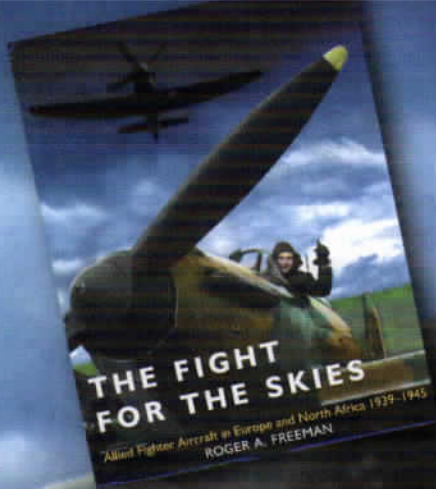




8th AF NEWS

VOLUME 00 NUMBER 3 Voice of "THE MIGHTY EIGHTH" SEPTEMBER 2000



Eighth Air Force Historian Roger A. Freeman



Lt. General James H. Doolittle

Roger A. Freeman

Lt. General Ira C. Eaker



AF NEWS

Magazine of
The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

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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.**

Walter E. Brown, Editor



The Eighth Air Force Memorial Museum Foundation - 2000 Board Officers -

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MISSION BRIEFING

For many this time of the year is a special time - the Eighth Air Force time of the year. Reunions are being held by Historical Society Chapters and by units of the Mighty Eighth across the country. October is on the way with the Mighty Eighth Air Force Week observance closely followed by our annual reunion in Salt Lake City. Veteran's Day celebrations come right behind that. It a special time to see old friends and remember those gone before, and just have a good time.



This issue of the 8th AF NEWS has a special page included. On page 51 you will find an easily removable announcement of the official Eighth Air Force Week October 8 - 14, which may be cut out and placed in a window, an automobile, or on a Bulletin Board to help get the word out about this special week's celebration and remembrance. Color copies are easily made. Post yours in a place where the largest number of folks will see it. Historical Society information is also included.

You may also note that this issue is somewhat thinner than previous issues; a concession to the present budget concerns of the Society's treasury. The Summer Reading section set for this September issue is on temporary stand down until a future date, however we have tried to pack as much interesting material into this edition as the pages would allow. It is hoped that Santa Claus will greet us with a big fat issue in December.

I hope to see as many of you as possible Under Western Skies at our reunion in Salt Lake City!

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

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

REUNION 2000

Great News! Stephen E. Ambrose, noted historian and author (*Citizen Soldier*, biographer of General Eisenhower, etc.), and founder of the D-Day Museum in New Orleans will be our featured speaker at our Reunion 2000 in Salt Lake City, August 18-22, 2000. Don't miss it. Come and enjoy the Utah hospitality. **If you haven't registered - now is the time to do so.**



DUES

Our Treasurer's report will show why we must raise dues this year. Yes, we should have done it earlier, but nobody wants to raise dues, and it was put off too long. Twenty-seven years ago, dues were \$5.00; we had a very modest newsletter and a growing membership. Today we have a professional quarterly journal, Chapters in most every State, and despite new members, we have a declining membership. We aren't keeping up with the mortality rate of our veteran members. In that regard we are not giving up and new and different membership drives will be forthcoming. As for dues, we still feel that \$20.00 is a bargain.

KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK

When you stop and think of it, the work that is done directly by the Society and the Memorial Museum Foundation is just the "tip of the iceberg" when it comes to perpetuating and preserving our history. Countless individuals who are volunteering their time and energy in various museums, talking to school children and civic clubs, writing or recording their own histories, and otherwise getting publicity; this collectively is making a major impact. Then there are the Chapters and Groups who are helping with memorials, publicity and projects to preserve our history. Each newsletter brings our history to a wide audience. Hopefully, the Society can be a catalyst to promote more of these activities and offer support and guidance to all who might be interested. We are an important part of history and it is up to all of us to tell our stories while we can.

See you in Salt Lake City!

Richard Baynes
President

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TREASURER'S REPORT



Ken Nail

The latest financial statement for the Historical Society which we have is the June 30, 2000 statement. While it is slightly better than we projected it to be, it is not good. At that date the General fund cash balance was only about \$4,000.00; bills owed were over \$30,000.00. Thus, it was necessary to withdraw an additional \$40,000.00 from the Life Member Fund in July. We have projected that we will have had to withdraw at least another \$15,000.00 from that Fund before we start receiving dues collections this Fall. At the same time we have not, as yet, been able to make deposits into the Life Member Fund of some \$17,850.00 representing amounts due the Fund for new Life Members. Furthermore, because of the Society's financial condition, no contributions have been made this year to the 8th Memorial Museum Foundation. The Life Member Fund is being depleted rapidly. Your Board of Directors has cut just about all that can be cut from its budget, including the per diem meeting allowance of Board Members. Arrangements have been made for considerable savings in the Membership Management function, the Information Office and Financial Management. Some of the savings provided by the changes made have yet to be realized, but they will be realized soon. These savings have been done without sacrificing the quality of service. One area we have not wanted to change is the publication of our

newsletter. We believe that its real quality, its readability, its content, is the very best thing we have going for all our membership. Also, we believe that it is the very best vehicle we have for carrying out the principal objectives of our Society - preserving and promulgating Eighth Air Force history and the memory of our fallen comrades. All of the above go to show how it has been necessary for the Board to institute a dues increase and a corresponding increase in life member fees beginning with the start of our new fiscal year on September 1, 2000. The Board has wrestled with the financial problems for over a year and has reached this conclusion only after considering all the options available. As of September 1, dues will be increased to \$20.00 per year. While this is a doubling of dues and while there will be a corresponding increase in Life Member fees, these charges, in the opinion of the Board members, will still be very reasonable. This is the first dues increase in many years; inflation alone would indicate the old \$10.00 rate would equate to a current rate of at least \$35.00. Other veteran's organization dues are closer to that range. It is the Board's fervent hope that this increase will be accepted by our members as both necessary and reasonable and that no member will find difficulty in paying this increased amount. The intent of the Board is first to improve its current financial condition, then to restore the amounts withdrawn from the Life Member Fund and, finally, to fund worthy projects as they are brought to the Society's attention. The Board believes that the proposed dues increase, along with cost savings which have been instituted, will make these things possible.

Ken Nail
Treasurer 8th AFHS

FROM THE UNIT AND CHAPTER ADVISORY AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

STATES WITHOUT CHAPTERS

The following States do not have active Chapters:

State	8th AFHS Membership
Alaska	18
Delaware	75
Hawaii	23
Indiana	364
Kansas	231
Maine	67
Missouri	388
Nevada	89
New Hampshire	88
North Dakota	35
Oklahoma	246
South Carolina	227
Vermont	48
Wyoming	25

The following States have Contacts but no active Chapter:

Montana	63
South Dakota	35

Anyone in the above States who wishes to start a Chapter please write the Committee and you will be given instructions, a roster and some financial support.

Jim Erskine,
Chairman
Tel. (419)382-8595
Fax (419)382-4242



Jim Erskine

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Only two things are infinite, the universe and human stupidity, and I'm not sure about the former."
-Albert Einstein

Cover: Eighth Air Force historian Roger A. Freeman is shown flanked by two wartime Commanders of the Eighth Air Force at 1976 Memorial ceremonies held at High Wycombe, 8th Air Force Headquarters. Lt. General James Doolittle, (left) and Lt. General Ira Eaker (right).



The cover background illustration is taken from Roger Freeman's The Fight For The Skies reviewed in 8th AF NEWS June 99.

ROGER A. FREEMAN HISTORIAN OF THE MIGHTY EIGHTH

Childhood Passion Still Alive
After Fifty-five Years

Many English teenagers grew up in the shadows of war in the 1940s - Roger Freeman was one of them. Roger worked on his father's farm at Dedham and lived near a number of East Anglian airbases. While most of his friends were interested in chasing the girls, Roger spent all of his free time watching the airplanes. He cycled from airbase to airbase, often many dozens of miles each day, to observe the activities of the massive Eighth Air Force. Roger watched the aircraft of Boxted - at first the bombers of the 386th Bomb Group and then the fighters of the 354th and 56th Fighter Groups. He saw the massive formations of Heavy bombers forming up to leave for the coast of the continent into combat over enemy territory. He saw the bombers return, fewer in number and many disabled by enemy fire. On occasion Roger would get into the base infield to help his father with the haying. He never forgot what he saw. He became part of the sounds and the events of the men and their machines, and he never forgot those who never returned.

During the years following the war, Roger and his wife, Jean, operated the family farm at Dedham. Roger continued his interest in the 8th Air Force and collected material for his publication of the history of the Mighty Eighth. His first effort was printed in 1961 and a decade or so later Roger published his in-depth study of of US 8th Air Force operations 1942-1945 in three-volumes - over 400,000 words and over a thousand illustrations. These volumes, *The Mighty Eighth*, *The Mighty Eighth Diary* and *The Mighty Eighth War Manual*, have been used as references by scholars throughout the world. There have been over sixty historical volumes authored by Roger Freeman, with three new titles to appear this calendar year.

Roger has been involved with the 8th Veterans in other ways as well. For over twenty-five years he has regularly headed seminars, air war symposia and has also given lectures at numerous Eighth AF bomb and fighter group reunions. He has participated

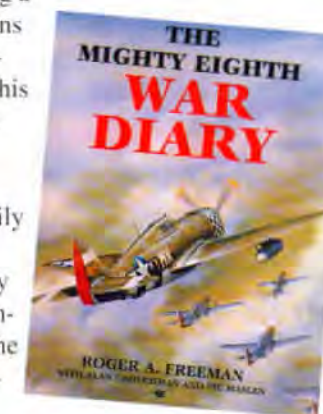
in seminars at the annual reunions of the 8th Air Force Historical Society. Roger currently serves as a Governor of the 2nd Air Division Memorial Trust, a member of the Historical Society's Eighth AF Memorial Museum Foundation Board of Directors, and as a member of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum's Board of Trustees. He has been active with consultant advice and contributions to the historical content and exhibitry of museums and memorials in a number of countries. Movie and video producers frequently seek his assistance on war and aviation-related projects. He was a consultant on the recent movie "Memphis Belle".

Roger tells an interesting story of a meeting he once had with 8th AFHS founder John Woolnough in the early 1970's. Woolnough was visiting and called Roger to ask if he might take him to an 8th Air Force wartime airbase. Roger recalls, "John and I drove about twenty miles up the road to Lavenham, which was still pretty much intact. On the way there, John said, 'You know, Roger. I am thinking about starting a Society of Eighth Air Force veterans to gather together and work to preserve the history of the Eighth.' This was the very beginnings of the 8th Air Force Historical Society."

Roger's son, Dan, runs the family farm these days. When he's not holding seminars, Roger stays busy helping out fixing tractors and combines as the need arises. One of the Freeman's daughters, Sarah, is living in Australia and daughter Emma is in England. Jean runs a busy Bed and Breakfast "at the other end of our farmhouse, and enjoys every minute of it."

Roger Freeman has well earned his place at the top of notable World War II historians, and he remains as active as ever. He has friends around the world who know him as a very humble, sincere gentleman, always ready to enthusiastically meet and correspond with those Americans who served in the Eighth Air Force. A true friend to each, and a true friend of the Mighty Eighth.

New books being published this year by Roger Freeman are *The Mighty Eighth Color Record*, *RAF Bomber Command Airfields*, and a volume on the *USAAF 56th Fighter Group*. They will be available, as are his other books, through the 8th AF Historical Society PX - contact: Mark Copeland, address inside front cover: 8th AF NEWS.



PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Mighty Eighth Air Force Week Proclamation

Dear Member:

This letter as addressed was sent to all Chapter and Unit Presidents in early July.

If you haven't received correspondence from your President, and if you are sincerely interested in the perpetuation of our "Mighty Eighth", call your leader and stimulate some action. This action brings recognition and recognition uncovers old 8th Air Force Vets that may not know about us, and it whets the interest and passion of those who would like to be associated with us. Altogether is spells membership and perpetuity.

Hopefully you have a copy of the proclamation from the Governor of your State if you had him issue one. If not, please make the effort to request a proclamation so your State and Governor can be part of this National effort. Political years are good years to ask politicians for their support, and to make the request more appealing suggest that a photo session with a group or even a couple members of the "Mighty Eighth" who are also part of the "Greatest Generation" would be good news copy. We have some proclamations in the Savannah office so

contact - Connie she may be able to supply a copy for you.

Now what to do with them?

Send a copy to each member of your Chapter or Unit requesting that they take it to their local newspaper, radio station, T.V. station, and any other news source and ask them to give coverage to this Nation Wide proclamation. Give them your picture, or suggest they take one, and have it inserted in your local news outlets for local interest. Emphasize that your Governor or other elected official is cooperating with Governors and officials in other States to recognize the sacrifices made by so many of our fellow airmen.

If you do your part we will truly make "MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE WEEK" a National Week of remembrance for all who served in the "Mighty Eighth".

LET'S DO IT!!!!



Norm Grant

P.S. offer to speak to schools or civic groups. As one teacher wrote, "your sharing of your experiences has led many students reaching out to their Grandparents to discuss their experiences, and it gives students a new view of America, the Flag, and the cost of Freedom".

A copy of the Proclamation may be found on page 52 of this issue - Editor

SECRETARY'S REPORT

This report will consist largely of the results of the balloting for the proposed 8th AF Historical Society Bylaws change. It is with pleasure that I report that all four 8th AFHS ByLaws proposals passed overwhelmingly. There were only twelve "nays" - all the rest received were "ayes". These results will be reported at the annual membership meeting in Salt Lake City.

Secretary:

Craig Harris
2701 Pickett Road, Apt 2035
Durham, NC 27705-5649
Telephone (919) 489-5685
FAX (919) 419-1705



UNIT CONTACTS UNKNOWN

The following Units have not sent the information concerning their Unit Contact to the **Unit and Chapter Advisory and Development Committee**. These Units were listed with Contacts in the 8th AF News in 1996. If your Unit has a Contact please send the information to the Committee, address inside front cover.

8AFFC	942EATOBIN	3ADHQ	5ERS
91GENHOSP	386BG(M)	66FWHQ	82FG
25BS	465BG	95BG	386BG
449BG	8AFTOP	4SAD	45ADG
8AFSPTCMD	1915ORDAVCO	1FG	355FG
70RDP	387BG(M)	100BG	387BG
406BS	1ADHQ	5SAD	65GENHOSP
455BG	FLYCONTR	4FG	495FTG
8FSUC	36BG	301BG	406BG

WHEN THE EIGHTH WAS REALLY MIGHTY

by Roger A. Freeman, 8th Air Force Historian
Dedham Colchester, England

Several US citizens have expressed puzzlement over the many Britishers who have an absorbing interest in the Eighth and Ninth Air Forces of World War 2. Indeed, there is not an old airfield base in England that does not have one or two enthusiasts who seem to know more about the units that were based there than the men who were part of them. In many if not most cases these enthusiasts were youngsters during the war years, but old enough to become fascinated by what they saw. It should be remembered that rural Britain was very rural a half century ago, each country village somewhat isolated and largely dependent on agriculture. The war brought considerable change, no more so than when new airfields were hued out of the farmland and occupied by two to three thousand young men from distant lands, sometimes outnumbering the locals twenty to one or more.

But it was the spectacle provided by the aircraft that made the greatest impression on young minds. To stand at the end of a runway and watch two score overloaded B-17s or B-24s claw their way into the sky never failed to excite. Equally the massed take-off of fighters with their flamboyant decor. This was war, a deadly business, but for the English youngsters around the airfield bases it was a time of unsurpassed excitement. Only with maturity was a less impassioned view perceived.

