



97th AF NEWS

VOLUME 97, NUMBER 1

- Voice of "The Mighty Eighth" -

FEBRUARY 1997

The Lines On His Face

By Don R. Hayes, 97th BG
(From the "Flying Fortress News Letter")

*Back many, many years earlier,
When the world was badly torn by war,
He was ready to fight for his country,
And was imbued with "Esprit de Corps."*

*The Army Air Corps needed men to fly,
To be the long arm to hit the foe.
He bravely said, "I'm ready to go,
Just give me a plane and off I'll go!"*

*The wild blue yonder was his new domain,
To be a great warrior his chosen destiny,
Challenging the enemy in far-flung skies,
His silver wings a glorious sight to see.*

*His old face is now bearing many creases,
And thinning hair turned gray and white,
Look closely under those sad, tired eyes,
You can strangely still see a ghostly sight.*

*Under the eyes the two fine curved arches,
On the faces of they who fought the war on high,
It's the faint imprint of a snug oxygen mask,
From long months of combat in the freezing sky.*

*When skies resounded with a terrible clamor,
As men and planes locked in a deadly war,
And the victors came home in glorious triumph,
To contemplate anew all they'd fought for.*

*There were many who fell and gave their all,
And they are remembered only now and then,
In solemn tribute they were toasted briefly,
But as years pass they are all but forgotten.*





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.

DIRECTORY

8AFHS Officers Elected September 10, 1995

President: Hubert M. Childress, 48988 Sunny Summit Lane,
Palm Desert, CA 92260 (W- 619-341-5887)

Vice Pres.: William E. Shields, Jr., P.O. Box 1438, Azle, TX 76020-1438

Secretary: Harold C. Rutka, II Artavia St., Duluth, MN 55811 (218-724-1667)

Treasurer: Charles E. Dye, 4949 San Pedro, NE, No. 87, Albuquerque, NM 87109

8AFHS Directors

Class of 1997: Thomas Reto, Norman Grant, Richard Funk

Class of 1998: Robert E. Vickers, William E. Shields, Sherman M. Small

Class of 1999: Charles E. Dye, Thomas S. Parsons, Harold Rutka

Class of 2000: Hubert M. Childress, Richard Baynes, Kenneth Nail

8AFHS Independent Contractors

Director of Information Services: Edward A. Kueppers

Box 7215, St. Paul, MN 55107

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65 Beddington Lane, Strasburg, PA 17579

Phone (717-687-6257) Fax (717-687-0910)

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Phone (814-234-1376) Fax (814-234-0650)

The Eighth Air Force Memorial Museum Foundation (8AFMMF)

8AFMMF Officers Elected September 9, 1996

President – John E. Greenwood, 607 State Street, Alton, IL 62002

(800-477-3808) (618-462-2500)

VP/Secretary – Thomas L. Thomas, 1607 E. Willow, Wheaton, IL 60187

Treasurer – Arthur E. Swanson, PO Box 201, Strasburg, PA 17579

8AFMMF Directors

Class of 1997: Edward J. Creeden, Clifford Peterson, Roger Freeman,

Class of 1998: Arthur E. Swanson, Thomas L. Thomas, Edward A. Kueppers,
Robert E. Vickers.

Class of 1999: John E. Greenwood, Barkev Hovsepian, William E. Shields

Class of 2000: William C. Leasure, Richard M. Scott, James W. Hill

Front Cover: Just before Veterans Day, 1996, the West Chester, PA "Daily Local News" ran this striking picture, which I believe we all can relate to, and which is representative of our generation. The accompanying story by Staff Writer Kevin McAveney, was about L. Kirk John, of Coatesville, PA, a former P-51 Pilot in the 55th Fighter Group who logged 334 combat hours and became an Ace, scoring five kills. His A-2 jacket bears the name of his wife, who first pinned on his wings. The Staff Photographer was Bill Lyons.

Mission Briefing

As promised, we give you in this issue an account and photos of the 1996 Annual Reunion in Orlando. We also have several items about the Heritage Museum, and some interior photos of the soon to open American Air Museum in Britain. There's a beautiful painting of B-26 "Sexy Betsy," and a photo of the 8th AF Memorial Tree on the U.S. Capitol grounds. Look what went on in the cockpit of a B-17 and ponder the loss of a furry 8th AF friend. Read about the 398th BG Ground War and Kevin Pearson's nostalgic return to Bassingbourn. Recall the WWII girl friend and honor the military wife. Read about and look at the annual Ira C. Eaker Awards and some other surprises. Don't miss "This is Your Society" on page 30 and the description of proposed By-Laws changes and ballot on page 31. (JWH)

Contents

President's Message	3
Membership Manager's Message	3
Information Manager's Message	3
Orlando Reunion Photos	4
New Duxford Museum	5
Orlando Reunion Photos	6
Heritage Museum Letter	7
Memorial Gardens at Savannah	7
"Sexy Betsy" & Martin Marauders	8-9
Memorable Christmas Tale	9
1996 Reunion Report	10
1996 Financial Report	11
Chapter News	12
Mail Call	13-14
398th Ground War	14
8th AF Memorial Tree	15
"As I See It" Editorial Page	16
Look Who Is In The Left Seat	17
Loss of a Friend	17
Return to Bassingbourn	18-19
For Old Times Sake	19
Calling All Cooks	19
The Military Wife	20
Coincidence Nonpareil	20
Mystery Solved?	21
More Youngest To Complete Tour	21
Reunions & Events	22
The Goose Story	22
Book Reviews	23
Taps	23
Music of Elvis	24
Eaker Awards	24-25
PX Pages	26-27
Ads	28-29
This Is Your Society—I	30
Proposed By-Laws Changes and Ballot	31

President's Message

By Hubert "Chili" Childress

To each and every member of our illustrious Society, may I extend sincere wishes to you and your family for the best of health and happiness in 1997.

I hope most of you were watching the start of the famous Rose Parade on January 1st and thus witnessed the fly-over at 800 feet of a B-2 Stealth Bomber along the parade route. The Los Angeles Times characterized the short fly-by as "a show-stopper, not to be equaled by any of the 56 floats that followed...."

The fly-by was a salute to the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of the U. S. Air Force, an historic event to which the 8th Air Force, all of us, contributed by our individual and collective service, attention to duty and pride in accomplishment.

Congratulations and thanks to all of us who took advantage of the Board of Directors' offer to match, with up to \$25,000 of Society funds, all contributions to the Heritage Museum made by our members in connection with the recent 8AFHS Dues collection activity. This same invitation was forwarded to all Life Members, as they do not receive a notice for annual dues.

In announcing this arrangement last November, my letter naively expressed a hope that we would soon be forwarding \$50,000 to the Heritage Museum. As this letter goes to press, a total of some \$70,000 has been sent to the Museum as a result of this appeal. By the time you read this letter, I am confident that the total will have grown to at least \$80,000. This is an admirable showing of support.

Please take the time to read a short comment by the undersigned elsewhere in this publication (pages 30-31) regarding how this organization operates in accordance with our By-Laws and how those By-Laws can be changed.

Membership Manager's Report

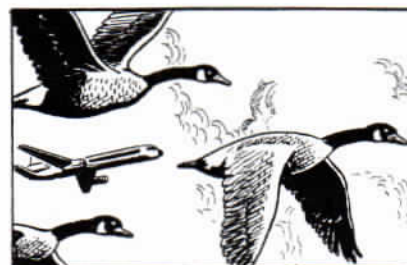
By Art Swanson

Many thanks to all of you who responded so promptly in sending in your 1997 dues. Special thanks go to those who so generously donated to our appeal for funds for the 8th AF Heritage Museum at Savannah and our 8AFHS Memorial Fund. We are still receiving contributions, and if you haven't already done so and wish to make a donation, we'll be glad to add your name to the list of contributors.

There was such a good response to Carolyn's special membership drive, she has volunteered to continue with it, so if your Group did not participate and wishes to do so, the same offer applies. Forward a copy of your roster, and she will compare it against our Master roster to see who is not a member. For every new member signed up from your Group, \$3.00 will be forwarded to its treasurer. This offer will be extended through May 1997 and enable us to send the \$3.00 bonus per new member to your Group before the end of our fiscal year—August 31, 1997. This is strictly a volunteer effort by Carolyn, and all proceeds accrue to the Eighth Air Force Historical Society and to your Group.

We hope that all new Life Members will have received their membership cards by the time they receive this issue. If they haven't, be assured that the cards are at the printers and will be sent immediately when we receive them.

We appreciate the cooperation and dedicated work given by those who are responsible for membership in the various groups and chapters. Thanks for keeping us informed of membership changes as we try to keep our Master Roster as accurate as possible. Best wishes for the New Year!



Information Manager's Report

By Ed Kueppers

1996 was a very good year in the St. Paul Office.

Over 1000 inquiries were received by mail, along with many others on the 800 telephone line.

Responses to my request in the August 1996 Newsletter for aircraft and/or crew pictures still keep trickling in and we are now up to about 400 new additions to the collection. Acknowledgements were sent to those who responded.

We have changed our 800 line carrier and now have our costs down to \$.14/minute. In 1990 it was \$.26/minute.

We still receive, by phone or mail, inquiries by individuals looking for information for books, TV documentaries, and other money-making propositions. In some cases the information provided helps perpetuate our history. However, the majority do not, and I have advised those individuals that they must become members of the Society in order to use our services.

Over the past year we have received letters from students looking for information and it is a pleasure to provide that assistance. One nine-year-old said he was doing his own "definitive and independent" study of WWI. More power to him.

We still continue to solve 50-year-old mysteries, and it makes the job well worth it when you get a call or letter of thanks for providing the information.

Our networking system continues to grow, along with our own research materials. With our membership now at 20,950, 1997 should be a busy year.

Election Notice

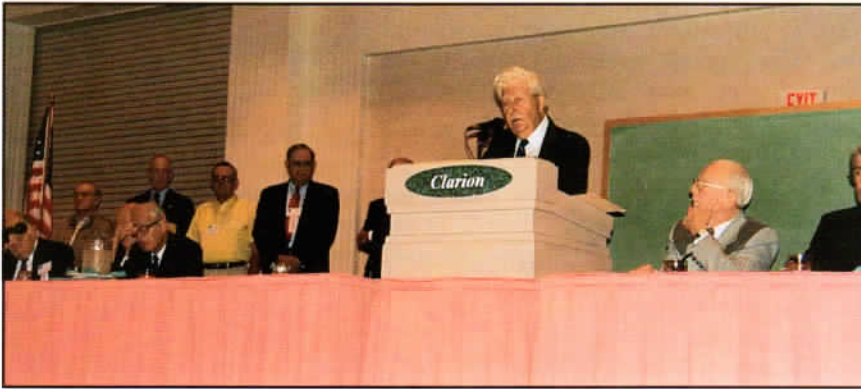
Nominations for candidates for election to the Board of Directors of the 8th Air Force Historical Society must be in the hands of the Secretary not later than April 15, 1997. The following information must be included with the nomination:

- Full name of person being nominated
- 8AFHS membership number
- Nominee's complete address
- 8th Air Force unit nominee served in
- Short resume of nominee
- Full name and address of nominator
- Nominator's membership number and unit

The Secretary will send all nominations to the Nominating Committee. Nominations not received by the Secretary by April 15, 1997, or any nominations without complete information, will not be considered.

Send all nominations to:
Harold C. Rutka, Secretary, 8AFHS
11 Artavia St., Duluth, MN 55811

Orlando Reunion Photos



TL—Incoming President Childress Introduces Candidates for Director; TR—Director Emeritus Aida Kaye Lights Memorial Candle; CL—Artist John Bachelor and Mark Copeland hold one of Batchelor's 8th AF Paintings; CR—Reunion Perennials Homer Sheridan and Rose Sereah Pose Before Heritage Museum Table; BL—King Henry Presides at Medieval Feast; BR—Outgoing President Jim Hower, His Lady Velma, and one of King Henry's Serving "Wenches." (See additional photos on page 6.)



The Eighth Center Stage In New Duxford Museum

By Roger A. Freeman

The magnificent American Air Museum in Britain is on schedule to be completed and opened by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, on August 1, 1997. A twenty million dollar tribute by the British to the thirty thousand U.S. airmen who gave their lives in Europe during World War II, the display covers American air power from World War I to the recent Gulf hostilities. Although the 9th, 12th, and 15th Air Forces are fully acknowledged, the 8th Air Force holds center stage with a B-17, B-24, P-47, and P-51. Although the B-24 is just the forward fuselage section, it also fills a very important function in telling the whole 8th Air Force story as the site for the audio-visual presentation. Towering over all is the massive B-52, a 200-mission 8th Air Force veteran of the Southeast Asia conflict.

