



th AF NEWS

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EIGHTH AIR FORCE



HERITAGE MUSEUM



25TH
ANNIVERSARY
REUNION



AF NEWS

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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Mission Briefing

A Spring welcome to all members of the Historical Society! The time is upon us to get serious about our plans for the very special 25th Silver Anniversary of the Society coming up October 26 - 31, 1999 in Savannah, Georgia. Hence, this issue of the 8th AF NEWS is our annual Reunion issue, detailing all the programs and special events and ceremonies to be held at that time. Application and reservation forms are included within, and there is no better time to fill them out and mail them in than right now!



In previous issues of the NEWS several 8th Air Force related museums have been featured with special occasions and items of interest to our members. In this June 99 Reunion issue it is most appropriate to present the programs, the museum staff, and photo layouts, as well as updates on recent events and new exhibitry at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah. Dr. Barry Buxton, President and CEO of the Heritage Museum, and the Board of Trustees are most appreciative of the continuing support and contributions of the Historical Society members and Chapters to the museum and its programs, and look forward with anticipation to our annual reunion. The Heritage Museum staff, the Savannah Wing of the Historical Society, and all of our Eighth volunteers at the museum are planning an enthusiastic welcome for all reunion attendees in October. There are many new features to see in the museum. Our groundbreaking and cornerstone ceremonies for the Memorial Chapel will be held there during the week's activities and many crew plaques will be dedicated. There will be good music, swell entertainment, and the great southern cooking of W. W. and his Museum Canteen staff throughout the week.

This Silver Anniversary will be a memorable reunion for Historical Society members; an opportunity to relive many of your experiences in the 8th Air Force; a chance to observe first hand and take part in the preservation of our heritage; a time to enjoy the company of old friends and their families; a good reason to have a great time in one of the most beautiful cities in the country!

Walt Brown, Editor

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Now is the time for all members of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society to join together to celebrate our greatest 25th anniversary reunion in Savannah, Georgia. The Headquarters Hotel will be the Marriott Hotel and the dates will be October 27-31, 1999. You may want to arrive earlier and stay longer as there are many sights to see in historical Savannah. Be sure to read the scheduled events in this issue.

The reunion committee has been hard at work to make sure that this reunion will be long remembered. The year of 2000 will be celebrated at the Salt Lake City Hilton - 18-21 October 2000. The next great reunion will be our 50th anniversary

and will be held in October 2049 - the site selection committee has not selected a site yet. This has not been confirmed.

Communication, co-operation and dedication of all our members is essential to the continued success of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society. When we are at our reunions, try to stop and talk to a member that is standing or sitting alone, just possibly trying to decide why he or she attended when they knew no one in attendance.

Communication is vital. Ideas submitted should be examined and not rejected because of personalities. We must be able to converse with each other, even though we may disagree on any given

subject. We must continue to work together for the good of our society. We have the opportunity to bring back members to our reunions who have only attended group meetings in the past. We have to explore the possibility of signing up members of groups that do not belong to the Eighth Air Force Historical Society.



Harold C. Rutka President



WILLIAM R. LAWLEY, JR.

23 August 1920 - 29 May 1999

305th Bomb Group 8th Air Force - Medal of Honor



Colonel William R. Lawley, Jr. of Montgomery, Alabama died on May 29, 1999 following complications developed during hospitalization for a fracture of a lower extremity. He was a member of the 305th Bomb Group and was the last living World War II 8th Air Force recipient of the Medal of Honor, of the seventeen awards conferred on 8th AF airmen during World War II. Bill Lawley had a life-long affection for the 8th Air Force and his many friends he flew with and met in the years since the war. He was loved by all who met him, and was an avid supporter of the Alabama Chapter of the 8th AF Historical Society and the Mighty Eighth AF Heritage Museum from their earliest days. He and his wife, Amy, were regularly seen at 8th reunions and gatherings across the country and stayed in close touch with their many friends.

Bill felt privileged to have received the Medal of Honor during his service years in the war, but always proudly let it be known that the honor which was bestowed upon him was in the name and memory of all who served and sacrificed. The Award citation recounted his conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action above and beyond the call of duty as a pilot of a B-17G on a mission to bomb Me-109 airplane manufacturing plants in the Erla Complex near Leipzig on 20 February 1944. On the bomb run, the bomb release switch of his Flying Fortress failed to drop the bombs and immediately thereafter Lawley's aircraft was attacked by 20 enemy fighters. Eight members of the Lawley crew were hit by enemy fire and his co-pilot was



killed instantly by a 20 mm cannon shell. Wounded himself as well, Lt. Lawley called for his crew to bail out of the stricken plane. They reported back to him that several crewmen were too injured to survive the jump. He would not abandon his crew and made the decision to try to get his bomber with its crew back to England.

Fading in and out of consciousness from blood loss and fatigue, and with help from his bombardier Lt. Mason, and radio operator Sgt. Dempsey, Lawley headed for the English coast. A second engine was lost due to fire, and was feathered, and soon afterwards a third engine burst into flames. Spotting a small British fighter base, he brought his B-17 onto the runway and crash landed with the remaining engine out of gas, its propeller wind-milling. Ambulances arrived at the crash site to take the injured crewmen in to the area hospitals. After the war ended, Lawley remained in the United States Air Force and retired with the rank of Colonel.

Special services were held for William Lawley on 2 June 1999 at Maxwell AFB, Alabama with many friends and 8th AF veterans in attendance. He was buried with full military honors at the Maxwell AFB National Cemetery.

Bill Lawley's wife and family request that remembrances in honor of him be sent in lieu of flowers to the Memorial Gardens at his beloved Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum at P.O. Box 1992, Savannah, GA 31402.



FROM THE OFFICERS AND STAFF

TREASURER'S REPORT

As predicted in my report to the Members' meeting at Cherry Hill last Fall, dues income is running behind last year because of attrition of members. In fact, it is running farther behind than we expected. In the budget for 1998-99, we projected dues income of approximately \$112,000, while actual receipts through April have been only about \$88,000. Of course, the latter figure may be increased somewhat after second notices are sent out; however, it appears that dues income will be much less than we projected.

Expenses through April have run more than we predicted in our budget - about \$5,000 more. Thus, we are going to operate at a deficit for the fiscal year. This means that we are going to need to withdraw some \$25,000 or more from our Life Member Fund. For the last few years we have been withdrawing \$2.00 per life member for current use; we may need to increase this withdrawal to \$3.00 per year.

The only alternative to this is to cut expenditures or to increase members' dues. Your Board will do everything it can to trim expenses, while still maintaining the level of member services to which you are accustomed. Also, the Board will only increase dues as a last resort. However, as has been pointed out, dues are only \$10.00 per year, an amount which seems rather small for an organization like ours. Some of our Chapter's dues are as much as \$15.00 per year.

Please let me know if you have any questions about this report or the finances of our Society. I shall be happy to answer your inquiries. Also, please make every effort to attend our Annual Reunion in Savannah in October, participate in the discussion of our Society's affairs, and elect some outstanding members to our Board of Directors!

Ken Nail Treasurer, 8AFHS



INFORMATION MANAGER



With my business now operating e-mail - edkuepp8th@aol.com - the way of doing business has changed somewhat. I receive 2-3 e-mails per day along with 3-4 regular mail letters. The phone runs in cycles. Somedays 2-3 calls; somedays 10 - 12 calls. The phone calls involve the usual research questions along with request for lost newsletters and mailing out of promotional materials.

Someone asked what research materials we have at our disposal. These include all 8th AFHS newsletters (1975 - 1999), Bits and Pieces by Andrews and Adams, Roll of Honor combat casualties list, some unit histories, WW II unit APO numbers, B-17 field manual, approximately 3000 pictures of nose art, Missing Air Crew reports by Andrews and Adams, listing of all WW II combat units, and reunion symposia on video, along with several maps of England and Europe. This information is available to all members. Extensive research involves some fees. If you have any questions, contact me.

Ed Kueppers

UNIT AND CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE

All Unit Contacts that have been confirmed to the Committee are listed in this issue. We know there are more organized Units out there but their whereabouts are a better kept secret than "D-Day." If your Unit is not listed please have your Contact write this Committee with their name, address, phone number and any E-mail address. People are looking for you - help us help them.

All Chapters that were listed in the last

issue of the 8th AF News have received their rebate checks and latest roster. There were several reasons for delaying the Chapters receiving these and we think it has all been corrected and it should not happen again. If you are a Chapter and were not listed you will not receive a check nor roster because you did not notify this Committee who your officers are. Again, I would like to say that the main reason for this Committee is to be a pipeline between the Chapters and Units and the Officers and Board of Directors of the Historical Society. If you have questions or constructive comments for the Board, this is your way to express

them. Everything sent to the Committee will be sent to the proper person or persons to handle it. If you see a problem then you should also know the solution, and they want to hear it.

Be specific because broad statements have very little meaning. Everything sent to this Committee will be forwarded.

Jim Erskine, Chairman



DISC US

The 8th AF NEWS will try to print articles of interest from 8th AFHS contributors and we solicit your contributions. We would greatly appreciate your including the material on disc format as well as your hard copy if possible. This will give us editorial flexibility and save hours of re-typing the material. If you are computer challenged, send your handwritten articles, letters or whatever anyway. Your input is needed and appreciated.



MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE HERITAGE MUSEUM CELEBRATES THIRD ANNIVERSARY



The crowds turned out for festivities held during the recent Third Anniversary of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, a fitting prelude to the anticipated week of events awaiting the Historical Society attendees this October at our annual reunion in Savannah.

The Heritage Museum, known as the Home of the Mighty Eighth, has received widespread support of the Eighth veteran units during these years and that needed support is still on the rise. Many group reunions, events and dedication ceremonies bring the members back time after time to see the latest exhibits and features, to meet the staff and friends, and to reaffirm their commitment to the values which will preserve the heritage of the Mighty Eighth. The museum was the focus of the Master Plan of the 8th AF Historical Society two decades ago, and had its beginnings with funds allocated by the Directors of the Historical Society to the establishment of this permanent home. Its location is just outside of beautiful Savannah, Georgia on busy Interstate I-95. After years of planning and with the efforts and input of many members of the Society, the Heritage Museum staff and Board of Directors proudly opened the doors of the 90,000 square foot facility on May 13, 1996. Since that day over a quarter of a million people have visited the museum.

During these past three years, the Museum's growth has branched out in many directions - a few of which will be presented in these pages of this Reunion Issue of the 8th AF NEWS. The museum has become prominent internationally. Statistics for 1998 record visitors from forty-eight nations and from all fifty states. Attendance is up 30%. Educational school tours rose 75% with over 7,000 students participating in the Museum's Heritage of Values program. The tour industry is promoting the Heritage Museum as a featured destination. Local community support is an important factor in Museum plans, and the County Commissioners are fully behind the future growth of the facility and its programs. It has been independently established that the Heritage Museum has brought over \$20 million from visitors and reunions into the community since its doors opened.

The Heritage Museum physical facility has grown week by week. Unit exhibitry continues to expand, telling the story of the 8th Air Force and its airmen. Museum library archives con-

tain database information on over 23,000 veterans. There are 6,500 photographs catalogued and preserved, and over 5,000 book titles available for research and pleasure. The Memorial Gardens are a unique feature of the Heritage Museum and a walk through the many unit and individual monuments and plaques found in the Gardens is an emotional trip through history in itself. Exhibit cases, special areas, and artifactual materials are constantly being added to the storyline of the 8th Air Force. The impressive Wall of Valor in the Gardens now proudly displays more than 3,000 individual tributes to members of the Mighty Eighth.



On the management side, there has been a significant expansion of members to the Board of Trustees, who are involved in all aspects of decisions affecting and directing the future course of the Heritage Museum. The Board meets every 90 days, and special meetings of the Executive Committee are held monthly. Staff members have been added in critical areas and the staff now totals 36 employees. Catered events, parties, and meetings of organizations held at the facility are very special occasions. The museum's food services and its hospitality are renowned throughout the area.

The members of the Historical Society hold a special place at the Heritage Museum. Supporters from the inception, 8th AFHS members serve in many ways; as volunteers, sponsors,

committee members, contributors, and advisors. Society Chapters have placed memorials to their state veterans in the Memorial Gardens. Chapter support of events and tours to the Museum as well as artifactual and financial contributions, solidify the interaction of the Historical Society with the activities of the Heritage Museum. Our long-awaited central office for the Historical Society is in place on the ground floor level at the Museum and the Society's office staff is expanding its services to the members, as well as establishing a permanent locale for all of the Society records, rolls and documents.

The Historical Society will meet in Savannah in October of this year, and members can expect a most memorable reunion with events and ceremonies at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum being one of the highlight features of our program.



INSIDE THE HERITAGE MUSEUM

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum is known for its hospitality, atmosphere, cuisine, and its team-approach to daily operations, as well as for the story it tells. The Museum is open 361 days each year from 9am to 6pm. Some of the features and a sampling of staff members are presented in the following sketches.

PRESIDENT AND CEO

After months of extensive searching, the Heritage Museum EXCOM found Dr. Barry Buxton and his wife, Debbie, out in Houston and things immediately clicked. Here was the man needed by the Heritage Museum to direct its future plans and accomplish its growth and expansion of programs. With the enthusiastic support of Debbie, he agreed to come to Savannah and take the reins. Since Barry's arrival in July, 1998 the results have been impressive. At the Museum daily from early dawn until first dusk, and frequently later into the night hours, he has added his museum expertise and professionalism to all aspects of museum activities. His goal is to guide the Museum development to further establish, direct and promote Heritage Museum programs, and firmly stake out a place at the top of world-class museums throughout the nation. During this past year, he has been well on his way to doing that.

He serves in many capacities. A personable speaker, Barry appears before many organizations and veteran groups as their featured meeting speaker. He has actively established contacts with corporations and support foundations, and has the friendly political support of many legislators who understand the necessity of promoting programs which teach loyalty, responsibility, and citizenship to our younger generations.

Barry's door is always open and his spirit and energy are evident to everyone with whom he meets. His professionalism and knowledge of his field will assuredly take the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum successfully into the decades ahead. He asks for full support of all Mighty Eighth veterans in achieving these ends, and extends his personal invitation for each to make plans for a special visit to their heritage.



Dr. Barry Buxton

THE VOLUNTEERS

The Volunteers who serve at the Heritage museum are omnipresent. They are the smiling faces who greet visitors at the door and who wish a farewell to all who have experienced the Museums attractions. The Volunteer staff present the mission experience dialogues and conduct educational tours of the exhibitry. They help with events and special ceremonies, and perform numerous tasks as needed to ensure smooth operation of the museum on a daily basis. The Volunteer staff numbers over a hundred members with Bud Porter as its leader and Captain. A tight work schedule is set up with regular meetings of the Volunteer staff EXCOM. A majority of the Volunteers are original 8th AF veterans, most being members of the active Savannah Wing of the Historical Society's Georgia Chapter. Museum

visitors always are impressed with being able to actually meet and talk with original members of the 8th Air Force, and the volunteers are always available for their questions.

One especially valuable addition to the Volunteer program is the 2nd Air Division's Volunteer-for-a-Week program. Initiated and directed by the 2nd ADA, its members come to Savannah for a week of meeting visitors, presenting student educational programs, giving lectures and helping out with many other aspects of museum operations. These special volunteers have all had a very rewarding experience as part of this program. Volunteer members also include a significant number of ladies who are interested in the museum and its goals. There is also a growing number of younger generation workers who have a love and admiration for the 8th Air Force. In 1998, the men and women of the Volunteer Corps contributed over 14,500 hours of volunteer service to the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum!



Bud Porter

HISTORY AND ARCHIVES

An important facet of Heritage Museum activities involve the complex program of acquisition, cataloguing, preserving, and accessing artifactual materials within the museum facility. These materials must be organized and readily available for exhibit presentations and research purposes. Materials of all types are contributed daily to the Museum archives, and these must individually be documented and recognition correspondence sent out to donors. For the past five years, these responsibilities have been carried out under the Directorship of Mary Beth Barnard. Before coming to the Heritage Museum, Mary Beth had devoted much of her life helping preserve the 8th story with her activities in the 2nd Air Division Association. Her father flew combat missions in B-24's with the 445th Bomb Group during the war.

Mary Beth encourages every 8th veteran to get in touch with her concerning their donations of personal artifactual material for permanent preservation in the Heritage Museum archives. She states that the only way to tell the complete story of the Mighty Eighth accurately is to have the material available with which to present it. These necessary artifacts must come from 8th AF veterans.



Mary Beth Barnard

June 1999 (99-2)

She can be reached at the Museum by calling 912-748-8888. Mary Beth also extends a welcome for every veteran and their families to stop by the library and say hello.

HISTORIAN AND LIBRARIAN

The Heritage Museum library is a beautiful area on the second floor of the Museum. Rusty Bloxom not only serves as librarian, but does extensive research work, educational tours, and writes material for use in exhibitry and for special events. The Library features numerous work areas including a large computer room. There is a Special Collections section in the library. Over 6,000 8th AF-related books are catalogued, many donated by individuals and by bomb and fighter groups. Rusty has a "wish list" of volumes he needs to round out certain areas of the library collection and will forward a copy of the list to those who may have these books. Call him at the Museum at Extension #110.

There is an extensive collection of videos and donated oral histories of veterans, and an audio collection as well. After a long day visiting the museum, time spent relaxing in the special lounge area off the main room of the library is a fitting reward for aching feet! This room is a contribution of the 361st Fighter Group Association.



Rusty Bloxom

EXHIBITS AND COLLECTIONS

The heart of the Museum rests in the Exhibitry. The story of the 8th Air Force and those who served. The physical presentations which will be remembered by all who visit, and the values imparted to them by the myriad areas of exhibits in the museum. There are many audio visual presentation throughout, and there are four full theaters operating full-time to add life and additional depth to the exhibit programs. Jeff Bilderback is the planner and designer of exhibits and works closely with museum Curator Jeff Reed. Plans for future exhibits are mapped out many months ahead of time, with indepth research and consultations with other staff members and with 8th veterans. Much of the construction is done in-house in the extensive shop area on the first floor. The result is a creative informative historically accurate exhibit which meshes into the Master Plan of the Heritage Museum. One section which has received much publicity is the Heritage Museum Art Gallery. Since the grand opening extensive shows, each last-



Jeff Bilderback

ing six months, have included exhibitions by noted aviation artists Keith Hill, Keith Ferris, Gil Cohen, and the original works of war artist Peter Hurd.

Plans for the immediate future are to continue with an indepth presentation of the 8th Air Force in the "jet age," right up to the present day 8th AF activities. Jeff B. and Jeff R. ask that anyone who has artifacts and related material of any type which may add to the effectiveness of museum exhibitry, please get in touch with him to make plans for its availability in ongoing exhibit development.

FINANCIAL OFFICE

The financial affairs of the Heritage Museum is a vital area for the successful daily operations of the museum. All funds are closely recorded, and include the usual gamut of financial matters. Payrolls, ongoing daily expenditures, income from all sources, funding of special activities and events, transactions involving the Memorial Gardens and long-term budgeting are all a function of this office. Debra Smith has accomplished these tasks for the past five years. She is the smiling pleasant southern telephone voice when you call, which, however, can turn strict with professionalism when it comes to a discussion of the monies of the Museum. Debra regrettably will relinquish her duties in the near future as she and her husband will be moving to another city.



Debra Smith

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Jack Burton has served as a jack-of-all-trades since long before the Museum opening. He developed the sales program of the Museum gift shop, dealing effectively with many suppliers and wholesalers. He is actively involved with the events programs and catered affairs, working late until the last person is gone. Jack is on his business phone daily replying to calls and inquiries, and most recently has developed an effective program to assist all veterans groups who may wish to hold their reunions in Savannah. Jack is presently involved with the program of events at the museum to be held during the Historical Society reunion this October.



Jack Burton

GIFT SHOP/VISITOR SERVICES

The gift shop is always a highlight of a visit to the Heritage Museum. Managed by Julia Smith, the extensive shop features something for everyone. Wearing apparel, glassware and jewelry,

models for the kids, and all 8th AF-related articles are found throughout the museum gift shop. A large book section centers on 8th literature and group histories. Catalogue sales are also a special feature. Julia is frequently in touch with authors and book-signings are an attraction at museum events. She also interacts with Mark Copeland, manager of the 8th AFHS PX regarding sales items.



Julia Smith

DEVELOPMENT

Judy Walker heads up one of the very active departments operating at the Heritage Museum. Born in Venezuela, Judy's father was an executive with Exxon Corporation. A graduate of Gettysburg College, she has an extensive background with fundraising, marketing, and corporate contacts. She and husband



Judy Walker

Steve have two sons, one of whom works with his father at family-owned Savannah Aviation. Judy is proficient in Giving plans and Living memorials. She has assisted many of the 8th veterans in effectively carrying out their wishes to support the Heritage Museum financially. Contacts with Corporate and grant Foundations are expanding since she took over this department in 1997. She has been instrumental in developing the program of Giving levels at the museum and for the membership levels of support for the museum. Judy's enthusiasm is evident in every project she is part of, and she especially enjoys her interactions with people who wish to contribute to the museum's success. One special area is her development of the Exhibit sponsorship program for 8th groups and units. She is available every day to answer questions and to offer professional advice to those interested. Her Department of Development is vital to the long-term success of the Heritage Museum, and she asks for the active and continuing support of all 8th veterans.

FOOD SERVICES - MUSEUM CANTEEN - CATERING

The Department of Food Services is renowned for its superb catered events and for the daily operations of the Museum Canteen. Manager Dee Miles and staff, including Peggy Harden and Sarah Benton work closely with Head Chef Walter W. Thomas to turn out food beyond compare. Many civic organizations and corporations hold their regular meetings in the museum

in order to enjoy the Coastal cooking of the Heritage Museum kitchen. Businessmen come from nearby just to have lunch in the Museum Canteen. They regularly run out of the much-demanded Savannah crab cakes. The food services staff works



W. W. Thomas

long hours almost every evening to cater over 300 special events at the museum each year. All food preparation is done on site. They have catered events for over 2500 people and have even done several weddings in the Museum. Dee and W. W. have some very special plans for our upcoming reunion events in October.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Heritage Museum is proud to announce the recent addition of Dr. Virginia Price to the staff as head of the Department of Education. This section is rapidly expanding as word of the Educational Programs available at the museum is getting around. Over 7,000 school children have spent special days in these programs and have participated in the Heritage of Values programs which are the focus of Museum efforts. Not limited to school-age visitors, Elderhostel tours have attracted visitors from all over the country to take part in the educational aspect of the museum. All participate in learning not only the story of the Mighty Eighth, but are exposed to concepts of responsibility, loyalty, patriotism, honesty, and civic pride. The Education program developed and presented is well received by educators in the area, as well as by the parents of school participants.

There are many other aspects to the Heritage Museum. Staff members work hard to achieve success in all museum programs and goals. Phil Sellers is Director of Marketing and Public Affairs, a vital section in terms of getting the word of the Museum out to the public. Pam Sconyers is in the Financial office. Darlene Scott serves as membership coordinator and recently handled all the arrangements for a very successful Poker Run for motorcycle bikers who support the museum. Stephanie Wilson is the pleasant receptionist who is always glad to direct your calls to appropriate staff members and also to answer your questions. Sonia Dickey is active as an archivist, and Facility Services superintendent is Richard Scott. A number of reliable clerks and assistants round out a staff who work together as a team to make each visitor take with them significant things to think about and leave them with a desire to return to learn and appreciate the story of the Mighty Eighth.



Stephanie Wilson

June 1999 (99-2)

RECENT EVENTS AT THE HERITAGE MUSEUM

JIMMY STEWART AWARD PRESENTED



General Michael E. Ryan

The prestigious Brigadier General James E. Stewart Award was presented to Air Force Chief of Staff General Michael E. Ryan at banquet ceremonies held in Rotunda of the Heritage Museum. Named for 445th Bomb Group 8th Air Force pilot and actor Jimmy Stewart, the award recognizes distinguished contributions to civilian or military American aviation or leadership in aerial flight. The presentation was made by Lt. General E.G. "Buck" Shuler, Chairman of the Museum Board of Trustees.

General Ryan is responsible for the training and readiness of all Air Force active duty, National Guard, Reserve, and civilian forces in the United States and overseas.

A large turnout of Air Force ROTC cadet leaders from a dozen colleges were present at the reception and banquet along with many prominent citizens and 8th AF veterans. General Ryan, who comes from a family of Air Force veterans, is a 1965 U.S. Air Force Academy graduate spoke on the importance of military readiness, greater mobility, updating of military equipment, and defense capability of the Air Force.

SHULER FIRST RECIPIENT OF VISION AWARD



Lt. Gen E.G. "Buck" Shuler

Heritage Museum Chairman of the Board Lt. Gen. E.G. Shuler was awarded the first annual Vision Award by the Savannah Tourism Leadership Council at a special President's reception and banquet ceremony on May 6, 1999 at the Hyatt Regency Savannah. The Awards and Scholarship Dinner honored Shuler with the Visionary Award for his foresight and ability in developing and bringing to

completion the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum as the museum's first CEO. The ceremonies were attended by over 450 notables and community leaders.

General Shuler's acceptance speech recognized local community and state leaders, and also those supporters of the Mighty Eighth who have contributed their time and efforts to bring the dream of establishing a permanent home for the 8th Air Force to completion.

EXHIBITION PRESENTED BY AVIATION ARTIST

One of the premier museum attractions of recent months has been the art exhibition of the aviation works of celebrated artist Gil Cohen. His works have been featured in the Museum Art Gallery since this past November, and have received much publicity. He presented a lecture on his drawing and painting techniques to attendees at the Third Anniversary celebration events in May.

Gil brought in paintings and drawings from across the country for the exhibition, and thousands of visitors have enjoyed seeing his original works. The 8th Air Force paintings were among the highlights of the show. His meticulous research is evident in each painting and all show the personal side of the experiences of 8th AF veterans. Several owners and subjects of his art works were present at the lecture. Some of the Gil Cohen pieces are available as prints.

A special gift to the museum by artist Cohen is a large pastel and charcoal drawing of an 8th airman which will become part of the permanent house art collection.



Artist Gil Cohen, right, with Colonel Don Blakeslee and the painting which depicts Blakeslee's Shuttle mission to Russia in June 1944. Entitled "The Mighty Eighth - Russian Shuttle" the painting is one of many exhibited in the Art Gallery of the Heritage Museum. Col. Blakeslee's 4th Fighter Group arrived at Piryatin airfield on the shuttle mission that covered 6000 miles, 10 countries, and over 29 hours of operational flying. He personally flew over 500 combat missions with the RAF 133 Eagle squadron and for 2 1/2 years with the 4th FG, which he commanded from January 1944.

HERITAGE MUSEUM BOARD OF TRUSTEES EXPANDED

As a reflection of the increased growth of the Heritage Museum since its opening, as well as an indication of community involvement, the Board of Trustees is honored to announce a number of new Trustees to its current Board, which was organized in 1992. The Board has quarterly meetings and is closely involved with all aspects of planning and operating the museum. These distinguished individuals represent the local community and also a cross-section of talent from various sections of the country. Their guidance will be important for the expansion and future growth of the Heritage Museum.

New Trustees include Houston Texas banker Ben Love

(351st BG); Doug Friesen of J. C. Bamford Corporation; Floyd Adams, Mayor of Savannah; Walter Carson, President of the Savannah Economic Development Authority; Earl Buddy Carter, Mayor of Pooler, Georgia; Virginia Edwards, Chatham County Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Billy Hair, Chairman of the Chatham County Commissioners; Paula S. Rowan, Provost of the Savannah College of Art and Design; Major General William P. Bland, Jr.; Charles Glover of Cox Enterprises in Atlanta; Mr. Gene Cartledge; and Mr. Joseph Reese, Jr.

Ex-officio members of the Board include the President of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society, Harold Rutka and the President of the Second Air Division Association, Earl Wassom and for 1999, F. C. "Hap" Chandler, who will add direction regarding the course from these two 8th AF organizations..



The Heritage Museum Board of Trustees at their May meeting in the High Wycombe Room.

BRONZE TRIBUTE UNVEILED AT HERITAGE MUSEUM

A luncheon given during the recent Third Anniversary



Lt. General E. G. "Buck" Shuler

Celebration of the Heritage Museum in honor of Board of Trustees Chairman Lt. General E.G. "Buck" Shuler was the occasion to unveil a life-size bust of the former Commander of the Eighth Air Force. The bust joins bronzes of former 8th AF Commanding Generals Carl "Tooey" Spaatz, Ira Eaker and Jimmy Doolittle already in place in the museum.

Words of appreciation for his work in developing the Heritage Museum were expressed by Major General Lew Lyle, Dr. Barry Buxton, and by Dr. Curtis Tarr, member

of the Board of Trustees. The invocation was given by RAF Chaplain and friend of the Museum, Rev. Martin Loyley. In attendance were many members of the museum Board and their spouses and a large number of personal friends and those who worked alongside General Shuler in constructing the museum facility. Buck was surrounded at his table by his family: his wife Annette; sons Frank, Gray and Buck; and his brother Jake, Jake's wife Happy, and their son USAF Captain Frederick "Bud" Shuler, M. D.



Rev. Martin Loyley addressing the audience and giving the luncheon invocation

The bust and accompanying plaque outlining his career may be seen in the Rotunda of the Heritage Museum.

INTERACTIVE FLIGHT OF DISCOVERY EXHIBIT PRESENTED

An interactive computerized exhibit to be used by museum visitors to search out answers to their questions about 8th AF history was presented to the Heritage Museum by 303rd Bomb Group Commander Col. Kermit Stevens at the museum's recent Third Anniversary Celebration. The exhibit kiosk was given as part of a \$10,000 donation in memory of Colonel Stevens' late wife, Marion. The ribbon cutting ceremony was attended by his daughters Ellen and Mary. Words of introduction and appreciation for the sponsorship of this museum exhibit were given by Museum President/CEO Dr. Barry Buxton and by Major General Lew Lyle, who served as Col. Stevens' Deputy Commander in the 303rd BG at Molesworth. In addition to 8th AF history the computerized exhibit kiosk can readily lead visitors into numerous other areas of aviation technology and history.



With Barry Buxton at the mike, two 303rd BG Commanders exchange greetings in front of the Flight of Discovery exhibit. Lew Lyle on the left, with Kermit Stevens



Radar bombing techniques, utilizing PFF, enabled the 8th AF to bomb with some accuracy through a 10/10 undercast. Smoke from targets hit by preceding bomber formations is seen rising through the cloud cover. photo by William Duane

At a recent Air Force Association luncheon Minnesota Chapter member Norman Grant represented the 8th AF Historical Society, giving a talk about his World War II experiences to a number of Air Force ROTC Cadets from the University of St. Thomas and the University of Minnesota.. Seen are Clayton "Chief" Pyle, Norman Grant of the 493rd Bomb Group, and Larry Bachman, a WW II pilot. In front are Cadets Greg Juelke, Corey McNeal, Greg Frana, and Brian Genelin.



The North American Aviation AT-6 "Texan", "Harvard", or "J-Bird" served as an advanced trainer for more than twenty years with the Air Force. As a trainer for instrument flight, aerobatics, bombing and gunnery, and with a tailhook, for aircraft carrier qualification, the AT-6 featured retractable landing gear, sophisticated control surfaces, and thirty-caliber machine guns and bomb rack fittings and a noticeable increase in trainer power. This detailed close-formation photograph was taken in 1944 by Air Corps Chief Engineer Elliott Sullivan over Maxwell Field, Alabama.



