

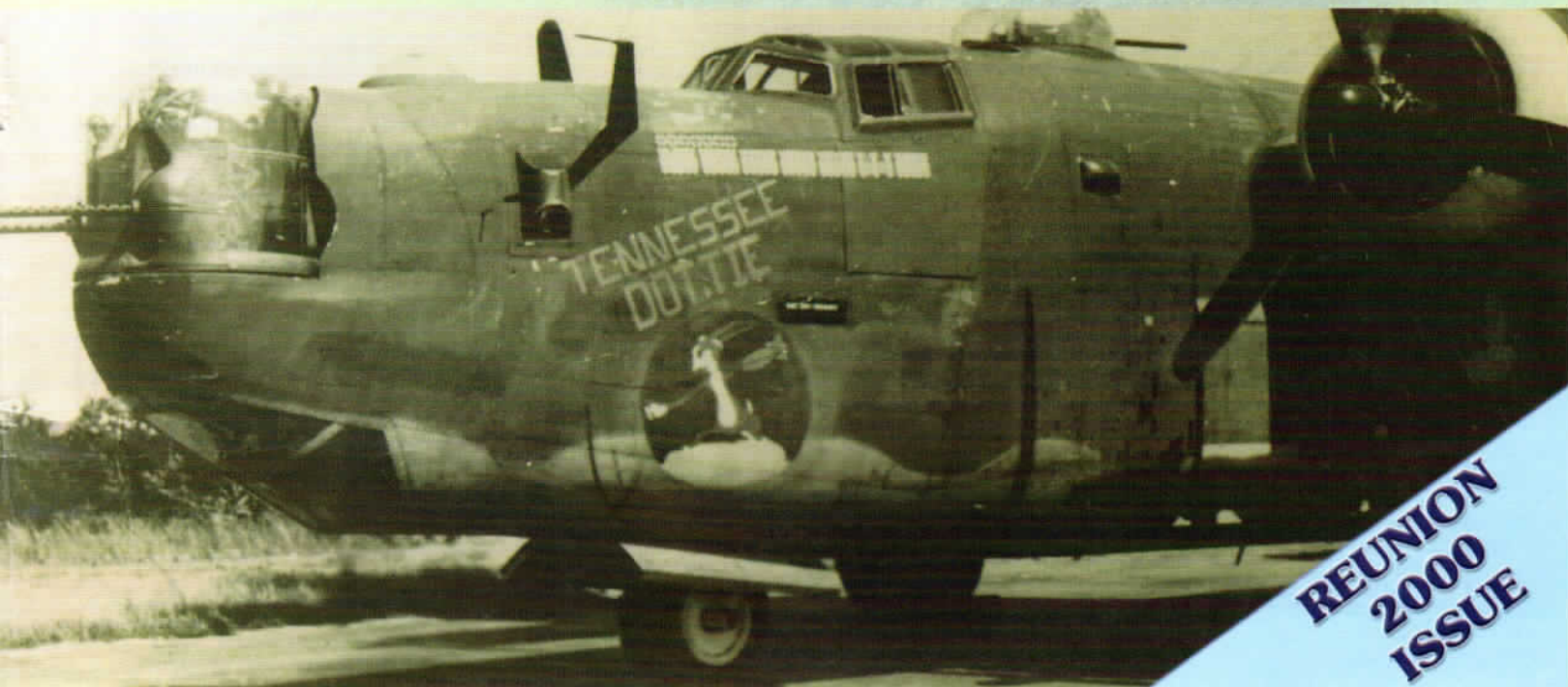


th AF NEWS

VOLUME 00 NUMBER 2 Voice of "THE MIGHTY EIGHTH" JUNE 2000



B-24 Liberator State Names



**REUNION
2000
ISSUE**



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. **Matters concerning membership, address changes, and copy distribution should be sent to the Membership Records office.**

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Robert E. Vickers. **Class of 2003:**
Peter F. Ardizzi, Charles E. Dye,
John E. Greenwood.

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

REUNION 2000 –Registration forms, schedules and tour packets are included in this issue, but they only give you a partial picture of what you can expect at this year's reunion. Our Reunion Chairman, Larry Goldstein, and his committee, our Welcome and Hospitality Chairman, Stan Peterson, and his committee are working with a very dedicated group from the Utah Chapter to make this one of the friendliest reunions ever. Don't miss it! Register early. Bring your family, as there is a lot to do and see in the Salt Lake City area.

POLICY STATEMENT – To clarify the relationship, as well as the difference, between the 8th Air Force Historical Society and The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, the Board has prepared a POLICY STATEMENT, which you will see elsewhere in this issue. Like all museums, the Heritage Museum needs members and support from those members. We encourage you to become a member if you are not, and to continue to contribute whenever you can.

THE JOHN H. WOOLNOUGH ENDOWMENT FUND – This endowment fund was established to honor the founder of the 8th Air Force Historical Society and to name the Library at the Heritage Museum, "The John H. Woolnough Memorial Library." This is one of the ways that you can support the Heritage Museum and pay tribute to our founder at the same time.

CHANGE OF BY-LAWS – We are asking you to vote on some by-law changes, and hope that you will fill out the forms and send them in promptly. One issue is to include our resolve to support The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, wherever possible. Another issue involves a more welcome attitude for our Associate Members, making it possible for an

Associate member to become a full member after only two years of membership, instead of five years, and any Associate who chooses to become a life member would become a full member immediately.

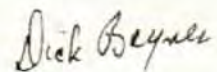
We are not a last man veterans organization, and welcome Associate Members! THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS RECOMMENDS A VOTE IN FAVOR OF ALL THE PROPOSED CHANGES.



SPONSORED SUBSCRIPTIONS – We discussed the idea of a sponsored subscription category at our general meeting in Savannah last year. The idea is to get greater exposure for our 8th AF NEWS.

We are asking all individuals and Chapters who can afford it, to sponsor subscriptions for libraries, schools, and special individuals. They will get 8th AF NEWS and you, the sponsor, will get the renewal notice.

DUES INCREASE – Despite our attempts to cut costs, our projections show that we must raise dues to cover the costs of the Society. At this point, we are no longer able to give monetary support from our treasury for the many worthwhile projects, including those of the 8th Air Force Memorial Museum Foundation. We will ask for ratification of a dues increase to \$20.00 per year at our general membership meeting in October.



Richard Baynes
President

Mission Briefing



We are getting ready to head to Salt Lake City this October 17 - 22, 2000 for the 26th Annual Reunion of the 8th Air Force Historical Society. The Society's Board of Directors held its mid-term meeting there last March and were very impressed with the plans the host Utah Chapter has for us during the Reunion. Utah Chapter members are enthusiastic about the reunion and a number of their

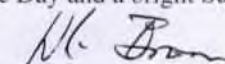
members have been hard at work these past few months to ensure that we will experience the best of their Western hospitality. Registration forms and reunion details appear in this issue. Armed Forces Reunion is once again coordinating the reunion and is working closely with our Reunion Committee headed up by Chairman Larry Goldstein.

You will also find in this issue some of the products of a long winter's work by each of your Board members and

especially by the Society officers. Some By-laws proposals are here for your consideration and action, and a proposal for a long-overdue dues increase is also included. Cost-cutting measures will continue to be enacted by the Board as each month passes. We plan to have a glowing "in-the-black-again" financial report for you at the October meeting.

As a personal thank you, I want to say that all your contributions and encouraging comments for the 8th AF NEWS are very much appreciated. Articles, letters and photos are each closely read and each is considered to become a part of your publication. Most all are slated to appear in print so please keep your material coming. The newsmagazine's success depends on each of you.

A Happy Independence Day and a bright Summer for each of you!



Walter Brown, Editor
Ewell Farm
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SECRETARY'S REPORT

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For openers, it is a pleasure to report to you that the Historical Society's Membership Records Office in Savannah now has enhanced hardware and software capability to respond to the members' needs. Member data files now can be accessed directly for all member status changes and to record new members in timely and correct manner. Connie Metts and Kathy McCurry are excited about the forthcoming expansion of the 8AFHS office space, which is largely to their design, and on a minimum budget! The project should be completed in the near future. Connie is kept quite busy with your inquiries, and she is anxious to serve you.



The Board of Directors met in Salt Lake City March 3 & 4, 2000 and in addition to what the President has reported to you there are several things that might interest you. First of all, we heard the exciting plans for Reunion 2000 (Oct. 17-22) by Larry Goldstein, his Reunion Committee, and the Utah Chapter delegation. Elsewhere in this issue you will find those plans. Make your plans now to attend!

Next, please note the ballot for proposed Bylaws changes, and let us have your vote. Your vote is important!

Another exciting report came from Membership Committee Chairman Hap Galfunt to the effect that we have 260 new regular members and 250 new Life Members. More have been added since that report, and exciting as that is, it is not enough to significantly alter our financial status, either near or far term. So, it was with much concern, even agony, that the Board voted to increase dues, as the President has mentioned in his message to you.

There has been much interest in a mail ballot election for Directors, but once again the Board has voted down the matter, decisively, only after spirited and prolonged, but amicable, arguments.

Finally, please note a new address and telephone number for the

Secretary: **Craig Harris**
 205 Emerald Pond Lane, Apt. 306
 Durham, NC 27705-6054
 Telephone (919) 490-1128
 FAX (919) 419-1705

UNIT REBATES FOR THE 1999 REUNION

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>ATTENDANCE</u>	<u>REBATE</u>
18 WX	13	\$65.00
303BG	19	95.00
34BG	15	75.00
389BG	11	55.00
394BG	40	200.00
457BG	10	50.00
466BG	14	70.00
482BG	32	160.00
493BG	134	670.00
92BG	11	55.00
96BG	54	270.00
TOTAL	353	\$1765.00

-Jim Erskine

Attendance was determined by Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum

Mailing Address:

P. O. Box 1992 Savannah, Georgia 31402-1992

Address: 175 Bourne Ave. Pooler, GA 31322

Telephone: 912-748-8888 website:

<http://www.mighty8thmuseum.com>

B-24 LIBERATOR STATE AND CITY NAMES

Many B-24 Liberators of the Mighty Eighth were named after State or City locations thereby carrying hometown pride to the airbases in England and over enemy targets. Aircraft names were usually chosen by the crew members themselves, most frequently after arrival at their bases in England. Nose art paintings often accompanied the name of the airplane and many were very creative; many were very attractive.

State and City names sometimes were chosen as a token of appreciation to those people of a locale who helped raise money through war bond purchases to finance the cost of a particular aircraft. Others honored the homeplace of the crew's pilot or another special member of the crew. Recently C. N. "Bud" Chamberlain, Chairman of the Second Air Division Association's Year of the B-24 Liberator Committee, Philip Levick, and several other members mounted a drive within the Association to gather as many such names of 8th Air Force B-24s as possible. This list of over 50 B-24s is not complete but does give a feeling of how the crews of many bomb groups of the 2nd Air Division felt about the aircraft that ground crews diligently worked on and combat crews flew over enemy territory.



Nose art of the 445th Bomb Group's Tennessee Dottie

The 8th AF NEWS will add names sent in by Historical Society members to expand this list in upcoming issues. Send your names and a photo copy of your aircraft to the news-magazine editor.

A/C 41- 28652 was named *Tennessee Dottie* and was flown overseas on the southern route and in combat by George Wright's crew, crew 76, assigned to the 445th Bomb Group at Tibenham. She was battle-worn but in good shape after the Wright crew's tour of missions was over in mid-1944, but was lost over Kassel later that year.

Tennessee Dottie's crew chief named her after his girlfriend in

Chattanooga. The painting on the cover depicts a/c 652 under attack by German fighters and is the artwork of noted British aviation artist Keith Hill. Actor Jimmy Stewart flew a number of training missions in this airplane while he was flying combat with the 445th BG.



LIBERATOR STATE NAMES

Many of the B-24 Liberators of the Mighty Eighth were named after States or locations in particular States, thereby carrying hometown pride to the airbases in England and on the enemy targets. A sampling of names follows.

B-24 LIBERATORS THAT CARRIED THE NAME AND HONORED CITIES & STATES IN WWII

ALABAMA Birmingham Express Dixie Flyer Dixie Dumper	INDIANA Wabash Cannon Ball	NEW JERSEY Jersey Bounce 2nd	TEXAS Palace of Dallas Touch of Texas Texas Rose Fort Worth Maid Sweetest Rose of Texas Texas Refugees	VIRGINIA Miss Virginia
ARKANSAS Arkansas Traveler	KENTUCKY Kentucky Babe Kentucky Baby Kentucky Belle Kentucky Colonel	NEW YORK Brooklyn - No Name Jive Niagara Special	UTAH Utah Man	USA Miss America US Express
CALIFORNIA Los Angelas City Limits Hollywood & Vine	LOUISIANA Louisiana Belle	OHIO Ohio Silver The Massillon Tiger	<i>Frank W. Fink B-24 Liberator Inventor, Engineer, and Designer</i>	
COLORADO Denver Zephyr	MASSACHUSETTS Massachusetts Girl Old Man Boston Marclar Belle of Boston Cape Cod Special	OKLAHOMA The Oklahoman Oklahoma Girl		
GEORGIA Georgia Belle Georgia Peach Georgia Peach Jaw Ja Boy	MICHIGAN Detroit (Spirit of Cooley High School)	SOUTH CAROLINA Carolina Moon		
ILLINOIS Chicago Red Windy City Belle Chicago Shirl	MISSOURI Missouri Mauler Missouri Belle/Sue St. Louis Woman Missouri Sue	PENNSYLVANIA Pittsburgh Babe		
		TENNESSEE Chattanooga Choo Choo Tennessee Dottie		

8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REUNION

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

OCTOBER 17-22, 2000

The first reunion of the new millennium is just around the corner. Make plans now for a great time of renewing old friendships in Salt Lake City.

Salt Lake City lies among the rugged, open horizons of the great American West, surrounded by some of the world's most dramatic landscapes. Nestled between the Wasatch and Oquirrh ranges of the Rocky Mountains and the Great Salt Lake, this is a city unlike any other.

Take a stroll around the city, and you'll find endless surprises. The inevitable center of all urban treks is Temple Square with its inspirational architecture and gardens. In fact, anywhere you stand in Salt Lake City you see breathtaking mountain and desert vistas. We encourage you to come early and/or stay late to enjoy all the city has to offer. You'll definitely want to pack a jacket; the weather will be cool. The average low is 40 degrees, and the average high is in the low-mid 60s.

REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

See choices below and complete the Registration Form. Remit by check or money order payable to **Armed Forces Reunions** (NOT "8AF REUNION") by **September 18, 2000** (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.).

Your cancelled check will serve as your receipt, although you are not expected to present it at registration. Confirmations will not be sent.

Full refunds will be given (less a \$3 processing fee) for cancellations received by October 13, 2000. 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.

Society members who attend more than one event must be officially registered and have paid the registration fee.

MEALS / EVENTS CHOICES

CHOICE #1 TOTAL PACKAGE \$158

Package includes 7 hotel food functions starting with breakfast on Thursday. Options are separate.

CHOICE # 2 PARTIAL PACKAGE \$113

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

Breakfast menus: The continental breakfasts on Thursday, Friday, and Sunday include juice, assorted breakfast breads, cold cereals, fruit, yogurt, coffee, and tea. The breakfast buffet on Saturday includes juice, assorted breakfast breads, eggs, pancakes, breakfast meats, potatoes, coffee, and tea.

CHOICE #3 INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

Friday Rendezvous Dinner \$30 and Saturday Banquet \$36 can be purchased separately, but are included in both packages above.



Utah State Capital

TOUR OPTIONS

Wednesday: City Tour \$25.

Thursday: Kennecott Copper Mine & The Great Salt Lake \$18; Mormon Tabernacle Choir Rehearsal \$12. **Friday:** Hill Air Force Base \$31.

Saturday: Park City / Utah Winter Sports Park \$33; City Tour \$18.



Salt Lake LDS Temple

HOTEL / TRAVEL INFORMATION

The **Sheraton Salt Lake City Centre Hotel** is located at 150 West 500 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84101. The hotel is within walking distance of downtown businesses, shopping, entertainment and historical/cultural attractions.

Driving Directions:

From the North: Exit I-15 at 600 North. Turn left and proceed over the overpass to 400 West (1st stoplight) and turn right. Stay on 400 West until you reach 400 South (5th stoplight) and turn left. Continue up 400 South to West Temple (3rd stoplight) and turn right. The hotel will be on your right. Proceed 1 block to the parking entrance.

From the South: Exit I-15 at 600 South. Proceed to West Temple (4th stoplight) and turn left. Stay on West Temple 1. The hotel will be on your left.

From the East: Take I-80W to I-15N. Exit at 600 South and proceed to West Temple (4th stoplight) and turn left. Stay on West Temple 1. The hotel will be on your left.

From the West: Take I-80E and exit at North Temple. Proceed east on North Temple until you reach West Temple (9th stoplight) and turn right. Stay on West Temple, and the hotel will be on your right.

The hotel has a jacuzzi, sauna, and an exercise room. Handicapped accessible and non-smoking rooms are subject to availability. Parking will be complimentary at the hotel. Check-in time is 3pm; check-out is noon. The restaurant is open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

Loft Suites have been blocked for Hospitality Room purposes with a group rate of \$129+tax per night. The parlor (with wet bar) is on the main level with a bedroom and bathroom upstairs. Please call Jennifer Seelos at 800-421-7602 to make these reservations.

Interwest Medical, (800) 468-1000, rents wheelchairs by the day or week. They will deliver and pick up for a fee.

The hotel provides complimentary transportation to and from the Salt Lake International airport. The shuttle runs every half hour from 6am until midnight. Upon arrival use the courtesy phone located in baggage claim to alert the hotel of your arrival.

There is hotel parking for RVs, but hook-ups are not available. The VIP Campground, (800) 226-7752, is 12 blocks from the hotel.

***** CUT HERE AND MAIL TO THE HOTEL *****
8th AIR FORCE HOTEL RESERVATION FORM - OCTOBER 17-22, 2000

NAME _____ SHARING ROOM W/ _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

TEL. NUMBER (_____) _____ HILTON 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: \$89 + tax (currently 10.95%) for one or two people in the room.

CUT OFF DATE: 9/18/00. Late reservations will be processed on space & rate availability.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Deposit is refundable if reservation is canceled by 4pm on your arrival day. Call 800-421-7602. All reservations must be guaranteed by credit card or first night's deposit, enclosed.

____ AMEX _____ DINERS _____ VISA _____ MASTER CARD _____ DISCOVER

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE (regardless of payment method) _____

MAIL TO: Sheraton Salt Lake City Centre Hotel / 150 West 500 South / Salt Lake City, Utah 84101

EIGHTH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REUNION Sheraton Salt Lake City Centre Hotel - SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

Tuesday, 10/17/00

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

Wednesday, 10/18/00

8:00am - 10:00am Reunion Registration Open
9:00am - Meet your friends in the Hospitality/Gathering Room & Memorabilia Room open throughout the week
9:00am - 3:00pm (Option) City Tour
1:00pm - 5:00pm 8AFHS 'PX' open through Saturday (exact hours to be posted)
1:00pm - 5:00pm Reunion registration open
2:00pm - Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, 10/19/00

7:00am - 8:30am Extended Continental Breakfast
9:00am - 11:00am Reunion Registration Open
8:30am - 10:00am Unit Advisory and Chapter & Unit Development Meeting
10:00am - 11:00am Medical Advisory seminar
12:30pm - 4:30pm (Option) Kennecott Copper Mine & the Great Salt Lake
3:00pm - 5:00pm Reunion Registration Open
5:00pm - 7:30pm Cash Bar, followed by group dinner at the hotel
7:30pm - 9:15pm (Option) Mormon Tabernacle Choir Rehearsal

Friday, 10/20/00

7:00am - 8:30am Extended Continental Breakfast
8:00am - 10:00am Reunion Registration Open
9:00am - 10:00am Individual Group Meetings
11:00am - 5:00pm (Option) Hill Air Force Base
2:00pm - 5:00pm Reunion Registration Open
6:00pm - 7:00pm 8AFHS Reception
7:00pm - Rendezvous Dinner and 'Hangar Flying'

Saturday, 10/21/00

7:00am - 8:30am Full Breakfast Buffet
9:00am - 11:00am General Membership Meeting
12:15pm - 4:45pm (Option) Park City / Utah Winter Sports Park
1:00pm - 4:30pm (Option) City Tour
5:30pm - 6:00pm Reunion Registration Open
6:00pm - 7:00pm 8AFHS Reception
7:00pm - 11:30pm 8AFHS Gala Banquet, Memorial Service, Awards Ceremony, and entertainment

Sunday, 10/22/00

7:00am - 8:30am Extended Continental Breakfast
9:00am - 9:30am Worship Service, non-denominational
10:00am - 8th AFHS Annual Board Meeting

There also will be a number of special programs conducted by Historical Society members throughout the week.

REUNION HIGHLIGHTS

WEDNESDAY – CITY TOUR 9:00am-11:45am

Board bus for a tour that will include stops at some of Salt Lake City's most famous sites. See Brigham Young's homes, the historic Union Pacific Railroad Depot, and the Utah State Capitol. You'll also see the Governor's Mansion and some of Utah's most opulent homes, built nearly a century ago. Visit the military museum located at Fort Douglas. There you will see displays tracing the history of the military in Utah. Drive through the University of Utah campus, home of Olympic Village and the ceremonies for the 2002 Winter Olympics. Enjoy the spectacular views of the city, valley, and lake.

Lunch on your own at Trolley Square, a high-fashion shopping, restaurant, and entertainment complex located in buildings that once housed the city's trolley transit system.

Reboard bus to visit Temple Square, the symbolic heart of the world-wide Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Mormons. The Square includes the six-spired Temple Tabernacle, Assembly Hall, monuments, and the elegant gardens for which the area is known (seasonal). Upon arrival your guide will give you a choice of tours: the Family Search Center to learn how to begin your search utilizing libraries in your own hometown or the historic Smith Building, one of the oldest and newest landmarks in Salt Lake City. From 1911 to 1987, this building served as a world-class hotel. Today eight of the ten floors are devoted to office space for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

\$25/Person includes bus and guide. Lunch is not included.

THURSDAY – KENNECOTT COPPER MINE & THE GREAT SALT LAKE 12:30pm - 4:30pm

Board bus to visit two of the most famous sites associated with the city. The Lake is the largest saltwater body of its kind in the world. Learn about the lake's turbulent Ice Age history, and its present-day significance regarding weather, industry, recreation, and migratory bird habitat. Continue the ride to Kennecott Copper Mine, man's largest excavation. One-half mile from top to bottom, this magnificent expanse could easily shelter two Empire State Buildings stacked one on another. Observe an operation whose cumulative sales from extracted ore exceed, eightfold, the yields of the Comstock Lode, the Klondike, and the California gold rush combined.

Note: Based on final attendance, the routing for each bus may differ. \$18/Person includes bus, guide, and admission.

THURSDAY – DINNER AT THE HOTEL, FOLLOWED BY CHOIR PRACTICE

5:30pm Cash Bar.

Enjoy a buffet dinner at the hotel including Chicken Cordon Bleu, Grilled White Fish, Beef Stroganoff, and many accompaniments. During dessert, your guest speaker, an active choir member, will present the dynamics of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

Board bus at hotel for a short trip to Temple Square.

Enjoy special seating to see the world famous Mormon Tabernacle Choir at their weekly rehearsal.

Price is included in Package #1. Cost includes dinner, guest speaker, bus, and escort.

MORMON TABERNACLE CHOIR REHEARSAL 7:30pm

Board bus at hotel for a short trip to Temple Square.

Enjoy special seating to see the world famous Mormon Tabernacle Choir at their weekly rehearsal.

\$12/Person includes bus and escort.



REUNION HIGHLIGHTS continued

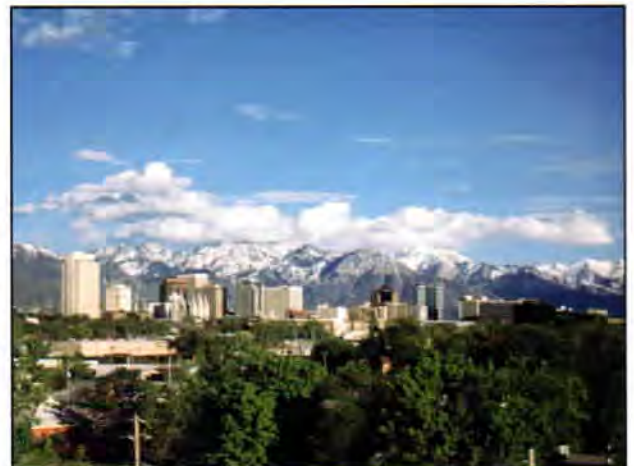
FRIDAY - HILL AIR FORCE BASE 11:00am Board bus for Hill Air Force Base Officers Club. Enjoy lunch which consists of a deli sandwich, with pasta salad, fruit, dessert, and a beverage. Reboard bus for the re-dedication of the 8th AF Memorial by the Utah State Chapter. Tour the Hill Air Force Base Aerospace Museum, home to one of the finest collections of old and current military aircraft in America. You will see over fifty aircraft including the B-17G "Flying Fortress," C-47 "Sky Train," P-51D "Mustang," and many more. Also included at the 40-acre museum is a film and gift shop. *\$31/Person includes bus, escort, and lunch.*

FRIDAY - RENDEZVOUS DINNERS 6:00pm
Cash bar reception at the hotel.
Gather in your respective banquet rooms with your individual groups for dinner featuring Rosemary Chicken. Bomb Groups, Fighter Groups, 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 \$30 separately).*

SATURDAY - PARK CITY / UTAH WINTER SPORTS PARK 12:15pm Board bus for a scenic ride into the Wasatch Mountains as you head into the famous resort town of Park City. Enjoy a box lunch en route to include a deli sandwich, chips, fruit compote, and a beverage. Upon arrival, a Winter Sports Park representative will board your bus and give you a one-hour guided tour of this 387-acre park. Don't be surprised to see construction crews and equipment roaming around as they prepare to host the 2002 Winter Olympic venues for the luge, the bobsled, and the Nordic jump. Then, stroll into yesteryear! Enjoy free time in historic Park City. This once rowdy mining boomtown is now a bustling ski and summer resort. The old establishments that line Main Street now house charming specialty shops, unique art/history museums, and diverse eateries.
Note: Please pick up your box lunch prior to boarding the bus. You must show your tour ticket. *\$33/Person includes bus, guide, admission, and box lunch.*



SATURDAY - CITY TOUR 1:00pm - 4:30pm
Board bus for a tour that will include stops at some of Salt Lake City's most famous sites. See Brigham Young's homes, the historic Union Pacific Railroad Depot, and the Utah State Capitol. Visit Temple Square, the symbolic heart of the world-wide Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Mormons. You'll also see the Governor's Mansion and some of Utah's most opulent homes, built nearly a century ago. Visit the military museum located at Fort Douglas. There you will see displays tracing the history of the military in Utah. Drive through the University of Utah campus, home of Olympic Village and the ceremonies for the 2002 Winter Olympics. Enjoy the spectacular views of the city, valley, and lake.
Back at the hotel. *\$18/Person includes bus and guide. Lunch is not included.*



SATURDAY - ANNUAL BANQUET
6:00pm - 7:00pm Cash bar reception at the hotel.
Assemble in the ballroom for the Posting of the Colors and Memorial Service. Dinner will be a choice of Roast Prime Rib or Salmon (sauce du jour), along with the usual accompaniments. After dinner, we'll proceed with the awards ceremony, guest speaker, and entertainment. *Cost is included in both Meal Packages (or \$36 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, INC. 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 18, 2000. After that date, reservations will be accepted on a space available basis. We suggest you make a copy of this form before mailing.

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

OFFICE USE ONLY

Check # _____ Date Received _____
 Inputted _____ Nametag Completed _____

CUT OFF DATE IS 9/18/00	Price Per	# of People	Total
REGISTRATION FEE	\$30		\$
MEAL PACKAGES			
<i>Choice #1 includes 7 meals beginning with breakfast on Thursday.</i>			
<i>Choice #2 includes 5 meals beginning with breakfast on Friday.</i>			
Choice #1	\$158		\$
Choice #2	\$113		\$
Please select your entrée choice(s) for the banquet:			
Prime Rib		#	
Salmon		#	
SEPARATELY PRICED MEALS (if not purchasing a package)			
Friday: Rendezvous Dinner (chicken)	\$30		\$
Saturday: Banquet (<i>Please select your entrée</i>)			
Prime Rib	\$36		\$
Salmon	\$36		\$
TOURS			
Wednesday: City Tour	\$25		\$
Thursday: Kennecott Copper Mine	\$18		\$
Thursday: Choir Practice (included in Pkg #1 above)	\$12		\$
Friday: Hill Air Force Base	\$31		\$
Saturday: Park City / Utah Winter Sports Park	\$33		\$
Saturday: City Tour	\$18		\$
Total Amount Payable to <u>Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.</u>			\$

Please do not staple or tape your payment to this form.

PLEASE PRINT

MEMBER NAME _____ 1st 8AFHS REUNION?

