



th AF NEWS

VOLUME 96, NUMBER 2

- Voice of "The Mighty Eighth" -

MAY 1996

Oh Say, Can You See...



Savannah, May 1996



th AF NEWS

Magazine of

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

Managing Editor – James W. Hill

Please address questions concerning membership, address changes, distribution, and missing copies to the Membership Records Manager listed below. (*)

This magazine is dedicated to Lt. Col. John H. Woolnough, founder of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society and editor of the Eighth Air Force News for 16 years.

The Eighth Air Force News (8AFN) is published four times a year (February, May, August, November). Please submit material to the editor at least 30 days before the desired issue month. We cannot acknowledge receipt of material or be responsible for its return. All unused material will be deposited in the 8th AF Archives. For advertising rates, call editor (See below). The 8AFHS does not endorse or guarantee the products of its advertisers.

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Robert E. Vickers.

Class of 1999: John E. Greenwood, Barkev Hovsepian,
Frederick Dundas (deceased)

Front Cover: Again we express our heartfelt thanks to Marc DeCaro for a beautiful cover. This time he depicts many aspects of the celebration of the emergence of a "new star," the "Mighty Eighth" Heritage Museum in Savannah, Georgia (see editorial on page 3).

Mission Briefing

The front cover and editorial on page 3 illustrate the most currently newsworthy item—the dedication of the "Mighty Eighth" Heritage Museum in Savannah, Georgia, which many of you will attend and support.

The center section advertises the 1996 8AFHS Annual Reunion in Orlando on October 1-6, 1996. This reunion will be a real "block-buster, so don't miss it!" Pages 18-21 describe the various activities and travel aspects of the reunion and page 23 is the Registration Form, which you should fill out and mail right away. Don't forget to fill in the optional medical form on page 24 if you wish to indicate possible medical problems so that our Flight Surgeon Dr. Walt Brown can assure that proper facilities and treatment are available to ensure your comfort and safety.

This is also the Annual Directory Issue which includes the major officers and contacts for all 8th Air Force affiliated and related chapters, units, stations, and museums. This was the toughest task in putting together this issue, and there are sure to be inaccuracies, so please send in corrections so we can correct them in the next issue.

Contents

Editorial: Another Star Emerges	3
President's Message	4
Membership Corner	4
Nominations	6
Information Mgrs. Report	6
Responses to "Willow Run" Query	7
A Very Pleasant Gentleman	7
Spitfires For Duxford Air Show	8
Book Reviews	8
Duxford Acquires B-24 Exhibit	9
Yankee Doodle Came To Town	10
Shuffling The Deck	11
First Aerial Engagement	12
As I See It Editorials	13
Mail Call	14
Reunions and Events	15
Looking Sharp	16
Chapter News	17
1996 Reunion Highlights	18-22
Reunion Registration Forms	19-20
8AFHS Directory	
Officers, Directors, Staff, Comm.	25
State Chapter Presidents	26
Unit Contacts	27
Station Contacts	27-28
Related Organizations	29
Foreign Contacts	29
Newsletter Editors	30-32
The Bombing of Billie B	33,36
A Strange War	34
They Don't Say the Pledge	34
My Moment At The Wall	35
Photos	36
"After the Mission" Painting	37
Poems	38
Taps, Chaplains Corner	39
RAF "Red Arrows" Perform	40-41

EDITORIAL--"Another Star Emerges"

The "Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum" in Savannah has been completed, and it will be dedicated appropriately with much fanfare in Savannah on May 12-13. We wish it well.

Most of the leaders and members of the Society have long supported the concept of an 8th Air Force Heritage Center or Museum. However, they have not been willing for the Society to be legally or financially connected with the Museum for fear that the health and integrity of the Society itself might be compromised. That's why the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum in Savannah was set up as a completely separate organization.

We have recently heard that certain disaffected groups plan to exploit unrelated emotional issues to elect 8AFHS Directors friendly to the Heritage Museum in Savannah with the purpose of taking over the Society and making it a vassal of the Museum. This must not happen! The officers and boards of the two organizations must be kept completely separate and independent! It should be noted that General Shueler and other leaders of The Heritage Museum also endorse this separation.

The Museum has long been a subject of controversy--its location, the long-range financial feasibility of the project, and its methods of organization, funding, and operation. Many say the Museum will not be able to generate enough traffic and funds to pay off the revenue bonds. Only time will tell, and we encourage those who support the Museum to donate generously so that it will succeed.

Those who complain about the controversies that have surrounded the Savannah Museum and other issues do not understand our national history and how democracy works. We thrive on controversy. In the American Revolution, approximately half of the people of the thirteen colonies did not want to rebel against the Crown, and a bloody, divisive war resulted. In World War II, the 8th Air Force was told that it couldn't conduct a successful daylight bombing campaign, and a lot of good men died to prove that it could be done. Nothing worthwhile is ever easy, and it often is accomplished only through controversy and trial, which brings out our best efforts.

The supporters of the "Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum" have now stepped up to the line to compete with the many other national heritage centers and air museums that have sprung up across the nation. They deserve a great deal of credit and support, and I'm sure they will wave the Eighth Air Force banner proudly. Their trial by fire begins now, and it will continue over the next twenty years when it will have to survive the "rockets' red glare and bombs' bursting in air," competing with other priorities to generate the funds to make it fly.

As I said in my columns before, we can do it all--so long as we retain our respect for each other and our civility to each other; with our objective always being the perpetuation of the memory and the Glory of the "Mighty Eighth."



President's Message

Harold Rutka, Reunion Chairman, and his committee of Tom Thomas, Sherman Small, and Robert Vickers are hard at work to make your 1996 Reunion at Orlando on Oct 1-6, 1996, a big success. Their assignment takes planning and hard work to provide an enjoyable experience for all who attend.

Artist John Batchelor, our main banquet speaker, is looking forward to being with us and is preparing a new painting for the reunion which will be on display. Batchelor was in Washington, DC in April to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Air & Space Magazine and had a big cutaway on the poster slipped inside the April issue.

The news from the current 8th Air Force Headquarters at Barksdale Air Force Base near Bossier City, LA is that the commanding officer, Lt. Gen. Stephen Croker, is retiring on April 1, 1996 and will be replaced by Philip Ford, director of operations at Strategic Command. Ford was confirmed for his third star on January 24, 1996.

Many units are planning reunions this year, and the Strategic Air Command (SAC) had its first reunion after 50 years at Omaha, Nebraska in March.

Plan now to join with us in Orlando and make our 22nd Reunion one to remember.

Jim Hower, President

WORLD WAR II STATISTICS

At present there are forty-four surviving B-17's. Of these there is one "D" model at the National Air and Space Museum, two "Es" (one located in Papua, New Guinea) and three "Fs." The rest are the "G" model. Besides the one in New Guinea there are seven others located overseas: three in France, three in England and one in Brazil.

The following battle summary was compiled by Henry R. Heckman, Indiana Chapter President.

From August 1942 to November 1945:

221,811 Bombers dispatched
190,764 Fighters dispatched
443,969 Bombs dropped
9803 Enemy planes destroyed
1993 Enemy planes probably destroyed
3677 Bombers missing
1622 Fighters missing

Number of men behind each plane for maintenance, repair and supply: 22

In 1947 Lt. Gen. J. K. Cannon, CG of ATC summarized the staggering numbers of trained airmen produced by ATC from Pearl Harbor through VJ Day:

497,533 Aircraft & Engine Mechanics
347,236 Aerial Gunners
195,422 Radio Operators & Mechanics
193,240 Pilots
51,357 Radar Mechanics
50,976 Navigators
47,354 Bombardiers

—from "Crosshairs," Vol. 5 No. 4

Membership Corner

By Art Swanson, Membership Records Manager

Address Changes

Your cooperation in forwarding address changes is appreciated. Just to keep you informed, to date we have spent several hundred dollars to recover returned mail because of forwarding orders that have expired. Even if only your zip code or post office box number changes, the mail is returned to us for 32 cents payment for each piece. Remember to send us both addresses if you maintain two homes. Here's a good example as related by a member recently. "I have not received the current issue of the 8th AF News and was informed by the post office, very curtly I might add, "We don't forward those kinds of magazines." When I asked them what they did with them I was told, "We just trash them." Please give us sufficient lead time to make changes, as it requires four to six weeks to make them.

Unit Contacts

Carolyn is working hard on her project of contacting prospective 8AFers who are not members of the Society, through rosters many of you have sent in. The response to date has been overwhelming. The \$3.00 per person enrollment bonus to the various units who have cooperated will be made before the end of our fiscal year-August 31, 1996. Again, many thanks to those of you who have forwarded your rosters. You are doing a great job in keeping them up to date, and as soon as time

allows, you will be advised of any changes we have received. You can appreciate what a job it is to keep the 8AFHS roster current.

Membership Card Offer

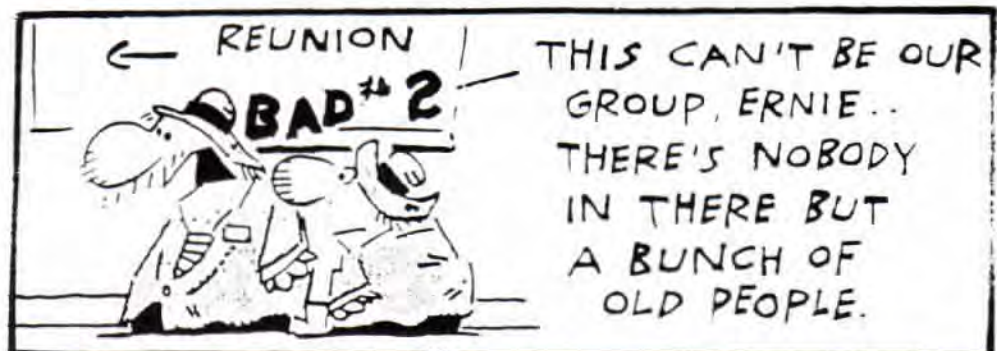
Is your membership card lost or in poor condition? Here's the offer:

For Regular Members--Send your name, membership number, and a self-addressed, stamped envelope to me, Art Swanson at POB 340, Strasburg, PA 17579, and a new card will be sent to you free of charge. Allow 2-3 weeks to process.

For Life Members/Life Partners--Send your name, membership number, a self-addressed, stamped envelope PLUS \$1.00 (\$2.00 for Life Partners) to me at the same address above. The \$1.00 per person charge covers the cost of having the personalized membership cards prepared by the printer. Allow 8-10 weeks for delivery.

Carolyn will be the only one handling this offer. Time does not allow individual preparation of looking up numbers, addresses, etc. and typing up envelopes, so be sure to include your self-addressed, stamped envelope and fee for Life Cards. Your member number is the first item on the mailing label of the 8th AF News.

Thanks again to those who forwarded dues promptly, and especially to those who included kind comments and greetings. It is gratifying to know our efforts are appreciated by so many.



From BAD News Journal of BAD 2 Assn. Jan. 1993



John Batchelor of England, who will be the major speaker at our Reunion Banquet, will exhibit a number of his paintings of 8th Air Force and WWII subjects. One of his recent paintings is shown on the back cover of this magazine. He is also donating a painting of 8th Air Force aircraft to be auctioned off at the Reunion.



A Tale of Two Cousins

For the first time in their lives, two distant cousins met at the Sept. 1995 Annual Reunion of the 8th Air Force historical Society. John Howland realized he was probably related to Bill Leasure because his mother's maiden name was Leasure. When Bill and John had a chance to talk it over, they were amazed at the similarities in their parallel careers. They both were celestial navigators and completed tours in the 91st Bomb Group, 324th Bomb Squadron, and both were hit by pieces of flak in identical spots right over the jugular vein. Both married girls named Dorothy, both had two girls (Howland also had a boy), both worked in the oil business and strip mining after the war, and both are inventors and own several patents. They found that even their "No-Wind" dead reckoning navigation techniques were identical.

Nominees for 8AFHS Director Class of 2000

(Three to be elected at Orlando Reunion)

Richard C. (Dick) Baynes, LM10606

71 Nighthawk, Irvine, CA 92714 (714-552-3889 & 3890)
WWII B-24 Pilot in 466BG/787BS
Flew 35 combat missions plus 5 gas-hauling missions
B-24 instructor at Liberal, KS. Instrument instructor at Lubbock, TX
Awarded DFC and Air Medal with 3 OLC. Discharged Oct 1945.
Remained in Air Force Reserves, served last three years
at Air Force Academy. Retired with rank of Colonel
Graduate of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, B. Civil Engrg
Worked for Revere Copper & Brass and Reading Tube Corp
as VP Mktg and Sales. Now self empl. as Mfrs Rep.
Former AFA Chapter Pres., currently Director and Secy of
Curtis LeMay Chapter of 8AFHS, 2nd AD 8th AF Relations Comm.

Hubert M. Childress, LM5529

48988 Sunny Summit Lane, Palm Desert, CA 92260 (619-341-5887)
WWII P-38/F-5 Recon Pilot in 7th PRG as Flight Comm., Sqdn
Comm., Dep. Gp Comm. and Group Commander. Flew 59 missions
and received Silver Star, Brit. DFC, French Croix de Guerre, etc.
Remained in military and served in NATO making war plans and brief-
ing highest defense officials. Served tour at NATO Defense College in
Paris, then returned to Pentagon for Project Forecast. Retired as
Colonel. Graduate of USC, Georgetown Graduate School, and UCLA
Law School. Has been practicing law for 20 years,
Represented Douglas Aircraft to government, customers, and suppliers.
Has been active with the AIAA, TROA, P-38 Assn, and Optimists Intl.
Has served for the past four years as a Director of the 8AFHS.

Larry Goldstein, L18590

POB 3994, Ridgewood, NY 11386 (718-386-8635)
WWII Radio/Gunner with 388BG, flew 25 missions, received DFC,
and AM with 3OLC. Then served as a Gunnery Instructor with 487BG,
then flew 500 hours instructing B-29 crews. Reactivated for Korean con-
flict and served 19 months in Japan. Larry was the Founding President of
the highly successful Southern New York Chapter of the 8AFHS and is
currently its president. He has represented the Society at a number of
high level functions in the New York area. He has been an insurance
executive for 42 years and has been very active in veterans affairs.

James M. Hower, LM23881

Holly Circle, St. Joseph, MO 64506 (816-233-9600)
WWII Lead Pilot for 447BG, flew 30 missions, received DFC and Air
Medal plus 5OLC. BMA degree from Kansas State University, Agent
for Equitable Life Assurance Society (Hall of Fame, Legion of Honor),
Founder of James M. Hower & Assoc., active as officer and director of
civic, church, and fraternal organizations, recipient of BSA Prestigious
Award. Founder of 8AFHS Missouri chapter and St. Louis Wing,
Director of 8AFHS for past four years, secretary 1994-95, and presi-
dent 1995-96.

Richard M. Scott, #4340

144 Mulberry St, Lancaster, PA 17603 (717-299-2484)
WWII Fighter Pilot in 364FG, failed to return from 13th mission, was
an evader in Holland, Belgium, France for 4 months, captured and
imprisoned in Stalag III for 10 months, and escaped through Allied
lines in April 1945. After the war he remained in the Air Force and
served as a test pilot, jet fighter pilot in Korea. He then served in the
U.S. Atomic Energy Commission and as Deputy Asst to Secy of
Defense for Atomic Energy, retired from Air Force as Brigadier
General. He was appointed Adjutant General of PA in 1979 with
Federally recognized rank of Major General from which he retired in
1987 with rank of Lt. Gen. (Ret.) of PA Natl Guard. Scott holds a
Bachelor's Degree from West Point and a Masters Degree from George
Washington University. Among his decorations are two USAF
Distinguished Service Medals, the U.S. Army Distinguished Service
Medal, the Legion of Merit, and the Pennsylvania Distinguished
Service Medal. Scott is one of the founding members of the highly suc-
cessful Pennsylvania Chapter of the 8AFHS and has been an active
member and Director of the Chapter for the past 4 years. He is also a
member of the Escape & Evasion Society.

From The Information Manager Ed Kueppers

After the BIG 50, I thought the volume of mail and telephone calls would taper off.

Well I was wrong.

Still averaging 5 pieces of mail a day and 20 hours a month on the phone.

