



th AF NEWS

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Big Christmas Issue!

AF NEWS

Mission Briefing

Magazine of The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

Walter E. Brown, Editor

The Eighth Air Force News is dedicated to Lt. Col. John H. Woolnough, founder of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society and editor for sixteen years. It is published quarterly and is the official newsmagazine of the Society. Submissions of Eighth Air Force related material are welcome and encouraged, but we cannot be responsible for its return. All material will be permanently preserved in the 8th Air Force archives. The 8th AFHS does not endorse or guarantee the products of its advertisers.

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Sherman M. Small
Robert E. Vickers

It is just now that many of us are recouping from a busy and rewarding annual meeting in Cherry Hill last October. The schedule was so packed that there was hardly enough time to get around and see all the friends who attended. And the mail and follow-up correspondence is just now getting to a level where I can see the desktop. Sometimes it all seems enough to give you a good case of the willies! The reunion was indeed a fine one and plans are already in the works for a great time at the Historical Society's Silver Anniversary meeting in Savannah eleven months from now.

After what may be termed a somewhat complex election process your new officers are in place as are the three newly elected Board of Directors members. The Board is committed to carrying on the progressive programs of the Historical Society as affirmed in convincing fashion by the general assembly at the 1998 membership meeting. The 8th AF NEWS will stay abreast of all of this and keep everyone informed.

A special thanks to all Society members across the country who played an active part in dozens of towns and states obtaining official proclamations from their local leadership announcing Eighth Air Force Week October 8 - 14. We will increase that number in 1999!

You may notice that this is a December issue of the 8th AF NEWS; we are changing the magazine to conform to a quarterly yearly mailout: March, June, September, December. Having had the honor of being appointed to serve as your editor, I feel the magazine will be a better publication because of that minor change. And as the new editor may I say a hearty thanks to those of you who have sent in contributions to the NEWS - please keep them coming in. We will try to get most of them into print and out to the membership.

**A very Merry Christmas
and a Happy Hanukkah to all!**

Walter Brown
Ewell Farm
2340 Sugar Ridge Road
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The Eighth Air Force Memorial Museum Foundation 1999 Board Officers

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Class of 2000: Roger A. Freeman, Clifford L. Peterson, Hubert M. Childress. **Class of 2001:** Edward J. Creeden, James M. Hower. **Class of 2002:** Edward A. Kueppers, Robert E. Vickers.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am honored to serve the members of The Eighth Air Force Historical Society, as your President. We must remember that the purpose of our Society is to perpetuate the history of The Eighth Air Force and the mem-

ory of our lost comrades. Let us join hands and work for this purpose during the coming year. This year we will celebrate the 25th anniversary of the founding of The Eighth Air Force Historical Society at Savannah Georgia 27 - 30 October 1999. We will be looking forward to seeing you in Savannah.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, GENEVIEVE AND I WISH YOU A HEALTHY, HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON.

Harold C. Rutka

1998-99 Historical Society Board of Directors



From left: Tom Parsons, Vice-President; Craig Harris; Harold Rutka, President; Charles Dye; Norman Grant; Dick Baynes, Secretary; Larry Goldstein; Kenneth Nail, Treasurer; Abraham "Hap" Galfunt; Stanley Peterson; Walter Brown. Missing: Hubert Childress.

8th AFHS Website: <http://members.the globe.com/>

COMMITTEE REPORT UNIT AND CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE REUNION REPORT

The Unit and Chapter Development and Advisory Committee had a very interesting meeting at the Cherry Hill Reunion. Many items were discussed but the one that seemed to stir the most interest was Web Sites.

The common consensus seemed to be that all units should have a Web Site and that it would be a good idea for the Chapters to have one also. With more people having computers and being on the internet there are many who would like information from the individual units. It would be better if they got their information direct rather than going through the Historical Society. Being a computer idiot I cannot give all the things that it takes to set up a Web Site but it will be in the next Eighth Air Force News. I shall consult an expert - the 487th Webmaster, my son Tim.

CHAPTER NEWS

Starting with the next issue of the Eighth Air Force News all Chapter News will have to come from the Chapters in article form. Just sending a newsletter to the editor will not work. Too much time is spent going through your Chapter newsletter to make up an article for the column, so send the editor the news about your Chapter and it will be entered in the "Chapter News." Please try to make your article interesting nationally and not just locally. One other point - please keep it as brief as possible.

UNIT AND CHAPTER REUNIONS

All Unit and Chapter reunion notifications are invited to be included in the Eighth Air Force News. Send it to the editor or to this column. Tell us what Unit or Chapter, when it will be held, where it will be held, whom to contact and how to contact them and anything important that will happen. Get it in as soon as you have the details finalized so it won't show up after the reunion is over.

Jim Erskine, Chairman



SECRETARY'S REPORT

AN OPEN AND MEMBERSHIP ORIENTED SOCIETY

The Board of Directors fosters an open and membership oriented Society. All members are welcome to a copy of the Board of Directors' minutes and financial statements.

HIGHLIGHTS OF BOARD MEETINGS

We continue our policy of highlighting what transpired at our Board of Directors meetings of October 14 & 18. The **Wednesday Board meeting** was composed mostly of committee reports. President Grant would like to thank all Chapters, Units and individuals who obtained **Proclamations for Mighty Eighth Air Force Week, Oct. 8-14**. Congress, most state Governors, many County, City and town leaders throughout the United States signed the Proclamation.

The only motion passed at the Wednesday meeting involved changing the flat fee per member funding of the 8th Air Force Memorial Museum Foundation and requiring them to present a budget or plan telling the Society where they would spend the funds from the membership.

At the **General Membership meeting on Saturday**, brief reports were given by Mark Copeland, PX Manager; Dr. Walter Brown, Interim Editor of 8th AF NEWS; Dick Baynes, Secretary; Ken Nail, Treasurer; Bob Vickers, Liaison for the 8th Air Force Memorial Museum Foundation; and Tom Parsons, Vice President.

Tom Parsons introduced Major General Lewis Lyle, Chairman of The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum who gave an upbeat report on the progress of the Heritage Museum. The Chatham County Commissioners have directed the management of the Heritage Museum to concentrate on continuing to develop it into a World Class Museum. The County is very happy with the Museum as well as the income that it is generating for the County. Lew Lyle introduced the new Museum Director, Dr. Barry Buxton, who spoke of his enthusiasm for the progress that the Museum is making and the plans for future growth. Repeating again, it was emphasized by both the Boards of the Historical Society and the Heritage Museum, that we are two separate organizations and that there is no desire or method whereby we would want to be joined.

There was considerable discussion on the motion passed by the Board on Wednesday, concerning the flat fee funding of the 8th Air Force Memorial Museum Foundation. A motion was made from the floor to continue the flat funding and when a vote was taken, it was

so close that no decision could be made. Since balloting could not be done without advance notice, President Grant offered a compromise that would continue the funding of the MMF for the coming year and that it would be put on the ballot for next year's meeting. All accepted the compromise and the motion was withdrawn.

Three new Society Board members were elected for the Class of 2002 from a slate of 5 regular nominees and one nominee from the floor. The successful candidates are listed elsewhere.

Action at the **new Board of Directors meeting on Sunday** included the following:

- A critique of the completed reunion with total registered attendance of 622 and an excess of 30 members who attended on Saturday for the business meeting only.
- Arlo Bartsch and Scott Gray of The National Foundation gave a presentation for Military Heritage Data. Their project is to record detailed history of 8th Air Force individuals, missions, planes, etc. in interactive computer files.
- Following the report of the PX Manager, it was enthusiastically agreed for Mark Copeland to take selected PX items to the 2nd Air Division Association's next annual reunion in Austin, TX, May 23-25, 1999.
- Walt Brown reviewed the layout of the 8th AF NEWS. It was agreed that this quarterly publication is the most important link to the members of the Society and we will continue the effort to make it a first class publication.
- Treasurer Ken Nail submitted a budget report indicating a declining income associated with the effect of attrition on membership numbers.
- A motion was passed to make a final fund drive, via membership renewal mailings, for the Chapel to be built at The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum. We hope to complete the drive by the end of the year. Construction could then be started and we could dedicate the Chapel at The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum during our 1999 Reunion in Savannah in October 1999, the Society's Silver Anniversary.



R. C. Dick Baynes
Secretary

NOTICE: The final Financial Report for this fiscal year is presently being finalized and recorded. The Financial Statement for the Historical Society will be published in the March 1999 issue of the 8th AF NEWS.

FROM THE INFORMATION MANAGER"



The Information Office had its usual and customary press of activity following the annual reunion in Cherry Hill. A lot of telephone calls and requests for information about individuals and Groups from the good turnout at the reunion. The interest from overseas contacts and people interested in the Eighth is growing; a good number of the younger generation showing interest and writing books and papers on the war. Great Britain is our biggest overseas

contact area, of course.

A reminder to everyone that membership application forms and dues, address changes, membership cancellations, and related items should be sent to Kathy Mc Curry at the Membership Records office - the address is on the inside front cover of this issue of the 8th AF NEWS. General information and specific info requests can be made by calling my number 1-800-833-1942.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!
Ed Kueppers



A True Story of Christmas...

THE BET AT BARTH

In war-time, a place called Barth was Hell. It was a prisoner of war camp located only a few miles south of the Baltic Sea in Northern Germany. Downed aircrews were interned there after having been shot down and captured by the enemy. Ten thousand were held there as prisoners. The camp was divided into four administrative compounds with 2,500 airmen in each unit. These "guests of the Germans" were elite and quality men - leaders and brave American youths. They had been effective in their aerial combat activity against Nazi Germany. But now, their role had dramatically changed. Internment brought suffering beyond belief; the unending frigid weather, the unpredictable behavior of the guards. Inadequate food, lice, sickness, boredom, death by starvation or by exposure, was their unchanging agenda. Yet there were times when the spirits of the Prisoners of War were lifted. It was always through their own methods of creativity and ingenious that this happened. One on-going "high" occurred when each new contingent of "guests" arrived in the camp. Up-to-date uncensored information became immediately available. The reports brought in by these new POW's gave fresh, unbiased running accounts of how the war was progressing on both the Eastern Front with the Russians and on the Western Front. The increasing numbers of bombers and fighters appearing in the air overhead brought silent but exuberant joy and hope to Barth's imprisoned. As optimism flourished small group conversation centered on the war's end and their freedom. Liberation was on everyone's lips. The war was indeed winding down! Talk of being home for Christmas became a Utopian Dream. Although all embraced the Dream, not all were optimistic. This difference in opinion brought about the "Bet at Barth." A wager was on. New life came to the camp. But what was there to wager!? There was no money, no freedom or 3-day passes to London, no material possessions for the loser to forfeit, no points or promotions to be gained or lost. In a heated conversation, two men got carried away in their claims. An optimistic airman bet a pessimistic one on the following terms. "If we aren't home by Christmas, I will kiss your ass before the whole group formation right after head-count on Christmas morning." They shook hands. The bet was

*"They shook hands.
The bet was on!"*

*"The curfew has been lifted for
tonight! We're going to have a
Christmas service over in the
next compound."*

on! Well, the optimist hadn't counted on the Battle of the Bulge in early December. Consequently, the war was prolonged and they were still in Barth on Christmas Day, 1944.

Christmas morning was cold, there was snow on the ground and frigid air was blowing in off the Baltic sea. The body count for the compound began, each man was counted off, ein.... zwei.... drei.... vier.... funf.... sechs.... sieben.... acht... Under ordinary circumstances, when the counting was completed and the German guards were satisfied that everyone was accounted for, the group split up and everyone went to their barracks. But this time, everybody stayed in formation. The two betting "Kriegies" walked out of the formation and went into the barracks. No one else moved! The guards were puzzled. They didn't know what was going on. Soon, the two men came back out of the barracks. One was carrying a bucket of water with a towel over the other arm. The second one marched to the front of the formation, turned his back toward the assembled troops and guards, pulled down his pants and stooped over. The other took the towel, dipped it in the soapy water and washed his posterior. The whole formation was standing there looking and laughing. The German guards and dignitaries of Barth stood gazing in amazement, they didn't know what was going on. Then the optimist bent over and kissed his opponent on the rear! A mighty cheer went up from over 2,000 men. Then the puzzled guards joined in the fun. Nothing changed on Christmas day- the same black bread and



*The Compound barracks at Barth
photos from: The Mighty Eighth in Color by Roger A. Freeman*

thin soup, sparse and flavorless. As evening fell, the weather worsened, the barracks were cold, the last of the daily allotted coal briquettes were reduced to nothing but white ash. Boredom was settling in and the prisoners anticipated another long miserable night. Suddenly, the door opened... a voice shouted, "The curfew has been lifted for tonight! We're going to have a Christmas service over in the next compound." The weather was bitterly cold; the new fallen snow crunched under the feet of the men as they quickly shuffled towards their congregating comrades in the distance.

The nightly curfew always kept men inside - this Christmas night's reprieve allowed them to be outside after dark for the first time. Above, the stars were shining brightly and were high in the northern skies; the dim flicker of Aurora Borealis added a magical touch as the troops assembled. Gratitude was felt in their hearts...a lone singer led out with one of the world's most familiar and loved carols.



A guard tower at the South Compound

Others joined in and soon there was joyful worship ringing throughout the camp.

Silent night! Holy night!

All is calm, all is bright...

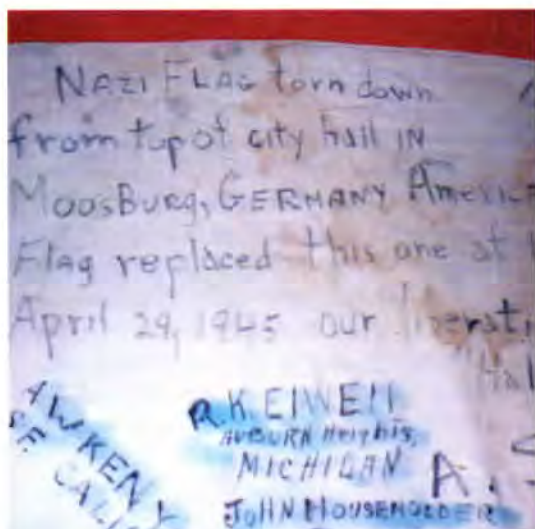
The German guards marching their assigned beats stopped in their tracks...they turned their heads toward the music. The words were unfamiliar but they recognized the tune...after all, *Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht* was composed by a German. They loosened up, smiled, and joined in the celebration; the praise became bilingual.

Round yon virgin mother and Child
 Cinsam wacht nurdas traute hoch heilige Paar
 Holy Infant, so tender and mild
 Holder Knabe im lockigen Hoiar
 Sleep in heavenly peace, Sleep in heavenly peace,
 Schlaf in himmlischer ruh!
 Schlaf in himmlischer ruh.

The Bet at Barth had paid off. Everyone had won! As the words of the carol rang in their hearts, there was a literal fulfillment. Tonight they would sleep in peace. War and internment did not have the power to destroy the meaning and beauty of this special day.

It was Christmas. They were not at home. But they declared, "Next year we will be! All of us!" And they were!

authentic story submitted by: **Earl Wassom 466th Bomb Group Ex-POW - Barth, Germany**



Dr. S. William Clark, Jr. (351st BG) was a POW in Stalag VIIA and Lt. General Gerald W. Johnson (56th FG) a guest in Stalag I at Barth until the end of the war.



They stand beside a captured Nazi flag which flew over the city hall at Moosburg until being hauled down by recently liberated Prisoners of War on April 29, 1945. The painting above them depicts a "neutral" USAAF P-38 in action - Bill Clark flew B-17s and Gerry Johnson flew in P-47 Thunderbolts. The swastika flag is covered with signatures of POWs and their hometowns, plus various other comments they recorded at the time. It was given by Angelo Petix, 303rd BG, at the Historical Society annual reunion, to be placed on permanent display at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah.

Recently a publisher of an American History book used widely by school students published its new volume. The Depression years and the four-term Presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt were discussed in just 33 lines; two full pages were devoted to baseball player Cal Ripken.

ONE OF THE BEST!

1998 ANNUAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY REUNION IN CHERRY HILL A GREAT SUCCESS

From the rousing Down by the Old Millstream songs of the Sweet Adelines and the barbershop extravaganza the second night of the reunion, to the last strains of We'll Meet Again, The Air Force Song, and God Bless America by Hannan and McKenna following the Gala Banquet on Saturday night, good fellowship and good times pervaded the Eighth Air Force Historical Society's annual reunion at the Cherry Hill Hilton last month. Attended by over 625 members, the largest number of attendees in recent years, the thrust was to meet old friends and see the sights of Philadelphia and its environs in their company.

Tours were the order of the day followed by banquets and entertainment at night, with time in the exhibit room, the theater, and the various hospitality rooms thrown in. Forget the boat ride; it was the trips out into the beautiful countryside that were the highlight to many. Tours to the his-

torical City of Brotherly Love and its Liberty Bell, the Amish Country tour and shopping at Peddler's Village, the "valley tours"; Brandywine Valley and Valley Forge. The entire week was very special - take note of the accompanying photographs in these pages. A special treat to see were the many proclamations proudly displayed which set the week of October 8 - 14 as Mighty Eighth Air Force Week in many states and cities across the nation.

The final day saw a well-attended and interactive general membership meeting where the challenges and accomplishments of this past year were recounted by Society officers and committee chairmen. Elections of three new members to the Board of Directors were held during the meeting. New Board members are Craig Harris, Stanley Peterson, and Abraham "Hap" Galfunt, who to a man state that they will work these next four years to continue to build on programs which benefit the Historical Society and preserve its heritage for future generations.

The afternoon 8AFMMF Seminar featured a panel discussion



Earl Wassom, President of the 2nd Air Division, gives an enthusiastic after-dinner talk.

of combat crew stress - The Flight Surgeon's Story - during wartime. There was just enough time for one last visit to the Chocolate Factory next door to the hotel before the evening cocktail party and the Gala Banquet in the Hilton Ballroom. Prior to the dancing and before dinner, the annual memorial service was conducted by President Norm Grant with the laying of carnations for the missing members of each Unit.

After dinner, Eighth Air Force awards ceremonies were conducted by General Reginald Rider. An enthusiastic talk presented by 2nd Air Division Association President Earl Wassom, the presentation of a tribute plaque for past 8th AF NEWS editor Jim Hill, and a special program, The Friendly Invasion,

narrated by Roger Freeman, were features of the after dinner program. At the close of a memorable week, the changing fall leaves on the neighboring hillsides were left with vows to continue the fellowship at the big Silver Anniversary of the 8th Air Force Historical Society next October in Savannah, where the welcome mat will be out and the red carpet will be spread for every Society member.



The honor guard from McGuire AFB presents the colors at the Gala Banquet the final night of the reunion.



General Regner Rider, Vice Commander of the Eighth Air Force, Barksdale AFB, talks with Hap Galfunt at the VIP Reception with Bob Vickers and Ed Creeden in the background.

The Gala Banquet



1998 ANNUAL REUNION

If you have attended an annual Historical Society reunion during the '90's you have met or seen Tom Lawler. Tom is the distinguished gentleman with all the cameras who gets around to reunion events taking snapshots of convention attendees, all the while carrying on an animated conversation with his photography subjects. Tom flew 35 missions as a flight engineer with the 351st Bomb Group out of Polebrook from September 1944 to April 1945. His training bases were in Wichita Falls Texas and Rapid City, South Dakota. Retiring from active duty in 1971, Tom now lives in Austin.

If Tom has snapped your picture, in several months more often than not, an envelope will arrive at your door containing a couple of pictures as keepsakes which bring back fond memories of the reunion and add a special bright spot to your day. Tom took many Cherry Hill Reunion photographs and says that he loves seeing old friends and getting to make new ones by way of taking their pictures. Plan to see a lot of him around Savannah next October at the Silver Anniversary Reunion of the Historical Society.



Tom Lawler, photographer extraordinaire, at the Rendezvous dinner with fellow 351st BG member Joe Wroblewski. Joe hails from Cape Coral, Florida and was the personal pilot for Georgia Governors Jimmy Carter and Lester Maddox.



In the memorabilia room are three members of a 453rd BG crew recently reunited and attending the reunion. At left, Paul Darden of Wilson, North Carolina, Copilot; Robert Ronalds from Collinsville, Connecticut, Bombardier; and Herman Lefco, Wyncote, Pennsylvania, the crew's Navigator and Radar-Bombardier. The 13-man crew left Westover Field with two navigators and two bombardiers, and arrived in Ireland where they spent two weeks (their brand new B-24 they flew over in was confiscated there) before heading on to their Old Buckenham airbase in England.



Lionel Leblane, 381st BG, from Manchester, New Hampshire, shows off a 2.75 folding fin aircraft rocket and a red 100-pound practice bomb he is sending to the Heritage Museum in Savannah - for display purposes in the combat exhibits.



Dr. Barry Buxton, President/CEO and Judy Walker, Director of Development of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum.

Outstanding reunion organizers, planners, and jacks-of-all-trades at Cherry Hill, Donna Lee and Jennifer Cashat of Armed Forces Reunions.

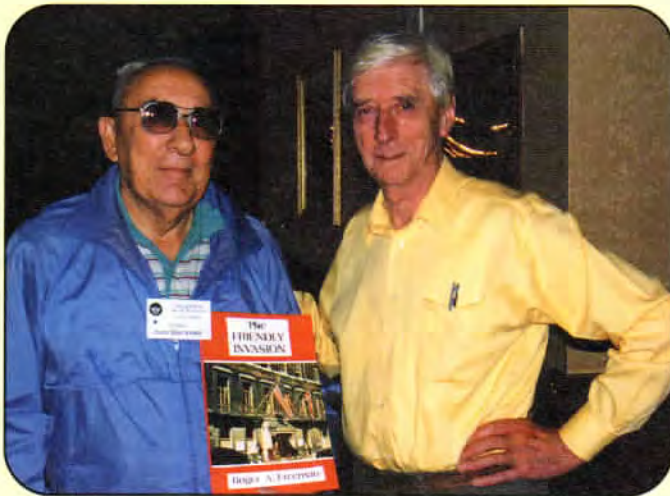




Attending their fourth 8th AFHS reunion are Leonard and Lorina Alsford, from Great Britain.



Saturday Night Fever - enjoying the last night of the reunion



John Shatynski, 7th Photo Recon Group, shows off his autographed copy of Roger A. Freeman's volume, *The Friendly Invasion*, with Roger at the reunion. Roger's presentation of his slide show and narration at the banquet was a top feature at the reunion, and the autographed books were a sellout at the Copelands' 8th AFHS PX booth.



Some of the Sweet Adelines in concert at the Baseball, Hot dogs, and Apple pie supper during the reunion



Old 303rd friends Betty Lyle and Malcolm Magid on the dance floor



The Swingtime music of Hannan and McKenna at the Gala Banquet



Dr. Herbert Allen, Flight Surgeon 96th Bomb Group at Snetterton-Heath, was a panelist at the annual MMF seminar following the meeting of the general assembly. With him at the reception are Marge Bricks and Cindy Allen.