Several of the 8th Air Force exhibits result from contributions made by the 8th Air Force Memorial Museum Foundation over the past twenty years. Most notable is the beautifully restored P-47 Thunderbolt, now resplendent in the markings of the 56th Fighter Group. Much of the memorabilia from the original 8th Air Force exhibit at Duxford is incorporated in the new Museum's displays. One of the many new items with an 8th Air Force connection is a scale model of a typical heavy bomber station, complete with all living sites and 72 bombers. The actual subject airfield is on the secret list until June. Among other exhibits is an aerial gunnery stand with a "hands-on" .50 caliber, as well as an acknowledgement of the ground crews. Eighth Air Force commanders, Medal of Honor recipients and air aces are also covered in graphic displays. You might detect a slight 8th Air Force bias in the exhibits, as I was involved with the draft WWII story line and exhibit captions.

The Imperial War Museum at Duxford already has the largest and most diverse museum collection of aircraft in Europe and is visited by many thousands of people every year. Support for Duxford by the 8th Air Force Historical Society through the 8th Air Force Memorial Museum Foundation has ensured that the 8th Air Force of World War II will never be forgotten in the land where its proud history was made.



More Orlando Reunion Photos



TL—Frank and Jean De Cicco of 303BG at “Welcome” Sign; TR—Bob Vickers Presents Plaque of Appreciation to Ralph Patton; CL—Gene Person, Roger Freeman, and Dan Fisher Kibitzing at PX; CR—“Aw C’mon Polly, “no-one’s lookin’,” “Hope Springs Eternal” for Polly and Barkey Hovsepian; LL—Joe Wroblewski, 351BG, Tom Lawler, 351BG, and John Parsons, 351 & 91BG; Ted Lipinski and Son Ed in WWII Uniforms. (Most photos taken by Tom Lawler)



The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum

P.O. Box 1992 Savannah, Georgia 31402-1992 (912) 748-8888 1-800-421-9428

5 January 1997

Mr. Hubert M. Childress
President, Eighth Air Force Historical Society
48988 Sunny Summit Lane
Palm Desert, CA 92260

Dear President Childress:

On behalf of the Board of Directors of The Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, I want to express our deepest appreciation to you and the Society for the matching fund campaign. This particular effort significantly aided The Heritage Museum in meeting its financial obligations to Chatham county, thereby ensuring long term success. The entire campaign was very effective and well orchestrated by Art and Carolyn Swanson. They delivered the checks in a timely fashion and really made our responsibilities easy. This was quite a success story for which we are most grateful.

Please express our appreciation to your Board of Directors, to Art and Carolyn and the entire membership of our Society. This was a grand demonstration of cooperation in the continuing effort to preserve and present Eighth Air Force history. God Bless and Happy New Year!

With kind regards,

Lt. Gen. E.G. Shuler, Jr., USAF, Ret.
Chairman and CEO

Museum Starts Memorial Gardens Program

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum has created a Memorial Gardens Program to give individuals and groups the opportunity to place various kinds of memorials in the Museum's Memorial Gardens.

Two members of the Museum Board of Directors, Judge Ben Smith (303BG) and Dr. Walter Brown, are handling all arrangements for the memorials to be placed in the gardens.

Three kinds of memorials are available to veterans, families, or anybody who desires to place a memorial in the gardens.

* The Wall of Valor Program gives an individual who donates a minimum of \$100 the opportunity to have his or her name, rank, and unit carved into a 4" x 12" stone tablet which will be permanently placed on the Garden's Wall of Valor.

* The Memorial Plaques Program is designed for an individual or a crew that wants to place a plaque made of Georgia blue granite, Georgia white marble, or black granite into the Memorial Gardens. Minimum donation is \$350 and goes up to \$895 depending on how the plaque is made.

* The Memorial Monuments Program is designed for large groups and organizations who desire to place free standing monuments in the Gardens.

To order a memorial or get more information, call 1-800-544-8878 or 912-283-9966. Additional information about the Memorial Plaques and Memorial Monuments Programs can be obtained from Charles DePue of the DePue Monument Company at 912-233-3096.



“Sexy Betsy” Stands Ready

This painting by Eugene Knight of Roswell, Georgia, shows “Sexy Betsy’s” six-man crew ready to board their B-26 Martin Marauder for their next mission over Nazi occupied Northern Europe. The crew of “Sexy Betsy” were: Pilot—Lt. Russell Horner; Copilot—Lt. Zera Patterson; Bombardier/Navigator—Lt. John Thompkins; Engin/Gunner—S/Sgt. Frank Sommo; Radio/Gunner—S/Sgt. Floyd Bowling; Tail Gunner—S/Sgt. Phillip Mulligan. The crew trained together in the States and flew around 64 missions together.

This crew and bomber belonged to the 555th Bomb Squadron of the 386th Bomb Group (Medium) of the 8th Air Force, which was stationed at Great Dunmow, Essex, England from October 1943 to

October 20, 1944. The group later became one of eleven B-26 groups of the 9th Bomb Division of the 9th Tactical Air Force.

The 386th Bomb Group called the “Crusaders” flew 409 missions over occupied Europe attacking 433 targets, dropping about 18,287 tons of bombs. It lost 49 aircraft shot down over enemy territory and sustained some 2,048 battle damages to its aircraft during its 21 months of combat operations. The group is credited with shooting down 32 enemy aircraft, probably destroying another 18, and damaging another 21 aircraft. This was the highest number of enemy aircraft destroyed by any of the 11 groups of B-26s in the ETO.

Schenectady Museum Restoring a B-26

(From the 386BG Crusader's Newsletter)

The Empire State Aerosciences Museum (ESAM) located at the Schenectady County Airport, New York, is restoring one of the world's six remaining Martin Marauders.

They have a collection of B-26 parts from three planes that crashed in British Columbia, Canada in January 1942. The museum has had these parts for three years on loan from Dave Tallichet who was successful in restoring to flight status one of those three aircraft. That plane serial #40-1464 was recently purchased from Tallichet by Kermit

Weeks for his "Fantasy of Flight" theme operation located in the Lakeland, Florida area.

The ESAM plans only to restore the airplane to exhibit status, not to flight condition. There are many missing parts, and the task will require perhaps another five years to complete. The B-26 Exhibit will tell the story of this great airplane while the restoration is underway using display boards, photographs, and hardware exhibits where possible.

Because ESAM is a small museum with very limited resources, they are

soliciting funds for the restoration. ESAM is chartered in New York State as a nonprofit organization devoted to aviation education, research, and discovery. It has a number of WWII, Korean War and Vietnam era aircraft on exhibit.

Contributions should be sent to the Empire State Aerosciences Museum, 130 Saratoga Road, Scotia, NY 12302 designated for "ESAM B-26 Exhibit fund." You may contact ESAM at 518-377-2191, FAX 518-377-1959, or Earl Slanker at 518-370-4421.

Now That's Class: A Truly Memorable Christmas Tale

(Editor's Note: Several months ago I received a letter from a mother about a boy named Joey who was in love with the story of the "Memphis Belle" and wanted to locate information about the members of the crew. I could have sent him their names and addresses, but decided to try something better; so I sent the letter to the pilot, Robert Morgan suggesting that he "field" this request. After Christmas I received a copy of this message from the mother to Rev. Charles W. Lanham who had referred her to me in the first place.)

Dear Rev. Lanham,

Joey had a most memorable Christmas. After months of searching on the Net to find the "Memphis Belle" crew members, we received the address of Robert Morgan which Joey "found" in his stocking on Christmas Eve. He was so excited that toys were secondary.

Christmas morning we got up and proceeded to get ready to spend the day with my family. We were in Joey's room (which is entirely decorated with airplanes) when the phone rang. Joey's three-year-old brother answered, since we expected only family to be calling on Christmas morning. When I retrieved the phone the voice on the other end declared his name to be Captain Robert Morgan of the "Memphis Belle" and he had called to talk to Joey. I was in utter disbelief but wondering if it was my brother-in-law who likes to play practical jokes. When I regained my senses and realized it truly was Mr. Morgan, I gave the phone to Joey and rushed to get his father out of the shower, and to find the video camera.

Joey was in shock to say the least! I actually thought he might faint, as I saw him sway during the conversation. When he returned the phone to me, Mr. Morgan told me that he had received my letter (which could have only been forwarded from Mr. Hill as I did not write to Mr. Morgan), and that he had saved the letter to call Joey on Christmas morning. This was absolutely the kindest thing I have ever witnessed, and I only wish Mr. Morgan would know the enormity of his truly thoughtful gift; a gift the you helped happen and one that my son will never forget!! (I cried all day, I might add)

Thanks again for everything. Your kindness means so much, and Joey and I consider you a friend.

Sincerely,

Susan and Joey Bell

(Susan and Joey—All of the "Mighty Eighth" are your friends. JWH)

1996 8AFHS Reunion

(ED Note: This will be the first time I have devoted space to the business of the Annual Reunion in some detail because: 1) it takes up valuable space with matters that most members do not care about; and 2) if they did care, they would probably attend the Reunion and wouldn't need an account; and 3) The official Minutes are available to anyone on request. This time, however, I believe such a factual account is necessary because several group newsletters have published badly biased accounts which do not serve the best interests of the Society.)

Wednesday Board Meeting

Reunion arrangements were reviewed to make sure everyone was on the same page, and the matter of Board tenure was discussed briefly and deferred for resolution to the Sunday Board Meeting.

The proper function of the Advisor newsletter was discussed. The purpose of the newsletter was to disseminate useful organizational information to and between several hundred units and chapters related to the Society. Some dissatisfaction was expressed with the type of "information" that had been disseminated. There was no resolution of the problem.

The request of the Air Museum in Britain for use of the Society mailing list was discussed. It was decided to contact the directors of the Museum to determine exactly who would be using the list, as it is Confidential and the Board does not want it to be generally available.

General Membership Meeting—Saturday

President Jim Hower convened the meeting with a greeting followed by an Invocation and recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag led by Chaplain James Hill. Staff members gave reports on their areas of responsibility. Of particular note was the membership report which emphasized that membership is at an all-time high of 20,950, largely through a special membership drive conducted by Carolyn Swanson through the membership chairmen of the various units and chapters which brought in over 1500 new members. The Finance Manager reported that in 1996 the Society had receipts of \$288,470. This included a \$100,000 memorial bequest from Ruth Eaker, widow of the late Ira C. Eaker, former CG of the 8th AF. (She made a similar bequest to the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum in Savannah.) Disbursements were \$207,381, leaving a year-end balance of \$173,495. The Society's committed Life Member Fund totaled \$418,032.

The Nominating Committee presented a slate of three nominees for the class of 2000, and two more were nominated from the floor. Those elected were Hubert Childress of Palm Desert, CA for a second term; Kenneth Nail of Tupelo, MS; and Richard Baynes of Irvine, CA.

Pete Petrillo, Chairman of the Unit Advisory Committee presented the following three recommendations to the Board which were the result of discussions in the Unit Advisory and Chapter Development Committee Meetings: 1) Restore the \$1 per mem-

bership rebates to chapters. 2) Continue the Unit Advisory Chairman and Chapter Development Chairman as two separate advisors to the Board, rather than combine them as proposed in a By-Laws change. 3) Reconsider and reverse the board's recent action to cancel the membership of a member because of charges published by that member which a majority of the Board and the Ethics Committee ruled unfounded and inappropriate. These recommendations were received by the Board for consideration as prescribed by the By-Laws (See p. 30). At this point a section of the audience became unruly when the chair would not entertain a motion to make the three recommendations binding to the Board. To prevent further unpleasantness, President Hower adjourned the meeting.

Annual Board Meeting—Sunday Morning.

After the usual preliminaries, the following officers were elected: Pres.—Hubert Childress; Vice President—William "Tex" Shields; Secy—Harold Rutka; Treas.—Charles Dye. The Board adopted a 1996-97 budget based on a projected income of \$242,896.

The Board expressed unanimous and wholehearted support for the recently dedicated 8th AF Heritage Museum at Savannah, GA, and urged all members to visit and support the Museum. The Board further directed that the Membership Manager send out with the annual dues notices an appeal for donations to the Heritage Museum, and that the Society would match such contributions to a total commitment of \$25,000.

The Board called for an audit of the finances of the Society for the past two years, followed by an annual internal audit. It also decided to submit the proposed change to the By-Laws on Board tenure to a referendum of the full membership to be conducted through the 8th Air Force News.

