

The BULGE BUGLE

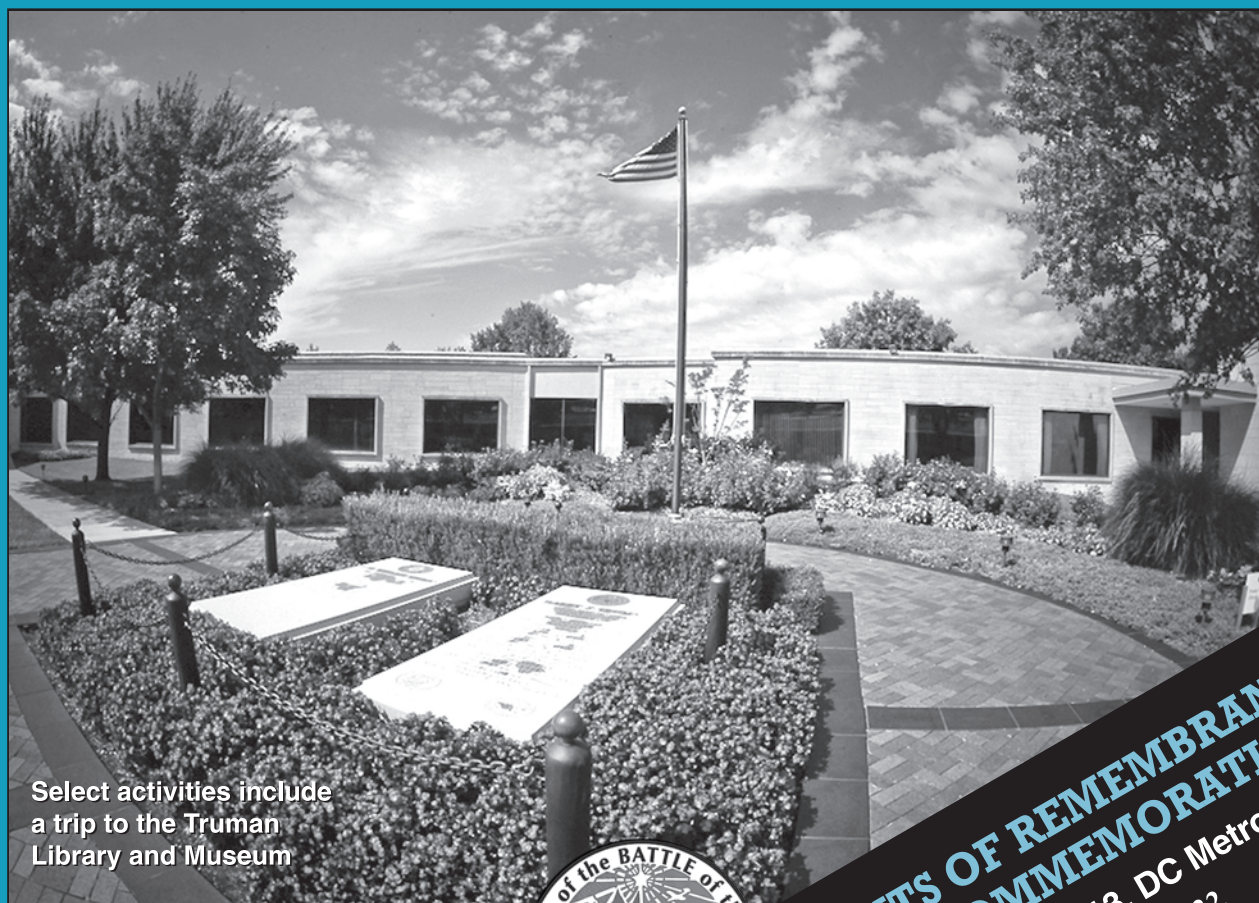
THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION • VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE, INC.

VOLUME XXXII NUMBER 3

THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

AUGUST 2013

JOIN US FOR THE Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge 32nd Annual Reunion SEPTEMBER 3-8, 2013 ★ KANSAS CITY, MO



Select activities include
a trip to the Truman
Library and Museum



**EVENTS OF REMEMBRANCE
AND COMMEMORATION**
December 2013, DC Metro area
See page 22.

Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Inc.
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Historical Research: John D. Bowen,
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or www.vbob.org**



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Douglas C. Dillard (Col. Ret.)
82nd Airborne Division

Greetings all...I'm back. I must apologize to the Executive Council because I missed the May Council meeting. I had a commitment in Germany to participate in several commemoration events at several former concentration camps and finally celebrate VE Day in Kahla, Germany. Of course, the Germans do not call it VE Day, but as a commemoration held in Kahla where the Herman Goring Jet plane was made by forced laborers from many European countries.

I was particularly impressed that the village children at the 3d grade level participated in several events, the theme being "Why Were the NAZI so Evil". That village continues an educational plan for the children to expose the evils of the NAZI regime. I met many survivors from France, Holland, Belgium,

Italy, Czech Republic, and the Ukraine. They were surprised and very happy to meet an American at their commemoration ceremonies. I explained that I was the National President of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Association and represented the American Divisions that, after the Bulge, continued to liberate the rest of Western Europe and of course end the War. As a delegate of VBOB I was very honored to speak on its behalf at the evening dinner in Kahla.

We are approaching the 2013 annual reunion in Kansas City, MO. And I must congratulate Ralph for his outstanding efforts in coordinating this exciting venue. I trust we will have a great number of attendees. Also of importance are continuing efforts to recruit new associate members, and retain current members. We do need to recruit, from our new members, potential Executive Council Officers in order to perpetuate our legacy and continue to promote a vibrant, active Executive Council into the future.

Finally, I continue to receive letters, e-mail, etc from our chapters about their activities. I really appreciate hearing from the Chapters...keep it up!

SEE YOU IN KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI!

COMING DECEMBER 2014

**Help us commemorate the
 70th ANNIVERSARY
 of the Battle of the Bulge!**

*We need your ideas on how we
 should mark this momentous occasion.*

*Send suggestions to
 Douglas Dillard, VBOB President, at:
 coldillard@gmail.com*

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE REMEMBER 39-45 MUSEUM

The Remember 39-45 Museum, created and maintained by Mathilde and Marcel Schmetz, who are known by all United States Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge as the "Belgian M&Ms," is setting up a special area to display memorabilia about "Rosie the Riveter". Mathilde and Marcel would like any Rosie the Riveter to please send them any pictures taken during World War II and a current photo, which would then be displayed in the museum.

The Remember 1939-1945 Museum was opened by American veterans in June 1994. It is a private collection made up mainly of objects abandoned by the GIs in December 1944 on the farm of the owner, before they set off for the battle of the Ardennes.

The various dioramas, divided up on three floors, trace the history of our region, part of which ended up annexed to Germany. The museum's mission is primarily educational, which is why all visits take the form of guided tours. This is a chance for children in new classes to take a history course with images and relief works. Many are US veterans who have entered this museum, happy to see that what they did for us has not been forgotten.

After their visit, all visitors feel a sense of gratitude towards the Belgian and American veterans who risked their lives to offer us a present that we shall probably never be able to give back to them: Freedom.

Address and contact information for the museum:

Les Bolles, 4
4890 Thimister-Clermont
Phone 087 44 61 81 Fax 087 44 65 08
Web site www.remembermuseum.com

M&Ms are asking all veterans of the Battle of the Bulge to please help them contact any of their acquaintances who may have been a Rosie the Riveter.

Anyone desiring further information may contact

Christian W. de Marcken
Secretary and historian of chapter 22,
Central Massachusetts
e-mail cwdemarcken@verizon.net

KEEPING THE MEMORY ALIVE

My name is Patrick and I am 28 years old. I live in Luxembourg and I am very interested in WWII history to keep the memory alive. I met a few Veterans in Normandy, Belgium and Luxembourg a few years ago and stayed in contact with them. They have become good friends of mine and I have been thrilled that they shared their stories with me. I would like to learn as much as I can.

I would like to make contact with Veterans who fought during WWII during the Battle of the Bulge for our liberty and freedom today. If there are any Veterans interested in sharing their stories with me, this would make me very happy. I want to pass on this information to my children so that they do not forget the sacrifices you made for me. My address is:

Patrick Dax
11, rue Jules Wilhelm
L-2728 Luxembourg
Europe
e-mail: golf2_power@yahoo.fr

DONATING TO MUSEUMS

First I wish to commend Jesse Bowman, 87th Infantry Division, 345th Infantry Regiment for donating his flag to the museum. I would like to encourage all members of the VBOB who have artifacts from the war to donate them to their favorite museum. If items are kept in the family only the family sees them; but at a museum thousands will see them – which in turn you are giving your relative much deserved honor, otherwise they become lost.

If any of our members visit our National Infantry Museum at Fort Benning, make sure that you see our American flag which was made by men of my second platoon, 394th Infantry Regiment, 99th Infantry Division over a 2 1/2 month period between battles when we were in reserve, and donated to museum right after the war's end.

Submitted by Samuel Lombardo,
99th ID, 394th IR, Co I, 2nd PT

CORRECTION TO WWII FACTS

In the May issue of the Bulge Bugle, it is mentioned that Lt Gen Lesley J. McNair was the highest ranking officer killed during WW II. Lt Gen Simon Bolivar Buckner was also a Lt General and he was killed in action on Okinawa.

Submitted by Jay M. Lenny,
Associate

DEAR MISTER DOMINIK SANTAGATA,

Hello, my name is Alain Larock, I live in Belgium, near Bastogne. I never had the honor to meet you, but I am passionate about the history of the Second World War and especially the BATTLE OF THE BULGE. By searching the internet, I found your touching story of GI World War II.

I write because for some time, I began to write to veterans who participated in the Second World War (when I find their addresses) to honor you and thank you for everything you have done for us leaving your family and friends to come and liberate Europe from the brutal oppression of the Nazi regime. Without your heroic actions, what would become of us? I every year attend commemorations in Normandy D-Day ceremonies and Battle of the Bulge, to preserve the memory of the Second World War and to honor the young soldiers who have not had the chance to go home. Because we live in freedom and peace, it is also thanks to the soldiers who gave their lives for us. I sponsor several graves at the American cemetery in Neuville CONDROZ and I go regularly to flourish.

I never had the chance nor the honor to meet you, but in doing research on the internet, I found your fabulous story of heroes during WWII, so I allowed myself to write.

Could you please autograph the photos? Thank you in advance. I enclose \$ 2 for postage.

With much delay, I present to you my best wishes for 2013.

Waiting for your response, I offer my most sincere greetings and thank you again for all.

ALAIN LAROCK
Rue de BORSET 12
B-4537 VERLAINE
BELGIUM
alainaiibome@gmail.com

A MIRACLE... HOW MY MILITARY SERVICE ENDED

By Glenn E. Vance, 8th AD, 80th TB, Co C



Glenn E. Vance, 8th AD, 80th TB, Co C

I believe that my final few months in Europe made up probably the coldest winter that I've ever experienced. At times, our tanks would run out of fuel and we would have to sit for several days before the fuel would catch up with us. Much of the time, the ground would be covered with snow. The fact that the tanks had no heating system in them and they were made of metal just added to the already cold conditions. The low temperatures lingered into the month of March that year.

It was March 29, 1945. My unit, Company C, 80th Tank Battalion, 8th Armored Division had been slowly moving all day with only sporadic resistance from the Germans. It was five or six o'clock in the afternoon. I was in the last of five tanks that were to enter this German town (either Dorsten or Marl) ahead of the rest of the column to search out possible resistance. We were approaching an intersection where the buildings had been leveled with bombs leaving a wide-open space and large piles of debris. Each tank had a five man crew. I was the assistant gunner and radio operator. Suddenly, I was alone and the tank was full of smoke. I could see orange flames only two feet away. I immediately realized that the tank had been hit. The Germans had zeroed in on the intersection with an 88 millimeter gun.

I had been unconscious long enough for the rest of the crew to escape the burning tank. I knew that I had to get out quickly so I reached for the hand hold near the top of the turret and was able to pull myself to a standing position. One of the turret hatches had been left open when the other crew members escaped, and standing, my head and shoulders were outside the hatch. At that point, I needed to use my arms to lift my body through the hatch and onto the top of the turret, but as I tried, my left arm would not move. I reached for it with my right hand and lifted it to the top of the turret, but it wouldn't support any weight. I then noticed that I couldn't feel my left leg and it wasn't supporting any weight either. There was no way that I could get through the small hole with only one arm and one leg. Had German soldiers been nearby, I would have been an easy target with my head outside the turret. The four tanks in front of me were also burning and I saw no one or any activity as far down the street as I could see. Things got worse. As the fire spread, my clothing caught fire.

Then the miracle happened. A soldier suddenly appeared from behind a pile of debris about 50 feet away. When he saw that I was in trouble, he ran toward the tank and quickly climbed to the top. He leaned over the hatch, grabbed me under the arms, and pulled me to the top of the turret. With his help, I let myself fall to the engine deck. He immediately put out the fire in my clothing. He then jumped from the engine deck and lifted me to the ground. He had a packet of morphine and gave it to me for the pain. He then said, "I'll go find the medics for you." I never saw him again, but the medics came shortly after he left. I pray that he made it home, too. Other than the medics, he was the only other person I saw from the time I regained consciousness until I arrived at the field hospital. If

he is still alive, he probably does not know whether I made it or not. I have wished many times that I could find him. With a battle developing in that area, I can't understand why he and I were the only two soldiers there. God must have put him there to save my life.

Things apparently were pretty critical as the two medics rushed me from the battle area to the field hospital. While one drove the jeep, the other one was working to stop some of the bleeding. I heard him tell the driver, "I don't think he is going to make it." I remember the tent hospital vividly. The room they took me to was already full of wounded soldiers with perhaps a dozen or more doctors and nurses working frantically. Someone immediately started cutting and stripping my clothing. As soon as they determined my condition, a team of doctors and nurses were ordered off less serious cases to work on me. They put me to sleep and continued to assess my injuries. I knew nothing more until late the next evening when someone was calling my name. I learned then that I had lost my left leg, my left arm was paralyzed, and I had multiple wounds in my right leg and scalp. My eyes had also been burned.

I remained in the field hospital for eight days and was then moved to the 158th General Hospital near Salisbury, England where several more operations were performed before I was put on a hospital ship on June 30, 1945, and sent to Charleston, South Carolina. From there I was sent to Lawson General Hospital in Atlanta, Georgia. After several more operations and almost one full year of recuperation, I was discharged on March 20, 1946.

I returned home to Bristol, Tennessee that spring of 1946 and met my future wife in the fall. We were married in January of 1947 and have a son and a daughter.

A ROUTINE RCONN PATROL

By Jim Harris, 17th AB, 194th GIR

submitted by Madeline Aughenbaugh

Squad Leader, Dick Thomas, and his buddy Bob, had been making plans for the past half hour—plans centering around the gas station they would open when this damned war was over. The two future partners were still planning when Lt. Simms, the platoon leader, crawled up and told Dick it was dark enough to move out.

