

The BULGE BUGLE®

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION • BATTLE OF THE BULGE ASSOCIATION®, INC.

VOLUME XLIV NUMBER 1

THE ARDENNES CAMPAIGN

WINTER 2025



CELEBRATING THE VETERANS



★ 1944 – 2024 ★





BATTLE OF THE BULGE ASSOCIATION®, INC.

P.O. Box 330, Mechanicsville, VA 23111-0330

The Battle of the Bulge Association® (BOBA) is a membership organization instituted to: perpetuate the memory of the sacrifices made by those who participated during the Battle of the Bulge; preserve historical data and sites relating to the battle; promote friendship among Battle of the Bulge veterans, their relatives and others interested in the battle; foster and maintain international relations and good will with all Allied countries who were a part of the battle; and support Chapters of BOBA. BOBA is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. Donations to BOBA are tax-deductible.

The Bulge Bugle® is the official publication of the Battle of the Bulge Association®, Inc.

Editor: Leon Reed (this issue)

EMAIL: boba.editor@gmail.com

Editor-designate: Christine Guidry Law (future issues)

EMAIL: bulge.bugle.editor@gmail.com

BOBA MEMBERSHIP OFFICE

Send all correspondence relating to membership and all BOBA matters to:

EMAIL: BobaMembership@gmail.com

Battle of the Bulge Association®, Inc.; P.O. Box 330, Mechanicsville, VA 23111-0330

VISIT THE BOBA WEB SITE: WWW.BATTLEOFTHEBULGE.ORG
FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK!

CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

Many members of the Battle of the Bulge Association® belong to individual chapters located throughout the United States. The following is a list of the present chapters, the state in which they are located, and their Chapter President's name. Please contact BOBA at BobaMembership@gmail.com for their local meeting times and contact information.

CALIFORNIA

Golden Gate (10):

Doris Davis

CONNECTICUT

Yankee Chapter (40):

Richard Egan

INDIANA

Central Indiana (47):

Chris Schneider

KANSAS

Kansas (69):

Greg Penfield

MICHIGAN

West Michigan (23):

Gary Higgins

MISSOURI

Gateway (25):

Jan Buerhle

Visit website gatewayvbob.org

NEW JERSEY

Fort Monmouth (56):

Larry Lynch

Fort Dix/McGuire (60):

Donald "Coach" Brien

NEW YORK

Mohawk Valley (28):

Julian Scatko

Hudson Valley (49):

Matthew J. Swedick

Staten Island (52):

William Abell

Duncan T. Trueman (59):

Elliot Hermon,
87th Chem Mortar Bn

Long Island (63):

William Mueller, 106th INF

OHIO

Blanchard Valley (42):

Leonard Skonecki

Alton Litsenberger (68):

Tom Tomastik

PENNSYLVANIA

Delaware Valley (4):

Dr. Andy Waskie

Lehigh Valley (55):

Steve Savage

Reading (64):

[President in Transition]

SOUTH CAROLINA

South Carolina (7):

Nelson McLeod

VERMONT-

NEW HAMPSHIRE-MAINE

Tri-State (17):

Edward Deverell

VIRGINIA

Crater (43):

Mary Ann Coates Smith

WASHINGTON

Northwest (6):

Jim Pennock

BOBA, INC. BOARD ELECTED OFFICERS

President and CEO: Steve Landry

Executive Vice President:

Kevin Hinkle

Vice President Membership:

Joe Wollet

Vice President Chapters:

Dr. Andy Waskie

Vice President Military &

Veteran Affairs: Doris Davis

Treasurer: Mary Ann Coates Smith

Recording Secretary: Gail Larke

PAST PRESIDENT:

John Mohor

PRESIDENT EMERITUS

David Bailey

BOARD MEMBERS

Madeleine Bryant, Chaplain

(Appointed Duty)

Kristin Faller

Ken Larke

Craig Stiegemeier

Jim Triesler, Historian

(Appointed Duty)

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Finance: Mary Ann Coates Smith

Membership: Joe Wollet

Outreach: Leon Reed

Records Management: Gail Larke

Strategic Planning:

Craig Stiegemeier

PAST PRESIDENTS

Clyde Boden* 1981-84

Robert Van Houten* 1984-86

George Chekan* 1986-88; 2003-05

William Greenville* 1988-90

Darrell Kuhn* 1990-92

William Hemphill* 1992-93

William Tayman* 1993-94

Grover Twiner* 1994-95

Stanley Wojtusik* 1995-97; 2005-07

George Linthicum* 1997-99

John Dunleavy* 1999-01

Louis Cunningham* 2001-03

Demetri Paris* 2007-10

David Bailey 2010-12

Douglas Dillard* 2012-14

Alan Cunningham 2014-16

Gary Higgins 2017-19

John Mohor 2020-23

* Deceased

**Do You Have a New Chapter President?
Or a President in Transition?
Forming a New Chapter? Let Us Know!**

**PLEASE SEND CHAPTER
UPDATES TO:**

bulge.bugle.editor@gmail.com

ON THE COVER



TOP ROW:

Belgian Chargée d' Affaires Sophie Karlshausen reflects at BOBA monument

BOBA President Emeritus David Bailey and Ambassador from Luxembourg Nicole Bintner-Bakshian

Golden Gate Chapter Commemoration.

Front row L-R: Veterans Ken Mar and Jake Larson

Back row L-R: Nathalie Delrue (Honorary Consul General of Belgium, San Francisco); Sophie Hottat (Consul General of Belgium, Los Angeles); Doris Davis (President of BOBA Golden Gate Chapter); Daniel da Cruz (Consul General of Luxembourg, San Francisco)

MIDDLE ROW:

Veteran Richard Weaver and Susan Eisenhower, at Gettysburg conference

Veterans Jake Ruser and Ted Novak (seated) at New York reception

Andy Valero and students

Veteran Ralph Dinin

BOTTOM ROW:

Members of Congress and veterans, Arlington Cemetery. Rep. Keith Self. (TX-3), Rep. Scott Fitzgerald (WI-5), Rep. Salud Carbajal (CA-24), Rep. Mark Takano (CA-39), and Rep. Michael McCaul (TX-10); Veterans David Bailey and Joe Landry; Belgian Chargée d' Affaires Sophie Karlshausen, BOBA President Steve Landry, Ambassador of Luxembourg Nicole Bintner-Bakshian

Veterans in New York: Ted Novak, Ben Berry, Joe Landry, Jake Ruser

PHOTO CREDITS: Embassy of Belgium, Embassy of Luxembourg, Courtesy Doris Davis, Christine Guidry Law, Leon Reed

Thanks to our vendors who provide valuable services to support BOBA:

Apple Press, Inc. (Printing/Fulfillment);
Martha Wasik Graphic Arts (Layout/Design)

How to submit stories for *The Bulge Bugle*®

PLEASE SEND YOUR IDEA FOR A STORY PRIOR TO SUBMISSION.

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING STORIES AND PHOTOS:

Stories and letters: Send via email (preferred) or typewritten (not handwritten) text, limit word count to 500 words or fewer. We reserve the right to edit for length or clarity. Clippings/articles from recent newspapers or other periodicals must contain the name & date of publication, so we can obtain reprint permission. Original stories will be given preference over reprinted articles. NOTE: We cannot reprint from books or pamphlets, unless you are the author. **Photographs:** Please identify the place and/or people in the photograph. Photos copied on a copy machine, or printed on a laser printer, are not suitable for publication. Scan original photographs at high-resolution (300 dpi), or take a cellphone photo, and send us largest digital file possible. **Stories, clippings, and photos will not be returned, so please do not mail originals you want to keep—send legible copies.**

Please include your e-mail address or telephone number, in case we have to contact you.

Send: By email (preferred) to: bulge.bugle.editor@gmail.com
or by mail: Battle of the Bulge Association®, Inc
P.O. Box 330, Mechanicsville, VA 23111-0330

NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE: APRIL 28, 2025

**QUESTIONS? Please contact Bugle editor
Christine Guidry Law at bulge.bugle.editor@gmail.com**



DONATIONS

*Thank you for your generous donations in
November and December*

Jonathan Allen	Steve/Diane Landry
David Bailey –	Gloria Layne
IMO Hope and George	Michael LoPiano
John Baker	Kerry Lynch
Dale Barone	David Marinucci –
Arlene Bjerke –	IMO Brundo Marinucci, 44th
IMO Howard E. Bjerke	Engineer Combat Battalion
Patricia Bowers	Juanita Miller
Allen Cleghorn	Linda Miller
Hope Cooper	Dan Ocko
Civil War Roundtable of Eastern	Robert Radspinner
Pennsylvania	Leon Reed
Rebecca Corbett	Thomas & Mary Rogers
David DeRidder	Mary Ann Coates Smith –
Cheryl Gordon –	IMO James Coates
IMO Fred Gordon	David Sulser
David Halverstadt	Amanda Stern
David Hartzell	Nancy Tibbets
Mary Harrell	Jim Triesler
Noel Hastalis	Carolyn Truesdale
Thomas Hodges	Mary Louise Vaught
William Jannace	Linda Watts –
Alisa Kosla	IMO Cpl Lee Garrett, 3d ARMD
Sue Landaw	Linda Winer
Joe Landry	Elaine Winters
	Vally Wyman

*Please use the form on the back cover to make a donation today!
Or go to our website: battleofthebulge.org/store/donate/*



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Steve Landry

GREETINGS FELLOW VETERANS AND BOBA MEMBERS!

AS WE BEGIN THE New Year, I am pleased to report that the BOBA-approved 80th Anniversary Tour was a resounding success. Our journey, though modest in numbers—with only one veteran in our group (my Dad)—was filled with heartfelt gratitude and genuine enthusiasm wherever we went. Each stop reminded us of the deep respect local communities in Europe hold for our veterans' service, and we are profoundly thankful to JP Paviot and his dedicated team for their hard work and commitment. (Full report on page 14.)

We also had an outstanding 2024–2025 Commemoration in Washington, D.C., a two-day event truly dedicated to celebrating our military heritage and the bonds that unite us. The event featured an array of engaging and informative presentations, offering insight into our shared history, and we proudly carried out our traditional wreath-layings at the WWII Monument, the Battle of the Bulge Monument, and the Tomb of the Unknown. These ceremonies served as powerful reminders of the sacrifices made by those who came before us. The luncheon at the Embassy of Luxembourg further enriched the event, providing an opportunity for meaningful dialogue and international fellowship. Congratulations to Mary Ann Coates Smith and the Virginia Crater Chapter for organizing a flawless event. Our sincere thanks also extend to the Belgian and Luxembourgian embassies, the staff at Arlington National Cemetery, and Rep. Keith Self (TX-3), Rep. Scott Fitzgerald (WI-5), Rep. Salud Carbajal (CA-24), Rep. Mark Takano (CA-39), Rep. Michael McCaul (TX-10), and Rep. Jake Ellzey (TX-6) for their steadfast support and participation. (Full report on page 8.)



I am also happy to report that your Association has made significant progress in implementing our new volunteer-based business model in 2024. After several challenging years that saw losses exceeding \$30,000, we are proud to announce that the association will record a positive net income for the fiscal year. This remarkable turnaround is largely attributable to the tireless efforts of the Finance Committee, the Membership Committee, and *The Bugle* team, as well as the strategic shift to mostly emailed Bulge Bugles. This new approach has not only improved our operational efficiency but also strengthened our engagement with members. However, our continued success depends on every member's active participation; please ensure that your dues are paid. Dues for 2025 were due on 12/31/2024, so if you have not yet renewed, we urge you to do so soon.

On a more somber note, we have lost more than two dozen of our cherished veteran members over the past year. Their passing represents not only the loss of courageous individuals, but also the fading of a generation whose values, sacrifices, and way of life have shaped our nation's history. Please take a moment to honor their legacy by reviewing the In Memoriam and Tributes to Heroes sections on page 22. As the Greatest Generation gradually slips away, it is up to those of us who remain to preserve the memory of not only their courage and sacrifices, but also the exemplary manner in which they lived their lives—with honor, dignity, and unwavering commitment to our country.

Thank you for your continued support and for upholding the legacy of our veterans.

— Steve Landry, President and CEO

TREASURER'S REPORT

by Mary Ann Coates Smith, Treasurer



AS WE BEGIN 2025, it's with great pride that the Finance Committee can report that 2024 was a successful year.

We began January 1, 2024 with \$83,463.48, and ended December 31, 2024 with a balance of \$112,635.24.

New rules were implemented, following good business practices. Below are details of how the three-member Finance Committee operates.

We meet every month for one and a half to two hours, by phone, to discuss, create and update spreadsheets which are based on checks received through our P.O. Box and PayPal transactions.

All figures used for our monthly, quarterly, and annual

reports are from actual bank documents and generated from PayPal's website.

For financial continuity, if the treasurer is no longer in command, all documents, signature, and ID of the current president are in place with BOBA's financial institutions. BOBA's debit card is not shared with anyone. Debit transactions have to be pre-approved with source invoices and receipts.

All transactions and invoices must be submitted to the Finance Committee for approval. Hotel points generated for BOBA Events belong to BOBA, not the individual or event planner. This practice was enforced beginning January 1, 2024.

Again, the 2025 D.C. Commemoration planner is glad to report that our income exceeded our expenses by \$7,613.04! Thanks the individual donations and for the items donated for the wreath fund raffle.

One extremely knowledgeable Finance Committee member, Betsy Rose, stepped down. We welcomed Doris Davis to the Committee beginning January 1, 2025.

FROM THE NEW EDITOR'S DESK



GREETINGS, READERS! My name is Christine Guidry Law, and it is my great honor to step into the role of editor for this esteemed publication. My journey has been deeply rooted in history, education, and storytelling. As a retired National History Teacher of the Year, a published author, and the current Executive Director of the nation's second-oldest historical library, I have spent decades preserving and sharing the past. For more than 30 years, I have also served as an editor for various newspapers and magazines, always with the mission of ensuring that the voices of history continue to be heard.

