



8th AF NEWS

VOLUME 99 NUMBER 4 Voice of "THE MIGHTY EIGHTH" DECEMBER 1999



Seasons

Greetings...

And Happy New Year "2000"





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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OFFICERS

President R.C. Dick Baynes (Margaret)
71 Nighthawk
Irvine, CA 92604-3693
Tel. (949)552-3889
FAX (949)551-2151
e-mail rcbaynes@hotmail.com

Vice President Norman C. Grant (Margaret)
7633 Thomas Avenue South
Richfield, MN 55423-3517
Tel. (612)866-7974
Off. (612)934-3456
FAX (612)934-3939

Secretary C. Craig Harris (Bobbie)
2910 Welcome Drive
Durham, NC 27705-5556
Tel. (919)489-5685

Treasurer N. Kenneth Nail (Ethelda)
1211 Eugene St.
Tupelo, MS 38801
Tel. (601)844-2488
Off. (601)844-1553

STAFF

PX Manager
Mark S. Copeland, (Monica)
16264 Goodview Trail
Lakeville, MN 55044
Tel. (818)953-0121

Membership Records Manager
Kathy McCurry, Manager
Connie Metts
PO Box 1787
Savannah, GA 31402
Tel. (912)748-8884

Directors Emeritus

Sherman Small
Robert Vickers

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Walter E. Brown, MD (Alice)
Ewell Farm, 2340 Sugar Ridge Road
Spring Hill, TN 37174
Tel. (931)486-2968

Abraham "Hap" Galfunt (Kathy)
110 East End Avenue #1-C
New York, NY 10028
Tel. (212)731-9388
FAX (718)274-8588

Lawrence Goldstein (Dorothy)
64-13 Madison St.
Ridgewood, NY 11385-4629
Tel. (718)386-8635

W. Henry Hughey (Jean)
1529 Delia Drive
Decatur, GA 30033-3373
Tel. (770)939-2462

Ivan L. McKinney (Mary)
331 Greenacres Blvd.
Bossier City, LA 71111
Tel. (318)742-0895
e-mail IVANMCKINNEY@prodigy.com

Thomas S. Parsons (Sara)
2091 Black Fox Drive, NE
Atlanta, GA 30345
Tel. (404)634-5012
FAX (404)634-9594

John S. Pearson
11305 Blendon Lane
Richmond, VA 23233
Tel. (804)740-2635

Stanley A. Peterson (Lois)
1644 12th Fairway
Wellington, FL 33414-5934
Tel. (561)793-8231

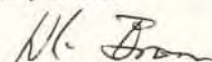
The 25th Anniversary Annual Reunion of the 8th Air Force Historical Society in Savannah was a great week and a great success, according to over 700 people who attended. It was a solid team effort and for a Silver Anniversary, was as good as gold. The interactions



among the planners - Donna Lee of Armed Forces Reunions, the Staff of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, the Georgia Chapter and the Savannah Wing members, the Eighth Air Force at Barksdale AFB, your Board of Directors and its Reunion Committee and the staff at the Marriott Hotel Riverfront - filled the days with special activities and events which will be long remembered. Appreciation goes out to all those who took part. A taste of Reunion happenings will be found in this issue of the 8th AF NEWS.

The annual Board of Directors meeting held on the Sunday following the reunion welcomed the new members of the Board as elected by the general membership the previous day. A productive meeting with our newly-inaugurated Society officers set the course of the organization for the upcoming year. A thorough and detailed examination of our financial status, budget, and all aspects of our expenses was instituted at this meeting, with the immediate and long-term viability of the Historical Society being its goal. Reports of the officers will address these plans and actions in this and future issues of the NEWS.

This Holiday issue presents some articles apart from our usual format for this final holiday season of the century. My thanks to each of you for your support and contributions to your newsmagazine this past year. Continue to keep in touch during 2000, send me your thoughts and articles, and may everyone have an end-of-the-century most Happy Holiday season!


Walter Brown, Editor
Ewell Farm
2340 Sugar Ridge Road
Spring Hill, TN 37174

Articles presented in the 8th AF NEWS, unless bylined or otherwise attributed, are written by the Editor. Please send your contributions of notices and articles directly to the Editor at this address.

The Eighth Air Force Memorial Museum Foundation 1999 Board Officers

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What a great 25th Reunion we had in Savannah! The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum rolled out the red carpet for us. The highlight was the ground breaking ceremony for the Chapel. It will soon be built there, financed chiefly by the generous contributions of you the members of the 8th Air Force Historical Society.

The Saturday night banquet was impressive and it is always a pleasure to see our current outstanding blue suit members of the 8th Air Force. As we honored all the Past Presidents of the Society, it makes me very humble, but proud to be following in their footsteps.

Congratulations to our hard working Reunion Committee, and to all of you who attended to make it the success that it was. Thanks also to outgoing President Harold Rutka who served as our Silver Anniversary President.

LT. COL. JOHN H. WOOLNOUGH

I had the privilege, at the banquet, of paying tribute to John Woolnough, the Founder of the 8th AFHS, and Editor of 8th AF NEWS for several years. What a dedicated individual! In his later years he had a total commitment to preserving the history of the 8th Air Force and the development of The Eighth Air Force Historical Society. As you have seen, we are honoring John through the establishment of a John H. Woolnough Endowment Fund and naming the library at the Heritage Museum, "The John H. Woolnough Memorial Library."

Information on how you can participate will be found elsewhere in this issue.

HEALTH OF THE SOCIETY

As for the health of the Society, the good news is that we will be heading on a more steady and harmonious course than we have been for some years. We have an excellent Board of Directors, from varied parts of the country and from various backgrounds, who will carry out the goals of the Society with the membership in mind.

The bad news is that with declining membership and increasing expenses, we are

going to be looking at every controllable cost to see how we can reduce expenses. This is never a pleasant task, but one that is necessary. A dues increase may possibly be required.

We have made and are continuing to make some transition of services. We apologize for last year's problem of processing membership dues and contributions, but now feel that the membership office is working smoothly and will continue to improve.

PRESIDENT'S PRIORITIES

As for my priorities in the coming year, the Society's quarterly magazine, 8th AF NEWS, is tops on the list. It reaches all our members and furthers the goals of the Society by preserving and disseminating the history and heritage of the 8th Air Force. I hope that you might help us share the magazine more widely.

SPONSORED SUBSCRIPTIONS

We are asking all members who can afford the annual \$10.00 fee to take a sample of our magazine 8th AF NEWS to their local library and offer to sponsor a subscription for the library. We will establish a new category, SPONSORED SUBSCRIPTIONS and that way the renewal notice will come to the sponsor and not the library. You may think of other organizations and individuals that you might want to sponsor.

CHAPTERS

The next priority is to encourage our Chapters to be an active part of our Society. Hopefully, the strong Chapters can pass along some of their ideas to the less active Chapters. We still have a few States with no Chapters, and some States have more than two, plus Wings. Jim Erskine, Chairman of the Chapter and Unit Development Committee is ready and willing to help.

MEMBERSHIP

The above priorities are geared to membership, but it also needs the personal touch. There are many members of the 8th Air

Force that don't know about the Society and there are many more post-WWII 8th Air Force Veterans and aviation enthusiasts who might like to join, if they knew about us. We are establishing a special committee to help get the word out, but you, our members, offer the best avenue to spread the word.



Richard Baynes

THE 8TH AIR FORCE MEMORIAL MUSEUM FOUNDATION

The educational arm of the Society, the 8th Air Force Memorial Museum Foundation is an important part of the 8th AFHS, but we have voted to discontinue the automatic per member funding of the Foundation. Future funding will be on a request basis. Since they have a significant sum of money in their treasury, we will probably skip any payment to the MMF in fiscal year 99-00, while we examine our own finances. The MMF will be looking to outside sources and member contributions for many of their future worthwhile projects.

REUNION 2000

Plan now for our reunion in Salt Lake City, Utah, October 18-22, 2000. Get your units together, assemble your crews and bring your family. We will have lots of activities and a fun time for all.

As we are embarking on the coming year, I am reminded of Solomon's prayer to God, 1st Kings, 3, Verse 9, "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?"

Dick Baynes, President



ON THE COVER: Early photos of American airmen include shots of Eagle Squadron fliers and Bomber crews from 1943, supplied by Leonard Alford. Several Christmases in England would be celebrated by the 8th Air Force Groups before peace was won.





WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Roger A. Freeman

Eighth Air Force or 8th Air Force? When first constituted the official designation was 8th Air Force but a subsequent amendment changed this from numerical to word form. However, both forms continued to be used on official documents throughout the wartime formation's existence. Thus while Eighth is the correct form, 8th is also historically acceptable.

What is not acceptable is *US 8th Army Air Force*. Many writers have been guilty of this error and none other than General Eaker gently rapped this sinner's knuckles for using it in the first edition of *The Mighty Eighth*. As he pointed out, great efforts had been made towards achieving an autonomous air force and the advent of the numbered air forces in 1941 was the first occasion the Army tag was dropped in force designations. Always the Eighth or 8th Air Force, never the Eighth or 8th Army Air Force.

With the passage of time wartime terminology tends to be forgotten or discarded. (In today's politically correct society some expressions then harmless would now be obscene!) Other terms which were rarely heard during World War II are now considered to have been commonplace in those days. A prime example is *Jug* for the P-47. It obviously originated during the war but it was not as supposed by many, including those who flew the fighter, a common nickname. It was never heard in many groups and I have never found one contemporary article that uses *Jug* for the P-47. Post-war yes, but not before 1945. Then we come to Bf 109 for the aircraft that was known as Me 109 by all Allied air forces and even by the German press: but that is another story.

Roger Freeman is a notable historian of the Mighty Eighth Air Force and a frequent contributor of interesting and informative articles.
-Editor



ITS MY OPINION...

Dear Walt:

The September issue was another truly outstanding job. Thank you.

I do not wish to prolong the debate about fighter escorts, prompted by my letter published in the June issue, and my friend Chet Hallberg's response in the September issue, but among other items, my reply to a question Chuck asked may be of interest to your readers.

Chet said, *Bill, surely remember the P-38s over Berlin, Munich, Kiel, Bremen, etc.!* Actually, during my B-24 tour, I do not remember seeing any P-38s, P-51s or P-47s, other than once in awhile seeing fighter contrails that we hoped were our *Little Friends*. However, during my second tour in P-51s, I distinctly remember a mission to Southern France, near the German border, when my wingman, Wild Willie Whelan, and myself had completed our primary task and were shepherded back to England to scout weather and enemy action on the way home for the small B-24 force that we had shepherded to the target.

Because of the adverse weather conditions, these were the only bombers and the four members of the Scouting Force, the only Allied fighters, in the entire 8th Air Force that were airborne. My wingman and I were separated from the other two Scouts. As we headed back towards England, Willie said over the radio, *Hey, Bootleg Deputy, look down about two o'clock. May be a bogie.* What I saw was a lone aircraft, about two-thousand feet below us, high-tailing from the direction of Germany, and apparently aimed at our bomber stream. It was a strange looking aircraft with twin booms, twin engines and a long, greenhouse nose. It was far enough away, and the visibility poor enough that we could not immediately see identification markings. It appeared to be painted a dark color.

With all the wisdom of a 20-year-old bomber pilot flying a fighter aircraft, I jumped to the conclusion this must be one of those Focke-Wulf 189s we had seen on aircraft identification cards. I told Willie to get ready to drop our wing tanks if necessary (we liked to bring those scarce tanks home), and that we were going to jump this guy. We started our dive. I was tense, ready to fire when within range. But soon we saw the U.S. star insignia and I told Willie to hold fire. We came up to the strange plane and discovered that this was really a modified P-38 with a bombardier nose. I had never seen one before or even heard of this strange bird. Later, I learned this was called a Droop Snoot, and that it would lead a gaggle of P-38s to a target, and they would drop their bombs when the bombardier in the Droop Snoot dropped his - just like the big boys. Did I see the P-38s in Europe, Chet? Yes, I did. Just one. *And I almost shot him down!*

May the P-38 Force Be With You,

C.W. "Bill" Getz 491st BG

Ex-everything
Burlingame, CA



SECRETARY'S REPORT

OCTOBER 31, 1999

The 8th AFHS Board of Directors met on Sunday, Oct. 31, 1999 and as a first item of business elected the following officers for 1999-2000:

President, Richard C. Baynes

Vice-President, Norman C. Grant, Sr.

Secretary, C. Craig Harris

Treasurer, N. Kenneth Nail

The Board heard the report of the PX Manager which showed a successful year together with an extensive revamping of the inventory. The Treasurer's report projected a deficit in the coming year, which will be addressed by a study of projected expenses and the dues structure by Executive Committee. A number of members of the Memorial Museum Foundation were present and took part in productive discussions, resulting in an improved outlook of coordination between the MMF and the Society in future planning and funding.

The Board agreed to endorse the efforts of Arlo Bartsch and The National Foundation for Military Heritage Data, which is developing its own funding.

Several changes in the Bylaws were approved for submission to the membership in a mail ballot in the near future.

The question of election of Directors by mail ballot is under study.

Means of increasing membership, particularly among bomber/fighter group members and associate members were discussed.

With a reminder that the next Annual Reunion will be held in **Salt Lake City, UT. Oct. 17-22, 2000**, the meeting was adjourned.



Craig Harris

Craig Harris, Secretary

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum

Mailing Address:

P. O. Box 1992 Savannah, Georgia 31402-1992 Address: 175 Bourne Ave. Pooler, GA 31322

EIGHTH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS 1999 - 2000

The newly elected members of the 8th AFHS Board of Directors attended the Board meeting following the annual reunion in Savannah and will assist in leading us into the 21st century, each new member serving a four-year term. New members are Tom Parsons, Georgia Chapter, who was re-elected for a second term of office; John Pearson, Virginia Chapter; Henry Hughey, Georgia Chapter; and Ivan McKinney, who will serve the remaining year of the term of retired Board member Hubert Childress.



**Sitting from left: Henry Hughey, Thomas Parsons, Abraham "Hap" Galfunt, John Pearson
Standing: Walter Brown, Norman Grant, Craig Harris, Richard Baynes, Stan Peterson,
Kenneth Nail, Ivan McKinney, Larry Goldstein**

NORFOLK WARTIME AIRFIELDS & THE 'MIGHTY EIGHTH'

Norfolk's flat landscape proved ideal to accommodate airfields. In 1939 there were just five operational airfields. By the end of the war there were 37. These created a massive influx of servicemen - English and American - which dramatically changed the predominantly rural area with its 700-plus villages.

This made Norfolk a prime target area for Luftwaffe air attacks. Norwich - the county capital - suffered its first air raid on 9 July 1940 - before London and any other provincial city. Almost daily and nightly the City's sirens sounded. But in the initial attack of the 9th no sirens sounded and the bombs on the Boulton & Paul factory came without warning, resulting in 26 people killed and many more injured. By the end of 1940 the air onslaught resulted in 260 separate raids. It was during the series of 'Baudecker' raids of 1942 that Norwich received its heaviest bombardment. On 27 April - at a half hour before midnight - a large enemy force approached Norwich. The railway station was the first building

under attack and quickly erupted into flames making it an ideal marker for the streams of bombers. Whole areas and streets were devastated in the raid which lasted 1 1/2 hours, leaving 158 people dead and 161 seriously injured. Not a single enemy aircraft was destroyed. Norwich immediately became a gun-defended area. Two nights later the Germans bombed Norwich again, this time killing 68 people. Again, two days later the Germans returned in strength but were hoodwinked by decoy lights and fires and dropped their bombs on nearby open countryside. The city suffered its last air attack on 6 November 1943.

During the raids a total of 1600 civilians had been killed or seriously injured, with 4,700 houses destroyed or seriously damaged.

For three years - from 1940 to 1943 - the huge and costly task of building the 37 airfields was undertaken. The Royal Air Force occupied 19 and the Americans 18. The first US airmen made their appearance in late 1942 and by the following

year the trickle became an avalanche. The sheer number of airfields in the country meant that Norfolk skies were hardly ever empty of aircraft. By day hundreds of American heavy bombers filled the sky, and by night there was the constant throb of R.A.F. bombers passing overhead. The lull between operational air traffic was taken up by low level training and test flights. During the late 1944 over 4,000 flights were mounted daily which resulted in some air collisions and accidents. Indeed, more Allied aircraft came to grief over Norfolk than any other English county, resulting also in the loss of civilian lives.

Even after D-Day the area of Norfolk suffered bombardment - but now it was from German unmanned projectiles - the V1 flying bomb and the V2 45-foot streamlined rocket.

- submitted by **Air Historian Roy Barker, Norwich England brother-in-law of HS member Eileen Pignatelli Bloomington, IL**

IF...

The Armchair strategist and tactician has the great advantage of hindsight when assessing long gone battles. Much is made of the failure of the self-defending bomber, epitomised by the B-17 and B-24, but rarely does one see or hear comment on the prime cause of the heavy losses the unescorted daylight bombers sustained. The .50 calibre Browning was a fine weapon but how could large aircraft, albeit with several of these weapons, stand up to enemy fighters firing 20mm cannon, let alone

the heavier calibres that the Luftwaffe later brought into service. For the self-defending bomber to have any hope of succeeding it required heavier calibre and longer ranged weapons than the enemy. Yet, neither the USAAF or RAF made any serious effort to use heavier armament on their bombers. Indeed, the largely ineffective rifle calibre .30 weapon was still being fitted in British production in the final year of the war, although many bomber squadrons replaced these with .50s. The Second Air Division did experiment with air launched rockets to combat the devastating 30 mm weapons introduced by the

Luftwaffe in the final stages of the conflict but it was all a bit late in the day. Extraordinarily, neither the British or Americans developed weapons for air fighting during the war, while the Luftwaffe developed several exclusively for the purpose. Most notable was the MK108, a simple but highly effective 30 mm cannon. As the P-47 was designed around a turbo-supercharging arrangement, perhaps the self-defending bomber should have been designed around batteries of 30 mm cannon. But it is easy to suggest answers years after the event.

Roger A. Freeman



EAGLE TOURS: MAY 28 THRU JUNE 4 - 2000 EAST ANGLIA

Wonderful Roger Freeman escorted Tour of Various World War II 8th AF Base sites which also includes admissions to numerous British Air Museums and the premier RAF Airshow of 2000. Hotels, most meals and transportation except air, which can be easily arranged by Ginger or John at 1-800-264-3401. This is one well-planned tour for all 8th AFers and friends. In association with exclusive Eagle Tours of Great Britain, professional, reasonably priced; a unique opportunity

to tour East Anglia with The Mighty Eighth Historian. "So successful this is a second tour! Very interesting as well as nostalgic and that is why I want to go again in case I may have missed something the first time" - Doug Anderson-Major, Nebraska.... "A nostalgic, well-planned trip and most informative with Roger Freeman along" - Ken Brown-Colonel, Calif. Call for pricing and an attractive brochure at the above 800 number.

ELLSWORTH CAPTURES 8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY AWARDS

By Master Sgt. Rick DelaHaya
8th Air Force Public Affairs

An Eighth Air Force B-1B bomber crew and non-commissioned officer stationed at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D., were honored recently for their contributions to the mission of the "Mighty Eighth" during the 8th Air Force Historical Society's annual reunion in Savannah.

Aircrew members from Slam 22 assigned to the 28th Bomb Wing received the Ira C. Eaker Outstanding Airmanship Award for 1998. Crew members included Captains Randy Kaufman, Jeffrey Taliaferro, Joseph Reidy, and John Martin. The Eaker Award is presented annually for an outstanding feat of military airmanship within the Eighth Air Force by an individual crew member or aircrew.

Senior Master Sgt. Michael Schull, 28th Operation Squadron, was also honored when he was presented the Pursuit of Excellence Award for 1998. This award is also present annually to an outstanding aircraft and munitions maintenance person of the year.

Both awards are sponsored by the 8th Air Force Historical Society. Eighth Air Force historian and best-selling author Roger Freeman presented both awards.

"When you look at these current Air Force service members, you are looking at the best in the military today," said Norman Grant, World War II veteran and former President of the Society. "They not only represent where we've been, but the future of our Mighty Eighth."

Key speaker and current 8th Air Force commander Lt. Gen. Ron Marcotte echoed Grant's sentiments. "These aircrew members and Sergeant Schull represent the professionalism and dedication that has become the signature of Eighth Air Force," said Marcotte, to more than 600 former Eighth Air Force veterans, society members, and guests. "These awards mean a lot not only to the folks that received them, but to every airman out there."

"Our airmen work hard and they very much appreciate the fact that there are people out there who recognize them and, in turn, appreciate their service. I am proud to have people of their caliber in your 'Mighty Eighth.'"

The aircrew of Slam 22 was cited for their airmanship skills while participating in the first operational combat sortie in the 15-year history of the B-1B. The mission was flown in support of USCENTCOM Operation DESERT FOX, a four-day bombing campaign against the Republic of Iraq.

Slam 22 was one of two B-1s to take part in a strike force consisting of U.S. Navy F-14s, F-18s, and EA-6Bs, whose mission was to attack Republican Guard barracks deep inside Iraq

territory. During the mission, the aircrew was able to fly into the target area, while evading both radar-guided surface-to-air missiles and anti-aircraft artillery, and successfully deployed their weapons, contributing to the success of the composite strike force. After assessment by in-theater intelligence experts, the target was officially listed as "target destroyed."

During this mission, Slam 22 released all weapons on their primary target, becoming the first crew in history of the B-1B to drop a full conventional weapons load in combat.

Later, in November 1998, with a different copilot, this crew was selected as the lead aircrew for the deployment flight in support of Operation DESERT THUNDER, and was subsequently nominated as the Air Combat Command's Flight Safety Crew of the Quarter.

The evening's other award winner, Sergeant Schull was also cited for his superior job knowledge of the B-1B Lancer. Because of this knowledge, he was selected as the maintenance focal point for bringing the Block D upgrade for the bomber from the test mode to operational status. The \$800 million program includes the installation of the Global Positioning System, improved global communications systems and the Air Force's newest "smart bomb," the Joint Direct Attack Munition.