As one of those many youngsters mesmerised by what was to be seen daily on the airfields or in the sky, of all that extraordinary spectacle one cold morning remains dominant. It was an icy morning early in 1945: I believe 3rd February, but my diary does not record what impressed for at the time its significance was not appreciated. As a 16-year old farmhand I was shovelling mangolds (root fodder) off a cart for cattle in a meadow to eat. There was not a cloud in the sky and visibility was excellent, as it often is on cold frosty mornings. The meadow was at the top of a hill, a valley hill, for there is no high ground in this part of East Anglia. Bombers were passing high overhead, a common enough occurrence that by this date, were only

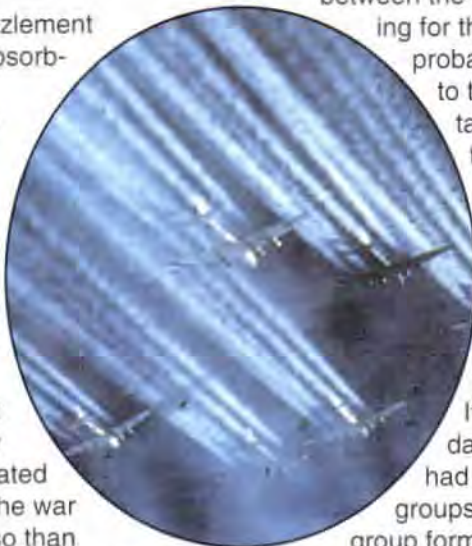
warranting a casual glance. But as a break from my labours I rested on the fork and turned my head skywards. Directly overhead at around 20,000 feet a group of near forty B-17s were headed out towards the coast. Ahead of this group I could see more contrailing groups and behind it others approaching. In all, there were twelve formations

between the west and east horizons, obviously making for the departure landmark on the coast, probably Clacton or Harwich. Then I looked to the north and could see many more distant formations, not individual aircraft but the massed contrails that indicated a bomber group. I counted another sixteen, some no more than a white smudge in the distant blue, for such was the exceptional visibility that morning my vista must have taken in fifty miles or more. In total twenty-eight contrailing formations.

It was several years later before it finally dawned on this addled brain just what I had seen that frosty morning. Twenty-eight groups preparing to go to war at a date when a group formation was thirty-six bombers or more. I had probably been looking at a thousand bombers, with near ten thousand young men about to do battle. A sight that can compare with having been on the white cliffs of Dover as the Spanish Armada sailed by. A fantastic sight which at the time I simply dismissed as just another Eighth Air Force mission departure.

**"I
had
probably been
looking at a
thousand
bombers..."**

One morning twenty-five years later, when my history of the men and machines of Eighth was going to print, I had a phone call from the publisher's editor. He told me that a telegram had just arrived from the American co-publisher stating that the title had to be changed. The American publisher called the turn because the British publisher did not believe there would be any worthwhile interest in Britain for a book lauding the achievements of US airmen. To say the least, my editor was not very pleased with the US publisher's demand because printing the book was actually scheduled to start that very day. I was told I had an hour to come up with a new, pithy title. The memory of that icy morning in 1945 must have come to mind and when my editor phoned back, I suggested *The Mighty Eighth*. Many years later at an 8th Air Force Historical Society convention the then current commander of the Eighth Air Force mentioned in conversation that the call sign of his air transport was *Mighty Eighth One*. I felt it inopportune to tell him that *Mighty Eighth* came from a book title dreamed up by a grubby old English farmer!



MILLENNIUM BUILDING IN NORWICH CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY

The Memorial Library of the Second Air Division, established in Norwich, England in 1963 and destroyed by fire in 1994, is awaiting completion of its new location in the Millennium Centre Building now being erected in the City Centre. The new quarters being built on Norwich's Market square and opposite the fifteenth-century church of St. Peter Mancroft, will be twice the size of the original library and will interact closely with other features included in the building plans. Together these varied features will attract a continuous flow of visitors to the facility.

Millennium Commission Governor Hilary Hammond, 2nd AD American Fulbright Librarian Judy Jerome, and Project Manager David Janssens, recently gave several 8th visitors a cook's tour and an in-depth briefing of the progress of the unique building. The area dedicated to the 8th Air Force's 2nd Air Division is found at about nine to eleven o'clock upon entering the front of the horseshoe-shaped building on the ground floor. General Lew Lyle, Vice Chairman of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum along with Museum Board members Harry Gobrecht and Walter Brown were treated to an impressive look at the plans of the new library. A large stained glass panel commissioned by the 2nd ADA will be a central feature of the new library.

The library, supported by the leaders and members of the 2nd ADA, will exist for three primary purposes: To be a war memorial, to tell the story of the 2nd Air Division, and to be a source of

information on American life and culture. The new 2nd ADA Memorial Library promises to be a magnet for all generations and once again Norwich will feel the presence of 8th veterans who were stationed in the vicinity. Construction is scheduled to be completed by January 2001 and facilities will be fully operational by March 2001.



Lew Lyle, Judy Jerome, Hilary Hammond



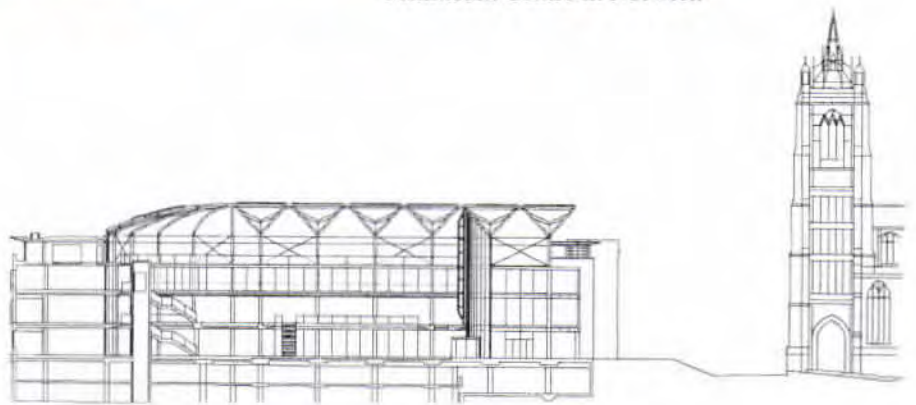
Overlooking the construction



Millineum Centre in Norwich



final design plans for the Millennium Centre



NOMINEES FOR 8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS CLASS OF 2004

The Nominating Committee, 8th AFHS, Henry Hughey, Chairman, presents the following candidates for the National Board of Directors. Three positions are to be filled by voting at the Annual Reunion, October, 2000.

Richard C. Baynes, life member #10606

466th Bomb Group, Attlebridge: pilot, 35 missions, 6 gas deliveries. Retired sales executive, major mfg. firms. Currently President, 8AFHS, Past Secretary, 8AFHS (two terms). President, 466th BG Association. Board of Directors, Gen. Curtis E. LeMay Chapter, 8AFHS. Chairman, 60th International Anniversary of the B-24. Secretary, Generals LeMay Chapter, Air Force Association. Nominated by William C. Rawson.

Murray Codman, life member #16293

447th Bomb Group, Rattlesden: 35 missions, gunner. Retired president, Codman Trading Co. and USA Sales. Currently, President and PX Officer, 447th BG Association, which was reorganized in 1998 and now has quarterly meetings. Past president, California Chamber of Commerce. Member, Gunners Association, DFC Society, B-17 Combat Crewman & Wingmen, Aero Club.

Hal Goetsch, life member #32759

385th Bomb Group, Great Ashfield: tail gunner & armament chief, POW, Stalag Luft IV & I. Former VP, large manufacturing company. Formed consulting firm, marketing and management services. Author of two books on marketing and managing. President, N.M. Chapter, 8AFHS, 1998-2000, during which Chapter had significant growth due to public relations and publicity.
Nominated by Edward J. Kastanek.

Ivan L. McKinney, life member #22014

Retired Lt. Col., USAF. OCS-54A, then navigator school. 8th AF units: 4045th & 500th Air Refueling Wings, 397th Bomb Wing, 310th Strategic Wing, 8th AF HQ, Barksdale AFB. Baccalaureate degree, Eastern Michigan Univ., Masters degrees, University of OK, LA Tech. Currently member, 8AFHS Board of Directors. National Director, Air Force Association, National Director, Aerospace Educational Board of Trustees.
Nominated by Craig Harris

James A Myl, life member #18833

351st Bomb Group, Polebrook: pilot. On his 29th mission he bailed his crew from the burning B-17 while over the North Sea, and became a member of the Caterpillar Club and the Goldfish Club. Awarded Honorary Membership in RAF Air Sea Rescue Services in 1994. Member, Curtis Lemay Chapter, 8 AFHS, Costa Mesa Historical Society and the Professional Writers League of Long Beach.
Nominated by Michael F. O'Shea

Robert H. Nolan, life member #800

486th Bomb Group, Sudbury. Retired USAF, 1969, veteran of WWII, Korean and Vietnam Wars. Original member of 486th Bomb Group Association, Secretary for eight years. Elected twice to 8AFHS Board of Directors, Executive Secretary for three-plus years. Currently, president Florida Chapter, 8AFHS. Active supporter, Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum.

Neal E. Sorenson, life member #9403

489th Bomb Group, Halesworth: 23 combat missions, 6 food drop missions, combat Vietnam with MATS. Graduate, University of Minnesota. President & CEO, Baddor Companies, WEB Printing. Past-president, 2nd Air Division Association, organized fund drives: B-24 Groups Memorial to site B-24 Sculpture in Honor Court at USAF Academy, and sponsorship of Bell Tower in Chapel at the Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum.
Nominated By Earl Wassom

8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REUNION 2000



City County Building



Kennecott Copper Mine



Salt Lake City
Heritage Park

***** 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.

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SIGNATURE (regardless of payment method) _____

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

THESE FORMS ARE FOR USE BY NEW REGISTRANTS ONLY
REUNION 2000 - SALT LAKE CITY - OCTOBER 17-22
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 _____

<i>CUT OFF DATE IS 9/18/00</i>	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.

SPORTS OF THE EIGHTH



1st Strategic Air Depot Basketball Casaba Champions - 1944 "Shuttle Blue Boys"
front row: Romingino; Tough; Lt. Brower, Special Services; Capt Cleary, coach; Zylinski; Woolward - Championship MVP; **back row:** (not identified); Hough; Col. William Shuttles, Commander; Rakle; Goss; Causey - season's most valuable player

LET'S — PLAY BALL!

The Yanks who went to England to serve in the Mighty Eighth took their all-American love of sports with them. Cricket and darts were not going to satisfy them, and soccer was not the answer. They wanted a taste of home and wanted it all - baseball, basketball, football, boxing, wrestling and even track events. There was an active and official competition

among the air-bases of



SOLDIERS FIELD



The 466th Bomb Group Basketball team 1944-45

each Air Division organized by 8th AF Headquarters and enthusiastically supported by the airmen. In addition, there were also round-the-clock air base "pick-up" games in all sports, offering rest, recreation, and more than a few laughs for the troops.

Robert Morin, Hershey PA, furnishes a photo taken by his brother Thomas Morin while he served with the 466th Bomb Group at Attlebridge as a radio operator/gunner.

Charles McC Carson, Thomasville NC, managed the 1st Strategic Air Depot's "Shuttle Blue Boys" to the 1944 Casaba Championship of the 8th AF Service Command in England. Serving as Athletic Director, he also saw his "Troston Red Devils" baseball team achieve a 21- 5 record in 1944 competition.



1st Strategic Air Depot Baseball "Troston Red Devils"
front row: Sanders; Emody; Green; Woolward; Liestman; Causy;
back row: Lt. Kiefier, Special Services; Maisto; Crocco; Venable; Hovis; Cubertson; Grieve; Gordon; McC Carson, Athletic Director

P-38 Lightning? P-51 Mustang?

I have been irritated for over 50 years by reading that our bombing attacks during WWII were limited by the lack of long range fighters until the P-51 came along. Therefore it was with pleasure and pride that I read the item in the 8th AF News entitled "The Escorts" by J.E. Johnston of the 491st BG in which he quoted German Ace Johannes Steinhoff as stating the P-38 being the most difficult American fighter to deal with. There being no torque with the P-38, it would turn to the right as easily as the German aircraft could turn left. Therefore in a dogfight a right turn gave the P-38 a big advantage. It also had considerable range.



P-38H Lightning of the 55th Fighter Group

I'll have to leave its dogfighting capability to others because I never found it necessary to try to turn inside a German fighter, but I do take exception to the claim that the P-51 could fly further and longer than a P-38. That's a claim that it seems has been made by everybody since I last flew it. I would gladly wager a large amount that given the two airplanes with full drop tanks, the P-38 would be airborne for at least an extra hour longer than the

P-51. Although I never made a test of the above proposition, I did fly both craft on combat missions over Germany in 1944 and do assert that



78th Fighter Group P-51D Mustang

my butt got a lot sorer from the hours and hours required by the duration of flight that the P-38 would allow me to stay on patrol over enemy territory. I found it a relief to run low on fuel in the Mustang because of the above mentioned discomfort. Again, without making any comparison testing, I believe the P-38 to be the faster of the two. I will not argue with those who want to claim that the Mustang was the best all-around fighter of the two. But in the two features I mention above, I stand fast. The Lightning was truly the better craft.

In summary, I take exception to those who claim that the bombing of Europe could not have been accomplished without the "long range fighter escort", the P-51. Bah! In witness whereof, why did the powers that be schedule a P-38 search and destroy mission from England to a point 40 miles east of Berlin where we were to remain for an hour to strafe and bomb targets of opportunity? And still return to our base in England.

Somewhere there must be definitive fuel consumption figures comparing these two aircraft. I would certainly be interested in such a comparison and would appreciate the clarification of which was the real long range escort fighter. Sincerely,
HERMAN E. HOVERSTEN
479TH FIGHTER GROUP
Lompoc, CA

55 YEARS AGO IN RESCUE -- 1945

by Virgil Thompson, Lima OH

The 5th Emergency Rescue Squadron was under the command of Major E.L. Larson. The role of this squadron of the 8th Air Force was to aid and rescue airmen who had been downed in the North Sea.

Aircraft operated by the 5th ERS included the P-47 "Thunderbolt," used as a spotter and carrying a long range fuel tank, a pack containing a dinghy under each wing, and four smoke marking flares. Other aircraft operated by the 5th ERS were "Catalina" OA-10 amphibians; and, later, a B-17 "Flying Fortress" was added to the squadron's inventory. The B-17 bomber was converted to carry an airborne life boat, which was dropped to the downed air crew by means of a parachute. After being formed at Air Base Boxted, England, the 5th Emergency Rescue Squadron moved in 1945 to Halesworth Station 365. Even though a lot of the operation was by trial and error, the 5th ERS had a successful record.

I am happy to have served at the start of Air Rescue!



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Canadian-built
OA-10 Catalina -
the *Sophisticat*



COMMANDER STATES VIEWS ON "MIGHTY EIGHTH"

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

Recently, between trips and exercises, Lt. General Thomas Keck, Commander 8th Air Force, had the opportunity to sit down and comment on the state of Eighth Air Force, to his vision for the command, and future challenges that face the Numbered Air Force.

You've been here now as commander for a number of months and you've had the opportunity to visit almost all the bases under the command. What are your impressions of what you've seen so far throughout the command?

"I have been truly impressed with what I've seen. I find that going on the road to visit the units, and pumping them up, really ends up recharging my batteries because I see a lot of great, energetic, young Americans. They're innovative and doing a super job. We have some great, young men and women accomplishing the mission throughout the command."

"We're in a transition period right now, into an Expeditionary Air Force, and of course, I guess you could say that we've been in that transition for the last 50 years. But, as I go out, I see the airmen adjusting to the Expeditionary Air Force and it's not easy. We don't have a lot of the answers, but we're getting them. And a lot of answers are coming in to us from the field. They're doing a great job of providing feedback and ideas to us, to ACC and to Headquarters Air Force."

What is your vision for 8th Air Force and where do you see us headed?

"I see us continually refining our mission and our requirements so that we provide highly capable warfighting forces to the CINCs of the different geographic areas when they are required. And then, when we do respond, the people of Eighth Air Force are the most highly-trained individuals and teams that we can possibly put together."

"When you asked about the future of 8th Air force, it's extremely bright and going to be extremely busy. There are plenty of tasks and missions out there for us."

To go along with those issues, what are your goals or priorities for the headquarters and the wings?

"We're a warfighting Numbered Air Force and a warfighting headquarters, and I believe our primary job is to be able to conduct those airpower missions through our Air Operations Center."

"Here at Barksdale, we have one of the best facilities in the United States in our own backyard in our Readiness Training Operations Center. We just finished a very successful Blue Flag

exercise...successful because of a lot of hard work by the men and women of 8th Air Force, ours sister services, coalition partners and contractors."