This work is especially personal to me. My grandfather, Dupre A. LeJeune, proudly served with the 80 INF 319 REG (CO I). His service, along with that of his fellow soldiers, instilled in me a deep commitment to honoring our veterans and ensuring that their sacrifices and stories are never lost to time.

Four years ago, I relocated from South Louisiana to Pennsylvania—a misplaced Cajun girl finding herself in a new world. What I didn't realize at the time was that this move would open countless doors for me to serve our veterans in a more meaningful way. Through this journey, I have had the privilege of getting to know our World War II survivors and those veterans still with us, preserving the memories of others, and visiting various divisions and command centers. Attending commemoration events, conferences, and gatherings has further strengthened my resolve to uphold the legacy of those who served. This work has enriched my life in ways I never dreamed possible. Each time I sit with one of our Bulge veterans or share a soldier's story, I feel a deep connection—not only to them but also to my departed grandfather.

A soldier is never forgotten as long as his name is spoken aloud. That belief drives me every day—to speak their names loud and proud, to share their stories, and to ensure that future generations understand and appreciate the legacy they left behind.

I look forward to working with all of you as we continue this important mission together. Let's keep history alive, one story at a time. If you have news, photos, memories, or a suggestion for something you would like to see discussed in forthcoming issues, email me at bulge.bugle.editor@gmail.com.

FROM THE OUTGOING EDITOR: LEON REED

THIS REPRESENTS MY eighth issue of *The Bugle*. While there are few jobs I've had in my life that gave me more pride and satisfaction, this will be my last issue as editor. I've gotten more and more involved, with Outreach and the booklets, plus there are a couple books I want to write. Something had to give.

I owe thanks to many people, including my designers, Tracey Diehl and Martha Wasik; Steve Landry for his steady support; and veterans Harry Miller and Ralph Dinin for making themselves available for interviews. I'm proud I got 10 Bulge veterans on my last cover and three unpublished veterans' accounts into print.

Most particularly, I am grateful to Doris Davis, VP, Military and Veteran Affairs for the many contributions she made to *The Bulge Bugle*.

I leave *The Bugle* in excellent hands. Christine Guidry Law has been an active member of BOBA and is an experienced editor.

BOBA APPOINTS NEW COMMITTEES

FIVE COMMITTEES WERE appointed to deal with important issues on behalf of the Board of Directors. The Board is grateful to the many volunteers who stepped forward.

Finance Committee

Mary Ann Coates Smith, Chair; Doris Davis, and Steve Landry

Membership Committee

Joe Wollet, Chair; Rosemary Corbett, Carol Higgins, Barbara Mooneyhan, and Jeanne Thornton

Outreach Committee

Leon Reed, Chair; John Baker (Vice Chair), Patty Bowers, Jim Triesler (ex officio), and Christine Guidry Law (ex officio)

Records Management Committee

Gail Larke, Chair; James Triesler, Mary Ann Coates Smith, and Joe Wollet

Strategic Planning Committee

Craig Stiegemeier, Chair; John Mohor, Doris Davis, Ken Larke, Tom Hewlett, and Leon Reed



Typical condition issues

MONUMENT FUND

THE BOARD APPROVED a Monument Restoration Fund. Funded by donations, this fund will be available to maintain, repair, and care for the 46 U.S. monuments installed by VBOB/BOBA.

A survey of this inventory showed that many of these monuments are in fine shape but that some have deteriorated over time and need a little restoration work. The monument at Valley Forge Military Academy (left) shows some of the concerns we have discovered: the red segment of the seal has faded and there is a covering of mold.

Please help us keep the memory of our soldiers alive by donating to the Monument Restoration Fund.

Donors who contribute \$150 or more to the fund will receive a BOBA coin and a photo of the restored monument.

Please consider donating to this worthwhile fund to keep our history alive.

WELCOME MEMBERS!

New or Reactivated Members (through Dec. 2024 to Jan. 2025)

Sandra Berinato	Rose Marie Light
Glenn Bryant	Michael McCarthy
Jesse Campana	Anna Miller
Diane Depew	Roger Mockford
Cynthia Donovan	Angel Montalvo
Brad Gates	Valentin Plancke
Thomas Hodson	Jennifer Riemer
Harris Hollin	Susan Saum-Wicklein
David Howsare	Duncan Shepard
Michael Keating	John Sito
Rosemarie Delahaye Klems	Steven Stack
Ronald Krum	John Tiene
Samuel Landrum	Ryan Welsh
Christine Guidry Law	Billy Wilson
John Leary	Hannah Winton

Please pay your dues for 2025 today! And, memberships make a great gift. Use the form on the inside back cover, or go to our website: battleofthebulge.org/store/join-boba/

2024 MEMBERSHIP REPORT

by Joe Wollet

WE FINISHED 2024 quite strong in terms of membership. A total of 93 persons paid their 2025 dues in December, the highest month in 2024.

We are starting the new year with 662 members, although 135 of them expired at the end of the year, a sign we need to redouble our efforts in the next few months.

Promising sources for renewals and new members are our chapters (Andy Waskie), relationships with other organizations (Doris Davis), and community outreach (Leon Reed).

Here is the breakdown by dues expiration year:

YEARLY EXPIRATIONS	VETERANS	NON-VETERANS
2024	0	135
2025	14	284
2026	4	42
2027	0	11
Lifetime	47	117
Other	0	8
Subtotal	65	597
GRAND TOTAL		662

A total of 82 members took advantage of the Fall 2024 membership promotions, of whom 46 selected the printed Bugle and 37 selected the BOBA challenge coin (one person ordered both).

OUTREACH TO THE CLASSROOM

AS THE FIRST-HAND memories of the Battle of the Bulge fade further into the past, the responsibility for preserving the memory of this pivotal event increasingly falls on the shoulders of people who did not fight there—often the children or grandchildren of Bulge veterans.

One primary mission of the Outreach committee is to encourage people to identify opportunities to speak to school and civic groups and to develop resource materials that speakers can use.

Our Executive Vice President, Kevin Hinkle and his wife, Alice, provide one model for this activity. Recently, they spoke to the Military History Class of Exeter High School. This class is an elective for upper classmen at this public school in Berks County, Pennsylvania. The course is taught by Brandon Ziegler, who is an 82nd Airborne Veteran of Iraq. He covers the Battle of the Bulge every year as part of his curriculum and it occurs during the same time as the Battle did 80 years ago, between December and January. The students had already studied the battle when the Hinkles made their presentation on January 13th. The Hinkles discussed some of the better known events of the campaign, including St. Vith and the Malmedy Massacre, and showed students photos of many of the sites, including the field where the Malmedy Massacre took place.

The presentation focused on events at the southern shoulder of the Battle of the Bulge. They discussed the push toward Antwerp led by Joachim Peiper's armored force and the important role played by combat engineers in stopping Peiper's offensive.

They also discussed their visit to three separate American Cemeteries in Luxembourg and Belgium and the care that the locals provide to our American servicemen who made the ultimate sacrifice.



BEN BERRY FEATURED IN MAGAZINE ARTICLE

BOBA STALWART BEN BERRY was featured in an article in the Spring 2025 issue of *World War II History* magazine, "A Supporting Role in Patton's Third Army," by Kevin Hymel. The article quoted Berry extensively about his life before, during, and after the war and gave a behind-the-scenes profile of the little understood Quartermaster Fumigation and Bath companies and laundry units.

Subscriptions <https://warfarehistorynetwork.com/publications/wwii-history/>





CELEBRATING VETERANS: PENNSYLVANIA AWARD CEREMONY

by Patty Bowers

On December 15, 2024, Patty wrote this reaction the night after the award ceremony. Patty Bowers is a leader of the Scions of the 17th Airborne and a member of BOBA's Outreach Committee.

Good evening all:

YESTERDAY WAS ONE of the best days of my life. I along with an estimated four thousand people came out to Indiantown Gap National Cemetery in Lebanon PA to honor our WWII Veterans and to remember the 80th year anniversaries of D-Day and the Bulge.

There were 15 WWII veterans in attendance, two of whom were 17th Airborne paratroopers. Richard Weaver HQ Co and Raymond Parker POW 513th PIR Company A, Raymond was captured in January in the Bulge and was liberated by the Russians in May. He was confined to Stalag 4B until he was reunited with American forces 2 weeks after he left the camp.

This was Ray's first event. He was thrilled to be there and was accompanied by his wife Gail, Son David and his wife and grandchildren. He said he is looking forward to meeting everyone in April in Gettysburg.

Prior to the ceremony in the Pennsylvania Memorial which was designed to look like a bombed out church in WWII, the veterans all received a blanket of valor and challenge coin.

They were then shuttled down to the cemetery for a grand entrance with 200 ROTC and JROTC members lining the walkway saluting them.

Remarks were given by Brigadier General John R. Pippy and PA State Senator Doug Mastriano, a 30 year 82nd Airborne Colonel Retired.

The veterans were each awarded a medal, commissioned and designed by the State of PA, to honor their service, along with a PA State challenge coin.

There were several solos and duets to honor the veterans and the Quittapahillia Highlanders played the Armed Forces medley.

After the ceremony, there was a large reception at the KCC officers club where the veterans got the opportunity to enjoy a great meal, meet great people, and share stories with other members of the Greatest Generation.

It was amazing to see Rich Weaver and Ray Parker interact and talk about the 17th Airborne. The day could not have been more perfect. Put this on your calendar for next year!



Jake Ruser



**(Above)
17th Airborne
paratroopers
Raymond Parker and
Richard Weaver**



Veterans at Ceremony

PRESERVING HISTORY, HONORING HEROES: THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION

by Christine Guidry Law

THE DC/ARLINGTON 2025 Commemoration, held January 22–24, brought together veterans, historians, dignitaries, and supporters to honor the legacy of those who fought in the Battle of the Bulge. The 80th Anniversary two-day event opened with a compelling lineup of speakers and presentations.

PRESENTATIONS AND REFLECTIONS

Bulge Bugle editor Leon Reed opened with a historical analysis of the battle's origins, strategy, and hardships faced by American troops. Lt. Col. Will Hogan followed with insights from his book, *Task Force Hogan: From Normandy to the Elbe*, offering a personal account of his father's wartime leadership. Rep. Chris Pielli, live-streamed by Dan Ocko, discussed Pennsylvania's House Resolution 275, which recognizes December 16 as Battle of the Bulge Day and supports efforts to preserve veterans' stories.

BOBA Historian Jim Triesler conducted an engaging interview with 100-year-old veteran Joe Landry (776 AAA AW BN). With a sharp wit and enduring spirit, Joe reflected on the camaraderie, challenges, and moments of levity that defined his wartime journey. BOBA President Steve Landry delivered a welcome address, celebrating the organization's progress while acknowledging the loss of over two dozen veterans this past year.

Kayla Smith alongside Andy Valero read a letter sharing the life challenges and experiences which led her to Andy's doorstep, and the unshakable friendship they forged.

Professor Alicia DeFonzo (Old Dominion University) read excerpts from her book, *The Time Left Between Us*, weaving personal and historical narratives about her grandfather's service. Incoming *Bulge Bugle* editor Christine Guidry Law then shared her decades-long mission to reclaim her grandfather's honor after his WWII service was unjustly questioned.

COMMEMORATIVE CEREMONIES

Guests continued to pay tribute the next day with wreath-laying ceremonies at the Battle of the Bulge Monument and the Tomb of the Unknown at Arlington National Cemetery. BOBA Chaplain Madeleine Bryant recited a beautiful prayer she wrote for the occasion. The BOB Monument ceremony featured inspiring speeches by Belgian Chargée d'Affaires Sophie Karlshausen, and Honorable Nicole Bintner-Bakshian, Ambassador of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg to the U.S. This year's commemoration was unique as it marked the first time that members of Congress actively participated in the events. Notable congressional attendees included Rep. Keith Self (TX-3), Rep. Scott Fitzgerald (WI-5), Rep. Salud Carbajal (CA-24), Rep. Mark Takano (CA-39), Rep. Michael McCaul (TX-10), and Rep. Jake Ellzey (TX-6).

Following the wreath-laying at the Tomb of the Unknown (presented by BOBA veterans Joe Landry and Ben Berry along with Rep. Michael McCaul and Rep. Mark Takano), guests gathered at the Belgian Ambassador's residence for a beautiful luncheon reception honoring our veterans. Unable to make it to Arlington, Rep. Jake Ellzey (TX-06) joined us at the Luxembourg Embassy luncheon to further honor the veterans.

Among the distinguished guests were four BOBA veterans

recognized at this year's special events: David Bailey – age 103 (106 INFD 422 REG.), Joe Landry—age 100 (776 AAA AW BN), Benjamin Berry – age 100 (863 QM CO), and Andy Valero – age 101 (9 INFD 47 REG.).

The day concluded with a placement of flowers by our BOB veterans at the WWII Memorial and a visit to the National Museum of American History. Friday, over breakfast, everyone said their goodbyes and posed for last minute photos with both long-standing and newfound friends.

A LASTING COMMITMENT

With 76 registrants, 4 veterans attendance, and a two-bus capacity, the 2025 commemoration was a resounding success. Special thanks to event planner Mary Ann Coates Smith, along with Betsy Rose, Jim Triesler, Madeleine Bryant, Arthur Forest, and Alan Cunningham of the Virginia Crater Chapter.



LTC Will Hogan (USA Ret.) presents on his book: *Task Force Hogan: From Normandy to the Elbe*.