During upgrades, his organizational skills and innovations led to upgrade completions five weeks early that saved the Air Force 8,000 man-hours, while ensuring an on-time checkout of the initial staff of Block D maintenance personnel.

He did this while tackling the responsibility of planning, organizing, and managing more than 800 maintenance personnel and 23 jets.

He was also cited for his work as production superintendent, where he directly contributed to the 28th Operations Group's "Outstanding" and the 28th Bomb Wing's "Excellent" ratings during recent Operational Readiness Inspections.

As a senior escort for the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty inspections, Russian officials praised Schull's professionalism as the cornerstone of an outstanding inspection. As a senior escort, Schull also ensured that B-1Bs met mandates, and that the escort team was properly trained, mobile and transparent to the on-going inspections.

In addition to presenting all the award recipients with a permanent commemorative plate, the Historical Society awarded two traveling trophies to the 28th Bomb Wing, where they will remain on display for one year.



A Mutt's Tale ... Across the Pond

– Part II –

"Would you like a nice bone, doggy?" Say, ma'am, that bone is whiter than the Utah salt and there ain't no sign of any marrow." "There you are, boy, try not to eat it too quickly..." "Eat it, ma'am? This bone has been boiled so many times, ma'am I could only offer it a pretty serious sucking! It certainly didn't come from the PX." "I bet it has been a long time since you had a lovely bone." Guess I'll just have to hold it in my mouth for a while and kinda look cute so's I get me some more donuts. "Good boy. Now you just take it easy and rest for a while..." Rest a while, ma'am? No siree, ma'am. Gotta keep the show on the road ma'am.

After the initial training at Wendover was finished we all flew on to Sioux City, Iowa to do some more advanced stuff and pick up our new airplanes. As I remember it ma'am, it was the start of April and there they were, brand spanking new B17Fs - just arrived in from the Modification Centers of Cheyenne, Long Beach, and Denver. By then I was a fully signed up member of Jesse's crew and, well, all I could do was stand on three and lift ma lone paw in awe when I saw our airplane. Tail marking #956, brand new and smelling of all the things a new airplane smells of; aluminum, hydraulic oil, paint and stuff. I was sure proud to be a fly-dog. And so were Jesse and the boys as they clambered all over that airplane checking out their places and getting ready for the job ahead.

The boys whooped a lot and I don't know where the name came from, ma'am, but somebody called her The Vertical Shaft. Now, I have to say this ma'am, I just didn't understand a nose name like that. Personally I would have thought, since I was now part of their crew, a more canine name would have sounded better. You know, sort of fearsome stuff like 'Breath O' Dog' or something, but I was just a rookie sergeant at that time. Early in May we all set off for Kearney in Nebraska for the last of the training before Bangor and then Gander for that big hop across the pond to foreign soil. Guess I was pretty well used to flying inside a parachute bag by then, so when we took off from Gander to cross the Atlantic, I took it all in my stride, and as the cold increased with the altitude, I took to pushing my nose under my tail. Ma'am, that has to be one of the warmest places that a dog can keep his nose - even though the air quality ain't so good. Seems we were airborne for a dog's lifetime, ma'am, and from where I was settled in the nose of #956 I got a good view, through the plexiglass nose, of the sun rising across vast white prairies of Atlantic cloud. Seems I just dozed along with the rest of the crew while the ship droned on and on. During one forage for a pee I froze my nose to a bulkhead - lucky it was just the nose, ma'am - sure did hurt some getting it unstuck.

"Would you like some tea, boy?" Well thank you ma'am if that's all there is. Sure do miss some decent coffee. Seems the boys all thought 'cause we spoke the same language as the natives that this was gonna be a home away from home but, ma'am: English coffee! Yeuk! We hit the coast of Ireland after about ten hours and all the boys whooped some at the green

fields and stone walls. Guess none of us had ever seen such a collection of shades of green. A bit later somebody called out that they got a view of Belfast and said that the next stop was England. Well, it was Scotland to be exact ma'am and to be more exact, Prestwick. Now here my memory plays a few tricks on me 'cause I spent most of the first two days of my immigration period hidden in a suitcase. Seems the Brits have a big problem with foreign mutts bringing in rabies and stuff so for a while I was one of the 8th's best kept secrets. And, talking of secrets, ma'am, those Norden Bomb sights were spread out on the grass in front of a whole line of our Forts - nobody guarding them at all and just about the right height for a dog's leg to be cocked at ... The journey for the 384th wasn't without mishap, ma'am, for some of the Group ... #074 got busted back home and #851 crashed at Gander whilst #041 ditched somewhere near Greenland and

George Riches' crew had to land in Ireland to pick up some gas. For the rest of us - we flew south across the mountains of the Lake District. Well, the natives call 'em mountains, ma'am, but then they ain't never seen the Rockies. Then we flew low over the checkerboard of the English countryside with all the guys at their combat stations. This was war zone stuff. We reached Grafton Underwood Station 106 sometime in late May of '43 and just a few days behind the first six of our Bomb Group. For a dog-tired mutt, all that grass, trees and just hundreds of places to push a snout into was as close to heaven as a dog was gonna get. Sure, was quiet at first ma'am. The ground guys had sailed outta New York on board your Queen Elizabeth's own boat and landed up in Glasgow, Scotland. Then they rode down through the Midlands to Kettering aboard some pretty cute trains and I just can't tell you how much I danced about when all my buddies turned up at the gate. There was plenty of whooping as buddy spotted buddy. So, ma'am, we arrived. A small piece America in the midlands of England. It was going to be quite something for the guys to be operating out of Grafton Underwood and we were gonna whop that Adolph Hitler ...

To be continued ...

Peter Hinson
Bedford England
Sketches by Russell Sharp



SAVANNAH COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN INSTRUMENTAL IN DEVELOPMENT OF MEMORIAL CHAPEL

A design class from the Savannah College of Art and Design spent a semester working out plans for the future development of the Memorial Gardens and the Memorial Chapel at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum early this year. The design students spent several months under the direction of Professor LaRaine Papa-Gasser and the leadership of Heritage Museum Board of Trustees member and SCAD Provost Paula Rowan.

The students each developed their own creative proposals for the Chapel design based on many hours of study of 8th Air Force history and its role in World War II. Students' project proposals incorporated the esthetics of sky, light, ground effects, and of flight itself. The final Chapel design chosen by the Heritage Museum Staff and EXCOM was the work of third-year student Jon Lucas. Following the Chapel Dedication ceremony during the annual Historical Society reunion, engineering plans and blueprints for the project are slated to be finalized with the assistance of David Sladek. Bids will be then taken for construction.



Jon Lucas

The Chapel, funded in great part by the 8th AFHS will be completed by the end of next year.

To the Executive Committee of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum:

The students and

Professors of Design Studio II at the Savannah College of Art and Design would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the very enriching educational experience undergone this quarter. The exposure to real clients, and to real building and site requirements, has benefited our own growth as architectural designers above and beyond the confines of the purely academic environment. We thank you for encouraging that maturation and development to occur under the auspices of your wonderful institution. We would also like to commend you on providing our community with an inspiring message. Our first trip to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum impressed upon us the valor, sacrifice and courage of the pilots and crews that flew missions during World War II. We will never forget the message of duty and obligation to one's own country. This has been an extraordinary example of history informing and guiding the design process. We look forward to continuing the relationship between the Savannah College of Art and Design and the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in such a positive and rewarding manner. This has been, truly, an unforgettable experience. Thank you to all who worked so hard to make it happen.

Sincerely yours, LaRaine Papa-Gasser



*LaRaine
PaPa-Gasser*

SOME MEMORIAL CHAPEL PROPOSALS FROM SCAD CLASS...





EAGER BEAVER

Dear Editor,

The remaining crew members of the B-24 *Eager Beaver* and family members will be meeting in Savannah Oct. 21st through the 24th.

As hosts of this year's reunion we selected Savannah as our meeting place that they might enjoy your museum. We have visited it and were very impressed with your library, presentations and hospitality. Only the pilot, bombardier and radio man remain of the crew members. This plane and all its crew survived 29 missions between Sept. '42 and May '43 (no escorts at that time). The tail gunner tracked down the crew forty years later and groups have been meeting since that time.

Sincerely, **Kristin Lent & Bob Lent, Pilot: Frank Rinehart, Bombardier: Robert Lent, Radio Man: William Gros, Ted's Flying Circus - 93rd Bomb Group.**

Bob Lent and Radio Operator Bill Gros were found in the Combat Gallery of the Heritage Museum looking at a display of B-24's in formation. Bill was introduced to Connie Metts at our H.S. Office, who gladly accepted his \$10 dues as a new H.S. Member!

MAIL FROM HOME

In Passing in front of our barracks, the King of Prussia stopped to talk with us; the letter-box of the regiment, which on campaign is placed near the flag, astonished him greatly.

"Of what use is that box?" asked Frederick William. "Sire, to receive the letters

which each one of us writes to France." "During a campaign, is your mail so organized that it can take care of the letters of all the soldiers?" "Yes, sire, it leaves every day, every day it arrives, and we receive the Paris papers in two weeks."

"It is admirable!" relied the King." Admirable indeed in Napoleon's time, and admirable today. This same sentiment has been expressed many times by military men. The current expressions however, are more informal and more concerned with the individual soldier. Today we hear such expressions as, "Next to good food, the most important thing to a soldier is mail from home" and, "If they can have good food, American cigarettes, and some word from the folks back home, they ask for nothing more."

Not only are these things important to the individual soldier, but they are also an important part of that vital factor of military success--troop morale. Napoleon realized this just as our military leaders realize it today.

**-from Military Review
September 1943**

MEMORIALS SOMETIMES HAVE A LIFE OF THEIR OWN

Dear Walt,

For several years now the Scouting Force Association and as far as I can determine, all other veterans groups have been sending memorials to England with absolutely no problems with British Customs. In fact, I have accomplished this little fete on four previous occasions. All went well over the years until I attempted to place the 3rd Scouting Force plaque in the hands of citizens of Wormingford to meet a 6 June 1999 ceremony schedule. I was in contact with my British friends via telephone on a regular basis but it never arrived at the destination. Investigation revealed that it was in the hands of British Customs and they would not release it without payment of \$120 in duties. Plaque value was about \$500. Despite the efforts of friends on the spot, they would not relent and by the time I got the money to them, the ceremony has already taken place. I was able to send a large photo which was used in the dedication but it was not like the real thing. I believe Customs made a mistake but friends in London attempted to get the ruling

changed but were unsuccessful.

You might publish a warning to the membership to get a reading on this so that the same fate would not befall them. If you have any contacts in British Customs perhaps we could clear the air.

Sincerely, **Dick Atkins Scouting Force
Arlington, TX**

The shipment to England of the the June issue of the 8AF NEWS was held up by British customs in a similar manner. This was a first occurrence of a customs problem. We were told that we must print: "Veterans Magazines - VAT exempt" on future shipments. - Editor

A FAMILY AFFAIR

Dear Mr. Murphy,

I am writing this letter to tell you about the charge for our news magazine, The 8th AF NEWS. The charge is \$2.50 per copy. I could mail all of your children and wife a copy, or you could give them an 8th AFHS Membership of their own for only \$10.00 per year. This would entitle them to receive all the news and extras that go along with being an 8th AFHS Member.

Please let me hear from you on what you wish to do. I will be glad to send all the magazines for you if that is what you want.

Sincerely, **Connie Metts, 8AFHS
Office**

DEAR CONNIE,

Thank You.

I was a pilot in the 381st Bomb Group. Please invoice me each year for the five memberships, one for each member of my family.

Sincerely **John H. Murphy**

VISITOR IS AWED BY MUSEUM VISIT

Dear Editor:

My family and I truly enjoyed the Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum on Super Museum Sunday. What a great gift to the community for the museums to donate tours. As for the Mighty 8th, I underestimated the historic quality of the facility. From the moment we walked into the huge atrium until the end of the tour, we were impressed with the memories contained there of World War II, including

the Mighty 8th's contribution and certain soldiers that were remembered, along with their personal effects. As the mother of three sons, the effect was chilling when I saw pictures of the young, patriotic faces of the World War II soldiers, innocent before battle and scarred afterward. The lighting was perfect for the life-size mural photographs, leaving nothing to the imagination concerning the horrors of Hitler's very own words, the brutality of Nazism and the destruction of aggression.

Museums highlighting history for us, such as this one does, should be encouraged at all costs, lest we forget the chaos, death and devastation inspired by hatred and tyranny. We should always remember and see to it that future generations have the chance to appreciate their heritage of a freedom so hard won. To whomever is responsible for the Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum, we say thank you.

Susan M. Waters

ROLLESTON HALL

Dear Sir,

I wonder if you will be able to help me please. During the Second World War, Rolleston Hall in Rolleston - England was used by the American Red Cross as a Convalescent Home. I am anxious to trace anybody who can remember Rolleston Hall or was there during that time OR can remember anybody who was convalescing there. I know there were many Airbases throughout Norfolk and Suffolk but feel that the Rolleston Hall was probably used by the Airbases in Northampton and Bedfordshire. Can anybody help, however little, with my research? I would not wish anyone to 'be out of pocket' and am willing to reimburse any postage costs. I thank you in advance for your assistance and help.

Yours faithfully, **Sally Vincent**
Home Address; 44 Third Avenue
Frinton on sea, Essex, England
CO139EE

Fax No 01255 675109

TED'S FLYING CIRCUS

Dear Sir:

I am requesting information for the niece of T/Sgt Jack R. McCallen of Pitcairn, PA, who was shot down and killed over France or Germany on April 1, 1944. It is believed that at least two or three of the crew survived and became POWs. Are

any of these men alive today and members of 8th AFHS? Uncle Jack was part of 409th Bomb Squadron 93rd Bomb Group flying B-24 Liberators. He was either a radio operator or tail gunner. What airfield would they have operated from? Do you have an address for 93rd BG Association? Is there anyone in 8th AFHS or 93rd BG who remembers these fellow airmen? Any information is greatly appreciated on this matter.

Thank you.

Phone: (704) 619-1839 or
 e-mail gevers6501@aol.com
Jerry Evers PO Box 19137
Charlotte, NC 28219

A LITTLE HUG

Dear Walt,

A friend brought his sixteen year-old son to take a look around The Heritage Museum. I had been processing New Members all day and my eyes were getting really tired so I decided I would make sure my cousin and his friends saw everything in the Museum. I asked them if they went to see the Mission Experience and they said they missed it. Well I said it's never too late, so off we went to the 4 o'clock show. We entered the exhibit and sitting next to me was a much older gentleman, with his son or grandson. I could tell that the older man couldn't hear or see very well, so I told him to sit in the middle next to me - that it was the best spot to get the true effect. Little did I know this older gentleman had the *real* Mission Experience. When the bomb doors opened and the cool wind blew through your hair and the lights started flashing all around, it was so real. After it was over we stood up and the lights came on, the man next to me looked at me with tears in his eyes and said, "I flew 42 missions." Well, that was all it took. He had hold of my hand and I had his as we walked out together talking and remembering what all he had been through. A total stranger, but I could feel the pain and hurt he was feeling. Well that's what I get for taking a break. A good cry, but a good feeling. To sit next to a person who was there and helped to save our country - it just made me want to grab him and give him the biggest hug, but I didn't want to scare him, so I gave him a little hug.

Yours Truly,

Connie Metts

DEAR SIR,

I am up early and going through "8th Air Force News" of September 99. A fellow VFW member Mr. "Bud" Foris, passed the issue on to me when I stopped by his grocery store in Bloomington, Indiana. It is such an interesting magazine.

I am writing to you about your article on page #23. I recognized the "silouhette" of the B-52 bomber.

I was in USMC artillery "13th marines", at the siege of Khe Sanh-1968. The "bunker" I stayed in - an underground trench with logs and sand bags overhead was right on the perimeter, beyond which was several hundred meters of barbed wire and trenches: "No Man's Land". The enemy often snuck up on us in the night and layed in wait to "snipe". Once I had a round from a "reckless" rifle go over my shoulder singeing my hair! One day, we were "warned" to stay in the bunker, since there was going to be "close in" bombing by B-52's! Naturally, we all had to be outside to witness the onset of this bombing raid.

I will never forget the approach of those majestic planes. They were in three "delta" shaped formations. They seemed to be flying so slowly. Then we could hear the "drone".

We ducked back inside. The ground shook and vibrated as the 500lb bombs went off. It was wonderful!

Sincerely,

Darrick D. Moody

Po Box #26

Unionville, IN 47468

*These B-52s were SAC *8th AF bombers under the command of Lt. General Gerald Johnson - Editor*

THE CREWMAN'S PARACHUTE

Gil Cohen & Walt Brown
 Gentlemen,

I surely enjoy Gils' rendering of "The Crewman" on the September 99 News!

The Art work is just fantasticaly great. The drawing depicts a 24-foot chest



pack. There were three different chutes used on each B-24. #1 was the back pack blanket type, worn by the Ball gunner/Asst. Engineer so that he could bail out from his Ball, when it was let down out of the belly by hydraulic jacks. All he had to do was reach over each shoulder and trip the doo catches and fall out, as he was sorta sitting and mostly lying on his back, when the turret was in operation.

#2 was the chest pack, worn by the nose, tail, and upper turret men, and there was no room to wear any of the three harness with chute in these gun positions and the chest pack lay on the floor and was clipped onto the buckets (2) on the harness at the chest. The harness also had leg straps that clipped onto the upper harness (not shown).

Many a crewman expired when he bailed out with a chest pack - either because he didn't get it hooked properly on his chest or he forgot to hook up his leg straps. The chute would blossom open and the crewmans body would instantly depart and fall to earth with no chute attached. This was a common sight. Another common sight was the chute on fire and burned up and the crewman fell into earth. This fire was caused by the crewman opening his chute before he had cleared the slip stream of his bomber, which slip stream was full of particles of hot burning aluminum metal. Once an aircraft caught fire it became a molten wind-whipped torch and usually blew up quickly and often before the crew could bail out.

I was engineer and top turret gunner and we were shot up badly but still flying with dead aboard, when we were rammed. I bailed with my chest pack. I had fitted my harness so snug (having seen others fall out of their chute when opened) that it was most uncomfortable. So I only hooked up one leg strap. YES that's right, I forgot the other and got quite a jerk on the one leg at the groin, but it held. It is amazing feeling when the chute opens and you are floating in a deathly quiet.

The fun begins as you approach the ground, in just a 24-foot chute, (others are 36 feet) and the feeling of floating becomes one of huge alarm of coming down too fast. The earth hit me with a mighty blow and I hurt all over and couldn't get even one gulp of air, having hit

almost entirely on my back in a fast wind-drifting collision.

It is a very good thing your drawing "Feller" didn't have to bail out - he would have been a missing in action MIA and a Dear John letter to his folks without his leg straps.

I "still" liked and enjoyed your drawing.

Thanks,

**Hugh Malcolm Hinshaw, 392nd BG
Clifford L. Peterson's crew
(went down and POW 3/18/44)**

RATTLESDEN TOUR

Dear Editor:

My father, Harry W. "Bill" Peterson, served as a radio technician with the 711th Squadron, 447th Bomber Group based in Rattlesden, England from early 1943 to the end of the war. This summer I journeyed to England for the first time. I was studying at Cambridge and on my free day went to Rattlesden, where I took photos to show my 87 year-old father how it looks today. Upon my arrival at the train station in Stowmarket I called a taxi. Morris, a delightful gentleman born after the war, was my driver. When he inquired as to why I was going to Rattlesden I explained that my father had served there during World War II. Instantly he began treating me like royalty!

Morris was one of the owners of the cab company, so he said he was free to drive me not only to the old Rattlesden base, but around the Rattlesden area. He drove me to the Memorial to World War II veterans, took my picture at the Memorial, drove me around the closed airbase, now a glider base. He waited patiently while I took 360 degree photos of everything, including the still-standing control tower where my father won his medal for designing a better radar dish, and the green quonset hut barracks, now surrounded by brush and trees.

Then Morris took me several miles to the other side of the old airbase where I could walk on the remnants of the original main runway. He drove me into the little village of Rattlesden nestled in a valley nearby. We stopped at the old church built from flint rocks centuries ago. He kindly suggested we see if it was open, and it was. The sanctuary was humble but beautiful. All the wooden beams

overhead bore carved wood angels with wings outspread, unique to churches in this region of England. I choked with emotion and couldn't speak as I stood there in the middle of the church, in awe of the prayers of the English people for deliverance from Hitler, the brave men who fought nearby, and the God who answered their prayers.

Afterward Morris drove me to a nice little restaurant in Stowmarket so I could have lunch. And for all this he charged me only the cost of a simple round trip between Stowmarket and Rattlesden. I'm convinced he did this out of appreciation for America's help during the War.

At the train station afterward, I overheard an American speaking, and greeted him. It turned out he and his wife were from California and he was visiting Rattlesden for a big reunion over the weekend. His name was Ken Anderson and he was in the 709th Squadron. Mr. Anderson certainly was a wonderful ambassador for the 447th as he enthusiastically encouraged me to return. Later, back in the U.S.A., Mr. Anderson even mailed my father a sample of the 447th Newsletter so Dad could subscribe! My visit to Rattlesden, England my tour with Morris, the taxi owner, and the marvelous chance acquaintance with the Andersons were a delight. May Almighty God bless all of the men and women who served in the Mighty 8th and the citizens of England.

Sincerely, **Linda Freeman Hibbing,
MN**

PUT DOWN THE REMOTE

Gentlemen-

Your June 99 edition was really good. I hope you can keep it up. (It took me this long to read it) I read it cover to cover and especially enjoyed Mail Call, Debriefing, Reading Section and Bulletin Boards. I'm going to get my grand kids to read at least those sections instead of watching T.V.

Keep it flying!