AIR STRATEGY FOR VICTORY

by General Henry H. Arnold, Commanding General, United States Army Air Forces, **October 1943**



December 1941. Hap Arnold reviews strategic plans and operations with his staff.

Strategy is the art of war and is concerned with the ability to concentrate military force on the enemy at a given time and place. Air strategy involves all the methods by which a nation impresses its will through the use of air power. It concerns the selection of the enemy targets and the best means of their destruction from the air.

Strategy is as old as history and its general principles have changed but little down through the centuries. Air strategy, however, is as new as the long-range heavy bomber, with its ability to span oceans and continents with loads of destruction.

America's air doctrine for years has been based solidly on the principle of long-range bombardment. Air forces are strictly offensive in character. This was not generally appreciated until recently, and efforts to gear our Air Force solely to defense or to limit it strictly to cooperation with ground forces were bound to fall short of our requirements.

No longer are broad oceans or "Maginot Lines" regarded as sufficient protection. *War has become global.* Statesmen as well as generals and admirals have been forced to study globes as well as maps, and many radical readjustments in thinking have resulted. Air power has shrunk distances so that we no longer speak of a place as so many thousands of miles away, but so many hours.

Modern war is three-dimensional. No longer are armies and navies to be regarded as effective means of preventing enemy incursions. *War has become vertical.* We are demonstrating daily that it is possible to descend from the skies into any part of the interior of an enemy nation and destroy its power to continue the conflict. War industries, communications, power

installations, and supply lines are being blasted by attacks from the air. Fighting forces have been isolated, their defenses shattered, and sufficient pressure brought by air power alone to force their surrender. The days when a nation depended wholly on its army and navy for victory have gone forever. *War has become total.* Air power brings the reality of war to the people as a whole.

The laboratory and the factory, the mine and the field—all the nation's resources must be mobilized. There will be no permanent victory in the air or on land or sea without victory on the home front and that means that the enemy home front is a part of our legitimate target objectives.

There are three principal ways in which air power can be used—strategically, tactically, and logistically. These three aspects of air power stem back into the roots of American air thinking.

Strategic air power is a war-winning weapon in its own right, and is capable of striking decisive blows far behind the battle line, thereby destroying the enemy's capacity to wage war. The highest development of strategic air power in the war to date is found in the activities of the Royal Air Force Bomber Command, our 8th Air Force Bomber Command (now called Strategic Air Force), and Major General Doolittle's Strategic Air Force, one of the component parts of the Northwest African Air Forces, commanded by Lieutenant General Spaatz.

Strategic air power based in England played an important, although indirect, part in the battle for Tunisia by crippling or destroying war plants in Germany and occupied France. Production of new machine tools, antiaircraft guns, motor transport aircraft, engines, and tanks was slowed down and their flow to the front further reduced by disrupting railroad yards, blasting bridges, blowing up locomotives and freight trains.

We again proved the sky road to both Berlin and Tokyo can be utilized to the full to blast the heart out of the citadel before our combined operations take over for the final drive.

The Army Air Force's principle of precision bombing, aimed at knocking out not an entire industrial area, nor even a whole factory, but the most vital parts of Germany's war machine, such as the

power plants and machine shops of particular factories, has had many illustrations during the past few months. The mission against the submarine works at Vegesack in March was a notable example of precision bombing. With their eyes on the targets, and using an automatic device enabling them to exercise direct control of the plane during the bombing run, our bombardiers dropped some 250 tons of bombs, hitting seven out of fifteen submarines actually in the construction ways, and inflicting heavy damage on the power plant and seventeen other key buildings. On May 14, in the 1,000-mile round trip mission against the U-boat yards at Kiel the actual bombing results were even better. About 287 tons of bombs were dropped by 125 of our heavy bombers, and reconnaissance photographs indicate that nearly every bomb landed smack in the target area, inflicting terrific damage. A secondary result of these engagements (each one of which is sufficiently important to call an air battle) is that the Luftwaffe has been forced into defensive action. Single-engined day fighters of the latest types, including souped-up, heavily-armed versions of the Messerschmitt Me-109 and Focke-Wulf Fw-190 are being thrown in with desperate determination to stop these bombings at any cost, and many such fighters have been shifted from other areas. We have proved that they cannot stop us. Our heavy bombers are shooting them down in substantial numbers and recently we have had the added protection of a number of modified fighter versions of the *Flying Fortresses*, so heavily armed they are called "flying hedgehogs".

Knocking the Luftwaffe out of the skies continues to be one of our main jobs. During April, May, and June our bombers and fighters shot down 821 German planes over Europe, against 183 of our own, a ratio of 4 1/2 to 1; including "probables" it is about 6 to 1. In order to hold their own the Luftwaffe would have to destroy our planes at the ratio of 2 to 1. There is growing evidence that the Luftwaffe, spearhead of the early Nazi triumphs, will prove to be the Achilles heel leading to the collapse of Hitler's government.





8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY INVITES YOU TO THE 25th ANNIVERSARY REUNION SAVANNAH, GEORGIA OCTOBER 26 - 31, 1999



The 1999 reunion is just around the corner. Make plans now for a great weekend of renewing old friendships in Savannah, Georgia, home of the Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum.

Savannah, one of the most enchanting and exquisite seaside port cities in the world, has charmed visitors for centuries - since city founder General James Edward Oglethorpe landed on the shores of the Savannah River in 1733. Samplings of Savannah's rich colorful history grace the downtown area, charming all who set eyes upon them with a character unmatched by any other city in North America. Stately old mansions, moss-draped oaks, and massive churches border twenty-two of the twenty-four original squares - the crowning jewels of Savannah's two-square mile historic district, which is one of the largest such districts in the nation. Our hotel, the Marriott Riverfront, located at 100 General McIntosh Boulevard, is adjacent to world famous River Street. More information about the hotel is included in this mailing. Modern Savannah has preserved its proud history and built upon its reputation as a destination city. Numerous military reunion groups are meeting in Savannah now because of its southern hospitality, climate, and of course, the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum.

REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

1. See choices below and complete the Registration Form. Remit by check or money order payable to Armed Forces Reunions (NOT '8AF REUNION') by September 24, 1999 (no credit cards or phone reservations accepted). Forms received after this date will be accepted on a space available basis only. Please complete the entire form (Member number, WWII group, etc.).
2. Your cancelled check will serve as your receipt, although you are not expected to present it at registration. Confirmations will not be sent.
3. Full refunds will be given (less a \$3 processing fee) for cancellations received by October 20. After this date, the refund amount will depend on charges made for unused portion of services. Please call 757-625-6401 Monday-Friday 9am-5pm Eastern time (excluding holidays), to obtain your cancellation code.

MEALS / EVENTS CHOICES

CHOICE #1 TOTAL PACKAGE \$126

Package includes 6 hotel food functions starting with breakfast on Thursday. Options are separate.

CHOICE #2 PARTIAL PACKAGE \$102

Package includes 4 hotel food functions starting with dinner on Friday. Options are separate.

Breakfast menus: The continental breakfasts on Thursday, Friday, and Sunday include assorted breakfast breads, fruit, cereal, juice, coffee, and tea. The breakfast buffet on Saturday includes assorted breakfast breads, fruit, eggs, pancakes, sausage, bacon, hash browns, coffee, and tea.



CHOICE #3 INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

Friday Rendezvous Dinner \$32, and Saturday Banquet \$35 can be purchased separately, but are included in both packages above.

TOUR OPTIONS

Wednesday: City Tour \$31; Old Fort Jackson \$52. Thursday: Low Country Tour \$26; 8th AF Heritage Museum \$45 (\$19 w/out transportation). Friday: 8th AF Heritage Museum \$43 (\$19 w/out transportation). Saturday: Lunch Cruise \$34; City Tour \$25.



EIGHTH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REUNION SAVANNAH MARRIOTT RIVERFRONT

Tuesday, 10/26/99

2:00pm - 7:00pm Early Bird Registration

Wednesday, 10/27/99

8:00am - 10:00am Reunion Registration Open
 9:00am - Meet your friends in the Hospitality/Gathering Room & Memorabilia Room open through the week
 9:00am - 2:00pm (Option) Savannah City Tour
 1:00pm - 5:00pm 8AFHS 'PX' open through Saturday (exact hours to be posted)
 1:00pm - 5:00pm Reunion registration open
 1:30pm - Board of Directors Meeting
 6:00pm - 10:00pm (Option) Old Fort Jackson Dinner Outing

check in

Thursday, 10/28/99

7:00am - 8:30am Extended Continental Breakfast
 8:00am - 2:00pm Reunion Registration Open
 9:00am - 12:00pm (Option) Low Country Tour
 9:00am - 10:30am Unit Advisory and Chapter & Unit Development Meeting
 10:30am - 11:30pm Medical Advisory seminar, "Pearls," by Dr. Walt Brown
 1:15pm - 9:30pm (Option) 8th AF Heritage Museum Events, BBQ Dinner, & Entertainment

Friday, 10/29/99

7:00am - 8:30am Extended Continental Breakfast
 8:00am - 10:00am Reunion Registration Open
 8:30am - 9:30am Individual Group Meetings
 10:15am - 4:45pm ✱ (Option) 8th AF Heritage Museum Chapel Dedication, Special Events and Lunch →
 2:30pm - 5:30pm Reunion Registration Open
 6:00pm - 7:00pm 8AFHS Reception
 7:00pm - ✱ Rendezvous Dinner and 'Hangar Flying'

Saturday, 10/30/99

7:00am - 8:30am Full Breakfast Buffet
 9:00am - 1:00am General Membership Meeting
 11:00am - 2:00pm (Option) Lunch Cruise
 1:00pm - 4:00pm Savannah Blue Light Jazz Band Performance in the hotel atrium
 2:30pm - 5:00pm (Option) Savannah City Tour
 5:30pm - 6:00pm Reunion Registration Open
 6:00pm - 7:00pm 8AFHS Reception
 7:00pm - 11:30pm ✱ 8AFHS Gala Banquet, Awards Ceremony, and entertainment

Sunday, 10/31/99

7:00am - 8:30am Extended Continental Breakfast
 8:30am - 9:15am Worship Service, non-denominational
 9:30am - 8th AFHS Annual Board Meeting

Until Next Year - in Salt Lake City

All meal functions/meetings are at the Savannah Marriott Riverfront, unless otherwise noted.

Driver and Guide Gratuities are not included in the tour prices.



REUNION HIGHLIGHTS

WEDNESDAY - SAVANNAH CITY TOUR

- 9:00a Board bus to explore America's finest 'living' collection of eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings in one of our nation's largest National Historic Landmark Districts. Beautiful streets and squares reveal 260 years of history, displayed eloquently in exquisite ironwork, ancient cobblestones, splendid mansions, and picturesque cottages. Discover Savannah's garden-like public squares, the crown jewels of General Oglethorpe's planned city. On the picturesque waterfront you will discover cobblestone-paved Factors Walk and River Street, where old cotton warehouses have been converted into shops, taverns, restaurants, and museums. This tour also includes admission into two of the historic homes.
- 11:30a Enjoy free time and lunch on your own at City Market. This four-block restoration features unique retail shops, fine restaurants, and The ART Center, a community of working artists.
- 1:30p Reboard bus to return to the hotel by 2pm.

\$31/Person includes bus, guide, and admission. Lunch is not included.

WEDNESDAY - OLD FORT JACKSON

- 6:00p Board bus for an evening at Old Fort Jackson. Upon arrival you will be greeted by uniformed soldiers of the Civil War. You will receive all proper military honors, accompanied by fife and drum music. Once you have entered the fort's parade ground you will have an opportunity to explore the fort's museum and casemates, while enjoying some refreshing cocktails (cash bar available). Bugle call will summon you to step into history as the Captain of the Guard directs a fifteen minute historic presentation of Civil War life in and around Savannah. Enjoy an authentic Low Country dinner with shrimp, sausage, corn, red rice, cole slaw, chicken, beverages and dessert, during which you will be entertained by a wandering balladeer. Serving time: approximately 7:30pm.
- 9:30p Reboard bus to return to the hotel by 10pm.

\$52/Person includes bus, escort, dinner, and program.

THURSDAY - ISLE OF HOPE LOW COUNTRY TOUR

- 9:00a Board bus for a Low Country tour. Experience the "romantic flavor of restful elegance" on this excursion which combines guided sightseeing of the Isle of Hope and Wormsloe, Georgia's oldest plantation site. Isle of Hope is located on the marshlands of Savannah and is known for its lovely homes with wide porches and gracious lawns overlooking the Skidaway River. This tour will also include travel through Thunderbolt shrimping community, palm-lined Victory Drive, and a stop at the Byrd Cookie/Gourmet Store.
- 12:00p Back at the hotel.

\$26/Person includes bus, guide, and admission.

THURSDAY - 8th AIR FORCE HERITAGE MUSEUM

- 1:15p Board bus for the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum. This museum was created to build, maintain, and operate into perpetuity a living memorial to the men and women who served with the United States 'Mighty Eighth' Air Force. It consists of a nationally recognized museum and historical repository where serious study and casual informational research may be performed by the general public using the museum's data base. The museum accurately displays, exhibits, and portrays the sacrifices, daily activities, and accomplishments of all segments of the 'Mighty Eighth' Air Force team. Free time to tour. Special events will take place during the day. More information will be posted at the reunion.
- 6:00 Cash Bar opens outside with entertainment provided by the Velvetones.
- 6:30 Outdoor Bar-B-Que Dinner.
- 8:00 Buses begin leaving the museum.
- 9:00p Last bus departs the museum to return to the hotel by 9:30pm.

\$45/Person includes bus, escort, admission, and dinner. (\$19 without transportation)

FRIDAY - 8th AIR FORCE HERITAGE MUSEUM

- 10:15a Board bus for the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum.
- 11:15 Ground Breaking Ceremony for the Memorial Chapel and Cornerstone, followed by a Memorial Service.
- 12:00 Buffet lunch outside with entertainment.
- 2:00 Buses begin leaving the museum.
- 4:15p Last bus departs the museum to return to the hotel by 4:45pm.

\$43/Person includes bus, escort, admission, and lunch. (\$19 without transportation)

FRIDAY - RENDEZVOUS DINNERS

- 6:00p After a Cash Bar Reception at the hotel, gather in your respective banquet rooms for dinner at 7pm with your individual groups. Bomb Groups (FGs, PRGs, etc.) with approximately fifty or more people in attendance will have a private room. Smaller groups will be combined with others. Think of this as your "reunion within the reunion."

Cost is included in both Meal Packages (or \$32 separately)

SATURDAY - SAVANNAH RIVER QUEEN

- 11:00a Buses begin shuttling to the waterfront area. Buses will return immediately to the hotel to pick up the remaining people. Southern hospitality and charm prevail in the steamship tradition aboard the Savannah River Queen. Enjoy a one hour cruise and a light lunch while you take in the sights along the Savannah River. Afterwards, enjoy free time to browse among the open shops along the waterfront.
- 1:30p Buses begin shuttling back to the hotel.
Note: This tour is limited to 180 people.

\$34/Person includes bus, escort, and lunch cruise.

SATURDAY - SAVANNAH CITY TOUR

- 2:30p Board bus to explore America's finest "living" collection of eighteenth and nineteenth century buildings in one of our nation's largest National Historic Landmark Districts. Beautiful streets and squares reveal 260 years of history, displayed eloquently in exquisite ironwork, ancient cobblestones, splendid mansions, and picturesque cottages. Discover Savannah's garden-like public squares, the crown jewels of General Oglethorpe's planned city. On the picturesque waterfront you will discover cobblestone-paved Factors Walk and River Street, where old cotton warehouses have been converted into shops, taverns, restaurants, and museums. This tour also includes admission into two of the historic homes.
- 5:00p Back at the hotel.
Note: This tour is limited to 86 people.

\$25/Person includes bus, guide, and admissions.

SATURDAY - ANNUAL BANQUET

- 6:00p Enjoy a Cash Bar Reception and then assemble in the hotel ballroom at 7pm for the Posting of the Colors. Dinner will consist of your choice of Steak Teriyaki or Swordfish, along with the usual accompaniments. Following dinner, awards will be given to active duty members of the 8th Air Force.

Cost is included in both Meal Packages (or \$35 separately)

Driver and guide gratuities are not included in the tour prices.



ACTIVITY REGISTRATION FORM

Listed below are all registration, tour, and meal costs for the reunion. Please enter how many people will be participating in each event and total the amount. Send that amount payable to ARMED FORCES REUNIONS in the form of check or money order (no credit cards or phone reservations accepted). Your cancelled check will serve as your confirmation. All registration forms and payments must be received by mail on or before **September 24, 1999**. After that date, reservations will be accepted on a space available basis.

Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.
P.O. Box 11327
Norfolk, VA 23517
ATTN: 8th AF

OFFICE USE ONLY

Check # _____ Date Received _____
 Inputted _____ Nametag Completed _____

Registration Fee

Mandatory Registration Fee includes Unit Rebates, memorial plans, commemorative program, postage, etc.

PRICE	NO. OF		
PER	x PEOPLE	=	AMOUNT
\$33	x _____	=	_____

Meal Packages

Choice #1 Total Package (6 meals)

\$126 x _____ = _____

Choice #2 Partial Package (5 meals)

\$102 x _____ = _____

Please note Banquet Choice (included in both packages):

Steak Teriyaki # ___ or Swordfish # ___

Individual Meals (if not purchasing a package)

Friday Rendezvous Dinner (Chicken Marsala)

\$32 x _____ = _____

Saturday Banquet

\$35 x _____ = _____

Please note Banquet Choice (if purchasing separately):

Steak Teriyaki # ___ or Swordfish # ___

Events Section (Options)

Wednesday

City Tour (maximum capacity 86 people)

\$31 x _____ = _____

Old Fort Jackson

\$52 x _____ = _____

Thursday

Low Country Tour

\$26 x _____ = _____

8th AF Heritage Museum w/ transportation

\$45 x _____ = _____

8th AF Heritage Museum w/out transportation

\$19 x _____ = _____

Friday

8th AF Heritage Museum w/ transportation

\$43 x _____ = _____

8th AF Heritage Museum w/out transportation

\$19 x _____ = _____

Saturday

Lunch Cruise (maximum capacity 180 people)

\$34 x _____ = _____

City Tour (maximum capacity 86 people)

\$25 x _____ = _____

TOTAL AMOUNT PAYABLE TO ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC. \$ _____

PLEASE PRINT Please do not staple or tape payment.

MEMBER NAME _____ 1st 8AFHS REUNION? yes or no

LIFE MEMBER? _____ 8AFHS MEMBERSHIP # _____ WWII GROUP _____

SPOUSE NAME _____ MEMBER # _____

GUEST NAMES _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY, ST, ZIP _____ PH. NUMBER (____) _____

DISABILITY/DIETARY RESTRICTIONS _____

Full refunds will be sent for the above mentioned activities if cancellation is received by 10/20/99 (less a \$3 processing fee). This includes the transportation fees to the museum. After that date, refund amount will depend on vendor policies. CANCELLATIONS WILL ONLY BE TAKEN MONDAY-FRIDAY 9am-5pm eastern time (excluding holidays), CALL (757) 625-6401 to obtain your cancellation code.

HOTEL INFORMATION

The Savannah Marriott Riverfront guest rooms feature in-room coffee makers, hair dryers, and irons & ironing boards. The group rate is \$109 plus tax. Please use the reservation form at the bottom of this page to make your reservations. Handicapped and non-smoking rooms are available upon request. Please mention any special needs when making your reservation. Parking for attendees of the reunion is \$5 per day. Hotel check in time is 4pm and check out is 11am.

Group rates have been negotiated for suites. The Junior Suite (\$159/night) is an over-sized room overlooking the city. In addition to a standard king bed, this suite has a sleeper sofa and a dining table. The Executive Suite (\$199/night) is similar to the Junior Suite, but it's a little larger, it overlooks the river, and the balcony overlooks the indoor atrium. The One-Bedroom Hospitality Suite (\$289/night) is two separate rooms. The bedroom is standard with two double beds. The parlor has a sofa, wet bar with refrigerator, dining table, and a balcony. The parlor is approximately 1.5 times the size of a standard room. The Two-Bedroom Hospitality Suite (\$398/night) is like the One-Bedroom, with the addition of a king-bedded room adjoining the parlor.

For your dining pleasure the following are on-site:

River's Edge: Waterfront cafe overlooking the Savannah River. Hours are 6:30am-11am.
TGI Friday's: A nationally known eatery serves lunch and dinner daily. Hours are: 11am-12midnight.
The Atrium Lounge: Located in the hotel's soaring atrium lobby. Hours are: 3pm-10pm

For transportation to the hotel from Savannah International Airport, the following options are available.

You must call ahead for pickup for both companies. Fares are current and subject to change.

Yellow Cab - (912) 236-1133. \$15 first person, \$3 each additional passenger, one way.
Coastal Transportation - (912) 964-5999. \$10 per person one way.
The Shuttle - (912) 352-3484. \$10 per person one way.

Directions to the hotel:

From the North and South: Take I-95 to I-16 East to Savannah. I-16 dead-ends into Montgomery Street. Follow Montgomery Street approximately 7 blocks. At Bay Street, after going around Franklin Square, take a right. Follow Bay Street for .08 miles; the Savannah Marriott Riverfront will be on your left.

From the West: I-75 South to I-16 East towards Savannah. I-16 dead-ends into Montgomery Street. Follow Montgomery Street approximately 7 blocks. At Bay Street after going around Franklin Square, take a right. Follow Bay Street for .08 miles; the Savannah Marriott Riverfront will be on your left.

Should you need full service hookup for your RV, Rivers End Campground located at 915 Polk Street is approximately 14 miles from the hotel. Call Rivers End Campground at 912-786-5518 for more information.

If you need to rent a wheelchair, American Home Patient at 912-353-7400 rents wheelchairs for \$35 per week and will deliver to the hotel for \$25. You should call 24 hours ahead to reserve your wheelchair.

***** CUT HERE AND MAIL TO THE HOTEL *****

8th AIR FORCE HOTEL RESERVATION FORM - OCT. 26-31, 1999

NAME _____ SHARING ROOM W/ _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

TEL. NUMBER (____) _____ MARRIOTT HONOR GUEST CARD# _____

ARRIVAL DATE _____ APPROX. TIME _____ DEP. DATE _____

____ # OF ROOMS NEEDED ____ # OF PEOPLE IN ROOM ____ HANDICAP ACCESS

____ SMOKING ____ NON-SMOKING ____ KING BED ____ 2 DOUBLE BEDS

In the event room type requested is not available, nearest room type will be assigned.

RATE: \$109 + tax (currently 12%).

CUT OFF DATE: 9/27/99. Late reservations will be processed on space & rate availability.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Deposit is refundable if reservation is canceled by 6pm on your arrival day. Call 912-233-7722.

All reservations must be guaranteed by credit card or first night's deposit, enclosed.

____ AMEX ____ DINERS ____ VISA ____ MASTER CARD ____ CARTE BLANCHE

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE (regardless of payment method) _____

MAIL TO: Savannah Marriott Riverfront / 100 General McIntosh Blvd. / Savannah, GA 31401 OR FAX TO: 912-233-4885

CONVOYS

Dear Walt,

The 359th Fighter Group - they assembled at Camp Kilmer, NJ in Oct 1943 and sailed in the Army transports ARGENTINA, THURSTON, AND SLOTERDJYK. I was also on board the ARGENTINA for that trip and have done some research on the convoy-UT-3 in which we sailed. I have a complete list of the 11 army transports, 2 auxiliary ships, 16 destroyers and 1 battleship that sailed in the convoy. I also have copies of most of the radio communications between the U.S. Navy, Royal Navy, and the Convoy Commander. In addition I have the report from the commander of the Navy ARMED GUARD. I don't know if any of the people in the 359th would be interested in this information, but if they are I'd be glad to share it with them.

Regards, **Paul D. Neumann 168 Lindsey Mill Circle Lake City, TN 37769**
Pdneumann@juno.com

FUTURE EDITIONS

Dear Walt,

Your, latest issue of 8th Air Force News was great! What I think you did that was especially good was to try to give us a collective idea of what the 8 AF really was. If your readers think the magazine is about the groups in the 8th, they will thumb through the pages, see if there is anything about their group, and then throw it aside. You are trying to unify us. Letting us know who the commanding officers were was very useful in that direction. You did an excellent job of differentiating the 17's and 24's. There is no need to exacerbate the rivalry but there is plenty to know about their different advantages.

I suggest that you have articles about how an 8AF mission was developed, how the field orders were prepared, how they went out, how the fighter and bomb groups prepared, how ground crews gassed up the planes and loaded the bombs. This information would be interesting to all of us. I suggest also that you have articles about specific missions involving the whole 8AF task force. It may be a good idea to publish ever so often the same map of England showing where all the bases were. Perhaps you will want to have an article about each of the three divisions, how the First got us started, the Second was Liberators, and the Third was the first major command of Curtis LeMay. In

view of some historians' belief that 8AF strategic bombing was simply an expensive show that didn't change the length of World War II by one day, you may want to run some assessments of the what the 8th contributed. Mostly, just keep going. For 25 years I was the editor of the 100th Bomb Group newsletter, "Splasher Six," named from the beacon around which we assembled in bad weather. I have a small idea of how demanding your job is. Keep 'em flying!

Yours, **Harry H. Crosby 100th BG Lovell, MA**

Harry Crosby is the author of the excellent book of his experiences with the 100th Bomb Group, "A Wing and a Prayer." His suggestions will be included in future issues of the 8th AF NEWS. - Editor



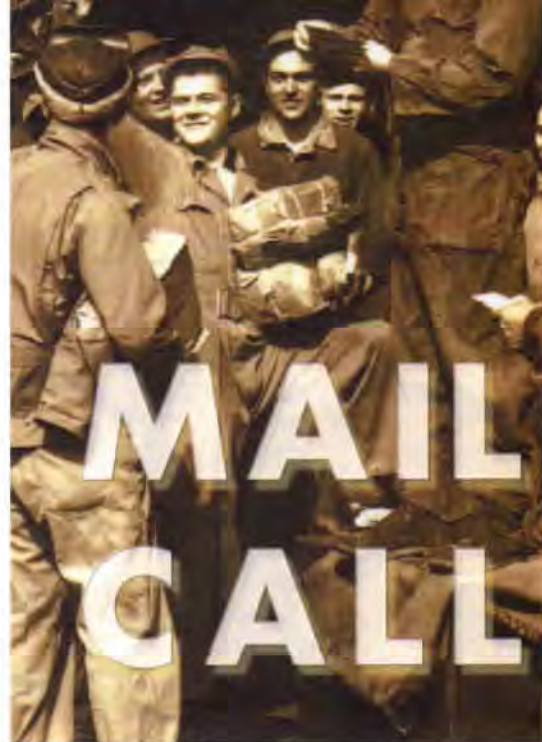
Artist Gil Cohen is shown at the completion of his painting "The Regensburg Mission" depicting lead navigator Lt. Harry Crosby and Bombardier Jim Douglas in the nose compartment of the 100th Bomb Group's Just a-Snappin' just after bomb release over the Messerschmitt factory.

MISS BEHAVIN

Dear Mr. Brown,

The cover of the March 1999 Newsletter features a B-17G nicknamed *Miss Behavin*. By coincidence, a B-17G also nicknamed *Miss B-havin*, was assigned to the 486th BG, 835th Sqdn. Its tail number was 137. Its pilot was Lt. Clarence Hermann. On October 15, 1944, *Miss B-Havin* was taking off on a mission to Cologne, when it developed a malfunctioning engine, or otherwise. It got about one-half mile from the main runway, lost altitude and crashed into a farmhouse, injuring a 15yr old boy, who later died. All the crew except the pilot were killed in the crash. One of the propellers of *Miss B-Havin* was found years later, and became a 486th memorial.

Arthur May 486th BG 832nd Sqdn Weehawken, NJ



GUN COTTON

Dear Walt,

Firstly my congratulations upon the content of the 8th AF News issue Vol. 99 Number 1. Secondly I would like to call attention to my good friend Col. Pool and his article about "Project Aphrodite." Some of you may recall that it was this program that killed one of the Kennedys. Anyway I want to commend the Colonel for his courage and dedication, but I do not think he knew much about the ordinance that he was carrying. Without going into a very technical discussion about military explosives let it be sufficient to state that nitrostarch was hardly the explosive of choice. It may have been combined, but I doubt that. Moreover, Branconnot prepared nitrostarch in 1833. That's the flintlock musket period. Its explosive properties - learned later on - found their use in coal mines long before the war. Now RDX is another story. Its what we now call C-4 and other names. Nitrostarch is nothing more than a variant of old fashioned gun cotton. For those who like chemical names, RDX is cyclotrimethylenetrinitramine - courtesy of a GI Bill education. Just as long as the chemical names of the high blood pressure pills that I am taking and just as expensive.