Dick knew that Bob shouldn't be going on this patrol. He had acted as first scout on the last four. But Dick also knew it would do no good to argue with him. Everything they had done, they had done together. Bob would not let this be the exception. The peculiar trait of being able to see in the dark had won Bob the nickname of "Owl" and the job of first scout.

Tonight was just another routine reconnaissance patrol of five men. It would be a fairly simple job to go out, scout the area and bring back the required information. There would be no moon tonight, which would be a fact in their favor. Dick took a lot of pride in his squad. It functioned like a well oiled machine. It should, it had had enough practice. Tonight was no exception, and without a word or sound the men formed and at a silent signal from Dick, moved out.

Bob moved ahead of the rest like a dark spectre, uncannily sensing where he would blend with the skyline, where they could move fast, and where they had to go slow. They had already covered 400 yards and Dick had begun to think, "Just one more daylight patrol tomorrow and then rest camp, the GI's heaven. Then they could really make plans for their business. Then he could listen to Bob again

(Continued on pg. 8)



MEMBERS: IN MEMORIAM

Please notify us when you hear that any member of our organization has recently passed away, so that we may honor them in a future *Bulge Bugle*. Also, kindly notify us of any errors or omissions.

Please send notices by mail to: VBOB, Inc., PO Box 27430, Philadelphia, PA 19118-0430; or by email to: tracey@battleofthebulge.org; or by phone to: 703-528-4058.

We have received word, as of June 25, 2013, that these members of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Inc. have also recently passed away:

Barenkamp, William	30 InfD	Marks, Edmund	126 AAA Gun Bn
Barrow, Lawrence	8 ArmdD	Mayer, John E	593 Amb
Bass, Robert G	243 Engr Cmbt Bn	Meeker, William	84 InfD
Bonner, Philip Knute	159 Engr Cmbt Bn	Miller, Orville L	513 Engr Light Pontoon Co
Bowers, Robert F	143 AAA Gun Bn	Milne, William R	9 AF
Bridgewater, James	80 InfD	Mitchell, Glen W	9 ArmdD
Dannecker, Paul	9 ArmdD	Orth, Lloyd	68 Med Det
Desantis, Michael	35 InfD	Parzy, Joseph	45 InfD
Frederick, Darwin	9 ArmdD	Peterson, Ross E	101/509 PIR
Frank, Chester C	6 ArmdD	Pflughaupt, Margery	Associate
Fuerst, Robert	87 Chem Mtr Bn	Poelvoorde, Arthur	734 FA Bn
Fugit, William	2 InfD	Pugh, Eugene C	84 InfD
Glovier, Garland	9 InfD	Ruppert, Richard J	101 AbnD
Hanson, Kenneth W	99 InfD	Sherrill, Robert G	57 Fld Hosp
Hinchy, Cornelius	78 InfD	Smith, Robert J	9 ArmdD
Hodges, Everett	99 InfD	Stevens, Clarence E, Sr	516 FA Bn
Kusnir, Jr., Frank	28 InfD	Streeter, Jack	1 InfD
Leavitt, Roger E	26 InfD	Thomasee, Frank	11 ArmdD
Logan, Ralph E	75 InfD	Wall, Elvin	2 InfD
Main, Thurman	264 FA Bn	Wight, Gordon	313 QM Bn

A ROUTINE RCONN PATROL *(Continued from pg. 6)*

telling him of his wonderful wife and son. His thoughts were interrupted when he suddenly realized that Bob had frozen into a black statue, straining to peer into the blackness ahead. Then it happened. The flare going off overhead lighted up the entire area with a bright un-earthly blue that threw everything into stark relief.

The Kraut machine guns opened up before they could take cover. "Brother, this is it," thought Dick. "Right smack into the middle of a Kraut combat patrol of about 20 men." By now the slugs were whining a song of death around them. Glancing behind him, Dick breathed a sigh of relief,—none of these angry, deathly hornets had as yet stung into his men. But Bob—he should have crawled back by now, unless— unless he was hit up forward. The enemy knew their position now, there was no longer any need of silence. Turning back to yell, Dick could see that the Kraut patrol had moved in behind them. They were cut off from their lines. "Hold down here", he yelled, "Bob is hit up front, I'm going to get him." "You better get him, he's the only one who can see to get us back." The voice was that of one of the men to the squad. "I'm going to get him because he's hit and he's my buddy," snapped Dick.

Dick could feel Bob's face, wet and sticky as he turned him over. For an instant he thought Bob was dead, then he heard his voice, "Just drag me beside you, Dick, and I'll get you back through them. Old Owl eyes hasn't failed you yet." "I led you in and I'll lead you out." Two hours later as the doctor at the aid station looked at Bob, Dick spoke, "You've got to bring him around. Doc. He brought the whole damned patrol in safely tonight. He couldn't walk, so I dragged him. For two hours he whispered in my ear, when to duck, when to move on and when to turn. You have to pull him through."

The Doctor looked up from Bob's face and turned unbelieving eyes on Dick. "Save that talk for the psycho ward, soldier, you dragged a dead man in. This man was killed instantly. He caught it right between the eyes."

The next morning Dick reported to the old man and smiled as he said, "It's OK, Captain, I can take my patrol out this morning. You see, Bob told me what we are fighting for, so that his kid and I can start that gas station we planned." The old man turned to his exec. and watched the patrol move out. "He'll bring his patrol back today, he has a buddy as first scout."

AN UNFORGETTABLE NIGHT

By Ray La Casse, 87th ID, 345th IR, Co C

I was a squad leader in a rifle platoon of "C" Co. 345th Inf. Reg't., 87th Inf. Div. in Dec. 1944. We were engaged in the Alsace region, poised to attack the west wall about Dec. 18th or 20th when the break-through occurred up north on Dec. 16th. We were one of 3 Army divisions that Patton swung 90 degrees north to attack the underbelly of the Bulge. We were pulled off the line and after a long freezing ride of about 200 miles, settled into a bivouac outside the city of Rheims.

On the 29 of Dec., we were trucked to an assembly area near Libramont, Belgium, arriving late afternoon in a pitch black forest. Seems that we had barely finished digging in, when we were called to "hit the road until you run into Germans." Our officers were upset because we were not given time for a reconnaissance.

We were in a column of companies in the approach march, when

contact was made with elements of the German Panzer Lehr and 26th Volksgrenadier divisions. As we approached the village of Moiricy we came under machine gun and artillery fire. In the ensuing action, a flanking movement to the left, my platoon was ordered to clear a hill on our right flank. We no sooner got there when we came under mortar fire which wounded myself and several others. When the firing lifted, the wounded were helped back to a farmhouse in the village. Battalion medics were able to evacuate some of the wounded as fighting continued in the village and we were counter attacked by tanks. Unknown to us our Battalion commander had ordered a withdrawal of all elements in Moiricy, and he called for heavy artillery including corps (the big stuff), in an attempt to break up the counter attack. We had lost contact with Battalion, so we were trapped in the farmhouse, and what seemed like forever, underwent a heavy and lengthy barrage, which did break up the counterattack. Medics returned early the next morning and evacuated those of us who had remained overnight.

My unit endured heavy fighting in the following days, and on January 6, some of my platoon were captured and spent the remaining months in a German Prison Camp, while I luckily spent 3 months in a hospital in England.

JANUARY 7, 1945 – THE BITTER COLD

By Bill Dean, 551st PIB, Headquarters

Submitted by Doug Dillard, 551st PIR

This time of year when I lay down or rise out of bed I remember many years ago what happened in my young life. I will relate the happenings of one day but I could tell you about many days.

Before the break of day you are awakened. You throw off the branches of the fir trees you have broken to use for cover the ground and cover your body. No need to put on your shoes or clothes because you haven't removed them for days. You open your can of food and eat it for it will be a long day. You feel you are to young too die but the enemy is not interested in your age. You check your weapon and see if it is ready to use and began your walk thought the snow to meet an enemy who waits for one purpose and that is to kill you. As you walk with difficulty in the deep snow there is no conservation. You think about the girl you love, the home on the hill where you grew to be young man and your brother and sisters. You sure would like to open the old kitchen door and sit down again at the table and eat mom's biscuits again and say hello.

You walk in the deep snow and hear only the sound of the snow under your feet while in your mind you remember your goal today is to kill or be killed. It is the break of day and you hear the sound of an enemy machine gun of which you will hear many today. You see your first man fall to the snow covered ground and that will just be the beginning, for you will see many more today. You must keep moving as the big shells are falling among you. You succeed and are among the enemy in the woods and they are unaware you are present and you watch your men shoot them down. You will spend several hours in the woods hunting and being hunted.

There is another order: we must break another line of defense so we move forward and attack the enemy. You see a man hanging in the fence shot, while trying to cross. You watch another blowing bubbles out his nose and mouth trying to breathe. You heard one of your machine gunners calling to you that he needs *(Continued)*

JANUARY 7, 1945- THE BITTER COLD *(Continued)*

ammunition. You brave the fire of the enemy, searching for the man carrying the ammunition and you find him lying helpless with battle fatigue. Your thoughts are not with sympathy, but you think, if I can do it so can you. After your unkind words you speak to him, you return through the enemy guns to your gunner.

Suddenly you feel the impact of the enemy bullet and you find yourself lying in the snow. You wonder if you are bleeding. You take your sharp combat knife and cut your clothing to check where you have been shot. While you check yourself, you listen to the cries of your friend as they call the names of their buddies for help and hear them answer: "I can't get to you." Then you hear the sound of a language you can't understand but you can tell by the sound it is a desperate call for help and it is the German you fight.

It has been a long day and the sun is hiding its face and you need your wounds dressed and you look for a place for help. You see burning buildings in the distance so you make your way to them. You find doctors and medics working on the wounded. You notice some are dead and others with blood on their clothes. A doctor helps you and puts you on one of the many ambulances waiting for the wounded. You arrive at the hospital and you find a nice clean bed waiting for you. You pull off your clothing which you have worn for a number of days and enjoy a nice shower. Before I go to sleep I wonder how many of my friends died today. Before you close your eyes you wonder about your sweet heart and if you will make it home to marry the girl you love. Then you think about dad and mom. If I were home they would be my doctors. I remembered when I was a little boy they could always doctor me and I would be well soon.

Before I drift off to sleep I remember in a few days I will be healed and I will be back in the snow and they will expect me to kill or be killed. That is the way it happened in a few short days. I was again in the snow, hearing the rattle of the machine guns and hearing the shells falling among us day and night.

For many years of my life I would never have written such a letter. I could write words of many more days in a fight for our freedom. I am an old man now and fear there is a generation that doesn't know what the cost was for them to enjoy the freedom we enjoy in the United States of America. I think of my friends and buddies who died as young men and never heard the words dad, husband, grand dad or my sweet husband.

Why do I choose to write this today? On this day on January 7th 1945 the five- hundred- fifty- first battalion was completely destroyed. A sad day for an old man even until the present and if my friends could hear me who gave their lives I would tell them I have had a great life and thanks for your sacrifice.

GRABBING AN OPPORTUNITY

By Robert H Burrows, 80th ID, 317th IR, HQ

16th December 1944, I was a Corporal, jeep driver in XIIth Corps, G-5 Section (Civil Affairs/Military Government). "Iceberg" Forward moved to Morhange, France that morning. A rumor had it that evening the Germans had attacked north of us in Luxembourg. It was not until the 18th or 19th in my mind, that here was an opportunity that I had sought twice previously, but had not been permitted to join a line outfit.

I went to see Colonel Frank Veale, Corps G-1 personnel Officer. I said to the Colonel that, "He could not keep me back now"! He must

have been in a good frame of mind that day! No negative response, nor had I intended to be insubordinate! In October this same Officer told me after I had volunteered once again for line duty that I "needed to stay as a driver". Apparently those rumors we were hearing about clerks, band members, rear echelon troops being moved into the line to help stave off the German attack were true. He told me to wait a few minutes. He came back to his office, told me to report to the Corps Commander, Major General Manton S Eddy. After a few minutes conversation with General Eddy, he said, I could go to any unit in the ETO. I said it made no difference which unit, (my intent was Luxembourg area). He then suggested the 2nd Battalion, 317th Infantry, 80th Division. He said to me that his former XIIth Corp Headquarters Commandant had volunteered for line duty the previous month and he was now the 2nd battalion, 317th Infantry, Commander. My orders were cut immediately. I left that afternoon for a Metz, France Replacement Depot.

I spent a few days at the 95th Division Replacement Depot awaiting ultimate transfer to the 80th. On the 23rd, I was picked up by Lieutenant Colonel George Ball and his driver, the 80th Division G-5, Civil Affairs Officer. We drove from Metz to Mersch, Luxembourg where we spent the night. The 80th was in Corps reserve at St Avold, France at the beginning of the "Battle of the Bulge". The Division began its move from St Avold, France area on the 19th, delaying my direct transfer from Corps to Division.

I had to wait until Christmas morning to become a line soldier as my new unit had been surrounded by the Germans Christmas Eve day and night, breaking out early Christmas morning. From the 23rd December to January 21, '45, the 80th spent its time mainly in defensive holding positions on the bulge's south shoulder in the vicinity of Heiderscheid, Dahl and Ettlebruck areas.

Christmas Day two battalions of the 80th, 1st and 2nd of the 318th Regiment were temporarily transferred to Colonel Creighton Abram's Task Force to relieve surrounded 101st Airborne at Bastogne. After mission accomplished, they returned to Division control on December 29th. During this 30 day period, intervals of artillery, mortar, rifle, machine gun, and occasional sniper fire on our various positions during this time resulted in many casualties. Of course, "mother nature" did not treat us well either.

The 80th first big retaliatory offensive (we had many minor skirmishes in between!) in Luxembourg against the Germans began at 6 A M, 21st January '45. Our Battalion's assigned objective that morning, was Bourscheid, along with sister Regiment 318th on our right flank. We moved out on time from the vicinity of Ringel and Tadler area. The battalion moved in Company file, with Fox and Easy Companies leading, closely followed by Battalion Forward Headquarters, George Company immediately behind in reserve with Howe Company, mortar and machine gun sections bringing up the rear.

About an hour after leaving our line of departure, lead elements of Fox Company had triggered "Bouncing Betty's" mines. This stopped our forward movement for a short time. We apparently had been under German observation from daylight and those exploding mines gave them a definite location to begin their harassing fire against us. From that time until 11 A M we were continually battered by their artillery and mortar fire. Machine gun and heavy rifle fire commenced on the two attacking rifle companies. The terrain certainly was no help as it was rough, with steep ridges and valleys, small trees and scattered brush, with approximately 10-12 inches of slippery, cold snow, making for tough movement and climbing.

Our Battalion Commander Lieutenant Colonel *(Continued)*

AN OPPORTUNITY (Continued)

William J Boydston leading the Forward Command group received a message by his executive Officer, Captain Gerald Sheehan, from battalion rear headquarters, which was located in a barn near our departure point at Tadler. He reported about 10 A M that our sister regiment, the 318th had captured Bourscheid with very little resistance. Those land mines had been successful for the Germans, after the mines debacle, our objective was then changed by Regiment to take and hold a bridge over the Our River at Dirbach, move north to capture Girschend and Beschend, two small Luxembourg villages.