LIFE MEMBER? 8AFHS MEMBERSHIP # _____ WWII GROUP _____

SPOUSE NAME _____ LIFE MEMBER? MEMBER # _____

GUEST NAMES _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

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

DISABILITY/DIETARY RESTRICTIONS _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT _____ PH. NUMBER (____) _____ - _____

Full refunds will be sent for the above-mentioned activities if cancellation is received by 10/13/00, less a \$3 processing fee. After that date, refund amount will depend on vendor policies and/or the resale of tickets. **CANCELLATIONS WILL ONLY BE TAKEN MONDAY-FRIDAY 9am-5pm eastern time (excluding holidays).** CALL (757) 625-6401 to cancel reunion activities and obtain your cancellation code.

TREASURER'S REPORT



As I reported at the meeting in Savannah in October, the Society's operations resulted in a substantial loss for the year ended in August, 1999. This was explained by attrition in membership dues as well as increases in operating expenses. Dues have steadily decreased with the deaths of members and with the shifts of members to life member status. Costs of operating the Society have increased in spite of the Board's efforts to economize

and to eliminate functions or to combine functions. Further efforts to reduce costs of operations are ongoing.

One principle change has been to combine the Information Manager function with that of the Membership office in Savannah. This is working well; our office staff is located in the

Museum building and has ready access to all the books and records of the library and archives located there. Another change has been to eliminate the Finance Manager function and to contract for most of those functions to be performed by a CPA firm located in Savannah. This arrangement is also working quite well.

We are very pleased with this relationship which is moving forward as projected and at considerable savings.

With the operating loss for the fiscal year ended August 31, 1999, it was necessary to borrow \$30,000 from our Life Member Fund in order to complete the year.

Please be assured that the Board of Directors is working diligently to hold down and even reduce, expenses of operations. However, we are also working to maintain the level of numerous services to members, publication of a quality members' news magazine and to carry out our mission of preserving the history of The Mighty Eighth.

Ken Nail
Treasurer 8th AFHS

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

POLICY STATEMENT

The Relationship between the Eighth Air Force Historical Society and The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society and The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum are two separate and distinct organizations. Neither organization has any intention or desire to combine these two organizations. Both organizations have a similar goal, "TO PRESERVE AND PERPETUATE THE HISTORY AND MEMORY OF THE EIGHTH AIR FORCE."

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society is an educational, non-profit 501 (C) (3) organization, composed mostly of veterans of the 8th Air Force. Membership dues support the Society.

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, located in Savannah, Georgia, is an independent non-profit 501 (C) (3) History and Aviation Museum. Its support is derived from operations.

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society was instrumental in establishing The Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum as a permanent home for the Mighty Eighth Air Force by designating funding for the search process in 1986, and supporting the final plans in 1989. In 1995, the Historical Society General Assembly passed a resolution reaffirming their full support. The Society believes that it should encourage and support 8th Air Force displays in other aviation museums and generally publicize the history of the 8th Air Force in other ways.

There is no other Museum in the World that better represents the history and perpetuates the memory of the 8th Air Force and those who made the supreme sacrifice than The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum.

The Historical Society therefore resolves to encourage special support for The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, and encourage our members to individually support the Heritage Museum through membership and contributions to the Heritage Museum.



THE MIGHTY EIGHTH



FROM THE EDITOR -

THE BERLIN RAID 3 FEBRUARY 1945

The Lead Pilot of the most Destructive 8th Air Force Mission to the Heart of Berlin tells his Story

"You could see everything down there. Visibility was just perfect. It was a beautiful sight, clear, and although I had been to Berlin several times, I had never really seen Berlin before - to look down and see what a huge place it was and also a beautiful city. Then all hell broke loose after that."

THE MISSION

It was one of the most devastating Eighth Air Force missions to a single enemy target to that date - February 3rd, 1945. Over 2400 heavy bombers and fighters were dispatched by 8th AF Headquarters for the first large-scale attack on top echelon German military and Luftwaffe headquarters and administrative buildings in the center of Berlin. The 379th Bomb Group at Kimbolton, led by Group Commander Colonel Lewis E. Lyle, drew the assignment as lead Bomb Group for the 1st and 3rd Air Divisions on that mission. The 2nd Air Division simultaneously put up a maximum effort mission to bomb the synthetic oil plant at Magdeburg, southwest of Berlin.

"I knew I would be leading the 8th Air Force," recalls Lew Lyle. For each mission we would normally get the field order between ten o'clock at night to two or three o'clock in the morning. Immediately as soon as the old ticker tape started operating, there was an alert call for a certain number of people. I would go in to find out as much as I could and eventually we wound up with lead crews - bombardiers, navigators and pilots in a separate squadron who did nothing but train to be leaders. They had areas of responsibility and for this Berlin mission we had crews in my outfit who were focusing in on that target. The policy was that as soon as we got any information about a mission we got the lead

crews out of the bunk - we didn't care if it was twelve o'clock at night or whatever. Some groups didn't do that. They would say that the lead crews needed their sleep and rest. That turned out to be false. The youngsters didn't need the rest. They had four or five hours to work on that target. The crews had every aspect of it. They were very intimate with the target. After studying all these hours, the lead crew got together and we talked the day's mission to Berlin over in a small dining area over breakfast. Maybe an hour and a half, generally releasing the tension. It worked real well for us.

"The gunners and the officers came into a nice big briefing building. We had a huge map on the wall. When the curtain was pulled back you could here the groans - they knew it was going to be one hellava battle. Some of that was just carrying on; a comic relief in some cases. They knew they were going. Once they got through the briefing they knew what they had to do. They went to their own place of duty whether it was an airplane or a chart room or wherever it was; they got all the materials they needed. The thing about combat was: the more you knew



Home From Berlin
3 February 1945

Big Jim Edwards, navigator, 'Togglin Ed' Millson, bombardier, and Pilot Lew Lyle

about it - the more experience you had - the less danger it appeared to be. For instance, the crews that were on their early missions would be much more worried and concerned and they tended to get together as a crew and talk about it. They did a lot of discussing trying to get prepared for a tough mission. For this mission to Berlin, I was eager to get going. Berlin was the nerve center. The fact that you were going after the German leaders - it was an emotional thing. That we were able to go after Hitler and the Headquarters of the German Luftwaffe made it more exciting to us. But it was the first time we had ever gone for a city, so it was critical in a lot of ways. It was a special mission. We knew we had a lot of airplanes. It was gonna be a pretty good battle. By that time we had good fighter escort and there was no real problem for us with the enemy fighters. Basically, the guys who were gonna drop the bombs - the leaders, the squadrons, and the lead airplanes - had been up working and the tension had sort of died down. It was very professional. Real professional."

"The weather was always a major problem for us in England. Everybody takes off at about the same time to get the formations together. They all had a specific time they had to pass over the departure point in a part of England. It had to be perfect or else you would be out of position in the formation of bombers."

THE FORMATIONS

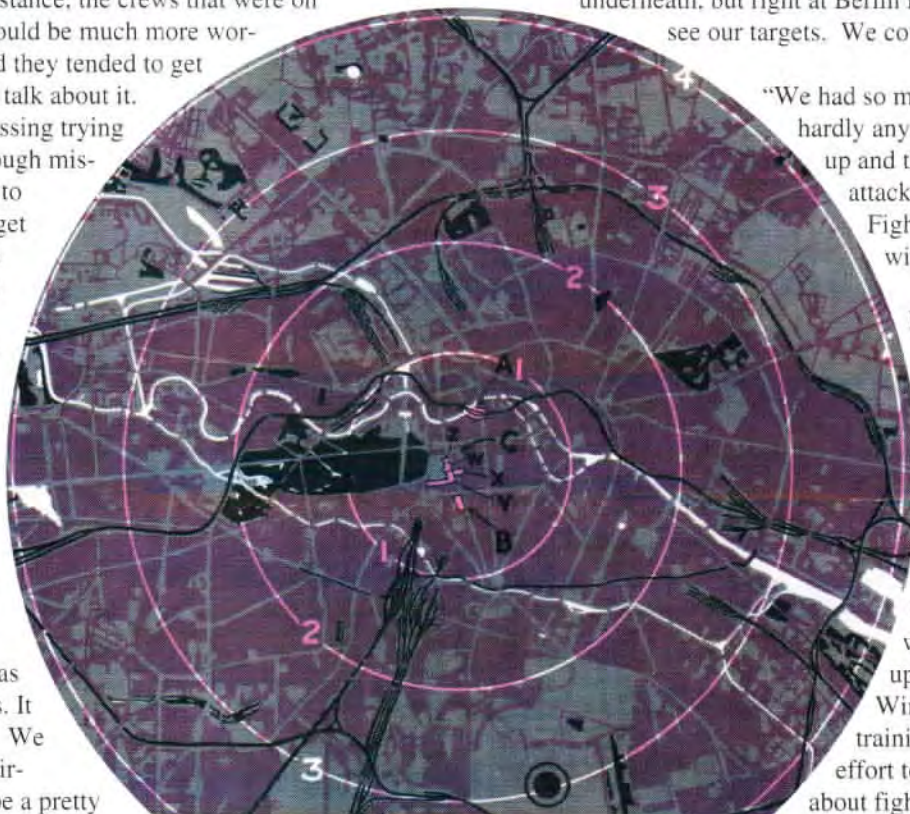
"You can imagine what it would be like a lot of times in bad weather. The Royal Air Force would be coming back from their night missions flying a thousand planes over England trying to find their bases to land at the same time we were taking our bombers and fighters off for our missions. We were taking off about two thousand aircraft. We had a significant number of our aircraft run together. On February 3rd, we had some low clouds but we got out of them right away, so above it was sunny and a beautiful day. "Formations didn't have any trouble getting together, but it was going to be a pretty long trip to Berlin. By this time in the war we had what they called Scouts - the airplanes that went out ahead and checked the weather. We were in communication with them and they could tell us what the weather was like

at the target. On this particular day the weather was cloudy underneath, but right at Berlin it broke and we could see our targets. We could bomb visually,

"We had so many fighter escorts that hardly any enemy fighters showed up and there were hardly any attacks against the formation. Fighters were not a problem with that mission."

Lew Lyle came to the 379th Bomb Group as Commander in October 1944 after spending the previous two years with his original 303rd Bomb Group at Molesworth. He replaced Col. Maurice "Mo" Preston when Col. Preston went up to the 41st Combat Wing. In his early days of training Lew had made an effort to learn all that he could about fighter attacks. He would take the best airplane available, a trainer or an available fighter, and for hours and hours make simulated attacks on the practicing bomber formation. In this way, he was able to learn what problems there were for a fighter pilot in combat.

"It really boiled down to that if you took evasive action of any kind as a bomber pilot, and if the airplane held together, it was hard for the enemy fighter to pick out any one bomber that he could attack and it was easy enough that once a fighter had made a commitment to attack, the bomber pilot could take evasive action to avoid being hit. Generally speaking, a bomber



NOTES:- B = Air Ministry
C = Four Important Departmental Buildings.
W = Foreign Office. X = Ministry of Propaganda.
Y = Reich Presidential Chancellery Z = Gestapo H.Q.



379th Bomb Group B-17 Flying Fortress formation over Germany.

pilot could tell who was coming at him because they were in there pretty close. The slightest motion of the bomber would throw the enemy pilot off. You didn't have to move the bomber more than 50 or 100 feet, so with me it became somewhat of a game which I enjoyed. As an individual airplane, it was the safest thing to stay in tight formation and not straggle. Don't put yourself in a position of being an easy target.

"Early in the war the German pilots were far superior in every aspect, in the equipment and the pilots. It was actually awesome. I would see them attack a formation and had tremendous respect for those Luftwaffe pilots. They were really first class. We found out right away that our guns - and it was a horrendous hail of fire that might be aimed at incoming fighters - were not that effective. The original German pilots had nerves of steel. They would fly right into it and tear a formation apart. What was effective for us from the beginning was that you had to stay in close formation and you had to concentrate your firepower and if you straggled you would be the first one to receive the fighter attacks. You had to stay in formation. And taking evasive action once the fighters were on their attack run was really successful. When we started to hit the German fuel sources - that's when the German Air Force started to go downhill. They eventually didn't have the fuel available to even train the Luftwaffe replacement pilots. It was not unusual for their pilots to have less than ten hours flying time and be up there. That meant that their skill was greatly reduced, but the best people they had would lead a squadron into our formation. Flying in close formation for seven or eight hours on a mission was tiring for a lot of crews and it was made more difficult in rough weather or if you were flying in the clouds.

"The bomb run was entirely different. If you want to hit the target you have to fly entirely straight and level. This is where you had to have discipline in flying straight and level with somebody shooting at you. Of course, it was the most dangerous thing we had to do. If you did take evasive action on the bomb run, it was gonna stretch out your bombing. But it was the leader who was the guy who had to do it - to keep the bombers from moving around and getting out of formation. He had to have fantastic depth perception to keep the proper intervals so that when you were on the bomb run you didn't run over another group or get behind and make yourself vulnerable. If you didn't have a good formation the bombing pattern on the ground would be scattered all over Hell's Half Acre, so if you didn't have a good formation the bombing was generally not too effective."

The early missions attempted to let each bombardier drop his own bombs but it was quickly discovered that this method was not consistent with accurate bombing. It was eventually worked out that the lead crew would drop their bombs and the rest of the formation would toggle theirs when they saw the lead crew bombs drop. Various

methods were tried using flares or radio contact to synchronize the bomb drops. The 379th Bomb Group, which the records showed had the highest bombing accuracy in the Eighth Air Force, often used ten-foot cloth streamers obtained from the base parachute shop and tied to the fins of the lead ship's bombs, to effectively increase visibility of the lead airplane's bombs when they were released.

The 379th Bomb Group put up thirty-eight B-17s for this mission, including two spares who filled in with the formation. After forming up, the force passed Control Point #1 near the Thames estuary, crossing over the cliffs near Dover at 10,000 feet at 0843 hours. The formation reached its bombing altitude of 25,000 feet just north of Osnabruck and at that altitude turned on the IP heading north east at 1052 hours. Flak over Berlin was reported by the 379th Intelligence Officer as moderate, black, and accurate. Six 379th aircraft received major damage and twelve aircraft received minor damage. A/C 42-97678, Pilot Lt. William Weber, was lost to flak over Berlin. Bombs away was at 1102 on a heading of 65 degrees.

"The flak, particularly with the first group over, was not as heavy as we had seen it before, but it was extremely accurate. As soon as we started on the bomb run and got into the area of flak, the first flak rounds that came in shot my left wingman down, and there were holes in many airplanes. He was the only one who was shot down in my formation."

THE BOMB RUN

The target on this mission to Berlin were any installations that had to do with the running, the planning, the control, and the ability for the German Army, Navy and Air Force to continue to fight; the entire military structure. In the center of Berlin, where these German headquarters were, each building was targeted. Each element or bomb group in the 8th Air Force formation that day was assigned a specific administrative or operational building to hit.



Strike photo, 41st Combat Wing "A" Group Berlin - 3 Feb 45

" We took up a course as soon as we started going in. The bombardier and the navigator worked together so as to be exactly over the proper spot all the way in so that there were no turns at the target. Ed Millson, the 379th's group lead bombardier, took control of the aircraft on the bomb run. Ed was as good a bombardier as there was. Some of his buddies in the 379th named him "Togglin' Ed". This day he was leading the bomb run of the entire Eighth Air Force. Big Jim Edwards was our lead navigator. Both of these experienced fliers had been with the group since the early days. They killed the drift and just drove straight in over the target. No turns of any kind. You were supposed to bomb on a certain planned heading, and you could almost tell by looking at the heading that you were flying when the bombs were released whether or not it was a good bomb run. This day we had good bombing.

" We dropped our bombs and turned off the target. I didn't go straight and level coming out. I made some turns to avoid flak, but there were really no problems once the bombs were dropped. We turned and headed back home. We followed the same course that we had coming in, basically, but were a few miles north. I turned and I was able to look back at the stream of bombers and they reached almost back to England. The stream was almost 300 miles long and I could see the whole thing." Ed Millson states the same thing: "There were 8th Air Force bombers as far as the eye could see." Lyle continues: "And as we came off the target and I looked back at the target - perfect visibility - it looked as though we had taken a giant rake and just raked the center of town - Berlin. There was a stream of bombs from each organization that went over and dropped and just laid down an area of destruction. It was a great relief to come off the target and the flak, but looking at the huge number of bombers gave you a feeling of what it must have been like on the ground - to see a 300-mile stream of bombers aiming right at you. My thought was: The poor people on the ground there. They were catching hell. Of course, the people were in bunkers or bomb shelters of some kind, but apparently some of the shelters got hit. There was a lot of destruction and a lot of confusion caused by the destruction. It was an awful thing. A terrible thing, but we had to do it. It was not as dangerous as many missions were, but it was effective and we were excited over it. It was not only exciting but it was at the same time a sad situation too. To come to that in a war is terrible. But that is the terrible

thing about wars. With air power, we can't help just killing a lot of people. This raid was aimed at the aviation structure of the Germans, and it was to demoralize the leadership from Hitler on down.



" As a lead aircraft, everything else is behind you. And everybody on the ground is gonna try to shoot you down. If the German fighters are going to hit you, now is the time to hit you. On the bomb run. So you are really hanging out there like a sore thumb but it is also really a proud moment when you realize that you've got the whole 8th Air Force behind you. And it is a real honor in a military sense that your crew is the first over the target. The first flak bursts were at us and the lead formation. The next formation behind us at that time were about three miles distant. They had a little more difficult time. When they reached the target, they didn't have as clear a picture as we did."

"Until we got out of enemy territory my policy was that no one did anything that was frivolous or that would endanger our aircraft and our formation until we got back on the ground at our home base. That was one of the rules that I used," Lew states. "I told the crew that 'your job is to keep me informed. You can't do anything else. I am the only guy who can do anything with this airplane, and I can't do anything properly unless I have all the information that you have. What do you see back there? What's going on?'"

RETURN HOME

"I never watched a bomber go down when we were under fire. If it went down it just disappeared. If it went down I never looked to see anything about it, because one of my concerns was that if a fighter shot them down, they could shoot me down too. That was in my opinion, bad judgement on the part of the crews that would fight in battle - that they would follow an airplane down to see what they could see. In the meantime, a lot of them got shot down because they didn't know that they were under attack. They focused on the airplanes going down and the focus should have been on their own airplane."

After leaving the coast of the continent at 1241 hours at 23,000 feet, the lead formation returned home over the North Sea and let down to reach the English coast at 1428 hours at 2500 feet altitude. The 379th Bomb Group returned to their base at Kimbolton at 1501 hours.

"Customarily on return to the airbase in England the Commanding General of the outfit came out to meet the lead airplane. This raid to Berlin, the accomplishment of the 8th Air Force's mission on this day, and our return home from the raid followed this familiar pattern. You always certainly felt good about having a successful mission behind you, but I had an attitude that it was no sweat - I had a lot of self-confidence. I never expected to get hurt on a mission. And you know if you don't get hit, you don't get killed - you're alive. I suppose my attitude was entirely different from somebody who might have been shot down or who had all kinds of trouble in the air."

The February 3rd mission to Berlin was unique in its immensity and in its specific targeting. The air war after this raid continued in its intensity, and bomber streams of many hundreds of aircraft became commonplace over Germany. The German surrender on V-E Day in early May 1945 saw an abrupt halt to the bombing.

Lew Lyle recalls his thoughts at that time. "I had an unexplainable feeling when hostilities ceased - when the war was over. I was completely devastated. I didn't have a job anymore. I had been doing something for three years that I was an expert at; that I had been successful at. Suddenly, I didn't have a job. Although I volunteered to go to the Pacific with Doolittle, I never made it. It was a sort of disaster in my career, but it gave me a confidence that there was nothing that I couldn't do - and that followed me for the rest of my life.

"Later in my career I became involved in the Cold War with Russia and with the U.S. Air Force Missile programs. During those years when I recalled the combat missions of the war, I never did lose the realization - but never did fully understand the causes - that on many missions throughout the war all those young kids, 8th Air Force veterans, were following me into combat, just as they did when we flew together on the devastating February 3rd mission into the heart of Berlin."

February 3rd, 1945 saw an 8th AF night leaflet operation preceding the mission to Berlin.

A total of 1003 B-17 Flying Fortresses were dispatched to Berlin and 434 B-24 Liberators were dispatched to Magdeburg. All fighter groups were in operation numbering 948 fighter aircraft. Roger Freeman's *Mighty Eighth War Diary* also reports a loss of twenty-three B-17s and two B-24s on that day. Eight 8th Air Force fighters were also lost. Twenty-one German fighters were destroyed by 8th AF airplanes. Other participants were 7th Photo Recon with 16 a/c; 25th BG with 3 Mosquitoes on H2X PR; 3 Mosquitoes on chaff screening for bombers; 5th ERS dispatched fifteen P-47s on Air/Sea Rescue search; 36th Bomb Squadron with seven B-24s on Radar Countermeasure activities; and six 8th AF aircraft on radio relays.

The February 3rd, 1945 raid had a devastating impact on the German military's ability to coordinate operations at their extensive Headquarters complex in Berlin, and thus on the course of the war. To commemorate this mission, the German television network of *Der Spiegel* researched and produced a factual video program which was aired over television networks throughout Germany on February 3rd, 2000. This production included interview material from 8th Air Force participants and German military and civilian observers in Berlin the day of the mission and used ground footage of the destruction of Berlin in its presentation.

Material and photographs for this article were taken from original classified combat mission files of the 379th Bomb Group. Interview tapes of Major General Lewis E. Lyle were made by the Editor during a recording session with the *Der Spiegel* team at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in January, 2000.



FRIDAY IS HISTORICAL SOCIETY DAY AT HILL AIR FORCE BASE

Our annual reunion will find Society attendees enjoying all the exhibits and features found at Hill Air Force Base near Ogden, Utah on Friday of Reunion Week 2000. The Hill Aerospace Museum will be the highlight of the fourth day - it is home to a collection of 60 aircraft, missiles, artifacts and restored buildings. The new 43,000-foot Lindquist - Stewart Fighter gallery, financed by over \$1,354,000 in personal donations, was dedicated in 1999 and is now open. There are many planes of interest in these Museums including numerous World War II warbirds, an SR-71 Blackbird, a JN-4 "Jenny", a B-17 Flying Fortress, and a rare P-38 Lightning. Buildings on the Museum site include a 50-seat Theater, a restored English Chapel with its replica of the 384th Bomb Group's stained glass chapel window at Grafton Underwood, a Missile Park, a museum gift shop, a barracks building, and many artifactual presentations throughout.

John Lindquist, 493rd Bomb Group, will host this memorable trip to the Air Base complex, and will be joined by many of the staff of 106 volunteers and members of the Utah Chapter. The museum features educational programs for students and we will see that in action on our visit. The Museum is handicapped accessible. Bus tours will leave from the Headquarters hotel in Salt Lake City.



Hill Aerospace Museum



B-17 Flying Fortress "Short Bier"



Mitchell B-25 Bomber



P-51D Mustang "Audrey"

THE FIX

In the March 00 issue we ran Robert Mahan's story "I'm Hit! I'm Hit!" of a wound he received as a copilot on a 96th BG mission. In his telling of the equipment he took with him he included his survival kit, a .45 Colt pistol and his trusty hunting sheath knife on his belt. A sentence was inadvertently left out; here-with a reprint of the missing section of that tale.

... I squirmed around in my seat, trying to keep in formation when I felt a sharp pain in my gluteus maximus. I was too busy to really be scared although the thought of being hit was really

unsettling. When things calmed a bit I reached down and my hand came back all bloody. I was also sitting in a pool of blood. ...Bombs were away and we headed for home, fighting most of the way. I was so busy I almost forgot about my wound, although I was still sloshing around in the pool of blood in my seat. Back over the Channel I had time to leave my seat and reassess my ...rear end. I had not been shot after all. In my squirming around flying formation I had sat on my hunting knife which pierced the knife sheath and stuck me. Turned out to be a superficial cut. You can bet that I never claimed a purple heart!

CRASH RESEARCHER EFFORTS APPRECIATED BY FAMILIES

Research Investigations are Ongoing...

Archives at Kirtland Air Force Base reveal that over 15,130 airmen lost their lives during stateside training mishaps during World War II. Trey Brandt of Scottsdale, Arizona has spent much of his time during the past decade researching crash sites of these training accidents and as a result has gained the admiration and appreciation of many families of airmen killed in the service of their country.

Trey states, "Many Eighth Air Force veterans witnessed these crashes or knew the fliers who were involved. I have received many calls and letters from families of lost airmen who are glad to know that someone is interested in that part of the war." Arizona was the site of a large number of training bases including Kingman, Yuma, Dateland, Douglas, Ajo, Gila Bend, Yucca, Davis-Monthan, Luke, Thenderbird, Williams, and Marana. Trey lives within driving distance of all of them.

After spending six months in library archives searching through old records and newspapers, Trey developed files of long-forgotten air crash sites in the southwest - long forgotten by all except the families of those servicemen who were killed. Using this information, he has spent weekends and spare time backpacking into rugged mountain territory to locate the remains of downed aircraft. In his searches, he has discovered many personal artifacts and items buried in the crash debris - articles that complete in some way the stories of the aircrews who perished. Trey has been able to get in touch with family members who are very appreciative of his work. He has returned dog tags, rings, and other personal effects which are now important in the final closure to families after 55 or more years of not knowing. In return, the families have related the stories of their loved ones to him in a most personal way, and Trey has made friends with people across the country as a result of his findings.

One story that Trey "can't get out of my mind" is that of a young Scottish bride named Henrietta Ellis, who tragically put a gun to her head and ended her own life in a Mesa, Arizona motel

hours after learning that her husband, Lt. Hesler Ellis, had been killed in the crash of his B-24 Liberator in the Arizona desert near Williams airbase. After tracing the site and discovering Ellis' buried dogtags, he was able to locate a surviving aunt and her son, Calvin Brice, who lived near Phoenix and through them met Ellis' 99-year old mother, Josephine Hoffman, to whom he returned the artifacts. They have kept in touch with him since. It is this kind of story which stimulates Trey's drive to find the crash sites. "There are easily 250 or 275 crash sites in Arizona alone," Trey states. "Arizona was a major hub for wartime training because of its clear skies and 365 days of sunshine each year. Everything from primary training to advanced bomber training took place here."

Trey has searched out crash sites of almost every type of aircraft flown during the war, and has been a vital contributor of certain hard-to-find parts for museum restorations of vintage aircraft. He is frequently in touch with other crash site archaeologists and with restoration specialists. Often he teams up with other "wreck chasers," as they call themselves, to mount a major effort to locate particularly difficult sites. Trey is also assisting in the compilation of a book on airplane crash sites in Arizona. He says, "It's tragic to think that a lot of young lives ended out there: lives of a lot of young men who never had the chance to have families and enjoy the freedom which we have in this country today as a result of their sacrifice."

- Several of Trey Brandt's experiences of his work on crash sites will be featured in upcoming issues of the 8th AF NEWS.
- Editor



Trey Brandt is at the site of the B-25D 42-87457, which crashed while on final approach to Davis Monthan Field.



B-17G 42-102899 from Kingman AAF, crashed onto the peaks north of Flagstaff, while on a night cross-country flight, killing four men. The wreckage is scattered over a half mile down the steep slopes. Note the .50 cal. barrel and ammo chute on top of the rock.



The crew photo of the *Passion Pit* crew: Left to right: **Martin Richard**, engineer and gunner; **Darrel Larson**, gunner; **Jack Bertolli**, navigator; **John Milliken**, pilot; **Irwin Stovroff**, bombardier; **Kenneth Beckwith**, radio operator; and **Morris Willie Larkin**, tail gunner.

PASSION PIT CREW TOGETHER AGAIN

Crew Reunites 55 Years After Bailing Out of B-24 Over Germany

It was supposed to be their last mission over Germany - their 33rd, and in every sense, their last. The mission of 13 August 1944 could easily have been a milk run for the Milliken crew, but there were no milk runs. While bombing the escape routes of the Nazis at the Falais Gap with other ships of the 44th Bomb Group from Shipdham, the *Passion Pit* - named after a night club in a Tucson, Arizona hotel - was hit by enemy fire and burst into flames. Pilot John Milliken says, "I knew we were gone so I gave the signal to get out. I thought everyone was out, so I let go of the wheel and jumped out the bomb bay." Kenneth Beckwith, the radio operator, states, "We took a direct hit between the number 1 and number 2 engines and flak came through the bomb bay doors cutting the hydraulic lines. Everything happened so fast, you really don't think about it. You know, the whole thing was going to blow. You don't even have time to get nervous."

John McClane witnessed the spectacle from another 44th BG B-24: "The plane was blown into bits. The wings and fuselage and the tail were torn into shreds. As the pieces of aluminum drifted and twisted while they fell, with each turn the sun reflected off their surfaces back into my eyes as if they were mirrors. It was like watching a thousand suns turn on and off in a rapid, random fashion. The gas tanks had been torn from the wings and burned in huge orange flames streaming out behind the tanks as they fell in wavy fashion toward the earth below."