MEMORIAL SERVICE TO OUR LOST COMRADES



One of the significant and emotional events now a tradition at each annual reunion is the Laying of the Flowers memorial service. This year the ceremony was held just prior to the Gala Banquet. After a brief service by President Norman Grant, members of the 8th AFHS participated in carrying a flower down the middle aisle and placing it on a table behind the dedication wreath. Each Bomb Group, Fighter Group, and Support Group was called by number or name and the tribute was made by the individual representing each group. These photos are presented in remembrance of each veteran of the Mighty Eighth who has gone before.



From the Past - President

One year ago, upon my election to the coveted position of President of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society, "The Mighty Eighth", I made some promises to you our members. Foremost of those promises was an open Society, a fiscal responsible Society, and an open forum for everyone, with assurance that all questions and letters would receive a written or telephone response. I believe we lived up to those promises whether the phone calls or letters were complimentary or critical.

We asked everyone to adopt a positive attitude, to bury the negatives that had been so harmful, and encourage those who felt they had been disenfranchised to return to the fold and be present at our annual reunion. Many answered the call, and if we continue to "accentuate our positives and eliminate the negatives" we will have more of the free standing groups joining us at future reunions.

The other officers and committee chairpersons will be writing about the directions that were taken this past year and the reasons why, so I will not comment on their many endeavors, but just say, "You and I were favored with the ability, professionalism, dedication, and deep feeling for the "Mighty Eighth", by a Board of Directors and Executive Committee that had the courage and common sense to implement changes necessary to fulfill our promises and bring renewed strength to our "Mighty Eighth".

I feel our Eighth Air Force Week is well ensconced with the many proclamations we received. They came from Governors, Mayors, State Senates, County Officers, and from the President of the United States. Hopefully next year, under the direction of our Unit and Chapter development chairman, Jim Erskine, and with the total support of the Board, and Unit and Chapter Presidents we will secure participation by all of the State Governors. Remember, Eighth Air Force Week is established as the week of October 8 to 14 each year.

Now as Margaret and I close the door on another chapter of our lives, we agree that it was one of our most rewarding chapters because of the many friends we have made and the receptions we were given. We both thank you for the honor and privilege bestowed on me to carry the mantle of President of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society; it is our hope and prayer that you feel I have served you well.

In Friendship,
Norm Grant



President Norman Grant presents a plaque of appreciation to Bob Vickers for his long service on the Board of Directors, naming him a Director Emeritus

'Kipling's Error'

Dear Sir:
An inquiry in the 8th AF NEWS was made as to how 'Kipling's Error' got its name. I can give you the straight answer on this.



Kipling's Error was one of the original B-17s of the 413th Squadron, 96 Bombardment Group. Our group formed in Boise, Idaho in the fall of 1942. The original crew of Kipling's Error was Rube Neie, Pilot — Ole Asper, Co-Pilot — Lloyd Mitchell Navigator — Manny Mendelson, Bombardier — Laky, waist gunner — Malinowski, ball Curret gunner — Joe white, top turret and asst. engineer — Nelson, engineer — Dick Hazeltine, Radio — Kotlarz, tail gunner.

Kipling's Error was named by Dick Hazeltine. I think he was a frustrated poet. He remembered the line that Rudyard Kipling, the English poet, penned, "East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet: Dick decided that Kipling had made a mistake when he said this.

There were three men of Polish descent, one of Norwegian descent, one was Jewish, and three were Heinz '57 descent. Because our ancestors came from all over the world Hazeltine reasoned that East and West had come together. A little history on the plane. Our original crew left for England in April of 1943. We were routed first to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania and got there some time in the early morning. Rube had just got out of the hospital in Salina and wasn't feeling too good. Ole was at the controls

bringing the plane in. He was busy watching a very tall smokestack, close to the runway. There were a lot of tall trees at the end of the runway. Ole sawed off a number of them with the right wing. Rube took over the controls and managed to go around and bring it back in. Exit Kipling's Error No. 1. We were on a raid to one of the sub pens in south France, flying in one of the low positions in the formation. Fighters were coming in from the front of the formation, out of the sun. We got the tarnation shot out of us by one of our own planes. Some green gunner must have held his trigger finger down too long. Some 50 to 60 holes in the plane; the pilot's controls shot out; all 50 caliber holes. Exit No. 2. We, the original crew, finished our 25 missions in September of 1943. Kipling's Error finally went down over the Baltic on its 55th mission. That is the way it happened.

The Board of Directors of the 8th AF Historical Society has confirmed the annual reunion sites and dates for 1999 & 2000. Unit and Chapter meetings may be planned around these dates

1999 - Savannah, Georgia Marriott Riverfront Hotel October 26-31.
2000 - Salt Lake City Hilton Hotel, October 15-22

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum
Mailing Address: P. O. Box 1992
Savannah, Georgia 31402-1992
Address: 175 Bourne Ave. Pooler, GA 31322
912-748-8888
website: <http://www.mighty8thmuseum.com>

“Bombers are Bait?”

by Major General Lewis E. Lyle, USAF Ret.



Shortly after becoming Commander of the 8th Air Force on January, 1944, General Jimmy Doolittle made a series of visits to his commanders in the field. His stated objective was to review the role and status of

the 8th AF and his plans and policies toward maximizing the use of bombers and fighters. General Bob Williams had his key operations staff and his Wing and Group Commanders present when Doolittle visited the 1st Air Division in January 1944. Col. Kermit Stevens, 303rd BG Commander, took me with him for this meeting.

Basically, Doolittle said that in spite of the great damage we had done to Germany, the enemy had been able, by dispersions and by going underground, to keep their fighter production up. Clearing the skies over the continent was a must if we were to invade the European continent. Repeated fighter sweeps over enemy territory had been ineffective because the German fighters often would not come up to engage. Since our bombing had not reduced fighter production, we had to go after the German pilots themselves. He was determined to get our fighters more involved, therefore close air support to the bombers was to be secondary to destroying enemy fighters and pilots. He noted that our bombing had reduced the fuel available for training and German pilot proficiency was getting lower.

Doolittle's plan was to increase the pressure on the bombers and to force the enemy fighters to respond, giving our fighter force more opportunity to engage and destroy, as well as getting

them involved in strafing and destroying many important targets on the ground. Although there were about forty people present at this conference and Doolittle was prepared to discuss his plans, I do not remember much discussion among the partici-

“Since our bombing had not reduced fighter production, we had to go after the German pilots themselves”

pants. After the meeting was concluded, I approached the General and told him that my interpretation of his plans indicated that he intended to use the bombers as bait. He responded with “That is exactly what I said”.

On the drive back to our base things were pretty quiet, but I thought about the meeting and decided not to relate my conversation with the General to the troops back at Molesworth. I realized that it was true that if the German fighters did not come up to meet our pilots on their fighter sweeps, it was essentially nothing but an airshow for that particular mission. Ordering our fighters to go down on strafing missions increased the chance for casualties among our fighter pilots; they had been doing a good bit of that already. My personal decision was made to stay with the combat units and do what I had come over to do - continue to fly missions. It wasn't long after that I realized that was the way to fight. Get everybody involved on every mission. And that is the way it turned out. Doolittle was right and it was a smart thing to do. His aggressive leadership paid off. This was proven when not a single enemy aircraft showed up over the beachhead during D-Day.

Doolittle responded, “That is exactly what I said.”

For all of you bomber and fighter pilots: let me have your ideas and opinions about the idea of the “bombers as bait” concept, which became well

known throughout the command in 1944. I will summarize your replies in the next issue of the 8th AF NEWS. By the way, Lt. Gen. Gerald Johnson, 56th FG, has said that he “will jump into the foray” if you fighter pilots are interested.

Lew Lyle, 207 Ridge One Circle, Hot Springs, AR 71901

NO REST FOR THE LUFTWAFFE

by Maj. Arthur Gordon
Air Force magazine correspondent, 1944

As April 1944 ended and invasion fever mounted inside Hitler's contracting fortress, the harried Luftwaffe suddenly found itself with a new and painful thorn in its side. In an effort to conserve its dwindling forces, the Luftwaffe had taken to sitting on the ground at airfields deep inside Germany unless good weather and visual bombing conditions made defense of key targets essential. Suddenly, in April even that margin of safety was seriously threatened. In good weather or bad, Americans began sending out their 8th and 9th Fighter Commands to blast the Luftwaffe on the deck. For a long while, fighter pilots protecting bomber boxes over

Europe had been in the unenviable position of a feline-hating dog who has a bone to protect and yet frequently encounters a cat. Chasing a cat in anything like a satisfactory manner involved leaving the bone unguarded, and there was a point in the American air offensive last fall when such neglect was unthinkable. Improved German defensive tactics had made it necessary to protect the bombers at all costs. Fortunately, long range fighter escort proved the answer to German rocket-carrying fighter-bombers. Our bomber losses dropped from the autumn high, and our replacement capacity increased. The emphasis in the role played by the fighters shifted



somewhat. The bombers still needed protection and they still got it, but with invasion just around the corner, the main objective for fighters became the destruction of the Luftwaffe. If Jerry would not come upstairs to fight, then American fighters would go down and beat his ears off on the ground. For the first time, Fighter Command had a strictly offensive job to do.

It was recognized at once by combat flyers, if not by everyone at home, that destroying an enemy plane on the ground was just as difficult and considerably more hazardous than killing one in the air. Roaring in at tree top level and better than 400 miles per hour, our American flyers had only split-seconds in which to aim and fire. The danger of being hit by light flak was high; the chances of bailing out, low. The element of surprise was an advantage only if the Nazis were asleep. If the attacking plane was damaged it faced a long, hazardous flight across hostile territory. It was inevitable that fighter losses should rise in proportion as ground strafing was attempted.

There were compensations for the perils of low-level attack in the excitement of seeing flak towers fall silent, grounded aircraft burst into flames, and locomotives blow up under the fire of their guns. Moreover, they knew their ships could stand considerable punishment.

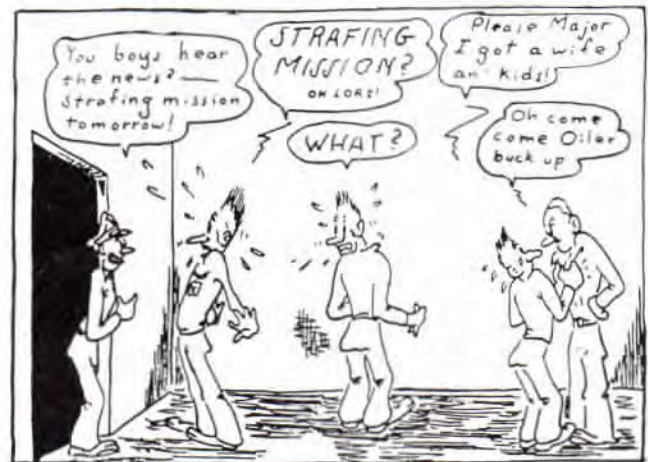
The patience, skill and experience required to put 1,000 fighters into the air and have them at the right place at the right time has never received the acclaim it deserves; nor for that matter has the strain on the individual fighter pilot been recognized. Let a man strap himself in a chair and try turning his head constantly as far as it will go for five hours; let him imagine flying under conditions where the cold is so intense that instruments are frozen, the canopy is coated with ice, and his hands and feet are so numb that he can't feel them; let him contemplate engaging German pilots who are relatively warm and rested and who can bail out over their own territory, if necessary. The bomber crews know what it takes. As one Liberator pilot remarked with typical sin-

cerity: "Any time a fighter pilot wants a shoeshine from now on, all he has to do is come to me."



P-51 Mustangs of the 361st Fighter Group; 375th FS; 376th FS

"THE FIGHTING 84TH"



*Sketch by Lt. J. L. Murphy in the Duxford Diary - 78th FG
Submitted by Frank Harrington, pilot, 78th FG*

357th Fighter Group

On January 14, 1945, the 357th Fighter Group set an Eighth Air Force record by shooting down 55.5 German fighters during a dogfight over the Schleswig-Holstein area. Both pilots had set up their final missions to be flown together and hatched a plan for their last mission. On 14 January, Clarence "Bud" Anderson and Charles "Chuck" Yeager took off as spares in case any pilot had to abort. No aborts occurred as the group crossed the European coastline, allowing Yeager and Anderson to return to base. However, instead of turning west to return to Leiston, they headed south towards neutral Switzerland. Both pilots penetrated Swiss air space and buzzed Mount Blanc. Swooping low over the mountain, they released their drop tanks and tried to set them on fire with their machine guns. They made repeated strafing runs on the gas tanks, using up their entire ammunition supply, but failed to get them to burn. Out of ammunition, Yeager then led Anderson to Lake Annecy, where they repeatedly buzzed a lakeside hotel at 445 miles per hour. From Lake Annecy, they flew to Geneva and buzzed a restaurant where Yeager had once dined.

Turning southwest, the two pilots raced across southern France all the way to the Pyrenees mountains, then turned toward Paris.

After buzzing two tourist sites in Paris, they finally headed for Leiston late in the afternoon. Yeager and Anderson were the last two pilots to land at Leiston and were shocked when they heard about the group's record-setting day. Ironically, two of the 357th's best pilots, with a combined victory record of twenty-seven aircraft destroyed, had missed out on the biggest "Turkey Shoot" of the war.

Submitted by
Scott Richardson
Norman, Oklahoma
As told by Colonel Clarence Anderson



A P-51 B Li'l Kitten of the 357th FG with paint sand blasted on bottom surfaces because of forceful winds of the propeller.

A Path, a Tree, a "Living Runway"...and a "Friend"

Like other former World War II bomber bases in East Anglia, Knettishall is difficult to find. And like other bases, most of its buildings, hangars, runways, and Nissen huts are long gone; the land that once supported the huge flying fortresses returned to its pastoral state. But Knettishall, former home for the 388th Bomb Group, is distinctive, and in its simplicity as worthy of a visit as any former base. In its serenity and quietness punctuated only by the sounds of pheasants and other birds, and breeze rustling the trees over the now overgrown terrain, it tells a story and provokes memories for veterans who once lived there, flew its runways and faced death on an almost daily basis, that no plow or wrecking crews can ever erase.

While on sabbatical leave in England in 1995, I visited several former Eighth Air Force bases as part of a text-book on the air war I am writing. I had not included Knettishall on my list of visits due to the fact that it was so difficult to locate and the fact that I expected to find nothing of significance remaining from its days of glory. Then, as part of my pre-visit contacts I called George Stebbings, a "Friend of the Eighth", who had devoted his life to this patch of land that was once his boyhood home. After a brief conversation with George I was hooked. There was more to Knettishall than I had suspected. George has never forgotten the days he watched the base constructed from the farm land adjacent to his home, and most importantly the many men who were stationed there and befriended him as a lad of 14, literally adopting him as one of their own. George's eyes well up as he recounts the many different airmen he knew personally--some who

managed to take him along on B-17 training flights, and some who never returned from their missions.

George has adopted the remnants of the once proud base, and with the help of other interested residents in the area, has built a most striking memorial to the 388th Bomb Group at the entrance that once led to the base headquarters and flight line. George is very proud of this memorial, as well he should be, and is always delighted to show it to visitors, especially former residents of the base. As he escorts you to this spot, he is suddenly



transported back to 1943-45, and he can see the faces of hundreds of men who walked or rode up the path that once led to their waiting planes and the uncertainty of the day's mission. Then he vividly describes the scene as you walk with him through the tangled brush that now covers the once bushy path. At the end of the path now all is quiet; the scenes of war are long gone. But a glance to the left reveals a poignant reminder of George's description of what was once a beehive of activity. There is the stump of an old beech tree, and a closer look reveals many names and initials carved into the trunk by countless crews in the frightful days of 1943-45. Suddenly the visitor can see--not a deserted field--but hundreds of men carving not only their names

in a tree but their places in history.

Then George takes you to the large flat farm land that was once the main runway; the point of departure for so many bombing missions. At first glance the visitor sees nothing more than a cultivated field. But George then points out a huge earthen mound covered with trees and vegetation. The mound was placed there by the land owner as a "living runway," a special memorial to the many airmen who took off from that very spot with their lethal cargo destined for Hitler's fortress Europe. The striking scene reminds today's visitor that instead of a field of war Knettishall now

represents in its serenity and the greenery on the living runway not death but life; life as enjoyed by individuals in the post-war generations who are the beneficiaries of the sacrifices of the 388th Bomb Group and others like it scattered throughout East Anglia.

By the time I left George's presence I realized that the visitor to England does not necessarily need to see the monuments and castles of England to appreciate the grandeur of that country. A trip into the countryside of East Anglia and a day with George Stebbings will leave you, in the simplicity of an overgrown path, a beech tree stump, and a living runway, with a vision of perhaps the most significant era in Britain's long history; an era when a group of Americans created their own "castles" in the form of bases such as Knettishall, and made it possible for free men today to visit the England of the centuries.

**Donald E Wilson, PhD; Professor,
Dept. of History, Samford University
Lt. Col. USAF (Ret.)**



Beech tree with names and initials of Flyers at Knettishall



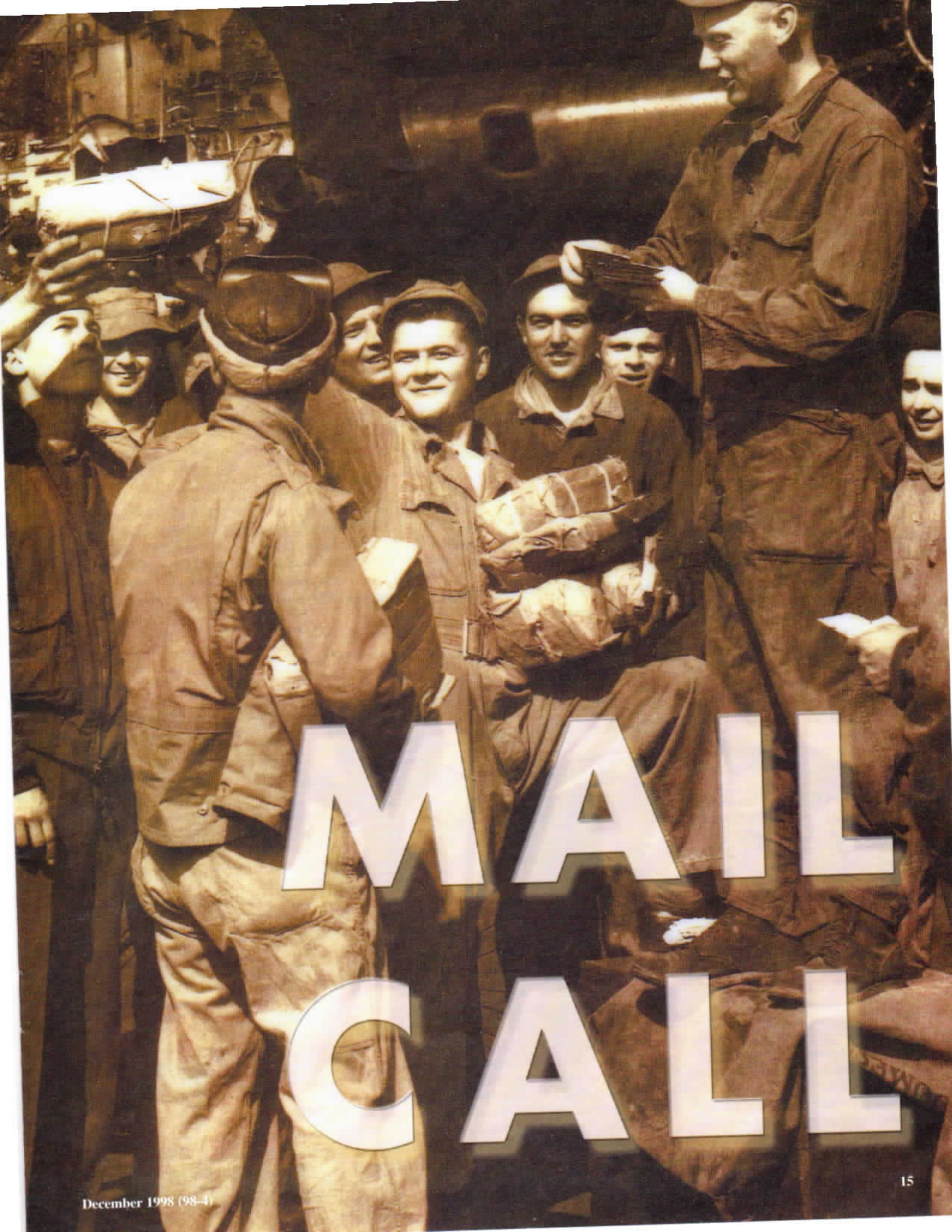
Path to Flightline



The living runway mainway Knettishall



388th Bomb Group Memorial at entrance



MAIL CALL

Dear Walt,

Thank you so much for the two copies of the 8th AF News! What an impressive magazine I'm sure your members enjoy it very much! Life on the staff is as it has always been - life on the staff! It was a privilege and pleasure to be the Commander of the Mighty Eighth-being with the troops-where the rubber meets the road. One of the interesting anecdotes of the Russian trip occurred in the western suburbs of Moscow. My host had arranged for the group to visit a recently restored Russian Orthodox Church building. We were greeted by the priest, who was a former pilot in the Long Range Aviation Corps of the Russian Air Force. He also held advanced degrees in mathematics, physics, and theology. He related the history of the church building. During WWII it had been an ammunition depot and storage facility. As the German offensive threatened western Moscow, the Commander of the depot was ordered to "remove the ammunition and destroy the building." A quartermaster Captain in the Army pleaded with his superior not to destroy the building. After a few heartfelt attempts the Captain was successful-the building was not destroyed and the rest is history. As Paul Harvey says, "the rest of the story" is that the Captain was the priest's father. His son has restored the Church to its original condition and boasted a membership of over 2,000 people! Again, thanks for the article! And likewise, my best to Buck!

Sincerely,

Lieutenant General, Phillip J. Ford, USAF Deputy Commander in Chief, United States Strategic Command

Editors Note: Lt. General Ford was featured in the Aug 98 8AF NEWS when he was Commander, 8th Air Force.

GENERAL BURNS

Gen. Robert W. Burns former C.O. 351st BG then C.O. 4th Wing, 3rd Air Division in 1957 was Maj. Gen. C.O. Air Proving Grounds, Eglin A.F. Base. I am seeking info, addresses, on him as I was his driver at 4th Wing and often flew in the rear seat of his P-51.

Sincerely,

Norm Valentine, 721 Lawrence La, Ambler, Pa, 19002.

KNETTISHALL

Dear Sir:

I am an associate member of the Alabama Chapter of the Historical Society. My AF career of 25 years is post-WW II, but I did have the pleasure of serving with many 8th AF veterans and am now very interested in teaching the story of the Mighty Eighth to today's college students. I have just returned from a trip to the UK with 10 Samford students in which we traveled into East Anglia in

order for them to learn through on-site visits, the history of the air war. My major concern as a teacher is that today's generation is ignorant of not only the air war but WW II in its entirety. Perhaps the mission of education is one of the challenges of the 8th AF Historical Society.