In the interim, we had really been catching heavy enemy fire! Our casualty rate had increased dramatically. The medics could not keep up administering their aid and carrying wounded back to our battalion aid station. Litter bearing itself was a backbreaking task.

Colonel Boydston's small command group consisted of his radio operator, T-4 Alexander H Hirsch, PFC Ernest H Fuller and myself. (To this day I do not recall why Ernie and I were with the Colonel. Runners? I sure felt like running that morning!) The Colonel had summoned the 313th field artillery Forward Observer, Lieutenant Joe R Clark Jr, of B Battery with his radio operator Sergeant Emil Tumolo, to confer about the direction and location of this infernal, devastating, incoming German fire.

Fox and Easy Companies in the meantime had spread out through this rugged wooded area slowly moving toward our new objective Dirbach. Both Companies were also receiving this same terrific heavy weapons fire. All units were now calling for additional medics and stretcher bearers, also for our artillery to do something about the enemy fire power! Those of you veterans who were there and suffered similar circumstances in combat can certainly picture in your minds the difficulty of like situations.

The time was now about 11 A M, our small group were in a circle with the Colonel and Lt Clark kneeling, looking at a map. Sergeant Tumolo was near the right top of the circle with T-4 Hirsch to his left, the Colonel six or seven feet to my right with Lt Clark almost facing Col Boydston. PFC Ernest H Fuller was lying on his stomach, his right shoulder touching my left shoulder. Tumolo, Hirsch, Ernie and I were all on our stomachs watching and waiting for instructions. The snow seemed deeper, but probably was my imagination, of course the ground was frozen solid as this had been an unseasonably cold winter. German fire power seemed to have escalated tremendously in the past few minutes! At that moment a sound above those shells that had been destroying the battalion approached. It was more like a fast passenger train of the time. The sound was overwhelming! (It was later determined that this last round of the morning came from a German railroad gun that frequently lobbed their shells upon our forces.) As this unusual noise approached us, I am sure each of us desperately tried to dig a hole in that frozen earth! An instant later there was an explosion that blotted out all sound! Complete silence for a time! After a few dazed moments, I regained my hearing and looked up and around me. Ernie was lying still. I must have asked if he were O K. No answer, nor did I see condensation of breath. I turned Ernie slightly to see if he had been hit and bleeding. I saw no blood but felt that he was dead, then I heard moaning. It was then I that yelled for the medics!



**Robert H Burrows,
80th ID, 317th IR, HQ**

G Company First sergeant Percy Smith recalls in his diary that he and his Company Commander Lt Damkowitch came up immediately to see if they could be of assistance. As they were only a few yards behind us, their Company had also been taking similar punishment. Percy said that a member of the Command group was "walking around in a dazed state". That was possibly me, as I was the sole survivor of this group! (Some say, I am still in a dazed state!) Medics tried to save Colonel Boydston and Lieutenant Clark, both had survived instant death. A short later, both died of their extensive wounds. Sergeant Tumolo, T-4 Hirsch and PFC Fuller were killed instantly. Meantime during those moments mentioned above, I had felt a stinging to the back of my right leg. Reaching back I was thinking to myself that I would get a warm, wet handful of blood! No luck! No million dollar wound! 68 years ago and, I still remember most vividly those moments. I have much to be thankful for!

This one sided battle was over for us. That was the last artillery round the Germans fired in our direction for the remainder of the day. They had totally disrupted our attack. The battalion lost its Commander, Fox Company Commander, Captain Ira Miller was also killed. The battalion as a whole then became litter bearers for our wounded as we slowly moved back toward our starting point of the morning.

Buddies Sergeant Gerald V Myers, G Company of that day's reserve Company recalled, "morning reports for January 22, reported 86 casualties out of 148 men that had begun the attack the previous morning." His platoon had only 4 men left of the 26 who started out that morning that were not casualties! PFC LaVerne Schock had been wounded by rifle fire. This Fox Company had been so overwhelmed, with most seriously wounded, that Vern who was not able to walk because of his wound. Medics and riflemen were acting as litter bearers. Even then they were short of help to carry all our helpless. He stayed in the woods overnight cared for by a medic. It was not until afternoon the following day before he reached Battalion aid station! It was not "The Wreaken Second" day, but is a day long remembered!

On the 23rd I lead a Grave Registration team to our area of devastation to recover our battle dead. The Team consisted of an Officer and 5 or 6 enlisted men. A weapons carrier, two jeeps, all vehicles pulling trailers. Ernie was found lying in the same position that I had left him. Evidently concussion was the cause of death as I had earlier surmised. The Colonel and Lieutenant had been worked on by the medics and were stretched out close to the position where they had been kneeling. Tumolo and Hirsch lay as I had remembered leaving them to the medics care.

It was not a very pleasant day that I had with these fellows, nothing personal. They had a miserable job! Spreading out through our one sided battlefield they began retrieving bodies, by tying wire to the ankles and arms of our dead Comrades frozen bodies, limbs askew, dragging them through the woods and deep snow to waiting vehicles. We had arrived at the battle site pre-mid morning. I did not assist them in their grueling task. A tough wait! It seemed long hours before they figured all our dead had been recovered. We arrived back at our starting point about dusk. (Please note: Those who fought in the Pacific, it seemed a very common event for them. Their surviving comrades often came to view their burial site.) To this day I am not sure all bodies were retrieved. I know the three trailers and the weapons carrier were stacked with 2nd Battalion men. From my observation they were very conscientious, maybe because an outsider was with them that day but, it did not appear so. The (Continued)

AN OPPORTUNITY (Continued)

battalion had been spread out over many miserable acres of rough terrain, they had worked up a sweat despite the cold!

I often wondered from where the order came that I should be their guide or why there should be a guide. XIIth Corps history book shows a picture taken on the January 25th of Major General Manton S Eddy and many Officers of XIIth Corps Headquarters in attendance at the Colonel's interment. He was well respected at Corps, also by our Battalion and regiment.

Two days later the German Ardennes Offensive ended. The 80th as a whole came through the ordeal with loss of many fine American men and Officers. Two men of the 80th Division were awarded the Medal of Honor during this battle.

One award was earned at Chaumont, Belgium, Christmas Day. PFC Paul J Weidorfer, G Company 318th Infantry. PFC Clifford H Hooker a comrade of Paul in G Company, was at Chaumont. The second Bulge MOH was awarded to: Sergeant Day G Turner, B Company, 319th Infantry at Dahl, Luxembourg, 8 January 1945. Both men survived the Ardennes battle but, Sergeant Turner was killed the next month in Germany! Day is buried not too far from the grave of General George S Patton Jr, our Third Army Commander at Hamm, Luxembourg, American National Cemetery.

CLOSE CONTACT WITH THE GERMANS

By Raymond J Wenning, 30th ID, 117th IR, Co A

We were now fighting Hitler's First SS Division. This was his best division which had direct orders from Adolph Hitler himself to kick our A's out of there. We actually beat them up pretty bad in Mortain, France. I heard that Axis Sally was on the radio and said this time they were to annihilate that 30th Division. After we got



Raymond J Wenning,
30th ID, 117th IR, Co A

done with them in Stavelot, the Germans dismantled their division. The Germans had about twenty-nine Divisions of their best troops that returned from the Russian front to throw in this battle, so there were many SS Troopers.

We came to the little city of Stavelot, Belgium. The Germans gave us a hell of a fight and ran us out a couple times, and finally we went back in and stood our ground. It was about Christmas time. Fighting in the city was different. In the city we had buildings to go into get away from the cold and snow that was always there. We didn't have to dig foxholes in the city. The temperature was from plus twenty to minus five for the entire Bulge Battle. I spent my twenty second birthday in this city, and it could have been on this day that a sniper almost got me.

We left Stavelot around the first of Jan, 1945. The other Companies caught up with us and then we were out in the field all the time, sometimes digging three foxholes a day. We did most of our moving at night so the enemy could not see us. It was so cold I would hock down in the foxhole on my heels, and shiver so hard that my teeth would rattle and my knees would get sore and hurt just from shaking. There were at least three nights I thought I would just freeze to death and not wake up. When morning came the honeycomb frost would be about three inches thick at the top of the foxhole, pretty

and crisp. All we wore was our wool uniforms, wool overcoat, and socks, knit woolen cap, helmet liner, steel helmet and wool gloves. I had no real boots, only combat boots that were twelve inches tall.

One of the nights, we got into position and they talked about holding there for a day or so. I got a very nice foxhole dug, put twigs in the bottom and laid some pine twigs over part of the top which got it pretty warm. I was going to have a warm night at last. It was all ready, the best foxhole I ever dug. About ten in the evening the word came out, "We're taking off." I was so discouraged I didn't care if someone would shoot me right then. This may have been a lucky break. We hadn't gone seventy five feet and ran into an evergreen clumps; evergreens around a foxhole. I think six Germans were in there. They didn't want to give up first and I thought we were going to have a little gun fire. We were all ready to let them have it when they finally came out and gave up. If anyone would have let one shot go we would have had a slaughter. The snow was so deep that we would trade off with the front guy to cut the track. We walked all night, and I told the officer we most probably were going behind the German lines. About four in the morning we came on a hill that overlooked a small group of homes in the valley. The Germans were eating their breakfast. I could hear their silverware rattle (that is close combat). We stopped to dig in. I told my foxhole buddy to start cutting twigs with his pocket knife for we needed a cover over. When the Germans find out we were this close they would have all kinds of artillery coming in. With this being in a wooded area, those shells would hit the trees and explode and send shrapnel down on us. After getting those twigs across the foxhole we would throw ground on top to keep shrapnel from hitting us. This was OK. I was on my knees, digging as fast as I could with my rifle standing against a tree about eight feet away. Someone down the way from me called out, "there are Germans behind you". As we have done many times, we would kid someone even if we were to get killed the next minute. I never paid attention to this, though in the corner of my eye I thought I caught some thing. When I stopped to look around there stood three German SS soldiers with their burp guns and hands up. They were close enough that I could have shaken hands with them. The first thing I thought, "My rifle!" There it was eight feet from me against the tree. Right away they asked to give up, saying, "Comrade, comrade." I've been lucky throughout the war. I have taken so many prisoners, I don't know if I looked so forgiving. Later I found out that we dug our foxholes in the same area the Germans were dug in. After we found out about that we took a lot of prisoners.

On another night we marched most of the night coming to our position and the ground was frozen. This time I found a German foxhole. It was pitch dark and I got down on my knees to feel around in it to see if there was a German in there. It was empty, but he must not have had too much training on digging, for it was too wide and not deep enough. But I managed to squeeze under in it. This one had a cover with ground over it. This was my luck, for the Germans shelled the area all night. I could hear and feel those shells go off all around this foxhole. I thought the only way they could get me was if one would land right in my hole. The next morning when it got light, of course the shelling stopped before daybreak; I got out of the foxhole. I had a hard time getting out. The ground on top had settled down with weight and it was smashing me. I managed to get out. When I did, I found a lot of my buddies that didn't get cover lying all around in pieces. One look and all I could do was to walk away. The officer was getting the guys ready to march out; there were only eleven GI's. We were standing in a group waiting (Continued)

CLOSE CONTACT *(Continued)*

for two guys that were still coming. After five minutes I got the feeling that we should spread out, for we were a perfect target for the Germans. So I walked out away from the group. The officer ordered me to come back to the group and I told him it was a good target for the Krauts; but he insisted. As I walked back a shot came in. An 88mm artillery shell, it was a tree burst about fifty feet away, and again I took off. I knew that the next one would be right on us. I have seen this happen too often. The officer insisted that we group up. Well I did obey his orders and I just got back when this 88-mm shell came in and exploded, maybe eight feet from me. I was looking right at it; just a big three-foot orange ball of fire. Thank God I was ok, my buddies not so lucky.

The days went on in those foxholes; we were gaining ground mostly in the night. There was less opposition from the enemy since they could not see us come. There were a lot of surprises though. The weather was our worst enemy as we were always trying to keep from freezing. I think I was out there two weeks at a time without seeing the inside of a building. It's amazing how much torture the body can take.

Sometime during the first part of January 10th, 1945 near Five Points, they took part of the GI's back off the lines to a town named Spa, Belgium. They took us to the bath house, "Spa." It was the first bath I had in a couple months. It was the first time I had my shoes off, or any clothes changed during that time. This was a copper bath tub and mineral water was used. Our clothes were so dirty they could stand up. We got all clean clothes. This sure felt good, and the best part was that we could walk around without being shot at. What a difference!

One afternoon we got ready to take a small town. This was something different. It was the first day attack we had for a long time. Being about a half mile from the town, the tanks started to come up from the forest behind the infantry. One of the tanks stopped about fifteen feet behind my foxhole. I told him to get back in the forest since the Krauts would start firing at him, but no they let it there. It wasn't long and the shells started coming. Our foxhole wasn't dug big enough since we were only going to be there a short time. My buddy was in the foxhole. When the shelling started, there wasn't room for me to get in. I dove in and layed across my buddy, figuring I would be killed anyway and maybe could save him. With hands over my head, I just said LORD here I come. I never ever heard so much shrapnel around my head. It was like having a hive of bees dumped on me, and to this day I don't understand why this didn't burst my eardrums. I think they shot about three shells at the tank. They did explode that tank and killed everyone in it. We were about fifteen feet from it. Again I was thankful for all those prayers going on back home.

On the front lines all your senses work better than ever. I knew the sound of each tank, plane, gun or anything. I knew whose artillery made each sound. It was called survival. We got so far ahead of the rest of the units that we had to hold our position for several days sitting in those foxholes and freezing to death. It wasn't so bad when we moved every day and dug a couple foxholes to keep us half warm. The Commander and Medic usually came around each day since so many men were getting frostbite. This time when they got to my position I felt like I was getting a cold, so I asked the medic for an aspirin or something before it would hit me. He told me I should give my BAR to my buddy and go back to Company aid. I told him I didn't feel that bad and I wasn't going to walk a

half-mile in the snow. This situation went on and about an hour later the Medic and the Officer came back to me, and insisted I go back. When they came back to me it rang a bell. What do they know that I don't? I thought I'd better follow orders. I gave my BAR to my buddy and took his M1, and headed back to Company Aid. I didn't go far when I quickly learned what the problem was. I could hardly walk. When the blood started to circulate in my feet, it felt awful. I was in luck when a weasel came along bringing food to the lines. He gave me a lift to the Company Aid station, which was an old brick house that was partly shot away. I got inside and there lay a few GI's. I've never seen people so tough and brave as I have ever seen in combat. This was the 22nd of January 1945. I never knew this date until fifty years later and the people from the Anniversary Committee in Stavelot told me. I will always say that this saved my life.