My batting average is still around 80% and with the additional networking with various people and groups most questions can be answered.

Half of my mail is coming from overseas. I've run into some minor problems with some people, in that they are sending letters to several people requesting the same info. If you receive a letter, forward it onto me and I'll try to handle it.

Carolyn Swanson has made mailings to several groups, inviting them to join the Society, with excellent results. 900 new members have been signed up.

A new member, who shall remain anonymous, is an inmate of Indiana Dept. of Corrections. He indicates he will get active when they let him out.

In March I received a letter from a man in Germany who saw a B-17 go down near his home in mid 1944, he recovered the navigators brief case and now wanted to give it back. We located one of the crewmen who couldn't believe what I was telling him. He should have it by now. Quite a story.

We still get weird requests at least once a week, i.e., looking for people in the Marine Corps., info on the Vietnam war. If you need some info. don't hesitate to contact me.

REAL LIFE ADVENTURES



How can you develop a five-year plan when you can't come up with a five-minute plan?

Many Respond to "Willow Run" Query



We thank all of you who sent in your answers to the question about the "Willow Run" in England in World War II. I knew the answer, since my older brother took me there several times. He was a captain in the headquarters of the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps Service of Supply located in Grosvenor Square.

Bob O'Connell of Basking Ridge, NJ wrote: "Willow Run was a huge U.S. military mess hall in downtown London in what had been the grand ballroom or other large internal area of one of the great hotels just off Marble Arch. The Grosvenor comes to mind, but that may be where they held the afternoon teas for us. It put out so many meals per hour--reputed to be up to 2,000--that it came to be nicknamed "Willow Run," after the B-24 plant in the U.S. There were three reasons for its establishment. One, to ease the strain on the British restaurants and their short rations. Two, to ease the crowding at lunch time in restaurants in what we would call the downtown area of London, but the English referred to as "the City." Three, to provide American airmen, soldiers, and sailors with a place to get a good and balanced meal at an affordable price." He said that the cafeteria was for both officers and enlisted personnel.

Vic Staknis of Watertown, Massachusetts identifies "Willow Run" as the officers mess located in the ballroom

of the Grosvenor House. He says that you passed through the cafeteria line very quickly and then were told where to sit. The whole process was very efficient. There was a bar on the balcony and also a General Officers dining area.

Ed Burnham, Past Pres. of the Missouri Chapter also verifies that it was near the American Embassy on Grosvenor Square, and that it was a good place to eat.

Victor Iglesias of Newport Beach, CA, who sent the photo above said it was difficult to see from one end to the other because of all the cigarette smoke. The line for food was at the far end, and refills for coffee were served from huge vats on wheels attended by waitresses in the center aisle.

Dwight Ross of Akron, Ohio says they served the best food in London and probably all of England. He also attended (crashed?) a "Tea Dance" in another room of the hotel and was genuinely shocked as he entered to have his name announced by a very loud-mouthed attendant.

Walter Faulkner of Ocala, Florida remembers that at meal time the seats were filled in row after row from front to rear, and by the time the last row was filling the first was open again--a real production line, hence, "Willow Run." He doesn't remember the prices but they must have been good because he returned several times.

Tom Flynn of Sun City, Arizona reports that when he was on leave in London he ran into a WAC sergeant who had worked for him back in the States. They wanted to have lunch so he took her to "Willow Run" but was told that it was an Officer's Mess and no enlisted personnel were allowed. They finally ate in a nearby Chinese restaurant.

Robert W. Planes, a former driver at Burtonwood, says that his engineering officer called the Burtonwood Repair Depot "The Willow Run of the ETO."

Ralph Scott, Secy of the BAD 2 Assn, sent us a copy of an article he published in their "BADNEWS" in 1985 about BAD 2 being the "Willow Run in England." The phrase was coined during wartime by a security conscious British journalist.

Mrs. Daphne Bradley of London wrote to tell us that she was friendly with an American officer who referred to the PX stores in Oxford Street, London as "Willow Run." Her husband, who was a policeman before he joined the Commandos, also remembers the PX stores in Oxford Street almost opposite Selfridges Department Store on the corner of another street leading to Grosvenor Square.

First prize in these reminiscences, however, goes to Hollis H. Baker (306BG) of Lompoc, CA, whose story is worth setting by itself on the following page.

A Very Pleasant Gentleman

By Hollis H. Baker (306BG),
Lompoc, CA

One day in the late summer of 1944 my crew and I were looking for a place to eat in London and I approached a rather small officer standing on the corner of Pall Mall and a cross street. I said, "Sir, do you know any place around here where our crew can eat?" About that time I noticed a single star on his shoulder and recognized him as B/Gen William Kepner. He replied "I am going to Willow Run at the Grosvenor House."

We stepped off the curb together and I waved the rest of my crew to follow. When we arrived at the cafeteria we got a tray and got in line. Of course, Gen. Kepner went to a large table reserved for the local wheels. An overweight, officious, major came up to me and said, "Lieutenant, you can't eat here. This mess hall is not for combat crews on pass to London." To which I replied, "Major, you go tell General Kepner that."

We all filled our trays and then marched up to Gen. Kepner's table where he was alone, and I asked politely, General, may we join you?" He smiled and asked us to be seated. He was most gracious and asked about our missions and how we were adjusting to England. We all had a good conversation. He was fun to talk to and a very pleasant gentleman.

In September 1952 I ran into Gen. Kepner again, in the Visiting General's Office in the Pentagon. I introduced myself and sheepishly recounted the incident. He laughed, and said that he was all ready to come to our assistance if we had a problem with the major. I like to believe he was telling the truth.

Important PX Notice

On a recent visit to the Cooper Sportswear factory, it was learned that the Air Force is planning to change the A-2 jacket from its traditional form. They want it made up in a looser fit, with added gussets, and they also want hand-warmer pockets! This modification will not only change the jacket, it will add to the cost. If you want the traditional jacket, and you want to enjoy our usual low, low price of \$175.00, get your orders in NOW! The jacket as we know it will become a memory, so order up now, before it's too late!

RECORD NUMBER OF SPITFIRES CALLED UP FOR DUXFORD AIR SHOW

(Duxford Press Release)

The largest public gathering of Spitfires since the end of the Second World War will take place at Duxford Airfield near Cambridge on Bank Holiday Monday 6 May. Over 25 examples of the legendary fighter will be present at the Spitfire Diamond Jubilee Air Show to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the Spitfire's first flight.

Organizers of the show expect it to prove very popular with the public. "The Spitfire is one of the few historic aircraft that most people can recognize" says Frank Crosby, Duxford's Marketing Manager. "It has a special place in British history and we are delighted to have the opportunity to present so many examples of this classic fighter to the public. It will be an air show that will be talked about for many years."

Possibly the best known combat aircraft of all time, the Spitfire was developed from a series of high performance seaplanes. The aircraft first captured the British public's imagination by the part it played alongside the Hurricane in RAF Fighter Command's victory during the Battle of Britain in 1940. Hitler's Luftwaffe was kept at bay, the invasion of Britain was averted, and the Spitfire became a symbol of British determination. For most of the war through constant improvements and modifications, the Spitfire was superior to equivalent enemy aircraft. Loved by pilots in its many forms, the Spitfire served in the fighter, dive bomber, and photographic reconnaissance roles.

The Spitfire first entered RAF service with No. 19 Squadron at Duxford in August 1938, making the historic airfield the perfect venue for this anniversary air show. Spitfire marks represented will include I, II, V, VIII, IX, XI, XIV, XVI, XVIII, XIX and 24. They will be joined by a magnificent replica of the Spitfire prototype plus Spitfire predecessors, contemporaries, adversaries, successors and modern equivalents. Among the other classic aircraft taking part will be Mustangs, Messerschmitts, Hurricanes, the Blenheim and B-17 Flying Fortress. Spitfire "personalities" will be on hand to meet the public and give their views of the aircraft, complementing the activity in the air. Before the flying starts a unique

Spitfire Flightline Walk will give visitors the chance to see all the Spitfires at close quarters, offering a wonderful photographic opportunity. In addition, Duxford's world famous collection of historic aircraft from Great War biplanes to Gulf War jets will be on show throughout, offering a fascinating diversion before the flying starts at 2 p.m.

A Fabulous Book!

"Glenn Miller in Britain Then and Now," by Chris Way, chronicles every concert and broadcast that the band undertook from June 1944 when it arrived in the UK until Miller's death six months later. It is packed with first-hand accounts, photographs, maps of the various bases, people and place names, and just about anything else you would want to find. Anyone who saw Miller's band in Britain will want a copy of this book--you might see yourself in the audience. I guarantee that it will be a "Sentimental Journey" you won't ever forget.

The book is published by Battle of Britain Prints International, Ltd., Church House, Church Street, London E15 3JA England, and the price in the UK is £19.95.

The book is in hard cover, 168 pages, 8-1/4 X 11-3/4", excellent black and white photography, ISBN# 0 900913 92 4, and it can be obtained in the US by ordering through Schoenhof's Foreign Books, 76A Mount Auburn Street, Cambridge, MA 02138-5051 (617-547-8855) (FAX 617-547-8551). It's best to order with a credit card and the US price is about \$56.00 incl S&H.

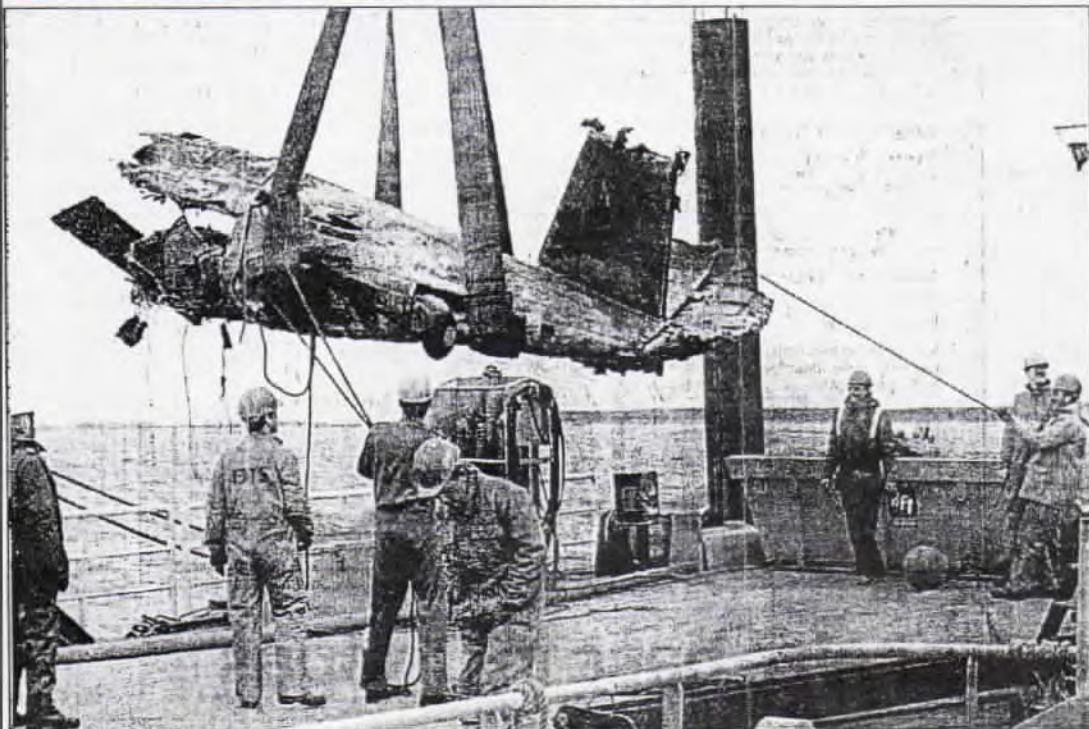
Incidentally, I'd try ordering any foreign book through Schoenhof's, like the book on Manna/ Chowhound reviewed in the February issue. (JWH)



Duxford Acquires Rare B-24 Exhibit

This forward fuselage section of a rare wartime B-24D Liberator is the latest acquisition for the Imperial War Museum's American Air Museum project at Duxford. The fuselage section came to Duxford from the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, DC and discussions are underway to decide how to best present the exhibit. Little is known about the aircraft except that it is an early D model, was a movie prop, and may have been used as a training aid at some point.

WWII Thunderbolt recovered



Agence France-Presse

The wreckage of a U.S. Republic P47 Thunderbolt fighter from World War II was hoisted onto a salvage barge Friday on the Dutch IJsselmeer inland sea, about 50 miles north of Amsterdam. The U.S. plane, reportedly on a mission to Wilhelmshafen, Germany, crashed

at sea 50 years ago after a German Messerschmitt shot it down. The remains of the pilot, Frank D. Gallion, were found inside the plane. Still equipped with three of its six machine guns, the plane was found during a survey of the inland sea. 414 FG 334 FS

(11/3/43)

YANKEE DOODLE CAME TO TOWN...

by James Anderson, 8th Ridgeway, Ware,
Herts, SG12 ORT, England
(Submitted by Alan Ostrom, 398th BG)

They sounded like Clark Gable, Mickey Rooney, or some Damon Runyon character to ears raised on the Americana of Hollywood.

Countless evenings spent in local cinemas had attuned East Anglians to the dialects of the Deep South, Mid-America, and New York, and here, in their midst, those accents (or something closely resembling them) were suddenly everywhere, it seemed.

Americans, 'real' Americans, were everything they'd ever supposed: confident, outgoing, friendly (some said excessively so!), and something of a blow between the eyes for many in the quiet backwaters of rural East Anglia. They were Tyrone Power and Cary Grant personified to the mass of English girls 'in love' with the originals.

In reality, they were largely as young and naive as their admirers, as fascinated by the handkerchief-sized fields and Tudor-type scenery that met their preconceived ideas of li'l old England, as were the natives themselves by the belief that these newly acquired friends really did know Hedy Lamarr or Spencer Tracy.

Certainly, however far-fetched a few impressive claims, some could honestly say they had seen the Sunset Boulevards and San Fernando Valleys of that world, for California was no less likely to supply a son than was Maine or Connecticut. Indeed, they came from quite literally every corner of their homeland, Louisiana or Vermont, Oregon or Florida, New Mexico or New York; whichever one was asked his home state, he could supply a name guaranteed to evoke images of mint juleps or ivy-league colleges, cowboys, or Yellow Cabs.

That, after all, was what the USA consisted of. We knew we'd seen it all via RKO, Columbia, Paramount, or MGM. There was no kidding us!

There was no kidding the new arrivals either, once they had tasted the traumas of their trade, visiting hostile Europe.

Together with the RAF, whose night raids kept the enemy under 24-hour threat, the Eighth and Ninth Air Forces began their strategic and tactical daylight bombing, and were to maintain it for almost a thousand days.

From the fields of East Anglia the Fortresses and Liberators, Marauders,

Lightnings, Thunderbolts, Mustangs etc. faced fearsome opposition from flak and fighters alike. As the pressure increased on the enemy, so too did the casualties suffered by the Eighth and Ninth.

Fortune, of course, was as fickle as ever.

Among Heavy Bombardment Groups, the 446th (Bungay Buckaroos) with their Suffolk-based B-24 Liberators, were able to boast 62 and 68 consecutive missions without loss to their 706 and 707 squadrons, respectively. Others weren't so lucky.

The 100th Group, for instance, earned its unwanted title of 'The Bloody Hundredth' from the devastating losses suffered throughout the 30 months it operated its B-17 Fortresses out of Thorpe Abbots, near Diss in Norfolk.

From the more southern reaches of Anglia the newcomers were no less involved. Bases such as Ridgeway and Nuthampstead were home to the 381st and 398th Bombardment Groups, respectively. The 381st suffered the most losses of any group involved in the initial Schweinfurt raid of August 1943.

Nuthampstead's 398th did not take up residence until some eight months later, but from the time their 600, 601, 602 and 603 Squadrons first acquired the Hertfordshire airfield as 'home' - on 22 April 1944 - their involvement was as total as that of their fellows.

At Bassingbourn, alongside a Roman highway which marks the presence of earlier overseas visitors, the 91st Group arrived in mid-October 1942 and stayed until the third week of June 1945. During that time its four squadrons (322, 323, 324 and 401) achieved some remarkable - if sometimes unwelcome - records.