Prof. Alicia DeFonzo with Mary Ann Coates Smith who planned the event

continued on pages 9 & 10



(ABOVE) Group at WWII Monument

(LEFT) L-R: Kathie Wilkins, Diane Landry, Christine Guidry Law, Kathleen Zoll, Barbara Spaventa, Patricia Bowers

(BELOW LEFT) Steve and Joe Landry

(BELOW RIGHT) Veterans David Bailey, Andy Valero, Ben Berry, Joe Landry at WWII Memorial

Photo credits pages 8 – 10: Embassy of Luxembourg, Christine Guidry Law, Mary Ann Coates Smith, Kathleen Zoll





Members of Congress, Veterans: Rep. Mark Takano (D-CA), Joe Landry (BOBA Veteran), Rep. Michael McCaul (R-TX), Benjamin Berry (BOBA Veteran), LTC Albert El (BOBA Delaware Valley Chapter)

IRVING LOCKER RECEIVES A SPECIAL AWARD

IRVING LOCKER, 116 AAA Gun Bn, 4th Inf Div, VII Corps, received the Bob Dole Leadership Award in Washington, D.C. on November 14, 2024. The award is presented to deserving individuals of the WWII generation who still endeavor today to preserve the lessons and sacrifices of that time in our history. Irving's commitment to sharing the stark realities of the War and the Holocaust has made him a vital voice in preserving history through countless presentations, including those at the White House. He turned 100 years old in November and remains very active today.

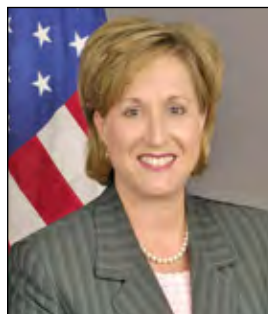
As a soldier, he was a staff sergeant and led a platoon during the Battle of the Bulge. "My promise to them was to bring them home alive, and that's what I tried to do," he said.

In the war's closing weeks, he was involved in the liberation of Gardelegen Concentration Camp.

The award was presented by Colonel Thibaud Thomas, Deputy Defense Attache, Embassy of France. The keynote speaker was General Bryan Fenton, U.S.A., 13th Commander of the U.S. Special Operations Command. The Film "Dad's Secret War: France, 1944" was shown during the ceremony. Prior to this event, Irving had been a recipient of the French Legion of Honor. He proudly displays this in his home with his other medals. He is a proud American and a member of our Greatest Generation.



HONORING THE VICTORY AT THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE



REPRESENTATIVE ANN WAGNER (MO-2) served as U.S. Ambassador to Luxembourg during the second term of President George W. Bush (2005-2009). She joined us for our reunion in St. Charles but was unable to join us on January 23 because of Committee activities. The next day she made a statement in the Congressional Record honoring the veterans.

(Statement Inserted in the Congressional Record by Hon. Ann Wagner (R-MO), Friday, January 24, 2025)

Honoring the 80th Anniversary of the Allied Victory at the Battle of the Bulge

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in remembrance of the Battle of the Bulge and the courage of the American troops who fought there.

This Saturday, January 25, marks the 80th Anniversary of this historic Allied victory.

41 days, Mr. Speaker.

For 41 days, our soldiers stood guard in much colder weather than we have experienced this week in Washington or back in my home State of Missouri.

For 41 days, these men, many still teenagers, fought from snow-covered foxholes when death and defeat looked imminent.

For 41 days, they saw their brothers, thousands of miles from home, succumb to hypothermia, bullets, bombs, and artillery.

For 41 days, over seven hundred thousand Allied troops, short on equipment, ammunition, and warm clothes, experienced warfare that they would never forget.

For 41 days, these heroes fought and won a battle that would fundamentally change the course of human history.

As we've all shivered through the freezing temperatures this month, it's impossible to imagine what must have gone through the minds of our soldiers hunkered down in the Ardennes.

The anguish and sacrifices these brave men endured will never be truly understood, but will never, ever, be forgotten.

It will not be forgotten by the liberated people of Western Europe, and certainly not by the American people these soldiers gave their lives defending.

Earlier today, the Embassies of Belgium and Luxembourg hosted a wreath-laying ceremony at the Battle of the Bulge Memorial in Arlington National Cemetery.

I want to thank these nations for organizing this moving tribute to those who held the line for freedom over tyranny.

But most importantly, it is my distinct honor to pay respects on the floor of the House of Representatives to the victors of the greatest land battle in the history of the United States Army.

We are, and forever will be, grateful for your heroism.

Thank you.



80TH ANNIVERSARY OBSERVANCES

BOBA WAS A MAJOR co-sponsor of Pennsylvania's official observance of the 80th anniversary. The ceremony, held at Fort Indiantown Gap on December 16, was mandated by legislation written by Rep. Chris Pielli. The ceremony took particular note of the record of the 28th INFD. BOBA's John Baker, son of a 28th Division veteran, made the principal address during the ceremony.

Various individuals and chapters also held local commemorations of the 80th anniversary.

First, the Staten Island chapter holds a commemorative ceremony at its impressive monument in Wolf Pond Park every December 16.

Second, David Brookins, son of Richard W. Brookins, 28th Signal Company, 28th Infantry Division, and longtime President of the Genesee Valley chapter, reports that he lays a wreath at the chapter's monument every December 16 "to honor 1) all those wonderful men from the Genesee Valley Chapter, who had the monument installed in the 1990s, and 2) all those comrades who made the ultimate sacrifice in 1944-45, and 3) to honor my dad." (Richard Brookins was known as the "Wiltz St. Nick." See story, p. 17)

The monument is located at the entrance of Ontario Beach Park in Rochester, NY.

Finally, The Golden Gate Chapter commemorated the 80th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge on Saturday, January 25, 2025, in Alameda, CA. There were 38 people in attendance, including 2 WWII Veterans—Jake Larson and Ken Mar. Guests included families of former veteran members and a large contingent of the Northern California Belgian Club including their president, Pierre Smit. Speakers included Nathalie Delrue, Honorary Consul General of Belgium; Daniel Da Cruz, Consul General of Luxembourg; Sophie Hottat, Consul General of Belgium from Los Angeles; and Doris Davis, President of the Golden Gate Chapter.

Jake Larson turned 102 in December and Ken will be 100 in May. Both shared stories and when they spoke, you could hear a pin drop. We were grateful that they could attend.

Contributions and photos by Patty Bowers, David Brookins, and Doris Davis.



Staten Island Monument



Genesee Chapter Monument

PERSONAL REFLECTION ON STATEN ISLAND CEREMONY

by Barbara Mooneyhan

TUESDAY, JANUARY 28TH dawned bright and cold in New York City. Joe Wollet (BOBA VP, Membership) and I joined officials of Belgium and Luxembourg for a wreath laying ceremony at Staten Island's Wolfe's Pond Park. We arrived at a beautiful, 2-part granite column with a star in the middle that represents hope and peace. It is surrounded by trees to simulate the Ardennes and a granite wall that contains the shoulder patches of the 45 units that fought in the battle. Along with Consul General of Luxembourg, Luc Decker; Filip Vanden Bulcke, Consul General of Belgium in New York; and Col. Marc Bouthe, Military Advisor, Permanent Representative of Belgium to the United Nations, we had a simple, solemn wreath laying ceremony. Joe spoke passionately about what it meant to him to be there representing his father and how he had just returned from a trip to Belgium where he stood on the ground that his father's 75th Infantry helped liberate and where he was wounded on January 18, 1945. Afterwards, we returned to the city for a reception at the Luxembourg House. It is a day Joe and I will never forget!



Bulge veterans Ken Mar and Jake Larson at Golden Gate chapter meeting



John Baker speaks at Fort Indiantown Gap



NEW YORK CONSULATES CELEBRATE VETERANS

ON JANUARY 28, 2025, the Consuls General of Luxembourg and Belgium hosted a reception at the Luxembourg Consulate General in New York City to honor the 80th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge. This event paid tribute to the American veterans who played a crucial role in one of World War II's most significant battles.

Among those honored were WWII veterans Benjamin Berry, Jake Ruser, Joe Landry, and Ted Novak, the oldest attendee at 102 years old. The combined age of these four heroes totaled an astonishing 403 years. The event was attended by members of the Philadelphia Chapter of the Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge (VBOB) and the Battle of the Bulge Association (BOBA), as well as military historians, dignitaries, and descendants of those who fought in the battle.

The Honorable Luc Decker, Consul General of Luxembourg, and the Honorable Ambassador Filip Vanden Bulcke, Consul General of Belgium, delivered heartfelt speeches expressing their nations' deep gratitude toward American soldiers. They emphasized the sacrifices made to secure the freedom, sovereignty, and democracy of Belgium and Luxembourg.

Benjamin Patton, grandson of General George S. Patton, gave a moving presentation that included a short film on Tony Vaccaro (83 INFD), who later became one of the most renowned photographers of WWII.

The reception took place at the Luxembourg Consulate General, a historic building once home to Irving Berlin and James Forrestal, the first U.S. Secretary of Defense.

A DAY OF REFLECTION AND TRIBUTE

Earlier that day, a wreath-laying ceremony was held at the Battle of the Bulge Memorial in Wolfe's Pond Park, Staten Island. Organized by the Consulate General of Belgium, the ceremony was attended by dignitaries and representatives from various military and veteran organizations, including Barbara Mooneyhan and Joe Wollet, representing the Battle of the Bulge Association, and Colonel Marc Bouthé, Military Advisor at the Permanent Mission of Belgium to the United Nations in New York.

HONORING SACRIFICE THROUGH WORDS

American Industrial Acquisition Corporation (AIAC) Chairman L. M. Levie contributed a poetic tribute, "In the Shadow of Their Sacrifice," to honor the veterans in attendance. AIAC and its affiliates, strong supporters of Luxembourg's business community and members of the Luxembourg-American Chamber of Commerce, played a key role in organizing this event.

Reflecting on the significance of the day, Mr. Levie remarked, "The Battle of the Bulge, like Gettysburg, was a battle of immense sacrifice and loss, but it ultimately shaped the course of history. We must never forget the courage of the American soldiers who fought for the freedom of Europe."

This solemn yet celebratory event ensured that the legacy of the Battle of the Bulge remains alive, honoring those who fought and those who continue to remember their valor.

Photo Credits: Eva Depoorter, Christine Guidry Law, Barbara Mooneyhan, Andy Waskie



Leonard Levie & Col. Krzysztof Steć



Standing (L to R): LTC Albert El (BOBA Delaware Chapter); Christine Guidry Law (BOBA Delaware Chapter); Andy Waskie (BOBA Delaware Chapter President/VP Chapters); Luc Decker (Consul General of Luxembourg); Barbara Mooneyhan (past BOBA Executive VP); Joe Wollet (BOBA VP of Membership) Sitting (L to R): Ted Novak, Benjamin Berry, Joe Landry, Jake Ruser



L to R: Brice Gilson, Consul of the Consulate General of Belgium in New York; Marc Bouthé, Military Advisor at the Permanent Mission of Belgium to the United Nations in New York; Honorable Filip Vanden Bulcke (Consul General of Belgium); Honorable Luc Decker (Consul General of Luxembourg); Joe Wollet (BOBA VP of Membership); and Barbara Mooneyhan (past BOBA Executive VP)

BOBA ORGANIZES GETTYSBURG CONFERENCE

ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, the Gettysburg World War II American Experience and BOBA presented the second annual Gettysburg Bulge Conference, bringing together historians, authors, military experts, and veterans to pay tribute to the soldiers of one of World War II's most defining battles.

The commemoration began with a greeting by Jody Wilson (representing the WWII American Experience) and Christine Guidry Law (representing BOBA).

Leon Reed, conference organizer, began with a lecture on "Bulge Memories: Surrounded and Outnumbered," weaving together firsthand accounts from soldiers who fought against overwhelming odds. Next, Dr. Walter S. Zapotoczny Jr. discussed the experiences of Pennsylvania's 28th Division in "Triumphs of the Keystone Division."

Jonathan Cordish introduced the audience to the commander of the 3rd Armored Division, "Major General Maurice Rose: Unsung Hero of the Battle of the Bulge." Later, Glenn Ivers shifted the focus to the medical personnel who worked tirelessly behind the front lines in "Angels of Bastogne: A Remembrance of World War II."

The final speech, given by the granddaughter of General Dwight D. Eisenhower, Ms. Susan Eisenhower, provided a powerful perspective on "Eisenhower's Decisions at the Battle of the Bulge." She shared personal insights into his leadership, strategic thinking, and the weight of the choices he made.

The success of this event was made possible by the generous support of the Battle of the Bulge Association and other sponsors, including John Baker, C&N Bank, Federal Pointe Inn, and the George Rich Family Foundation.

Photo credits: Christine Guidry Law, Leon Reed, and Kathleen Zoll

(Below) Susan Eisenhower (left) and Walter Zapotoczny (right) speak to the audience



Mary Ann Coates Smith and Ronan Kingsella



Jody Wilson and Christine Guidry Law address audience





80TH ANNIVERSARY EVENTS



EXHILARATION, GRATITUDE, AND SADNESS MARK 80TH ANNIVERSARY IN EUROPE

By Joe Wollet, VP of Membership

PARTICIPANTS IN BOBA'S 80th anniversary trip to Europe experienced a range of emotions as we traveled through Belgium and Luxembourg in December.

The trip organizers, the Paviot family (Jeanpierre, Marie and Caroline), and local guide Joël Lamberty did an outstanding job personalizing the trip for participants, nearly all of whom were family members of veterans who served in the Ardennes Campaign.

In a trip filled with highlights, there were two emotional pinnacles for me. While speaking with Joël, I mentioned how my dad had been wounded in action on January 18, 1945, although I didn't know the exact location. Joël's response was, "It was Burtonville. That's where I was born." As a lifelong area resident and historian, Joël knew exactly where to go.

After a long day that included somber stops at Malmedy and Wereth, sites of SS massacres of American G.I.'s, our bus wound its way along small farm roads to the village of Burtonville. Stopping in pitch-black darkness, Joël called me to see a memorial to the 290th REGT of the 75th INFD, my dad's unit.

Visiting the memorial was a moment of great exhilaration, knowing my dad's regiment had been there 80 years earlier. Still, the stop was somber, as Wollet blood was literally shed there as my dad and his comrades liberated the village.