Art Swanson reported that the Society has applied for a technical change of our IRS status from "veterans nonprofit" to "nonprofit." This change is advisable because of our growing number of non-veterans as Associate Members. Our application is expected to be approved.

The Board responded to the three initiatives of the Chapter Development and Unit Advisory Committees in the following ways: 1) Tabled the membership rebate question until the financial impacts could be calculated for consideration at the mid-year Board meeting; 2) Directed that the initiative to combine the Chapter Development and Unit Advisory Committees be submitted to the whole membership through referendum conducted through the 8th AF News; and 3) A majority of the Board voted not to reinstate the deposed member. However, President Childress volunteered to consult with the deposed member to see if an accommodation could be worked out. He will report on this at the Mid-Year Board Meeting.

Future reunions were discussed. The next one is scheduled for Sept 9-14, 1997 at the Hotel Radisson in Bloomington, Minnesota (near Minneapolis/St. Paul). The 1998 reunion is set for Las Vegas, NV, with dates still to be finalized.



The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL OPERATIONS FISCAL YEAR ENDED AUGUST 31, 1996

	<u>THIS</u> <u>YEAR</u>	<u>LAST</u> <u>YEAR</u>	<u>INCREASE</u> <u>(DECREASE)</u>
<u>BEGINNING BALANCE, SEPTEMBER 1:</u>			
CASH - CHECKING ACCOUNT	\$ 6,558	\$ 1,479	\$ 5,079
CASH - SAVINGS ACCOUNT	69,306	29,968	39,338
PETTY CASH	300	300	--
PX INVENTORY	32,503	37,947	(5,444)
ADVANCES ON REUNION EXPENSES	--	1,237	(1,237)
OTHER DEPOSITS	--	100	(100)
ADVANCE DEPOSITS PAYABLE	(16,261)	(11,622)	(4,639)
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
NET TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 92,406	\$ 59,409	\$ 32,997
PLUS NET RECEIPTS (EXH. 1)	288,470	219,636	68,834
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
NET FUNDS AVAILABLE	\$ 380,876	\$ 279,045	\$ 101,831
LESS NET DISBURSEMENTS (EXH. 1)	207,381	186,639	20,742
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<u>ENDING BALANCE, AUGUST 31</u>	<u>\$ 173,495</u>	<u>\$ 92,406</u>	<u>\$ 81,089</u>
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
<u>BALANCE MADE UP AS FOLLOWS:</u>			
CASH - CHECKING ACCOUNT	\$ 3,394	\$ 6,558	\$(3,164)
CASH - SAVINGS ACCOUNT	39,627	69,306	(29,679)
U.S. TREASURY NOTE	99,026	--	99,026
PETTY CASH	300	300	--
PX INVENTORY	29,877	32,503	(2,626)
PREPAID INTEREST	974	--	974
ADVANCE ON REUNION EXPENSES	701	--	701
ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	(404)	(16,261)	15,857
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<u>ENDING BALANCE AS ABOVE</u>	<u>\$ 173,495</u>	<u>\$ 92,406</u>	<u>\$ 81,089</u>
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
<u>SUMMARY OF FUND BALANCES:</u>			
GENERAL FUND	\$ 50,464	\$ 73,544	\$(23,080)
MEMORIAL FUND	123,031	18,862	104,169
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<u>TOTALS AS ABOVE</u>	<u>\$ 173,495</u>	<u>\$ 92,406</u>	<u>\$ 81,089</u>
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

“The Mighty Eighth”

Complete financial report available on request.

Chapter News

By Gene Person

There is a large transition in chapters charging dues for the first time. Membership in both National 8AFHS and the Chapters charging dues is fairly close in a few states, but in most states there is quite a disparity between the two memberships. Some states show that only 25% of their members who belong to National are members of the State Chapter. Several States plan on keeping all their members in the chapter by charging no dues and by asking their members for money to run their chapter plus raffles and PX items. We hope to have another Chapter in the Corpus Christi area soon.

Arizona Chapter. The new officers and directors met Oct. 19, 1996 to discuss a membership drive and plan for the Spring Reunion. Next Board meeting is Feb. 1, 1997, where details for a May 1, 1997 General Meeting and Reunion in Casa Grande, AZ will be finalized.

Colorado Chapter. The Chapter is looking forward to its Jan. 17th Board Meeting at the Englewood Public Library. Their Annual Meeting will be held Feb. 21 with the election of officers and discussion of future reunions. As of Nov. 16, the Chapter had 179 members.

Connecticut Chapter. A general meeting was held in October. The speaker was Capt. Hoyt Sweeney, of Branford, who described to the members his combat experience in the U.S. Marine Corps during the Gulf War. For his actions he received the Bronze Star. In December the Chapter held its annual luncheon which was attended by 90 persons. We are looking for new members and ask CT vets to contact the Pres., Art Ruggiero @ 488-8754.

Illinois Chapter. The Chapter held its Nov. 13, 1996 meeting at the Maine Township Village Hall in Park Ridge. Jim Newcomb, 351st BG, talked about his ground crew experiences to keep the big bombers in operating condition. These unsung heroes worked long hours to make it all happen. Speakers for Bill Cullerton Nov. 14 dinner included Roy Leonard-WGN, Hoot Gibson-Astronaut, Roger Triemstra-WGN, James McInerney-Exec. Dir. Air Museum in Britain Campaign, and Paul Poberezny-Chm. of EAA in Oshkosh, WI.

Iowa Chapter. The Chapter is looking to 1997 to attend as many air shows in furthering our membership. Also, dues will be brought up at the April Board Meeting. The beautiful Iowa WWII Monument was dedicated November 11, 1996 with approximately 6,000 veterans attending in the chilly 26-degree weather. Iowa 8AFHS members Norman Erbe-former governor, Bob Houser, Ray Schiehs, and Gene Person served on the committee for the \$750,000 monument.

Minnesota Chapter. The Minnesota Chapter has gone on record in favor of reversing the decision to cancel the postage stamp commemorating the end of WWII after the dropping of the atomic bomb. They would like support of veterans organizations to have this stamp issued on the (August 6) anniversary date.

Missouri Chapter. President Jameson convened the Annual Meeting at the Club at Whitman AFB on Oct. 18, 1996. Col. Bill

Percival, Group Commander, presented an interesting briefing on the B-2 Bomber. There were 96 members and guests from the chapter and wing in attendance. Besides Jameson, Joe Pruett will serve as Vice Pres., Kevin Pearson-Secy, and Bill Randeall-Treas.

Nebraska Chapter. The quarterly meeting was held Oct. 19, 1996 at the Arbor Manor in Auburn with Fred and Bobbi Farington planning the arrangements. The next meeting was held Jan. 17 at Offut Air Base Officers Club with Bob Adwers as guest speaker. He is the author of "Rudder, Stick, and Throttle."

New York Southern Chapter. We celebrated our seventh birthday on Nov. 30 at Hofstra. A questionnaire was sent to members soliciting ideas on how to increase membership. Chapter Life Members who have not received LM Pins should contact Larry Goldstein. We are contacting the Cradle of Aviation Museum at Mitchell Field to see if we can help to complete the Museum Complex. We need photos of Chapter activities for the newsletter.

New York Western Chapter. The annual Christmas Party was held at noon on Thursday, Dec. 12 at the Little White House. Larry Paul, Gerald Miller, James Kiernam, Milton Schenler, and Rev. Joseph Penkaul will all serve another year in their capacity. Harry Switzgale was presented a gold-plated name tag as was Ruth Zorn recognized for attending all the meetings and making party arrangements for the Chapter.

Pennsylvania Chapter. Early preparations are being made for the Chapter's 1997 Annual Reunion, which this year will be in Reading, PA. The Mid-Atlantic Air Museum puts on an Air Show at Spaatz Field with their annual WWII Commemorative Weekend. The dates are the first weekend in June—the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th. The Pennsylvania Chapter extends an invitation to all members of the 8AFHS to join us. For more information contact Art or Carolyn Swanson. They will be happy to send registration forms.

Texas North Chapter. The Chapter held its Christmas Luncheon Meeting on Dec. 9 at the Fort Worth Petroleum Club with 83 in attendance. Officers for 1997 will be Dick Atkins-Pres., Jim Stoops-VP, Doyle Shields- Secy Treas. Jim Rockwell and John Kuenzel are the new directors.

Texas Valley Chapter. The Chapter will hold its Annual Meeting Feb. 5, 1997 at Harold's Kitchen, east of Donna. A contingent of members from Corpus Christi headed by Curley and Donna Roethler plan on attending. John Huston, founder of the Texas Air Museum will be the speaker and tell of his experience in bringing three FW-190s over from Norway and refurbishing them with fabric after they were fished out of the bay and also three Yaks from Russia which they flew over by the northern route.

Utah Chapter. The Annual Meeting was held on November 18, 1996 with a nice luncheon at the Enlisted Dining Hall with the Hill Aerospace Museum opening up its doors to the Chapter on Monday. Colonel Humphreys gave a moving and emotional presentation on American patriotism and care of the cemeteries of WWI and WWI in Europe. John Lusk Moore was elected the new president, Newt Moy-VP, and Gerald Folsum-Secy/Treas.

West Virginia Chapter. President Al Davidson chaired the Oct. 16, 1996 board meeting at Camp Lawson near Kingwood. The Annual Reunion will be held June 18-19, 1997 at the Radisson Hotel on Third Avenue in Huntington with reunion chairman Jack Kings making the arrangements.



8th Air Force Bibliography. A complete listing of 8th AF related books and publications to date has been prepared under 8AFMMF auspices by Prof. Kenneth Werrel, who also includes an extensive essay evaluating the various types of publications. This is a MUST for any serious historian of the air war. It is 507 pages, 4,465 listings. Price is \$39.95 plus S/H available through our PX.

97th Bomb Group in 8th AF. The 97th was omitted from your list of 8th Air Force Groups in 96-4. The 97th arrived in England during the first two weeks in July 1942. The 340th and 341st Squadrons were stationed at Polebrook and the 342nd and 414th at Grafton-Underwood. The first mission was flown on August 17, 1942 and after 17 missions the Group was sent to Africa. Some losses were sustained over France and Holland. Christopher J. Karas, 3009 Landmark Blvd #301, Palm Harbor, FL 34684.

Cluntee AFB, Northern Ireland. Looking for 8th Air Force personnel stationed at Cluntee Air Force Base, County Tyrone, Northern Ireland, 1943-45. I'm looking for anyone who remembers Pvt. William Harrison, Jr., who murdered a 7 year-old girl on Sept. 25, 1944. If you were on the base at the same time as Harrison, or if you know stories regarding this incident, please write or call me. Annie Kalotschke, 72 Clinton Road, Tuxedo, NY 10987 (914-351-4047).

Know 2nd/Lt William Watkins, 55FG/343FS? Trying to locate friends of Lt Watkins, who was killed in crash Mar 1, 1945 in training accident. My parish wishes to erect a memorial for him and we need as many details as possible. David P. Claridge, Walnut Cottage, 34 Rectory Road, Rockford, Essex, England SS4 1AD.

Know 1st Lt Thomas H. Sears of Webster Grove, MO? Diane Vuillemin is seeking information regarding her father, Lt Sears, who was pilot of bomber that crashed in Munster, Ger. on March 23, 1945. He was based in Norfolk. Interred in American Cemetery in the Ardennes. Killed in crash but there were three survivors. Contact Cdr. Melvin H. Everding, Greater St. Louis Chapter, Ex-POWs, 10233 Schuessler Rd, St. Louis, MO 63128.

1821st Ordnance Supply & Maintenance Co. We're trying to locate as many as we can find. Also need complete roster and movement from beginning to Flixton Air Base and return in 1945. Contact George E. Terrell, 9910 Vega Lane, Louisville, KY 40272-2962 (502-935-3285).

Freeman Army Airfield. We are establishing a museum in memory of all stationed here in WWII, including 4,000 pilots who went on to fly B-24, B-25, B-26, and B-17 bombers. Looking for anything you might donate or lend to the museum. Contact Ted Jordan, Airport Manager, 1040 A Avenue, POB 702, Seymore, Indiana 47274 (812-522-2031).

Achmer Airdrome (near Bramsche/Osnabruck in NW Germany). Searching for Allied information about this airdrome which was attacked on 2/21/44, 3/23/44, 4/8/44, 3/21/45, 3/24/45. It was a fighter base and the first jet fighter Gruppe was stationed here. Contact Dieter Przygode, Westerkappeler Str. 8, D-49565 Bramsche, Germany.