"But not only do we have to accomplish the warfighting mission and have the AOC provide Air Tasking Orders and pull together an operation, the other objective of a NAF is to focus on problem areas and help the units and wings

under our command. They're our primary customers. If the wings can't do their job, then none of us can do our job."

"Also, contrary to what people may have heard, Headquarters Eighth Air Force is not going away. We'll be around for a long time and in fact, we have big plans for the "Mighty Eighth."

"We have four major focus areas that we are actively pursuing. They include becoming the premier AOC in Air Combat Command, if not the Air Force, and being the innovation and experimentation NAF, where we become the proving and training ground for new technology, processes and procedures. Another focus area is operational training and innovation, where we can link tactical and operational expertise together and train in joint operations. And lastly, we are working the concept of flex targeting...decreasing the process from hours to minutes."

"So we're really working hard not only at the headquarters, but also the wing and unit level to keep us the world's premier warfighting NAF."

What is the best or most rewarding aspect of being the commander of 8th Air Force?

"I think I've already touched on that and that's working with a lot of great people. The demands our nation place on us require highly motivated, highly skilled, professional airmen. And that's something I see everyday as the commander...the dedication of all our assigned airmen. We are a true testament to the "Total Force Concept." We have active-duty, reserve and guard members assigned, as well as numerous civilians."

"Adding to that winning combination is a community that is a preeminent partner, retirees that continue to serve, and families that support each other. With this team, we're prepared to go forward and win an air war anywhere in the world. It's a total team effort that's made our Eighth Air Force truly "Mighty."



*Lt. General Thomas Keck
Commander Eighth Air Force*



MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE HERITAGE MUSEUM NEWS

JIM LAURIER ART EXHIBITION OPENS AT HERITAGE MUSEUM

At a reception held in the Colonial Oil Gallery, the aviation art of James Laurier was opened for display to museum visitors. A graduate of the Paier School of Art in Hamden, CT, Jim specializes in realistic and accurate aviation art, his work covering several decades of flying including aircraft of World War II and especially those of the Eighth Air Force.

Several dozen original pieces make up the current exhibition and cover a span of four decades of aviation history. A large turnout attended the opening ceremonies including a number of members of the Museum's Board of Trustees. Jim and his wife Jill, took the opportunity to spend a few enjoyable extra days in



Jim and Jill Laurier

Savannah before returning to their home in New Hampshire. Jim Laurier's paintings and drawings are found in countries around the world - his clients include the Pentagon, the U.S. Navy, the U. S. Air Force, The AOPA, Osprey Military Books in the U. K., WW II magazine, Aviation History magazine, and many authors and publishers such as noted 8th Air Force historian Roger A. Freeman. Many art galleries and private citizens own his works. The Laurier Art Exhibition will be open for viewing at the Heritage Museum in Savannah through December 2000. For information on Jim Laurier Art check the web at www.aviation-art.simplenet.com or e-mail: jalco@monad.net; tel 1-888-357-4451.



BRIGADIER GENERAL JAMES M. STEWART AWARD PRESENTED TO ASTRONAUT EILEEN COLLINS

The prestigious Brigadier General James M. Stewart Award for 2000 was presented to the first female commander to pilot a space shuttle, Col. Eileen Collins by Heritage Museum Director Ben F. Love, 351st Bomb Group, in a special ceremony held in Houston. This annual award is given in recognition of individuals who make exceptional contributions in the field of aviation.

Colonel Collins was noted for her outstanding leadership and coolness as Shuttle Commander in handling two in-flight emergencies during her 1999 shuttle mission. After encountering loss of electrical power to a shuttle engine and spotting a small hydrogen leak, Col. Collins exhibited exceptional airmanship and leadership in making decisions which enabled the flight to continue to a successful conclusion. Serving as shuttle Commander "was a tremendous challenge because I knew I am setting an example for other women who desire to be shuttle pilots and commanders," Collins said.

Col. Eileen Collins is married to Pat Youngs, an airline pilot; they have a daughter, Bridget, age 4.

HERITAGE MUSEUM WELCOMES ITS NEW PRESIDENT/ CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

After an extensive search and interviews with a number of very qualified candidates, the Board of Trustees of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum has named C. J. Roberts as its new President/CEO. Roberts comes to the Heritage Museum directly from a two-year tour of planning, developing, building and opening the acclaimed D-Day Museum recently established in New Orleans. The D-Day Museum, headed up in its planning by noted World War II historian Stephen Ambrose, is the second museum project of C. J. Roberts. Prior to that he had served as Director of the George C. Marshall Museum in Lexington, Virginia.

Roberts and his wife Sarah are both natives of Indiana, where

he received his Baccalaureate and Master's Degrees at Indiana University. Sarah is active in numerous museum-based educational organizations as well. They write, "We are eager to make our home in Savannah and look forward to leading the Heritage Museum, which is nothing less than a national treasure." Roberts will be on board on September 15th, 2000, and brings with him national experience and vision to the future growth of the Heritage Museum.

*President/CEO
C. J. Roberts*



HERITAGE MUSEUM SHORT BURSTS ...

The B-47 Stratojet Bomber which has been refurbished during the past year, is now in place in the museum Memorial Gardens and is very visible to passers-by on Interstate 95. Engines will now be replaced in their cowlings, paint and markings will be applied and surrounding landscaping completed. The 165th Airlift Wing of the Georgia Air National Guard, with the help of volunteers and an Anthony crane turned the aircraft around and moved it the last fifty yards to its final resting place in the gardens.



Heritage Museum Board of Trustees released bid packages to six prominent construction contractors and bid openings for the Memorial Chapel to be built in the Memorial Gardens will be held on August 27th. Construction will begin immediately and plans are for the ribbon-cutting to be held during Heritage Museum fifth anniversary events May 4-6, 2001. The Chapel is fully funded through the successful efforts of the 8th AF Historical Society membership and other contributors. All stained-glass windows and all pews inside the chapel are already sponsored by supporters of the Chapel. Memorial Chapel dedication ceremonies were held this past Spring at the Museum.



At their July Board of Trustees meeting, the Heritage Museum Board was proud to announce the addition of prominent British historian Roger A. Freeman as an Honorary member of the museum Board. An author of over sixty volumes on war history,

Freeman is the acknowledged authority on Eighth Air Force history of the World War II era. Board Chairman Lt. General E. G. Shuler states, "Roger Freeman has been of great value during previous years in assisting us in developing the Heritage Museum, and we look forward to his involvement in our continuing efforts to further develop the museum and tell the story of the Mighty Eighth. He is a distinguished and welcome addition to our Board."

The Education Program of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum is moving ahead and has gained national notice for its programs educating the younger generations of schoolchildren about the values promoted by the 8th Air Force history - The Heritage of Values. The Heritage Museum is designated as the first Center for Character Education by the Georgia Education Board. An excellent twenty-page booklet, *A Guide to Education Programs - Science, History, Character Education, and Social Studies* has been produced by Dr. Vivian Rogers-Price, Director of Education and her staff at the Heritage Museum. The book is a thorough compendium explaining the programs, activities, and educational tours and workshops for teachers and students grades 4 - 12. For info call 1-912-748-8888 or e-mail: mighty8edu@aol.com



A special exhibit presentation, *Angelo Spinelli: Behind The Barbed Wire* was formally opened on July 27th at the Heritage Museum. The travelling exhibit features the most extensive prisoner of war photographic collection available; photos taken by American war photographer Angelo Spinelli during his years in the German Stalags. This unique and fascinating story is free and open to the public. Angelo Spinelli was a guest speaker at the Museum on August 29th.

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>

Charles Gleswein...

Our route took us north of Berlin, where we saw more flak. Coming into the target we ran into heavy flak, which knocked out one of our engines. It also knocked out my gyro compass. We dropped out of formation and had to make our way back across Germany as a lone aircraft. Without the navigator's gyro compass, I had to use my astro compass and rely on the pilot's magnetic compass to hold the westerly heading that would take us back to England.

The pilots had trouble feathering the prop on the engine that had been knocked out--instead it began to windmill and ran out of control until it came loose from its bearings. For a while it hung at a forty-five degree angle until it finally dropped off.

The lack of precise navigational instruments caused us to drift south of the area covered by my maps. To find our way, I broke open my escape-and-evasion kit, which contained a small cloth map of Europe. Fortunately, we saw no fighters on the way back, but when we came to the Rhine, the flak barges were waiting for us. The pilot took evasive action, but we could still feel the concussion of shells as they exploded beneath us. The escape-and-evasion map that I was using showed little detail and we had drifted farther south than I had expected. The next landmark that I could accurately identify was Paris, which lay to the south of us. From there I plotted a course back to England.

by Charles Gieswein

379th BG, Silver Spring, MD

James Good Brown...

When they died, they took some of our life with them. We are not the same, and never shall be.

I see them now. They are looking up at me from the chapel seats, toward the Altar--a plaintive look, with a taint of fear running through them.

Likewise in the briefing room, before going into combat, they cast a glance at me when the red line from Ridgewell to Berlin is drawn, or a hundred other targets. They expect help from me, and I can give them little. The best I could do was to step into a plane, carrying my parachute, and go with them into combat.

For more than two years, I saw their faces at the window of their B-17, and then their hands extended, waving at me hopefully, as the plane moved slowly off the hard stand.

Yes, they hoped! And I hoped. And too often that hope turned into despair, for I did not see the hand, or the face, in the late afternoon -- ten men, twenty men, one hundred men not to return on one mission.

But you who stand here suffered too, perhaps more than I did. You trained with them; laughed with them; flew with them till their very last breath was snuffed from them. You missed them when they left you. You miss them now, or you would not be here. Your presence on this hallowed spot is your answer to their call -- their call for remembrance. They would have you remember, for they thought they died for a worthy cause.

Thus our men of the 381st whom we honor this day not only died as brave and honorable men, but they believed in a cause which civilization had come, over the long centuries, to believe was right and just -- THE DIGNITY AND NOBILITY OF MAN.

For this our men died! They were patriots! They were loyal Americans! They honored their flag -- this very flag which flew over the base during all our days here!

Willingly did they come to this England. Courageously did they fly their wings over these fields of wheat and corn. Nobly did they fly for this England -- The Mother Country of the U.S.A. Yes, they came here to save this England from the feet of monstrous men who would invade this land.

To those who here died we raise this flag to worthily and eternally fly beside the British flag, in harmony and in brotherhood. Before going into combat they quoted your lines from Shakespeare:

To this isle we come
To defend its shores,
This royal throne of kings,
This sceptered isle,
This earth of majesty,
This seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-paradise,
This fortress built by Nature for herself
Against infection and the hand of war,
This happy breed of men,
This little world,
This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Renowned for their deeds.

And so, we the 381st heard of their deeds, the Royal Air Force heroes who flew from this base to save this England. And we came to take their place: to die for you who stand today at this monument, which shall be an everlasting Memorial to them. James Good Brown, Chaplain 381st BG at Dedication Ceremonies of 381st Bomb Group Monument at Ridgewell.

ABE DOLIM...

Chance of a Lifetime

Time: 0930 June 15, 1944 Cuxhaven

The B-17 is heading home on a westerly course, part of a loosened up group formation and visibility is unusually good. The co-pilot is flying and the pilot is trying to catch forty winks as he has been awake since 0130. Down below and up front, the bombardier has been watching an enemy convoy at 12 o'clock four miles below. It is on a northeasterly heading and hugging the enemy coast. He signals the navigator to come over and have a look. Two minds are dancing with similar thoughts on all the training lavished on the bombardier-navigator teams for just this type of target - radius of action and interception problems - the technique of bombing a moving target - ship identification - bombing a task force on the high seas! But this is another world - another kind of war, and the bomb bays are empty. The bombardier grips his controls for the chin turret and the navigator moves to the left cheek gun. Together they fire a good three dozen rounds into the convoy. The pilot, rudely awakened from his nap by all the noise and vibration, angrily shouts into the intercom, "Godammit, what the hell's going on down there?"
Abe Dolim 94th BG

JOHN GREENWOOD...

Feb. 3, 1945 Berlin, Germany

This was really a big raid. Over 1000 ships hit the center of Berlin. Our group was one of the first ones in but the town was burning nicely from the ones who had preceded us; we were seventh over the target. We hit the railway marshalling yards and government administrative buildings. The flak was moderate and accurate. I saw two B-17s go down in the group ahead of us, but only saw one chute come out. The black oil smoke from the burning planes were very distinctive against the blue sky. This was the first time I had seen a ship shot down. From a distance the B-17 looked like a wounded duck wobbling very gracefully, trying to keep its altitude but failing to do so. From a distance it looked like a minor thing compared to what devastation that was taking place on the ground below us, but I could imagine the chaos that was taking place inside that plane.

John Greenwood, 351st BG

Alton, IL - from his Mission Record

JERRY EFROS...

About 3:30 A.M., June 6, 1944, we were awakened and told that this was our day to fly. Until we assembled for the pre-mission briefing, we had absolutely no idea that this was indeed "D" Day. My first bombing mission was about to take place on the most historic day of the war!

Our first targets were the heavy gun placements overlooking Normandy's Omaha Beach. We dropped our bombs just as the first landing craft approached the shore. It was an awesome spectacular sight, never to be forgotten! Planes as far as the eye could see, our big Navy guns pounding the beach, and the English Channel filled with an advancing armada.

We returned to our base, picked up another bomb load, and this time our target was a munitions depot outside Caen, France. As we approached, the sky was black from exploding anti-aircraft shells. We could hear the flak fragments penetrating the skin of our bomber.

Suddenly I was struck in the middle of my back. My upper body went numb. I was unable to reach to touch the point of

impact, but I was certain that there was a gaping hole in my back, and a posthumous Purple Heart would be my fate. At last a crew member was able to come to my aid. He put his hand inside my clothing. There was no blood. I was wearing my flak vest. The deadly fragment had penetrated the vest, torn my clothing, but never reached my skin.

I went on to complete thirty-three combat missions as a B-17 tailgunner. Not one was more memorable than the two I flew on June 6, 1944.

Jerry Efros, 379th BG Hollywood, FL

HERB GRANBERG...

Berlin - 3 Feb 45

"Quit smoking," someone shouted in the darkness, and several hysterical persons took up the cry. In the distance someone yelled for a doctor, but the clamor for help, taken up by many voices, was drowned in the next wave of bombs.

The explosions shook the concrete structure. By the crash you could tell several bombs had pierced the upper floor of the elevated railway station. "For heaven's sake stop it, put an end to this insanity, put an end to the war," a woman screamed, "Shut up with that," broke in a man's voice, and a stir ran through the tightly packed shelters.

Four more strings of bombs tumbled down. Finally there was a long silence in expectation of the All Clear signal. It was difficult to breathe in the dust. No one said much. Some men discussed in low voices the types of bombers above.

In the elevated station there were dead. One man on a stretcher apparently had had his lungs crushed by air pressure. Hardly anyone rushing out of the tunnel paid attention to the dead. Everyone had his own troubles to take care of. In the square a hurricane of fire raged. Smoke and flames limited visibility to fewer than 100 yards. I was blinded by smoke and soot. Even before I arrived at my hotel I knew I had been bombed out for the fourth time. It was the Esplanada Hotel and it had been crushed by nine heavy bombs, of which six were direct hits.

Herb Granberg in the *Stars and Stripes*, 24 Feb 45

If you can smile when things go wrong - then you've found somebody to blame.

John Bacon



Words of friend always enough when cliffs loom ahead - right, Jack?

by Cody Hall, Anniston, AL

I don't believe in ghosts. But I believe my friend Jack Hagler. We first met at Maxwell Field in preflight training, and I can still see in my mind's eye the sunny smile of that freckled, auburn-haired aviation cadet.

Thrown together by alphabetical coincidence, we stayed together all the way through flight training. Our coterie also including a quiet youngster named Tod, who came from New Jersey.

My young bride remembers Tod vividly, especially the incident one Sunday afternoon at the USO in Greenville, Miss., where one of the local ladies was entertaining us by reading our palms. Came Tod's turn, he sat down before her and extended his hand. She looked down at it a few moments, then looked up, gazing into his eyes. And abruptly she excused herself and left.

