

❖ WWII MUSINGS ❖

Volume 8 Issue 6

John D. Bowen, Editor

Nov/Dec 2001



Happy Holidays

THANKSGIVING

At this special time of year
we wish to express

*Our heartfelt thanks
to all who have done so much this year,
especially our Fire, Police and Military
personnel.*

*Whether it's a trip to a school, a
veteran's home, the VA Hospital, or a
cemetery to visit a friend or loved one.
Thank you for caring.*

BATTLE OF THE BULGE HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

57th Remembrance & Commemoration
Saturday, 15 Dec 2001

Hospitality Room, Holiday Inn, Laurel MD
Annapolis Tour 9:00 AM

*Banquet Holiday Inn 6:00 PM
See Bulge Bugle for details

Call Dorothy Davis 301-881-0356

*Note location change to Holiday Inn
Due to problems getting on Ft Meade

VETERANS OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

57th Remembrance & Commemoration
Sunday, 16 Dec 2001

Wreath Laying Tomb of the Unknowns 11:00 AM

Followed by

Ceremony of Remembrance BOB Memorial
Arlington Cemetery

Buffet Luncheon, Ft Myers Officers Club,
Arlington VA follows.

Installation of new VBOB Officers

WWII Memorial

Finally, the legal gerrymandering has been denied by the judges of the Appeals Court in the latest attempt to stop the building of the WWII Memorial on the Mall in Washington DC.

Though there is still the possibility that this group may appeal to the Supreme Court, the World War II Committee has started construction and has no intention to stop proceeding with construction unless an injunction is obtained. Construction will be completed in 28 more

EDITOR'S CORNER

WWII COMMEMORATION COMMITTEE

It was my honor and pleasure to participate in these Veterans' Week Activity to provide an overview introduction of the Battle of the Bulge for our Bulge Veterans, LTC Alfred Shehab, 1st Lt Dorothy Davis, RN and Sgt Bob Phillips who talked about their experiences in the Battle of the Bulge.

Our group was just one of many WWII veterans groups from D-Day, Iwo Jima, Pearl Harbor Veterans, Japanese Americans, Tuskegee Airmen and Ambassador John Dolebois, who is the last of the US Army Military intelligence interrogators who interrogated, Donitz and Goering and other high Nazi's before they were tried in Nuremberg. He was a particularly fascinating speaker who spoke each day and could still enliven his talk each time.

What was more important is that these talks were given to various high school and other students over the three days, a total of about 300, in passing on the legacy of the valor and hardships of the World War II generation. It was clear that these future leaders of America were engaged and interested and when called upon will rise to serve their country as you veterans did in the 1940's.

In this time of need in our country, it falls to all veterans to meet with and talk with the young of today to encourage them and to allay any fears that they may have about their serving. AS President Bush issued the call to we veterans to volunteer our services at your local school please give them a call.

As Bulge Veterans you are testimony to perseverance and determination in the face of winter and extreme cold and had been surprised attacked because of a failure of intelligence to anticipate the attack. All the elements of our current tragedy on Sep 11th. But with your TRIUMPH OF COURAGE you were able to overcome the initial setbacks, tolerate the cold and deprivations until the enemy was routed and their attack destroyed. You are the heroes of the Bulge, along with the 19,000 that never left to tell their story. You must tell your and their stories now. You must pass the word. United we are invincible. It is to the youth of today that we must pass the torch of our Freedoms and it is to the youth of today that falls the task to protect those freedoms. It is to them that our encouragement's

WWII Musings is published for the enjoyment of WWII Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge. It is based on the research of John D. Bowen, 613 Chichester Ln, Silver Spring MD 20904-3331 in the Unit Records maintained at the National Archives and Records Administration. Proper credit should be given both to the researcher and to the National Archives. Your comments are welcome. E-mail jdbowen@gateway.net

must go.

JDB

11 SEPTEMBER 2001

The dastardly act on 11 September 2001 was another surprise attack and another intelligence failure as was Pearl Harbor, 60 years ago and the Battle of the Bulge on 16 December 1944.

The tragedy at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon and the crash in Pennsylvania drive home the fact the Freedom is not Free and that in the protection of our freedom we must be ever vigilant, both home and abroad. The complacency in pursuing these thugs in the past did not wake us up until the terrorism hit our home soil.