Leaving Burtonville, the bus continued in the dark to another memorial, this one dedicated to the 424th REGT of the 106th INFD. Member Mike McCarthy was overcome with emotion seeing the monument to his dad's unit.

Two days later, standing at the Parker's Crossroads Memorial in Baraque de Fraiture, Joël explained how important control of the road crossing was in stopping the advancing German troops.

Just five minutes after leaving Parker's Crossroads, the bus stopped again, this time at a farmhouse on the outskirts of Odeigne. Here, Joël said, was where my dad, Staff Sgt. Joseph Wollet, and his combat patrol engaged SS troops in a withering firefight. For their gallantry in action in that encounter on Christmas Eve 1944, my dad and his fellow squad member Samuel Panther were both bestowed the Silver Star Medal.

Not only did Joël know about my dad's unit, but he made direct connections for other participants seeking to follow in the footsteps of their family members who were in the Ardennes.

Joël showed Brenda Street where her father saw combat in Büllingen with the 99th INFD, being one of only 11 soldiers in his unit to escape captivity when the town was overrun.

With Mark Hatchel, we visited iconic places of the famous La Gleize battle, where his dad's 740th Tank Battalion fought, including the "Saint Edouard Festung" and Froidcour Castle, where we were kindly welcomed by the owner, François De Harenne.

Joël showed Anna Crooks and her son, Diego Perez, where Anna's father's 987th Field Artillery Battalion had set up the big guns, and explained their characteristics and important role in the battle.

Stopping in Malmedy to visit the memorial to 84 soldiers of the 106th INFD who were summarily executed by the SS, we paused at a marker to one of the dead, James Coates, father of BOBA Treasurer Mary Ann Coates Smith.

At Val-Dieu Abbey, retiring BOBA Executive Vice President Barbara Mooneyhan recreated a war-time photograph taken of her father at a doorway of the abbey.

Another one of Joël's specialties was showing "then and now" photographs that helped us envision what the soldiers saw and heard. Standing at many of those spots elicited gratitude and sadness, knowing G.I.'s fought and gave their lives there.

At a farmhouse up the hill from the site of the massacre of the Wereth 11, a group of American soldiers executed by the Germans, we listened as Solange DeKeyser, president of the Wereth memorial, told their story and said they had gone unrecognized for decades because they were Black. Bulge Veteran Joe Landry said that when he learned of the injustice, his American Legion post worked with the local VBOB/BOBA chapter to erect a memorial to the Wereth 11 in the Boston area.

Joe was treated like royalty—even by royalty—during the trip. In Bastogne, Joe and other surviving Bulge Veterans met their royal highnesses the King and Queen of Belgium. At a ceremony in Wiltz, Luxembourg, site of the Schumannseck battle, 5th HRH Prince Guillaume, Hereditary Grand Duke of Luxembourg, introduced himself to Joe shortly after Joe and his son, BOBA President Dr. Steven Landry, placed a wreath honoring those who fought there.

Throughout the trip, at museums and on the streets, dozens of people approached Joe for selfies and autographs. He received a standing ovation from perhaps 600 World War II reenactors gathered in a huge tent in Manhay, Belgium.

The tour through Belgium and Luxembourg exceeded my expectations for the trip, primarily because of the research and care taken by the Paviot family and guide Joël Lamberty. It was unlike any group tour I've experienced and is enthusiastically recommended for those wishing to become immersed in the history of the Battle of the Bulge.



Mark Hatchel, his son Wesley, and members of a family his father met during the war at the 740 Tank Battalion memorial in Montroux, Belgium

continued on page 15



(FAR LEFT)
Top row, L-R: Joe Wollet, Marie Paviot, Diane Landry. Kneeling behind couch: Caroline Paviot, Trey Lundeen.
Front row, L-R: Jeanpierre "JP" Paviot, Joe Landry, Mathilde Schmetz, Marcel Schmetz, (Remember Museum)

(LEFT)
Joe Landry with King and Queen of Belgium



(FAR LEFT)
Barbara Mooneyhan re-enacts photo of her father at Abbaye du Val-Dieu

(LEFT)
Joe Landry throws a walnut to a waiting crowd at 'Nuts Weekend' celebrations in Bastogne.

WERETH MEMORIES

Summary by Solange DeKeyser

THE U.S. MEMORIAL WERETH committee wishes you a happy new year 2025; may it bring you much happiness, joy, pleasant surprises, success, travel, serenity, may it be peaceful again, and may it keep you in good health!

On the exact date of the massacre, December 17, we organized, as in 2019, a small ceremony for the 80th Anniversary.

Not knowing the weather, only 50 people were expected. This group grew thanks to the involvement of 115 Americans from the National WWII Museum, New Orleans.

THANK YOU all for your enormous support to all our ceremonies. 2024, marking the 80th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge was rich in emotion, with numerous veterans' meetings, tributes throughout Belgium and our two ceremonies.

The success of our events relies on the participation of loyal people and friends, from whom our association is fortunate to benefit.

ONLINE ONLY

Livestream

LEARNING FROM THE HOME FRONT

YOU STILL HAVE TIME!



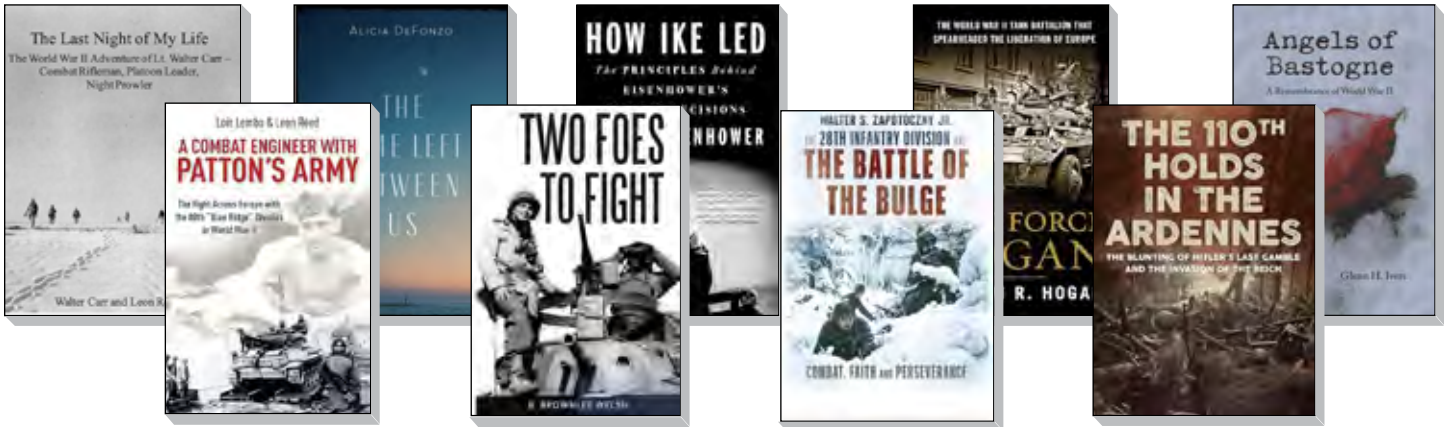

The Malmedy Massacre: Eighty Years Later

Tuesday | December 17, 2024 | 2:00 PM

TO REGISTER: [VAWARMEMORIAL.ORG/EVENTS](https://vawarmemorial.org/events)

BOBA Historian Jim Triesler held an online discussion of Malmedy on the anniversary of the massacre.

Authors of the following books presented at the St. Charles, MO, reunion, or the January commemoration or conference.



The Last Night of my Life:

The World War II Adventure of Lt. Walter Carr, Combat Rifleman, Platoon Leader, Night Prowler
by Carr-Reed

The Time Left Between Us

by Alicia DeFonzo

Eisenhower, How Ike Led:

The Principles Behind Eisenhower's Biggest Decisions
by Susan Eisenhower

Task Force Hogan:

The World War II Tank Battalion That Spearheaded the Liberation of Europe
by William Hogan

Angels of Bastogne:

A Remembrance of World War II
by Glenn Ivers

A Combat Engineer with Patton's Army:

The Fight Across Europe with the 80th "Blue Ridge" Division in World War II
by Lois Lembo and Leon Reed

Two Foes to Fight

by Bob Welsh

The Battle of the Bulge

Combat, Faith, and Perseverance
by Walter Zapotoczny

The 110th Holds in the Ardennes:

The Blunting of Hitler's Last Gamble and the Invasion of the Reich
(forthcoming)
by Walter S. Zapotoczny Jr.

MISSING MONUMENT RESTORED

A DISCUSSION AMONG several exhibitors at the Army Expo 24 led to the location of a missing monument and, within a few months, its re-erection in a prime spot where it can be appreciated by generations of visitors.

Bugle editor Leon Reed, volunteer Tom Vossler, and 17th Airborne representative Patty Bowers were discussing the seeming disappearance of the VBOB Bulge monument erected in 1997 at the Army War College. Nobody at Carlisle seemed to be aware of the monument, but Patty was armed with the program from the original dedication ceremony that had been handed down by her father, 17th Airborne veteran Thomas Miller, and Tom recalled that he had been a speaker at that ceremony.

Inquiries at the War College disclosed that the monument had been removed and placed in storage to make way for a new building. Tom Vossler volunteered to lead an effort to get the monument re-erected. This was a significant challenge, involving three separate commands, a change of ownership (from the War College to the Army Heritage and Education Center), plus finding a location and moving the monument. Within two months, Tom sent us a note confirming that the monument would be re-erected and a month after that, we received photos showing it in its new spot, the Memorial Grove along the Army Heritage Trail. In an especially excellent bit of site selection, the monument is centered among spruce trees to suggest the Ardennes Forest.

A re-dedication ceremony will be scheduled later this spring.





HONORING THE AMERICAN ST. NICK, 80 YEARS LATER

BESIDES INFORMING US of his one-person commemorative event, David Brookins also alerted *The Bulge Bugle* to an important human interest story from December 1944 – which continues to this day (see page 11). David's dad, Richard K. Brookins of the 28th Signal Co., 28th INFD, was stationed in Wiltz in the days before the campaign started. He became well known as "the Wiltz St. Nicholas" when he and some buddies became aware that December 6th was "St. Nicholas Day" and that the people, though happy to be liberated, had nothing to give the children for St. Nicholas Day. Some of the GIs chipped in treats and gifts, the Brass endorsed the event, and Brookins was asked to dress as St. Nick. He described it in an article for the August 1997 Bugle: "With the local priest's surplice, a bishop's mitre head dress, a shepherd's crook and a rope beard, I rode through the town dispensing the goodies to every kid in town. We ended up at the castle in Wiltz where the kids sang and recited for St. Nick and we all had a great time."

"Sadly, 10 days later, the Bulge Battle started and, ultimately, 80% of the town was damaged or destroyed, most as a result of being retaken from the Germans in January, 1945. We lost 23 men from the 28th Signal Company and many civilians, including some of the children were killed and wounded. Wiltz, as well as all of Luxembourg, honor all ex-GI's to this day. Memorials to all the units which made them free are dedicated to all of us. The American Flag flies every day in Wiltz, and in front of the castle is a memorial to the 28th Division and its men.

"Each year a St. Nicholas Festival is played out in honor of and in memory of all of us who made the Luxembourgers of Wiltz free. I have had the honor of portraying St. Nicholas at the invitation of The Society of St. Nicholas of Wiltz in 1977, 1984, and in 1994, the special 50th year celebration of the little effort that a small group of signal guys put on in 1944 to make children happy in a terrible time. In 1994 I took my entire family to Wiltz to see for themselves what had only been my description to them over the years. I have all of the occasions on video tape, including the Signal Corps film taken in 1944. Though there is personal satisfaction in all of this, I feel I am representing all GI's who took part in that terrible battle to bring freedom to those who had none."

David continued, "Dad admitted that, at 22, he didn't have a clue (how this would be remembered). He and the guys just thought that it was a decent thing to do, and also enjoy the party themselves. Thankfully he lived to see the outpouring of gratitude from the people of Wiltz. They had been, unknown to us, celebrating the GIs' party every year, for 23 years, before they found Dad and invited him to come back. He, and our family, have been able to return many times to help them continue the tradition. The Tim Gray documentary does a great job with the story (www.iifoundation.org). Look for The American St. Nick."

David added, "My wife and I were in Wiltz this past November and December. We were there to participate in the 80th Anniversary of the original St. Nick Party initiated by the 28th Signal Company. It was quite an event as they always are. Usually the Luxembourgers have a special presentation and gift for us. This year the Grand Duchy issued two commemorative stamps to honor The American St. Nick and his GI buddies."



Richard Brookins, American St. Nick, December 1944



Re-enactment, Dec. 2024

Richard Brookins, 1943



(BELOW) Ceremony honoring 28th INFD at Wiltz Castle.

L-R: David Brookins, Wiltz Town Mayor, U.S. Ambassador Thomas Barrett, Committee members Boy Feltus and Tom Paquay





FAITH, FAMILY, AND A FRIENDLY FIREPLACE BROUGHT ME HOME

BY JIM DEAN

Jim Dean is writing a memoir of his parents' experience in WWII, based on letters his parents exchanged while his dad, Lauren W. Dean, was serving with the 87th Division. He describes it as a wartime love story rather than battle chronicles. He shared a discussion of his project with The Bugle.

THE MAIN THEME of this book is not about combat tactics or the horrors of war. It is about two newly-weds who were in their late 20s whose desires to raise a family of their own during peaceful times that was indefinitely interrupted by the world-wide aggression of WWII. The story elaborates how Pop maintained a positive attitude and also did his best to minimize Mom's worry about the possibility of her receiving the unwanted Western Union Telegram!