Putting it all aside, we went on with our training and finally graduated. Differing assignments split us up as we moved on to the training designed to prepare us for the serious stuff of war. Jack and Tod went into B-17s, the Flying Fortresses. But Jack caught a bug and was delayed a couple of months getting overseas. Tod didn't get overseas at all. The Fortress he was piloting went in off the end of the runway at Hunter Field in Savannah, killing him and his crew.

Jack, who was very close to Tod, still mourns him, and tried for years to comfort Tod's mother. That was predictable in Jack, a sensitive but, in his own way, very tough guy.

After the war Jack went into a very competitive business, became head of his own company, continued flying in his own plane for years.

He always had firm, definite ideas of his own. When his boys were coming along he sent them to Marion Military Institute. But Jack is also this sort of fellow: fairly late in life when the youngest of their children was nearing nest-leaving time, his beloved Mary Anne confessed some wistful thoughts about the medical career she'd given up for marriage. Jack changed the signals. Her side of the coin, he said, had come up, and Jack ate at McDonald's, so to speak, for a couple of years while she went back to medical school and became a physician.

It was some years after the war that Jack finally told me this story about Tod. Tod had been dead several months when this event happened.

Jack recovered and headed overseas to England. It came time for him and his crew to fly their Fortress the northern route.

The only possible hitch was Greenland. Greenland had, we all were briefed, an emergency runway should trouble arise, but...the decision to use it shouldn't be taken lightly. If your navigator was lucky enough to find the entrance for the fjord there still was a very tricky bit of flying up the fjord -- so many seconds on one heading, so many seconds on a second, another few seconds on a third and so on. And then you had just one chance at landing; there was no room for going around again.

Sure enough, as Jack told it, trouble struck and the choice had to be taken. Some choice. The weather was closing in, the clouds sweeping the wings as Jack sweated out the fast-changing compass headings.

Concentrating with ultimate intensity, Jack was pounding the B-17 through the unsparing clouds when it happened.

"I heard it just as clearly as you hear me right now. It was Tod's voice. He said, 'Jack! Right!'"

Without hesitation Jack hauled right on the wheel, just in time for his left wing tip to sail safely over the waiting rocks of the fjord's wall. And, of course, they made it in. And to this day he has not forgotten the unmistakable sound of his friend's voice. I still do not, I tell myself, believe in ghosts, but if Jack says it happened, it happened.

Cody Hall flew with the 448th BG and after the war went into journalism and became Editor-in-chief for the Anniston Star. Jack Hagler, 447th Bomb Group, resides with his wife Mary Anne in Augusta, Georgia. He remains active in many 8th Air Force organizations.



Jack Hagler, 447th Bomb Group



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WISCONSIN CHAPTER

Our Newsletter preceding this meeting brought focus to the anniversary of D-Day in 1944. Members were invited to do a little research, scan their memories, and be ready to provide a program of first-hand experiences about their Group's activities on that memorable day. The resulting session, following another hearty meal prepared by the dining room personnel of the 440th Airlift, proved to be interesting and enlightening. Several of the speakers recalled the multi-mission-day that they experienced and the relative absence of German air opposition, but a common thread through most of the stories was unexpected encounters with flak over the Channel Islands when the formations turned west from Normandy to return to their bases in England. Another feature of the day, which has been a prominent element of previous meetings, was the display of all the Group scrap-books for viewing by those attending this meeting. Door prizes were distributed prior to the D-Day talks. Plans are in progress for election of officers for the Chapter in the ensuing meetings this year.
Donald W. Almon, ILO

COLORADO CHAPTER

At our last general meeting in 1999, we were greatly honored to have retired Colonel Bill Bower as our guest speaker. Colonel Bower was a member of General Doolittle's Raiders and gave us a fascinating talk on his experiences. He spoke about having watched Doolittle fly at the Cleveland Air Races when he was a child, then getting to serve under his command, not only in North Africa but on the raid from shipboard to Japan. The new year 2000 has also promised to be an especially interesting one for our Colorado Chapter. At our February meeting, we elected officers for the year. Our speaker, Mr. Fred Fleming, Director of Special Services for the Denver Broncos Football Team, gave us an insight into the inner workings of professional football and, particularly, football life without the great John Elway!

At our annual June meeting at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, we had the great pleasure of listening to two very lovely ladies. Mrs. Lucile Wise and Mrs. Yvonne Wood were members of the WASPS, the Womens Air Force Service Pilots organization. It was extremely interesting to learn of the trials and obstacles which the WASPs encountered. They were a brave group!

In July, we have planned a picnic, which may become an annual event. In September, we have a tour planned for NORAD (North American Air Defense Command) located at Cheyene Mountain, near Colorado Springs. We are anticipating an exciting and educational experience.

James Peterson, President

OREGON CHAPTER

The May 11th quarterly meeting of the Oregon Chapter of the 8th AFHS was another good get-together, with more than eighty 8th AF vets, Associates, and guests in attendance. Our veteran membership is holding up well, and we are pleased to note that the percentage of Associates attending the meetings continues to rise. We feel that the long-range well being of the Chapter depends on the continued recruitment of Associates members, to ensure maintenance of the heritage of the "Mighty Eighth".

The food and fellowship at the meeting reached its usual high

level, and members and guests were loud in their appreciation of the remarks of our speaker. Robert Quarterman, who now resides in Oregon, was pilot of Lancaster bombers in the RAF. He flew a tour in '42-'43, spent a long assignment as an instructor, and then returned to combat as the pilot of a Pathfinder Lanc early in '45 until the end. His stories of training in the U.S., life on station, and combat were very interesting, and brought back many memories to those of us who were kept awake nights while the RAF filled the skies over our bases on their way to targets in the Reich.

Speakers at the meetings have been outstanding. Recently Ken Jernstedt, who spent twenty-two years in the Oregon Legislature and mayor of his hometown flew P-40s as a Flying Tiger in Burma and China. He talked of his experiences as a pilot just after Pearl Harbor as well as his work as a test pilot of the P-47 Thunderbolt. He received a standing ovation in tribute to his record as an American flying leader, from all who attended to hear his fascinating talk.

Our quarterly meetings, February, May, August and November, are at the Beaverton Elks Lodge. Anyone interested may call Chapter President Joe Conroy at (503) 246-2912 or e-mail at ajconroy@aol.com. Also you may contact Chapter VP Clint Gruber at (503) 649-2145 or e-mail at cags@intemetcds.com.
Joe Conroy, President

ILLINOIS CHAPTER

One of the newer Chapter members spoke to the Illinois Chapter at a recent meeting. Col. Robert McKillop has logged 8400+ hours of flight time as an Air Force pilot, participating in the Korean War and flying in A1E Skyraiders in Vietnam.

Terry Carlson, Chapter President, has put out a call for speakers at upcoming meetings. Also a call for those who plan to attend the national Historical Society reunion in Salt Lake City in September. Reach him at e-mail: LTCarlson@aol.com or tel (847) 740-8712.

GEORGIA CHAPTER

A very special July Chapter meeting was held at La Petite Auberge restaurant in Atlanta featuring an address by Mr. Jimmy Deloach of Pooler, Georgia. Jimmy, a former County Commissioner, was the prime mover in obtaining the land acquisition on which the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum was constructed. His efforts ensured the permanent location and enabled the Museum project to come to life. Jimmy's address to the Georgia Chapter told of the history of finding the location for the permanent home of the Mighty Eighth. His factual and emotional talk received an extended standing ovation by appreciative Chapter members.

The Georgia Chapter will hold its annual meeting the third weekend of January 2001 in Savannah. A full weekend of activities and a dinner-dance is planned. Chapter officers enthusiastically invite all of their friends in other Historical Society Chapters to make plans to join them for this event - everyone is welcome to come and enjoy the festivities. Contact HS Board members Henry Hughey or Tom Parsons for information.

GENERAL JAMES H. DOOLITTLE CHAPTER

The April Chapter meeting in Sacramento featured Major Arnie Jensen as guest speaker. Major Jensen told of his experiences in B-47s and then in B-52s and extended his talk to his experiences

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assigned to an F-4 reconnaissance squadron in Thailand.

Chapter officers were re-elected for another term, with Robert Harrington remaining as President. Belton Wolf is VP and Dan Raymond continues in his post as *Air Power* editor. The Chapter continues expanding its program of reaching out to the younger generations through close interaction with college Air Force ROTC programs.

SAVANNAH WING - GEORGIA CHAPTER

The turnout was a surprise to the Chapter meeting Planning Committee. Over 200 people appeared for the June Savannah Wing dinner meeting at the Heritage Museum. Special guests Charlie Brown, 379th Bomb Group and his close friend, Luftwaffe pilot Officer Frans Stigler gave a stimulating talk of how they met and their close friendship which developed after the war.

Brown was pilot of a crippled B-17 trying to get back home from a December 20, 1943 mission to Bremen. Shot up and flying on the deck he was spotted by a German Me-109 who flew alongside and recognizing the extensive damage and the wounded crew, escorted the aircraft to the North Sea on a direct course to England. The German pilot, Frans Stigler, respectfully saluted the crew, banked and returned to his own home base. After the war Brown searched and found Stigler living in British Columbia. They have been the closest of friends ever since.

The memorable Savannah Wing meeting and the pilots' story was featured on television and in the newspapers during the week.

NORTH WEST IOWA WING

Chapter members took part in the four-day Glenn Miller festival interacting with the 15,000 visitors from over the world. The event is held annually at the WWII-era big band leader's birthplace in Clarinda, IA. Alan Cass, curator of the Glenn Miller archival collection at the University of Colorado was present, as was Paul Tanner, original trombonist with the Glenn Miller band. Seminars were held on topics such as the Big Band Era, and the Big Band sound was heard throughout the week from visiting bands from around the world. Bill Baker's Band from Rijswijk, Holland was present, as was The Swing Time Big Band from Vienna, Austria. A special attraction was the appearance of the United States Airmen of Note and the Strolling Strings from Washington DC.

Members of the NW Iowa Wing took part in the Big Band Breakfast and the Wing and entered a float in the 2000 Festival parade which was entitled "Music For The World." Wing Commander Gene Person and his wife Anne got a call from daughter Sheila saying she saw them and other Chapter participants on the national Harry Smith television show.

MISSISSIPPI CHAPTER

The Mississippi Chapter continues its busy schedule of activities. Coming off the Lake Tiak O'Khata Spring reunion Chapter members jumped right into the promotion and selling of the Chapter-produced anthology of almost 100 articles and anecdotes written by and about 8th AF veterans who are from Mississippi. Entitled *Mississippians in the Mighty Eighth*, the beautiful and entertaining book is being sought after by veterans and their families and especially by interested members of the

younger generations. If you don't have your copy as yet, you can have one mailed to you from Mississippi Chapter 8th AFHS, 214 N. Madison, Tupelo MS 38804 for \$45 + \$3 s&h - proceeds go to the Mighty Eighth AF Heritage Museum.

The Fall Chapter meeting plans are already set: it's to be held in Natchez MS at the Ramada Inn overlooking the Mississippi river, and will be a special Veterans Day celebration event from November 10 - 12, 2000. Members from the newly-formed Louisiana Chapter are invited as well as all other "friends of the Chapter." Call 662-844-1553 for further information.

VIRGINIA PENINSULAR WING

Monique Pitts gave a fascinating presentation to the Peninsular Wing at their Spring meeting in Hampton, VA. Monique was a teenager in occupied France during the German occupation of her country. She described in detail all facets of her life in Paris and environs during the war, and discussed the emotions of the liberation by the Allied forces. Her husband, Jesse Pitts, is the editor of the Virginia Chapter newsletter "Plane Talk".



Monique Pitts speaking at Langley AFB Peninsular Wing meeting

Monique Pitts story will be featured in a special article in the December issue of the 8th AF NEWS.

PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER

The Pennsylvania Chapter's ninth annual reunion at Monroeville was a great success. Eighty veterans and their spouses enjoyed their day tour of the city of Pittsburgh on Saturday, June 24, and then dinner, entertainment and dancing on the Gateway Clipper river cruise that evening. On Sunday, after Catholic and Protestant services, our traditional and meaningful Memorial program was held. After lunch at the 911th Air Force Reserve Wing base at the Pittsburgh International Airport, the more hearty veterans and their spouses were treated to an hour-long orientation flight in a C-130 Hercules troop transport aircraft by pilots of the 911th Air Force Reserve Wing. For those who did not participate in the flight, an interesting tour was conducted of the huge US Airways maintenance hangar. The reunion festivities were topped off with a gala Sunday evening banquet at the Palace Inn. The guest speaker was Adam Lynch, a noted TV and radio personality, who has an avid interest in the history of the Eighth Air Force. All of those in attendance were enthralled by his existing presentation that described the 445th Bomb Group's fateful mission to Kassel on September 27, 1944 when more than 30 B-24's of that group were lost. At the general membership meeting on Saturday, it was agreed that the Chapter's tenth annual reunion would be held in Lancaster where the Chapter was founded. Arrangements are being made for the reunion to be held at the Ramada Inn on September 28, 29 and 30 and October 1, 2001. Interesting and

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entertaining events are planned, including a tour of the Amish farms and countryside.

Following the reunion, the Board of Directors met. The following officers were reelected for the forthcoming year: President, Frank Smoker; Vice-President, George Stifinger; Secretary, Carolyn Swanson. During the business meeting, it was unanimously agreed that our Chapter should be represented in the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum Memorial Gardens. President Smoker was directed to coordinate with the Heritage Museum for construction of a Pennsylvania Chapter memorial plaque to be placed in the Memorial Gardens at some future date. Submitted by Frank Smoker, Chapter President

WESTERN NEW YORK STATE CHAPTER

At a recent meeting of the Western New York State Chapter, the members were treated to an engaging talk by a former RAF Halifax navigator. Monty Burton, who served with the Royal Air Force from 1939 until war's end in areas from North Africa through Italy and back to England, told the membership about night bombing operations and what it was like to be caught in the searchlights above a German city. He also told the assembly about ditching the big bomber in the Mediterranean Sea and of the crew's miraculous rescue in the middle of the night by a hospital ship. Monty has since emigrated to the States and is currently a member of this Chapter. He has also created his own Web site at "RAF-knights.com." While entertainingly British, it is also instructive about how the other half of the aerial assault team against Germany functioned. There are also links to other interesting WW II sites. The Chapter's most recent meeting gambit was an afternoon cruise on Lake Erie and the Niagara River. Gerry Scoones, Editor "Chapter Chatter"

OHIO CHAPTER

The Ohio Chapter Held its Spring weekend meeting May 12-14 at the Lenox Inn in Columbus, Ohio.

Saturday morning they toured Motts Military Museum in Groveport, Ohio. This is a unique museum created by Warren Motts to preserve, protect and display items from history often overlooked. It covers history from the Civil War to Desert Storm.

The membership meeting followed a luncheon at the Inn. A slate of candidates was presented for election. The following were elected: Vice-president Bill Laib, Treasurer Frank Morse and Board members Roy Donaldson, Don Foulk, Bill Meszaros, Marion Smith and Chris Weber. President Roger Laib thanked outgoing Board members Clark Yocum and Jack Keller for their past services to the Chapter.

The guest speaker for the meeting was Lt. Col. Bruce Johnson of the Ohio Air National Guard. He gave an interesting and enlightening talk on what the Guard does. We were surprised to learn of the many jobs of the Guard. It provides many community services as well as protecting and defending our country at home and abroad. He stressed that an important part of the Guard duties is mentoring to young people and that World War II Veterans should do this also. Col. Johnson flies A-7's and F-16's and considers his job as an American Airline pilot as "moonlighting".

After the meeting a framed photo of the World War II Memorial was raffled off with the proceeds going to the Memorial fund.
- Jim Erskine

CONNECTICUT CHAPTER

The Chapter held its Spring luncheon in May. As usual, the attending members (61) had an enjoyable time. The luncheon was enhanced by the singing of the National Anthem by Leah Ahern, granddaughter of George Ahern, our Secretary. If you live in Connecticut and have not become a member, contact Art Ruggiero @ (203) 488-8754 to join. There are no Chapter dues.

Robert A. Valliere, Treasurer

KENTUCKY CHAPTER

The Kentucky Chapter was out in full force for the Show of Shows Military Show in May. The tent exhibits were well-attended and indoor displays proudly showed off 8th Air Force art and artifacts to all visitors. The Chapter is getting good use out of its recently acquired travel trailer, which allows them to safely transport a number of displays to all corners of the state.