Of all 8th Air Force bomb groups, the gunners of The 91st could claim the highest number of enemy aircraft destroyed (402), but this was shared with the dubious honour of carrying the greatest loss in the 8th - with 197 aircraft missing in action. It was the first group to operate against the Ruhr; the first to complete 100 missions; and it led the infamous Schweinfurt raid of August 1943. With around 9,600 sorties to their names, the aircraft of the 91st became as famous as any, not least through the titles their crews allotted them. Giving names to lumps of metal has much the same effect as doing likewise to such normally despised creatures as the spider or the snake. Once awarded a sobriquet - preferably a 'chummy' one - the subject becomes not only less fearsome, but often positively lovable!

Thus, the products of Boeing, Consolidated, Martin, and other faceless manufacturers became 'characters'.

Aircraft like the 390th Group's "Calamity Jane" lived up to her name by getting herself wrecked in a taxi accident almost as soon as she arrived at Framlingham, and so became the supplier of spare parts to sister B-17s as she took on the role of 'hanger queen'.

Similarly aptly named was a Nuthampstead-based B-17 entitled, "Was It Well?" Her 112 missions made her 600 Squadron's most consistent export to the Reich.

Ridgeway's 381st Group saw its (euphemistically named) "Tough Stuff", struck on its inner-starboard engine by a Focke Wulf 190 which cartwheeled over the wing. Miraculously, the B-17 made it back to England - complete with bits of Focke Wulf attached!

Names like "Southern Comfort", "The Eight Ball", "Geronimo", "Nine Yanks and a Rebel" (reference to its crew's origins), "Los Angeles City Limits", and - most famous of all - "Memphis Belle", abounded of course, as links with home were stressed.

A B-24 titles: "You Cawn't Miss It" conversely made use of the English connection: gently mocking a thoroughly British style of giving directions to strangers. Whatever else, variety and imagination were never lacking. "Pistol Packin' Momma" (the first to complete 100 missions), "Out House Mouse" (a survivor with 139 sorties under her belt!), "Hang The Expense" (a fittingly named lady, whose frequent crash-landings resulted in seven editions of her!), "Our Gang", "Stric Nine", "Sad Sack" - every one immortal.

Popular songs of the day were commemorated on many a flak-spattered fuselage too: "Sentimental Journey", "I'll Get By", "Kalamazoo", "Jersey Bounce", "Frenesi", "Moonlight Serenade", "Tangerine", "Stormy Weather"....

Of course, such titles meant pretty much the same to the British as they did to the visiting airmen. We knew the artists well enough: Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey, Artie Shaw, Benny Goodman, Count Basie. There was scarcely a household, it seemed, that didn't reverberate to their sounds at some time or other. We were hooked! And we've been hooked on it all ever since.

The sounds, sights, and people of America; their foibles, faults, and virtues, and their inherent good. They had it then, just as they do today. The proof was in the sacrifices made by those who shared the sunshine and rain of East Anglia with us around half a century ago.

Some remain with us to this day: asleep in the fields of an Anglia they helped to preserve and which their pres-

ence enriches. All, though, remain with us in spirit.

They helped create a mix that cannot be diluted by time: East Anglian boys from Kansas.. New Jersey.. Idaho.. Texas..Virginia..Illinois..Michigan..New England.....

SHUFFLING THE DECK

by John B. Wilson
From August 95
457th BG Newsletter

Bad weather during November 1944 restricted both 8th and 9th USAAF operations, also playing a distinct part in switching targets to those originally assigned by 1st Bomb Division as for example on the 21st. The 457th were briefed to attack Merseburg, considered by many 8th crew to be a 'tough' target due primarily to its being protected by over 300 flak guns.

Silver Star holder Major Raymond Syptak (749BS CO) was Air Commander of the 94th 'A' Wing, leading the groups off in the radar-equipped lead B-17 44-8152 MISS IDA at 0815; assembly was effected over England at 10000 ft. However, group records reported that some course "S-ing" was necessary as the formations were ahead of schedule prior to looking into the division assembly at 0936. Overall formation structure was still loose as the Dutch coast was approached and where flak met the bombers. The flak had caused several preceding groups to make 'S' course-changes which had the effect of placing the 457th in fourth position instead of seventh as penetration into Germany was made.

The weather was deteriorating and tension mounting as the bombers approached the target due to be struck at 1142. However, about ten minutes before the I-P with the group at 24,000 ft. its aircraft flew into heavy cloud extending up to 30,000 ft. The group leader decided to drop below the clouds but while descending at around 21,000 ft. another B-17 Group angled in from about 45 degrees, so 'shuffling the deck' as frantic evasive action was taken.

It was hard enough to face flak and ride out unfavorable weather conditions - to those hazards was now added the added drama of probable mid-air collision! Now retired, Lt Col. Lloyd Gray (who attended the 1994 Madingley Ceremony) was at that time a young Lieutenant with the 749 Squadron flying a veteran B-17 42 - 31706 SLOW-but-SURE.. He recalls: "Shuffling

the deck" was another frightening event in a series of chilling moments encountered during a bombing mission, and it was not an uncommon experience; however, it never became less nerve-wracking! In a way the pilots were lucky because they were so busy trying to miss other aircraft that they had less time to be afraid. We always thanked God for a "safe return." Lt. Gray's co-pilot, Lt. Charles 'Chuck' Keller (Lt. Col. retired) provides a further insight into the mission via his diary: "...At 24,500 ft. and eight minutes from the I.P. we ran into a thickening white haze. We went down to 20,500 ft. to get under the haze and at the change of position the group from Polebrook (351BG) who were also within the 94th CBW got into a major shuffle with us. As a result of this we got separated. We were flying No. 3 in the lead squadron's high element and our entire element was separated. We climbed back up to 30,000 ft. and headed back. When Paul Harlan (Gunner) called out "Fighters coming in on the tail," we jettisoned our ten 500 lb. bombs to keep in formation. Just as two Fw190s came in, three more B-17s joined up with us and this seemed to scare them off. Chuck also recalls "A shuffle was a frightening experience because a group with three squadrons totalling 36 aircraft filled a vertical space of some 1000 ft. For another group to pass right through the same airspace meant that they were sliding past you no more than 20 ft. above, and 20 ft. below you."

More facts on this mission come from Chuck's diary: "This Merseburg is poison to me! With the recent beating the Luftwaffe has been taking, and our position seventh within the division, I figured we would be OK this time. We had trouble forming the division line and got mildly 'shuffled' doing it. Our position as No. 3 of the lead's high element was normally a good position...except that the element leader was shifting all over the formation. Well, everything was fine and in shape - line framed, plane running good, and a million beautiful P-51s. Then came the involvement with the 351BG, and the jettisoning of bombs on the Fw190s' approach." Chuck then notes: "We finally had a six plane formation but the lead had no G-box. After lots of 'blinker' (Aldis-lamp) talk with us, the other three planes got fixed up and we all came home. Seems to me that weather and S-2 had really Snafued.. because we had gone into haze at Merseburg when all the rest of Western Germany was CAVU (Ceiling and visibility unlimited)! What a mess! Well, we are really lucky fellows; if those two Fws had been four we'd be done!"

Although over within a few seconds, the hair-raising 'shuffle' caused the leader to believe all his aircraft were separated. The PFF equipment was not functioning satisfactorily, and the radar operator confirmed that it would be difficult to make the briefed run, so it was decided to re-assemble.

The low squadron was not too far away and re-assembled successfully but the high squadron being separated had continued toward the target. The primary target area was visible but weather conditions at altitude were extremely bad. Since it was deemed impossible to make a normal sighting, the squadron's bombs were released at 1220 at the D-R (Deduced Reckoning) position 40 48N 10 50E.

Meanwhile, the other two squadrons searched for a suitable target of opportunity. The PFF equipment on the lead aircraft was now totally U/S and the deputy lead took over, quickly determining the new target to be the marshalling yards at Friedburg. At 1232 the formation's 500 lb. bombs dropped into the eastern section of the yards from, 20,000 ft. The group records reported some flak, but no aircraft were lost and the lead and low squadrons joined by two 351BG B-17s carried out a normal let-down over Cromer; the high squadron returned separately.

Merseburg had been spared the ordnance of the 457BG this day, but the group returned four days later to attack the large synthetic oil plant complex there. On this latter mission, 42-31633 piloted by Lt. Jack Westcott was forced by oxygen-system failure to leave the formation. Returning home they were unfortunately damaged by flak and forced to finally crash-land near Marck in France. Happily all crew-members subsequently returned to Glatton.

Future 8 AFHS Reunions

1996 Oct. 1-6
Orlando, Clarion Plaza Hotel

1997 Sept. 8-14
Minneapolis, Radisson South

1998 (Omaha, Albuquerque)

An Air Balloon Engagement for the Empire of the Sky.



1. Some think we shall soon,
By the help of Balloons,
Be able to fly in the air,
And go where we please,
Without trusting the Seas,
With our Bodies, and mercantile ware.

2. Monsieur is clear,
Nor has he a fear,
By the help of his flying Balloon;
Not only to go,
To all places below,
But to visit the folks in the Moon.

3. If this is the case,
And soon shall take place,
It's pretty, I vow, and declare;
And as it is right,
For the Ocean to fight,
Why should we not fight for the air?

STAR WARS PROPHECY — This tongue-in-cheek cartoon from a British newspaper in 1782 illustrates how concepts that may appear impossible or ridiculous today can easily become reality tomorrow. The verse underneath explains:

"Some think we shall soon, by help of balloon, be able to fly in the air; and go where we please, without trusting the seas, with our bodies and mercantile ware. Monsieur is clear, nor has he a fear, by the help of his flying balloon; not only to go to all places below, but to visit the folks in the moon. If this is the case, and soon shall take place, it's pretty, I vow and declare; and as it is right for the ocean to fight, why should we not fight for the air."

As I See It



by Editor Jim Hill

Photo of yours truly in May 1943. O Lord! Was I ever that young?

Anthems. During one of our memorial services celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the invasion of Normandy, our combined group of "Brits" and "Yanks" joined together to sing "God Save the Queen" and then "America", which of course have the same tune. For some time I have felt that we need an 8th Air Force Anthem, so I submit the following third verse to be sung to the same tune:

Britain

God save our gracious Queen,
Long live our noble Queen,
God save the Queen.
Send her victorious,
Happy and glorious,
Long to reign over us,
God save the Queen.

America

My country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing,
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the Pilgrims pride,
From every mountainside,
Let Freedom Ring.

The "Mighty Eighth"

We heard our brothers call,
Flew with them against all,
Freedom to bring,
Vanquished the Nazi hordes,
Broke Europe's strangling cords,
Graced by our Sovereign Lord,
Made Freedom Ring.

A Tribute. To Dr. Eric "Whitey" Hawkinson, long-time leader, promoter, and exhorter of the Society, possessor and purveyor of encyclopedic information, editor and writer of prolific publications and articles. He decided at the end of 1995 that he has "done his bit." Indeed, and it was a BIG bite. He and his wife Dorothy will henceforth rest on their well earned laurels and dabble only occasionally in 8th affairs. I'll bet!

Apology. To William J. Crowe, United States Ambassador in London, whose name was omitted from the caption under his picture on page 4 of the November issue. He has been a big help in our relations with the British Air Museum at Duxford.

SAFMMF Projects. Our Memorial Museum Foundation recently donated \$200 to the endowment campaign for the History of Aviation Collection at the University of Texas at Dallas. The collection includes books, journals, photographs, films, and personal papers documenting the efforts of American airmen in WWII. It also includes over 200 separate collections such as The Doolittle Library, which is the only major collection of the General's memorabilia and personal files outside federal facilities. The UT Collection welcomes donations of material from 8th AF veterans. Contact Larry D. Sall, Ph.D., Associate Library Director for Special Collections, The University of Texas at Dallas, Box 839643, Richardson, TX 75083-0643.

Future Stories. Can somebody give me an article about the gunnery and other training conducted at, in, or over "The Wash." I would also like to compile a database of where each bomber and fighter group was organized, trained, and staged on the way overseas. What route did they take to go overseas? How about an article on how new crews and planes were received and processed in England. Also, anything pertaining to recycling groups to the ZI and the Pacific. How about a rundown of where and how the war-weary birds were parked, disassembled, recycled, etc. after the war. Could someone write a comprehensive article on the B-17 production facilities similar to the one on "Willow Run."

Ground Support Personnel Honored. The Pennsylvania Chapter's Reunion at State College, PA on June 27-30 will honor all 8th AF ground support personnel. The main symposium is entitled "The Mighty Eighth On The Ground," and it will cover mission planning, personnel, security, armament, maintenance, medical, weather, headquarters, cooks and bakers, air depots, and all other behind the scenes operations that have often been overlooked. The chapter is preparing to videotape the proceedings, as this is the first symposium of its kind that has been held. Anyone wishing to participate in the symposium and tell his or her story is welcome. For information, contact Lacy Lackey at POB 206, Lionville, PA 19353 (610-524-8990) (FAX 610-524-8990).

B-17 Memorial at Air Force Academy

Funds are being solicited to allow men and women throughout the world to honor the B-17 Flying Fortress by placing a monumental model of the famous aircraft in the distinguished "Study Hall" Sculpture Garden at the USAF Academy in Colorado Springs, CO. The fundraiser, already in progress, will culminate in late 1996 with the production of a 1/16 scale bronze model by the creator of the sculpture garden, Robert Henderson. Other aircraft models are already in place, and the project manager, Maurice Thomas, wants all of the main WWII aircraft to be represented. A plaque listing all those who have donated \$450 or over will be placed underneath the monument. Anyone wishing to contribute may do so by calling 1-800-305-1738. (Also see advertisement on page 43.)



Victory Fly-Over. The 487 BG/839 BS actually took off, formed up, and started for London. The weather was terrible. I saw about 1,000 planes in the sky. My pilot's log shows the air parade was on May 19 and scrubbed after we were airborne. We flew to Denmark before returning to Lavenham. We logged 4:15 hours with 2:30 on instruments. R.K. Hoddinott, Savannah, GA

Victory Fly-Over. Several days after VE Day there was a flyover of 8th AF Headquarters at "Pinetree," about 25 miles WNW of London. The ceiling was probably less than 2,000 feet broken to overcast and the air was turbulent. Most bomb group formations looked fairly good although a few didn't. There were breaks in the stream caused by groups that either didn't make it or were unable to sustain proper spacing. The fighter groups, following the bombers, looked better. As a B-17 pilot, I was happy to be on the ground watching rather than to be up there flying. As I remember it, the fly-over was more like a "pass-in-review" portion of an honors ceremony for a commander or VIP, rather than a "victory parade." I think a lot of the reason for the fly-over was for the headquarters personnel to see firsthand the mighty force they had built up, supported, and directed since Feb. 1942. I don't remember any remarks about flying over London and under the circumstances I don't think they would have. On VE Day the 8th lost around 7 to 9 a/c due to CFIT (controlled flight into terrain). In August, when the AFN announced that Japan had surrendered, our maintenance officer immediately grounded all of the unit's a/c. The next day the 8th Fighter Command also issued a grounding order. James A. Hanauer, Cincinnati, OH.

Goering's Jets. Concerning the Reichsmarschall's remarks about jets--Baloney! In his book, Speer states that by 1946 the last pound of nickel critical to turbine blades would have been consumed. Moreover, the British already had the "Ghost" and "Goblin" jet engines ready for production just in case. I believe the turbine of the German jet was operational for about four hours. No, the only thing that would have helped the Germans is a 1918 like flu epidemic and only they had the cure. Sam Zarcoff, 18 WXZ.

985th MP Co. I would like to hear from anyone who was with the 985th MP Company, 1st BD, who served between April 1944 and V-E Day. Especially ones who were at Royston-Bassingborne Huntingdon or Northampton. Jefferson Brown, 154 Lake Harbor Dr. Ridgeland, MS 39157 (601-856-5060).

Gen. Castle. Seeking information on Gen. Fred Castle, CMH recipient. Will copy photos or documents. I was his staff car driver. Norm Valentine, 721 Lawrence Lane, Ambler, PA 19002.