When the doc got to me, I said my feet were hurting, he told me to take off my shoes. He took a pin and started to prod around and I couldn't feel a thing. He told me to lie on a stretcher. I told him I could walk to the ambulance. He gave me orders right there that I was not to walk on my feet. (The only way you get off the front lines is for them to carry you off). That afternoon they took me to a field hospital, which was a tent. I was laid on a cot with white sheets. There was heat in the tent and hot soup. If heaven is better than this I got to see it. And if hell is as bad as the front lines, you better be good. I've gone through all but four days of the Battle of the Bulge. My number would have come up if I hadn't got off the front lines. We were in the Dillburg Forest, not far from RECHT, Bois-D'Emmels, near Rodt and overlooking St Vith, Belgium.

In those six weeks of the Battle of the Bulge, Americans had over ninety thousand casualties, more than 2000 per day. Some guys only lasted a day in combat. It was the largest battle ever fought in the world. From this field hospital on the 24th of January, I was taken to a hospital in Paris, France where I was for nearly ten days. I was then transported to an England hospital. I reentered the war as a 1st Sergeant at a POW camp.

GI44-45 REMEMBERS THE 82ND AB

Submitted by Paul Costin

I am part of a UK based living history group called GI44-45. We join with other like-minded individuals in the UK and continent and at least four times in the winter months travel to Belgium where we walk in the footsteps of American units that served during the Battle of Bulge. Being in the same venue, at the same type of year, wearing the same uniforms, and its a real eye-opener. How those young GI's survived all that was thrown at them, and then some, earns my utmost respect.

Last year we recreated the 120 mile journey in trucks when the 82nd Airborne were sent up to plug the gap in the line. Our next event is on 23rd February when we head once again to Belgium and walk in the footsteps of the 82nd Airborne.

I thought your members might be interested that there are living historians who are involved in ensuring people are reminded about the sacrifices that young Americans made during the winter of 1944/45.

Visit our web site <http://www.usmilitariaforum.com/forums/index.php?/topic/58337-gi44-45-living-history-group-england/>

Check out our website: battleofthebulge.org

LUNCH WITH THE AMBASSADOR OF LUXEMBOURG



General Abrams, Ambassador Wolzfeld and Colonel Dillard celebrating the closing of this joint effort.

Ambassador Honorable Jean-Louis Wolzfeld invited the following personnel for lunch on 4 February 2013 at the Embassy of Luxembourg to commemorate the donation made to the Army Historical Foundation.

The Army Historical Foundation was represented by General (Ret) Creighton Abrams and Mz. Rachel Hartman, Director, Major and Planning Gifts.

Prior to this presentation, the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge (VBOB, together with the Embassy of Luxembourg, made a joint pledge to donate funds to the Army Historical Foundation. The VBOB donation had already been made, so this luncheon signified the joint effort had been completed. Colonel Douglas C. Dillard (Ret), National President represented VBOB at the luncheon.

Additionally, the Ambassador spoke of commemorating the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge in 2014 by holding an event at the Embassy of Luxembourg. More planning will ensue for that event.

C-47 CLUB REMEMBERS VBOB

Submitted by Patrick Brion

Despite a foggy and rainy day, many members of the C-47 Club came to Trois-Ponts to honor the US soldiers who fought in this area during the Battle of the Bulge.

The events were organized by the CADUSA association. After a mass at St Jacques church in Trois-Ponts, we all followed for the ceremonies in RochelINVAL, honoring the 551st Parachute Infantry Battalion. We then continued our remembrance tour to the village of Spineux, honoring the 424th Infantry Regiment/106th Infantry Division and the 112th Infantry Regiment/28th Infantry Division.

The day ended with one last ceremony at the Logbierme Monument, followed by a reception and a great meal in the Wanne Castle. As all members were present, C-47 Club President Ed Lapotsky had planned a meeting and this proved very useful, as we are now moving ahead with some major activities in the Ardennes Region. Present were all members of the Belgian C-47 Chapter and Francine Noyon as European coordinator.

Visit our web site - <http://www.c47club.org/>

THE GLIDER RIDERS

By Kenneth J. Aiello, 17th Airborne

(Tune - The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze)

One day I answered the popular call,
And got in the Army to be on the ball,
An Infantry outfit, foot-soldiers and all,
Is where they put me to train.
They gave me my basic at Camp Claiborne,
There I was happy and never forlorn
Till one day they split us and made us Airborne,
But the pay was exactly the same.

Chorus:

Once I was happy, but now I'm Airborne,
Riding in gliders all tailored and torn,
The pilots are daring, all caution they scorn,
And the pay is exactly the same.

We glide through the air in our flying caboose,
Its actions are graceful just like a goose,
We hike on the pavement till our joints have come loose,
And the pay is exactly the same.

Once I was Infantry, now I'm a dope,
Riding in gliders attached to a rope,
Safety in landing is only a hope,
And the pay is exactly the same.

We glide through the air in a tactical state,
Jumping is useless: its always too late,
No 'chute for the soldier who rides in a crate,
And the pay is exactly the same.

We fight in fatigues, no fancy jump-suits,
No bright leather jackets...no polished jump boots,
We crash-land by gliders without parachutes,
And the pay is exactly the same.

We glide through the air with "Jennie" the jeep,
Held in our laps, unable to leap,
If she breaks loose, our widows will weep,
And the pay is exactly the same.

We work at headquarters, we sit on a chair,
We figure out tactics and take to the air,
We fly over Jerry and drop in his lair,
And the pay is exactly the same.

We hike and we sweat, and we load and we laugh,
We tie it down well just in case of a crash,
We take off and land and climb out like a flame,
And the pay is exactly the same.

We glide through the air with the greatest of ease,
We do a good job and we try hard to please,
The Finance Department we pester and tease,
But the pay is exactly the same.

THE VBOB 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 and they make excellent gifts—also for that buddy with whom you served in the Bulge. The Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Inc. is proud to offer this full color 11" by 17" certificate, which may be ordered for any veteran who received credit for the Ardennes campaign. It attests that the veteran participated, endured and survived the largest land battle ever fought by the US Army.

You do not have to be a member of VBOB to order one, but the veteran must have received

the Ardennes credit. This beautiful certificate is produced on parchment-like stock and is outlined by the full color World War II insignias of the major units that fought in the Battle of the Bulge, starting with the 12th Army group, then 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 that 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 the veteran's original patches to the certificate when you receive it. **Please allow approximately 4 to 6 weeks for delivery.** The certificate will be shipped rolled in a protective mailing tube. **Please be sure that you write the name, service number and unit as you would like it to appear on the certificate.** The unit name should be as complete as possible because you want someone reading it to understand what unit the veteran was in. We will abbreviate it as necessary. It is important that you type or print this information and the unit must be one of the 2,000 units authorized for the Ardennes Campaign credit that is in the Official General Order No. 114 for units entitled to the Ardennes Battle Credit and will be the basis for sale of the certificate. **The cost of the certificate is \$15 postpaid.**

Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Certificate Order Blank

I request an 11" by 17" certificate and certify the veteran named below received credit for the Ardennes campaign.

I have enclosed a check for \$15 for the certificate. Please include the following information on the certificate:

First Name _____ Middle Initial _____ Last Name _____

Serial Number _____ Rank _____ Unit _____

Organization _____
(usually Company, Battalion and/or Regiment and/or Division) ☐ Killed in Action ☐ Died of Wounds

Signature _____ Date _____

Mailing Information:

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone number _____ E-mail address _____

VBOB member: ☐ yes ☐ no (membership not a requirement)

Make checks out to VBOB for \$15.

Orders should be mailed to: VBOB Certificate, PO Box 27430, Philadelphia, PA 19118-0430

Questions can be directed to John D. Bowen, telephone: 301-384-6533 or by e-mail to: johndbowen@earthlink.net

MY INTRODUCTION TO THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE...AND HOW I MET MY BEST FRIEND FOR LIFE

By Ralph A. Nolletti, 2nd AD, 41st AIR, Co E

Somewhere in Belgium,
December 27, 1944.

As a young farm boy from Ohio, I found myself and twenty-nine other replacements onboard a train somewhere in Belgium on our way to the front. The officers in charge of the train stopped three miles from our destination because they were afraid of German dive bombers. It was in the middle of nowhere. We had a sergeant and lieutenant with us, but they were inexperienced and scared. They said "Nolletti, you take over."

The lieutenant said "you can walk up these railroad tracks and you'll come to a replacement depot." Well, we walked up the railroad tracks for about three miles, with no depot in sight. Finally, I looked across this field to see tire tracks, where there had been trucks and that in the field. But there was no one in sight. So we had nothing else to do but make preparations for the night because it was getting dark and we didn't know where we were at. I ordered my 29 men to go back down the track a ways and clean out the foxholes that were dug into the banks of the railroad track. I told them "We'll clean them out and get them fixed up. We'll need to camp in them tonight, since we have only another hour of daylight and we can't be caught out here in the dark. We'll assign two men to each foxhole. We'll get as many men into foxholes as we can, because we can't dig foxholes in the frozen ground." We spent the night in the foxholes. Well, anyhow, that's my introduction to the Battle of the Bulge.

Early the next morning I heard voices, but they were so far off, I couldn't make out if they were American or German. It was still dark out, and I thought I was dreaming. I was trying to get oriented as to where the voices were coming from. So I hollered "Hello, who goes there?" and a voice came back and said "Who are you?" I said, "We're Americans." "How do I know you're Americans?" I said "There's a password and I'll give you the password."

I gave the password, but the guy didn't accept it because it was the password from the day before. So I said "Well, what other test do you want to use? I don't know the new password."

We've been sleeping in foxholes that were dug 3-4 days ago. I have 30 men here who were supposed to be a squad. The lieutenant, he's so damned scared that he's covering in a foxhole. The sergeant is doing the same thing. I'm trying to establish an identity.

"Ok, I have a test for you" he said. "My name is Phil Haugh and I'm from Toledo Ohio."

I said "My name is Ralph Nolletti and I'm from Wooster Ohio." "Do you know where Toledo is?" he asked. "Yes I do" "How do you know about Toledo?" "Well, I know about the



Ralph A. Nolletti, 2nd
AD, 41st AIR, Co E

baseball team that was in Toledo" I said. "Ok, so what was it?" I said "the Toledo Mud Hens."

The man said "He's got to be an American to know that! How else would you know about the Toledo Mud Hens? You advance to be recognized." "Yes sir" I said. I advanced and was recognized, and he said "What's your name?" I told him "Ralph Nolletti. I was born and raised in Wooster Ohio." We embraced because we were both so glad to meet a fellow American. We sat down and talked. Phil said "I can't offer you much as far as protection is concerned, because we're out here cut off from our outfit the same as you are."

I didn't know how many men he had, but I said "We want to get together. We could be an effective fighting force. We will have to defend ourselves if we're out here in the open." We got together. We were right along the railroad tracks, and the train had brought us along as far as we could go. I said "let's get my other men recognized." It was snowing hard, it was cold, and we were stuck.

We never found out where we were. We spent two nights in the foxholes. The third night we moved into a village along the tracks. I found out later that we must have been close to Houffalize, Belgium, which was the closest city to where we were ordered off the train. Phil Haugh and I were together for the rest of the war and friends for the rest of our lives.

MILK FOR CEREAL

By Roger Vogt, 75th ID, 291st IR, Co I

In January 1944, I was with the 75 Infantry Division in the Battle of the Bulge. Somewhere in Belgium, we had just taken a town and came upon crossroads. We were ordered to make a gun emplacement and noticed a previous gun emplacement that was used by the enemy. I was the assistant gunner and had just hunkered down in the hole with the gunner. The sergeant was aware of my boyhood days on the farm. He said "Vogt, some of the boys would like some milk with their cereal. How about you go to that barn and milk some cows for us." I probably was the only one in the company who had ever milked a cow. I told the sergeant I couldn't leave the gunner alone and he said he would take my place. I jumped out of the emplacement and he jumped in. I walked over to the house and found a pail in the kitchen. I walked to the barn and found cows that had been brought in. When I found a stool I began milking. It wasn't long before I heard a loud low flying "WHOOSH" go right over the barn. Seconds later it exploded somewhere nearby. I was thinking what a close call that had been. With a full pail, I returned to my mortar position and saw that the mortar round had hit the edge of the mortar emplacement. The gunner and sergeant had both wounded. Many shrapnel wounds were visible through their uniforms. I later learned that the gunner had died from his wounds but I never heard what happened to the sergeant. Knowing how to milk a cow may have saved my life.

Tell us your VBOB Video Story

contact Kevin Diehl

at the VBOB Office 703 528 4058

kevin@battleofthebulge.org



WELCOME TO KANSAS CITY, MO

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE 32ND ANNUAL REUNION

September 3 - 8, 2013

HIGHLIGHTS AND SCHEDULE INFORMATION

REGISTRATION FEE

All who attend the VBOB Reunion must pay the registration fee (\$35/person). This fee covers the expense of name tags, programs, table decorations, Hospitality Room, etc.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 4 INDEPENDENCE, MO

Truman Library and Museum: The major issues and events of Harry Truman's Presidency are highlighted in this new 10,500-square-foot core exhibition. Featuring two decision theaters, enhanced audio and video programs, and new interactive elements, this exhibition forms the centerpiece of the Truman Library's ambitious museum renovation.

Lunch at Ophelia's restaurant

The National Frontier Trails Museum presents the history of the Santa Fe, California and Oregon Trails and the personal trials and adventures of the pioneers who opened the West. An award-winning film takes visitors from Independence to Oregon.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5 FORT LEAVENWORTH, KS

It is the oldest active United States Army post west of Washington, D.C., having been in operation for over 180 years. Fort Leavenworth has been historically known as the "Intellectual Center of the Army." In addition to a welcome from the commander and a briefing on the history of the fort and current operations, we will visit the following:

- Fort Leavenworth National Cemetery, where we will lay a wreath
- The Frontier Army Museum
- Buffalo Soldiers Monument
- Lunch with students and faculty from the leadership courses

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 6 KANSAS CITY, MO

The Liberty Memorial, located in Kansas City, Missouri, is a memorial to the soldiers



Highlights include, clockwise from top left: The Frontier Army Museum at Fort Leavenworth, Harley-Davidson plant tour, The National World War I Museum, and the Truman Library and Museum



who died in World War I and houses The National World War I Museum, as designated by the United States Congress in 2004. Exhibits include The World War, 1914-1919 and Memory Hall.

Lunch, Harvey's restaurant, Union Station

Harley-Davidson Plant Tour: Your tour experience begins with an introductory video. Then it's on to the factory floor where you'll witness a wide range of operations from welding, laser-cutting and frame-bending, to polishing and assembly.

After the tour those who do not wish to attend the BBQ listed below will return to the hotel about 4:00 pm.