The August meeting will be held August 26th at the Speed Art Museum in Louisville. Special guests will be the members of the Indiana Chapter.



Kentucky Chapter at the show of shows.
Joe Gagliardi, Kentucky Chapter



L - R: V.P. Tim Pryor, President Wayne Tabor, Joe Gagliardi, Bob Weixler - Editor, Ken Payton - Treasurer,
Sitting: M/Gen. Phil Ardrey USAF ret.

VIRGINIA CHAPTER

Edward Ewen, Virginia Chapter President has issued a call for all members to expand their 8th AF contacts and encourage 8th AF veterans, their families and friends to take part in Chapter activities. As part of this program, the Board is contacting the Washington DC Chapter for possible combined meetings in the near future.

Appreciation goes to Neal November for his excellent program on the SR-71 Reconnaissance plane at the recent Spring Chapter meeting.

Special guest Karen Kline is organizing the welcome to the Collings Foundation B-17 and B-24 to the Chesterfield airport on October 27 - 29. This event closely follows the Chapter's recognition of 8th Air Force Week on October 8 -14.

NEW MEXICO CHAPTER

At the Spring meeting, Congresswoman Heather Wilson, serving New Mexico's 1st District, was our speaker. She brought us current with respect to Veterans' issues in Congress, and also items of interest for Senior Citizens. Heather is the first woman

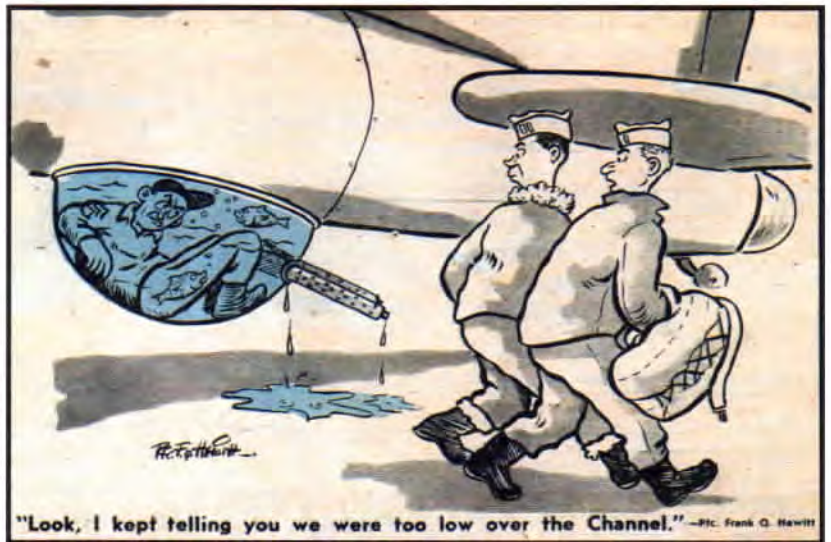
veteran to serve in Congress. A distinguished Graduate of our Air Force Academy in 1982, she was a Rhodes Scholar, earning her masters and doctoral degrees in International Relations from Oxford University in England. As an Air Force Officer, she worked with our NATO allies, and in the United Kingdom. After leaving the Air Force in 1989, she became Director for European Defense Policy and Arms Control on the National Security Council staff at the White House. The photo shows Bill Hill, 364th FG, membership chairman, giving Heather a Lifetime Honorary Membership in our New Mexico Chapter.



Bill Hill, 364th FG, presents an Honorary Chapter membership to Congresswoman Heather Wilson.



Dick Baynes, President of the 8th AF Historical Society, presenting Liberator Legends book, prepared by the 8th Air Force Memorial Museum Foundation to Bruce Beakley, Director of Education, San Diego Aerospace Museum, San Diego, CA.



-Yank March 45

"Look, I kept telling you we were too low over the Channel." -PIC. Frank G. Hawitt

Many Thanks!

Our appreciation goes out to all the staff at Ambrose Printing Company in Nashville, Tennessee for all their advice, creative ideas and expertise in publishing the 8th AF News. Their 135 years of experience comes through in every issue. Special thanks to Donna Neely and Telisha Gaines for the many hours of hard work designing and putting the magazine together.

- the Editor and the Board of Directors, 8th AFHS



FROM THE EDITOR ...

THE VIEW OUT BACK

THE TAILGUNNER'S WAR

He is isolated in the very rear of a heavy bomber and is the only airman to fight the war riding backwards. He sees where he has been and sees what has happened. He has two .50 caliber machine guns to ward off attacks from the rear. He is a tailgunner - now a lost breed of men. Sherman Small is one of these men.

"Our crew met in Alexandria, Louisiana after gunnery school in Las Vegas," says Sherman. "Essentially, my name was just pulled out of a hat to be a tailgunner. I was a career tailgunner. Our training had taken place in less than a year, and then we picked up our beautiful new B-17 Flying Fortress for the trip over by way of the cold, cold country of Newfoundland. I knew nothing about combat, but I was eager. My only contact had been with a couple of instructors at Gunnery school who had completed 25 combat missions early on; they were our heroes.

At the time, I wasn't thinking about combat. I was thinking about all the fun I was going to have in England - in London."

The Chris Wunnenburg Crew gave up their plane on arrival, but picked up another they named *The Character* and soon began another long phase of training. Small says, "The pilots went here; the navigators went there; the gunners went up to The Wash for additional gunnery training. We were ground-based there for awhile before getting some air-to-air target practice. We were hearing all the gory stories about combat but that didn't bother me one iota. During combat it never, ever bothered me. It hit me when I completed my tour of operations. Our crew finally got back to our 96th Bomb Group base at Snetterton Heath just after Thanksgiving 1943. Snetterton Heath was a great base. It was a permanent-type installation. We had huts, we had showers, we had latrines, and we had a good mess hall. Great food."

The Crew of The Character

Chris Wunnenburg was the pilot of *The Character*; his co-pilot was Lee Bennett. Chris says that "Lee was the man in charge of the rest of the crew - the personnel officer of the crew; the crew's guardian. He did a great job keeping in close touch with all of them and helping them out when problems arose.



The original crew of The Character

L-R Front: 1st Lt. Chris Wunnenburg Pilot, 2nd Lt. Lee Bennett Co-Pilot, 2nd Lt. Ken McVitte Navigator, 2nd Lt. Douglas Ty Leeper (KIA) Bombardier, L-R Back: TSgt. John DeCicco (KIA) Flight Eng., TSgt. James Setzer Radio Op., SSgt. Robert Collins Waist Gunner, SSgt. Walter Stachnowitz Waist gunner, SSgt. James Tasker (KIA) Ball Turret, SSgt. Sherman Small (Smilowitz) Tail Gunner.

He even intervened a time or two when trouble arose on passes into town." Lee confirms this and states that he enjoyed this part of his responsibilities. Lee says, "Chris was the ideal professional combat pilot. Chris was the airplane. He lived that plane, he slept that plane, he checked everything himself - even checked the gas tanks before missions. Our ground crew liked to work with him." Junius Eaton, one of the maintenance crew, says that "Lieutenants Wunnenburg's and Bennett's attitude and behavior during those trying and dangerous times stood out among all the others and had a lasting effect on me." Bennett continues, "The ground crew took good care of us and they became part of our crew. We named our B-17 after one of the ground crew who was always 'a character.' The flight Chief, Bob Vitteoe, painted the nose art of ground crew member William 'Red' Rinehart scratching his head, as in: 'What the hell is this all about?' We flew that plane until we got pretty well shot up and crashed it on our thirteenth mission. And Sherm Small? He was a nice guy. He always seemed a little bit cocky, but he did his job very well."

Sherman Small talks about being a tailgunner. "I felt good back there. That was my domain; that was my area. The seating wasn't real comfortable, but I had my own hatch if I had to bail out. I would bail out under the tail and was sure of not hitting any part of the plane on the way out. The guys up front didn't have it so good. I made sure my guns were taken care of properly. I made sure I had enough ammunition aboard and knew where the escape hatch was if I had to use it. And after we left the target, I was the guy who could see the damage that was done. I was able to tell the guys what I saw."

The Missions

The Wunnenburg crew's first mission was to Ludwigshafen/Mannheim on 30 Dec 1943. Small recalls his impressions vividly. "Over Holland, on the way into the target and seeing the sunlight reflecting off the water, which was perfectly beautiful - not a cloud in the sky - a perfectly clear day. And then seeing the Luftwaffe fighters up there and the flak ahead. And seeing the dogfights that were going on in the air; parachutes with people bailing out. It was like going to a movie - like going to a first-class movie in color! All of this didn't upset me then. It was part of the thing. It all came back to me later, after the war. It all hit me later with nightmares, crying jags, hands and palms sweating. I had been doing that for quite a while. I didn't know too much about that until several years after the war when I got married and then my wife Claire, would tell me. It seemed to be a combination of all that went on during the war."



Crew memorial plaque at the Heritage Museum



Sherm 'Smiley' Small on local transportation

get killed - we lost four in all - was our bombardier Ty Leeper. Killed by a 20mm cannon shell. Didn't know what hit him; maybe the best way. We took it hard. That was the mission we crash-landed The Character. We crashed because we were pretty well riddled up - half the tail was gone. I later saw some pictures and thought, 'That wasn't far from my head!' That was the last of that aircraft. After that mission we got a shiny new silver bird to complete our tours in. Ty is buried in Cambridge American Cemetery. Chris, our pilot, went to visit Ty Leeper's family after we returned to the States, but felt uneasy on his visit. It was as if the feeling was, 'Why? Why our son? Why not you or someone else instead? How come you're alive and my son isn't?' It was an

essential trip and a natural reaction of a grief-stricken family. After that thirteenth mission our entire crew took a week of R & R at a rest house at Southport on the Irish sea. We had a great time there!



Crew of "The Character" gathering around after a mission discussing information with each other prior to debriefing.

"We knew when we were going to have a mission. We could hear the putt-putts going out there. They were loading bombs. They were doing their job. And then there was a knock on the hut door: 'Wunnenburg's crew!' And then we went over to the mess hall. We used to pick up our equipment and install our own guns, until the armorers started doing it. I wound up getting credit for shooting down one Me 109 and two probables. It was on that rough thirteenth mission. The sky was just black with fighter planes, and they came in at six o'clock. I opened fire and saw the Luftwaffe fighter blow and go.

The Tailgunner

I was never claustrophobic back there in the tail. Earlier attacks frequently came from six o'clock when they didn't have those twin-stingers back there. I wanted to shoot at airplanes - that was my job. There was no emotion in that whatsoever. It was, 'Don't come near me because I've got these twin-fifties.' It never bothered me to get shot at. I would get him before he got me. I was invincible right up to that last mission. There were many missions we never did get shot at by enemy fighters; we

"Our first crew member to



Bob Collins and Sherman Small saying goodbye after completing their tour.

were just lucky at that. But the flak was always tough. Here's what did bother me. Every tenth .50 caliber round was a tracer - a visible lighted round. After our sixth mission, they eliminated the tracers because they wanted us to become better shots; to not use the tracers as a guide going in. 'Do your own sighting - do your own shooting,' they said. We could do this.

The one other thing that bothered me in combat was that I was

of the Jewish faith, and my dogtags were marked with a Hebrew 'H'. My father's name is Small, but when I was born my grandfather signed the birth certificate with the name he brought to America with him when he emigrated from Russia - Smilowitz. And that is the name on my dogtags. I was known to my buddies during the war as "Smiley". We flew Big Week, February 1944. The first missions into Berlin were scary, scary more than tough. Scary in the thinking in terms of 'Here we are going right into the heart of Germany.' But I was only afraid of getting shot down over Berlin because of my Jewish faith. It absolutely bothered me, all the time."

Chris Wunnenburg recalls what it was like to fly with Sherman in the tail. "Smiley saved our ass on a number of occasions. I would sit up there listening to the chatter on the intercom and I could always tell what was happening behind us by the tone of Small's voice. When he was getting attacked heavily back there, his voice would go up a couple of octaves in excitement. I would know by that to take evasive action, and I would move the airplane up 25 feet or so to avoid getting hit."

Small says, "I never flew another position in combat. I was not an engineer or trained as a radio operator. I flew all my missions as a tailgunner. No way I would have wanted to be in the ball turret. I had heard too many horror stories. I would work the tail again.

"Our crew was upset when Doolittle made crews fly 30 missions as a tour instead of their original 25.. We were prorated and had to fly two extras, a total of twenty-seven. Our last one was no milk run. It was to Posen, Poland - an eleven hour haul! We were mad. I had concern that whole mission because we had heard of crews being shot down on their final mission. We made

it back okay, and they quickly got us off the base.

"Lee Bennett and I were ready to board the *New Amsterdam* to return home when we heard. Three of our crew had to make up a few missions to complete their full tour of twenty-seven.

Their final mission assignment was a milk run to a No-ball site on the French coast. Then they would return home. Their aircraft took a direct hit. John DeCicco our engineer, James Tasker our waist-gunner, and Jimmy Malloy the ball turret gunner were killed instantly.

"We were stunned. In later years, whenever we get together, the five remaining crew members, we talk about those guys. It's always emotional, but it's also nice to remember the things we did together."

Sherman Small met his wife, Claire, at a basketball game years after the war. He owned a sporting goods store at the time and was active in several sports. One evening he took a date to the game where he met Claire - they were married in 1948. She says, "We met each other under a basketball net!" The girl he took to that game wound up marrying a close friend of his who also was an Eighth veteran who also flew during the war. They all remain good friends. Sherman says, "At least we kept it all in the Eighth Air Force!"

Claire and Sherman Small live in Connecticut and Florida. Sherman served two terms as President of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society and is a Director Emeritus of the Board, has for many years been a member of the Board of Trustees of The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, and remains active in his 96th Bomb Group Association. He keeps in close touch with his many friends across the country.



Dual .50 caliber machine guns and sight - Tailgunner position - B-17 Flying Fortress.



Claire and Sherman Small



96th Bomb Group B-17s at Snetterton Heath

BEN AND JACOB BLANK

Dear Editor,

In answer to Ralph Ambrose - 398th B.G. Associate, in regards to "Twins - the Sequel", Ben and Jacob Blank - 301st Bomb Group; they were not Combat Crew members, as I knew them. Ben did not marry, and Jacob was married to Helen. We went to several reunions together since 1977. Several years later Ben died, but Jacob and Helen were still living together in North Philadelphia. We lost contact with each other, and I don't know if they are still living at the present time. Ben, Jacob, and Helen were great people, and we had lots of fun at reunions. I have no other information on the Blank Twins. Thank you.

Sincerely, **Anthony M. Stevens**
710th Sqd - 447th Bomb Group.

AIR SERVICE COMMAND INSIGNIA

Dear Walter,
I would like to add a little information concerning Fred Gray's article "Life On The Horizon" appearing in the March issue of 8th AF News. It was about a converted B-17 that ferried the Brass around. He stated that the ATSC insignia on the plane was the only one he had ever seen. The insignia pictured in the article was the last one used by the Air Service Command. Enclosed find the history of the Air Service Command badge as furnished by pages from Joseph Massaro book "Distinctive Insignia Of US Army AF 1924-1947". I think the membership might be interested in the descriptions of what the various designs on the insignia stand for.

AIR SERVICE COMMAND (A1)

The badge for the Air Service Command was approved 26 July 1942 and amended 7 September 1942:

Upon and over a golden disc entirely surmounted by a blue ring gear charged with eleven silver mullets, a silver four bladed propeller with red hub, resting upon a pair of silver wings.

Each star stands for one Air Depot. Blue and gold are the colors of the Air Force. The blue geared wheel represents the ring gear of an airplane engine and stands for the technical and mechanical services of the Air Service Command. The four blad-



ed propeller divides the gold field into four areas symbolizing the four Air Service areas. The spear head represents equipment furnished fighting men. This design was cancelled and replaced with a new design on 18 March 1943: Upon and over a gold disc entirely surmounted by a blue ring gear charged with twelve silver mullets, a silver three-bladed propeller with scarlet hub, resting upon a silver winged spear head.