This true account is a love story for Catholic women, spiritual women of any faith, and all women who have a profound affinity for extraordinary true love stories. The initial chapter, entitled "Meet My Mom," consists of about 27 letters written from my Mom to her mother, including her three sisters while she attends State Teacher's College, (now University of Northern Iowa) studying for her two year Teacher's Certificate from 1931-1933, 10 years before meeting Pop on a blind date, while he was dating someone else. One of the letters was from Mom's older sister to my mother, who gives an explanation, at Mom's request, about "How To Flirt!" Not only were these letters written 10 years before Pop & Mom met, they also give an insight about the extraordinary attributes that Pop saw in Mom which ended in their nearly 59 year marriage following 6-9 months of courtship. The 2nd Chapter, At Last, which is based on about 25 courtship letters from Pop to Mom, (some letters not meant for my eyes) while Pop was taking classes to become Catholic for the privilege of obtaining Mom's hand in marriage, which occurred on Memorial Day, 1942, at St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Brooklyn, Iowa.

Pop and Mom knew that "Uncle Sam" would be calling soon, but didn't know when. The nuptials were eager to start a family of their own, but Pop's call to duty put that desire on indefinite hold. Induction at Camp Dodge, Iowa came in late October 1942. Boot Camp at Camp White, Oregon, finds Pop and Mom separated by 2000 miles. 35 letters during boot camp describe Pop's experiences. Again, some of these letters were not meant for my eyes. Ha! Pop makes Sgt. by late December 1942, qualifies for Officer Candidate School mid-January 1943, and graduates O.C.S. Course #63 May 5, 1943, as a 2nd Lt. at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, as an Artillery Officer. Though a great need existed for artillery officers overseas, Pop was given the opportunity to continue his training at Camp McCain, Mississippi, maneuvers in Tennessee, and receives more training at Ft. Jackson at Columbia, South Carolina. In early October 1944, Pop is ordered overseas on the advance team to prepare for the main body of 912th Field



Artillery to arrive 10-12 days later. While in combat, Pop writes about 120 interesting letters to Mom, family, and friends, some of which are 2000 or more words!

As part of Patton's Third Army, Pop spent most of his time on the front line as an artillery officer, in support of I-Company, 347th Infantry Regiment, directing effective artillery support during the Battle of The Bulge. During this brutal battle, these troops were short of food, ammunition, and appropriate winter clothing during one of the severest winters on record! Pop's love letters home to Mom exhibit extraordinary creativity in addition to his signature letter salutations and letter closings i.e. My Dearest Marge and, Your Loving Husband, Lauren! Prior to being sent to plug their assigned sector in the Battle of the Bulge, Pop describes the absolute worst experience of his life!! As an officer, Pop censored his own letters home,

which allowed amazing detail about his experiences. Most G.I.s had their letters closely censored. Through Pop's letters other families can get a better understanding of what their loved one/ones experienced but were not allowed to write about. There are numerous graphic accounts in these letters.

Nearly six years of research has gone into this unique, fairytale-like account. In 2019, tour-guide, Doug Mitchell, provided me with the declassified daily after action reports of the 87th Infantry Division and the 912th Field Artillery, each for December 1, 1944, through end of May 1945 except for the month of February 1945 for the 912th Field Artillery. These reports have been woven into the transcript to correspond with letter and envelope dates. Readers of this book will know exactly where the 87th and 912th were throughout the duration of combat which began in early December 1944 until the European armistice on May 8, 1945. There are more than 60 pictures with associated text boxes. Pop kept meticulous records of his military experiences, in addition to the 240 letters that I found in the attic of my parents' home.

Until this discovery, I knew nothing of these profound letters. In addition to the accounts described by Pop's letters, nearly a dozen additional accounts written post war by surviving WWII 87th Infantry Division Combat Vets are included. The descriptions obtained through Pop's letters in addition to the post war accounts written by 87th Infantry Division soldiers who survived, give exceptionally vivid detail about the actual price paid by our WWII Veterans in exchange for the many freedoms that we enjoy today.



WORLD WAR II MEMORIES AN INTERVIEW WITH RALPH DININ

The Bugle staff paid a visit to lifetime member Ralph Dinin at his comfortable retirement community in Toms River, NJ. During our visit, Ralph shared some of his experiences.

Q: *When did you enter the Army?*

A: I was drafted on February 16, 1943, and reported to Fort Dix. I spent my first 24 hours in the Army on KP. Then I went to my tent and when I woke up the next morning, I learned I was going to Fort Campbell, KY, where they were forming a new tank battalion.

Q: *So were you with the 740th from the start?*

A: No, at first I was with a brand new tank battalion, the 701st. This battalion was made up of boys only from New York and New Jersey. We were transferred to Fort Knox, KY. We had a few problems in the South.

I had a year of college, so I was sent to the HQ.

Q: *Oh, you're lucky you weren't sent to the ASTP (Army Specialized Training Program). You'd have wound up being made a rifleman and assigned to the 106th.*

A: It's funny, I did apply to ASTP, but I didn't get accepted.

Q: *So was the 701st also a Canal Defense Light battalion like the 740th?*

A: Yes, there were three: the 701st, 740th, and 741st. The tanks had this special light, to make it easier for our troops to operate at night and I guess blind the Germans. We went out to the California-Arizona desert and practiced there. It was really secret. When we went into town, only a few at a time could go so that we wouldn't talk about the light.

Q: *So did you deploy overseas with the CDL?*

A: Yes, we went overseas in April 1944. But they cancelled the whole program before D-Day. You may know more about that than I do; I never heard why they cancelled the program.

Q: *I heard that maybe the problem was that it worked fine in the desert but not so well where there were trees and buildings. So how did you wind up in the 740th?*

A: Right before we were supposed to cross the Channel, I came down with a bad case of pneumonia that put me in the hospital. By the time I got out, the 701st had gone across. I was worried they might put me in the Infantry but the 740th was about ready to cross and I was sent there. They were all Oklahoma and Texas boys. It was a little strange; they all knew each other and I was a stranger.

Q: *So you crossed the Channel without gear...*

A: Yes, we went forward without tanks. Finally, we were told a column of German tanks was approaching a village and we should go to the depot and pick up tanks. Of course you know the story. The machines were all junk, the boys spent the night scrounging parts to get a few operable units. Then just as our vehicles arrived in Stoumont, a column of German tanks came into town from the opposite direction. Our three vehicles put three of them out of commission and blocked their way into

Stoumont. They diverted to the town of LaGleize, where we blocked them again; they gave up.

On Christmas Day, a huge Air Force flight was overhead. That was a good sight to see.

We spent most of the rest of the war in support of the 82nd Airborne, and we earned the right to wear the 82nd Airborne shoulder patch.

Q: *That's so cool and explains something about my researches into the 80th Division. Were you also allowed to wear bloused pants?*

A: I think so. We got lot of special privileges on our uniforms. Tankers were allowed to tilt their caps from the left while everyone else tilted from the right. I think we may have started out with berets at first.

Q: *Did you have any interesting experiences during Occupation?*

A: I don't know why but a base newspaper reporter gave me the nickname "Bulldog," so I was Bulldog Dinin. One day I was walking with a soldier who spoke German. We passed two German women and the guy told me one of them said, "I wouldn't mind putting my slippers under his bed." But by the time we went back to find them, they had disappeared.

On the way home, as a Tech Sergeant, I had the same privileges onboard the ship as officers. I was discharged January 26, 1946. I went back to school and worked as an optometrist.



Top: Ralph Dinin (center) with two Russian soldiers, 1945



Right: Bugle editor Leon Reed with Ralph Dinin.



SERVICE WITH THE 969TH FIELD ARTILLERY BATTALION

BY 1STLT JAMES NASH

This article was compiled by John Mohor, Past President, from the unpublished autobiography of James Nash "Haunted Memories of a Moment in Time" provided by his youngest daughter Diane Malone.

JAMES NASH WAS BORN NOVEMBER 10th, 1918, and died December 11th 2008. This is just a small excerpt from his amazing life story, focusing on the immediate lead up to the time James and the 969th FA Bn were in the Battle of the Bulge.

2nd Lt. James Nash initially worked as the Recon and Survey Officer (RSO) of the battalion then later having made 1st Lt., as Battalion S-2. Along with surviving members of the 333rd FA Battalion, these normally Corps level units provided much needed big fire power to the 101st Airborne Division during the siege of Bastogne. Both units were equipped with the M1 155mm towed howitzer affectionately known by many as "Long Tom's."



"Our Commanding Officer was uneasy about reports and decided to move the battalion to a different location about two miles away. There was much grumbling among the men when orders were given to evacuate the positions we had occupied the past three months. They would have to leave the warm rooms which they had constructed underground.

On the Morning of December 16, 1944, we were awakened at 03:00 am by incoming artillery shells like nothing we had seen before. Our old gun positions were blasted with artillery fire until there were only black holes in the snow and the air smelled of gun powder. Had we remained in the old positions, we would have lost everything and probably our lives. The destruction was so complete, we were unable to comprehend the devastation. We learned that heavy German armor had attacked along a fifty mile front and had overrun the thinly defended front line.

We were ordered to immediately evacuate our positions and to withdraw along a route toward Bastogne, Belgium. We were told that further orders would come by radio but to move now while we had a chance. As we neared the narrow black topped road that would take us toward Bastogne, we noticed thousands of other units and troops were also withdrawing. Trucks, jeeps, guns, etc. jammed bumper to bumper and crept slowly along.

We slowly rolled along through the forest, not knowing where the Germans were or when they would attack us. Late in the afternoon, we arrived at a village called Longchamps. The people there were very surprised to see us and said that several German tanks had already come through the village, and that the German soldiers were wearing American uniforms. As the day was ending, we pulled off the road and prepared to spend the night. As we were about to get settled, a shot rang out from a group of trees nearby and we knew that we were under a tank attack. We hurriedly pulled our big guns about and began firing at the tanks and soon had knocked out three tanks and had killed thirty or forty men. The first round from the enemy tank had destroyed one of

our 6X6 trucks and had killed two of our enlisted men.

General Troy Middleton, the Commanding Officer of the 8th Corps, contacted us by radio and informed us that the Allies would make a stand at Bastogne and that our unit would be attached to the 101st Airborne Division. He stated that heavy artillery would be desperately needed and that we should make every effort to fight our way through.

We didn't know whether land mines had been placed along the dirt road, or whether trees along the road had been wired to blow and fall across the road when trip wires were run into. These and millions of other things raced through my mind as my driver and I led the Battalion down the road. If we ran into any more opposition, we would certainly be in a very dangerous place. Luck must have been with us for the remainder of the day, for nightfall found us in a small place called Villeroux, a Belgian

village about eight miles from Bastogne.

The village lay in a valley at the base of two hills, which made it appear to have been constructed in a bowl. Snow was over a foot deep and heavy fog had rolled in, creating a rather ghost-like condition. We drove our vehicles as close to the buildings as we could get, in order to get out of the wind and blowing snow. We would need to remain in the vehicles as we might move out at any time.

Our Commanding Officer was advised by radio that the 101st Airborne Division was in Bastogne and that the city was almost surrounded, with only the road between Villeroux and Bastogne remaining open. We badly needed rest and sleep but all through the night Villeroux was shelled by mortar fire and heavy machine gun fire. Some of our men received slight wounds and some of our equipment was shot up. Some of our trucks were damaged so badly that they had to be unloaded and reloaded on other vehicles.

The following morning at first light all hell broke loose. We discovered that during the night we had been surrounded. The Germans were closing in on us and it appeared that soon their infantry would overrun us. Our men were not trained to fight hand to hand, and were not equipped to do so. Even so, as the shadowy figures slowly came closer through the fog, our men returned their fire and halted their advance. Heavy mortar fire increased and we reasoned that soon their infantry would again try to overrun us. Our radios had been knocked out and we could not communicate with anyone. But we knew that it would be suicidal to remain in the village. Our only hope was to break through the lines of the attacking force and escape.

We reached the city limits of Bastogne that afternoon, December 19, 1944. After being on the road for three days, we were

continued on page 21

exhausted and hungry. Yet, we knew that the entire world was expecting us to hold out—to fight and not let the Germans take Bastogne. . . .

Obviously, our situation was very serious. We were encircled by the enemy, cut off from supply lines, with our ammunition very low and our food supply almost gone. We were outmanned at least 20 to 1, were dead tired and half frozen. Some of the men were without shoes and had wrapped rags around their feet in an effort to keep them out of the snow.

We located our artillery in positions with four 155 Howitzers in each battery pointing in different directions. Since we were surrounded by the Germans, we were able to fire in any direction.

We could not receive news from the rest of the world and it was a very trying time. The hours were filled with apprehension, and all the while the Germans threw 88 shells all around us. Machine gun and rifle fire was continuous and a steady stream of dead and wounded men were brought back from the front lines.

As men were killed and wounded, our ranks grew thinner as no reserves or replacements were available. At times, our howitzer barrels were red hot from firing so many rounds at the enemy and it was necessary to stop firing to allow them to cool off. At night, the Germans dropped flares from their observation planes that would light up the sky and allow their dive bombers to come in and drop bombs everywhere.

The circle grew smaller and by midday on Christmas Eve our food supply was gone and our ammunition was almost gone. The battle lines were almost upon us and the roar of the German tank engines never stopped. Rifle and machine gun fire was maddening. One of the officers of Battery "A" was wounded during the afternoon and I was sent down to act as Gunnery Officer. Another officer of Battery "A" had earlier hurt his back, so the battery was short on officers.... When I arrived at the battery, I noticed that one of the straggling officers from the overrun 333rd Battalion was also at Battery "A." As darkness settled over the foggy countryside, a flight of heavy German bombers came over and a great number of bombs were dropped near our position. We could feel the blast inside the headquarters building. If they didn't receive a direct hit. Three or four other waves of heavy bombers came over and dropped their loads and then the night was silent, except for an occasional burst of machine gun fire.