Best Regards, **Samuel Zarcoff WX 306 BG, 448 BG Los Angeles, CA**

SCR-522

Dear Sir,
Reference Mail Call "Radios" of the 8th Air Force News by Christ M. Christoff, March, 1999. I was Asst. Communications Officer under Capt. Vest in the 365th Sq of the 305th Bomb Group. My shop tuned and maintained the SCR-522s in our Squadron. I have no knowledge of the RAF school for these sets. However it was my understanding that the set was developed in the US but the Army didn't want to buy it, so it was sold to England who in turn turned it back to us under Lend Lease. An interesting side note on the set came up when Gen. Patton was making such progress east across Europe that our fighters were staffing our own troops. The word came down to place an SCR-522 and a Radio Operator in a jeep and proceed to the front lines. This was accomplished by the 371st Fighter Group, a P-47 outfit, at Tantonville, France.
Yours truly: **Wilson A. Herrmann 305th BG Reading, MA**

RED CROSS GALS

Dear Editor:
For several decades I tried to convince a Red Cross gal who served in the enlisted men's Red Cross Club in the Bishops Palace, Norwich to write her memoirs for publication. No luck. I have made an additional contact with a Red Cross gal who served in a hospital unit near Norwich & also in a club in Kingston-on-Thames. She writes interesting stories about her time in England-WWII. I had her double space them. What other requirements should they meet? Not many stories by our girls have appeared in the 8th AF News. Here's a chance to hear from one. Response from Red Cross girls requested.
Thanks, **John Rex 47 Loft Mountain Ct. Erial, NJ 08081-5227**

HEY MABEL

Dear Sir,
In your publication "Voice of the Mighty Eight" March 1999, on page 43, you have published a picture of our B-17 "Hey Mabel". The photo was submitted by a Leonard Alston of London. I was the bombardier on this crew of the first "Hey Mabel" in your picture, and I went on to my 29th mission, in "Hey Mabel II", which was shot down over Berlin on April 29, 1944. All of our crew bailed out safely

and spent exactly one year in German prison camps. Our pilot is Charles Marcy of Conneaut, Ohio - still alive and well. Charles Marcy's brother-in-law, in the military, saw a London Times front page on a news stand that day or the next - March 9th or 10th - with a headline about "Hey Mabel" and a photo and write up. Is there any way Mr. Leonard Alston of London could be contacted to research old issues of this London Times and get copies of same? We have known about this for over fifty years, but this is the first possible link to this knowledge. We would all appreciate your help on this.
Respectfully yours, **James J Conway 16 Ravine Circle, Westfield, MA 01085**



The Hey Mabel photo was obtained by Leonard Alston from censored military files, now released for publication and archival usage. - Editor

POLAND MISSIONS

Dear Sir,
Please, I need help. POLAND: Group of the Polish Aviation Archeologist from the Polish Army Museum in Warsaw/Poland are seeking American airmen shot-down over Poland or airmen who flew missions to Polish targets Odertal, Blechhammer and others. Please contact **M.F. van Eych, 12365 Cohasset St., N.Hollywood, CA 91605**.
I thank you very much!
Sincerely, **M.F. van Eych**

P-38 LITTLE FRIENDS

Dear Walt,
On May 28th, 1944 on a mission to Dessau our B-17 from the 457th B.G. was hit and we desperately struggled to get back. I was a replacement bombardier on the mission. With only 1-1/2 engines we finally reached Antwerp where four P-38s sent to rescue us came and with lowered flaps and wheels, they flew in circles about 100 feet below us to deflect the AA from us. This was a brave and unselfish act on the part of these four P-38 pilots and no doubt allowed us with the skill of

our pilot, Bernard Conners, to struggle back and land safely at our base in Glatton. I've been in contact with Ivo M. De Jong who wrote "Mission 85, A Milk Run That Turned Sour" who is now writing about that fateful mission of May 28 and has tried to help me locate any of these four wonderful pilots. So far no luck. In the hope that one or more of these pilots gets to read this I hope they will contact me as I want very much to correspond with any of them.
All the best, **Morris (Murray) Swerdlove 1450 Worcester Rd. #114 Framingham, MA 01702**
Email: **MSWERD@GIS.NET**

CORNWALL COVES

Dear Mr. Henry,
Your name and address has been given to me by the Air Attaches office of the American Embassy in London. I am trying to find an American serviceman who passed through the air base at Perranporth in Cornwall UK in 1943/44. The reason for my search is that in the summer of 1943 an American serviceman saved my sister's life. She was six years old and while playing in a cove got her foot trapped under a girder which was used for sea defenses. The tide was coming in rapidly and without help she would have drowned. Her only companion was me, the baby of the family, who was totally unable to lift the girder. I went for help and found this young serviceman who not only listened to a very small child's story but immediately went down the steep cliff and rescued my sister before the water was over her head. He may not even have realized that he saved her life. He was with other servicemen who just may remember the incident too. At Perranporth the only sighting that I have found is a USAAF B17 carrying 8 special couriers from North Africa which landed at Perranporth on June 1st, 1943 having overflowed Portreath and departed the following day. This airman has made a lasting impact on the lives of my sister and myself and very belatedly, we would like to thank him. Is it possible that you could put this story in a newsletter. Any information or help that you can give me, I would be so grateful for.
Yours sincerely, **Jan Zuckerman Mather, Ingate House Ingate, Beccles, Suffolk NR34 9RZ England**
submitted by: **H.C. "Pete" Henry original organizer 44th BG**
June 1999 (99-2)

25TH BOMB GROUP RIPPLE EFFECT

Dear Editor,

Thanks so much for putting my letter in the March issue of 8th AF News. The response I got was great, heard from people all over, but not anyone I knew. Would like to correct an error - I was not in BAD 2. I was in the 25th Bomb Group. One guy, Charlie Damer from Houston, Texas called me and we talked a long time. He told me names that I did remember. Am sorry I did not contact the News a long time ago as I missed out on a lot of good reunions.

Thanks for a great magazine.

Charles Ripple Sr.

B-17 NAMES AND BAIL-OUT

Dear Mr. Brown,

While reading my March 1999 Eighth AF News, I turned to page 29, lo and behold there was a photo that jumped out and got my attention. I think the photo you have shown as "Blonde Bomber II" is misrepresented; it is a B-17 from the 452nd Bomb Group and is named Four Freedoms - 1st Lt. John Pesch, Pilot. One other comment, as a former B-17 tail gunner, I have had an operative alarm bell in the tail on practice missions (page 33), and in combat we had the "abandon ship" bell ring, which is one long steady ring! This happened to me on May 12, 1944 near Frankfurt, Germany. Yes there was an alarm bell in the tail. At least I was able to hear one. I think the 8th AF News is a very good, super publication. I have every issue dating back to 1975. We are all grateful to our founder Lt. Col. John H. Woolnough.

Sincerely, **Don Jones, Tail Gunner
452nd Bomb Group Barberton, Ohio**



Four Freedoms - 452nd BG

OVIE WHITE AND THE RUPTURED DUCK

Dear Jack Rude,

I have a friend in Walters, OK who is try-

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ing to locate an 8th AF veteran or his family for the purpose of returning his flight jacket. The man's name is Ovie White, from the Walters, OK area. He flew a B-24 called "THE RUPTURED DUCK," and since there was a B-24 by that name in the 493BG, I am contacting you to see if he shows up on your roster, or perhaps a record of him. He did stay in the AF until retirement. Whatever help you can give would be appreciated. To save you time in answering by letter you can call me at 800-448-1861 if you like.

Sincerely, **s/s Jim Zigrang 406 East
Broadway Eagle Grove, Iowa 50533**

Editor's Note: Jack Rude spoke with Jim by phone and informed him that the B-24H, SN 42-52770 had been re-assigned to the 493rd from the 34th BG, and later when the 493rd converted to B-17s was transferred to the 392nd BG. If any of our readers recognize the name Ovie White, please contact Jim Zigrang directly.

BRITISH RATIONS

Dear Sir,

I enjoyed the two articles on OPERA-TION CHOWHOUND. I tested the dropping of C rations to check for damages at



different airspeeds and altitudes. After our first drop, the Dutch responded with "Thank You Boys" in tulips. The third day, we dropped British rations. We felt sure we would see "No British Rations, Please"! Here is a picture of the 452nd B.G. dropping British rations.

Sincerely, **Samuel Darby 452nd B.G.
Medford OR**

FOLLOW-UP ON BLONDE BOMBER II

Dear Walt,

On page 29 of the March issue, there appears a photograph of the "Blonde Bomber". The picture is attributed to Joe Clemens of the 447th Bomb Group. I am enclosing a copy of a photo I brought home from our Group, the 452nd, at war's end. You can see that they are identical.



I sent this and one other photo of the 452nd in action to a Colonel of the Confederate Air Force who had flown a B-17 into Cincinnati some 25 years ago. He, in turn, sent back a book he had just received written by a former navigator which I believe was called "The Fall of the Fortress". Lo and behold, there in the centerfold were the very same pictures, the other being the "Lady Be Good" in severe flak. The insignia of the 452nd had been obliterated from the original and the author claimed both of the pictures were of his group, which I believe was the 397th or 379th. The first issue of the 452nd Bomb Group History shows this same exact photo, contributed by an "M. Brown" of the 452nd and is stated to be one of our planes on the bomb run. One puzzling feature glares at me today, although after having it hang on the wall of my family room for a half century I'm surprised it did not jump out at me in the past. This plane has deicers still in place! The one I flew to Wales and Ireland was left behind so that it could be made "combat ready" and that meant taking off the deicers which became a hazard when struck by flak. I'm also enclosing a copy of the "Lady Be Good" I mentioned above. Note the L in the square (the 452nd marking) is plainly visible. You'll run across this same picture somewhere else and I'll bet the insignia is "missing". Note also that the deicers on this aircraft have been removed. I'm not saying the tail gunner mentioned did not take the "Blonde Bomber" picture, but it is strange that it appeared on other bulletin boards across the 8th and has since appeared on a number of publications each giving it a different history. I wonder how many other letters you received on this matter. Sincerely, **Dr. H. Duccilli Jr.
452nd B.G. Amelia Island, FL**

PRESERVING THE HERITAGE

Dear Sir,

I am retired from the United States Air Force and a member of the 8th AFHS. I have decided to put together a small museum and library in my home for my children, grandchildren, and their children

to come in years ahead. My grandchildren have told me that they hardly study about World War II in school, and I think this is sad, very sad. I want them to know the story of the men and women of the 8th AF and the important part they played in winning the war. I don't want, nor will I let the deeds, heroism, and sacrifices of those who served in the 8th fade with time over the years. As long as I am alive it won't. I would like to obtain both officer and enlisted air corps lapel insignia and cap insignia, authentic 8th AF and Air Corps shoulder patches, authentic unit shoulder patches, photographs, and books. All help will be greatly appreciated. **Tom Moore 1219 E. Perkins Ave Sandusky, OH 44870**

Editor's note: Many Historical Society members have established their own memorabilia areas - "war rooms" - in their homes, as attested to by numerous wives of our Mighty Eighth veterans.

AMERICAN 8TH AIR FORCE CONTROL TOWER MUSEUMS

Ever since meeting a USAAF veteran at Duxford in 1992, I had wanted to visit his old airfield at Bassingbourn and so one week-end I did just that. Wayne B Frye, (known as "Tex") was a navigator in the 91st Bomb Group and he flew mostly, in the B-17 "Wicked Witch". After he returned home from his visit to Duxford, he sent my husband and me some fascinating accounts of his missions over Occupied Europe. It was then that I decided that some of his letters could be of historical interest and would best be donated to the Curator of the Bassingbourn Control Tower Museum. I first visited the American Military Cemetery at Madingly, near Cambridge - what a beautiful and peaceful place. I joined a group of about 20 people at Bassingbourn. This old airfield is now an Army Training Base so we had to go through all the usual security checks before meeting up with the Curator, Mr. Vince Hemmings, at the now restored war-time Control Tower. We were then taken on a fascinating tour of the Museum which was so interesting I wish it could have lasted all day. The famous Flying Fortress "Memphis Belle", with pilot Robert Morgan, was based at Bassingbourn along with other well-known B-17s such as "Nine-O-Nine" and "Outhouse Mouse". The next day, I visit-

ed the 100th Bomb Group Control Tower Museum at Thorpe Abbots and, in the afternoon, I went to the 390th/95th Bomb Group Control Tower Museum at Framlingham/Parham. They were both most extremely interesting and, one day, I hope to return and spend a lot more time there.

With very best wishes, **Annette Hedges Maidenhead Berks England**

EAGER EAGLE II

Dear Sir:

On a visit to the 8th AF Heritage Museum in Savannah there is a group photo with nine crew members standing under a B-17 "Eager Eagle II." One of the crew members a gunner named "Starzynski" wounded on his last mission. I would like to contact him or any of his crew members. He was assigned to the 351st B.G. Sincerely, **Robert J. Starzynski 306BG 5253 N. Long Ave Chicago, IL 60630-1437 773-685-8177**

DEBRIEFING PHOTO

Dear Walt,

What a surprise I had when I saw the photo on page 17 of the March issue of the 8th AF NEWS. I knew I had seen that same photo before somewhere. I started looking through my Air Force "library" and there it was...the Time-Life Books Series on World War Two printed in 1979, on the front and rear cover of "The Air War in Europe." This photo shows some of the rest of the crew exiting the B-24. The reason the picture was of interest to me was this. Back in the early seventies when I was working for United Airlines in Miami, Florida, one of my co-workers and car-poolers was a Nelson Kiefer. He had been the radio operator on the crew shown in the photo. The B-24's name was **ARISE MY LOVE AND COME WITH ME**. Kiefer did say that they had been shot down and he and another crew member had walked out I believe, as he did relate to me about the two of them riding on a train with German troops on board. I do not know who the rest of his crew were: I wish I had asked. Are there any of you good 8th Air Force folks out



there that might remember this B-24 or crew? I am sorry to report that Nelson Kiefer passed away shortly after he had told me that was his crew in the photo on that Time-Life Book.

Sincerely, **John Hildebran 453rd BG PO Box 191 Moyers, OK 74557**

HELLO WALT,

I saw the note about the "Second Eagle Squadron" on Page 43 of the March 99 issue, and have an update of info that was not said in the note. The Squadron number was 121, the Airfield name was Rochford, near Southend, in England. The #121 Squadron was formed in 1941 and flew Hurricanes and Spitfires mostly on channel sweeps and interdiction over West European countries. In September of 1942 it was transferred to the USAAF 8th Air Force Fighter Command at Debden Airfield near Cambridge (Saffron Waldon) and continued flying Spitfire Mk.Vb aircrafts until P-47 Thunderbolts were delivered early in 1943. #121 Squadron was joined up with #71 and #133 -the other two Eagle Squadrons- and numbered as the 4th Fighter Group, 334th FS, 335th FS, and 336th FS. P-51B/C Mustangs started arriving in late 1943, and their first long missions began in early 1944 to Germany.

Sincerely, **Capt. Pete Hardiman President P-51 Mustang Pilots Assoc 1040 SE 58th Ave Hillsboro, OR 97123-6326**

LOOKING FOR EVADER

Dear Sir:

I write to you this letter from France in the framework of a research on the air war in central France. One of my projects is to install a commemorative stone marker to express our Recognition for the Sacrifice of the American Airmen for our Liberty. This stele will be placed near Blois on river Loire near the remains of a bridge destroyed by 8th AF. I am studying several 1943 bombings on Blois, Pruniers, Tours, Chateauroux, Bourges and Avord. Particularly, I encountered Mr. Blinet and Mr. Lebeau. They had hidden several American pilots. Both families were awarded for their courage. Among them: Sgt JPL Harrison D. Taylor (matricule : 18060652 APO 634) Here, the French resistant helpers say that just after the war, his address was in Galveston, TX. Please, would you be so kind as to help us to find

any information about this airman? To identify his unit? Can we be in touch with comrades and/or members of its family? My searches are personal and non-profit ones. I am 35 years old and I teach History and Geography. I am also an 8th AF Associate Member.

Sincerely Yours, **Philippe Canonne**
2, rue Assolant 41 000 Blois
France p.canonne@wanadoo.fr
phone: 0254215996

LOOKING IN BERIA

Dear Mr. Erskine,

Your name was given to me when I visited the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum near Savannah, Georgia. I am from Berea, Ohio and was there for an Elderhostel which included a class at the Mighty Eighth which was absolutely wonderful. The Museum is incredible, so very well done, the guides were so well-informed and the exhibits were outstanding. Our instructor showed videos of actual live war department footage which was so moving as well as interviews with survivors of those dangerous missions over Germany in WWII. How I wish the young people of our nation could see those films and be educated about what it took to preserve our freedom which is being so abused today. I was pleased to find that there was an Ohio Chapter of the Mighty Eighth Historical Society.

If there are Mighty Eighth veterans in the Berea area, I would appreciate knowing about it so I could contact them as they may have info we could use to enhance the tribute that Mahler Museum is paying to the flyers.

Sincerely, **Elosie Tressel, Coordinator**
Mahler Museum & History Center
PO Box 173 Berea, Ohio 44017

DROP TANKS

Seeking information for a book I am authoring about the 8th AF in England. Need any information from pilots and ground crews about the first drop tanks.



The Belle of Belmont of the 56th FG taxis with two 150 - gallon wing mounted jettisonable tanks.

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Any technical information would be greatly appreciated, i.e., How they were attached, dropped, plumbing etc. Also about radio procedures. A/C to A/C and A/C to towers, and instrument flying and landing procedures.

Donald M. Biondich 4163 Chaparral Pl
Castro Valley, CA 94552
org check6@aol.com

ESPECIALLY FOR THE 2ND AD

Norwich video - length 61 mins.

Cost #11.99 + postage #2.50 per video
"Norwich - City of Distinction"

Renaissance Vision Capitol House,
Heigham St Norwich, Norfolk, NR2 4T
Phone#011-44-1603-767272
from USA - charge cards accepted

I am originally from Norwich, and recently purchased a video of that beautiful medieval city. The video shows different areas of the city and describes its historical values. The final scenes include the 50th anniversary parade through the city, ending at a memorial service in Norwich Cathedral. In case any of your readers are interested in buying a copy of this video I have enclosed the name and address of the company. Once again, Thanks.

Sincerely, **Irene Moxley Orlando, FL**

DEAR CONNIE METTS,

Thank you for your letter of sympathy and offer of a complimentary membership for one year. I would like that very much. My husband (Francis Ray Carter, Phillip Sheridan's B-17 crew) enjoyed the magazine very much and always read it several times. One time he was reading and let out an exclamation and said "it took over 50 years for me to find out what happened to that crew." Of course I didn't know what he was talking about until he said there was an article written by a flyer who bailed out of a B-17 hit by flak and he made it to the ground to be captured by the Germans. He had told us of seeing a plane to the side of theirs, looking away and seeing nothing but smoke. He could not see a parachute. That scene was in his mind forever. Part of the crew met in 1983 in Cedar Rapids, Iowa for a reunion and we both loved it. When Ray died they sent a large memorial gift, cards, phone calls and letters. It meant a great deal to me and my family.

Sincerely, **Mrs. Francis R. (Lois) Carter**

Connie Metts at our Historical Society Central Office receives many calls and personal letters of appreciation from wives and families of 8th veterans.

8TH AF WIVES

Dear Connie Metts,

My husband was so proud of the 8th Air Force. I believe I would like to be a member of your Society in his memory.

Yours truly, **Corinne Dorula**

Casselberry, FL

A reminder that all spouses of deceased 8th AFHS members may receive the NEWS without cost for a year as a remembrance.

CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP

Dear Connie,

Thank you for your expression of sympathy. Yes, I would appreciate the continued membership in The Eighth Air Force Historical Society.

The grandchildren need to read about the history of the members.

Sincerely, **Marie Brannan Lake Mills, WI**

UTAH MAN

Dear Walter,

This is an exact copy of the Patch our UTAH Chapter uses. We think it looks fine.

Sincerely, **John Moore, President Utah Chapter**



27TH AIR TRANSPORT GROUP

Dear Walt,

On page 294 in Roger A. Freeman's book, "The Mighty Eighth", under the heading of "Miscellaneous Units" the very last entry reads - "27th ATG of VIII Air Force Service Command." Although the Group was part of the 8th AF, I doubt if anyone, other than those who were in the Group, knew/knows of it's existence. We weren't in the news like the bomber and fighter boys, and so were virtually unknown. Pilots in the Ferrying Squadrons of the Group picked up and delivered every type of aircraft used in the theatre to the various bases. After D-Day the Group flew supplies and munitions to forward areas and evacuated wounded to Base Hospitals in England and later on to those on the Continent.

Sincerely yours, **Fred Garcia Peoria, AZ**

CALL FOR MISSIONS

Dear Sir,
The purpose of this letter is to issue a challenge to all of those who flew for the 8th out of England during WWII to determine which plane put in the most missions. I was a co-pilot and later pilot in the 457th BG, 751st Sqdn. Our plane, "Old 123" flew 110 missions over Germany without ever having to abort. I put in that mission as a pilot on 4/18/45 to the marshalling yards at Friesing. That was my 34th mission and the last one for both me and the plane. It had been shot up and patched so often, that we used to jokingly say that the front half was Boeing and the back half was Lockheed. Enclosed is a picture of her on her 90th mission on March 5, 1945 to Chemnitz. I give full credit to the plane's performance to the two ground crew chiefs, John Fischer and Bernie Green, and our flight engineer, Clyde Grimm. Everything seemed to work every time, unless something was shot out. Originally the plane had teeth painted under the nose and was named, "Ipana Smile". Orders came out to eliminate commercials so we simply called her "Old 123", the last 3 numbers in her serial number. She was built in 1942 by Boeing so she was one of the early "Gs". I would like to know if any other B-17s flew more than 110 missions over Germany.
Very truly yours, **Donald L. Nielsen**
457TH BG



"Old 123"'s 90th mission; 5 March 45; Chemnitz.

STEEPLE MORDEN

In your March 1999 volume of the Eighth Air Force News on page 40, you used a photograph of the interior of a hut. I just thought you might like to know for your records about the photograph. The photograph was taken at Steeple Morden, Station F-122, the base of the 355th Fighter Group. The photographer was Cal

Sloan who was attached to the 1066 Signal Company. The man on the left wearing a cap is Les Radtke. The man in the middle reading a newspaper was a cook, name unknown. The other man also reading a newspaper is Howard Gell. You might be wondering how I know all this. Well, I used this photo in the book I wrote about the 355th Fighter Group, called 'Steeple Morden Strafers'. I shall send you a copy and hopefully you would review for me in the Eighth Air Force News. I will also send you a copy of the video documentary I produced about the 91st Bomb Group, 'Memories of the 91st Bomb Group at Bassingbourn', and that you can review this as well. May I also say how much I enjoy the magazine. You and the team do a brilliant job, keep up the good work.
Yours Sincerely, **Ken Wells Steeple Morden Royston Harts, England**

THE WASHOUT

At a reunion of Stalag 17B at Myrtle Beach, S.C. I was a guest of my five Sergeant gunners from the B-17, "Kansas City Killer" which was shot down on Aug. 12, 1943. On the way to Myrtle Beach, I drove to the POW Museum at Andersonville, GA and then to the 8th AF Museum at Savannah, GA, where I met my original navigator, Tom Walden, who I had not seen since the war. We were both in Stalag Luft III but in different camps. As we went through the museum, we came to a wall listing all the fighter aces. This brought to my mind Willard W. Millikan who was my roommate in primary training in San Diego. He was washed out before ever soloing. He then joined the Canadian Air Force and got his wings. He went to England and flew a Spitfire. In early 1943 the USAAF transferred all Canadian pilots into the 8th AF and he became a P-47 pilot. Some how we kept in touch and he flew into my

Primary Training 42-C, Lindbergh Field, San Diego left: Gene Wiley, Willard Millikan



base, Alconbury, one afternoon in June and we had a nice time reminiscing about events that started two years earlier. As I recall, he was later shot down and was a POW in Stalag Luft I; Barth, Germany. At the Heritage Museum I was looking at the Wall of Aces hoping to find Millikan's plaque. I started at the bottom where aces started with five kills. I kept going higher and higher and began to think he wasn't there. When I got three names down from



the top in the center row there was his plaque with 13 kills and one on the ground. The picture of the wall of plaques is enclosed. There were about 25 plaques with more kills and leading the list was Col. Gabby Gabreski with 28 kills. I just wonder how our primary instructors decided to wash out a cadet. It sure didn't apply to Millikan.

Yours truly, **Eugene M. Wiley Conifer, CO**

FRANK PFEIFFER

Dear Editor,
Sgt. Frank Pfeiffer of the 466th Bomb Group, 786th Squadron was killed in action 22 March 1944 on a mission over Berlin flying in *Rebel Yell*. His daughter, now my wife, Joan, was since only six at the time of his death. The remainder of her family is now deceased. Any information or photos of her father would be greatly appreciated.
Many thanks, **Frank and Joan Racine**
1015 Sturdivant Drive Cary NC 27511-4722

GUM DROPS

Dear Sir,
As an Associated member of the 8th AFHS I thought you might find the letter which appeared in the April 14, 1999 issue of the London Daily Telegraph interesting. I am sure it will bring back pleasant memories of members who were

stationed with the 384th Bomb Group at Grafton Underwood.

Sir — I was surprised to find under the edge of our oak dining table at RAF Grafton Underwood, which we had taken over from an American air force bomber unit, a large chunk of chewing gum. We were even more surprised to see that the whole of the undersurface of that long table was covered with hundreds of dried-out wads.

—Paul Tunbridge

I would assume that the writer was a member of the RAF 236th Maintenance Unit which used Grafton Underwood airbase after the war.

Sincerely, **John N. Smith**
Kettering Northants England

DEAR SIR,

First I want to compliment the staff of the 8th AF News for putting out a publication

that surpasses the National Geographic in layout and interest. I find the articles in the news magazine very interesting. I was a member of the 384th Bomb Group (H) stationed at Grafton Underwood England. I flew 30 missions from December 1943 to May of '44. The 384th is making a final mission to visit our old site in England. The junket will be taking place on September 9th through the 13th. The photo is part of a 42 member "Friends of the 8th". These people all live in the vicinity of our Grafton Underwood airfield. They call themselves the "White Jacket Squadron", whereas all of them wear the white jacket with the 384th emblem on certain occasions. The main get together is on Remembrance Day, usually the first Sunday in November. They meet at our memorial site in Grafton Underwood to pay tribute to the 1,579 airmen from our



The Grafton Underwood 'White Jacket Squadron'

group, who were killed. The gentleman at the extreme right in the photo, in suit and tie, is Quentin Bland, our historian. He is a resident of the village of Grafton Underwood. Thanks for all the wonderful work that you and your team are doing. By the way, I am positive that the B-17 "Miss Behavin" on the cover, is sfrom the 384th ? At least the sign on the post points to The White Hart, a pub in Geddington which I frequented.

Sincerely,

Ed Zieba 384th BG Robbinsdale, MN



Aircrews frequently loaded themselves and their equipment into the back of what was called a "six by six" after briefing to ride out to the hardstand prior to a mission. Those who returned were picked up for the trip to Debriefing. Fatigue was a constant companion of the flyers and became more and more of a factor as the number of missions flown accumulated. The effect of air combat, of untold stories, of days and nights of war turning into weeks and months with no predictable end, is vividly seen in the individual faces of this unidentified combat crew.

446TH BOMB GROUP REPRESENTED AT PIMA AVIATION MUSEUM

It was a long haul to get there, but well worth the time and trouble according to Virgil Falkner of Tucson, Arizona. You will find him and fellow volunteer Sam Bargamian in almost every day talking to visitors and teaching the younger generations all there is to know about the beautiful B-24 "Bungay Buckaroo" restored with 446th Bomb Group markings. The airplane was



originally picked up from the Indian Air Force and was the first airplane owned by the Pima Air Museum.

Virgil was a ball turret gunner

and engineer in the 13th Air Force; Sam served with the 8th Air Force flying 30 missions with the 93rd Bomb Group. The restoration project took ten years. Virgil says beginning in 1982 he started travelling all over the West scrounging parts one at a time and along the way sold coffee cups with a picture of a B-24 on them to raise funds for the project. Some parts needed for the restoration had to be adapted and others fabricated to specifications. The interior, which was completed first, is complete. The Liberator is one of the finest restorations to be found anywhere. Dedication ceremonies were held jointly by the 446th BG and the 2nd Air Division Association.

Sam Bargamian gives full credit to his friend for the success of the project. The awe on visitors' faces when they enter the hanger and see the "Bungay Buckaroo" is worth the hours spent as a volunteer at the museum. Explaining the role the Heavy Bomber had in ensuring freedom for our country is a special pleasure for both of these USAAF veterans.



Virgil Falkner sitting at the Volunteer's table and Sam Bargamian with the "Bungay Buckaroo" in the background

1999 "THE YEAR OF THE B-24"

This year the 8th Air Force will celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Consolidated B-24 -- The Liberator. They are calling it, "The Year Of The B-24." While the B-17 fraternity has a number of flying Forts, the Liberator folks are down to one -- the Collings Foundation's "All American." They are now calling it an "endangered species." This, despite the fact that the B-24 represents the most produced American aircraft (military and civilian) of all time. A total of 18,479 Liberators were built between 1939 and 1945. This compared to 12,731 Fortresses. The B-24 was built in five different factories, principally at the Ford plant in Willow Run, Michigan. Lyle Niswander of the Air Force Association observed, "If there were an endangered species for aircraft the B-24

would be at the top of the list. I believe the B-24 had a more direct impact on more Americans and on our freedom than any of those other magnificent eagles." The B-24 was designed to the specifications of the Army Air Corps -- speed 300, range 3,000 miles, altitude 30,000 feet, bomb load 8,000 pounds. At the peak of production one Liberator was "hatched every 55 minutes." It first flew in December 1939. During World War II it flew more missions and dropped more bombs than any other aircraft. It served the Air Force in every theater of



operations and flew for 15 nations. The Liberator was flown by crews in the 2nd Air Division of the Eighth Air Force. The 1st

and 3rd Divisions had B-17's. The 60th anniversary of the B-24 will be celebrated in May 1999 at the reunion of the 2nd Air Division Association in Austin, Texas. Suggested by: **Jim Lawler**
466th BG 2nd Air Division
8th Air Force



DEBRIEFING

BILL GETZ...

Our fighters did a magnificent job of clearing the skies of the Luftwaffe beginning around mid-1944. Earlier, 1943 and the first half of 1944, the situation is best categorized in the words of one 1943 era bomb commander who said, in response to a question as to whether they had fighter escort on missions:

Fighter escort? Hell yes we had fighter escort, all the way to the target and back. The RAF escorted us to the French coast, then the Luftwaffe escorted us to the target and back to the coast where we were met once again by the RAF who escorted us back to England. Fighter escort? You bet!

C.W. "Bill" Getz 491st BG Burlingame, CA

IRV DAY...

Going in April 11, 1944 my Group lost two planes to the Dummer Lake flak batteries. All ten crewmen of one survived and were captured. There was but one survivor of the other. These POWs and others were loaded into trucks and transported to three crash sites, handed shovels and stretchers, and ordered to recover the bodies and body parts. I still weep for the young boy, sole survivor, who probably recognized some of his buddies-in-arms. At one site, an explosion had created a steep-sided crater twenty feet deep and body parts were at the bottom where water was flowing. These kids were in shock and hampered by flight boots and gear, agonizing while their comrades were already back at Base being de-briefed. The guys with shovels weren't thinking of how fortunate they were that God had allowed them to become POW, rather than KIA. And they couldn't even dream that they would be imprisoned for thirteen months, having committed no crime except doing their duty. That's a long time to ponder the Fickle Finger of Fate!

I regret that I am unable to express my point in less space, but there's more to this story. Sometime in '93 I think it was, a lady expressed interest in learning something of her brother's wartime experience. She knew he was of my Group and was KIA.

Checking our Group History, I was able to identify her brother as one who perished due to flak at Dummer Lake, April 11, 1944 and told her the name of the cemetery in Germany and the number of the plot. She subsequently attended a Reunion of our Group and I was pleased to meet her and her husband.

Irving M. Day, Jr. Lake Placid, FL

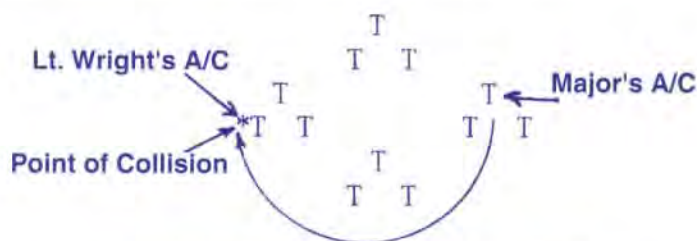
JOHN HAROLD ROBINSON...

There are times today that I am accused of never throwing old notes and papers away. I sat down and began to clean out and shift papers around from one drawer in the files to another. One note caught my attention.

My pilot, George Wright, sent me a letter outlining events from his flight log that had taken place when we were flying missions. As I began to read the letter my mind was taken back to

December 1943 to an event that I wondered how many other aircrews may have experienced.

As George put it in his log, a real gung-ho Major from the Training Command showed up and wanted to fly a mission. This would be the Major's first mission to fly. As the formation of B-24s were on their return flight, every thing seemed to be very quiet and going well after the intense flak over the target area. Suddenly flak began to burst around and in the formation. One flak burst just in front of the B-24 the Major was flying. He lost control of his airplane and rolled over and went under the formation. As he tried to recover and pull back into the formation from below he pulled up under our airplane putting his right tail rudder into our number one engine propeller. Our propeller cut off his right rudder at the hinges. Upon contact both airplanes went out of control. The Major's crew began to bail out as both airplanes were trying to recover. After considerable loss of altitude George Wright finally recovered and pulled back into the formation. The number one engine continued to run satisfactorily without vibrating. The Major's airplane was last seen going down.



Aircraft positions in flight formation.

Back home at the base we examined our number one engine and propeller. There was exactly two inches missing from each blade of the propeller which explained why the engine continued to run smoothly. We never learned the fate of the Major's airplane and crew.