Know Eugene Billings? I would appreciate hearing from anyone who knew Eugene (Jeep) Billings from Edinboro, PA, who was a fighter pilot who was shot down by an "88" while flying cover shortly after the Battle of the Bulge. I particularly want to find out about his combat record. Richard M. Jones, 18403 Aceituno St., San Diego, CA 92128 (619-451-9443).

Dick's Dilemma. Regarding the Dick Tracy cartoons on page 12 of 96-1, I don't understand why Dick Tracy would look for help from a P-38 when a P-51 already has him under its wing. He would have both lateral and elevated line of fire after cranking up the Mustang. I don't think that even Dick Tracy could sneak up on the B-24 or even draw a bead on the top turret with a P-38! Harry R. Corey, Wilmington, DE.

"Royal Flush Coming Home." My copy of this painting was lost in the 1994 flood, and I'm looking for a replacement, for a price, of course. Bob Drake, 439 Audubon Dr, Albany, GA 31707 (912-432-1052).

78th FG Pilots. On April 25, 1945, Lancaster aircraft attacked Berchtesgaden and several aircraft of the 78th "dropped in to say hello" to three of the RAF aircraft. A painting done by one of the navigators shows two Mustangs doing this courtesy call, and I would like to pass copies of this painting along to the respective pilots, and at the same time ask them for their comments regarding that fateful day. Clinton G. Johnston, 91-Havenhurst Cresc. S.W., Calgary, Alta. T2V 3C4.

Know Paul Hagerup? I want to locate my former co-pilot with this or similar name. He and Chick Snow should have some interesting stories to tell about the charter airline the Army ran in Sweden, how they flew Norwegians above the Arctic Circle to avoid German radar, then dropped back into Norway to sabotage German installations and returned to keep them supplied by air drops at predetermined times and locations. It was a whole other war. Leslie E. Veit, 26 Patricia Lane, Levittown, PA 19057-3818 (215-946-5454). (Ed note: Can somebody give me an article about it?)

Memorial at Thanet/RAF Manston. We have started to raise funds for a memorial life size bronze statue and plinth to be erected in memory of those brave airmen from all Allied nations who gave their lives in WWII, many of them crashing in this vicinity. "Liberator Memorial Appeal." Arthur Pay, Coordinator. (Ed note: We need an address for this appeal.)

Intelligence Officers. Stationed with bomber and fighter groups in England. Researcher/Author seeking contact with anyone familiar with the methods used to credit crew and pilots with combat victories over enemy

aircraft. Doing research on confirmation systems of all countries involved in WWII. Need information on gun cameras, debriefing, report systems, assessment processes, reference materials. Why did the Luftwaffe have more aces and victories credited than did Allied pilots? Robert C. Strobell, 7005 Nightingale Terr., Lanham, MD 20706.

"Meathound" Research. I am researching history of B-17F No. 42-29524 "Meathound" which was assigned to 306BG/423BS from March to May 1943 and after a period at Air Force Service Command at Burtonwood was then assigned to 303BG/358BS from July 1943 to January 1944. I would like to hear from any crew members who were connected with this ship: mission stories, photos, details. Why was the a/c sent to Burtonwood? Michael Chevalier, 24 Lucy Lane South, Stanway, Colchester, Essex, CO3 5HE, England.

Auld Lang Syne. Would like to hear from American Airmen who frequented Frank Marsden's "New Mermaid" Hotel at Wansford, not far from Peterborough and knew his family. I remember the summer holidays at the "Laurels" and the strange mixture of wartime and fishing along the banks of the river "Nene." Perhaps even "Chuck" and "Kenny" would respond. Christopher C. Marsden, 435 Queens Drive, Stonecroft, Liverpool, L13 0AQ, England.

Know Lt Jim Jeter? I would like to contact anyone having knowledge of Lt Jim Jeter, 353FG/351FS. He was killed near Liege on Nov 25, 1944 in P-51 ID 44-14972. He was a cousin whom I never met. I would appreciate hearing from anyone having any information at all. Bob Jeter, 18744 Wicomico River Dr, Cobb Island, MD 20625 (301-609-8443).

Co-Author Needed. I am attempting to complete a book called "The Inner Seven." It is a history of the seven piston aces in WWII who were also jet aces in Korea. Three of them flew in the 8th AF: Francis Gabreski, William Whisner, and Vermont Garrison. Three chapters are completed, but need a co-author to help complete the book and share with the profits. William Oliver, 441 So. Genevieve Lane, San Jose, CA 95128 (408-249-6179).

"Twelve O'Clock High". Free-lance writer working on magazine feature about the novel "Twelve O'Clock High" and its authors would like to hear from anyone who knew or served with Sy Bartlett, Beirne Lay, Jr., or Frank Armstrong. Also need leads to Beirne Lay's widow and surviving children and to James Parton, author of "Air Force Spoken Here" and aide to Gen Eaker. Please respond to Chuck Dunning, 2443 Corona Ct, La Jolla, CA 92037 (619-279-1716).

Know Gen. Charles M. Beatty? I would appreciate any help you can render to locate information on General Charles M. Beatty, who commanded one of the largest air bases in England. Don Kabatzke, 2464 N. Sherman Blvd, Milwaukee, WI 53210 (414-442-8890)

Customized Crew Positions. Many crew members customized their crew positions with pictures, booties, cartoons, lucky charms, special jigs, etc. How about sending in your contributions on how you did it for a composite article in a future issue. (JWH)

Reunions & Events

1SAD Reunion, Oct 3-6, 1996, San Diego, CA. Contact Herb Kaster, 720 Society Hill, Cherry Hill, NJ 08003 (609-751-1763)

2BAD Assn Reunion, Oct 3-5, 1996, Myrtle Beach, SC, Contact Dick McClune, 527 Quarterfield Rd, Newport News, VA 23602-6140

2nd Air Division Midwest Regional Reunion/445BG/Kassel Mission, Sept 26-29, 1996, Marriott Hotel and Wright-Patterson Air Museum, Dayton, OH, Contact William R. Dewey, KMMA, POB 413, Birmingham, MI, 48012

7th Photo Recon Group, Reunion with 8AFHS, Oct 3-6, 1996, at Clarion Hotel, Orlando, FL, Contact George Lawson, 4390 14th St. NE, St. Petersburg, FL 33703, (813-526-8480)

8AFHS Mountain and Plains FUN Reunion, Sept 23-27, 1996, Colorado Springs, CO, Contact Dave O'Boyle, 715 Locust St, Denver, CO (303-399-6993)

8AFHS National Reunion, Oct 1-6, 1996, Clarion Plaza Hotel, Orlando, FL

25BG Reunion, Sept 24-29, 1996, Marriott Fairfield Inn, Albuquerque, NM, Contact Don Peterson, 2168 Forest Hills Rd, Muskegon, MI 49441-3440 (616-759-7236)

34th BGA Reunion, Sept 19-22, 1996, Marriott Hotel, Raleigh, NC, Contact Hal Province, 111 Province Lane, Carriere, MS 39426 (601-798-2059)

303BGA Reunion, Aug 23-27, 1996, San Francisco, CA, Contact Carlton Smith, 12700 Red Maple Circle #54, Sonoma, CA 95370 (209-533-4033)

351BGA Reunion, May 27-June 1, 1996, Holiday Inn, Chattanooga, TN, Contact Cline Hammond, POB 281, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055 (717-766-1489)

339FG Reunion, Sept 6-10, 1996, Seattle, WA, Contact Richard C. Penrose, 142 SW 17th St, Bend, OR 97702

355FG Reunion, Oct 10-13, 1996, Nashville, TN, Contact Bob Kuhnert, 4230 Shroyer Rd, Dayton, OH 45429 (513-294-2986)

384BG Assn 15th Reunion, Oct 17-20, 1996, Regent Front Hotel, St. Louis, MO, Contact Ted Rothschild, 650 Snug Harbor Dr, Apt G-402, Boynton Beach, FL 33435-6140 (407-734-5052)

385BG/424ASG/88SS Reunion, Sept 12-14, 1996, Milwaukee, WI, Contact Donald Kabitzke, 2464 North Sherman Blvd, Milwaukee, WI, 53210 (414-442-8890)

398BG Annual Reunion, Sept 25-28, 1996, Springfield/Branson, Contact George Hilliard, 7841 Quartermaine Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45236-2313

401BG Reunion, Sept 12-15, 1996, Holiday Inn on the Bay, San Diego, CA, Contact George Menzel, POB 15356, Savannah, GA 31416 (401-596-5085)

452BG Assn, Oct 17-20, 1996, Tucson, AZ, Contact Henry North, 901 Poling Dr, Columbus, OH 43224

465th Service Sqdn Assn Reunion, Sept 11-14, 1997, St. Louis, MO, Contact Bill Butts, 611 Clyde Ct, San Marcos, TX 78666 (512-392-2517)

466BGA, Oct. 2-5, 1996, Orlando, FL at 8AFHS Reunion, Contact Lou Loeveesky (201-226-4624)

467BG Reunion, Oct 3-7, 1996, Savannah, GA, Contact Walter Weaver, 3 Hermitage Ct, Savannah, GA 31419 (912-927-4609)

482nd BGA, Oct. 4, 1996 during 8AFHS Reunion in Orlando.

486BG Reunion, Sept 4-8, 1996, Williamsburg, VA, Contact Ed Ewen, 124 Hempsted Rd, Williamsburg, VA 23188 (804-565-2625)

P-51 Pilot's Assn Reunion, Sept 19-23, 1996, Contact Tony Chardella, 511 Cresthaven Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15239-3609 (412-793-7619)

Pilot Class 46C/47A 50th Reunion, March 23-26, 1997, San Antonio, TX, Contact Vic Cerelli, 1931 Curling Ave, Naples, FL 33942 (941-598-4803)

All Former Aviation Cadets Reunion, Oct 9-12, 1997 in Dallas, TX, Contact Errol D. Severe, Rt #4, Box 416, Eureka Springs, AR 72632 (501-253-9471)

Burtonwood Assn Reunion, October 8-12, 1996, Little Rock, AR, Contact James Moddrell, 10 De Soto Circle, North Little Rock, AR 72116-8514 (501-758-8742)

CAF Annual Ranger Wing Fly-in, June 8-8, 1996, Waco, TX

CAF Gathering of Memories Airshow, Aug 17-18, 1996, San Marcos, TX

CAF Wings of Freedom Airshow, Aug 24-25, 1996, Frederick, MD

CAF Wings Over Houston Airshow, Sept 21-22, 1996, Houston, TX

CAF Airshow '96, Sept 28-29, 1996, Midland, TX

National Warplane Museum 16th Annual "Wings of Eagles" Airshow, August 17-18, 1996 at the Airport in Batavia, NY, Contact National Warplane Museum, POB 159, Geneseo, NY 14454 (716-345-0424)

Polish Air Force Assn XX International Reunion, Aug 31-Sept 2, 1996, Ramada Hotel O'Hare, Chicago, IL, Contact Tadeusz Maj, 400 Thomas Pkwy, Bristol Court, Park Ridge, IL 60068 (847-692-2244) (8th AF veterans invited)





LOOKING SHARP! Al and Gladys LaParche have appeared at many reunions in their original uniforms, most recently in St. Louis. They were both stationed in 8th Air Force headquarters. The happy couple and their five daughters recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

From West Cambridgeshire Town Crier/Neots Citizen 2/10/96

NEWS

RAF site up for sale

THE former RAF Alconbury site is to be put up for sale by the Ministry of Defence in April.

With 1,100 acres and a prime location alongside the A1/A14 junction, the site is being touted as potentially the country's most

by Julian Kirk

significant industrial site.

Ian Hudson, of Bidwells chartered surveyors in Cambridge, the agents dealing with the marketing of the site, said: "The location

of Alconbury and its air, road and potential rail links place it firmly in a European context.

"It is at the junction of two of the fastest growing regions in Britain, the East Midlands and East Anglia, and it straddles the main north-south transport routes."

The planning brief for the site, prepared by Huntingdonshire District Council, points to the need for new jobs on a high quality development, comprehensive landscaping and public transport access, including a rail freight terminal.

David Potter, director of planning, said: "The scale and location of the site gives it regional and national significance.

"We are planning to secure a quality development, phased over many years, that will respect the quality of life of local residents and enhance the environment of the area."



● From the air: RAF Alconbury is to be put up for sale by the Ministry of Defence in April.

Chapter News

By Gene Person

We are now in the process of revising some of the twelve chapters that have not incorporated. Some of these states have less than 50 members in the 8AFHS. In writing to potential founding presidents, we have found that there seems to be little interest in forming a State Chapter. Please let me know if you are acquainted with any member in Delaware, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Wyoming. We hope the Society's chapter newsletter, "The Advisor" will be able to give additional information to promote our society in helping our members.

Alabama Chapter. The Alabama Chapter held its Annual Business Meeting on Jan 12, 1996. After election of officers the group enjoyed lunch. The chapter and each wing, North, Central, and South, "Meet & Eat" in their respective areas once each quarter in addition to the Annual Business Meeting. The North Alabama Wing was organized two years ago and they have very good meetings in Huntsville with good attendance. The South Alabama Wing has been active for many years and holds its meetings in Mobile and Gulf Shores.

California Doolittle Chapter. The Annual Luncheon Meeting was held at McClellan AFB in Sacramento on March 30 with an attendance of 86. Officers were elected and the By-Laws were revised to permit more active participation of associate members. The guest speaker was Irene Nurner, Executive VP of the Heritage League, which is made up of children and grandchildren of the 2nd AD. Two raffles were held to raise funds to support the newsletters.

Connecticut Chapter. A general meeting was held Jan 20 at the American Legion Hall in Hamden. The speaker was Nello Malavasi of the 385th BG. He told of crashing in Holland and evading with the help of the Dutch underground. He made it to Belgium where he was eventually taken prisoner.

Illinois Chapter. The March meeting was held with the election of officers. There will be another O'Hare Air Show which will be held on May 19-20. The chapter will have a booth manned by members. DuPage County Air Show will be the weekend of Sept 7-8, with the members also manning the booth. Treasurer Dink Best's wife Jane is in a wheelchair, but both are taking things as well as expected.

Iowa Chapter. The 1996 Annual Reunion will be held at Best Western Longbranch in Cedar Rapids on Aug. 23-25, 1996. President Rudy and Millie Nelson will be in charge of meals and entertainment. Charles Taylor and Mark Niffenegger are in charge of the speaker and Bob Reeves of the memorial service. Next board meeting will be on April 27, 1996 at Starlite Village in Ames.

Kentucky Chapter. The Chapter had its quarterly meeting February 10, 1996 at Masterson's Restaurant in Louisville. After the delicious lunch a meeting was held.

Massachusetts Chapter. President Albert Audette will try to continue to do the things that promote fellowship and increase participation. The next meeting is at the Hanscom AFB Officers Club in Bedford, Mass. on the third Friday in March. They also are working on a plaque to be placed in the State House under the leadership of Dr. Robert Glebus.

Michigan. The next meeting of the Eastern Michigan Wing will be May 8, 1996 at the Kalamazoo Air Museum at 11:00 am with lunch at noon. Reservations (\$6.00) should be sent by May 1, 1996 to Maurice Sunney, Box 2527, Kalamazoo, MI 49003.

Missouri Chapter. The board met on Tuesday, Feb 22, 1996 at the VFW Hall in Kansas City to begin the planning for the annual meeting in August. They also met at the New Theater Restaurant in Overland Park on March 6. After lunch they saw the stage show "Don't Dress for Dinner," starring Jamie Farr of TV MASH fame. It was a good show enjoyed by all. They currently have 272 members in the Missouri Chapter, including the St. Louis Wing. Al Villagram, commander of the St. Louis Wing, broke his ankle and also George Everhart is on the mend and feeling better.

Pennsylvania Chapter. The Pennsylvania Chapter is hosting a reunion at State College, PA (home of Penn State) on June 27-30, 1996. The reunion is being held at the Nittany Lion Inn, 200 West Park Ave., State College, PA. A symposium will be held honoring all ground support personnel, including target inception and mission planning, maintenance of aircraft, operations, weather, security, and all other ground functions. The symposium is being organized by Pete Ardizzi, of the 440th Subdepot, 482BG, Sta. 102, Alconbury.