Sincerely,

Donald E. Wilson, Professor, Dept. of History, Samford University, Birmingham, AL

Editors Note: See Dr. Wilson's story on page 14 of this issue.

MORE ON "MAULIN 'MALLARD'"

Dear Editor,

Just a short note relative to "Maulin Mallard," a great B-24 that had 99 missions up to 1-22-45. "Pap" Hastings was crew chief and a great one, also a wonderful person. Two of his men were Art Wolken and George Hice. I was an original member of the 93rd BG 330th Sq. and I have a few snap shots of the "Maulin Mallard." I know one of the pilots, Carlos Vasquez, who flew most of his 35 missions on the "Maulin Mallard" and he said it was a great plane. Before becoming a cadet and pilot, Carlos was a glider pilot - boy what a change!

Sincerely,

Howard Macreading, Warwick, RI

REQUEST AVAILABILITY OF A BOOK

Stalag Luft III

Sagan-Nuernberg - Moosburg

by Bob Neary

If possible please indicate price and location of place to order.

Thanks,

Albert Byrne P.O. Box 26800 Lawrence, IN 46226

CHIVALRY

Dear Sir,

I received the February 1998 issue of the 8th AF News with the portrait of the distinguished General Leon Johnson on the front cover. After my combat tour of 30 missions with the 388th BG at Knettishall, in 1949 at Headquarters Third Air Force in South Ruislip, Middlesex, England, my office was situated on the first floor of Building Number One facing Main Street. I would see General Johnson every time that his staff car drove up to our building. He would walk past my office on the way to his office which was located on the second floor. General Johnson was a tall, handsome, dignified man who always looked impeccable in his uniform. My wife Gladys had not obtained her driving license and when she went shopping on the base she would have a taxi take her to the Main Gate. Gladys would call for a taxi to be waiting for her when she was ready to go home. One day Gladys was walking toward

the Main Gate from the Commissary carrying two full bags of groceries. She heard a voice behind her saying that he would carry her groceries. When Gladys saw who it was she nearly dropped the grocery bags; there was General Johnson as the helpful individual. There were many heads turned and others looking out of their office windows watching General Johnson help my wife to her waiting taxi. After Gladys and the groceries were inside the taxi, General Johnson tipped his cap and smiling, closed the taxi door for her.

Sincerely,

Rev. Melvin F. Larson D.D., Lynnwood, WA 388th BG

RELIEF TUBE

Dear Sir:

I attended Kingman Air Gunnery School in early 1944. On my first flight in a B-17 to do air to air gunnery practice I had a very unusual experience. Our pilot was going to the back of the plane to use the relief tube and got caught near the top turret, grabbed the side of the fuselage, pulled on the wiring and started an electrical fire knocking himself unconscious. The co-pilot, thinking he must get the plane down and not warning any of the people on board, landed 40 miles from the base on the belly with wheels up. I would like to know if there is anyone who happened to be on that plane and remembers that incident. I continued on and flew 35 missions on a B-24 at Old Buckenham with the 453rd Bomb Group.

Thanks very much,

Sincerely,

Richard G. Ghaster, Ft. Wayne, IN 46815-3555

FRIENDS

Dear Sir:

I am writing to make contact with anyone who might have known my father, Captain John Press Ultcht. My father served as a Flight Commander in the Army Air Corps and participated in battles and campaigns in 1945. He also served after VJ Day as a Flight Commander transporting soldiers from Istres, France to Casablanca, North Africa. We would be most interested in hearing any stories or anecdotes about my father's experiences during his service.

Very truly yours,

Robin M. Barclay, 68 Main Street Andover, MA 01810

STAMPS

Dear Sir:

I saw in the May issue of 8th AF NEWS where someone sent in a postage stamp which showed a P-38 Fighter of the 20th Fighter Group. I am enclosing a



stamp which shows a B-17 from the 381st Bomb Group, 533 Bomb Squadron. I am really proud of this stamp because I flew 35 missions as a Ball Turret Gunner for this outfit. I hope to see the stamp in a future issue of your publication.

Sincerely,

**S/sq Guadalupe "Lucky" Duran
Muskogee, OK 381st Bomb Group**

"GRIN AND GREETER"

Dear Sir,

My father, SSGT Henry W. Corrow, was a ball turret gunner on the fortress "Grin and Greeter", (serial number unknown), 708th Squadron of the 447th Bomb Group. I am looking for anyone that may have information on that aircraft or may have known my father. If possible, I would also like to contact members of his crew.

Thank you,

**Cpt. Andrew J. Corrow, 206 Early Dawn
Drive, Raeford, NC 28376**

LOST SOLE

I had been a POW in Stalag Luft III, Sagan Germany, for nine months when for two weeks the sound of Russian artillery was heard, sounding ever closer as the Russian front advanced. It was a cold night on January 27, 1945 when we were alerted that the Germans were evacuating the prison camp and we had thirty minutes to gather our meager possessions and food. The march to a new location began about 10:00 PM. The snow lay deep and it was bitterly cold (-20 degrees). We marched for 24 hours with a short break at daylight. On the evening of the second day, my right foot felt very cold, and upon inspection I discovered the sole of the shoe had detached itself and just hung by the heel. I was literally walking on my stocking foot. Luckily, we arrived at a town about 10:00 PM and a large group of us were sheltered for the night in the basement of a pottery factory. I slept well that night atop a stack of firewood with my feet against a steam pipe. The next morning after a meager meal of barley soup provided by the factory kitchen, I was contemplating how to provide sufficient protection for my frost-bitten foot when one of the POWs who was bedding down at the other end of the factory approached us. He said he had heard that someone needed a pair of shoes. How news travels. I showed him my shoe. He had carried an extra pair of shoes and said if they fit, they were mine. They fit. Imagine the probability of the two of us meeting under those circumstances. Of the more than 10,000 POWs, he with the only extra shoes and me being the only "lost sole". I have remembered that day for the past 53 years and can only conclude that someone was watching over me.

I would like to hear from this former POW so

I could again thank him. Write to me: **Frank Line, 5303 Baker Road, Minnetonka, MN 55343.**

BILL ADAMS

Dear Sirs:

It was such a pleasure to see Bill Adam's article in the latest 8th AF NEWS. I have never met Mr. Adams personally - but became acquainted with him while writing to my English friends, Mick and Joan Sargent, who reside near my old air base at Wendling. I was in the 579th BS - 392nd BG. I know personally of Bill's fine wood carving plaques as I am the proud owner of two of them and now



I treasure them even more. When we arrived in England in April 1944, we were to deliver a new B-24 to the motor pool near Blockpool, but couldn't locate the field. The pilot, Lt. Roy Miller, said we would land at the first one he saw - and as we came down these huge RAF bombers were taking off and after all the mix up settled - we were interrupting Sterlings going on a late afternoon practice mission. We were also very low on fuel as we just arrived from Marracesh, Africa. They welcomed us with open arms and had us stay overnight. They had never been through a B-24 so we took a large group of RAF fliers through ours. Then they took us on a tour of their huge Short Sterling four engine bomber. I told them I sure would like to fly in it. Since our time was limited the flight did not come about. To this day this ugly plane was my favorite other than our own B-24 and B-26. Bill Adams made me a B-26 plaque with all the markings of our B-26 in the 322 BG. When he found out I loved the Short Sterling he made me another plaque with the RAF Short Sterling. To me now they are collectable and valuable. Once again, thanks for the very fine article of Bill and very fine gentle man.

God Bless,

Ross De Frates

MUSEUM

Dear Editor,

Thank you so much for sending "8th AF NEWS". It is appreciated and read widely by us here at Planes of Fame Museum.

We have four 8th AF (B-17) veterans here in our museum who give weekend tours through our B-17 "Piccadilly Lilly" former star of TV series 12 'O'Clock High.

We also fly - we are a flying museum!

P-38 J Lightning - One of five still flying.

P-47 Razorback Thunderbolt - only Razorback flying in USA.

In markings of 8th AF Ace Bud Mahurin, 56 FG P-51 D Mustang

Keep up the good work, and keep'em flying.

**Ed Moloney, Founder, The Air Museum
Chino, CA**

PARACHUTES

Dear Sir:

Your August 1997 issue had a marvelous story on Jimmy Stewart by Abe Willen, 453rd Bomb Group. That brought to mind a story I was told about Jimmy Stewart wherein he was responsible for saving the life of a very good friend of mine.

I was told this story in the Herman Goring Luftwaffen Lazarett Nummer Acht by Guy Rogers of Missoula, Montana.

Guy was shot down on the first daylight raid on Berlin, Mission 250, 6 March 1944. He was the pilot and the only one on his B-24 to survive. I arrived at old Herman's place 18 April 1944. The 94th Bomb Group was leading 770 B-17's and 24's to Berlin. "45 to 75 EA on the first attack, and 50 to 70 EA on the second, firing as they came out of the clouds." The well-pressed and coordinated attack shot down 10 out of 18 of the 94th's Forts. (Group Mission report.) Guy and I lay side by side for nearly three months in that German Air Force Hospital in northwest Berlin. One quiet day in Berlin (no daylight or night bombing raids, no "Round the Clock Bombing") Guy told me this Jimmy Stewart story: Prior to his first mission, Guy Rogers paid a visit to his nephew, Niel Johnson, who was stationed at a B-17 base near him. Guy and Niel had lived side by side, in Missoula, Montana and were close friends. Niel, being a year older had entered the Air Force first and was now a lead pilot for Col. Stewart.

Guy arrived just as Niel's Group was returning from a mission. Upon greeting Niel at the revetment, Niel told Guy he had to attend mission interrogation and Guy should come along. At interrogation, Guy saw and heard a tall lanky Major, describing in a wide-eyed manner and high pitched voice, the passage of an unexploded 88mm shell directly behind the Major's head. The Major used his long hands to demonstrate the size of the hole in the B-17 fuselage. As the speaker turned toward him, Guy Rogers recognized him as the actor, Jimmy Stewart. The next day, Niel asked Guy to go with him and meet his pilot, Major Stewart, explaining that he (Niel) flew left seat for Stewart, as Stewart rode right, and commanded the Group. After introductions,

Niel asked Guy if he'd flown a mission yet. Guy said he expected to soon. Niel inquired as to the type of chute he was issued. Guy replied "chest pack." Major Stewart spoke up: "You go back and tell them you want a seat pack. You fly a B-24. B-24's blow up. You got no time to hunt around for your chest pack!" Guy said Stewart said this as if it were an order. Guy did as Major Stewart ordered, and flew the March 6 mission to Berlin a few days later. It was his first mission. His B-24 was hit with an 88mm Anti-aircraft shell that exploded between himself and the Co-Pilot. Their B-24 blew up. Guy came to in the air, sitting in a section of the cockpit still strapped to his seat, with the four control throttles still in his right hand. Guy was not able to get out, because of the spinning "capsule" and thought he'd had it and settled back to die. He then realized he was wearing a seat pack, which gave him new hope and with some effort was able to counter the centrifugal force of the spinning of the cockpit capsule he was in and popped his chute as he broke free, and hit the ground almost at the same time. That 88 had broken his left leg high on his thigh. After a long and painful ride on a ladder, Guy was loaded into an ambulance, and ended up the night of March 6, 1944 in that Berlin Hospital. A few nights later in Herman Goring hospital, a very conscientious German nurse checking on Guy often, discovered he had gangrene and was dying. She roused out the "Stapzart" (Head Surgeon) and the two of them removed all but six inches of that leg, saving his life. The nurse was Schwester Maria Lorenzen, alive and well today on her island in the Baltic. Guy kept in contact with her over the years. Guy never complained about his situation, even though his face and eyes were badly burned, and his mouth could only be opened enough to accept thin apple slices from Schwester Maria, poked into his mouth. He had six operations on one eye, three on the other until one failed five years ago. I saw him regularly after the war. He never failed to remind me: "Gosh Quent, aren't we lucky." He was thinking about being the only survivor of his plane. He was thinking about Sister Maria's compassionate nursing skill, and he was thinking about Jimmy Stewart, movie actor, who saved his life. Guy's nephew, Niel Johnson went on to serve as a Fighter Pilot Squadron Commander in Korea. Returning from one long mission he found that all were low on fuel, so sent his inexperienced pilots in ahead of him. Niel circled waiting, then headed in. On final approach his engine failed, he crashed short of the field and was killed.

Thanks for your time,

Quentin V. Brown, Sedona, Arizona

GENERAL LEON JOHNSON

Dear Sir:

The article on the passing of Gen. Leon

Johnson brought back fond memories to me as an ex-fighter jock of the 56th Fighter Group. In March of 1943 we had received our first P-47 and everyone got to fly it. Since my Squadron C.O. held me in dubious esteem because of some trouble I had gotten into back in the Z.I. I always got the early morning flight. I had found out that an old friend of mine was flying B-24's out of Shipdam and decided that he should be given a wake up buzz whenever I was airborne. As buzz jobs go, they were fairly low. My friend called me on the telephone and invited me to a "Dining In" at Shipdam. As I recall, they were saying goodbye to a Maj. Brandon who had completed his tour.

I was properly impressed with stories of St. Nazaire, Vegasack, flak, 109's and empty beds. During the affair, Col. Johnson welcomed me and proceeded to chew me out in the most marvelous fashion and let me know that his boys needed their sleep. He ended with "When you start escorting us, I will open the hangar doors and you can fly through it. Until then stay away from here." I did! We eventually were assigned to the 2nd Air Division and I always knew where the 44th BG was in the stream. The B-24's were a pleasure to escort (if that is the right word). Their formations were tight and they were faster. The names slowly drift in to old age forgetfulness. Names such as Brandon, Hughes, Garrett, Jansen, Cameron, Light and Howell. All bright comets that streaked across the dark days of 1943. Gen. Johnson was a leader and a man among men. I will miss him.

Sincerely,

**Harold E. Comstock, Col. USAF Retired
Auberry, CA**

"THANKS"

Dear Sir:

Friday 3rd of April was a day to remember for me. I was at the Goldspring Branch of the Campbell Co. Library, where I volunteer, giving out trees for Arbor Day. I was wearing my leather jacket with the 8th Air Force patch on it. A young man wearing a suit and carrying a brief case came up to me. When he saw the patch he said "8th Air Force"; he shook my hand and said "Thanks." I don't know who he was, but it made my service in World War Two worth-while.

Very truly yours,

**Robert Ralph Hartman, Alexandria, KY
493rd BG**

STALAGS

Dear Editor:

In the May 98 issue "Taps" carried the name of Cliff Barker who became a basketball All-American at Kentucky. Cliff was in Stalag in Lithuania and everyday he would shoot baskets in front of his barracks. If I recall cor-

rectly his close friend was Robert Jernigan from California. In the same camp was Augie Donatelli who later became a well-known National League umpire. The second interesting point in the issue was the article on Frank Baca. I was with the 95th BG 336 Bomb Squadron. I was with the Group for a very brief time (2 missions). I am quite sure Frank is the same ball turret gunner in our barracks and I remember talking to him before the mission. This point remains in my mind because the Berlin Mission (3-6-44) would be his twenty-fifth. I told him that was some accomplishment and I was just starting mine. When our plane was shot down on March 6, I wondered later on if Frank had completed his 25th. Over the years I would occasionally wonder if he made it and the article removed the question that over the years had lingered in my mind. I'm glad he made it home. Sincerely,

**Donald Griffin, Ball turret gunner
Cheektowaga, NY**

KIMBOLTON

I am looking for information about my uncle, Staff Sgt. Walter D. Barnes, 527th Bomb Squadron (B-17s), 379th Bomb Group, Col. Ralph Preston, Co., Stationed at Kimbolton AFB May to Aug 1944. Flew 32 missions, one on Berlin Raid 5-24-44 on "Busy Baby" with Lt. Robert Schench, Lt. John Wegenhalls, Lt. James Thompson, Tech. Sgt. Alfred Sabernaik, and Staff Sgts. Ferguson and Wilber. Hope to hear from anyone who knew him then. **Please call Bill Barnes collect (515) 224-2114 or write to me, 2026 Woodland Ave. West Des Moines, Iowa 50265-2235.**

EMERGENCY LANDING INCIDENT

During the return trip to England following a raid, a crippled B-17 was escorted from Germany to England by a small flight of P-51 Mustangs. Captain Clarence E. Anderson was the flight leader of these 357th Fighter Group Mustangs. He states that the Fortress was badly shot up nose to tail with one of the propellers feathered and severe damage to the tail gunner's position. The pilot of the bomber nursed the aircraft to England where he proceeded to make an emergency landing at the first air base in sight.

As the pilot lined up on final approach, Captain Anderson realized the crippled bomber's radio was out for he could see a flight of B-17s returning from the mission approaching a landing from the opposite end of the runway. Realizing the tower control had not spotted the crippled B-17, he buzzed the lead B-17 at the other end of the runway to get the pilot's attention. Anderson then made a 180 degree turn, out in front of the B-17 he had just buzzed and raced back towards the crippled bomber with his wings wagging.

This action caught the attention of the ground personnel who waved off the bombers approaching from the opposite direction, allowing the crippled B-17 to belly in. Captain Anderson, now a retired USAF Colonel, does not remember the exact date this event took place, but thinks it happened between 5 October 1944 and 15 January 1945. Anyone who remembers this event can contact me at the address and phone number listed below. Colonel Anderson and I are curious to find out what happened to the crew of this crashed B-17.

Sincerely yours,
Scott Richardson
4113 W. Main Apt. E
Norman, OK 73072 405-360-6518

Dear Friends,

Jim would be so honored and humbled by the special tributes you have given to him. Thank you for the beautiful plaque of appreciation for Jim and his dedication to the Society. He really loved being the Editor of the 8th Air Force News. His office was one small room in our home. He was so pleased when folks write and express their appreciation for him and his "staff" - I was the "staff", and was happy to be so!

I wish I could have been at Cherry Hill, N.J. for the presentation of the plaque. The support for me and our family have helped us during difficult times.

Love and prayers,
Marjorie Hill
Pennsylvania Furnace, PA

10TH REPLACEMENT DEPOT

During the years 1942-45 many U.S. military personnel passed through or spent varying amounts of time at the 10th Replacement Depot at Whittington Barracks, Lichfield, and Pheasey Farms Estates, near Birmingham, England. Two Britons, Bob Webb and Martin Collins, are writing a history of this "Repple Depple". Webb was among the youthful hordes whose U.K. welcome mat echoed the chant, "Any gum, chum?", while Collins' interest in the lives and times of Yanks in

Britain stems from his family and acquaintances who worked at the First Base Post Office at Sutton Coldfield. The authors are being assisted by USAFHS Associate Member Bill Beatty. Anyone who has information, experiences, or photographs they would like to share is invited to contact:

**William E. Beatty, 194 Connor Drive
Henrietta, NY 14467 Phone: 716-359-1659**

Dear Sir:

I have been looking for some time now for an image of a 100th Bomb Group B17 named the WAAC HUNTER. Maybe I could put an appeal in for that, in case any veterans remember this aircraft. This ship was lost on her first mission on 17th August 1943 and was one of nine 100th BG ships to get shot down, her serial number was 4230002, Squadron code XR - F, and she flew with the 349th BS. Sincerely,

**Ron Leigh 52 Grosvenor Way Horwich,
Bolton BL6 6DJ England**

TAYLOR CHUMMY

Dear Walt:

I belong to the GERIATRIC PILOTS OF ROCHESTER, NEW YORK. We have restored and moved into the airline terminal, the 1927-1948 ONE MAN control tower. We are paying the cost of producing two full-sized airplane replicas to hang in the terminal. One is a 1928 two place TAYLOR CHUMMY which is complete except for covering and a five cylinder radial engine. WANTED: 5 cylinder radial engine, 100 horsepower range, in ANY condition, FAX: Joe Clemow 716.244.5534. 100 Buckland Ave. Rochester, N.Y., 14618-2110

WITH APPRECIATION

Dear Walt:

In 1944, I was given the opportunity to be part of a very special project: The planning, building and early operation of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah, GA. My thanks to two old friends from my air

force days - Maj. Gen. Lew Lyle, and Lt. Gen. E.G. Shuler, Jr. - for giving me the chance to be part of such a noble project to honor all who have served in The Mighty Eighth. After the museum's second anniversary in May 1998 Gloria and I made the very difficult decision to leave the museum and return to our home in Columbia, S.C.. We are very proud of all that has been accomplished at the museum and it was a tough decision to leave. The four and half years we spent helping to start the museum will always have a special place in our memories and we will miss being there. Undoubtedly what we will miss the most will be our close association with the many Eighth Air Force veterans and families we met during that time and will forever count as friends. It was great to see so many of those friends at the SAFHS National Reunion in Cherry Hill, N.J. last week. We look forward to seeing them again often as we remain active in 8AFHS activities. I also look forward to a great future for the Historical Society and the Heritage Museum. God bless you all!

Sincerely,
**Philip Wayne Corbett, Colonel USAF
Retired**

INFO SOUGHT

The B-17 my father Ysaye DiRosario (92nd BG Sq. POW) flew in was shot down at Natein over Werl near Munster 23 Mar. 1944. Any info about my father, the raid or any of his crew members (Lt. F. Maxwell, Lt. Robbins, Lt. Kappel, Lt. Feingold, Sgt J.G. Wilson, Sgt F. Page), would be greatly appreciated.

**William DiRosario Assoc.
Billerica, Ma. 01821
E-Mail: FireDi1297@aol.com
Tel: (978) 667-1332**



ELLSWORTH NCO EARNS PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE AWARD

An Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D., noncommissioned officer has earned the Pursuit of Excellence Award for 1998. The award, sponsored by the Eighth Air Force Historical Society, is presented annually to the 8th Air Force outstanding aircraft and munitions maintenance person of the year. This year, Master Sgt. Stephen D. Grissom, production superintendent, 28th Munitions Squadron, was recognized for his accomplishments to the flying mission of 8th Air Force. Grissom received the honor Oct. 17 during the society's annual reunion. In addition to presenting Grissom a permanent, commemorative plate, the

Historical Society awarded a traveling trophy to the 28th Bomb Wing, where it will stay on display for one year.

Master Sgt. Stephen D. Grissom, 28th Munitions Squadron, receives the Pursuit of Excellence Award



MERRY CHRISTMAS

1944 Style in the E.T.O. 398th Bomb Group

As we sit down to this Christmas dinner, so far from our home, our hearts and spirits go out to those whom we love. We are proud to be serving those loved ones and our flag in this fight for the right to live our lives in a free world. We are also conscious of those who have gone before and we pledge ourselves that they will not have perished in vain. A successful Christmas to each and every one of you and a victorious New Year!

BOMBER COMMAND, WEATHER DIDN'T COOPERATE Christmas 1944

To be sure, it was an all out effort on the part of the cooks and bakers as they turned out their 1944 Christmas dinner at Station 131.

Complete with an eight-page, printed menu, in color yet!

Everyone on base was looking forward to this day...and the super dinner of roast young turkey, sage & celery dressing, giblet gravy, cranberry sauce, whipped potatoes, buttered asparagus, mixed salad, oranges, pumpkin pie, apples, hard candy, hot rolls, butter, jam and coffee. Wow! No need for Bovril cubes this day. No need to snatch bread from the mess hall. No need to buzz into Royston for fish & chips.