Sincerely, **Bill McIlraith 401st BG**

DEAR WALT

Request for help! Re. Survivors of the air combat - Merkwiler Mission 512 August 3rd 1944

Researching material and personal memories from those of the 40th CBW, that par-

participated upon the August 3rd 1944 mission to MERKWILLER France. This comprised of the 1st Air Division Bomb Groups of the 305th, 306th, and the 92nd. As an associate member of the 305th, I have gained much help from a number of 305th veterans on this story. However, I am looking for others from the 306th and the 92nd that may have kept diaries or journals, and may have noted their personal notes about this raid. Also looking to make contact with fighter pilots involved that day, from the 355th Fighter Group. Four of their ships were shot down during air combat with Me-109's of the crack German unit "Ace of Spades" JG53. I believe three of the 355th pilots survived to become POW's. This action took place around 15:30 hrs over the area below Strasbourg and to the west of Stuttgart. I am in direct contact with a number of the German pilots involved that day. Any help from Bomber crews involved on August 3rd or indeed Fighter pilots from the 355th would be most welcomed to help tell the real story of this mission.

Sincerely, **Ian D. White 154 Victoria Street Irthlingborough Northants NN9 5RG England**

BIGGLES

Dear Mr. Editor,
Do you recognize this face? Of course you do: it's Gregory Peck in his famous role of Brigadier General Frank Savage in "12 O'clock High." The strange thing is, he adorns the carrier bags used by a Dutch clothing store in Dronten which calls itself "The Biggles Jeans Shop" and has a "double decker" (that's a biplane to you and me) on the roof. Biggles is the creation of the English author Captain W. E. Johns, and has been the embodiment of aerial derring - do for generations of boys



and girls throughout Britain and its commonwealth since the 1930's. In recent years he's become almost as well known in Europe, and one of his adventures, "Biggles Flies West", is to be filmed in Canada during the coming year. I can visualize him in flying kit or the attire of an English gentleman (with an R.A.F. tie, naturally), but jeans? The mind biggles - sorry, boggles!

Sincerely, **Jim Burgess - Associate Essex England**

FEATHERED PROP

Dear Sir:
The 8th AF News is a great magazine. I especially enjoy the expanded Mail Call and the Debriefing and Reading Sections. During the winter and spring of 1944-45 I was crew chief-engineer on a C-53, one of several C-53's and C-47's operated by the 7th PRG. In the spring of 1945 my C-53 was used to return a B-24 crew to England from France. The C-53 pilot was Lt. William Dittrich, recently with the 25th BG. We picked up the B-24 crew at a small air strip in France on a bright, sunny day. The weather was perfect, but it had been quite different the day before. Two B-24's had bumped in the clouds and at least one crew had to bail out, hence our passengers. On the flight to England one of the B-24 crew members noticed that a prop on the C-53 was feathered. The feathered prop really hacked the B-24 pilot. Single engine operation of the C-53 was then ended. Perhaps this account will identify the incident, and one of the B-24 crew members will provide information about the accident in the clouds.

Sincerely, **Daryl W. Nooner 8918 Langdon Lane 7th PRG Houston, TX 77036**

LT. COL. JACK JENKINS

Dear Sir,
Regarding the September 99 issue back cover photo: In P38H Col. Jenkins, Commanding 55th FG, led the 55th & 20th Fg's on first Combat Ops 1943, first fighters to Berlin led 55th Fg, L/Col. Mark Hubbard lead the 20th Fg 2 Mar '44, later POW. L/Col. Gustke on wing, Combat Tour in North Africa 82nd FG, two Combat tours in the 8th AF, 20th FG, Two combat tours, 636 combat hours in 20th FG/2-tours. Total: 3-Combat Tours,

Still in Combat to end of European War. Thought it important that this be corrected.

Respectfully,
Art Heiden - 20th Fg Memphis, TN
See explanatory note in this issue's "The Fix" - Editor

BUZZING THE YANKEES

'Buzzing' of the Yankee Stadium. I am working on research for a book about Lt. Jack W. Watson & crew, 303rd Bomb Group (H). Before Watson came to England in 1943 he and three other crews were involved in the 'Buzzing' of the Yankee Stadium, New York in October 1943. To date I have obtained much information about Watson however; I would like to know more about the following Airmen: Lt. Robert Sheets from Tacoma, Washington, Lt. Elmer W. Yong from Roachdale, Indiana, Lt. Joseph C. Wheeler from Fresno, California.

To date I am unable to find out which Bomb Groups they were assigned to in England and their fate. If you can help with any information about these men of any details of the 'Buzzing' incident no matter how small, all information would be of great value to my project.

Thank you all, **Michael Chevalier, Thurne House, Granville Way, Brightlingsea, Colchester. CO7-OSY England.**

EL LOBO II

Dear Sir:
The interest generated by "Call for Missions" by Don Nielson in the June, 1999 issue of 8AF News, as evidenced by John S. Warner's response in the September, 1999 issue is in itself interesting. From a history of the B-17G, 42-32101 - 35 - BO, assigned to the 457th Bomb Group (H) at Glatton, we learn that this aircraft, was named "El Lobo II" in March, 1944 by the crew of Lt. Cornelius Woolf of the 748th Squadron. It went on to fly 112 missions, always returning one way or another. Unfortunately, on its 113th mission and the Group's 213th mission, it was left on the Continent on 16 March 1945 and subsequently salvaged. (The prominence of 13 in the mission numbers may catch the attention of the superstitious.) Lt. Glenn Harris of the 748th Squadron and his crew were

uninjured in the crash landing. The markings of the 457th BG and of "El Lobo II" comprise one of two sets of decals furnished with Monogram's well-known 1/48 scale model kit of the B-17G Flying Fortress. A paragraph in the user's instructions refers to the fact that on Nov. 02, 1944, Lt. Kelly of the 748th Sqdn. flew the aircraft on a mission to Bernberg, the most costly mission of the war for the 457th. It also states that Lt. Kelly's ball-turret gunner, Sgt. Bernard Sitek, was "kept busy" by a massive fighter attack by the Luftwaffe, but fails to note that Sgt. Sitek was given credit for the destruction of a FW-190. The aircraft is depicted in color in Roger Freeman's "The Mighty Eighth". "El Lobo II" fell short of the 390th BG's 42-97093's 114 missions, so we are still interested in any B-17s flying more than 114 missions. Sincerely, **Craig Harris, 457th BG Durham, NC**

EIGHTH AIR FORCE WEEK

Dear Walt:
October 4, 1999.
You may be interested in knowing that our Iowa governor has proclaimed the week October 8 to 14, Mighty Eighth Air Force Week, resulting I am sure from a connection by people in our state chapter. A member of the Shenandoah City Council. I have asked our mayor to issue a similar proclamation. It will take place today. Finally, another bit of news of the 351st Association. Our president, Clint Hammond represented the 351st and the 8th Air Force at an event at the Parks Eisenhower Farm in Gettysburg, PA on September 18th. Each year the Parks Department sponsors a WWII Encampment of Organizations that served under General Eisenhower. Clint was selected to take part this year. He spoke of the typical combat mission from wake up, breakfast, briefing, taxi, takeoff.....also the typical route, the flak and return and debriefing. He also showed the film, *Combat America* produced by a 351ster, Clark Gable. Sincerely, **Lee E. Gingery, 351st BG Shenandoah, IA**

WARTIME PHOTOGRAPHER

Dear Walt,
Re: George A. Parrish's letter on page 14 Sept 99. The photo of his crew was

almost certainly taken after the mission. I recall as a photography assistant it was arranged to arrive after squadron take offs. If you arrived before take off you were confined to camp until well after 'TARGET TIME'. I can't remember if I was assisting when Mr. Parrish was photographed. However, I seem to remember Lt. Col. Jenkins on the back page, and his pilots were extremely nice people. Having spent some time on 8th bases and R.A.F. airfields three things have been in my mind ever since: On RAF stations I saw WAAFS (Women Airmen) servicing aircraft, and doing most of the things the man did. On 8th bases no women at all - Why? On RAF stations really big bombs -on 8th bases only small ones, did they not have big bombs? Also I got the impression 8th AF jeeps had only two speed gear boxes-full speed and stop! Best Wishes, **Leonard Alsford London, England**

NEBRASKA AIRFIELDS

Dear Sir:
I am writing to ask your help and that of your organization's membership in a personal project I have undertaken. My project involves attempting to write and publish a story of the numerous Army Air Corps airfields located in the State of Nebraska during World War II. I grew up not far from one of these former bases. During World War II, airfields existed at Harvard, Grand Island, Kearney, Fairmont, Bruning, McCook, Omaha, Lincoln and Ainsworth. Others may have also existed. Most were used to support the formation and training of bomber crews prior to their overseas deployment. The assistance of your membership in forwarding photographs, stories or other documents regarding any of these bases and their activities would be especially helpful. I would also welcome information on these bases units, any unique insignia created for them (official or unofficial), as well as other memorabilia. I would be willing to copy and return anything forwarded to me. In advance, I sincerely appreciate your help in forwarding my request to your membership. My sincere best wishes for the continued success of the 8th Air Force Historical Society. Sincerely, **Michael D. Jorgensen Colonel, U.S. Army (Retired) PO Box 142652 Fayetteville, GA**

30214-6518 mjorgen565@aol.com

THE CREWMAN

Dear Walt,
Enjoyed the September issue of 8th Air Force News. The cover CREWMAN by Gil Cohen was outstanding. I'm enclosing a picture of a real-live crewman (myself) for comparison



Walter Sturdivan

to the cover. I flew with the 34th Group at Mendlesham, England. I have visited the Mighty Eighth Museum near Savannah, GA. and would like to return. The simulated mission brought back memories of actual combat with superb vision and sound. Next time, however, I want to give myself more time for a visit. Sincerely, **Walter Sturdivan, 34th BG Stockton, CA**

THE EIGHTH AF NEWS WISHES EVERYONE A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR "2000"



ANTHONY CHARDELLA and THOMAS SPITLER...

Spitler: It was one morning after our P-51's had taken off. I along with other mechanics, was on the field, fixing up our external fuel tanks for the next mission. The B-24 had come into the field the evening before. When the crew was on board again and ready for take-off, I just stopped my work and watched. I wanted to see that big hunk of metal get off our postage-stamp size field. He went all the way down to the farthest corner of the field, across the road into a large open area, and quite away into that field. Turning the plane around, he set the brakes and started moving for takeoff, headed for the other corner of the field. He was within about 100 yards of the corner of the field and was still on the ground. I thought, "Boy, if you don't do something soon we'll have to go down and pick up a lot of pieces." About then he started pulling it off, I guess hoping it would fly anyway. As the plane went over the corner post of the fence I very clearly heard a "clunk" but the plane kept going. I noticed it didn't gain altitude very fast but it did get over the trees. **Chardella:** The B-24 came in to pick up two men from the 369th, myself and Frank Settle. When we hit the fence and trees on take-off, we tore off the landing gear and damaged a prop. It felt like we stopped in mid-air. We got to about 200 feet when the pilot said "Get set to bail out" but we couldn't get high enough to jump. We bellied-in at a field not far from our base. We had a coolant fire on landing but except for two minor injuries to the crew, everyone was o.k. We sure did a job on that 24, it was junk after that flight. When I came back to East Wretham two weeks later, Andy Lovasik almost passed out. He saw us hit the fence and trees and he thought we were all killed.

Anthony Chardella; Thomas Spitler, 369th FG

CHESTER KLIER...

September 4, 1943- Approximately fifteen miles inland from the French coast heavy type flak blossomed within the formation; it was very intense and accurate anti-aircraft fire! "HELL'S-A-POPPIN" lived up to its name one more time as Lieutenant Aberson's ship bore the brunt of attack. The co-pilot's hatch was cracked, two large holes appeared in the left wing leading edge, two more holes in trailing edge of left aileron and one hole punched through the fuselage in the navigator area. The aircraft shuddered when three pieces of flak ripped into the leading edge portion of the right-hand wing between the fuselage and engine nacelle, also puncturing a wing flap on that side. In magical disarray ten flak holes erupted on top of the right wing! The right-hand engine trailed grey-white smoke briefly, and then burst into flame. Tech Sergeant John Himelright in the waist informed the pilots via intercom as did Staff Sergeant M.W. Crawford from his top turret position. Both pilots noted a manifold pressure drop and a fluctuating needle on the right-hand engine tachometer. Co-pilot James Snell could see the blaze sweeping under the engine nacelle, the flame appeared to be forcing out through the cowl flaps. Hearing of this situation, Aberson instructed his co-pilot to get into the bomb bay and shut off the fuel valve feeding that particular engine. Unknown to the crew at that moment was the fact a chunk of flak had knocked a hole in one of the lower cylinders on the outboard side of the engine! Having feathered the propeller, Lieutenant Aberson pre-

pared to activate the engine fire extinguisher system which utilized CO2 gas from a high pressure cylinder. He lifted the control box lid which was located on the floor, centered just forward of the nose wheel well entrance, turned the selector handle to the right-hand engine, and pulled the Tee-Handle in the box. A cloud of white smoke belched from the burning engine nacelle for nearly a minute, then all cleared away and the fire which had burned almost four minutes, was finally out. The co-pilot was back in his seat assisting his pilot by cutting off switches to the dead engine as Aberson trimmed his ship for single engine operation. They were able to hold altitude fairly well but slowly began to fall behind the formation. Six Spitfires swooped down around "HELL'S-A-POPPIN" providing a protective umbrella against possible enemy fighters wishing to seize upon the precarious situation! Time was 1805 hours when more flak came up as the Group exited the enemy land five miles west of Furnes. One minute later a Spitfire was observed to go down smoking into the channel. Another fighter believed to be a Spitfire was seen going down trailing smoke into the water just off the coast of Ostend, Belgium at 1807 hours. No parachutes were noted in either case. The formation took up a heading of 280 degrees which carried them across the channel to English landfall at Deal. A short while later they gave way to the left because of another B-26 formation flying close by, then continued on to base where the first man landed at 1831 hours.

Chester Klier 386th BG Florissant, MD

GENERAL HENRY "HAP" ARNOLD...

He emphasized American innovations in aerial warfare such as the use of parachute bombs which explode just above the ground with deadly effectiveness to enemy troops. He praised U.S. flight training which has made our military flying record the safest of any Air Force in the world. And he justified the faith held by Army officials in our military aircraft, in the face of severe criticism from all sides, which was finally proven in the aerial battlefields of Europe, Africa and the Pacific. But General Arnold's real news came in his vision of the future. "We have a secret weapon or two up our aerial sleeves that will deal paralyzing blows to our enemies," he told the young airmen. "Entirely new battle-wagons are on the way. The present-day Flying Fortresses and Liberators are perhaps the last of the 'small bombers.' Our standard .50-cal. machine guns are terrific weapons of aerial destruction but they will seem like peashooters compared with the firepower that we are putting into our newest big ships. Our pursuit ships can now take good pictures at 300 miles an hour from 30,000 ft., accurately enough to show up individual railroad ties." With such fearsome weapons being readied, the country could well afford to be proud. But General Arnold is not satisfied with past records or future promises. He told the cadets that he wants U.S. aerial combat superiority increased from 4-to-1 to 10-to-1. He warned that the Axis would do its utmost to bring out aircraft models to match our best.

- from a graduation address to four combined Flying Schools December 1942

HOMER 'MACK' SANTERRE...

Mack, just graduated from Sunset High School, figured on becoming an architect. When the war broke out, he was working



The smiling Flying Fortress crew of Flak Hack returns to their base after a raid into Germany.

in his first job, as a draftsman for the Dallas Gas Co. Among the things Mack got when he joined the Army was a service songbook. To pass the long, lonely hours, he amused himself by covering several of its pages with crude, flip-animation sketches. The drawings showed the stick figure of a man; as the pages flipped, the tiny figure dived toward a body of water. At 4:45 a.m. on February 16, 1943, Mack rose with the crew of the "Shak-Hak" - his B-17's nickname - and ate breakfast. An hour later, they were briefed on their day's mission. Their target was "Flak City," a concrete-fortified Nazi submarine base in the port of St. Nazaire, well-protected by German fighters and anti-aircraft guns. The port was a little more than 150 miles south of Le Havre, where Mack's great-grandfather Francois had sailed for Texas in 1856. The Shak-Hak was airborne by 8:45 a.m. for the two-hour flight, flying in formation with 90 other bombers. Each plane carried 5,000 pounds of bombs. By the time they were in position to make their bombing runs, Mack's plane was flying the lead flank of a 13-plane formation. The crew dropped its load on time and on target from 25,000 feet and headed back to England, encountering moderate flak. As the bombers flew over the nearby Brest Peninsula, they were ambushed by 50 or more German fighters. The Shak-Hak, badly crippled, ditched in the icy 100-foot-deep water just off the coastline, Mack was 22. A few days later a delivery boy brought a telegram up the front walk of Gussie Santerre's Oak Cliff home. Gussie's birthday was approaching, so she assumed it was a birthday message from one of her four boys. But the telegram was from the War Department. It did not say Mack was dead, only that he was missing. Mack's mother, Gussie, never gave up hope that her youngest boy would come home. by: **Clifford Santerre, brother of Mack Santerre, 303 BG.**

HAROLD MAPES...

The plane turned left to pull out of the formation and it hit another B-17 bearing the name *Jeanne* -the name of the pilot's wife. Both planes crashed and Mapes, a waist gunner on *Stormy Weather*, the plane that was hit by antiaircraft fire, was the only survivor. All the men in *Jeanne* were killed. *Jeanne* was Mapes' regular plane. All the the men on it were his regular crew mates and normally he would have been with them. For this mission, however, Mapes had the day off. But a gunner on *Stormy Weather* on leave to London did not return in time and Mapes

volunteered to take his place because he wanted an extra mission to bring him closer to the total of 25, which qualified a crew member to go home. It was his fourth mission, *Stormy Weather* went into a spin after it was hit and, as Mapes lay in the spinning plane, a parachute slid down the floor and hit him. He grabbed it and struggled to put it on, but he had only enough strength to get one strap on. He knew that one strap could support 180 pounds. But he weighed 197. That was only part of the dilemma. One leg was caught in twisted metal and he couldn't get it loose. He was lying near a hole in the fuselage. "Having the choice of losing my leg or dying," he says, "I decided to place the chute in the opening and I pulled the ripcord. The wind opened the chute and the chute pulled me out through the hole at about 5,000 feet. "My flying boot was left behind, but my leg was intact. The chute did not open fully and, because only one strap was attached, it spun around all the way down. The Germans shot at me as I was coming down. They put holes in the chute but stopped shooting when I played possum.

"I landed in a haystack which help break my fall. Two young Germans came up with machine guns pointed at me and called me a 'Luft Gangster.' They held me until a German major came by in a jeep and picked us up. "As we drove down the road, an old woman - she could have been 80 -stepped out of the crowd at the side of the road, swore at the German who was guarding me with a machine gun in my back, and spit in his face. "I thought we were both going to be killed, but they ignored her. That old woman gave me courage I would not have had otherwise." Harold Mapes wound up in Stalag Luft IV in Poland.

- **Harold Mapes Glen Rock, NJ**
submitted by **John Shatynski 7th PRG**

GENERAL FREDERICK W. CASTLE...

"The days are getting longer and much warmer, so recently I've taken time out to take a walk or two. Have been out a couple of times with one of my young assistants, Bill Martin, West Point '39. We found a path out behind headquarters that leads out through some woods and pretty fields. We haven't explored the path very far, but hope to take an entire afternoon off soon to do so. Bill represents the very best type of young American professional army officer. I'm very proud of West Point for producing people like him. Alert, hardworking and loyal--they are scattered rather thinly through our forces, but are accomplishing a great deal. They are good organizers, and that is supremely important in a complex situation like this. You probably got an idea of the highly organized nature of our work from 'Target Germany.' When several hundred bombers take to the air for simultaneous attack, the organization must be perfect."

- **Gen. Fred Castle, 94th Bomb Group** Col. Bill Martin took over command of the 487th Bomb Group from Col. Robert Taylor at Christmas of 1944. General Castle was KIA Christmas Eve, 1944.

JOHN CRAMER...

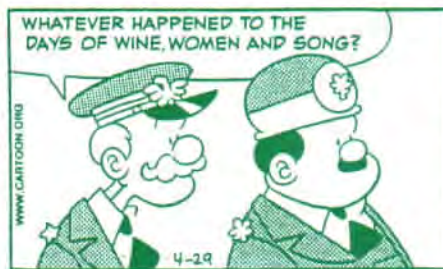
It was December 31, 1944, at Snetterton, and some of us had been to an outgoing party at the nearby pub. It was late, very late, perhaps midnight or after, and cold and frosty. Several of us walked back to the base, really big-time drunk, and probably doing everything stupid. There was a "brown -out" on base, so

an air raid may have been rumored. I went to the orderly room and saw that our crew was scheduled for a morning mission. "Oh, boy!" I said to myself, "We are in big trouble....with only a few hours until time to get up, go to the chow hall, get briefing, gear, ordinance, and the rest of our equipment." Around 3 a.m., the corporal came in, shining his light on the crisp G.I. papers, and shouting "Rhea's crew. Briefing 06:00!" That was us. Just one crew in that frigid box. The stove had died, my fault since I bunked near it and was supposed to keep it going. I got hell, of course! TOUGH! At briefing groans were heard when the major announced, "Target, Hamburg submarine pens. Heavy flak expected on approach and over target." We all made it back in our bomb group except for three B-17s. Today, 52 years later, I can still see a bomber and nine men atomized and another ditching in the North Sea. That was war. No one who has ever been in combat can forget certain events. Such is the nature of combat, and the price we paid for freedom may be marked up as "Paid in full." Target: Hambug, Germany, M.P.I. (Main point of impact). Submarine pens, also adjacent areas. Bombing altitude: 24,000 feet; Temp. -32 Cent. Flak: intense, accurate, tracking. C88s and 105 mm. Also rockets shot through our formation. A cluster of "spheres," huge, released by enemy over target area. We hit the target visually with both demolition and fire bombs. Entire 3rd Air Division. Heavy losses by the enemy and our

division. In all, about 20 Forts went down. Several ditched in the North Sea, where a man can freeze in about ten minutes. A sad sight seeing those B-17s ditching, and several parachutes were sighted. The fellows may have been picked up by German coastal patrol boats or perhaps they froze in the icy waters. Twenty minutes before target, Red Leader (96th) told us to surrender our lead position, then low element, to a B-17 from the 1st Air Division, lost from her group and having come up behind us for protection. First Pilot Rhea complied and took "Old Stuff" to the Tail-end Charlie position. Later, on the bomb run over the target, the newcomer, now in our slot, was hit by the enemy flak and lost. We wondered if that might have been us, on 987 D, the war-weary "Old Stuff." But such are the fortunes of war. We returned to Snetterton minus three aircraft and 27 men. The 96th flew the second most missions and sustained the second heaviest number of losses in World War II. E.T.O. The 91st Bomb Group had the dubious distinction of being Number One in those same categories. But these statistics had not yet earned their place in history as we headed back to base, grateful to be alive and more than happy to be around to greet the New Year, 1945!