Know 2nd Lt Richard Charles Monroe, Jr., 466BG/784BS? Would like to talk with anyone who knew this B-24 bombardier commissioned at Midland, TX on 10/7/43. He was shot down April 28, 1944 over Germany. Contact his sister Barbara Bailey Avelar, 2850 Jennifer Dr., Castro Valley, CA 94546 (510-538-2431).

364th Fighter Group Memorial. We plan on replacing seven stained glass windows blown out of a French church at Remy when we strafed a German munitions train in August 1944. Contact Gordon A. McCoy, "Windows for Remy," POB 644, Linden, CA 95236 (510-824-2466).

"Unknown Airman." The unknown airman on page 13 of 96-4 may have been (sans small mustache) Vance Chipman, mosquito pilot, 25th BG. His navigator was severely injured and may be in a VA hospital. Chipman was captured, escaped later via "honey wagon" and returned to active duty at Watton. He may be in the Space program and was seen in Michigan about 1993. Would like his present address. Philip T. Mulligan, 59 Ahrens, Mt. Clemens, Michigan, 48043. (ED: Also see p. 21).

492nd BG Combat Record. The 492nd should have been included on the table on p. 14 of 96-4. We flew 66 missions. Our losses were 58 MIA and 530 KIA. On the May 19 mission to Brunswick we lost 8 a/c and 80 KIA; 5/29 to Politz we lost 3 a/c and 22KIA; June 20 to Politz we lost 14 a/c and 138 KIA; July 7 to Bernburg we lost 12 a/c and 118 KIA. Unfortunately, the 492BG had the highest number of losses in the shortest period of operation. Willis H. "Bill" Beasley, 1525 South Garfield St, Denver, CO 80210 (303-756-4766).

801st/492nd BG. Our group is conspicuous by its absence in the listing of 8th AF Bomb Groups in 96-4, p. 14. Although the major part of our missions were Carpetbagger missions, we did fly bombing missions as well. It is strange that we are not listed considering all the citations and medals of the group. Richard Sizemore, VP and Editor, 801st/492nd. (ED: Your group was truly distinguished and unique, which I assume is the reason it was not included in the table. Its figures are just not comparable, which was the basis of the table. The Air

War Symposium in San Diego was devoted entirely to the "Carpetbaggers." No other Group has been so honored.)

Chivalry. Regarding Joan Peterson's story in 96-4, I wish to commend the Texas Captain for his chivalry and good manners. Chaste indeed! Was there ever an English lady who was not chaste? Sam Zarcoff, 121 S. Hayworth Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90035-2605. (ED Note: With all those "Yanks" around, I think the word should be "chased.")

More on Tail Gunner, Legs Extended. I agree with Mr. Weiler that it can't be done in the B-17 E or F. However, with the introduction of the B-17G with the Cheyenne tail and optical sight, the guns could be fired from the 6 o'clock position with legs extended providing the gunner had long legs and a crew chief who was willing to cater to the whims of a smart-assed 19 year-old gunner. Further details are available from Bob Hess, 6308 Heather Lane, Pinellas Park, FL 33781 (813-544-2434).

Customizing Your Station. The only real change I made to my radio room was to unbutton the lap flap of my flak vest and slide it under my seat cushion. Lucky for me. Over Geisen, a piece of flak the size of my thumb nail came up through the bottom of the plane and hit the chair just underneath some of my favorite body parts. The flak vest deflected the piece of flak and it fell back to the floor. I don't like to think about how things could have been. Ken Posey, POB 33, Rosebud, TX 76570.

Combat Flak Photo. I took the photo on the cover of the Nov. 1944 8th AF News. I was flying with the 303rd BG over Germany in 1944 in the right waist position. It was cold as hell. I used Bob Sheets' camera. Somehow a copy got distributed and it made its rounds. It gives folks an idea of the flak we went through. Jim Donnelly, Columbia, MD.

Kentucky Memorial. The Kentucky Chapter is placing a monument in the Memorial Gardens in Savannah to honor all Kentuckians who served with the "Mighty Eighth." We are asking for financial assistance. Please send checks payable to Mem. Fund, KY Ch. 8AFHS and send to Ken Payton, 8602 Claudia Drive, Louisville, KY 40219.

What happened to Tiff? In 1949-50 at Wheelus AFB Tripoli we had a Navigator, 1st Lt. Tiffany. He wrote a letter to AF HQ stating that he had done everything right, flown his missions with the 8th AF and had been a 1st Lt for six years, and shouldn't he be promoted? Days later he received a TWX from HQ saying "We concur." Time went by and nothing more was heard of the matter until one day Tiff appeared with an oak leaf cluster soldered to his silver bar. I would appreciate hearing from anyone who knows what became of Tiff. Jaques Keshishian, 614 Wyoming Dr, Dover, DE 19904.

B-24 Lore. Question was asked in 96-3 if a B-24 ever flew from Berlin to England on two engines. I don't know that, but it was no trouble for a B-24 to drop into a B-17 formation and easily keep up on three engines. (ED: With its brakes on, no doubt).

452nd BG Memorabilia. Group personnel are requested to donate memorabilia to the March Field Museum. March Air Reserve Base is now home of the 452nd Air Mobility Wing. Those interested can write to the March Field Museum, Riverside, CA 92518 (909-697-6600), or call George Epperson at 909-655-4077.

French Air War Historian. I am writing about the air war over Loir-et-Cher, 1939-44, most particularly attacks on Blois-St Denis (rail bridge), Romorantin/Pruniers (air field), Gievres/Camp des Landes (factory, air field), Bourges (factory, air field),) Avord or St Avord (air field). I will be pleased also to answer inquiries about missions over France. Philippe Canonne, 2, Rue Assolant, 41.000 Blois, France.

Richard I. Bong Heritage Center. Funds are being raised for this center to honor all WWII veterans in the name of America's greatest Air Ace. The main Exhibit Hall will house a carefully restored P-38 in a dramatic SW Pacific jungle setting. The Center is located in Poplar, Wisc., near Duluth. Send inquiries and donations to The Bong P-38 Fund, Inc., POB 326, Poplar, WI 54864 (715-364-2623).

B-52 Stratofortress Association. This organization has been formed and will be celebrating its 2nd biennial National Rendezvous at Merced, CA on Sept 20, 1997. Anyone interested contact the B-52 Stratofortress Assn, 498 Carthage, DR, Beavercreek, OH 45434 (937-426-1289).

Know John Seaman? This Navigator was stationed near Norwich during 1944 and early 1945. Freddie Snelling would like to communicate with his relatives or anyone who knew him. Please contact Mrs. Patricia Chester-Kadwell, 166 Manor Gardens, Cambridge St, St Neots, Cambridgeshire, England PE19 1PU.

52nd Fighter Control Squadron. I would like to hear from anyone who was in this squadron. "Colgate Air Sea Rescue." We picked up over 1000 men from the Channel and the North Sea. Sherwood C. Carlson, 1 Wembley Dr W.E., Jamestown, NY 14701 (716-484-9038) or FL(407-456-4771).

Know Robert L. Jones? Want info about this man, Dog Tag 0-763219 P43-44 A, found at Goxhill. Historical Aviation Group, LTD intends to return the airfield to original wartime condition as a living memorial. Contact Peter Howard, 49 Southern Way, Wolverton, Milton Keynes, England MK12 5EH. (ED to FOTE: Are there two separate organizations interested in Goxhill? Please investigate.)

Know 1st Lt Richmond S. Wollstein & Maurus C. Owens? Belgian named Ivan Rasquin has adopted graves of these two airmen at American Military Cemetery in "Neuville en Cordroz Belgium." They were 466BG/786BS. He wants to know where and when they died, type plane, native towns, etc. Contact William A. Fisher, Pres. Arkansas Chapter, 3 Sabote Way, Hot Springs Village, AR 71909 (501-922-0935).

Otto Wessner from Selfridge Field. I have a/c fuel pressure gauge with repair tag dated April 30, 1945 and would like correspondence or photos from anyone who remembers Otto,

Selfridge, the type a/c, etc. Contact Chris Cross, Box 94, McConnell, IL 61050.

Know S/Sgt Henry Jones from St Petersburg, FL? From 303, 305, or 306BG shot down 2/16/43 on raid to St Nazaire. Very tall, red haired, captured by Germans while evading near community of Pommerit le Vicomte. Contact Ralph Patton, 5000 Alden Dr, Pittsburgh, PA 15220 (412-343-8570).

Know Lt/Col Delos Richard, 447BG/708BS, Operations Officer. Desire information and photos about him. Contact Bill Howard, 590 Kenwood Ave, Delmar, NY 12052

B-17 "Milk Wagon". Researching missions of this a/c. Need info and photos. August Altese, 9802 Montana, Gladstone, MI 49837 (906-428-9654).

95BG Based at Sta. 119 Horam. Anyone assigned to this bomb group and attached to 334,335,336,412 squadrons, please contact Warren E. Specht-ADRC, USN Ret., 225 N. Fairview St, Ridgecrest, CA 93555 (619-375-7701 call collect).

Words to "Bless 'Em All." I am collecting different versions of this song. It should be remembered as a part of our history. John R. Segrest, 412 Winchester Rd, Huntsville, AL 35811. (ED Note: Let me know what develops.)

The 398th Ground War: Or, The Art of Trying to Beat Those Freezing English Winters (Even If Very Dangerous)

By Lou Baffaro, 398BG Navigator
(From "First in Flight News," North
Carolina Chapter, Aug-Sept-Oct 1996)

Much of our free time was utilized in taking steps to keep warm. Sometimes bomb rings were dumped in our squadron's compound. We gathered all we could as fast as we could and stored them in our Nissen Huts. If we stored them outside, they would be stolen by our comrades who also wanted to keep warm.

First we had to remove the steel straps that were attached to the thick layered cardboard rings in which the bombs were shipped. We would then cut the rings into thirds so that they could fit into the pot bellied stove. This was a source of quick heat...good for rapid heat when we were roused at 3 or 4 a.m. Since we were allowed only one bucketful of soft coal per day, we needed fuel for those damp cold English winters.

I remember the time four of us tore down a football field goal post and chopped it up for fuel.

The best heat came from used engine oil. The idea was to get the top of the pot bellied stove very hot by conventional

means, then remove the top and place it in the stove on top of the coals. We then let the oil drip on the lid in the hot stove. The oil would burst into flame, and Presto! We had an oil burner. It took some scrounging of parts from the depots to rig up the piping, shut-off valve, and a tank to hold the oil (usually a discarded wing tank). The tank had to be kept inside the hut or the oil would congeal and not flow in the cold weather.

I remember one day when four of us went to the depot to get some oil. We took a 50-gallon drum of used oil and were kicking it down the street toward our hut when a car came down the road. It was the Executive Officer, Col. Berryhill, and he asked what we thought we were doing. We sputtered something about fuel to keep warm, but he told us to take it back. We turned around and kicked the drum back toward the depot, but as soon as the car had disappeared, we continued on to our hut.

A few weeks later a hut caught fire from an oil burner and we all had to dismantle our equipment and get out of the oil heating business.

The fire, incidentally, was caused by gasoline mixed with the oil. In cold weather, before the engines were shut down after returning from a mission, the engineer would turn a valve allowing gasoline to enter the oil pan and mix with the oil. The valve was left on for a few seconds depending on the temperature. This would thin out the oil, making it easier to turn over the engine the next time it was started. Once the engine and the oil heated up, the gasoline evaporated and only oil was left to properly lubricate the engine. Normally, if the engine oil was to be changed, gasoline was not added. In this case, someone goofed, and gasoline was mixed with the oil in the drum that started the fire.

One day I had what I thought was a brilliant solution to keeping warm.

I knew that our electrically heated suits were heated by 24-volt generators. England has a 240 volt electrical system in contrast to the American 120 volt system. There were three crews of officers in one hut—12 men. If we all wore our heated suits to bed and hooked them up in series, each suit would see 20 volts instead of the maximum 24 volts required while we were flying. This would be enough to keep us nice and warm.

I was not successful in selling the idea to my hut mates, however. They thought that we might be electrocuted in our sleep. In retrospect, I think they made a good case. We froze instead, but we came out of it alive.