Worth Harley-Davidson Dealership BBQ:

VBOB will be a guest at a BBQ held at this family-owned and operated business since 1978, which carries one of the largest comput-

erized inventories of Harley-Davidson motorcycles, parts, accessories, and Motor Clothes merchandise in the Midwest. Their state-of-the-art performance departments are manned by staff who are knowledgeable in racing and Harley-Davidson products. Return to the hotel about 7:00 pm.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

Free time

Shop 'til you drop at **Zona Rosa**

VBOB General Membership Meeting

Reception with cash bar

Banquet featuring your choice of salmon or filet mignon entree

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

Farewell breakfast on your own

You can also register online: www.battleofthebulge.org; click on "Attend Reunion." And, "Like" us on Facebook!

VBOB REUNION REGISTRATION FORM **Deadline: August 13, 2013**

There are two options for registering for the reunion: Complete this form OR register online: www.battleofthebulge.org, click on "Attend Reunion" and fill out the registration form. **Either type of registration form must be received by VBOB no later than August 13, 2013.**

The VBOB registration desk at the hotel will only be open on September 3 from 12:00 noon-4 pm, and on September 4 and 5 from 8:00 am-4 pm.

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

Division _____ Regiment _____

Signature _____

Wife/Guest(s) *(use additional paper if necessary)* _____

Airline _____ Flight # _____ Arrival Date and Time _____

Departure Date and Time _____

	No. of People	Cost per Person	Total Cost
Registration Fee <i>(all attendees must register)</i>	_____	\$35	_____
Tuesday, September 3, 2013			
Wine and cheese reception - no charge	_____	free	_____
Wednesday, September 4, 2013			
Trip to Independence, MO	_____	\$61	_____
<i>Includes Truman Library and Museum, lunch at Ophelia's, Frontier Trails Museum and bus transportation</i>			
Thursday, September 5, 2013			
Trip to Fort Leavenworth, KS	_____	\$48	_____
<i>Includes lunch and bus transportation</i>			
Friday, September 6, 2013			
Trip to Kansas City, MO	_____	\$57	_____
<i>Includes WWI Museum, lunch at Harvey's at Union Station, Harley-Davidson Factory Tour, BBQ at Worth Harley-Davidson dealership and bus transportation</i>			
Saturday, September 7, 2013			
General membership meeting	_____	free	_____
Reception <i>(cash bar)</i>	_____		_____
Banquet <i>(choose entrees below)</i>			
Salmon	_____	\$46	_____
Filet Mignon	_____	\$51	_____
		TOTAL	_____

Mail registration form and check to: Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Inc., PO Box 27430, Philadelphia, PA 19118
(Refunds for cancellation, will be honored in whole or in part, depending on availability of funds)



VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE, INC.

EMBASSY SUITES KANSAS CITY-INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Kansas City, MO September 3 - 8, 2013

REUNION PROGRAM

Tuesday, September 3, 2013

Noon – 4:00 pm Registration
6:30 pm – 7:30 pm Wine and cheese reception
Dinner on your own

Wednesday, September 4, 2013

8:00 am – 4:00 pm Registration
8:30 am Buses depart for Independence, MO, return to hotel by 4:00 pm
Trip includes Truman Library and Museum, lunch at Ophelia's, and Frontier Trails Museum
Dinner on your own

Thursday, September 5, 2013

8:00 am – 4:00 pm Registration - last day
8:45 am Buses depart for Fort Leavenworth, KS, return to hotel by 4:00 pm
Trip includes Fort Leavenworth National Cemetery, The Frontier Army Museum, Buffalo Soldiers Monument, and lunch
Dinner on your own

Friday, September 6, 2013

8:45 am Buses depart for downtown Kansas City, return to hotel by 4:00 pm (*if you choose not to attend the BBQ*) or 7:00 pm
Trip includes WWI Museum, lunch at Harvey's at Union Station, Harley-Davidson Factory Tour, and BBQ at Worth Harley-Davidson dealership
Dinner on your own

Saturday, September 7, 2013

Free time in the morning
Shopping at Zona Rosa shopping center
Lunch on your own
2:00 pm – 4:00 pm General membership meeting
6:00 pm – 6:45 pm Reception (cash bar)
7:00 pm Banquet seating

Sunday, September 8, 2013

Farewell breakfast on your own

Hospitality Room: Location and times will be posted in the registration room.

See "Highlights and Schedule Information" page for more details.



Embassy Suites

Kansas City-International Airport

7640 N.W. Tiffany Springs Pkwy

Kansas City, MO 64153

Phone: 816-891-7788 Fax: 816-891-7513

<http://embassysuites3.hilton.com/en/hotels/missouri/embassy-suites-kansas-city-international-airport-MKCPDES/index.html>

WELCOME

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

September 3 - 8, 2013

Hotel Information

The room rate is \$109 per night, single or double occupancy, plus taxes and includes complimentary breakfast and a complimentary two-hour Manager's Reception each evening. Check-in time is 3:00 pm and checkout is 12:00 noon.

RESERVATIONS

When making your reservation you have two options, by telephone or online.

1. By phone: call 816-891-7788 and say you are with the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge group and also mention the Group Code, which is VBB.

2. Online: There is a page on the Embassy Suites hotel website specifically designed for our group, where you can register with our special rates:

http://embassysuites.hilton.com/en/es/groups/personalized/M/MKCPDES-VBB-20130901/index.jhtml?WT.mc_id=POG

We suggest you guarantee your reservation with a charge card. **Reservation requests received after August 13, 2013 will be confirmed on a space available basis.** In the event you need to cancel your reservation, please inform the hotel 48 hours prior to the day of scheduled arrival.

HOTEL AMENITIES

- Full service restaurant and lounge
- Complimentary:
 - Shuttle service to and from Kansas City Airport
 - Indoor swimming pool
 - High-speed wired and wireless internet access throughout entire hotel
 - Shuttle within a five mile radius, including Zona Rosa shopping center

SLEEPING ROOM AMENITIES

- Well-lit dining/work table with a Herman Miller chair
- Refrigerator, microwave and coffee maker
- Two telephones with data ports and voicemail
- Two flat-screen HD televisions

DIRECTIONS TO THE HOTEL

From I-29 take exit 10 (Tiffany Springs Parkway). The hotel is located east of I-29.

2014 VETERANS TOURS



2014 and 2015 are very important World War II Anniversary years because they will close a great era in our history. The prestigious 1944/1945 70th Anniversary celebrations planned for these years in Europe will inevitably be the last great celebrations in which our ever fewer surviving veterans will be able to participate.

If you are a 2nd or 3rd generation of a Veteran, this would be an excellent opportunity to visit places that were significant to your father, grandfather (or uncle). If you can accompany the Veteran, it would be even more meaningful because he's likely to share actual stories about his experiences on the battlefields. (See the story about Bob Pidcoe, 1st Infantry Division and how his son, daughter-in-law and close friends had an experience of a lifetime in May, 2013. Bob was the Guest of Honor at the Memorial Day ceremony at the American Battle of the Bulge Cemetery at Henri-Chapelle Cemetery.)

PILSEN LIBERATION FESTIVAL AND PRAGUE April 27 - May 7 2014 Arr Frankfurt – Dept Prague. This is the biggest and most famous World War II Liberation Festival in Europe. It welcomes all American World War II Veterans as liberators and guests of honor with their families and friends. VBOB veterans of General Patton's Third Army which also liberated western Czechoslovakia are especially revered.

US MEMORIAL DAY 2014 IN THE BULGE, AND NORTHERN BULGE TOUR. LATE MAY 2014. Arr Brussels – Dept Frankfurt. Memorialize those who gave the supreme sacrifice. You are guests of honor in the prestigious Memorial Day ceremonies at a main American Battle of the Bulge Cemetery. Then we explore the Northern Bulge battlefields. The tour is of special interest to all First Army Veterans and their families. We also go through the Aachen to Rhine battlefields and Huertgen Forest. Our itinerary will be customized according to the requests of our group members.

LUXEMBOURG-AMERICAN FRIENDSHIP FESTIVAL AND SOUTHERN BULGE TOUR. MID-JUNE 2014. Arr Paris – Dept Frankfurt. The Luxembourg- American Friendship Festival celebrates the Battle of the Bulge and warmly welcomes American World War II Veterans and their families as guests of honor. This will especially interest all First and Third Army Veterans and their families. We explore the Southern Bulge battlefields in depth. Our itinerary will be customized according to the requests of our group members. You can independently attend just the Luxembourg-American Friendship Festival, if desired.

70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE START OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE DECEMBER 16 1944. MID-DECEMBER. We visit Luxembourg and Belgium and our itinerary will be customized according to the requests of our group members. 8 days. Arr Brussels, Dept Brussels.

FOR MORE INFORMATION about the above tours and/or special customized group tours, contact Doris Davis, President of VBOB Golden Gate (San Francisco) Chapter. Email doris@battleofthebulge.org; Tel (650) 654-0101 (PST).

NOMINATIONS FOR 2014 VBOB EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

The nominees for 2014 positions as proposed by the Nominating Committee are as follows:

President - Douglas Dillard

Executive Vice President - Alan Cunningham

Vice President Chapters - Doris Davis

Vice President Membership - Barbara Mooneyhan

Treasurer -

Recording Secretary - Madeleine Bryant

Additionally, the following members were nominated as **Three-year Trustees**:

Mary Ann Bowen

Bert Rice

Mike Levin

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!

**We'd like to welcome aboard the following people who became new members of VBOB
between April 1, 2013 - June 25, 2013:**

Adams Jr, John J	Kingwood TX	Associate	Hatcher, Annetia	Knoxville TN	Associate
Ambrose, Greg	Arlington VA	Associate	Hawkins, Elmer B	Columbus In	282 FA Bn
Andert, Paul	Tulsa OK	2 ArmdD	Hayden, Charles	Bloomfield KY	282 FA Bn
Barron, Leo	Sierra Vista AZ	Associate	Hennings, Steven K	Delafield WI	Associate
Bauer, Howard	Rochester Hills MI	11 ArmdD	Hinchy, Norma M	Elizabeth CO	Associate
Bennett-Wyatt, Patty J	Spencer WV	Associate	Ledvina, Karen Turchik	Seven Hills OH	Associate
Black, Bill	Belchertown MA	Associate	Moirano, Charles	Basking Ridge NJ	Associate
Boeff, Frederick	Rochester NY	90 InfD	Moirano, Jimmy	Hillsdale NJ	Associate
Bowden, Mickey	Rock Island, IL	Associate	Neff, Nancy A	Ashford CT	Associate
Brauer, Tim	West Gardner ME	Associate	Neff, William S	Bluffton OH	2 InfD
Cardiello, Virginia	Commack NY	Associate	Pennock, James	Seattle WA	Associate
Chilek, Jr, Rudy V	Yoakum TX	101 AbnD	Regan, Ronald	Smyrna GA	Associate
Collins, Mark	Topeka KS	Associate	Rickett, Sandra K	Massillon OH	Associate
Dobrovich, Adam G	Oxford CT	Associate	Riley, Robert E	Raytown MO	4c ArmdD
Dobrovich, David J	Greenwood Village CO	Associate	Silverman, Bruce	Olympia WA	Associate
Donner, Douglas	Tacoma WA	84 InfD	Silverman, Joseph	Corpus Christi TX	Associate
Driscoll, David O	Saratoga Springs NY	Associate	Skeans, John	Huntington WV	87 InfD
Driscoll, Patricia A	Saratoga Springs NY	Associate	Smith, James C	Southport NE	8 InfD
Flushing, David	Grover MO	Associate	Snow, Paul F	Seattle WA	Associate
Forquer, Kevin	Snohomish Wa	Associate	Walter, Robert C	Fostoria OH	99 InfD
Forte, James A	Pompano Beach FL	97 InfD	Taylor, Nancy Goins	Aliquippa PA	Associate
Fugit, Donna	Somerset NJ	Associate	Trantow, F. Keith	Tucson AZ	Associate
Fullom, Kenneth	Camp Hill PA	83 InfD	Vandoren, Paul	Suffolk VA	Associate
Grillo, Peter	Stroudsburg PA	6 ArmdD	Watson, Larry	Wabash IN	Associate
Gillot, Jr, Gunter	Belgium	Associate	Zimmerman, Antoinette	Crete IL	Associate
Hanna, George M	Allentown PA	517 PIR			

THE THREE MINUTE SHOWER

By Carmen Guarino, 75th ID, 291st IR

After the Bulge was blunted – that is the Germans were placed in retreat or captured – since the foxholes did not have running water etc., we had not washed. We were in the same clothes worn when we left Haverford West, South Wales, UK 6 weeks or so before. Some soldiers may have had an opportunity to change clothes. We didn't. If you were to look at my hands, the only clean parts would be my fingertips where the dirt and grime would wear off from use in handling my rifle, ammunition and a month or so of living outside under bad conditions.

One day we were transported about 10 miles behind the front lines to a temporary Quartermaster operated washing and change of clothes station. They had set up a truck alongside a small stream. The truck was equipped with water heaters and showers. There were small tents at the front and rear of the truck. Small groups were let into the first tent and given instructions in very colorful language "take off all your clothes, you will not see them again. If you have any valuables hold them in your hand. When you enter the shower find someplace where they may not get wet." My "long Johns" felt like a part of me. I had sweat in them, froze in them and did everything in them. I mean everything. When I took them off it was like peeling off some of my skin. So there we were naked and shivering waiting for more instructions. All our clothes were on the ground (dirt) and we were freezing. It was winter and we were nude in a forest by a stream.

We were then given instructions as to what was going to happen

next. Once again instructions were given in colorful language. It seems that no one would pay attention unless you spoke that way. We were told it was to be a three-minute shower. You would go up the steps into the shower cubicle, which was built into the truck somehow. The water would come on. You would have one minute to wet yourself, followed by one minute to soap yourself and then one minute to rinse. We were reminded that if soap was still in your eyes or anywhere else "too bad". The water would be shut off anyhow. Pick up your valuables (family photos and other items of value) then go down the steps into the rear tent.

As I went down the steps from the shower into a cold tent someone handed me a set of new clothes and shoes without any regard for size. We were all nude wandering around that tent bumping in to one another asking anyone what size they were given and "could we trade". I ended up with very narrow shoes. (They were probably 11 and a half-triple A). They curled up in the front and seemed to say "hello." Did you ever try to dress and/or bend or try putting on a pair of shoes in a crowded room of nude men? We were then ushered outside the tent, which seemed extra cold because our pores were now wide open and we weren't wearing the dirt-clogged underwear etc. As dirty as my "long Johns" had been, I longed for them at that moment.

Because we were a company of about 250 men it was a slow and long process to shower and process everyone. Some of us wandered down the road to a bar that somehow was open. It didn't take much cognac, so for the first time in my life I got drunk. I hardly remember getting in the truck to return to the front lines. I can't remember where I went. I thought about it later and realized it was dangerous being on the front line and not really having all my senses.

THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE HISTORICAL FOUNDATION, INC.
Invites You to Join Your Friends for the
“EVENTS OF REMEMBRANCE AND COMMEMORATION”
OF THE 69th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE
December 14, 15 and 16, 2013 Metropolitan Washington, DC

This year we have been invited to two Embassy receptions. On the 15th of December, we will bus to the Luxembourg Embassy, as guests of Luxembourg Ambassador Jean-Louis Wolzfeld, where we will view a film on (Queen) "Charlotte: A Royal at War," directed by Ray Toslevin, which will be followed by a buffet luncheon at the Embassy. The Belgium Ambassador has invited us again to his beautiful residence, on Monday, 16 December 2013, from 6:30 – 8:30 PM, for an evening reception. We will hold our annual Commemoration Banquet, on Sunday evening, 15 December 2013, between 6:00 and 10:00 PM. Our speaker for the Banquet will be Major General James A. ("Spider") Marks, USA Rtd, currently President of SPIDERnet, LLC in Oakton VA, His last assignment was as Commanding General of the US Army Intelligence Center and School at Fort Huachuca, Arizona. The DoubleTree Hotel Crystal City by Hilton, 300 Army-Navy Drive, in Arlington VA22202 has been selected again as our host hotel, with its panoramic view of our Nation's Capital. This hotel, just off Route 1 in Crystal City is a 7 minute drive from Reagan National Airport and a 2 City block walk to the Pentagon City Metro Station and the Pentagon Mall. It provides easy access to Washington DC and completed major renovations last year for great accommodations. **We have managed again to retain the reduced rate of \$99.00**, single or double occupancy plus taxes, as well as the same food prices and free parking. **We have blocked 20 rooms so it is imperative to make hotel reservations immediately.** Parking is complementary. This rate is available for any night(s) between December 12 and December 18. For room reservations, please call the DoubleTree Reservations **(1-800-Hiltons)** or 703-416-4100 by **December 6, 2013**. Mention the **BATTLE OF THE BULGE** for this special rate.

▪SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2013

2:00 PM – 9:00 PM	Registration & Hospitality Room open – Harrison/Jackson Room - Receive name badges, Parking Passes, Banquet/bus tickets. Sign Attendance Books. (If you are only attending the Banquet, (on the 15 th this year) you may pick up your tickets at the DoubleTree banquet room by 6:00 PM Dec 15 th .)
2:00 PM – 11:00 PM	Hospitality Room/Exhibits, Books, scrapbooks, memorabilia open everyday. John Bowen, BOB Vice-Pres will be the host. Refreshments and snacks will be available..
4:00 PM	We will be having our traditional Tree Trimming Ceremony “Salute to Bulge Veterans” in the Harrison Hospitality Room
Evening	Dinner on your own. Hospitality Room will be open till 11:00 PM

▪SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2013

10:30 AM	Load buses and depart promptly at 10:30 AM for Embassy of Luxembourg.
11:00 AM	Enjoy a film on Luxembourg (Queen) "Charlotte: A Royal at War" and Her Wartime Service followed by a Buffet Luncheon hosted by Luxembourg Ambassador Jean-Louis Wolzfeld.
2:30 PM	Return to DoubleTree Hotel to rest and prepare for our annual commemorative Banquet.
5:00 PM	Hospitality Room Closed till after Banquet.
6:00 – 10:00	BANQUET AT THE DOUBLETREE CRYSTAL CITY HOTEL WASHINGTON BALLROOM.
6:00 PM	Social Hour/Cash Bar. Seated for Dinner at 6:45 PM.
7:00 PM	Color Guard & Honors.
7:15 PM	Dinner served: <i>Apple Brandy Pork Tenderloin</i> OR <i>Chicken Florentine</i>
	Program: Greetings from Dignitaries, Person of Year Award, Speaker MG James A. Marks, USA Rtd
10:00 PM	Hospitality Room open

▪MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2013

8:45 AM - 12:30PM	Bus loads 8:45 AM leaves Hotel promptly at 9:00 AM for Wreath layings at World War II Memorial, large VBOB Memorial, and Tomb of the Unknowns and changing of the Guard in Arlington Cemetery..
12:30 PM	Return to DoubleTree Hotel for annual VBOB Luncheon in Windows Over Washington.
1:00 PM	Lunch 14th Floor of hot soup, Grilled Chicken or Smoked Turkey sandwich, beverage and cookies. Swearing-in of new National VBOB officers for 2014.
5:30 PM - 9:30 PM	Bus loads at 5:30 PM for Reception at beautiful Belgium Ambassador's Residence from 6:30 – 8:30 PM Leave Residence at 8:30 PM and arrive back at DoubleTree Hotel by 9:30 PM.
9:30 PM - 11:00 PM	Hospitality Room Open

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2013

GOODBYES till Next Year.

Notes: Free Airport shuttle provided by the DoubleTree Hotel every half hour, 3 miles from Reagan Washington National Airport.
Free Shuttle from DoubleTree Hotel every hour on the half hour to METRO: Pentagon City (Blue/Yellow Line) and to Pentagon City Mall.
 Skydome Lounge for dinner, the area's only revolving rooftop lounge, for a spectacular view of Washington at night. **06242013**

Seq # _____

Chk # _____

Date _____

Amt _____

RESERVATION FORM
"REMEMBRANCE AND COMMEMORATION"
OF THE 69th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE
December 14, 15, and 16, 2013 Metropolitan Washington, DC

Return form and check by **December 6, 2013** to:

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

Questions:

John D. Bowen, 301-384-6533

E-Mail: johndbowen@earthlink.net

Name: _____ Telephone _____ Cell _____

Name of Spouse/Guests: _____ ; _____ ; _____

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

Battle of Bulge Unit You Served With: _____

E-Mail Address: _____ Do you have a WWII Pictures to send us?

RESERVATIONS:

Number Attending

If you haven't before?

Cost/Person

Total

Registration Fee: Provides for Badges, Programs, Hospitality, etc. _____ X \$20.00 \$ _____

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2013

4:00 PM Tree Trimming Ceremony Harrison Room _____ X FREE

5:00 PM Dinner on your own - Hospitality Room open till 11:00 PM _____ X

Bus to Belgium Ambassador Residence Reception _____ X \$20.00 \$ _____

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2013:

Chartered Bus: To Luxembourg Embassy Bus Transportation _____ X \$20.00 \$ _____

10:30 AM Bus Leaves for Luxembourg Embassy _____ X

Commemorative Banquet, DoubleTree Hotel Crystal City _____ X \$65.00 \$ _____

6:00 PM - 10:00 PM Please make your Main Course selection(s):

☐ Apple Brandy Pork Tenderloin _____ (Names) _____☐ Chicken Florentine _____ (Names) _____☐ Diabetic Meal _____ (Names) _____

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

MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2013:

Chartered Bus: All Day: Morning Bus to Wreath Layings & _____ X

Evening Bus to Belgium Ambassador's Residence _____ X \$35.00 \$ _____

Depart 9:00 AM to Wreath Layings to WWII Memorial & Arlington Cemetery

Depart 5:30 PM to Belgium Ambassadors Reception

09:00 - 12:00 AM Wreath Laying Ceremonies: Number Attending: _____

01:00 PM VBOB Luncheon at DoubleTree Hotel _____ Chicken _____ X \$30.00 \$ _____

_____ Turkey _____ X \$30.00 \$ _____

05:30 - 08:30 PM Belgium Ambassador Reception: Number Attending: _____

GRAND TOTAL (Enclose check made out to BoBHF 2013 Commemoration): \$ _____

NOTE: Checks will not be deposited until 1 Dec 2013 so you can register & send in now.

Permission granted for Hotel to notify BoB Historical Foundation that room reservation has been made.

Signature: _____

NOTES & REMINDERS: Banquet Dress: Business suit/black tie optional (miniature medals encouraged) or military dress uniformRoom reservations must be made with the DoubleTree Crystal City directly, by **December 6, 2013** Telephone (1-800-Hiltons).

We have a Block of 20 rooms. Reservations based on Availability. Please do not delay.

Return completed Reservation Form for events to BOB Historical Foundation ASAP but no later than **6 December 2013**.

No cancellation refunds after December 6, 2013.

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

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

06242013

FORWARD OBSERVERS

By Newton A. Parker, 106th ID, 592nd Bn, Hdqs Radio Section



Newton A. Parker, 106th ID, 592nd Bn, Hdqs Radio Section

Our ship carried the entire 106th Division, which consisted of 15,000 troops, vehicles, guns and all equipment. Upon arrival they started to unload immediately. The personnel waited for their vehicles to be gassed then got in a convoy to St. Vith. Bill Shand and I followed a GMC which had two Piper Cubs that had to be assembled at an English Airport and have radios installed to be used by us as Forward Observers. Bill Shand went to school to be a forward observer with another fellow from our section. Two of our men

were assigned to the planes to observe and direct gun fire. We were there about 3 days and then we were driven to St. Vith and given a furnished house to live in. It was small for 16 guys, but very nice. We all slept on the floor. First we set up our communications system on the kitchen table and then installed our radios in our two jeeps along with 50 caliber machine guns.

The weather was snow about a foot deep. The kitchen was in a garage up the road and the wire section in a house next to us. The houses were located on the main street, with the road facing a farm field valley and up the far side was a very narrow road coming down a hill to our main road. All the houses had an outhouse. When we had to use them we went out in pairs for protection since we could see the Germans in white uniforms on top of the hill on the other side. There was no action that night. The next day a call from our Captain Richmond for the wire section to go down the road to repair some wires. They did so and ran into some Germans and they were all killed.

The Captain then called me and said "Sergeant, there are two tanks coming down the road on the other side of the valley, stop them." I said to the Captain, "stop them with what? I have two rounds of bazooka and two clips for my carbine. I do have four cans of ammo for my 50 caliber." I turned to my guys and said, "you heard the Captain, since yesterday we all agreed to stick together and all go home. Who wants to go with me?" All 16 guys raised their hands, so I said that I would take Al Singoni, who was a little guy and a barber from Brooklyn in civilian life, but an excellent shot and the other guy I selected was Corporal Matoon, a bus driver back home on Springfield Avenue, in Newark, NJ. and one of the best machine gunners in the Army. The rest stood by the house with their carbines to keep the Germans in the tanks. They wouldn't be able to get out and fire at us so out we went to our jeep. When we drove down the valley we were below them and they could only shoot over our heads which they did. I told Al that I would hold the bazooka and he was to fire it.

I told Matoon to make sure he aimed for the cannon and not the tank. If he got it in the cannon it would stop their fire otherwise we could not stop the tank. Matoon was the best machine gunner I ever saw and he got 50 caliber shells in both tank cannons and stopped them firing at us. We had a little advantage by being down in the valley and all of the shells that they got off

went over our heads. When we got out there, Al and I and Matoon kept firing. We were about 100' from the tanks and I held the bazooka and Al fired and missed the first round, but the 2nd round was a direct track hit and we stopped both of the tanks and Matoon knocked out the cannons. Our other guys kept firing over their heads and the Germans could not get out of the tanks. We drove like Hell and got out of there. Later that day the Captain called again and told us to bust up the communication system and get out of there with the mobile radios and follow the big cannons. As we were following the big cannons, the Germans made a direct hit and blew up one of the cannons and the vehicle, rolling it over with the whole cannon crew inside.

That night I sat on the Colonel's Command Car running board, freezing in the snow and kept his radio going. We could actually see the Germans about 500 yards away. The next day the guns were set up and the Captain called us to set up the wiring and I was running wire under a Howitzer when a "Joker" pulled the trigger. My men pulled me out, unconscious, from under the gun. They worked on me for about an hour slapping my face and putting snow on it to get me to come to. That is the reason that I now have a 100% disability due to hearing loss. We moved further in the morning since we were now surrounded and had no food and little ammunition. Five days we took refuge in a house and planes came over on Christmas Eve when they could fly again and dropped food and ammo and guess what? The 101st dropped in with their little pea shooters right behind our 155 howitzers. Did we laugh! We could then, since we finally had food. We had one K ration for the previous 5 days that lasted a long time.

One of our men who was assigned as a Caller to one of the Piper Cubs got sick so I took over for him. I did O.K. for my first time and then we got our wing shot off and the crazy Pilot would not leave until we gave our gunners the position of the Germans and then we landed on a highway. One time I saw a church and when I went in the Germans had shot all of our guys who were kneeling at the altar. We found a cow and one of the boys milked her. We could not kill her for meat.

Christmas Day, word came that we had won and the War was over. We got sent to a Ball Field, which was fenced off for a Prison Camp and we had to watch over the men there. After that all of the Sergeants got sent to Metz France which was a large French Garrison. We could sleep 15,000 troops a night. I got put in charge of billeting. This consisted of 500 troops on their way home each night including officers. The officers were billeted in hotels in town and the rest were in the French Garrison. This is where I met Lloyd Boyce, my 1st Sergeant. We were both offered 2nd Lieutenant promotions with 1st Lieutenant in 6 months if we signed up to stay. We both said "no thanks, we're going home."

I was in Metz about a year until my number came up and I was put on a very small ship with 50 other guys. The ship split in half during a bad storm at sea on the way home and we had to help out while the guys welded patches on the side, enough to keep the ship together and get us to New York Harbor. After we got off, the ship was towed a little way out and it sank. This is a small part of what I went through and how I lost my hearing and also got a knee injury diving into a foxhole to get out of the way of the Germans.

EX-POW TELLS HIS STORY

By Jesse H. Burnette, 28th ID, 44th CEB, Co B

I had just graduated from high school when in November, 1942, Congress lowered the draft age from 21 to 18. I was 19, and I heard from the draft board in early December. I went to Camp Croft, South Carolina, for my physical examination, and on December 19, 1942, I was inducted into the army at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. A few days after Christmas I went to Camp McCoy, in snowy Wisconsin for basic training.

After basic training I went to Fort Knox, Kentucky, then to Lebanon, Tennessee, for maneuvers. One day there seemed to be more rabbits in the field than men. We killed enough rabbits to make a good meal of rabbit stew. Our cook, "Pee Wee" Dossett, got permission to prepare the rabbit stew. Following maneuvers I went to Fort Breckenridge, Kentucky. In March of 1944, I went to port of embarkation in Boston, Massachusetts. From Boston we sailed to England. I was in England on D Day, June 6, 1944. I went to France about three weeks after the invasion. Lloyd Brumfield and I slept in a pup tent as we made our way through France.

In France I can remember seeing and hearing in the distance the bombing of Sainte Lo. Brest, France had been the target of brutal bombings. I was with a convoy of troops traveling through Brest when a wall of a bombed building fell on the truck just ahead of my truck. The rest of the day was spent digging out bodies, a few did survive.

By mid December, 1944, the German army attempted to regain Luxembourg and Belgium. Several American army units were in the Ardennes Forest at that time, including the 44th Engineer Combat Battalion. At one point I remember an American plane dropping bombs and killing 18 Americans and some German citizens. The German army had the Americans outnumbered and surrounded. The casualties were great. Benjamin Southerland, Company Commander of the H & S Company, told us at a reunion of the 44th, that Company B suffered the most casualties. Only about 12% of Company B's troops survived the Battle of the Bulge.