-John Cramer, 96th BG Mansfield, OH
31 December 1944

Beetle Bailey



"Great Brother" – the Chinese translation of Viagra

The Memorial Chapel cornerstone inscription

Dedicated to those
who have served in the Eighth Air Force
for the cause of Freedom and Liberty
Erected through the efforts of the
Eighth Air Force Historical Society



Within this Chapel lives
the memory of those airmen
of the Mighty Eighth Air Force who
gave their lives for their country

THE FOUR CHANGING SEASONS OF BRITAIN.



- submitted by John Harold Robinson 445th BG

HAPPY JACK'S GO BUGGY

A Fighter Pilot's Story

by Jack Ilfrey with Mark Copeland

Before there were paper drop tanks; before there were bubble canopies, before there were deep penetration fighter escorts, there was Jack Ilfrey. A member of cadet class 41-F at Hemet Field in California, Jack became a 2nd Lieutenant at Luke Field in December, 1941. *Happy Jack's Go Buggy* is the biography written in 1946 by Jack after the war and tells the fascinating story of his wartime experiences and the cast of characters he came in contact with during his years as an 8th Air Force fighter pilot. Jack went over to England in July 1942, flew early missions in North Africa with the 94th Squadron, 1st Fighter Group, and returned to England to join the 20th Fighter Group at Kingscliffe. Jack saw as much of the war as any 8th AF pilot could have. The people he flew with, the experiences he had, stand out among those of combat pilots. There is a chapter in the book entitled, "It Finally Happened To Me, Too..." – "It" being his bailout into enemy territory after a low-level run on a German locomotive which, with its subsequent explosion, ignited one of Jack's P-38's engines. The story of his subsequent evasion and escape would be a book in itself and is fascinating reading. Upon his return to England, Jack, contrary to usual practices, immediately went back to flying combat missions. His career after the war and his continuing activity in 8th activities up to the present are depicted in this volume. Jack Ilfrey's love of his group is shown by his editing of the Kingscliffe Notes Group newsletter for decades. He is an active supporter of the 8th AF Historical Society, the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, and numerous other aviation organizations. He is regularly seen at 8th AF functions, the most recent being the 25th Anniversary HS reunion in Savannah. His P-38, after which this book is named, flew for several years in an Imperial War Museum Fighter Connection reconstructed aircraft painted in his colors and based at Duxford. First printed in 1978, *Happy Jack's Go Buggy* has been updated, re-formatted, and expanded with the able assistance of Mark Copeland, and is available in a large format hard cover edition. The personal story of a legend of the 8th Air Force should not be missed. This volume is available from the 8th AFHS PX – see the order pages in this issue. Autographed by Jack Ilfrey. \$35 & \$5 s&h. 126 pp; color.



death in combat. This editor had previously talked with Bill on several occasions by telephone and it was a pleasure to meet him and his wife in person at the reunion. A copy of the book was signed and given to me along with a gift of several volumes to the Heritage Museum book shop. Several weeks passed before the post-reunion activities wound down, and I had the opportunity to read Bill's book from the beginning. This fascinating story is much different from any other 8th war story I have seen, and stands uniquely

alongside the haunting story of 398th Bomb Group bombardier Goodrich White, told by his mother in *Wings of Eagles*. Absorbing in its content – that of a decade-long search for every detail of the life and death of a father he never knew – the story unfolds in an unforgettable manner. It is truly a novel of one son and his family. It takes you from the author's home in New York to England and eventually to the crash site of his father's B-24 Liberator in the beautiful alpine country of Germany. It is an emotional voyage, one that is the story of just one flier of many who did not return, but is one that the reader soon feels is his own. Indeed, except for unexplainable and unknown circumstances, it could well have been the story of many of those children of the following generation. It happens to be Bill McGuire's story, and stands as his sensitive but emphatic tribute to those who fought for our freedom. *After The Liberators* illustrates every reason that the memory of those and the story of what they did and why they died must always be preserved and passed on to future generations. The men who flew in the 392nd with Bill's father are well known to Historical Society members. Past-President Cliff Peterson and his engineer Malcolm Hinshaw were shot down at the same time and place as Bill's father, and along with many others helped Bill flesh out the story of the final mission of the Bill Sharpe crew with Bill McGuire Sr. flying as navigator, adding a most personal and authentic contribution to the story. The volume is filled with numerous details, the obvious results of the years of research by the author. An excellent index follows and there are period photos included. A book that, once begun, cannot be put down, or forgotten.

Available from the 8th AFHS PX or from Parkway Publishers, Inc, Boone NC. \$16.95 & 4.00 s&h USA. 198 pp softbound.



AFTER THE LIBERATORS

A Father's Last Mission, A Son's Lifelong Journey

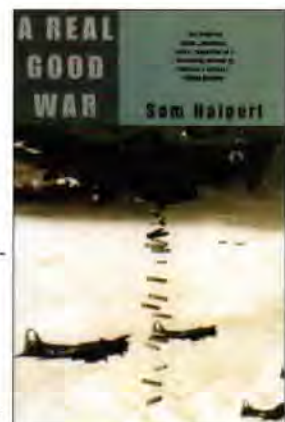
by William C. McGuire II

Bill McGuire was one year old when his father, navigator of the "Sinister Minister", 392nd Bomb Group stationed at Wendling, was shot down on a mission to Friedrichshafen. Bill attended the 8th AFHS reunion this past October in Savannah and with him he brought his just-published book about his father and his search for the details of his father's life as an 8th airman, and of his

"A REAL GOOD WAR"

by Sam Halpert

"A Real Good War," an autobiographical novel by 91st Bomb Group Navigator Sam Halpert and first published in hard cover in 1997, is now available in paperback. In Halpert's fast-paced novel, we follow an 8th Air



Force navigator from his first coming together with his crew on the flight line at an air base in Alexandria, LA, to the completion of his 35 combat missions in Europe. The crisply-told story is marked by dialogue consistently spiced with wry humor. Through his insightful sketches, Halpert presents the reader with crew members who are well formed, three dimensional individuals. He skillfully captures the confusion and uncertainty of members of a bomber crew as they progress through those pre-England training stages familiar to all 8th Air Force bomber crews. Their training completed, they, like countless other crews, pass along the familiar Nebraska and Goose Bay route on their way to England. There at the Air Force Replacement Depot (reple depple) they await the outcome of that blind lottery of bomb group and squadron assignment.

From this lottery, the crew of "A Real Good War" drew the 91st Bomb Group's 324th squadron where they arrive in mid-1944. Here, I must disclose that I was a co-pilot in this same group and squadron from September to December of 1943, and thus find nitpicking Halpert's version of the ambiance irresistible. As an antidote, I was forced to remind myself that Halpert's book is, after all, a novel where in the interest of pace and plot certain departures from actuality are sometimes necessities. Even so, Halpert's impressionistic rendering rings true. Even truer is the violence of aerial combat which Halpert captures with remarkable fidelity. The book, however, is not about the air war over Europe so much as it is about the dynamics of personal relationships among crew members and between crew members and squadron officers. One aspect of this dynamic is the tendency, which most veterans of combat crews will recognize

as true, for one crew member to form an especially close bond with a fellow crew member. In the case of Halpert's unnamed navigator narrator, that special relationship was with the crew's bombardier, Cavey. The reader comes to care deeply not only about Cavey, but for all the members of Halpert's B-17 crew.

Sam Halpert's writing style is easy, fluid and terse — Hemingway—esque. This might be expected in a author who has devoted himself to the study of writing style in others. Although this is his first book of fiction, Halpert is the author of two books on the life and work of Raymond Carver, a careful stylist and one of America's foremost short story writers. Reviewed by **Verne Woods, co-pilot 91st BG, 324th Squadron**

Sincere appreciation for this Book Review by member Verne Woods. — Editor

ACES AND WINGMEN

Volume Two
by Bill Hess

Ten years in preparation, *Aces and Wingmen* is the long-awaited Volume 2 of the compilation by Bill Hess, edited by Tom Frisque. The contributions have packed in 1,183 photos and their extensive cutlines along with 21 stories to give the reader an overwhelming impression of what the fighter pilot's experience was on 8th bases during World War II. Seventeen Fighter Groups are



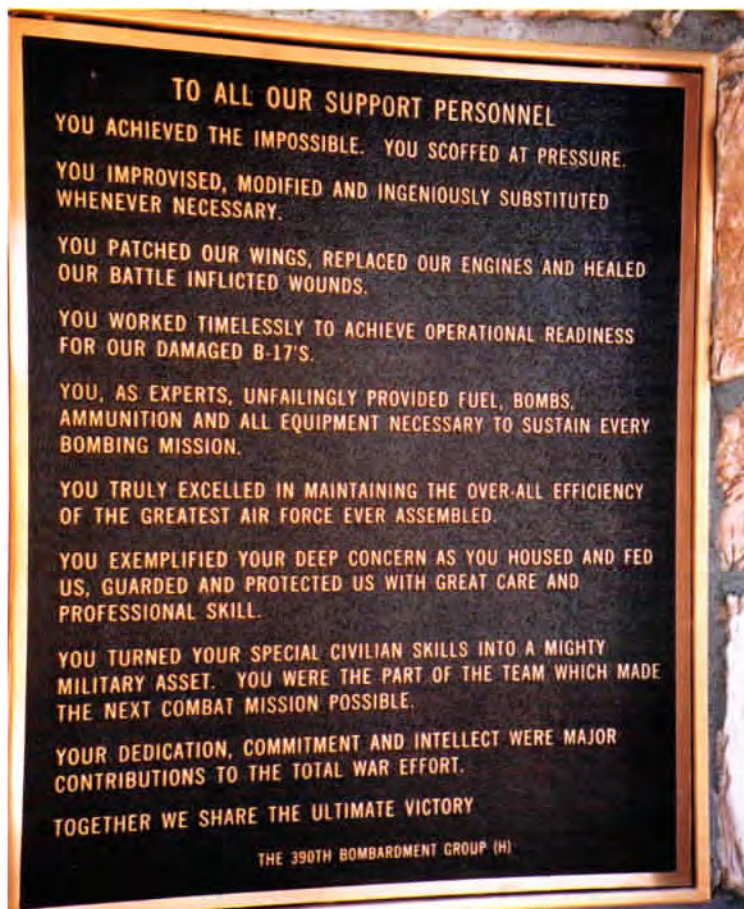
covered and a number of pilot's stories are featured in depth. Walt Konantz, 55th FG, has his entire logbook of missions and his diary included, covering several pages of the chapter, affording an opportunity to see exactly what went on during a tour of duty of a P-51 fighter pilot. James Golden, 361st FG at Bottisham, is featured with his combat experiences over a six-page spread, accompanied by photo layouts of others in the 361st during his tour. There are several personal stories of James Wilkinson, 82nd FG, who flew the P-47 razorback *Miss Behave* until his tragic death on 4 June 1944, just before D-Day.

The photo captions are presented in a very personal style and impart a personal effect to the accompanying pictures throughout the entire volume. A lot of information comes through in these captions. Over 150 photos are in full color, an unusual feature included in the book.

Aces and Wingmen - Volume 2 is easy to read but be prepared to spend a long time with it. There is a huge amount of material here, and those who have Volume One of this set will of necessity wish to order this companion. Those who missed the first volume will, after spending time with this one, want to obtain a Vol. I copy. Hardback, large format, 256 pp, full-color dust cover with James Howard P-51 photo, extensive bibliography. Available from: Av-Usk, POB 97, Usk WA 99180. Phone/Fax 509-445-1236 afternoons. \$49.95 & \$5 s&h. (Volume One available for \$39.95 & s&h. \$8.00 s&h for both volumes together).

All book reviews are by the Editor unless otherwise noted.





390th Bomb Group Tucson, AZ

THE BOMBERS

By Sarah Churchill - daughter of Winston Churchill

Whenever I see them ride on high
 Gleaming and proud in the morning sky
 Or lying awake in bed at night
 I hear them pass on their outward flight.
 I feel the mass of metal and guns
 Delicate instruments, deadweight tons
 Awkward, slow, bomb racks full
 Straining away from downward pull
 Straining away from home and base
 And try to see the pilot's face.
 I imagine a boy who's just left school
 On whose quick-learned skill and courage cool
 Depend the lives of the men in his crew
 And success of the job they have to do.
 And something happens to me inside
 That is deeper than grief, greater than pride
 And though there is nothing I can say
 I always look up as they go their way
 And care and pray for every one.
 And steel my heart to say,
 "Thy will be done."

from Eighth of Minnesota Newsletter

Recent research figures show that only 25% of husbands kiss their wives goodbye when they leave the house. Figures also show that 99% of husbands kiss their house goodbye when they leave their wife.

He who never made a mistake, never made anything.
 Samuel Johnson



**"Diana" 95th Bomb Group - 325th Squadron;
 Horham England**

Front row L-R: V. W. Ford pilot, C. Murray Saylor copilot, Clete Cummiskey navigator, Julian Meyer bombardier.
 Back row L-R: Willis A. Perry top turret, A. K. Hutcherson radio operator, Richard C. Peterson ball turret, Marvin Casaday waist, Lenord S. Stycynski tail, Robert J. Evans waist.

BLACK WEEK RAID ON POLAND

After reading about the "Black Week" and the Munster Raid in Sept '99 issue of the 8th AF News, I felt the urge to write to you about my crew's experience of Oct 9, 1943 on a raid to the Polish Corridor. Early in the morning of Oct 9, 1943 we were all assembled for the briefing of the day's mission. The map showing the route for the mission was covered with a curtain. Believe me when I say that when the curtain was first removed there were a lot of gasps when they revealed the route



to Danzig, Poland.

They used a strategic maneuver, which on my tour was only used once to my knowledge, to start a mission. In our usual assembly we formed flights, squadrons, groups, wings, divisions, and started out for the target at about eighteen thousand feet from East Anglia. Of course, about 25% of our fuel was used up in the assembly.

Instead of starting that way, our lead ships took off in the dark out over the Wash and then into the North Sea with a flashing amber light in the tail turret. They flew in a northeasterly heading under 1000 feet making wide esse turns. The following ships cut off the esses and formed enroute. By this time there was daylight. We stayed under 1000 feet so that German radar in the low countries could not pick us up on their radar screens.

At the Kiel Peninsula we climbed to 10,000 feet which was the first time the Germans knew where we were. Germany was on our right. Denmark, Sweden, and Norway were on our left as we proceeded eastward to the Baltic Sea. The Luftwaffe failed to hit us, I believe, because they did not know where we were going and would not commit their forces until they knew. We passed the turn south that would be appropriate if we were going to Berlin,

but instead we proceeded east for another 300 or 400 miles to the Polish Corridor.

We then climbed from 10,000 feet to about 15,000 feet for our bombing run. Our assigned target was the battlecruiser, *Scharnhorst*, which was at anchor just off Gdynia. We still had not encountered fighter opposition. Our run on the battlecruiser, *Scharnhorst*, was not successful in that we missed our target by about 2000 feet. However, I feel we must have surprised them as they did not put up as much flak that I know they were capable of. On our way out we descended again to 10,000 feet to fly back over the Baltic Sea. After we left the target we passed many Forts on their way to Marionburg. They had a very successful mission destroying their target.

It was leaving our target area that we encountered long and constant opposition. Our navigator recorded two and one half hours of being under fire from single and

"Our lead ships took off in the dark out over the Wash..."

twin engine fighters. We suffered some damage from flak and fighters, but all eleven of our 392nd BG planes

that crossed the target returned safely. We carried bomb bay tanks which added 700-800 gallons of fuel which was necessary for this trip. This was by far the longest trip to a target up to this point in the war. It was a very tiring experience. As I said before this was on Oct 9, 1943. By Oct. 11, 12, and 13, letters of commendation came in from Prime Minister Churchill, RAF Air Marshal Portal, General Marshal and Arnold in Washington D.C., Eighth AF Generals Eaker and Anderson.

The general theme of these letters of commendation was that the week of Oct 8, 1943 altered the course of the war and that the Germans were not safe from our bombing anywhere in their entire realm. Each airman who participated



in this Oct 9th mission has copies of these letters of commendation in his file.

Where Anklam is in Germany I am not sure, but the force that went there took heavy losses and in the process diverted opposition to them so that the forces that went to Poland had somewhat less opposition. As I understand it we put up about 350 bombers on this day and suffered 60 losses. Later in the war by the end of March, 1944, which was the end of my tour, we were putting up about 1000 bombers and suffered on an occasional day 60 losses. This was done with complete fighter coverage in 1944, whereas the flight in 1943 to Poland had no fighter coverage.

That day was long, eventful, and memorable.

Sincerely,

**Bob Egan - 392nd BG
Minnetonka, MN**

The week Bob Egan flew this mission to Danzig is now the annual nationwide Mighty Eighth Air Force Week - October 8-14. -Editor



MI AMIGO

Early on the morning of February 22, 1944 the 305th Bomb Group took off from their base at Chelveston to attack the airfield at Alborg in Northern Denmark. As a diversionary raid in order to lure German fighters away from the main force.

Within the 305th formation was a B-17G called *Mi Amigo* flown by Lt. John G. Kriegshauser. What happened to John and his crew on this raid we will never know, but what we do know is that by late

the people of Sheffield had escaped. It was a miracle!

John was awarded the DFC posthumously. The citation stated:

"Displaying consummate skill, he piloted the aircraft back to England. Although weather conditions were prevalent Lt. Kriegshauser attempted to locate a field in which to land. Engines became inoperative over a heavily built up area and he was forced to crash land. An English home was directly in the path of the

a permanent memorial was unveiled to the ten young Americans who had died so tragically so far from home. Ten oak trees were planted around the memorial, one for each crew member. Each year on the Sunday nearest to the crash date a memorial service is held to commemorate these young men.

This year's memorial service was attended by many local dignitaries. There was a USAF Honor Guard and 21-gun salute, Colonel Glenn Spears, CO of the 100th Air Refuelling Wing at Mildenhall and Colonel Tom Sheridan, senior USAF officer at Menwith Hill Listening Post, laid wreaths and took the salute.

As Peter Radford put it "I look on these lads as being adopted by Sheffield as our own people. Lifting the aircraft to save the lives of the local people endeared them to the people of Sheffield."

Peter is the organizer of the memorial service each year for the Royal Air Force Association. These young men will never be forgotten by the people of Sheffield, their memory will live forever in the history of Sheffield. If any member of the 8th AFHS remembers these men, would they please contact me. There could be surviving members of the crew families who don't know that their loved ones are remembered every year and that a memorial exists for them over here in England.

Sincerely,
Mr. Philip Levick
202 Ironside Road
Gleadless Valley
Sheffield 14
S14 1FJ England



Memorial Services for the MI AMIGO crew.

afternoon *Mi Amigo* was to be found over Sheffield, a heavily populated city in Northern England.

How did they come to be so far off course? We can only assume that the Navigator Lt. John Humphrey was either dead or badly wounded. As the aircraft flew low over the city it was clear it was in a distressed state with engines misfiring and even reports of flames trailing back from the wings. The fire services were flooded with calls. Lt. John Kriegshauser must have realised the danger he and his crew were in. As he circled even lower, oil from his engines sprayed over the roof tops. He was circling Endcliffe Park, the only open area near the city centre.

It was inevitable that the aircraft would crash; when the end came it was swift and savage. An engine failed and *Mi Amigo* spun three times before plunging into a wooded embankment in Endcliffe Park. The tail section was ripped from the main fuselage. Rescuers raced to the aircraft but nothing could be done. Lt. John Kriegshauser and his crew perished, but

Bomber, but Lt. Kriegshauser, exhibiting an exemplary devotion to duty, maneuvered the crippled aeroplane over the dwelling. It crashed approximately 100 yards away.

The courage coolness and skill displayed by Lt. Kriegshauser reflect the highest credit on himself and the armed forces of the United States of America."

The crew of *Mi Amigo* were - John G. Kriegshauser, P. Lyle J. Curtis, CP, John W. Humphrey, N. Melchor Hernandez, B, Harry W. Estabrocks, Eng, Charles H.

Tuttle, BT, Robert E. Mayfield RG, Vito R. Ambrosio WG, George M. Williams WG, Maurice D. Robbins TG. Sgts Tuttle, Stabrocks and Robbins are buried in the American Cemetery at Madingly.

In November 1969,



Wreaths laid by the residents of Sheffield at the crash site.

BULLETIN BOARD

OVER 100 MISSIONS

This is a call for information regarding all B-17s which flew 100 or more missions. See related items in the 8th AF News - June 1999 issue at P. 24; also in the September 1999 issue at P. 12 and P. 16. The purpose is to put together an article to be entitled "The Century Club" for all B-17s with 100 or more missions to their credit for publishing the 8th AF News. Several letters have already been received and your contribution would be welcome.