John Harold Robinson 445th BG, Collierville, TN

BEN ROUJANSKY...

I first met Joe Sobo in Gulfport, Mississippi when I was assigned to a flight crew. We would take off, fly around the field, return, land, keep on rolling, and take off again. While our pilot, Milo Thor, was a great flyer, it was hard for him to land properly. We'd touch down, rise up 50 feet, come down hard, and do it again and again, until our waist gunner, Parky, fed up at last, complained loudly that we should fly higher so he could bail out! It was Joe who saved the day. He could land a B-17 as light as a feather, handling the throttles beautifully, landing smoothly and gently on the runway. You would have been so proud if you had been there to see it, as I was. We took off first to Prestwick, Scotland, then on to Valley, Wales. In Wales they took our plane away, trucked us over land to our base, HORHAM, where we were assigned to the 95th Bomb Group, 336th Bomb Squadron. At first, we flew practice missions, then finally we took off for Germany. That was in January of 1945. Fighter planes covered

us all the way to the target and back. The flak was intense. Many planes were lost. Ours was hit, but nobody was ever wounded. It was like we led a charmed life. Finally, we made "lead crew," and were assigned a command pilot to replace Joe as co-pilot. Joe was most unhappy about that, and took it very hard. When you break up a fully-functioning crew, you get bad feelings about the future! Joe and our navigator transferred out and we never saw them again. Officers (Joe) and enlisted men (that's me!) do not fraternize. So, our paths were different. We ate separately, slept apart, and socialized with others of equal rank. Except for missions and debriefings, our lives never crossed. Our war ended in 1945. Four of us, with our wives, met at a reunion which I arranged at the annual meeting of the 95th Bomb Group. It was about eight years ago at a hotel in Cincinnati, Ohio. It was the first time we had been together since 1945! It was a fabulous experience, and there were more than a few tears of joy.

from a letter to Eva Sebo, the widow of Joe Sebo.

by **Ben Roujansky, Radio operator, 95th BG Orangeburg, NY**

GEOERGE SHOEMAKER...

22 April 1944. On that day our pilot Lt. Schellenberg, Sgt Vincent Jay and I were flying our final mission. We were at 20,000 feet over the North Sea heading for Hamm, Germany when I had the first indication that something was wrong. I felt an explosion and saw the right bomb bay door partially open and fire and a body tumbling out. That had to be Sgt Jay as he was top turret. Then I saw two more bodies go out the front of the plane. Hit my intercom button to find out what was going on, but it was dead. Figured I had better get out of the ball turret, but by the time I got it positioned so the hatch was inside the plane, we were in a dive and I couldn't move. Pilot and co-pilot finally pulled it out at 6,000 ft. When I got up front, Vince Jay, the bombardier Lt Curtis Poe, and the navigator Lt John Brandino were missing. We made an emergency landing at a B-24 base at Bungay. Still some fire in the plane so the rest of us made tracks getting away from it. There were six 500 pound bombs and a smoke bomb still in the plane.

Submitted by: **George S Shoemaker 305th BG Hollywood, FL**

GERRY SCOONES....

We took off in the evening darkness with Northern Ireland as our destination. The weather was clear and the stars were reach out and touchable. Our briefing had indicated high clouds would be encountered about two hundred miles out and I decided that a star fix every half hour would give me at least two positions and a good chance to confirm the wind vector. I remember the distance to the Irish coast as a little over 1900 miles and the indicated air speed around 10 MPH. With the usual west to east following wind, my ETA for landfall was around 8AM. Breakfast time. Two star fixes with the Octant confirmed the predicted wind velocity with a slightly more northerly veer. I gave the pilot a modest course correction and thought things were in pretty good

shape. A subsequent peek out of the astrodome showed that the clouds had appeared about on schedule. I tried to plot a speed line from a radio station in Greenland (Blue West One) but the radio compass was useless, the needle oscillating wildly. Thus it would be dead reckoning from there on. That is, no outside assistance. Not a comforting thought for a navigator's first long over water flight. In spite of the nine other guys aboard the plane, I felt very alone. In fact, I was. The bombardier had gone to the radio room to see if he could stretch out and get some sleep, as other crew members were doing. I could have been feeling a little sorry for myself since I was the only crew member who had to work all through the flight. The other nine men could nod-off for a while, but the navigator had to keep the driver on course. That meant a log entry every six minutes showing the following data: The time, the indicated air speed, altitude, compass heading, air temperature, and any pertinent observations about the flight or meteorological conditions. At half hour intervals, using this data and the last known wind vector, I would compute and plot our position on my chart. Without either a visual reference, a functioning electronic device or a star fix, our location could not be guaranteed because a change in wind direction and/or speed would move the plane along a different flight path. In between the six minute recording times we would keep glancing at the instruments to make sure we were not missing any variation in the readings. On we droned, through a very short period of darkness. When we were perhaps half way across it started to get light and in due time there was activity on the intercom. "Where are we?" "How much longer, Gerry?" Also there was some temporary excitement when we flew over a convoy and wondered if they might fire at us, afraid we might be Germans. There is some dispute among our crew today as to whether they actually did fire at us, and whether we used the Veery Pistol to show the colors of the day. Suffice to say, we didn't get any Silver Stars for sighting ships and sinking same. Submitted by: **Gerry Scoones - 381th BG Orchard Park, NY**



MALCOLM HINSHAW...

This beautiful Island, roughly 300 miles by 500 miles, began to sink. Americans, Canadians, New Zealanders, Australians, etc. etc. and all their equipment, ammo, bombs, tanks, aircraft, gasoline, cannons, trucks--oh my gosh the weight was fantastic... I knew the Island was sinking for it was "always wet or muddy. Armies had arrived, and mashed all the grass and flowers into mud. We had three kinds of weather; rain, fog and clouds touching the ground. It was never broad daylight! And nights were terrible. You got lost trying to find the mess hall. After several bloody noses I walked around with my hand in front of my nose--bloody noses (and that's where the British soldiers got the cuss word "bloody".) They had no dirty words, unless you preceded any word with bloody. I once, innocently called a Britisher a

Bloody Britisher--that's right, I got a bloody nose. Even the fog or the clouds, you bumped your nose into this stuff, because it was so thick. To keep from drowning, each night the Royal Air Force would take to the skies, with weight of aircraft, gas, and bombs--the Island would raise four feet in elevation. Same with the daytime (gray almost black) the Air Force (ours) took to the air to keep the Island from sinking.

Submitted by: **T/Sgt Malcolm Hinshaw, Very Ret. (76)**
Engineer, Cliff Peterson's Crew 392nd BG

PPETER EDWARDS...

In early May 1944, without warning, the avenues surrounding our school were filled with military vehicles of all descriptions and one thing that stands out in my memories is how the Jeeps had large leather scabbards on the side which I was told were to carry sub-machine guns. It was obvious that our American G.I. friends were very busy and rather too preoccupied to talk to us very much but we still managed to exchange a few words now and then until suddenly, overnight and without any opportunity to say any good-byes, they were gone. Men, vehicles, equipment - every single trace of them had disappeared and the tall, dark brick houses in which our friends had been billeted now stood empty, silent and filled with a strange air of sadness, almost as if the soldiers had never been there. On the morning of June 6th 1944 it became clear why our American friends had left so swiftly and secretly and where they had gone, and although I never saw Sergeant "Tex" or any of his comrades again I still hope and pray that God was merciful and they all eventually returned safe and sound to their loved ones. The war finished and by the end of 1945 my father was safely back at home physically in one piece but like so many thousands of others, badly scarred by the memories of almost four years of continuous fighting. Sadly, not all of the eight members of my family who had been in uniform were to return. In 1948 I realized an ambition I had cherished since I was about six years old when I started a flying career with the Royal Air Force. A great deal of my training took place in East Anglia where most of the old Mighty Eighth Air Force had been located.

Submitted by: **Peter Edwards Lowton, Warrington, England**

HOWARD LINN...

We were shot down by Focke Wulf 190s on our bomb run on the marshalling yards at Brunswick, Germany. Three of us got out before our Bomber exploded, killing the other seven crew members. I was in Stalag-Luft 4, near Stettin up by the Baltic Sea. On September 19, 1998, my wife, Betty and our four adult children went back to England to see my old Air Base at North Pickenham. We then flew to Hanover, Germany, rented a seven passenger van and went to the village of Rodewald, Germany. Here I met the man who was responsible for my capture on May 20, 1944. At that time he was a 16 year old boy. He treated us to a wonderful meal in a restaurant and gave gifts to all of us. Russell Ives, an English Historian, who wrote the history of the 492nd located this man for me. They took us to the pasture where my Bomber wreckage came down. We talked to the 87

year old woman who owned the land and was there when our Bomber came down. She told me where my dead crew members were laying by the wreckage. They found pieces of my Bomber with a metal detector in the pasture, for me to take home. We were taken to the nearby Churchyard cemetery where they buried my crew. The crew was later removed and taken back to the U.S. and are buried in the Louisville National Cemetery. They took us to the timber where I landed and it was still there. My tail gunner and right waist gunner had landed a couple miles away and they also took us there. This location was about 30 miles northeast of Hanover. They told me I was the first American to come back for a visit from the eight Bombers that were shot down in that general area. A German Newspaper came and interviewed me and took pictures of us. I received the newspaper with the story and pictures in it. It was a very emotional time for me and I believe my wife and children had a much better understanding of what the war was like.

Submitted by: **Howard Linn 492nd BG Hubbard, IA**

HORACE WATKINS...

Remember the B-18s? If you do, you're at least my age of seventy-four or older. The multi-purpose machine's appearance could be compared to the B-24 that I felt was ugly on the ground, yet a beautiful airplane in the air. The old Army Air Corps owned an abundance of the twin engine bombers that were used quite extensively for submarine patrol in the Panama Canal Zone and the Gulf of Mexico in early WWII, and due to one incident, became known as The Whale Killer, after a bombardier stationed in the PCZ bombed a dead whale, floating belly up.

Submitted by: **Horace Watkins 43rd, 44th, 446th BG**

ROBERT BOYD...

The Laden Maid was flown to England. The Zeigler crew flew 25, assigned to her. The ground crew was led by M/S Douglas Miller, who was second to none in the 8th. My crew started for 25 missions with her, at 13 or 14 missions the requirement was upped to 30, when we had over 20 the requirement was upped to 35. Change of requirements was not the best for the moral of myself and crew, especially in view of the fact we were down to flying 9 ship formations and there were over 30 crews in the squadron. The day after Christmas 44 returning to base with a full bomb load the lead could not find the target over the Ruhr. Miller wanted to know what we had hit on seeing a large hole inside the prop arc in the middle of the deicer boot, he scrambled up on the wing, stuck his hand in the hole and began cursing; the hole extended through the main spar - the outer wing panel would have to be changed.. Three days later Miller met us at the revetment of a spare we had flown, a big smile on his face. When we got out of the plane, "You guys are the luckiest crew in the whole damned 8th Air Force." There was an unexploded 88mm shell stuck in the wing. I could never have more appreciation for any personnel than those who changed the outer wing panel, a perfect installation that in no way influenced the flight characteristics, a perfect replacement, unusual for such a major replacement. The rottenest in England concerning base facilities,

second to none concerning the outstanding ground crews that kept them flying. My crew flew the Laden Maid to 600 hours, normally the engines would have been changed; maintenance was so good the time was extended to 800 hours, and she was still running perfectly, all four engines, however she was replaced with a newer model with heated wings and crew quarters. Our crew was undoubtedly as superstitious as any, but had no problem giving up the old girl for a younger hot model. Submitted by: **Robert Boyd 466th BG Grand Junction, CO**

FRANK DE CICCIO . . .

Nov. 16, 1944 (21)

Mission to front lines near Aachen. Bombed visually with 30 - 250 lb. Frags. We made three 360-degree turns, two of them through flak; dropped on last run. Got two flak holes. 24,000 feet. 35 degrees below. 7:55 hours. Our field closed in when we got back. Had to go on to an English Glider base close to west

coast, 40 miles south of Liverpool. SLEAP was what they called it. Stayed two days.

Nov. 21, 1944 (22)

Mission to Merseberg. Bombed oil plant with 10 - 500 lb. bombs. Group bombed from 18,000 feet visually. Bad weather; were underneath clouds. Roughest mission yet. Flak at target unbearable. Came back, interphone shot out. Three oxygen systems out. Number 3 and 4 prop control wires cut. Number 3 throttle cable cut. Bomb select wires cut. Number 3 prop feathered. One bomb didn't drop at target. No switch would drop it. I dropped it with a screwdriver about 45 minutes after target. I watched it hit right smack in middle of a little town. Nobody hurt. Hydraulic line burst just as we parked. About 30 degrees below. 8 hours, 20 minutes.

Nov. 22, 1944

Nothing doing.

submitted from his wartime diary by **Frank De Cicco Pilot, 303rd Bomb Group Houston, TX**



8TH GROUP COMMANDER MEETS THE BRITS



Colonel Kermit Stevens, Commander of the 303rd Bomb Group at

Molesworth recently related an early experience that occurred shortly after he took command of his bomb group in England and involved the Duke of Gloucester, Royal brother to the King.

Kermit, asleep in his quarters on the base one night, awoke to a telephone ring around midnight.

"Wondering who would be calling at that time, I answered 'Hello' - the voice on the other end sounded scratchy and far away. There were no boosters on the British phone system in the early months of the war. 'What happened to the Vicious Virgin?' the voice on the other end asked. 'What happened to what?' I replied. 'What happened to the Vicious Virgin?' the caller repeated.

I could barely hear him and I shouted back, 'What Vicious Virgin? Who is this?!' The voice answered, "I am inquiring as to what happened to your Vicious Virgin. This is the Duke of Gloucester on the line." At that, I was past my limit at that hour of the early morning and I shouted into the telephone, "And I am

the King of England!" and abruptly hung up on the caller.

The following morning, I rounded up my Public Affairs officer in Operations and told him about the call, asking if he knew anything about that caller and about the Vicious Virgin. He said matter-of-factly, 'Oh that really was the Duke of Gloucester. He lives just across the airbase here. The airfield is actually on his land. We frequently let him pass through the gates on his way to his home and he always stops to have a word with the ground crew of the Vicious Virgin. He seems to have taken a special interest in that airplane. The plane and its crew didn't return from the mission yesterday.'

I distinctly remember my next statement: 'Well, it looks like this will be the shortest assignment of my career!'

The following day another mission was on for the 303rd. I had spent some time thinking about the telephone conversation from the previous night. Something had to be done. I asked the PA officer to invite the Duke of Gloucester over to the base to watch the B-17's take off for the day's mission. The invitation was accepted and the Duke watched our take-offs from the top deck of the Molesworth control tower. He was like a kid in a candy store; he enjoyed every minute of it and stayed for the return of the bombers from the mission that afternoon. And true to the customary typically respectful nature of the British, the Duke never mentioned the events of that midnight telephone call." Kermit Stevens stayed on as Group Commander at Molesworth for another thirteen months.

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT



Last year we inaugurated our annual week of National recognition for the Mighty Eighth Air Force. As stated in our proclamation the week of October 8-14 was chosen because of the large number of casualties suffered during that week.

The proclamation is a permanent one and will be used each year as we request participation by our elected officials, and encourage all our 8th Air Force Historical Society Members to wear something to identify themselves as an 8th Air Force person.

Last year we had very good participation with many Governors, Mayors, Senators, and other elected officials issuing their proclamations and we offer our thank you to all of you who worked so efficiently and effectively. However, some of our members stated that they needed more lead time to make the contacts and appointments so we are making our appeal early so you can request an audience in August.

As we did last year we are asking the State Chapter Presidents to contact their Governors requesting the issuance of a State Proclamation and if possible have the presentation photographed. This year we want the maximum exposure and this can be assured by submitting a copy of the proclamation and a photo of the Governor presenting the proclamation to the local newspapers, radio and T.V. stations. If you do not have a state Chapter president will YOU carry out these details?

If we all participate we may find more of our "Mighty Eighth" veterans who still need to be acquainted with the benefits of membership in the 8th Air Force Historical Society and attract young people who have an avid interest in our history and would be pleased to know they can be associate members.

Let us all do our part for a very successful program to bring recognition and remembrance to all who served in the "Mighty Eighth". WILL YOU PARTICIPATE?

Norm Grant Past President / Chairman Public Relations Committee



Proclamation



Whereas: The Eighth Air Force was formed and dispatched to England in 1942 to become the largest military unit in World War II, and the largest bomber force of all time. Over 350,000 airmen served in Europe and

Whereas: The Eighth Air Force has continued as an operational combat unit to this day with over one million serving the country in war and in peace and

Whereas: No Mighty Eighth mission was ever turned back due to enemy action. The cost was 26,000 killed in action, and over 28,000 prisoners of war.

Whereas: The number of missing in action and wounded have not been counted and In a one week period of October 8 - 14, 1943, the Eighth Air Force lost over 100 Heavy Bombers to enemy action over the skies of Europe, and despite heavy losses, many feel that this was the turning point for daylight strategic bombing. Targets during this week were:

October 8, 1943	Bremen, Germany	14 Bombers lost, 3 Fighters
October 9, 1943	Anklan, Germany	6 Bombers lost
October 10, 1943	Munster, Germany	30 Bombers lost 1 Fighter
October 14, 1943	Schweinfurt, Germany	60 Bombers lost 1 Fighter

Whereas: The Eighth Air Force Historical Society, the largest single military unit veterans group in history, holds its annual reunions in the month of October and

Whereas: Today 20,000 Eighth Air Force Historical Society members are seeking to inform later generations of the contribution and sacrifice made by our generation to perpetuate America's freedom and way of life and

Whereas: Every year during the week of October 8 - 14, we will ask every Eighth Air Force Veteran and friend of the Eighth to wear and display items identifying them with The Mighty Eighth to honor and remember our comrades and especially those who made the supreme sacrifice.

**NOW , THEREFORE, do hereby proclaim every October 8 - 14 to be
MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE WEEK**

JOE HORN LOVED OUR BOMBING MISSIONS

by Irv Pliskin President, New Jersey Chapter

The first time I saw bombers in the sky, I was a child in Buchenwald, dressed in a striped suit, and completely demoralized" said Joe Horn, a North Jersey based writer and businessman. "The bombers-your bombers-gave us hope and led to the realization that this unrelenting nightmare could end sometime." Joe's statement was a revelation to me, a complete revelation, because my combat flying in a heavy bomber during World War II was in a very special way, impersonal. Even when we were under heavy attack by flak or fighters the war remained at arms length for many of the Air Corps participants.

There was no direct involvement as there was on the ground. We never saw the whites of their eyes, or the people we may have killed, or the buildings and edifices we destroyed. Even the exploding flak had very little sound, unless it hit us directly. Our war was fought at high decibel levels with the sound of the engines in our ears, and no audible cry of pain from the enemy. No way for us to count the human impact of a bomber raid. No way to count the toll on a city or a target, except for very impersonal strike photos. We never really knew what our missions may have meant to anybody, and that is what I thought for over 50 years.

And then I met Joe Horn.

For the last 30 years or so, my wife and I have been part of a book group: we read a book and then sit around at someone's house and discuss it. A year or so ago, the book discussed was MARK IT WITH A STONE, a biography/history by Joe Horn. Joe was a close friend of one of our book members and the book focused on his experience as a young Jewish boy in Poland in the thirties and his miraculous survival and slave labor in the German Concentration Camps.

Joe Horn was present when we discussed his book. He had so much to say of interest, that I suggested he be a guest speaker at one of the New Jersey Chapter meetings. He spoke and kept the attending members enthralled. It was a dramatic, touching talk.

Joe started by telling us, "My one ray of hope as a Concentration Camp slave laborer was when I heard the sounds of the 8th Air Force bombers coming overhead..."

Recently, we had another gathering at our friend's house, and Joe was there again. He and I chatted for quite a while, and this time I began to realize how important and vital our missions were, especially to the enslaved people on the ground in Germany.

Your airplanes represented hope, Joe told me. The airplanes gave us the drive to go on living, because we knew that there was still someone up there, a real live people up there, doing what they could to save our existence. When we heard the airplanes it sent the blood rushing through us, and intensified our will to live, and to see the end of the horrors we had experienced.

He spoke of the effects of our bombing, and his having looked through the wood slits in a jam-packed, sealed box car transporting skeleton-like people in striped suits from one slave camp to another. He recalled chugging through Hamburg and seeing nothing but bombed-out skeletons of buildings and devastation; and that brought joy to him and his fellow prisoners. "Whenever I saw the bombers," Joe said, "whether it be over Buchenwald, or some other German Concentration Camp I was sent to, I would look at them way up there. And when I heard them it was symphonic song for me, a resurgence of hope, a reaffirmation of perhaps, a future life.

The risks you airmen took endeared you to us. No allied action did more to demoralize the Germans. With your bombing, you guys really made a difference.

So for Joe, speaking to the New Jersey Chapter was a sort of epiphany. And hearing Joe talk proved to be pretty much the same for me.

Irv Pliskin New Jersey Chapter

PUBLICITY

I do not recall reading a single story in Stars and Stripes about a B-24. The Forts were the favorite due to publicity. The Fort was introduced in the late 1930's. It was a success and the public got to like the Forts. The B-24 came along just before the war started and did not receive the same publicity. In England, the Fortresses got the publicity due to the fact that reporters who were quartered in plush hotels in London could hop a train, cab, or rent a car and in a few minutes be at a Fortress base. The B-24's were in the eastern and northern part of the Isles away from London. The reporters took the easy way out, kept near London, got material for their stories and were back in the city before dark. They wrote their stories, took them to the censors, filed them, and then went off to their parties and social life to enjoy good food and drinks. After the Invasion, you read very little about the 9th Air Force. They operated out of over 700 bases; the 8th had 112. The reporters did minimal coverage on the 9th. After all, they would have to ride in open Jeeps, sleep in tents, brave the rain and cold. It was easier to stay in Paris and enjoy the good life.

They all did their share.

Donald J. Kabitzke, Milwaukee, WI. Wisconsin Chapter Editor

The Board of Directors of the 8th AF Historical Society has confirmed the annual reunion sites and dates for 1999 & 2000.

Unit and Chapter meetings may be planned around these dates

1999 - Savannah, Georgia
Marriott Riverfront Hotel October 26-31.

2000 - Salt Lake City
Hilton Hotel, October 15-22

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum

Mailing Address:

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Savannah, Georgia 31402-1992
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Pooler, GA 31322
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HISTORICAL SOCIETY CHAPEL FUND DRIVE

Plans are now underway to build the Memorial Chapel at the Heritage Museum and inquiries are already coming in from Society members desiring to sponsor some of the planned interior fixtures and to place memorials in the chapel building. Air Force Chaplain Billy Jones of the Mississippi Chapter has donated an organ from the air base on Guam. Past-President Sherman and Claire Small have contributed an antique English altar for the chapel. Others are sending in financial contributions; our total for this Historical Society Fund Drive has reached an amount of over \$75,000 so far this year and is still growing, bringing the total amount in the Chapel Fund to over \$370 thousand dollars.

The many Chapel plans are being carefully worked out now. The design will follow the pattern of an East Anglican style church, with appropriate surrounding landscaping. Following approval of the design, detailed engineering plans will be undertaken and approved, followed by a Request for bids with thorough consideration of these bids.

A reminder here that there will be special chapel cornerstone dedication and groundbreaking ceremonies during the Historical

Society annual reunion in October. It is not too late to be part of the Memorial Chapel Fund Drive. Those wishing to add their names to the book of contributors may send in the coupon with their check enclosed. Donations are tax deductible and will be placed in the special Chapel Fund Drive account.

Claire and Sherman Small stand in the altar which will be placed in the Memorial Chapel.



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BOOK REVIEWS

THE FIGHT FOR THE SKIES

Allied Fighter Aircraft in Europe and North Africa
1939 - 1945

by Roger A. Freeman

It may be enough to just state that this is a Roger Freeman volume and therefore is just excellent. A large format book containing over 270 photographs each meticulously researched, this presentation by the life-long 8th Air Force historian follows his tradition of detailed accuracy and wide-ranging subject interest established in over 50 previous publications.

The story of 8th AF and RAF battles is told through the effective technique author Freeman has developed in many of his latest books - that of taking each photograph as an individual subject piece and using photo captions to not only describe the circumstances of the picture, but to also add a myriad of in-depth details surrounding the subject material. The method allows the reader to view each photograph as an individual item and become drawn in personally to each singular pictorial subject. The feeling of being there yourself and being part of the experience and action can not be avoided. Often presented with a subtle bit of his personal philosophy and humor, Roger speaks with authority and with respect for those who flew. He imparts a feeling of insight of what fliers in all theaters of the war faced. Events of their personal experiences are included; the reader becomes an intimate part of their wars. Textual material covering the historical flow and chronology of the air war meanders through the extensive photographic layouts offering a time-context to the entire volume. Covered as well are areas involving the African air campaign - British, American, and German - in addition to Soviet and Italian air experiences. Many of the photographs are enlarged to half-page size and all are shown in grey, black and white lending further inescapable feelings of authenticity and credibility to the entire book. As the reader progresses through the pages, he realizes that a lot of history has been covered in a unique and personal manner. The refinement of Roger Freeman's creative and artistic style as an historical author is most evident here; the research into factual material included in this book has taken him years to accumulate and record. In *The Fight for the Skies*, you will find pictures and information not found elsewhere. One two-page full layout depicts a handful of RAF airmen standing in the distance before a lineup of nine new British Typhoon fighters on a typical grey damp day. Another photograph shows an airman holding a large fighter drop tank above his head, illustrating the light weight of the compressed paper early wing tanks. Another, an interesting contrast of a ground crew working on an RAF P-51 Mustang in the churchyard of a war-damaged East Anglican chapel, Freeman has a lifetime of archives to explore and has the experienced luxury of being able to choose items which are most unusual and publish them in a book such as this.



Highly recommended, fascinating, instructive and available from Cassell PLC, Stanley House, 3 Fleets Lane, Dorset, BH153AJ England Tel.01202-665432; Fax 01202-666219; e-mail: orders@cassell.co.uk for a list price of 25 Pounds + shipping. Or may contact Mark Copeland, 8th AFHS PX Manager.

M. I. A. (MISSING IN ACTION)

by H. Phillip Causer

The mastery of a fighter plane is no less a Pyrrhic victory than is the conquest of a captivating woman. The plane is yours, an extension of your body, responsive to the least flexing of an arm or leg. But for the gift of flight you pledge a part of your soul which you can never again call your own.

A telling beginning to a masterly written book by Phillip Causer, 356th Fighter Group, now available in its second printing.

Causer wrote the tale of his thoughts and experiences after his return to England following his shoot down and subsequent journey home, with the assistance of the French Underground. He tells, in the language of a young American fighter pilot, his feelings as they were felt at the time and writes in a style which captivates the reader. The descriptions of his blowing bridges in France from the cockpit of a P-47 Thunderbolt to blowing them up alongside French resistance fighters on the ground is an interesting contrast. His day-to-day escapades with the resistance are related in detail and illustrate that for young men in WW II there were a number of significant experiences which did not have to do directly with war.

The personal aspects of the author story are a pleasant addition to the grim tales of combat. The good times were somewhat infrequent for the fliers, but were a necessary part of their lives. The volume is a tribute to those who flew combat and to those who helped downed airmen escape capture by the enemy. A number of hand-drawn sketches made by the author are presented throughout the book, with a humorous section of them at the end. Available from Phipps Publishing Company, 66 Bridge St., Norwell, MA 02061; 168p



There was also the hidden strain, one that you can't do anything about, that with some, God had given up, and the guns and armor plate were not enough Crampton? Oh yes, he's gone on leave. But no mention of Johnson, Harding, or Briggs. There was nothing to be said about them now. They were more than dead; they were out of it. But even though cannon fire had destroyed their aircraft and we knew we would never see them again, to all of us, they still lived. The only way these men could really die was to be utterly forgotten.

EIGHTH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY PX NOTES SPRING 1999

A very Happy Spring to each and everyone of you! It was terrific to meet so many of our B-24 friends at the annual Second Air Division Reunion in Austin, Texas a few weeks ago. For the first time, the 8th Air Force Historical Society PX was invited to attend the annual Reunion of the Second Air Division. We had a very successful weekend and I wish to thank the efforts of Earl Wassom (466th BG), Bud Chamberlin (489th BG), and Evelyn Coen (HQ). Thank you for your splendid hospitality. We have some fantastic new items to add to this month's PX page. First, is a splendid new book by our friend Roger Freeman! Once again, Roger has produced another masterpiece. The book, *Fight for the Sky: Allied Fighter Aircraft in Europe and North Africa - 1939 - 1945* (B2), focuses on the European, Mediterranean, and North African Fighter history. This is the companion to *Raiding the Reich* (B5). Very nicely written, and superbly illustrated. Hdbd. 232 b&w ill. Only \$29.95! The next book we are featuring is a fantastic new book about the U.S. Air Depot at Warton. *U.S. Eighth Air Force at Warton 1942-1945*, Holmes (13) details the history of this amazing airbase. During World War II the personnel assigned to Warton modified, repaired and processed over 10,000 aircraft! Included in this fascinating work is over 250

photos and a comprehensive record history. It is about time this aspect of 8th Air Force History is documented. A great piece! Only \$24.95!

In late 1942 and early 1943 the original cadre 8th Air Force Groups were fitted with the first Boeing B-17F's. The next book we are featuring is called *Pride of Seattle - the First 300 Boeing B-17Fs* by Steve Birdsall (B19). This softbound book gives a brief history of the early B-17Fs assigned to the 91st, 92nd, 305th, 306th Bomb Groups. Along with the service history in the Pacific, this book gives a brief history of each Fortress. A steal for only \$9.95!

Attention all Bombardiers! Our final book feature is entitled, *The Legendary Norden Bombsight*, by Albert L. Pardini. This is the first detailed book outlining the history of the famous Norden Bombsight. Very captivating reading! Hardcover; 352 pages, 70 photos. Only \$29.95!

The last feature we have is a new addition to our Video Catalog. *Memories of the 91st Bomb Group*. This nostalgic, British-made, 70 minute film documents the history of the 91st Bomb Group. Excellent first person accounts and archival Black and White/Color footage make this a

must for your video library. NTSC (U.S.A.) format. Only \$24.95!

As always, we appreciate your support and we hope to hear from you very soon. Take care of yourselves and may God Bless each and everyone of you. Have a safe and healthy summer! Cheers!



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BASES OF AIR STRATEGY

Building Airfields for the RAF 1914 - 1945

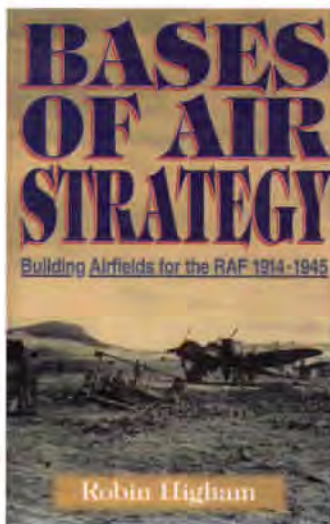
by Robin Higham

The development of wartime airbase configuration and construction technics had its origins in the airfields of World War I and subsequent years. *The Bases of Air Strategy* traces this development in detail and centers on wartime Royal Air Force bases in England and around the World.

The need for a close examination of base construction grew acute with the advent of larger heavier aircraft and in particular heavy bombers, especially during the period from 1934 to 1945.

Extensive research went into this book and a wealth of information is presented in a very readable form - a subject which little has been written about until now.