Just hearing about this meal was a Christmas present in itself. But somebody forgot to tell Bomber Command. They scheduled a mission for December 24. The Eighth (and Ninth) Air Forces had been generally grounded for 10 days or more as the weather had been gosh awful both in England and on the Continent. And the Germans were on a counter offensive and making dramatic inroads in their drive to retake territory lost during the Allied offensive since D-Day in June. These were the days of Bastogne, Malmedy, and Remagen.

This would be a true maximum effort and the 398th would contribute with

all four squadrons going after a variety of targets in the Rhine River area of Coblenz. The Eighth would send up 2,000 aircraft this day, much to the delight of the hard-pressed ground troops holding the line in what was to become known as the Battle of the Bulge.

The bombing results on the targets at Coblenz and Kerchgons were described in the Group Statistical Reports as "good."

Years later, the Eighth bomber stream passing over the Nazi occupied country of Luxembourg would be described by local residents as "humming music."

Two B-17's, one from the 600th and another from the 602nd, crashed on take-off in the early morning mist.

The first was piloted by Leland Zimmerman; all crew members survived. Two on the Grinter Crew, however, were killed -- Franklin Harrod and David Flores.

Both planes came down north of the main runway on what was known as Gypsy Farm, owned by Bill and Olive Bates. Before the surviving crew members were picked up and returned to the base, they were taken to the Bates farm and treated to Christmas mince meat pie.

No effort was made to salvage the two B-17's, and at war's end they were forgotten. Bates, as "owner,"

finally removed the remains years later and ultimately sold the engines for \$50.00.

Meanwhile, his daughter, Peggy, married a man named David Wells and the two moved to Nuthampstead and became leaders in the "Friends of the 398th."

So it was not a happy Christmas Eve start for the 398th...and Christmas Day would not be a whole lot better. The mission problems spilled over as the capricious English weather played Scrooge for the air crews. Scrambling home after more than seven hours in the air, all planes were diverted to fields indicating better visibility than Station 131, which was socked in. Some landed with the 381st at Ridgewell and others with the 447th at Rattlesden. With no chance to return home on the 24th, the crews were made (more or less) welcome at the host bases. The next day - Christmas Day - the 398th crews had a snack and then waited near their planes for the call to return home. That call finally came late in the afternoon...long after Christmas Dinner time but at least in time for turkey sandwiches.

from Remembrances
by Allen Ostrom
398th BG

DEBRIEFING

ADOLF SCOLAVINO...

An incident happened one night at Harrington that I have never forgotten. We had been briefed in the afternoon that our drop site was in Belgium and that we would be dropping two underground agents. As a general rule 801st/492nd BG air crews did not mingle with the agents. I as the pilot usually introduced myself to them, time permitting, and asked if they had any questions about the flight or drop. As I approached the two agents just prior to boarding, I noted that one of them was a lady about 20 to 25 years old. Just before I got to them, I saw their escort hand them some capsules. The capsules contained poison and were to be swallowed by the agents to kill themselves, if they desired, in case of capture. If captured they would have been tortured and put to death by the Germans. Seeing this young lady voluntarily embark on such a dangerous mission, knowing the possible consequences if it failed, has been etched in my mind ever since.

Submitted by:

Adolf Scolavino, Historian, NM Chapter, 8th AFHS.

JAMES TALLEY...

The lead plane of our group was hit by flak; the plane exploded after pulling away from the formation. At this juncture we were under attack by FW 190s and ME 109s. Our group was scattered all over the sky.

Our squadron lead had taken a severe hit in his #3 engine; flaming parts were falling off the aircraft as he tried to keep in formation. We were with him in the high element and had to slow down as we followed him away from the formation. Now we were again under attack by many FW 190s. To add to the confusion several B-17s crossed our flight path right through our formation. Fortunately there were no mid-air collisions.

Off course and alone and under heavy attack by fighters, I looked down and could see we were over Berlin, right over the Brandenburg Gate. All hell broke loose just north of Berlin. I remember seeing the faces of FW 190 pilots as they swept by with guns firing. I fired the two flexible guns, first the left side then the right, having to stumble over the .50 caliber casings on the floor along with my maps and gear in the nose section. At this time in the war German fighters would stay grounded unless bombers had been forced out of formation and were straggling all over the sky. That is where the 306th would find itself on this day. Our group lost nine aircraft in this battle over Berlin, eight to fighters and one to antiaircraft fire. Some crewmen did survive, having parachuted to safety.

Soon a few other B-17s came into view. These stragglers like ourselves had suffered battle damage. Very quickly eight of them formed on us; we found ourselves in the lead on this, our second mission. Being lead navigator with little experience was a bit unsettling. In all this hell we still had not dropped our bombs. Macy asked for a heading to the target. I found my maps and E6B computer and gave him a heading. As we started the bomb run, we faced a solid wall of flak bursts. All of our little force suffered more damage, yet all of them made the bomb run and dropped on our

signal.

I plotted a course back to the English Channel and to Thurleigh; we had to change course several times to avoid other heavy flak concentrations. We arrived at the base at 1553 hours.

Over the years that have passed, no one incident comes even close to that experience of 12 September 1944. There I was fresh out of navigation school, gold bars still shining, when all of a sudden I found myself in a situation beyond description. I cannot describe the thoughts that raced through my mind that day. It is only in the company with others who also found themselves in a similar situation that I can feel comfortable talking about it.

Now it is a rare day that can go by without my being reminded of that mission on 12 September. I have learned to live with it, as others have, yet time does not diminish the reality of the experience. When you realize that you are the hunted and not the hunter, survival becomes uppermost in your mind. It becomes apparent that divine intercession has entered the picture somewhere along the line and I am fully aware of it.

Submitted by:

James Talley II, Navigator 306th BG

SHERWOOD SHARP...

VARGA VENUS HOME AT LAST

Merseburg was a mission to remember. Everything happened to us that could happen to a bomber crew, I think. It shows how much punishment a Fortress can take, and the crew in it, and still get back to its home base. Right over the target at Merseburg, flak got us. We were knocked out of formation.

I looked out the left waist and saw five Focke Wulfe 190s, which were about 200 yards out, flying parallel to us. Those Nazis were taking shots at us. I opened fire at one of the five. By this time they were slightly ahead of us, but still flying parallel. The last one in the formation of F-W's started smoking and slid off, and later the bombardier told me he saw that fighter blow up.

Pretty soon an escort P-51 Mustangs and P-47 Thunderbolts came in to give us support.

There were other Forts around us going down in flames from the vicious attacks by other Jerry fighters and so we were plenty glad to see the American fighters.

We were sputtering along on 2 1/2 engines right in one of the worst spots in Germany.

The skipper called for a quick "check point" to get us home, so we headed out in the direction of England. We went right



VARGA VENUS

across the center of Osnabruck.

They picked us up at 18,000 feet, and the flak batteries really let loose. They hit us hard too. Later we found the flak had knocked out our hydraulic system, the radio, the automatic pilot, most of our oxygen, aileron controls, and the flaps.

"I'm going to try to make our base," said the skipper a little later, "but I'm not promising anything." But we made it.

I looked out at our wings as we made the approach to our runway. The flaps were only one-fourth down and our brakes were gone.

We hit the runway and "Varga Venus" just wouldn't stop. We rolled off the runway and across the wheatfields knocking down fences before we stopped.

Sherwood G. Sharp, Port St. Lucie, FL

JAMES HOLLOWAY... MISSION #1

Opening my eyes, I glanced out the window and could see nothing but fog. (What the hell is going on?). I checked in on the intercom and the co-pilot told me to watch for a runway as we were circling an alternate air field, ours being fogged in. This meant that most of the Eighth Air Force, over 1,000 planes, were flying blind in fog trying to find a place to sit down, any place would do as gasoline by now was getting low.

We soon had glimpses of the ground and crossed over the field, but at a right angle to the runway. The pilot circled to line up with the runway but lost sight of it for a while. When it came into sight he was not lined up for a landing and by the time he was, half the runway was used up so he was forced to go around again. On the second trip around another B-17 crossed in front of us. The pilot jerked the stick back, going over the top of the other plane. Damn that was close.

On the second try we used up a lot of runway again before getting the wheels on the ground, and when the end of the runway came into view through the murky air, what was sitting across the runway and blocking it but a semi gasoline truck and trailer. The pilot, judging his speed, the wet surface of the runway, and the distance to the truck, doubted he could stop in time. He shut down all four engines and applied all the brakes he could. At long last we came to a screaming halt.

The tail wheel on a normal landing would have been on the ground by the time the speed had dropped to about 40 miles an hour. This time it didn't touch the ground till our forward movement stopped, at which time it crashed to the runway. I was still in the tail position, and it bounced me around like a rubber ball. Nevertheless, I was glad to be on the ground. When I crawled out I saw the aircraft nose sitting not ten feet from the gasoline truck. Combat didn't seem so bad, but this coming home sure was hell.

James Holloway, Santa Clara, CA

BILL VARNEDOE...

The red tape on the briefing map showed that the route led in over the flak gap at the Zuider Zee in Holland. This gap in the flak coverage might have been left open so that the Germans could be reasonably sure that would be where we would go--and indeed we usually did; an odd arrangement that both sides found helpful. The return leg was further south and led out near Ostend. We were told that we would be flying

over fighter fields of the German Air Force. If the weather was bad, it would keep the Luftwaffe away from the ground fighting; then the fighters might be expected to attack the bombers. The weather turned out to be bad.

On the bomb run, I noticed what I thought was unusual flak bursts close by. Normal flak was a black smoke, elongated vertically. These were light gray, rather small, and elongated horizontally. I had just started to describe them in the log when someone started firing his guns and I realized that there was an attack by fighters. By then numerous gunners were firing, but no one had ever called out "bandits" on the intercom. Neil Duell in Vaadi's crew also reported no one in his crew had called out bandits either. Those "odd flak" bursts were actually 20mm cannon shells fired by the fighters and fuse-timed to go off in the formation.

Bill Varnedoe, Huntsville, AL 385th BG 550 Sq

FRED ZUKER...

THE ZUKERS RETURN TO SUDBURY

We made our way to Station 174 at Sudbury- the home of the 486th. We ignored the No Trespassing signs and drove out on the remnants of the old perimeter road toward the three Nissen huts that still remain from 1944. The runways are now gone, given over to the wheat fields which rippled in the afternoon breeze beneath a dramatically sunny and cloud-split sky. My Dad explored the track and by the location of the huts he found the hardstand where *Lady Lightnin'* had once parked. The tie-down rings still protruded from the tarmac as if some day there may be need to secure a B-17 from the winds that rush down from the North Sea.

As I think back on the moment of being in that place with my father and watching him scuff the dirt on the tarmac and gaze across the field, I am again hard pressed to describe my feelings. Clearly this was a special time for my father. He had returned to a place that shaped all his years since he left in 1944. I am a child of that place as much as my father is a man of that place. I have grown up aware of Sudbury and the role it played in my father's life, but I never thought I would see it for myself. The real thing has replaced that vague image from my childhood. And, more importantly, I have shared the reality of that place as it is now, with my father.

Fred Zuker-son of Ray Zuker, pilot, 486th BG

JOHN O'NEIL/GEORGE MOFFAT...

Another common happening at Eighth bases during the Christmas season was to hold Christmas parties for local children where the GIs would "adopt" a child for the party. At Alconbury, for Christmas 1943, the combat crews' mess hall was decorated and also had a Christmas tree in readiness for the big event.

Our recollection is that our crew was alerted for a mission on Christmas day, but it was scrubbed, and in fact, no USAAF missions were flown that day; and thus the war was forgotten briefly.

In the early afternoon of Christmas day after the main dinner meal was completed, the children received presents from Santa. The children certainly enjoyed the festivities and the GIs almost felt like they were back home with their families.

from BOMBS AWAY

Return to High Times - Sweating it Out

Recently I had the opportunity to return to my old B-24 base in England from which I flew combat missions in WWII. The base hadn't changed much except the old runways were gone and in their place was a good crop of sugar beets.

However, as I wondered about the airfield, overcome with nostalgia for the old high times when we would come back limping with 50-cal. bullet holes in the fuselage

and a wounded gunner aboard. I saw a rather ragged looking hangar on one side of the field. I wandered in and sure enough there was a bunch of old pilots sitting about having a pint or two of stout and warm English beer. Seems part of the old hangar had been turned into a pub.

One of the pilots saw me approach and when I told him I had flown combat missions from that very field in 1944-45 he stuck out his hand and shook mine with a vengeance. Then he put his arms about me and said, "Great, old chap. I've got just the thing for you." With that he stuck an old leather pilot's helmet on my head and bursting into a smile said, "You're going up with me. I've got my Stearman parked outside ready to go. What ya say old chap?"

I thought a minute and remembered the flak and fighters and the old urge took hold of me. "Of course, I'll go. Let's do a few turns about the pattern."

Off we went. The open cockpit took in the wind like a fury and I sat hunched over with two hands on my camera. The flight plan was to circle the airfield, then to make four approaches lining up right with the old runways which the pilot seemed to remember. I don't know how he did. Around the airfield we went. I could see the ruins of the control tower I remembered so well, the outlines of the runways, the dispersal areas where our bomber had been parked and the flood of memories came back stronger than the wind in the cockpit. Higher and higher we went until I could see the old farms surrounding the field and the places we had used as landmarks coming back in the cold misty evenings after 7 to 8 hours of combat flying, weary, shocked and a little hopeful that we would make it. I felt the adrenalin surge into me and before I knew it I was on an

adrenalin high.

Before me appeared the vision of a cold dawn when two of our aircrafts collided on takeoff. Another vision I had was of a cold November afternoon when a straggling bomber appeared out of the dusky darkness and parachutes blossomed in the sky holding the crewmen abandoning the battle crippled-bomber.

I saw the row of hangars, the remains of our barracks, the living quarters, the bomb disposal area and the briefing rooms, all in my mind.

If you don't think it was a high I was on, imagine reliving those gut-wrenching times when, as you neared the home base, you saw the flare path of the runways and then the slow letdown through mist and fog until there was the familiar squeal as the wheels hit the runway. Home at last and another mission under your belt! Across the field came the faint sounds of waiting ground crews and up on the control tower a cheer went up. I was back again 50 years ago sweating out the landing, my palms moist and the perspiration running down into my flight boots, the dry taste of hours on oxygen still in my mouth, and the rubber of the oxygen mask. Wow, we made one more. How many to go?

I'm off to the pub, I said, as I grab my parachute and head off to interrogation. "God I'm thirsty" I said.

by Forrest S. Clark, 44BG,
Kissimmee, Florida

'Sweat It Out,' It Seems, Was Born of Mark Twain

Pending the discovery by an Eighth Air Force major that Shakespeare used the term "GI" somewhere in Hamlet, the phrase which a Ninth Air Force captain has found in Mark Twain's "Adventures of Tom Sawyer" will rank as the linguistic surprise of the year.

At one point in the adventures, Becky Thatcher, with whom, you'll remember, Tom Sawyer was in love, tears a page from a book belonging to her teacher and gets caught. The teacher goes after the culprit with a hickory stick and Tom deliberates on whether to save Becky.

"It's her own fault," he finally says, "let her sweat it out."

Mark Twain wrote "Tom Sawyer" in 1875.



Shipdham - home of the 44th Bomb Group

Two Psychiatrists were walking down the hall of the Psychiatric Ward in the hospital when they were passed by a third doctor who greeted them: "How are you today?". One turned to the other and said, "I wonder what he meant by that?".

from Sam Zarcoff

MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE WEB PAGES

BOMBARDMENT GROUPS

First Air Division - Boeing B-17 "Flying Fortress"

91st BG(H) <http://www.memphisbelle.com>
97th BG(H) http://www.itws.aetc.af.mil/ho_www/97_bg.html
303rd BG(H) <http://www.303rdbga.com>
303rd BG(H) <http://www.303rdbga.com/thunderbird>
303rd BG(H) <http://www.molesworth.af.mil>
379th BG(H) <http://www.erinet.com/dbarberz/screwballexpress/379th.htm>
305th BG(H) <http://www.cris.com/~docherk/305th/history.html>
381st BG(H) <http://www.jvl.net/~paradise/381st/381st.htm>
381st BG(H) <http://www.missouri.edu/~ras/scott/charles.html>
384th BG(H) <http://www.hill.af.mil/museum/history/384bg.htm>

Third Air Division - Consolidated B-24 "Liberator" & Boeing B-17 "Flying Fortress"

34th BG(H) <http://www.excel-tech.com/34th/>
95th BG(H) <http://www.members.aol.com/the95thbg/>
96th BG(H) <http://www.azstarnet.com/~mrmopar/96thbg.htm>
390th BG(H) <http://www.390th.org>
390th BG(H) <http://www.airfax.com/390th/home.htm>
447th BG(H) <http://www.users.cybercity.dk/~bbl3024/>
452nd BG(H) <http://www.missingplanes.com/>
487th BG(H) <http://www.geocities.com/CapeCanaveral/1393/>

Second Air Division - Consolidated B-24 "Liberator"

2nd AD <http://www.ecn.co.uk/memorial/>
2nd AD <http://www.mach3ww.com/b24/>
392nd BG(H) <http://www.collectorsnet.com/milhist/392bg.htm>
448th BG(H) <http://www.geocities.com/pentagon/6565/>
449th BG(H) <http://www.geocities.com/pentagon/6565/>
453rd BG(H) <http://www.453rd.com/>
458th BG(H) <http://www.ionet.net/~route66/mighty8th.htm>

FIGHTER GROUPS

First Air Division - North American P-51 Mustang

352nd FG <http://www.fightertown.ort/352frgp.htm>
352nd FG <http://www.ccn.net/%7edawsonm/ckpics/preddy2.gi>

EIGHTH AIR FORCE

All Groups www.collectorsnet.commilhist
Mighty 8th AF Heritage Museum <http://www.mighty8thmuseum.com>
8th AFHS Website: http://members.the_globe.com/

compiled and submitted by Harry D. Gobrecht 303rd BG Association Historian

8TH AFHS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____

FIRST NAME

MIDDLE INITIAL

LAST NAME

Address _____

CITY

STATE

ZIP CODE

Where did you hear about us? _____ 8th AF Unit _____ Not in 8th - Sign Me Up _____

In service _____ Branch _____ Dates _____ to _____

Were you a former member? _____ Member # if available _____

Send application to: 8AFHS, P.O. Box 1787 Savannah, GA 31402. Please use this form only for your initial application and for your first calendar year's dues (\$10 U.S. and \$15 non-U.S.). Your annual dues will be billed for subsequent years.

Eighth Air Force Historical Society PX News

DECEMBER 1998



Happy Holidays everyone! We sure enjoyed meeting so many of you at the National Reunion in Cherry Hill. The PX was an outstanding success and we wish to thank you for all your support and good wishes. We especially want to thank Roger Freeman for his tireless efforts and for spending so much time autographing books for our customers.

This edition of the 8AF NEWS brings some exciting new items to our PX pages. First of all, we are very pleased to introduce a new book from our friend Roger Freeman and co-author David Osborne, **"The B-17 Flying Fortress Story - Design - Production - History."** (B8) This spectacular book details the role and function of the airplane, it's testing, evolution and revisions, power plant and performance from 1939-1945. Most impressive of all is a brief summary of the accomplishments of every B-17 that took part in World War II ... **all 12,731 of them!** An exhaustive amount of research makes this one of the finest books ever on the Mighty Fort! Attention all B-17 boys . . . a must for your library!! 8 1/2" x 11," Hdbd., 320 pages, 127 b&w ill. Only \$45.00 plus postage.

The next item is a reprint of the legendary book, **"Serenade to the Big Bird,"** by Bert Stiles (B28). Stiles completed 35 missions as a pilot in the 91st BG, then went on to fly as a fighter pilot until his death on November 26th, 1944. This fine book portrays the tragedy of war and has become a World War II classic! Now back in print for the first time in many years, we are very proud to offer this hardbound edition for the amazing low price of \$19.95 plus postage.

"Bombs Away - Pathfinders of the 8th Air Force" by Marshall Thixton, George Moffat and John O'Neil (B31). This book explores a virtually unknown subject in 8th AF history; *the Pathfinders*. It details the history of the Pathfinder Forces and covers missions in a regular Heavy Bomb Group (95th BG) and the original Pathfinder Group (482nd BG). Well written and very interesting. 182 pgs. Hdbd. Ill. Only \$25.00

Note: Fee Review in "Book Review" Section of this issue.

"Happy Jacks' Go Buggy" by Ilfrey/Copeland (B24). This book is one of the finest accounts of World War II aerial com-

bat ever written. Jack Ilfrey, an eight-victory ace, flew with the 1st Fighter Group in North Africa and with the 20th FG at King's Cliffe with the 8th AF. Honest, well-written, and superbly illustrated. If you need a book to read for the coming winter, this is it! **"I welcome anyone that reads Jack Ilfrey's story for the first time."** *Len Deighton - author.* This updated version will be a great addition to your library. Only \$35.00.

1999 Calendars are here!!!! Get ready for the coming New Year with your **8th Air Force Pocket Pal Calendar (M6)**. Black softcover with embossed 8th AFHS emblem. Only \$2.00 each! Makes a great stocking stuffer!

Please watch our next issue for some gifts for children and grandkids! Monica and I want to wish you each and everyone of you a wonderful and meaningful Holiday Season. May your Christmas and Hanukkah season be one of family, friends, and memorable joy. May your New Year be one of health, happiness, and peace. Lastly, we want to thank you for all the love and support you have given us over the past year. This will complete the first full year for us as you PX Managers. ***It is an honor to serve you.*** It is a small way we can pay back the debt we owe all of you - our peace and our freedom. A debt that we shall never be able to repay. God Bless each of you and we hope to hear from you very soon!

Cheers!!!!



The PX in CHERRY HILL

Mark and Monica Copeland
8th Air Force Historical Society PX
Managers

REMOVABLE PX
4 PAGE INSERT



Please use the latest PX page when ordering.

Prices listed are good through 1 March 1999.