I was among the troops captured at Wiltz, Luxembourg, on December 19, 1944, exactly two years from the date I was inducted into the army. I recall marching in the snow, from Wiltz, Luxembourg to Linberg, Germany, more than two hundred miles. In Linberg we were loaded into box cars and taken to Stalag IV B. Later we were transferred to Stalag IV A. From Stalag IV A, we could see the sky light up when the American planes were bombing Dresden. More than 50,000 German civilians were killed in that raid. When the prisoners were taken back to Stalag IV B, we were told not to smile as we passed through Dresden, for the German people might be intimidated, but who wanted to smile?

In prison we slept in a flat building with rows of cots. Cleanliness was an impossibility, one cold shower, but never a change of clothes, once we were dusted for lice. Weak soup and bread, once a day, was the menu. One day I swapped my high school

class ring for a loaf of bread. On one occasion, I was watching a guard eat a pickle, the guard saw me and slipped the pickle to me. Ummm! What a good pickle. Most of the prisoners, including me, weighed a mere 100 pounds or less when released.

In early April, 1945, we got the news that President Roosevelt had died. We thought Henry Wallace would be our next president, for we had not heard that Harry Truman had been elected vice-president. Sometime around the last of April, 1945, the Russians liberated the prisoners in Stalag IV B. They took us to Riesa, East Germany, where we were kept until after V.E. Day, (Victory in Europe), May 7, 1945. We were told that transportation would be sent for us, but Lou Grant and I didn't wait, we started walking across Germany. We marched into Germany as prisoners. Now we were marching to FREEDOM!

STALAG STORIES

By Ian Morrison, 106th ID, 424th IR

The voice on the field telephone whispered, "We're hauling ass right now- get yours back here if you can. Maybe we'll see you. Shoot yourself if you can't make it. Ha. Ha. Good luck, soldier." He whispered since, in the freezing clear cold air to have talked normally or rung us properly, would have given away our position to the enemy.

It was dawn on the 16th of December 1944. and our infantry company was in retreat, as was the whole regiment. Two of us had just spent a freezing cold black night standing five feet in the ground on the edge of Germany peering through slits in the eighteen inches of our forward observation post that was above ground trying, despite snow, fog, and fright to determine what the enemy was doing on the other side of the steep valley known as the Schnee Eiffel. What the enemy was doing was mounting an incredible surprise assault in Hitler's last gamble to wrest victory from sure defeat.

The ensuing Battle of the Bulge involved more Americans than any other single battle in World War II and saw the surrender of more American troops (50,000) in any battle in American history, or since. Not a happening of pride, but a disaster born of American military complacency, and arrogance. General Eisenhower and his staff in Paris were so sure of continuing victory that a winter recess on the German border prior to a planned Spring offensive found absolutely green troops spread thinly over a dangerously long front. And found most of the Supreme Headquarters staff in Paris on "vacation".

Perhaps there was good reason for the quiet recess. Our food and ammunition was rationed – apparently there wasn't enough on the European continent to serve all needs. Our clothing was inadequate for the brutal winter weather we were living in. Every day, twenty to twenty-five men of our regiment were sent to rear hospitals suffering from "trench foot"-the result of inadequate boots, a shortage of socks, freezing weather and wet snow.

We did not know then, nor for years to come, that the U.S. Army lost the equivalent of an entire infantry division -12,500 men-that December alone due to trench foot! In any event, in a series of foolhardy and uncomfortable moves born of near panic we obeyed the telephoned orders and caught up with our fighting unit three miles away as it rushed *(Continued)*



Jesse H. Burnette, 28th ID, 44th CEB, Co B

STALAG STORIES *(Continued)*

rearward to a new line ten miles back, near division headquarters. No one knew that we already were cut off by Germans until the lead jeep in our column was blown away at a crossroads. Almost in the Biblical sense, the last became first as our partially armored column chaotically turned around in a narrow valley to seek blindly new ways to the west.

Those of us who had been trailing suddenly were leading. We didn't know where we were, where 'we were supposed to be going, nor why we were leading, but there we were in an not unusual wartime situation, but without sufficient ammunition or food. There was no air cover, no air observation and no air drops of ammunition or food since the two-day fog was so dense. We began eating frozen potatoes wrestled from the fields around us, and discussed throwing them at the enemy in lieu of grenades. The latter was not merely an exercise in black humor since anti-personnel shells were bursting high in the deep pine forests around us, and machine gun nests seemed to be around every bend. We well recall digging seven foxholes in frozen ground in a twelve hour period: obviously a useless exercise in a moving situation. Before long we were just burrowing down amongst supplies in the back of the canvas covered two and a half ton truck.

At one point in the second day, a company cook, usually a non-combatant, hefted the truck's heavy machine-gun from its track above the cab, jumped onto the canvas, straddled the support, held the gun to his thigh and began firing into the woods. His precarious position on the billowing canvas resulted in fifty-calibre shells firing off in every direction. As we burrowed deep to avoid mayhem a German squad came storming out of the wood screaming, "Comrades! Comrades! Don't shoot! We surrender!" Our fighting in the forests, our rushing rearward (when we could) was so great that soldiers who had lost track of their units were rushing to catch up with our trucks and, failing that, would swing onto and straddle our rapidly bouncing towed 57mm cannons. Their ensuing screams of agony as we stretched to reach them remained in our minds for a long time. For forty-four years.

On the morning of December 19, 1944 the fighting war was over for us and, as we learned almost a half year later, for two of the three regiments of our 106th Division (6000 men). The Division, barely a year old had been formed in South Carolina, trained in Tennessee and staged in Indiana where it was decimated as the Army broke that well trained unit into individual casual replacements and filled the once cohesive unit with semi-trained replacements such as I, which it ultimately sent to Europe believing, alas that it had maintained a cohesive trained unit.

On that morning of the 19th, the fog lifted to reveal that we were in a narrow valley and from the crests on either side there poured German troops backed up by four Tiger tanks, one on each flank, and fore and aft. The 88mm shells that slammed into our convoy caused flaming havoc and fear. The fear turned to fearful bewilderment as we began to be strafed time and again by a new kind of airplane: the first jet airplane to appear anywhere, a Messerschmidt. Its speed, firepower and overwhelming noise convinced those of us not long baptized by fire that the war could go on for years. Maybe forever. Angry with our officers for surrendering, many sought caves or outcroppings in

which to hide. To no avail and some of us were beaten with rifle butts for trying. For us, the fighting war was over and a new and even more miserable phase of war was beginning. We were prisoners of the enemy. What was even worse, our own prisoners grabbed our weapons and became our wardens.

We were herded by our captors into a barnyard in the border town of Schoenfeld where crowded, cold, hungry and hurting we spent the next 24 hours again without food or medical attention before beginning the straggling, starving, scared march to a railhead in Germany. We were shoved into boxcars large enough, in World War I, to hold forty men, or eight horses in reasonable infantry type comfort, but which now each contained a hundred of us standing mouth to ear, nose to cheek, butt to butt regardless of injuries, wounds or maladies. Those of us with both wounds and dysentery inevitably soon found ourselves rocked to the floor where the danger in the dark was now one of being trampled by our own. Between the standing, straggling, marching, loading, and transporting it was Christmas Eve before we reached the major rail yard in Frankfort au Main.

Our Christmas present that evening was a bombing by the British who seemed determined to obliterate the rail junction in one night. We lost thirty men from our boxcar when, as we broke out with the strength of panic, they by chance went one way while we went another in that cold black night. They suffered a direct hit and disappeared. There was more room in the car later that night when we straggled back from the frozen plowed furrows in which most of us had lain for several hours. No one sang "Silent Night, Holy Night." No one said much of anything. Out loud.

The next day, Christmas, we arrived at Stalag IXB in Bad Orb, somewhat east of Frankfort, and had a welcoming Christmas dinner of horse bits and oatmeal, and a slice of black bread. It differed from our once a day menu of the next five months only in its quantity. The quantity and nutritional value was such that personally we lost 85 pounds, and our teeth. The time in the Stalag is another story. Suffice to say that the troops that liberated us in early May 1945, that is the specific troops that entered our particular barracks were led by then Lt. Roger Young of Millbrook. Colonel Young and this writer discovered this coincidence on the porch of the Millbrook Golf and Tennis Club in 1959, and he has never let me forget it. He shouldn't ever let me forget it. I don't intend to.

I had no desire to return to the scenes of such personal horror and over the years avoided that whole area of Europe until 1986 when I had a strong desire to locate that observation post and show it to Naida, whom I had married in 1946. Miraculously, almost immediately upon arrival on the ridge I found the site of our post and of our battalion dugouts. Not much had changed except the season was better and the wounds of war were not much evident in the landscape.

I also cried for the first time when we visited the American war memorial in the small Belgium village of Malmedy where a number of our service troops (cooks, drivers, clerks, etc) had been captured by Germans wearing American uniforms who lined them up in a field at the crossroads and shot them, one by one. As I read the names I was distraught in finding four of our company. My wife left me alone. I cried. For quite a while. I do again as I write.

ONE HOUR IN THE BULGE

By Joseph V. Pillitteri, 5th ID, 10th IR, Co E



Joseph V. Pillitteri, 5th ID, 10th IR, Co E

It was one day in December 1944, in Northern France on our way to Luxembourg. I was a scout walking knee deep in snow. A TD came up to assist us in our push forward. The tank saw a Jerry run into a farm house about 300 yards down in the valley. They fired one round into the house. My buddy and I ran into the house. (My buddy, James Mitchell, was killed a few days later.) We went through the front door. Mitch went down the hall to clear other rooms.

I went into the first room (that's the room that the shell entered). In the room were two German soldiers. One had his head half blown off (you could see his brains moving). The other one had both legs blown off and was in shock. As I entered the room, he raised his arms and was saying over and over something that sounded like "Soney, Soney." After 50 years those words still haunt me. I thought he wanted me to shoot him; but he was unarmed so I did not.

I went out the front door and into another at the corner of the building. As soon as I entered the room, six German soldiers put their hands on their heads and surrendered to me. That could have been my last day. It was a radio room. The room had large radios all over the place. My first thought was to put a few bullets into them. Then I thought they might be of some use to us. I lined my prisoners up and started to take them back to my unit.

Just as I got the last one out the door, another Jerry (he must have been behind the building) ran into me as I went backwards. I came down with my machine pistol; it was a German gun that I had picked up at the other end of the building. Thank God, it was not on safety. I shot a burst of bullets through his shoulder and collar bone. He started to cry and wanted to pick up his overcoat. I spun him around to join the group. Now, I had seven prisoners. When I got back to my squad the prisoner I had shot was still crying — he wanted to see his mother. When my sergeant heard him, he wanted to kill him, saying he was thousands of miles from his mother. I got between them, told the sergeant he was my prisoner and I didn't want any more harm to come to him. I lasted until January 20, 1945, when I was wounded in Luxembourg.

THE BULGE, NO NEED TO DREAM OF A WHITE CHRISTMAS

By Robert Cragg, 26th ID, 104th IR, 2nd Bn, HQ

Lieutenant Jim Bailey was a terrific officer; a good leader, brave, cautious, considerate, knew his business and above all was well thought of by his superiors and subordinates. Yes, he was adept at politics and well aware that risk to life and limb was inversely proportional to the distance one was from the front lines. The success of our patrol group under Bailey's leadership did not go unrecognized throughout the Regiment as well as the Division. It is not surprising

then, in retrospect, to understand how, in the several days we were in Metz, Jim had talked the Colonel into including a Special Patrol Section in the 104th Regimental Headquarters Company. And just who formed the group? Bailey as leader; Jack Bombard, Tech Sgt (Bailey's former Platoon Sergeant from "G" Company); Phil Lounsberry; the "Chief," Ed Limes and myself. The others from our original group remained with 2nd Battalion with Sgt. Bob Snyder as leader.

The change for us was that, when not on patrol, we were a bit further from the front lines. However, our patrol objectives became somewhat more difficult since we were now responsible to a higher echelon of command who were greatly more critical about obtaining results.

Luxembourg was well into winter when we arrived - it was cold, the ground was snow covered and it continued snowing off and on until we left in late January. Our quick change in orders didn't allow time to outfit the troops in winter clothing - many were without overcoats and had only medium weight or fatigue jackets and none of us had decent footwear such as "snow-pacs", although a few did scrounge galoshes. I was lucky because I had in some way obtained a set of tanker's coveralls and jacket. These were ideal as they were heavy cotton twill lined with a wool blanket - warm, weather resistant and permitted maximum flexibility and comfort. Within a day or so after engaging the Germans we were issued white camouflage suits - a mixed blessing; when in snow - great; but with dark woods as a background, you stood out like a sore thumb. On patrol we rarely wore them.

The Kraut offensive was six days old and the confusion of their whereabouts was great - our Intelligence did not know just where they were. Accordingly, our orders were direct - Go north, through the snow storm until you bump into them. We had been sent forward of the column of Battalions, the 2nd leading, and observed a column of Germans proceeding south. After we reported to Regimental Headquarters the 2nd Battalion engaged the Germans as they came face to face, going opposite directions on the same road. Combat again; fighting in Lorraine was tough but the Bulge was rougher and tougher. It seemed everything was against us: the weather - snow and bitter cold; the terrain - rugged hills and dense woods; the enemy - fanatic troops, SS, Parachute and Panzer Divisions who were feverishly fighting in a tremendous effort to split the Allied Forces in two and drive a wedge completely through Belgium to Antwerp. The further north we advanced the stiffer the resistance became.