As the midnight hour on Christmas Eve came nearer, I thought of the fruit cake my wife had sent to me back in early December. I went outside to my jeep and dug through the 50 caliber ammunition and guns that occupied the rear area of the jeep. I finally found the small metal container which contained the fruit cake. I returned to the headquarters building and cut the fruit cake into four pieces so the other three officers could share it with me. This was our Christmas. We ate the cake slowly to make it last as long as possible. . . . The cake was good and we all enjoyed it. There was no joy in our lives this Christmas Eve. It was the worst moment of my life; a time that would bring death and destruction to many lives.

At midnight, the beginning of Christmas Day, 1944, Lt. Thomas and I went outside to check our machine gun positions and our gun crews. I talked with the crew at one gun position and wished them a safe Christmas. Minutes later, as I was walking to the next gun position, the Germans dropped their flares again. Immediately their dive bombers came in quite close and began dropping their bombs. I fell flat on my stomach into the snow just as a terrific explosion occurred near me. As I raised myself from the snow, my ears felt as if they had been blown out. I knew that I was deaf and hoped that my condition would be temporary. As I gazed around me, I noticed a huge crater at least ten feet deep and thirty feet across only a few feet from our second gun

position. Dust and the acrid odor of gun powder drifted slowly from the gaping black hole in the white snow. A one thousand pound bomb would be required to produce such a hole. The gun crews all appeared to be safe, although one 155mm howitzer had been destroyed. I turned to go back into the headquarters building only to find that the building was gone. Only a pile of rocks, brick, and rubble remained. Obviously a second bomb must have destroyed the building and killed both the officers. Only minutes before, the four of us had eaten the fruitcake and now only two of us remained.

We searched through the rubble as best we could in the darkness and then during the daylight hours on Christmas Day, to find the two bodies. Our search produced nothing except a black fur collar from the jacket worn by the 333rd officer and the tied down leather holster which Captain Amann had worn to carry his 45 caliber government issued automatic pistol. There were no traces of the bodies and although we knew without a doubt that both of them were dead, according to army rules and regulations, we were forced to report them as missing in action.

Early on Christmas morning an officer from "B" Battery and one from Service Battery were assigned to "A" Battery. Captain Caplan became the new "A" Battery commander and I was transferred back to Battalion Headquarters.

More parachutes with needed supplies were dropped on December 26th and 27th and the American Air Force had completely dominated the skies since the fog had lifted. High above, Allied bombers in great waves flew over on their way to bomb military installations inside Germany. Below them, hundreds of fighter planes were diving, swooping and striking the German positions. Still closer to the ground, the Dakotas continued to drop parachutes with more supplies. For two days this savage battle raged. We could see our dive bombers as they bombed the woods near Bastogne. We saw one of our fighter planes crash and go up in flames.

German soldiers took the small villages near Bastogne. They fought house to house, and their advance patrols reached the edge of an apple orchard near our Battalion headquarters. Our artillery men and officers were deployed as infantry.

On December 26th, through radio communication with the pilot of a fighter plane, we learned that a combat team from General Patton's Third Army was two days away and desperately fighting to get to Bastogne. On December 27th, we heard that the armored column was close but experiencing very heavy fire. At last, on Wednesday, December 28th, the armored column broke through the German ring around Bastogne and we were relieved! This was truly our finest hour."





All of our departing heroes left a legacy that will live forever in the memories of their family members, their fellow countrymen, and the peoples they liberated. Some also left written memories.

“THE ARDENNES MARCH”

by Frederick Faulkner
Summer 2024 Bugle

IN 2007, BULGE VETERAN Fredrick Faulkner composed “The Ardennes March” for concert band. It was recently scored for a symphony orchestra and performed by the Florida Orchestra. Before the performance, Faulkner addressed the crowd.

“500,000 American troops served in the battle of whom 19,000 American boys, mostly 18-21, died in action. Clearly the United States saved Europe.

The weather was horrible and it lasted 40 days, from December 16, 1944, to January 25, 1945. I was there the entire time. Temperatures were as low as 15 degrees below Fahrenheit. Additionally there was a blanket of 18-24 inches of snow and the wind blew constantly. It was acknowledged as being the worst winter in Europe in 50 years.

We were constantly at the mercy of the Luftwaffe and the 88mm artillery, the most effective artillery piece in the world.

There was never a hot meal or a warm berth. Our feet were always wet and we were always cold. Dry socks when available were carried in our helmet to keep them dry from our body heat. It's amazing what the human body can endure.

Ammunition, food and other supplies were slow to be replaced because the roads were destroyed by shell fire. The Red Ball Express, the system of 2 ½ ton trucks, driven mostly by black soldiers, had a difficult time driving over those destroyed roads.

Imagine running out of food and ammunition during this horrible battle. Unfortunately it happened. Morale was challenged, but at the end of the day, we prevailed.

It is my hope that this March will continue to be played after I am gone as a reminder of this terrible battle and how America stood tall. And as a reminder of the sacrifices of American youth. Hopefully, never again.”

View the concert on Youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wDs6QhhN8pM>

VETERAN MEMBERS: SUBMIT YOUR BULGE MEMORY!

If you are a veteran who participated in this historic battle, **please share a photo, a memory, and/or thoughts** about the impact it has had. It can be a few sentences or short paragraph with a picture. We will continue to share Bulge Memories in future issues of *The Bulge Bugle*®.

Email your responses to:

bulge.bugle.editor@gmail.com

A SOLDIERS' STORY

by Dominick Santagata, 5th INFD, 7th ECB
August 2012 Bugle

AT THIS TIME OUR division was taken from the First Army of Gen. Omar Bradley and assigned to the Fifth Division under the command of Gen. George S. Patton, Jr. My first river crossing occurred at the Vire River that night. This was a night to remember. When the first boat reached the other shore, all hell broke loose, and it looked like the 4th of July. Enemy fire was coming from all directions. We then had to return to get another boatload of men. At Anger the Division moved on to a railroad bridge. Our mission was to make the bridge a highway bridge for trucks and other vehicles. The German snipers kept us under heavy fire and we were always running for cover, however, we were successful in completing our task. We then rapidly deployed across, the men riding on M-10 tank destroyers and any other vehicle available. As we traveled through many towns and villages we fought and killed Germans, as well as taking prisoners. We were on the outskirts of Paris, fighting the Germans in foxholes, when the word came we would not be liberating Paris, rather we were assigned to Reims, this was not too disappointing, as this was the champagne city of France. Upon our arrival we filled our canteens with the “bubbly.”

... we now entered into the Battle of the Bulge phase of the War. On December 16, 1944, the Germans made a big thrust into the American lines into the Ardennes Forest.

A meeting was held in Verdun by Gen. Eisenhower, Gen. Bradley, and Gen. Patton. Patton was asked how soon he could have his army ready to halt this major attack. Gen. Patton replied “I will have three divisions ready in two days’ time.” This was thought to be an impossible task. Within two days, all the troops were ready and the men went at top speed on every vehicle available.

Patton's Fourth Armored Division headed the attack. They found a hole in the German line of defense and relieved the troops that were trapped in Bastogne. Another important river crossing was the Sauer River at the Town of Diekirch in Luxembourg. We wore white bed-sheets to camouflage ourselves I was the platoon radio man that day when my best friend, Donald Ickes from Chicago, was killed on the bank of the river. To this day, each year the town re-enacts the river crossing of the 7th Engineer Battalion of the 5th Division who was responsible for the liberation of their town.

In July we returned to France and left from the Port of Le Havre for America. We arrived in the Hudson River on the Liberty ship LeJeunes sailing past “Lady Liberty.” It was the best feeling in the world.



• IN MEMORIAM •

Troy Barrick, 6/1/2024 ★ Norbert Dishaw, 12/24/2024
Fred Faulkner, 1/10/2025 ★ Raymond Grimard, 12/14/2024
Dominick "Dan" Santagata 12/24/2024 ★ Bob Welsh, 1/3/2025

TRIBUTES TO HEROES

FRED FAULKNER

FREDERICK L FAULKNER JR, Tech-3, Radio Intercept Operator G-738, 3257 Signal Service Co – 6/23/25 – 1/10/25. Battle of the Bulge veteran. He participated in battles of Ardennes, Rhineland and Central Europe. Steadfast in his patriotism and belief in his civic duty, he was a Sunday School teacher, a member of his children's school board and a village board member.

He was a steadfast champion of veterans' causes, dedicating much of his later life to honoring those who served alongside him, including organizing gatherings of his unit buddies. He participated actively in his local VFW Post 10167, Holiday, FL.

An accomplished musician his entire life, Fred composed three pieces honoring those who served in the Battle of the Bulge, Pearl Harbor and Vietnam. His Ardennes March has been played many times, most recently by the Florida Orchestra and with great honor, scheduled to be played by the U.S. Marine Band in May 2025.

Donations can be made to the VFW Post 10167, 4619 Bartlet Road, Holiday, FL 34690 or The Florida Orchestra <https://the.floridaorchestra.org/donate/contribute1>

DAN SANTAGATA, 5TH ENG CMBT BN B

DAN SANTAGATA, 5th Eng Cmbt Bn B was a proud American. He made many friends at the Battle of the Bulge Reunions. His broad smile showed the love in his heart. He enjoyed giving presentations to young people - sharing his experiences during the war. He fought in 5 major campaigns (Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes and Central Europe. He crossed over 26 rivers - including the Rhine River. He received the Chevalier of the Legion of Honor by the Ambassador of France. On Christmas Eve, the angels called him home when he was surrounded by his loving family. He was 100 years old. We will miss Dan's smile. To honor Dan's legacy, the family suggested a donation to the Battle of the Bulge Association.

BOB WELSH, 87TH INFANTRY DIV.



BOB BROWNLEE WELSH, 87th INFID joined his comrades on 3 Jan 2025. He had celebrated his 102nd birthday on Nov 7 in Charlotte, NC.

Bob joined the ROTC in college and this led to him being commissioned as a 2nd Lt in 1942 and joining the 87th that was eventually attached to Patton's Third Army. He became a Tiger Patrol leader and fought in the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium, Luxembourg and Germany and continued toward the border of Czechoslovakia. Bob was very proud to have served with the 87th. He was awarded a Bronze Star for valor. After the war he served in Operation Paperclip getting scientists and their families and belongings to the port or airport for travel to the U.S.

After his discharge from the army, he finished college and began law school but diverted his attention to photography and became a very successful photographer. After retirement, Robert became involved in the 87th INFID Legacy Association and the Battle of the Bulge Association. He gave speeches about his experiences during the war and wrote his autobiography, *Two Foes to Fight*. He also painted landscapes, portraits, and introspective canvasses that were on his books: *Theology*, poems about his unique perspective of Christianity; and *Mystical Enigma*, plays of Biblical Scripture. Bob was also known for giving back to the community—including being a Sunday school teacher for decades. We will miss Bob's smile and positive spirit.

(Bob's book *Two Foes to Fight* is available on Amazon) Photo supplied by Linda Miller



THE 17TH AIRBORNE (ARBN) DIVISION

Activated on April 15, 1943, at Camp Mackall, NC
with a cadre from the 101st Airborne Division.



Training: Sandhills of NC (9 months); Tennessee Maneuvers (winter); Camp Forrest, TN (five months, battle skills).

Overseas: Arrived to Liverpool, England August 26, 1944. Left Camp Chisledon on August 30, 1944.

Major Campaigns: Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace, Central Europe

Days in Combat: 45

Casualties: 6,745 (1,191; WIA 4,904; MIA 224, POW 426)

Distinguished Unit Citations: 4

Awards: Congressional Medal of Honor 4; Distinguished Service Cross 4; Distinguished Service Medal 1; Silver Star 179; Legion of Merit 15; Soldier's Medal 6; Bronze Star Medal 727.

Commander: Major General William "Bud" Miley

Inactivated: September 15, 1945.

IN AUGUST 1944, the Division deployed overseas from Boston to England on the USS Wakefield. After leaving Camp Chisledon, the Division was assigned to XVIII Corps (Airborne). Together with the American 101st and 82nd ARBN, the Polish Brigade, and the British 6th and 1st ARBN Divisions, they became part of the First Allied Airborne Army.

When the Battle of the Bulge began, units of the 17th ARBN were rushed to the Reims area of France by air in spectacular night transport landings. They closed in at Mourmelon. After taking over the defense of the Meuse River sector from Givet to Verdun on 25 Dec, they moved to Neufchateau, Belgium, then through the snow to Morhet, relieving the 28th INFD, on January 3, 1945. General Patton, who had just taken command of the sector, believed that the Germans, once stopped at Bastogne, were in full retreat. Under appalling conditions of snow and fog, with poor intelligence, no air cover, and inadequate artillery support, Patton ordered the 17th ARBN to attack. With the 101st ARBN Division on the right, and the 87th INFD on the left, the 17th troopers moved to halt the Germans who were attacking northwest to close the Bastogne corridor. Hitler on the other hand, furious at the failure to take Bastogne, commanded two German panzer armies in the north to regroup and attack again. The 17th ARBN was among the American divisions that ran head on into this numerically-superior force.

The 194th Glider Infantry Regiment (GIR), the 550th AB Infantry Battalion and the 513th Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR) made the attack. In reserve were the 193rd GIR and the 507th PIR.

The Germans hurled dozens of tanks and a heavy barrage of artillery at the attackers and many casualties were inflicted on the lightly-armed troopers. The 2,250 yards of narrow, high-rimmed road northeast of Bastogne rightfully earned its nickname of "Dead Man's Ridge." Attacking in a driving snowstorm, the division battled for control of the ridge. It was a bitterly fought battle that saw the 17th ARBN suffer close to 1,000 casualties during the three-day battle. Lightly-armed paratroopers and glidermen, at times in waist deep snow, were fighting German tanks. The division captured several small Belgian towns and entered Flamierge January 7, 1945, but enemy counterattacks necessitated a withdrawal. However, constant pressure and aggressive patrolling caused the enemy to retreat to the Ourthe River.