New York Southern Wing. The Wing has grown tremendously in the last year. President Larry Goldstein in his President's Message stated that there are 8th Air Force veterans still out there who are not aware of our organization. Being a part of the largest air force ever assembled will forever remain in our minds.

Tennessee Chapter. The Chapter held its Annual Luncheon and Business Meeting on April 11, 1996 at the Hermitage House Smorgasbord in Hermitage, TN. Officers elected were Pres. John Bacon; VPs Walt Brown and Walt Baker; Secy/T John H. Robinson; Chaplain Earl Wassom; and Legal Adv. James L. Bass. Mrs. Margaret Prosser, owner of the Hermitage House, was guest speaker and told of her experiences as a child in Hungary in WWII. She testified that "America is Great! It is not Man made, but GOD Made!"

Texas Valley Chapter. The Annual Meeting of the Texas Valley Chapter was held March 20, 1996 at Harold's Country Kitchen on Business 83, Donna, Texas with a delicious meal at noon. Harry Thompson, President, was in charge of the meeting.

Texas North Chapter. The chapter held its February Luncheon at Davies' Restaurant in Addison, TX on Feb. 16. 74 members were present with Laird Doctor as speaker who is Director of the Cavanaugh Flight Museum. After lunch the members adjourned to the Museum to see the many flyable aircraft in the three hangars. Bill Barnett is the new president.

Utah Chapter. The regular chapter meeting was held on January 11th. The first speaker was Ted Peterson, who narrated his escape in evading the Nazis through France into Spain. Ted's escape was one of the earliest in the 8th AF. In January, the Utah Chapter also sponsored an information center at the Hill Air Force Base Museum for all members, former members, and the public. This was a very positive promotion with a large crowd on hand.

Wisconsin Chapter. The February luncheon and meeting was well attended. They had a former Women's Army Service Pilot as the speaker. She holds the world's record for spinning an airplane 73 times. President Don Kabitske is searching for information on Gen. Charles Beatty, who was commander of the largest air force base in England in WWII.

8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
INVITES YOU TO
REUNION '96

ORLANDO, FLORIDA
OCTOBER 1 - 6, 1996

"Orlando - You Never Outgrow It." That is their motto, and we all know why. It's a top choice of travelers of all ages from all over the world. The variety of entertainment and the weather are just two reasons.

Long an agricultural center, Orlando blossomed anew with the opening of Walt Disney World in 1971, twenty-five years ago. The excitement has grown non-stop ever since. Where else but Orlando can you stand inches from a killer whale, see a feature film in the making, witness the launch of a space shuttle, and shake hands with a mouse..... all in a week? Don't forget about nearly 100 golf courses along with fishing and boating at one of Orlando's numerous lakes.

You'll want to come early and stay late for this reunion. Not just for the tours and attractions, but for the camaraderie of your fellow members. Encourage your buddies to join the fun and reminiscing this year in Orlando. You may even want to attend the workshop scheduled on Thursday to encourage the development of units and chapters. Some groups may rent hospitality suites; others will socialize in the gathering room. There will be plenty of time for everything at this year's reunion. So make your plans now to attend an exciting gathering in Orlando - and feel the magic!

CLARION PLAZA HOTEL - ORLANDO

Literally at the hub of Orlando's famous attractions, the Clarion Plaza Hotel gives you luxurious accommodations, superb service, and resort-style amenities. Each beautifully decorated guest room includes remote-control TV, in-room movies, and in-room safe. The hotel offers a large gift shop, coin laundry facilities, a convenience store, heated outdoor pool and Jacuzzi, and plenty of complimentary parking (valet parking is available). The Clarion's excellent restaurants satisfy every appetite. Jack's Place presents prime steaks and fresh seafood. Cafe Matisse is a full-service coffee shop which serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner. The Lobby Lounge is a great place to catch up on old times with a friend. Of course, room service is available.

The special room rate is \$73 per night for one or two people in the room. The rate is increased to \$87 for three people and \$102 for four people. The hotel will honor the group rate three days before and after the convention so make plans now for a long vacation. Non-smoking rooms and wheelchair accessible rooms are available upon request. The Clarion has blocked a limited number of suites for our use. The rate for a one bedroom parlor suite is \$146 per night. This suite consists of a sleeping room and a parlor equal to the size of a normal sleeping room. Hospitality suites are available for \$100 per night. These suites consist of one room equal to the size of two sleeping rooms, and it includes a "murphy bed." Please make special notation of these requests on your reservation form or call the hotel directly for more information.

**EIGHTH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REUNION
CLARION PLAZA HOTEL, ORLANDO**

Tuesday, 10/1

2:00pm - 7:00pm Early bird registration
2:00pm - 10:00pm Gathering room open

Wednesday, 10/2

8:00am - 5:00pm Reunion registration open
8:45am - 4:45pm (Option) Kennedy Space Center
9:00am - 10:00pm Gathering Room open
9:00am - 'Mighty Eighth' Theater open until Saturday afternoon (hours tba)
1:00pm - 4:30pm (Option) Flying Tigers Museum
1:00pm - 5:00pm 'PX' open

Thursday, 10/3

7:00am - 8:30am Extended Continental Breakfast
8:00am - 5:00pm Reunion registration open
9:00am - 11:00pm Gathering room open
9:30am - 4:30pm 'PX' open
TBA (Option) Sea World
TBA (Option) Universal Studios
11:00am - 3:00pm (Option) Church Street Station
1:00pm - 4:00pm Chapter & Unit Development Workshop
6:00pm - 9:30pm King Henry's Feast Dinner Outing

Friday, 10/4

7:00am - 8:30am Extended Continental Breakfast
8:00am - 10:00am Reunion registration open
8:45am - 4:45pm (Option) Kennedy Space Center
9:00am - 10:30am Individual group meetings
9:00am - 3:00pm Gathering room open
TBA (Option) EPCOT Center
TBA (Option) Splendid China
10:00am - 5:00pm 'PX' open
1:00pm - 5:00pm 8th AFMMF Board of Directors annual meeting
2:00pm - 5:00pm Reunion registration open
6:00pm - 7:00pm 8AF Cash Bar Reception
7:00pm - Rendezvous Dinner and 'hangar flying'

Saturday, 10/5

7:00am - 8:30am Full Breakfast Buffet
9:00am - 11:30am General Membership Meeting
10:00am - 4:00pm 'PX' open
1:00pm - 4:00pm (Option) City Tour
1:30pm - 4:30pm Annual 8AFMMF Symposium
5:30pm - 6:30pm Reunion registration open
6:00pm - 7:00pm 8AF Cash Bar Reception
7:15pm - 11:30pm Military Color Guard Ceremony followed by 8AF Gala Banquet and Dance

Sunday, 10/6

7:00am - 8:30am Extended Continental Breakfast
8:30am - 9:00am Catholic and Protestant Services at the hotel
9:00am - 9:30am Memorial Service
9:30am - 8th AFHS Annual Board Meeting

UNTIL NEXT YEAR - IN MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

REUNION HIGHLIGHTS

Wednesday & Friday - Kennedy Space Center

- 08:45 Board bus at hotel for Kennedy Space Center, where America's space exploration comes to life.
- 10:00 Arrive at Spaceport USA Visitor Center.
- 11:00 View IMAX Film "The Dream is Alive," footage of three space shuttle missions.
- 11:45 Lunch on your own in the Visitor Center cafeteria.
- 01:00 Board Spaceport USA Bus for a two hour guided tour which showcases various attractions including the massive Vehicle Assembly Building and the six million pound Crawler Transporter.
- 03:15 Reboard bus to return to the hotel by 4:45pm.
\$31/Person includes bus, guide, IMAX film, and tour. Lunch is not included.

Wednesday - Flying Tigers Museum

- 01:00 Board bus for the Flying Tigers Museum. Former World War II pilots will take you on a guided tour of this facility where they repair WWII bombers. See some of the greatest planes ever built, such as the Flying Fortress Boeing B-17 Heavy Bomber 109, which made 140 missions and the North American B-25J Mitchell used on the 1942 Doolittle Raid on Tokyo. Don't miss the 1931 DeHavilland Tiger Moth and a 1941 Ryan PT22 Traine, both of which are often in the air.
- 04:00 Reboard bus to return to the hotel by 4:30pm.
\$16/Person includes bus, escort, and admission.

Thursday - Sea World

- ***** Board bus at hotel for Sea World, the world's most popular marine life park. Laugh at the hilarious penguins at the Penguin Encounter or marvel at the sea lions at Pacific Point Preserve. Ruling over it all is the mighty monarch Shamu, the killer whale. His show is a blend of modern technology, awesome animal magnetism, and all-out thrills. Departure time will depend on the number of people registered and will be posted at registration. Approximately six hours will be scheduled at the park. An earlier departure from the park will be arranged for those who do not want to stay all day.
\$45/Person includes bus, escort, and admission. Lunch is not included.

Thursday - Universal Studios

- ***** Board bus at hotel for Universal Studios, a movie theme park. Universal Studios Florida is a working television and movie production studio, and home to some of the most thrilling and educational rides in Central Florida. Experience over 40 rides, shows, and movie set streets including Back to the Future, Jaws, and King Kong. Departure time will depend on the number of people registered and will be posted at registration. Approximately six hours will be scheduled at the park. An earlier departure from the park will be arranged for those who do not want to stay all day.
\$45/Person includes bus, escort, and admission. Lunch is not included.

Thursday - Church Street Station

- 11:00 Board bus at hotel for lunch and shopping on your own at Church Street Station, a block-long entertainment complex with many restaurants and shops. Explore the Exchange Shopping Emporium, 3 levels of shopping featuring over 50 specialty shops and a food court. Enjoy full service dining at Cracker's Seafood Restaurant, Lili Marlene's, or the Cheyenne Barbeque Restaurant, just to name a few.
- 02:30 Reboard bus to return to the hotel by 3pm.
\$12/Person includes bus and escort. Lunch is not included.

Thursday - King Henry's Feast Dinner Show

- 06:00 Buses begin shuttling.
- 07:00 Enjoy the royal treatment at King Henry's Feast Banquet and Show as you celebrate his birthday. Dine on a bountiful chicken and rib dinner while special royal entertainment and amazing death-defying feats are performed right before your eyes. The show features a sword swallower, fire blower, aerial ballerina, and court jesters. Unlimited beer, wine, and soda are included.
- 09:00 Begin shuttling back to the hotel.
Cost is included in Package #1

REUNION HIGHLIGHTS (CONTINUED)

Friday - EPCOT CENTER

***** Board bus at hotel for Epcot Center, Disney World's ever-changing theme park of discovery. Excitement abounds during your visit to EPCOT Center. Disney minds designed the Experimental Prototype Community of Tomorrow (EPCOT) to be a true educational experience. See new technology and inventions in the exciting atmosphere of a world's fair at Innoventions. Travel around the world without leaving the country in World Showcase. The park features intriguing ideas in science and technology and celebrates the richness and diversity of world cultures. Departure time will depend on the number of people registered and will be posted at registration. Approximately six hours will be scheduled at the park. An earlier departure from the park will be arranged for those who do not want to stay all day.

\$52/Person includes bus, escort, and admission. Lunch is not included.

Friday - Splendid China

***** Board bus at hotel for Splendid China. Discover the mysteries of ancient China at this elaborately designed 76-acre Chinese-themed outdoor attraction. The park features more than 60 highly detailed miniature and full-scale displays. View the half-mile long Great Wall and stunning Forbidden City. Your experience will include live entertainment, delicious Chinese cuisine, and shopping. Departure time will depend on the number of people registered and will be posted at registration. Approximately six hours will be scheduled at the park. An earlier departure from the park will be arranged for those who do not want to stay all day.

\$34/Person includes bus, escort, and admission. Lunch is not included.

Friday - Rendezvous Dinners

After a Cash Bar Reception, gather in your respective banquet rooms for dinner with your individual groups. Bomb Groups (FGs, PRGs, etc.) with approximately 50 or more people in attendance will have a private room. Smaller groups will be combined with others. Think of this as your "reunion within the reunion."

Cost is included in both Meal Packages (or \$28 separately)

Saturday - City Tour

01:00 Board bus at hotel for a tour of Orlando. Discover the historic districts of Lake Cherokee, Delaney Park, and Lake Copeland. Drive through Lochhaven Park and see several of the museums that make up the Cultural Center of Orlando. Continue the tour in Winter Park by driving down exclusive Park Avenue, home to many boutiques, restaurants, and shops. Learn about the fragile geological make-up of this area which is responsible for the Winter Park Sink Hole. A community pool, a Porsche repair shop, and a home were all lost in this disaster which took place in 1981.

04:00 Back at the hotel.

\$12/Person includes bus and guide.

Saturday - Annual 8AFMMF Symposium, "The Friendly Invasion"

This year's show in Orlando promises to be one of wide-ranging historical interest and equally entertaining to every 8AF-er and their families as well. Differing somewhat in program format from prior ones, this session will be a special feature presentation by the "Mighty Eighth's" own eminent historian, Roger Freeman. The impact of the US Servicemen in Britain during WWII will be the focus of this interest-laden program backed by many visual effects which will center on the life and times of the Mighty Eighth's men and women. The fun, the social, the sadness, the tragedies, all combined, will tell the story of those wartime days.

Cost is included in your registration fee.

Saturday - Annual Banquet and Dance

Enjoy a Cash Bar Reception and then assemble in the hotel ballroom for the Posting of the Colors and a Candle Lighting Service. Dinner will consist of your choice of entree (beef or fish) along with the usual accompaniments. Following dinner, awards will be given to active duty members of the 8th Air Force, and you will hear from a guest speaker. Lastly, dance to the sounds of the Big Band Era, provided by the Joe Mose Band.

Cost is included in both Meal Packages (or \$33 separately).

Sunday - Memorial Service

Please join us as we honor our departed comrades. Norm Grant, the Memorial Service Chairman, will conduct the ceremony, as Past Presidents and individual group contacts participate in the wreath and flower presentation.

TRAVEL INFORMATION

If you are flying into Orlando International Airport, many transportation companies offer service to the Clarion. Transtar has agreed to a reduced rate for airport transportation. The current price is \$21 per person roundtrip. However, if you present the coupon at the bottom of this page to the Transtar Ticket Booth, you are entitled to a \$3 discount. After claiming your luggage, go outside to the Transportation Level at both "A" and "B" Terminals. Advance reservations are not necessary, but please call 24 hours prior to your departure from Orlando to schedule a return trip to the airport.

If you are driving, the hotel is located at 9700 International Drive, near the convention center.

From Interstate 4 East, take the Sand Lake Road exit and bear right. Turn right onto International Drive, and the hotel will be on your right after King Henry's Feast and Pizza Hut.

From Interstate 4 West, take the Sand Lake Road exit and bear left. Turn right onto International Drive, and the hotel will be on your right.

If you are driving an RV, there are numerous campgrounds in the area. The Orlando KOA is about twenty minutes from the hotel. Please call 800-999-5267 for more information. You may park your RV in the hotel parking lot while attending hotel functions.

REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

1. See choices below and complete the Registration Form. Remit by check or money order made payable to 8AF Reunion by August 30, 1996. Forms received after this date will be accepted on a space available basis only. Please complete the entire form (Member number, WWII group, etc.).
2. Canceled check will serve as your receipt, although you are not expected to present it at registration. Confirmations will not be sent.
3. After you check into the hotel, report to our registration desk on the 2nd floor to pick up your nametags, tickets, etc.
4. Full refund for cancellations received by September 25, 1996. After this date, refund amount will depend on charges made for unused portion of services. Please call 804-625-6401 (9am-5pm EST) if you need to cancel.

MEALS / EVENTS CHOICES

CHOICE #1 TOTAL PACKAGE \$157

Package includes 7 food functions starting with breakfast on Thursday. The Thursday evening dinner outing is available only in this package. Options are separate.

CHOICE #2 PARTIAL PACKAGE \$112

Package includes 5 food functions starting with breakfast on Friday. Options are separate.

CHOICE #3 INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

Friday Rendezvous Dinner \$28 and Saturday Banquet \$33 can be purchased separately.