The ten crew members of the *Passion Pit*, however, had escaped the doomed aircraft and floated down into enemy territory landing among the enemy combat lines. Irwin Stovroff, the bombardier was one of two Jewish members of the crew, and while in mid-air he threw away his dog tags to avoid being captured as a Jew in "Hitler's Germany." Stovroff says, "I was captured immediately and was taken to an area where they were actually burying German soldiers who were killed at the front. A German officer assured me, "Nein! Nein! We don't kill our prisoners." Morris Larkin, tail gunner, was the other crew member of the Jewish faith and was unable to conceal his identity. Upon capture, he was asked by a German officer who was a Harvard graduate, "Aren't you afraid to come here as a Jew?" "I came over here as an American soldier," Larkin replied.

All of the crew members were captured, with Milliken making an escape attempt the first day. Their stories of life as prisoners of war vary, but all have the common thread of numerous other tales of life in POW Stalags in Germany.

The crew was reunited 55 years later in a meeting in New Orleans in conjunction with the 44th Bomb Group Veterans Association fifth reunion. Seven crew members were together for the first time since being shot down. Three crew members were unable to attend. Jack Bertoli, navigator, says that "Seeing these guys was amazing. You're like a family." The crew reunion brought out a number of stories of the mission and of their respective lives since their months spent in POW camps. Darrel Larsen, gunner, says, "When a group like this gets together, the things you talk about can only be believed by us." Irwin Stovroff concludes, "It's amazing because I look at these guys and still recognize them. I was thrilled that I could look at them and still recognize them!"

B-17 TAILGUNNER WAVES THE AMERICAN FLAG

"By golly, why don't I just take that flag, go out to the mall and walk." And that's what Eighth Air Force veteran Jack Johnson of Tulsa, Oklahoma did. He now carries out his exercise in patriotism on over thirty holiday walks at Tulsa's Woodland Hills Mall every year. The Fourth of July is his big day each year and this Independence Day will see Jack out at the mall. Jack says, "I don't know what's going on in our schools. I don't think they are teaching patriotism like they did when I was young. We have to take up the slack whenever we can."

His flag-waving three mile walk attracts a lot of attention. "It's a big flag. It catches your eye for sure," Jack relates. "I go at a pretty good pace and hold the flag up so it doesn't drag the floor and where everybody will see it." The responses to his holiday marches are overwhelmingly positive. Some onlookers give him a thumbs up. Some salute. Others clap. Once a man, a foreigner, kissed the flag and said, "This is a great country!"

If you're out at the mall for all of the Fourth of July sales, look for him. Jack Johnson will be out there in full force, with his red, white and blue sneakers and his big American flag.



Jack Johnson Tulsa, Oklahoma

HALESWORTH MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION ESTABLISHES MUSEUM

The men and machines of the 56th Fighter Group are being remembered at their first airbase at Halesworth England - Station 365. Chairman Harold Johnson, Secretary Richard Pymar, and Liaison Officer Buzz Took along with other members of the volunteer staff are nearing completion of a newly expanded museum facility which will tell the story of "Zemke's Wolfpack" during its years of flying missions from England.

The Association has worked closely with the 56th Fighter Association and received guidance from the 56th's John Truluck to establish a memorial and plaque adjacent to the existing 489th Bomb Group memorial at the old base. The monument is dedicated to the pilots, ground force, and men of the 56th and of the 33rd Service Group. Bill Billings, Dick Warboys, Bill Hartshorn, George Nunemacher, Urban Sweeney, John Sipek and their wives and families are a few of the 56th FG members who have recently visited the memorial site, the museum, and other local establishments, with occasional repasts at the Triple Plea Pub. Airbase runways and many structures are still intact and are under supervision of the Bernard Matthews Company.

The Halesworth Memorial Association is looking for donations of artifacts and related materials of the war years to include in their exhibitry. Financial contributions for development expenses are also necessary and are appreciated. For information contact Richard Pymar, 37 Thw Avenue Halesworth Suffolk England IP1-8JB.



Return to Halesworth by Gil Cohen; prints available



56th Fighter Group P-47 wing section awaiting restoration at Halesworth Museum



Harold Johnson and buddy, working on display

VIETNAM MEMORIAL ESTABLISHED AT HERITAGE MUSEUM



CEREMONIES HAND OVER F-4 PHANTOM JET

Gulfstream



Col. Steven Westgate passes the symbolic flight helmet over to Chaplain Martin Loyley



The Scottish American Military Society and Vietnam Veterans of America color bearers



F-4C-23 Phantom Jet

Hand over ceremonies of an F-4C-23 Phantom jet to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum were held on April 1st as the initial installation of a memorial area to honor all American soldiers who fought in the Vietnam conflict. The beautiful aircraft was demilitarized, restored and painted by members of the 165th Airlift Wing of the Georgia Air National Guard and by volunteers from Gulfstream Aerospace corporation. In the Hand Over ceremonies Chairman Lt. Gen. E. G. Shuler paid tribute to those killed in battle in Vietnam and recognized the vital role played by the Eighth Air Force which was decisive in bringing that conflict to its conclusion.

A large turnout for the morning occasion was on hand including uniformed contingents of the 165th Airlift Wing, the Scottish American Military Society, and the Vietnam Veterans Association of America Color Guard, which posted the colors. The ceremonies began with the singing of the National Anthem by Capt. Geraldene Adams and an invocation by Heritage Museum Chaplain Martin Loyley. Following General Schuler's address, the symbolic hand-over of a vintage Air Force flight helmet was presented to Chaplain Loyley by Col. Steven Westgate, Commander of the 165th Airlift Wing. "Whispers from the Wall" was recited by Chaplain Loyley and the ceremonies were closed by the playing of Taps by bugler Steven Smith.

The Vietnam Memorial exhibitry development is currently underway at the museum and this F-4 Phantom, an aircraft which was a cornerstone of the air war phase of Vietnam, will be the cornerstone of the Memorial area. Located on the northeastern portion of the museum facility, the area will feature a granite monument and a Walkway of Honor with personalized bricks in honor of veterans of all services. The memorial will be paid for by individual and corporate contributions. Bricks for the walkway and contributions may be made by calling the museum at (912) 748-8888 ext.123. Plans are for the Memorial to be completed by the end of this year.

748-8888 ext.123. Plans are for the Memorial to be completed by the end of this year.



Keynote speaker Buck Shuler at Hand Over ceremonies

MILITARY APPRECIATION DAY HELD AT FOURTH ANNIVERSARY

The fourth anniversary of the Heritage Museum featured a weekend of events honoring military personnel of all services. Numerous active duty military units were on hand with combat equipment filling the museum parking lots and a representatives of all services were on hand in uniform to explain their duties and escort younger generations through their vehicles and displays. A special attraction was the arrival of a twin-rotor Chinook transport helicopter, the largest wingless aircraft presently employed by American army units. Taking part were units from the 3rd Infantry Division, the 1st Battalion 118th Field Artillery, Det 1 Company F 131st Aviation Regiment, 165th Airlift Wing Georgia Air National Guard, the Savannah Combat Readiness Training Center, the US Navy Dive Team, and the Effingham County High School Air Force Jr. ROTC.

Events of the family-oriented day at the museum included exhibitions by the Savannah ROTC drill team, a Scout Pinewood Derby, a custom pushmobile racer competition, and of course tours of the museum. Special ceremonies in the evening were held to present the grand opening of the Ground Crew theater exhibit as part of the mission experience. Members of the sponsoring 96th Bomb Group were on hand at this opening reception.

The weekend closed with a Military Appreciation Banquet held in the High

Wycombe Room at the museum. The Teacher of the Year was announced and introduced as Maria Bashlor, who has been instrumental in including activities at the Heritage Museum into her classroom curriculum to educate her students on the values represented by the Mighth Eighth. She and her students have made a documentary to educate fellow students about the men and women who have served in the Eighth Air Force. Ms. Bashlor attended with her family and friends to receive the Teacher of the Year award.



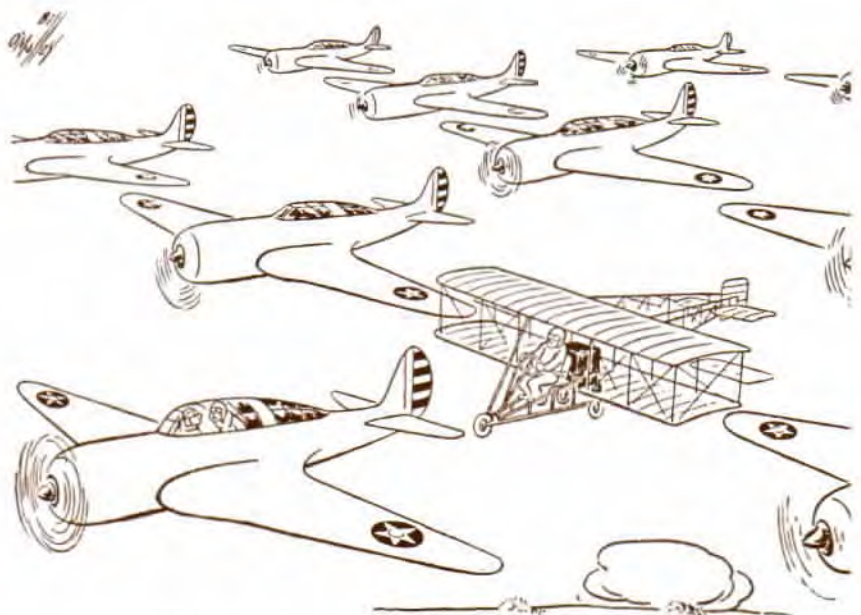
Georgia National Guard Paladin Howitzer - the Army's largest high tech mobile artillery weapon



A distraught husband went to his Psychiatrist to seek advice about his marital problems.

"Doctor, I don't know what I am going to do about my wife," the man said. "She is out drinking and running around with men every night and doesn't come back until the very late hours. Why, just last night she didn't get home until four o'clock."

The Psychiatrist replied, "It was two-thirty!"



"No one seems to know who he is"

Flyers in England Wear Boots Made at Blum Shoe Co. Plant

Captain William Blum Relates Interesting Experience

President James J. Blum of the Blum Shoe Manufacturing Company has received a letter from his cousin, Capt. William G. Blum, of the American Air Force from somewhere in England, which will be read with great interest by Dansvillians in general, many of whom are employed at the Blum Shoe Manufacturing Company factory.



Major William Blum



A direct hit on Major Blum's B-24 Liberator

Capt. Blum writes:

England
April 10, 1944

Dear Jim,

There is a great body of water and a few thousand miles separating Dansville from this Heavy Bombardment base "somewhere in England". However, recently these two individual units of the giant war effort were brought very close together.

It gives me a great deal of pride to say that my entire Squadron of Combat Crew personnel is now equipped with the electric Flying Boots manufactured back home in the Blum Shoe Manufacturing factory.

I know all the folks working at the factory will be pleased to know that the work they are putting into the war effort is actually and effectively being put into the giant offensive against "Jerry" across the channel. Every time you read of a Liberator raid on the Continent, you may be certain that a goodly number of the lads flying are using the equipment you are turning out every day.

I have worn the "boots", as we call them, on several of my recent missions and as were all the rest of the lads in our squadron, I was very much pleased with the comfort and protection they afforded at sub-zero temperatures.

So until the day we can fly in peace and you can all return making "Rest Time Slippers", you keep making them and we'll keep flying 'em.

Regards to all,
Bill

Major William Blum Reported Missing In Action

Major William Blum, operations officer of a B-24 Liberator group in England, has been missing in action since September 9, according to a telegram received Sunday by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Blum.

According to the most recent information received here he had completed nearly 50 missions and was awarded the Air Medal and several Oak Leaf Clusters.

Several months ago Major Blum was credited with playing a part in crew teamwork that brought a Liberator back to its base in England after it had been severely damaged by enemy attack over the Channel. The ship was brought in for a belly landing with flames shooting from the bomb bays and ammunition popping off inside. Crew members leaped for safety as the ship slid to a stop and Major Blum was the last to leave the craft.

On recent leave he visited Scotland where he purchased a dog which soon became air-minded and traveled with his master on many air journeys.

MYSTERY PLANE

This notice entitled "Mystery Plane" with its photo of a B-24 in Turkey in 1942 was found deep in the pages of an old August 1942 issue of *Leatherneck* magazine which had been purchased at a garage sale. Curiosity persisted; there must be a story behind that aircraft and with some research and a couple of hours of interviews the facts of this story unfolded.

Wilbur West grew up in from Pine Bluff, Arkansas and lives there today. In 1941 he entered

Aviation Cadet school and was assigned to the 376th Bomb Group - the Liberandos - attached to the Ninth Air Force at the time. He took part in the Halverson Project in May 1942. There were in that group, twenty-three B-24s outfitted with six machine guns in the nose and two more fixed beneath the bombardier/navigator compartment. Wilbur says, "There was a firing button on the wheel just like a fighter plane. We would fly training flights out over the Gulf of Mexico in these aircraft which were modified for strafing. Shortly thereafter, we were sent to Khartoum.

"Our Bomb Group, the First Provisional Bomb Group, flew the first raid on Ploesti. This was in mid-1942. This mission was also the first American bombing raid over the European continent. We were a small group of Liberators. I liked the B-24. I flew them all shot up and they still got back. With three engines they still could really go, but with two engines out on the same side it wasn't a lot of fun. You had to use a lot of rudder. Our B-24s bombed Ploesti from around 30,000 feet. We saw plenty of German fighters but they were flying around below us; most of them couldn't get to us. We proved to the Germans early in the war that we had the capability. The problem on this mission was that many of us ran out of gas. My crew and three other B-24s elected to land in Turkey. Three ships came into a civilian airport in Ankara. The other Liberator was shot up badly and crash-landed near Istanbul with wounded aboard."

Turkey was a neutral country at that stage of the war. Countries were courting Turkey as an ally, so the U.S. transferred the three bombers over to the Turks. After being interned there for several months West states, "The Turks wanted the American airmen to teach them how to fly the B-24s, so they moved the planes and crews to a military base 100 miles away. Nobody at that airbase knew how to work on the huge bomber engines so I told them that I had worked on a 40-horsepower J-2 Cub engine back home and I went to work on them. We messed with them for three weeks, put all the available gas into one of the aircraft, and made plans to get out of there. It was 400 miles to Cyprus, and we only had 400 gallons of gas, but we met a Brit who had been stationed at Nicosia and he gave us all the radio call signs.

"Sgt. Taylor and I had free rein of the aircraft and we had fixed a defective magneto on one of the engines. We cranked it

up for a test run one day, and I told the crew, 'Y'all come out to the plane one at a time.' They each wandered out, got on board, and Taylor stuck his head out the window and told the Turkish guard, 'Go get me a wrench.' We took off right from the hanger - had no time to taxi. We had no guns, no radio, no compass except for a small button compass I carried. After take-off, we stayed right on the ground until we reached an 11,000-foot high

mountain range and then we headed for Cyprus. One of those guys on that flight was later killed in a raid over Naples.

"On our way to Cyprus we got intercepted by a lone fighter. It came in and we saw that it was a British Spitfire. There we were in a four-engine B-24 with Turkish insignia on the sides. One of our crew started waving his tee shirt out the waist window; the Spitfire pilot saw it, wagged his wings, and flew away. We soon came out of the clouds at the Cyprus coast and were in perfect alignment with the main runway. After bringing it in, the British greeted us with an official 'Jolly Good Show!'

"We wanted to get back to our bomb group as soon as we could, so after a couple of weeks we boarded a British Blenheim that was heading for an American Hospital unit in Tel Aviv. The pilot revved the engines

and immediately there was a tremendous vibration on the right side of the airplane. He looked across and said, 'Well, the starboard engine is in a bit of disarray, but the port side is bloody smooth.' He poured the coal to it and we were off. Only seven of us could get on board, and I recall that the British pilot was rather miffed because he couldn't bring his mechanic along. The 'mechanic' was really good-looking too. She had to stay behind. Those Brits really know how to fight a war!"

This first bombing raid only counted as one mission for the West crew, but that mission had lasted six months. After flying seventeen more combat missions with the Liberandos, Wilbur West returned to the States as an instructor pilot at Smyrna air base and he later established the engineering school at Wright Field. He recalls, "Everytime I got in an airplane overseas it looked like somebody was trying to kill me. Then I come back to the States as an instructor and everytime I got in an airplane it looked like somebody was trying to kill me!"



MYSTERY PLANE: Shangri-La in Turkey?

At the east end of the Mediterranean, 6 B-24's, with U. S. Army crews, were grounded in neutral Turkey, promptly interned. Axis propagandists made a great fuss over these "mystery ships," claimed they came from the Russian front. Official dope was that they had just completed successful bombing of supposedly impregnable Axis oil fields in Rumania. But where they were based, and why they were flying over Turkey, was still unexplained.



Wilbur West

A LITTLE PAYBACK

British Aviation Cadets Remembered

by John Hildebran Moyers, OK

We all know how the British people put out the welcome mat when we come over there to visit, whether it is several with a reunion or individually. We are always shown respect and appreciation. My wife Aida and I were able to turn the tables in a small way in February 2000. Here is that story.

When we moved to southeastern Oklahoma in 1981, we had heard about some sort of plane crashes in our area years before, but no one knew too much about them. In 1998 twelve sixth grade boys and their teacher Mrs. Beth Lawless, at Rattan Elementary school, elected to investigate and research the plane crashes. After several weeks of letter writing, asking questions of native residents, and researching past news items, they discovered that two AT-6s crashed on February 20, 1943, killing four British Cadets - the pilot and navigator in each aircraft. During their research they found that one AT-6 crashed just across the road from our cabin. Naturally this ex-air force guy became very interested. Before Pearl Harbor when the United States was officially neutral, England sent hundreds of their cadets over to Canada. Some were released from the RAF, made civilians, then sent to the U.S. to train, and after graduation, sent back to England and the RAF.

These cadets were based in Terrell, Texas and had been on a low level, cross-country flight to Miami, Oklahoma. One boy would be the pilot one way, the other would navigate. On the return flight they would switch positions. This particular day, after leaving Terrell, the weather turned sour over Oklahoma and both planes went into the low clouds and hit the mountains here in southeast Oklahoma. The students scoured the area of the first crash and only found several coins minted in the late 1880s and early 1940s. However during their research they had come across reports stating that one plane had hit so hard that it had turned up a large rock by a pine tree. Both are still there. Since we live so close, we became very involved, and became what the school

called "Rattan Research Assistants."

The students were able to find the names of the boys killed, their date of birth, and where they were born in England. The school boys thought it would be a nice gesture to erect a monument on the crash site in honor of the four cadets that had lost their lives while over here training, even though they are buried in Terrell, TX.

With the help of the news media the names of each of the four cadets were found.

While all this was going on, the students and their teacher decided to have a monument erected at the crash site, and also have a Dedication Ceremony on 2/20/2000. A local headstone sculptor made a beautiful four-foot high marker with all four names of the boys and the inscription. The sculptor did the work for free. The Oklahoma State Historical Society made and erected a beautiful sign with the pictures of the four boys and a short history of what these 21 school boys had accomplished. British Airways paid the way for 17 family members to attend the dedication. New Zealand Air brought over one of the cadets that had landed in a meadow, the same time that the other two had crashed, for no charge. A number of news people came over as well.

On February 20, 2000 - 57 years ago to the day of the crashes - the Memorial and area was dedicated. What we thought might bring perhaps 250 people ended up with almost 1,000! Our local High School band played both National Anthems, our Choctaw Indian Nation Honor Guard were the flag bearers as well as conducting the 21 gun salute and each of the Rattan students

introduced the speakers. It was a very moving ceremony.

Aida and I have volunteered to look after the site since we are so close and it has been such a pleasure to become involved with these school children. We have told them that with all the publicity that schools are getting nowadays, we are proud of



The sign that the Oklahoma State Historical Society placed showing the four boys that were killed, the names of the 23 school boys that took on this endeavor, and their findings. It stands about 5 feet tall and 3 feet wide.

what they have accomplished, and especially their interest in "our war," which was long before their time.

Epilogue

This dedication was a great success. The English people are still sending e-mails and letters to the Rattan School teacher and boys saying how great everything was. I had e-mailed the nephew on one of the boys that was killed. He and his father came over from England. His father Kenneth Froststick, was a "bomb aimer" with the RAF in a B-24, so we had a lot to talk about. Kenneth had served in Africa, Italy and Greece.

-John

DEDICATED TO THE SPIRIT
OF COOPERATION BETWEEN
THE U.K. AND THE U.S.
IN MEMORY OF BRITISH
CADETS

VINCENT H. COCKMAN
FRANK R. W. FROSTICK
MICHAEL J. HOSIER
MAURICE L. JENSEN

KILLED IN THESE
MOUNTAINS
FEBRUARY 20, 1943
WHILE TRAINING
DURING WWII AND
BURIED IN TERRELL, TX.



The Oklahoma monument to the British Aviation Cadets. An AT-6 is engraved on top.



The Person and the Story Behind "I Wish To Be A Pilot"

Harold Zallen was sworn in the United States Army Air Force [USAAF] as a Pre-Aviation Cadet on his seventeenth birthday in April, 1943, and was called to Active Duty on his eighteenth birthday. He received his pilot's license at the age of sixteen. His solo flight was made in a J-3 Piper Cub on snow skis following a major snow storm in Westboro, Massachusetts. Harold Zallen had flown missions in a Civil Air Patrol Aeronca Chief. The reconnaissance missions were search and identify enemy submarines off the Coast of Cape Cod, Massachusetts. He served as a co-pilot and observer for the Civil Air Patrol [U.S. AAF Auxiliary]. During Basic Training at Sheppard Army Air Field, Wichita Falls, Texas in June, 1944 ALL Pre-Aviation Cadets by Order of the USAAF Commanding General were eliminated from the program. It was said that the United States did not need any more pilots. Those who possessed an Army Serial Number with the prefix "1" [Volunteer] were given the opportunity to be tested and then go on to Aerial Gunnery School. Those with the prefix "3" [Drafted] were transferred to the Infantry. It was an emotional let-down for the group. The outbursts varied from belligerent behavior to tears.

I WISH TO BE A PILOT

I wish to be a Pilot
And you along with me,
But if we were all Pilots
Where would the Air Force be?
It takes guts to be a Gunner
and sit out in the tail,
When the Messerschmitt's are coming
and the slugs begin to wail,
The Pilot is only a chauffeur -
It is his job to fly the plane,
We do all the fighting
But we may not get the fame,
But if I must be a Gunner,
Let you make this bet,
I will be the Best Damn Gunner
to enter Combat yet.

By: Harold Zallen Pre-Aviation
Cadet June 1944
Sheppard Army Air Field,
Wichita Falls, Texas

It was at Sheppard Field that Harold Zallen expressed his disappointment by writing "I Wish To Be A Pilot". Harold Zallen went on to Aerial Gunnery School at Las Vegas Army Air Field, and on to Operational Training Unit at Biggs Field, El Paso, Texas and Rapid City, South Dakota, then to Staging at Lincoln, Nebraska on to join the Mighty Eighth Air Force, 487th Bomb Group [H], 839th Bomb Squadron Commanded by Colonel William K. Martin. Sergeant Harold Zallen flew first in the Tail Gunner's position of the Flying Fortress B-17G and later in its Nose as a Toggelier - an enlisted Bombardier. During World War II, the period of 7 December 1941 to 2 August 1945, The United States Army Air Force trained 193,000 Pilots; 50,000 Navigators; 45,000 Bombardiers; and the top spot goes to Flexible Gunnery Schools [Aerial Gunnery] which turned out 297,000 graduates. Most of the Gunners were enlisted men - almost all were volunteers who like bombardier trainees, knew they had but one destination after graduation - combat.

Colonel Zallen retired from the United States Army in 1986 and now resides in Auburn, Alabama.

THE LAST MISSION

A Race With The Stork

It was a hot day in early August 1944, when my pregnant wife Evelyn, and I said our good-bye at Kearney, Nebraska. I was leaving for a tour of duty flying missions as a navigator with the 8th Air Force in England. At that time, we suspected that Evelyn was pregnant, which was later verified by her doctor. I remember my parting words to my tearful wife, "Honey, I will be back before the baby comes."

My crew was among the seven crews that were sent as replacements to the 493rd Bomb Group. We flew our first mission on 8 September 1944. Our thirty-fifth and last combat mission was 23 February 1945. Then on to the deployment center in England to be rotated back to the States by boat.

In the meantime, the doctor had determined that our baby was due about March 20. Realizing that embarkation was going to take a while and I wouldn't make it home on time, I went to the Commander of the Base to see if he could hasten things. Next day he contacted me saying he assigned me as a courier officer to take charge of classified materials to be flown to Washington, D.C. via Air Transport Command. At Washington, orders were immediately cut to allow me to fly directly to Nebraska where my wife was living during the war.

Upon arrival at the small town I found my wife was not at home.

After inquiring at a neighbor's, I found out that she had left for the hospital an hour earlier. So I borrowed a car and rushed to the hospital in Lincoln, a drive of thirty-five miles. Upon arrival, I found her in labor and an hour later we were the parents of our first-born, a bouncing baby boy born on St. Patrick's Day - three days early.

One might say this was a productive mission with very satisfactory results. I had made it back from my tour with an hour to spare!



Ed Kastanek

P.S. The "bouncing baby boy", named Eugene, is now 55 years old and is an avid associate member of The Eighth Air Force Historical Society.



ONE OF THE LONGEST TRAINING MISSIONS OF WORLD WAR II BY A B-24

May 13, 1944, Westover Field, Mass. This mission began at 15:00 hours. A mission to bomb Patuxent Naval Air Station, fly approximately 200 miles due east then fly to Block Island, New York, then to Westover Field, Mass., for night landing. This was a three-fold mission: night landing for pilot, bombing mission for bombardier and a navigator's training mission.

Things went nicely until we were just east of Patuxent. Out of a clear sky lightning hit the radio antenna and destroyed all electrical equipment on our airplane. Storms came at us from everywhere - small rough rain, hail wind like you wouldn't believe, and then darkness set in. We flew until we thought we had made

landfall at New York. Through broken clouds we flew west for Westover. We continued on for 20 or 30 minutes, and no Westover. We flew back to where we made landfall, then flew north to the next big city. We flew inland from this point for approximately 30 minutes and spotted a small airport. Things began to happen at this stage of the flight. Our pilot instructed the radio operator to go to a waist window and see how long it took to fly down the runway. The time it took was approximately ?. The best guess was a maximum of 2500 ft with no runway lights. The radio operator, without the pilot knowing, sent an SOS by hand light from the right waist window. Autos and trucks began to appear on each side of the runway with

their lights on. This runway was too short for our aircraft. We flew southeast to New York City, we hoped. From New York City we flew towards Westover, and it appeared! We for the landing our engineer put out a long strand of copper wire for the static electricity. That was quite a show.

We had less than 200 gallons of fuel left. Needless to say this was the last flight for this crew.

Edward M. Smith Jr.
466th Bomb Group
Gloucester Point, VA



EIGHTH AIR FORCE HERITAGE MUSEUM UPDATE



I am pleased to provide the membership of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society with a brief update on some key projects on-going at the Museum. First, the B-47B jet bomber sponsored by the 303rd Bomb Group Association continues to be refurbished by a dedicated group of volunteers. The tail assembly has been primed and reinstalled on the fuselage. The fuselage has also been primed and the volunteers are now working on sealing the wing corrosion spots and will prime it next. On May 20th the aircraft will be lifted, turned towards the Memorial Gardens and the main gear elements will be reinstalled. Soon thereafter the aircraft will be towed to its display area and placed on the concrete footings, which have already been constructed. Once in position the engine nacelles will be reinstalled and the aircraft will be painted in the combat colors of the 303rd Bomb Wing assigned to the Strategic Air Command. This magnificent aircraft will serve as a linkage between the Eighth Air Force of WWII and the Eighth of the post war years. It should prove to be a dynamic centerpiece in the North corner of the Memorial Gardens and draw much interest from the travelers on Interstate 95.

Secondly, the Chapel sponsored by the Historical Society experienced a momentary pause until we were confident that the B-47B movement was assured, since it must traverse the area where the Chapel will be constructed. The Chapel design, final plans and specifications were approved by the EXCOM of the Museum's Board of Trustees in late March. Since then the bid packages have been completed by the engineering team. The time schedule now calls for the bid meeting with the contractor teams to occur the week of June 5th. A contractor team will be selected at a bid opening meeting two weeks later and construction should be underway by August 1st. This schedule will put the opening and dedication

of the Chapel sometime after the first of the year. The Museum's Board of Trustees feels that the Chapel of the Fallen Eagles will be a grand focal point in the Memorial Gardens honoring those who paid the supreme sacrifice.