Each star stands for one Air Depot Control area command. The blue ring gear stands for the Technical and Mechanical services performed by the Air Service Command for the Air Force. The three bladed propeller symbolizes the combined efforts of men, machines and materials in performing these services. The spear head represents equipment furnished fighting men.

There was no approved sample of the second design, but it was worn.

Yours truly, **Art Livingston 446th BG,**
707 Sqdn South River, N.J.

8TH AF CANINE UNIT

Dear Editor,

Did you know the 8th Air Force had a canine unit? I will tell you all I remember about the K-9 Unit.

As an M.P. we were on duty at night. One night I was working on the outer perimeter of the air base and recall observing soldiers working with guard dogs. The kennel fences were about 10 feet high. Some trainers were working with dogs outside the fenced kennels and others were inside the kennels. I can remember being surprised that the dogs were of different breeds, thinking all K-9's were of the German shepherd breed. Most dogs were German shepherds, but remember seeing Labrador retrievers. There were other breeds also.

Sorry, I can't name the exact base where I saw the K-9 Unit. I did duty on five air bases in England: Goxhill, Atcham, Ipswich, Boxted and Halesworth. If I had to state where I observed the K-9 Unit I would guess Atcham.

I was stationed at Atcham from July 1944 to April 1945. So my final guess would be Atcham.

Atcham was where General Kepner was stationed. Can remember seeing his P-47 "Ko Ko Mo." Believe it had an Eagle painted on it.

Sincerely, **Bill Burchard Fresno, CA**

KINGMAN TRAGEDY

Dear Walt:

I read with interest the article by Frank McKinley on the Kingman, AZ bus tragedy in the March issue of our 8th AF News; also those of Richard Johnson and Fred Biggs in the June issue. It brought back old memories as I also was there training with those lost cadets.

On the evening of January 6th 1944 I, with others, were in the base theater listening to Stan Kenton's Orchestra I believe, when the call was made for blood donors. By the time we arrived at the hospital the medical staff had sufficient type "O" blood so I was not needed.

Incidentally we lost twenty-eight cadets in the tragedy.

Prior to this we lost eleven men on a B-17 over McClellan Field, CA on Jan 2nd 1944 when the A/C disintegrated in bad weather. Two huge losses within a week. I attend a 1991 Kingman re-union; also a last one in 1992. After the second one we donated money to place a memorial with the names of the twenty-eight men lost at the railroad crossing - now an underpass.

I haven't been back since so don't know if that has been accomplished or not.

After graduating on Feb. 28th 1944 from Kingman I was assigned to the famed 390th BG, completing thirty-five combat missions.

Jack R. White, 390th BG
Renton, WA.

P.S. Those eerie train whistles at night still bring back old memories.

MISSION ELEMENTS

Dear Sir:

When I opened the June issue last night, I saw a black-headed, young guy identified as pilot Lew Lyle with his navigator and bombardier. With more than casual interest, I was riveted by his account of the February 3, 1945, mission to Berlin. His description of the battle and crew's reactions brought back many memories. Especially did I admire his descriptive language because it captured the way lead crews undertook the responsibility for a mission's success and the way lead crews would later review the mission.

Aside from the compelling narrative, I was reminded of my August 6, 1944, mission to Berlin flying lead with Colonel Burns, a battle during which the 351st Bomb Group lost seven B-17's over Berlin due to extremely heavy attacks by

ME-109s.

Thanks to Gen. Lyle for his superb delin-
eation of all of the elements that went into
a mission and telling it "just the way it
was."

Most sincerely, **Ben F. Love 351st BG
Houston, TX**

CORRECTION RE: WISCONSIN CHAPTER

Thank you very much for presenting in
June 2000 issue the report of the first
meeting at the 440th Airlift Wing in
Milwaukee. We would like to correct an
error that occurred in our report.

The welcoming address at the March 7
meeting was delivered by Colonel David
E. Rundquist. We mistakenly referred to
him as Lt Col Rundquist, and want to
apologize for this error.

Sincerely, **Donald Almon, ILO**

POW PICKUP

Mr. Newt Moy Salt Lake City, UT

Dear Newt:

I just read your letter in the June issue of
"8th AF News". I was a radio operator on
one of the 21 B17s from the 305th that
went to Barth May 13, 1945 to pick up
the P.O.W's. Like you, I didn't remem-
ber many of the details of that day. I
finally started looking in the National
Archives and found the information in the
1st Air Division records. The name of
this operation was "Revival". All two
hundred aircraft were from the 1st Air
Division groups as follows:

Group	Arrival	Time at Barth
91st A	20 A/C	07:00 hrs
91st B	"	08:00
381st A	"	09:00
381st B	"	10:00
398th	"	11:00
305th	"	12:00
306th	"	13:00
92nd	"	14:00
379th A	"	15:00
379th B	"	16:00

So, Newt, you landed at Barth between
11:00 AM and noon. We landed right
behind you and if your aircraft was late
getting off, we were lined up behind you
on the taxi strip. Do you remember how
the B-17s were all lined up? We shut off
two engines on the co-pilot's side, the
rear door was opened and 30 P.O.W.s
climbed in. As soon as the rear door was

closed, it was: re-start the two engines
and taxi out for take-off.

I always wanted to go back to visit the
airfield and site of Stalag Luft I P.O.W.
camp. My wife and I did this in July
1993.

If you have computer access, log on:
www.stalag.net for pictures and stories
about Stalag Luft I.

Regards, **Tom Creekmore 305th BG
Severna Park, MD**

RESCUE MISSION

Dear Walter:

Reading Newt Moy's letter in the June
issue, reminded me of a similar mission
we made. I was aircraft commander of a
B-17G, 487th BG at Lavenham. On June
3, 1945 we were sent to Linz, Austria to
transport French slave laborers to France,
Men and women! We also used wooden
planks to build bleachers in the bomb
bay. We were able to load 30 French
men & women in the aircraft. We flew
them to an airfield south of Paris noted as
A-55. I later learned that this was the ID
of the nearby road or highway.

Upon landing in France, everyone actual-
ly kissed the soil upon deplaning! As I
took off, I saw the Eiffel Tower up ahead.
Being an all-American red-blooded
young boy, I went for it! I buzzed it head
on, peeled off at the last moment, and
noted that the altimeter read about 1000
feet ASL!.....my reference books show a
height of 984 feet!

Sincerely, **Ken Hoddinott 487th BG
Savannah, GA**

BRITISH AVIATION CADETS

Dear Editor,

Two points the June 2000 issue raised to
me:

1. The story on p. 26 "A Little Payback"
gave me thoughts of a little known fact
about British aviation cadets in the U.S.
during WWII. At Arcadia, Fl. near me is
a memorial grave site to 23 British RAF
aviation cadets who died while training in
Florida and at Carlstrom Field near
Arcadia. The memorial is in Oak Ridge
Cemetery in Arcadia about 50 miles south
of Orlando, Fl. Many of the cadets died
from disease and others from others
cause. year a memorial service is held
at the site on Memorial Day. Carlstrom
Field was a basic flight training base for
Royal Air Force cadets in 1941-42. The

field is now a civilian airport but was
very active in WWII as was nearby Dorr
Field also a training base. The second
point.:

I have been researching the fate of the
crew of an 8th AF B24 that crashed in
Belgium 29 Jan 1944. The crew included
my radio operator T/Sgt Abe Sofferman
and the pilot was Lt. Harold Pinder. Both
parachuted and were hidden by the
Belgian partisan army.

Thank you and congratulations on a fine
issue.

Sincerely, **Forrest Clark, 44thBG
703 Duffer Lane,**

Kissimmee, FL 34759-4114

P.S. --I received 13 responses so far from
Caterpillar Club members as result of the
notice in the June issue. Thanks.

LETTER TO GREAT- GRANDPA

Papaw,

Today, as you know, we celebrated
Memorial Day. This day is not always
appreciated by others or respected as
much as you and I know it should. Right
now I would like to take the time to thank
you. Today in our church service we rec-
ognized and thanked everyone who
served and fought in a battle. This made
me realize what an important thing you
and all the others fought for in these wars.
It also makes me realize what an impor-
tant and meaningful person you are to
everyone in the United States. You
fought and represented us proud, strong,
and willingly, no matter what the battle
facing you was. My analogy of you
fighting for our freedom is like God who
also "fought" for our freedom. I love you
and thank you for everything. You are
the best papaw a girl could wish for.
Thanks for caring so much.

Love always, **Melissa McAllister**

*-This letter is from one of the younger
generation, 15-year old Melissa
McAllister, to her great-grandfather Fred
Gray, 379th BG, Gastonia, N.C.*

ARKANSAS FILES

Dear Ms. Metts:

Many thanks for the back issues of the
Eighth Air Force News! We added these
issues to the papers of retired Chief
Master Sergeant Theodore C. Hood, a
former B-17 top-turret gunner. CMSGT
Hood is retired from the Air Force and

has graciously donated his papers to the University of Central Arkansas (UCA) Archives. We are very grateful to him and his family for keeping history alive. It is our goal to make the UCA Archives the home of the "Mighty Eighth" in Arkansas.

Currently, to my knowledge, none of the archives in Arkansas have much information on the Mighty Eighth Air Force, and I want to change that by aggressively pursuing the papers of former Eighth Air Force members who live in Arkansas. I would appreciate it if you could put something in your newsletter which will convey this message.

The address for sending materials is:
**Jimmy Bryant C/O UCA Archives
 Torreyson Library 201 Donaghey
 Conway, AR 72035**

RED CROSS CLUB

Dear Mr. Brown:
**THE AMERICAN RED CROSS CLUB,
 KINGSTON-ON-THAMES, SURREY,
 NR. LONDON U.K.**

I was fascinated to read the article by Virginia Reynolds, "AN EVENING STROLL" pages 67/68 8th AF NEWS June 2000. My interest was certainly heightened by the end-piece which stated that Ms Reynolds was stationed ... "later at a Red Cross Club at Kingston-on-Thames near London."

For a long time I have been trying to obtain information about this particular American Red Cross Club, as it was used by Air Force personnel at nearby Camp Griffiss in Bushy Park. I know it was situated in Castle Road near Clarence Street, in the centre of Kingston but its exact location so far remains unknown.

Kingston's Local History Museum and Service unfortunately are as ignorant about its exact location as I am.

I would be very pleased if John Rex or Virginia Reynolds might be able to supply me with some more details about this particular Red Cross Club. The people at the Kingston Local History Museum plus your own Red Cross Society would in addition be very pleased to receive this information.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely, **Richard Anthony Harries 8AFHS Station Contact, AAF#586, Camp Griffiss, codenamed "WIDEWING", Bushy Park,**

Teddington, Middlesex. United Kingdom

CHATEAUROUX MISSION

On 5 February 1944, 401st BG Capt. Stann and 351st BG (Col. Romig, Col. Gaylor) bombed the airfield of Chateauroux, central France. This bombing was very successful: the important destructions delayed during many weeks the training of the German pilots. Please, I am looking for information, American airmen who participated on this mission, their comrades or members of their family.

Your reply would be greatly appreciated by the American aviation enthusiast I never ceased to be.

My address: Phil Canonne, 2, rue Assolant, 41000 Blois, France / p.canonne@wanadoo.fr
 Articles, comments, photos, memories, historical searches etc. made 8th AF News a remarkable review. Long live 8th AF News!

Thanking you in anticipation,

Yours sincerely, **Philippe Canonne**

NEW MEMBERS

Dear Connie Metts:

Many thanks for a delightful afternoon with you and Ed Morgan at the Eighth Air Force Museum in Savannah. The museum is outstanding and as I told Ed, we too soon forget what so many American boys fought and died for along with the patriotism of all Americans at that time. It takes something like this to remind us of our great history. My hat's off to those responsible for this wonderful museum. Enclosed is my check for the two memberships in the Eighth Air Force Historical Society. One is for a Gordon Rosencrans who was our Vice President of Sales until he retired. Rosy, as we called him, served in the 15th Air Force and was a pilot on a B-24 Liberator stationed in Italy. He flew 23 missions before being shot down and spent the rest of the war in a German prison camp. The other membership is for me. I too, was in the Air Force during the tail end of WWII but by the time my training was completed, the war was over. Even so, I did enjoy my time in the Air Force and was proud to have served.

Connie, it was a real pleasure to meet you and hope I have a chance to return and

spend a few more hours in your fine museum.

Sincerely, **David Williams Chairman Emeritus WW Williams Company Columbus, OH**

LETTER TO THE TROOPS

Complaint Department

During these past years as Editor of the 8th AF NEWS I have on occasion received objections from members to a particular article or item published in the newsmagazine issues. I realize that occasional complaints are the natural course of printing an international veterans magazine which goes out to a diverse readership. Of course, much thought is given to the material included in each issue to hold upsets and misunderstandings by the reader to an absolute minimum. While most of the mail received is enthusiastic and encouraging, various complaints on a wide range of subjects have been received.

Some of the items deemed objectionable by individual members have included printing of some descriptive nose art from your 8th Air Force aircraft; including reunion notices for non-8th units such as the 9th AF; "not enough fighter material, not enough B-17 articles, not enough B-24 articles"; too many corny jokes; too many color pages; too many Society business items; not enough Society business items. You get the idea. In addition there has been a mild flareup or two by our British members to the cartoons commenting on the consistently miserable damp cold rainy English weather; referral to the "Picadilly Commandos;" the warm English beer and excesses of it by 8th Yanks. A member or two took offense at the articles which referred to the designated use of flak jackets and helmets by combat crews for protection of personal private physical parts - equipment now openly talked about on sports TV as steel protector cups. I have even gotten a couple of letters from members who oppose printing letters in Mail Call from young German associate members which usually ask for information on raids or crews, in their notable efforts to learn more about the war and its effect on their country. Some of these letters are very touching in their sincerity.

In the recent June 2000 issue I have

heard from a few who objected to the inclusion of the (fully clothed) Varga girl and her wearing of the American flag's red, white and blue in our Independence Day celebration section. From the same issue came a complaint about the Happy Airlines cartoon submitted to our office by the respected CRASH research group in Holland which I obtained for print; also an objection to a joke which depicted a conversation between mother and son with a minor speech difficulty, a well-worn joke taken directly from an old Academy Award movie directed by John Huston and which, incidentally, must be read aloud to fully understand. Even got a complaint about the joke which mentioned an old fella's yellow teeth.

Let me state that no material that is printed in your magazine is included to make fun of any person or upset any reader. I consistently use the services of what I call my "censor panel" of several individuals and friends to run articles by for their opinion and input prior to going to press. We wind up negating a good number of photos and articles for a number of reasons. While American media has come a long way from radio's "Portia Faces Life", "Young Widow Brown," and "John's Other Wife" to the openly expressive television daytime soap operas of today, most of us do not wish to fall into that arena or that of Geraldo or Jerry Springer and I feel as strongly about that as anyone. The 8th AF NEWS should stand apart and should serve as an educational source for everyone, especially those of the younger generation. It should set the standard for veterans magazines and we are working to achieve that.

I do feel, however, that the magazine would be dull and rather pointless if all we published was business news of the Historical Society, Chapter News, Taps, and a few run-of-the-mill combat articles. Material should remain interesting with a wide variety of subjects and presentations. Again, no offense or impropriety is ever intended, and I would hope that none is perceived. In discussing this matter with my personal review board, they came up with a suggestion which may satisfy a reader who sees something he objects to, and that is for the reader to simply remove that page, deep-six it in the round file, and enjoy the rest of the magazine, share it with family and friends, and look forward to the next quarterly issue. That answer

certainly sounds feasible to me. I want to say again, however, that your correspondence is vital to our goals and I want to continue to hear from you as always, with your thoughts, suggestions and input.
Sincerely, **Walter Brown, Editor**
8th AF News

MOSQUITOES

Dear Editor:
Your story, "The Berlin Raid 3 February 1945," brought back many memories. I was assigned to both the 379th Bomb Group that led the mission in your story and the 25th Bomb Group, which provided the three Mosquitoes that dropped the chaff to screen the lead bombers. I flew 35 missions as a navigator with the 379th Bomb Group at Kimbolton from August 1944 to December 1944.