John S. Warner
Director of Research
390th Memorial Museum
6000 E. Valencia Road
Tucson, Arizona 85706

UNIT CONTACTS

97th BG - Gene Aenchbacher, 432 Longford Ct,
Wichita KS 67206;
Telephone 316-682-0098; Fax 316-682-9024

401st Bombardment Group (H) Association, Inc.,
George H. Menzel, P.O. Box 15356, Savannah,
Georgia 31416

379th Bomb Group Unit Contact

Howard Fibel
Winter: 17792 Arbor Lane, Irvine CA 92612; 949-651-1704
Summer: 692 Ascan Road, Franklin Square NY 11010; 516-825-8448
e-mail: hmfibel@webtv.net

B-24 INTERNATIONAL 60TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

December 9-12, 1999 - Town and Country Resort Hotel, San Diego

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For registration and more information contact:
B-24 Groups Memorial - San Diego
71 Nighthawk, Irvine, CA 92604
Tel. 949-552-3890, Fax 949-551-2151
e-mail rcbaynes@hotmail.com

It is estimated that more than 180,000 crew members and 500,000 ground personnel were involved in flying and servicing the B-24. Come to San Diego, December 9-12, 1999 and hear from the people who built it, flew it, crewed in it and serviced it. They will bring it alive. Bring your own stories.



Anthony Zywiecinski would like interested veterans who served with the 93rd Bomb Group, Ted's Travelling Circus, and have a special story to tell, to contact him at e-mail: webmaster@behindbarbedwire.com or write to 7371 Ayers Road, Perrysburg OH 43551.

(logo to go with this)

8th Air Force Historical Society U.K. Contact For WW2 Bases

Membership Manager Representatives Gordon-Connie Richards- Contacts for bases Million Ernest Risely Sharnbrook Melebourne Park Abbots Repton -

A beautiful old green and gold pill box with medications inside was found in the Rendezvous dinner room on Friday night of the reunion in Savannah. If it is yours please contact the Editor, 8th AF NEWS.

B-52s IN THE 21st CENTURY

The Grand Daddy of American jet bombers, the Vietnam War-era B-52, is going to have to fly four decades into the new century. By the time it gives up to a new generation, it will be 80-plus years old. "Structurally they are in great shape" said Lt. General Ron Marcotte, the 8th Air Force commander at Barksdale AFB, home of 47 B-52s. "Thanks to exceptional maintenance, the planes are doing exceptionally well."

The first B-52s began their Air Force duty in June 1955. The aircraft now flying were built in 1961. Most pilots who fly the B-52 today were not born when the planes entered service, and those planes will be flying well into the 21st Century with pilots of the generation yet to come. "It's amazing," said Glenn Buchan, a Rand Corp expert on strategic bombers. "The B-52 is one of the most remarkable successful airplanes ever built." Infact, Buchan said in a interview, "The B-52 might be the best model of which to develop the next generation of long-range bombers, a plane capable of carrying many different weapons and launching them from a great distance." "Preserve what we have in bombers", is the way Air Force Secretary F. Whitten Peters described the strategy of the Air Force bomber force.

Eighth Air Force Historical Society PX News

Winter 1999

8th Air Force Historical Society PX Column Winter 1999

Happy holidays everyone! It was wonderful to see so many of our members at the recent National Reunion. The PX was a wonderful success in Savannah. We appreciate all the support the Reunion attendees gave us.

With this issue of the Journal we hope we can provide our members some new items that would make your Christmas shopping a little easier.

In our book list we have some wonderful new features. Our first book, *After the Liberators: A Father's Last Mission, A Son's Lifelong Journey*, by William C. McGuire II is the story of one son's search to find the truth about his father's death. William C. McGuire was a Navigator in the 392nd BG and was killed in 1944. This is the story of the son's research to seek the truth about his father's death. Very moving and well researched. An inspiration to those of the second generation. Also includes an excellent research guide for those trying to find information about someone who served in the 8th Air Force. Only \$16.95!

Radar Countermeasures?? This term seems like it might be out of a James Bond movie, not an 8th Air Force history! This common term, familiar to us today was actually developed during WWII. The 36th Bomb Squadron was an attached Support Group assigned to the 8th Air Force. this B-24 Sqdn. was assigned the task of confusing German radar by air. This subject has been thoroughly documented by author, Stephen Hutton in his book, *"Squadron of Deception - 36th Bomb Squadron in WWII."* (Item: B23) This book includes a complete history of the Group

and the inception aerial radar countermeasures. Well-written and impeccably researched. Included are over 330 rare photographs. Only \$39.95!

We are also excited to announce the return of the fine book, *"The Sky was Never Still,"* a Collection of 8th Air Force Poetry. (Item M4) This popular book has not been available for many years, but we are very proud to offer this to our members for the Holidays. Don't miss out on this limited availability. Only \$14.95!!!!

We are also very pleased to offer for a limited time only, the 8th Air Force Historical Society 25th Anniversary Golf Cap! (Item C3) This silver-gray baseball cap is only available for a short time! The embroidered 8th AFHS emblem is surrounded by special 25th Anniversary logo! They were very popular in Savannah! Get yours before they're gone!!!! Only \$12.95!

We are sad to report that we have discontinued our Grave Marker selections. We hope to have them back soon, while I search for a new manufacturer. Please look in the coming months for new items; an 8th Air Force flag and other special items including a special print offer from aviation artist, Gil Cohen.

Monica and I would like to thank you for another wonderful and amazing year. The 8th AFHS PX continues to be successful thanks to your support and encouragement. It is our honor to serve the Society as PX Managers. We hope in a small way, we can pay all of you back for the precious gift that you have given us. Our freedom. A debt we shall never be able to repay.

We want to wish each and everyone of you a most joyous Holiday Season. We hope that the coming millennium brings



you good health and peace. May blessings be with you and your family. Cheers to the Mighty 8th!!!! We hope to hear from you soon!

With our love and good wishes!
Mark and Monica Copeland
8th Air Force PX Managers

**Mark and Monica
Copeland
8th Air Force PX
Managers**

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Prices listed are good through 1 March 2000.

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___	P3 8th AF Shoulder Patch (wartime patch reproduction)	\$ 2.95
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JEWELRY

___	J1 3/4 inch 8th AFHS Lapel Pin	\$ 2.95
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___	B6 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



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—	B8 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	_____
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—	B25 Mission 85 - The Milk Run that Turned Sour , De Jong, 1998. Stbd., Profusely illustrated. Superbly researched history of Mission 85 flown August 19, 1943 by the First Air Division. Excellently written and well illustrated. We really recommend this one! \$ 22.95	_____
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—	B28 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	_____
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CHRISTMAS WITH THE GI'S

Christmas has always been England's favorite and most festively celebrated holiday, but by 1942 the War had decimated all the Yuletide luxuries and left many chairs at the table empty by absent British soldiers. It was a time of homesickness for the Americans. For many it was their first Christmas ever away from home. The song,

"I'll be home for Christmas - if only in my dreams" accentuated their longing for home.

As many men as possible were given the day off, or replaced by volunteer Jewish soldiers. Army cooks prepared a traditional Christmas dinner for those who stayed in camp.

It is on record that at Christmas 1942 a great number of invitations were extended to Americans by local British families as the word got around that those men who accepted invitations were supplied with extra ration packages to take with them. This may be the reason why there were about 50 invitations for every one GI available. A plea went out for more men to accept!

The Brits were not normally inhospitable people, but meager food rations had previously kept many local families from inviting Americans to their homes. After all, 3 oz. of cheese a week, 2 oz. of tea, 2 oz. of butter, grey National bread, with little or no jam or fruit, was not the kind of fare one could easily offer a well-fed American who, not understanding, would expect more. But when the rationing situation was clarified and understood, it was quickly corrected by the generous Yanks who from then on never visited a home without bringing food gifts of some kind. They were repaid by a growing affection from grateful Brits who opened their homes to them with

heartfelt hospitality and in many cases forming lifelong friendships.

Adults were not the only ones to benefit from the Americans' big-heartedness. One thing was very obvious. The GI's loved kids! Many of them not much older than kids themselves, they went all out in their kindness to children. Scores of WWII's young English gum-chummers are among today's greatest admirers and supporters of the Mighty Eighth! Onwards from 1942, Christmas was a very

"One thing was very obvious. The GI's loved kids!"

special time in and near the air bases. It was then that the Stars and Stripes and the Union Jack were hung together

with tinsel and paper decorations, and there was always Father Christmas or one of his helpers arriving to give out toys and treats to the eagerly waiting kids. These children were mostly evacuated from bombed out homes in London, some orphans. Others were local children from nearby towns and villages, but all growing up without experiencing the traditional joys of a child's Christmas. Many would have had a very slim holiday had it not been for the kindness and fun provided by the Americans. Perhaps the best thing was that the airmen seemed to enjoy it all as much as the kids. At the various airbases they had spent weeks preparing for the parties and festivities they provided. They sent home for small toys that couldn't be found in the austere English shops; they saved up their sweet rations, and collected money towards parties they planned. They saved immense amounts of treat foods and provided "thrill" arrivals of Father Christmas, usually by jeep, but at Shipdham in Norfolk he arrived in a Piper Cub plane straight from the North Pole.

At Rougham Air Base a B-17 brought him in with a sackful of toys for 145 war orphans from Dr. Barnardo's National Children's Home. They were greeted personally by Colonel Castle and provided with Christmas dinner and entertainment, all put on by the men of the 94th.

An orphan's fund was started by the American Red Cross and the Stars and Stripes. Every unit that collected 100 pounds (cash) could adopt an orphan. There were 600 children who qualified and who were sent clothes and toys, and were entertained by their benefactor unit. The 306th Bomb Group adopted a little three year-old girl hoisted up to the nose of a B-17 whom they nicknamed "Sweet Pea." She was up and Christened the bomber after dipping her hand in red paint and planting her palm on the fuselage.

Local newspapers of the various communities reported the Americans' thoughtfulness and generosity, quite apart from their official military duties and reasons for being in England. There are many people in America today, especially the younger generation, who do not realize how much the USAAF in Britain contributed to the well-being and morale of British people at large, and to the children in particular. The British themselves will never forget that wonderful human touch of the Americans of World War II!

-by Lalli Coppinger, 94th Bomb Group Nostalgic Notes



POW STATISTICS

In the course of all Wars and conflicts since the Civil War, where United States service personnel served as combatants, a total of 815,229 Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen were captured and held as Prisoners of War. Of this number 8.96% or 73,021 died during their captivity. The percentages by war and conflict breakout as follows:

CONFLICT	HELD	DIED	PERCENTAGE
*Korea	7,140	2,701	37.8%
*WWII Pacific	34,648	12,935	37.3%
*Vietnam	766	114	14.9%
*Civil War Union	211,000	30,000	14.2%
*Civil War Confederate	462,000	26,000	5.6%
*WWI	4,120	147	3.6%
*WWII Europe	95,532	1,124	1.2%
*Persian Gulf	23	0	0

The combined overall death rate for WWII POWs was 10.8%. It is also interesting to note, that 28,000 or 29.3% of the 95,532 WWII European prisoners were 8th Air Force airmen. Our POWs suffered greatly in serving our nation and many have endured hardships and physical disabilities during the intervening years resulting from their period or incarceration. With the recent dedication of the new POW Museum at Andersonville, Georgia, The Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum just wanted to take the opportunity to salute all POWs and say thanks.

Lt. Gen. E.G. Shuler, Jr., USAF, Ret.
Chairman, Board of Directors
Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum

THE FIX

~ Re the text accompanying photo of Lt. Col. Jack Jenkins Sept 99 issue:

Several members wrote in with information concerning the distinguished combat leadership careers of Jack Jenkins and Russell

Gustke. Well noted and appreciated. As an explanation, the photo and text as printed was bylined 14 October 1943 to be a period piece from Army censors, respectfully contributed by British HS



Lt. Col. Jenkins with the rank of Lt. as of October 1943 was indeed a typographical omission. Many thanks to all who contacted us about the text.

member Leonard Alsford and was as of that date. Both of these 8th Air Force leaders continued on, earning numerous awards and citations for their distinguished service during their careers. The listing of

~ Sept 99 - Page 44: Gremlins ate the end of the last sentence on the P-38 story. To eagle-eyed Jim Hughes of the California Chapter: "The first USAAF aircraft to land on Japanese soil after the surrender was a P-38."



From the Hip

Second Lieut. John B. Mulvanna, bombardier of the Flying Fortress "Old Bill," dropped his bombs over Bremen, then started testing his machine guns. He fired a 20-round burst watching the feeder mechanisms. A voice shouted over the interphone: "You got him! Why don't you call out those attacks!" Mulvanna looked up just in time to see a Messerschmitt 109, which had popped out of a cloud and into the line of fire, falling away and coming apart.



NEWS FROM 8TH AIR FORCE HEADQUARTERS – Barksdale AFB

Mighty Eighth Earns Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

By Tech. Sgt. Rick DelaHaya

Air Combat Command named Eighth Air Force as one of 11 units to receive this year's Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. The award was given for the headquarters' accomplishments from June 1, 1997 to May 31, 1999. This year's award recipients for the AFOUA came, according to ACC, due to various units continuing to excel, despite decreased manpower and increased workload.

"This award really was a total team effort," said Lt. Gen. Ron Marcotte, 8th Air Force commander. "Our people were involved in global operations and remained ready to meet any worldwide combat contingency. At the same time, we also participated in numerous major and joint exercises, helping to pave the way for the future of the Air Force. So it was a busy time for us, and without everyone pulling together, this accomplishment wouldn't have been possible."

The Mighty Eighth was cited for many accomplishments during this period, including its presence in Diego Garcia, where Headquarters 8th Air Force centrally planned and controlled the B-52 deployment in support of Operation SOUTHERN WATCH. During this time, Eighth Air Force successfully coordinated hundreds of missile strike missions, the largest Conventional Air Launched Cruise Missile employment in history.

Eighth Air Force was also cited for its involvement during the 78-day conflict in Kosovo. "It's evident from the many accomplishments cited that we are a war-fighting numbered air force," said Marcotte. "We have some of the best people in the Air Force, and it's their hard work and dedication that made this award possible. I'm proud of their accomplishments...they certainly lived up to the proud heritage of the "Mighty Eighth."

MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE STAFF



8TH AF NEWS STAFF WORKS YEAR-ROUND ON OUR NEWSMAGAZINE

The quarterly editions of the 8th AF NEWS have been receiving some acclaim for their impressive layouts and use of full color throughout the issues. The credit goes to our contacts at Ambrose Printing Company in Nashville, a quality family-owned company headed by John and Sterling Ambrose. Two years ago the Historical Society began to look for a new publishing house following the retirement of editor Jim Hill. The Board of Directors wanted to produce the best veterans newsmagazine in the country and after considering many proposals, settled on Ambrose Printing Company, in large part because of the chance to work with our two staff members, Donna Neely and Telisha Gaines. Donna has been employed at Ambrose for 24 years and has been instrumental in developing many of the high-quality books and magazines published by Ambrose in contracts with organizations world-wide.

Shortly after each edition of the 8th AF NEWS goes to press, they begin to develop plans for the upcoming edition. Material is received from the Editor every few days and the flow of the issue, page layouts and color setups are formulated. Throughout the next ninety days contacts are made with contributors, advertisers, and other officers of the Society. Several times each week meetings are held with the Editor, and the last few weeks before finalizing each issue, editorial planning meetings are held daily. Donna and Telisha supervise the pre-publication proofs, make corrections and ensure that the newsmagazine meets the

standards set for the publication. They deliver 20,000 quarterly copies to the Mailing Service and supervise the mailouts to members all over the world. As our staff representatives, both are vital to the success of every issue. They have become closely involved with the 8th AFHS and their personal interest in our activities and our goals is evident to all members who interact with them.

Donna Neely and her husband Jeff, live on a small farm in Hermitage, Tennessee surrounded by their horses and dogs.

Telisha Gaines and her husband Brad, live in Old Hickory, Tennessee with their two year old daughter Taylor.



Donna Neely & Telisha Gaines

Editor's notice: The Chapter News section is available for contributions from Chapters who desire to submit them and this practice is encouraged. Reports as printed in this section will be abstracted from the Chapter newsletters available if no other correspondence is received. The deadline is two weeks before the date of each issue of the 8th AF NEWS, which is published quarterly in March, June, September, and December. For example, material received from President Frank Smoker of the Pennsylvania Chapter to be included in the last issue arrived the day the August 99 issue went to press, understandably creating some confusion among some of the Chapter members. Contact with President Smoker helped resolve the problem. For this issue, Dec 99, only two Chapters have sent in a special reports. The 8th AF NEWS is the voice of the Historical Society members. Please be heard by sending your Chapter news in.

GENERAL JAMES H. DOOLITTLE CHAPTER

Dan Raymond, Editor of the Chapter newsletter Air Power, has in his most recent issue a most interesting presentation of many of the members' recollections of some of their experiences serving with the 8th during the war. The feature, entitled "Share Your Memories," allows each contributor to write in his own style some of his personal stories of the war. This allows a wide variety of subject matter and opinions. For instance, Don Werner's tale of flying a British Spitfire fighter on a sweep brings out some telling points of the advantages of flying an aircraft with a wooden propeller. Thomas Burrell tells of a New Year's Eve mission in 1943 that almost ended in disaster when a formation of B-24s flew across the 447th BG formation. (The NEWS will print several of these stories in future editions - Editor) President Bob Harrington states that the annual membership meeting will be held at Travis Air Base on April 29, 2000 at which time a new slate of Chapter officers will be selected.

NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER

The October Chapter meeting at the Los Colinas Country in Irving, Texas featured a presentation by Dr. John J. Kiwiet and his wife Margaret of the Netherlands. Dr. Kiwiet committed his life to the ministry in 1943 and survived two years of labor camp and underground experiences in resisting the Nazi regime. Officers of the Chapter were scheduled to be elected at the October meeting, states President Doyle Shields. The final event of the century will be the annual Christmas party on December 1st at the Las Colinas Country Club.

KENTUCKY CHAPTER

The Kentucky Chapter quarterly luncheon meeting was held at the University Club, with a guest speaker who was to address the subject of obtaining oral history for preservation of heritage and history. Several other items from the Chapter Bulletin Board: Dues of \$7.50 should be sent into Ken Payton, Treasurer, ASAP to avoid the Y2K gremlins. Also the P-51 airplane raffle completed at the September Chapter meeting declared the winner to be: Louis Epperson- a great prize! A veterans tribute appears in the recent newsletter "The Flying Colonel". The poem is entitled "What is a Veteran?" and will be reproduced in an upcoming 8th AF NEWS.

WEST VIRGINIA CHAPTER

The luncheon and business meeting which served as the annual Chapter meeting was held in September at the invitation of Denver and Vivian Guthrie at the Hales Landing aviation complex in Newark WV. A covered dish affair allowed everyone to take part in the festivities, Officers for the upcoming year were elected. A proposal to send \$1000 to the Memorial Chapel of The Heritage Museum in memory of West Virginians who served in the 8th Air Force was made. New Chapter officers for the year 2000 will be printed in the Mar 00 issue of the 8th AF NEWS.

VIRGINIA CHAPTER

Lt. Col. Bob Noziglia flew with the 379th Bomb Group at Kimbolton and following the war he was a C-54 pilot at the Berlin Airlift base at Fassberg. At the annual meeting of the Virginia Chapter in November, he spoke on his experience and the impact the Berlin Airlift had on Berliners during this early cold war confrontation with the Russian government. Bob addressed the gratitude show by modern day citizens of Berlin shown to the veterans at the recent Fiftieth reunion of the Berlin Airlifters. The meeting was held at Stonehenge Golf and Country Club in Richmond. Chapter officers were elected.

CENTRAL NEW YORK CHAPTER

The Summer picnic Chapter meeting was a great success with the business meeting following for members of the Central New York Chapter. Member Jim Kelly invited his son Jamey to speak to the attendees. Jamey was a pilot in the Desert Storm conflict, and is a Navy Captain. He is scheduled to take command of the U.S. Aircraft carrier *Constitution* and has been asked to return to a future Chapter meeting to relate his experiences in that assignment.

GEORGIA CHAPTER

The Georgia Chapter continues its program of activity with well-attended meetings in September and October. The October luncheon speaker was William (Bill) Johnson who told of his experiences with the 100th Bomb Group and of his connections with the Confederate Air Force. The Christmas luncheon is scheduled for December 18th, 1999 at the Petite Auberge Restaurant in Atlanta. The annual statewide meeting and election of officers for 2000 will be at the Holiday Inn in Perry, Georgia January 14 -16, 2000. This Fall has been spent preparing for the 25th Anniversary National HS Reunion and as host Chapter, members have remained busy, looking forward to a successful and memorable reunion in Savannah. Chapter members will man a welcoming table and help with other aspects of the event.

GENERAL CURTIS E. LEMAY CHAPTER

Meeting in Temecula, CA
The Curtis LeMay chapter of the 8 Air Force Historical Society had a quarterly meeting in Temecula, CA. at Oscars'. There were 96 persons that attended the delicious luncheon. In attendance was Murray 'Big Shorty' Codman, Group Commander, David Listsinger VP, and Chaplain Dick Hawes, Secretary-Treasurer, Bill Rawson Newsletter Editor, and Board members Dick Baynes President of the 8 AFHS National, and Bob Kerr, a

guest from the 303 Bomb Group who recently received his Distinguished Flying Cross after 54 years. Dick Baynes spoke of the upcoming 8 AFHS reunion in Savannah and also that the L.R. Green School in Escondido, CA are recreating a U S O Show on Oct 13 as a history project. The guest speaker was Guy Gabaldin, a retired Marine who captured over 100 Japanese prisoners single-handed and killed 33 enemies of Saipan. He wrote a book called 'Saipan: Suicide Island' which is a true story and exciting reading of the events for which he received the Navy Cross. He was on the TV program This Is Your Life of which we saw on video. There was a raffle that raised \$450.00. Any person that lives in Southern California may join the group by phoning 'BIG SHORTY' at 310-827-7277. Associate members are also welcome. The next meeting will be Nov 20 at the Aero Squadron Restraunt on Van Nuys Airport, Ca. There will also be a luncheon and a guest speaker.

