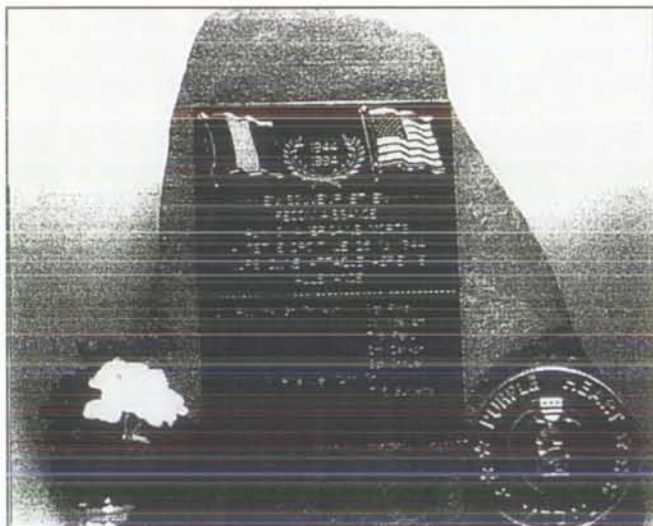
For Joe DiFranco, being demoted to rank of private for smashing a vehicle from his motor pool may very well have saved his life.

DiFranco, was a motor pool dispatcher and held the rank of sergeant until an accident sent him back to the rank of private.

On Christmas Day, 1944, he lost several members of his army unit. The Germans were using bombs during a raid that were the first in history to be assigned to jet bombers.

DiFranco's former assistant, Sgt. Ford, who replaced DiFranco, was killed when the bombs made a direct hit on the offices and motor pool. Ford was sitting at DiFranco's desk when the attack occurred.

A memorial now stands on the exact spot where the 862nd had been attacked. On a trip back to Grace Hollogne, DiFranco saw the monument the Belgium people had erected on the site.



The trip to Belgium included a visit to a nearby cemetery and the graves of the fallen soldiers with whom DiFranco had served.

"The cemetery is American soil, we pay for it, we maintain it, I wanted to visit Sgt. Ford," DiFranco said. "When you visit the cemetery, you are accompanied by an attendant that has a bucket of water and of sand.

"The attendant washes the cross and then applies a coat of sand to the inscription." The sand comes from Omaha Beach, a major battlefield of the Normandy Invasion in France. "After your visit, the cross is washed clean again," DiFranco said.

The area in Belgium where the unit was building an airstrip at the time of the attack also has been established a museum in honor of the 862nd.

[We apologize for the quality of the picture of the stone's replica. It is all we had.] ■

A BELGIAN THANK YOU

[CHARLES WOODMAN, 75TH INFANTRY DIVISION, 291ST INFANTRY REGIMENT, 1ST BATTALION, COMPANY B, sent us the following message from Edgard Pots, of Belgium.]

[Edited] When we woke up this morning, we realized that 65 years ago, the Battle of the Bulge had been going on for two hours - December 16th, 1944.

That morning at exactly 0530 a.m., a gigantic "fireworks" was seen in the air, followed by a tremendous noise from incoming artillery fire. At that moment Germans launched their last attack on the Western front called by their fuhrer "Wacht am Rhein."

The American boys had to fight in a kind of deep-freezer--where during the night the temperature reached minus 20C (-4F as I can count).

The results were dramatic, besides the noise and fireworks, the beginning of a large river of blood. You can see what it means if you visit Henri-Chapelle U.S. Military Cemetery.

I was three months old when this happened--so you were my very personal liberators.

For that reason, I want to thank you for our freed which we have had for 65 years.

Mathilde and Marcel sent me a real nice seasonal letter, including a deeply emotional poem, which I would like to share with you.

The Song of the Departed by Jean Goujon

We are still alive, we tell you.
We didn't die, we are transformed
because eternal is the spirit's form
We are still alive, we tell you!



A peaceful part of the Ardennes today--the area is around Amel, which is near St. Vith. ■

CHRISTMAS 1944 TOO WHITE TOO COLD

Don Addor
20th Armored Infantry Battalion
10th Armored Division

Since I joined VBOB I have read a lot stories from different members on how they spent Christmas of 1944. For all of us, this holiday was truly celebrated in a different manner than usual. A white Christmas that was too white and too cold!

I, too, shall never forget Christmas of 1944, but for a different reason than stated in the tales I have read in *The Bulge Bugle*. I was with the 20th Armored Infantry Battalion, 10th Armored Division. We were on RR down in France when General Patton ordered us north to Bastogne. I would up on an outpost in Noville with orders to stop the German's advance at any cost while defenses at Bastogne were set up.

This Team Desobry did for about two and a half days. On the 20th of December we were told, "That we were no longer needed and could withdraw back to Bastogne. That is if we could make it!" We pulled out of the devastated town and headed into the thick fog for Bastogne. At Foy we were ambushed by German armored forces and received many casualties.