8th Air Force Memorial Tree

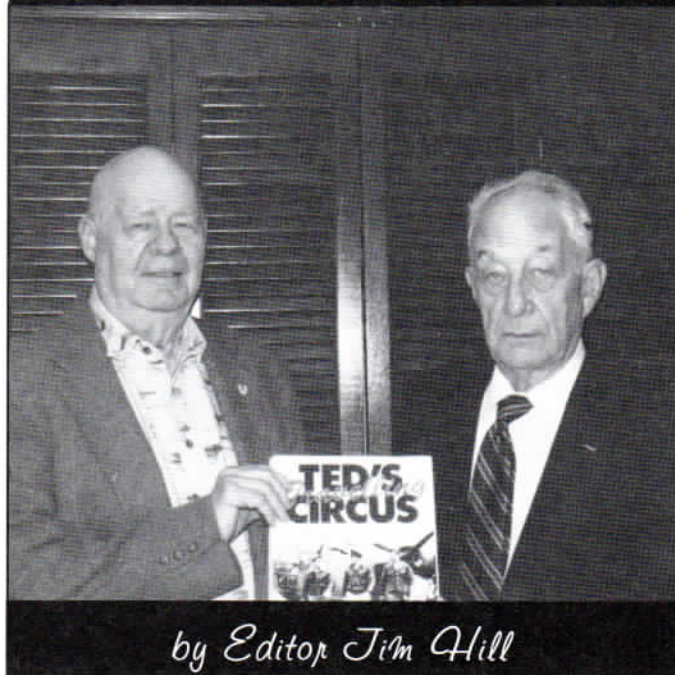
In response to this editor's inquiry about the 8th Air Force Memorial Tree on the U.S. Capitol grounds, William Amrhein of the 355th Fighter Group and from Brighton, Michigan has sent us the following definitive information. He was instrumental in arranging the planting of the tree through U.S. Representative William Broomfield.

The tree, a *Zelkova Serrata*, is a beautiful, fast-growing tree similar to the American Elm, but resistant to the Dutch Elm Disease. When planted on Sept. 17, 1981, it was 2 inches in diameter and 12 feet high.

Mr. Amrhein has sent us the accompanying photograph of his family, taken in front of the tree, which appears to be more than 22 feet high. The photo also shows the tree's location in front of the U.S. Capitol Building.

The memorial was made complete on Sept. 17, 1991 by the mounting of a plaque honoring those who served in the Eighth Air Force during World War II. (JWH)

As I See It



Shown above with yours truly is Fred Lakner of the 93rd Bomb Group, "Ted's Flying Circus," presenting a copy of their official Group history to the 8AFHS Archives at Penn State. We request that each group deposit a copy of its Group history, newsletters and other publications so that a complete record can be compiled.

Letters of Complaint

Occasionally I receive letters complaining about the lack of coverage about some aspect of the 8th Air Force. I usually take note of the complaint and don't take it too seriously, as I can't expect everyone always to agree with my choice of material; but when I receive five letters on the same subject, I do take it seriously. That happened in the November 1996 issue.

The complaint was that there was too much mention and pictures of the B-17, and not enough about the B-24. I checked the issue, and the complaints were well taken, but I assure you the slight was not deliberate. I do not believe in "affirmative action." I do not have the time or inclination to go through my pile of manuscripts saying "now that's about B-17s," or "that's about B-24s," and I don't count words or put the manuscripts on a scale to see whether they weigh the same. I cannot even tell you which groups, other than a few, flew B-17s or B-24s, or which ones switched in the middle of the war.

So the complainers are accurate—I do not strive for balance. I go for a good story or a good picture, no matter where it comes from. In combat we had the same experiences on B-17s as on B-24s.

One of the writers put his finger on the problem when he asked, "...please show me an article in this publication that is written by a B-24 jockey." Well I was not a B-24 pilot, there-

fore it would be very presumptuous of me to try to write an article about a B-24. But I guarantee that if a B-24 pilot sent me a good story, I'd put it in!

Nowhere in the magazine will you find a mention of the 1st, 2nd, or 3rd Air Division, and this is deliberate. I simply don't think that way, nor should anyone else in the Society. Before another generation passes, group and division numbers will fade away and our grandchildren will brag that "Grandpa was in the "Mighty Eighth" Air Force. It did take all of us working together to do the job, and I believe we are all in good company. Just send me some good stories and the problem, if there is one, will correct itself.

I suspect, however, that there may be another contributing factor. I haven't checked the figures, but I'll wager that just over the past several years we have had a large influx of new members from the 2nd Air Division, which for many years kept itself separate and distinct from the 8AFHS. When Sherman Small was President of the Society, he started making contacts with leaders of the 2nd AD to see how the two organizations could work more closely together and some progress was made. Since then considerably more progress has been made. It may be, however, that 2nd AD personnel became used to telling their stories and publishing their stories in 2nd AD and Group publications, and by now they think the stories are no longer of interest and shouldn't be submitted to this magazine. Not so! As I said before, a good story is a good story, and we'd all like to hear it.

If anyone gets short shrift in this publication, it's the P-38, P-47, P-51, and C-47 boys; but here again—we don't hear much from them.

If my perspective is a bit skewed, it's skewed in the direction of the ground personnel, who outnumbered air personnel by five to one. Their story has never been adequately told. I also like stories about the related experiences of our most appreciative hosts, the British people, with whom we forged a bond that can never be broken.



"What, me worry?"



Look Who Is In The Left Seat

Hangar Dances are a staple in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. Each year, the Vintage Flying Museum owned by Dr. and Mrs. H. R. Hospers, home of the B-17G "Chuckie" and many other warbirds and artifacts, hold a Spring and Fall Dance in their giant hangar at Meecham Field in Fort Worth, Texas. Everyone is invited to wear WWII uniforms or other 40's dress. About 25% of the 500-700 attendees do so.

At the October dance, John Gronemyer, an Engineer at the Fort Worth Lockheed-Martin Aircraft Company and WWII buff, decided to propose to his intended bride Diana Meadows in an unusual fashion. He equipped her with a perfectly tailored WAC Sergeant's uniform, and clad in an equally authentic AAF uniform, invited her into the cockpit of "Chuckie." There he proposed marriage and presented a beautiful 1 karat diamond ring. "Yes," she gushed, and the deed was done. This may be the first such marriage proposal on record. Question: Is she in the First Pilot's seat, or is he in the Command Pilot's seat?

The Loss of a Friend

By Virgil F. Thompson, 5th ERS

Early one fall evening my buddies and I from the 5th Emergency Rescue Squadron went into the village of Halesworth for an evening of relaxation and went to the pub where the Land Army Girls congregated. There I met a young Land Army girl of my acquaintance who enjoyed cigars. I would bring her cigars and she would bring me fresh eggs. That was true friendship; besides, neither of us ever complained about tobacco breath when we kissed good night.

This evening we all had an enjoyable time, lifting a few pints and singing in good voice. Then it was "Time, gentlemen," and we knew it was time to leave. As the pub emptied into the street we

encountered a small dog, which my Land Army girl friend picked up in her arms. Turning to me, she said, "Here is a gift for your hospitality. May it keep you warm."

I took the little dog with me when I returned to the base, having no idea what I was going to do with it. When I awoke the next morning, the dog was asleep at my feet. Everyone in our Q-hut wanted to know where it came from, so I filled them in. He became a great pet to all who knew him. For some reason I named him "Scabies."



Our days started with duty call, breakfast, and reporting to our duty stations to perform the task of rescuing air crews downed in the North Sea. Scabies always took up his watch at the hangar.

One day I was in the Operations Center when someone came in and said, "I have bad news for you. Your friend was killed." My first thought was of my comrades, and I asked "Who?" He informed me it was Scabies. The mutt was up at the hangar and they were moving a B-17 into the hangar for repairs. The caterpillar driver didn't see Scabies and ran over him.

I guess there are a lot of stories about GI dogs, but the one I remember is Scabies. He didn't get a Purple Heart, but for a few weeks he gave heart to me and a lot of others. All who knew him had lost a friend.

Return to Bassingbourn

by Kevin M. Pearson

I recently visited Birmingham, England on business and had the week-end free before returning to the States. I could have gone anywhere in Europe – London, Paris, Dublin – but where did I elect to go with my precious 48 hours? Bassingbourn, England, Station 121, home of the 91st Bombardment Group (Heavy) during World War II.

Some Background: While writing my book "Sentimental Journey," I met Louis A. LaHood, who was a pilot with the 91st BG(H), 324th BS from October 1944 to May 1945. Lou was my mentor while writing my book, frequently calling and asking about the book's progress. Lou and I even had the opportunity of flying on a Confederate Air Force B-17 named "Texas Raiders" in 1992. The resulting story from this flight makes up the Prelude to my book. Needless to say, I formed a very close bond with Lou over the three years before his untimely death in 1993. Out of a profound respect for this man, I knew I had to visit Bassingbourn if I ever had the chance.

On Sunday, 30 September, I was met in Cambridge by Peter Roberts, who is on the board of the East Anglian Aviation Society - the same group which has turned the Tower at Bassingbourn into a museum. I made contact with him through Ron Mackay, the chairman of the Friends of the Eighth – a group of dedicated English citizens who help Americans tour former bomber and fighter bases. Peter spent an entire Sunday escorting me around the Bassingbourn/Cambridge area and I can not thank him enough for his willingness to help this 40 year old air historian.

Bassingbourn is very much the way it was during the war. It is now the Depot for the Queens Regiment, a British army training unit. There is a very impressive memorial when you first enter the gate from the main highway running by the base – A-14. There is a B-17 propeller, suspended at the same height as that on a B-17; a large bronze plaque commemorating the activities of the 91st BG(H); and a park bench donated by the 91st Bomb Group Memorial Association. I saw the H Block billeting quarters where Lou had slept; the C-type hangers where the "Lassie Come Home." Lou's B-17, had been repaired; the Nissen Hut where pilot briefings were conducted; the Officer's

Mess; and the Tower Museum. I stood on the perimeter tract and runway where so many young men took off and never returned. I saw Wimpole Hall and the row of trees the pilots used as a reference marker to line up with the main runway. Most of the buildings I could not enter since the base is still an active military establishment. I could imagine heavily damaged bombers returning from a mission in the dark gray, low cloud cover which permeated the skies above the base. There is a famous picture of the Memphis Belle buzzing the tower before setting down after her last mission and I could fully picture how that must have looked. We poked our heads into one of the three remaining C-type hangers and, just for an instant, I thought I heard a Big Band playing "Moonlight Serenade" before a Saturday night dance crowd.

I even had the distinct pleasure of seeing the original "Grand Order of the Rigid Digit," an award made for those who goofed spectacularly - like raising the landing gear before leaving the runway! The award took the shape of a silver fist with the center finger upraised. Members of the Order were also awarded a replica with blue ribbons.

The Tower Museum has many interesting artifacts dating back to the time when the RAF was in control of the base. The base had originally been an RAF airdrome, established in 1938 and was used extensively by Spitfires and Hurricanes during the Battle of Britain. Later, British Wellington, Lancaster and Blenheim bombers used the base; and in early 1942 many bombers were dispatched from Bassingbourn for the first RAF 1,000 plane raid on Cologne.

Col. Stanley Wray was the Commander of the 91st BG(H) when the group first arrived in England. The group was originally assigned to a base near Kimbolton but the Kimbolton base could not withstand the weight of the 30 ton Flying Fortresses. Col. Wray, while traveling to London on the A-14, stopped in at Bassingbourn one day, took one look at the brick buildings and hard surfaced runway and decided to reassign the 91st to Bassingbourn on a temporary basis - which lasted three and a half years!

Station 121 at Bassingbourn was known as "The Country Club," nicknamed by the media in 1942 because of the excellent brick living quarters with central heat and the many paved sections of the base. Bassingbourn was filmed the most during the war by the media

because it was close to London and had very fine accommodations for the press corps. Most U.S. air bases were equipped with Nissen Huts and coal stoves, less than modern kitchens and mud (and lots of it, brother).

Bassingbourn and nearby Duxford were the airfields used to film the remake of "Memphis Belle." As soon as I returned to the States, I watched again William Wylder's original film, "Memphis Belle." The base has changed some over the years – more trees, less mud, new asphalt, etc. But other than that, it is very much the same. Peter Roberts, my guide for the day, is a very thorough historian and told me a great deal of information about the filming of the original "Memphis Belle." Many of the scenes in the original movie were shot at several air bases in England and the church featured during the opening segment of the original movie is not the church at Royston, a small village at the south end of the airfield. Rather the church is one from just outside Alconbury, another American air base. Many 91 BG(H) vets have watched the movie and wondered where the steeple is on the church at Royston. Wyler used 100+ cameras in the making of the film and several scenes in the movie, especially the scenes showing the take-off for Wilhelmshaven, were not filmed at Bassingbourn.