We must take our hats off to the Fire & Rescue and Police personnel who in spite of personal danger did their job in trying to protect our citizens, especially those who made the ultimate sacrifice. We must pray for them and for our military, Active, National Guard and Reserve, upon whose watch the torch is passed.

As you so valiantly answered the call over fifty years ago, it is to the youth of today that we confide in to protect those Freedoms that you fought to preserve, so that they may live in the land of the brave and the free.

At this Thanksgiving period we must give thanks for our blessings and pray for our protectors and also for those who lost their lives on 11 September. Pray also for the survivors that they may recover soon and pray for those who have lost loved ones in these tragedies, that the good Lord will support them and console them in their loss.

JDB

P.S. Darrell Kuhn is on the mend and would like to hear from

In grateful appreciation for his donation to the Chapter
Robert Edge, Jr. 505 Engr Light Ponton Co

In grateful appreciation to Ethel Klaven for her donation to the
Chapter in memory of her brother
PFC Philip Rosenbloom
Bazooka Gunner, 83rd InfD
Battle of the Bulge

In World War I, American soldiers were called "Doughboys."
In World War II, they were called "GI's."
Today, they are called "Tali-Whackers!!!"

E-Mail Addresses

If you have an E-Mail address please send it with your dues. If we missed your birthday we are sorry that we do not have it. Please send your DOB & Telephone # changes.

Thanks JDB

EVALUATION OF THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

By Christian Kraft, President of CRIBA

At the time of the battle of the Ardennes, I was a 14 year old boy and was living with my family in a house located in the town of Liege, to the rear of the front. That town was subjected to major V-1 and V-2 attacks. We lived day and night in cellars. At that time, civilians like us were very poorly informed about the progress of the battles in the Ardennes. We listened everyday to the censored news of the BBC.

Today, after reading many books from different sources on the Battle of the Ardennes and meeting numerous American, English and German veterans as well as Belgian and Luxembourg civilians, I can form a better opinion.

The Ardennes offensive can be considered as a group of battles whose centers of gravity varied over time and space.

At the beginning of the battle, the powerful 6th Panzer Army, after advancing a few kilometers, was halted by two American Infantry Divisions (2nd and 99th) supported by a powerful American artillery bombardment. This, at the very start, upset the plans of the German High Command.

The very mobile column Panzergruppe Peiper was pushed off course by Combat Engineer Battalions and was ultimately surrounded by the 82nd Airborne, 3rd Armored and 30th Infantry Divisions.

Then the resistance of the 7th Armored Division at St Vith kept the 5th Panzer Army of von Manteuffel from reaching the Meuse in the short time expected.

Farther south, although the town of Bastogne represents a symbol of the heroic resistance of the American Army in the 101st Airborne Division, it was rapidly bypassed by the Panzer Lehr and 2nd Panzer Divisions, which never reached the Meuse, blocked as they were by the 2nd Armored Division.

Between Bastogne and St Vith, the very mobile 116th Panzer Division zig-zagged its way forward and, after two major detours, was stopped on its march to the west by the 2nd Armored Division.

Finally, the northern offensive towards Liege by the 2nd SS Panzer Division was brought to a halt, in the battles of Manhay, by the 3rd Armored and 82nd Airborne Divisions.

The overly ambitious German offensive ran out of steam because of a lack of fuel and reinforcements.

Next, the Americans counterattacked: first the rapid thrust of Patton's 4th Armored Division, which liberated Bastogne, and then the general counteroffensive on the salient's northern and southern flanks, which came together at Houffalize on January 16th, 1945. It must be recognized that the Germans carried out a remarkable defensive battle.

The real victors of the Battle of the Ardennes were the heroic American infantrymen who, instead of running away, held their ground at the start of the battle and allowed American reinforcements, with a mobility extraordinary for that time, to seal up the holes pierced by the German armies and to push them back to their starting point.

This group of battles constituted the Ardennes offensive and counteroffensive, called the "Battle of the Bulge" by the Americans. Responding one day to the young son of an American veteran, I could explain to him that the vast area over which these numerous battlefields were scattered is the reason why there is not an observation tower in the Ardennes, as there is at Gettysburg.

This article was translated from the French e-mail sent to Merritt Bragdon, 2nd Armored Division, 66th Armored Regiment, 1st Bn, a new Chapter member, on 21 May 2001, by the author, and is used with permission. Christian Kraft is the President of CRIBA, the Center of Research and Information on the Battle of the Ardennes.