8TH AIR FORCE LOGO PATCHES

QTY.		TOTAL
___	P1 4" Jacket Patch (Blue/White with 8th AF emblem)	\$ 3.95
___	P2 Special Blazer patch (Gold Bouillon thread)	\$ 19.95
___	P3 8th AF Shoulder Patch (wartime patch reproduction)	\$ 2.95
___	P4 Deluxe 8th AF Shoulder Patch (Gold Bouillon thread)	\$ 17.95

JEWELRY

___	J1 3/4 inch 8th AFHS Lapel Pin	\$ 2.75
___	J2 3/4 inch 8th AFHS Life Member Lapel Pin	\$ 3.25
___	J3 1 1/4 inch 8th AFHS Lapel Pin	\$ 4.95
___	J4 8th AFHS Tie Tac (Regular)	\$ 3.95
___	J5 8th AFHS Tie Tac (Life Member)	\$ 4.50
___	J6 B-17 Belt Buckle, (Pewter finish)	\$ 13.95
___	J7 B-24 Belt Buckle, (Pewter finish)	\$ 13.95
___	J8 8th AF Bolo Tie	
___	___ Gold Medallion Clasp with Black Rope	\$ 17.95
___	___ Silver Medallion Clasp with Black Rope	\$ 17.95
___	___ Gold Medallion Clasp with Gold Rope	\$ 17.95
___	J9 Solid Pewter Tie Tacs @ \$6.95 each	\$ 6.95
	<i>please circle your choice(s)</i>	
	B-17 B-24 P-47 P-51 P-38	
___	J10 Key ring Tabs @ \$3.95 each	\$ 3.95
	<i>please circle your choice(s)</i>	
	B-17 B-24 P-47 P-51 P-38	
___	J11 8th AF Key Ring - Metal key ring with 8th AF emblem	\$ 3.95
___	J12 Gold Ladies 8th AF Bow Broach Pin	\$ 8.95
___	J13 Ladies Gold plated Earrings, 8th AF emblem (pierced ears only)	\$ 12.95
___	J14 Miniature Wings - lapel type	\$ 4.95
	<i>please circle your choice</i>	
	Crew Member Pilot	

AUTOMOTIVE ACCESSORIES

___	A1 8th AF Logo Metal Grille Ornament	\$ 12.95
___	A2 8th AF License Plate - 6"x12"	\$ 3.95
___	A3 8th AF License Plate Holder (one per order)	\$ 5.95
___	A4 8th AF Bumper Stickers @ .90 each	\$.90
	or 3 Bumper Stickers for \$2.00	\$ 2.00
___	A5 8th AF 4" Sticker @ .75 each	\$.75
	or 3 Stickers for \$2.00	\$ 2.00
___	A6 8th AF 3 1/4" Inside Decals @ .75 each	\$.75
	or 3 Inside Decals for \$2.00	\$ 2.00

8TH AIR FORCE BOOKS

QTY.		TOTAL
	ROGER FREEMAN BOOKS: THE FOLLOWING POPULAR HARDCOVER BOOKS WERE WRITTEN BY NOTED 8TH AF HISTORIAN ROGER FREEMAN	
___	B1 Mighty Eighth in Color , Roger Freeman, 1992. Hdbd, 8 1/2 x 11, 160pp, 426 color illustrations. Take a nostalgic trip back to England 1942-45 with this magnificent book of all color WW2 photos. Superb!	\$ 35.00
___	B2 Mighty Eighth Warpaint & Heraldry , Roger Freeman, 1997. Hdbd, 8 1/2 x 11, 160 pp, Color photos. The latest edition from 8th AF historian Freeman. Examines the colors, markings and heraldry of every 8th AF unit. A must have book!	\$ 34.95
___	B3 Mighty Eighth War Diary , Roger Freeman, 1990 (revised). Hdbd, 8 1/2 x 11, 300+ pages. 2nd book in the trilogy of Freeman 8th AF histories. Day-by-day accounts of 8th AF activities, missions and losses. A great history! Please note this book is now out of print - order now to avoid disappointment.	\$ 49.95
___	B4 Claims to Fame: The B-17 Flying Fortress , Freeman & Birdsall, 1993. Sftbd, 6 1/4 x 9 1/2. Study of the most famous B-17s of WW2 -- longest serving, most damaged, etc. All studies are meticulously researched. Fascinating!	\$ 16.95
___	B5 Mighty Eighth in Art , Roger Freeman, 1996. Hdbd, 11 1/4 x 9, 160pp. Remarkable collection of aviation art relating to the 8th AF. Beautiful book! Highly recommended!	\$ 39.95
___	B6 Raiding the Reich: The Allied Strategic Bombing Offensive in Europe , Roger Freeman, 1996. Hdbd, 8 3/4 x 11 1/4, 160 pp, 260 b/w photos. Study of the 'Round the Clock' bombing theory. Another Freeman classic! 	\$ 29.95

CLOTHING

QTY.		TOTAL
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___	C2 8th AF Golf Cap - Embroidered emblem, fits all sizes ___ Red ___ White ___ Blue	\$ 11.95
___	C3 T-Shirts - 8th AF logo in full color <i>Please indicate size(s) wanted</i> ___ S ___ M ___ L ___ XL ----- \$ 9.95 ___ XXL ----- \$ 11.95	
___	C4 Sweatshirts - 8th AF logo in full color <i>Please indicate size(s) wanted</i> ___ S ___ M ___ L ___ XL ----- \$ 18.95 ___ XXL ----- \$ 21.95	
___	C5 Golf Shirts - Embroidered 8th AF logo in full color <i>Please indicate size(s) wanted</i> ___ S ___ M ___ L ___ XL ----- \$ 22.00 ___ XXL ----- \$ 24.00 ___ Red ___ White ___ Blue	
___	C6 A-2 Jacket, genuine goatskin <i>Order one size larger than your suit size</i> Indicate ___ Regular ___ Long	\$ 190.00

Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

___	M1 8th AF Wall Clock	\$ 19.95
___	M2 Grave Markers - 5 7/8" Diameter, with metal stake ___ Aluminum \$ 15.00 ___ Bronze \$ 80.00 ___ Please check here if you would prefer a flush mount for bronze marker.	
___	M3 Bronze Coin/Medallion, 2" diameter - WAS \$6.95, now \$ 4.50	
___	M4 8th AF Luggage Tags \$ 4.25 or 2 for \$7.95 \$ 7.95	
___	M5 8th AF Zippy Letter Opener \$ 2.00 or 3 for \$4.95 \$ 4.95	
___	M6 1999 Pocket Pal Calendar \$ 2.00	



Please use the latest PX page when ordering.

Prices listed are good through 1 March 1999.

QTY.			TOTAL
—	B7	Airfields of the Eighth, Then & Now , Roger Freeman, 1987. Hdbd. Each 8th AF base is presented in this 'must-have' book. The history of the base, and the then and now' photos illustrate this great work!	\$ 35.00
—	B8	The B-17 Flying Fortress Story - Design - Production - History , Freeman/Osborne, 1998. Hdbd. Chronicles evolution of the aircraft. Brief history on every B-17 that served in World War II - all 12,371 of them! A great testament to the mighty Fort.	\$ 45.00
	OTHER 8TH AIR FORCE BOOKS AVAILABLE FROM THE PX		
—	B9	Mustang Aces of the 8th Air Force , Jerry Scutts, 1994. Stbd., 7 1/4" x 10", 96 pp., 103 b/w photos, 66 color profile paintings. History of P-51 Mustang aces of the 8th AF. Covers all 8th AF Fighter Groups and respective aces.	\$ 15.95
—	B10	Fighter Command , Ethell & Sand, 1992. Hdbd, 10" x 10", 180 pp. American fighters of WWII in color. The story of the men, airplanes, bases, and countryside, plus excellent first-person accounts from WWII fighter pilots. Illustrated with over 200 original color photos! Terrific book!	\$ 29.95
—	B11	Bomber Command , Ethell, 1993. Hdbd, 10" x 10", 180pp. American bombers of WWII in color. Unique collection of USAAC bombers in original color photos. First hand accounts from bomber crewmen. Excellent book!	\$ 29.95
—	B12	Big Week: The Classic Story of the Crucial Air Battle of World War II , Inteld, 1992. 6 1/4" x 9 1/2", 125 pp. The most critical time of the 8th Air Force - February 1944. Complete and detailed history of the most decisive period in 8th Air Force history.	\$ 16.95
—	B13	Eighth Air Force Bomber Stories , McLachlan, 1993. Hdbd, 6 3/4" x 9 1/2", 208 pp., 150 photos. Gripping, graphic and honest first-hand accounts from 8th Air Force bomber crew experiences. Set against previously unpublished photos, this book paints a vivid picture of life as a bomber crewman in the 8th Air Force. Great reading!	\$ 37.95
—	B14	The Mighty Eighth: The Air War in Europe as Told by the Men who Fought It , Astor, 1997. Hdbd, 6" x 9", 464 pp., 16 b/w photos. New book that chronicles the first-hand accounts of 8th Air Force combat crewmen. Very nicely formatted. Super book!	\$ 26.95
—	B15	The Liberator Album , Bailey & North, 1998. Hdbd, 8 1/2" x 11". 500+ b/w photos. Superb collection of 2nd Air Division B-24 photos. Each 2nd AD Group is represented in this outstanding book. Fine collection of color profile paintings. A must have book!	\$ 39.95
—	B16	Bloody Skies , McGuire and Hadley, 1990. Hdbd, 448pp., 6" x 8 3/4", photos. An outstanding account of the air war over Europe and the 15th Air Force. Autographed by the authors!	\$ 22.95
—	B17	8th Air Force Yearbook (reprint); Hdbd., 224 pp. Pictorial. Superb photo book published especially for the 8th Air Force Historical Society members. Terrific book!	\$ 32.95
—	B18	Gabby: A Fighter Pilot's Life , Francis 'Gabby' Gabreski, 8 1/2" x 11", 200 b/w photos, color profiles. One of the finest fighter pilots ever to emerge from the 8th Air Force. This new expanded edition includes more photos, more text, and color aircraft profiles. Outstanding reading!	\$ 45.00
—	B19	Raiders of the Reich: Air Battle - Western Europe 1942-1945 , Bowman & Boiten, 1996. Hdbd, 6" x 9", 224 pp., 32 b/w photos. Superb book giving vivid accounts from not only Allied aircrews, but Luftwaffe fighter pilots. Interesting reading and captivating stories from both sides.	\$ 29.95
—	B20	Thunderbolt! R.S. Johnson. Stbd, 6" x 9", 307pp., 17 photos. The classic memoir of 56th FG ace Robert S. Johnson, the first American WWII fighter pilot to top Eddie Rickenbacker's WWI record of 26 aerial victories. <i>Col. Johnson has autographed these editions especially for us!</i>	\$ 19.95
—	B21	US 8th Air Force in Camera - Volume 1- Pearl harbor to Big Week 1941-1944 , Bowman. Hdbd, 7 3/4" x 10 1/2", 192 pp., 220 b/w photos. Fully illustrated in black and white photos, author captures a pictorial aspect of the Mighty Eighth at war!	\$ 29.95
—	B22	The 8th Air Force Album , 1978, Hdbd, 9" x 12", 224 pp. Photo essay of the 8th Air Force in WWII. 1150 photos, including 250 nose art photos. Published by the 8th Air Force Historical Society. Excellent book!	\$ 29.95
—	B23	Air War Europa , Hammel, 1997. Stbd. This fine book gives a day-to-day account of the air war over Europe. A great book to guide you through the greatest air battles the world has ever seen!	\$ 19.95
—	B24	Happy Jack's Go Buggy , Ilfrey/Copeland, 1998. Hdbd, 8 1/2" x 11", 125 pp., 200+ photos. Story of eight victory fighter pilot Jack Ilfrey of the 20th Fighter group. One of the finest tales of aerial combat ever written. Hard to put down!	\$ 35.00
—	B25	Fortresses of the Triangle First - Bishop, Hdbd, 320 pp., 251 ill. An extremely detailed history of the 1st Bombardment Wing from 1942-44. Covers each squadron with mission lists, missing in action, crashed and salvaged aircraft. Includes a complete listing of all serial numbers. Meticulously researched! Very highly recommended.	\$ 42.95
—	B26	B-17 Flying Fortress , Hess, 1994. Stbd., 8" x 10 1/2", 144pp., 107 b/w photos, 33 color, 1 map. This tribute to the B-17 is filled with design, manufacture and combat records. plus rare color photos from WWII showing aircraft, nose art, and crews. A very nice tribute to the 'Fort'.	\$ 24.95
—	B27	USAAF Fighter Stories: Dramatic Accounts of American Fighter Pilots in Training and Combat Over Europe in World War 2 , McLachlan, 1997. Hdbd, 6 1/2" x 9", 192 pp., 180 photos. Well illustrated accounts of training, combat, bail-out dramas, POW, and evadee adventures. Stories from the 4th, 20th, 55th, 78th, 339th, 352nd, 356th, 361st, and 364th FG personnel. Aircraft archeology stories. Great book!	\$ 39.95
—	B28	Serenade to the Big Bird , Stiles, 1947. Hdbd. A true 8th Air Force classic! Back in print for the first time in many years. Stiles flew 35 missions in the 91st Bomb Group and wrote this fine book prior to his death in November 1944. A great read for a great price!	\$ 19.95
—	B29	Called to Command - The Life of General Gerald Johnson , Johnson, 1996. Hdbd., photos. Remarkable story of 56th FG ace Gerald Johnson. Courage, dedication to duty, commitment and luck describe this wonderful look at his incredible life.	\$ 29.95
—	B30	America's Aces in a Day , Hess, 6" x 9", 192pp., 50 photos. William Hess brilliantly chronicles the combat records of American pilots that achieved the status of 'Ace in a day'. Covers USAAF, Navy, Marines - 1941-45.	\$ 19.95



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QTY.			TOTAL
—	B31 Bombs Away! Pathfinders of the 8th Air Force , Thixton/Moffat/O'Neill, 1998, hdbd., Photos. Remarkable story of the 8th Air Force Pathfinder Groups (92nd and 482nd Bomb Groups). Well written and very interesting.	\$ 25.00	_____
—	B32 German Jets vs the US Army Air Force- Battle for the Skies Over Europe , Hess, 1996. In late summer 1944, an awesome new weapon took to the skies over Europe - the jet fighter. Superb book!	\$ 19.95	_____
—	B33 The Interrogator , The Story of Hanns Joachim Scharff, Master interrogator of the Luftwaffe. hdbd, 6" x 9", 352 pp., 150+ photos. The amazing story of the man who questioned captured 8th AF fighter and bomber crewmen during WWII. Long out of print!	\$ 29.95	_____
—	B34 Over Here- The Americans in Norfolk during WWII , Snelling, 1994. Hdbd. Well-illustrated. For a limited time only, we are offering this now out-of-print book. Mainly detailing the 2nd Air Division, this book chronicles the life of crewmen at bases around the Norwich area.	\$ 34.95	_____
—	B35 Glenn Miller in England, Then & Now- After the Battle Publications. All of us love his music... now learn about the travels of the Glenn Miller Orchestra as they travelled through England playing at 8th Air Force bases. Illustrated with "then & now" photographs.	\$ 39.95	_____
—	--- Squadron Signal's In Action series: Stbd. Excellent quick reference on specific aircraft. The perfect gift for a grandchild! Circle your choice.	\$ 7.95	_____
	_____ B-17 _____ B-24 _____ P-51 _____ P-47 _____ P-38		

8TH AIR FORCE VIDEOS

QTY.			TOTAL
—	V1 Pistol Packin' Mama , 60 minutes. Story of the crew of the Pistol Packin' Mama B-17 crew from the 390th BG. Their story is heart-wrenching, emotional and extremely stimulating. Very highly recommended!	\$ 24.95	_____
—	V2 Wing and a Prayer: The Story of Utah Man , 58 minutes. August 1, 1943 - Target, Ploesti, Rumania. One of the most infamous missions in which the 8th AF participated. Emmy award winner. Absolutely wonderful!	\$ 24.95	_____
—	V3 Start Engines -- Plus 50 Years , 60 minutes. Excellent video covering all aspects of life in the 8th Air Force during WWII. Produced by the 8th AFHS. Highly recommended!	\$ 24.95	_____
—	V4 Behind the Wire , 80+ minutes. Superb documentary focusing on the German POW experience. Great first-person accounts. Don't miss this award-winning film. Produced by the 8th AFHS	\$ 24.95	_____

Quantities are limited on Sale items

SALE ITEMS!

Sale prices good through 1 March 1999

QTY.			TOTAL
—	S1 Bronze Coin Medallions - 2" diameter 50th Anniversary commemorative Medallion. 8th Air Force emblem embossed on front. Very nice gift item. Was \$6.95 -- now only \$4.50!	\$ 4.50	_____
—	S2 SALE BOOK The Weathermen Let Them Fly - Story of the 8th AF Weather Squadrons, Brown. Very interesting reading! Was \$13.95 -- now only \$9.50!	\$ 9.50	_____
—	S3 SALE BOOK The Friendly Invasion , Roger Freeman, 1992, Stbd. A fine book detailing life in war-time England. Well written. Superb reading. Was \$21.95, now only \$10.00 while supplies last! This book is now out-of-print!	\$ 10.00	_____
—	S4 SALE BOOK Fighter Aces of the Mighty Eighth , Hess and Ivie, 1990, 264 pp. Well illustrated, fascinating look at the Fighter Aces of the Eighth Air Force. Gripping accounts and well-researched facts. Great reading! Was \$39.95 -- now just \$19.95!	\$ 19.95	_____

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MEMORIAL TO 44TH BOMB GROUP - 8TH AF 8TH AIR FORCE MUSEUM, BARKSDALE AFB, LA

During 1997 a memorial was dedicated to the 44th Bomb Group of the 8th Air Force. The memorial is located at the original 8th Air Force Museum at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana.

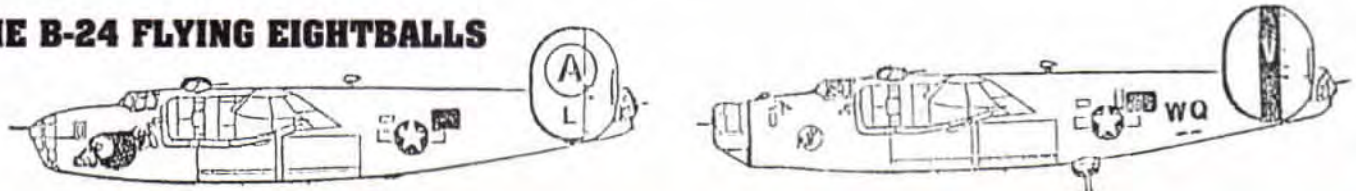
The granite marker and bronze plaque commemorates assignment of the 44th Bomb Group Veterans Association (which funded this project) opened the Dedication Ceremony with a welcome and introduction of honored guests. Present was Lt. General Phillip Ford, 8th Air Force Commander at Barksdale AFB, Brig. General Andrew Smoak, 2nd Bomb Wing Commander, Brig. General John Gibson, USAF-Ret., a former 44th Bomb Group Commander and, over 60 men and women of the 44th BG Veterans Assn. Brig. General Smoak accepted the Memorial on behalf of the 8th Air Force.

Instrumental in procurement of the bronze plaque and granite marker was Col. Clem R. Haulman, USAF-(Ret) of Lafayette, LA. Col. Haulman was a member of the 506th Bomb Squadron, 44th BG. He is pictured at the Memorial and in front of the B-24 located at the Museum. Col. Haulman was assisted in his efforts by Capt. Jeffrey Swegel, the son of Robert Swegel, a 44th member. Clem's son LTC David Haulman, Cdr. Civil Engr. Sqdn. 917th Air Rescue Wing also assisted.

Col. Clement Haulman at Memorial to the 44th Bomb Group in Barksdale AFB, LA, 8th AF Museum, in front of the B-24 Laden Maiden.



THE B-24 FLYING EIGHTBALLS



COMMANDER - EIGHTH AIR FORCE LIEUTENANT GENERAL RONALD C. MARCOTTE

Lieutenant General Ronald C. Marcotte is commander of Air Combat Command's 8th Air Force, with headquarters at Barksdale Air Force Base, La. He is responsible for overseeing the wartime operations capability of this general purpose numbered air force's aircraft including F-16, B-1, B-2 and B-52 bomber forces as well as active duty, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve bomber and fighter units located within 8th Air Force's command responsibility.

General Marcotte was commissioned into the Air Force in June 1969 after graduating from the United States Air Force Academy. He has commanded a B-52 squadron; the 2nd Wing at Barksdale Air Force Base, La.; and the 801st Wing (Provisional) during Operation Desert Storm which generated more than 350 successful combat and combat support sorties involving B-52s, KC-135s and KC-19s. He also

commanded the 509th Bomb Wing, Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., from April 1993 until March 1996, where he was responsible for establishing the first and only B-2 Spirit bomber wing.

His staff experience includes positions as assistant chief of Strategic Air Command (SAC) protocol; chief of command presentations (SAC) and a tour on the Joint Staff as a division chief for the J-1. He has also served as assistant deputy chief of staff for requirements at Air Combat Command. Prior to assuming command of the 8th Air Force, he served as director, plans and policy (J-5), United States Strategic Command, Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska. He is a command pilot with more than 3,700 flying hours, primarily in bomber and trainer aircraft.

General Marcotte and his wife, Ruth, have two sons.



OPERATION CHOWHOUND - MAY 1-8, 1945

A TRIBUTE TO THE UNITED STATES ARMY AIR FORCE



*Near The Hague at the German coastal defenses
photo by William Duane*

After suffering through a bleak winter of 1944-45, the inhabitants of western Netherlands were on the brink of starvation. The German army still occupied the territory and denied access to food supplies from the East. Following pleas from Queen Wilhelmina to President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill, General Dwight Eisenhower was ordered to arrange for relief of the starving Dutch people. The Royal Air Force and the 8th Air Force were instructed to carry out missions of mercy to help save the Dutch. During the first week of May, 1945 ten Bomb Groups along with the 3rd Scouting Force of the Mighty Eighth flew 2189 sorties, dropping 4,155.6 tons of food at nine drops zones in the Netherlands. RAF Lancaster bombers had flown in, on what they termed "Operation Manna", the night before. The B-17 bombers had been reconstructed to carry canned "C" rations in 50 -lb cases. Other similar food supplies were included as the missions continued. Through the Red Cross a truce had been arranged with the German defenses for the purpose of the food drops. At low altitudes the 8th airmen could see the exuberance of the Dutch civilians and were able to read the THANKS YANKS message spelled out in tulip fields. German troops on the ground observed but offered no resistance.

Bill Duane, bombardier with the 388th BG, wrote in his war diary: "It looked as if today would be a good opportunity to get in one last mission with the group, even if it was not to be credited to the crews as a combat mission. We were to drop food rations to the Dutch. The code name was 'Chowhound', a name usually attributed to a hungry GI. With the Hague to our left, I



B-17's of the 385th BG have their gear down and bomb bay doors open to reduce speed at a food drop near Utrecht.

took some pictures of "Rations Away". They tumbled down in clusters like leaves from a tree. From our low altitude, I could see them hitting the ground, some burying deep in the soft, wet soil, others into the waters of the irrigation ditches. The bulk, however, landed on a racetrack outside The Hague. The "Many Thanks Boys" spelled out on the ground by the Dutch was a touch of gratitude I will never forget. It left more than a few of us misty-eyed."

Bill Ridder of Clayton, California says that he remembers well, as a 14 year-old child in the Netherlands, looking up to the sky to witness a scene not repeated in human history. "For eight days, from the belly of bombers, flour, sugar, bread, potatoes, Spam, chocolate, and cigarettes scattered over Holland's landscape. The first thing we got was mustard! Canned meat followed."