These are but two of the many projects underway to enhance the museum complex, thereby making it more attractive to a wider audience. Attracting a wider audience so that we might relate the distinguished history of The Mighty Eighth Air Force, is vital to the Museum's long-term success. That is why the Board of Trustees approved the implementation of the Science of Flight exhibit, which will compliment the Museum's education program. It is also why the Board of Trustees approved the Women in Aviation exhibit, which should be completed and opened in December. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I want to assure all museum supporters, that there is no intent to change the name of the museum, nor to stray from the core objective of relating the heritage of all men and women who have served in the Eighth Air Force with tremendous distinction and at great sacrifice.

In closing, let me also on behalf of the Board of Trustees express our collective appreciation for the continuing strong support of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society and all the unit associations. Without The Society's vision and support established many years ago to create a "home" for the Eighth, we would not have the emerging world class institution represented in these facilities near Savannah, Georgia. Thank you and please come visit your Museum.

**Lt. Gen. E.G. Shuler, Jr., USAF, Retired
Chairman of the Board of Trustees**

THE WRITING 69TH

by Jim Hamilton



Author Jim Hamilton and his son stumbled upon a memorial marker in a churchyard in Sayville, New York in 1993, and from that came a book which tells the story of an American war correspondent who went down with a B-24 crew on the first bombing raid into Germany - Wilhelmshaven, February 26, 1943.

Bob Post was one of a cadre of eight American journalists who covered the activities of the air war during initial bombing operations. These writers called themselves "The Writing 69th," a tribute to the famous World War I infantry unit composed primarily of Irish Americans, "The Fighting 69th." This group included several reporters who were to become notable journalists: Walter Cronkite, Homer Bigart, Andy Rooney, and William Wyler of "Memphis Belle" fame. After a brief period of training, six of this group loaded into 8th Air Force bombers and flew their first combat mission with various bomb groups operating from East Anglia. Bob Post of the New York Times chose to fly the Wilhelmshaven mission with the 44th Bomb Group "Flying Eightballs" at Shipdham.

His premonitions which he related to friends prior to the mission came true. His aircraft was one of two B-24s of this group that failed to return.

The Writing 69th takes us through the details of the preparations for the mission from the journalists' perspective and then to the fate of the Capt. Howard Adams' aircraft "Maisie" in which Bob Post flew. Hamilton has done extensive research into the events of February 26th utilizing jour-

nals of the German fighter pilot, Heinz Knoke, who shot Post's aircraft down and then landed his fighter at the crash site. He also interviewed citizens of Wilhelmshaven, has included remembrances from the two survivors of the Adams crew, and he offers a fascinating look into the mission through the words of the other journalists who flew that day. There is a chapter on his personal visit to the crash site.

Over 38 war correspondents were killed in the line of duty during World War II; a listing and the circumstances of each is included in the volume's extensive appendix. Robert Post was the first and only journalist to die in combat with the 8th Air Force. This book tells a fascinating aspect of the journalists' war and presents the personal side of those who were close to Bob Post. This reviewer found himself picking the book up many times to re-read some of the material researched by author Hamilton. Extremely interesting, very readable, large format, 172 pages with period and current photographs throughout. Much interaction with those who knew Robert Post. A fine tribute to those who were closely associated with the 8th Air Force. Available from J. Hamilton, 416 Webster St. Marshfield MA 02050; \$25 includes s&h; \$30 UK e-mail: jimham@channel.com web-page: <http://www.channel.com/users/jimham>

THUNDERBOLT

Republic P-47

by Dan Patterson and Paul Perkins

The pristine P-47 Thunderbolt fighter owned by Butch Schroeder at the Midwest Aviation Museum in Danville, Illinois is the focus of this beautiful full-color new offering in the Living History Series - World War II by Howell Press. Professional photographer Dan Patterson has done exquisite photographic presentations in this volume, with text written by aviation historian and emergency room physician Paul Perkins. Every conceivable view of Schroeder's P-47 Jug with its Earthquake McGoon nose art is shown in this book. Thunderbolt's large scale layout views of the aircraft utilizes the book's pages to a maximum effect. Beautiful airplanes in color come right

out of the pages at you and the contrast with a section of period wartime fighters makes those wartime black and white photos even more realistic. Photo cutlines are utilized to impart detailed information about the Thunderbolt.

Text material by Paul Perkins outlines the war history of the P-47 emphasizing its role in the 8th Air Force. He takes you through pages of a factual hour-by-hour description of every facet of a fighter pilot's day of a mission, telling the details of functions of the pilot in the cockpit on the ramp and of taking off for, and flying, another mission over enemy territory.

P-47 Thunderbolt pilots will comfortably recall and recognize everything presented in this fine volume. Novices, upon reading this very creative book, will have learned a wealth of specifics about a fighter plane which was pivotal in the war effort in the European Theater of Operations. Large format, 8 1/2 by 11 soft cover full color, 67 pp; from Howell Press 1713-2D Allied Lane Charlottesville VA 22903 1-800-868-4512; \$15.95 + 3.00s&h website: <http://www.howellpress.com>



WIMPYS TO MUSTANGS

A Pictorial History of Steeple Morden Airfield 1940-45
by Ken Wells

There are not too many books of the World War II era that take the reader through an in-depth pictorial history of RAF operations and subsequent 8th AF operations at a single facility. Ken Wells' new book, *Wimpys to Mustangs*, does just that. A following volume to his previous work, *Steeple Morden Strafers*, Wells

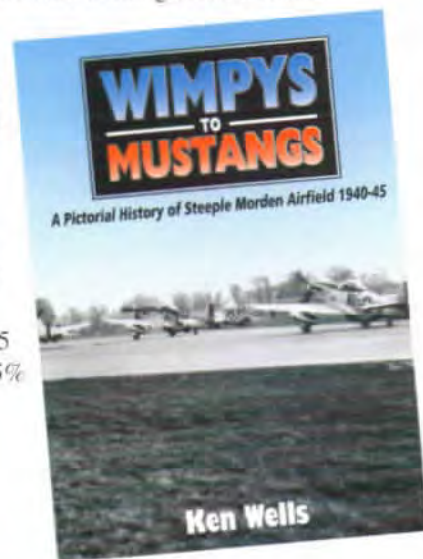
BOOK REVIEWS

presents his material in his unique and fascinating style. He finds unusual subjects, researchs the material and offers an entire chapter devoted to each topic. Hundreds of authentic and rare photographs are presented with explanatory text offered in extensive photo captions. Photos and their subjects come to life.

The first photograph in the book shows a British 1940s dump truck of John Laing and Sons laying the runway for RAF operations, and the book takes off from there. The History of Early Days: The RAF Arrive soon gives way to The 355th Take Over. From July 1943 Steeple Morden was committed to 8th Air Force Fighter operations. This is wartime pictorial history at its finest. The reader soon feels that he is part of the 355th, there with his buddies, experiencing life on the base and life around Litlington, with an awareness of the war at all times. There is Snapshots of the War; An M. P.'s Diary; The Young Lions; Crashes and Amazing Escapes. Check out Nose Art, or the enthusiastic Goddamn It, We're Going To Have Fun! There is much more, ending with the memorable chapter Never To Be Forgotten. An eight-page signature of pictures in full color is included. Views

of the present airbase site with memorials and returns to England by the 355th FG Association are a fitting closure to this volume.

Wimpys to Mustangs; available in large format, 195pp from East Anglia Books Station Road, Elsenham, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire. CM22 6LG Tel.(01279) 813791 Fax: (01279) 815919 hardback: \$38.95 softback: \$29.95 - add 15% for s&h. Visa and Mastercard accepted.



-submitted by Frank McKinley Stoneham, MA

THE TWINS - PART III

Ralph Hoffman, of Oneida, Tennessee, has sent in a wealth of information on twin brothers who were members of his crew in the 92nd Bomb Group. They were both gunners from Detroit. Elmer Diebel was a waist gunner and twin brother Charles was a ball turret gunner. Both flew their missions as waist gunners after the ball turret position was abolished. They had spent their childhood days in school classes together and enjoyed hunting and fishing trips with their father in upstate Michigan. Before joining the 8th Air Force in England they were sent for training at Keesler Field and were assigned to different crews. Elmer says, "I went to see the captain. He said he'd put us together again." Charles and Elmer were never separated after that. Ralph Hoffman flew 23 missions with the Diebels as part of his crew, and he is contacting other crew members for additional stories about the twins.

After the war the twins met their future wives and Elmer and Marie, Charles and Wilda, had a double wedding in 1948. The crew has remained close and get together each year. The brothers have lived in Prudenville, MI since Elmer's retirement after 36 years with the Budd Company, an automobile parts manufacturing firm, and Charles' retirement after 31 years with Chrysler Corporation.

From Leslie Jackson of Bethesda, Maryland comes information about two other sets of twins in the 8th. Ralph and Raymond Haley flew with the 384th Bomb Group early in 1944. On their first mission - the LeMeillard mission - Ralph saw his brother Raymond's plane shot down. He saw ten chutes from the stricken bomber and immediately notified the folks back home. Three months later, on the Oberpfaffenhofen raid, Ralph was shot down. The brothers both were Prisoners of War. Raymond is now deceased, but Ralph and Leslie recently returned to the site where their Booby Trap was shot down. Leslie also reports

of another set of 384th BG twins who flew in the same aircraft, Richard and Robert Egger. Their airplane was shot down at Wesel, Germany and Robert was killed in the crash.

John Bacon, Memphis Tennessee,

states that there were two brothers who flew fighters with the 55th FG or perhaps the 355th FG. They were C. A. and Charles C. Patillo, now of Valrico, Florida. Both later in their careers became General officers and in 1948 were assigned to the 31st Fighter Group at Turner AFB in Albany, Georgia.

While in gunnery training at Buckingham Air Field in Fort Myers, Florida, Robert Evans, 95th BG, recalls three brothers who were in training with him. They were Arthur, Edward, and Ernest Hartwell. Two of them were twins. He lost track of them since. Would anyone in the 8th remember having served with these twin brothers?



The Hartwell twins (on left and on right)



GPR289-1-92Y26-12-44)



92nd BG buddies get together. From left: Elmer Diebel, Conray Lumpkin, Leonard Netti, Charles Diebel, Ralph Hoffman, and Robert Burbank

Charles Diebel kneels in the middle with twin brother Elmer on his left. Ralph is seen standing second from left in back row

Happy July 4th! Independence Day 2000



HERITAGE

*There in the shabby Inn the jukes are still . . .
A Soldier stands, uncertain and alone,
Then asks for change from one last crumpled bill
And calls his Girl upon the telephone . . .
Her voice comes dancing down the thread of miles,
Her words are all the music he will need,
She speaks a magic phrase . . . the youngster smiles . . .
And they are still as precious moments speed;*

*Time's up for him . . . but also for his Foe—
For now he knows what he is fighting for:
The bungalow they looked at long ago . . .
The old job back . . . kids playing on the floor . . .
A picnic on the fourth of each July . . .
A flag that waves unconquered in the sky!*

**PAINTING BY VARGA
VERSE BY PHIL STACK**

a. Varga
1999

Flagship - 360th Bomb
Squadron 303rd Bomb
Group 28 March 1943



HISTORY OF THE FLAG

The flag of the United States of America is one of the oldest national standards in the world - older than Great Britain's Union Jack or France's Tricolor.

During America's War for independence, the need for a single national emblem was realized. On June 4, 1777, Congress passed an act stating "that the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white, that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation." **June 14** is now celebrated as **Flag Day**. This design, associated with Betsy Ross, was used until 1795.

In 1794, after Vermont and Kentucky became states, Congress established a flag with 15 stars and stripes. This design, which remained for 23 years, was "The Star-Spangled Banner" Francis Scott Key wrote about 1814. Finally in 1818, Congress settled on our current design. They returned to 13 stripes, with the number of stars equal to the number of states - 20 at that time.

*-from The Distinguished Flying
Cross Society*

HOME

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.

I left our base at Framlingham on March 10, 1944, having been assigned to return to the zone of the Interior. I was sent to Glasgow, Scotland, where along with several thousand others I boarded the former French luxury liner Ile de France. We left Scotland on March 18th, it was a 6 day crossing, no convoy. Speed, it seems, would be our best protection from the few U-Boats still at sea. The crossing was without incident.

As we approached New York Harbor that great symbol of freedom, the Statue of Liberty appeared on our left. It seemed that every ship in the area began to blow whistles as we came into view. It was a welcome home and each man aboard reacted. Even those that suffered sea-sickness during the crossing suddenly became well. Everyone rushed to the left side of the vessel to take in the sight, one he would never forget.

Then a strange event happened. I noticed a stirring of men behind me; I wondered what was going on. I soon found out. Many of the people on deck had gone down into the sick bay and had carried the sick and injured on stretchers on the deck so that they too would know they were home. All was quiet for a little while as these men wounded in battle strained for a glimpse of our Statue of Liberty. Then they started a cheer, soon taken up by all on deck. To say that I, and many others, were deeply impressed would be an understatement. After docking, all aboard were either sent to their homes on leave, or sent to hospitals for treatment of wounds. Others would be reassigned to the Pacific theater of operations.

Clyde White
390th Bomb Group
Carthage, TN

THE PRICE THEY PAID

Are you aware of what happened to those men who signed the Declaration of Independence?

A great sacrifice that was required of those who placed their signatures on this great document - The United States Declaration of Independence. What kind of men were they? Five were captured by the British as traitors, and tortured before they died. Twelve had their homes ransacked and burned, two lost their sons in the revolutionary army, another had two sons captured. Nine of the 56 fought and died from wounds or the hardships of the Revolutionary War.

Twenty-four were lawyers and jurists, eleven were merchants, nine were farmers and large plantation owners, men of means, well educated. But they signed the Declaration of Independence knowing full well that the penalty would be death if they were captured. Still they signed and they pledged their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor. Keep in mind that these were not wild-eyed, rabble rousing ruffians. They were soft spoken men of means and education.

Francis Lewis had his home properties destroyed. The enemy jailed his wife, and she died within a few months. Vandals or soldiers or both, looted the properties of Ellery, Clymei, Hall, Walton, Gwinnett, Heyward, Rutledge and Middleton. The British swept the ships from the seas that belonged to Thomas McKeam, and he had to move his family constantly and keep in hiding as he served in Congress without pay. At the Battle of Yorktown, Thomas Nelson, Jr., noted that the British General, Cornwallis, had taken over the Nelson home for his headquarters. The owner urged General George Washington to open fire, which was done. The home was destroyed and Nelson died bankrupt. That's the price paid by these patriots for our Liberty.

-490th BGA



A patriot at the Heritage Museum Military Appreciation Day

THE NATIONAL ANTHEM

To the Editor:

I watched the swearing-in-ceremony the other day of the mayor, and I feel compelled to comment on the singing of the national anthem. Jaclyn Lisenby is the first person I have heard in several years to sing the anthem as it was written and meant to be sung. It is inspiring to hear such a young person serve as an inspiration to others. I feel her rendition was what most Americans like to hear.

Miss Lisenby, I salute you.

I am a veteran of the Army Air Corps and flew 26 missions as a tail gunner on a B-17 during World War II, and it still stirs my soul to hear the national anthem sung correctly.

Ben T. Love
Hermitage, TN

A SECOND HAND VIEW

by Fay A. Robb

I entered the room and took a chair in the corner. This was my first time to attend an "Air Force" get together. Three men were standing just to my left. I overheard one say, "Oh yes, I remember that raid, we had flak all around us. Johnny was hit in the leg. We lost an engine, but we made it back across the Channel. And you remember that day over Berlin when..."

I look to my right and the same thing was happening. I sit very quietly and just listen. I am lost in the story that each man has to tell. What a wonderful experience this is for me. I am able to relive some of history through their stories. The friendship that binds these veterans together is unmistakable. I look around and see a warm smile, a firm handshake, an arm around someone's shoulder, or just a nod. Yes, these are our real heroes.

Now, ten years later, I am married to a "B-17" guy. The first thing I had to learn was what a B-17 looked like, and the difference between the B-17 and the B-24, being told, of course, of the B-17's superior records, and what a superb plane it was. This was quickly accomplished by a visit to the "Memphis Belle" and a chat with Bob Morgan, her captain.

I was introduced to the 96th Bomb Group when we accompanied them to England. There we visited my husband's old air base. I even got to see the bomb shelter where he spent time during an air raid. Sunday we attended service at nearby Quidenham Chapel. Here I learned why England calls to an airman's heart.

When I met his crew members, I began to hear stories about their thirty missions. Each one told me story after story about things that happened on these missions. Some true, some shaded by time, some made me laugh, some made me cry,

but all were told with friendship and love for each other.

We have traveled over the country to the national meetings and traversed our state to state chapter meetings. I have had so much fun with this group. Thank you! The men with all their wonderful stories: happy ones, sad ones, scary ones, but all brave ones. To the women, I am thankful to have had the opportunity to get to know and hear their stories, and the work they did for the war effort. They waited and they prayed and when it was over they were there to embrace their special one.

I have been welcomed into this unique fold. I have paid no dues to get here, as most others have. I was not the one to kiss him goodbye at the train. I was not the one who waited every day for a letter, and I was not the one to welcome him home with open arms. I am the one now, who sees the pride in his face when the "Air Force" song is played. I am the one who stands beside him now when "Old Glory" passes by, and the "Pledge of Allegiance" is given. I am the one who sees tears in his eyes when Taps is played for a comrade who has passed away.

I hope I can pass a small part of what I have learned along to my children and grandchildren, to let them know of a part of history that I have been fortunate enough to share with these men and women. Their bravery and love of God and country should never be forgotten.

I am profoundly grateful to have known "THE MIGHTY EIGHTH," and "THE GREATEST GENERATION."



Fay and Vern Robb, 96th Bomb Group (H), are at home in Loudon, Tennessee.

ADVERTISING

The 8TH AF News will only accept advertising that has to do with the 8th Air Force, 8th Air Force units or personnel, 8th Air Force memorabilia, or the Air War over Western Europe.

The 8th AF Historical Society does not endorse or guarantee products or services advertised in this journal, although all have been screened for content and relevancy.

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The print run is 20,000 copies per issue

Mail to: Walt Brown 2340 Sugar Ridge Road
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Eighth Air Force Historical Society PX Notes

Summer 2000

Greetings and best wishes to all! The 8th AFHS PX has had a very successful spring. Large in part, to the success of the print "The Crewman" by Gil Cohen. Our membership has been truly ecstatic about the print, especially the "next generation." We have received numerous orders from the children or relatives of 8th Air Force veterans. They have purchased them as gifts or as a remembrance of their father or relative. It is an ideal Father's Day gift! Don't be without one!

New to this issue of the Journal are the following items. First, we have a tremendous new book by renowned aviation historian/author and WWII veteran, William Hess.

HELL IN THE HEAVENS - ill fated Missions of the 8th Air Force (B-29) is a detailed account of the worst missions ever flown by the Mighty Eighth (statistically). Schweinfurt, Kassel, Ploesti, Berlin, Freidrichshafen are just some of the missions that are skillfully covered in the fine book. Bill gives the reader an honest account of these fateful days in 8th Air Force history. A tribute to the lives lost for the price of freedom. Amazingly priced at only \$16.95.

We also have two new offerings from Ospey Publishing. Items B5 and B6 respectively. **B-24 Units of the Eighth Air Force** by Robert Dorr (B5) is a

nice concise book detailing the history of the Second Air Division. Each 2AD Group is mentioned in this well-illustrated, 96 page book. Color Profiles of respective B-24s make this book a must have for any B-24 lover! Only \$17.95!

B-17 Flying Fortresses of the Eighth Air Force (part 1) by Martin Bowman details the history of the First Air Division. Heavy emphasis is placed on the 91st, 92nd, 303rd, 305th, 306th Bomb Groups. Well documented and superbly written by author Bowman. A wonderful selection of color profiles cap this 112 page book into a great edition to your library. Only \$17.95!

Tea Time anyone? After an exhaustive search, we have finally secured a supplier in England for the 8th Air Force Tea Towels (M6). We have had numerous requests and we are very pleased to once again offer these fine, full color, washable, tea towels. They are not only an attractive addition to your kitchen, but make a great wall hanging as well. *This is the only way Monica gets me to dry the dishes!* Only \$10.95 per towel.

Lastly, we are very proud to offer a masterpiece by author Ron Mackay, **Ridgewell's Flying Fortresses - 381st Bomb Group (H) in World War II.** (B-16) This phenomenal book is detailed history of the



381st Bomb Group (Triangle L) stationed at Ridgewell. Ron has agonizingly researched this First Air Division Group for many years and has written one of the best 8th Air Force Unit Histories ever. Superbly written and well illustrated. A great buy at only \$59.95!

We want to thank you all for your continued support of the **8th Air Force Historical Society PX.** Remember, the profits made go directly back to the Society. Your Society! Monica and I want to wish each of you a very happy summer. Take care of one another and be well, Friends! We hope to hear from you soon! May God Bless!

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

REMOVABLE PX
4 PAGE INSERT



Please use the latest PX page when ordering.

Prices listed are good through 1 August 2000.

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___	P2 Special Blazer patch (Gold Bouillon thread)	\$ 22.95
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___	P4 Deluxe 8th AF Shoulder Patch (Gold Bouillon thread)	\$ 19.95

JEWELRY

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	Embroidered emblem, Silver Gray. Limited edition.	\$ 12.95
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	<i>Please indicate size(s) wanted</i>	
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	<i>Please indicate size(s) wanted</i>	
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	or 3 for \$4.95	\$ 4.95
___	M4 8th AF Golf Towel - Embroidered 8thAFHS logo,	\$ 13.50
	w/ grommet	
___	M5 'The Sky was Never Still' - 8th AF poetry	\$ 14.95
___	M6 8th AF Tea Towel - Full color English style tea towel	\$ 10.95

8TH AIR FORCE ART

___	P1 The Crewman - Limited Edition print by aviation artist Gil Cohen, as shown on 9/99 8AFHS Journal cover. If you wish to have your print personalized, please include your request on a separate piece of paper and enclose with order.	\$ 75.00
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8TH AIR FORCE BOOKS

QTY		TOTAL
	ROGER FREEMAN BOOKS THE FOLLOWING POPULAR HARDCOVER BOOKS WERE WRITTEN BY NOTED 8TH AF HISTORIAN ROGER FREEMAN	
___	B1 Mighty Eighth Warpaint & Heraldry , Roger Freeman, 1997. Hdbd, 8 1/2 x 11, 160 pp, Color photos. The latest edition from 8th AF historian Freeman. Examines the colors, markings and heraldry of every 8th AF unit. A must have book!	\$ 34.95
___	B2 Fight for the Sky , Allied Fighter Aircraft in Europe and North Africa 1939-1945, Roger Freeman, 1999. Hdbd. Comprehensive history of the fighter airwar over Europe and North Africa. Well written and contains over 250 superb black and white photos.	\$ 29.95
___	B3 Airfields of the Eighth, Then & Now , Roger Freeman, 1987. Hdbd. Each 8th AF base is presented in this 'must-have' book. The history of the base, and the 'then and now' photos illustrate this great work!	\$ 49.95
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THE FLIGHT SURGEON'S LECTURE

On bad weather days when we could not fly our missions over Europe during WWII we did non-flying training, perhaps enemy aircraft and enemy warship recognition classes, or lectures on some aspect of the war effort.

To this day I still remember one lecture given by the Flight Surgeon. After telling us of the hazards and danger of venereal disease in having sex with prostitutes, he showed us slides of people who had contacted the various diseases. The slides were old, mostly of Africans taken by doctors who had studied the strange maladies of African natives before Dr. Livingston went to Africa.

What I remember the most was telling of the many head wounds suffered by airmen due to flak. He told us that the doctors suggested a skull cap which would protect the head from flying flak bursts.

The Army Air Corps developed skull caps which consisted of overlapping steel sections all covered by cloth which made them flexible. They looked much like a cap which Jewish men wear in their Temple. They could be called a bullet proof vest for the head. These were worn under caps, plastic head gear, or other type of normal head gear. Our bomb group had procured some and we had been using them for some time.

But, he explained, they found out that there were just as many head wounds showing up as there were before the skull caps were made available. They investigated and found that in the heat of a flak attack the airmen were taking off their skull caps and putting them in their crotches, thinking that if "that" got shot off there was no sense in living anyhow.

At mission briefings, having to take more notes than other crew members, navigators were the last ones leaving the briefing room. Thus most of the time the skull caps were all gone, so while some airmen probably checked out two, I usually did not get one. But I guess I was lucky. No wounds of any kind. Well...one slight wound, but that is another story...which I hesitate to put in writing.

Lou Baffaro

Dear Walter,
The article in Dec 99 on "Armored Helmets for Bomber Crews" was of special interest to me. I have written several stories pertaining to my tour during WWII as a navigator in the 398th BG. One of the stories pertained to the armored helmets that we wore during my tour which started at the end of October 1944.

I have enclosed a copy of the short story which you may find of interest as another version of early armored helmets. I hesitated sending it earlier for the, I hate to say...vulgar connotations it contains. Times have changed however, so you may decide the amusing aspect is worth publishing.

Sincerely,
Lou Baffaro, 398th BG
Raleigh, NC



A veteran went to see his dentist and said, "Doc, since I have been getting older I have noticed that all of my teeth are turning yellow. What do you suggest?"

The dentist replied,
"Wear a brown tie."

"Whoa! You mean, like, you actually were a World War Two bomber pilot?"

submitted by Abraham 'Hap' Galfunt

THE FROZEN HATCH

by Samuel Najavian, 305th Bomb Group
Bluffton, SC

January 10th, 1945; Cologne, Germany; Mission #13.

If I was even a bit superstitious I might have felt apprehensive about #13 - but I wasn't. What I was, was a 19-year old who had eagerly enlisted in the Army Air Corps immediately upon graduation from high school and who possessed an aire of invincibility inherent in most young men of that age and era. I was a Navigator on a B-17, 305 B.G., 364 B.S. out of Chelveston, England. I had arrived from the States in the Fall of 1944.

At the time, most of us were looking forward to getting airborne and making a strike. We were in the midst of some very bad weather - snow, fog and overcast conditions had grounded air crews for some time and during a spell (Battle of the Bulge) when our ground forces urgently needed air support.

The day started by being awakened at 3 a.m. I use the word 'awakened' loosely because, not unlike most crew members, I rarely slept when I anticipated being 'on the list' to fly that day. While lying in my cot I heard the vehicle drive up, heard the door to our hut opened and shut, and felt the gentle nudge from the Sgt., followed by his message that I was to fly and that briefing was at 4:45 a.m.. A short time later, a pickup truck arrived and transported us to the mess hall for breakfast.

The weather was very cold, with snow on the ground. After breakfast we went to briefing. Cologne, while not a 'piece of cake', was not supposed to be a tough mission. Anti-aircraft fire was supposed to be heavy, but fighter opposition was predicted to be light and intermittent. At worst, I expected another mission where the greatest hazard we might face would be the usual - trying to find our airfield through the dense evening fog upon our return.

The scope of the mission on January 10th was huge. Over 1,000 heavy bombers, with fighter escort, were to attack various airfields, marshalling yards, transportation facilities and bridges in and

around Cologne. After takeoff in snow and fog we spent what seemed a lifetime assembling, then started crossing the English Channel at about 17,000 feet. Bomb run was to be made at about 26,000 feet from a turning point just to the south of Cologne.

As we approached the Belgian coast we lost power in our right inboard engine. We were in a deputy lead position, which we had to drop out of. We maintained a semblance of position in the group and continued on to the target. Flak was very intense. I recall how thankful I was that I followed the habit I developed of spreading flak vests on the floor and along the walls around me before takeoff.

These were flak vests which other crew members chose not to use because they were heavy and cumbersome. I took a lot of friendly kidding from my crew members about this. I developed another habit of bringing a large, empty can on every mission in which to relieve myself.

Over the target our group was welcomed with a savage anti-aircraft barrage. Flak flew through the nose section between my Bombardier and me and left holes in both sides of the fuselage. Our left outboard engine started smoking and windmilling, and had to be feathered. Bombs were not dropped, even though the target was visible.

I could never determine why not and could only attribute the failure to drop to equipment malfunction or confusion aloft. The unpopular decision was made, by Command, to execute a 360 for another bomb run. This was good news for the anti-aircraft batteries below who, no doubt, relished a second chance to zero-in on us. Our aircraft made the second run completely out of formation and with only 2 engines operative. We dropped our bombs but were hit again by flak, causing a third engine to begin sparking. The pilot gave the order to bail out.

"The entire escape hatch was frozen-over with a couple of inches of solid ice!"

"I recall how thankful I was that I followed the habit I developed of spreading flak vests on the floor and along the walls around me before takeoff"

Although we were losing altitude and partially in flames, the aircraft was not out of control, but rather was in smooth, downward glide. I immediately got on the intercom to the pilot and informed him that we could not be more than a few minutes flying time from an area that was probably occupied by Allied forces, and that if we could manage to stay aloft for those few minutes our chances of surviving a bail-out would be better. He agreed and we proceeded due west. I did pilotage as best I could under the circumstances, and when I thought we might be over or close to Allied occupied territory I so informed him. The pilot then repeated the order to bail out and said he was putting the aircraft on auto-pilot.