"Merritt Bragdon's letter of transmittal said in part "...I thought it would be interesting to see what the Belgians themselves think about this major campaign on their territory. One thing in Kraft's analysis that contrasts sharply with media accounts of BOB here is Kraft's lack of concentration on what happened in the southern part of the Ardennes battlefield. Kraft mentions Bastogne in passing but also has a lot to say about the northern shoulder.

I think this deviation from the usual US media version is understandable. Hitler's intention, after all was to book thru on the north, not in the south; his goal was Antwerp, not Reims. And until late Dec 44, most of the German armor was concentrated against the northern shoulder."

(Continued from page 5, 4th ARMORED DIVISION)

All attacks were repulsed w/o loss of ground, and at the end of three weeks men of the 4th ArmD counted 281 German Panther and Tiger Tanks littering the hills. On 18 Dec 1944, tankers of the organization had heard vague reports of a 2 day German offensive in Belgium & Luxembourg. Suddenly that night orders were issued for the outfit to march north against the breakthrough. Elements raced northwest thru Morhange, crossed the Moselle at Pont-a-Mousson, turned north to Briey and Longwy, then into Belgium to Arlon, before arriving at an assembly area at Vaux-les-Rosieres. The 151-mile march had been made in 19 hours. For 4 days, 22-26 Dec, the 4th pounded away at von Rundstedt's offensive from the flank and finally on 26 Dec, the first Sherman tank lumbered the last few hundred yards over the mine strewn Arlon - Bastogne

(Continued on page 6)

TO OUR VETS and THOSE THAT NOW SERVE

Twas the night before Christmas He lived all alone,
In a one bedroom house made of plaster and stone

I had come down the chimney with presents to give
And to see just who in this house did live

I looked all about, a strange sight I did see,
No tinsel, no presents, not even a tree.

No stockings by Mantle, just boots filled with sand,
On the wall hung pictures of far distant lands.

With medals and badges, awards of all kinds,
A sober thought came through my mind.

For this house was different, it was dark and dreary,
I found the home of a soldier, once I could see clearly.

The soldier lay sleeping, silent, alone
Curled up on the floor in this one bedroom home.

The face was so gentle, the room in such disorder,
Not how I pictured a United States soldier.

Was this the hero of whom I'd just read?
Curled up on a poncho, the floor for his bed?

I realized the families that I saw this night,
Owed their lives to these soldiers who were willing to fight.

Soon round the world the children would play,
And grownups would celebrate a bright Christmas day.

They all enjoyed freedom each month of the year,
Because of the soldiers, like the one lying here.

I couldn't help wonder how many lay alone,
On a cold Christmas Eve in a land far from home.

The very thought brought a tear to my eye,
I dropped to my knees and started to cry.

The soldier awakened and I heard a rough voice,
"Santa don't cry, this life is my choice;

I fight for freedom, I don't ask for more,
My life is my God, my Country, my Corps."

The soldier rolled over and drifted to sleep,
I couldn't control it, I continued to weep.

I kept watch for hours, so silent and still
And we both shivered from the cold night's chill.

I didn't want to leave on that cold, dark night,
This guardian of honor so willing to fight.

Then the soldier rolled over, with a voice soft and pure,
Whispered, "Carry on Santa, it's Christmas Day, all is secure."

One look at my watch, and I knew he was right,
"Merry Christmas my friend, and to all a good night

This poem was written in 1998 by a Marine stationed in Okinawa, Japan. The following is his request

"PLEASE, would you do me a favor of sending this to as many people as you can? Christmas will be coming soon and some credit is due our US service men and women for our being able to celebrate these festivities.

Let's try in this small way to pay a tiny bit of what we owe. Make people stop and think of our heroes, living and dead, who sacrificed themselves for us. Please, do your small part to plant this small seed."