The day I visited Bassingbourn, there was an 8/10 cloud cover over the base - low hanging, dark clouds with a brisk wind from the North Sea, making the clouds sail gracefully and quickly over the airfield. Later in the day it started to rain. Perfect weather for visiting the base and very typical of the weather conditions the crews had to face when taking off or returning to the base.

The tower at the base is almost identical to the tower used during the war – only a few modifications have been made. The glass dome on top of the tower was extended several feet after the war when the RAF again took control of the base and Canberra bombers graced the field. The tower is now operated by the East Anglia Aviation Society, a group of remarkable "chaps," who unselfishly donate time and money to a small but important part of history. The first floor of the Tower Museum has quite a collection of RAF memorabilia from the days before the 91st arrived. There is a spiral staircase leading to the second floor which is filled with artifacts from the 91st BG(H) and the 355th FG at Steeple

Morden. There is a separate room on the second floor set aside for memorabilia from the "Memphis Belle." Pictures, flight gear, invitations, squadron insignias, models and other interesting 91st collectables adorn this truly unique museum.

During my tour through the museum, I stepped outside alone and walked up to the fence separating the base from the perimeter tract. A cold wind slapped me in the face. As I gazed about, I felt as though I had been thrown back in time. I could almost see 30 B-17 bombers lined up on the perimeter track with engines at idle speed; those massive Hamilton Standard props fanning the swirling mist from the North Sea. Just barely, I thought I could hear the thunderous roar of 120 Wright Cyclones. I turned around and looked at the C-hangers and for a split second could visualize the ground crews milling about, waiting for "their" birds to come home; "meat wagons" at the ready; and a mechanic up on a ladder working on the #3 engine of a Fort. I could almost smell the pungent aroma of mud, 100LL aviation fuel and burnt engine oil. I was brought back to reality when, out of the corner of my eye, I spotted a British soldier holding an automatic weapon guarding the gate to the runway.

Peter also spoke of a feud which had arisen between the 91st BG and the 78th FG at nearby Duxford towards the end of the war. It all started when "Redline," the base canine mascot of the 91st, was spirited away during a joint party on the station. With Victory in Europe, the AAF soon got back to spit and polish parades but the 91st mascot was still missing. During one such parade, the 78th FG were all lined up for inspection at Duxford when a lone B-17 appeared, making a low pass with bomb-doors open and from within fell a half ton of horse manure.

The 91st waited with bated breath, for they knew the "fighter jocks" would not let the event pass without some form of retaliation. Sure enough, the next day a lone P-51 flew over Bassingbourn and dropped a wreath by the Tower. Attached to the wreath was a card inscribed with the words, "In memory of your Commanding Officer who yesterday, over Duxford, fell from one of your aircraft!"

After spending several hours in the Tower Museum and being regaled with many fine stories, Peter took me over to Steeple Morden, home of the 355th Fighter Group, which was originally a satellite base of Bassingbourn until it grew large in size. The 355th FG was

then spun off from the 8th Air Force and joined the 12th Air Force.

We parked next to the 355 FG memorial just north of Litlington. As I approached the memorial, there were fresh flowers at its base and I was again consumed in emotion and had to wipe away yet another tear. I still find it hard to believe the local residents, after 50 years, continue to place fresh flowers at the memorial. The memorial is made up of a wall, out of which protrudes a replica of the nose of a P-51 and propeller. Surrounding the nose section are squadron insignias.

Peter and I walked down to what had been the main runway at Steeple Morden. On the way back, we walked through a farmer's field, which had been the 355th FG air base, and found pieces of what I would like to believe was an airplane - a lead shielded electrical cable; a section of old, decayed rubber tubing; and a piece of aluminum strapping, joined together by a bucked rivet. Peter Roberts said every year when the farmer plows the field, new debris is found. The runway at Steeple Morden was the widest of any American fighter base of the war and six P-47 Thunderbolts could take off abreast. Several sections of the runway are still intact. A large hay stack sits on the west end of the remaining concrete runway.

Peter tells of a glowing light which emanates from a creek at night at the eastern end of the runway. Story has it the light is the ghost of a young American who inadvertently walked into a spinning propeller. Peter tells this story with a straight face and very somber voice.

About 4 p.m. Sunday afternoon, Peter took me to the Madingley Cemetery just outside Cambridge. This is a U.S. Cemetery for American servicemen killed in action. 3,811 American servicemen are buried here and the names of 5,125 are properly enshrined on a 472 foot granite wall. As we began walking to the Chapel, it started to drizzle. The Chapel - well - words can not properly describe.

The entire day I was visiting Bassingbourn, Cambridge, Litlington, Steeple Morden and Royston, I had the unmistakable feeling Lou LaHood was right there by my side. I somehow felt Lou was seeing his old base again through my eyes.

I returned to Bassingbourn for you, Lou.

"For Old Time's Sake"

Rumor has it that an 8th AFer from the Missouri Chapter was visiting his old base at Rattlesden, England and was walking down a country road leading to the base. He seemed to recognize a beautiful older woman along the road, so he approached her. "Miss, excuse me," he said. "would your name be Betty McGinty?" The lady responded, "Why yes, yes I am." The 8th AFer excitedly said, "Don't you remember me, Betty? We met right here on this road at this very spot in 1943!" "Why yes—yes, I do remember now," she said with a look of realization in her eyes. "You are that American Airman Bobby Roberts from Rattlesden, aren't you? My, my, we used to go to it like rabbits, didn't we?" "Yes," said Bobby with a gleam in his eye. "Yes, we did. In fact, didn't we do it here beside the road on this very spot the first time we met? Hey, I've got an idea; why don't we do it one more time for old time's sake?" Betty agreed and they got on with their business. When they were through, Bobby said, "Wow, Betty, that was just like old times; you were magnificent! The way you grabbed my hair, screamed, and wiggled uncontrollably!" The English lady coyly responded, "Wot did you expect—the fences in the old days weren't electrified, now were they!"

(Names are fictitious.)

Calling All Cooks !!

Carolyn Swanson thinks it's time more women in the 8AFHS got involved, so she would like to put together a Society Cookbook, if the response makes it a worthwhile project.

LADIES—and MEN, too—how about sharing your favorite recipes and having your name appear in the Cookbook. We are interested in all categories, and particularly those recipes that would appeal to the "working Mom." Maybe we can help her to prepare easy and healthful dishes with a minimum of time and effort (and a desire to purchase the Cookbook)!

Please list all ingredients and amounts carefully and personally sign the recipe including your Group affiliation so proper credit can be given.

The address: COOKBOOK RECIPES
c/o Carolyn Swanson
65 Beddington Lane
Strasburg, PA 17579

If this project is a GO, all profits will be given to the Memorial Museum Foundation of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society.

THE MILITARY WIFE

The good Lord was creating a model for military wives and was into His sixth day of overtime when an angel appeared. She said, "Lord, you seem to be having a lot of trouble with this one. What's wrong with the standard model?"

The Lord replied, "Have you seen the specs on this order. She has to be completely independent, possess the qualities of both father and mother, be a perfect hostess to four or 40 with an hour's notice, run on black coffee, handle every emergency imaginable without a manual, be able to carry on cheerfully, even if she is pregnant and has the flu, and she must be willing to move to a new location 10 times in 17 years. And oh, yes, she must have six pairs of hands."

The angel shook her head. "Six pairs of hands? No way" The Lord continued, "Don't worry, we will make other military wives to help her. And we will give her an unusually strong heart so it can swell with pride in her husband's achievements, sustain the pain of separations, beat soundly when it is overworked and tired, and be large enough to say, "I understand," when she doesn't, and say "I love you," regardless."

"Lord," said the angel, touching his arm gently, "Go to bed and get some rest. You can finish this tomorrow."

"I can't stop now," said the Lord. "I am so close to creating something unique. Already this model heals herself when she is sick, can put up six unexpected guests for the weekend, wave good-bye to her husband from a pier, a runway, or a depot, and understand why it's important that he leave."

The angel circled the model of the military wife, looked at it closely and sighed, "It looks fine, but it's too soft."

"She might look soft," replied the Lord, "but she has the strength of a lion. You would not believe what she can endure."

Finally, the angel bent over and ran her finger across the cheek of the Lord's creation. "There's a leak," she announced. "Something is wrong with the construction. I am not surprised that it has cracked. You are trying to put too much into this model."

The Lord appeared offended at the angel's lack of confidence. "What you see is not a leak. It's a tear."

"A tear? What is it there for?" asked the angel. The Lord replied, "It's for joy, sadness, pain, disappointment, loneliness, pride and a dedication to all the values that she and her husband hold dear."

"You are a genius!" exclaimed the angel.

The Lord looked puzzled and replied, "I didn't put it there."

A COINCIDENCE NONPAREIL

by Ralph A. Nicholas, 448th BG

On October 26, 1995 after the fall luncheon of the Western Pennsylvania Wing of The Pennsylvania Chapter of The Eighth Air Force Historical Society in Monroeville, Pennsylvania, a group of veterans, some with their wives, perhaps eighty in number, settled back comfortably to reminisce.

In WWII I was a B-24 Liberator bomber navigator assigned to the 714th Squadron of the 448th Bomb Group, 2nd Air Division, at Seething Air Force Base just outside of the town of Norwich. Two seats to my right at the reunion luncheon sat Tony Chardella, who had been assigned to the 359th Fighter Group, a P-51 Mustang Base at Thetford Field located a short distance from East Wretham, England.

Tony said to me, "Hap, while waiting your turn to become airborne, bomb racks loaded, the four engines revved to maximum, did you ever tear down the runway and not get off the ground?"

I pondered his question for a few moments and replied, "We might have Tony, but frankly I don't recall."

"But, I continued, I can recall an incident which is sort of the reverse of your question. We were returning from what had been an exceptionally long mission and were circling over our airfield preparatory to landing. We were low on fuel and I can still see Rufe Nichols our engineer frantically pumping the last of the vapor into the four engines with first one engine "conking out" and then another so that our pilot, Tom Horton, had no choice but to peel out of the formation and look for an emergency landing area, a fighter strip some miles away. But, having minimal power and thus little control of the airplane when we spotted the landing field, we were forced to land on the last half of the runway."

"I was standing on the flight deck between the pilot and our co-pilot Ed Schreiber as we hurtled toward the concrete at what seemed to be a 45 degree approach. With minimal time to react, they pulled back on "the stick"; we hit the deck, and I can still see their four feet pressing the brake pedals as we bounced toward a thicket with a forest looming behind it. Just as we lurched off the end of the runway the right tire blew which

caused us to ground loop. We spun like a top on the tire rim before coming to a stop in stunned silence...not 50 feet from the thicket! Though none of us was hurt, we were shaken to the core."

I can still see Tony Chardella's widened eyes, his mouth agape, as he blurted, "WAS THAT YOU?!" When my gooseflesh subsided, I learned that he and several of his buddies had observed the entire sequence of events and were uncomfortably standing not many feet away from where our bomber came to rest.

His version differed slightly from mine. They watched the right wing hit a wooden shack with a reverberating crack after which the right tire blew causing the spin.

Our ten man crew, chilled to the marrow and in abject silence, was trucked back to Seething after dark. We were indeed counting our blessings.

Tony informed me that, since the plane was beyond repair, they "liberated" our fifty caliber machine guns (presumably to be fitted to the fighter planes) and our survival rations. He grinned and said "We particularly enjoyed the candy!"

The Eighth Air Force Museum

Many will be surprised to learn that the original Eighth Air Force Museum is at Barksdale Field, Louisiana, the present home of the 8th Air Force.

The professional curator in charge of the museum is H. D. "Buck" Rigg. The museum includes 16 aircraft and their support equipment, including a B-17 and a B-24. All are "intact but not operational," and are on loan from the U.S. Air Force in Dayton, Ohio. They are under the care of T/Sgt Ray Grillo and trained volunteers who keep the aircraft from the effects of weathering, since all are stored outside until financing is available for a building.

An original room, with wall hangings, was brought over from England for a home-front display. Also, a quonset hut and a briefing room are set up, with films and briefing. On nine acres of land and 12,000 feet of enclosed space there are authentic displays from World War I through World War II and to the present.

No admission is charged, and groups are welcome.



Mystery Solved?

These photos are possible identification of the captured American airman shown on page 13 of the November issue. They were submitted by James V. Crow of Elmhurst, IL, who wrote that they were photocopied from a German flak crewman's album. The aircraft shown is B-17 #4297200 of the 452nd BG, 728th BS, shot down by flak on March 28, 1944 on a raid to Chateaudun, France. Crow identifies the airman shown as Sgt Morris W. Anderson, left waist gunner of that aircraft. Six of the crew were KIA, four POW. Sgt Anderson died in the 1960s.