I was one of those casualties. I had been knocked down by a mortar shell and when I got back up, I was hit by burp gun fire. The bullets tore the field jacket off of my back and three went through my right leg. Two went through my shin bone and the other through the artery in my calf. Blood streamed out of my right leg making a big puddle in the grass of that Belgian cow pasture. I thought I had had it but a voice from above said, "You're not dead yet!" After some difficulties, I finally got a tourniquet to work and the blood stopped flowing.

I looked around me and I was all alone, except for the dead, sitting in the fog behind the German lines about a mile outside of Bastogne--that city was also behind the lines. After what seemed like hours a jeep came down the road. It turned out to be the major's jeep and driver with a medic from the 101st paratroopers.

They had been lost in the fog dodging Germans for over a day. When they finally got back to Noville it was deserted. I told them what had happened and directed them the way back to Bastogne. When I got to our battalion aid station, I passed out.

Some time later, I came to in some kind of rocking tunnel. When I tried to get up, the medic, hooking another bottle of plasma over my head, pushed me back and told me I was on a hospital train on my way to a hospital in Paris. I retained consciousness after that. I guess all of those blood transfusions and other liquids had done their work.

Rolling down the hospital hallway, I noticed Christmas decorations hanging from the ceiling. A life sized cardboard Santa smiled at me as we turned a corner and entered a ward. This was the first time I had thought about Christmas since we had made that mad dash from lower France to Bastogne. I asked a nurse what day it was and she said, "Why it's Christmas Eve!" Before I could ask her anything else, the doctor arrived at my

bed side to examine my leg.

Some where a long the line a cast had been put on it. I looked down and saw that my toes sticking out of the cast were an awful bluish black. The doctor gently lifted my cast and the bottom slushed out all over the nice clean sheets. A terrible smell hit my nose. I had smelled that smell before from the dead. It was the smell of death.

The doctor came over to me with a very solemn face. I saw he was struggling for words, so I said, "Gangrene?" He replied, "Yes." He went on to tell me that it had to be amputated as soon as possible. He added that he hated to do it on Christmas morning. He would send the chaplain to talk with me.

I told him I would be glad to talk with the chaplain, but I looked at the operation as a gift of life. I also told him that I had been so close to death twice that I was happy to be alive and in good hands. I don't know if he understood me or not. One has to actually be in combat and experience death all around to really understand.

The next morning bright and early, I was off to the operating room. I was trying to take a last look at my leg when the nurse stuck a needle in my arm. I was out by the count of three so never got that last look.

The next thing I knew was a nurse pulling a thermometer out of my mouth. I was hot and sweating, so I said to her, "I guess it's pretty high." She answered, "Why, no. It's almost normal!"

She examined the bed and discovered that I had seven heavy army blankets on me. I could not feel them as there was a wire cage keeping them off of my body. She explained that the way back from the operating room crossed an open courtyard. Paris was having a very cold, white Christmas so thus all of the covers.

We both had a good laugh. Then, she asked me if I would like a drink. I said I was not thirsty and she said, "Not that kind of drink." I had two Scotch and waters to celebrate Christmas 1944. She said the officers in the hospital had saved their liquor ration so the patients could have a holiday toast. "Merry Christmas!"

[Bob advised that his book, *Noville Outpost of Bastogne: My Last Battle* can be purchased for \$18.00 (including postage) by writing him at: 503 Mulberry Street, Milton, Delaware 19968.]



**65th ANNIVERSARY
BATTLE OF THE BULGE
HISTORICAL FNDN EVENT
DECEMBER 12-17, 2009
WASHINGTON DC**

About 150 veterans, spouses, family members, friends, etc. attended the commemoration of the 65th anniversary of the beginning of the battle of the bulge, which was held at the DoubleTree Hotel in Crystal City, VA. Of the 150 people there were 54 veterans representing 32 different units. The following statement is from John Schaffner, 106th ID "a magnanimous, stupendous, wonderful, and any other word that I can't think of at the moment, experience that we will always be able to remember." In addition to John's words we can add merriment, respect, hospitality, honor, camaraderie, etc to describe the five-day event.

Pieter De Crem, Belgian Minister of Defense was in attendance and brought with him the 40-piece Belgian Royal Air Force Band who played honors music prior to the wreath laying ceremony at the VBOB Memorial in Arlington Cemetery. VBOB President Dee Paris, Pieter De Crem, Belgium Ambassador Jan Matthysen and Nicolas Mackel, Deputy Chief of Mission Embassy of Luxembourg laid the wreaths. Al Grossenbacher, 28th ID, laid the wreath at the original VBOB memorial.

The Belgian band played prior to and after the wreath laying ceremony at the World War II Memorial. The wreath layers were Stan Blazejewski, 9th AD; Bill Bearisto, 28th ID; John Schaffner, 106th ID; and Arthur Loukas, 83rd ID.