MEMBERSHIP

We welcome new members for 2002:

Merritt C Bragdon, Arlington VA	2nd Armd 66AR
Ethel Klavan, Bethesda MD,	Associate
Jim Leftwich, Pittsboro NC	Liaison Pilot 75th InfD
Stanley Wojtusik, Philadelphia PA,	106th InfD

DUES PAID 2002

Daniel R. Fleming	80th InfD 317 Inf K
Elmer H Janosko	310 Sig Ops Bn B
John D. McKinley	87th InfD 346 Inf F
Lucille Rehling	widow 5 InfD 351 Engr (GS)
John W. Rue	99th InfD 394 Inf Svc
John K. Zeender	300 CIC Det 1st US Army

BULGE REENACTMENT

The annual Battle of the Bulge Reenactment will be held from
Wednesday, 23 January 2002

To

Sunday, 27 January 2002
At Fort Indiantown Gap, PA
All Veterans Invited
Deadline 31 Dec 2001

Option C: \$57 -4 nites in Barracks,
Saturday Breakfast and Dinner
Option D: \$37 -4 nites in Barracks,
No Meals

For Registration Forms send #10
stamped self addressed envelope to
John D. Bowen, 613 Chichester Ln
Silver Spring MD 20904-3331

Fact Sheet of the 4th Armored Division

TYPE OF DIVISION: Regular Army

NICKNAME: "Breakthrough" Division. However, no nickname has ever been officially adopted; troopers have preferred to be known simply as members of the 4th Armored.

SHOULDER PATCH: Triangular design divided into three areas: red (representing Field Artillery), blue (representing Infantry), and yellow (representing Cavalry). Superimposed on three areas, in black, are the track of a tank and a cannon. A bolt of lightning, in red, is superimposed on these. The Division's number appears in the upper portion of the triangle.

ACTIVATION DATE: 15 April 1941..

INACTIVATION DATE: 26 April 1946 at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey.

COMPONENT UNITS: Hq Co; Res. Com.; CCA; CCB; 8, 35 and 37 Tank Bns; 10, 51 and 53 Armd Inf Bns; 24th Armd Engr Bn; 25th Cav Ren Sq (Mecz); 144 Armd Sig Co. Division Artillery: 22, 66 and 94 Armd FA Bns. Division Trains: 4th Armd Med Bn; 126 Ord Maint Bn; MP Platoon; Band.

TRAINING: Upon activation the unit was assigned to the Armored Force and stationed at Pine Camp NY. From 14 Sep through 26 Oct 1942, it maneuvered under the Second Army in Tennessee. In Nov 1942, it was transferred to Camp Young CA and participated in Desert Training Center maneuvers from 1 Dec 1942 through 22 Feb 1943. From 19 Apr to 10 Jul, it took part in further Desert Training Center maneuvers and then moved to Camp Bowie, TX, under the VIII Corps, Third Army.

DEPARTED U.S. FOR FOREIGN DUTY: 29 December 1943 from Boston..

OVERSEAS TRAINING: The Division conducted training in England prior to seeing combat on the continent.

DATE ENTERED COMBAT: Division 28 July 1944, First Elements 17 July 1944.

COMBAT DAYS (DIV): 230.

RETURNED TO U.S.: 25 April 1946.

BATTLE CREDITS: (Division) Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes, and Central Europe.

SUCCESSIVE COMMANDING GENERALS: Major General H W Baird from April 1941 to May 1942; Major General J S Wood from May 1942 to December 1944; Major General H Gaffey from Dec 1944 to March 1945; Major General W M Hoge from March to July 1945; Major General F B Prickett from September 1945 to inactivation in April 1946.

CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR WINNERS: 1st Lt James H Fields, Houston TX. He led his platoon in the seizure and defense of a vital hill position near Rechicourt, France, 27 Sep 1944, though greatly weakened and speechless from a serious head wound. He so inspired his depleted platoon that it faced an overwhelming rush of Germans in a stand that grabbed victory from the grasp of the Nazis.

Sgt Joseph J Sadowski, Perth Amboy NJ, for heroism near Valhey, France 14 Sep 1944. As his unit, 37th Tank Bn, pressed towards the town under heavy fire, Sgt Sadowski's tank was disabled, and burst into flame. He ordered his crew to take cover, but one member was unable to dismount. In the face of almost certain death, the sergeant returned to the tank and tried to pry open the turret, being killed during his efforts.

S/Sgt James R Hendrix of Lepanto AR, Company C of the 53rd Armored Infantry Bn, for wiping out two enemy artillery positions and saving the lives of three of his wounded comrades on 26 Dec 1944.

DISTINGUISHED UNIT CITATION: The division became the first Armored Division to receive the Distinguished Unit Citation, given the entire personnel for "extraordinary tactical accomplishment" from 22 Dec 44 to 27 Mar 45 in spearheading the Third Army across France into Germany.