Bob Cooperman, USA Chairman of the International Manna/Chowhound Brotherhood recently traveled with a contingent of other 8th Air Force veterans to the Heritage Museum in Savannah. In a very special ceremony in the Rotunda, they presented a beautifully decorated proclamation of appreciation from Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, along with a generous check from the Brotherhood, to the museum to help tell and preserve the story of Operation Chowhound. The Food and Freedom Foundation carries on the legacy of the 8th Air Force Operation Chowhound food drops by actively organizing food supplies to starving people in wartorn countries throughout the world.



Bob Cooperman with other Eighth veterans in the Rotunda

Editor's comment: The events of the week of Operation Chowhound became well known throughout the Eighth Command. The food drops were acts of mercy which stood out in stark contrast to the horrors of air combat and bombing missions. The "food from heaven" missions offered an early glimpse of what a world at peace would hold for the airmen of the Eighth Air Force after three years of hardships and uncertainty; a most appropriate theme to reflect upon at this time of Christmas and Hannukah and this Holiday celebration fifty-three years later.

BOMB GROUPS OF OPERATION CHOWHOUND
34th BG, 95th BG, 96th BG, 100th BG, 385th BG,
388th BG, 390th BG, 452nd BG, 490th BG, 493rd BG
3rd Scouting Force



B-17G BEFORE PERSONALIZATION



B-17G PERSONALIZED



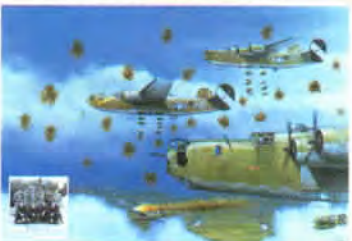
B-17F BEFORE PERSONALIZATION



B-24 H/J BEFORE PERSONALIZATION



B-24 H/J PERSONALIZED



B-24 H/J PERSONALIZED



B-24D BEFORE PERSONALIZATION



This B-17G print was personalized for Tom Kucskar 8AF, 351 BG, 511 SQ.

20"x 28"

Tell your story with an heirloom print that has all the personalized markings of your choice.

- 1** Your bomb group markings
- 2** Your nose art
- 3** Your crew or individual photo with name, rank, position, etc.

Comments from crew members

"Getting this picture made has been fun, and I am sure it will be a generator of conversation as people see it hanging on the wall. I am very pleased with your work, and at the price it can't be beat!"

Tony Bell - 8AF, 467 BG, 791 SQ.

"My picture arrived yesterday and I am extremely pleased, it is actually much more than I expected. The rendition is quite accurate. Your choice of framing accentuates the picture perfectly. Well done!"

Robert J. Honeycutt - 8AF, 445 BG, 700 SQ.

"The print arrived today, and it is beautiful. Our children and grandchildren will see it for the first time. Most of them know very little about that war."

William E. Foose -
8AF, 305 BG, 364 SQ.

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Mission Bombs on Nose	Add \$10
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MEMBER 8AF HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ALABAMA CHAPTER

Even though the recent statewide meeting and Luau Party planned for Gulf Shores was washed out by Hurricane Georges (weather continues to present problems occasionally), there has been a lot of activity around Alabama and in the Wings. The committee for the Dedication Memorial brochure completed its work and the beautiful brochure was mailed to all Chapter members and other notables. An impressive photographic reproduction of the Alabama memorial at the Heritage Center is included for all those who were unable to make the trip to Savannah for the ceremonies. The Central Alabama Wing meeting in Prattville featured member Milton McPherson from Troy State University with a slide presentation on Abraham Lincoln and the Reconstruction Period. Members of the Chapter, including Henry Arnold and C.B. "Red" Harper, took an active part representing the 8th AF in the Veterans Day programs and parade in Birmingham, one of the largest celebrations in the nation. Special guests at the dinners were Major General Lewis E. Lyle and Lt. General E.G. Shuler.

ARIZONA CHAPTER

The Arizona Chapter Board members met September 5, 1998. It was decided that we will no longer ask members to pay state dues, but contributions would be appreciated. An after New Year's Luncheon is planned for January 9, 1999 at Country Harvest Buffet, Tempe, AZ. A short meeting will follow. The Spring Reunion is planned for April 28-29, 1999 at Ramada Express, Laughlin, NV. Arizona Governor Jane Hull signed the Proclamation for October 8-14, 1998 to be designated as MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE WEEK.

CONNECTICUT CHAPTER

Our September meeting was held at the American Legion Post in Hamden, Ct. Our speaker was Louis DelGuidice, who spoke about his adventures as an Evadee. He parachuted over France and local farmers hid him until the French Underground was notified. He stayed at various homes of the Underground and posed as a family member right under the noses of the German troops. Once reaching Toulouse, France, he was turned over to the French Resistance, a group called

the French Maquis. They took him over the Pyrennes which took 4 days and 3 nights. When he reached Pau, Spain he was picked up and taken to a isolated prison for the criminally insane. He was held there until he was turned over to the British Military Attache. At the conclusion of our meeting, I learned that one of our Associate members was with the French Underground during WWII. Our luncheon meeting will be held in November. For more information on our Chapter meetings, please contact Art Ruggiero at (203) 488-8754.

GEORGIA CHAPTER

Clayton Ridge relates that the Georgia Chapter was well represented at the Cherry Hill annual reunion. Many members, including Al McMahan, Henry Hughey, Arthur Fonzo, and others went out of their way to be sure to attend the general business meeting of the national Society. Clay says that at dinner at an Italian restaurant during the meeting, a gentleman at a nearby table, Mr. Al Schaaf, saw the A-2 jackets worn by several members of the delegation and insisted on treating them to their dinner. On their return flight home, the airline captain of their airplane likewise saw their 8th AF insignia and had them moved up into first class! It frequently pays to show your colors. Georgia Chapter members took the lead in having the 8th Air Force Week in Georgia proclaimed by Governor Zell Miller. In September the HS was represented by a program advertisement and a display set up by the Chapter at the Wings Over Dixie Airshow at Peachtree City. The Veterans Day parade in Atlanta saw many 8th veterans taking part. The 15th annual three-day meeting and officer election of this active Chapter will be on January 15 - 17, 1999 at the Hilton in Norcross, Georgia.

GENERAL JAMES H. DOOLITTLE CHAPTER

President Bob Harrington reports in the winter issue of Air Power, the Chapter newsletter, a glowing summary of his experiences at the recent 8th AF Historical Society meeting in Cherry Hill, NJ. The Chapter annual meeting will be held April 17, 1999 in Santa Rosa, CA. The upcoming meeting of the Board of Directors will be at Hiller Museum at the

San Carlos airport on December 9th. Members are encouraged to attend.

IOWA CHAPTER

The Iowa Chapter of the 8 AFHS held its annual meeting on August 22, 1998 at Waterloo, Iowa. It was an all-day program with registration starting at 8:00 a.m. There were 14 tables of displays of 8th Air Force books and personal memorabilia. There were 82 present at the luncheon, Jons, Olsson giving a presentation on a Civil War enactment. He had everyone's full attention with a great many Civil War Stories. At the general membership meeting there went an election of three members of the Board of Directors. Four people were running, so a ballot was needed. After the meeting, the Board members selected their officers for the coming year. The officers are - President: Charles D. Taylor, Vice-President: R. Dean Airy, Treasurer: Leon G. Mehring and Secretary: Barry Johnson. The banquet had 94 members present. The guest speaker was Hank Potter who was the Navigator on the General Doolittle crew on the first raid over Tokyo, Japan on April 18, 1942. Hank Potter was given a standing ovation after his presentation.

ILLINOIS CHAPTER

Veterans Day was observed by Illinois Chapter members by holding their monthly meeting in Park Ridge on Veterans Day, following the November 8 ceremonies at the Eternal Flame War Memorial in Worth. Recent speakers at meetings have been Jack Van Acker who gave a talk on his post-war experiences in the development of jet aircraft, and John Bailey, local President of the AFA. The annual holiday luncheon tradition will continue this year, and on behalf of the Chapter, President Terry Carlson wishes all a very Happy Holidays!

KENTUCKY CHAPTER

The members of the Kentucky Chapter have a busy schedule planned for 1999. The Kentucky 8th AF HS has been invited to participate in the Annual BBQ given by the Honorable Order of Kentucky Colonels the Sunday after Kentucky Derby Day. A joint meeting with the Tennessee Chapter is in the works for early spring tentatively to be held in Bardstown, the home of Stephen Foster as

well as several old Kentucky whiskey factories. Ed Myles, Chapter President, and other members were successful in obtaining half a dozen Proclamations for 8th AF Week from the governor of Kentucky, Paul Patton, and from some of the cities across the state.

MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER

President Al Audette reports that the Chapter had a memorable outing with a luncheon and cruise around Boston Harbor in lobster boats supplied by the Boston Lobstermen's Association. Also included were a number of veterans from local VA hospitals, with organizational help from the Disabled American Veterans. Additional support came from the Harvey Salt Water Fishing club, the Quincy Yacht Club, Quincy Mayor Jim Sheets, and State Representative Bruce Ayers. The annual Fall reunion took place at Hanscom Air Base in Bedford. The featured speaker was Thomas P. O'Mahony, state President of the AFA. Officers of the Chapter for 1999 are: Pres. Al Audette; V.P. Henry Oi; Scy. Dave Ching; and Treas. Carl Wood. The Boston Chinatown Post No. 328 of the American Legion invited the Massachusetts Chapter 8AFHS to join them in celebrating Chinese Independence Day. In 1910, the freedom-loving people of China overthrew the Manchu Dynasty and established the free Republic of China on October 10, 1911. A group of 25 members of the Massachusetts Chapter took part in the parade. The Massachusetts Chapter has been very active this year and the Fall Rendezvous luncheon was held October 22, 1998.

MISSISSIPPI CHAPTER

The Mississippi Chapter continues their tradition of having a great time at their meetings and on bus trips. In November, a bus load of Chapter members spent four days in Bransford, Missouri, seeing the shows and wining and dining. Entertainment included the Radio City Music Hall's Rockette's Show, The Russian Yakov Aircraft Show, The Andy Williams Christmas Show at the Moon River Theater and the Shojo Tabuchi Christmas Show. The group also took in the Veterans Day Parade in Branson. This active Chapter is also nearing publication of their anthology, *Mississippians in the*

Mighty Eighth. Chapter meetings continue to hold well-attended meetings with frequent musical entertainment and great speakers.

NEW JERSEY CHAPTER

New Jersey was the host Chapter for the Annual Reunion in Cherry Hill October 13 - 18. All attendees were made welcome by Chapter members with newly-elected Chapter President Irv Pliskin and Herb Kaster heading up the welcoming committee. National 8th Air Force Week was proclaimed by Governor Christie Whitman prior to the reunion. The Fall Luncheon meeting was held November 14 at the Westwood in Garwood, NJ.

NEW YORK STATE SOUTHERN WING

The Southern Wing Chapter celebrated its ninth year anniversary in October, having grown from 65 original members to 350 and counting. President Larry Goldstein had the honor of announcing the election of Chapter member Abraham "Hap" Galfunt as a new member of the Board of Directors of the National Society. The Officers are setting meeting dates for 1999 and considering various fund-raiser projects for the Chapter. Chapter officers are: Pres. Larry Goldstein; V.P. Gustave Nathan; Scy. Anthony Zotollo; Treas. George Grady.

NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

The three Wings of the North Carolina Chapter will be the primary focus of Chapter activities for the future. Because of declining attendance at statewide chapter meetings and increasing activities within each of the Wings, members are now encouraged to attend the three annual Board meetings whenever possible. Special activities sponsored by the Wings will be publicized and are available to all members of the North Carolina Chapter. The Chapter has recently elected two co-Presidents, James R. Phillips and Odo J. Stenstrom. Several members were instrumental in arranging the Proclamation of 8th Air Force week for the state by Governor James B. Hunt. Other chapter activities included a talk by Mark Allen, Board member of Carolina Aviation in Charlotte.

NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER

Dr. Roger Johnson, who flew 35 combat missions with the 351st Bomb Group, is a practicing Surgeon and Attorney in Dallas. Dr. Johnson gave a fascinating talk centered on his war experiences in the 8th AF at the October meeting of the North Texas Chapter at the Las Colinas Country Club in Irving, Texas. Officers for 1999, to be announced, were elected at the same meeting.

OHIO CHAPTER

KENN RIEGER HONORED

On Nov. 5, 1998 Ken Rieger of Toledo, Ohio, was honored posthumously by being inducted into the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame honors Ohio veterans for their achievements after being honorably discharged from active duty in the armed forces of the United States. Ken was very active in veterans affairs. During his newspaper career as a reporter and an editor for the Toledo Blade, whenever a veteran or a veterans organization needed help Ken was there. At least one day a week was spent at the Disabled American Veterans Hall helping members file forms and answering questions. When needed, he went to the Veterans Clinic to assist veterans with their paper work. There was not much Ken could not and would not do for fellow veterans. He was an active member of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society, the Ohio Chapter, the



447th Bomb Group Association and the Military Order of the Purple Heart. He was Chairman of the Welfare Committee and a Past Commander of his American

Attending an Ohio Chapter meeting, General Paul Tibbets autographs his book Flight of the Enola Gay below his B-17F nose art, reproduced by Ron Kaplan of "Warbird Aviation Art". General Tibbets was the pilot of the aircraft which dropped the first bombs on enemy-held territory in Europe and, over three years later, the first atomic bomb on Japan, ending the war in the Pacific Theater.

Legion Post.

The weekend of August 21-23, 1998 was very special in Columbus, Ohio. The Ohio Veterans Plaza was dedicated on the Statehouse Grounds. The new Plaza honors all Ohio Veterans who served in war and in peace. The memorial is unique because it not only honors those lost in conflicts or who have since died, but is also a tribute to the living.

SAVANNAH WING GEORGIA CHAPTER

The Savannah Wing continues to have a large turnout for their monthly dinner meetings. In October Major Sandra Casey, head of the Effingham County Junior R.O.T.C. unit was special guest speaker. The chapter made an impressive showing in their 8th AF float in the local Veterans Day parade. A recent outing featured a boat cruise on Coast Guard off-shore boats and a picnic luncheon that followed. The HS members of the Wing continue to serve actively in their vital capacity as volunteers at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum serving as tour guides, greeters, educators, and general laborers in most all areas having to do with Museum activities and functions.

TENNESSEE CHAPTER

The Tennessee Chapter had a good contingent of members attend the Veterans Day parade and luncheon in Knoxville, with over 500 in total attendance. The featured speaker was General Joseph Ralston, Vice Chairman, U.S. Joint Chief of Staff, who gave an outstanding presentation and visited afterwards with some of the attendees. President James Bass is working out plans for a joint meeting with the Kentucky Chapter in the near future. John Bacon invites everyone to Memphis to see the *WWII Through Russian Eyes* exhibition at the Pyramid. Over 500 war-related items not previously seen in the West are featured in the impressive exhibition from Nov. 5 - Jan. 31, 1999.

VIRGINIA CHAPTER

Virginia Chapter members are looking forward to their Luncheon meeting at the Officers Club at Langley AFB on December 8th. John Pearson, Secretary, writes about the Annual HS reunion at Cherry Hill in the Chapter newsletter,

Plane Talk. The Virginia Chapter had a fine turnout for that meeting. The Chapter took part in the recent showing of the Collings Foundation B-17 at the Virginia Air Museum in Richmond, where Bob Collings gave a presentation of the aircraft and of his B-24 as well. The Peninsular Wing recently heard a talk by Major General Anthony Shotgren, weather officer, 2nd Air Division from 1942 to 1945.

WEST MICHIGAN WING

Over a dozen Wing members and their wives traveled to Dayton for a visit to the Air Force Museum. A hospitality room was open each evening. Chapter members are taking part in a Christmas fundraiser with the VFW Comstock Post for Christmas items for disabled veterans. They also participated in the Veterans Day celebration at Comstock.

WEST VA CHAPTER

The annual meeting of the 8th Air Force Historical Society, West Virginia Chapter held at Newark, Wirt county, on September 12 was a pleasant and productive enjoyable meeting. Denver and Vivian Guthrie were the perfect host at their hanger hideaway hobby by the Hale's Landing. The members had an opportunity to inspect a 1948 two seated Lustrum that Denver had restored from a basket case. A beauty it is. He also had an early vintage true yellow Cub in beautiful condition he was keeping for a Norwegian pilot. It was moved, second discussed and passed that the West Virginia Chapter place a memorial there for our state at a cost of \$800.00 to come from the current treasurer. It may be that other funds could be coming from direct donations from the members to have a better memorial.

OFFICERS ELECTED: PRESIDENT: Clement Dowler, 6 Riverview Acres, Washington, WV 26181.
VICE PRESIDENT: Jack Kings, Huntington, WV
TREASURER: Angelo A. DeCarlo, Morgantown, WV
SECRETARY: Jack Feller, Mullens, WV
BOARD OF DIRECTORS: James Al Davidson, Denver Guthrie, Walter Harpold, Harry Huster, Tom Garten

WISCONSIN CHAPTER

The quarterly Chapter meeting was held

at the Sunset Bowl in Waukesha. Kathy Sampon, Project Director for the Vietnam Memorial wall in miniature, now on a nationwide tour, told of its origins, and Sebastian Corriere of the Carpetbaggers gave a presentation outlining many of the wartime activities of his Bomb Group. A report from Chapter Librarian Dave Brouchoud updated the members on his extensive collection of loose-leaf binders relating to 8th AF activities and many other artifacts of historical importance and interest.

THE FIX —

- The Aug 98 Chapter News erroneously listed the **General Curtis E. Lemay Chapter** as the Southern Chapter of California. A nice reminder from George Epperson of the Chapter sets these records straight.
- Joe Regan, Washington Chapter President writes to say that the airfield mentioned in the Aug 98 NEWS Chapter News as Calvary Field is actually called King County International Airport.
- August 98 issue: Bob Jacobs has mistakenly taken a few hits for the Gentlemen From Hell article omission of the 838th Bomb Squadron in the article about the 487th BG. Flak should be aimed at your editor for that inadvertency; apologies are herewith offered.

BIRMINGHAM PAYS TRIBUTE TO AMERICAN VETERANS NOVEMBER 11, 1998





This may be familiar to the many young men who stopped over at Iceland while flying a new bomber over-seas. We were the only plane on an isolated section of Mead Field. As I lay in my sleeping bag looking up through the radio room hatch, I saw flashing lights. I went outside to investigate and saw the most spectacular event in the night sky that I had ever seen. It was as if giant curtains were wavering across the sky in an everchanging pattern. In addition to this awesome show of lights, there was a brilliant full moon low on the horizon across the bay. It was like being on another planet. The night was cold and still and the bright light from the full moon reflected over the barren land and across the bay as the "northern lights played fantastically across the sky."

painting by **Frank McKinley**

BOOK REVIEWS

MIDNIGHT SERENADE STORIES AND ESSAYS by BERT STILES

Edited by Roland Bishop Dickison and Robert Floyd Cooper

Many of us treasure on our bookshelves the wartime autobiographical volume written by Bert Stiles, *Serenade to the Big Bird*. Bert Stiles attended Colorado College before becoming a pilot in World War II. He finished his tour in bombers and after a time in fighter pilot training, he signed up for another tour, this time in fighters. He was killed in combat. Bert's biography has previously been written and published by Bob Cooper, an Eight Air Force veteran himself. *Serenade to the Blue Lady*. This just published companion piece, **Midnight Serenade**, completes the trilogy and is unusual in that it

is a compendium of a wide variety of storylines of Bert's writings before the war. Roland Dickison was a close friend of Bert during his teen and college years. He has searched out over 100 of Bert's unpublished short stories and essays and selected the best for inclusion in this volume. The collaboration with Bob Cooper has produced a fascinating series of stories showing the talent a young Bert Stiles had for writing. Each story is alive with Bert's thoughts and feelings of his country, its people, and about pre-war life in western America. Introductions to the stories from people who knew Bert add a special personal touch. Bert's sensitive perception, love of life, and depth of thought show a promising future as one of our country's premier writers, a future tragically ended in a P-51 Mustang in the skies over Germany.

It is not often that we get to look back at the early writings of an author whose one published book is still widely sought after and read fifty years later. This look is offered to us by Editors Dickison and Cooper and is an opportunity not to be missed.

Midnight Serenade, as well as the two other cited volumes about Bert Stiles, are available from: Robert Cooper; 30 College Park; Davis, CA 95616 (\$15 for *Midnight Serenade* volume).

MIDNIGHT SERENADE
Stories and essays
by
Bert Stiles



Edited by
Roland Bishop Dickison
Robert Floyd Cooper

BOMBS AWAY

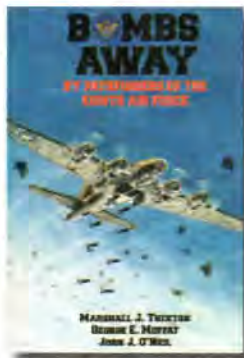
BY PATHFINDERS OF THE EIGHTH AIR FORCE

by Marshall J. Thixton, George E. Moffat, and John J. O'Neil

There are very few books available on the history and missions of the Pathfinders, aircrews of the 482nd Bomb Group who were assigned to various other bomb groups as advance aircraft, using radar and radio beam equipment to search out and identify targets of the day on missions over enemy-held territory.

Bombs Away tells the story of three members of an air combat crew in a most unusual and effective manner. Authors Thixton, Moffat, and O'Neil - flying as a bombardier, a ball

turret gunner, and a tail and waist gunner respectively - have collaborated to tell their stories of combat in 1943 and 1944 as members of the Pathfinders. The volume covers the early missions with the 95th Bomb Group and then describes their experiences with the 482nd. The combined views of life on the base and descriptions of combat missions from the authors' varied viewpoints offer a unique and authentic flavor to the entire book. In the early months in England, locating the target presented a problem to the Eighth AF bomb groups, because of the unpredictability of the weather on mission days. The Pathfinders, flying out of Alconbury, opened up a flexibility not previously available, allowing many raids to be successful due to their participation and their expertise in bad weather. Pathfinder aircraft were known to the Luftwaffe and were prime targets for



German pilots on the way in during bombing raids. The 482nd worked closely with lead crews of many 8th AF bomb groups, and were involved in intensive training programs. On March 22, 1944 the Pathfinders led their last mission in their previous role, as sufficient H2X bombers were then available to allow a pathfinder group to be established in each division.

Bombs Away is well-researched, with much detail throughout. The personal experiences related by the authors, both on the airbase and in the air, result in a book unique in its premise and fascinating in its presentation, while telling the story of one of the unusual bomb groups of the Mighty Eighth Air Force. Available from **FNP Military Division**; 6527 Main Street; POB 374; Trumbull, CT 06611. 203-261-9724.

MISSION 85

A MILK RUN THAT TURNED SOUR

by Ivo M. de jong

Mission 85. August 19, 1943. Eighth Air Force. ETO.

Few have heard of Mission 85. The previous 8th AF mission, Mission 84, was two days earlier on August 17th 1943 - a combined raid to bomb aircraft and ball-bearing factories in

Regensburg and Schweinfurt; perhaps the most renowned raid by the Eighth Air Force during the war; one with horrendous losses of aircrews. Mission 85 was to be a milk run. The Mighty Eighth had incurred so many losses on August 17, the Combat Wing flew with two of its groups



comprised of composite groups. The only intact group was made up of three squadrons of the 303rd BG. The targets for the day were Gilze-Rijen and Flushing airfields in Holland.