The wreath layers at the Tomb of the Unknowns were Dee Paris, 9th ArmdD 14th Tank Bn; Kate Nolan, 53rd Field Hospital; Dan Santagata, 5th ID and Bill Leunig, 285th Engr Cmbt Bn.

A Christmas tree decoration ceremony was held in the hospitality room on Sunday evening and each veteran hung various ornaments consisting of laminated photos of themselves, shoulder patches of all the units that served in the battle, flags of Belgium, Luxembourg and the US, plane ornaments representing the 8th & 9th Air Forces and ornaments for hope peace and love. Family members also added decorations to the tree. A check with the VA verified the veterans had been good throughout the year; therefore each veteran was presented with an 8 1/2' x 11' laminated document that contained information about their military service. Throughout the evening five members from the Belgian Royal Military Band provided entertainment.

The White House actually opened an hour earlier on Dec 14th, specifically to accommodate our Bulge Veterans. As hundreds of people waited in line to tour the White House our three buses were escorted, after inspection, right to the head of the line and into the White House grounds. Imagine all the work that was done to pull this off. The White House is beautiful at Christmas! A truly inspirational visit where each veteran and their families were escorted on the tour with a designated staff person and/or Secret Service Agent. Our thanks go to Matt Flavin, Director of Veterans and Wounded

Warrior Policy in the White House for making this great tour of the White House happen.

The veterans in wheel chairs, along with a Secret Service agent, had the opportunity to tour the downstairs and kitchen of the White House as they made their way to elevators. They viewed all the White House chefs busy decorating cakes, making hors d'oeuvres for holiday parties and constructing a huge white chocolate White House model.

Two videos were shown in the hospitality room. One was a DVD entitled "Marching Once More" produced by Brenda Hughes. The video was about the 2004 trip to Belgium and Luxembourg and featured archived film and interviews with our veterans during that memorable trip. It was just released this December and is available for purchase. Brenda, it was outstanding! The other DVD contained battlefield scenes, patches of all the infantry, armored, airborne divisions, the air forces and photos of US military cemeteries in France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands and Arlington.

The receptions at the Luxembourg Embassy and the residence of the Belgian Ambassador were outstanding. The veterans were given the royal treatment, especially the greeting by the Royal Air Force Band on their entrance to the Residence. Everyone was impressed with the fabulous hospitality and the delicious food and drink at both receptions.

In addition to never ending work by John Bowen's committee, LTC Martine Dierckx, Deputy Military Attache, Embassy of Belgium coordinated activities involving the Belgium representatives. It was her idea to have the decorated Christmas tree moved to the Embassy of Belgium where it will remain until January 25, 2010, the end of the Battle of the Bulge. Also she returned the loaner wheelchairs to the Armed Force Retirement Home in Washington DC.

Another of the many highlights of the five-day event was the special US Army Military Review hosted by Major General Karl R. Horst, Commanding General of the Military District of Washington, that was held in Conmy Hall at Fort Myer VA, on December 16th. Prior to the Review the 40 member Belgium Royal Air Force Band played airs as the veterans entered the Hall and took their seats. Participating in the review were the US Army Band "Pershing's Own", E Company of the 3rd Infantry and the Olde Guard, Fife and Drum Corps. The precision and beauty of the Review brought many a tear to these ole soldiers.

That evening the traditional Commemoration Banquet was held with good food, good friends and an outstanding talk by Col Gorham Black.

From Bob Reed, 87th ID, "Just a quick note to say thank you for all you did to make the 65th anniversary ceremonies a memorable occasion. I know a lot of hard work went into all the planning and execution of the various events. I never heard a complaint from anyone - only praise."

Kudos to John and Mary Ann Bowen, Madeleine Bryant, Marty and Phyllis Feldman, Mike Mc Laughlin, Ray Schwarzkopf and LTC Martine Dierckx for the time and effort that they put in to make this such a successful event.

Even the good Lord waited until everyone got out of town before dropping 24 inches of snow on the Washington Area two days later.

**"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



Tomb of the Unknowns Wreath Laying
Kate Noland, Dee Paris and Guard



Veterans' photos and unit patches
adorn the VBOB Tree



A tribute to our veterans
Percussion in Conny Hall - Ft Myers
Old Guard Fife and Drum Corps



Frank Walsh and Charels Malachowski
enjoy the hospitality room



VBOBers Dan Santa, John
Schaffner & Hohn Gatens at the
Residence of the Belgium Ambassador

**FANTASTIC - FUN FILLED -
FESTIVE - FIVE DAYS THAT
WILL FOREVER BE REMEMBERED!**

**WE OWE SO MUCH TO OUR
VETERANS**

TWO NOTHERN INDIANA CHAPTER MEMBERS TAKE PART IN HONOR FLIGHT

Two Northern Indiana Chapter members, **JOE SMRT, 319th Combat Engineer Battalion**, and **BILL SWEENEY, 770th Field Artillery Battalion**, participated in separate Honor Flights to Washington, D.C.