Major General Miley, the Division Commander, indicated that he was taking 40% casualties in some of his battalions. Noted military historian S.L.A. Marshall later wrote that no other American division suffered as brutal and as high a casualty rate in their "baptism of fire."

On January 18, 1945, the division relieved the 11th ARMD at Houffalize, Belgium, pushed enemy remnants from the Bulge, and seized Wattermal and Espelier on January 26. Coming under III Corps, the 17th turned toward Luxembourg, taking Eschweiler and Clervaux and clearing the enemy from the west bank of the Our River. Aggressive patrols crossed the river to probe the Siegfried Line defenses and established a limited bridgehead near Dasburg before being relieved by the 6th ARMD on February 10, 1945.

General Miley led the Division in a daring daylight jump over the Rhine River into the Ruhr heartland of Germany itself in "Operation Varsity" on March 24, 1945. The mission was "to seize, clear, and secure the division area with priority to the high ground east of Diersfordt and the bridges over the Issel River, protect the right flank of the Corps, establish contact with the British 1st Commando Brigade, and the British 6th ARBN Division."

Taking off from marshalling areas in France, they and the 6th British ARBN Div with a combined force of 17,000 men, were dropped in just over 2 hours in an area containing 85,000 German troops. Varsity constituted the largest Airborne operation ever staged in one single day. The 507th PIR began landing at 0948 hours and landings were completed by 1201 hours. The Germans knew they were coming. So heavy was the flak they encountered, that an observer—General James Gavin—flying above the air armada counted 23 aircraft going down at one time. One regiment (513th PIR) was flown in the new larger C-46s—an airplane that with their exposed fuel lines turned out to be fire-prone death traps. A smoke haze hung over the drop and landing zones causing some of the units to be dropped off their designated areas. In particular, the 513th troopers were dropped 2-3 miles from their Drop Zone. However, the troopers sized up the situation and began attacking the objectives in their vicinity and fought toward their assigned positions. Everywhere the Germans were found, they were routed from their positions.

Earlier, in the planning for Operation Varsity, it became evident that there would not be enough transport planes to tow the required glider elements consisting of 906 Waco gliders with men, jeeps, artillery, and other equipment. A decision was then made simply to have 578 of these heavily-laden gliders pulled two per plane in a V formation. The result was added carnage, as gliders crashed on take-off or tow lines fouled during the 2-3 hour flight, ripping off wings. Coming so close to the end of the war, little publicity was ever given that operation or its casualties. The worst single day in airborne history was not in Normandy or Holland, but at Wesel on March 24, 1945, where more than 1,070 members of the 17th ARBN and the 6th British ARBN Divisions were killed and thousands more wounded. Despite the costs, Varsity achieved all of its objectives, assisting in the final conquest of Nazi Germany.

continued on page 25

On March 25, the 17th ARBN secured the bridges over the Issel River and entrenched itself firmly along the Issel Canal. Moving eastward, it captured Haltern 29 Mar, and Munster on April 2, 1945. The 17th entered the Battle of the Ruhr Pocket, relieving the 79th INF. It crossed the Rhine-Herne Canal April 6, and set up a secure bridgehead for the attack on Essen. The "Pittsburgh of the Ruhr" fell April 10, 1945, and the industrial cities of Mulheim and Duisburg were cleared in the continuing attack. Military government duties began April 12 and active contact with the enemy ceased six days later. The division came under the XXII Corps on April 24, 1945. It continued its occupation duties until Jun 15, 1945 when it returned to France for redeployment. Many troopers were then transferred to the 82nd and 101st ARBN Divisions and for occupation duty in Berlin and Austria. Many of the men sent to the 82nd later came home with them to participate in the victory parade in New York City. Others joined the 13th ARBN Division, which was being returned to the US to be readied for the Pacific and the expected airborne invasion of Japan. The remainder of the division was deactivated on 15 Sept 1945 at Camp Miles Standish, MA.

By the time World War II was over in Europe, the 17th ARBN had suffered 6,745 killed and wounded—almost double the daily combat average of any other American Airborne division. It had the most recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor (four).

Summarized from the website of the 17th Airborne Division. <https://www.17thscions.org/history>. Edited by Patty Bowers and David Shortt. Submitted by Doris Davis, VP, Military and Veterans Affairs. The Scions of the 17th Airborne invites family members to join the organization.

VOICES OF THE 17TH AIRBORNE

"THREE DAYS AND A HERO TO REMEMBER"

AS THE YEARS PASS so rapidly now, it is amazing how clearly I still remember three particular days during those indescribable months. January 4th, 7th, and 26th, of 1945, have lived indelibly in my mind and have been recalled so many times since that time. During those days it seemed that we would all surely die, and on the 26th of January, I saw a man step up and prove himself to be a hero.

On January 26th, Lt. Clark informed the Battalion CO that we had taken our objective and according to our map, a patrol would enter territory a mile behind the German lines. I joined the small patrol that was ordered to scout out the situation in enemy territory. We had no cover and were in plain sight when we were about 400 yards from our destination. Much to my surprise, we made it to a row of trees and it was a miracle that we weren't all wiped out because the Germans were only a few hundred feet on the other side of that row of trees!

When we reached the trees, Lt. Clark sent James G. Smith, a machine gun sergeant, and three of his men to set up a gun 200 yards to the right of the Company CP. In minutes, the Germans brought them under fire with one being killed and another, John Erdman, being hit five times by a sniper.

One trooper with me was hit while we were routing out two Germans in a machine gun nest and a tracked vehicle started up nearby. Lt. Clark sent word for us to "Get the Hell out of there." Noble Eagle, my 300 radio operator, and I took off through the trees. We were running back over the same open ground, bullets snapping everywhere—I can't understand how they missed us.

We had run several hundred yards when I spotted an incredible sight. There was Jim Smith plodding through the knee-deep snow carrying John Erdman on his back. He and another trooper had already helped Erdman for about 200 yards when the other trooper couldn't help anymore, so Jim carried him alone. Eagle and I finally reached them. We made a litter of sorts and got Erdman back where he could get medical aid. Jim had carried Erdman on his back for almost half a mile before we reached them to help. We were all under enemy fire over half way back to our own lines.

There is no doubt about it. Jim Smith was solely responsible for saving John Erdman's life. It really didn't soak into me at the time, but I had never seen anyone put someone else's life above their own. I had never really experienced what "love for one's fellow man" or esprit de corps really meant until that day. I do now and I'll never forget the two terrible days of January 4th and 7th, and the day I saw a real-life hero.

By Derk Strikwerda 17th ARBN 513 PIR C Co.

"MY UNTOLD STORY"

WE FINALLY GOT WORD to withdraw but unfortunately as a machine gunner, we have to stay back and cover the withdrawal. When I felt that I gave our troops ample time, I dismantled my gun and threw parts in all directions so that the Germans couldn't use it against us. As soon as I started across the field to join my company, the Germans started in with the artillery again. I could hear the six tube rockets coming in so I hit the snow. That's when my helmet pushed back off my forehead and shrapnel hit me across the top of my head and went out the back of my helmet.

I lay in that freezing cold for about two hours with nothing but a field jacket as our overcoats were taken away for some reason. Army logic I'm sure. My jump boots were little protection for my feet.

Soon, I felt myself being cradled in very strong arms and knew that I was on my way to that happy place. I soon realized that it was a human voice I was hearing reassuring me that I would be alright. I didn't realize that it was a German medic until he started to bandage my head. He threw an overcoat over me and my teeth finally stopped chattering.

I was lying next to another airborne trooper when our artillery started pounding the Germans. The trooper said, "Let's get the Hell out of here. I don't want to be killed by our own shells." He helped me up and we headed back to our lines.

I had no idea where our lines were, so I followed him and he led us right to our battalion aid station. By the time we made it back, my feet were frozen so bad that I couldn't stand anymore. I looked up from my prone position and saw Frank Greco from my home town of Omaha. He asked me to contact his mother and tell her that he was alright. He did make it home later.

The medics tagged me and a few days later I was in a hospital in France and then on to England.

I have regretted the fact that I didn't ask the German medic for his name and address. He was such a great human being, and so gentle and caring with me. Hopefully, he was reunited with his mother and family. I never saw my mother again as she passed away while I was recuperating in the hospital in England. However, I was fortunate that I had a father, and brothers and sisters to come home to.

By Joseph Campagna, 193rd Glider Infantry Regiment, 2nd Battalion, 17th Airborne Division, February 2002 Bugle

DIVISION REUNIONS PLANNED FOR 2025

*The following reunions are scheduled for 2025. Please feel free to contact the individuals noted for further information.
Some Divisions require membership in their organization in order to attend a reunion. Feel free to inquire.
Many Divisions welcome Associate Members.*



SOCIETY OF THE 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION

JUNE 18 - 22, 2025 • Oak Brook, IL (near Chicago)
Opportunity to visit the Division Museum at Cantigny in Wheaton, IL
DEADLINE: June 6, 2025 (online);
18 June 2025 (on-site)
CONTACT: Joshua Sandlin sfdevents@gmail.com
or sfid1919@gmail.com / 785-307-1472
WEBSITE: www.1stid.org
The 1st ID has chapters in IN, Eastern NY,
Western NY, KS, OH & WI: www.1stid.org/chapters



8TH ARMORED DIVISION

Information will be posted in the next issue of The Bulge Bugle. Continue to watch website for details.
WEBSITE: 8th-armored.org



12TH ARMORED DIVISION ASSOCIATION

AUG 6 - 10, 2025 • Nashville, TN
DEADLINE: July 6, 2025
CONTACT: Nina Donath: ninaewd@gmail.com
or Geoff Lackey: galackey98@gmail.com
WEBSITE: www.12tharmoreddivisionassociation.us
12th AD Museum in Abilene, TX:
12tharmoreddivisionmuseum.com



2ND INFANTRY DIVISION

SEPT 24 - 27, 2025 • San Antonio, TX
DEADLINE: for hotel res: Aug 22, 2024
CONTACT: Bill Schultz, 2nd Vice President
cmbt2b20@hotmail.com / 716-804-4791
WEBSITE: www.2ida.org
Note: The 2nd ID has a branch in FL



17TH AIRBORNE DIVISION

APRIL 11 - 14, 2025 • Gettysburg, PA
DEADLINE: March 14, 2025
CONTACT: Patricia Miller Bowers
Scion17th@gmail.com
WEBSITE: 17thscions.org



2ND ARMORED DIVISION ASSOCIATION

NOV 11, 2025 • Tribute Plaque unveiling
Next Reunion will be at Ft. Knox, KY in 2026
LOCATION: National Museum of US Army,
1775 Liberty Dr, Fort Belvoir, VA
CONTACT: Ramiro
2ndarmoreddivisionassoc@gmail.com



26TH INFANTRY DIVISION

MAY 14, 2025 • VFW Post, Avon, MA
CONTACT: Mariano Bollino
17 Lilac Lane, Weymouth, MA 02188



3RD ARMORED DIVISION

OCT 23 - 26, 2025 • San Antonio, TX
DEADLINE: Sept 23, 2025
CONTACT: Don Davis kycolonel1@aol.com
770-367-9507
WEBSITE: 3ad.org



28TH INFANTRY DIVISION

SEPT 13 - 14, 2025 • Army Expo at Army Heritage
& Education Center, Carlisle, PA
CONTACT: Rodney Miller Rodney.miller3@aol.com
WEBSITE: 28id.org



4TH INFANTRY DIVISION

AUG 11 - 16, 2025 • Colorado Springs, Ft. Carson
CONTACT: Armed Forces Reunion (AFR)
757-625-6401
WEBSITE: www.4thinfantry.org
(Details of reunion are on website)



29TH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION

MID-SEPT 2025 • Williamsburg, VA
CONTACT: Frank Armingier natexecdir@29div.com
WEBSITE: 29thdivisionassociation.com



4TH INFANTRY DIVISION

MAY 2 - 4, 2025 • Carolinas Chapter Mini-Reunion
DEADLINE: April 18, 2025 (for hotel)
CONTACT: Don Eisenman ragmufman64@atmc.net
910-754-9315
WEBSITE: www.4thinfantry.org
(Details are on 4IDA website)



35TH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION

SEPT 5 - 6, 2025 • Leavenworth, KS
DEADLINE: Aug 15, 2025
CONTACT: Executive Secretary
35divassn@gmail.com
785-969-7548
WEBSITE: www.35DivAssn.org



SOCIETY OF THE 5TH DIVISION

SEPT 18 - 22, 2025 • Kansas City, MO
CONTACT: Armed Forces Reunion (AFR)
757-625-6401
or Larry Burnett larrywburnett2@gmail.com
WEBSITE: Societyofthefifthdivision.com



65TH INFANTRY DIVISION

OCT 15 - 19, 2025 • San Antonio, TX
DEADLINE: September 12, 2025
CONTACT: Jackie Hanson bluegrass@abe.midco.net
WEBSITE: 65thdiv.com



70TH INFANTRY DIVISION ASSOCIATION

SEPT 4 - 7, 2025 • Denver, CO
DEADLINE: (for hotel): Aug 14, 2025
CONTACT: Judy Ferber:
 secretary@trailblazersww2.org;
 or Fred Sabatine: pres-elect@trailblazersww2.org
WEBSITE: trailblazersww2.org



80TH DIVISION VETERANS ASSOCIATION

Next Reunion will be in 2026
Continue to watch website for details
WEBSITE: 80thdivision.com



82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION ASSOCIATION

MARCH 6 - 8, 2025 • Lexington, KY
DEADLINE: Feb 15, 2025 (registration \$90).
 After Feb 15, registration is \$105
CONTACT: Bill Waller
 kentuck@82ndairborneassociation.org /
 502-396-4770
WEBSITE: 82ndairborneassociation.org
Hotel rooms after Feb 15 are subject to availability



82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION ASSOCIATION

MAY 19-22, 2025 • Ft. Liberty, NC
(formerly Ft. Bragg)
DEADLINE: May 5, 2025 (registration \$155). After
 May 5, registration is \$180.
CONTACT: execdir@82ndairborneassociation.org
WEBSITE: 82ndairborneassociation.org