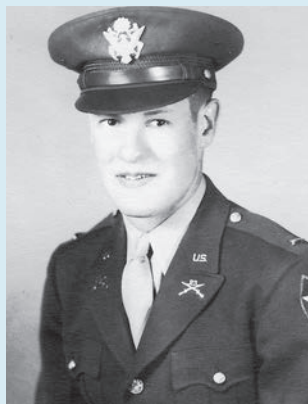
Christmas Eve, 1944, found us in Grosbous, Luxembourg, a few miles north of where we had first engaged the enemy. The line companies were several hundred yards forward attempting to drive the Germans from other villages, Dellen and Eschdorf. Our section and a several others were in a house still occupied by the owners - a family of four; two parents and their daughters in their early teens. In one of the "Care Packages" I received from home had been a doll or some other small gift to " - give to a little French girl!". I believe some others had a trinket or so which we all gave to the Luxembourg lassies together with "Ho-Ho's and Bon Noels" all around. Phil and I attended a Christmas Eve Service conducted by the Regimental Chaplain in a barn complete with cows, a couple of sheep and the aromas attendant to such a location. The hood of the Chaplain's Jeep served as the altar as we sang a few carols with the strained chords of a portable organ as accompaniment. The Chaplain delivered a short message (which I don't recall), no collection was taken and the service was hastily disbanded because some invasive artillery was landing too close for comfort. The barrage (*Continued on pg. 29*)

DONATIONS

We greatly appreciate the kind donations of the following VBOB members and supporters, received April 1 - June 25, 2013:

Bass, Mrs. Robert & Family	Donors	Landry, Jr., Athanace	776 FA Bn
Bender, William L.	42 InfD	Meinhart, Richard	Associate
Berkelhamer, Lawrence	106 InfD	Melleno, Felix	955 FA Bn
Black, Joe	Associate	Mest, Robert	1567 Engr Depot Co
Boone, Stewart	99 InfD	Meinhart, Vincent	61 Chem Depot Co
Cascarano, Arnold	75 InfD	Miller, Edgar	35 InfD
Ciullo, Ralph	84 InfD	Morrison, Sherrie	Associate
Cooper, Lenward	75 InfD	Murray, George	86 Chem Mtr Bn
Custard, Raymond	87 InfD	North, Louis	87 InfD
Duncan, Bob	Associate	Parker, Geoffrey K	75 InfD
Glenn, Michael J	Associate	Pohorylo, Nancy	Associate
Goodrich, Ward	123 Ord Co	Provost, Christine	Donor
Gradzki, Joseph	32 Cav Rcn Sq	Riley, Wilfrid	188 Engr Cmbt Bn
Gugel, Roland	99 InfD	Schebler, Patricia	Donor
Haas, Bernard	643 Td Bn	Smith, Stanley G	Associate
Hicks, Joanne	Associate	Thompson, Ronald	Associate
Hoffman, Harold	106 InfD	Wapinski, Stanley	26 InfD
Hoff, Russell	106 InfD	Watson, John B	Associate
Hummel, Kenneth	8 ArmdD	Winters, Elaine W	Associate
Huxley, Bill	Associate		

A FINE TRIBUTE



**William D. Fugit,
2nd Infantry Division**

We've received a number of donations in memory of recently deceased Life Member William D. Fugit. His daughter, Associate member Donna Fugit, who suggested donating to VBOB, explained: "Dad believed his service in Normandy and the Battle of the Bulge was the most important contribution of his life to our world. When I think about what society might be like today with-

out the dedicated men and women who fought there, I know he was right.

"Attached is a picture of him in uniform taken in September 1943, shortly before he left for Northern Ireland to train for the Normandy invasion. As you know, the 2nd Infantry (Indianhead) Division landed on Omaha Beach on D plus 1.

"Our entire family was fortunate enough to attend the

dedication of the World War II Memorial in Washington, DC, and the VBOB banquet, where we were given small evergreen tree sprouts as a memento. I have also attached a picture of the tree (*shown right*) I received as it is today — growing, and a constant reminder of the dedicated service of the men and women who served in the Battle of the Bulge."



The friends and family of William D. Fugit who have donated to VBOB in his memory as of June 25, 2013 are:

Albrecht, Bill & Deb	Donors
Ascolese, Joseph, Mr. & Mrs.	Donors
Ascolese, Robert, Mr. & Mrs.	Donors
Caravano, Alison & Vincent	Donors
Eissner, Donna & Carl	Donors
Fugit, Donna	Associate
Simone, Louise	Donor
Vidal, Steve & Sue	Donors

A WHITE CHRISTMAS (Continued from pg. 27)

ceased shortly after returning to our billet and I was writing letters when Bailey called us all together. I was shocked when he informed us that someone had attempted raping one of the little girls. Not an adult but barely a teenager. Crap, what next! Fortunately, this little girl suffered no apparent physical damage; emotional, who knows.

One by one we were taken face to face with the girl for identification of the culprit. Of course we were nervous, for who could predict how accurately an emotionally upset little girl could identify a stranger's face that she had seen only in a darkened room. However, she identified the same individual repeatedly. What a sad way to celebrate Christmas. The end of the story - the culprit was subsequently court-martialed and sentenced (I believe to execution). Amongst others I testified at the proceedings held in Grosbous in January, 1945. Dellen, Luxembourg was a picture perfect Christmas Day, 1944 - snow covered the ground under a magnificent, cloudless blue sky. Bailey had come across a camera and film so we had a photo-op. Also, one of the residents, who had elected to remain during the battle, shared some of her freshly baked cookies with us. Really nice, as I'm certain the ingredients were difficult to come by. The clear skies made it possible for our air force to actively return to the skies - and that they did! We had ring side seats as they pounded the enemy positions with devastating strafing and bombing runs. This to us, was like manna from heaven - too bad the pilots couldn't hear our cheers.

At this time we were on the right flank of the 4th Armored Division as they were heading toward relief of the troops surrounded in Bastogne. On December 26 the 2nd Battalion forced a crossing of the Sure River at Esch-Sur-la-Sure and continued north, leaving the Division's entire right flank badly exposed since the 80th Division, on our right, was unsuccessful in their attempts to establish a bridgehead across the Sure. Of particular concern was a tunnel through the mountain east of Esch-Sur. On the night of December 27 Bailey was ordered to send a patrol to reconnoiter the road from Esch-Sur to the intersection of the north/south road just beyond the tunnel. We were badly informed about the lagging 80th Division and the fact they were still south of the river. Thinking this patrol would be a piece of cake, since we had been instructed to avoid firefights, just Bailey, Phil and I journeyed forth.

The two lane road clung to mountain on one side and dropped off to the river on the other. Bailey was to bring up the rear while Phil was on the river side and I was on the inside of the road. Our plan was to continue until we met the enemy; if and when we did it was every one for himself to return to headquarters with the information. We truly thought any contact we made would be with troops of the 80th Division.

Since the bridge leading out of Esch-Sur was demolished we had to scramble across the river as best we could to pick up the road on the far side. Going east we spotted a number of land mines spread around but came across no troops; we had some concern about the tunnel as it would be ideal for concealing Kraut troops and tanks but so far so good. Our good luck petered out just as we approached the tunnel when a loud "Halten zee!!" was shouted. Hearing no password in reply the Germans opened up with an MG-42 machine gun. As planned Bailey, bringing up the rear, and Phil, on the river side of the road, took off; me - I did my best to merge into the mountain side. An MG-42 has a rate of fire of about 2000 rounds a minute; with a tracer every fifth round each burst looked like a thin beam of white light going down the road. It seemed I was pretty well trapped,

as the escape route was some distance away across the line of fire and across the road.

Although I was happy for contributing to the Red Cross since it appeared highly likely I might shortly be in a position to receive some of their POW packages, my immediate thoughts were how to get out of this predicament. One thing the Chief had taught us was patience - keep quiet and don't do anything rash. Sure enough, shortly the curiosity of the Germans got the better of them; the firing stopped and one or two came out to investigate. It was my opportunity. I jumped up, dashed across the road firing my "grease gun" toward the tunnel mouth, went over the bank and down toward the river. In the mad scramble I lost my helmet, grease gun, one boot and a couple grenades - fortunately the Germans were probably just as surprised as I since they gave no chase. Later I caught up with Bailey and Phil in Esch-Sur just as they were reporting to the CO and suggesting that I probably wouldn't make it back. The next day I scavenged some replacement equipment; but, the Chief, whose grease gun I'd borrowed, was a bit upset because I couldn't come up with another. We returned that day to take and hold the tunnel until reinforcements arrived.

Early in January, 1945, Bailey got great news that he was one of the first to be given a 30 day rotational leave and would be transported to continental USA, courtesy of the Army, for some welcome R & R. When he left Sgt. Jack Bombard assumed leadership of our group. As we got closer to Wiltz, a good sized city for Luxembourg, German resistance stiffened, the fighting was fierce and advances very limited. By this time it was evident the German effort to break through to capture their initial objective, Liege, would not be accomplished. Therefore, they were forced into the position of salvaging what they could while protecting their flanks so that some order could be maintained in their withdrawal. Wiltz, which was our primary objective, a hub for several important highways was situated atop a mountain and commanded all the surrounding terrain. It was mandatory for the Germans to defend it at all costs - which they stubbornly did. Such a situation dictated constant patrolling, seeking out locations and disposition of enemy forces; maintaining contact with other outfits on our flanks and guarding against any surprises initiated by the Germans. Conditions were miserable - cold, snowy, thick woods and difficult terrain; the Germans had their backs against the wall and were determined in their fighting to prevent us from getting a stranglehold on the neck of the Bulge.

They were aggressively patrolling. On more than one occasion we encountered their patrols, at times almost bumping into one another. Any firefights were usually short and in all we only had one fatality, a replacement with us just a couple of days, whose name I don't recall. Our missions on these nightly patrols were pretty much the same each time we went out - probe around trying to find weak points in the German lines, try to pick up a prisoner, locate their heavily defended positions, etc. This latter was usually easy, however nerve racking, since the Germans were quick to use flares at the first sign of any activity to their front. As soon as they heard any noises or thought they saw any movement, up went the flares followed by raking small arms and machine gun fire together with supporting mortar shells if necessary. It could get a bit testy.

One night after being driven back by harassing fire we were returning to our lines, following a trail through the woods as a couple of men in camouflage suits approached. It was nutty, we literally bumped into them - not knowing if they were friend or foe. One of our guys challenged them for the password. Their (Continued)

A WHITE CHRISTMAS (Continued)

reaction was to scramble and shout a few commands in German - we hit the dirt and several shots were fired. Now it was a game of hide and seek - they wanted to return with a prisoner, just as we did, but no one wanted to take their turn in the barrel. In the dark of the woods our patrol was separated and shortly I lost track of the German I was following and found my way back to the command post. The only other who had not yet returned was Jack Bombard. Some time later he straggled in, a bit worse for the wear; a couple from the German patrol had gotten on his tail and had a merry chase through the woods before he ultimately gave them the slip. An incomplete mission - the only comforting thought was that the Germans were no more successful than we in picking up a prisoner.

Due to the stalemate at Wiltz the Regimental CP remained in Esch-Sur over a week. This was terrific when we weren't on patrol as we were billeted indoors. Esch-Sur was nestled among the mountains which folded together in such a manner as to cause one to wonder how to get into or out of the town. Along the river the mountainside was nearly vertical for several hundred feet. We were in a house adjacent to the river bank and took comfort in the belief the mountainside would shield us from any artillery or mortar fire. Sporadic artillery fire did rain on other sections of the town but none came close to our billet. Thus we felt quite comfortable in undressing down to our long Johns when slipping into our sleeping bags - the first we'd had such a luxury since mid-December in Metz.

This worked well for a couple of nights and then our house took a hit by a white phosphorus shell into the window of our room. Set the room on fire, which spread to a jeep parked by the front door, and urged us to scramble with whatever few possessions we could quickly gather up, which was precious little. I got out with only what I was wearing. Lost were my weapons, clothes, shoes, helmet, personal items and maps that I had been collecting of where we had been; gone but not forgotten. Can you imagine the lot of us running down the street in our BVD's in the middle of the night when the temperature was well below freezing, dodging incoming artillery and trying to find another shelter? You've got the picture. It took a couple of days but the supply sergeant rounded everything up, less a 0.45 automatic for me.

Jack Bombard was a good sergeant but he didn't have the Regimental S-2 Officer's ear as Bailey did. After the middle of January we had fewer regimental patrols and were shortly transferred back to our original battalion headquarters companies. This was a rude awakening because 2nd Battalion Headquarters was located in Buderschied, a small town further forward. The town was exposed and under direct observation by the Germans resulting in constant artillery fire; in fact, it was such a hot spot it became known as "88 Junction". Several days after we arrived Wiltz was taken and once again we advanced as the Bulge broke down and the Germans retreated toward their homeland. By the end of January we were out of it and about to be trucked south to positions along the Saar River in Saariautem.

The six weeks we spent in the Bulge were the most difficult of our time in combat. The weather was against us - snow was all over, the temperatures extremely cold - water would freeze in your canteen and the artillery constant, heavy and very accurate. Our clothing was not suitable for such conditions - overcoats were so bulky body movement was dangerously impaired; it was difficult, almost impossible to manipulate a rifle with one on; gloves were neither warm nor weatherproof; shoes froze stiff and galoshes were impossible to

wear. True to Army efficiency, we finally got sno-pacs to replace our combat boots the day before we were sent south - it then took some time to get combat boots back since our new zone was too warm for sno-pacs. On the plus side many things were done well by the Army. In our Division, mail and packages were delivered almost daily, cigarettes were plentiful, we normally had sufficient rations (not hot meals but food at least) and newspapers - "Stars and Stripes", "YD Grapevine" and "Yank" magazine were delivered regularly.

After four months in combat I became a changed person, no doubt we all did. It's curious what over sixty combat patrols will do for one. Combat is a frightening business, indeed, and at times terrifying. Yes, I had confronted death often, face to face; yet I was one of the lucky ones because I walked out of the valley. I was scared - all of us were; it would be difficult to believe anyone who claimed not to be. It wasn't the possibility of instant death that was most frightening, but of being severely wounded - losing limbs, receiving disabling head and abdominal wounds, becoming a basket case, spending hours in severe pain as the battle continued, ending up a burden to society - that was very scary. Most always the front put on to joke about our situation, make light of the last patrol or anticipation of the next one, was just that; a front to masquerade the fact we were scared. After all, most would do anything to avoid looking bad in the eyes of his buddies and fellow infantrymen.

Witnessing death, injuring, maiming and mutilating human and animal bodies was an accepted occurrence and practice. Participating in the destruction of persons and properties became a way of life - it was destroy to avoid being destroyed. Many perspectives, attitudes and actions changed. Early on, patrols were undertaken with a very cavalier, "hell-bent-for-leather" acceptance; "Let's move it, by George, we're going to do this thing and the devil take the hindmost". Now we approached our missions with more thought and caution, (I hesitate to suggest more maturity. Is there a mature way to wrack havoc and death upon your foes?), more planning as to what each was to do if things went right or wrong and more concern for others and a better understanding as to how other patrol members would react. It's not certain that we performed our jobs any better since we had lost some of our prior elan and were less flamboyant in completing our missions. However, it is certain that none of us backed away from any of our responsibilities.

And, finally, I came to an understanding just how fragile life is and that death does not respect age, sex, race, social status, education or any other security blanket to which we might cling. No, I did not become a "foxhole" Christian; after all, I had been brought up in a family that believed in God and Jesus Christ and stressed the need for including Christian principles and teachings in all areas of our lives - they also believed regular church attendance was absolutely necessary. My faith was strengthened during these months and I truly believed we were fighting for a just cause. Yes, I had changed - hopefully for the better.



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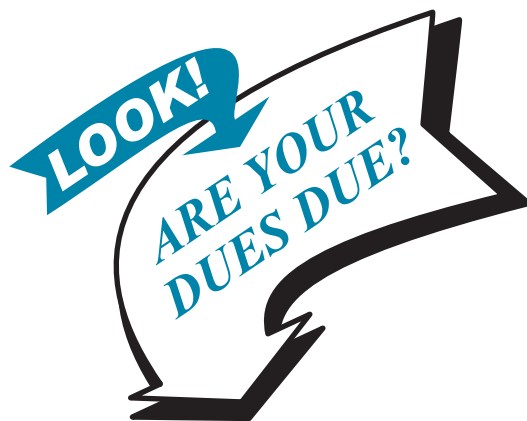
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All associate members please provide the following information below (Military Service is not a requirement but as a 501 c (19) we need to identify all veterans):

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