The next few minutes were hectic. I checked to make sure I had the few things I might need, then snapped my chest chute onto my harness. My bombardier and I were both supposed to use the escape hatch recessed in the floor just behind my station. I went to it with the intent of pulling on the release which opens the hatch. The entire escape hatch was frozen-over with a couple of inches of solid ice! On the floor next to the hatch was my 'relief' can on its side. It had probably tipped over and spilled its contents when the aircraft was hit and tossed

about. The spilled liquid had collected in the recess in the floor and, because of the intense cold (-40 degrees to -50 degrees), it was frozen solid. Not reacting too brilliantly, I stood there trying to break up the ice by kicking it as violently as I could with the heel of my foot. This went on for a few minutes with my bombardier standing beside me, but to no avail. In retrospect, I defend this futile reaction only by saying we were, during training, told which escape hatch to use in an emergency and we remained programmed to that mentality.

Simultaneously, we came up with the 'brilliant' idea of using another exit and proceeded through the bomb-bay area to

the side waist door. During our journey through the aircraft I saw no one, and concluded the other crew members had long-since bailed out.

I dove out, followed by my bombardier, and estimate we were at about 18,000 feet. The jump was my first, since air crews did not practice this maneuver. Speaking for myself, I am still somewhat surprised that I had no reservations when it came time to jump although, what choices were there? I do recall saying to myself "jump, count to 10, then pull the ripcord." After I dove out I started counting, 1-2-3--, then immediately pulled the cord. My parachute opened flawlessly, but I had forgotten one minor matter. Because of my tendency to relieve myself frequently during a mission, I had left my harness straps loose and dangling down around my knees instead of fitting tightly in my crotch. The shock I received when the chute opened is indescribable. I spent the next few minutes pulling myself up on the chute straps while trying to make adjustments. After achieving some level of comfort, the trip down was fantastic. It was then I realized my flying boots, which I was accustomed to wearing unbuckled, were sucked off my feet when I dove out.

While floating down, I was able to spot only one other parachute and assumed it was my bombardier. I took one last look at our aircraft. It was still flying (although like a wounded bird), maintaining a nice level of attitude, spouting flames, slowly losing altitude but still heading west. I join those who champion the ruggedness of the Flying Fortress - if that plane had an unlimited fuel supply, I wouldn't be shocked if it were still up there somewhere!

The ground was covered with 3 to 4 feet of snow. I landed in an open field. After removing myself from my harness, I cautiously made my way to a barn - still not knowing whether I was in friendly territory or not. I thought it best to hide there until dark, then make my way to somewhere or find someone who might help.

After about an hour, a very elderly woman came into the barn. At first, I couldn't decide whether to 'make a move' or stay out of sight. Then I figured this was as good a time as any. With my .45 sidearm in one hand and holding identification materials in the other, I stepped out into

view. She just stared at me as I kept repeating "American, American" while at the same time making gestures of someone floating down in a parachute. She dropped whatever she was carrying and came running toward me with outstretched arms. She held me in a bear-hug and kept rambling on in a language foreign to me. The woman eventually led me to the farmhouse where other members of the family were. They broke out some wine and cheese, summoned some of their neighbors and a sort of party atmosphere developed. Amongst the gathering were one or two who understood and could speak a little English, therefore we were able to communicate a bit. I learned the Germans only recently withdrew from the area and I was the first American serviceman they had personal contact with. Soon thereafter my bombardier walked into the same farmhouse, dragging his parachute behind him.

About two hours later local authorities arrived and after some preliminary formalities, transported both of us to Brussels where we were billeted in a hotel for downed airmen. Eight days later we were flown, by A.T.C., to our base.

It was around dinnertime when we arrived at our base.

We were anxious to see our comrades so we decided to go directly to the mess hall. When we entered and our friends saw us the place went a little wild with celebration - as far as anyone knew we were shot down and M.I.A. On the downside my C.O., who was in the mess

hall at the time, called me 'on the carpet' the next day for not reporting first directly to him.

The following day I paid a visit to our parachute packers to express my appreciation with the traditional bottle of booze. After two weeks of R&R,

I returned to combat and flew an additional 13 missions.

As one gets on in years, it seems one reflects more and more on his memories of significant past experiences.

Almost on a daily basis, I re-live some of the events of that day and always end up by thanking God for the good fortune he bestowed upon me. I also remind myself that many negative occurrences end up having an 'up side'. What at first seemed like an unfortunate, if not disastrous, turn of events - the frozen escape hatch- turned out to be a blessing in disguise. It forced my bombardier and me to delay bailing out for a few invaluable minutes - the delay giving us a better chance of surviving by landing in friendly territory.

"I dove out, followed by my bombardier"

"With my .45 sidearm in one hand, I stepped out into view"



Insignia of 364th Bomb Squadron



BULLETIN BOARD

TO ALL 8TH AF MEN TRAVELING IN SCANDINAVIA, NORWAY OR DENMARK AND SWEDEN.

The 8th Air Force, Second Air Division Memorial to 62 Americans killed in action on the Oslo-Kjeller, Norway, mission of 18 Nov. 1943 is now in place at Lillestrom, 18 miles east of Oslo. It is easily accessible from downtown Oslo via the excellent Norwegian railways. Any 8th Air Force veteran, family members or friends may reach and see this memorial at the Royal Norwegian Air Force base at Kjeller, which was the base used by the Luftwaffe in 1943-44 and bombed by the 8th Air Force.

If they take the railway train from Oslo's main station for about 20 minutes and get off at the Lillestrom station they are about 2 miles from the memorial and it can be reached by taxi. The new memorial, a bronze plaque, was dedicated on May 8, 1995, the 50th anniversary of the end of WWII in Europe.

CATERPILLARS AWAKE

This is a special alert to all the men of the 8th Air Force who had to make emergency parachute jumps in WWII to save their lives. We are looking for some of these men, aircrew members, pilots, navigators, and of whatever position to form a reactivated Caterpillar Club.

The Switlik Parachute Co. of Trenton, NJ, has offered its support for this effort and is interested in renewing such a group after years of inactivity. The Caterpillar Club dates back to Oct. 1922 at McCook Field near Dayton, Ohio, when Lt. Harold Harris was forced to jump from a PW-2A mono-plane fighter. Since that time thousands of flyers have joined, among them Gen. Jimmy Doolittle and other celebrated aviators.

All those who have the distinctive caterpillar pin and membership card are eligible to join. Any one who reads this and is interested may contact me, Forrest S. Clark, formerly 44th BG, 8th Air Force, b24vet@aol.com. 863-427-0371.

The purpose is to resume reunions, exchange experiences and possibly look forward to having a memorial.

UNIT CONTACTS

Scouting Force Association

E. Richard Atkins
1304 Cochise Drive
Arlington, TX 76012
(817)261-3007

e-mail dick8af@flash.net

56th Fighter Group

John Sipek
1606 Basil Drive
Columbus OH 43227

NOSE ART MASTER'S THESIS

I am researching information for a Master's thesis concerning the Nose Art displayed on 8th Air Force bombers in World War II.

I have had luck in contacting 8th Air Force veterans but would like to continue my efforts to contact more.

My emphasis in the thesis is to describe the process by which aircraft were named and the inspiration behind the names and Nose Art. I have found reference materials that displays photos of Nose Art but little in describing why the crews chose such a name and associated Nose Art. I am also interested in hearing from veterans that flew in bombers with no names and those crewmen who flew in named bombers but had no idea why or how the bomber was named.

If you can assist me by answering my brief questionnaire, contact me at any of the addresses listed below.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully yours,

Gregory B. Griffith 415 Bit Court Reno, NV 89506
(775) 969-3245 e-mail: LeanGRnch@AOL.com

TWO DISTINGUISHED SOCIETIES

The **DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS SOCIETY** was formed in 1994 as a nonprofit organization of those who have been awarded the DFC as a result of deeds accomplished during aerial flight. The Society's aim is to publicize the award and to honor its recipients. Many distinguished fliers are members including those of other nationalities who have received the award. Historical Society member George Pirnik, 379th and 388th BGs, served in three wars and sends information on how to become a member. A \$12.50 initiation fee plus \$12.50 for one year's membership can be sent to Alexander Ciurezak 34552 Camino Capistrano, Capistrano Beach CA 92624-1232 or call (949)493-7165 for information on lifetime memberships. All funds are tax-deductible and are put towards promoting and benefiting the DFC Society.

Member Pirnik also forwards application info re the AFGA, the Air Force Gunners Association, which may be joined, thus receiving newsletters and other flyers, by mailing your annual fee of \$15.00 or \$100 life membership dues to E.D. Steele 1117 Johnson Ft Worth TX 76126; or call (817) 249 0150.

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Mother to young son: "Tommy, why are you so upset?"

Tommy: "M-M-Momma, J-J-Jimmy says I s-sound like a j-j-jackass."

Mother: "I'm sure your brother wouldn't tell you that you sound like a jackass."

Tommy: "Y-Y-Yes he d-did t-t-too. He all - He all - He always s-says that!"

THE JOHN H. WOOLNOUGH MEMORIAL LIBRARY FUND

The 8th Air Force Historical Society's 2000 Annual Fund Drive is an important one. This endowment fund drive will formally name the Heritage Museum Library after the founder of the Historical Society in honor of his many contributions to preserve the heritage of the Mighty Eighth. The extensive library is located at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah and plays an important part in research and educational activities of those who are interested in the story of the Eighth Air Force.

Educational functions involving the younger generations taking place at the Museum are now receiving national attention, and their educational activities are constantly on the increase.



The Endowment fund for the Woolnough Memorial Library will allow the educational programs to reach many others and will promote the principles and heritage of the Eighth in a most effective way. This is our opportunity to see this mission through. Each contribution will be used to continue these very worthy teaching programs.

Our annual drive has a goal of \$250,000 and will be entered as a donation option on your September annual dues statement. The coupon below may be sent in with your tax-deductible contribution as well. Lets pull together to make the John H. Woolnough Memorial Library drive a great success!



8TH AF HISTORICAL SOCIETY JOHN H. WOOLNOUGH 2000 MEMORIAL LIBRARY FUND DRIVE

NAME _____

AMOUNT
\$ _____

ADDRESS _____

GROUP OR
UNIT _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

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

DEDICATION OF THE 92ND BOMB GROUP MEMORIAL

by Frank Smoker

Former Navigator, 325th Bomb Squadron, 92nd Bomb Group

For those of us who were fortunate enough to be present at the dedication of the 92nd Bombardment Group Memorial on July 3, 1999, it will be a day forever well remembered. And for those of us who were not present, it is my fondest hope that they will have the opportunity to see this wonderful tribute to our 92nd Bomb Group sometime in the near future.

The monument is located on the right side of Podington Airfield Road near the former location of the World War II main gate to our former aerodrome. As you approach the site, the first thing you see is a tall flag pole with an American flag flying in the breeze. As you get closer, there is the beautiful dark gray monument situated in the middle of a small fenced area and a large inviting wooden bench where one may sit and contemplate the full significance of this grand memorial. It is really a part of America located there in the English Midlands. The American flag correctly signifies that this small area is part of our heritage, and a lasting tribute to the 92nd Bombardment Group. This splendid memorial was built under and paid for by our English friends of the 92nd Bomb Group Memorial Association, under the leadership of Chairman John Walker. It was erected on this parcel on land generously donated by Simon Whitbread, another member of that group, and legally transferred to the 92nd Bomb Group Memorial Association - UK. Prior to the dedication, I saw a rough sketch of the monument, however, when it was unveiled, the beauty of this memorial exceeded all of my expectations. Imported from Switzerland, the dark gray granite monument sits on a three by six feet base, six inches thick. The vertical top piece, on which the gold letters are engraved, is mounted and centered on that base, and measures five feet high, four feet wide, and is three inches thick. These measurements do not, however, come close to describing the beauty and significance of this memorial.



92nd Bomb Group Memorial
Podington Airfield, England

92ND BOMB GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

Our 92nd Bomb Group U.K. Committee rushed this memorial to completion in time for the Group's reunion. We are very pleased that they did, so that those of us attending the reunion had the advantage and pleasure of being present for the dedication. Our English friends incurred all the costs for the entire Memorial. We owe a great debt of thanks to our 92nd Group English friends for their ingenuity and hard work in establishing this memorial, and for that reason, our American members of the 92nd have launched a fund drive to reimburse our British committee. We can all be proud of our wonderful Memorial at Podington Airfield and proud, too, for the opportunity to perpetuate our 92nd Bomb Group's combat record for generations to come.



**Never criticize a man until you have walked a mile in his shoes.
Then you will be a mile away from him, and you will have his shoes.**

UNIT ACTIVITIES

EIGHTH AIR FORCE MEMORIAL MUSEUM FOUNDATION DONATES DOCUMENTARY

On 4 January 2000, the 8AFMMF's VP for Special Projects, Bob Vickers, presented the Foundation's popular exhibit documentary "Legends of the Liberator" for permanent loan to the Pima Aerospace Museum near Tucson, Arizona; Shown in the photo of this presentation event (L to R), Colonel (Ret) Bob Vickers; Ms Lisa Lines, Director for Museum Developments; and Col (Ret) Edward Harrow, Jr; Executive Director of this upscale museum complex. The MMF's donation of this noteworthy documentary covering the life and times of this rugged WWII aircraft, its world-wide units and their people, is the fifteenth such placement of this exhibit in an accredited air museum. The Pima Aerospace Museum is home of the pristine B-24 restoration of the 446th Bomb Group's *Bungay Buckaroo*.



AIRCREWS AND FREEFALLS

It has been a mystery to me why aircrews in WWII were not given formal parachute training.

We were shot up badly, two engines out, a hole in one wing and perhaps as many as 100 holes when the bail-out bell went off. I had never had the slightest training on how to jump. No one on the crew had and here we were faced with the immediate need to jump from a battle crippled bomber.

I recall to this day snapping on the chest pack and squeezing through the rear camera hatch of our B24 as we went down. I let myself fall counting to ten as someone had told me to do, to clear the huge tail assembly. I looked up after ten and saw the huge bomber still very close, so I decided to count again to ten all the time freefalling and tumbling over and over.

When I did pull the cord, the D ring stuck in my hand and I saw the ground coming up fast. I hit with a tremendous jar injuring my left leg, which still troubles me today 50 years later.

Boy, did I wish I had some preliminary parachute training.

This is just one of the mysteries of the WWII airwar.

- Forrest Clark

JOIN US! THE EIGHTH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

We want YOU as a member of the 8th Air Force Historical Society! Become a part of the fun and camaraderie of State and National meetings, receive the quarterly 8th AF NEWS magazine, membership cards and all privileges, and become a part of the historical legacy of the Mighty Eighth Air Force! Friends, kids, grandchildren, veterans of all services, history buffs, and patriots are all welcome to become members. The coupon below may be copied and sent in with one year's dues to start your membership right now!



8TH AFHS MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____

FIRST NAME

MIDDLE INITIAL

LAST NAME

Address _____

CITY

STATE

ZIP CODE

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

In service _____ Branch _____ Dates _____ to _____

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

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

FRED GRAY...

One memorable trip for our crew of the plush B-17 *Horizon* was taking a group of high ranking officers on an "inspection tour" of flying officers' rest areas. First we flew to Rheims and loaded up several cases of champagne. Then we headed to Cannes, on the French Riviera, where the Air Corps had taken over the posh hotels as rest areas mainly for fighter pilots. Someone said "I think there is an airstrip there." When we got to Cannes, we did see a level strip of grass that looked like a landing strip. There was a group of French civilians standing around on the strip. We buzzed the field and scared them off, and landed. That night we stayed with the VIP's in one of the thick-carpeted hotels on the beach, the Carlton, I think. The whole town was off-limits to G.I.'s, so Captain Blank and I had a hard time convincing the M.P.'s that we belonged there. Barbed wire barricades were still up on the beaches and we kept hearing explosions. The food was great - it's surprising what those French chefs could do with Spam. When we went out to the plane to leave the next day, those French civilians were still there and we learned what had been exploding. The French civilians were clearing land mines from the airstrip. We took off VERY carefully and flew down to Caserta, a small airfield near Naples. We jeeped up to Naples and took a Navy Launch out to the rest area on the Isle of Capri in the Bay of Naples. If you can imagine coming out of combat and the English and French weather for four months - into the sunny, balmy weather of Italy - it was wonderful. Capri is the only place in Europe I ever wanted to go back to.

**-Fred Gray, 379th BG
Gastonia, NC**

JOHN COMER...

Major Hendricks was in the lead ship and we were on his left wing. I saw him leave the cockpit and go toward the bomb bay. A few minutes later he returned to his seat. Immediately he dropped down out of the formation. Perhaps he hoped to get close to the ground, below the radar, and try to slip through. I doubted he could make it. There were too many fighters circling about us. A lump came into my throat and I said to myself, "Take a good look at Hendricks - I doubt if we will ever see him again."

"Ball to Pilot, is Hendricks trying to surrender? His landing gear is down."

"No, that's his signal for the deputy lead to take over."

Gleichauf moved up to take over squadron lead and I lost sight of Hendricks. I could sense the pain in Gleichauf's voice. He and Hendricks were good friends and it was hard to lose a friend in plain sight with no chance to help him. Kels called the pilot.

"Hendricks saw he was slowing down the squadron and did what he thought was the right thing for the squadron."

"He didn't have to do it - we could have made the coast. The escort will meet us there."

"Legg to crew, four 210s trailing us - may come in."

"Turret to Tail - if they start in, fire two quick bursts and I'll turn around and help you."

When I heard Legg open up I whirled around. Two 210s were closing fast at six o'clock slightly high.

**-John Comer, 381st Bomb Group
from "Mission to Anklam" in *Combat Crew***

ELMER LIAN...

The prison camp, in many ways, is a unique testing ground. The equality among the men is pitiless and unparalleled from any other type of organization. Family, culture, religion, wealth, education, and station in life make no difference. A prisoner is on his own. Nobody will help or save him from the consequences of his behavior if it is deliberately wrong. He is forcibly placed among his peers in the most elemental circumstances and sparse environment. Here he is tested to see what he is made of. In the prison barracks he lives with prisoners of all types, coarse and refined, brutal and sensitive, rich and poor. He need not like them but they must all become a part of his life. Being a prisoner in a prisoner war camp is a special way to participate in the affairs of one's time. The war was the common experience of my age and time. As history passes by, the least I can say is that I had a part of it.

**-Elmer T. Lian, POW, Stalag I Barth, Germany
Grand Forks, N.D.**

RICHARD HILLARY...

The voice of the controller came unhurried over the loud-speaker, telling us to takeoff, and in a few seconds we were running for our machines. I climbed into the cockpit of my plane and felt an empty sensation of suspense in the pit of my stomach. For one second time seemed to stand still and I stared blankly in front of me. I knew that morning I was to kill for the first time. That I might be killed or in any way injured did not occur to me...I knew it could not happen to me. I suppose that every pilot knows, knows it cannot happen to him; even when he is taking off for the last time, when he will not return, he knows that he cannot be killed. I wondered idly what he was like, this man I would kill. Was he young, was he fat, would he die with the Fuhrer's name on his lips, or would he die alone, in the last moment conscious of himself as a man? I would never know. Then I was being strapped in, my mind automatically checking the controls, and we were off.

**- Richard Hillary, RAF Pilot
Killed in Action - from "The Last Enemy"**

JOHANNES STEINHOFF...

Interviewer: Of all the Allied fighters you encountered, which was the most difficult to handle with a good pilot at the controls?

Steinhoff: The Lightning. It was fast, low profiled and a fantastic fighter, and a real danger when it was above you. It was only vulnerable if you were behind it, a little below and closing fast, or turning into it, but on the attack it was a tremendous aircraft. One shot me down from long range in 1944. That would be the one, although the P-51 Mustang was deadly because of the long range, and it could cover any air base in Europe. This made things difficult, especially later when flying the jets.

**-Johannes Steinhoff
Luftwaffe Fighter Pilot
-submitted by John Johnson**

HOWARD POLIN:

When I got into the weather station, I never saw so much activity. All the weather officers were there. They usually didn't show up on the night shift, but this night, they did. There was constant dialogue between the weathermen and pilots in hushed voices, as if the enemy were listening. Constant briefings on current weather conditions continued through the night. All night long, I heard "putt-putt" motors going. I later found out these were gas-powered paint spray machines. They were painting black and white stripes on our aircraft for identification of all allied aircraft.

During the wee hours of "D-Day" we could hear the drone of the bombers as they were circling over East Anglia to gain altitude before crossing the Channel. Our Mustangs started take-off about the same time. They took off down the dirt runway, four abreast, and staggered one behind the other. Our 352nd Fighter Group sent up approximately forty fighters, as did the many other fighter groups in East Anglia.

We had the misfortune of one of our fighters crashing on takeoff into our new Control Tower under construction. Flames lit up the Aerodrome, and we could see the P-51's continue taking off in the light of the burning

aircraft - no abortions. In fact, all the weathermen and other ground people were standing around the Control Tower witnessing this ever-memorable time. When the plane crashed, we could hear the "Old Man", 35-year old Col. Mason, yell over the loud-speaker system for the crash-crew to "get that plane the hell off the runway." Our mission was to get forty fighter escorts into the air, and there was no stopping the mission, as bad as we felt about the casualty. The pilot, Bob Frascotti, is memorialized at Bodney Aerodrome where the Control Tower still stands showing the marks of that crash.

The missions flown on June 6, 1944 were continuous. Pilots would return to base - one, two, or three at a time; refuel, reload, a little rest, something to eat, and back out again to protect the ground troops going ashore.

- Howard Polin 352nd FG



Customer to Pharmacist: "Do you sell Viagra here?"

Pharmacist: "Yes, we certainly do."

Customer: "Can you get it over-the-counter?"

Pharmacist: "Yes, I can if I take two of them."

If "I am" is the shortest sentence in the English language, is "I do" the longest sentence?

TO THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE 8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Annual dues to increase to \$20.00 effective Sept. 1st for 2001

Your Board of Directors has agonized, over the last two years, with the increasingly precarious financial position of the 8th Air Force Historical Society. Membership had decreased by attrition, with an accompanying loss of dues income. Normal withdrawals from the Life Membership Fund have not provided enough income to meet our expenses.

It is a hard job to cut back on expenses. The 8th AF News, the life blood of the Society costs us the same per page as in former years, despite addition of more color pages. We are printing more pages these days by popular demand, and are reluctant to cut back materially. We have however, combined the Information Office with our Membership office with a reduction in expense for that function. The 800 number for the Information Office is given elsewhere in this issue. Also, the transfer of our Finance Manager's function will reduce costs in 2001 and beyond. Board members have agreed to substantial cuts in meeting costs, and will continue to seek cost cuts wherever possible.

Your Board has reluctantly voted to increase dues, and will ask the membership to ratify this increase at the Member's Meeting in Salt Lake City in October, 2000. The \$10.00 annual

membership fee has not been changed in over a decade.

As President Baynes has noted, "Inflation alone would have increased that figure to over \$30.00 per year." Had dues been raised earlier, and only modestly, we could perhaps have avoided the increase now.

How much do we propose that annual dues be raised? Ten dollars. That may cause pain to some, but it is less than two seats at a movie, or three rental videos, or three Happy Meals, or four packs of cigarettes, or a small number of many other things normally enjoyed, even if only infrequently. And the total annual cost of membership would be comparable with that of other organizations to which many of our membership belong. The size of the increase, with cutting of costs, hopefully is sufficient to avoid another increase in the foreseeable future.

The Board believes that its mandate to run the Society in the best interests of the membership requires it to increase dues, beginning with fiscal year 2000 - 2001, in the amount of \$10 per year, and will ask the members to ratify this action at the Member's Meeting in October 2000.

Board of Directors
Eighth Air Force Historical Society

BETTY'S SHOES

Douglas C. Garner was a Tail Gunner on the crew of Ted's Traveling Circus of the 93rd Bomb Group. When he was sent to England he took with him a pair of tiny shoes belonging to his baby daughter Betty. Doug attached these shoes to his parachute harness. During the course of his thirty missions his chute was sent in for repack. He was called up for a mission and was given another chute to use. He "knew" he would not return from this mission because his baby shoes were not going along with him. He did return safely and the baby shoes continued to make the rest of his missions with him. Doug Garner is on the lower left, with the shoes quite visible hanging from his harness. Also enclosed is a photo of Mr. Garner at one of the Alabama Wing lunches holding the shoes, now bronzed, that



Douglas C. Garner 93rd BG
Ted's Traveling Circus
Holding his daughter's bronzed baby shoes in 1999.
These are the shoes that flew 29 missions.

have become a favorite story when he participates in VETERANS INTO SCHOOLS. Young people are touched by this story and gather around after the presentation to see "the shoes that made 29 or 30 missions."

Doug Garner and his wife Patsy are faithful and influential members of The North Alabama Wing of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society. Their willingness to participate in VETERANS INTO SCHOOLS help to make this program a resounding success in our area.

We are an intergenerational group that enjoys focusing on the exploits of The Greatest Generation. The North Alabama Wing veterans are creating a LEGACY collection. These are 8X10 photos showing the veterans in their uniforms. THE LEGACY is another successful item being used for speaking engagements.

Sincerely,
Ann Vaughn
North Alabama Wing



Kneeling L-R: S/Sgt. Douglas Garner, Gunner (with baby shoes), S/Sgt. John Curran, Gunner, S/Sgt. John Dinapoli, Gunner, S/Sgt. Allen Reusch, Gunner, T/Sgt. Donald Schwartz, Gunner, T/Sgt. George Morris, Radio Operator
Standing L-R: 1/Lt. Theodore Guzik, CoPilot, Capt James Rutherford, Pilot, F/O John Sloan, Navigator, 2/Lt. Paul Freeman, Navigator, 1/Lt. Robert Brooks, Bombardier. -1944

LOUISIANA CHAPTER

The Louisiana Chapter held its organizational meeting January 8 2000. The meeting was called to order at 0330 hours by Harry Tanner. About 30 persons were in attendance. The first order of business was the election of officers, they are:

President: Harry (Doug) Tanner
Vice-Pres: Robert Bowen
Secretary: Lorene Y. Tanner
Treasurer: Ronnie Taylor

There will be a two-day meeting held either in June or July. This is to be set by the President.

President Tanner asked Historical Society Board of Directors member Ivan McKinney to serve as an honorary member of the Chapter Board. He accepted.

PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER

Ninth Annual Reunion

Reunion 2000 will be held by the Pennsylvania Chapter 8AFHS at the Place Inn, Monroeville, just east of Pittsburgh, during 23 to 26 June. Planning is in the final stages for this, the Chapter's ninth annual reunion. Although the costs are still being finalized, the Reunion Committee of the Chapter's Western Wing is giving full consideration for minimum costs for maximum enjoyment.

Chapter members, associates, friends, their spouses, children and grandchildren are all welcome to attend Reunion 2000, the planning for which is designed to be of interest to all. A unique, special registration fee is being established for the grandchildren under 18 years of age.

Some of the Sunday events include a tour of Pittsburgh including the Golden Triangle, a visit to the Senator John Heinz Regional History Center, lunch at the Church Brew Works and a visit to the nationally known classrooms of the University of Pittsburgh. All of this will be topped off with a dinner cruise aboard the Gateway Clipper to view the lights of Pittsburgh from the Three Rivers perspective. The shipboard program includes entertainment, music and dancing.

A memorial service is scheduled for Sunday morning, to be followed by a tour of the Beaver Air Heritage Museum. In the evening, the annual banquet including dinner and dancing will conclude the Sunday events.

The "Al Monzo's" Palace Inn is easily located, just off the Pennsylvania Turnpike, exit 6, near Routes 22 and 48, at 2775 Mossie Boulevard, Monroeville. For reservations, call (412)372-5500 or (800)545-6600.

Reunion 2000 registration packets will be mailed to all Pennsylvania Chapter members in mid-April. For others interested in attending, or questions, please contact Art or Carolyn Swanson at P.O. Box 58, Pine Grove, PA 17963 or telephone (570)345-4521.

Reunion 2000 promises to be a great opportunity for comradeship and a chance to meet with your fellow veterans of the Mighty Eighth Air Force. All are invited!

CONNECTICUT CHAPTER

The Connecticut Chapter held a meeting March 4, at the American Legion Hall in Hamden, Ct. The speaker was Andy Kosch of the Ultra Light Club. The topic was Flight Before the

Wrights. He talked about the Whitehead airplane, built by Gustave Whitehead. The claim is that this man built and flew his airplane years before the Kitty Hawk event.

A book was written by Stella Randolph, titled *The Story of Gustave Whitehead, Before the Wrights Flew*.

Mr. Kosch showed a tape of the 60 minutes TV program which delved into this claim. Photos of the plane and builder were presented and these facts would lead one to believe that Wright "was not the first aloft".

The chapter is planning our spring meeting and luncheon in May. For further info about our chapter activities contact Art Ruggiero, Pres. @ (203) 488-8754.

-Art Ruggiero

WASHINGTON CHAPTER

Veterans Day in Seattle found members of the Washington Chapter standing underneath the wing of a B-17. Donuts and hot coffee were distributed as members were interviewed by local TV News. Past President Joe Regan was honored for his previous work with the Chapter.