TOUR OPTIONS

Wednesday: Kennedy Space Center \$31 or Flying Tigers Museum \$16. Thursday: Sea World \$45, Universal Studios \$45, or Church Street Station \$12. Friday: Kennedy Space Center \$31, EPCOT Center \$52, or Splendid China \$34. Saturday: City Tour \$12.

***** CUT HERE *****

8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY DISCOUNTED CASH COUPON

\$3 off regular round trip price.

Present this coupon to TRANSTAR AIRPORT SHUTTLE.

The counter collects all cash, and gratuity is not included in the price. Please call 24 hours in advance for transportation back to the airport:

856-7777

ACTIVITY REGISTRATION FORM

NAMES (for nametags) _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

8AFHS Membership # _____ Check () if Life Member? PHONE #(_____) _____

WWII Group (for seating arrangements) _____ 1st 8AFHS Reunion? _____

Please note Banquet Choice: # _____ Sliced Beef Tenderloin # _____ Chef's Selection of Fish

Meals Section

Package Choice #1 per person \$157 \$ _____
Package Choice #2 per person \$112 \$ _____

Choice #3 - Individual Events

Note: Thurs. dinner is included in Choice #1. Fri. & Sat. dinners are included in #1 and #2 above.

Friday: Rendezvous Dinner (Chicken) per person \$28 \$ _____
Saturday: Banquet & Dance per person \$33 \$ _____

Events Section (Tour Options)

Wednesday: Kennedy Space Center per person \$31 \$ _____
Flying Tigers Museum per person \$16 \$ _____

Thursday: Sea World per person \$45 \$ _____
Universal Studios per person \$45 \$ _____
Church Street Station per person \$12 \$ _____

Friday: Kennedy Space Center per person \$31 \$ _____
EPCOT Center per person \$52 \$ _____
Splendid China per person \$34 \$ _____

Saturday: City Tour per person \$12 \$ _____

Mandatory Registration fee per person \$32 \$ _____

(Reg. fee includes Unit rebates, Symposium, 8AFMMF memorial plans, postage, and a raffle ticket for a special gift)

Enclose Full Payment to 8AF Reunion \$ _____

Registration forms must be received by *August 30, 1996.*

MAIL TO: 8AF Reunion * P.O. Box 11327 * Norfolk, VA 23517

***** CUT HERE AND MAIL BOTTOM PORTION TO HOTEL *****
8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY HOTEL RESERVATION FORM - OCT. 1 - 6, 1996

NAME (last) _____ (first) _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____ PHONE (_____) _____

ARRIVAL DATE _____ NUMBER OF NIGHTS IN ROOM _____

SPECIAL REQUESTS _____

RATE: Singles and Doubles: \$73, Triples: \$87, Quads: \$102 (plus tax, currently 11% + 1% surcharge)

Reservations received after September 2 will be processed on a space available basis.

Deposit is refundable if reservation is canceled 3 days in advance of arrival date. Be sure to record your cancellation number. Special circumstances will be considered.

Please include first night's deposit by check, travelers check, or credit card to confirm your reservation.

CREDIT CARD # _____ TYPE _____ EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE (regardless of payment method) _____
(CHECK-IN 3PM, CHECK-OUT NOON)

MAIL TO: Reservations * Clarion Plaza Hotel Orlando * 9700 International Drive * Orlando, FL 32819

MEDICAL FORM – 8TH AIR FORCE REUNION – MEMBER

NAME _____ AGE _____ BIRTH DATE _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

CURRENT MEDICATION, DOSAGE _____

KNOWN ALLERGIES _____

PRIVATE PHYSICIAN _____ PHONE _____

NEXT TO KIN OR CONTACT _____ PHONE _____

PERTINENT MEDICAL HISTORY _____

MEDICAL FORM – 8TH AIR FORCE REUNION – SPOUSE/GUEST

NAME _____ AGE _____ BIRTH DATE _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

CURRENT MEDICATION, DOSAGE _____

KNOWN ALLERGIES _____

PRIVATE PHYSICIAN _____ PHONE _____

NEXT OF KIN OR CONTACT _____ PHONE _____

PERTINENT MEDICAL HISTORY _____

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

Officers, Directors and Staff – 1996-97

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Thomas Parsons
Sherman Small

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 AF Gunners Assn, 453 Plaza Circle, Bossier City LA 7111
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8AFHS, FOTE Mourn Passing of George Vanden Heuvel

George Vanden Heuvel one of the 8th Air Force's WWII aces, and a prime mover of the "Friends of the Eighth" in Britain, passed on in late February. Not only was he a member of the air force which FOTE commemorates, but over the years he acted as the UK representative for the 8th Air Force Historical Society. He was a member of the 361st Fighter Group, 376th Fighter Squadron, and was credited with 9-1/2 enemy aircraft destroyed. He will be remembered by many for his delightful sense of humor and a relaxed social style whenever he appeared at one of the 8th AF gatherings.

George was born in Mount Vernon, NY and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering at the School of Technology in Atlanta, GA. He graduated from the USAF pilot training on Dec. 12, 1942 and became an instructor of US and RAF pilots at Cochran Field, GA. Six months later he was sent overseas where he flew his first P-51 at Walden on Oct. 1, 1944, and his last flight at Little Walden on Oct. 1, 1945. He returned to the States on Oct 26, 1945.



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A group newsletter recently printed an interesting description of rationing in Britain during WWII. In response to my queries for clarification on several points, our 8th AF News representative in Britain, Connie Richards, sent this reprint from "The Times."

2¹/₄ YEARS OF FOOD RATIONING

Food rationing was resumed after a break of 20 years on January 8, 1940, 18 weeks after the start of the war. *The Times*, in a leading article on November 2, 1939, had stated that it was "to begin gently," and the accuracy of that description will be even more apparent to-day than it was two and a half years ago, for when rationing came in again it covered at first only bacon, butter (allowing 4oz. with no check on purchases of margarine), and sugar (12oz. against 8oz. to-day) . . .

It may be found useful to have printed together the amounts of the various rationed foods to which at present the individual citizen is entitled :-

MAIN FOODS (WEEKLY)

MEAT: 1s. (5p) worth of butcher's meat: 2d (1p) worth of tinned corned beef or pork. Half this amount for children.

BACON : 4oz.

FATS : 8oz. (6oz. of butter and margarine, of which not more than 2oz. may be butter, and 2oz. of cooking fat).

CHEESE: 3oz. (12oz. for certain workers, including agricultural, forestry, and land drainage, the auxiliary force of the Women's Land Army, county roadmen, train crews, signalmen and permanent way men without access to canteens, miners, and vegetarians who do not take their meat or bacon rations).

SUGAR : 8oz. TEA: 2oz.

PRESERVES: (as with points foods) are made

ON THIS DAY

April 11, 1942



Rationing ended in 1954 when butter and meat came off points. It has been said that people were better fed during the war than before it.

available for periods of four weeks, in respect of each of which the ration is 1lb. of jam, marmalade, syrup, treacle, or mincemeat.

POINTS FOODS

Beginning with the four weeks period which started on Monday each consumer is allowed 24 points, and the value of the coupons in the pink books is now: A, one point; B two; and C, three. These may be expended as follows :-

TINNED SALMON - Grades I and II, 32 points a lb., or from 32 to 8 according to the size of the tin; grade III, 24 points a lb., or 24 to 6 according to size of tin.

SARDINES - From 3 to 30 points according to size of container, or 24 a lb. net.

OTHER TINNED FISH - From 1 to 24 points a tin

according to size or from 12 to 16 points a lb.
TONGUES - 24 points a lb.

MEAT ROLL OR GALANTINE - 21 points a 3lb. container or 8 points a lb.

OTHER TINNED MEATS - 8 points a lb.

DRIED FRUITS - 6 points a lb. These include dates, currants, raisins, sultanas, apples, plums, prunes, figs, apricots, nectarines, and peaches.

RICE, SAGO AND TAPIOCA - 2 points a lb.
BREAKFAST CEREALS - Containers of 8oz. and under, 2 points; up to 12oz., 3 points; over 12oz. 4 points.

DRIED PEAS - 4 points a lb.

IMPORTED DRIED BEANS - 1 point a lb.

SPLIT PEAS AND LENTILS - 2 points a lb.

TINNED FRUIT - From 8 to 16 points a tin, or after removal from container 8 points a lb.

TINNED BEANS - From 1 to 4 points a tin or, with tomato sauce, 2 to 8 points a tin.

BEANS - (dried, in brine) - From 1 to 3 points a tin.

TINNED PEAS - 3 or 4 points a tin.

TINNED TOMATOES - 3 to 9 points.

CONDENSED MILK - From 4 to 10 points

according to quality and size of tin.
Eggs are not rationed in the official sense: they are allocated. The latest allocation provided for three a head in March.

MILK - Expectant mothers and children up to six years, 1 pint daily; children and adolescents from six to 17, 1/2 pint daily; school children up to two-thirds of a pint a day; invalids up to 2 pints daily; other adults 3 pints weekly.

COD LIVER OIL - Children under five.

THE BOMBING OF BILLIE B.

by John A. Clark, 100th BG

It was a late November 1944 mission of the 100th Bomb Group, 8th Air Force. We were flying 895, "Miss Chief," an old (B-17G) aircraft but a dependable one, in which we had put about a dozen missions. Our Fortress crew had completed all the usual pre-take off procedures (and, precautions), including making any last minute necessary pit-stops before taxiing out for take-off.

Hence, during group assembly over East Anglia, while I was monitoring the group frequency on the radio, I was surprised to hear the following override on the intercom from Pete, our radio operator:

"Lieutenant?" (As co-pilot, I normally handled any intercom communications between the crew and the cockpit, so I switched from group frequency to intercom: "OK, Pete."

"Lieutenant, Wade's in a bad way."

"What's wrong, Pete," all the time wondering if our ball turret gunner had had an accident or taken ill. Thoughts of aborting our 12th mission also ran through my head. Doubtless, Chuck, our pilot, would approve of aborting if Wade was really bad off.

"Wade's gotta go so bad he can hardly stand!"

"Can he get to the can in the companionway?"

We had long given up on using the bomb bay relief tube as it would invariably freeze up during the winter months, even at low altitudes. So, our solution was a rectangular, open-ended, well secured, 15-gallon oil can placed strategically in the companionway at the end of each mission it was always filled almost to the brim. The task of disposing of what would be by then a large frozen block of yellow-colored ice was democratically rotated among the crew. We always joked about taking flak hits anywhere, but...well, you know where.

"No, Lieutenant, Wade has to do number-two, and it's really urgent!"

By now, the entire crew knew about Wade's predicament.

"Not back here!" (Bruce, our tail gunner)

"It'll get worse as we go higher!" (Dave, the navigator, encouragingly.)

"Dump it in the ball and sit on it!" (Unknown, but probably Rex, our armorer and second waist gunner.)

"Maybe it'll freeze fast enough to put it on the floor in the waist." (Jim, our always helpful other waist gunner.)

"Nothing doing!" (Rex, the originator of the ball turret solution.)

Executing his command function, Chuck pointed a gloved finger at me and, without a word, his dry smile said "It's yours!"

"All right, you guys. Let's have some good ideas. Wade's got a bad problem." (Me.)

"We all do now." (Robin, our flight engineer, always seeing a situation clearly.)

"Not in my office!" (Al, our bombardier.)

"Lieutenant?"

"OK, Pete."

"I wonder if we could use one of the cardboard boxes the chaff comes in. I could dump the chaff in the corner until I need it."

"Better use more than one box, Pete. They're pretty thin." (Robin.)

"OK, Pete. Why don't you try it. Let me know when you're finished." (Me.)

Chuck nodded and tapped my shoulder, pointing to his headset. I switched back to group frequency in time to hear Fireball Leader say we would be at Angels Five, on course, 2 minutes behind briefing, in 17 minutes.

"Dave, did you get that?" (Me.)

"Roger." (Dave.)

Shortly later I switched back to intercom when I heard on the override:

"Lieutenant?"

"OK, Pete."

"Wade's done. I think the box will be OK."

"Thanks, Pete. Good job. How's Wade?"

Wade's OK, but what should I do with the box?"

"Can you move it without spilling it?" (Me.)

Yes, it's pretty firm and we put a fairly tight cover on it."

"Well, put it in some corner, out of the way. We'll deal with it later."

"OK." (Pete.)

Suddenly, in a burst of truly creative enthusiasm, Rex broke in:

"Lieutenant, why don't we tie it to the fins of one of our bombs? I can do it with some extra arming wire I have. We'll drop it with our entire load!"

At that the intercom came alive with excitement and declarations of joy, mixed with evil intent:

"Right in the Fuhrer's face." (Bruce, tail.)

"Insult to injury." (Dave, navigator.)

"Same on same." (Al, bombardier.)

"Lieutenant? OK to go to the bomb bay?" (Rex and Robin.)

Chuck, who apparently was also listening, lifted his gloved hand with a

raised thumb, almost hitting the landing light switches. Big smile, now.

"OK. Go ahead." (Me.)

Carrying the box as carefully as if it were a bomb, Rex squirmed into the bomb bay from the radio room to be met by Robin from the cockpit. Together, they completed their dedicated task promptly and in high spirits.

"OK, Lieutenant, we're done." (Rex.)

"Thanks. We'll probably set some kind of 8th Air Force record today. Wade, are you back in your turret OK?" (Me.)

"Yes, Lieutenant. We really ought to smear 'em today."

For the next few minutes, high humor reverberated back and forth among the crew. Never had such interest been expressed over our bomb load. They seemed even anxious to get to the target.

As we turned on the I.P. and took up our course to the target, I switched briefly back to intercom:

"Wade, we probably won't have much to worry us about fighters on the bomb run. Why don't you turn your turret so you can see the bombs drop out. Give us all a report."

"Roger, Lieutenant!" (Wade.)

We were flying lead in the low flight of Fireball Able of the 100th and, as was often done, there was a fourth B-17 added to our flight of three, flying slightly below and directly behind us. This was called flying in the diamond, somewhat of a tailend Charlie position which was usually assigned to a new crew. Today, it was the B-17 flown by Billie B. and his crew.

In a few minutes, following standard procedure, Al opened the bomb bay doors which was announced by the usual roar of the slipstream. After another short period of straight and level flying we felt the sudden upward lurch of our Fortress at the same moment Al sang out "bombs away."

Almost simultaneously, over the group frequency, I heard an irate rebuke: "Hey, what are you guys doing?" It sounded like Billie B. "We can't see anything down here!" Now, I knew it was Billie B.

At this sublime moment of our sweet revenge for all the nasty atrocities of the enemy, at a time to once and for all settle accounts with the Aryan brutes below by dropping on them Wade's latest full measure of devotion to the miracles of the alimentary canal, we had badly goofed. We had overlooked those important aerodynamic relationships between weight, mass, shape, and drag that determine a ballistic trajectory. Instead of sending our personal (or, at least, Wade's) greeting to the enemy below along with our load of

Continued on page 36

A STRANGE WAR

by Stanley P. Friedman
Yorktown Hts., New York

So we're coming in on three engines. The number one was feathered over Brussels, where we took I guess about seventy thousand hits. At least, because that damn B-24 never flew another mission. It was turned into salvage.

So we hit the runway at Debach, doing I guess about 110 or so. Suddenly we start veering off the concrete to our left.

Bob says, "Gene, get off the brakes."

Gene says, "I'm not on the brakes."

Bob says, "Get off the f--king brakes, Gene!"

Gene says, "I'm not on the f--king brakes!"

Fact was, we'd taken hits in the left wheel well. The tire was flat.

We're now off the runway doing about 80, tearing across the turf. And we're heading right for the tower. Stand back, folks.

I didn't see it, but Thel Neihoff, our engineer says many men in uniform were running out that tower door, and many men were jumping out the tower windows.

Fortunately, that train crash never came off. We stopped dead at the front door. Avon calling!

We get out of the plane, Helton, our colonel, a dry witted man comes up to Bob, and he says, "Millhollin, I want to congratulate you. That was smart work taking that plane off the runway so everybody could land behind you."

Oh yeah, tell me about it.

But here's the kicker.

Thirty years later I'm in Hachogdoches, Texas where Bob has retired. It's the first time we've seen each other since all that chazari in the Old Country.

He says, "Stan, I want to tell you something about that ninth mission that I never told anyone before."

