

H.R. 2170 Leonard G “Bud” Lomell VA Clinic

Excerpts of remarks by Rep Chris Smith (R-NJ) in the House of Representatives during debate on H.R. 2170 July 21, 2025

Today the House of Representatives has the opportunity to further recognize and honor one of the bravest and most highly decorated combat soldiers of World War II—Leonard G. “Bud” Lomell—by naming the new Veterans outpatient clinic in Toms River, New Jersey in his honor.

While Bud Lomell passed away in 2011—at 91—his dear wife Charlotte is turning 104 in September and she and her family deeply loved Bud and continue to deeply cherish his memory. I spoke to Bud’s youngest daughter Renee on the phone this morning and they are very pleased that Congress is poised to honor him.

I also want to extend special thanks to former Toms River Mayor and retired Admiral Mo Hill for originally coming up with this idea to name the clinic for Bud Lomell, as well as his incredible advocacy on behalf of Bud and his family.

On June 6, 1944--D-Day—First Sergeant Bud Lomell of D Company, 2nd Ranger Infantry Battalion, and his Army Rangers were tasked with the nearly impossible mission of scaling the 100-foot cliffs at Pointe du Hoc and to destroy the Germans’ 155-millimeter artillery guns with a range of 10-15 miles that threatened the entire allied invasion which they believed were positioned at the top of the cliffs.

Bud Lomell and his Rangers, upon successfully climbing the cliffs despite heavy casualties—Bud was actually wounded leaving the landing craft but tenaciously continued and said in one interview, “I lost half my guys”—were dismayed to find at the top of the cliffs that Allied military intelligence was misled by decoys, and that the entire invasion was now at risk.

After forming patrols to search for the guns, First Sergeant Lomell and another Ranger, Sergeant Jack Kuhn, found the five guns camouflaged in a nearby orchard. He discovered they were all aimed at Utah Beach but could reach Normandy as well. With Kuhn providing cover, Bud Lomell used thermite grenades to singlehandedly destroy three of the Nazi big artillery guns, got more thermite grenades and went back and destroyed the other two—five massive artillery guns utterly destroyed—ultimately helping to ensure the success of the Allied invasion and saving countless lives.

Historian Stephen Ambrose has described Bud Lomell as the single individual, besides Allied Supreme Commander Dwight Eisenhower, who was most responsible for the success of the D-Day invasion.

In his book, *The Greatest Generation*, Tom Brokaw devoted an entire chapter to Bud Lomell, who he first met forty years after the invasion at D-Day. He noted that during their interview, even after several decades, he “could almost see the tough, young First Sergeant Lomell directing his men as they landed under the withering fire of the German forces.”

For his amazing leadership and extraordinarily brave acts, Bud Lomell received the **Distinguished Service Cross**—the second highest military decoration. The [citation](#) said in part: “**First Sergeant Lomell led**

a patrol of men through the heaviest kind of automatic weapons fire to destroy an enemy machine gun nest. Later on, the same day, while leading another patrol, he penetrated through the enemy lines to the rear and discovered five enemy 155-mm. guns...he gallantly led his patrol against the enemy and successfully destroyed the guns...First Sergeant Lomell's bold and outstanding leadership in the face of superior numbers is in keeping with the highest traditions of the military forces of the United States and reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Army."

Lomell also received a rare battlefield promotion to Second Lieutenant, and it was said that "there was not a man who did not feel proud to serve under him."

Six months later, Bud Lomell served in the Battle of Hurtgen Forest, where he and D Company helped capture and defend the notorious Hill 400, which had claimed thousands of his fellow servicemembers' lives. He was subsequently awarded the Silver Star for his valor in combat. His **Silver Star** citation states:

"Conspicuously leading from the front, Lomell directed the successful defense of the hilltop in the face of a nearly overwhelming German counterattack midday...Refusing shelter and, at risk of life with blood oozing from his ears, nose, and mouth, firing his machine gun cradled in his bandaged left arm with his right hand, he continued to lead his men against another ruthless German assault throughout the entire afternoon."

Bud was wounded at Hurtgen and again weeks later in the Battle of the Bulge.

In addition to the Distinguished Service Cross and Silver Star, Bud Lomell received other awards including the Bronze Star, Purple Heart with two Oak Leaf Clusters and France's highest medal—the Legion of Honor.

A little further background: born in Brooklyn in 1920, Bud Lomell was adopted by Scandinavian immigrants and raised in Point Pleasant, New Jersey, along with his four siblings. His parents instilled in him a strong work ethic and he often worked odd jobs to help support his family during the Great Depression, including delivering mail, caddying at Manasquan River Golf Club, and selling his father's paintings to guests at local hotels. This relentless drive also followed him in sports, where he became a stellar boxer and also played football and baseball. He earned a partial football scholarship at Tennessee Wesleyan University, where he worked part time to support his aging parents.

Bud Lomell married Charlotte Ewart, a public health nurse in Long Branch. They settled in Toms River, where they raised three daughters, Georgine, Pauline, and Renee. They also took in Elizabeth "Buffy" and Jay Bergson, the children of Charlotte's sister who passed unexpectedly, and raised them as their own. Lomell's daughter Renee describes her beloved dad as a caring and devoted father who loved and valued their mother and taught them to, as he would say, "work hard, be respectful, and do the right thing."

Bud Lomell was appointed to serve as the first director of the newly organized Ocean County Veterans Service Bureau to assist veterans with their transition to civilian life. He later graduated from Rutgers Law School and opened one of Ocean County's largest and most successful law firms. Initially a member of the prestigious Ocean

County Lawyers' Club, he resigned in protest when the club would not admit a Jewish lawyer whom he had recommended. "I'm not going to tolerate any anti-Semitism," he said at the time. "I didn't fight Nazis in Europe to come home and find anti-Semitism in my backyard."

He was an active participant in civil life, serving as president of the Ocean County Bar Association, a director of the First National Bank of Toms River, a member of the Dover Township Board of Education, and a co-founder of the Garden State Philharmonic.

The 68,000-square-foot state-of-the-art facility, which we hope will soon bear his name, provides both primary care as well as specialty care, including dental care, women's health care, mental health counseling, physical therapy, and laboratory services. It is only fitting that a clinic that has already done so much for our community be named after a true war hero who dedicated his life to the service of his country and its veterans.

As President Reagan famously put it in his speech at Pointe du Hoc, the men who invaded Normandy, including and most especially Bud Lomell, "had faith that what they were doing was right, faith that they fought for all humanity, faith that a just God would grant them mercy on this beachhead or on the next." They were "the men who took the cliffs." They were "the champions who helped free a continent." They were "the heroes who helped end a war." In enduring gratitude to them, Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in bestowing this posthumous honor on Second Lieutenant Bud Lomell, and I yield back.