When I finished my bomber tour, the 25th Bomb Group was looking for combat-experienced pilot and navigator volunteers to fly reconnaissance missions in British Mosquitoes. I was assigned to the 653rd Light Weather Reconnaissance Squadron. Our primary job was weather reconnaissance in which we scouted routes and target areas for weather conditions and reported back to 8th Air Force Headquarters before the bombers took off. However, another one of our jobs was the chaff missions, which your article mentioned. On these missions a flight of three Mosquitoes preceded the lead bombers to the target. Our bomb bays contained packs of chaff which were dropped sequentially to form a screen for the lead bombers. Each bomber in turn dropped chaff to screen the planes that followed. The Mosquito's fuselage was made of plywood, so the German radar was not likely to home in on the plane itself, but would shoot at our stream of chaff instead. Therefore, we would watch each other and take evasive action if the flak began to follow the chaff stream toward the plane itself.

Fresh eggs were scarce in England during the war and at the 25th Bomb Group's combat mess we were allowed one egg each, which we could have either before or after a mission. Some guys had their egg before a mission just in case they did not make it back. I always had mine after I returned. It gave me something to come back for. In all, I flew 36 missions with the 653rd Squadron. That comes to three dozen eggs.

Sincerely, **Charles F. Gieswein 379th BG Silver Spring, MD**

COMING IN

Dear Sir,

I would like to correct a statement in your June issue involving the piece in TAPS about Kendrick "Sonny" Bragg.

The song "Coming In On A Wing And A Prayer" was written for a B-26 coming in from a raid on Benghazi in North Africa with one wing demolished. So be it.

Sincerely, **Peter Sobin**
466th BG Shelton CT

- Appreciate the corrective information, Peter. I have also been advised that particular song was written in the Pacific war about an incident on an island airstrip there. The tune was a very popular one with the troops and on the Homefront as well. - Editor

A FEW SUGGESTIONS

Dear Editor:

The article "Twins - The Sequel" in March 00 concerning the Jackson twins reports a few errors. The Jackson crew was assigned to the 855th Squadron, 491st BG. Jack was the bombardier and Harry was the pilot. Bruce Crane was the navigator. We were billeted in the same Quonset hut.

Re: New Jersey Chapter News, March 00: I would think that the "bear" joke doesn't rate a snicker. Norm Grant's idea of humor is almost as bland. If you have read Andy Rooney's *My War* you would assume that the B-24's did not provide any punch for the 8th, and their only claim to fame was a result of high combat losses and the plane crashes on returning to their bases. I get the same feeling reading the 8th AF NEWS; more than a mere oversight just as the air battle of England was just a pilot's war.

Sincerely,
George Risko, 491st BG Troy, MI

Thanks for the opinions, George. Please check out the June 00 issue.

-Editor



Chuck Halper's license

Eighth Air Force Historical Society PX Insert

Fall 2000

Wow! Where did the Summer go? Here it is already Fall - my goodness how time flies. Monica and I have some terrific new items to offer for this issue!

After many requests by our members, Monica and I are very proud to present an 8th Air Force Flag (Item M7). This sturdy 3' x 5' nylon white flag features a full color 8th Air Force Emblem with black lettering (see picture). We are offering two flags to choose from, an indoor and outdoor version. The indoor version is slightly more expensive due to the fact each flag has a gold fringe surrounding it. Show off your pride during 8th Air Force Week (October 8th through October 14th), Memorial Day, Veterans Day or any Group Reunions. Show the spirit of the Mighty Eighth and fly your flag. Outdoor flag is \$49.95. Indoor flag (with gold fringe surround) \$59.95.

BLUENOSED BASTARDS of BODNEY by Tom Ivie and Robert Powell, 292 pages, hardbound, 100's of photos. (Item B-10) - is one of the most sought after 8th Air Force Unit histories ever published. First printed by the 352nd FG Association in 1990, the book soon became a collector's item. On the secondary market they have gone as high as \$200 to

\$300 for an original copy! Due to numerous requests, the book has been reprinted and is now once again available for a very short time. We are very pleased to offer the book but you better



Displaying our new flag!

hurry! Don't miss out! Only \$49.95! This is an exclusive offer the 8th AFHS PX!

We are also very pleased to offer a wonderful book entitled, *VALOR AT POLEBROOK - The Last Flight of Ten Horsepower*. (Item B9) This hardbound book details the history of two of the 8th Air Force's finest veterans, Lt. Archie Mathies and Lt. Walter Truemper (351st BG). Both were recipients of our nation's highest military decoration, the Medal of Honor. Masterfully researched and skillfully written, this book illustrates the story of February 20th, 1944, the day the men aboard "Ten Horsepower" became the most decorated crew of the 8th Air Force. Only \$24.95!

Featured in our Sale Items, we are offering a new item for a limited time the 8th AFHS - 25th Anniversary Golf Cap! This lightweight, silver-gray Golf Cap features an embroidered 8th AFHS emblem and is adjustable to fit. A great gift for you, a son or daughter or a grandchild! Was \$12.95 now only \$8.95! Get yours while supplies last!

We look forward to seeing you all in Salt Lake City at the 8th AFHS Reunion. Till then, take care of yourselves!! We look forward to hearing from you soon! May God Bless!!! Keep 'em flyin'!



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 November 2000.

8TH AIR FORCE LOGO PATCHES

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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

___	J1 3/4 inch 8th AFHS Lapel Pin	\$ 2.95
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___	J3 8th AFHS Tie Tac (Regular)	\$ 3.95
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___	J7 8th AF Bolo Tie	
___	___ Gold Medallion Clasp with Gold Rope	\$ 17.95
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	<i>please circle your choice(s)</i>	
	B-17 B-24 P-47 P-51 P-38	
___	J9 Key ring Tabs @ \$3.95 each	\$ 3.95
	<i>please circle your choice(s)</i>	
	B-17 B-24 P-47 P-51 P-38	
___	J10 Gold Ladies 8th AF Bow Broach Pin	\$ 8.95
___	J11 Ladies Gold plated Earrings, 8th AF emblem	\$ 12.95
	(pierced ears only)	
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	<i>please circle your choice</i>	
	Crew Member Pilot	

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	or 3 Bumper Stickers for \$2.00	\$ 2.00
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	or 3 Stickers for \$2.00	\$ 2.00
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	or 3 Inside Decals for \$2.00	\$ 2.00

CLOTHING

QTY		TOTAL
___	C1 8th AF 'Better' Cap - Black w/embroidered emblem	\$ 17.95
___	C2 8th AF Golf Cap - Embroidered emblem, fits all sizes	\$ 12.95
	Red ___ White ___ Blue ___	
___	C3 T-Shirts - 8th AF logo in full color	\$ 12.95
	<i>Please indicate size(s) wanted</i>	
	___ S ___ M ___ L ___ XL	\$ 10.95
	___ XXL	\$ 12.95
___	C4 Sweatshirts - 8th AF logo in full color	
	<i>Please indicate size(s) wanted</i>	
	___ S ___ M ___ L ___ XL	\$ 19.95
	___ XXL	\$ 22.95
___	C5 Golf Shirts - Embroidered 8th AF logo in full color	
	<i>Please indicate size(s) and color(s) wanted</i>	
	___ S ___ M ___ L ___ XL	\$ 22.00
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	___ Red ___ White ___ Blue	
___	C6 A-2 Jacket, genuine goatskin <i>Order one size larger than your suit size</i>	
	Indicate ___ Regular ___ Long	
	<i>Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery</i>	\$190.00



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___	M1 8th AF Wall Clock	\$ 19.95
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	or 2 for \$7.95	\$ 7.95
___	M3 8th AF Zippy Letter Opener	\$ 2.00
	or 3 for \$4.95	\$ 4.95
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	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
___	M7 8th AF Flag - 3'x5' white nylon flag with full color 8th	
	AF logo	Outdoor \$ 49.95
		Indoor (with gold fringe) \$ 59.95

8TH AIR FORCE ART

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

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
___	B4 The B-17 Flying Fortress Story - Design - Production - History , Freeman/Osborne, 1998. Hdbd. Chronicles evolution of the aircraft. Brief history on every B-17 that served in World War II - all 12,371 of them! A great testament to the mighty Fort.	\$ 45.00
___	 B5 B-24 Units of the 8th Air Force , Robert S. Dorr, 1999. Stbd. 7 1/4" x 10", 96 pages, 100-plus photos, 30 color profile paintings. History of the 2nd Air Division of the 8th AF. Each 2nd AD group is covered in this nicely formatted book.	\$ 17.95
___	 B6 B-17 Units of the 8th Air Force, Part 1 , Martin Bowman, 2000. Stbd. 7 1/4" x 10", 112 pages, 100-plus photos, 39 color profile paintings. History of the 1st Air Division of the 8th AF. Heavy emphasis on the 91st, 92nd, 303rd, 305th, 306th BGs. A great read!	\$ 17.95



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c/o M. Copeland

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Apple valley, MN 55124

No Phone Orders Please

FREEDOM

Dear Walt:

I've had some great fun with this license plate. I'll never turn it in. People from all walks of life, stop me to talk about the B-17 or share some military story.

A man with a woman passenger and a couple in the back seat stopped beside me at a red light. He motioned for me to put down my window. When I did, he yelled over, "I just want you to know I'm enjoying the freedom you helped give me."

The man in the back seat said, "That goes for me too." So I said in return, "To tell you the truth I'm enjoying it myself."

With that, we waved and drove off. We probably will never see one another again but I'll bet we both will remember our brief chat at the red light.

My best regards,

"Chuck" Halper Lakewood, CA

BERLIN MISSION

Dear Dr. Brown,

After reading your story of Lewis Lyle's mission to Berlin on 3 February, 1945, I wanted to respond. I flew 29 of my 30 combat missions as a lead navigator with the 379th Bomb Group. Many pre-dawn hours were spent with "Big Jim" Edwards planning each mission and providing briefing for the crews. Jim was a "navigator's navigator" and highly respected by all. "Togglin Ed" Millson was an ever present "Jimmy Stewart-like" figure who towered over most of us and was an outstanding bombardier. Of course there's little I can add about Lewis Lyle, who I first met as a 27 year old Lt. Colonel, in October, 1944. Not only was he an outstanding pilot and natural leader who was highly respected by all who served with him, but he was a man of compassion and understanding who had a "listening" and sympathetic ear for the problems of others. As a personal example, when I learned on Jan. 20, 1945 of the unexpected death of my sister, an Army Air Corps nurse, I visited Col. Lyle at his office. Since I needed only one mission to complete my tour and return home to my family, I requested that I be assigned as lead navigator on the next mission. This was a mission to Neuss, Germany on January 23rd that I flew as

navigator for Major Gibson. It was the mission that one of our planes failed to get off the runway and crashed into a squadron site to explode and cause the loss of many lives and destruction of buildings. In spite of this tragic and traumatic circumstance, when our lead plane was diverted to a British base due to inclement weather on our return, Col. Lyle sent a jeep nearly 80 miles to pick me up so that I could be released the next morning for my return trip to the U.S.A. Congratulations on your magazine! To the past, present, and future of "THE MIGHTY EIGHTH"!

Sincerely, **William "Bill" Shupert 379th BG Marietta, GA**

HOLLAND

To the Editor:

I am a member of the 8th AFHS, a life member of the 486 BG and the 3rd Scouting Force. I would like to advise you about a little known reunion that occurred in the Netherlands this past April/May. This was in honor of an event that happened at the close of WWII, the dropping of food to the starving Dutch.

The 3rd Air Division Group, including the 3rd Scouting Force, dropped food to these people at tree-top levels.

Prince Bernhard and the people of Holland invited all the airmen who were on the food dropping missions for eight days of celebrations where we were wined and toasted. Our three buses even had a police escort wherever we went. The overall theme was THANK YOU, THANK YOU. IF YOU HADN'T DROPPED FOOD TO MY STARVING PARENTS WE WOULDN'T BE HERE TODAY.

Invited to the celebrations were people from England, Canada, Poland, New Zealand, Australia and the US who flew

on the Manna/Chowhound food-dropping missions. In one village 78% of the townspeople gathered to greet us. There were nine Bomb Groups involved in this operation.

Sincerely, **David A. Mullen 486th BG Oscoda, MI**

CHAPMAN CREW

Dear Editor,

Your publication stimulates the memory of the great air war. In your March 2000 issue, Page 51, you feature the Chapman pilot-bombardier brother crew.

I was with Harry Chapman Class of 43A and would like to make contact or at least find out: Did they make it?

Thank you, **Charles J. Anderson 111 Fellowship Rd. Moorestown NJ 08057**

MID-AIR TRAGEDY

Dear Mr. Brown:

Reading the March, 2000 issue of the *8th Air Force News* in which an article called "Uncle Charlie" written by Richard Hansen brought back a very unhappy memory for me.

I was the tail gunner on John Silvernale's crew with the 381st Bomb Group, 534th Squadron, and on May 24, 1944, we were on a bombing raid over Berlin. As the tail gunner in the lead plane in our squadron, I saw first hand what happened to the Wardneck and Wainwright crews. These two planes were in the second and third positions in the squadron. Something happened to the plane in the second position, on my right...I don't know if flak hit the cockpit or fire from enemy fighters did the damage; all I do recall is that the plane on my right turned into the plane on my left. There was one big fireball and I was worried that our plane would be engulfed also. No chutes - in fact, nothing but bits and pieces, I'm sure the twenty men were killed instantly and many times I have recalled this terrible mishap.

Perhaps the above information will be of some sort of closure to Richard Hansen.

Sincerely yours,
Robert E. Georgen 381st BG Arlington Heights, IL



American Parade at Prince Bernhard of Holland's Palace.



Louisiana Proclamation

Historical Society Board of Directors member Ivan McKinney is at the left and at right is 303rd Bomb Group pilot Phillip Eisenwinter, representing the Mayor's office of Alexandria, LA with the Mayor's Proclamation of National Eighth Air Force Week October 8 - 14. Holding the Proclamation is Harry Tanner of Sulphur, Louisiana, President of the newly-organized Louisiana Chapter of the 8th AFHS, an aviation historian and avid memorabilia collector.



PLAQUE HONORS EIGHTH POWs AT ANDERSONVILLE



Carl Runge of Winter Haven, Florida continues to remember and is actively keeping alive the memory of his fellow airmen captured or killed over Europe while flying with the 8th Air Force. Runge was a navigator with the 486th Bomb Group B-17 crew of *Oh Miss Agnes* when he was shot down and became a Prisoner of War in 1945. He coplloborated with his former Scoutmaster, graphic artist Al Lawson of Sun City Center to design and fabricate a bronze plaque honoring 8th Air Force POWs. The plaque was dedicated in Memorial Day ceremonies at The National Prisoner of War Museum in Andersonville, Georgia. The memorial includes a map of the 8th Air Force's theater of operations during the war. The National Park Service granted special permission to place the plaque on the site.

Carl Runge has spent a large part of his life working with veterans of all services and all wars to develop and build the National POW Museum, which opened in 1998. He also helped establish The Andersonville Trust, a private foundation to maintain and improve the Museum. He is a past-President of The Friends of Andersonville, a museum support organization.

Carl states, "Of the 95,000 POWs in Europe, a third of them were from the Eighth Air Force. No military organization suffered more casualties than the Eighth on a percentage basis. I just felt that the Eighth Air Force certainly deserved a Memorial at the Museum."

A VERY SPECIAL RETURN

351st Bomb Group - Polebrook

Using hyperbole in describing events that greeted veterans of the 351st Bomb Group in England, June 6-12 would be impossible because one simply could not overstate one climactic occurrence after another. Our English honorary member David Gower, was the organizer and prime mover behind Reunion 2000 at Polebrook, Oundle and Peterborough.

After the usual perceptive selection of tours that provided something for the men, spouses and a sprinkling of second and third generation attendees, our first surprise was Friday morning at Polebrook Airfield, site of our hallowed 351st Bomb Group memorial monument. After several days of unusually glorious weather, that morning reverted to the kind of day we veterans remembered best....out of an overcast it began to drizzle. But the posting of the colors and prayers proceeded as scheduled. And then, over the PA system,



351 red, white and blue balloons released at the 351st BG airfield

David asked for absolute quiet! Soon, we heard an unmistakable sound of four powerful Wright Cyclone engines in the distance. Out of the mist materialized a B-17. We craned our necks upward as it passed overhead. My wife, Virginia, snapped a number of shots as the aircraft made six or seven passes well under 1000 feet.