Grass airfields had been used for fighters, but in 1939 a push to concrete runways, designed in the triangular configuration with a perimeter track familiar to all 8th veterans, became the norm. Concrete highways for automobiles



were being used in the late 30's, notably the autobahns in Germany. Stress factors for aircraft of course were to be much greater. Author Higdon addresses many interesting components of airbase construction. For instance, a section on camouflage discusses the advent of trees, hedges and creeper vines to disguise the buildings, but in 1939 the use of a 'tennis court' finish was utilized, later replaced by a rubber scrap material and then by a tinted wood chip surface to dull the surfaces of the tarmac.

Higdon's volume explores the adaptations of airbase strategy in various climates and conditions in all theaters of WW II. The American experience was interwoven with decisions made by the British government, as those airmen flying from these airbases were quite familiar with. It is interesting to read an indepth history of the airbases; this volume follows the long line of fascinating and often obscure subject material concerning World War II published by Specialty Press. Available from Specialty Press,

\$42.95 +

\$4.50 shipping, 285 pp; call 1-800-895-4585.

All reviews by the Editor. Note: It is the editorial policy of the 8th AF NEWS to review only books in print and currently available from usual sources. Emphasis is placed on newly published editions.

BOMBER ROUTES

A Follow-up to the "Bombers are Bait" dialogue

Dear Walt,

With regard to the "discussion" of "Bombers for Bait", perhaps a clinical account of a mission that illustrates this situation might be helpful.

On September 12, 1944, the 303rd Bomb Group was briefed for a mission to Brux, Czechoslovakia. Our target was a synthetic oil refinery. We were routed around Berlin down to the outskirts of Prague (I believe we were "showing the flag") some 160 miles South of Berlin, and then 40 miles Northwest to Brux. Our group, the 303rd, led the 8th AF this day with Gen. Travis in command. My crew with Bob Akers, pilot led a four plane formation which was the high element of the Low squadron putting us out on the extreme right edge of the group formation.

As we passed Berlin, we were attacked by a group of ME-109's. I noted a B-17 going down out of our High squadron at the other end of our group formation. Very shortly thereafter it became our turn. My recollection is that the ME-109's made four passes at us knocking down our #2 man (right wing) and setting a fire in the wing of our #4 man. Fortunately, they were able to put the fire out and completed the mission. The last pass at us was made by a single 109 who passed between our plane and our #3 man (left wing) about 5 feet over us. Had I had a ten foot pole and been able to reach out, I believe that I could have broken his windshield. Johnny Kuwik, the Engineer on Sid Underdown's crew, who were flying #4, was heard by me to remark - I think it was when we were gathering for interroga-

tion, something along the lines of "I think he was redheaded".

At this point, just behind a 109, who was already smoking when he got to us, were four P-51's in single file. This marked the first appearance of our escort during this period. I believe that the group lost four B-17's in all. We never heard how many German fighters were downed during this skirmish.

At briefing, it didn't occur to me to think that we were being used for bait, but as we were leaving the briefing room, I did hear remarks to that effect. I must admit to wondering why we were given this circuitous route. Our previous experiences in the Berlin area had always resulted in violent reactions from the Luftwaffe for some groups in our formations.

Despite my high esteem for General Gerald Johnson, I do not believe that this depiction "discredits the mighty effort". It seems to me that we were serving a dual purpose somewhat along the lines of "as long as you are up anyway, maybe you can stir up some activity". We still did the bombing. I do not believe that I am in the minority if I say I could have done without the extra half-hour or one hour over Germany. However, if it led to shortening the war I suppose we would accept that. Of course, it is easy to say that now while writing this from home. We seem to have to continually re-learn the lesson that if you are in a war, don't do it half-heartedly. It costs more in the end. I suppose the question in all this is: "Would we have lost those four planes if we had taken a direct route?" Who knows?

Sincerely,

Herb Shanker

Engineer on Bob Akers' crew

303BG/359BS

DAPHNE

Reading through the issues of the 8th AF NEWS brings back so many memories of those young boys who came over to help us fight in our war. We could not have won the war without them! Most of them were so very young and when they came on furlough to London they would speak of their fears when on bombing missions, but it has only been in the years following World War II that we have learned of some of the dreadful things that they had to see and endure.

I was a young girl myself and I lived in London through the Blitz and also the Flying Bombs and the V-2 Rockets. We had to do essential war work and I was in the drawing office of a factory that made the fuselage of the De Havilland Mosquito aircraft. I had to keep track of the drawings for the Mosquito, which went out all over the factory to draughtsmen and other departments and workshops. We worked twelve hours a day, seven days a week from seven o'clock in the morning until seven in the evening. After seven days we had one and a half days off before starting all over again. Every other month we worked the same amount of hours at night.

When we finished our work my friend Bobbie and myself would wash and change into our "best clothes." We didn't have many "best clothes", as they were rationed. We would take ourselves off to the Royal Opera House at Covent Gardens in London for the evening which at that time was a magnificent ballroom. To us, it was the most glamorous place in the world, where we could forget the war and dance with those lovely young men with accents which came straight out of Hollywood. To be in the arms of a Clark Gable or a Robert Taylor was like being transported right to Hollywood.

There were so many different shoulder patches on the boys' uniforms, including the 8th and 9th Air Forces. A few of them had an eagle's head on the patch - members of the airborne division. How could we have known what they would encounter in



the horror of the Normandy invasions? We sang Auld Lang Syne as 1943 went and 1944 came in. Even now, it doesn't seem all those years ago! A young man who said that his name was Richard Frohlic was standing next to me and he grabbed me and kissed me. I didn't know that it was an American custom to kiss the girl nearest you as the new year came in. I never saw him again - I wonder if he survived the war. We were bemused when the "snow drops" arrived and made the officers leave the ballroom. We were told that officers were not allowed to socialize with enlisted men. It only happened every now and then. It was all such an experience to us young girls.

The Americans always greeted each other with "Where you from?" It was fascinating to our English ears! I remember one such greeting which to this day I am always quoting. There was a boy called Elmer; no one we ever knew was called Elmer. He met and shook hands with another serviceman. The conversation went like this: "Where you from?" Answer: "I'm from Missouri." Elmer's reply: "Well, hush my mouth. I'm from Texas!"

As we got to know and talk to these young men, mostly air crews, we learned that they were just ordinary people like ourselves and they missed their families and homes. Their "bill-folds" always came out with photographs of their loved ones. They couldn't wait to get back to them. We learned a lot about America and other parts of the world which in those days were just places on the map - places which we had no hope of ever visiting.

I wonder if there is still anyone who remembers Covent Garden and Blanche Coleman and her All Ladies Band? Her signature tune was *I'll See You Again*. Alas, so many of those young men never went back to their homes and loved ones again. We English people who knew them will never forget.
Daphne V. Bradley Tottenham London, England

THE FIX

An Editor's nightmare: Gremlins, popped into the the setting up of the March 99 issue of the NEWS. A week before going to press, our computer hard drive went on the Fritz, resulting in a rather rapid re-write of some of the material. Among other glitches, Ken Male's 356th Fighter Group reunion in September was reported as the 346th FG, and a letter from Angelo DeCarlo, Treasurer of the West Virginia Chapter reminded us that West Virginia became a separate state in 1863 and their Chapter News should therefore not be listed as Virginia News. Sincere apologies to all.

If any other 8th newsletter editors have access to some sort of gremlin-eradicator, please drop me a line! Frustrating, however as Mark Twain once said in his newspaper, "This edition may not be perfect, but it has the great merit of existing."



This edition of the 8th AF NEWS fulfills the dreams of your editor. From time to time we receive articles which for one reason or another do not fit the mainstream of editorial policies of the newsmagazine. They may be too lengthy or perhaps they may contain material which may be perceived as a bit too controversial; all are read and filed for potential future publication. This Reading Section is an opportunity to print some of those articles for your pleasure and thought. As space permits, we will continue to include the Reading Section in the 8th AF NEWS.

GUARDIAN ANGELS?

By Bruce G. Craig, 93rd BG

In thinking back about our adventures in the Air Force, I wonder how many of us might now be thinking we had a guardian angel with us. At least for me, there were many situations that appeared to have someone watching over me, not keeping me from dangerous situations but seeing that I was unharmed.

One day in 1945 at our B-24 base at Hardwick, England we had no flying assignment, and I was going through a mental plan for what the next mission might have in store for us. If we were disabled at some point in the mission, what route should we take. As navigator, I would have that responsibility. I decided an avoidable problem would be flying into an area loaded with anti-aircraft guns, so I went to see the intelligence group to see what information they had. The officer there thought I was paranoid and just laughed at me. "Just keep flying the route we planned for you". I persisted long enough that he finally gave in and let me copy the anti-aircraft plot maps of Europe. As I left, he shouted, "They won't do you any good. The Germans move those guns around a lot". But I was satisfied. I even had the locations of all the airfields in France that we had regained. I wasn't sure why he resisted so much or, for that matter, why I had persisted that much.

The next day was March 17th, 1945, and at 8AM we were following our brightly lit assembly plane. The formation was nearing the final stages of assembly when Dave Clark, my pilot, called me on the interphone to say he was having trouble keeping up with the formation and for me to be sure to keep navigation up to the minute in case trouble showed up suddenly. As we crossed the Channel I looked out and saw that we were no longer in formation, so I went up to the flight deck to see what was going on. Today's target was a tank manufacturing plant in

Hanover, and I saw our formation was slowly pulling away from us. In fact, our plane couldn't go above 19,000 feet, and they were headed for 24,000 feet. We attempted to get permission to turn back, but this was denied because other formations were still behind us, and we would be in "good company". We had bad feelings about being at least 5,000 feet below all other planes and certainly vulnerable to fighter attack. When we saw Hanover, the last of the formations were well past us and Hanover, but we turned at the initial point and headed in for our own bombing run. At the edge of the metropolitan area the steady hum of the engines had a new sound variation and the nose of the bomber dropped. An engine had failed. Dave was yelling over the intercom, "Drop the bombs. We've lost an engine. Drop 'em!". I dropped them and grabbed my flak map as Dave turned away from Hanover. With a quick calculation I had a temporary heading change for Dave because he was headed right into a flak gun area. We were now at 10,000 feet, and I had to figure the best way out of this area to avoid getting shot down. I told Dave that I would be giving him some frequent course changes to avoid anti-aircraft fire. Our calls for assistance brought no fighters, either friendly or unfriendly. Dave said he thought we would just go down if another engine went out.

To return to the route we took coming in would require a turn we couldn't take without going over flak areas, so we were going to cut across country to take the shortest route home. None of us wanted to follow the looping route planned for today. Not with this plane.

We were headed for a triangle of towns (Lemgo, Bielefeld, and Herford) where I had a heavy plot of flak guns, so we diverted south of them. After we passed them, headed due west, I asked Dave to

make a sharp turn to a new course of 10 degrees. Going ahead would put us into the flak at Munster and a wide turn would put us into the Osnabruck flak area. Dave was great about making the tight turns I asked for. Everyone was anxious about going back the fastest way, but the copilot verbalized it by suggesting I quit screwing around and head us for home. I was tense because of the cloud cover that was obliterating most of the ground, forcing me into dead reckoning and guessing what the winds were at 10,000 feet vs the ones that had been predicted for 24,000 feet. I couldn't respond to him as I prepared to guide us through a corridor between Osnabruck and Drummer Lake that was 6 miles wide and 30 miles long, lined with flak batteries. Even with flawless navigation there was still the concern that the flak batteries had been moved. But finally we were out in the open and felt safe again. I had time to recalculate the winds and then make a small course correction to be sure we avoided the Zolle flak area. Moments later, I was looking down to my left and saw a B-17 flying at about 5,000 feet headed directly to Zolle. Even our gunners who were supposed to be looking for planes had not seen it, so they became more alert. We tried to raise the B-17 on the radio to tell them to move over and fly beneath us, but we had no response from them. It was frustrating to me to see them flying into what I thought was danger and not be able to save them. All of us watched, and I wanted to scream at them. Seconds later the black flak puffs appeared behind them, walked right up to them, and blew them out of the air. I heard Bob, the co-pilot exclaim, "God, there is flak down there. I thought you were just making all this up. Tell us where to turn next". The crew went silent. This was our first encounter with death. Finally, we were over the channel and we

could see the English coast. I took a final Gee navigation reading, closed my log, and headed for the flight deck. There I was told that our radio was now inoperable, and we were coming into England with no radio code identification. We could be vulnerable to English flak or fighters. That would be ironic to make it this far and be shot down by our allies because we couldn't identify ourselves as friendly. Dave was upset about it and decided to lower the landing gear to appear non-aggressive. The landing gear refused to lower. Something was haywire with the hydraulic system, so now Dave was guessing that we would have only one application of brakes. The only thing to do was to head for the emergency landing field at Woodbridge for our own safety. Bob Moore, the flight engineer, and Ed Rawlins, the radio man, cranked the

wheels down for landing. Dave gave us the opportunity to bail out, but we all chose to ride it out. The landing was tense but uneventful with an escort of a fire truck and an ambulance. Their services were not needed, so they rushed back to escort a B-17 coming in. As its wheels touched down, one prop fell off onto the ground. Later we watched a B-24 come in and its nose wheel collapsed. The nose dragging on the runway threw a shower of sparks, and as the bomber came to a halt it spun sharply to the left. That ended the show, and we went looking for some supper. We hadn't realized that we were hungry until we had calmed down. Our day wasn't over yet. We still had a long night trip in a truck back to our base, but even that was interrupted when a U.S. guard at a check point on the road pulled

us over because of air raid that was going on at a town 10 miles away. We could see the German dive bombers flying through the searchlights. The landscape lit up with the bomb explosions which added a deep bass note to the fainter, spurious anti-aircraft fire. Finally an all clear siren could be heard, and we were on our way again. We had quite a happy reception back at our barracks at midnight. A B-24 had been seen crashing in the Channel and our barracks friends thought it had been us when we hadn't returned after the mission. After all the smiles and handshakes, we had to give up. We were tired, and the other guys had a mission to get up for in 3 hours. It had been a wild day, and I figured that our guardian angel must be tired out too. 


JUSTICE AT 452ND B.G., 1944

by Hubert Campney 452nd BG

Lt. Bill Stiles and his crew were members of the 452nd Bomb Group stationed near Doephan Green, England. Early in June 1944, we were briefed on a mission to Berlin. It was to be our first long trip into enemy territory. Crew briefings were held in the early morning darkness. Mission destinations were announced and crews assigned to their planes. The ball turret was my assigned combat position. Gunners were then dismissed to ready their guns while officers remained for further instructions.

I made my way to *Lady Satan* #257175. The thought of the long mission and the expected enemy fighters made me want to do a very good job of getting our plane ready. I pushed the cartridge belts back behind the holding pin and test fired the two .50 caliber machine guns as I had been trained. At about the fourth or fifth test firing, six or seven rounds rattled out of my turret guns and struck the tail of the B-17 to our left which was also being prepared for the mission. The unbelievable had happened! I couldn't believe that shots from my turret guns had shattered the tail of that B-17. I must admit though, that it was a comforting feeling to know that my guns were working and that "Jerry" needed to "watch out" when we would get over Germany.

Albert Becker, from Wichita, Kansas, was in the wing of that B-17. He was checking a fuel valve to be sure that fuel could be transferred when needed. He was petrified when the plane he was working on was riddled by machine gun fire. His first thoughts were that the Germans were strafing and that perhaps he would be killed. When several rounds are fired across a bomb group preparing for a mission, it really electrifies all ground crews, M.P.'s and officers in charge. In fact the M.P.'s

were the last to approach our plane after the incident. (This fact has been the cause for many wisecracks and laughter at military reunions.) Everyone's first thought was that it was a strafing mission by the German Air Force. When the 452nd Group Officers gathered at our plane and found the real reason for the excitement, they were really mad. Now, two planes needed for a maximum effort were unable to fly the daily mission. Also, it was the officers' responsibility to notify the Wing and would, no doubt, receive their wrath. And of course, someone had to "pay" for this mishap. I was arrested. Plane Comdr. Stiles ordered our bombardier, Lt. Charley Keck, to accompany me to M.P. headquarters. The 452nd Group C.O. listened to my explanation for a short time, then ordered me to stand trial by Summary Court Martial for the careless firing of a Caliber .50 machine gun. However, since it was a well known fact that combat crews were in short supply, he also ordered us to continue to fly missions as a full crew. I would be notified when the trial would be handled. However, there was a good chance I could duck the court martial by getting killed or taken P.O.W. Our crew continued to fly combat missions at our appointed time. In the meantime, Charley Keck investigated and found the real reason for the accident. A spring in the hold back pin for the ammunition belt had never been replaced in the 70 missions that the *Lady Satan* had flown. About three weeks later the Summary Court Martial convened. Charley Keck did a very good job of presenting evidence regarding the weak holding pin. I was found "not guilty" and was to continue to report for duty. The captain conducting the trial stated the Summary Court Martial defendants never get off "Scot-free". My penalty - to deliver one carton of cigarettes to his desk in twenty minutes. Our crew continued to fly missions, and on our 17th mission, on August 14, 1944, we were shot down. We were held as P.O.W.'s until the end of the war. Being a P.O.W. is another story, but Albert Becker and I always have good laughs over this incident at 452nd Reunions. 

A FAIR COMPARISON

by James R. Blackburn, 34th Bomb Group

After reading the August 1998 edition of the 8th A.F. NEWS, I feel that the time has come for me to write this letter concerning the comparison of the B-17 and B-24 bombers. Some of us had the opportunity to fly both the B-24 and the B-17 under the same combat conditions. As many know, the Third Air Division of the 8th A.F. was half B-24 groups and half B-17 groups. The First Air Division was all B-17s and the Second Air Division was all B-24s. As 8th A.F. grew, it was decided that the Third Air Division would convert to all B-17s. I was in the 34th Bomb Group (H) in Mendlesham, England. We converted to B-17s in July 1944. My crew's conversion came when ferry pilots brought in new B-17s and flew the B-24s out. Our instructors were teams of one instructor pilot and one instructor engineer. We got one two-hour flight in the local area and two landings. We were then given a new B-17 in which we flew about four practice mission, dropping bombs at the range called "The Wash" at 25,000 feet.

After seven missions in B-24s, our crew was designated as a Group Lead Crew. Every mission was led by a Group Lead Crew with another Lead Crew as Deputy Lead. We dropped our bombs with all groups doing pattern bombing when the Group Lead dropped two smoke bombs with the regular bombs. All Group bombardiers then dropped their bomb loads in trail at intervals directed in our Intelligence briefings.

Another reason that I feel qualified to make this comparison is that we were shot down on our thirteenth mission and landed the damaged B-24 on an English base on the East Coast of England. When our Engineering officer arrived and inspected the plane he declared it unrepairable, and it was left at the English base. The second time we were shot down was while leading a B-17 formation (same 34th Bomb Group) to Ludwigshafen on our eighteenth mission. Two of the 88 mm direct hits damaged the #2 wing tank and the bomb bay. The aircraft was burning and starting to break up. Making it to friendly lines, ninety miles away, was impossible. We all bailed out at 26,500 feet, were POWs, and returned home in June 1945.

I will briefly list my qualifications before making the comparison. I was in the Army Air Corps, then the Air Force from 1941 to 1971. I have 7,000 hours as a pilot. Heavy bombers that I have flown are (in order) B-24J, B-17G B-29, B-47E and B-52G.

Now for the comparison:

1. B-24s and B-17s are very similar, both weighing about 27,500 pounds at takeoff.
2. They had almost identical armament and fuel load.
3. The B-17 had four 9 cylinder single row radial engines of 1820 cubic inches and 1200 hp, was turbo supercharged and built by Wright. The B-24 had four 14 cylinder double row radial engines of 1830 cubic inches and 1200 hp and was built by Pratt Whitney.
4. The B-24 had a new type wing called the Davis wing with Fowler (slide down) wing flaps. The B-17 had a conventional design wing with split flaps.
5. As for the bomb load, our bomb wing always carried 6,000 pounds of bombs. Mainly the bomb loads were twelve 500

pound bombs but several times there were 6,000 pounds of 250 pounds bombs and once we carried magnesium incendiary bombs. All the B-17 and B-24 pilots that I knew in Stalag Luft I POW camp said they also always carried a 6,000 pound bomb load.

6. Unlike the B-17, the B-24 was made in many different models, such as the excellent Navy long range patrol bomber. Many of these versions might have carried different bomb loads, but our B-24s were barely able to get off the ground from our base on mornings when there was variable or no wind. This was because we were given a British air base which had short runways because of previous use by fighters. It was a common occurrence for planes to run off the end of the runway into the dirt overrun before the stick was pulled back. On one of these mornings one of the B-24s became airborne but sank back into the ground after about two hundred yards. The aircraft and crew were lost. The wing loading on the B-24 Davis wing was much higher in pounds per square foot than the B-17 with the conventional wing. When we got B-17s we floated off the runway 1,000 to 500 feet before we got to the end of the runway, a great relief to all.

7. Altitude and Handling: While flying B-24s our parts of the bomber stream flew at around 21,000 feet. As soon as we changed to B-17s our altitude moved up to 26,000 feet, sometimes more, where the flak was less accurate.

The bomber stream at that time was as far as you could see ahead and behind. The lead crew was responsible for keeping his thirty nine plane formation exactly three minutes behind the one in front and so on down the line. In the summer of 1944, the bomber stream almost always had 2,000 B-24s and B-17s. All lead pilots were required to hold 150 mph indicated air speed. At the usual conditions of 25,000 feet and -40C, this gave a true air speed of 222 mph.

8. Emergency handling: In the emergencies that we experienced we found that (a) The B-17 with two engines out on one side handled much better than the B-24 and could maintain a higher altitude. (b) The B-17, with its flat bottom (fuselage and wings) crash landed and stayed intact much better than the B-24, which had about ten feet of fuselage below the wing to absorb the impact. This also enabled a B-17 that ditched in the water to have a better chance of staying intact and floating much longer.

On a mission in B-24s to Politz, a rocket center near Poland, we all knew that gas was going to be tight. No aircraft were lost over Germany and we were returning over the North Sea when five of my wing men called and said they were running out of gas and were preparing to ditch. Our crew alerted British Air Sea Rescue and gave them time and position (co-ordinates) of the ditching position, number of planes and crew members. No crew could loiter in the area because we all had very little gas. The North Sea was very rough that day and the water was cold. We never again heard any information about plane wreckage or crew members. It is my opinion that the planes must have broken up because of ditching on the rough sea.

9. Conclusion: All heavy bomber pilots from POW camps re-

trained in B-24s at Smyrna, Tennessee, which is where I started out before going overseas. After the war I also flew stripped down versions of the B-24 and B-17. With the extra weight, turrets and armaments gone, I cruised each aircraft at low altitude at 30" of mercury and 2,000 rpm. Each plane indicated around 180 mph. Although I flew more missions in the B-24 and flew it first, for

handling, engine-out emergency and ditching, I prefer the B-17. I have heard this argument off and on since 1950 and waited as long as I could for someone who flew both planes, in conditions and with experiences similar to mine, to write. There are few of us left that flew both aircraft in combat. I feel compelled to record my observations.

✈✈✈
James R. Blackburn 34th Bomb Group Rockport, Texas

These two paintings by artist Phil Brinkman of the 486th BG are being framed for presentation to the Art Gallery collection of the Mighty Eighth AF Heritage Museum as a gift of Phil Brinkman. Phil painted the nose art on the aircraft of The Zodiac Squadron at Sudbury, creatively featuring all twelve signs of the zodiac on twelve 486th BG airplanes. These two prints, and others to be featured in future issues of the 8th AF NEWS are now available from Phil's daughter, Phyllis Craig, for \$35 dollars each or \$120 for a set of four different limited edition prints. Also please add \$4 for shipping. Contact Phyllis Craig, 20804 NE 132nd Ave., Waldo FL 32694, 352-468-2001.



B-17 G on the ramp at the 486th Bomb Group base at Sudbury



A new B-24 plus a man taking a leak 833rd Bomb Squadron

THE ILLUSIVE BATTLEFIELD

Search if you must you never will find
A marker or border of any kind
To say that here they fought and clashed
Some died, some lived, and others crashed.
The mighty angry time panic of air war thunder
Now scattered by the wind and blown asunder

Never littered with twisted men or planes,
Nor fliers buried among flowered lanes,
No place to sit and sadly contemplate
Why are you here? No need to wait.
For friend or foe there's none to blame
To a shifting sky that's never the same.

Build not your monument of steel or stone
To memorialize the heroes of flesh and bone,
For unlike the seirling battle din and roar
Is now the wild sky where eagles soar.
As long as a flier of the flight lives on
In the mind of man it will never be gone

by **Robert J. Kilby**
452nd Bomb Group
in memory of Sgt. Gordon Gibson, KIA July
31, 1944 Munich mission



REPLACEMENT CREW

Crew #731

by Richard C Baynes, Pilot; 466th Bomb Group

On July 6th, 1944, the new crews spent the whole day in more classes, and these continued in the morning of the 7th. That afternoon we went out to our airplane to get acquainted, took off and made a few landings. We then flew around the area to get oriented and become used to picking out our air base.

July 8th had us getting up early with the crews that were alerted for a mission. We took off with them, climbed to our assembly area and formed with the group. We followed them to the Channel, then left them to complete their mission and bomb some railway bridges near Fismers and Anizy, France. We proceeded on to drop five practice bombs before landing. That afternoon we took off for a practice mission that failed to assemble. The next day we took off on another practice mission, and assembled into our 12 ship formation, but the weather was so bad that it had to be canceled. The Group flew no mission that day because of the bad weather.

So after two aborted practice missions and one practice forming with a regular mission we were declared ready to fly our first mission, and were put on alert for a mission on July 9th. We stayed on alert most of the day, but the mission was finally "scrubbed" (canceled) because of the bad weather. We did get our airplane assignment, "Gallop in 'Ghost'", #439.

Previously we had heard that on a first mission, an experienced pilot would fly with the crew, or that the new pilot would fly on a mission with an experienced crew, but with few crews available, due to the

original crews all getting finished with their tours, we were to fly our first mission on our own.

July 11 -- Up at 0130 hours. This was it!! Our first mission! Munich, Germany. What a choice for our first experience -- one of the longest missions flown from England. My flight log shows 8 hours and 55 minutes for this mission, the longest one of my 35 missions. That time didn't include the long period of waiting for our turn to taxi to the runway before take-off. Being a new crew, we were probably one of the last to take off. Here is what happens when you are alerted and called for a mission.

An officer comes around in a jeep to your barracks and wakes up the specified crew members in time to get dressed and have a chance to get to the mess hall for breakfast -- lots of powdered eggs, and fruit cocktail -- before the appointed time to arrive at the briefing room. The officers, and Radio Operator attended the briefings to hear about the details of the specific mission, the target, its importance, the forming details, the route, the plan of the bomb run, expected weather, and expected resistance - known anti aircraft batteries (which meant "FLAK" to us), possible enemy fighters, and possible evasion routes. After briefing, you would take your flying gear from your individual locker out to waiting trucks and be transported to your airplane. The ground crew and your enlisted crew members would be waiting to hear the news.

This particular mission was an historic one for the 466th, as it

was the culmination of weeks of training and preparation for a method of pinpoint bombing through clouds by use of radar. Various referred to as "PFF," "Mickey," "Blind Bombing," "H2X." The 484th Squadron of the 466th Bomb Group had been designated the 96th Wing's PFF Squadron, and selected crews from the 466th, the 458th and the 467th Bomb Groups (all part of the 96th Wing) became the new 784th Squadron to provide lead planes whenever weather necessitated bombing through clouds, rather than visually.

Back to the mission, we were to bomb an airfield in Munich and details were given on the location of the IP (initial point) where the bombardier, either visual or PFF, takes over and in essence from then until "Bombs Away" flies the airplane. He has to fly straight and level through a "bomb run" so that he can get a fix on the target and let the bombsight do all the calculating to determine the point when the bombs are to be dropped. This is the most vulnerable time for a formation because it allows the anti aircraft tracking system on the ground to get a fix on the plane's altitude, speed and direction, just what is needed to set the fuses on shells they are firing. We did use counter measures to confuse the AA tracking system -- each plane dropped bundles of "chaff," which were fine strips or

shreds of aluminum foil, and as the foil fluttered down it would give the ground radar the same appearance as a formation of planes.

As we looked at the map in the front of the Briefing Room, it looked like the area from

the IP through the target was all in red, meaning we could expect lots of flak.

After the briefing, we were all abuzz with excitement and a little tense to say the least. We grabbed our flight gear, climbed into the truck and were dropped off at the "hard stand," or "revetment" (individual concrete pads located around the perimeter of the field) where our airplane was parked. It was loaded with forty 100lb GP (general purpose) bombs for the mission. The rest of our crew were already there and anxious to hear about our coming mission, as were the ground crew.

I had a good solid religious background as I was growing up, and although I didn't outwardly manifest my belief in a divine Creator, I sure did my share of silent praying throughout my tour of missions, and this mission would see more than its share of my prayers.

After looking over the plane and going through the check list, we waited for the flare to start engines, then another flare to start our taxi to get in line at the end of the runway, ready to take off. It was about 0800 hours when we finally took off, and climbed through the clouds to our specific radio beacon -- I think it was called "Splasher 5." When we got to the designated altitude and near the radio beacon, we would look for the group's colored flares coming from the lead plane (later we had a brightly striped red and white formation plane to form on), and we would take our preassigned position in the 12 ship formation. The 466th was putting up two 12 ship formations for this mission. The

**"Up at 0130 hours.
This was it!!
Our first mission!"**

group circled around the beacon while everyone assembled, then at a specified time the formation would fly to a designated point where they would fall into line with other groups of 12 ship formations and an armada of airplanes, sometimes as far as the eye could see would head out toward Europe. We climbed as we went, and at 10,000 feet altitude, we would put on our oxygen masks, and depending on the temperature, turn on our electrically heated flying suits. It was the navigator's job to keep track of where we were, in case we had to leave the formation, even though we were just following the lead plane in formation. A routine that we would follow on each mission was to have all guns test fired over the Channel on our way to a mission.

I'm not sure what position we flew in the formation, but it was probably wing man of the low left element, or of the high right element, as these were usually designated to new comers. I remember doing my best to stay in tight formation, as we had been told that it was for our own protection. The formation's firepower was most effective, and protective when we were flying in a tight formation. We were getting up to about 22,000 feet altitude on our way to the target, when Rocky, the co-pilot got really sick. He couldn't stay in the seat, and ended up

stretched out on the flight deck. As we approached the target we could see lots of what looked like black puffs of smoke ahead. We donned our flak vests and steel helmets as we approached the IP, and the gunners in the back were throwing out chaff. We had good fighter protection and that may be the reason that we saw no enemy fighters.

We saw a couple of planes go down up ahead of us. It wasn't a story anymore, somebody was shooting at us. This is for real. Another time for some private prayers. Maybe the enemy gunners were reloading, maybe the chaff was working, or maybe we were lucky, but none of the planes in our formation were hit very seriously with flak. John Gattis thinks it was the chaff, as he remembers throwing out the chaff and watching the flak get lower and lower, apparently following the chaff rather than our formation.

There was a cloud cover over the airfield and I guess a decision was made that with radar bombing, it was better to pick a more defined secondary target in the city. We dropped our bombs and then the formation started taking evasive action as we left the target area. Right after "Bombs Away," the plane seems to jump up as it releases its heavy load. As we turned and headed back to England we saw a couple of planes off toward the Swiss border, probably crippled and headed for safety.