I'm standing there in the living room with a drink in my hand.

"We took a direct hit that day."

A direct hit? I sat down on the couch, flabbergasted. What am I doing here alive today?

"Yeah. I didn't want to tell the guys. I didn't want to scare them. I only found out about it when I went out to look over the plane the next day. We took a direct hit in the left wing. It went in the bottom, through the gas tanks, and out the top. And didn't go off. Nobody saw it, but I thought something was not right. It was probably at Ghent. Because when we hit the Channel, and gas was pouring out the bottom, Mims on our right and Holtman behind us were pulling away. They said

they thought we were going to go up."

What am I supposed to think today? Out of the hundreds they lobbed at us on 36 missions, a flaw in that one shell with our name on it let me live another fifty-two years, I guess. Life is strange. I've always hoped that a Jewish slave laborer in a factory put the fix in.

But so was the whole war strange. I got home, and I said, "From here on, everything is downhill. Nothing in my life will ever be so utterly fantastic again."

But there were benefits. One time in later life, I was in trouble-the type we all go in and out of regularly. Money, job, kids, marriage, mortgage, health, car repairs, grass won't grow, etc. But this time it was going on and on.

So one night in bed, I said, "God, get me out of this. Enough is enough."

And he said to me, "Listen, Stanley, you don't need my help. Just remember, if you can get through the war, you can get through this."

And by God, He was right!

NO, THEY DON'T SAY THE PLEDGE ANYMORE!

by George Reamy, a Texas high school
teacher borrowed from the
Dallas Morning News
(From "Mendelsham Memories")

"Do they still say the pledge, George?" That question haunted me like the ghost of a fallen comrade as I drove home on a quiet Sunday morning last month. Having gone to San Antonio to visit an old Navy buddy escorting his father-in-law to a convention of Second World War airmen, I ran into the unexpected. What I thought I would find was a bunch of cane-wielding old men swapping memories. What I found were the dignified warriors of the 95th Bomb Group. With every word they spoke, traces of their bravery flashed across their eyes.

One of those incredible men I'd had the privilege to meet was nicknamed "Oc." Hardly more than a kid from Wisconsin at the outbreak of the war, he was a navigator on a powerful B-17 Flying Fortress. One day "Oc" found himself cradling a 19 year-old who was crying for his mother as he bled to death from a leg mangled by flak. "Oc" tried to stop the bleeding and couldn't. Instead he simply held the boy in his arms while the young man's lifeblood drained from him like fluid from a shot-up

hydraulic line. "Oc" didn't like to get too close to people over there.

I also spoke with Dick, who had been a tail gunner. On one mission the tail gunner's plexiglass was blown away by shrapnel. When someone called back and asked "Hey, Dick! Are you all right back there?" he replied, "I don't know - someone had better come back and check. My head hurts." A fellow crew member came back, then laughed with relief. Dick was OK, but his flak helmet looked like a Messerschmitt had slammed into it. He brought the ragged shrapnel home as a souvenir.

After telling his story, Dick politely asked me what I did and I told him I was a high school teacher. That was when Dick fired the question that seemed to come from nowhere, like a fighter diving out of the sun. "Do they still say the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag in school, George?" The faded blue eyes that once swept the skies, hunting for the enemy, were searching mine. It seemed to me that the old warrior was sweeping the expanse of my soul still looking for a threat to his beloved country. "Do they still say the pledge, George?" he repeated. I squirmed. The answer was "No." I didn't tell Dick that, though I couldn't.

No, I didn't tell Dick about the vast numbers of school children who don't appreciate the hard-won freedom for which he and "Oc" fought so bravely. I didn't tell Dick about the ones who don't stand or stop talking when the bank plays the national anthem at football games. They are the same kids who expect grades and everything else to be handed to them, like the teenager bragging to her friends about how much money she would get from the government after her next baby is born.

Maybe it is time I gave Dick a straight answer. "No, Dick, they don't say the pledge very often anymore. Your airman's instincts led you to search in the right place for a threat to the nation you defended so well. The enemy is within us, Dick. It feeds on our greed, our selfishness and, most of all, our complacency. What is even worse, we can't send heroes like you to defeat this one. God help us all!"

One must wait
until the evening
To see how splendid
the day has been.

--Sophocles--

MY MOMENT AT THE WALL

by Wayne W. Livesay
Riverside, CA

Perhaps all veterans of the military remember specific dates and events which occurred during their tenure of duty. Each of us remembers the classic battles, narrow brushes with death, heroic actions of friends, and the times when life seemed uncertain and suffering became matter of fact.

The date of August 10, 1944, stands out in my book of memory as the one time when I really believed my life had reached the point of termination. The anxiety, fears, anger, and utter hopelessness I felt at that time cannot be expressed in word, but from time to time I find it necessary to reflect upon that moment of 46 years ago.

I was the navigator of a B-17 in the 8th Air Force. After completing one tour of duty, I returned to the States for a 60-day R & R then went back to my base at Polebrook, England. During the bombing missions of my first tour, I experienced attacks from German fighters, constant flak barrages from German anti-aircraft positions, and a few narrow escapes due to mechanical problems; but although I recognized the involved danger, I never really thought that any adverse action would befall me.

However, my second tour soon convinced me that I had been living in a fool's paradise. On August 9, nine days after returning to England, our plane was shot down over the Dutch coast and I parachuted to safety on a small island off the mainland. Since a garrison of German soldiers was stationed on the island, I and other members of the crew were captured within 3-5 minutes. We were moved to a jail in a small town on the mainland and I was placed in a cell hardly large enough to accommodate the straw mattress I was to sleep on.

Around daylight the next morning, I was awakened by a rifle butt against my ribs and a soldier motioned for me to go outside. He directed me to a truck in the parking lot where four other soldiers and a German officer were waiting. Not a word was spoken by any of them as I was pointed to the back of the truck and directed to climb in. Three of the soldiers then entered the truck and motioned for me to sit with my back against the cab. Each of these three was equipped with a weapon which appeared similar to a Thompson submachine gun. The German officer and the other soldier entered the cab of the truck.

As the truck engine started and the vehicle began to move, a myriad of

thoughts filtered through my mind. I thought of my family, my girl back home, the men at the base, and the others who had been captured along with me. Underneath these thoughts was the distinct possibility that I was making my last ride and that these silent men were intent on just one thing---to finish me off and leave me somewhere in the countryside. The three soldiers with the guns were sitting on a bench just inside the tailgate and they kept their eyes glued on me the entire journey.

I had always pictured German soldiers as professional and neat in appearance with an inbred attitude of military discipline. The three characters I was facing were just the opposite---unshaven, with uncombed hair and dirty uniforms which appeared to have never been cleaned. The officer and soldier who drove the truck looked somewhat better but far below what I expected.

We rode for approximately 20 minutes at speeds from 5-15 miles per hour. Since the truck was covered by a foul smelling canvas I could not see outside, but judging from the way the truck was bouncing up and down, I was convinced that we could not be on a road but were pioneering a path through open country replete with rocks and gaping holes. We seemed to reach a downgrade and the truck picked up speed only to come to a sudden stop as if we had struck a barricade. Two of the three soldiers were thrown off their seats and one almost dropped his weapon.

After a few seconds, the tailgate was lowered and I was motioned outside. As I jumped to the ground, my heart skipped a beat or two as a thought of utter dismay came to mind. I turned to my right and there about 50 feet away was a rudely constructed rock wall which appeared to me as an ideal background for a firing squad action.

The wall was about 8 feet high and had been built across an open field for a distance of about 150 yards. Since it did not branch off in another direction so as to enclose a given property location I figured it must have been a designated boundary line. Regardless of its original purpose, there appeared to be no doubt as to its present intended use.

One of the three armed soldiers indicated that I should move over to the wall. After I complied, the officer approached and without saying a word offered me a cigarette. I took a cigarette from the pack which, ironically, was the identical pack of Camels that had been taken from me when I was captured. The officer furnished me with a light and I stood there 'enjoying' what appeared to be my last cigarette.

In the meantime, the three armed soldiers positioned themselves approximately

25 yards from me and about 10 feet from each other. The officer moved to a spot on my left a few feet from them while the truck driver stayed in the cab of the vehicle.

As I stood there looking at the scene, I started to speak but no words came out. The cigarette was almost burning my fingers but I hesitated dropping it to the ground. My emotions at that time were a mixture of anger, prayer, and regret as I thought of many things I should have done in the past as well as numerous things I should not have done. Only one who has experienced a similar situation can truly empathize with my feelings at that moment.

Finally, I dropped the residue of the cigarette and fixed my eyes toward the weapons in the hands of my tormentors. At this point there was no doubt in my mind as to what was about to happen and my final decision appeared to be whether I should look or close my eyes. I thought about running but knew this would profit nothing, so I decided to assume an erect position as if someone had called me to attention.

I stood there for what seemed like minutes but, in reality, was not more than 10-15 seconds. Suddenly, the officer raised his hand and motioned for me to go back to the truck. I did not wait for a second indication as I hurried to comply with his instruction. About 20 minutes later I was placed back in my cell and given breakfast which consisted of a slice of black bread and a cup of barley coffee.

Subsequently, I was a prisoner of war for nine months. During that time I experienced the bitter cold in Poland, the march in the snow from Sagan to Spremberg, the 3-day journey in a 40 X 8 box car to Moosburg, and bouts with malnutrition and pneumonia pleurisy. All of these are listed as times of suffering; but none of them approached the magnitude of what I endured during those few minutes with my back to the wall in Holland.



MEMORIES

by Bill Rellstab, 388th BG Navigator

8-500 lb. GP bombs, Wade's box was delivered at about 150 MPH directly into the Vee of the windshield of Billie B's Fortress.

At this speed and with an outside temperature of about -50°F, Billie B. was indeed instantly blinded forward with an impenetrable coating that also instantly froze into an almost perfectly symmetrical curtain over the windshield.

Fortunately, or otherwise, as one may consider it, Billie B. was flying expertly closed-up almost directly under us looking up through the upper cockpit windows. Thus, he could still keep flying with the formation. (He returned to base, however, looking mostly out his side windows.)

"Wade, I think we got Billie!" (Bruce, in the tail.)

"I think so, too!" (Wade.)

"Lieutenant, what should I do?" (Wade, again.)

"Watch out for German fighters, Wade." (Me, trying to pretend nothing happened.)

"Wade, I'll help you clean it up." (Jim, always helpful.)

Jim and Wade did exactly what they promised, Chuck apologized for the entire crew to Billie B., who said he understood. I emptied the can, all this after we landed at our base, Thorpe Abbots.

A month later Billie B. and his crew went down at Hamburg among the 12 Fortresses the 100th Bomb Group lost that day, December 31, 1944. Old 895, "Miss Chief," was one of them, too, but flown by another crew.

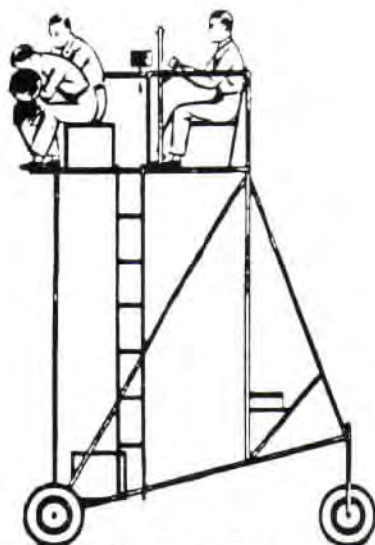
A buddy sent me a recent highway map of East Anglia, which brought back a flood of long-forgotten memories. I think the name Knettishall probably came from a nearby manor home, Knettis Hall. The nearest town name was Coney Weston, a tiny crossroads village near the perimeter of the air base of the 388th Bomb Group. A few miles north of the airfield there was (is) a forest and on its southern edge, as seen from the air, the trees form a long green arrow pointing west. This great green arrow created a spectacular landmark in a countryside otherwise rather undistinguished. It was a familiar and welcoming sight for many a returning exhausted air crew, like a friendly green Interstate sign which tells you that this is your turn-off. I note with the pleasure of nostalgia that the green arrow is still there, as shown on the map. (Note: In England one can't just cut down a tree without a special permit. It's against the law, so a wooded area on the map almost never changes.)

The roads and towns on the map brought back memories of countless bicycle trips to many a quaint village pub. On stand down days, I would sometimes cycle farther into the surrounding countryside, seeking points of historical interest. There was ample time for this, for daylight lingered til midnight because of the high latitude (52 degrees north - same as Labrador), the effect of the summer solstice, and, of course, the double daylight savings time which was in effect over the whole of England. One time I ventured as far as Bury St. Edmunds to look at the old Roman ruins and I imagined the bustling market town it was during the Middle Ages. I fished in a little river just north of the base near a place called Rushford (it would have been a creek back home in America) called, I believe, the Ouse or Little Ouse, for loach - whatever that is. I never caught one, so my present feeble fishing reputation has a long-standing historical basis. I cut down a little Christmas tree from a small copse not far from the river in December of '44, thereby risking punishment under the King's forestry laws. Back at the barracks we decorated it with strands of chaff (strips of tinsel which we dropped from the plane to confuse the German radar-controlled 88s), cigar bands, and chewing gum wrappers, all the while hearing inside our heads and on AFN (Armed Forces Network) the strains of "I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas."

My laundry lady lived on the road just outside another small village, Hopton, a few miles from the base down another road. She lived in an ancient, straw-thatched hut with a hard-packed dirt floor, a five and a

half foot front door that I had to stoop to enter, and a half dozen ragged urchins. I would supply her with GI soap and pay her a few shillings, and she would sometimes give me a few fresh eggs, as treasured a luxury for me as soap was for her.

Ipswich, near the coast, was too far for a bicycle trip, but we did get there once, or at least to Woodbridge, as RAF air base nearby. This was the area from which Cardinal Wolsey, the son of a butcher, came. His splendid palace, Hampton Court, was very close to where you lived in Richmond. Woodbridge had an extra long runway (several miles, I think) and a fog dispersal system, named FIDO, that consisted essentially of pipes along both sides of the runway which would spray ignited gasoline into the air over the runway thereby creating a tunnel of heated clear air in the fog. It was the only airfield left open in East Anglia where we could land when, at 2 a.m. on Christmas Eve, the weather socked in beneath us while we were flying weather ship patrol from Scotland to Lands End for an impending 8th Air Force mission. We hated to be away from our squadron "home" and friends on Christmas Eve and we desperately wanted to return once the mission was scrubbed. Knettishall, our base, was completely fogged in and we couldn't see the runway lights until we were almost over them, too late to make the necessary flight corrections to land the ship. Nevertheless, we made three attempts to land, our desperation evidenced by my attempt to use the Gee Box to get the ship lined up to where we would be headed for center of the runway when the pilot, Bud Beatty, could finally see the runway lights. After the third try, coming in to the left of the runway and within a few feet of wiping out the control tower with our left wing, we decided to try to make it to Woodbridge, which was the only field in East Anglia still open. As I recall, it closed shortly after we landed there, so we didn't get to test the effectiveness of FIDO. We did learn what Christmas breakfast on an operational RAF base was like (underwhelming for us spoiled Yanks). The fog persisted the next day, and we were returned to our base at Knettishall in the back of a GI 6x6 truck. I also learned that although the precision of the Gee Box was legendary, in a real blind test it couldn't line you up with a runway with sufficient accuracy to bet your life on it - which essentially is what we were doing. I imagine that whoever was on duty in "Tarbox" control tower that night will not forget, for we were betting their lives, too. I shake my head now at such youthful optimism but such was the powerful pull of Christmas on young men far from home in a foreign land.



A-2 Bomb Trainer



Gil Cohen's poignant painting, "After The Mission," brings back a scene familiar to all those who returned from combat missions. This was not an easy mission. The men are bone-tired and spent and want to get back to the sack. They would rather not be here, but the 'Brass' need to know what happened. Thank God for the coffee (and the whiskey)! The pilot tries to sort things out for the intelligence officer who documents the day's events while his British counterpart puffs thoughtfully on his pipe. The navigator nervously thumbs his Zippo to light a cigarette. A waist gunner, wearing a hastily wrapped bandage, appears to be in shock, while the bombardier wearily rubs the back of his neck as he recalls the harrowing run over the target. The young tailgunner looks out the window, perhaps sweating out a buddy's plane, perhaps contemplating a run into town. And did you notice—"Lucky Strike Green Has Gone To War?" (Retail price \$95, image size 27 X 18 inches. See Aeroprint ad on page 44.)