Secretary JW Roundhill took it upon himself to educate some young children about the B-17 and its involvement in WWII. JW ended the day by closing the bomb bay doors.

The New Year found our chapter meeting well attended with numerous stories by the veterans on how they won the war while stationed in "Piccadilly Square". We were approached by a film crew from "Eagle Productions". They are interviewing/filming WWII Air Force veterans for "Voices from the Air" episodes on the History Channel. Art Henio Jim Mayhall, Joe Regan, JW Roundhill, Al Hendrickson were a few of the members who participated in the interview.

Upcoming events:

Noted aviation author Peter Bowers will showcase the variations of the B-17. Artist and Boeing illustrator Steven Cox will share his talent as he wants to donate a painting for this chapter (I can only guess the feud that will start as to what identifying Bomb Group letter goes on the tail of the B-17 painting).

Editor Ann Brown is doing a fabulous job on the Chapter Newsletter. The desire for an Eastern Washington "Wing" is being pursued. May 27th will see chapter members share their WWII experiences at the Seattle Public Library, 8th AFHS representation at the McCord AFB Airshow in June, and our Chapter Picnic in July. God Bless you all.

- Greg Pierce, President

NEW MEXICO CHAPTER

The New Mexico Chapter of the 8th Air Force Historical Society held its annual Winter General Membership Meeting and Luncheon on Saturday, 5 Feb 00. The members and guests in attendance totaled 147 - which is a new record for the Chapter.

The increased attendance may be partly attributed to the change of location from Kirtland AFB to the Petroleum Club. This change allows for a convening on Saturdays which are more favorable for the membership. An increase of 16% membership



this year is attributed to a special telephone campaign to 8AFHS National members who were not yet Chapter members.

The featured speaker was New Mexico Chapter Ray Parker who shared his wartime experiences as a POW for 14 months in Stalag Luft I at Barth, Germany. Mr. Parker served as a Navigator with the 445th BG. During his imprisonment, he produced an underground newspaper which provided his fellow POWs with news of the war, which he secretly obtained from a variety of sources. Mr. Parker also told of his post-war experiences as a TV comedy writer for such stars as Bob Hope, Art Linkletter, Dinah Shore and Dick Van Dyke. Ray is also a magazine humor columnist and gives lectures extensively. His excellent book of travel humor, "RV Having Fun Yet", was available for purchase at the meeting.



Ray Parker

Five cast members of the musical "Swingtime Canteen", currently playing in Albuquerque, entertained the membership with several World War II songs from their production. The cast includes Chapter member, Samantha Blauwkamp, daughter of Van White (303 BG) and his wife Lorie. The locale of the musical is a 1944 London canteen where a group of talented USO performers entertain the men of the "Mighty Eighth"!

NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER

The April Chapter meeting at Dovie's Restaurant in Carrollton, Texas featured a great tour of the Cavanaugh Flight Museum, with an emphasis on vintage WW II and Korean War aircraft. The museum is located at Addison airport in Dallas. The February Board meeting was a productive one with plans being laid for Chapter meetings and activities for the upcoming year. Brigadier General Albert Lenski was the guest speaker for the meeting. The Chapter voted to donate \$200 towards the 8th AF Memorial in Arlington National Cemetery. A membership list was also provided to all members.

NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA CHAPTER (NCAC)

The March meeting was held at the 94th Aero Squadron Restaurant and included a visit to the museum at College Park Airport. Featured speaker was former Luftwaffe pilot Kurt Liva. The May meeting will be on Armed Forces Day, May 19th at Andrews Air Force Base.

NEW JERSEY CHAPTER

The annual Spring Fling was held April 15th at the Westwood in Garwood, New Jersey. Ongoing within the Chapter is a Member Survey to determine what type of activities interest the membership and what direction they would like to see the New Jersey Chapter take. Locations and programs for future meetings are also being researched. Members are encouraged to mail the survey or their written opinions and requests to Marv Speidel, 708 Dianne Court, Rahway NJ 07065-2612. Chapter planners will put your suggestions to good use.

ILLINOIS CHAPTER

The April meeting had VP Mel Brandt of the 401st Bomb Group speak about his wartime experiences with the 8th Air Force. Officer elections were also held with the new slate being: Terry Carlson, President; Mel Brandt, Vice-President; Jay Spitzer, Secretary; and the new Treasurer is Florence Richards. Plans for the rest of this year's meeting and activities are underway. Continuing the line of distinguished Illinois Chapter meeting guest speakers, the May meeting was privileged to hear Al Lynch who was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor with the 1st Cavalry Division in Vietnam.

MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER

New Chapter President Bill Campbell takes the reins of the Chapter from outgoing President Al Audette after Al's many years of service to the Chapter and the National Historical Society. He presides over the Chapter's Spring Fling at the Hanscom AFB Officer's Club. This annual Spring event has as its guest speaker Lt. Col. Glen Michael, who entered the USAF in 1970 and has served with the Federal Aviation Administration since 1977. Col. Michael has flown as an FAA Advanced Avionics Flight Test Pilot and Chief Pilot.

CENTRAL TEXAS CHAPTER

The Central Texas Chapter recently saw a lot of action at the 3-day Georgetown Texas Air Show. Chapter members not only enjoyed a fine airshow, they represented the 8th AFHS with an exhibit table and in the process collected a number of new members into the Chapter fold. Tom Lawler is continuing his fine work as photographer of events and plans to be at the annual National Reunion in Salt Lake City this October.

GENERAL JAMES H. DOOLITTLE CHAPTER

The annual Chapter meeting was held April 29th at the Red Lion Hotel in Sacramento. Following the business meeting, at which election of new officers was held, a fine luncheon was enjoyed by the members. The Speaker of the Day was Major Arnold Jensen who Air Force career spanned three decades, during which he logged over 5000 hours flying time.

TENNESSEE CHAPTER

The Tennesseans have done it once again. The annual meeting was held in conjunction with the Kentucky Chapter and once again, it was a resounding success! The place was Clarkesville, Tennessee and the three-day affair saw a lot of old friends get

together and a lot of new acquaintances being made. Dean "Bill" Reeder, planner and co-ordinator of events, welcomed everyone to his hometown and showed them sights such as the nearby Beachhaven Vineyards and Winery, a tour of Fort Campbell and the Pratt Museum, and a theater show, *Carousel*, at the restored Roxy Theatre. A highlight of the weekend was a memorial visit to the gravesite of General William Kepner, distinguished 8th Fighter Command Commander, at which Chaplain Earl Wassom gave a stirring recitation. A wreath was laid during this ceremony.

The annual banquet had Col. Bob Jones, 101st Artillery Battalion as the guest speaker. New Chapter officers are James Bass, President; Vice-Presidents Clyde White and Walter Brown; Secretary-Treasurer Harold Robinson.

MISSISSIPPI CHAPTER

The Tenth Annual Reunion and Homecoming Celebration was the billing for the annual Chapter weekend at Lake Tiak O'Khata, the geographical center of Mississippi. All Eighth AF veterans who grew up in Mississippi but are now living elsewhere were especially invited to attend this reunion.

Sales of the Chapter anthology released just a few months ago have been overwhelming. A second printing has been already ordered and received. The Chapter, and the 8th Air Force Historical Society, has received much favorable publicity about this excellent volume. Chapter members have attended numerous book signings, library "Lunching with Books" programs, and have taken part in media book reviews since its release. Brochures in full color describing the book have been mailed to every library in the state, every school from grades 8 - 12, and every community and state college and university facility - orders for *Mississippians In The Mighty Eighth* are coming in from all of these sources. Historical Society members from across the country have also ordered this unique volume to read and to show the younger generation what the airmen of the 8th achieved. This large format hardback publication may be ordered from 8th AFHS Mississippi Chapter, 214 N. Madison, Tupelo MS 38804, for \$45 & \$3 s&h. All proceeds from the sales will be donated to the the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum to be used to perpetuate the history of the Mighty Eighth.

ALABAMA CHAPTER

The three Wings of the Alabama Chapter have their usual wealth of activities well underway for 2000, with interesting meeting and luncheon speakers at each gathering. Southern, Central and North Alabama Wings are growing in numbers searching out 8th veterans and attracting younger generation members as well. Wing events are organized to appeal to members and wives and a number of Alabama members take an active part in organizing and promoting the events. These Wings commanded by : North Alabama: Ann Vaughn; Central Alabama: Louis Kline; and South Alabama: George Grau are excellent examples of what can be accomplished within a Historical Society Chapter when everyone takes part in supporting Chapter programs and events. Alabama members seem to have a great time doing just that.

The familiar format and variety of news articles persists in the recent 16-page issue of the Chapter newsletter, *Propwash*, large-

ly due to the fact that C. B. "Red" Harper has agreed to continue to serve as Editor, after a momentary lapse when he announced his resignation last issue after having served over a decade as *Propwash* editor. A nice surprise to know that one of the top HS Chapter newsletters will continue in its fine tradition.

KENTUCKY CHAPTER

The members of the Kentucky Chapter report in "The Flying Colonel" that now that Y2K is passed, they are making plans for Y3K. A membership drive is underway to attract younger members to ensure that the legacy of the Mighty Eighth lives on. The Chapter has placed its Memorial in the Heritage Museum Gardens and are collecting a written history of Kentucky 8th members.

Chapter luncheon meetings will be increased to six a year according to President Wayne Tabor. Newsletters will also be published six times a year. The Chapter is being represented at many military and air shows, the most recent being their exhibit at the Ohio Valley Military Society's "Show of Shows." General Philip Ardery was a guest at the show and signed copies of his superbly written book called "Bomber Pilot." The Chapter will also have an exhibit at the Kentucky Colonel's annual Barbeque in Bardstown, KY.

The annual joint meeting with the Tennessee Chapter went off very well with a big turnout April 28 - 30 at Clarksville, TN.

NORTH EAST IOWA WING MEETING

The North East Wing, of our Iowa Chapter, met at the Elks Lodge in Waterloo on Friday Apr. 14, 2000 for a noon luncheon. 63 people attended the meeting.

After signing in and getting seated, the program began with the singing of "America", followed by the pledge of allegiance and the invocation under the very able leadership of Rudy Nelson. Bob Reeves played piano for the opening ceremonies. Chuck Taylor, President of our Iowa Chapter, gave the welcome and a good report of our up-coming State Convention in August and the individual pictures and stories of our Iowa Chapter members for future publication in an Iowa Chapter book.

One of our young Associate members, Greg Piper from Iowa City, came dressed in World War II class A Army Air Corps pilot's uniform -- complete with Pilot wings, battle ribbons and insignia. He really looked great! It's good to see our young Associates taking such an active and enthusiastic part in the history of the Mighty Eighth! Leon Mehring did double duty: First as cashier for the meeting, and then presented some very interesting information on the World War II memorial to be built in Washington D.C. He also brought a beautiful, large, framed artists' picture of the new memorial. Many thanks to Leon.

Our program was a presentation of three 10-minute videos, one on the B-17, *Climbing High* with Chuck Yeager, and Aerobatic Art with Bob Hoover and Corkey Forno. Among our guests were a number of former B-29 people who enjoy coming to our N.E. Iowa Wing meetings.

KRIEGIE JOURNAL NOTES

March 28, 1945

by John Chaffin, 95th Bomb Group Richland Hills, TX

Prisoners of War can sometimes give their parole, which means that they promise not to try to escape. In exchange the guardians grant the POW permission to move about unescorted. The United States Army forbids the giving of parole. As the end of the war seems to be near, the Germans have started trying to build up a little good will. They have set up "Parole Walks" for groups of five or six American POWs. A guard takes them from the camp for a walk about the country side. The guard is unarmed and serves as guide only. About three such walks were arranged by the Germans and for some reason I was selected for the last of them.

Today, I spent what will probably be my most pleasant day in Germany. After eighteen months of Kriegie camp life, I was given one day on parole and taken for a long walk. It was an experience that few of us can have.

I went to the camp office along with five other fellows to sign our paroles. From there we went to Colonel Salesman's office for a briefing on what to expect while on our outing. He asked us to dress neatly as possible; to do no bartering and told us how much we should pay for our meal.

I reported back to the camp office not too happy about the day: It was pouring down rain and there was no sign of a let-up. I had borrowed Cornell's greens, (slacks) Chapin's battle-jacket, Jone's cap and Ling's belt. Dressed up for the first time in so long made me feel like a new man and now it looked as if our walk was to be called off. Our guard was in the office waiting however, and said that if we wanted to go, he was willing. The other fellows and I wasted no time in assuring him that we wanted to go, so we started out.

We walked about seven miles due northwest of the camp to a little village called Bergen. The hour and forty-five minute walk was a wet muddy one and our overcoats were soaked when we reached the

farm which was our destination. This farm house was a very large place built of stone. One room was a small beer tavern and it was into this place we were shown by the owner.

Soon after we arrived the woman who lived there had a good fire going in a coal stove and was serving us with good beer and the most delicious chicken noodle soup I have ever tasted. With the soup, we had big thick slices of fresh rye bread which was more like eating cake than bread.

After our soup, we were served a good portion of roast pork, boiled potatoes and red cabbage family style. I do not know how the cabbage was the prepared except that it was boiled; purple in color and tasted better than any cabbage or kraut than I have ever eaten before. With our lunch we had more rye bread.

When we finished eating, we were brought another stein of beer and more bread, which we had asked for!

We were served rolls which were similar to the hot rolls we have in the States, coffee and delicious fried fritters. The fritters were very thin pieces of dough fried in deep fat and then sprinkled with sugar.

In mid-afternoon, we started making preparations to leave. We had one more stein of beer, which left me so full I was uncomfortable. Earlier in the afternoon, we had given the proprietor four packages of cigarettes and a package of tea as payment for the food. Just before we left she gave us one and one half loaves of bread: six fresh eggs and a big bowl of cottage cheese for ten British cigarettes, two bars of soap and a package of tea. The bread amounted to a big piece for each of us. As the loaves were round and about sixteen inches in diameter, the portion for each was about the size of a man's fist. At the last minute a

peasant, whom the guard had located for us, came in with seventeen apples and twenty four onions which we brought for ten British cigarettes. We started back to the camp.

The walk back was not quite as unpleasant as the walk to the tavern. The rain had slowed to a drizzle and I had a very interesting talk with our guard. He and I walked together, alone most of the time and talked about our countries and the British. He told me a lot about his life, his home and his parents. He promised to bring me some cigarette lighter fluid and gave me his address.

We arrived back in camp at six o'clock. After we divided our purchases, I took mine to the combine. It had been a wonderful outing and I had a lot to tell the other fellows. We all sliced up the bread and ate it with a cracker and the cheese as a snack while I told them all that took place. My only regret was that I couldn't bring back enough of the things that I had enjoyed. The day cost me thirty-five cigarettes counting those which I smoked, and a bag of tea. I raffled off my egg for forty cigarettes so, besides a wonderful day, I made a few cigarettes!



Red Cross parcels arrive

WISCONSIN CHAPTER MEETS AT 440TH AIRLIFT WING

The start of a new millennium also signaled a new start for the WISCONSIN CHAPTER 8th AFHS. A very logical inquiry at HQ of the 440th Airlift Wing, General Mitchell Field, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, found a welcoming response, opening the way for our first quarterly meeting of the new era in the auditorium and dining hall of the 440th.

After two full days of display preparations, the doors opened for viewing of the extensive collections of uniforms, publications, posters, books, airplane models, charts, unit scrapbooks, POW memorabilia, etc. - even a collection of gold-plated Zippo lighters. As the morning progressed, the gathering swelled to more than a hundred in attendance.

The formal program commenced at 10:30 AM:

Welcome by V.P. Bill Bergner (92nd BG(H))

Pledge of Allegiance

Star-Spangled Banner (Sung by Michelle Smukowski, student at Cudahy High School)

Invocation by Harvin Abrahamson, (487th BG(H))

Taps, by student Josh Lequia and Director Jeff Kitzman, of Cudahy High School Band

Formal Welcome of Wisconsin Chapter, by Lt. Col. David E. Rundquist (440th Airlift Wing). After his words of welcome, the Chapter presented to Col. Rundquist a scrapbook devoted to history and other details about the 493rd BG(H), which was the unit in which his father had served in WWII.

Announcements and "What's New" by Dave Brouchoud, Associate member of 8AFHS

The remaining time until noon was devoted further viewing the displays and comradeship, followed by a short walk to Sijan Hall, the 440th Diningroom, for a delightful lunch prepared by the 440th Food Services personnel.

Back at the auditorium after lunch, our guest speaker, Mr. Rick School, gave a vivid and detailed report on B17G No. 42-31763 named "TEN HORSEPOWER." This bomber was participating in the 351st BG(H) mission to Leipzig on Feb. 20, 1944. Drastic developments followed a 20mm shell explosion in the cockpit, killing the copilot and leaving the pilot unconscious. Two other crew members managed to keep the plane flying back to Polebrook, but landing attempts proved disastrous. Rick School's longtime research, extensive travelling, and contacts with many sources of information resulted in publication of this story in the book, VALOR AT POLEBROOK, written by Jeff Rogers. Rick commissioned a painting showing TEN HORSEPOWER and a guide plane near the end of the flight at Polebrook. Thanks for a tense and dramatic story, Rick.

Another highlight of the afternoon was an opportunity to walk through one of the 440th's C-130 HERCULES aircraft conveniently parked aside one of the hangars.

We are very grateful for the cooperation and warm welcome extended to us by the 440th Airlift Wing command and personnel. We look forward to the fortunate privilege of scheduling our future meetings there and having the wonderful benefits of their meeting facilities.

-Donald Almon Info Liaison Officer



Featured speaker, Rick School, with oil painting of "Ten Horsepower" and photo of crew.



V. P. Bill Bergner 92nd BG, back to camera, addresses March 7th meeting of Wisconsin Chapter



Lt. Col David E. Rundquist welcoming first meeting of Wisconsin Chapter March 7, 2000, at base Auditorium of 440th Airlift Wing.

INFORMATION NUMBER ACTIVE AT SOCIETY OFFICE

Calls have been coming in increasing numbers since the Historical Society office has instituted its 800 telephone line. Connie Metts regularly searches the Heritage Museum archives, with the assistance of the library archival staff, to answer questions, search for personal records of veterans and their units, and pass on information regarding the Mighty Eighth and its history to interested callers. In addition, she answers a daily influx of correspondence about a wide variety of subjects. The number to reach the Information service is **1-800-982-1942**.

Office Manager Kathy McCurry says that a record number of new memberships to the Society have been received from people throughout the world, totaling over 600 new members during this past year. Membership Drive activities by Society Chapters and increased distribution of the Historical Society newsmagazine, the 8th AF NEWS, have all played a part in the increase in number of new member applications. A portion of the new members are of the younger generation who have heard of the Mighty Eighth Air Force and are interested in learning of its history.

Connie Metts and a visitor to the Historical Society office look over a few photographs.



HISTORICAL SOCIETY WINS FIRST PLACE IN ANNUAL PARADE

The Savannah Wing of the Georgia Chapter of the Historical Society gathered together and decorated its float, decorated themselves, and stepped out in mass during the 29th Annual Stand up For America! Day parade held recently in Port Wentworth, Georgia. They all had a great time promoting patriotism as seen through the eyes of the members of the 8th AFHS and as only 8th Air Force vets can do it. They came away with the First Place prize for the event. A large gold First Place trophy now resides in our Historical Society office at the Heritage Museum.

The Stand Up For America Day festivities have received an increasing amount of publicity in recent years and the annual parade has grown proportionately in numbers of participants. The Savannah Wing has been the beneficiary of much media coverage which surrounds the activities, and after the parade the Wing members and other visiting Georgia Chapter members who made the trip to participate, retired to the Heritage Museum to take part in Military Appreciation Day activities and to bask in the glory, with all smiles, of their most recent accomplishment.



The winning float and Historical Society floaters in the "2000 Stand Up For America!" Day parade.



First Place! Society members Clayton and Edna Knight with trophy-bearer Connie Metts.

WORKING IN FLYING CONTROL

Wormingford Station 131 near Colchester, where the 55th F.G. was stationed

I worked in flying control.

I want to explain how poor the telephone switchboard reception was. I remember one time I was on the phone and pilots would call in because they could not make it to home base. There were many reasons, low on fuel, A/C heavily damaged and they needed to land at the nearest base he could reach. Sometimes it would be the weather or our home base may have been closed due to fog. Our field was close to being closed. We didn't have many parking spaces for them. We had probably close to 20 A/C of theirs.

I remember one time a pilot called our base and was trying to explain who he was and where he landed. Because of the noise in the room or A/C noise outside the tower and poor reception, I could not understand his name or where he was. I had to plug one ear with my finger. I finally had him spell each letter of his words so I could get his name and where he landed. All of us who worked the switchboard had the same problem.

Our other jobs were to keep a mission blackboard to record the pilot's name, A/C he was flying, and squadron letters on his aircraft. After the mission was over, we sweated out their return. One person stood by the mission board inside the tower room. Another person was on the roof of the tower with field glasses to get the A/C letters off the landing A/C and he called down to the other person at the mission board. The squadron letters were 38th -CG, 338th -CL, 343rd -CY. Each A/C had a third letter that could run from A-Z. These letters were on the side and on the tail section. We needed to know which pilots were returning as soon as possible because there were other personnel standing by to see who returned.

Another tower job was to have a person cover the midnight shift even though we did not fly at night. The reason we stood by at night was we might get an air raid alarm. We waited by the switchboard in case we received a call from "Marks Tey" which was the air raid headquarters. They would call and say a V-1 buzz bomb was headed our way or a German air raid was headed our way. An officer had a bedroom next door in the tower. We would wake him up and get on the "Tanoy" (PA) system and give the red alert to the base and to take cover. We had some V-1's that came close by. Then we waited for the all clear and would announce that. On the night shift we also had to clean and wax the floor.

Another interesting job was to record all transit A/C in a log. There were some interesting people and A/C that came to our base. We kept a record of all of our U.S. and RAF bases about the status of these bases. These were called NOMADS that gave the latest information on construction or lighting systems, runway length or radio contact, and so forth.

Another job was to copy on rice paper the code of the day from a secret codebook. Each day had a different code. If British anti-aircraft guns challenged the pilots, the pilot would fire a flare of the right code for the day and it was more than one color. The

reason the code was put on rice paper was if they were shot down over enemy territory and captured they needed to destroy the secret code right away. So they put it in their mouth and swallowed it. It would melt in their mouth with no harm. The rice paper was about 2 inches square.



A mobile control tower - painting by Philip Brinkman

We worked with the mobile-checkered control tower that was stationed at the head of the active runway. Their job was to monitor the landing A/C that may not have his landing gear down or locked, and if this were the case the operator would shoot up a red flare so the pilot would have to go around and solve the problem some other way by contacting the control tower. If there was a problem we would send our the crash crew out to the mobile tower to stand by. In most cases they would make a belly landing in the grass next to the active runway. I remember a P-38 making that kind of landing. He was returning from a mission. He could not get his landing gear down, and he had one engine out also. He made a good landing and was not injured.

Normally when pilots were on a mission they kept radio silence. Later on in the war when the Luftwaffe was scarce, there were no restrictions to transmit. There were times we at home base could hear our pilots make comments about things that were going on as they were engaged in combat with the Luftwaffe. We heard two pilots flying P-38's involved in a mid-air collision. One A/C pulled up into the other one above him. I don't recall if either plane went down and crashed, or survived.

My wife and I visited the airbase in 1982. The tower was torn down around 1980. The flying control tower was just a pile of bricks and rubble for two years. The gentleman that drove us to the airbase worked for the mayor of Colchester. He took time from his job to take us to the train to London.

**Fred Hoxey, 442nd ASG
Ann Arbor, Michigan**

A D-DAY TRIBUTE

JOHN WILLIAM ORR JR.

J. W. Orr entered the U.S. Army in 1943 from his home in Winder, Georgia. After basic training at Camp Wheeler in Macon, he became a part of the 2nd Division. His training continued with the British Commandos in South Wales and later became a member of the Regimental Raiders. His group landed on Omaha Beach of Normandy on June 6th, 1944 - the D-Day invasion. Moving inland J.W. was hit by a German sniper eight weeks later near St. Lo, France. He received two Bronze Stars and a Purple Heart. After post-war service with the National Park Service in Washington, DC and then with the Justice Department, he returned to Winder with his wife Jackie and resumed his life as a prominent businessman. He is also survived by their three sons, Mike, Johnny, and Arnie, and daughter Beverly.

"Uncle Jay" was the favorite uncle of the Historical Society's Connie Metts who tell many satories of her years of knowing him and growing up around him. She says he was a great story-teller himself, a wheeler-dealer ("Never be afraid to ask the price of something and NEVER pay what they are asking for it."), and a man who would do anything to help friends or strangers. He always said that to just listen to people was the best way to learn - "after all, they can't cook you and eat you, it's against the law; all they can do is say yes or no." Many young men and women who came into contact with him benefited from his wisdom and guidance and from help freely given to them whenever they were in need. His lessons of loyalty and patriotism will remain with those who knew him.



KENDRICK R. "SONNY" BRAGG

Sonny Bragg died recently at his home in North Carolina. Born and raised in Savannah, he played on Duke's 1938 Rose Bowl football team and attended the University of Miami on a diving scholarship. During the war he gained a good bit of notoriety as an 8th Air Force B-17 pilot. Sonny flew the first 8th AF bombing raid over enemy territory in Europe. His trademark shout on the intercom after dropping his bombs was always "Boy-o-boy! We got 'em today! Boy, we really got 'em today!"

On one particularly rough mission, Sonny's airplane, the *All American*, was rammed in the fuselage in mid-air by a German Messerschmitt which almost severed the B-17's tail. He got the bomber back home and shortly after landing, the aircraft's entire tail fell off. "It should not have been able to fly," reported his tail gunner Sam Sarpolus. The wartime song, "Coming in on a Wing and a Prayer" was written to commemorate that heroic landing.

After practicing his profession for thirty years as an architect, he returned to North Carolina. Sonny Bragg was buried in historic Bonaventure Cemetery in Savannah, Georgia

- submitted by Bill Barber



Anderson, Donald, Austin TX; 35 missions bombardier and navigator 401st BG, Central Texas Chapter; many years as attorney with Texas Medical Association

Selch, Adolph "Art", 8th AF, flew many life-saving missions as one of the first military helicopter rescue pilots

Maxfield, John, tailgunner 398th BG, North Texas Chapter

Moran, John, 44th BG, Illinois Chapter

Bellgardt, Dick, navigator 492nd BG, Illinois Chapter

Reeves, Paul R., Baton Rouge LA 55th Fighter Group, lovingly submitted from wife Nell

Sawyer, Robert, Scotia MA

Downe, Charles O., from wife Margaret

Larson, Roy A., Kansas City KS over 100 missions as P-47 pilot; 49 years in practice of law with many outstanding career achievement awards. He had a love of golf and the principles upon which the game is founded.

Allbrook, Marvin "Mike", Port Orange FL; an unabashed patriot proud of the fact that at one point three generations of his family were in the U.S. Air Force

Rohow, Earl, 490th BG radio operator submitted by Bob Vandebert

Cruver, Harry, 100th BG, President NCAC HS; led Hamburg mission on which two B-17s, on flown by Glen Rojohn, collided and locked "piggy-back" in mid-air

Buist, William, Nashville TN; served as Operations officer for Newfoundland Base Command during World War II

Campbell, Wallace 398th BG, 31 December 1999, from John Self, Pres. Colorado Chap.

Kniese, Marvin, pilot 398th BG, Colorado Chapter

Pfau, Russell, Apple Valley MN, Missesota Chapter, from Don Kent

Kirkpatrick, John "Jack", Eustis FL; 7th PRG, GA National Guard

Dorriety, Robert, Birmingham AL, 489th BG Alabama Chapter

Foster, Edgar, Grove Hill AL, 100th BG, Alabama Chapter

Worden, Leslie, Huntsville AL, 486th BG Alabama Chapter

Williams, David, 357th FG, from Joe De Shay

Glado, Francis, Lakeville MA, from his family

McGhan, Roy, Jackson CA

Zieba, Edmund, Minneapolis MN, tail gunner 384th BG, while visiting in England

Maher, William "Bill", Lexington MA, copilot of *Betty J* 401st BG, POW - per his request through daughter Maureen, and greatly missed by his wife Jean and his family

Wildeman, James, Harrisburg PA, Pennsylvania Chapter

Rohrsen, John, New York State Southern Wing Chapter

Ortman, Lowell "Red", Waller TX, navigator B17, 36 missions

- from Alfred Lea

M FROM THE COMMANDER

Walter.

Appreciate the extra copies of the 8th AF News! Great command...great publication. Will distribute them at an 8th AF meeting in San Antonio next month.



Respectfully, Tom

-Lt. General Thomas Keck is the Commander of the 8th Air Force, with its Headquarters at Barksdale AFB, Louisiana. -Editor

TO TELL THE STORY

Dear Dr. Price,

Our recent visit to Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum was an outstanding opportunity for the students. My 8th graders had previously experienced a study unit on the World War II era. One group of the students had previously done a National History Day project on the evolution of aircraft through the years. To visit this museum, and a focus that relates to what they have studied over the past two years, was a great way for the students to tie in all that they had learned.