Addendum: Youngest to Complete Combat Tour

Several late entries have been received to be added to the list published on page 15 of the November 1996 issue (96-4). Please note that I have not included any entries with less than 25 missions or over the age of 20.

Name	Birth Date	Flew First Mission	No. Missions	Age at Last Mission
John T. Brinkman	02/24/25 *	07/10/43	25	18y08m28d
Robert L. Kilpatrick	12/20/24	02/24/44	29	19y09m29d
Frank T. Kinker	09/02/24	03/02/44	30	19y09m03d
Virgil C. Tally	06/23/25	07/21/44	25	19y07m17d
John I. Jenkins	03/16/25	08/30/44	35	19y09m21d
Frank Giosta	06/26/25	10/07/44	33	19y09m29d
Floyd M. Bieniek	12/08/25	11/29/44	36	19y05m03d
Milton Genes	12/16/25	11/26/44	30	19y04m10d
Robert W. Brennan	06/05/25	12/04/44	34	19y10m20d

John Brinkman, of Cartersville, GA added the following interesting information:

"The fact that my fraudulent underage enlistment was punishable by a courts martial was never far from my thoughts. As the war progressed, Army Regulations provided that the falsified Service Record entry could be changed upon request if you had reached the age of 18. While instructing at Bovingdon I had mine corrected. I seem to recall that some individuals could and were discharged based on application by their parents, as long as they were still actually underage and in the States. Upon retiring from the Air Force at the war's conclusion, I was advised that I must register for the draft. I did, and my draft status was deemed to be 'not available for active military duty in time of war or other national emergency declared by Congress or by law.'"

He added one other bit of information that bears checking out: "Rumor had it that one individual in the 306th BG, by the name of Maclintick or McClinick (369th BS?) was shot down at the real age of 13!!!" (306th BG Please Note)

Reunions & Events

2 Bad Assn Reunion, Oct 23-26, 1997, Dallas/Fort Worth. Contact Dick McClune, 527 Quarterfield Rd, Newport News, VA 23602-6140

2AD Midwest & East Regional Reunion, Sept 25-28, 1997, Marriott Hotel, Harrisburg, PA. Contact Ray Souders, 431 Lewisberry Rd, New Cumberland, PA 17070 (717-774-3960)

3SAD, Sept 10-13, 1997, Spokane, WA. Contact W. A. Noble, 7266 Goodwood Ave, Baton Rouge, LA 70806 (504-925-8454)

8AFHS Southeastern Regional Reunion, June 5-8, 1997, Knoxville, TN. Contact Ruby Otto, POB 274, Hermitage, TN 37076 (615-391-4160)

96BGA, May 14-18, 1997, Tulsa, OK. Contact Tom Thomas (708-668-0215)

351BGA, June 11-14, 1997, Marriott Hotel, Dayton, OH. Contact Clint Hammond, POB 281, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055 (717-766-1489)

364FGA, Sept 23-28, 1997, DeSota Hilton Hotel, Savannah, GA. Contact Dan Leftwich, 6630 Caldero Ct, Dayton, OH 45415 (937-890-3641)

388BGA Reunion, Sept 17-20, 1997, Savannah, GA. Contact Robert E. Simmon, 101 Charlotte Dr, Cabot, Arkansas, 72023-8847 (501-988-1486)

398BGMA, July 16-19, 1997, Spokane, WA. Contact George R. Hilliard, 7841 Quartermaine Ave, Cincinnati, OH 45236-2313

446BGA, May 7-11, 1997, Menger Hotel, San Antonio, TX. Contact John F. White, 408 Willow Ridge Rd, Fort Worth, TX 76103 (817-457-5715)

457BGA, Oct 12-16, 1997, Savannah, GA. Contact Homer Briggs, 811 NW "B" St, Bentonville, AR 72712

466BGA, May 21-25, 1997, Hotel Park, Tucson, AZ. Contact Lou Loevsky, 16 Hamilton Drive, East, North Caldwell, NJ 07006 (201-226-4624)

467BGA, Sept 23-28, 1997, Nevele Hotel, Ellenville, NY. Contact Walter J. Mundy, 24030 Basin Harbor Court, Tehachapi, CA 93561 (805-821-5816)

All Aviation Cadet Reunion, Oct 15-19, 1997, Kelly AFB, San Antonio, TX. Contact Aviation Cadet Museum, RT #4, Box 416, Eureka Springs, AR 72632 (501-253-5008)

Scouting Force Assn Reunion, March 9-12, 1997, Menger Hotel, San Antonio, TX. Contact Dick Atkins, 1304 Cochise Drive, Arlington, TX 76012 (817-261-3007)

Organizational Changes

Delete Tony Cox, Station Contact for Ramsbury, substitute Gary Caldecott, 17 Swansdown Walk, Thatcham, Berkshire, England RG19 3SL (44 (0) 1635 866253)

398BG President Wallace H. Blackwell, 2897 Balmoral Dr., Rockwell, MD 20850-3067 (301-762-2213)

Station Contact for 401BG is G. D. Bratley, 71 Patrick Rd, Corby, Northants, England

Station Contact Bassingbourn is Steve Pena, Bramble Cottage, Netherstone, Stotfold, Hertfordshire, England SG5 4BX (001 441462 835787)

Unit Contact 301BG is Peter J. Chille, POB 47843, San Antonio, TX 78265-8843

Unit Contacts: Change SCOUTFC to Scouting Force; Richard Atlins to Richard Atkins

Add Scouting Force Assn Scouting Report, Editor Dick Atkins, 1304 Cochise Dr, Arlington, TX 76012 (817-261-3007)

The Goose Story

(Anonymous)

A lesson is to be learned from our feathered friends. Next fall, when you see geese heading south for the winter, flying along in V formation, you might consider what science has discovered as to why they fly that way. As each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for the bird immediately following. By flying in V formation, the whole flock adds at least 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew on its own.

People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going more quickly and easily because they are traveling on the thrust of one another!

When a goose falls out of formation it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to go it alone. It quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird in front. If we have as much sense as a goose, we will stay in formation with those who are headed in the same way we are!

When the head goose gets tired, it rotates back in the wings and another goose flies point. Amazing how the goose is willing to share with one another the lead role without self indulgence at the expense of the flock.

It is sensible to take turns doing demanding jobs, with people, or with geese flying south! Geese honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed. What do we say when we honk from behind?

Finally, and this is most important. When a goose gets sick, or is wounded by gunfire, and falls out of formation, two other geese fall out with that goose and follow it down to lend help and protection. They stay with the fallen goose until it is able to fly, or until it dies, and only then do they launch out on their own or with another formation to catch up with their group.

If we have the sense of a goose, we will stand by each other like that!

Book Reviews

"Forgotten Fields of America: World War II Bases and Training Then and Now," by Lou Thole, Pictorial Histories Publishing Co., Inc, 713 South Third St. W., Missoula, Montana 59801, 1996. ISBN 1-57510-010-X \$14.95 + \$4.00 S&H. 158 pp, 8-1/4 x 11", soft cover, B&W, many photos. This book tells the story of the buildup of the United States Army Air Forces just before and during WWII. Its focus is on the training bases, the men and women who served, and what they did. It is not a reference guide filled with data and many bases are not covered; but it relates, from a human interest standpoint, one of the greatest accomplishments in WWII. One wishes Mr. Thole would produce further volumes definitively describing the many aspects of training, but it would be a monstrous job. This is a good start—it sets the framework. (JWH) (see advertisement on page 29.)

"German Jets Versus The U. S. Army Air Force", by William N. Hess, Specialty Press, 11481 Kost Dam Road, North Branch, MN 55056. ISBN 0-933424-63-9, 1996, 176 pp, 6 x 9", hard cover, B&W, some photos. This is a good coverage of the German jet menace that had us all concerned in the late summer and fall of 1944. It traces the design and production problems of the German jets and contains personal reminiscences of how the Allied fighter commands learned to cope with the menace. The author is the official historian of the American Fighter Aces Assn. (JWH)

"In the Shadow of The Swastika: The double life of a Resistance leader in World War II occupied Holland." by H. Van Remmerden, 13500 Wentworth Lane #121E, Seal Beach, CA 90740, Printed by Lithocraft, Inc., Boise, Idaho, 1996. \$10.95, 122 pp, 8-1/2 x 5-1/4, few photos, soft cover. Personal stories of the Dutch underground in the village of Doorn as recalled by the resistance commander, "Little George," and told to Hal Netten, an American journalist. A fantastic story about some extremely brave men and women to whom all 8th AFers owe undying gratitude. (JWH)

"Against All Odds: Surviving World War II," by Frederick D. Worthen, Published by Fithian Press, POB 1525, Santa Barbara, CA 93102. ISBN 1-56474-183-4, ISBN 1-56474-183-4, \$12.95. Personal reminiscences of a crew of the 93rd Bomb Group.

"Tales to Noses Over Berlin," by Ray Bowden, Design Oracle Partnership, 50 Argyle Rd, Ealing, London England W13 8AA. ISBN 1-898575 02 9, 35L in UK, 1996. 128 pp, 8-1/4 x 11-1/2, soft cover B&W, many photos. This book is a very attractive collage of articles, stories, and photos about the 20 American missions to Berlin, and the 140,000 air crewmen who made the trip. Filled with fascinating detail and reminiscences. (JWH)

"War Stories of the O&W: A History of the 486th Bomb Group," by Richard A. Wood & Robert S. Bee, RSB Publications, Columbus, OH 43228, 1996. LC# 96-96947. 521 pp., 8-1/4 x 11", hard cover, B&W, many photos. A well executed Group History full of pertinent statistics, photos, and reminiscences.

"Agents for Escape: Inside the French Resistance, 1939-1945," by Andre Rougeyron, LSU Press, POB 25053, Baton rouge, LA 70894-5053. ISBN 0-8071-2019-7, \$24.95, 1996 Translation. 185 pp., 6 x 9", hard cover, B&W, few photos. Privately published in France in 1947, this memoir by a self-effacing resistance hero offers continuous suspense and excitement. Rougeyron risked his life throughout the war rescuing downed Allied airmen. He was caught by the Gestapo and sent to Buchenwald. He escaped during the camp's evacuation and finally reached British lines. His jaunty narrative voice and powers of description add a fresh perspective on the resistance in Normandy at the time of the invasion and on conditions at Buchenwald.

★★★★★ TAPS ★★★★★

Freeman C. Beasley, 91BG/324BS, B-17 Pilot, Colorado Springs, CO
Dale E. Benesh, 453BG, Tail Gunner, Loveland, CO
Joseph A. Bennett, 303BG, POW 17-B, Keyport, NJ
Benjamin Blank, 301BG
Benjamin I. Breen, 96BG Board Member, "Frantic" Participant
Matthew W. Buttiglieri, 305BG/366BS, Navigator, POW 7A, Granada Hills, CA
Jack W. Cotterman, 351BG, Tail Gunner
John B. Dabry, 7th PR
Marc C. De Caro, 94BG, Bombardier, Artist for 94th and 8AFHS, Longmont, CO
Ralph B. Englehart, 20th FG, Crew Chief
Harry Fireman, 351BG, B-17 Pilot, Brookline, MA
Russell F. Fisher, 487BG, B-17 Pilot, Winter Park, FL
Otha Foley, 440th Subdepot, Alconbury 1943-45, Ground Support
Peter Gamoian, 493BG/863BS, Tail Gunner
George V. Giovannoni, Sr., 453BG
Robert A. Hannum, 95BG, Bombardier, POW, St. Petersburg, FL
Hugh James Harries, 448BG, B-24 Pilot, POW, Ocean Shores, FL

Eugene Fields Howard, Jr., 457BG/750BS, Houston, TX
Edwin A. Jerome, 384BG
Albert H. Leonard, 95BG, Denver, CO
Robert L. Mull, 487BG/387BS, Waist Gunner, Howard Peterson Crew
William R. Kavanaugh, 398BG/602BS Flight Surgeon Kalamazoo, MI
Viekko Koski, 351BG, Waist Gunner
Vincent J. Lang, 305BG/366BS, Titus Village, FL
Richard E. MacDonald, 401BG, Navigator, Albany, OR
Thomas A. McCord, 4FG/336FS, P-51 Pilot, 42-1, Lafayette, CA
Armando Marsili, 385BG, B-17 Flight Engr on "Crash Wagon II, Spring Hill, FL
Darwin M. "Reube" Milone, 452BG/729BS, Waist Gunner, Olney, IL
Bernard E. Patchett, 447BG/711BS, Waist Gunner on "Ice Cold Katie", Vallier, IL
Thomas P. Philbin, 100BG, Stow, OH
John H. "Robby" Robinette, 305BG/422BS, POW, Richmond, TX
Raymond P. Stange, 398BG/603BS, Navigator/Bombardier, Westchester, IL
Thomas Michael Tighe, 466BG, Co-pilot
John "Jay" Wooldridge, 92BG, Pilot, Houston, TX

Music of Elvis Can't Compare To A B-17

(From "Flying Fortress News Letter")

A few years ago one of the 97th Bomb Group members appealed to the U.S. Postal Service to produce a postage stamp honoring the B-17 Flying Fortress. He got support from a number of others and they intensified their efforts, but they received excuses; then a final negative decision came down from the head man. No reason was given by the Postmaster General. Later the Postal Service announced they would do an Elvis "The Pelvis" Presley commemorative stamp.