Joe's smile seems to indicate
he enjoyed the trip



Bill Sweeney said his Honor Flight to Washington D.C.
was a humbling experience

The Honor Flight is a non-profit organization created solely to honor America's veterans for all their sacrifices. They transport their heroes to Washington, D.C., to visit and reflect at their memorials. Top priority is given to the senior veterans (World War II) survivors, along with those other veterans who may be terminally ill.

To date, there have been more than 900 veterans who have participated in the program.

To find out more, go to the website for the Honor Flight Network: www.honorflight.org.

VBOB 2004 TRIP REFUNDS

In continuing with our practice of keeping our members informed, the Executive Council offers the following report on our efforts to identify those individuals who might be entitled to a refund. In June 2008 Earle Hart accepted a plea bargain, which included, among several things, a monetary restitution to VBOB. The FBI returned our records and in January 2009 we mailed letters to 118 people who went on the trip. The letter requested individuals to submit copies of their checks they wrote in payment for the trip. We would then compare the information received with our records to determine if a refund was due. Your responses/letters were to be sent to **2004 VBOB TOUR - PO BOX 336 - BLUE BELL, PA 19422**

Of the 118 letters mailed we have received responses from 54 people. Four were returned because of an incorrect address. Forty-four of the 54 people were eligible for refunds and checks totaling \$25,937 were mailed to these people in less than two months time from when we received their information. Sixty people have still not responded to our letter even though some of these people may be due a refund. Please write to the above address and include any information that you think will assist us in determining if you are entitled to a refund.

At this time we are planning to take additional action steps to help ensure that all people who went on the trip and are eligible to receive a refund will be reimbursed. Some of the steps we are considering are sending another letter, making a telephone call or sending e-mails. We appreciate your patience and look forward to receiving your response. We hope to resolve the issue of refunds this year.

Dee Paris, President

Mark Your Calendar



**VBOB
REUNION**
Columbia, SC
Sept. 1-6, 2010

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE CERTIFICATE

Have you ordered Yours?

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

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

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

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE CERTIFICATE ORDER BLANK

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

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Serial Number _____

Rank : _____ Unit: _____

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

Signature: _____ Date: _____

I certify that I have received the Ardennes Credit

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

VBOB QUARTERMASTER ORDER FORM

FEBRUARY, 2010

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			\$

Only Cash, Check, or Money Order Accepted

Make checks payable to: "VBOB" - and mail orders to VBOB-QM, PO Box 101418, Arlington, VA 22210-4418

DO NOT INCLUDE ANY OTHER MONIES WITH QM PAYMENT

Please allow 3-4 weeks for delivery

Shipping and Handling:

\$0.00 to \$5.00 - \$ 2.00

\$5.01 to \$10.00 - \$ 3.00

\$10.01 and over - \$ 4.00

Please add \$1.00 to for all items shipped outside the USA.

Cost of Items: \$ _____

S&H: \$ _____

Total: \$ _____

Office Use Only - Do Not Write Below This Line

Date Received: _____

Date Mailed: _____

Payment: Cash Check MO

Check No.: _____



VETERANS of the BATTLE of the BULGE

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FEBRUARY, 2010

*MAY THE LEPRECHAUN
BRING YOU
GOOD HEALTH*



**Make plans now for the VBOB Reunion
in Columbia, South Carolina
September 1-6, 2010 (details next issue)**

-----Detach and Mail-----

OFFICIAL USE ONLY



APPLICATION FOR NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge
PO Box 101418, Arlington VA 22210-4418
ANNUAL DUES \$15.00

Do not write above this line

Do not write above this

☐ Regular Membership ☐ Associate Membership ☐ New ☐ Renewal—Member # _____

Regular Membership is for those who have received the Ardennes campaign credit. Associate membership is for relatives, historians or others with an interest in preserving the memory of the Battle of the Bulge. Both have the same rights and privileges.

NAME _____ DOB _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP+4 _____

TEL () _____ E-mail _____

CAMPAIGNS _____

All Regular members, please provide the following information below:

Unit(s) to which assigned during period 16 Dec 1944 – 25 Jan 1945 – Division _____

Regiment _____ Battalion _____

Company _____ Other _____

All Associate members, please provide the following information below: (Military Service is not a requirement but as a 501 c(19) we need to identify all veterans)

Relative of Bulge Veteran _____ Bulge Vets Name & Unit _____

Son, daughter, brother, niece

Historian _____ Other _____ Associate's Military Svc (dates) _____ Branch _____

Make check or money order payable to
VBOB and mail w/application

Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____