After the trip, the students talked about the experience. Students noted that they were impressed with the "Home Front" materials, some of which they had read about and were glad to be able to see for themselves. In particular, they liked seeing the banner that families would hang in the windows. They also spoke highly of the scavenger hunt. They thought it was a challenge, because they felt they knew some of the answers, but wanted to verify before they would write anything down! I felt that this was a very well done activity.

I want to thank you for all that you did to make this visit a success. Several of the students have told me that they want to come back and bring their parents. I hope they will do so, and will be able to share what they have learned with their parents. Having an avid interest in the World War II era, I'm sure that I, too, will make another visit to the museum with my husband.

My respect, pride, and patriotism continue to soar as I think about all that the Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum represents for our national and state history. I wish continued success for the message that the museum carries to all who visit.

Sincerely, Joan Williams Teacher -
Putnam County Middle School
Eatonton, GA

A very nice tribute to all who have served in the Mighty Eighth and to Dr. Vivian Price, Director of Education at the Heritage Museum. -Editor

RAF BOMBER COMMAND

Dear Connie Metts,

Since we have now returned home to Chicago and have got settled down again it was time I wrote you a thank you note on behalf of my wife, myself and R.A.F. Bomber Command for your kindness and assistance during our recent visit to the Mighty Eighth A.F. Museum which we enjoyed immensely.

If you remember I wanted to find out what had happened to the picture of the R.A.F. "Lancaster" bomber which was presented to the 8th A.F. Historical Society at the 1993 reunion in Chicago by a group of ex-R.A.F. aircrew. They had made the trip from England with the picture which had been signed by many R.A.F. people including myself. Since it wasn't yet framed, I was given the job of getting the picture framed and ready for presentation.

This was achieved with the help of my son Andrew as part of our contribution to Bomber Command. We presented it to Secretary Doug Radcliffe who is now a very good friend. Because of your kind assistance I shall now be able to inform him that the picture is hung in the Heritage Museum, which makes all of us very proud.

Thank you again on behalf of all the R.A.F. Bomber Command airmen a aircrew who flew alongside the Mighty Eighth those many years ago.

Yours Sincerely, John A. Maur ex-R.A.F.

-After the Chicago annual Historical Society reunion, President Sherman Small directed that this unique presentation from the Royal Air Force occupy a special place in the Heritage Museum. -Editor

POWs, 8 MAY 45

Dear Walter:

There is one event which occurred in the 8th Air Force that has not received any significant coverage, and that concerns the recovery of our POWs by 8th Air Force units. About all I know is that the 398th BG participated in the recovery effort.

I was a pilot in a flight of twelve aircraft that flew into Barth, Germany and returned our POWs to A 70, an airfield near Reims, France. Some of the specifics as I recall: we put wooden floors in the bomb bay of our B-17 to accommodate 34 POWs in each aircraft. The Russians required us to fly in a restricted corridor to reach Barth in Russian occupied territory, and we flew into Barth in formation and returned to A 70 by individual aircraft.

One thing I remember vividly was that when I dropped out of the front hatch to put foot on German soil and looked at the 34 POWs lined up to board the aircraft through the waist door. I got a very clear eyeball message from 68 eyeballs - "Get my butt back in the aircraft, we want out of here." That was a very memorable flight.

I am sure other bomb groups participated in the same mission, as there were aircraft landing by the numbers at A 70, but I have no idea how large an operation it was. If the data is still available I think it would make for a great article in the 8th Air Force News. Sorry I can't contribute any more to this mission. Is it possible the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum may have some data on the recovery of our POWs?

Newell (Newt) Moy, 398th BG
Salt Lake City, UT

LICENSE PLATE

Dear Walt,

As always, I really enjoyed the latest edition of the 8th AF News and I was interested to see Brian Moffatt's 448th Bomb Group license plate. The bond between the Brits and the 8th Air Force guys has always been strong and now, all these years later, it still as great as ever. I



Harry Holmes' Rover 800 license plate.

spent my wartime days as a schoolboy looking over the fence at Base Air Depot No. 2 at Warton, Lancashire, and I was luckier than most as I saw pretty near every type of US airplane that came to the ETO. I am a long standing member of the BAD.2 Association and in regular correspondence with many of these great guys.

As my own tribute I tried to get the license plate BAD.2, but it was not available. However, as a private plate I could get a number 1 to 20 so I chose one for my favorite bomber B-17 and I am still amazed on just how many people ask, "Is that for the Flying Fortress?" The second part of the plate, ATP is for the Advanced Turboprop airplane, which is for the last aircraft I was involved in before I retired from British Aerospace. I will enclose a photograph which I hope will interest your readers and show to them that they are not, and never will, be forgotten.

My kindest regards, Harry Holmes
Manchester, England

-Harry Holmes is a noted Aviation Historian and author of books on aviation, history and heritage.

THE RAF BOMBER COMMAND DAYLIGHT MISSION OF 23 DECEMBER 1944



Dear
Walt:

Neil Cockburn did a good job of describing this mission (Dec 99 NEWS) from the RAF point of view. The German side of the battle is also of interest. The interception was made by the Second Gruppe of JG 26, the former "Abbeville Kids". Their primary task at this time was to support the German Army, and they were rarely ordered to attack heavy bombers, but welcomed this opportunity to engage an unescorted formation of Lancasters, which were much more vulnerable than American heavies. (The location of the escort is an unanswered mystery.) The following account is taken from my book, *The JG 26 War Diary Volume 2: 1943-1945* (Grub Street, London, 1998).

This was the first mission by the Second Gruppe in its new mount, the Fw 190D-9. Major Anton Hackl led nineteen of the "long-nosed Doras" up from Nordhorn at 1152 and headed southwest toward the Ardennes, looking for American fighter-

bombers. The 190s were spotted and attacked by a squadron of 364th Fighter Group P-51s that were flying a sweep in support of an 8th Air Force bomber mission. One German pilot was shot down and killed. A second pilot force-landed without injury and ran from his airplane just before it exploded. Major Hackl claimed one of the P-51s, which was able to make a forced landing on the Allied side of the lines.

Hackl then received word of an unescorted heavy bomber formation near Cologne, and led five aircraft in that direction. The bombers soon came into view - a small force of Lancasters and Mosquitoes. The first victim of the fighters' attack was the leading Lancaster; it was followed by five more Lancasters and one Mosquito. Major Hackl and his men filed seven victory claims, exactly matching the RAF lessons. Their German fighters were not touched by British return fire.

The RAF mission had gone wrong almost from the start, when two Lancasters collided over the Channel. The attacking force comprised thirty Lancasters and two Mosquitoes from Bomber Command's elite No. 8 (Pathfinder) Group. Their target was the Cologne railroad station. It was to have been located and bombed using the Oboe navigation aid, but a sudden clearing of the solid cloud cover necessitated a change in tactics, resulting in a great deal of confusion within the formation. The German fighters hit them on the target run, and destroyed any remaining hope of a successful bombing attack.

The leader of the attack force, S/L R.A.M. Palmer, was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross - the third such award of the war to an RAF bomber commander shot down by the Abbeville Kids. Best regards, Don Caldwell
Lake Jackson, TX

COLONEL ABER

Dear Mr. Brown,

I would first like to thank you for the wonderful job you are doing with the 8th AF NEWS. I look forward to receiving it!

In the Dec 99 issue there was letter titled "TONDELAYO" and about Col. Earle Aber from John DeGrange, 384th B.G., White Jacket Squadron. Perhaps I can



Col. Earle Aber presents the air medal to T/Sgt. Thomas Thompson



T/Sgt. Thompson and "Tondelayo"

furnish a little more information to go with it. Col. Aber was Commanding Officer of the 406BS(H), a Night Leaflet Squadron at Station 113, Cheddington, England. Their function was to drop leaflets at night over enemy occupied territory. The aircraft consisted of B-17s and B-24s. The B-24s were painted black. The planes flew alone without an escort. I had the pleasure of flying a mission on February 10, 1945 as Engineer/Gunner with Col. Aber in B-17 #42-30726 "Shady Lady."

Sincerely, Thomas D. Thompson
406BS(H) Adrian, MI

COLONEL ABER

Dear Walt,

Many thanks to John DeGrange for his update on TONDELAYO. Col. Aber was

the C.O. of the 406th Bomb Squadron based at Cheddington. The function of the 406th was the dropping of leaflets & pigeons. Every night 12 planes were sent out, each with different destinations. We had no escorts and no formation. Usually 1, 2 or 3 drops per mission. Our "Bombs" were 500 pound cartons loaded with leaflets, and equipped with a barometric fuse that blew at 5000: breaking apart the carton and scattering the leaflets - it was very effective. On this night Col. Aber was delivering newspapers to Holland and was re-entering England when his plane was shot down. His last mission is recorded in the book "SECRET SQUADRONS OF THE EIGHTH" by Pat Carty. Shortly after that the Squadron was transferred to Harrington and became part of the 801/492 Bomb Group, known as the CARPETBAGGERS. S/SGT Vernon Gauger Waist Gunner, 406th B.S. Park Ridge, IL

8TH AF NEWS CONTRIBUTION

Dear Walt,
Enclosed is an eventful human interest story I experienced. I would like to share it with the readers of the 8th AF News. I must tell you that the material included in the magazine recently has been first rate. Keep up the good work. Also, I was privileged to visit the 8th AF Heritage Museum in Savannah this last March. It is a great tribute to us that served. It makes me proud to have been a part of the Mighty Eighth. I urge everyone to visit this fine Museum. It is impressive.
Sincerely, Ed Kastenek 493rd BG
Rio Rancho, NM

PADERBORN

Dear Editor,
I am a 41 year-old police officer in my hometown Paderborn, some 70 miles east of Dortmund. Since many years I am looking for information about the air war in this area during WWII. The three air-fields near Paderborn, Lippspringe and Stormede, the city center, the railway bridge Altenbeken, the fuel station near Neuenheerse and so on were often attacked by bombers and fighters of the 8th Air Force. I am looking for some details and when you would be so kind to publish my researches in your Air Force News I'll be very happy. I'm looking for some more information about the raids to

Paderborn, the crew-members, the pilots and units.

As an example:

On 11 Jan. 1944 one combat box flown by B-17s was attacked by 109s of JG 1 south of Paderborn. A today living JG 1-member told that three B-17s were damaged, one crashed near the small town Osterholtz in the NE of Paderborn. Six crew members bailed out. The others were KIA. On 21 February 1944 a B-17 collided with Me 410 of ZG 76 over Bad Dribrug, some 15 miles east of Paderborn. The B-17 crew was KIA. Pilot of Me 410 was killed.

After the raids on 17 January and 27 March 1945 the city of Paderborn nearly was destroyed, the documents in our archives too. The rest was destroyed by some leaders of the Nazi-Regimen before US troops reached this area in 1 April 1945.

Members of our city archive tried to collect every information about Paderborn that could be found. Paderborn is a very old city aged more than 1200 years. My part are the air-fields and the war from WWI and WWII. The historians here wrote about the bombing mostly. I want to know more about the men and their aircraft. So I'm very thankful for publishing my questions.

Yours faithfully, Friedhelm Henning
Im Brassfeld 16 33100 Paderborn
Germany

SINK THE BISMARCK

Dear Sir:

The report from the Illinois Chapter in the March 2000 issue of the 8th AF NEWS (p 39) is very interesting but contains an error. The story of the Hood and the Bismarck is recorded in "History's pages, Prose and Song." On May 24, 1941, the Hood and the Bismarck engaged when at 5:52 AM the Hood fired on the Bismarck from a distance of almost fifteen miles. The Bismarck's return fire struck the Hood and started a fire which quickly engulfed the midship section. At 6:00 AM, after the fifth salvo from the wounded Bismarck, the Hood exploded and sank. Only three survived.

Sincerely, Daryl W. Nooner, 7PRG
Houston, Texas

- Member Nooner is right on target. *The Bismarck was eventually sunk by nine allied ships in a well-known Naval encounter. Johnny Horton's country song*

'Sink The Bismarck' uniquely puts the story to music. -Editor

HELP!

HELP! A WW-2 novel entitled WHORES AND BOMBS AND ENEMY PLANES, is ready for publication. Need help with a publisher. If you can help, correspond with me at El Camino Real Box #59, San Benito, Tx. 78586. Tel/fax (956) 399-2312. E-mail hlwatkinsjr@juno.com. -H.L. Watkins Jr.

INCIDENT AT KINGMAN

Dear Walter:

I read with great sadness the letter from Frank McKinley in regard to the tragic incident that occurred at Kingman Army Air Field, Arizona in January 1944. I had finished pre-flight at Santa Ana Army Air Base a few weeks earlier and had been sent to Kingman for gunnery training as a part of the bombardier-navigator programs.

I was on my bunk and, like most of us, was getting ready for "Lights Out" and there was a lot of chatter going on, when suddenly the door to the barracks burst open and someone called out "Blood donors needed on the double!" Needless to say, a lot of guys put on their jackets and went out into the night. A few minutes later we learned that a bus carrying members of the 4th Student Squadron had been hit by a Santa Fe freight train at the main grade crossing. These men were on their way to night gunnery and we did not know the full extent of this tragedy immediately. When the death toll became known, all of us tried to notify our loved ones to assure them of our safety.

I completed gunnery training, washed out at Deming (N.M.) bombardier school, was sent on to operational training unit at Rapid City, S.D. and assigned as waist gunner to a crew getting ready for overseas deployment.

Sincerely, Frederick M. Biggs 486th BG
Bethesda, MD

TRAINING TRAGEDY

Dear Sir,

I am responding to the request of Frank McKinley of Stoneham, Maine in the March 2000 8th AF NEWS, for any 8th AF members who were stationed at Kingman, Arizona in January 1944, at the time of the train-cadet bus accident. I was on night gunnery range and for

some reason, I don't know why, I was assigned to remove the .50 caliber guns and load them in the back of a 6X6. As luck would have it, I heard the train and I don't know whether we heard the crash or not, but I do know I felt 16 wrists before I felt a pulse. I was privileged to act as a military escort for my friend, Herb Spenser, one of the 32 cadets who died that night. Because I was a military escort I lost a section and graduated later than the rest of our class. I then went on to Bombardier School in Deming, N.M., but because of an ear infection I dropped back a class. I did graduate and became a Bombardier and member of a B-17 bomber crew in the 96th bomb group. In March of 1945 I was wounded over Leipzig, Germany and later received a Purple Heart and Distinguished Flying Cross. If we look back at the things that happened, including a bus train accident, an ear infection & some German artillery, we must wonder what if? I've often said "I wouldn't do it again for 10 million dollars, but I wouldn't take 10 million for the experience".

Richard L. Johnson, 96th BG
Langley, Washington

8TH TWINS

Dear Mr. Brown,
Thank you for your "Twins" article in the March issue of the News. Our 452nd Bomb Group also printed mention of the Birkbeck twins. I hope that we will hear from Dan and Tom soon. I was surprised by the number of twins who flew with the 8th, particularly the number of pilots. I note that Peder Larson flew with the 96th B.G. That group was part of the 45th Wing with our group, the 452nd, and the 388th B.G. so he and I flew some of the same missions. I'll be looking forward to the complete Larson tale. I really enjoy the 8th AF News - you do a very fine job. Best Regards, Harry Smith, 452nd BG

BOMBER ROUTES

Dear Sir,
After reading the latest issue of 8th AF News which I always enjoy and I feel that I can add information to the article in Mail Call in Volume 00, Number 1, page 18 titled "Bomber as Bait." To refresh my memory about this situation I dug out my WWII diary and under 12 Sept. 44 on my 1st mission to BRUX, CZCH. (the 398th

BG - 81st mission) I had written - "Went on my 19th mission to hit a synthetic oil plant at BRUX, CZCH." We went by way of Jutland peninsula, Berlin, and back out via France and Belgium. Saw fighters and plenty of them near Berlin." We were told that the reason for the routing was to see if Germany could still put up fighters in any strength. The answer was definitely, yes. On 1 October 1944, my 26th mission, we returned to BRUX, CZCH on a more or less straight-in trip, but that is another story. Keep up the good work of publishing the 8th AF News.
Sincerely, Ralph D. Trout, 398th BG

FRECKLETON AND BUZZ BOMBS

Dear Walt,
I returned home from the Heritage Museum just a few days ago. Two English friends had come to visit me and wanted to see the Memorial Garden the BAD-2 Association had dedicated at the Museum. One of my visitors was Ruby Whittle Currell, one of two five-year old village children who survived the fire when the B-24 crashed into her nursery classroom on August 23, 1944 in Freckleton, England. Plaques at our Memorial Garden tell the story of the crash and list those who perished. A marble slab lists the children and teachers we lost. We drove from Delaware, collecting Dick McClune near Newport, VA. At Savannah we were joined by Ed Morgan plus Carl Finney and wife from Jackson, GA., and Alan Drew & his family from New Hampshire and South Carolina.



Ruby and Brian Currell at Heritage Museum

We spent four days at the Museum, much of the time with the wonderful staff members there who surely made us welcome!

Dick presented Judy Walker with a \$2500 check to cover the cost of a chapel pew and a second check also for that amount toward the Museum's Endowment Fund on behalf of the BAD 2 Association.

While in Georgia, Ruby and her husband Brian Currell celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary.

Robert Hassie's story on Page 14 in the March 8th AF NEWS brought back a lot of memories. I had been transferred from BAD 2 in late 1944 to London for six-month's duty operating a radio station for the Stars & Stripes. When the V-1 "buzz bombs" came over, the ack ack guns in Hyde Park sounded like the 4th of July. A V-2 rocket bomb hit the corner of Selfridge's store on Oxford Street. When I went past there next day I saw a taxicab sitting in the open second floor of the store, blown there by the blast. There wasn't anything published in their papers about the bombs, in an effort to keep the Germans from knowing how good or bad their aim was.

Sincerely, Ralph Scott BAD 2
Editor "BAD NEWS" New Castle, DE

WHERE ARE THE TRAINERS?

Dear Sir:
Re: The Advanced Trainer AT-9
During my advanced training with the class of 44-G at Blytheville AFB in Arkansas during the summer of 1944 we flew the first part of it in the AT-9. We were then given AT-10's to complete the training. Does anyone know if there are any AT-9's on display in the States? How about the AT-10? I would like to see one again before I go to the big hanger in the sky. (I ain't planning that trip soon, however.) Please advise...

Sincerely, Lewis E. Burke 5287 Ellicott Drive Centreville, Va 20120
Fax # 703-802-7946

MID-AIR COLLISION

Dear Sir,
Re: Article "Application" page 18 of March 2000 issue. I witnessed two B-17 squadrons approaching each other as right angles. One squadron pulled up sharply and then dove sharply - except the last two ships in each squadron. Both dived

down and collided directly over the 306th B.G. Station at Thurleigh. At the point of collision a 368th photographer by the name of Spencer (from Ohio) made photos that should be in the 8th archives somewhere. It was an experience that you don't like to recall but cannot forget. My compliments to you for your publication.

William B. Griffith 368th BS. 306th B.G. Beallsville, MD
"Application" titled the letter from Associate member Paul Baker who witnessed a mid-air collision near Chelveston - Editor

HIKIN FOR HOME

Dear Walter:
 I just received the March issue of the 8th AF NEWS, noticed a letter from Robert A. McKee regarding B-17s that had flown over 100 missions. I flew with the 322nd Squadron of the 91st Bomb Group. My plane was named "Hikin for Home". At the end of the war it had flown 125 missions. My crew and I were assigned to this plane in early June of 1944. We named it "Hikin' for Home" with the thought that after we had dropped our bombs we were 'hikin' for home'. We had Tony Starcer paint a picture of a girl hitch-hiking on the nose of the plane. It was one his best wartime paintings.

My crew and I completed our missions flying this plane; we returned to the U.S. the first part of August 1944. During the time we flew "Hikin" none of our crew was killed or wounded. We considered the plane to be very lucky. There was battle damage on some missions, but we got back to our home base every time. A number of other crews flew the plane

after we left. There were a few incidents regarding the plane, which I will not take up space to relate here now. The ship was consigned to salvage and scrapped in the ETO in December 1945.
 Sincerely,
 David Hanst 91st BG
 Huntington Beach, CA

BODY ARMOUR

Attn: Walter Brown, Editor
 Your article on "BODY ARMOUR" reminded me of an incident in early 1944 when I was a navigator in the 571st sqdn, 390th Bomb Group.

I had stuffed my gear up through the nose hatch of our B-17, parachute, helmet, navigator's briefcase, and one of those eleven-pound flak jackets, and crawled in after the load. After I organized my workstation, checked over the two guns, I struggled into that burdensome flak jacket. My eye caught a label sewn to the edge of the canvas. It read "FASHION FROCKS INC. NEW YORK." Very appropriate, there must have been more than 7000 crewman loaded down with those very necessary flak jackets that morning.

A friend, who was also a navigator, obtained a piece of armor plate which he placed on the floor by his worktable. When the flak got heavy, he pushed his stool aside and sat on the armor plate. It proved very effective one day when a heavy piece of flak hit the armor plate right where he sat. A real jolt, bent the plate, but no

blood. However, his backside was severely bruised, and he had to be taken off flight duty for a few days. No "Purple Heart", just a "Black And Blue Butt". I really enjoy every issue of the 8th AF NEWS; the present format and coverage is great!
 Sincerely, Cecil Richardson, 390th BG
 Upland, CA

FATHER AND SON

Dear Walter,
 Thank you for the most wonderful review you gave "Squadron of Deception" in the March issue of 8AF News. Both Dad and I could not be more pleased. Here is a snap of us taken at the December 8, 1999 book signing at Borders Bookstore in Cary, NC.
 Sincerely, Stephen Hutton Apex, NC
 www.36rcm.com



Stephen and Iredell Hutton



L-R: Unit and Chapter Chairman Jim and his wife Joe Ann Erskine and Michigan Chapter President Maurice (Suds) and his wife Char Sumney at the organizational meeting of the Michigan Chapter.

VERY NERVOUS INSTRUMENT FLIGHT

By Gene Wiley, 92nd BG
Conifer, CO

The death of John F. Kennedy, Jr. in 1999 while flying in instrument weather and crashing in the Atlantic near Massachusetts brings back the memory of my most nervous flight in England.

The 92nd Bomb Group was still stationed in Bovingdon and on Oct 14, 1942 I flew to Burtonwood (near Prestwick, I think) delivering some engine parts. Our take off to return to Bovingdon was late in the afternoon. On the way back we had solid cloud cover which kept getting lower. I stayed under it to fly contact until we were close to Bovingdon. A ridge ahead forced me into the clouds. By then it was dark so I asked the Bovingdon control tower to give me headings to land.

Following their directions I got on the downwind leg and when they told me to descend below the cloud cover they told me when to turn onto the base leg and watch for the runway lights.

When I saw the lights, I turned to make a final approach & the lights disappeared. All runway lights had directional hoods & I had to be aligned with the runway to see them. I went back up in the soup and the tower continued to give me headings to land. Each time I had the same problem so after 3 attempts, I asked them to remove the hoods from the runway lights. We flew in the soup for about 15 minutes while they removed the hoods.

While all of this was going on, my navigator, Tom Walden, went back to the radio room. When the tower said the hoods were removed, they gave me headings again to get into the landing pattern and when to descent. The ceiling was 400' and when I broke out I could see the runway lights. This time I aligned with the runway on my final turn & made a nice landing. When we get off the ship Walden said, "Wiley I'll never leave the nose again when your piloting." It was late and the mess hall was still open so we went to eat. I set down near two Officers and heard their conversation. It was "Did you hear that crazy B-17 flying in all that soup?" I told them I was the Pilot and was so hungry I wanted to land and eat. My aviation cadet training really paid off.

CLEANED UP



SGT. GEORGE BAKER

"SAD SACK" by George Baker

NATIONAL PRISONER OF WAR MUSEUM HOSTS UNIQUE PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBIT



**Combat Photographer, Angelo Spinelli aboard
troop ship to North Africa.**

Andersonville National Historic Site features an extraordinary exhibit of life in a World War II German Stalag in a presentation of photos taken by American combat photographer Angelo Spinelli during his years of captivity. Spinelli was assigned early in the war to the 162nd Signal Company and was sent to North Africa in 1942 to photograph the First Armored Division's activities in that campaign. He states, "My assignment was to take pictures of everything and anything we believed important to our government." Spinelli was captured with other members of his unit on February 14, 1943 at the battle of Kasserine Pass and was taken by the Germans to Stalag III-B at Furstenburg. Over 22,000 Prisoners of War were confined there.

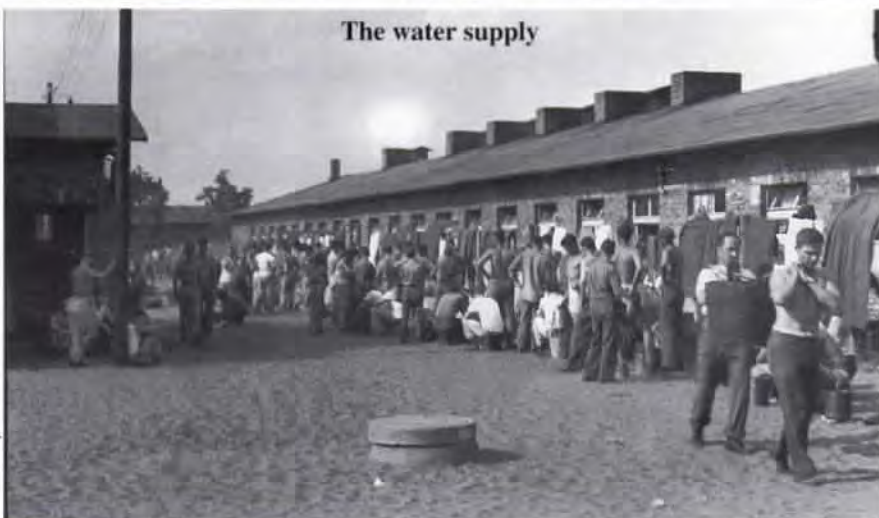
Shortly after his arrival he developed a trade agreement with an elderly German guard who was willing to swap film for Spinelli's American Red Cross weekly allotment of cigarettes. For eight packs of cigarettes a Bessa Voightlander folding camera was obtained. The same German guard would get the rolls of film developed for a pack of cigarettes per roll. Over the next twenty months as a prisoner of war, Spinelli took 1200 pictures under extreme conditions. He had to be careful not to be discovered and have his photographs and



**The National Prisoner
of War Museum -
Andersonville, Georgia**



Kriegies - barracks life



The water supply

equipment confiscated by enemy guards. In spite of these obstacles he was able to record a unique permanent record of life behind the wires.

The traveling exhibit depicts a close look at the day-to-day life of Eighth Air Force POWs and covers many of the activities in which Kriegies were involved to pass the long days and months of confinement away. Baseball teams in uniform, plays and camp show productions, the camp choir directed by Russell Hrer, and even the Stalag band called the *Yankee Doodlers* are seen in remarkable detail and clarity. Morning roll calls, interior shots of barracks and camp kitchen areas, and clothes hanging outside the barracks to dry are depicted in the exhibitry. There are several photos showing prisoners in the act of bribing German guards for special items from outside.

After the liberation of the POW camps by Allied ground troops, Angelo Spinelli returned home by ship on June 13, 1945, having successfully brought with him the largest single collection of prisoner of war photographs and negatives in existence.

The Prisoner of War Images by Angelo Spinelli exhibition will be taken for showing around the country this year and will make a special appearance at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum this Summer. An excellent book of photographs *Spinelli: Behind The Wire* has been compiled by the Georgia Humanities Council and the Friends of Andersonville.



At the guard shack bribing a guard.



The Camp Band
Tha Yankee Doodlers



Harry Gobrecht of San Clemente, California wonders how many 8th AFer's have license plates relating to the Mighty Eighth. The above license is on his personal vehicle. Send yours in to the 8th AF News, with a short note of explanation for publication in future issues.

MY PILGRIMAGE

by Anita Nash Campbell Irmo, SC
487th Bomb Group Association

Pilgrimage: (1) a journey made to a shrine or sacred place; (2) any long or arduous journey. **Wanderer:** one who travels aimlessly.

War orphan. Who? Me?

My mother and dad, Anita and Lloyd Nash, met during the summer of 1942 in Clarksdale, Mississippi, where he was commanding officer of the air training base. She was a music major at Ole Miss. She thought he was a weird-talking Connecticut Yankee. They married Thanksgiving Day 1942. I was born December 1, 1943. He was killed Christmas Eve 1944. She never remarried. She has never really accepted the fact that he was killed.

We lived with my Mississippi grandparents, and I had spent every summer and many holidays in Connecticut with my grandparents, aunts, uncle, and cousins. Of course I heard many stories about my dad as a child, his teen and college years, his success in the Air Corps, his love of flying, his high moral standards, his values - endless praise. Forever young, he was 27 when he flew off from Lavenham Airbase, England.