They wouldn't do a stamp on the plane that practically "won the war" to help honor the men who risked their lives time after time on missions to destroy the Axis' war-making facilities; and the many thousands who died in combat in the skies or were prisoners of war. But, it seems they could perpetuate the sordid lifestyle of a "pop" singer who left his young wife behind while he used drugs and bedded many a young groupie around the country.

*He starred in some movies, but so did the B-17

*He was admired, even loved by some—the B-17 by everyone

*He was famous, but not as everlastingly famous as the B-17

*He was a hero to misled youth, but the B-17 was hero to real men

*Elvis took his own bloated, drug-filled life—To the men of the B-17 bomber crews, life was precious. The B-17 did everything it could to save the lives of its crews.

The smooth rock and roll voice of Elvis can never compare to the music of the B-17's four engines carrying its crew off on another mission and back home to base again. After all is said and done—more is said than done! In the footprints of the sands of time, some people leave only the mark of a heel!

Letter from James Parton, Gen. Ira Eaker's Biographer

Dear Mr. Hill,

As one who went overseas in the advance echelon of the Eighth Bomber Command and became Gen. Eaker's Aide and biographer, I am a devoted reader of your magazine. The November issue is particularly fine, with its elegant cover of 390th BG B-17s overhead and "Almost Home."

Your clever use of the 8th AF patch in your banner leads me to wonder if it might be interesting to you to summarize the history of the patch itself.

When Gen. Eaker moved up from Bomber Command to head the entire 8th AF in December 1943, he directed me to look into getting a patch designed. In London there are several fine stores which specialized in insignia of many varieties to fill the elaborate ceremonial needs of the British military, etc. I do not now recall which one I approached, but they asked for a sketch. I turned to an officer in Intelligence who had been an art director in the States, whose name was (I think) Capt. Paul Lawler. He drew the patch as shown in your magazine, with its short wings. Eaker approved and at once orders were placed for all officers.

But back in Washington some bureaucrat designed a different patch, one with long, graceful wings which looked more like ferns in a breeze than an airplane in flight. Some arrived in England and Eaker arranged to have the Washington device withdrawn by I suppose, appealing to Gen. Arnold. But in a TV show last week, I saw what purported to be a "documentary" on the 8th in action: All officers wore that languid insignia.

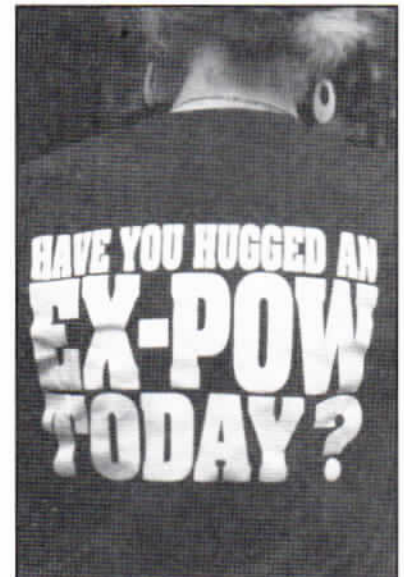
My best regards to all of my fellow veterans of the 8th at the start and those all the way down the aisle of history who have, or still do, serve in "The Mighty Eighth."

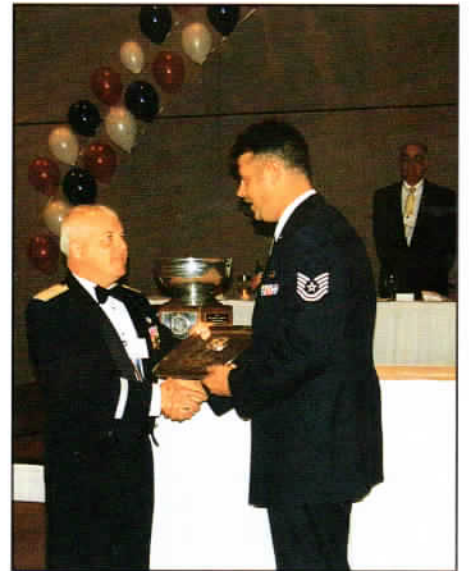
Recipients of Ira C. Eaker Outstanding Airmanship Trophy and The Pursuit of Excellence Trophy (For Maintenance Achievement)

The Ira C. Eaker Award for Outstanding Airmanship was awarded to the following eight Airmen, who brought in a B-52 after two of the engines fell off.

- Major Andrew J. Cernicky, Shreveport, LA
- Captain Jeffrey L. Swanson, Barksdale AFB, LA
- Captain Darrel T. Hines, Barksdale AFB, LA
- Captain Raymond G. Brown, Shreveport, LA
- Captain Russell F. Mathers, Barksdale AFB, LA
- Captain Victor R. Mosley, Bossier City, LA
- Captain Warren G. Ward, Bossier City, LA
- Captain Alfred Forzley, Jr., Marietta, GA

The Pursuit of Excellence Trophy for Maintenance Achievement was awarded to Technical Sergeant Henry A. Jackson, Mountain Home AFB, ID, who modified ejection seats and saved the government thousands of dollars.





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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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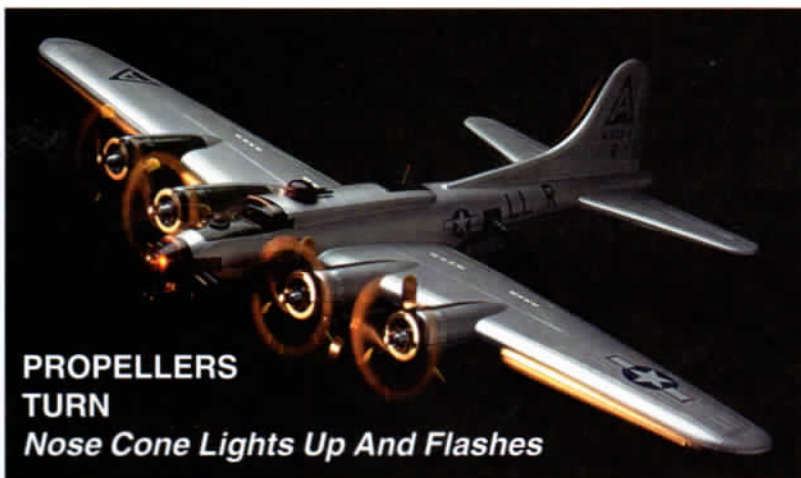
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THIS IS YOUR SOCIETY—I

By Hubert M. "Chili" Childress

As announced in the President's Letter in the November edition of the 8th AF News, we are initiating a series of articles to inform our members of some of the factual elements of the society to clear up some of the misunderstandings that have created undesirable friction among some of our members.

Representative Democracy or Mob Rule?

At the last two general meetings of the Society (St. Louis and Orlando), it became apparent that many of those present did not have a basic understanding of how the Society was designed to work by its founders. The legal basis for this method of operation is contained in the By-Laws of the Society, which are available to all and already in the hands of many. If you want a complete copy, please contact our Information Manager Edward A. Kueppers at 1-800-833-1942.

The founders recognized that because the membership is widely dispersed geographically, and because annual reunions were to be held around the nation, it would be extremely difficult to achieve a directly democratic method of governance that would fairly represent all of the membership. They therefore provided that the Society would be governed by a Board of Directors. The Directors were to be elected at the Annual Membership Meeting held in conjunction with the Annual Reunion. There were to be twelve Directors elected for staggered periods of four years, three to be elected each year.

In the following quote from the By-Laws, please note that the Board of Directors is not requested, not empowered, but directed, to manage the business of the Society.

Article VII - Board of Directors

A. The business of the organization shall be managed by a Board of Directors...."

In light of the foregoing, suggestions for actions of any kind made to the Board, whether proposed by individual members or by resolution at the Annual General Membership Meeting, are simply proposals or suggestions. As the By-Laws clearly state, it is the duty and responsibility of the Board to manage the business of the Society.

It is apparent from remarks made from the floor and tracts circulated at our last two reunions that some members believed that resolutions passed by the General Meeting, even those requiring a change of the By-Laws, constituted a directive or command to the Board. As the above citation clearly shows, such is not the case. Any actions or final decisions, however, are made by the Board of Directors, in accordance with the By-Laws as noted above.

This is not to imply that Board actions may not be, or are not, guided by any clear indication from the members of their desires on any particular matter. They should, and are, given weight and consideration in any Board action.

Changes in By-Laws

A case in point is the revision to the By-Laws that is being submitted to the membership for consideration in this issue of the 8th AF News.

The Board could have simply accepted or rejected the revision, but since men of good will can differ and because the tenure of the Board members had received so much notoriety, the Board agreed with this writer that the matter should be submitted to the entire membership for consideration and determination.

As noted by the excerpt quoted below, a revision of the By-Laws can be initiated either by a member of the Board or by a Request for Revision initiated by a member and endorsed by five other members in good standing. The revision may then either be approved or rejected by the Board, or be placed before the entire membership in a mail ballot in which case a two-thirds vote will decide.

Article XIV - Amendments

A. Amendments of the By-Laws may be proposed as provided in Paragraph 'B' of this Article. Amendment ballots shall be mailed to the regular membership (in good standing) for action with a statement of the position of the Board thereon. A two-thirds affirmative vote of the respondents, taken by mail, shall be required for adoption....

B. PROCEDURES:

1. An amendment may be proposed by a member of the Board and approved by the Board; or submitted by five regular members (in good standing) to the Secretary for Board approval.

2. If a proposed amendment, submitted by members in accord with paragraph B.1., is disapproved by the Board, it shall be returned to the person who submitted it, with reasons for disapproval or any suggestions for change."

After reading this discussion, please cut out the top half of the back cover of this issue and vote your preference with regard to the tenure of Board members. Send it to the 8AFHS Secretary Harold C. Rutka, 11 Artavia Street, Duluth, MN 55811. Make sure that your address label remains on the back of your ballot, as it validates the ballot.

OFFICIAL BALLOT FOR BY-LAWS CHANGES

Mark ballot clearly with check marks and mail immediately to:

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Secretary, 8AFHS
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Duluth, MN 55811-2330

ARTICLE VII PARAGRAPH B: FOR AMENDMENT _____

AGAINST AMENDMENT _____

ARTICLE XII PARAGRAPH 4: FOR AMENDMENT _____

AGAINST AMENDMENT _____

Signature

PROPOSED BY-LAW CHANGES

ARTICLE VII. Paragraph B

B. Directors shall be chosen for a term of four years at an annual General Membership Meeting designated by the Board of Directors. Nominees must be present at the meeting and must have been a paid-up Member in good standing for the preceding twelve months. Directors may not serve more than two four-year terms.

This proposed change eliminates the word "consecutive" from the last paragraph and has the effect of preventing any member from serving more than TWO four-year terms.

The Board of Directors recommends this change.

ARTICLE XII. PARAGRAPH 4

4. The Unit Advisory Committee will convene at each 8AFHS Reunion and at other times they may deem proper, to receive suggestions from the membership and/or to

make recommendations to the Board of Directors on any matter of concern to the Society.

The committee shall consist of recognized Unit Contact and State Chapter Representatives who are 8AFHS members in good standing. The President will appoint the Chairman, who shall not be a member of the Board of Directors. The Chairman, or his designee, will submit a report, either in person or in writing, at each Mid-Year and Annual Reunion Board Meeting. The committee shall establish operational procedures which afford clear, open access to the committee by all Society Members.

This proposed change will have the effect of combining the Chapter Development Committee and the Unit Contact Committee, since State Chapters have been formed and are currently in operation. This change will streamline the Committee and permit more efficient operation and more direct contact between Units, Chapters, Members, and the Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors recommends this change.



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