The trip home seemed uneventful, and, being our first mission, I was continuing to do my best to fly good formation. Les Walters our Flight Engineer was riding in the co-pilot's seat, when suddenly #4 engine quit -- it was out of gas. Les climbed back to the cross feed controls that allow gas to be transferred from one tank to another, and transferred some gas into the tank that fed #4 engine, and we got the engine started again.

Knowing that we were low on gas, and since we were close to the Channel, we left the formation, cut back on our power, and started a gradual descent toward home. Lloyd Holden, our navigator, gave us the proper heading and kept track of our flight path. Les Walters came back into the co-pilot's seat (that was

mistake #2), as Rocky was still out cold. Ralph Dennings remembers that we asked Nick Nicholson, our radio operator, to contact air-sea rescue in case we couldn't make it across the Channel, but all he could get was music. John Gattis and Harvey Walton threatened to throw Nick out so he could swim for help.

Just as we came over the English coast, two engines quit on the right side, and we were under 1000 feet in altitude. I jumped on left rudder with both feet and turned the rudder trim tabs as much as I could. I gave the remaining two engines as much power as I could and still keep control of the plane. The two engine procedures that I had learned in transition training flashed through my mind, but I really needed another set of feet helping me on the rudder to overcome that tremendous yaw from all the power coming from one side of the plane. Looking down, we were right over an airfield. What a break! But I was gradually losing altitude as I was trying to swing around to come in on a runway. I began to see that there was no way that I could make it to the runway with only two engines operating. The field was not an open field, but had trees growing up along the runway, and uneven ground. About this time, Rocky was awak-

"We saw a couple of planes go down up ahead of us. It wasn't a story anymore, somebody was shooting at us. This is for real."

ened with all the excitement and quickly climbed into the Co-Pilot's seat. Just as I was planning my approach through the trees, and telling everyone to prepare for a crash landing, power suddenly came back to the two dead engines. When the two engines had gone out, Les Walters had immediately climbed back to the rear of the

flight deck to the gas transfer control panel, and was able to transfer some gas into the two dead engines.

This is how Les remembers it:

"When #4 engine cut out, I turned all valves to connect all 4 tanks. The sight gauges in the B-24 were totally unreliable, as the gas in them would go up and down like a yo-yo. Along with the gas problem, we weren't sure that our landing gear was down and locked as we had no green light. Later we found that the Ball Turret had not been stowed properly. When the two engines went out, I finally got smart enough to turn on the fuel pumps, and that is why the two engines cut back in just in time to save our bacon. As we came down, all I could see out the right side was green fields, and I thought Dick was going for the grass, and as we came around and I saw the runway, I wondered where Dick found that."

We were no more than 100 feet off the ground when that happened, but it allowed me, with Rocky's help, to pull the plane around so that we could come in on the runway.

We taxied up to the airfield ramp, shut down the engines, and climbed out of the plane, and I kissed the ground. We radioed ahead to Attlebridge to tell them where we were, then got gassed up and headed home.

I mentioned Mistake #2 -- allowing our Flight Engineer to sit in the co-pilot's seat when we knowingly were low on gas. I should have had him stationed at the cross feed controls in case such an emergency happened. Mistake #1 was maintaining the gas mixture controls at a "too rich" mixture, thereby burning more gas than need be, and I suppose my over ambitious jockeying to stay in tight formation on my first mission might have burned up some extra gas. On most missions this would not

have been a problem, but on a long mission like this it was critical. We were fortunate, as a mistake like this could have easily caused a crash, the loss or damage of an expensive aircraft and the possible injury or loss of crew members. I know that the crew was scared, but I don't think they ever realized just how close we came to a serious crash landing into those trees and uneven ground.

Later on, we found that the airfield where we landed was the most Easterly airfield in England, the first one you could find after crossing the Channel from Europe. It was an RAAF Fighter Base called Ludham, according to my notes. Rocky thought the name of the Base was Manton. After filling up on gasoline, we took off and flew the short dis-

tance to Attlebridge. We landed, taxied around to our hard stand, filled out the necessary forms, got our gear together, and soon the truck was around to pick us up and take us to debriefing. At debriefing, we were asked the regular questions about the mission, our observations, etc. It was pretty routine, and no one got very excited about our close call. I guess that I was

expecting a little more sympathy, as I was still a little shaken up from our ordeal, but in hindsight, I guess the briefing officer had heard many stories more scary than ours. We were excused to go to dinner and told that we were on alert for the mission tomorrow!

One down, and 34 to go!



**"At Debriefing...
no one got very excited
about our close call"**



The Dick Baynes Crew - photo by T/Sgt Tom Morin, Radio Operator 466th Bomb Group, submitted by his brother R. J. Morin, Hershey, PA

Kneeling: Harvey Walton, Waist Gunner; Lester Walters, Engineer; and John Gattis, Waist Gunner

Standing: Seymour Friedman, Co-Pilot; Harold Bailey, Tail Gunner; Dick Baynes, Pilot; Ralph Dennings, Bombardier; Lyn Wheeler, Ball turret Gunner; Lloyd Holden, Navigator; Lester Nicholson, Radio Operator.

HOW THE AMERICANS TOOK 170,000 WAR DEAD HOME

by Iain Walker

One of the closely-guarded secrets of the 1940s' was the fact that the Americans took 170,000 war dead home for burial. As part of this massive repatriation almost 6,000 bodies were returned from Britain. And while the Americans had decided that no cost was too great to rebury the fallen at home, the British Government kept the operation secret for one reason: We could not afford to do the same. The total cost of shipping almost 170,000 bodies back to America was \$164 million.

The journey from Britain began at the American Military Cemetery at Madingley, four miles from Cambridge. The bodies were dug up, identified and placed in bronze caskets. They were loaded in a siding at Cambridge Station on to a special train which was so long and heavily laden that it had to meander on a 200-mile journey to Wales to avoid tight bends and steep gradients. At a special enclosure at Cardiff Docks throughout 1948 and the next Spring, America's dead were taken aboard U.S. transport ships for the journey to New York. In 1946, Congress had passed a special War Dead Act giving every American next-of-kin the right for the return of their dead. It was not reported in British newspapers at the time. Confidential Foreign Office and Home Office files, now open to public scrutiny, reveal how Prime Minister Clement Attlee and Foreign

Secretary Ernest Bevin were fearful that news of the huge project might leak out. In a 1948 letter, a Foreign Office official, Mr. J.G.P. Spicer, says: "We must be anxious to avoid giving publicity to the American repatriation operations, as the Imperial War Graves Commission have decided not to adopt the same policy, and if the American scheme became known it might have serious repercussions." His colleague, Mr C.G. Kemball fears indignant complaints to newspapers and members of Parliament from "irate next-of-kin of British War dead who will ask why American corpses are treated differently from ours." But the American Embassy, through Third Secretary Wayne Snyder, quickly cooled Whitehall anxieties. In a letter to Bevin he says: "I wish to state again that my Government has no intention of creating embarrassment."

Gangs of local and Polish laborers were hired to dig up the thousands of graves in Britain. But of the hundreds involved in the operation, only a dozen or so key officers and railway personnel knew the full story. And only a few survive. One is the retired station-master at Cambridge,

Mr Morris Lawn, now in his seventies and living in Thorpe, Norwich. He said: "The train was one of the most handsome things anyone could imagine. Inside there were white enameled walls and black tiled floors. The coffins were so heavy, it could only take ten to a carriage. No one who saw it passing on the lines suspected what the real cargo was. We

were all sworn to secrecy." The American Military Cemetery at Madingley is one of the most impressive monuments to the fallen. The Superintendent, Mr Joseph Cetola and his assistant, Mr James Shaffer, have been there since the war. Mr Shaffer said: "It was a big task, digging up all those boys. But it was done with the utmost decency and respect". Mr Shaffer went to Cardiff Docks to see the first coffins loaded. Behind the high security fence, a British Army Guard of



Honour snapped smartly to Attention. Ice covered the dockside paving stones. Not a sound broke the silence. The Yanks were going home.

from *London Mail*, 25 July 1982



Wednesday, November 4, 1998 Madingley Cemetery Memorial Service Cambridge

Before 1943, there was no Madingley Cemetery. This land was still the property of Cambridge University. When the Battle of the Atlantic and the strategic air bombardment of Northwest Europe was underway, Madingley Cemetery became a necessity.

Back in hometown America, those serving their country received recognition. A brick wall on a drugstore located in a prominent place, such as the corner of Pine Street and Grand Avenue, was made available. As men and women enlisted or were drafted, their names were painted on that wall. The locals watched in amazement as the list grew and grew. The youth of their little town were now in training, or else overseas in a combat zone.

At the same time, mothers and fathers who had children of mili-

tary age and who were already gone from home, sadly but proudly placed in the window of their home a small paper or cloth flag. This emblem displayed a white background with a blue star for each child who had been called to duty. Up and down the streets, windows displayed the flag, the contribution that household was making to the war effort.

In the European Theater of Operations, casualties mounted up. This 30-acre plot of land at Cambridge became the final resting place for those lost in battle. This plot of ground wasn't a pretty sight. Mounds of freshly dug earth were everywhere, the graves identified by primitive markers. There was mud and deep ruts were created by the constant flow of military vehicles bearing the dead from the different air bases. Burial rites were simple with few attending. Usually there were no flags or Taps; no fancy ceremony. Just a short committal service conducted by a chaplain who was accompanied by the truck driver and perhaps a friend or crew member.

Back at the base, a report had to be filed and a letter sent to the survivors back home in America. Sometimes the report was formal and impersonal. One read: "Mrs. Millicent H. Morley...the Secretary of War desires me to express his deep regret that your son, second Lieutenant Fred A. Morley has been reported missing in action since 28 May over Germany period. If further details or other information are received you will be promptly notified. Letter follows. Adjutant General."

Sometimes, a more personal hand written communication was given, but with the same message. One read: "My dear Mrs. Dickson, With deepest regret I have learned that an official determination has been made in the death of your son, 1st Lt. Donald F. Dickson who has been missing in action since December 13, 1943 in the European Area. My heartfelt sympathy is extended to you and other members of the family. Very sincerely, H.H. Arnold, Commanding General, Army Air Forces"

Back home, the sight of Western Union delivery boys on their bicycles bringing telegrams brought instant fear to mothers when they stopped in front of a house with a Blue Star in the window. After a time, the blue star came down and a gold one replaced it. The sign painter was sent to the wall on the corner of Grand Avenue and Pine Street and carefully placed a gold star after the son's name.

Now, 55 years later, 3,812 Crosses or Stars of David are in place, and, 5,126 names are recorded on the wall containing the Tables of the Missing who gave their lives in the service of their

country, but whose remains were never recovered or identified. A war-time B-24 Squadron Commander reported very honestly, "Religion made me say short prayers before going to sleep at night and sometimes during a fleeting instant at the height of combat. I think this undoubtedly made me a better combat officer." He went ahead to say, "...even though the assignment of the next morning might be my last, it helped me to say to myself with complete calm, 'You can't live forever.' Don't ever give up hope; never let the fear of death strike panic in your mind and paralyze your reason. Death will find you sometime, if not tomorrow. Give yourself a chance." Shakespeare summed it up in a sentence, "Cowards die many times before their deaths; the valiant never taste of death but once."

These grave markers, the inscriptions on the Tablets of the Missing are names of someone's son, a husband, a father, a friend, a combat comrade. We recognize and honor them for the sacrifice they made. But, they have already overcome the last enemy, Death. We have not. We still have that coming. Perhaps, if we only knew, they may be rooting for us. Let us listen to what the Holy Scripture declares, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us and let us run with the patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith...." (Heb.12:1-2)

by Earl Wassom 466th Bomb Group Bowling Green, KY



All warfare is based on deception. Hence, when able to attack, we must seem unable; when using our forces, we must seem inactive; when we are near, we must make the enemy believe that we are away, and when far, we must make him believe we are near. Hold out baits to entice the enemy. Feign disorder, and crush him. If he is superior in strength, evade him. If he is taking his ease, give him no rest. If his forces are united, separate them. Attack him where he is unprepared, appear where you are not expected. These military devices, leading to victory, must not be divulged beforehand.

- Sun Tzu on *The Art of War* about 500 BC

Every letter of the first phrase, "The United States of America" is used one time only to spell out the phrase below:

AN AMERICAN ANAGRAM

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ATTAINETH ITS CAUSE: FREEDOM

30TH MISSION

by George Grau 457th Bomb Group

George Grau has related a fine story of his being one of the first crews shot down by a German ME 262 jet fighter and had some of the crew members survive. The Daedalus Flyer has included it in an issue to their members. In the March 99 issue of the 8th AF NEWS Roy McCaldin and Emil Sobol tell of a similar experience. George would like to know if any other 8th veteran can join this rather exclusive club he calls "The Me 262 Survivor's Association."



The date was 19 March 1945. The target was the railyards at Plauen, Germany on the northwestern border of Czechoslovakia. I was at the controls, leading the low element of

the 750th Squadron. Just as we turned on the I.P., #2 engine caught fire, presumably from a broken oil line. At the same instant I was hit with vertigo, and the plane began descending to the left. The other five planes pulled away to join the group. Buettner had his hands full going through the procedure to extinguish the fire (cut switch, cut the throttle, feather prop, pull fire extinguisher, etc.) while I struggled to get us straight and level. So there we were, all alone with one engine out and a full bomb load of twelve 500 lb. G.P.'s. In an effort to catch up, we dropped nine bombs, then two more. When this proved unsuccessful, we dropped our one lone bomb on a smoke marker. We tried, unsuccessfully, to join several other groups, then headed for England alone, receiving some comfort from our "little friends" criss-crossing high above us.

Suddenly, all hell busted loose. Three ME 262 jets and one ME 109 jumped us, making all tail attacks. On the first or second pass they got direct hits on Rendina's twin fifties in the tail, and the elevators and rudder. Rendina, who was wearing his flak suit, later reported shell fragments hitting him all over the chest area, and perforating his G.I. shoes on the floor beside him. Rendina had been wounded on our twelfth mission, but he didn't get a scratch this day.

The damaged elevators and rudder caused the plane to climb to the left. Buettner and I sat for approximately an hour, each

with left foot on the control column holding full forward control, right foot holding full right rudder, and hands holding full right aileron. Power had to be cut back to reduce the terrific pressure on the controls. As a result, we were mushing along just above stalling speed. We were both sitting in such an awkward, tiring position with left foot on the control column, that at one point, in an effort to get some relief, I held the controls alone while Buettner tried to tie the control column forward to the rudder bar with his heated suit cord. This was unsuccessful because the cord was so thick and stiff that it left too much slack.

All the while, the fighters kept up their attack. They got hits on the radio compartment. Cowsert fell in the doorway in the bulkhead with double compound fractures of his left arm, and double compound fractures of his right leg. Wounded this badly, he still made a free jump, and pulled his own rip cord. He was on his way back to man a waist gun, but never got to fire a shot.

The fighters also got other hits along the fuselage, hits behind #3 and #4 engines, and a huge chunk about five feet by twelve feet shot out of the trailing edge of the left wing behind #1 and #2 engines. Somehow they missed hitting the flight deck. Montagno in the top turret received shell fragments through his upper right arm, but still managed to shoot down the ME 109. Westbrook in the ball turret only had one of his twin-fifties operative, but got a good hit on one of the ME 262's which left with an engine on fire.

Not knowing exactly where the front lines were located, I recall thinking that we might stand a chance of evading capture if we could manage to cross the Rhine river. When we had gone as far as we could go, we bailed out near the village of Simmern fifteen miles west of the Rhine, thirty-five miles west of Wiesbaden. As I recall, the altimeter was reading about 900 feet when Buettner and

I left the flight deck for the bomb bay. The bomb bay doors were not completely open, and in bailing out I hit my head. Momentarily stunned, I was delayed in pulling my rip cord. When my chute opened I just had time to cross by legs and get my arms over my face when I slammed into the trees. Several of the crew later said they saw me come out of the plane and fall out of sight behind a hill with my chute unopened. Buettner said he saw my chute open about 150-200 feet above the tree tops.

We were picked up by an infantry outfit and were told that we were three miles inside the American lines. Buettner, Dupont, Hawkins and I were picked up and returned to England together. Cowsert was picked up alone and flown back to England. He was in a hospital at Kidminster, south of Birmingham, by the time we got back. I believe the others were picked up together. So, we were lucky. Cowsert and Montagno had been wounded, and I received permanent injury to my left knee when I hit the trees



George Grau with pipe and bike outside a Nissen hut after being shot down and making it back to his 457th BG base. George states that he lost 40 pounds during his 30 mission tour.

on bailing out. The important thing was, we all survived.

We spent the first night there on the front lines in the little village of Peterwald, the second night in Luxembourg, the third in Metz, France, the fourth in Merville, France. The next day we caught a ride across the Channel to Alconbury at Huntingdon, England where a B-17 from the 457th BG picked us up. We arrived at Glatton around 1530 hours, March 23rd. Apparently none of our reports had gotten to the 457th because we were

greeted with "Where the hell have you been? You've been listed MIA for five days." Shortly after that, I realized that all my candy, gum, and cigarettes had been passed out to others, and all our belongings were packed for shipment. On 26 March 1945, one of our B-17's dropped us off at an RAF field near Southport for a week of flak leave at the Palace Hotel. We returned to Glatton on April 2nd.

On April 4th, I flew my 31st mission with a different crew and sweated blood when

the group leader announced "Bandits in the area." On April 7th I flew my 33rd mission checking out a new replacement crew on their 1st mission. On April 9th I flew my 35th and final mission.

I had received my wings and commission on 23 May 1944. After 35 missions, I docked in New York Harbor on 23 May 1945. As I have said before, that was the hardest, fastest, most memorable year of my life. Only someone who has been there can understand that statement.



THE APPLICATION OF AIR POWER

by **General Edgar Sorenson** from: **Military Review, September 1943**

In the relatively small area of Britain, industry is not concentrated when we measure distance in terms of bombs required for solid coverage by relatively unaimed bombs. The space occupied by a machine shop is very small compared to the space filled by the homes of the men required to operate the shop. Then when we consider the immense additional city area having little if any connection with the machine shop we begin to realize the reason why Hitler's blitz of British cities by scatter-bombing failed to destroy the vitals or even to impair them very seriously.

That, of course, is said without any desire to detract from the magnificent defense put up by the outnumbered RAF. Only history can bring out the full glory of that small, heroic force. But we cannot get away from the fact that when strategy and efficiency called for precision, Germany bombed for terror with unaimed bombs and hoped in vain that chance would aid in hitting vital points.

The lesson is now written in history for all to heed, but without making any pretense to omniscience, the American Air Force have long had that idea as a basis for their planning of equipment and technique. Efficiency expressed in the military maxim "economy of effort" is an epitome of the air concept upon which we have based all of our efforts, and this is best attained in strategic bombing by scientific target selection and precise placement of bombs where they will do the most real damage.

This demands a complete analysis of

enemy industry to determine the relative importance of each type of industry, and then the relative importance and vulnerability of each unit of the selected industries. Cities, as such, are not considered though many units of industry within a particular city may be singled out as requiring destruction.

Such an analysis results in the discovery that a relatively small percentage of the

many hundreds of industrial units need be destroyed in order to ruin the enemy's ability to wage war on modern terms. But even then we cannot be prodigal

with our force. If we were using cannon, we certainly would aim carefully, and we cannot fail to realize that a bomb is essentially the same as a shell fired horizontally at the speed of the airplane. No matter what our potential wealth may be, we still must measure it in finite terms, and our weapons will always be counted in finite figures. Therefore, we must exert every effort to be as economical as conditions permit. Destroy the targets but do it efficiently with a minimal waste of time. Precision bombing does this.

Aimed fire is considered essential in the infantry when individual soldiers may be armed with an eighty-dollar thirty-caliber rifle. We have paid bonuses for many years to encourage quality, develop expert riflemen and sharpshooters. The necessity for precision bombing should be fully as obvious,

The enemy war machine--and it is a machine--is analogous to an automobile

which we want to prevent from running. It is parked at the curb and entirely within our reach. Would we take an axe and start chopping and pounding until we beat it to a pulp? Or would we merely take out and hide the rotating contact in the ignition distributor? Another analogy is in the old story that "for want of a nail, the battle was lost." We take away the nail.

More specifically, we might point out that, though we can stop a tank by killing its occupants, suffering casualties on our side while doing this, would it not be more economical to destroy the potential tank by taking away the lathe used in its construction? Strategic bombing has that for its initial objective.

Many volumes could be written about Air Power as we visualize it, but like Sea Power, it cannot be described within the limitations of any one of its phases. It must always be composed of separate



Me 262 airfield Lechfield 19 July 44

types for various functions, each necessary if it is to fulfill its purpose. Fighters are necessary for defense and for attaining air superiority. Medium and light bombers are vital factors in direct support of surface forces, and the longer-range medium bombers also serve in the strategic effort farther to the enemy's rear. But Air Force reaches its peak expression in the heavy, long-range bombers which are the only weapons capable of hitting the real sources of mechanized military power.

Properly employed, a well-integrated Air Force serves to decrease the time, as well as the cost in life and wealth, of the final victory. To determine the proper sequence of operations, let us attempt to visualize the ground-force-requirements and potential losses involved in the invasion and final subjugation of the enemy. With no strategic bombing, it is readily apparent that the initial ground-force-requirement is very high. World War I statistics show that casualties will also be very high. Killed, wounded, and missing involve nearly 50% of those committed. Before invading, let us start a scientific program of strategic bombing of enemy industry.

At first we will make shallow penetra-

tions, striking primarily at targets which will reduce the air defense power of the enemy-hitting aircraft factories and flying fields, and knocking down fighters.

The second phase starts when we have gained the edge over the enemy's production of airplanes for defense, when he is no longer able to increase his defenses, and when we can stand the losses of deeper penetrations. Our bomber force must be larger here and steadily growing throughout this period which will end when the effectiveness of the enemy defenses is definitely on the down grade.

Now we start the third phase in which we really get down to the business of knocking out the heart of enemy production capacity. A chemical plant shattered here, an airplane factory flattened there, and a synthetic oil plant in flames.

During this third phase we really begin to realize dividends. The effects of previous bombings will begin to be felt by front-line forces, so that an invasion started late in this period will require much less force and will experience considerably less loss. However, if time permits, it should not be attempted while there are prospects of further reducing forces required and losses to be expected.

The fourth and last phase starts when we

have completed the initial destruction of the selected vitals and have started the cleaning up process on items overlooked. We will also have to destroy a few units which have been built from the ruins of earlier destruction, keeping a sharp watch to see that new sources are not left untouched.

We hope and fully expect to prevent most of the enormous losses which would be suffered on our side without this bombing, a saving besides which the most severe air losses will be infinitesimal. The result of precision is efficiency measured in economy of effort, allowing the forces available to accomplish the task with minimum waste and in the shortest possible time.

Another less tangible consideration, but one which cannot be ignored, is the post-war attitude of the nations toward each other. Bombing at its best cannot fail to cause some extraneous destruction and must certainly make the war and its hates very real to victim populations.

Carelessness on our part would intensify and spread those hates which would be stumbling blocks to international peace for years after the actual fighting is over. Precision will hasten the time of new understanding.



“An example from the monkey. The higher it climbs, the more you see of its behind.”

- Saint Bonaventure

The term “the whole nine yards,” came from WWII fighter pilots in the Pacific. When arming their airplanes on the ground, the .50 caliber machine gun ammo belts measured exactly 27 feet, before being loaded into the fuselage or wings. If the pilots fired all their ammo at a target, it got “the whole nine yards.”

- Clans of long ago that wanted to get rid of their unwanted people without killing them would burn their houses down - hence the expression “to get fired.”
- The phrase “rule of thumb” is derived from an old English law which stated that you couldn’t beat your wife with anything wider than your thumb.
- The Eisenhower interstate system requires that one mile in every five must be straight. These straight sections are usable as airstrips in times of war or other emergencies.
- The name Jeep came from the abbreviation used in the army of the “General Purpose” vehicle, G.P.
- The only two days of the year in which there are no professional sports games (MLB, NBA, NHL or NFL) are the day before and after the Major League All-Star Game.
- It takes 3,000 cows to supply the NFL with enough leather for a year’s supply of footballs.

from *The Tennessee Flyover*

HOME AT LAST

by Larry Goldstein President N.Y. State Southern Wing Chapter

T/Sgt. John Cangemi of the 91st Bomb Group came home to his native New York after fifty four years, during which time he was listed as missing in action, and then as killed in action. Cangemi was an upper turret gunner on the "Roxy's Special", a B-17 of the Eighth Air Force which was shot down on September 6th, 1944. The bomber suffered a direct flak hit while on a bombing run over Ludwigshaven, Germany, just thirty seconds before the bomb drop. His plane exploded in a fiery ball of flame and then lost the right wing. The crew of ten men were immediately involved in the explosion but two men, Bombardier Lt. Frank S Bohlen and Navigator Lt. Donald L Brazdone were blown clear of the burning bomber. They both found themselves floating down with their parachutes opened. When they landed without mishap, they were immediately captured by the German army. The other eight crew members all perished in the initial explosion.

Richard Braun, resident of Ludwigshaven is a historian researching the air raids on his native city. Richard was a young boy of ten years of age during World War II and over the past few years has reviewed the German Archives and made contact with 8th Air Force veterans as well as with the families of deceased veterans. Richard's involvement with John Cangemi began on that fateful day in 1944 when he, along with other German children, saw the crash of the B-17 after it had exploded in mid-air. Many years

later as a part of his research, he contacted me and asked me to trace the Cangemi family who had resided in a section of New York City called Richmond Hill before the war.

I had met Richard Braun several years ago when I visited his home in Ludwigshaven. I am a veteran of the 8th Air Force, and on December 30th 1943, as a crew member on a B-17, participated in the first American raid to that city. Richard and his friend and historian Erwin Folz and I reviewed the events of that day so many years ago.

On my first telephone call I was able to locate the family of John Cangemi. His brother, Gaspar Cangemi is the spokesman for the family. They had no knowledge of the fate of John for fifty-four years. The last word from the War Department was M.I.A. With Braun's help we were able to locate information from the German Archives that the remains of John Cangemi had been transferred to the Ft Snelling Minnesota National Cemetery after the war. For fifty-four years the Cangemi family had no idea of the whereabouts of John's final resting place, or even the facts of the crash. After a review of the U.S. Archives and the missing aircrew report on file, all the facts were confirmed. The B-17 did explode and only two crew members survived.

On March 14, 1998, T/Sgt John Cangemi finally came home, when a token sample of earth from Ft Snelling was interred in the National Cemetery at Pinelawn, Long

Island, New York. Veterans of the 8th Air Force, as well as many other veterans' organizations participated in a memorial service as a tombstone was unveiled. The Cangemi family gathered from several parts of the United States, cousins, nephew, nieces, brothers and sisters many who had not seen each other for fifty years. They mourned their family loss as if John Cangemi had died recently. As a Marine bugler sounded taps, and a specially selected firing squad fired a twenty-one gun salute, there was hardly a dry eye in the crowd. The ceremony concluded with a short and very emotional speech by Gaspar Cangemi, when he said, "My brother has finally come home".



COASTAL COMMAND AND AIRTIME AIR ASSOCIATION

Our aim is to put up a long overdue National Memorial to RAF Coastal Command, probably at the RAF Museum, Hendon, London. As a pilot who served Coastal Command during WWII on anti-U boat operations, I know at first hand that. During the critical period 1942-1944, a number of USA squadrons, drawn from both the US Army and Navy Air Forces, flew alongside us. The US squadrons operated from RAF bases in South England. They, too, operated B-24 Liberators. I am also aware that other US squadrons operating with Catalinas, Venturas and Martin Mariners carried out similar anti U-boat patrols from other bases.

With this knowledge in mind I am trying to get the word

around that there is a Coastal Command and Maritime Air Association which is actively working to ensure that future generations will be made aware of the work of RAF Coastal Command and that a number of our brother air crew members from USA took part in the Battle of the Atlantic.

If the Battle of the Atlantic had been won by the maurading U-boats, then there could never have been the successful Normandy landings of 1944.

The CCMAA subscription is a very modest 5.00# per year or Life Membership of 120# minus the applicant's age at 1 April. Virtually everyone who took part in wartime maritime operations such as torpedo bombing, U-boat hunting etc is eligible to join the Coastal Command and Maritime Air Association.

Yours sincerely,

A. (Tony) Spooner DSO,DFC.

REUNIONS

388TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP ASS'N, INC.

The 388th Bombardment Group, WWII. (H) Knettishall, England, will hold their 50th reunion in Seattle, Washington **Sept 2 to 6th, 1999** at the Marriott Hotel, near Sea-Tac, for information contact Bittner Snead, 2449 S 328th, Federal Way, WA 98023 or 253-838-9291

461ST BOMB WING ASSOCIATION 461st

Bomb Wing, SAC B-52/KC-135 (formerly 4128th Strategic Wing, Amarillo Air Force Base) **October 14-17 1999**. Clarion Hotel, Abilene, Texas. Contact: James Browall, 41 Rue Maison Abilene, Texas 79605. 915-793-2995. E-Mail: JIMR461@JUNO.COM



1ST STRATEGIC AIR DEPOT ASSOCIATION

The 1st Strategic Air Depot Association will hold its 1999 reunion in Greater Cincinnati, Ohio, from **September 23-26, 1999**. We welcome 8th Air Force veterans who were stationed at Honington-Troston, England, from 1941-1946. For further information, contact: Mr. Herb Kaster; 720 Society Hill; Cherry Hill, NJ 08003; Telephone 609-751-1763

THE NINTH AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION

Ninth Air Force Association Convention and Unit Reunions, **September 16-18, 1999**, Best Western Hotel Central, Omaha, NE. Contact: Chairman, Bob Hogg, RR 2, Box 80; Mead, NE 68041-9652, (402-624-2755); Co-Chairman Charles S. Nefsky, 248 South McKenna Ave., Gretna, NE 68028-7804, (402-332-3143)



We are seeking veterans of the US Army Air Corps training units in Miami Beach, FL 1942-1945 and other WWII air force veterans for a reunion **Dec. 3-7, 1999**. Contact: Forrest S. Clark; B24vet@aol.com

27TH AIR TRANSPORT GROUP

27th Air Transport Group Association (WWII) Consisting of the 310th 311th

312th & 325th Ferrying Sqds. 86th 87th 320th & 321st Transport Sqds. 519th & 520th Service Sqds.

September 23-25, 1999;



Minneapolis, MN; Sheraton Inn Airport; Contact: Fred Garcia, 11903N 77th Drive, Peoria, AZ 85345, (602-878-7007)

457TH BOMB GROUP

8th Airforce, & all attached units-station 130 in Glatton, England, near Peterborough, will have a reunion **Oct 10-14, 1999** in Gettysburg, PA. Contact: Homer L Briggs, 811 NW "B" Street, Bentonville, AR 72712; (1-501-273-3809) Fax:1-501-271-9147

384TH BOMB GROUP INC.

9th Reunion Junket to Huntington..ENGLAND: **9th to the 13th September 1999** Contact..Ted Rothschild, 650 Snug Harbor Drive..Apt-402, Boynton Beach, FL 33435-6140 Phone..561-734-5052 or Fax..561-731-5420

436TH FIGHTER SQUADRON - 479TH FIGHTER GROUP

8th Air Force WWII will hold its annual reunion **22-24 October, 1999**; Days Inn Oceanfront - Cocoa Beach, FL (800-962-0028). For information contact - Jim Ward, 3610 Sawgrass Drive, Titusville, FL 32780. Phone: 407-383-1099.