FOREIGN AWARDS: Awarded the French Fourragere for 27 July to 11 August 1944 action at Avranches and 12 to 29 September 1944 action at Nantes and the Moselle area, France by French Decision #272, dated 22 July 1946.

COMBAT HIGHLIGHTS: From the time the 4th ArmdD entered combat on the Normandy peninsula, 17 Jul 1944, its action was nearly continuous during long trek through France, Luxembourg, Belgium, Germany and Czechoslovakia. First real test of the Division was the battle for the city Coutances, France, on 28 Jul. Coutances was taken the day it was attacked, and from there the Division started a marathon sprint that carried it across France to the German border in an unending chase. From Coutances, the unit swung south and lopped off the Brittany peninsula in a lightning thrust. The outfit then swung due east and Combat Command "B" drove 264 miles in 34 hours to reach Prunay, south of Vendeme, France. In mid-September the 4th smashed across the cold, swift Moselle River and drove into the heart of the Germans' winter defense line. Two columns of steel flanked the French City of Nancy and the famous old city fell as the Germans fled to the east. Three weeks after the 4th's crossing of the Moselle River it saw some of the toughest fighting the Division ever encountered. The Germans counterattacked with two Panzer brigades and a Panzer Div, supported by Grenadiers.

(Continued on page 3)

BULGE UNIT REUNIONS

15-16 Dec 2001, Commemoration of the 57th Anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge, by Battle of the Bulge Foundation and Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, Annapolis Tour & Banquet Dec 15th and Arlington National Cemetery, VA Ceremonies Dec 16th

followed by buffet lunch at Ft Myers VA. Hotel accommodations at Holiday Inn, Rt 198, Laurel MD. Contact Ms Dorothy Davis, 301-881-0356.

23-25 Jan 2002, Reenactment of the Battle of the Bulge, Fort Indiantown Gap PA.

Veterans invited as observers and to stay in the WWII barracks. Re-live your barracks days and the comraderie of your fellow veterans. Contact John D. Bowen, 613 Chichester Lane, Silver Spring MD 20904, 301-384-6533 for Registration form by 31 Dec 2001..

Those having reunions can post them on the Internet at <<http://www.usmc.mil/reunions/reunions.nsf>> for free.

(Continued from page 3, 4th ARMORED DIVISION)

highway to signal the relief of the 101st AbnD which occupied besieged Bastogne. After six weeks of waiting for another German attack that never materialized, the 4th plunged into action again.. This time it went thru the Siegfried Line in the wake of the 90th InfD, drove to the Kyll River, paused briefly and then took off on a historical drive that carried to the Rhine River -- 66 miles in 58 hours. Enroute the outfit had surged across the Moselle River at Trois and made a non-stop trip to the ancient city of Worms on the Rhine, after capturing Simmern, Bad Kreuznach and a huge total of Nazi prisoners. This time the outfit passed thru the 5th InfD's bridgehead and crossed the Rhine 24-25 Mar. The Division advanced all night and by morning straddled the Main River south of Hanau, w/4 bridges intact. From here it was a lightning advance all the way to Chemnitz and into Czechoslovakia. After V-E Day the Div was given an occupational mission at Landshut, Ger until departure for the US and inactivation. Some elements of the Div were redesignated as Constabulary units to remain in Ger as occupation forces.

These fact sheets are from The Information Section, Analysis Branch, Hq Army Ground Forces, Washington 25 DC, 1 Mar 1947, as found in the records of the National Archives and Records Administration, RG 407, Archives II, College Park MD. Not all of the Division's Fact sheets have survived and they are being presented here in random order as new ones are found.

Veterans of the Battle of the Bulge, MD/DC

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MARCHER & WWII MUSINGS

Inside This Issue

- Page 3 *WWII Memorial*
- Page 3 *Dec 15 & 16 Affairs*
- Page 5 *Evaluation of Bulge Battle*
- Page 6 *Poem for Holidays*
- Page 6 *Bulge Reenactment*
- Page 7 *4th ArmdD Fact Sheet*

NEXT CHAPTER MEETING

Sunday 09 DEC 2001

**Holiday Inn, Laurel MD
57th COMMEMORATION -12 Noon
BATTLE OF THE BULGE**

FIRST CLASS

DUES ARE DUE NOW! - STILL \$10.00