TEXAS LONESTAR CHAPTER OF 82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION

Meets the 3rd Sat. of each month.
CONTACT: Larry Stewart lestewart1949@hotmail.
 com / 281-844-1421
WEBSITE: texaslonestar82.org



83RD INFANTRY DIVISION

AUG 3 - 7, 2025 • New Orleans, LA
DEADLINE: July 3, 2025
CONTACT: Tom Thomason, info@83rdassociation.com
WEBSITE: 83rdassociation.com



87TH INFANTRY DIVISION

Legacy Association
Information will be posted in the next issue of The
Bulge Bugle. Continue to watch website for details
WEBSITE: 87thinfantrydivision.com



90TH INFANTRY DIVISION

Next Reunion will be in 2026.
Continue to watch website for details
WEBSITE: 90thdivisionassoc.org



94TH INFANTRY DIV. WWII HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JUNE 9 - 12, 2025 • Gettysburg, PA
DEADLINE: TBD
CONTACT: John Clyburn
 94thhistsociety@comcast.net / 609-699-6280
WEBSITE: 94thinfdiv.com



95TH INFANTRY DIVISION

SEPT/OCT 2025 • New Orleans, LA
Information will be posted in the next issue of The
Bulge Bugle
FACEBOOK: 95thDivisionLegacyAssociation



101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION

FEB 12 - 15, 2025 • Tampa, FL
WEBSITE: Screamingeagle.org



106TH INFANTRY DIVISION

SEPT 17 - 21, 2025 • Columbus, GA
DEADLINE: August 18, 2024
CONTACT: David Smith dbsmith110@gmail.com
WEBSITE: 106thinfdivassn.org



740TH TANK BATTALION

OCT 24 - 26, 2025 • College Station, TX
DEADLINE: Sept 24, 2025
CONTACT: mchatchel78@gmail.com

REUNIONS ATTENDED IN OCTOBER 2024

DORIS DAVIS, VICE PRESIDENT of Military and Veterans Affairs, attended the 79th Infantry Division Reunion in Jacksonville, FL from October 17-20, 2024 followed by the 3rd Armored Reunion in Columbus/Ft Moore, GA from Oct 20-24, 2024.

The 79th Infantry Division Reunion included a visit to Ft. Blanding—a training center for Florida's National Guard Units and other US Armed Forces units (including ROTC units). A wreath was laid at the 79th Division monument. A total of 45 attendees were present—including MG Diane Del Rossi, BG William Wilkerson, CSM George Luedtke. The 79th Division defended the southern flank of the bulge during the Battle of the Bulge. They were attached to Patton's Third Army. Doris' father served in the 79th Infantry Division.

The 3rd Armored Reunion included a visit to Ft. Moore (formerly Ft. Benning)—the primary training site for the US Army Infantry and Armor Schools and Holme of Tuscany US Army Maneuver Center of Excellence, the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation and elements of the 75th Ranger Regiment. One of the classrooms on base is devoted to the 3rd Armored Division that trained there. Walter Stitt, WWII Veteran of the 33rd Armored Regiment was in attendance. A total of 96 people attended the reunion. A wreath was laid at their monument at Ft. Moore.

(Note: Walter's book *Surviving Three Shermans: With the 3rd Armored Division Into the Battle of the Bulge: What I Didn't Tell Mother about My War* is available on Amazon)

Compiled by Doris Davis, Vice President of Military and Veterans Affairs and President of the Golden Gate Chapter of the Battle of the Bulge Association

VIRGINIA CRATER CHAPTER

Submitted by
Mary Ann Coates Smith, Crater President

THE COMMEMORATION EVENT was held January 21-24, 2025. Thanks to Jim Triesler for acting as Master of Ceremonies, Betsy Rose for her creative eblasts, Christine Guidry Law for the special 80th Anniversary Program, and Mary Ann Coates Smith, event planner, for donating the lanyards and holders. Mary Ann also made a donation of \$1,000.00 (in memory of her dad, James H. Coates, December 17, 1944, Malmedy Massacre) with Matching Funds from TowneBank Foundation (Franklin Federal Savings Bank). Both are to be used only for payment of BOBA's many software programs and insurance policies until the funds are depleted.

Mary Ann displayed her Dad's artifacts, as Jim Triesler did with his father-in-law's. Thanks to Crater member Kayla Smith for getting WWII veteran Andy Valero to the 80th Anniversary events. She spoke on her relationship with Andy and received a standing ovation on completion. Congratulations to Christine Guidry Law as *The Bugle's* new editor.

Mary Ann traveled from the Commemoration to Gettysburg to display her Dad's artifacts at the Annual WWII American Experience Museum on January 25, for the third time.



Mary Ann's display of her father's memorabilia. James H. Coates was killed December 17, 1944, Malmedy Massacre



Mary Ann Coates Smith with Susan Eisenhower



(Above) Virginia Crater Chapter member Kayla Smith with WWII Veteran Andy Valero

(Left) Jim Triesler interviews WWII Veteran Joe Landry

Photo Credits: Christine Guidry Law, Mary Ann Coates Smith

WE NEED YOUR CHAPTER'S NEWS!

Please send to: bulge.bugle.editor@gmail.com

NEXT ISSUE DEADLINE: APRIL 28, 2025

DELAWARE VALLEY CHAPTER PHILADELPHIA REGION

Submitted by
Andy Waskie, DelVal Chapter President

OUR CHAPTER MEETS regularly on the final Wednesday of each month—with a few exceptions; there is NO meeting in July, and the Holiday meeting is the second Wednesday of December with NO meeting at the end of November or December. We meet in the Chapel of the Four Chaplains at the Philadelphia Navy Yard at 12:30 pm. The meeting is free and open to all interested in preserving and promoting the story of the veterans of WWII. We have a relaxed atmosphere, and usually have pizza courtesy of the Chapter.

The Chapel of the Four Chaplains is a historic WWII site which honors the memory of ALL veterans, especially the four U.S. Army Chaplains who gave up their life preservers to soldiers on the U.S. Army transport *Dorchester* after it was torpedoed in 1943 in the North Atlantic. Two Protestant pastors, one Catholic priest, and one Jewish rabbi were lost at sea saving the lives of other victims.

At each meeting we discuss incidents of WWII, inform about upcoming events related to WWII history, and plan outreach to veterans in need.

There are four WWII veterans of the Battle of the Bulge who are members, and two usually attend in person: Jake Ruser and Benjamin Berry. Ben and Jake were active, with one or both attending a medal ceremony at Ft. Indiantown Gap (p. 7), the BOBA Commemoration in Arlington (p. 8), and a reception and award ceremony hosted by the Consulates of Belgium and Luxembourg. Jake also celebrated his 100th birthday on December 27, 2024, while Ben celebrated his 102nd on September 21, 2024.

The Chapter has close ties to Legion Post 405 at the Union League, the Chapel of the Four Chaplains Foundation, the Mt. America Foundation, and other veterans' related organizations.

Our WWII Veterans are frequently invited to speak to historical and patriotic groups to tell their stories.

Our Chapter has about twenty active members. We publish a quarterly newsletter called *Ardennes Voice*, edited and written by Ed McLaughlin and Pat Bradley.

Albert El and Benjamin Berry at Jake Ruser's 100th Birthday



Scott Sigman; Andy Waskie, BOBA Vice President, Chapters, and President, Delaware Valley Chapter; and Jake Ruser



Benjamin Berry Cutting Birthday Cake



Jake Ruser cuts 100th birthday cake

SPECIAL OFFER FOR OUR VETERANS! BUY 1 FOR \$30, GET 2ND COPY FOR \$10! 2 FOR \$40

THE VBOB CERTIFICATE: HAVE YOU ORDERED YOURS?



THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE ASSOCIATION, INC. is proud to offer this full color 11" by 17" certificate, as a legacy item 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. (There is also a version worded for those who were killed in action or died of their wounds. Be sure to check the appropriate box on the form.) If you haven't ordered yours, then you might want to consider ordering one to give to your grandchildren. They are generally most appreciative of your service, and the certificate makes an excellent gift—also for that buddy with whom you served in the Bulge. You do not have to be a member of BOBA 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 wish that each unit insignia could have been shown, but with approximately 2000 units that participated in the Bulge, it is 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 box. **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 FOR 1 CERTIFICATE IS \$30 / 2 FOR \$40 (postpaid)**

Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge Certificate Order Form

I have enclosed a check for: ☐ One certificate: (\$30) ☐ Two certificates: (\$40)

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

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. Please check one if applies: ☐ KILLED IN ACTION ☐ DIED OF WOUNDS

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

MAILING INFORMATION: (SPECIAL PRICE SHIPS TO 1 MAILING ADDRESS ONLY)

NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

BOBA MEMBER: ☐ YES ☐ NO (MEMBERSHIP NOT A REQUIREMENT)

Make checks payable to BOBA, Inc. • Orders should be mailed to: BOBA, Inc., P.O. Box 330, Mechanicsville, VA 23111-0330

ORDER ONLINE: WWW.BATTLEOFTHEBULGE.ORG • NO PHONE ORDERS • QUESTIONS: bobamembership@gmail.com

OWN A PIECE OF HISTORY: BOBA CHALLENGE COIN AVAILABLE NOW!



COIN FRONT



COIN BACK

Battle of the Bulge
Association Challenge Coin
\$20.00

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY / STATE / ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

COIN - \$20 each x _____ qty	sub total:	\$ _____
U.S. SHIPPING & HANDLING (1 - 5 coins)	+ \$5.00	\$ _____
U.S. SHIPPING & HANDLING (6 + coins)	+ \$10.00	\$ _____
INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING	+ \$12.00	\$ _____
TOTAL DUE		\$ _____

Cash, check, or money order accepted for mail orders.

Make checks payable to: BOBA, Inc. • **NO PHONE ORDERS** •

Please allow 3-4 weeks for delivery.

Mail to: BOBA Inc., P.O. Box 330, Mechanicsville, VA 23111-0330

Questions? bobamembership@gmail.com

Another Way to Support BOBA: BUY AN AD

The BOBA board approved a policy to permit a limited number of ads in *The Bulge Bugle*®. Ads will be limited to 2 pages of external ads per issue, to make sure we don't dilute the content you have come to count on.

Do you want to announce your business to fellow BOBA members? Or just extend best wishes to BOBA? Our rates are \$120 for a quarter page, \$200 for a half page, and \$300 for a full page.

To advertise, contact:

bulge.bugle.editor@gmail.com



MEMBERSHIP/SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Battle of the Bulge Association®, Inc.
P.O. Box 330
Mechanicsville, VA 23111-0330

☐ **Yearly Membership: \$40 (electronic Bugle)**

☐ **Yearly Veteran (Bulge Vet) Membership: \$20**

***Veteran membership** is for those who have received the Ardennes campaign credit. **Membership** is for relatives, historians or others with an interest in preserving the memory of the Battle of the Bulge.*

Name DOB

Address City State Zip+4

Telephone E-mail

If applying as a Veteran member (you are a Battle of the Bulge vet), please provide the following information about yourself:

Campaigns

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

Regiment Battalion

Company Other

If applying as a Member, please provide the following information about yourself:

Relationship to the Bulge Veteran (if any) ☐ Historian ☐ Other
(wife, son, daughter, niece, etc. or N/A)

The Bulge Vet's Name and Units

Applicant's Signature Date

Please make check or money order payable to BOBA, Inc. Mail with form to above address.

IN THIS ISSUE

80th ANNIVERSARY EVENTS:

7. PA Award Ceremony
8. Preserving History, Honoring Heroes
11. 80th Anniversary Observances
Personal Reflection
12. NY Consulates Honor Veterans
13. BOBA Organizes Gettysburg Conference
14. 80th Anniversary in Europe
2. Contacts
Board
Chapters
3. On the Cover
How to Submit Stories for *The Bulge Bugle*®
Donations
4. President's Message
Treasurer's Report

5. From the New Editor's Desk
From the Out Going Editor
BOBA Appoints New Committees
Monument Fund
6. Welcome Members
2024 Membership Report
Outreach to the Classroom
Ben Berry Featured in Magazine
10. Irving Locker Receives Award
Rep. Ann Wagner:
Honoring the Victory
15. Wereth Memories
16. Books
Missing Monument Restored

BULGE MEMORIES:

17. Honoring the American St. Nick
18. Faith, Family... by Jim Dean
19. Interview with Ralph Dinin
20. 969th Field Artillery Battalion...
1st LT James Nash

22. PARTING WORDS:

The Ardennes March
A Soldiers' Story

23. In Memoriam

24. SPOTLIGHT:

17th Airborne Division

26. Reunions for 2025

27. Reunions Attended in Oct. 2024

28. Virginia Crater Chapter News

29. Delaware Valley Chapter News

30. VBOB Certificate order form

31. Challenge Coin order form Membership form



Battle of the Bulge Association®, Inc. P.O. Box 330 Mechanicsville, VA 23111-0330

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

As with all non-profit organizations, BOBA depends on the generosity of our donors to help support our mission. Please consider a donation to help sustain our mission of perpetuating the memory of the sacrifices made by those who fought in the Battle of the Bulge. You can also use the membership form on the inside cover if you have an address update or want to include a gift subscription to our magazine. All donations are tax deductible and are listed in *The Bulge Bugle*® Battle of the Bulge Association® Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. Donations can be made online at <https://battleofthebulge.org/store/donate/> OR complete the form below and include a check made payable to: Battle of the Bulge Association®, PO Box 330, Mechanicsville, VA, 23111.

Donation Amount: ☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ OTHER Your Name:

If desired, please choose: ☐ Gift In Memory of:
Name Service Units (if applicable)

☐ Gift In Honor of:
Name Service Units (if applicable)

ALL GIFTS ARE GREATLY APPRECIATED!