390TH BOMB GROUP

(H) Veterans Association, WWII, 8th Air Force (Station 153, Framlingham, England) will hold its annual Reunion in Charleston, SC. **Tuesday, September 21st thru Sunday the 26th, 1999**. Contact..Ken Rowland, PO Box 28363, Spokane, WA 99228-8363. Phone 509-467-2565, Fax 509-467-2565 or eMail rowland@ior.com



390TH BOMB GROUP (H) VETERANS ASSOCIATION

303rd Bomb Group Association (Molesworth, England, WWII)

October 8-11, 1999, at the Marriott Hotel in Oklahoma City, OK. Contact: Ed Miller, 422 S. Walnut Ave., Temple, OK 73568-0219. Tel. 949-342-5119. (edmiller@pldi.net)REUNIONS



303rd BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION, INC.

305TH BOMB GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

1999 Tacoma Reunion **Sept. 29 - Oct. 2** Sheraton Tacoma Hotel 1320 Broadway Plaza, Tacoma, WA 98402 213-572-3200 Contact: Ridge Kemp 1404 Patriott Colony Drive Williamsburg, VA 23188-1339

455TH BOMB SQUADRON ASSOCIATION

The 455th Bomb Sqd./323rd Bomb Group 'White Tailed Marauders' 9th Air Force will hold their annual reunion in Alexandria, Virginia in conjunction with MARAUDERMEN 99 on **September 3-7, 1999**. Host Contact: Mr. Jim Vining; 921 Ware Street; Vienna, VA 22180

361ST FIGHTER GROUP (WWII) October 28-31, 1999

Ramada Beach Resort Fort Walton Beach, Florida Contact: Gen. Joe Kruzel 850-244-0220

356TH FIGHTER GROUP

356th FTR GP (WWII) 359th, 360th, 361st, Hqtrs & Support Sqdns. **Sept. 11 - 15, 1999** Best Western Merry Manor Inn, Portland, ME Contact: Ken Male 8282 NW 47th St.; Ocala, FL 34482 352-622-9976 or P51Male@aol.com

398TH BOMB GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION 16TH ANNUAL

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma **August 25-28, 1999** Contact: James R. (Dick) Frazier

398th Bomb Group Reunion
305 Thornebrook Dr
Norman, OK 73069-9612
405-447-7703

BAD 2 ASSOCIATION

ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO -
SEPTEMBER 17-20
Contact: Richard McClune, 527
Quarterfield Road;
Newport News, VA 23602-6140

379TH BOMB GROUP

September 8 - 11, 1999 Tucson AZ
Contact: Jan Rumberger 925 Hertzler Rd.
Mechanicsburg PA 17055

801ST/492ND BOMBARDMENT GROUP ASSOCIATION

17th Reunion
Las Vegas, **September 26-30, 1999.**
Tropicana Hotel. Call Reservations Plus,
800-805-9528 or Bill Becker - 619-287-
7163 or FAX 619-582-4323.

452ND BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

September 30 - October 1 & 2, 1999
Nashville, TN
Contact: Tamarac Travel 1-800-228-9690

MEN OF THE 'FORTRESS'

There have been some great traditions
Through a thousand years of kings,
Long centuries of battles fought,
Crusades, campaigns and things-
That gave to many regiments
Traditions tried and true,
Honors aged and multiplied,
As they fought decades through.

The echo of the trumpeter
Whose repertoire at large
Embraced but one great battle call:
"Forward! Bayonets! Charge!"
There's the spirit of the Alamo,
Of courage unsurpassed:
Concord Bridge and San Juan Hill,
Verdun's "They shall not pass!"

Such fighting makes tradition.
But today, unlike the past,
A fledgling code without prelude
Becomes tradition fast.
The Air Force carved it's heritage
On the highways of the skies,
Blazing there the fighting code
Of every man who flies.

Yet few know this tradition
The armadas built upstairs,
Where the bombers blazing fifties
Defy the flak, and dare
The fighter packs, the rocket bombs
And shell blasts--to attack!
It's a mighty proud tradition
To have "never been turned back!"

Cpl. Ellsworth B. Laurence

A GRANDFATHER'S STORY...

Sit down, son. So you have an assignment to write an essay on the turning point of the 20th century? Bear with me, for I have a story to tell.

The year was 1942, and a young Russian soldier named Sergei was pinned down in a miserable cellar in a place far away called Stalingrad. He hadn't slept for 72 hours and was cold and hungry. He stumbled into the street with his squad and was instantly shot through the stomach by a German bullet. He fell heavily in a pool of his own blood. Two weeks later in a small village in Siberia, his mother received the news. She screamed, as the letter fell from her hands.

Abut the same time, in a B-17, a rear gunner was having some trouble with four German fighters. Forty .50-caliber machine gun shells smashed through his station. One of them severed his jugular vein. One week later his father, in a small white house on Cedar Avenue in Minneapolis, stared grimy at his lunch pail. He had called the Ford Plant and told them he would be an hour late for his shift, as his son, Jim Olson, had been killed. Olson knew he was needed at the plant that night, it made important war material.

Around that time, a young English tank commander in North Africa was adjusting the controls of his gun, when his tank was hit by a German 88. He was instantly incinerated. Upon hearing the news, his wife, in a Manchester flat, was inconsolable. Her one-year-old son wondered why Mommy was so sad.

In the year 1942, in a hundred million homes, a million factories and in thousands of military units, there existed a will to win this war...no matter what the sacrifice. That, my son, was the turning point of this century. That's why you are wearing Nikes instead of jackboots.

You don't owe that generation a debt of gratitude or a round of applause--you owe them everything.

LeRoy Olson, Bloomington, Minnesota

BRITISH 8TH AF HISTORIAN REQUESTS YOUR ASSISTANCE

"For some years I've been collecting color slides (transparencies) taken in World War 2. Color photography was a bit of a novelty then but many US servicemen did fit a roll of Kodachrome in their cameras and snap away. Often these slides lie neglected in a draw simply because its a chore to project them or use a hand viewer. In fact, I know of two instances where color slides from those days were thrown away because they were too fiddlesome to view. I would like to hear from anyone who took color during their service in the ETO and is willing to supply me with a set of duplicate slides - for which I will happily pay all costs involved. My interest is in all subjects and, while I hope to reproduce the best in a book, the main object is to insure these pictures of history are preserved for the future."

Roger A. Freeman Mays Barn Dedham Colchester Essex CO7 6EW
England, UK

There is a new Air Force veterans web page
members.aol.com/B24vet

UPDATED DUXFORD ADDRESSES

Ted Inman, Director of the Imperial War Museum writes to state that the contact for the American Air Museum in England, Alison Birley, is E-mail: Abirley@iwm.org.uk and the Duxford website is www.iwm.org.uk.



STOCKER FOUNDATION FUNDS 95TH BOMB GROUP

The 95th veterans tell their recollections in a newly installed oral history exhibit, *Our Recollections*, featuring audio-taped histories from the veterans as well as vintage and contemporary photographs of them and their families. This project was funded by The Stocker Foundation, along with contributions from 95th veterans, their families, and many interested parties. The exhibit will be duplicated this year in a computer CD-ROM format and will be available to the public. Among the topics covered in the exhibit are: *On Being a Jewish POW in Germany*, *First Daylight Raid on Berlin*, *Ten Days as an Evader*, *A Nineteen-Year-Old's Adventure*, *Dropping Supplies to the Poles*, *Homecoming*, and *My Crew...They're Family*. The 95th Bomb Group Museum, within the 390th Memorial Museum is located on the grounds of the Pima Air & Space Museum in Tucson, AZ.

DYERSBURG ARMY AIR BASE MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION INC.

Each year since 1993 this little town of 2600 people has had a yearly air show. Last year we had 30,000 in attendance. Since our air show is held on a former B-17 training base, we will have a B-17 and a couple of other bombers. However, I am really excited about the participation of "fighters" this year, which include P-51s,

Spitfire, and a P-40. In addition, we have Russian fighters scheduled.

Air Sho '99 - The Year of the Fighters

Arnold Field, Halls, Tennessee (Formerly The Dyersburg Army Air Base)
August 28 and 29
For more information: Pat Higdon, 719 W. Main, Halls, TN 38040
e-mail address: higdonp@tennash.ten.k12.tn.us

THE \$2000 CHALLENGE

Saul Kupferman states that the \$2000 goal of the Georgia Chapter was reached quickly and the check will be presented to the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum as a further show of support from their Historical Society Chapter. Saul says that he "hopes the other 8th units will each pick up the '\$2000 Challenge' ball and run with it. The Museum needs the support of every one of us now!"

A Good Show! by the members of the Georgia Chapter.

GROUP 800 NUMBERS

Hank North of the 452nd Bomb Group Association make a very good point. He states that his members are a lot more interactive - stay in close touch with each other and with their newsletter editor - since they instituted an free 800 telephone number for the Group. Hank states that it only cost them about \$700 dollars per year, and is enthusiastically accepted by the 452nd members. He suggests that other groups and units who do not have a Group 800 number, look into it.

487TH BGA AUXILIARY

Ann and Chick Kulp are producing a first-rate Auxiliary newsletter with the help of the membership of the 487th Bomb Group Association Auxiliary. This Auxiliary organization consists primarily of families of Eighth veterans and other interested members of the younger generations. The group supports 487th BGA activities and helps preserve the traditions of the original group, and they have a great time doing it. Ann and Chick are proud of their Auxiliary and set the standard for it's similar organization of 8th supporters. "We have a great group of 'Baby-Boomers' who care about each others just as out veterans do." For those interested in how they got their start and some of their activities, they may be contacted at 698 Garfield Ave.; Lansdale, PA 19446.

THE GRISSOM FEST

The annual festivities at the Grissom Air Museum in Peru, Indiana this year will be different from previous years. Foregoing an air show this year, the museum will have three days of special festivities on August 20 - 22, 1999. In addition to Museum features, there will be tours of the Air Force Reserve Base with static aircraft displays. Carnival rides, gift and craft booths and lots of food will add to the entertainment activities. Bill Anderson and his Grand Ole Opry band will put on a Nashville country music show on August 20. The museum received over 80,000 visitors this past year and is open Tuesday through Saturday. For Grissom Fest information, **phone 765-688-2654**. E-mail: gamuseum@iquest.net

WEB SITE ADDITION

Don Rapp sends in an addition to the growing list of 8th Air Force Web Sites; that of the 306th Bomb Group (H), the Triangle H:
www2.go-concepts.com/~don_rapp/306thBG.htm

MR. GORSKY...

When Apollo mission astronaut Neil Armstrong first walked on the moon, he not only gave his famous "One small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind" statement but followed it with several other remarks. Just before he re-entered the moon lander he remarked "Good luck Mr. Gorsky".

Many people at NASA thought it was a casual remark concerning some Soviet cosmonaut. However, upon checking, there was no "Gorsky" in either the Russian or American space programs. Over the years many people questioned Armstrong as to what the "Good luck Mr. Gorsky" statement meant, but Armstrong always just smiled. On July 5, 1995 in Tampa Bay, Florida, a reporter brought up the 26-year-old question to Armstrong. This time he finally responded. Mr. Gorsky had died and so Neil Armstrong felt he could at last answer the question.

When Armstrong was a boy, he was playing baseball with a friend in the back yard. His friend hit a fly ball, which landed in the front of his neighbor's bedroom window. His neighbors were Mr. and Mrs. Gorsky. When he picked up the baseball, young Armstrong heard Mrs. Gorsky shouting at Mr. Gorsky. "Sex! You want sex? You'll get sex when the kid next door walks on the moon!"

This true story submitted by: Norm Grant

GERMAN ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS ON RAILWAY MOUNTS

To obtain greater mobility in defense against air attacks, the Germans have mounted 88-mm anti-aircraft guns on railway carriages. The picture at the right shows a battery of four of these guns in firing position.



On the train that accompanies the guns are cars that contain living quarters



for the crews as well as all the fire control equipment. The picture below to the right shows this equipment mounted on a flat car. The height-finder appears

in the lower left-hand corner of the photograph, the battery commander's telescope is in the foreground, and a director or data-computing instrument is in the background.

(From *Die Wehrmacht* 17 march 1943 and *Hamburger Illustrierte* 1 June 1943)

Directly below is a view of a German railway train protected by light anti-aircraft guns mounted on the cars. With the critical shortage of locomotives in Germany, every means is being taken to provide them with all possible means of defense against attack from the air.



CHAPTER NEWS

ALABAMA CHAPTER

Red Harper, erstwhile and current editor of the renowned Alabama Propwash Chapter newsletter, had a milk run for his newsletter. The Alabama members had just returned from their annual Spring Fling Luau reunion activities down on the Gulf coast, and Red had a wealth of material and pictures to select from for his recent issue. The success of the event was most evident and surely will be long-remembered by most. The dancing and Hawaiian dancers (some of whom look suspiciously like 8th AF veterans!) were a feature of the Gulf Shores meeting, and you can bet that Chapter plans are already underway for this now traditional reunion next year. Other highlights of the weekend were a cruise on the Southern Rose and the largest raffle yet by the Chapter. A check from raffle profits for \$625 dollars along with a special donation of \$15,000 from one of the Alabama members were sent to the Heritage Museum to help in preserving the heritage of the Mighty Eighth. The several Wings of the Chapter are doing an excellent job of getting the 8th veterans into school classrooms to talk with the students and be a part of their history experiences. The May 1999 Propwash rounds out its features with a humorous outline of some of the crashes and other unfortunate escapades of the 100th BG's Frank Valesh and his B-17s successively named "Hang the Expense" Numbers I, II, III, IV, & V. The story is included in Red's tale entitled "Pink Flak" and is vintage C.B. Harper. General Beauregard Culpepper Boltstead (a Garfield in General's garb) rounds out the issue with a few signs of the times, such as: In a laundromat: Automatic Washing Machines. Please Remove All Your Clothes When The Light Goes Out; and sign on a repair shop door: We Can Repair Anything. Please Knock On The Door - The Bell Doesn't Work.

COLORADO CHAPTER

New Chapter President: John H. Self 3020 South Sherman St. Englewood, CO 80110 303-781-4361

CONNECTICUT CHAPTER

A general meeting was held on Feb. 20, 1999 with 50 members attending. Our speaker was Tom Darge, who described his experiences with the French Resistance during WWII. Having been called into the German army at age 15, he decided to run away and join the French underground. A very interesting talk. We welcome new members. Our next meeting is in March. Come join us. Call President Art Ruggiero at (203)448-8754 for details.

GENERAL CURTIS E LEMAY CHAPTER

The Curtis LeMay Chapter (Southern California) held a luncheon meeting at the Acapulco Restaurant at the Santa Monica Airport. In the past, Douglas Aircraft Co. had a manufacturing plant there. The guest of honor and speaker was Rudy Augarten. Sixty-five chapter members attended and enjoyed a wonderful Mexican Buffet. After dinner some of the members told us of some of



Dragon Rapide, Spitfire, and B-17 Flying Fortress

their memorable experiences. Dick Baynes announced the date of the 8 AFHS reunion in Savannah and spoke about the 8th AF Heritage Museum. The officers of the chapter were introduced, and of course their wives and ladies. Paul White spoke of his father flying Jennies in WWI, Paul followed in his footsteps and flew in WW2. Halcot Thomas spoke on his crew who dropped canisters of food in Holland and on one occasion the people spelled out "THANK YOU" on the ground with tulips. 'BIG SHORTY' Codman did a similar two missions deep in France dropping supplies to the Marquis in canisters flying B-17s at 700 feet in hilly country. It was thrilling as you could actually see the people on the ground waving and throwing kisses. My drop was arms and ammunition which I did twice and the missions were called 'NO BALL'. We then proceeded to the Museum of Flying which is on the same airport property. At the theater we heard Rudy's talk of how he and a few other volunteer American pilots created the Israel Air Force. They acquired 5 German fighters and this was the total of the Israel Air Force. He also showed slides of how they decimated all the Arab aircraft in the air and on the ground. From such a meager beginning the Israeli Air Force are among the best in the world. We then adjourned to tour the Museum and they supplied many docents to explain each plane and exhibit. Another successful meeting and a great time was had by all. The next meeting is scheduled to be in Temecula which is in Riverside County near San Diego.

Murray 'Big Shorty' Codman

GEORGIA CHAPTER

Georgia Historical Chapter members are in their usual active mode for this Spring. They have successfully completed their Project 2000 fund drive, raising over \$2000 dollars for the Heritage Museum in Savannah. They are expanding their program of school and ROTC visitations and talks to inform the younger generations about 8th Air Force history. Two Chapter meetings of note were held on May 15 and June 19, 1999. Chapter President Al McMahon has his Executive Committee have recently made several trips to Savannah to attend functions held the past few months at the Heritage Museum. Al says that Chapter members are looking forward to being the host Chapter for the 25th Anniversary reunion of the National 8th AFHS this October. As the time draws closer, Georgia members will be spending more and more time finalizing details to make this an occasion to remember for everyone who attends.

IDAHO CHAPTER

Correction: Chapter President: Karen Sayko P.O. Box 65 Atlanta, ID 83601 208-864-2157

ILLINOIS CHAPTER

The Illinois Chapter continues to have a host of great speakers for their monthly meetings. In May Jim Hoel, a Bombardier from the 322nd Bomb Group, 350th BS spoke on the early missions of the Mighty Eighth when his BG flew B-26s. These fast medium bombers were transferred to the Tactical 9th Air Force when the 8th AF converted to strictly strategic bombing missions. Future speakers of interest will include a US Marine captured from the embassy in China and was a Japanese POW. Also to speak is a female Colonel from the USAR who is in a civil affairs unit.

CHAPTER NEWS

KENTUCKY CHAPTER

"The Flying Colonel"

A Greetings is being mailed out signed by all of the officers and Board members of the Kentucky Chapter with materials, window decals, and a call for each Chapter member to actively search younger generation 8th Air Force members and other 8th enthusiasts to sign them up as Chapter members. The letter notes that for several years the Kentucky Chapter has set up tents, held raffles and bake sales and other fund-raisers to successfully gain exposure for the Chapter. Funds for the memorial monument honoring Kentuckians of the 8th AF placed in the Heritage Museum Memorial Gardens were raised in this manner. The Chapter encourages all members to place their decal on the window of their automobiles. There is now an ongoing fund drive for the purchase of an enclosed cargo trailer to transport necessary materials to events and locations around the state. Their goal is \$1500 dollars. The contact is Ken Payton, Treasurer, 8602 Claudia, Louisville, KY 40219. The next big event for the Kentucky is the combined Kentucky-Tennessee Chapter meeting in Bardston on July 9-11, 1999. A big social schedule full of tours and shows is set for this reunion and there will be a Chapter meeting at 9 AM on Saturday the 10th. Contact Ken Payton at the above address for further information.



MISSISSIPPI CHAPTER

The members of the Mississippi did it again at Lake Tiak O'Khata this past April with a very successful fun-filled Chapter reunion. A trip to the sites and sights of the Mississippi State University campus was one of the meeting features. Great Speakers addressed the attendees: Dr. Barry Buxton, President and CEO of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, Steve Owen, author of The Flying Key Brothers, and inspirational speaker Pete Collins. The Sunday morning Memorial service was led by Chapter Chaplain Billy Jones. The banquet featured music by the Chapter's own Bert Hill and his Over-the-Hill Brass Band. Some of the members rented fishing boats to try their luck on the lake while others took walks and bike rides along the many surrounding trails. Two items of immediate interest among Chapter members is the expansion of the impressive Mississippi Chapter Website, managed by Kenneth Nail, Jr of Montgomery, Alabama. Give it a try at: <http://members.tripod.com/Sigerson/> One other upcoming planned event is the Chapter bus trip to the national 8th AFHS reunion this October in Savannah. The Chapter has booked a motel in nearby Port Wentworth, Georgia for this Special Silver Anniversary Reunion. The new Chapter President is John L. Walker, 125 Post Hill Cove, Brandon MS 39042.

NEW MEXICO CHAPTER

The Spring meeting was held on May 7th at the East Officers Club on Kirtland AFB. The luncheon was preceded by a Tall Tales Session and a Cash Bar. A special speaker was Col. Stanley E. Boyd, Chief Operations Officer of Keystone, Intl. Col. Boyd is a distinguished graduate of the USAF Air Force Academy and spoke on "Flying in the New Air Force." Stan was

a combat pilot in the Viet Nam conflict and has flown as a test pilot and as a fighter lead-in instructor pilot. Chapter President Hal Goetsch, 4151 Maria Drive, NE, Albuquerque NM 87109, writes to state that the upcoming Chapter meeting will be a very special occasion on September 17, 1999. He urges a big turnout for this one!

NORTH EAST IOWA WING

The North East Wing, of the Iowa Chapter, met at the Elks Lodge in Waterloo on Friday April 16, 1999 for a luncheon. 57 people attended the meeting. Chuck Taylor, President of our Iowa Chapter, gave the welcome and a short report of our Iowa State Chapter convention to be held in Marshalltown August 27 & 28, 1999. Leon Mehring, Treasurer, gave a very interesting report on "English Airfields Today", and spoke to us about chapter dues, national dues, and the Air Force museum at Savannah, Georgia. Ed Doyle came to the meeting as our guest, and brought the compass from Douglas "Wrong Way" Corrigan's plane. Bob Reeves read to the group the gripping story of "Wrong Way" Corrigan's historic flight across the Atlantic on July 16, 1938. Among our guests were 4 former B-29 people and 1 former Marine.

NORTH WEST IOWA WING

The North West Iowa Wing met at the Bonanza Restaurant in Fort Dodge on April 23, 1999 with 40 in attendance. The dinner meeting was held at noon to give all the members a chance to drive during the daylight hours. Kenneth & Delores Hoff were in charge of the arrangements and program. After a short business meeting by Commander Gene Person, a film - "Wing and a Prayer" was shown. Harold Pace from Fort Dodge was flying the Ploesti raid with the Colonel Killer Kane Group and Harold Steiner from Wellman was flying with the 93rd BG with Lt Stewart in the B-29 "Utah Man." One of the few planes that made it back to England from the Africa base missions.

Gene Person

NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER

Fiske Hanley was a flight engineer on a 20th Air Force B-29 and was shot down while on a mine-laying mission over the Shimonoseki straits. He bailed out and was captured by Japanese civilians but was rescued from death by the local police. He was confined in a dungeon and tortured for six months until being saved by the war-ending drops of the two atomic bombs on Japan. He told of his fascinating experiences at the April luncheon meeting of the North Texas Chapter at the Petroleum Club in Fort Worth. Note is made of the illness and hospitalization of Chapter President Doyle Shields in Bedford, Texas, with all good wishes going out to him.

NEW JERSEY CHAPTER

The New Jersey Chapter of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society April 1999 meeting was at the Officers Club at Fort Dix, NJ. The speaker at the meeting was Joe Klapper, the AM VETS service officer, attached to the Lyons Veteran's hospital in Lyons NJ. Klapper, a veteran of the Korean war, spoke about the benefits that can accrue to any veteran who suffered Cold Injury or frost bite injury. According to Klapper, the Veteran's Administration now includes cold injuries among those

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presumptive for Veterans' Benefits.

Many of the over 130 attendees to the meeting he indicates, have called him and are now filing for damages they may have sustained while flying combat.

The next meeting will be held at Fort Monmouth on July 24. The luncheon speaker will be NJ state Assembly woman, Mary Previte who as a child was a Japanese prisoner of war in China. The meeting will begin at noon.

Irv Pliskin

Chapter President

NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

A record attendance at the recent Board of Directors meeting in Raleigh turned out for a social and for the business meeting of the North Carolina Chapter. Business conducted at that time set the time for the final fiscal year Board meeting as April 10th at the Charlotte Hilton Executive Park. North Carolina continues to effectively operate their activities through the three Chapter wings, East, Central, and West. Gladys A. Stenstrom is the editor of the ten-page First In Flight Chapter newsletter and presents a series of fine articles in each issue, the most recent being a personal history and tribute to the women in WW II, the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) many of whom served an invaluable service ferrying planes for combat use.

THE NORTHERN CALIFORNIA GENERAL

JAMES H. DOOLITTLE CHAPTER of the 8thAFHS met on 24 April 1999 at the Los Robles Inn, Santa Rosa, California, for their annual General Membership Meeting. There were over 140 members attending the Board meeting and the following luncheon. The speaker was Dr. Wilhelm (Willi) Kriessmann who was a pilot for the German Luftwaffe during WWII. He flew 95 missions against the Russians, and after being shot down had a crash landing in a wheatfield. Dr. Kriessmann now lives in the Bay Area as a retired American businessman. He is an excellent speaker and held the attention of the whole gathering. He told of flying 95 missions in a Heinkel 111P bomber until being shot down on the Russian front. He then was assigned to the brand new Arado 234 jet bomber, the same one on display at the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum in Suitland, Maryland. The next Board Meeting will be held at the Western Aerospace Museum at Oakland, CA, on 14 July 1999. All

Chapter members are invited to attend the meeting.

The Chapter Newsletter 'Air Power' is available to other chapters who wish to exchange letters. This is an excellent way to learn about the activities of other AFHS members.

Chapter President Bob Harrington reports that the National Historical Society office has forwarded a list of over 900 area members, up 150 from the previous year. His committee is actively seeking out these HS members to join the Doolittle Chapter and enjoy the activities and companionship of the current members.



Arado 234 Jet Bomber

TENNESSEE CHAPTER

Historical Society Chapter members will turn out in force to cross the state line into Kentucky for the joint meeting with their Kentucky Chapter cousins. The much anticipated and long-planned-for three day meeting will be held from July 8 to July 11, 1999 in Bardstown, Kentucky. Registration begins at 9 AM Friday. At noon on Friday July 9th, lunch will be served on the My Old Kentucky Dinner Train and that evening chartered buses will take all attendees to The Stephen Foster Story outdoor musical and drama at the Stephen Foster home. Both Chapters will hold their annual chapter meetings at 9:00 AM on Saturday the 10th followed by day tours of the makers of that smooth Kentucky Whiskey at the Maker's Mark and Heaven Hill Distilleries, followed by a trip to the Civil War Museum and to My Old Kentucky Home. The annual banquet will be held on Saturday evening, with departures on Sunday morning. This combined meeting will be a unique opportunity for Tennesseans to see first hand how those Society members in the North live. All members and guests can make their hotel reservations at the Holiday Inn, Bardston. Phone 502-348-9253. Registration information for events and for the Saturday night banquet may be obtained by contacting the meeting coordinator Kenneth Payton at 8602 Claudia Drive, Louisville KY 40219, or may call Tennessee Chapter President James Bass at 615-735-1212.

SAVANNAH WING - GEORGIA CHAPTER

The largest and most successful event ever hosted by the Savannah Wing was the recent Glenn Miller Gala big band dance at the Heritage Museum this past April. Over 300 people attended, including many dignitaries. The Wing will soon celebrate its 14th anniversary. The Volunteer corps of the Wing has been putting in the hours lately at the Museum, the big Heritage Museum Third Anniversary Celebration being just one of them. The members will join Georgia Chapter members from all over the state in October to wish everybody a big welcome for the annual reunion. The monthly meetings and the six-page monthly newsletter published by the Wing keep everyone up to date on activities and future plans. The dinner meetings held at the Museum are a treat for all who attend. Officers for 1999 include Paul Grassey, Wing Commander; James (Del) Lamb Vice-Commander; Marge Langston, Secretary; and Sharon Johnson, Treasurer.

VIRGINIA CHAPTER

The April meeting of the Virginia Chapter was held at the Stonehenge Golf and Country Club in Richmond this past April 20th. The Special speaker for the occasion was Steve Hicks, Operations Group Commander of the Virginia Air National Guard. He spoke on unit Deployment and Eighth Air Force Lineage.

A Chapter membership drive is on for new members to become part of the Chapter and the National Historical Society. The dues are \$10 dollars for each, making a total of \$20 dollars which may be sent to John Pearson, Secty; 11308 Blendon Lane, Richmond VA 23233. Associates are encouraged to join in.

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EIGHTH OF MINNESOTA CHAPTER

Pictured at the record attendance of the "8th of Minnesota" weekly luncheon group is Larry Bachman, president; Don Geng, secretary-treasurer, and guest speaker Lt. Gen Larson. General Larson, resident of Minnesota, retired as head of the Air Force Intelligence Service in the 1980's.

The General has kept current with national security matters as well as having served as president of the Air Force Association. This put him in a leading role on the Washington scene. He spoke freely to Congress as well as Pentagon arm-chair generals about his concerns on our international involvement. His uninhibited observations met with the approval of the 50 plus veterans at the lunch. Even the half-dozen navy veterans indicated strong concurrence of his comments.

Frank Frison

*Larry Bachman,
Don Geng, and
Lt. Gen Larson*



When my fiance' gave back my ring, I was shocked.
I asked her if there was someone else. She said, "There must be."

Restaurant customer : "Do you serve crabs here?" Waiter: "Yes sir. We serve anyone. Sit right down."

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS AWARDED AT THIRD ANNIVERSARY

Harry Gobrecht, President and Historian of the 303rd Bomb Group, of San Clemente, California received his Distinguished Flying Cross at special ceremonies during the Third Anniversary weekend at the Heritage Museum in Savannah. The prestigious award was earned for exemplary duty and for courageous action under extreme combat circumstances as a B-17 pilot while on a bombing mission over Germany in 1944. The award was pinned on Col. Gobrecht by former 303rd BG Commander Maj General Lewis E. Lyle. The certificate of Meritorious Duty was read by Lt. Gen E.G. "Buck" Shuler.

In attendance were his wife Barbara and his son Tom, who flew in from California as a surprise guest for the special ceremonies.



A salute of congratulations to Harry Gobrecht from Buck Shuler



Momentarily overcome by the surprise appearance of his son, Harry is seen between Lew Lyle and Barbara and Tom Gobrecht

A FAIR WEATHER SPECTACULAR

On occasion, lead crews drew the weather scout assignment prior to takeoff of 8th Air Force heavy bombers. My crew drew the mission in the spring of 1945. Much to our delight, the day was clear and beautiful.

In the 466th Bomb Group, we used a war-weary, stripped down B-24D for the weather ship. We carried no bombs and had no machine guns. We were to rely on speed to evade any German fighters. Speed in a 4 engine, 65,000 pound heavy bomber? Even in a vertical dive, it is doubtful that we could outrun Germans.

We took off just at dawn and headed out along the route that the bombers would take, crossed the channel and entered Holland. We saw no weather ahead or any German fighters. About half-way across the Zuider Zee, we turned around and headed for home. All reports - no bad weather - no fighters airborne.


Coincidentally, our route home paralleled the route that the bombers were flying into Germany. We were still at 25,000 feet, flying west, with the sun above and behind us. Slowly, from miles away, the 8th AF bombers came into view. More than 1300 heavy bombers in formation in a long stream! What a magnificent sight! We were above the bombers' altitude and to their left about two miles. We would be OK as long as I didn't turn the nose of our B-24 toward the stream. That could get you shot down in a hurry.