Big Shorty

COLORADO CHAPTER

Highlight events for 1998 were engaging speakers Stephen Overholser, a local writer here in Colorado, and retired Colonel John Lowell, top P-38 ace in the ETO. Stephen Overholser is our Chapter historian and is currently researching and writing a book on the Navajo Code Writers. His discussion regarding his interviews and experiences with the Navajo veterans was extremely interesting. Our annual meeting at the Air Force Academy was accentuated by Colonel Lowell relating his experiences during two tours with the 364th Fighter Group. His first tour, during which he became an Ace after three missions, was in P-38's. His second tour was in P-51s and he ended up credited with 16 1/2 victories, 9 probables, 11 damaged. Since most of our Chapter were members of bomber crews, they were particularly fascinated by his story. During the summer, we held our first picnic. Survivors believe it may become an annual event! At the February meeting, new officers elected for 1999 were John Self, president - Ralph Gies, Mike Quering, George Meshko, & Frank Kates - Vice Presidents - Jerry Nelson, treasurer - David Shomper, membership. Our speaker at the annual meeting at the Air Force Academy this year was Lt. Colonel Tony Kern, the Director of Military History at the Academy. His presentation, "Back to the Future: One More Mission for the 8th Air Force of World War Two", was very well received and he opened some eyes regarding the future of the Air Force. We highly recommend the Colonel, when available, for any other Chapter wanting a frank and invigorating speaker.

J.S. Peterson, Sr.

MISSISSIPPI CHAPTER

The big event of the Fall for the Mississippi Chapter was the five-day bus trip to the 25th Anniversary Reunion in Savannah. Chapter members had a great trip by comfortable chartered bus and of course they took part in all the reunion events. Among others who contributed to reunion activities, Chaplain Col. Billy Jones delivered memorable invocations at the general assembly meeting and for the Gala Banquet the final evening. Staying together at a motel on the outskirts of Savannah, the Mississippi group had their own private "Limo" service to the reunion hotel activities and the activities during the Days at the Heritage

Museum in Pooler. During the week they enjoyed trips to shopping locales around Savannah and even took an excursion over to Hilton Head island for an enjoyable luncheon at The Crazy Crab. Everyone one agreed that it was a memorable Chapter outing and a very effective way to ensure that transportation is always available for the many events of the week. The anthology published by the Chapter will be formally unveiled at special ceremonies at the Main Library in Tupelo in mid-December, followed by a book-signing at The Cottage Bookshop nearby. Eight years in production, the book *Mississippians in the Mighty Eighth* relates a thorough cross-section of personal stories and experiences of 8th Air Force servicemen and women who were from, or now live in, Mississippi. For those who wish to order this beautiful cloth-bound volume in time for Christmas giving, send your check for \$45 plus \$5 s&h in USA to 8th AFHS Mississippi Chapter, 214 North Madison, Tupelo MS 38804.

NATIONAL CAPITOL AREA CHAPTER

Chapter members received as honored guests at Andrews AF Armed Forces Day Celebration. One hundred-ten members of the NCAC chapter attended the open house at Andrews Air Force Base on Armed Forces Day. The members enjoyed the days events viewing the air show from the V.I.P. reviewing stand section on the flight line. This was a day-long activity ending with dinner at the Andrews Officers Club. The members were honored with an address by Lt. General David L. Vesely, Assistant Vice Chief of Staff, Headquarters, USAAF, Pentagon. General Vesely told of the importance of the contribution made by the 8th Air Force veterans of World War II in the establishment of the base for the Air Force of today and that we still continue to be an important part of the U.S. Air Force Family. Honored guests, in addition to General Vesely were Colonel Robert Morgan, pilot of the *Memphis Belle*, Marge Bong Drucker - wife of Major Richard Bong - America's Ace of Aces for enemy planes destroyed by him in WWII, and Cora Tess Spooner - President of the East Coast Chapter of the Tuskegee Air Force. On the 21st of August, 50 members of the Chapter were honored by the Confederate Air Force at The Wings of Freedom Air Show at Frederick, Maryland. The members were honored guests at the WWII Veterans reserved tent and seat section of the flight line. Chapter members were also given the opportunity to have a private showing and inspection of WWII Aircraft in the show. Members were excited about the appearance of the B-17 "Sentimental Journey", which become a nostalgic experience for those who recalled their wartime experiences as they crawled through the plane with family members.

Byron Schlag, President

SAVANNAH WING - GEORGIA CHAPTER

The October meeting of the Savannah Wing was a special dinner meeting held on Wednesday night of the annual reunion with a special program arranged by President Paul Grassey and his staff of officers. Guests from the National organization were invited and many others attended as well. The dinner was held in the unique atmosphere of the Great Rotunda of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum featured a color guard and special flags presentations posting the colors before dinner. Several guest speakers were recognized during the after dinner

ceremonies. The Chapter was busy hosting events throughout reunion week and the Heritage Museum Volunteers, consisting primarily of 8th AFHS members, were operating at full throttle the entire week. The Volunteers were glad to have a chance to meet attendees of the reunion and to show off the Heritage Museum to all who had not had a chance to visit previously.

ILLINOIS CHAPTER

The November meeting of the Illinois Chapter was entertained by the story presented by Mario Tonelli who was in the Army in the Pacific, was captured, and was part of the Bataan Death March. Mario was a POW under the Japanese for 42 months. The Chapter noted the recent passing of member Al Grajek who was instrumental in establishing the Eternal Flame Veterans Monument in Worth, Illinois. The plan to put up a stone sculpture at the memorial site is still ongoing and those wishing to contribute should send their contributions to: Alfred Grajek Fund for the Eternal Flame, 6825 W. 111th St., Worth IL 60482. Chapter President Terry Carlson attended the recent 25th Anniversary reunion of the 8th AFHS in Savannah, meeting old friends and representing the Chapter at meetings and various functions.

MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER

Chapter President Al Audette wishes to thank all contributors to all who helped make the installation of an 8th Air Force plaque at the Statehouse in Boston a success. Special invitations were sent to 94 people for the event and 63 responded. The beautiful plaque was unveiled on Flag Day, June 14, 1999 and was reported in the Sept 99 issue of the 8th AF NEWS. A reminder also that monthly chapter meetings are held the third Thursday of each month at 11:00 AM in the Hanscom Field Officer's Club. All are welcome.

NEW MEXICO CHAPTER

Under the leadership of President Hal Goetsch the New Mexico Chapter was successful in obtaining a proclamation from

Governor Johnson declaring October 8 - 14, 1999 as Eighth Air Force Week in New Mexico. Chapter efforts began last March and this past August over 20 Chapter members met with the Governor for the Signing. The Commander of Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque also signed the official proclamation in special ceremonies at the base. A number of contacts with state officials were made throughout this past summer and a lot of effort went into these events, states President Goetsch. Media publicity was extensive and new members joined the Chapter rolls as a result of the proclamation project. The events are presented in this edition of the 8th AF NEWS. Luncheon meetings of the Chapter are held monthly and the public is invited. The September meeting featured a talk by H. Phillip Causer, a P-47 pilot with the 356th fighter group. He has written his experiences in a book entitled M. I. A. (Missing In Action) which was reviewed in the 8th AF NEWS June99 edition. The Chapter Winter meeting is scheduled for February 5th at Kirtland AFB Officer's Club.

PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER

The Pennsylvania Chapter, under the direction of President Frank Smoker, continues to expand its programs through the activities of its Western Wing, the Scranton Squadron, and The Delaware Valley Squadron. The Western Wing meets quarterly at the Palace Inn, Monroeville. A recent meeting was held at the home of Western Wing founder Hap Nicholas. Regular monthly dinner meetings at Stirma's Restaurant are held by the Scranton Squadron, while the Delaware Valley Squadron meets monthly at the Williamson Restaurant in Hatboro. All of these meeting feature interesting programs for those in attendance.

Preliminary plans for next year's annual Chapter Reunion are for June 23 - 26, 2000 at Al Monzo's Palace Inn in Monroeville PA. The annual banquet is scheduled for Sunday June 25th. Further information will be forthcoming.

The Pennsylvania Chapter had a big turnout of Chapter officers and members at the recent annual reunion of the Historical Society in Savannah, representing the Chapter in meetings and activities throughout the week.

AT CHRISTMAS TIME

Within the sky's blue firmament
There is a beacon, Heaven-sent.
As scintillating as a gem-
It is the star of Bethlehem!

As brilliant as the star of old,
And hallowed by a love, retold,
It burns upon His holy hill,
And God be thanked, it leads us still.

-Adelaide Long Lawson



CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA CHAPTER 8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Presents recognition award to asst. Vice Chief of Staff Lt. General David L. Vesely United States Air Force Headquarters, Pentagon, Washington D.C. General Vesely, who was our honored guest and speaker, made an outstanding presentation to the members present which effectively brought together the recognition of the efforts of the 8th Air Force of WWII and its' importance as a primary source which resulted in the outstanding professional and technical U.S. Air Force we have come to respect today. General Vesely compared the statistical records of the air force of WWII with the combat records of The Air Force combat activity of today the similarity was amazing. In view of General Vesely's experience and contribution to the Air Force, the NCAC Chapter presented the General with an award recognizing him for his outstanding dedication to service and contributions resulting in the high standards of professionalism and ethics the United States Air Force represents today, and for the support he has given to the preservation of the legacy and heritage of the 8th Air Force and Air Force Veterans of World War II.



NCAC 8th Air Force President Byron Schlag presents recognition award to General David L. Vesely, Assistant Vice Chief of Staff, Headquarters U.S. Air Force-Pentagon Washington D.C.

THE WISCONSIN CHAPTER delegation met with South Milwaukee Mayor David Kieck to sign the proclamation for Eighth Air Force Week October 8 -14. Present at the occasion were Don Almon, Joe Longo, Harold Baylerian, and Frank Chybowski. The Chapter presented three showcases containing items related to the Mighty Eighth. The theme was "Then and Now" and featured items of 8th Air Force history from World War II up through the present 8th AF.

Assistance for the exhibitry was obtained from the Public Affairs office at Barksdale AFB, Headquarters for the 8th Air Force. Photos of 8th Commander Lt. General Ronald Marcotte were included along with presentations of B-52s, B-1 and B-2 Stealth bombers.

The public response of the display was most gratifying, according to reports from the Chapter.



Eighth Air Force history on display



Wisconsin Chapter members display the Proclamation signed by Mayor David Kieck

REUNIONS

446TH BOMB GROUP

8th Air Force, England, WWII

Reunion Washington, DC Area May 18 to 21, 2000 As part of the Arlington National Cemetery Beautification Program. Hotel: Hilton Arlington & Towers, Arlington, VA Reservations: 703-812-5111. Contact: Bill Davenport, 13382 Wheeler Place, Santa Ana, CA 92705, (714-832-2829)

364th FTR GP

364 th FTR GP (WWII Honington, Eng, 8th AF) & Support Units Reunion, 18-21 Oct. 2000. Shreveport, LA., Ramada Inn. Contact: Dan Leftwich, 6630 Caldero Ct., Dayton, Ohio 45415. PH: 937-890-3641.

303rd Bomb Group Association

September 25 - 29, 2000 San Diego CA - Hanalei Hotel Contact: James B. Taylor 421 Yerba Buena Ave. Los Altos, CA 94022-2152

303rd BGA Return to Molesworth

The 365th Mission May 31st - June 8th, 2000 Contact: Dick DiAmato 1-800-228-9690

446th Bomb Group

Washington DC area May 18 - 21, 2000 As part of the Arlington National Cemetery Beautification Program Contact Bill Davenport 13382 Wheeler Place Santa Ana CA 92705 714-832-2829

SECOND SCHWEINFURT MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION HOST GERMAN DELEGATION AT REUNION IN SAVANNAH

In June 1998, forty-nine members and families of the Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association were welcomed by the citizens of Schweinfurt, Germany to take part in ceremonies to dedicate a memorial in the city honoring those who died in the air and on the ground during the World War II raids on Schweinfurt, centered on manufacturing plants near the town. During the days of their visit last year, the American visitors were taken on tours of the sights of the area and were entertained at numerous ceremonies and functions. Plans were made to meet again in Savannah to continue the warm connections among the friends.

On the fifty-six anniversary of the Black Thursday raid of October 17th, 1943, SSMA members greeted a contingent of 19 German representatives with a welcome as hosts to Savannah. The Lord Mayor of Schweinfurt, Gudrun Grieser, led the German group, which was presented a key to the city by Savannah Mayor Floyd Adams. Several days of events at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum were capped off by a farewell banquet for the guests. Georg Schaefer, a Flakhelfer, was one of the speakers at the dinner. He explained that "Luftwaffenhelfer" meant "helpers" in

wartime Germany. These were young teenage boys conscripted from schools to replace regular soldiers in the defensive flak batteries. They were trained in a few weeks to take over 3 out of 5 key positions at each German 88mm anti-aircraft gun. Herr Schaefer stated that as a young boy he felt a sense of pride in his duties, a sense of duty to help in his country's war efforts, and of course, he felt a certain sense of adventure. There is a rather positive reminiscence of that wartime service in the minds of the Flakhelfers.

He stated however that "at the approach of enemy (8th AF) bomber formations a feeling of queasiness developed in the Flakhelfers. When bombs struck our batteries, when we had casualties and wounded comrades around us, this feeling became a very oppressive one indeed - one can, without hesitation, call it fear, "Angst". Many a fervent prayer of thanks arose from the hearts of us youngsters when it was all over." He states that after all

these years there is a sense of gratitude shared with their American friends that there now is a symbolic handshake between former enemies.

The impressive Second Schweinfurt Memorial now in the Memorial Gardens at the Heritage Museum and the unusual bronze memorial with its German and American inscriptions dedicated in the park in Schweinfurt stand as commemorative structures to remember, to reflect - as quiet reminders of a fateful past. The historic gatherings of these two groups of people whose lives were changed by the events of the war serve to join again two cultures which were once apart.



The Lord Mayor of Schweinfurt addressing the group in the art Gallery of the Heritage Museum. On her right is an enlarged photo of the Memorial dedicated in Schweinfurt in June, 1998. The photo was Presented to the Museum by the German delegation.



Oberbuergermeisterin Gudrun Grieser, Bud Klint and Georg Schaefer. Bud was made an honorary Bavarian with the presentation of the Tyrolian hat and string tie. Georg presented the hat and Herr Fritz Martin contributed the tie.



Most of the German delegation, gathered around the SSMA monument in the Memorial Garden of the Mighty 8th AF Heritage Museum.

THE FAVORITE PRAYER OF PRESIDENT HARRY S. TRUMAN

Almighty and Everlasting God, Creator of Heaven, Earth and the Universe:

Help me to be, to think, to act what is right, because it is right; make me truthful, honest and honorable in all things; make me intellectually honest for the sake of right and honor, and without thought of reward to me. Give me the ability to be charitable, forgiving and patient with fellowmen--help me to understand their motives and their shortcomings--even as Thou understandest mine!

Amen

8th Air Force in Europe, Combat Environment During WWII Effect on B-17 Crew Members

By: Charles L. Brown, 379th Bomb Group
Combat Pilot Dec. 13, 1943 to Apr. 11, 1944

The name "Flying Fortress" given to the B-17 bomber aircraft was perhaps a bit overstated. It was, however, normally as cold as damp stone in the depths of a cruel Siberian winter, perhaps even more so at the 25,000 to 28,000 feet levels at which the B-17 normally operated. The winter temperatures were constantly from thirty to sixty degrees below zero Centigrade. The thermometer on board the B-17's frequently "pegged out" at the maximum reading of minus 60 degrees Centigrade.

The extreme cold was further compounded by the lack of oxygen and the necessity to wear a primitive oxygen mask for several hours. The moisture in one's breath, perspiration, blood from facial wounds and nose bleeds, would frequently cause the mask to freeze to the skin and occasionally the ice build-up would be of sufficient quantity to cause the mask to malfunction; a serious and immediate life-threatening situation.

Severe confinement, due to space limitations also added to the above described discomfort factors. The ball turret gunner lived and functioned in a small ball-like space which was attached as an appendage to the bottom of the aircraft. He was confined for extended periods to near total immobility in a space so small that he frequently could not scratch an itch. The tall gunner was not much better off, and the waist gunners operated out of open windows with super cold air streams constantly battering their faces and hands. If wind-chill factors had been invented they would have been well in excess of 100 degrees below zero. In addition to the normal fears associated with suffering either death, serious wounds, or capture due to enemy action, Mother Nature extracted a heavy toll in casualties due to oxygen starvation, severe frost bite, and frozen body parts, which frequently brought about amputation of the affected members.

The high combat losses, casualties as described above, difficult to impossible nightmarish weather operating conditions, the frequent mid-air collisions due to restricted visibility, and the constant nagging fear, extracted a heavy toll in the mental well-being of the survivors. "Undue fatigue" or "combat fatigue" were common phrases used by the Flight Surgeons to describe even the average conditions of the combat crew members during 1942, 1943 and up to the Allied invasion of the continent on

June 6, 1944. "Flak leave" or "rest leave" was only available to a few of the more obvious, or fortunate, combat fatigue cases.

Due to high combat losses, and the resultant crew shortages, those who appeared to cope without showing evidence of breaking down flew continuously until they either completed their tours or were shot down. The general feeling among these men was "whatever happens, let's get it over with." The survivors of this new type of warfare were extremely proud of the fact that in spite of great odds and frequent enemy superiority "they never turned back due to enemy action," even when suffering massive casualties and large aircraft losses. As a former infantryman, it was extremely difficult for me to adjust to the fact that when the anti-aircraft artillery shells (FLAK), machine gun bullets, and cannon shells started flying "There was no cover anywhere and however desperate, one could still not dig a FOXHOLE in our new type battlefield" - five miles straight up.



379th BG pilot Charles Brown (left) with Luftwaffe fighter pilot Franz Stigler, honorary member of the 379th Bomb Group. These two combat pilots traced each other after the war and have since been lifelong friends. Lt. Brown's B-17 was severely damaged on a raid into Germany and lost two engines. German pilot Stigler found the aircraft as a straggler out of its protective formation and foregoing a sure kill, gave Brown a respectful salute and peeled off to return to his fighter base. The Brown crew survived and made it back home to England.

An 8th Air Force entry in the Fresno, California 1999 Veterans Day parade, with three members of the Historical Society taking part in the parade. William McLeod, 303rd BG at left; John Wagonhalls, 379th BG; and Milton Munro, 44th BG at right.





B. J. Erikson (l) and Evelyn Sharp (r) of the Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron talk with an AAF fighter pilot before ferrying this early P-51 Mustang from Long Beach, California.

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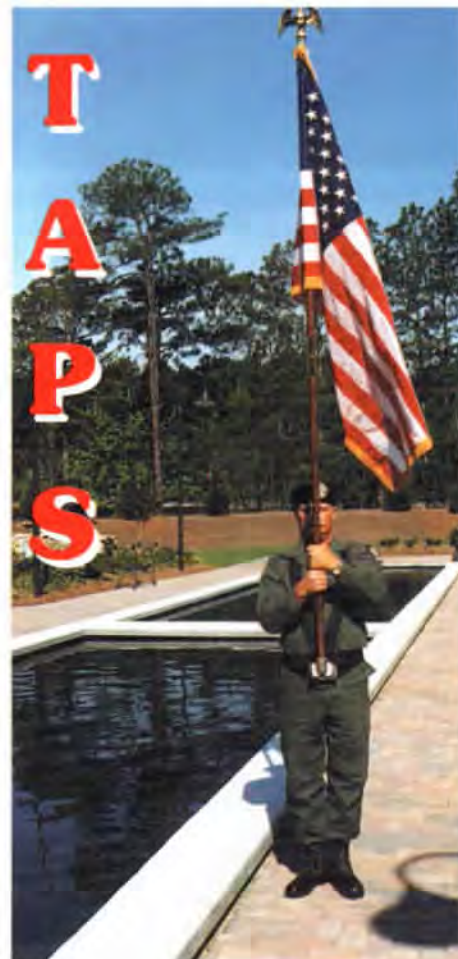
Remember to put The 8th AF NEWS on your Chapter's newsletter mailing lists – Address is on inside front cover -Editor

BRIGADIER GENERAL AUSTIN C. SHOFNER

Brigadier General Austin Conner Shofner died in November 1999 in Shelbyville, Tennessee, his ancestral home. Austin Shofner changed the fate of World War II and saved thousands of American and Allied lives. He was a commander in the 4th Regiment, U. S. Marines and was captured when Corregidor fell to the Japanese in 1943. After eleven months of prison and torture at the hands of the enemy, Shofner led 11 sailors, airmen and Marines in one of the few successful escapes of the war from Japanese prison camps. Two Members of the Air Force were among those escapees: Lt. Col. Ed Dyess And Capt. Sam Grashio. Dyess Air Force Base, Texas was named in honor of Col. Dyess.

Shofner remained in the Pacific leading guerrilla Filipino troops against the Japanese, and the rest of his men returned to the United States to become the first to relate the horrors, torture and deplorable conditions instituted by the enemy, and the atrocities which led to a 40% death rate of prisoners of war. They told of the Bataan Death March where ten thousand troops tragically died at the hands of the Japs. As a direct result of the stories told by Shofner and his escapees, American war strategy was altered by the government to immediately carry the war directly to the Japanese homeland and to rapidly increase forces and supplies in the Pacific. Shofner returned to the Pacific in 1944 to continue his fight against Japanese enemy forces, commanding U. S. Marine Battalions in the battles of Peleliu and Okinawa. He personally went behind the lines to rescue 500 prisoners who were slated for death at Cabanatuan. He received the Distinguished Service Cross, the Legion of Merit, two Silver Stars, the Bronze Star and two Purple Hearts, among many other service awards for valor. General Austin Shofner retired from the Marine Corps in 1959, always being known as a tough patriot who lived his life for freedom and for the love of his country. He was buried in the Shofner family cemetery in an impressive ceremony with full military honors, the flag being presented by a Marine General from Washington. An order was sent out for all Marine bases around the world to fly the American at half mast in General Shofner's honor. He is survived by four sons and seven grandchildren.