TROOP TRAIN (ETO NOV '44)

by Mary E. Hill, former 1st Lt. ANC WWII from her Series, "Comrades in Olive Drab"

"We're on our way! We're on our way!
We're on our way!"

the rails seemed to say, as the troop
train roared on that
cold November night.

Like a cannon ball, with a cargo of
humans nearly packed tight.

I hung on for dear life as I swayed
there in the aisle,
unable to sleep.

Pale moonlight nearby reflected pas-
ture and sheep.

The iron monster hurtled frenzied on
into obscure night.

my mind was too busy to contemplate
fright.

My heart beat and pounded, pulsating
stretched every vein

as I thought about tomorrow and

would I pass this way again.

The troop train sped recklessly
through town, vale and hill,
the chill that coursed through me was
only adventure's thrill.

I peered out bravely between the
drapes heavy and black,
and I saw in the distance, planes and
firework flak.

I finally stretched out my tired body, I
closed my weary eyes
to dream of the Army pilot with the
sweet white lies,

and how we made a date to meet in
London Town,
and the rails seemed to say:

You're on your way! You're on your
way! You're on your way!"

THE PADDLE FEET

by Virgil F. Thompson, 5th ERS

We are the Paddle Feet, maybe the unsung
heroes, if there are such.

We are the guys and girls who put the fight-
ers and the bombers in the air for their missions
to destroy our enemy.

We are the ones who awaken the crews in
the early morn.

We are the truck drivers who transported
the crews to the mess halls and then hauled the
crews to the flight lines.

We are the cooks, the bakers and KPs who
served the crews breakfast and meals.

We are the Armament and the Ordnance
crews who loaded the aircraft with ammunition
and bombs.

We are the crew chiefs and their mechanics
who put the aircraft in maintenance order to fly.

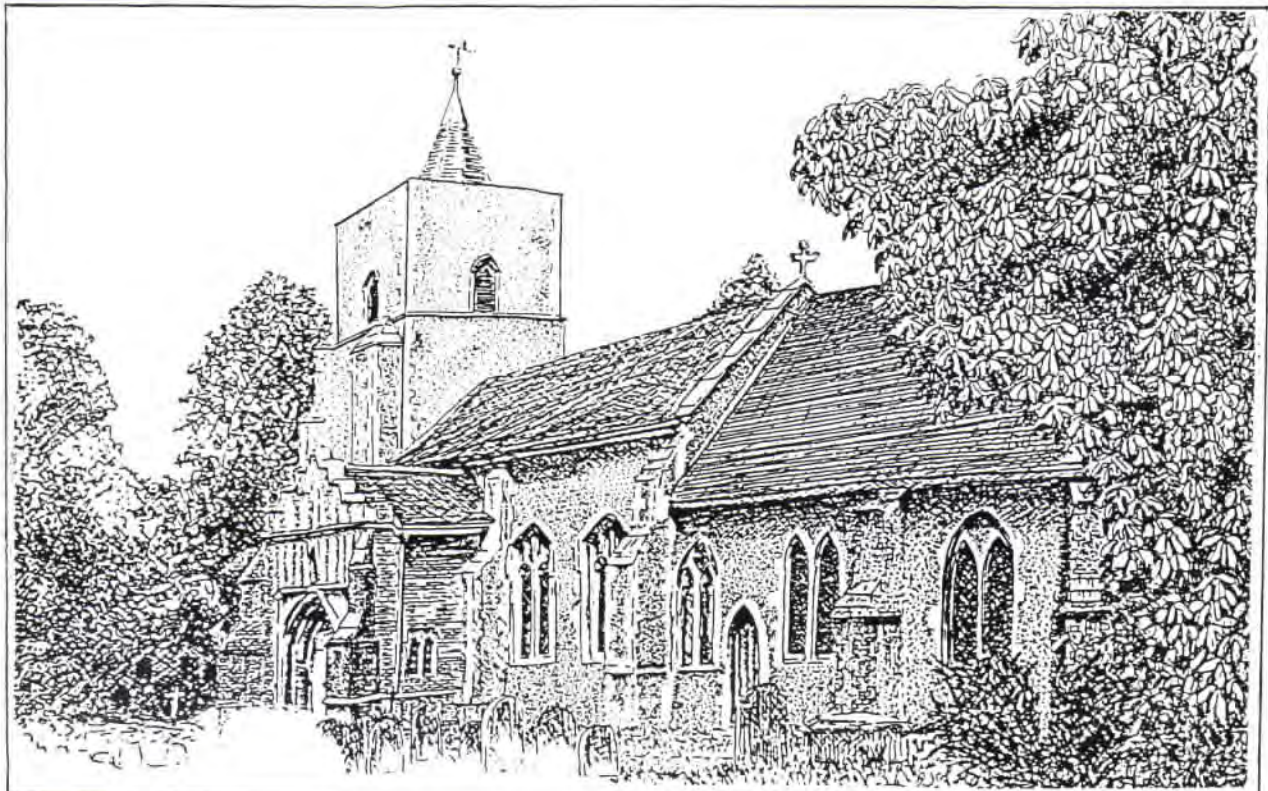
We are the tech supply who supplied the
parts and the equipment for the ground crews to
do their job.

We are the medics who prepare for the sick,
for the health and for the wounded.

We are the emergency crews there for the
crash or the aircraft who have to ditch in the
sea.

We are the Paddle Feet who sweat the air-
craft and crews back to the home field, and
most of all we are the ones who are with the
crews in spirit and prayer.

We are the Paddle Feet whose duties start
over again for the next mission.



All Saints Church, Great Ashfield, Suffolk

★ ★ TAPS ★ ★

Eugene Adkins, 91BG Engr-Gunner on "Memphis Belle".
 Ernest Anderson, 100BG, POW, San Antonio, TX
 William K. Armstrong, 82nd FG, Houston, TX
 Jerome E. Baier, 453BG/467BS Lead Pilot, 18M, Catonsville, MD
 Robert B. Baker, 91BG/322BS, Augusta GA
 Joseph H. Berryman, 8th AF in South Pacific in WWII, Houston, TX
 Rex L. Brudos, Oregon Chapter, Coquille, OR
 Harold R. Bundy, 96BG Copilot, Ottawa, KS
 John Dyer Carlisle, 91BG/322BS Pilot
 Ralph F. Coburn, 303BG Bombardier, 25M, Houston, TX
 William G. Comstock, 398BG Pilot, 35m, Korea, Vietnam (Ret. Col.), Fairfax, VA
 E. W. Clarey, 492BG, Former Board member and Secy of Unit Adv Com of 8AFHS, Exec. VP of 2nd ADA, and VP of 492BGA, active in California Doolittle Chapter, Los Altos, CA
 John W. Clinton, 379BG, Philadelphia, PA
 Alphonse J. Corriveau, 385BG, B-17 Pilot, 25M, Manchester, NH
 Pat Doran, 20FG, Colorado Chapter, Denver, CO
 Frederick B. Dundas, Past President of 8AFHS, Director of 8AFMMF, 351BG, Indianapolis, IN
 Richard Edgar, 493BG/861BS, Navigator, POW at Barth, Chapel Hill, NC
 Homer P. Groening, 385BG Pilot, Portland, OR
 Roy Enright Guy, 466BGA, Command Pilot, Col., USAF, Cyprus, CA
 H. Grady Hendricks, 493BG/863BS Ball Gunner, Grand Prairie, TX
 John V. Kelly, 479FG, St. Louis Wing 8AFHS, St. Louis, MO
 Marvin F. Knight, 493BG Engr-Gunner, POW, Portland, OR
 George R. Netzel, Engr-Gunner on B-24 "Rag Doll", 32M, Seaside, OR
 Euell E. "Bill" Norris, 8AFHS, Lewisville, TX
 Jay Schatz, 95BG Navigator of B-17 "Shack Buster", Chicago, IL
 Ernest Simpson, 325 PH Photointerpreter, Colorado Chapter, Lakewood, CO
 George R. Vanden Heuvel, Col. USAF, Treasurer of FOTE, UK (see p. 29)
 Louis M. Vingo, 91BG/324BS, Tail Gunner, 47 missions, Spokane, WA

(Note: Our abject apologies go to Gene Aenchbacher and Kenneth J. Male, both of whom were listed in Taps by mistake in the Feb 1996 issue. They are very much alive and kicking (at us). As we've said before, we don't make up the entries in this column. Please make sure of your contributions and write them carefully so that there's no chance of misinterpretation. JWH)

Notice: On all obituaries, please list – Full name, Bomb Group/Squadron, Svc Co, AF specialty (pilot, mech, MP, etc.) No. missions, months overseas, POW data – length, camp, 8AFHS Service, a/c name, Other Air Force Service, Place of residence at death.

CHAPLAINS CORNER

by James W. Hill, 8AFHS Editor, 305th BG

"Bless 'em all, bless 'em all, the long and the short and the tall"--but I'm not talking about the sergeants and corporals, I'm talking about Our Ladies.

I'm talking about the girls who sent us off to war with enthusiastic kisses ("Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree"); the wives who reluctantly bid us farewell with fear and trembling ("Say a Prayer for the Boys Over There"); all who sent us letters and gifts sealed with their soft, warm, moist lips (S.W.A.K.).

One of my most interesting recent experiences was hearing several of our wives exchanging stories on how they had to cope on the home front during World War II. We thought we had to put up with a lot--well they had to fight their own wars against fear, uncertainty, poverty, lack of housing and transportation, rationed food and gasoline, lack of entertainment, postal restrictions, censorship, few new stockings or clothes of any kind, and worst of all--loneliness. "Don't Get Around Much Anymore"). Holidays were especially tough for them ("I'll Be Home For Christmas"--Yeah!).

Their letters (most of them) and packages were affectionate, supportive, and morale-building. They made us all desire the war to be over quickly, particularly when they sent us treasured photographs of themselves and other loved ones.

When we returned they welcomed us with passionate kisses that we returned even more passionately. They put up with our hang-ups, restlessness, and frustrations as we tried to put our lives back together at school or work. They became our balance wheels as we reentered civilian life, chiding us gently when we forgot to ask for the butter properly, and entered into the lifelong task of turning our war-learned grossness and bad habits into more productive paths. They worked by our sides for half a century as we tried to make up for lost time and put our lives back together, created families, improved our society and served our nation and our God.

At one of our recent memorial services one of our members haltingly told, with tears in his eyes (and ours) of the recent death of his wife of 53 years. He gave testimony to her great faith and told how every night while he was overseas she knelt and prayed for his safe return. We needed no other sermon at that service.

So let's remember the girls, the wives, the real women who helped bring us home and created a meaningful life for us. Summon up and deliver some more old time hugs, embraces, and passionate kisses, and in your reveries, as the old song goes: "Light your pipe, bid your sorrows Avaunt!, blow the smoke from your altar of dreams; and wreath the face of your dream girl there, the love that is just what it seems".

Bless 'em All...and Amen!

Fred Dundas Passes

One of the 8th Air Force Historical Society's most faithful members passed away on Feb. 2, 1996. A former pilot in the 351st Bomb Group, he was past president of the Society and a board member of the 8th AF Memorial Museum Foundation.

Fred was a graduate of North Central College, Naperville, IL, and received a master's degree from Butler University. He was a mathematics teacher for 25 years in the Indianapolis area. He was president of the Scottish Society of Indianapolis and president and area coordinator for Phi Delta Kappa fraternity.

Services were conducted by the American Legion on Feb. 5 in Chicago. They included the Air Force Song a bagpipe player in kilts, and a large 8th Air Force floral arrangement from the 8AFMMF. Fred's Scottish tartan kilts were draped on the casket above the American flag and Fred wore his American Legion cap. In a eulogy given at the service, 8AFHS Finance Manager Arthur Swanson said: "Fred was a sincere and dedicated individual. Whatever task he undertook, he gave his all and never faltered. He was one of the prime movers in getting the replica of a World War II control tower financed and built at the Air Force museum in Dayton. It was a splendid job well done. The control tower now stands as a permanent tribute to those brave men who fought the air war. Fred was always there when we needed him. He will be missed."

(The family requested that anyone desiring to make a memorial contribution should send it to 8AF Memorial Museum Foundation, c/o POB 201, Strasburg, PA 17579.)



Facing Page: RAF "Red Arrows" Perform

One of the most outstanding group newsletters for many years has been the 305th Bomb Group's "Can Do Notes." The present editor is Harry Task, and we thank him for sending these outstanding color photos taken on June 18, 1995 by his granddaughter, Christy Task. Christy is shown at right feeding the swans on the Ouse River by the County Hotel in Bedford. We'd say she's a talented photographer.



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BACK ISSUES OF 8AF NEWS AVAILABLE!

We have back issues of the 8AF NEWS available to members. As some of these are collector's items, you should place your orders quickly. Quantities are limited, so it's "first come, first served. Use this form to order back issues and send the check to Arthur Swanson, Box #201, Strasburg, PA 17579

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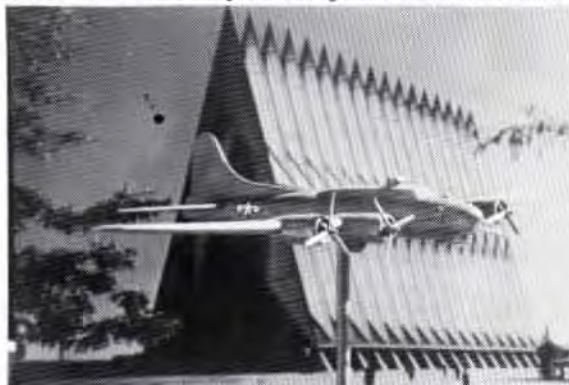
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Maurice Thomas, Past 305th BG(H) Memorial Association President named Project Manager to Administer funds.



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The artist takes us back in time, to a remote place in the English countryside: Station 376 at Watton. The activities that take place here are classified secret. The missions flown by the 25th Bomb Group beg many questions, for they are clandestine operations, often carried out under the cloak of night under circumstances of extreme danger.

As we look at this wonderful painting, we have a sense of our own participation in the busy preparations to which we are witness. Still wet from a shower that has passed through the area, the tarmac is bathed in the fading colors of twilight. It will soon be dark.

The damp air sends a shiver through the crew chief as he goes through a checklist to make sure that his DeHavilland Mosquito Mk XVI is in prime operating condition for tonight's mission.

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Valuable advertising space in the 8th Air Force News is available for items related to the purposes of the Society. The magazine, which goes to over 20,000 veterans each quarter, is even more widely read because it is passed hand-to-hand among members of the many affiliate organizations of the Society. We also suspect that it is read in the back room by the majority of post office workers, which could account for the fact that it takes so long for some copies to reach the addressees.

You can reserve ad space by sending a check for the correct amount, along with camera-ready copy to the correct size, to **James W. Hill, Editor, 8AF News, 125 Ramblewood Road, Pennsylvania Furnace, PA 16865**

Deadlines are January 1, April 1, July 1, and October 1 for the February, May, August, and November issues.

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THE EIGHTH AIR FORCE PX ORDER PAGE

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B2. <i>Mighty Eighth War Diary</i> , 1990, Revised Edition. 2nd book in trilogy on 8AF History by Roger Freeman.....	\$ 49.95 _____
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The 8th Air Force Historical Society is tax-exempt veterans' organization under IRS Code 501 (c) (19), founded in 1975 and chartered in Florida to perpetuate history of "The Mighty Eighth." In 1976 the 8AFHS formed the 8th Air Force Memorial Museum Foundation. Contributions to either organization may be tax-deductible. Membership is open to veterans or spouses of veterans who have been assigned or attached to the 8th AF. Others may become Associate Members. Membership years begin on January 1 and dues notices for the following year are mailed from Aug 15-Nov 1. Your canceled check is your receipt. The 8th AF News is sent to paid-up Members, Associate Members, and Subscribers.

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Not in 8th. Sign me up as Associate Member

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8th AF NEWS
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