The purpose of this story is to tell you how breath-takingly beautiful and colorful that sight was. Over 1000 brightly painted bombers, in bright sunlight, close formation, in a long stream. The sight of it is still very vivid in my memory. You can't imagine the rush of pride and patriotism that simply electrified me. So we didn't have any guns or bombs. Well, what the h---, we would simply take on the Luftwaffe single-handed! It was a rare privilege indeed to see a once-in-a-lifetime sight; the Mighty 8th Air Force passing in review. How I would love to see that sight one last time.

by **William E. Hendrix, Jr.**; 466 BG, 784 BS, Attlebridge; The Mighty 8th Air Force

INCIDENTS AND DEEP IMPRESSIONS - PATRIOTISM IN OUR TIME

by **Clyde White 390th Bomb Group (H)**



In World War II, I was one of the lucky ones. I survived 25 missions, flown between November 3rd, 1943 and March 6th, 1944. It so happened I was lead bombardier on the 6th March mission to Berlin. After the war I returned to my home in rural White County in Tennessee. One day I drove the family pick-up to a remote area of the county, just to be by myself for a little while. As I approached a small elementary school house I noticed two boys coming out of the building with the American flag draped over their arms. Nearby I saw a wooden pole with a rope attached. I parked the pick-up on the narrow dirt road and got out to watch.

Next to the school there was a small farm owned by a former soldier, he had lost his left leg and left arm. He was badly wounded during the invasion of France shortly after "D" day in June, 1944. Now he was trying to work a little garden plot on his property.

When the bugle started to sound our National Anthem, this man, incapacitated as he was, pushed himself up from the ground, put his right hand to his forehead and saluted the flag. When the last notes of the Star Spangled Banner faded away, he moved his hand smartly to his side. He stood there for a brief few moments, then lowered himself painfully back to the ground where he continued with his weeding. I don't think he saw me; he didn't need an audience.

In those few minutes I learned to appreciate the true meaning of the word Honor. That scene has never left me. Those that would take liberties with our flag and what it stands for should have made that trip with me in rural White County in Tennessee.

submitted by **Clyde White**
Vice-President Tennessee Chapter
Carthage, TN



A HAPPY JULY 4TH TO 8TH AIR FORCE VETERANS!

MY FLAG

Always it was a thrill returning from a mission, if it was not after Retreat to see the Stars and Stripes and to realize that we had lucked out on another one, My Flag was still there.

Attaining Happy Warrior status, one morning reporting to Hq. for clearance papers to the states, was in time to see the Group take off Germany for some target. I could have cared less where. Later that afternoon having made final clearance at Hq. I was walking across an open field about half a mile to the barracks. Half way there I saw the Group returning, twenty seven ships had taken off, twenty seven were returning, a very good feeling. Just as the first ship peeled off for landing, the base loud speakers sounded retreat. Each plane one by one peeling off circling around behind the flag and then me making final approach toward the Flag. By myself in the middle of the field, saluting the flag and mentally counting the planes again as they safely landed. It was one of the most emotional moments of my life.

Barnes, Carl E., Bellaire, OH 8VTN
 Waterbury, Irving B. Jr. Olmsted Township, OH 100 BG
 Hilden, Vincent T., 379th BG gunner, -from Ray Gurga
 Crawford, Thomas, 482nd BG Bombardier
 Scorey, George W., 93rd BG Fairfield AL -from Henry Arnold
 Erickson, Juel Erickson, 355th FG pilot, Air controller, Florida
 Flying Farmers, QB, flight instructor, Bradenton FL
 Andrews, B/Gen Alexander Boyd III, B-17 pilot, 8th AF
 Combat Intelligence, AFA Director, Editor UNC Yackety
 Yack, Raleigh NC -from Peyton Woody Woodson
 Miller, James L. Warrensburg, MO -from Joe Jameson
 Heibredner, Harold T., 385th BG, Rantoul/Blissfield Mich
 Craig, Thomas W. Concord NC
 Land, Bennett, Apopka FL
 Moody, Willis E., B-24 Navigator, Atlanta GA
 Howison, Charles, 100th BG, B-17 Bombardier with Brewer's
 crew
 Leibensperger, William P, Sedona AZ
 Peterson, Earle "Pete", 7th Photo Recon, 325th Photographic Wing
 Bennett, Harry P., 493rd BG, Virginia Chapter HS, Richmond VA
 Dovey, Arnold J., 482nd BG, Virginia Chapter, Newport News VA
 Jacobs, William E., 401st BG, Virginia Chapter, Williamsburg VA
 Brining, Fred J., Tacoma WA -from Gina Hurst, granddaughter
 Williams, Howard "Howdy", 8th AF photo Recon, Overland Park KS
 O'Halloran, Thomas J., Boston MA
 De Armond, James A., 93rd BG, P-61 Black Widow Night Fgtr Sqdm,
 Gladstone MO
 McCrary, Robert V., 487th BG, Raytown MO
 French, William "Jim", B-17 tail gunner, Olathe KS
 Hughes, William D., flight engineer, POW, Kansas City, MO
 Larson, Roy A., P-47 pilot 100 missions, Kansas City MO
 Block, Howard E., 390th BG Kansas MO
 Sottolano, James "Scotty", Oxford NY
 Evans, Ray R., All American Univ of Kansas basketball & football, Phi
 Delta Theta Pro football Pittsburgh Steelers, Prairie Village KS
 Root, Lynn, Connecticut Chapter, West Suffield CT
 Quiggle, Robert D., Eustis FL
 Riccotti, Jerry, 305th BG Arlington Maine
 Marshall, Willis W., 389th BG, Flight Engineer Deacon Jones crew,
 Spring Lake NC
 Girard, John J., B-17 Pilot, 96th BG North Fort Myers FL
 Hansvick, Alfred, 466th BG
 Struchen, Norman, Waist Gunner 96th BG Webster City IA -from
 Harvey Skallerup
 Schoen, Arthur, 351st BG, Charter member 8th AFHS, Treasurer 351st
 BGA
 Surges, Charles L., 351st BG, POW Stalag I, Naperville FL
 Tebbe, Louis A., 44th BG, Nose Gunner Roy Boggs crew, Santa Maria
 CA
 Farris, Davis J., 493rd BG, B-17 Ball turret Gunner, Sulphur LA -from
 Clifford Canulte
 Nissen, Niels "Arne", 339th FG Crew Chief, Iowa Chapter
 Grosz, Leonard B., Navigator 458th BG, Chesterfield MO, -from Robert
 Simon 401st BG
 Coston, Joseph A., B-17 Pilot, 97th BG, Santa Fe TX
 Shirley, Samuel "Sam", Pilot B-17s "Miserable Bitch I and II", 94th BG;
 established Little League Baseball in Japan and Phillipines, League
 City TX
 Dobson, Janes M., Pilot 30 missions, Houston TX
 Bradley, Frederick C., B-17 Top turret Gunner, 398th BG, -from
 daughter Lee Anne Bradley Andover NJ
 Theimer, Lawrence L., 388th BG
 Holte, Ortrude B., 3rd Air Division Headquarters
 Jones, John L., Pilot B-17 "Queenie", 34th BG, 35 classified Recon
 Missions Vietnam, North Ogden UT - from Seymour Isaacs
 Bailey, Arthur W., Pilot 381st BG, Colorado HS, Castle Rock CO -from
 Mike Quering



The Mighty Eighth

Thomason, Carwin, 392nd BG, with wife Henriette ran 392nd BGA PX
 for years; Santa Maria CA -from Cecil Rothrock
 Smith, Lloyd C., Tail Gunner, 379th BG, Oakland MS
 Jones, Milton J., Pilot, 379th BG, & flew B29s, B47s, B52s Boise ID -
 from Mayo Adams
 Powers, Cyril J., 91st BG, English teacher, Waterloo IA -from Robert
 Reeves
 Zeiger, Kenneth L., Waist gunner on B-17 "Spare Parts", 447th BG,
 Mishawaka IN
 Shaw, A. C. 493rd BG Financial Secretary, 493rd BGA, Pilot,
 B-24's & B-17's Arkadelphia, AR

GENERAL JAMES E. HILL

A past Commander of the Eighth Air Force, General James E. Hill died May 20, 1999 in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He was a fighter Ace with the 8th Air Force in World War II, flying P-47s on 127 combat missions. General Hill flew 128 combat missions in F-80 jet fighters during the Korean War. His career in the Air Force centered on flight organizations and combat wings. Among his many commands, he was Deputy Assistant to the Secretary of Defense in 1971, and was Commander in Chief Alaskan Command in 1974. After taking over as 8th AF Commander in 1976, General Hill moved to Strategic Air Command Headquarters in 1977 and was CINC - NORAD the same year. He retired after that command in 1980. General Hill is survived by his wife, Mary Sue, and their two daughters, Courtney Ann Vaughn and Johanna Bradley. He was interred in the United States Air Force Academy Cemetery on May 24th, 1999.

THOMAS F. RETO

Tom Reto died on January 8th, 1999. He was a dedicated supporter and Board of Directors member of the 8th AF Historical Society. He also took special pride in his activity with his 466th Bomb Group Association, and edited the Attlebridge Notes newsletter. He was the architect for the Memorial markers at the base in Attlebridge England. Tom enjoyed the brotherhood and companionship found at 8th AF reunions and overcame potentially debilitating illness to continue to attend each one with the enthusiasm which was a part of all of his 8th Air Force activities.

WADE C. WILSON

Wade Wilson served as President of the General James H. Doolittle Chapter and was an admired supporter of the Doolittle Chapter and the 8th AF Historical Society. Among his activities was involvement with a presentation of a gift to the Castle Air Museum from the 94th Bomb Group. During his combat tour during WW II, Wade was awarded the Distinguished for gallantry in action. After his death in San Jose, the Chapter members joined in a special memorial service honoring his many years of unselfish service to the 8th Air Force and the Doolittle Chapter.

THE 8AF MEMORIAL MUSEUM FOUNDATION-UPDATE

This progress report in the continuing NEWS series serves to accord our membership an insight into major on-going project activities within our Society's 8AF Memorial Museum Foundation (8AFMMF). As the 8th AFHS "educational arm", now in its twenty-third year of key undertakings and directly concerned with WWII 8AF historical preservation matters, the MMF's Directorship has continued to identify such essential projects and archival support areas under a rigid priority system-and allocate funding for these consistent with the funds at its disposal over the years. Accordingly in these efforts the Foundation at its recent April mid-year on site meeting at the 8AF Museum, Barksdale AFB, Louisiana, approved funding for some thirteen (13) additional major projects - all from its well-documented "Special Projects Objectives Plan". Funding for these new approvals amounted to \$21,904 for the FY99 program.

Most significant of these approved project actions were: A \$5,000 MMF check presented to the 8AF Museum at Hqs 8AF, Barksdale AFB for specified refurbishing work on the B-24 forward crew compartment exhibit; the project cost to fabricate an 8AF Unit Map Locator, punch-button exhibit now ear-marked for the Mighty 8AF Heritage Museum at Savannah; and placement of a newly compiled "Legends of the Liberator" bound book exhibit at six highly accredited U.S. air museums, which include - the Pima Aerospace complex near Tucson.; the Lone Star at Galveston, Texas; Hill AFB Aerospace, Ogden, Utah and the Fantasy of Flight museum, Kissimmee, Florida. On 30 April in England, a personal check for \$500 was presented by Bob Vickers to Duxford Director Ted Inman on behalf of the 8AFMMF for the 'B-24M Restoration Fund' - this actual B-24M soon to be received at Duxford later this year. Following the above actions, a total of

\$97,446 still remained for MMF on-going Special Projects Objectives program. The Memorial Museum Foundation continues to give energetic support on behalf of our membership in carrying out its long-standing charter preserving our Mighty Eighth's historical legacy in the U.S.A., England and Europe. In pursuit of this commitment over these past 23 years, the membership's approved funds for the MMF's tasks it's resulted in well over \$200,000 of these funds having been allocated in direct sponsorship of a long list of viable and highly visible projects and exhibits. In this latter regard, future progress reports on MMF undertakings will continue to be provided - here in the NEWS and at future reunion gatherings as downstream activities dictate.
submitted by: **Robert (Bob) Vickers**
8AFMMF, Special Projects Director

Two recent donations were made for 8th Air Force heritage preservation projects. In April the Memorial Museum Foundation presented a \$5,000 check to the 8th AF Museum located on the base at Barksdale AFB, the Headquarters of the 8th Air Force. The funds are earmarked to help restore and present the flight deck and nose of a B-24 Heavy Bomber at the airbase museum. Following the MMF meeting at Barksdale, Director Robert Vickers traveled to England for a ten-day visit to help in transferring a base locator board and a series of 8th AF group insignia reproductions to be placed in the Barksdale museum from the American Air Museum at Duxford. During this visit Bob contributed a personal check for \$500 to be used for restoration of the B-24 soon to be shown in the Duxford Museum collection.



MMF Chairman John Greenwood is seen at the podium presenting a check for \$5000 to 8th AF Museum Director "Buck" Riggs and 8th Air Force Commander Lt. General Ron Marcotte during ceremonies at Barksdale AFB.



MMF Director Bob Vickers presents a personal contribution to Imperial War Museum at Duxford Director Ted Inman on his recent visit to England. Standing at left is the U.S. Air Force Attaché to England Colonel Allan Parrington. On Ted Inman's left is Colonel (Ret) Robert Curran, American Air Museum Trustee.

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

Many of our Historical Society State Chapters have realized that it is important to have their states represented in the Memorial Gardens at the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum in Savannah. The majority of the memorials have been designed with the professional help of Jim Fogarty and Charles DePue of Depue Monument Company in Savannah. The wording and emblems on them have been composed by the Chapters themselves, and all are placed in a prominent location within the Gardens. Most pay respects in remembrance to those 8th Air Force veterans of each state who fought and did not return.

Several of the Chapters conducted months of fund drives to finance their monument, traversing the state at airshows, civic functions and at Chapter meetings. Impressive dedication ceremonies are held by the Chapters at the Museum for each of the States and are well attended by state Historical Society Chapter members. Most of the Memorials are included here and serve as a most impressive display of tributes throughout the Memorial Gardens for all visitors to the Museum.



Alabama Chapter



Connecticut Chapter



Florida Chapter



Georgia Chapter



Kentucky Chapter



Mississippi Chapter



South Carolina Chapter



Tennessee Chapter



Ohio Chapter



Iowa Chapter



North Carolina Chapter

THE NATIONAL WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL



The National World War II Memorial now designed and being developed as a Memorial Plaza on the National Mall in Washington needs the support of all WW II veterans. It will be located on acres between the Lincoln and Washington monuments and honors all who fought to preserve freedom and those on the home front who answered the call to arms and contributed to the war effort.

A national WW II memorial is long overdue and supporters may be entered in the Registry of Remembrances by forwarding their contribution check along with a brief description of their wartime activity. These tax-deductible donations will help the American Battle Monuments Commission reach their goal of \$100 million. Send to: **World War II Memorial Fund, P.O. Box 96766, Washington, DC 20090-6766**



In World War II the spirit of America, in home-front factories and on distant battlefields, saved the world. It is a spirit our soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines carried to victory, and sometimes carried into eternity. We owe them a debt. We repay it with a pledge: to preserve their memory against the tide of time.

- Senator Robert Dole

IN MEMORIAM

John H. de Russy, 305th BG, Past-President Florida Chapter; 31 years Air Force service with numerous decorations for valor and service; was the technical advisor for movie "Twelve O'Clock High" - the definitive WW II 8th AF Hollywood movie; Melbourne FL

June H. Petrillo, member of the first graduating class, Occupational Therapy, WW II Battey Hospital, Rome GA. Responsible for rehabilitation of soldiers of all services. Active in civic and national organizations, including CARE. Prolific writer and speaker for women's and church organizations. Wife of Orlando "Pete" Petrillo, 447th BG and BOD 8th AFHS; Elyria OH

Liaison Committee- Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum

Submitted by Tom Parsons, Chairman

Your Liaison Committee is very pleased with the progress made since the mid-term board meeting regarding the establishment of a permanent office for the Historical Society Membership Records functions at the Mighty Eighth AF Heritage Museum, that office being managed by a member of the Historical Society staff. The office is now open and is staffed by our Records Manager Kathy McCurry. Kathy is rapidly getting the computer records and communications of the Society into place and will be available to maintain our membership rolls, coordinate the annual dues and fund drives, and add

new members to our mailing list as well as enter deletions on a daily basis. We feel fortunate to have her perform these most vital duties to solidify the core of the Society. All communications and all dues payments should be addressed to her at our office. A separate bank account is set up at Savannah Bank for all monies coming to the Society treasury from annual and lifetime membership dues. This account will be monitored by Society treasurer Kenneth Nail with input from Finance manager Jack Hower and the Board of Directors. Her e-mail address will be printed in the next issue of the NEWS. Membership Records Office; P.O. Box 1787; Savannah, GA 31402.



UNIT ACTIVITIES

466th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

The 466th Bomb Group Association recently spent four days in Savannah attending their annual reunion. This reunion was an especially meaningful one for the group, with dedication and awards as featured events. Of course, also included were tours and trips of Savannah and its environs, golf, and the usual hospitality room at the headquarters hotel.

A luncheon at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum was the occasion for Group dedication ceremonies and awards. A plaque was dedicated to honor 466th BGA founder Lt. Col. John H. Woolnough, unveiled by his sister Nancy, along with a tribute by original crew member Russell McNair. John, who also was the founder of the 8th Air Force Historical Society, was a lead-crew pilot at Attlebridge during the war and later wrote the Group history, The Attlebridge Diaries and edited the Attlebridge Notes newsletter for two decades. John was devoted to his comrades in the 466th BG and when membership numbers were

being assigned to the founding fathers of the Historical Society, he chose #466 for himself out of his love and respect for his Bomb Group.

Wall of Valor plaques at the museum were dedicated to the late Barkev Hovsepian, with his wife Polly and son in attendance, to long-time Board member Tom Reto with long time friend Irene Cleghorn present, and to Board member James A. Gribble with Barbara attending. The formal dedication of the 466th BG Memorial monument honoring all who served in the Memorial Gardens was a highlight of the week's reunion activities.

A long-delayed presentation of the Distinguished Flying Cross was awarded to Louis Loevsky pinned on in ceremonies by Col. Beverly Steadman, 466th Commander at the annual evening banquet followed by music and dancing in the Rotunda of the Heritage Museum.



The John H. Woolnough plaque unveiled by his sister, Nancy Woolnough.



466th Bomb Group Monument in the Memorial Gardens



The Loevsky family out in force at the DFC award ceremony. From left: Anne Henry, Ruth Rosenthal, Lou Loevsky, Fern and Leon Lerner, Caitlin and David Buck, Molly Loevsky, Judy, Phil, and Jenna Buck.

PRESIDENT CLINTON MEETS WITH 8th AIR FORCE AIRCREWS BARKSDALE AFB

President Clinton met privately at Hoban Hall with more than 20 aircrew members of the 96th & 20th Bomb Squadrons and ground support personnel prior to addressing the Barksdale Air Force Base community during his visit April 12.

"As part of the first wave of the NATO operation in Kosovo, I am very proud of you and the mission you perform. You are America at its best.

After brief introductions, the President carefully listened to the concerns and challenges of the airmen during the informal meeting in which members openly talked with the president, asking questions and giving him their view on the current operations in Kosovo. One of the first questions Clinton asked the group, was how they had prepared for the mission. Clad in flight suits and BDUs, the response from the crews was unanimous... "We were prepared." "The actual mission was a lot easier than the training we went through leading up to the mission," said one of the flight crew members from the 96th Bomb Squadron. "The training we went through here prepared us to where we felt comfortable executing, and it went like clockwork."

Since the B-52s are deployed to RAF Fairford as part of the



NATO operation, the president was also concerned how they were treated while stationed in England. After some jokes were made about the weather they encountered when they first arrived, all were in agreement that the entire operation was receiving great support from the local community. "When we first arrived there, we had a lot of down time just waiting." commented a mission commander from the 20th Bomb Squadron. "We had a great time visiting some of the local sights and meeting some

of the people. It was nice, however, to get back here just to see the sun again."

Another topic of discussion was the longevity of the B-52 Stratofortress fleet. Since the Air Force has plans to keep the aging aircraft in the inventory for another 40 years, the president was curious about how the aircrews felt flying the aircraft well into the next century.

"Even though it is an old aircraft, with all the upgrades and variety of weapons it can carry, it will still be a formidable aircraft," said Brig. Gen. Andy Smoak, 2nd Bomb Wing commander, as aircrew members around him nodded their heads in agreement. "It is still a structurally-sound aircraft and even though it is old, it is still a lot of fun to fly. This aircraft has proven itself and will still be able to perform any mission we throw at it."

submitted by: T/Sgt. Rick DelaHaya
8th AF Public Affairs



ROCKET GUNS FOR FIGHTERS

21 August, 1944 Somewhere In England
Air superiority is essential for the success of any major land operation. Air Power and land power are co-equal and are interdependent forces; however neither is the auxiliary of the other. Mustang and Thunderbolt fighters and fighter bombers form an important part of the forces which will operate in close support of the expeditionary land forces when they enter the continent.

An addition to planes already fitted with rocket-firing guns is the P-47 Thunderbolt. 1st Lieutenant H. Peterson is shown with his Thunderbolt fighter showing the rocket gun fixed under the wing.

censored photo submitted by Leonard Alston,
London



UPDATES FROM THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY CENTRAL OFFICE

Everything is about caught up at the home office of the Historical Society, and it took about six months to do it. Time has been spent updating computer records with the assistance of John Cashman, our long-time computer records manager. Second-notice dues statements are in the mail, and Memorial Chapel fund donations are all recorded and deposited in the Chapel Fund account.



Connie Metts

Connie Metts stays busy at the office daily taking telephone inquiries from members, sending out correspondence to members and their families, and greeting visitors and members who stop by the office to say hello. She also finds herself frequently running up the backstairs of the Museum to the Library to find out the answer to a variety of questions asked by members every day. She says the interaction with our veteran members is the bright spot of every day, and invites each member to stop by for a visit.

Records Manager Kathy McCurry wishes to clear some confusion from the last issue of the 8th AF NEWS with the following:



Kathy McCurry

Groups and Units who sign up new members to the Historical Society charge the members the usual Society yearly dues of \$10 dollars, and of that \$10 the Group should forward \$5 dollars, with the pertinent information of the member, to her office. The Group may keep \$5 dollars for their own treasury. This item was discussed and passed at the last BOD meeting of the Society.

PRODUCTIVE HISTORICAL SOCIETY MID-TERM MEETING HELD

Members of the Board of Directors of the 8th AF Historical Society met in Savannah for a three-day work session on March 4-6, 1999. As is the custom of the Board, the meeting was held in the city of the annual reunion to follow. A tour of the headquarters hotel was conducted by hotel Convention Chairman Becky Flink for all the members of the Board. Specific details for the reunion program were reviewed and set into place. The remainder of the business sessions were held with the BOD as guests of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum where several major events will be conducted during the reunion in October. Motel facilities convenient to the Heritage Museum were used to billet the Board members and luncheon meals were at the museum facility.

The next scheduled Board of Directors meeting will be held Wednesday, October 27th at the Savannah Riverfront Marriott.



Members of the Historical Society Board of Directors met in the Flight Room of the Heritage Museum for their business sessions.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Board Meeting Summary

The Board of Directors of The Eighth Air Force Historical Society held their mid-year planning meeting, March 5 & 6, 1999, at The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, Savannah (Pooler, GA). Dr. Barry Buxton, President and CEO of The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum welcomed the Board and gave a brief report on the Museum's progress and plans. After a positive message from President Harold Rutka, he called for committee reports. The Membership Committee reported on the backlog resulting from the late mailing of the membership dues, processing the contributions to the Chapel Drive for the 8th AF Heritage Museum and the need to re-enter all the membership records into the Society's computer. Chapters please note: Because of the late processing of dues, the cut-off date for paid up dues was moved to March 1, 1999. Therefore Chapter rebates will be delayed. The Reunion Committee reported on plans for the coming Silver Anniversary (25th) Reunion of the Society at the Marriott Hotel and The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum. Included in the events at the Heritage Museum will be the laying of the corner stone for the Chapel, a project made possible by the donations of many 8th AFHS members. The Board visited the Marriott Hotel, Reunion

Headquarters and viewed the meeting rooms and other facilities that should make this reunion and outstanding occasion. The Site Selection Committee presented possible reunion sites for the year 2001, and the Board chose Memphis. As a reminder, the Society will meet in Salt Lake City in the year 2000. A draft of the up-dated by-laws was approved and the Secretary will produce a final form for anyone who might request a copy. ATTENTION: Both Units and Chapters are encouraged to recruit members for the 8th AFHS, and they can retain five (\$5.00) of the first years dues if they have established a contact with the Society and the check is drawn on the organization's account. We will continue our promotion of MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE WEEK – OCT. 8-14. We call on all individuals and Chapters to get involved.

Motions that were tabled for further study were:

Proposal that Associate members become regular members after three (3) years, instead of five (5) years, of continuous membership in the Society. Associates who become life members will be regular members upon payment of life membership dues.

Proposal to change the election of 8th AFHS Board of Directors to mail ballots instead of election at the General Business Meeting.

R. C. Dick Baynes, Secretary

The following poem describes the parachute jump I made with my crew over Belgium on November 10, 1944. We flew MILLION DOLLAR BABY of the 410th Bomb Squadron of the 94th Bomb Group at Rougham Field near Bury St. Edmonds. Our bomber was hit with heavy flak over the target, Wiesbaden, leaving two of four engines badly damaged.

This is exactly what my buddies would expect from me, whom they called The Deacon, or just "Deke" because of my prayers and Christian Lifestyle.

After completing 34 combat missions and my education I have returned to my former profession of Baptist preacher and Bible teacher, often quoting in my sermons and classes the verses of this poem under the title: "Christ was my Parachute."

Art Lewis St. Paul, MN 94th Bomb Group



THE STEP OF FAITH

We flew a famous plane,
And we gloried in her fame;
We trusted her each day to bring us through.
Others were knocked-out,
But we scoffed at any doubt
That such a ship would ever fail her crew.

Then far out on a flight
Our bravado chilled to fright
As we viewed the nearing bursts of deadly flak
Like lightning shrapnel came
Ripping through her fragile frame,
Leaving little hope that she could fly us back.

So the pilot gave the word,
And although I plainly heard
Him say, "Bail Out!"; I couldn't understand
How I would ever dare
To step out on thin air
And trust that chute to drop me safe to land.

With a forced smile on my face
I rolled out into space,
And pulled the cord that ripped the silk out free.
The sudden jolt changed all
And broke my headlong fall;
It seemed as if strong arms had rescued me.

The air was soft and still
And my heart began to thrill,
When I found the chute had saved me in my plight.
I stared about in wonder
As I gently swayed down under
That strange and silken canopy of white.

And floating near the ground
I was caught and lowered down
By the branches of a waiting Belgian tree.
I hit all in a heap
But stumbling to my feet
I cried to God, "My life I owe to thee."

There are many in this world
Whose lives are being hurled
By mistaken faith into a nameless grave.
If your life is like that plane
And you know your hopes are vain,
Why don't you jump, and trust God's power to save?

Written November 1944

THE FIFTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NORMANDY INVASION JUNE 6, 1999 - D-DAY

Communique number one, Tuesday, June 6, 1944

"Under the command of General Eisenhower, Allied naval forces, supported by strong air forces, began landing Allied armies this morning on the northern coast of France."

INVASION SHIP

An invasion ship is a lonely ship. Downstairs in an LST you sit and sweat and nobody says anything because there is nothing to say. You look around and you wonder who will be dead soon. Will it be that tall, tough-looking sergeant who is busy double-checking his M-1; or the guy stretched out in his upper bunk who keeps praying aloud all the time; or the kid sitting next to you who wet his pants? Who will be dead soon? Then the thought comes, swelling inside of you, a huge fist of fear socking at your gut, hammering and hammering . . . "Maybe it's me. Maybe I'll be dead soon . . ."

LANDING CRAFT, INFANTRY - D-DAY 1944

. . . the city of ours, as you yourself can see
Now tosses to and fro and is still not able
To raise its prow over the depths of bloody surge,
Consumed to one side of its fruitful earthly buds,
Consumed likewise of its grazing herds and children
Not yet born.

from The Elders of Thebes - 438 B.C.

ACCOMPLISHMENT AND SACRIFICE

June sixth is always brought up and I remember it and I think about it. And I think about the invasion and the death and the slaughter. And then you reckon how much we accomplished. Well, we did accomplish a lot. It gives you a hardened type of attitude that you develop. You're hardened to a lot of things you see. It's something that stays on your mind every day. You see things, you see friends, and you see articles in the paper. But I'm not like some people. I never did try to just dwell on it.

I have enough problems with it at night. I mean I dream about it - used to, more than I do now.

That's what you brought home with you. And you come home and you see the people here. And I talk to my other friends around. And, of course, we have all known people in there we thought a lot of we lost. You think about them and their families and all.

We've got a comradeship. We'll go out and sit around and talk, take a little drink, sit under a tree or whatever and we talk our language. Our language is not understood by our wives, our children or anybody else. That's our language. That's our language.

Carl S. Posey, Nashville

HOW ABOUT IT?

It is incredible how much alike we humans are! In appearance..well hardly. Personality, never! Achievements, non! But under all of these characteristics, the real person shares almost every emotion, desire, and thought. Thought, you say? Well, thought patterns do seem to center around three basic concepts. Aging "Warriors" gathering at a military convention have received invitations from their leadership to attend a well - planned program of activities.

Reservations are made, money is sent, travel plans are finalized. Chats on the phone with their buddies about attending precede the actual day of arrival. War-time friends, show up, individual gatherings are inevitable, conversations are lively and spirited and stories are shared, generally with some exaggeration. (After 25 years of repetition, the stories are perfected and almost believable.) In this group, there may be a sprinkling of Generals or Corporals and lots of rank in between, and all are thinking of the past, the present, and/or the future....there is nothing else. These are the three ingredients which make up the fabric of everyone's life. All thoughts center around them.

Memories of the past are certainly resurrected when wartime experiences are recalled. Many experiences were not pleasant but their shared memories are allies to uplift one another. Memories, dreams, and today's realities, even the bad times, can hold some good to those who refuse to succumb to defeat. Memories of failure awaken the fear of failing again while memories of success build confidence required to achieve further success. In memory, we recall times of terror, boredom, suffering, peace, comfort, thrills, excitement and victories. Strength and a greater sensitivity toward events happening in the present are the rewards of those who refuse to be defeated. Today's events are tomorrow's memories which bring pleasant anticipation for the future. So, the three thought patterns we all share are memories of the past, our present activities, and thoughts of the future. The power of memories is only a heartbeat away. Tap into your memories and bring a sense of wonder back into your life.

"I have considered the days of old....I call to remembrance my song in the night" (Psalms 77:5-6)

"The memory of the just is blessed....." (Proverbs 10:7a)

By Earl Wassom
Chaplain,
Tennessee
Chapter
466th Bomb
Group





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25TH SILVER ANNIVERSARY REUNION



OCTOBER 26 - 31, 1999

SAVANNAH, GEORGIA
SAVANNAH MARRIOTT RIVERFRONT



In Savannah there will be very special activities and events not to be missed during the days of this year's annual reunion!

The Memorial Chapel cornerstone dedication and groundbreaking ceremonies, special tributes to Historical Society founder John Woolnough and Society Past-Presidents, and days and dinners at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum with its new exhibitry and the Memorial Gardens await all who attend. Unique tours of beautiful Savannah, great restaurants, afternoons of meeting old friends, evenings of comradeship and brotherhood, and all of the memories of this 25th Anniversary celebration make this Big Week of our reunion one-of-a-kind. All details and Registration forms are included inside this Reunion issue.

The "Big - B" of 8th Air Force Historical Society reunions!