Austin Shofner epitomizes the spirit of the men of the Greatest Generation, and takes a deserved place alongside the men who fought for American liberty in the European Theater in World War II.



Johnson, Cecil D., Albany GA; survived 1944 mid-air collision over Belgium.

Interred in uniform with full military honors, Moody AFB

Mayor, David G., Masaryktown FL; BAD 2

Haller, Edward, Highland IL; 91st BG; Illinois Chapter

Asbill, Ronald W., Miner IL; Illinois Chapter

Kalhoefer, Herbert E. "Kal", Bowie TX

Pierson, Donald, Mayfield KY; POW; Kentucky Chapter

Ingels, William, 36th BS; notified by his daughter Judy

Shearer, Bob C., Seatt5le WA; 445th BG; reported by his son Casey Novak.

Frank G., Nashville TN; teacher, 37 years at Montgomery Bell Academy

Bloser, Lester "Flash", Carlisle PA;

Moore, R. W., 447th BG 711 BS

Hamer, James S., Nashville TN; pilot for 55 missions during career

Kreusel, Louis J., San Antonio TX; 490th BG

Cope, Donald, Connelssville PA; 350th FG

Wroblewski, Joseph, pilot and 351st BG Director; Pilot for Governor of Georgia; burial in Arlington National Cemetery - from Ed Brannen, Cincinnati OH

Propper, Henry M., 392nd BG, 577 BS

Rickert, Ralph, Dyersburg TN; ballturret gunner on Strictly Instrumental, 96th BG; by Cal Anderson, tailgunner

Wilson, William S. "Billy", Houston TX; 55th FG

Silverman, Edwin P., Houston TX; navigator 388th BG; Caterpillar Club; took part in end of war food drops over Holland

Palermo, Joseph Michael, Independence MO;

Melillo, William Kelly, Dayton OH; from injuries in auto accident in Ohio

Reiner, Max, Bayside NY;

Yarnof, Peter E.

Grindstaff, Howard D., Indianapolis IN; tail gunner 390th BG; POW

Porter, Robert; 466th BG

McMurray, Harold 91st BG; POW

Demis, Andrew "Andy"; stationed Chelshelton England; bombardier with 25 missions, 1943

Johnson, Laurence Lynn, Bellevue NE; 452nd BG

Marcollo, William, Fresno CA; General James H. Doolittle Chapter

Green, Robert, Cedar Rapids IA; tailgunner; a goodhearted gentle man who loved flowers, fine food, and model trains

Rudish, George A., Alburnett IA; pilot P-47; flew in the Battle of the Bulge 1944

Whitsell, William "Bill", Iowa City IA;

Choate, Eddie Joe, Cooper TX; 445th BG at Tibenham; US Postmaster for 34 years - by George Collar, Historian, Kassel Mission Memorial Association

Hutchcroft, Harold W., Middletown IA; 392nd BG; 35 missions

Graham, Harold E. "Pop", Santa Maria CA; flight engineer and gunner, 457th BG

Rickert, Ralph H., ball turret gunner, John Heath crew, 96th BG; - from Tim Blivens, Historian, Dyersburg AAB Memorial Association

Wilson, William S. "Billy", Houston TX; 55th FG

WHO WILL SING MY SONG?

I know a song of the wind and the sky,
the vast billowing expanse of God's brilliance.
Do the wind and the sky know a song about me?

I know a song of brave hearts battling in the soaring heights
leaving no print when the battle's done.
Do brave hearts know a song about me?

I know a song about God's spirit
that led me to risk all
in the cloudscape drawn by His finger.
Does God know a song about me?

The clouds hold no trace of me,
sing no song of me.
Here, is where my song is sung.

-Chaplain Martin Loyley
Chaplain, RAF and 8th AF Heritage Museum

THE TWINS

What ever happened to those twins? The ones who wound up in the 452nd BG in S-2, or somewhere? What were their names?... Don and Bob?... Tom and Ray?? I think it was Dan and Tom - that's it! Dan and Tom.

The first phone call came in early summer of this year. The accent came from the North. "This is Dan. I am calling to see if you know of any identical twins who served together in the 8th Air Force

that policy was an Air Force regulation. I told them that I would put a notice in the 8th AF NEWS Bulletin Board to see if any other 8th twins were around. The more I talked to the twin brothers - Dan and Tom - the more I found out about what happened to them after the war and the more fascinating their story became. It made me realize what a varied and successful career many of the 8th airmen had following the war, with the common bond that they all shared of having served in the Eighth Air Force.



Dan and Tom Birkbeck



452nd War Room at Christmas

during the war. As far as my brother Tom and I can determine, we may have been the only ones." The next calls arrived sporadically. It was always, "This is one of the Birkbeck twins - the good-looking one. Have you found out anything yet?" It was either Tom or Dan again. They sounded just alike.

I was looking. I had heard that brothers were not allowed to fly on the same aircraft for combat missions over enemy territory - you know, the tragic Sullivan brothers thing that happened in the Pacific early in the war, but I wasn't even sure

and successful career many of the 8th airmen had following the war, with the common bond that they all shared of having served in the Eighth Air Force. Dan and Tom Birkbeck were as most twins, inseparable. Growing up as youths in Philadelphia, they established their own thriving newspaper and magazine sales business before they entered the service in the Fall of 1942. Tom was assigned to the Army Air Corps, and Dan to the Army Signal Corps. Their mother, Mrs Arthur Birkbeck, resorted to writing to the Secretary of War requesting that they be re-assigned to the same Army unit. Her sons had always been together. In June, 1943 both boys were placed in the 452nd Bomb Group, Eighth Air Force. In England at Deopham Green, Tom worked in the base S-2 Intelligence section while Dan was busy in Operations.



the Hut Pet

Their artistic talents were soon put to good use. Tom designed and professionally decorated the 452nd Bomb Group War Room including mission boards and maps. Both did occasional flight crew jacket paintings and aircraft nose art. After two years with the 452nd, they returned home at the end of the war.

Back home in Horsham, Pennsylvania the Birkbeck twins and their younger brother helped establish the family retail business, and also opened up an art shop, The Twin Art Shop. In the years since, they have



452nd Bomb Group Headquarters - Tom is 3rd row back; 5th from the right



Lipizzan Stallions

become known world-wide for their art work depicting famous players in the Pool and Billiards arena. Minnesota Fats, Willie Mosconi, Irving Crane, et al. They maintain a close friendship with the most prominent and upcoming Pool professionals. Tom and Dan have been featured in all Pool and Billiard trade publications and have been recognized as the Godfathers of Pool.

Another area of their artistic talent is in the equine industry. The twins' work painting horses has been featured in the

top equine magazines. Of particular noteworthiness is their Devon Horse show series which depicts the horses and patrons at the Devon Horse Show in Pennsylvania - an annual event which Tom and his wife Mary attended for over fifty years. They also have a life-long interest in the Royal Lipizzaner Stallions, owned by Colonel Ottomar Herrman and his family, now in Myakka City, Florida. The Lipizzaner is the 300 year-old line of beautiful horses that performed for European royalty and were brought over from Vienna after General George Patton rescued

them at the end of the war. These prints also are known all over the world.

The twins have remained close throughout their post-war business and artistic endeavors. The portfolio of paintings, prints and news articles which they forwarded to me is fascinating and impressive. After leaving home in 1942, their first contact with the outside world was during their years with the Mighty Eighth Air Force - an experience which remains invaluable to both of them to this



Tom and Dan or Dan and Tom with Powers models Cissy Smith and Martha Price

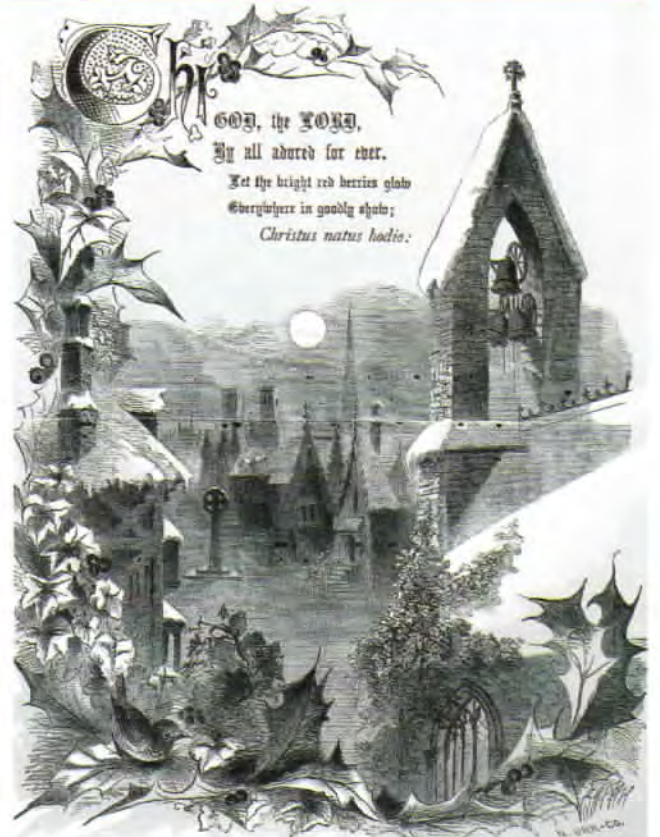
day. Accomplished artistic twins who got their start painting while serving in England with the Eighth Air Force.

Dan and Tom still are interested in hearing from twins or from those who are aware of other sets of twins who served together in the Eighth. Drop me a line and we will followup on that in future issues of the 8th AF NEWS. If you are a twin and choose to telephone, *please* make sure I know exactly which one of you it is on the line.

~ WEB

"The young dead soldiers do not speak.
Nevertheless, they are heard in all the still houses.
Who has not heard them?
They say: We leave you our deaths.
Give them meaning.
Give them an end of war, and true peace
Give them victory that ends war, and a peace afterwards.
We were young, they say. We have died.
Remember us."

Poet Archibald McLeish, quoted at a memorial parade in honor of 78th Fighter Group men killed in action- Duxford Airfield, 30 May 1945.





THE MUNSTER RAID BEFORE AND AFTER

by Ian L. Hawkins

The mission to Munster and the other three missions of that immediate period, namely, Bremen, Marienberg and Schweinfurt, are known as Black Week in the history of the Eighth Air Force. These air battles ranked with the most bitterly-fought, critical missions of the entire Air Offensive, 1942-1945 of the Eighth Air Force against the Luftwaffe. The losses of the Eighth during Black Week missions in men and equipment were prohibitive and proved that bombers of the Eighth could not do deep-penetration daylight missions to Germany without the protection of USAAF fighters.

The author has skillfully woven in the story of the Munster mission material from the official USAAF reports of the mission and Luftwaffe sources, as well as personal accounts of the air crew and ground crew participants of both sides, and the civilians on the ground.

Beyond the mission itself, there are personal stories of evadees and escapees from Europe and the brave members of the underground who aided these American fliers on their way back to England.

Price: \$32.00 1999 543 Pages ISBN 0-917678-49-4 Hard Cover Illustrated

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The tumult and the shouting dies –
The Captains and the Kings depart –
Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget – Lest we forget!

Far-called, our navies melt away –
On dune and headland sinks the fire –
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget – Lest we forget!

-from *Recessional* by Rudyard Kipling

When I was a kid
my mother used to tell me
to always put on a clean pair
of underwear every day.
After about three weeks,
I couldn't get my trousers
buttoned together.
- Clyde White

HAGAR



8TH AFHS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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A SHORT GUIDE TO GREAT BRITAIN

Excerpts from the War Department publication---

You are going to Great Britain as part of an Allied offensive -- to meet Hitler and beat him on his own ground. For the time being you will be Britain's guest.

British Reserved, Not Unfriendly. The British are often more reserved in conduct than we. On a small crowded island where forty-five million live, each man learns to guard his privacy carefully -- and is equally careful not to invade another man's privacy. So if Britons sit in trains or buses without striking up conversation with you, it doesn't mean they are being haughty and unfriendly. Probably they are paying more attention to you than you think. But they don't want to appear intrusive or rude.

Don't Be a Show-Off. The British dislike bragging and showing off.... They

won't think any better of you for throwing money around.

The Country. England is a small country, smaller than North Carolina or Iowa. The whole of Great Britain England, Scotland and Wales --is hardly bigger than Minnesota... No part is more than one hundred miles from the Sea.

The Weather. If you are from Boston or Seattle the weather may remind you of home. If you are from Arizona or North Dakota you will find it a little hard to get used to.

Remember There's a War on. Britain may look a little shop-worn and grimy to you. the British people are anxious to have you know that you are not seeing their country at its best. There's been a war on since 1939.

The Children. Children the world over are easy to get along with... To the British children you as an American will be "something special." For they have been fed at their schools and impressed with the

fact that the food they ate was sent to them by Uncle Sam. You don't have to tell them about lend-lease food, they know about it and appreciate it.

Britain at War. They have been bombed, night after night and month after month. Thousands of them have lost their houses, their possessions, their families... You are coming from a country where your home is still safe, food is still plentiful and lights are still burning... stop and think before you sound off.



PICKETT-HAMILTON FORT

What is it?? These were the words of Les Granfield and friend Chaz Bushell as they walked their dog on the old airfield at Burtonwood. A circular top with a manhole cover in the grass. A closer examination confirmed that it was the top of a

retractable pill-box used for airfield defence during WWII and lying derelict ever since. They managed to get the lid open but it was full of water and closer examination was not possible. Photographs were taken and information circulated to members of the Association to see what information could be gathered.

Burtonwood Association member David J Smith in his book Britain's Military Airfields has the following to say about them:

"The so-called disappearing pill box, more properly known as the Pickett-Hamilton Retractable Fort, provided an element of surprise against an attacker and was first seen as the answer to the problem of airfield defence. It was a concrete cylinder with firing slots, mounted inside another pipe and raised and lowered by either hydraulic, pneumatic or mechanical means. The crew of two would enter by hatch in the roof and when retracted it was flush with the aerodrome surface and able to bear the weight of a taxiing aircraft."

"By June 1941 a total of 170 had been installed at 59 airfields. When it was finally realized that they were virtually useless, 355 had been employced all over Britain. These curiosities continue to come to light at regular intervals and there must be many more awaiting discovery.

"The theory of having two or three retractable pillboxes in the

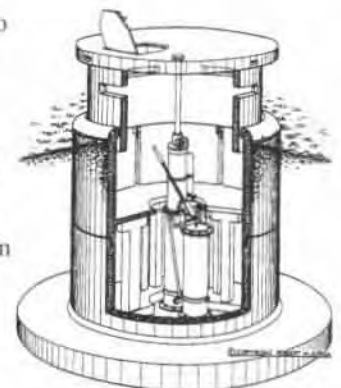
middle of an airfield was good but the practical aspects left much to be desired, even if shrouded in artificial smoke as suggested. It would have been difficult to man them until our own flying operations had ceased and the crews would then have to carry ammunition across open ground with no cover. There was also a considerable risk of their hitting, or being hit by, their own perimeter defenses."

"The other major problem was water seepage and at many places continuous pumping was necessary. By 1942, Bomber Command considered retractable pillboxes useless and recommended that they should not be installed at any more of its stations. In March 1942 the official view was that the weapons and personnel available could be deployed to better advantage but the forts were, nevertheless, to be maintained in working order"

A fort is located close to Burtonwood Road not far from the location of the post-war fire station close to the threshold of runway 22. Les and Ian Murphy with Pete Boardman

hired a pump and pumped it dry to have a better look and get some good photographs. They have now contacted Warrington Council to see if any help may be available to excavate it and put it into our Heritage Centre. Not an easy task but hopefully we can achieve.

-from the Burtonwood Times



DISCIPLINE

by Lt. John Thornton, Coast Artillery

Discipline is the life blood of an Army. The degree of success in battle is directly proportionate to the state of discipline of the troops involved. Just as the test of an officer is his ability to get results, so his ability to produce results is dependent entirely on the discipline of his men.

Successful battle discipline stems from self-discipline; pride in organization, instant obedience to orders, vigorous health, all flow from self-discipline, and are founded on the individual soldier's self-respect. Thus, the goal of all officers - to create this self-respect.

Of vital importance to a young officer, however, is the aspect of discipline and its relationship to his dealing with the enlisted men. Success in this regard is more than a mental attitude; it is a technique to be carefully developed and constantly practiced. Junior officers may well take heed that one careless slip in the relationship between them and their enlisted men will invariably undo weeks of painstaking effort to build up discipline.

Certain features in the officer-enlisted man relationship have been carefully worked out by leaders with years of experience. They are well to consider.

a. Treatment of the Soldier by Officers. -

First to remember, of course, is that while an officer must adopt a certain paternal attitude toward his men, at the same time he must not forget that they are to be treated as men. That is not to say that enlisted men will not be corrected for infractions of military rules. In fact, they must be corrected immediately. Any young officer who does not have the intestinal fortitude to insist on proper and precise attention to duty from each enlisted man is destroying the respect of that enlisted man toward him. First weeks are all-important. Officers must not be afraid to say "no." Unless this attitude is practiced, before a young officer realizes it, it will be a case of the tail wagging the dog, and his function as a troop commander will have been completely destroyed.

b. A Soldier's Self-Respect. - No aid is so valuable to discipline as an appeal to a soldier's self-respect. It is one of the most prevailing human princi-

ples that a man will undertake nearly any dangerous mission to retain his standing in the eyes of his fellow soldiers. In battle, this factor will be needed be carefully nurtured by officers. When appealed to in this manner, most soldiers will react favourably. New officers will find such an appeal the best means with which to deal with first offenders. Nine times out of ten, if an officer will approach punishment with an appeal to self-respect, instead of a sentence in the guardhouse, he will not be troubled with the offender again.

c. Criticism. - One of the common practices of many young officers, whether it be in the club bar or around the mess table, is casual, indiscriminate criticism of higher authority. Invariably such disapproval is transmitted to the men. And it is one of the worst habits which a young officer can develop. Running the War Department from a battery office may be a pleasurable pastime, but it is not conducive to discipline and respect of the troops for their superiors. What most officers do not consider is that when they criticize higher authority they are striking directly at themselves as direct representatives of such higher authority.

d. Punishment. - It is a certainty a young officer will deal out punishment sooner or later. The important factor is the manner in which such punishment is awarded. Perhaps no single item in the commanding of troops is so crucial to a new officer's success as the proper administration of disciplinary measures. The guiding rule for punishment in the Army is to make it *impersonal*. Each man punished by a superior officer must be made to feel that the penalty is a result of an infallible law which is over and above the officer. Just as the famous example of the stomach ache which follows the eating of a green apple, so must a soldier feel about his punishment when he has broken a military law. The smart officer will picture himself as but a mouth-piece for a system of justice much greater than either he or the offending soldier. Justice and promptness are the two administrative rules which all young officers should remember.

- from *Military Review*, Oct 1943

STRANGE LAWS

A man can't go outside while wearing a jacket and pants that do not match....

It's illegal to sit on the curb of any city street and drink beer from a bucket ...

People are not allowed to cross a street while walking on their hands ...

It is illegal to water your yard while it's raining ...

Ordinance #223 prohibits the installation and usage of slot machines in outhouses ...

~ Carmel NY

~St. Louis MO

~ Hartford CT

~ Tybee Island GA

~Bexley OH

OUR LADY IN ENGLAND

Connie Richards has a lifetime of 8th Air Force memories

Connie Stanton was in her early teen years when the first wave of American airmen invaded the quiet countryside of Thurleigh where she lived with her family. This was 1942 - the first four USAAF bomb groups had just arrived in England. The wartime activities surrounding a bomber base quickly extended into neighboring Bedford where trucks loaded with 8th Air Force airmen headed for entertainment, dances and concerts, and to meet young British companions. The Dujon Ballroom, the Corn Exchange and the American Red Cross GI Club in Bromham Road were their usual Bedford destinations.

It was on her fifteenth birthday, July 8th, 1944 at Milton Ernest Hall that Connie first met Major Glenn Miller. There was a dance that night at the Hall, and Connie asked her parents' permission to attend. With her dark hair side-swept up in the style of the day, wearing borrowed Tangee lipstick, and her legs tinted brown with strong coffee (a black crayon was used to draw seams up the back of her calves), Connie was smuggled by 8th AF Sgt. James McPhail into the Hall and danced that night to the music of the fabulous Glenn Miller Orchestra. Since that memorable night, her love of the Miller sound and of the 8th Air Force has never diminished.

She met her future husband, Gordon Richards, in 1947 and they both became members of the 8th AF Historical Society shortly after its formation in 1974. They have been the British contacts for the Society up to the present and value the friends they have made from every state in the Union. Their collection of Mighty Eighth memorabilia and souvenirs which have been presented to them is extensive, and they plan to show it on public exhibit in a museum sometime in the future. The Richards attend every Memorial ceremony throughout the year in England representing the 8th AF Historical Society, laying wreaths and flowers in memory of those airmen who were lost during the war. They organize many of the ceremonies and have numerous connections with British officials and royalty. Connie and Gordon handle all the administrative duties for the Historical Society in Britain, including dues payments, financial



Connie Richards, at her home in Oakley – with some of her 8th AF memorabilia.

matters, and the distribution of the 8th AF NEWS throughout England. As they have for many years, The Richards continue to donate their time and skills as 8th AFHS Ambassadors in the United Kingdom.