Author de jong has researched this mission in great detail and presents it in a large format and most readable fashion. The planning of the raid is developed and illustrated. He emphatically demonstrates in his material that there were no milk runs. Danger and losses were always present. Every raid had its own story, and its unique outcome. In this book, the planning and operational details of the mission are painstakingly researched and presented, allowing the reader to become immersed in the action as it occurs. After laying out the combat history of the Eighth Air Force and the plans for mission 85, de jong details the diversionary raids of that day, the fighter sweeps, and the reponse of the Germans. Personal interviews throughout the book add fascinating stories and depth to the entire volume.

The author has produced a most thorough story of one supposedly insignificant raid of the Eighth Air Force, emphasizing within it the fact that each raid affected airmen and civilians of both sides in a most unforgettable manner. Few, if any, volumes allow the reader to become a participant in a mission as this one does. The author has done all the research and legwork for you, and presents it to the reader so he may feel the effects. The appeal is there for the younger generations as well as for every airman who flew into the dangers of air combat. High quality large photos throughout and a large slick-page format make this book most pleasurable to read. It may be ordered from the 8th AF Heritage Museum at 1-912-748-8888 or from the USAF Museum at 1-937-256-6245.

All book reviews by the Editor, 8th AF NEWS



CHRISTMAS FROM THE CONTROL TOWER

BY CAPTAIN GALE M. JOHNSON, 491st BG

The winter of 1944 was time many of us would like to forget; many of us whose military service found us far from home, wondering if this war would ever end.

I found myself serving as Control Officer in Operations for the 491st Bomb Group stationed at North Pickenham, England, beside a forest of pine trees. Christmas was near and for many of the airmen it was their first time ever away from home for this glorious occasion.

For many of the missions, it was necessary to place men with "Very Pistols" and flares, out on a direct line with the runway and the duty to fire burning flares readily seen through the haze, allowing the bombers to line up on them with the hope of touching down on the runway just past the last one. An officer was required to supervise the firing and thus I found myself on a hazy evening about a week or so before Christmas out in a lane cut into the woods to lengthen the landing and take-off clearing. When time came to return to the control tower, one of the fine young airmen put a beautiful Christmas tree into my truck and covered it over with a canvas.

The Control Tower consisted of a large Operations/Radio room on the top floor, and there were two rooms on the lower floor. One room was used by the Weather Department and the other was my quarters.

It was hastily decided that the best place to put the Christmas tree was in my quarters. It was a punishable offense to damage Her Majesty's property and as my quarters were seldom inspected, into my room went the tree.

Once the tree was in the room, it was agreed that it needed a stand and some decorations. One of the armament men dashed

off for the bomb dump and soon a 500 pound bomb was missing its tail fin and my tree had a fine four-finned stand. Snow was no problem; one of the medics found a whole box of cotton somewhere. Tinsel - no problem, an ample supply was found in the "Radar Deflection Packages"; we called it Chaff, used to screw up the radar-aiming guns of the Germans. Lights System had red, yellow, and green lights. Someone wired them together and we had a string of lights for our tree. Some poor Crew Chief may still be looking for his airplane battery, but it sure helped make a beautiful Christmas tree.

Christmas was bound to be somewhat brighter, and the control tower crew set aside time to have a party around the tree on Christmas morning.

Well, word got around. Requests began to come in from different combat crews and their pilots, all veterans, hardened by the horrors of war. The conversation would go something like this: "Say, Captain Johnson, I was wondering if I could ask a favor of you. It being Christmas and all, and my boys being pretty young and a bit homesick. NOW, YOU SEE IT'S NOT SO MUCH FOR ME, BUT THE KIDS---and I was just wondering if we could use your room on Christmas Day."

A schedule was worked out for half hour intervals for the whole of Christmas Day and each crew went into the room, for thirty minutes, and celebrated Christmas Day in their own way.

"NOT FOR ME, BUT FOR THE KIDS ON THE CREW, YOU KNOW". I guess it is just for the Kids, but fortunately, most of us never stop being Kids part of the time.

submitted by F. C. (Hap) Chandler



*Control Tower
- Molesworth -
ENGLAND, 1944*



WHEN DUTY CALLED

We've laid aside our peaceful tasks,
We've packed our kits and gone to war.
We loved those things we left behind,
But loved our country even more.

And though we lie in some strange land,
Forgotten perhaps, by all but God,
We rest in peace because we know
Transgressors' heels shall never grind
Our country's flag into the dust.

We know, because we made it so,
The lad whose hands have milked the cow,
Whose hands have guided straight the
plow;
He did not shirk his country's call,
But gladly gave his life, his all.

We loved the murmur of the brook
That flows between the mountain slopes;
The golden moon that softly smiled
As if he shared our secret hopes.

We loved the whisper of the rain
Upon the roof tops overhead;
The gleam of sun upon the snow.

We sacrificed these things we loved
To keep our flag forever free.
We know, because we made it so.

The lad whose hands made tools of steel,
Whose hands have held the big truck's
wheel;
He did not shirk his country's call,
But gladly gave his life, his all.
-An American sergeant

The above poem by an American sergeant was found among his personal effects and forwarded to The Stars and Stripes by his commanding officer. A waist gunner with a Flying Fortress crew, the sergeant was killed April 17, 1944, while participating in a bombing raid.

from: THE STARS AND STRIPES

In war, which is an intense form of life, chance casts aside all veils and disguises and presents herself nakedly from moment by moment as the direct arbiter over all persons and events.

Thoughts and Adventures

TAPS

Aronson, Sydney M., Revere, MA	
Ashby, J.B., Abilene, TX	
Bachrach, Charles W., Overland Park, KS	US Air Force, World War II
Berman, George, Derby, CT	901st AF Co.
Biles, Dr. William R., Houston TX	392nd BG
Calderaid, Henry	
Cook, Norman R.,	493rd BG
Cooper, James C., Fairmount,	WV 1st Air Division Headquarters
Colvin, John A., Ballwin, MO	Co-pilot 392nd BG, original 392nd crew
Clemons, Robert, Montgomery, AL	Alabama Chapter
Dickerson, Paul D.	447th BG
Dovey, Arnold, Newport Beach, CA	Virginia Chapter, 392nd BG, 44 BG Navigator
Elliott, Byrl W., Cherokee, Iowa	356th FG, 305th & 306th BG
Falcone, Joseph T., Walpole, MA	457th BG
Fitz, Kenneth L., Madison, IN	Radio-gunner, B-17- "Wolf Wagon"
Fleming, William W., Lakeland, FL	
Flinn, Edward J.,	waist gunner, B-44D
Freedman, Leo, Pasadena, TX	Major, USAF, 3rd AF
Gauerke, Richard (Dick), Houston TX	96th BG
Greer, Cyrus	352nd FG
Guiggle, Robert D., Eustis, FL	
Hogaboam, George, Holt, MI	305th BG
Holbrook, Kenneth R.,	810th Food Service Sq.
Howell, Alfred R., Claremore, OK	Ball Turret Gunner-B17 96th BG
Hutchinson, Anthony R., La Grange, GA	Engineer/Upper Turret Gunner
Jacobson, Paul J., Billings, MT	Waist gunner, 486th BG
Kennedy, Jack D., Scranton, PA	Waist gunner, 493rd BG
Kiefer, Edward F., Lancaster, PA	
Leibensperger, William P., Sedona, AZ	
McLaughlin, Alfred R.	
McGlothlin, Ben	North Texas Chapter
McMullen, Richard M., Mansfield, OH	
McNicholas, Martin J., Somerdale, NJ	446th BG, Ball Turret Gunner
Mower, Leo,	44th BG
Mulhollem, Paul B., Anderson, IN	
Muszynski, Ed, East Chicago, IN	96th BG
Parramore, W. Woody, Montgomery, AL	Alabama Chapter
Powers, Cyril J., Waterloo, IA	91st BG
Roberts, James E., Jonesboro, GA	
Seal, John A.,	
Shelton, Dr. Marion DeWitt, Houston, TX,	Chief of Psychiatry of the 8th AF
Shumacher, Milford, Mesa, AZ	
Smith, Lloyd C.,	379th BG, Tail gunner
Swensen, Raymond W., Albuquerque, NM	467th BG
Snyder, Eugene P.	
Stimmel, Ralph L., Virginia Chapter	pilot, 445th BG
Thompson, James R., Osterville, MA	Pilot for the 8th AF and TWA
Thomason, Carwin, Santa Maria, CA	392nd BG, operated 392nd PX
Thornell, John F., Green Valley, AZ	352nd FG
Volcek, Frank P., Kansas City, MO	AF veteran of WWII
Wade, Bennie, Mobile, AL	
Westbrook, James O.,	487th BG, Georgia Chapter



A TRIBUTE TO THE GROUND CREWS

by Capt. Pete Hardiman

A lot has been written about those courageous air crews that flew the enemy skies to drop bombs and do combat with enemy fighters. Those of us who fought in the air had ground crews to maintain our planes. These men worked on our ships while we slept, met us in the morning to see us off on a mission, and waited for our return wondering if we *would* return.

The first time I took off on a mission to Germany, I saw bombers the entire route. There must have been over a thousand in the air. I never thought I would witness such an effort, but there I was in the middle of it. When I got back to my base, I thought it must have taken thousands of people to cause that to happen. So I want to dedicate these words to all those ground personnel who worked to support those of us who flew.

There was a strong bond of trust between myself and the men who maintained my plane and I never had to worry about its condition. It was "their airplane," loaned to me to fly and bring back in one piece. If there was as much as one bullet hole in the ship when I got back, the Chief would say, "If you can't take better care of our plane, we'll get someone who will!"

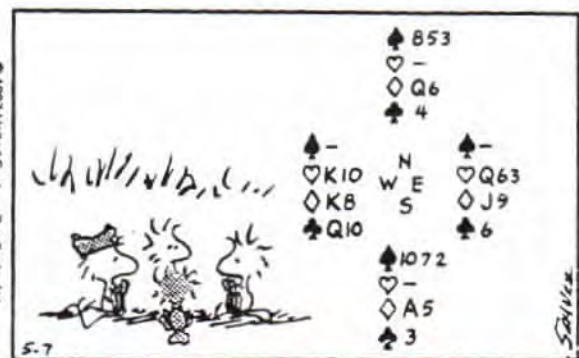
When I started to fly missions from England, I was only 19 and my CO was 21. The average age of the pilots in my squadron was 20. Two of my ground crew were in their 30s and were considered to be "over the hill." We youngsters relied heavily on their experience and judgement. Without their total dedication, many of us would never have come back and for that they



100 BG ground crew works on the feathered prop and engine of the "Boss Lady" at Thorpe Abbots

received very little praise.

Very few books were written by those who spent the war on the ground. Maybe they didn't think their story was worth printing but such books as "Fighter Command" by Jeff Ethell and Bob Sand allow a peek into the fantastic job these men did. Many times since the war I have talked to the guys that served on ground crews and asked them how it was for them. Their answer usually was, "It was a job that had to be done, we were trained to do it, and we knew how to do it." It was as simple as that. When asked about their relationship with the pilots, each one said it was a time of good feelings toward each other. To all of you who backed us up, regardless of your job, you should feel mighty proud of yourselves. My hat's off to you, my glass is raised to you.



NOTICE TO ALL SOCIETY MEMBERS

The dues statements for 1999 calendar year are in the mail.

Accompanying your statement is a form for donations to the Historical Society Fund Drive. Please look for them, and return them to the Membership Records office.

A return envelope is also enclosed. If you do not receive your statement by December 31st, please contact Kathy McCurry at the Records office. You wouldn't want to miss out on all the news of the Society for the upcoming year!



Connie and Gordon Richards are the 8th AF Historical Society Liaison and contact persons in the United Kingdom. They manage all of the Society British membership rolls, dues collections, 8th AF NEWS magazine distribution and any items of information needed by members and visitors to England. They do all of their work for their love of the Mighty Eighth and are friends to many of the Yanks who travel back to their wartime airbases.

NEW MEMBERS OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Stan Peterson, left, is proud to be a member of the 96th Bomb Group, a member of the 8th AFHS, and a member of the crew of The Saint On-The-Rocks. Stan says they reached Big B on Missions 21-24 (March 4, 6, 8, & 9, 1944) and led the 45th Wing to Brunswick Bicycle Factory on Mission 25. After graduation from St. Olaf College Stan married a classmate in 1947 - Lois and he have two daughters and six grandchildren. In his own words, "Life has been good!". He remains active in numerous organizations, is a fifty-year Master Mason, and plays a good bit of golf.

Craig Harris, shown in the middle, flew with the 457th Bomb Group, out of Glatton airbase; a total of 32 combat missions. He is a Major in the USAF Reserve and is active as a member of three different Chapters of the 8th AFHS. After a spell as an engineer at Oak Ridge Laboratory, Craig and his wife Bobbie have spent their past thirty years in Durham, NC where he has done extensive research in the field of Radiology, based at Duke University. As a Board member, Craig has "hit the ground running" and will play an active role in the plans for the Silver



Anniversary of the Society in 1999.

Abraham "Hap" Galfunt is on the Board of Directors of the Southern Wing Chapter of the Historical Society of New York State and is a member of the 493rd Bomb Group, flying 19 missions before being escorted to Stalag Luft I at Barth, Germany as

a POW. Hap is an active pilot and has remained very active in numerous aviation related organizations. He writes, "Dear members: Please accept my sincere thanks for electing me to the Board of Directors of the Mighty Eighth AF Historical Society. We have much work to do. There are those who seek to find artificial issues that would divide us, but this is not the time for

distractions. This is a time for healing and uniting as one harmonious Society. We fought side by side and relied on each other then. It is no different now, if we are to leave our legacy of freedom to future generations.

My congratulations to our newly elected President, Harold Rutka and the current Board of Directors who will lead us in that direction. I gladly welcome the responsibility and the challenge to ensure that the Mighty Eighth Air Force Historical Society remains vibrant, relevant, and proud, into the next century. Keep The Memory Alive."

"You have the opportunity to contribute to the future, for having the opportunity to have lived now". from A Guy Named Joe - 1944



FEASIBILITY STUDY

Your Board of Directors needs your input —



A proposal was forwarded at the October 18 Board of Directors meeting to determine the feasibility of printing a special Souvenir Journal for the Silver Anniversary meeting of the Historical Society in Savannah in 1999. Our 25th Anniversary - a milestone for the Mighty Eighth.

Anyone will be able to purchase an individual tax deductible notice, advertisement, or memorial to a person, group, crew, squadron, aircraft, or organization of your choice. You send no money or order now, but the Board needs to know your wishes and interest in such a project. At the present time there is no assurance the Journal will be printed - it depends on the interest of our members. Take a few minutes, if you think you may support such a project, and send in the form below. No obligation for an order or donation at this time, of course. We will give you a followup on the consensus in the March 99 8th AF NEWS.

I am interested in participating in a Silver Anniversary Memorial Souvenir Journal, and plan to purchase space. My suggestions are:

MEMORIAM TO MY MECHANICS ON MY GROUND CREW THAT MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR US TO HAVE 143 MISSIONS WITH NO ABORTS AND A BRONZE STAR MEDAL FOR ME

Signed: Name Ernest H Barber MEMBER #14801

Address: 5726 THOMSON HWY
LINCOLNTON, GA. 30817

Mail this form to:
Mr. Abraham "Hap" Galfunt
110 East End Ave.
New York, N.Y. 10028-7420

FAX: 718-274-8588

PROCLAMATIONS

Northern Alabama cities took an active part in supporting Proclamations for Mighty Eighth Air Force Week



Nassau County Executive Gulotta, presents Proclamation. L-R Bernard Mirotznik, Thomas S. Gulotta, Larry Goldstein and Anthony Zotolo.



Proclamation by Mayor David M. Kieck, of South Milwaukee, WI
L-R: Lt. Col. Don Almon, David Brouchoud, Mayor Kieck, Lt. Col. Joe Longo and Sgt. Harold Baylerian (retiree radio operator 381 BG (H))



Chairman of the Orange County California Board of Supervisors Jim Silva presenting the Proclamation for Mighty Eighth Air Force Week to Secretary Dick Baynes



The 447th Bomb Group was out in full force and here are three of the best. Left to right, holding two of the many proclamations of Eighth Air Force Week are Murray Codman, President 447th BG, Jack Keller, and Byron Schlag, President of the NCAC.

December 1998 (98-4)

Planning Committee Report

Pursuant to issues acted upon at the March 27, 1998 midyear Meeting and reported in the May 1998 8th Air Force NEWS, p. 31:

I. Our Membership Records office has been established and constructed within the Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah, GA. It is managed by Mrs. Kathy McCurry. This occurred as a result of negotiations on our behalf by President Norman C. Grant with 8th A.F. Heritage Museum (C.E.O) General Buck Schuler as anticipated in item I of the 3/27/98 Planning Committee Report.

II. Annual Meeting site selection is now proceeding at the rate of 2 years in advance as anticipated in item II of the 3/27/98 Planning Committee Report.

III. Pursuant to item III of the 3/27/98 Planning Committee Report, President Grant requested the 8th Air Force Memorial Museum Foundation to retrieve founder John Woolnough's memorabilia collection from the Penn State University Library, per his family's request, so that they could be put on full daily display in the Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum, as Col. Woolnough desired.

New issues currently introduced:

I. Reference is made to the proposal of Mr. Arlo Bartsch. Mr. Bartsch will be introduced to demonstrate and speak for his database proposal and it is hereby urged by this Committee that every Board member and every Society member apprise themselves of Mr. Bartsch's plans. They hold the potential of great fulfillment for the central goals of our Society - indeed, of the Heritage Museum and M.M.F. as well. Arlo has essentially completed the database for his own 379th Bomb Gp; and with full cooperation of the 44th Bomb Gp he has proceeded very far on their behalf. We strongly urge that each Society member apprise him/herself of Mr. Bartsch's progress on our behalf and find what he still needs from each of us to complete his project.

Tom Parsons, Vice President, and Chairman, Planning Committee

"ANOTHER JET FLYS INTO THE RECORD BOOK" Sage of an Me-262.

How arrogant they fly above the rest,
Certain in the belief that they are the best.
A patient hunter, I watch and case,
Patrolling hot, between Jets and their base.

Low on fuel, they head for home,
Required to glide past where I roam.
Now the playing field is free,
He has to get by me plus three!

Submitted by:
Harry R. Corey 339th FG 505th FS

DUXFORD COMMEMORATES PIONEER SPITFIRE SQUADRON WITH NEW EXHIBITION



One of the RAF's oldest and most distinguished squadrons has been commemorated in a new exhibition at the Imperial War Museum Duxford near Cambridge. Whilst based at Duxford in 1938, No. 19 Squadron became the first RAF squadron to operate the new Supermarine Spitfire. The exhibition opened at Duxford's Spitfire Air Show on May 2 and marked the sixtieth anniversary of the famous fighter entering RAF service. Members of No. 19 Squadron past and present attended the opening.

The exhibition documents the Squadron's First World War and Second World War actions right through to its activities today as a training unit operating Hawk jets at RAF Valley in North Wales.

One of the largest public gatherings of Spitfires since the end of the Second World War took place at The Imperial War Museum Duxford near Cambridge. Over 25 examples of the legendary fighter were at The Spitfires Air Show to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the Spitfire entering Royal Air Force service. The show ended with magnificent Spitfires in formation over Duxford - believed to be the biggest Spitfire formation in the UK for over half a century.

Possibly the best - known combat aircraft of all time, the Spitfire was developed from a series of high performance sea-planes.

The aircraft first captured the British public's imagination by the part it played alongside the Hurricane in RAF Fighter Command's victory during the Battle of Britain in 1940. Hitler's Luftwaffe was kept at bay, the invasion of Britain was cancelled, and the Spitfire became a symbol of British determination.

Towards the end of the Second World War, the squadron re-equipped with American built Mustangs and by the end of the war, No. 19 had claimed 145 enemy aircraft destroyed, 24 probably destroyed and 57 damaged. Eleven Distinguished Flying Crosses and eight Distinguished Flying Medals were awarded to squadron pilots.

Post-war, the squadron operated de Havilland Hornet single seat fighters and in 1951 entered the jet age with Gloster Meteors. In 1956 the squadron converted to Hawker Hunters, and in 1962 to March 2 English Electric Lightnings.



UNIQUE BATTLE OF BRITAIN AIRCRAFT ARRIVES AT DUXFORD

A unique Battle of Britain-vintage Messerschmitt Bf109E aircraft has been acquired by the Imperial War Museum Duxford, near Cambridge. The Messerschmitt is the only surviving example that was forced down during the Battle of Britain. It will undergo a two year restoration and will eventually be displayed at Duxford in a reconstructed scene of its 1940 crash-landing.

"Now is the time to return"

Maximum Effort

July 7-15, 1999

A nostalgic return to England to visit your old airbase during WWII. Visit the new American Air Museum at Duxford Imperial War Museum and the air show on July 11, 1999. The basic land package is for 9 days and 7 nights. A tour to Normandy and the landing beaches will be offered as an optional extension after the tour to England ending in Paris. Option will be for 7 nights. All tours are open to all families, friends, children and grandchildren.

Attention Fighter Pilots: If you would be interested in attending German Fighter pilots reunion sometime late September /early October near Frankfurt, please contact me. Dick.

-----Tear Off Here and Return-----

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Your Telephone Number (Include Area Code) _____

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B-24 BRONZE MEMORIAL DEDICATION

by Neal Sorensen, 489th Bomb Group



Colorado Springs, Colorado

God's golden sunshine bathed the more than 500 B-24 veterans, their families and personnel of the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs as they assembled in the Honor Court on September 25, 1998 for the dedication of a Bronze B-24 sculpture funded by the B-24 Groups Memorial, Inc. The sculpture, by noted artist Robert Henderson, had been planned for several years and drew widespread support from many veterans of the Mighty Eighth.

The colors were posted, honors played, and the National Anthem was sung by 2nd Lt. Holly Vandehei. Receiving the sculpture for the Academy was Superintendent of the Academy Lt. General Tad J. Oelstrom, whose remarks of appreciation honored all who had flown, built, and maintained the Liberator. He cited the fact that the B-24 sculpture stood to remind each Academy cadet to learn and appreciate the history of WWII and the role that those who fought, and the B-24, played in defeating the Axis Powers.

Others taking part in the ceremonies were General John Brooks, III; Ray Pytel, B-24 Groups secretary; Alfred Asch, Vice-President; and Robert Henderson, sculptor. A special



The crowd, the sculpture, and the Rockies

tribute was given to the late President Jay Jeffries of the 453rd Bomb Group. Chaplain Scott Ofsdahl concluded the ceremony with a Benediction of God's Grace and Protection for each and all.