"Your dad was killed in the Battle of the Bulge. He was a pilot. The plane was hit by the Germans, and it caught on fire. He bailed out, but no one knows for sure what happened after that."

Although I don't know how old I was, I remember when my mother left me in Mississippi to go to his funeral in Wesport, Connecticut. *There was no discussion about it - in any way - ever.*

In January 1995 I met Ed and Edna Mae Butner. Ed and my dad were in training in Rapid City, South Dakota, and later in Lavenham. Ed flew that Christmas Eve mission, and he told me just where in Belgium Daddy Lloyd's plane went down. While Ed was telling me all these details about my dad, I was taking notes, trying to keep my composure, and to think to ask halfway intelligent questions. *I had no idea there was anyone anywhere who could tell me anything about my dad. Ed had no idea that he was telling me anything I didn't already know!*

Ed signed me up for the 487th BG newsletter. *Talk about Pandora's opening the box!*

Ed and Edna Mae, Ann Kulp, and Henry Hughey urged me to meet them in Savannah, Georgia, in October 1997, for a 487th Bomb Group Association reunion. What an honor it was for me

to place flowers at the foot of the new 487th BG monument! Bob Jacobs, whom I met in Savannah, tapped me on the shoulder that last night and handed me a computer printout, my dad's accident report: "Killed December 24, 1944, Found March 1945."

A flood of questions! Could I pursue answers? Of course, via Internet, Friends of the 8th in Europe, etc. *Did I pursue answers? I couldn't function. I could barely breathe.* Newsletters arrived regarding a reunion in Lavenham, something about Belgium. Pol Walhain in Belgium requested pictures of U.S. airmen, "especially Major Nash," for a summer memorial celebration in Belgium.

Of course I sent pictures. Then I received a letter from Mr. Walhain in Comblain-Au-Pont, Belgium, inviting me to the celebration and offering to take me "to the rock quarry where your father's body was found. Perhaps you could meet and talk to some of the people here who remembered that day."

I had to make that pilgrimage. From the time I arrived in Belgium I felt enveloped in love and care and concern from our Belgian hosts, my new American 487th friends and from the people in Lavenham, England. The wonderful people in Belgium wanted to thank us for our sacrifice, to thank

us for their freedom, for their country, for their lives and the lives of their children and grandchildren. There were ceremonies, parades, speeches, trips to monuments, memorials, and museums, breakfasts, lunches, dinners, endless smiles and many, many tears.

The first night in Comblain, Belgium at the museum where Mr. Walhain and his friends exhibited the Story of Christmas Eve, 1944, I met both Mr. Walhain and also the son of the man who found my dad's body. He wanted me to know how distressed his father had been that day and how much that experience had affected his father, not only that day but also the rest of his life.

Our last day in Belgium I was taken to the quarry. Did I really want to see such a cold, dirty, ugly place? My host family followed several cars of caring Belgians to take Mike Quering, a member of the 487th, and me up up a narrow, winding stone road with walking distance of the quarry. The quarry had been closed for several years, and the sight was breathtaking: nothing that I had envisioned. It was beautiful: huge gray rock, green forests



Anita Nash Campbell talks with WWII re-enactor Pauline Clayton of Haverhill, Suffolk with her wire-haired Terrier, outside Lavenham Church.

MY PILGRIMAGE continued

high at the top of three sides, and flowers of every imaginable color growing wild everywhere - out of rock, up from the ground, and from clear pooled water. Turning and looking out and down from the quarry, I could see the beautiful clean rolling Belgian farmland far below. It reminded me of places in New England that I know my dad loved.

Why now couldn't I just go home? How much more could I absorb? What else could there be?

England: Wonderful people, English and American, overwhelmed me with their generosity and kindness - more ceremonies, monuments, and memorials, and many tears, and endless smiles.

On the bus ride to Lavenham Ann Kulp of the 487th BGA Auxiliary said, "Well you've seen the place where your father died. Now you'll see the last place that he was alive." Bob Jacobs whose father flew with the 487th took me under his wing to give me the opportunity to be alone at the airfield. What a wonderful day!

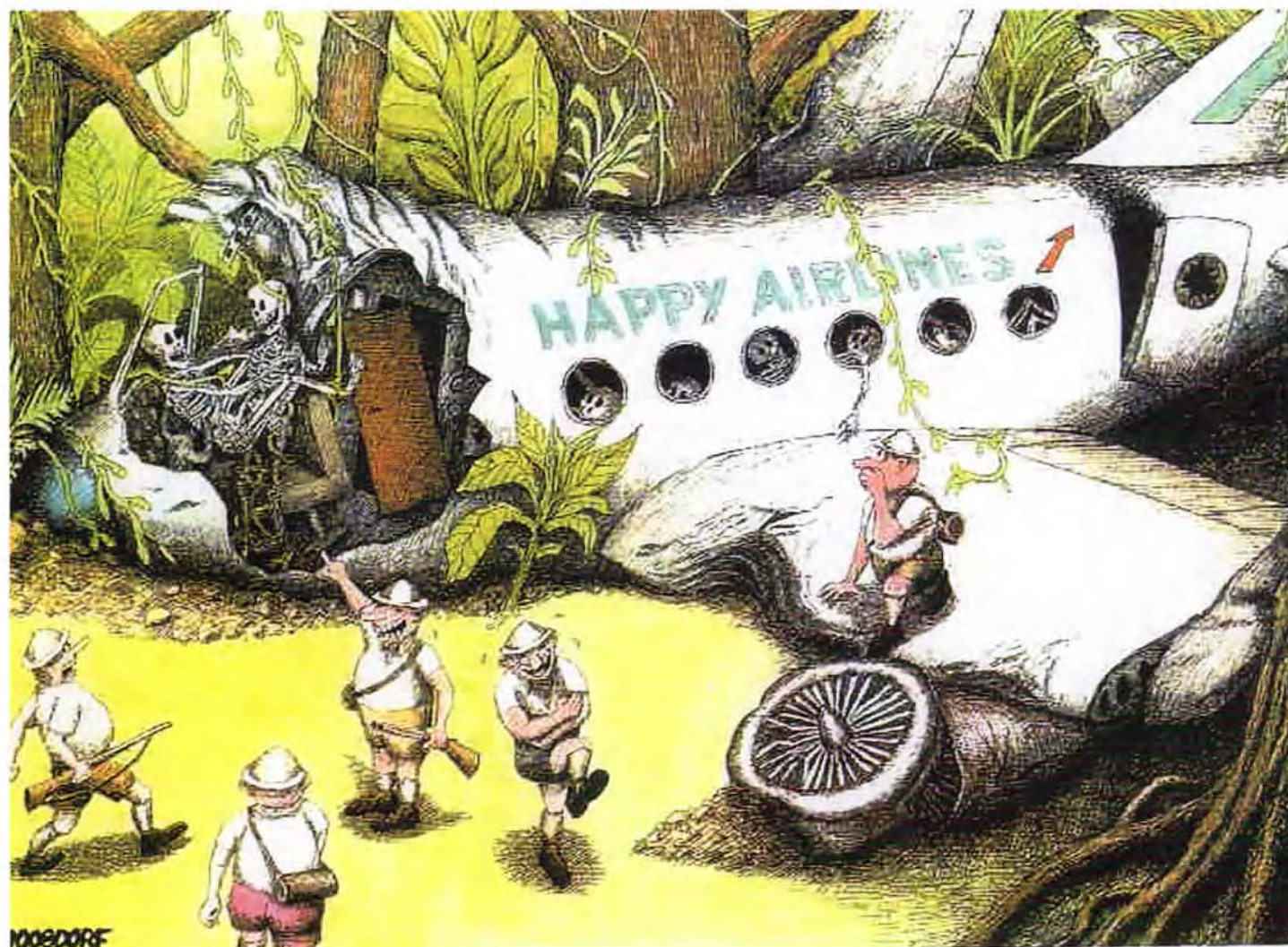
At Lavenham Church, built in the 1400's, Mike Quering and I followed friends to our seats. What a coincidence! My needle-point kneeling cushion had the same design as my dad's memorial stained glass window in our church in Mississippi!

After taking communion I said silent prayers of thanks for my endless blessings and my feelings of a tremendous sense of peace and well being. For the first time in my life I felt my dad's spirit; I knew he was with me there and that he knew how important he is to me. And for the first time I knew that he cares about me.

The night before we left Lavenham I was thinking about that wonderful Sunday, after experiencing all these years of traveling aimlessly, searching without knowing how, hoping and praying for some connection with my dad without ever having had any sign whatsoever before this eventful pilgrimage to Belgium and Lavenham.

For a while I could tell only a few people about my experience. Now, it's such a precious gift that I feel I must share it with anyone who might need an affirmation of faith and a joyous hallelujah during our life's journey.

*487th Bomb Group
Lavenham*



- submitted by the investigators at CRASH - Crash Research in Aviation Society - Holland 1940-1945

355TH FIGHTER GROUP ASSN.

8th AF WWII. 12-15 October 2000. Irving, TX. Contact: Bob Kuhnert, 587 Pine Needles Dr., Dayton OH 45458-3323. (937) 439-1893.

364th FIGHTER GP

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

303rd BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

September 25 - 29 2000
San Diego CA Hanalei Hotel
Contact: James Taylor 421 Yerba Buena Ave. Los Altos CA 94022-2512

303rd BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

RETURN TO MOLESWORTH

The 365th Mission

May 31st - June 8th 2000 Contact: Dick D'Amato 1-800-228-9690

BURTONWOOD ASSOCIATION USA Reunion

October 3 - 7 2000 Las Vegas NV
Contact: Robert Johnston 101 Temple Circle Lynchburg VA 24052-2415

BURTONWOOD ASSOCIATION United Kingdom Reunion

May 29 - June 4 2000 Park Royal Hotel
Contact: Aldon Ferguson 18 Ridgeway Wargrave, Berkshire RG10 8AS England phone 001 44 1925 730 740

447TH BOMB GROUP

June 21 - 25 2000
Colorado Springs CO Contact: George Hoidra Jr 6504 Old Sandy Spring Rd Laurel MD 20707

339th FIGHTER GROUP

October 18 - 22 2000
San Antonio TX Four Points Sheraton Hotel Contact: Larry Powell 818-363-3950

306th BOMB GROUP

September 5 - 10 2000
San Diego CA Sheraton Harbor Island
Contact: John J. Endicott, Reunion Chairman

398th BOMB GROUP

September 20 - 23 2000
Savannah GA for info:

<<http://home.fuse.net/ghilliard/>>
or Wally Blackwell phone 301-762-2213

398TH BOMB GROUP

Return to England and Czech Republic
June 7-20 2000
Telephone 301-762-2213

351st BOMB GROUP

25th Annual Reunion JUNE 6 - 10 2000
Polebrook England Contact: Clint Hammond PO Box 281 Mechanicsburg PA 17005 Telephone 717-766-1489

SECOND SCHWEINFURT MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

October 9 - 13 2000
Silver Legacy Hotel, Reno NV
Contact: Malcolm Higgins
1143 Whitemarsh Court San Jose CA 95120
408-997-0272

A contingent of representatives from Schweinfurt, Germany will be in attendance.

P-51 MUSTANG PILOTS ASSOCIATION

October 15 - 19 2000
Tucson AZ. Contact: Bob Blackwood telephone 520-648-1933

436TH FIGHTER SQUADRON 479TH FIGHTER GROUP

October 22 - 25 2000
San Antonio TX
Best Western Oak Hills 1-800-468-3507
Contact: Travis Greenwood
4506 Navajo Path Austin TX 78745-1520
Ph: 512-442-7134

455TH BOMB SQD 323RD BOMB GROUP

(M) "White Tailed Marauder" 9th Air Force
WW II Sept. 30 - Oct. 4, 2000
Albuquerque, NM Sheraton Uptown
Contact: Russ Hall 8711 Los Arboles NE Albuquerque, NM 87112
email ruanhall@aol.com

YEAR 2000 REUNION

361st Fighter Group WWII,
Comfort Inn BWI
Baltimore, Maryland
September 14-17, contact: William Hild
811 Lynvur Road, Linthicum, MD. 21090
(410) 789-9280

56TH FIGHTER GROUP REUNION

June 1, 2000 thru June 4, 2000
Pittsburgh Airport Marriott
777 Aten Road Coraobolis, PA 15108

NINTH AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION CONVENTION AND UNIT REUNIONS

September 28-30, 2000, Ridgeway Inn, Memphis, TN. contact: Fern Mann, 135 Riverwalk Place, Memphis, TN 38103-0846. Telephone: (901) 578-5333, FAX (901) 578-9999.

BAD 2 ASSOCIATION USA REUNION

Sept. 13-17, 2000 Alexandria, VA
Contact: Dick McClune 527 Quarterfield Rd., Newport News, VA 23602.

BAD 2 ASSOCIATION Blackpool, England Reunion

June 27- July 2, 2001
Contact: Ralph Scott- 228 W. Roosevelt Ave. New Castle, DE 19720

801st/492nd Bomb Group

(Carpetbaggers) 18th Reunion
September 6-10, 2000. Radisson Inn Cincinnati Airport, Cincinnati, OH
Bill Becker 619-287-7163 or Sebastian Corriere 414-464-8264.

SECOND AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION REUNION

May 25-29 Hyatt Regency Westshore
6200 Courtney-Campbell Causeway
Tampa, FL 813-874-1234

92ND USAAF-USAF MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

92nd Bomb Group (WWII and Korea),
92nd Bomb Wing (Viet Nam, Desert Shield, and Desert Storm), 92nd Air Refueling Wing (Allied Force), and the 325th Bomb Squadron (Allied Force)
October 12-17, 2000 - St. Louis Airport Marriott, 12-17 October 2000. Contact: Irv Baum, 3935 Young Ave., Napa, CA 94558-2654. (Phone 707-258-8806 or fax 707-258-1289)

361ST FG ASSOCIATION WWII

September 14-17, 2000 - Comfort Inn, Linthicum, MD Contact: William Hild, 811 Lynvue Road, Linthicum, MD 21090
Phone 410-789-9280

389TH BOMB GROUP

Station 114, Hethel Reunion, September 26-28, Hilton East, Tucson, AZ Contact: Barney Driscoll, 431 Pool Road, Richards, TX 77873-4149 Phone 936-291-6253

AN EVENING STROLL

by Virginia Reynolds

It was a rare October evening that year when we could look toward the sky and see that there was still a moon and stars up there. Until tonight we had been unable to see even the tops of the huge oak trees that stand nearby. The fog had wrapped this part of the world in such a heavy, grey blanket since we arrived in England that every day looked like dusk and nights were swallowed in a kind of tumbling roll of wet darkness. But tonight, tonight is different and Jack and I, newly in love, decide to take an evening stroll, and set out hand-in-hand down the little dirt lane. We can hear in the distance the soft, contented sound of lowing cattle. So bright is the light from the moon that a large owl casts its shadow across our path as it flies by on silent wings to the woods ahead. It is comforting to think that those stars, winking and blinking at us are the very same ones that look down on my own family so far away in Minnesota. Even the crunch of gravel beneath our feet has a good, familiar sound. It seems such a beautiful world, serene and peaceful. But not quite - for it is October of 1943 and the world is at war.

Jack and I had met at Camp Atterbury in Indiana in July of that year when we both had been assigned to the 231st Station Hospital which was acquiring personnel and being readied to go overseas. The entire hospital unit travelled by troop train to Camp Shanks, New York and then had sailed across the Atlantic Ocean on the

Aquitania, sister ship of the *Luisitania*. Our ship had landed in the Firth of Clyde on Scotland's West coast in a fog so thick we were unable to see anything at all of the countryside. That same fog folded us in its dusky mantle as we rolled down to London in a strange little English train. Pressing our noses against the cold, damp

pots squatting on them like pigeons in a park. We were unable to see all the way to the ground, though we strained our eyes. Then the fog fingers would close the curtain and our little train rolled on.

The four-hour journey from London to our hospital site in East Anglia was no brighter, and in the gloom of that foggy

British autumn we settled into a cluster of quonset huts that would serve for use as operating rooms, mess halls, dormitories and clinics. There was even a small hut reserved for use as a morgue.

This evening, our first time off duty, Jack and I are free to explore our surroundings. The evening is clear at last and cool and calm, and the war is very far away.

Behind us as we walk along we can hear voices from the hospital kitchen, an occasional laugh, and the clatter of dishes as the G.I.s on K.P. duty finishing the dishes are storing huge metal kettles with a bang and a clatter.

Our road leads us from the cleared area of the hospital grounds into the woods where huge black oak trees stretch their twisted arms and extend leafy fingers to touch each other and make an arch over our heads as we walk along. The path

winds through the trees, around a small curve to the edge of a small pond. Across the pond from us on a little rise stands Morley Hall, the estate after which our hospital area is named. The grounds surrounding the manor look cared - for from what we can see by the moonlight but the



train window for some glimpse of the great city, we were rewarded in a small measure, when occasionally the fog parted a little, like the slow movement of a theater curtain on the opening night of a great play. Before us spread an expanse of red roofs, with hundreds of fat little chimney

AN EVENING STROLL continued

house itself, large and white with a gracious pillared entryway, seems deserted rather than just empty. The windows of the house stare back at us in the sightless, unblinking manner of the blind. All around us are the spooky ingredients for a Halloween night, but I can not conjure up ghosts and goblins or feel frightened. I am with Jack and I feel safe.

Our paths leads us out from the trees and we find to our surprise that we are on the brink of a small hill. There below us stretches the storied English countryside; small clusters of farms and fields and meadows dotted with dark, heavy silhouettes of trees. The moon has frosted the scene with a silver light.

Voices ahead of us! We discern broad Cockney accents, and we see that where our path intersects a wider road, three soldiers are assembling some equipment they have unloaded from a truck. As we approach, a generator coughs and rumbles and labors into action and two spotlights pierce the night sky. We have come upon a searchlight crew whose job it is to seek out enemy planes. During the war English pilots and searchlight crews patrol the night skies, whereas the American pilots fly their missions by day.

"Evening, Yanks," they call. "'ave a good stroll, but watch out for Jerry."

"Hello Brits." We return the greeting and mull over their warning. The war seems a little closer.

We walk on looking now toward the sky and watching the searchlights stretching and sweeping and combing the Heavens like straight, bright fingers parting locks of dark hair. And there is the moon, peaceful, serene, untroubled. And there are the stars, blinking away. We walk on. It is a quiet evening and it is October, and we are in England and we are happy and all is ...

And all is not well, for the searchlight beams have come together, tight like two fingers made one, like lovers in the night sky and they are pointing almost straight up above our heads, now over a little, and down, and then...

It takes a minute to focus. The quiet of the night is shattered by the sound of a small plane that shoots throughout the sky, straight toward a small moving target. It flies alone above the beams of the searchlights and there is a moment's

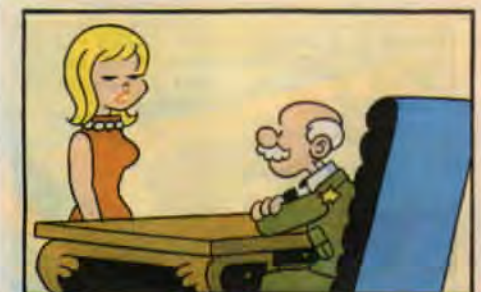
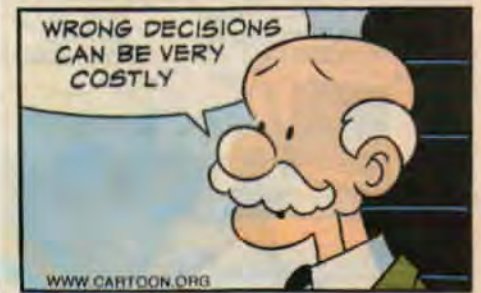
eerie sight when its tiny shadow seems to trail above the little black bullet of a plane. Then the searchlights turn away and by the light of the moon we see two planes circling, swooping, closing in, climbing, arching. Bright little balls of light come from the planes. Comets like those little bright duds from the fireworks on the 4th of July when some of the Roman candles fail to ignite and the little round fireballs they throw are disappointments for the audience. But these duds of light are real and a shiver climbs up my spine as I watch the terrible show. In the distance we hear the swell and drone of the planes' engines as they labor and grind through their antics.

More duds lights, more arcs in the sky and it is over. The fight is over and the fighters turn and head their separate directions for home. They will fight again another day.

We learn later that the Nazis send their fighter planes and bombers to this area for practice or graduation missions because East Anglia is so close to their own bases of operation across the English Channel.

Jack and I stand there this clear bright October evening and watch the searchlights separate their beams and once again comb through the night sky. My legs feel limp and wobbly. Jack puts his arm around me and we start back up the gravel lane, through the woods and into the hospital area. The night is cloudless. The moon still shows its bright face. The stars wink and blink. And the war seems very, very close.

This article, sent in by John Rex, is authored by Virginia Reynolds of Minneapolis, Minnesota. She was stationed in England at the 231st Station Hospital, Morley Hall, Norfolk and later at a Red Cross Club at Kingston-on-Thames near London



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BY LAWS CHANGE PROPOSALS

The following proposed amendments to the Bylaws of the 8th Air Force Historical Society were approved by the by the Board of Directors on Oct. 31, 1999, for submission to the membership for its approval or disapproval:

[Removed wording is ~~lined through~~; proposed wording is **underlined and bold**.]

1. ARTICLE I (B) - ORGANIZATIONS: "The Eighth Air Force Historical Society, Inc. (8AFHS) is registered as a non-profit ~~veterans~~ **educational** organization, Sec. 501 (c) (3) Internal Revenue Code.
[This is necessary to make the Bylaws consistent with its IRS designation and its Articles of Incorporation.]

2. ARTICLE II - PURPOSE
This purpose is also carried out by the support of the 8th Air Force Memorial Museum Foundation, Inc. **and by the support of the Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum.**

3. ARTICLE III (B) - MEMBERSHIP: Members, **Associates, and those eligible for Associate membership,** may become Life Members **entitled to all privileges of membership** upon payment of Life Membership dues as established by the Board of Directors.

4. ARTICLE III (C) - MEMBERSHIP [First two sentences unchanged.] After ~~five (5)~~ **two (2)** years of continuous membership, in good standing, Associates shall be ~~accorded the status of~~ Members with all of the privileges accorded therewith and said ~~five~~ **two** year term shall be retroactive to the initial date of association as to all existing Associate members.



BALLOT

Mail Ballot Before
August 15, 2000



Please vote for or against each change, as you wish:

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1. ARTICLE I (B) - ORGANIZATION: | For the change: ___ | Against the change ___ |
| 2. ARTICLE II - PURPOSE: | For the change: ___ | Against the change ___ |
| 3. ARTICLE III (B) - MEMBERSHIP | For the change: ___ | Against the change ___ |
| 4. ARTICLE III (C) - MEMBERSHIP | For the change: ___ | Against the change ___ |

NAME _____ MEMBERSHIP NO. _____

[Ballots without name and correctly matching membership number will not be counted.]

Clip and mail to 8AFHS, Membership Records Office, P.O. Box 1787, Savannah, GA 31402.

BIG WEEK

WEATHER REPORT

To: LT. General Lance W. Lord AU/CC
Maxwell AFB, AL

Dear General Lord,

Over the years I have enjoyed articles published by the Air University press relating to Air Force History.

The purpose of this letter is to describe a series of studies and actions that resulted in decisions by the highest Air Force authorities in the theater of operations. These decisions, although unheralded, had a profound influence on our success in World War II.

Let me introduce myself.

My name is Lewis L.

Mundell. I served 36 years as a commissioned officer and retired from the Air

Force on 30 June 1970. Before the war I was sent to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology for one year to study Meteorology.

Clearly, meteorology is an inexact science. One suggestion to improve forecasting was that if an earlier weather situation could be found that was very similar to the current one, then what developed from the earlier situation would be a powerful clue as to what was likely to develop now. The difficulty during the war was that there was no ready reference to such prior situations. General Hap Arnold, then Chief of the U.S. Army Corps, was anxious to have better forecasting in order to improve combat operations. He consulted frequently with meteorology professors at the California Institute of Technology, and was able to get the professor in charge, Dr. Irving Krick commissioned as a Lt. Colonel.

It was finally decided, surely with General Arnold's approval, to develop Northern Hemisphere daily weather maps for exactly the same Greenwich mean time for 40 years. Clearly that was a major undertaking. The daily weather reports for each station had to be recovered and collated to ensure that the readings were

at the specified time. Then the weather maps had to be drawn. The Weather Bureau and some Universities contributed to this major effort. Finally, the job was completed. The maps were indexed and bound.

Early in 1944, an alert meteorologist noted that a weather pattern, in the year 1920 was almost exactly like the current one. On subsequent days the historical development produced clear weather over desired German targets. Clear weather was necessary for bombing with the Norden Bomb Sight.

After watching the current weather changes match exactly the historical one for three days, USSTAF forecasters advised the commanders of the 8th and 15th Air Forces that beginning five

days hence they would have five days of clear weather over Europe, especially Germany, to conduct operations. The commanders said they would count on that. They ceased operations and prepared their units for combat. They also had fighter aircraft with drop tanks to accompany the bombers.

The onslaught of bombing on 20 Feb. 1944 was so effective that great havoc

was suffered by Germany -- even the capital, Berlin. Generals Marshall and Arnold, in their Biennial Report to the Secretary of War, stated, "Those five days changed the history of the air war." It was also proved that ground forces cannot effectively operate without supremacy in the air. Those five days of intensive bombing are now known as "Big Week."

I never thought that meteorologists were given proper credit for their contributions, although they were held in high regard by their commanders. Later, their forecasts for the invasion of Europe were followed by General Eisenhower. The British, normally expected to be more expert in local weather, had a more pessimistic view.

Lewis L. Mundell
Lt. Gen. USAF (Ret.)
Savannah, GA

- This fascinating letter was submitted by Arthur Gordon of Savannah, Georgia, who was an editor and war correspondent for AIR FORCE Magazine. He was involved in editing and publishing after his military career, and has written the volumes "A Touch of Wonder" consisting of autobiographical stories and Savannah tales. - Editor



THE MUTT OF 'A MUTT'S TALE'

Below is a picture of the MUTT that is featured in the 8th Air News. His name is Sgt. Delbert McNasty.

Sgt. McNasty is shown lying in the lap of Captain James C. McClanahan during the briefing for the mission for the 2nd Schweinfurt raid known as Black Thursday which was flown on October 14, 1943. The person in front of McNasty is Major Kettlesen, the C.O. of the 545th Bomb Squadron, 384th Bomb Group located at Grafton Underwood, Station 106, near Grafton Underwood, U.K.

-The hero of 'A Mutt's Tale' has told his story in several issues of the 8th AF NEWS. Written with humor by Peter Hinson of Bedford, England, the next installment by Sgt. McNasty will be in the September issue. James McClanahan and his wife Billie reside in Rome, Georgia.



Sgt. Delbert McNasty attending the briefing for the 2nd Schweinfurt, Germany mission to be flown on Oct. 14, 1943. The mission flown was known as Black Thursday, as the 8th AF lost 60 bombers

HOW ABOUT IT?

A military fledgling's first outing at night on a military base presented a frightening and unexpected experience. While he stumbled along in the dark on a rough street, an authoritative and threatening command pierced the chilly night air.

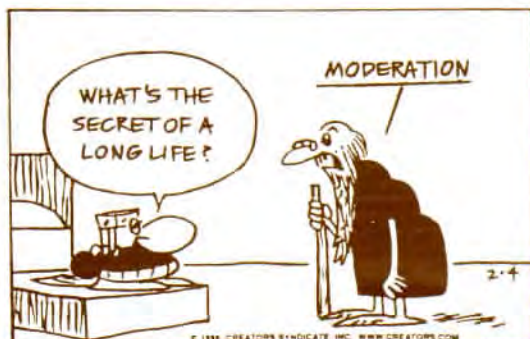


"HALT WHO GOES THERE?" There was no question as to what to do....stop in your tracks, and do it right now. The second command followed immediately, "ADVANCE AND BE RECOGNIZED". Name, rank, serial number, unit assignment, jingling dog tags, the proper uniform seemed to satisfy the shadowy figure who posed the questions. The order, "PROCEED" brought relief.

Proper credentials are always in order. Everyone faces the questions "Who am I?" "What am I doing here?" and "Where am I going?" These questions almost always come during moments of crises. Wartime and battle encounters are prime examples. In wars throughout history, soldiers on opposing sides have relied heavily on their Creator for comfort. German soldiers in the past wore buckles with the inscription "Gott mit uns" (God is with us). Russian soldiers, it is said, also had buckles with the inscription "Bog s nami" (God is with us). The English and Belgians had the motto "Dieu et mon Droit" (God and my right). The Americans: "God and my country." Every nation wants to have God and right on its side. How can this be? All have different languages, political agendas, uniforms, methods of killing....in short there is little resemblance of being alike. But, all want God.



Earl Wassom,
466th BG
Chaplain,
Tennessee Chapter





Dated Material Inside

8th AF News

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

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