Connie visits Thurleigh regularly. Originally RAF Twinwoods Airfield, Thurleigh was the airbase from which Glenn Miller flew on his ill-fated trip to a concert appearance in Paris. She is a Glenn Miller historian and promotes the story of Glenn Miller and his music at every opportunity. She knows the names of all of the original band members and recently hosted a return tour to six of the band's original musicians. They visited all of the old Bedford music Halls, and ended their trip to the old Co-Partners Hall in Queens Park where the band always rehearsed - the old "Shack in the Fields". On the 50th anniversary of Miller's last concert at Twinwoods, Connie and Gordon presented a concert by the only orchestra allowed to play the original "Glenn Miller Sound" in England, the Glenn Miller U.K. Orchestra. Over 2500 people once again heard the familiar old tunes drift across the airfield.

Connie and Gordon are always available to members of the Historical Society who have related questions or need assistance. They may be found at their home on a hill in Oakley near Bedford, or may be contacted by writing them at 14 Pavenham Road, Oakley Bedford, MK43 7SY, England. 01234 823357.



Control Tower at Twinwoods; Thurleigh 1999 – 306th Bomb Group – Station III



Getting old ain't for sissies.
- Betty Davis

303RD BOMB GROUP ENJOYS WESTERN SKIES

Hell's Angels' annual meeting held in Oklahoma City

There was a big turnout for the five-day 1999 reunion of the 303rd Bomb Group - the Hell's Angels. Meeting organizer and chairman Ed Miller and company put on a meeting to be remembered. Old Oklahoma City brought back many memories from the war years and the lively nightlife in the refurbished Old Town capped of days of tours and sight-seeing.

The restaurants were a hit with attendees and the highlight feature was the trip to the excellent Cowboy Hall of Fame Museum and the associated Omniplex. Don't let the name mislead you - there were fabulous galleries of original western art, a reproduction of an authentic American western town, huge scenic murals in many of the rooms, western statuary, extensive displays of silver-trimmed saddles, spurs, and artifacts of western living of the nineteenth century. One impressive exhibit displayed a large collection of styles of barbed wire used by early ranchers. And of course there was the ubiquitous large gift shop of western related articles as you completed your day at the museum. The outside gardens were a nice diversion and many 303rd troops made a special visit to the memorial to one of the world's greatest rodeo bucking horses of the 30's era who incidentally carried the moniker of "Hells Angels".

The final night saw the Gala Banquet with its Big Band sound and a successful auction of many donated items including half a dozen Bill Adams 8th Air Force woodcarvings. A complete compendium of all issues of the Hells Angels Newsletter was presented to The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum archives by the Group. President Harry Gobrecht turned over the controls to incoming 303rd BG President Bill Roche of Venice, Florida at the close of the Banquet. The other officers for the new millenium are: Richard R. Johnson, Vice-Pres.; James B. Taylor, VP Reunions; Albert L. Dussliere, Secty.; and Jack P. Rencher, Treasurer.

The 303rd BG is looking forward to its upcoming "One More Time - A Last Mission" trip to the airbase at Molesworth May 31 - June 8th, 2000. The special trip will see the members receive a royal welcome from the Brits, and will include a fantastic Hanger Dance on June third, in conjunction with several other Groups in England at that time. Those who do not want to miss this trip may contact Tamarac Travel at 1-800-228-9690.



303rd Bomb Group Commander Lew Lyle at the Hells Angels monument - Cowboy Museum, Oklahoma City



Commander Col. Kermit Stevens and daughter Ellen after the banquet



Together for the first time since the war: Irl Baldwin (left), pilot of the B-17 Hells' Angels - the first B-17 to complete a tour of 25 missions, and his crew chief for all 25 missions, Fabian Folmer



President Harry Gobrecht (left) and incoming President Bill Roche

VETERANS DAY CEREMONY NAMES BRIDGES AFTER 8TH AIR FORCE MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT

On Veterans Day, November 11th, 1999, twin bridges traversing the Tallapoosa River near Montgomery, Alabama were named in honor of 8th Air Force Medal of Honor recipient Col. William R. Lawley, Jr. Over 200 friends and dignitaries attended the special ceremonies. Bill was a friend to many people across the country and was a strong supporter of 8th AF activities. His wife Amy, who was the featured guest at the dedication, has continued staying in close touch with their friends and most recently attended the 25th Anniversary reunion week of the 8th AFHS in Savannah.

Bill Lawley was commended in 1944 for exceptional bravery and skill in bringing back his crippled B-17 with its eight severely wounded crew members after a raid on Leipzig, Germany. At the time of his death on Memorial Day, 1999 he was the sole surviving 8th Air Force Medal of Honor recipient. Alabama Governor Don Siegelman and Lt. Governor Steve Windom took part in the Veterans Day ceremonies along with a U. S. Air Force Honor Guard and Air Force representatives from the Air University at Maxwell AFB, Alabama.



Alabama Governor Don Siegelman and Amy Lawley at the Memorial Bridge dedication in honor of her husband

The wicked leader is he who the people despise. The good leader is he who the people revere. The great leader is he who the people say, "We did it ourselves."

~ Lao-Tzu

HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2000 CHARITABLE ENDOWMENT DRIVE

The fund drive to honor 8th Air Force Historical Society Founder John H. Woolnough is off to a great start on its way to a goal of \$250,000. This year's Memorial Drive will sponsor the library at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah. The library will be christened The John H. Woolnough Memorial Library in special ceremonies in the year 2000. Now is the 8th AFHS members' opportunity to ensure the preservation of the heritage of the Mighty



Eighth by supporting the further development and expansion of the Museum library and archives through this special endowment fund. Please mail your contributions with this coupon to our Historical Society central office. Each donor will be recognized in a special book to be placed in the Memorial Library. Your donation is a tax-deductible contribution.

Help make this mission a great success!



AF HS JOHN H. WOOLNOUGH MEMORIAL LIBRARY FUND DRIVE

NAME _____

AMOUNT
\$ _____

ADDRESS _____

GROUP OR
UNIT _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

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

RECORD BOMB BLOW 8TH AF'S YULE GIFT TO NAZIS

Over 2,000 Heavies--Biggest Single Mission--Unload on Christmas Eve

While the weather closed in again yesterday to curtail air activity against the enemy the Eighth Air Force was still counting up the results of its Christmas present to the Nazis, delivered Sunday by more than 2,000 heavy bombers and 900 fighters, the largest force of heavies ever flown on a single mission.

Sunday's big air attack was part of a weekend pattern, which continued yesterday, designed to pound the hell out of all communication lines supplying and reinforcing the German armies in their current counter-offensive. It was in direct support of the U.S. First Army forces which had been rolled back into Belgium by the weight of the German drive.

Taking advantage of clear weather, the Dec. 24 mission started for Germany in entering Germany as the trail of the tremendous column was leaving England.

Airdromes Hit

The Eighth started its Christmas blow when a force of more than 400 heavies, protected by some 700 fighters, struck at airdromes in the Frankfurt area from which the Germans had been operating tactical aircraft in support of their offensive. At least eight of the 11 airdromes attacked were rendered unserviceable.

Marshalling yards at Coblenz and rail centers near Trier, close to the Luxemburg border, Kaiserlautern and Hamburg were also hit. The Luftwaffe came up to meet the attackers and lost 77 planes in the resulting dogfights.

Col. David C. Schilling, of Traverse City, Mich., 26 year-old commander of the 56th Fighter Group, top-scoring group in the Eight Air Force, came out of Saturday's fights with a kill of five to become the Eighth's highest-scoring pilot now on active duty.

The Ninth Air Force took part in the Christmas show too, its fighters flying 1,172 sorties Sunday in support of the 1st Army. Its activities resulted in the destroying or damaging of 116 Nazi tanks and armoured vehicles, 778 motor vehicles, 56 railroad cars and 28 horse-drawn vehicles. In addition, a fuel dump was blown up, rail lines were cut and two bridges were destroyed and two damaged.

The RAF, also was out over the weekend, hitting at V2 launching sites in Holland on Sunday in addition to bombing airfields at Essen, Dusseldorf and Bonn and the Cologne marshalling yards. The Eighth Air Force's three-day total of enemy planes knocked out was 218. Its losses for that time were 38 bombers and 40 fighters, some of which are believed to have landed safely in friendly territory.

Stars and Stripes- December 1944

"Pin-Up" Contours

The Pin-Up Girl--like Donald Duck--is at long last leaving the Nissen hut and taking a co-ed place in the U.S. Army classroom. In the future the curves of Betty Grable may be responsible for taking a difficult enemy position, it is reported, and for the doubting Thomas here's how it works.

When the raw recruit goes into a map reading class these days he no longer is forced to sit and gaze at the usual map with its rivers, mountain ranges, towns and villages. Instead a glamour girl is prominently displayed to hold his attention. This figure is ruled off in "grid line" squares. Each section of the girl is divid-

ed and numbered. By checking the lines on the map the soldier can locate any given area, as on a real map.

With his interest in map-reading thoroughly aroused, the modern GI gets down to work. His proficiency develops with astounding rapidity.

"Pin-Up Girl" maps first came into being at Lowry Field, Colorado, and while still unknown to many in the Armed Forces, their popularity is spreading as speedily as grease on a hot skillet.

Who said there was nothing new under the sun?

Stars and Stripes 1944



NEW MEXICO CHAPTER INSTRUMENTAL IN PROCLAMATIONS OF EIGHTH AIR FORCE WEEK

Members of the New Mexico Chapter met with Governor Gary Johnson to take part in the signing ceremonies proclaiming October 8 - 14, 1999 as Eighth Air Force Week throughout the state of New Mexico. At the signing ceremony, Governor Johnson stated "I commend New Mexico's Chapter of the 8th Air Force Historical Society for helping to highlight achievements of the largest military unit in World War II and the largest bomber and fighting force in history. Their sacrifices, courage and patriotism stand as models for future generations of Americans to admire and memorialize."

In a separate ceremony, the Chapter met with the Commander of the 377th Air Base Wing, Col. Polly A. Peyer, at Kirtland AFB for signing of the commemoration proclamation. The New Mexico Chapter was the first to be formed under the National AFHS banner on June 6, 1978.

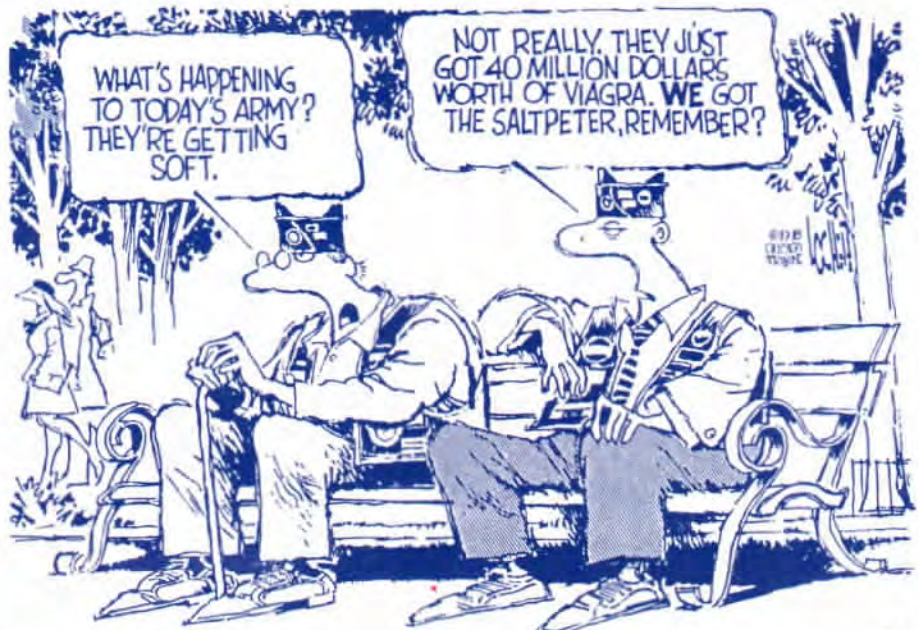


At the ceremonies with Governor Gary Johnson are, sitting from left: Warren Wylie, 95th BG; Harold Kiouss, 91st BG; Bernie Swinburne, 91st BG; John Hawkins, 381st BG; and Emil Radosevich, 305th BG. Standing from left are: Robert Summers, 385th BG; Paul Peloquin, 93rd BG; Van White, 303rd BG; Sherman Martin, 93rd BG; John Price, 352nd FG; Jose Garcia 351st BG; Dean Hall 95th BG; Frank Cummins 305th BG; and Bernie Falquist, 95th BG.



Colonel Polly A. Peyer, Commander of the 377th Air Base Wing, Kirtland AFB, is shown at the signing ceremonies of the Eight Air Force Week proclamation. With her sitting at left is Warren Wylie, 95th BG waist gunner and at right is Sherman Martin, 93rd BG PR specialist.

Standing from left are: Howard Thompson, 93rd BG crew chief; Paul Peloquin, 93rd BG navigator; Van White, 303rd BG group operations; Joe Garcia, 351st BG pilot; Dean Hall, 95th BG flight engineer and gunner; and Lloyd Anderson, 93rd BG crew chief.



MEMORIAL CHAPEL DEDICATION CEREMONY

On Friday, October 29th, 1999 the Memorial Chapel dedication and unveiling of the Chapel cornerstone took place at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum as a highlight of reunion week in Savannah. Welcomed by the bagpipe music of David Cramton, the large crowd of reunion attendees and many dignitaries paid tribute to our flag with the presentation of Colors by the Savannah Youth Group Color Guard. The ceremony began with welcoming remarks by Museum President/CEO Dr. Barry Buxton. A moving dedication speech was delivered by Board member Judge Benjamin Smith, 303rd Bomb Group. Afterwards Judge Smith and General Lew Lyle unveiled the Chapel cornerstone with dedication comments by Walter Brown. Prayers of remembrance were offered by Rev. Martin Loyley and also by a

Savannah Rabbi and a Priest, all friends of the 8th Air Force.

The Memorial Chapel dedication caps a two-year Fund Drive by members of the 8th Air Force Historical Society. Over \$450,000 dollars were raised by the Society to place the Chapel in the Memorial Gardens of the Heritage Museum. Final blueprints for the 30 x 40 foot structure will be approved this December and the project will be bid out for construction. Progress will be co-ordinated by Heritage Museum officials and representatives of the Historical Society, in conjunction with engineer David Sladek and architect Jon Lucas of the Savannah College of Art and Design. The projected Grand Opening will be in December, 2000.



Judge Ben Smith with Chapel Dedication remarks



Lew Lyle and Ben Smith unveil the cornerstone



Memorial Chapel groundbreaking



Savannah Youth Group Color Guard



Chapel designer Jon Lucas, Professor LaRaine Papa-Gasser, and Engineer David Sladek of the Savannah College of Art and Design

MEMORIAL CEREMONY

The annual Memorial ceremony in which red carnations are laid for each 8th Air Force bomb and fighter group was again this year conducted by Society Past-President Norman Grant. The beautiful ceremony was held at the reflecting pool of the Memorial Gardens and was preceded by the laying of a wreath by the Memorial Museum Foundation. Each flower was placed along the reflecting pool edge by a representative of each Group. The ceremony was concluded by a bugler's Taps.



To remember...



Participants in the Flower ceremony

Past-Presidents Sherman Small and Bob Vickers with the Memorial wreath

Norman Grant with Clifford and Mary Peterson



BASE LOCATOR BOARD RIBBON-CUTTING

The 8th Air Force Memorial Museum Foundation has commissioned a base locator board and has donated it to the Heritage Museum. In special ceremonies on Thursday of reunion week, MMF Chairman John Greenwood and members of the MMF Board of Directors took part in a ribbon-cutting ceremony in the Combat Gallery of the museum. The locator board presented to Heritage Museum CEO Barry Buxton is an electronically inter-

active exhibit in the form of an aircraft fuselage. It will allow museum visitors to find air stations in England at the touch of a button.

Ceremonies featured a dedication speech by John Greenwood followed by words of appreciation and acceptance of the fine exhibit by Dr. Buxton. The locator board fills a place in the flow of exhibitry telling the story of the Mighty Eighth, letting younger generations relate to the geographic locations of 8th air-bases as well giving them an idea of the enormity of the Mighty Eighth Air Force.



Heritage Museum Volunteer Mark Schaefer demonstrates the Base Locator Board interactive exhibit donated by the Memorial Museum Foundation



Dr. Barry Buxton accepts the exhibit from MMF Chairman John Greenwood

JOIN ME ON A 10-DAY TRIP TO THE LAND OF THE MIDNITE SUN

Wm. LEE BIRCH, RETIRED GUIDE/PROFESSIONAL HUNTER ON 5 CONTINENTS & OCEANIA
PAST COMMANDER BROOKLYN "KEY" CHAPTER AMERICAN EX PRISONERS OF WAR
PAST MEMBER 511th SQUADRON, 351st BOMB GROUP (HEAVY) 8th AIR FORCE
PAST OHIO WING COMMANDER AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION

DAY 1. LV. JFK FRI. SEPT 1st Y2K 8 PM
ARR. REYKJAVIK, ICELAND 5 HRS
DINNER & MOVIE EN ROUTE.

DAY 2. KILL THE JET LAG W/3 HRS SLEEP.
VISIT THE BLUE LAGOON FOR SWIM
IN 75 DEGREE GEO-THERMAL
WATER. THEN ON TO KEFLAVIK AIR
BASE THAT WE LAST SAW
EN ROUTE TO ENGLAND IN WW II TO
JOIN 8th A.F.

DAY 3. LV. ICELAND ARR. NORWAY 3 HRS.
TAKE "BULLET" TRAIN TO OSLO.
TOUR VIGELAND PARK W/WORLD'S
MOST UNIQUE SCULPTURED NUDE
FIGURES. SHOPPING FOR
NORWEGIAN VIRGIN WOOL
GARMENTS. VISIT VIKING MUSEUM.

DAY 4. LV. OSLO VIA WORLD'S BEST RR W/
BREATH TAKING SCENERY
ENROUTE TO BODO VIA TRUNDHEIM
TO THE ARCTIC CIRCLE. 1st CLASS
SLEEPING COMP.

DAY 5. SEE THE WORLD'S BIGGEST MAEL
STRUM. BOARD COASTAL CRUISER
FOR 24 HOUR TRIP NORTH AFTER
END OF RR LINE. WHALE
WATCHING, FJORDS & SNOW CAPS.

DAY 6 ARR. TROMSO. CABLE CAR TRIP
VISIT ARCTIC CATHEDRAL.

DAY 7. LV. TROMSO VIA CHARTER BUS TO
VISIT THE SAMI, THE PEOPLE OF
LAPLAND. TAKE A REINDEER SLED
RIDE. VISIT POLARIA.

DAY 8. LV. TROMSO VIA AIRPLANE 45 MIN.
RETURN TO BODO AND THE
NORWEGIAN STATE RR.

DAY 9. ARR. OSLO. VISIT STAVE CHURCH
AND HARBOUR CRUISE.

DAY 10. ARR. JFK 18:00 SUNDAY,
SEPT. 10th, 2000.



HOLDING DEPOSIT (REFUNDABLE TO FEBRUARY 1st)	\$500.00 PER PAX
CONFIRMING DEPOSIT DUE FEBRUARY 1st	\$500.00
FINAL PAYMENT DUE ON OR BEFORE AUGUST 1st	\$695.00
SUPPLEMENTS IF APPLICABLE: UNDER AGE 67	\$200.00
SINGLE OCCUPANCY \$300.00 PER PERSON	

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Back before Christian times evergreen trees were honored by pagans who thought that because the trees remained green all winter they had special powers. Since about 1200, evergreens have been mixed up with Christmas celebrations, but the present-day tree is fairly recent development, dating from the last century when certain German Lutherans took to worshiping at home instead of in church. Without clerics to oversee it, Christmas became less a religious occasion and more a family party. Prince Albert introduced the gaily decorated tree into England. Now, wherever English is spoken, Christmas is not Christmas without a tree.



HOW ABOUT IT?

The newspapers and newsreels at the movies gave the grim details of the war going on in Europe. Such places as the Ruhr Valley, Berlin, Karlsruhe, Schweinfurt, and Polesti were mentioned and the losses of aircraft, B-17s and B-24's were terrible. Considering the fact that there were ten airmen lost when each plane went down made the statistics even more frightening.

When a father or son or brother was an air crew member assigned to an aircraft and who was awaiting his POM (Prior to Overseas Movement) Orders, the family back home realized that they would soon enter a war zone. Many made long trips on crowded trains to be with their loved one for perhaps, the final time. These reunions were stressful. Some came to say goodbye, others to offer solace and prayers, others bought St Christopher medals, or some other type of good luck charm. One family came and brought a necklace with a charm with a four-leaf clover overlaid with a silver horseshoe. Usually these were presented to each of the ten crew members who graciously wore them and accepted the safety it was designed to give.

Once in the war zone and prior to a combat mission, the chaplains were always on hand for the crews who invited them. Some received communion, others a prayer or perhaps a mass was offered, others only wore their good-luck charms. Some crews did nothing. Of all of these crews, some were lost, some were spared. Prayers or Mass or good-luck charms did not work in some cases and did in others. Why? I have truthfully wondered many times why a Higher Power would spare a bum like me, but he did! I have enjoyed seventy-plus years of His mercy---so have you. Always remember, He is in charge. Perhaps the answer to WHY lies in the statement of Solomon who said, "(all men have this in common) the Lord is the maker of them all.: Proverbs 22:2



Earl Wassom, 466th BG
Chaplain, Tennessee
Chapter



"Attacking enemy aircraft"
LOCKHEED "LIGHTNING"
U. S. Army Air Force
P-38 Pursuit



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T *here will always be a Christmas*



This time of the year brings memories of those special loved ones who have gone before. The Board of Directors of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society wishes all of our members and their families a time of peace and joy - and a Merry Christmas and Happy Hannukah, and a wonderful year 2000!

And the glory of the Lord shone round about them...

St. Luke 2:9