The luncheon which followed filled the Officer's Club and NCO Club to overflowing. At the evening banquet, 2nd AD President Earl Wassom spoke on the future of the WWII

Associations and Col. Pat Rosenow, whose daughter is a cadet, described the organization of the graduates of the Academy. A special tribute was given to Norma Beasley for her superb work in organizing the event.



Neal Sorensen and the bronze B-24



A rare photo taken at Dayton, Ohio. Standing from the left: Major Robert Morgan and Captain James A. Verenis, pilot and co-pilot of the 91st Bomb Group B-17 *Memphis Belle*, visiting with Orville Wright, inventor of the airplane, and Colonel Deeds, Chairman of the Board of the National Cash Register Corporation.

POLISH AIR FORCE EXHIBIT DEDICATED



The honor guard raises the Polish Flag which proudly flies at the entrance of the Heritage Museum

At a special dedication ceremony September 19, the Polish Air Force and its members were honored at the official opening of the Polish Air Force exhibit at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah. The day at the museum was dedicated to those Polish fliers who served with valor, many of whom are active members of the Polish Air Force Veterans Association and who attended the ceremonies. Prior to the ribbon cutting of the exhibit, speeches relating the unique history of the Polish Air Force were made by several notable guests, including Col. Wojciech Kolaczowski, Commander of the 1st Polish Fighter Wing; Col. Francis "Gabby" Gabreski, 8th AF pilot and America's top fighter Ace; Col. Waldemar Dziegielewski, the Polish Military Attache' in Washington; and K. Steve Rasiej, President of the Polish Air Force Veterans Association.

Special awards were presented by Heritage Museum

Chairman Lt. General E. G. "Buck" Shuler to the honored guests. A reception in the Art Gallery and a special film showing of "Eagles in Borrowed Skies - The Polish Air Force in WWII" were held following the ceremonies. The exhibit will remain on permanent display in the Combat Gallery of the Heritage Museum as a recognition of the accomplishments, their contributions to freedom, and valor of the Polish airmen.



Gabby Gabreski applauds as dedication medals are presented by Buck Shuler

*Warsaw's last champion from her height surveyed,
Wide o'er the fields, a waste of ruin laid;
"O Heaven!" he cried, "my bleeding country save! —
Is there no hand on high to shield the brave?
Yet, though destruction sweep these lovely plains,
Rise, fellow men! our country yet remains!
By that dread name, we wave the sword on high,
And swear for her to live - with her to die!"*

POLAND from The Pleasures of Hope



Honored guests at Polish Air Force Day

REUNIONS

SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

8th Air Force 2nd Air Division Association, will hold a reunion January 23, 1999 in Orlando, Florida. Contact Teddy Egan, 2619 Lafayette Ave., Winter Park, Fl. 32789-1372 (407) 644-5439

466th Bomb Group Association

April 8-14, 1999
Savannah, GA - Days Inn
Contact: Lou Loevsky

446TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

May 19-23 1999 in Tucson, Arizona at the Viscount Suite Hotel. Contact: Marv Anderson, 8411 East Albion Place, Tucson, AZ 85715. (520) 296-4829

34TH BOMB GROUP

September 15-19, 1999 in Des Moines, IA at the Savery Hotel. Contact: Harold Rutka, 11 East Artavia Street, Duluth MN. 55811-2330 (218)724-1667

364th Fighter Group(WWII)

Honington, Eng, 8th AF, and Support Units Reunion September 20-26 1999 Albuquerque Hilton/Fairfield Inn by Marriott, Albuquerque, N.M. Contact: Dan Leftwich, 6630 Caldero CT, Dayton, OH, 45415 (937) 890-3641



Heritage Museum Growing Stronger...

The "Spirit of the Mighty Eighth" is alive and well at Savannah's Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum! We are enjoying a banner year with attendance up 32% over last year and school group visits on the rise over 30%. By the end of the year, over 100,000 visitors will have flown The Mission, toured the Combat Gallery, enjoyed The Mighty Eighth and Freedom Theaters, and paused to reflect on the sacrifice and valor in the Memorial Gardens. Our library & Archive Department is busy cataloging individual and group mission experiences and new exhibits are being added every month. Derrell Westberry and his exhibits team are busy preparing for the exciting Gil Cohen Art Exhibit.

Our visiting teachers tell us the Museum is a great field trip experience and John Edwards, our new Director of Education, has introduced some exciting new programs, including a series we call our "Heritage of Values". The program features dramatic reenactments portraying patriotism, self-sacrifice, courage, valor, creativity, and love of country. These values are truly hallmarks of The Mighty Eighth. In just two-and-a-half years, the Museum

has become a "must-see" for history and aviation enthusiasts from around the world. On a recent Saturday, we had six Russians, four Brits, and two Frenchmen in the Museum. That same day, seven historic aircraft flew in from Tampa, Florida with renowned airman Henry Bohler in the lead plane. His group spent the day at the Museum and shared some great memories with other visitors and staff.

On your next Museum visit, don't miss our new Founder's Wall and Sustaining Donor's Wall. This new donor recognition program will honor individual, corporate, and group gifts of \$1,000 and more. It is these special people and groups who help us keep the memories alive for future generations.



Barry M. Buxton, Ph.D.
President & CEO
The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage
Museum

B-24 Witchcraft

For some time Isaac Fesmire and his wife had planned a trip to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum from their home in McComb, Mississippi and were enjoying their day experiencing the many features of the museum. Walking through the Combat Gallery of exhibits they noticed a group of workers securing a large 1/6 scale model of a B-24 preparing to hang it high, in flight, over the displays. The surprise was that the Robert Henderson wooden replica of the bronze Liberator recently dedicated at the Air Force Academy was painted in detailed colors of the B-24 *Witchcraft* that Isaac and crew 51, 467th BG, 790th BS, flew their missions in. The model, donated by several Bomb Groups of the 2nd AD now flies in the 2nd Air Division tribute area of the Heritage Museum. Taking part in the placing of the model in the museum made the Fesmire's trip to Savannah a very special visit to remember.

Standing L-R: 1st Lt. J.R. Ross, 2nd Lt. Eugene Garrett, 2nd Lt. Stanley Spinweber. Kneeling L-R: Sgt. John Kindra, Sgt. Richard Fletcher, Sgt. Isaac Fesmire, Sgt. Luther Hallman. Crew members not pictured: Sgt. Frank Giosta, Sgt. Walter



*Isaac Fesmire reunited with his 467th Bomb Group B-24 *Witchcraft**

MODEL DISPLAY AT THE ANNUAL REUNION

One of the highlights of the exhibit room during the annual reunion was the fantastic display of workmanship shown by the area modelists - members of the International Plastic Modelers Society. The four chapters participating exhibited over 170 scale models, all related to US forces who served in WWII. Some were built by 8th AF veterans who actually flew in them; there were on display fighters from every 8th Air Force Fighter Group. There were also examples showcasing aircraft flown by the German Luftwaffe, the Royal Air Force, and the Polish Air Force. Michael Dobrzelecki states that one of his models is part of the permanent Polish Air Force - Little Friends Exhibit at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum.

IPMS Chapter members were available throughout the reunion to talk to the hundreds of attendees who stopped to enjoy their displays. Several 56th FG pilots, General Mike Jackson, Leo Batista, and Leonard Malmud saw their personal airplanes in the exhibit. The IPMS supports veterans organizations, museums, and military units with their expertly built models. Their members who participated in our reunion deserve a hearty thanks for their interest and efforts in adding a significant addition to the activities in Cherry Hill.



8th Air Force B-17G's "Out House Mouse" and "Nine O 'Nine" on display alongside a U. S. flown RAF Mosquito recon aircraft and a B-17E from the 88th Recon Squadron, which flew into Hawaii in the middle of the Japanese Air Raid on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, built by New Jersey modelers.



L-R Kneeling: Bob La Padura and Mike Dobrzelecki L-R Standing: John Rucks, Fred Yarema, Roger A. Freeman, & G. Moss



New Jersey Modelers display their work, including P-47's from the 56th FG flown by Polish pilots, Gabreski, Lanowski and Gladych, along with a P-26 "Peashooter", P-36A Mohawk, as they appeared on December 7, 1941, Wheeler and Bellows Field, Hawaii, and a Polish PZL P.11c flown in September 1939.

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMORIAL CHAPEL FUND

The Memorial Chapel Fund Drive is nearing its goal, with thanks to all who have sent in checks to the Fund Drive account. We are ready to begin on final plans and blueprints and then start construction in early 1999. These will be accomplished as soon as we reach our total amount. We are looking forward to a very special dedication ceremony at the Chapel site in the Memorial Gardens at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah during our 25th Anniversary Annual

Reunion in October 1999.

We are almost there! Contributions amount to approximately \$265,000 aiming at a **goal of \$350,000** and we ask each member to help us reach a 100% total of our goal. The Memorial Chapel will be a very special presence at the Heritage Museum. A special place of memory and meditation and honor. Please take a few moments and send the coupon below in to the Chapel Fund and make the dream a reality. Donations are tax deductible and all donors will be recorded and remembered in a special Donor Recognition Book to be on permanent display at the Museum. Together we can make this mission a success!



AF HS MEMORIAL CHAPEL FUND DRIVE

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AMOUNT
\$ _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

GROUP OR
UNIT _____

Please send this form & make check/money order payable to: 8AFHS Chapel Drive
Send your contribution to: Historical Society Fund Drive P.O. Box 1787 Savannah, GA 31402

A STRANGER AND ALONE

We are the insolent invaders with many uniforms
Who have come to England from far away
Bringing gifts of chewing gum and Chesterfields.
We are the harsh strangers - the vain, hearty foreigners,
The aliens thoughtlessly trampling your calm vineyards.

The slim colored boys send our heavy trucks
Screaming along your narrow roads.
The big tanks rip up the pavings
Of your ancient towns.
The jeeps and weapons carriers
Do fifty-five around your Z-shaped curves.
The half-tracks hold your traffic up for hours.
The country side rings
With the blare and whirl of our machines.

We are loud and fast and wild and lusty.
We are drunken, proud, hard and potent.
We could drink your island dry if you would let us.
We are the terrible, mischievous warriors
From far away.
We are, I'm afraid,
Just a trifle bestial
For your highly tempered tastes.

But, England,
Understand us!
Though we sneer and boast in the pubs,
Consuming your beer and belittling your glory,
We tremble and are afraid in the streets
Before the blind audience of closed doors.
We are young men whose roots
Have been left far behind
In strange places called Brooklyn and Sacramento and
Tucson and Thief River Falls and Council Bluffs and
Cincinnati and Coon Hollow.
We have been torn from the soil where we grew
And flung like exiles across an ocean
To a land we never dreamed of.

We are bewildered and weary,
Lonely to the point of madness,
And if we shout and curse
Through our quiet dreams,
Forgive us.

We are merely looking for a way to go home.

Stars and Stripes, 1944
by Pfc. John Behm

Farewell From England

Dear Sirs:

Quite a few of us over here would like to say how very sorry we are to be saying goodbye to your boys. We've had them in our homes ever since they first came over so we feel we're losing many good friends. Their never-failing cheeriness helped us in our bad times: they were fairy godfathers to our children, and they gave their girl friends the time of their lives. Their lack of convention was maybe startling at times but it did us good and melted some of our reserve! We're all very very grateful for all you've done for us--and to the memory of those brave boys who will never leave Europe. Please write to us and in the meantime good luck and Godspeed to a happy journey's end. In your language, it's sure been swell meeting you guys.

Mrs. E. Wilkinson, Norfolk, England
from YANK - July 7, 1945



"God's Spirit falls on me, as dewdrops on a rose,
If I but, like a rose, my heart to Him disclose.
In all eternity no tone can be so sweet
As when man's heart with God's in unison doth beat.
Whate'er thou lovest, man, that, too, become thou must--
God, if thou lovest God; dust, if thou lovest dust."



**LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
SOLICITS MILITARY MAPS**

The Library of Congress is undertaking an initiative to identify and acquire for the national map collection cartographic materials which document military operations.

While the Library holds the largest map collection in the world, including an extensive collection of topographic maps issued during wartime, it lacks examples of maps actually used in war planning and in combat operations. Maps that record the military experiences of our nation's heroes are an important addition to the Library's collections and help tell the complete story of how maps were used during our nation's wars. Each donated map will be preserved and catalogued with full credit given to the donor.

If you have cartographic materials that you wish to have considered for this preservation program, please contact:

**Ralph E. Ehrenberg, Chief
Geography and Map Division
Phone: (202)707-8530
Fax: (202)707-8531
e-Mail: rehr@loc.gov**

10TH REPLACEMENT DEPOT

During the years 1942-45 many U.S. military personnel passed through or spent varying amounts of time at the 10th Replacement Depot at Whittington Barracks, Linchfield, and Pheasey Farms Estates, near Birmingham, England.

Two Britons, Bob Webb and Martin Collins, are writing a history of this "Repple Depple". Webb was among the youthful hordes whose U.K. welcome mat echoed the chant, "Any gum, chum?", while Collins' interest in the lives and times of Yanks in Britain stems from his family and acquaintances who worked at the First Base Post Office at Sutton Coldfield.

The authors are being assisted by 8th AFHS Associate Member Bill Beatty. Anyone who has information, experiences, or photographs they would like to share is invited to contact either:

**William E. Beatty 194 Connor Dr. Henrietta, NY 14467
Phone: 716-359-1659**

**Robert Webb 53 Gainsborough Crescent Birmingham
B34 7LB ENGLAND
England Phone: 0121 360 8752**

**BURTONWOOD ASSOCIATION AND
HERITAGE CENTRE RAF BURTONWOOD**

RAF Burtonwood was the largest military airbase in the UK during World War Two and was responsible for the handling of over 15,000 US aircraft and for the maintenance of all the aircraft of the United States 8th, 9th, 12th, and 15th Air Forces. These covered the geographical area of the UK, Europe, Mediterranean and Middle East. In addition to the 18,500 US servicemen and women based on Burtonwood itself, it was responsible for another 30 bases in the UK and probably over 50,000 personnel.

Built as an RAF base, Burtonwood opened in April 1940 just in time to supply Spitfires to the Battle of Britain. Simultaneously

a civilian aircraft factory, known as Burtonwood Repair Depot, was developed, both utilizing a common airfield. The RAF gave up the base to the USAAF in 1942 and took it back after the war in 1946. In fact Burtonwood was the last USAF base in the UK to be handed back to the RAF. After two years acting as a storage depot for surplus RAF aircraft it was passed back the USAF in 1948 to support the US strategic bombers stationed in the UK, and it overhauled the US aircraft taking part in the Berlin Airlift.

The Burtonwood Association was formed in 1987 to perpetuate the memory of the men and women who have served at RAF Burtonwood, Warrington, England from 1940 to 1993, and their achievements. With a membership of approximately 1,000 the Association is open to anyone with an interest in the base. Yearly dues are \$12.00. The Association produces a quarterly magazine entitled "The Burtonwood Times" which mixes historical fact and photographs with current activities on the site and of the Association itself.



**Tom Conley 2946 Savannah CT WACO TX 76710-1739
Ian P Murphy 78 Chapel Lane Burtonwood Warrington
Cheshire WA5 4PS**

**LOUISIANA GOVERNOR PROCLAIMS
"MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE WEEK"**

BARKSDALE AIR FORCE BASE, La, Governor M. J. 'Mike' Foster signed a proclamation declaring Oct. 8-14 as "Mighty Eighth Air Force Week" in Louisiana.

Governor Foster received the request from the Eighth Air Force Historical Society, the largest veterans group from a single military unit, with a membership of 20,000. The Society was formed in 1975, and now seeks to tell later generations of the contributions and sacrifices made by the many Eighth Air Force members. The Society members urged the governor to help celebrate the many accomplishments of the Command during this week, especially since Louisiana is home of Eighth Air Force headquarters. "We're very proud Governor Foster chose this week to recognize the important contributions the men and women of the "Mighty Eighth" have made to our nation's defense," said Lieutenant General Ron Marcotte, Eighth Air Force commander.

**WILLIAM F. DAVENPORT,
446TH BGA HISTORIAN**

states that the 446th Bomb Group Assn. this year published its second book, the third about the 446th. As every thing, this third book is the best to date. It was authored by the former editor of a major news magazine and shows those many years of professionalism in its subject matter and lay out. It is not a history, but a collection of events of those war years.



ROGER, FREEMAN 8TH AIR FORCE HISTORIAN AND NARRATOR

A conversation with Roger Freeman at the recent annual reunion revealed an interesting item. Roger, the official 8th Air Force Historian who has researched and written dozens of books on the Mighty Eighth, will be included as a narrator on a tour of airbases and related sites in England, May 9th - 17th, 1999. This is a unique opportunity to "hear it like it was" for two days of the tour from the top authority on the 8th Air Force in World War II. The trip is being organized by a British agency and is limited to a small select number of 8th veterans and families. There is an American contact for information about the trip at 1-800-233-6101.

TRANS-ATLANTIC COUNCIL OF BOY SCOUTS

A son of an 8th Air Force veteran, Major John J. Powers, is involved with the Trans-Atlantic Council of Boy Scouts and writes to say that a benefit will be held to promote the Scouting movement and its programs of loyalty, patriotism and character values to children of military service members stationed throughout the world. He offers up some interesting statistics. Alumni of the Boy Scout programs are: 71% of football captains and 65% of basketball captains, 72% of Rhodes scholars,

65% of college graduates, 65% of members of Congress, 85% of airline pilots, and 94% of Americans who have walked on the moon. The 8th AF Historical Society will sponsor a \$100 donation and be recognized at one of the holes in their Golf Tournament Benefit held at the Heidelberg, Germany Golf Club.

General Carl A. Spaatz Memorial Association

Col. Harry Yoder flew 38 missions with the 44th BG and realized that one of the goals of 8th AF Commander Carl "Tooley" Spaatz during WWII was the protection of his aircrews. Tooley Spaatz was a quiet man with strong convictions about leadership. He rarely compromised his position. Now Harry Yoder is working to repay the favor to Spaatz's memory.

The Spaatz Memorial is an area in downtown Boyertown, PA and tells the story of their hometown boy. The memorial site is landscaped with plaques and flags as part of its features. Yoder and his Board are planning to pave the entire area with walkways and patios of memorial bricks which they offer for sale, with your personal engraving, for \$35 private and \$60 corporate, tax deductible. The individual bricks will add to the memorial serving as remembrances of those who served and of loved ones. Each brick can hold a total of 28 letters. Send your donation check and your message to be engraved to: General Carl A. Spaatz Memorial Fund, 200 Orchard Hills Drive, Boyertown, PA. 19512.

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 8TH AFHS

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Send your information to Jim Erskine!



The Headquarters of the 493rd Bomb Group rendered in oil by Raymond Gurga, Public Relations Officer and Historical photographer while stationed in Debach, England 1944-1945.

**The 8th AF NEWS
wishes everyone
in the
8th Air Force
Historical Society**



WALL OF VALOR

In the Heritage Museum Gardens in Savannah near the long reflecting pool, there is The *Wall of Valor*, much like the impressive Memorial Wall in the American Cemetery in Cambridge, England. It is constructed of stone with beautiful dark green inscription panels for each name. Eighth Air Force veterans may have permanent recognition inscribed on this Wall of Valor by contributing a **donation**

of \$150 to the continuing development of the beautiful Memorial Gardens. The museum staff is ready to assist you with your order.

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You may order by phone:
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And the Glory of the Lord

Ring out, oh voices, in glad hosanna! Ring out... from solemn cathedral and simple chapel, from distant ship and island shore. Lift heavenward a hymn whose message fills the world with hope.

To men free to sing their faith, Christmas, this year, comes as a day of deep rejoicing. To men still fettered, yet unafraid, it offers new-forged comfort. To both, it is a time of prayer that may soon know fulfillment. . . .

For the light of peace is lengthening, and there is promise that at last the forces of hatred shall be banished from the earth. . . that the hearts of all peoples, shadowed by great sacrifice and sorrowing, shall once again hold only mercy and goodwill.

Then the truth shall triumph over tyranny.
And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed.

"The hottest places in hell are reserved for those who, in a period of moral crisis, maintain their neutrality"
- Dante Alighieri

The celebration of Christmas inevitably couples two places - the home and the church. In the home we feast, we sing or read, roast apples about the roaring fire on the hearth, or we gather round the Christmas tree, so gay with tinsel, so bright with twinkling lights, with star above in memory of Bethlehem's Star, and the gifts that hang from the fragrant branches or cluster about the base. How eagerly the children take their first peep at the wonderful tree! Their rapturous exclamations are ample pay for the hours spent in decorating the tree.

Perhaps you have read the inimitable description of home delights about the Christmas tree in F. Hopkinson Smith's Colonel Carter's Christmas: "Soon there stole over everyone in the room the sense of peace and contentment which always comes when one is at ease in an atmosphere where love and kindness reign. The soft light of the candles, the low, rich color of the simple room with its festoons of cedar and pine, the spicy smell of the hemlock warmed by the burning tapers. . . all had their effect on hosts and guests."

From "Riders on the Earth" by Archibald Macleish

There are some things in life which have a poignance which does not belong so much to them as to the human circumstances which surround them - to the fact that they are common human experiences -- experiences in common. War is one. No decent man ever fought a war without hating it. But, at the same time, no decent man ever lived through the fighting of a war who did not remember, all his life long, the deep, almost inexplicable, satisfaction of the common struggle, the common risk.

I tried once to find words for this in a poem about my generation's war - what is now called, ironically, the first World War...

Why are the old soldiers brothers and nearest?

For this; with their minds they go over the sea a little and find themselves in their youth again as they were in Soissons and Meaux and Ypres and those cities.

A French loaf and the girls with their eyelids painted bring back to ageless and lonely men the twentieth year and the metal odor of danger.

It is this in life, which, of all things is the tenderest-- to remember together with unknown men the days common also to them and perils ended.

In war, it is true, as my poem puts it, that: "the brotherhood is not by the blood certainly, but neither are men brothers by speech, by saying so: Men are brothers by life lived and are hurt for it."

We know the feel of it (War), the desperate excitement, the triumph, the despair - above all the sense of those with us who know it also - feel it as we feel it. It is this which gives (War) its power over our memories and minds - a power which those who have never fought find inexplicable - even incredible.

And it is this too which gives the memory something more than its power over us - Which gives it its potential importance in our troubled society, and particularly in that part of our society where the troubles are the troubles of the young. For one of the deepest troubles of the young in the world we live in is precisely the loss, the lack, of the deep delight of the common labor.





8th AF News

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

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Ever that same Star...

That star has never failed us yet—it won't fail us now. The darker the night, the brighter it seems to burn.

It is a beacon of hope—a promise of the secure new tomorrow for which mankind is striving.

Swifter than any plane, swifter than radio, swifter than the thoughts of men, its spirit travels around this earth—carrying, even against the distractions of war, its age-old message of hope and assurance.

And that star's bright gleam reflects the greeting sent across the miles to the ends of the world—a greeting to every man and woman in the service of their country—a greeting from your neighbors—from your friends—from all America.

Another year may be different—let's hope it is. Let's keep our eyes on that star with its promise of peace—another year and another Yuletide when again we will hear your familiar voice shouting—"Merry Christmas!"