The schedule called for all 200 of us to have lunch at the world famous Oundle Boarding School. We reboarded the four coaches to be transported to Oundle where we found hundreds of American Flags and the British Union Jack displayed along and over the streets. Reaching the School complex we noted a huge circus-size tent erected in an adjoining meadow. The sides were raised and we could see large numbers of people inside sitting at tables. We were among the very first to walk up the pathway toward the entrance, and were greeted by area officials, their faces wreathed in friendly smiles, they shook our hands murmuring "thank you, thank you". Then we heard the applause that greeted us as we walked the length of the enclosure. People were standing and applauding and smiling greetings, and then most of the Americans and not a few British, cried just a little. Unbelievably, the applause lasted more than thirty minutes as it took that long to unload all the coaches.

The local citizenry, included men and women and students of all ages. They all remembered or had been told of the men of the nearby American Airfield. Everyone seemed to be aware of the part the American 8th Air Force and all other American Forces played in helping to save that island nation and the world from Nazi tyranny.

Personally, I can think of no other similar occurrence since our troops entered Paris toward the end of World War II. But the reception just described had been weeks, perhaps months in the planning stages. There was a small band that played music of the Forties with a pretty vocalist. We were addressed by the headmaster of the school and we were treated to an especially witty speech by the CEO of a division of Sony who happens to be a graduate of the Oundle School. Beside each plate of

food were pamphlets prepared by a local group as well as one filled with poems by the younger children at the School.

We in the 351st Bomb Group Association were so moved that I wished to share this wonderful uplifting experience. It proves that, at least in that small corner of the world, people do care!

**Lee E. Gingery 351st BG
Shenandoah, IA**



Lee Gingery at hanger site.



The 351st gathers at the Monument at Polebrook.

A BOMB RUN IN SAVANNAH MADE ME CRY

By Fred Becchetti, 445th BG Anandale, VA

The mission experience at the Savannah Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum was real enough to make me cry.

The details are somewhat vague in my memory, but I remember walking in and sitting on a bench in the middle of a room while a volunteer guide explained that we were going to experience a combat mission in a heavy bomber against a Nazi target.

We were at the IP making our turn toward the target, and the flak began to burst around us. Did I see flak bursts on a screen? I don't remember. But my mind's eye saw the sky ahead dotted by frightening black explosions with flaming cores of fire. The explosive flashes of light around the ship blinded me. Did the room shake? I doubt it. But I felt the thunder of the explosions and sensed a jolting of the ship off its course toward the target. The body of the ship rattling around me in the airstream, panels buckling in and out, cables scraping, stanchions twisting and clanging. The whole ship groaning from nose to tail. Fragments of flak bounced off the fuselage. Long forgotten dialogues on the intercom flowed through my consciousness as the pilot surrendered the ship to the bombardier for the final bomb run through the flak-pocked sky.

"Bomb bays open!" And I felt the freezing air sweep through the ship. I held my breath and thought my thoughts of death as the evasive action stopped and we made our final unswerving run at the target, with flak exploding in front and around us.

"Bombs away. Bomb bays closed!" The flak exploded behind us as we left the target, the lights came on in the museum's bomb-run experience room, and I sat on the bench and wept.

For the first time since January 1943 when I went into Cadets, became a bombardier and did my thirty-five missions out of the Eighth through D-Day and St. Lo during the spring and summer of 1944,

I cried about the war.

Since the war, there have been many sad, bittersweet and even joyful events in my life to make me cry, but this was the first time in 53 years of telling air stories and talking and writing about the war that a thought about that war had made me cry.

Don't ask me why I cried. A psychiatrist could probably put together a lot of gibberish explaining it, but I think I cried partly at the thought of our navigator Vince Hamilton, a wonderful guy and so full of life, who got behind in flying missions with our crew and had to fly a couple after we had finished our quota, only to get shot down and die without us. He was 20.

The tears may have been for the low-level mission at the St. Lo breakout when I saw a waist gunner with his flight suit on fire jump out of a burning plane to our right without a parachute, look directly at me in utter terror and pain while falling, falling, falling with his hands clasped desperately on his head, 11,000 feet to the ground and eternity.

My tears could have flowed from the thought of the wounded B-17 over Berlin, dipping heavily into a long slow spiral while parachutes popped out and we counted, "1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, -- can't see any more of them."

Our engineer at 26 was the oldest man on the crew. Leroy DeRouen, a cajun from New Iberia, Louisiana, married to his lovely and gentle Iris. Fun-loving, with hundreds of stories about his people in the bayous. After fifteen experiences with flak, his

mind, nerves and body began to deteriorate, until he was grounded and sent home, leaving a major vacuum of love and happy moments in our crew. I cried for what the war had done to Leroy.

It might be said that those three years of war and the G.I.

Bill that followed them improved my life, but I believe I cried on that museum bench about the loss of those three years, too. It doesn't matter that the cause was just and that we were fighting to save the world from tyranny. That goddam war ripped me out of the innocence of youth and brutalized me for three years!

Our training featured the philosophy of



The Mission Experience

"kill, kill, kill" as far as Germans and Japanese were concerned, so I hardly blinked an eye when we were ordered to bomb the center of Munich in case we could not see our primary military target. "They're not civilians, gentlemen. They are skilled workers!" the briefing officer explained. But even though I am still not sure about the Germans after a half a century (our brainwashing in the 1940's was very thorough!), I may have been weeping in the museum for the innocent people who were killed and maimed by the 1,500 bombers of the Eighth and Fifteenth converging over Munich and dropping their bombs blindly through the clouds, as well as for the British who died several years before during the Blitz by the dive-bombing Stukas of the Nazi Luftwaffe.

The bomb-run experience at the Heritage Museum didn't only make me cry. It made me wonder where those surprising tears have been hiding for more than fifty years. Suddenly, for the first time, I could identify with the guys with shattered mind and spirit who didn't die with the 53,000 who didn't come back from Vietnam.

My tears in Savannah also made me wonder about what we have been doing in the Eighth Air Force Historical Society since its founding. My weeping in Savannah made me wonder why our journals, our meetings and our conventions are marked by colorful reminiscences, humorous stories of life among the good people of Norfolk and sketchy and technical descriptions of our escapades in the air over Nazi-Occupied Europe. My tears lead me to believe that all this may be the babbling ramblings of men in pain who, for more than fifty years, have talked about the war in the air over Europe but never really tapped their feelings about that war. I am fairly certain that this is

what has happened to me. I seem to have been just too busy making a life for myself after the war to let my emotions participate in my memory of those horrible five months of battle.

Our radioman is the only member of our crew with whom I have made contact. I wrote him about my experience in the Savannah bomb-run simulation. He wrote back, "I know how you felt when you broke down during the simulated bomb run. I, too, broke down during a B-17 film at the Air Force Museum a few years ago. I guess I had put a lot of that out of my mind over the years, and it reappeared very realistically." So it's not just me. And it's probably not just the two of us.

Let's face it, guys. It was a crappy, dangerous experience, from beginning to end. Lots of laughs, perhaps, but basically a brutal period in our lives. We've forgotten how cold it could get up in that unfriendly sky while riding in a rattletrap of a B-24 with the airstream whistling through the cracks in the fuselage and from underneath through the vibrating doors of the bomb bay which never shut themselves quite tight enough. Just think back on those great screens of deadly flak over Berlin, Munich, Strasbourg and yes, Paris, as you made the final run to the target. Listen in your mind's ear to the deadly hail of flak fragments rattling on the thin skin of the ship and every once in a while zinging through and glancing from one inner wall to another and sometimes ending the ricochet in the body of one of your crew.

Do you remember getting back to base, sliding out of the ship, shaking yourself back into sanity and then taking a long look at the plane and at the gaping holes in the wings and tail where antiaircraft shells had gone through without exploding or where heavy chunks of flak had ripped at the plane, fortunately without hitting a fuel tank?

Nobody can forget how we scanned the skies constantly for "bandits," eyes fairly popping out of your head to see better against the blue and against the white of thunderheads so that you could get your guns in position to try to knock them out of the sky.

Today, jets take you from New York to London in a few short hours, so you may

have forgotten those nine and a half hours in the air to Munich and back, preceded by cold, damp morning hours of briefing and followed by nerve-wracking debriefing after the mission, when all you wanted to do was get back to your hut and try to forget the terror you had just lived through.

One would think that you could sleep after a mission, but you sometimes didn't. You flew the mission over and over again. Your legs and arms went numb on you in bed. And the flight surgeon gave you sleeping pills to get you to sleep, because you were needed for another mission tomorrow morning.

"We've forgotten how cold it could get up in that unfriendly sky..."

And try to remember those times when you got separated from the formation and had to make it back to base on three engines, expecting fighters any minute, sweating out your navigation and your remaining engines, while reviewing the procedure for bailing out or ditching in the Channel.

This doesn't even include actually being shot down, parachuting and falling into the hands of angry German farmers with pitchforks and becoming a POW or hooking up with the Underground and making your way across Germany, France and Spain to Gibraltar. Just think of the 1,000 young guys like you who died every month while the Eighth was in operation. Think of how the bombers were used as decoys to bring the German fighters up so that our fighters could knock them out of the sky and gain air superiority just before D-Day.

Remember the Kassel Raid in September 1944, when ninety German fighters, in three minutes, shot down 25 of the 445th Bomb Group's 35 ships, killing 113 young guys like you and scattering another 120 or more over the German landscape. Three minutes of horror!

There was nothing humorous or quaint about anything that happened to us up there; none of it was glorious or heroic. It was a cold, miserable, bloody experience. Not an adventure at all. It was an ordeal.

Like most guys, I guess, I have my medals where I can see them and where my children might look at them and wonder at their meaning. If you're not care-

ful, you get to thinking that the medals have a real meaning. You might look on them as measurements of heroism, but actually they have no meaning at all. There was nothing heroic about what I did, and I sure didn't meet any heroes where I was.

All of us would have done the things we did without the medals. Sure, there were a few who might have been true heroes, worthy of special medals, but, in general, the Air Medal and the DFC were simply markers of the number of missions flown, nothing else. Their only value lay in the discharge points they were worth when we had the chance to get out from under the control of the military. The only thing that had value was the comradeship we enjoyed with our crew, and even that was fleeting, because in most cases we did our tour, shipped out and never saw one another again. The only thing we shared was several months of flirting with death. Once that was over, we had nothing else in common.

The greatest value of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society has been to revive some of that comradeship and, of course, to promote the history of "The Mighty Eighth." Undoubtedly, it should continue to do this through its Chapters, conventions, scholarly studies and, yes, stories written by Society members and published in the journals. However, the Society must guard itself from glorifying the things we did in the skies over Europe. It seems time to focus on the ugliness of what it meant to fly

"You flew the mission over and over again."

missions under the wings of the Mighty Eighth. It seems time to remember the terror that accompanied us on every mission. Above all, it seems time to remember the death of some friends and the wounds that other friends have had to live with for fifty years and more.

None of us will ever forget the experience, but now it seems time to focus on the fact that flying in a heavy bomber over Nazi Europe was the most dangerous place in the world. Now may be the time for letting our feelings show. Maybe that is why my radioman and I cried.



REUNIONS

355TH FIGHTER GROUP ASSOCIATION

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 GROUP

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

303rd BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

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

BURTONWOOD ASSOCIATION USA Reunion

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

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

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 atten-
dance.

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

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.

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.

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, 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

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

452ND BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

26th ANNUAL REUNION
September 21-22-23, 2000
Antlers Adams Mark Hotel
4 South Cascade Avenue
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903
(719) 473-5600

389th BOMB GROUP

389th Bomb Group, England, Station 114,
Hethel Reunion, September 26-27-28,
Hilton East, Tucson, Az.
Contact: Barney Driscoll, 431 Pool Road,
Richards, Texas 77873-4149
Phone (936) 291-6253

361st FIGHTER GROUP ASSOCIATION

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

381st BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

October 17-22 2000
Gold Coast Hotel, Las Vegas, NV
Contact: Joe Newell, PMB 355
1973 N. Nellis Blvd., Las Vegas, NV
89115
ph: 702-643-1015 or visit www.381st.org

44th BOMB GROUP - EIGHT BALLS

Aug 31 - Sept 4 2000 - San Diego, CA
Contact: 44 BGVA
P.O. Box 712287
Salt Lake City, UT 84171-2287

REUNIONS

448th BOMB GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

August 27-30, 2000
Savannah, Georgia, Hyatt Savannah
Contact: Cater Lee (334) 943-7000
P.O. Box 1850, Foley AL 36536-1850

390TH BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION

The 390th Bomb Group (H) Veterans Association, Tucson, AZ, September 26th through October 1, 2000.
Contact Ken Rowland, P.O. Box 28363, Spokane, WA 99228-8363. Telephone 509-467-2565, Fax 509-467-2565 or eMail rowland@ior.com

385TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

April 3-8, 2001, Albuquerque, Doubletree Hotel, Hal Goetsch local host.
Contact (505) 889-9418 for information

27TH ATG ASSOCIATION (WWII)

Reunion Dates: October 11-13, 2000
Location: San Antonio, Texas
Historic Menger Hotel
Contact: Donald Diehm 246 Laurelwood Lane Horseshoe, NC 28742
(828) 891-5422

SCOUTING FORCE ASSOCIATION

October 5-8, 2000 Irving, TX

Sheraton Grand Hotel
Contact: Dick Atkins
1304 Cochise Dr. Arlington TX 76012
tel (817)261 3007

385th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

April 3-8, 2001, Albuquerque, Doubletree Hotel, Hal Goetsch local host. Contact (505) 889-9418 for information.

8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NATIONAL REUNION 2000

October 17 - 22, 2000
Sheraton Salt Lake City Centre Hotel
Salt Lake City, UT
Contact: Armed Forces Reunions -
757-625-6401

Crew of B-17 Flying Fortress 'BxR' 96th BG 338 SQDN Lost in action over Germany on 8 May 1944 - No survivors

Bottom Row, Left A.C. Hauser Jr. (N), (holding papers) followed by, I believe, J. Bailey (B), C. Birdsey (P), W.O. Hayes (CP)

Top Row, order unknown W.F. Bauman (R), E.J. Bondy (TT), J.V. Ball (BT) R.W. Kennedy (WG), J.B. Burke (W.G.) J.G. Roseborough (TG)

Any information to identify individual crew members would be appreciated.

W.J. Hauser (Brother A.C. Hauser Jr.) SIS Palma Ceia Pt Inverness, FL. 34450 Phone 352-344-4388



THANKS, UTAH CHAPTER!

As Chairman of the Historical Society's Reunion Committee I want to extend to John Lusk Moore, President of the Utah Chapter and to his membership, a thank you for an outstanding job in helping us to plan for a successful reunion in Salt Lake City. The members of the Chapter contributed many ideas and suggestions for an interesting visit to their City. Our Committee has incorporated many of those ideas in our planning. Salt Lake City is a historic and important part of American history, and the Utah Chapter has done a magnificent job to help us enjoy our visit at the annual reunion in September.

Larry Goldstein
Chairman, Reunion Committee



B-24 DOCUMENTARY EXHIBIT

Dear Robert Vickers,

Re: the B-24 Documentary Exhibit

The document "LEGENDS OF THE LIBERATOR," has been gratefully received by our group. We will be very proud to display the Document in our museum. The recognition of our task by such an esteemed group as the MIGHTY 8th is something that our members will cherish with pride.

Enclosed in the letter is a photograph as requested. The three men in the photo are, The Secretary & Restoration Co-ordinator Colin Grey, the gentleman in the centre is our President John Temby, a Pilot of 102 sqn RAAF Liberators and Vice President Nathan Eichler, a Wireless Operator/Airgunner (WAG), of 99 sqn RAAF Liberators. The presentation was made on behalf of your members on April 15th 2000.

Yours truly, Colin Grey Liberator Memorial Restoration Fund

NORFOLK' WAR-TIME AIRFIELDS & THE 'MIGHTY EIGHTH'

by Roy Barker, air historian, Norwich England

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

This made Norfolk a prime target area for Luftwaffe air attacks. Norwich, the county capital, suffered its first air raid on 9 July 1940 before London and any other provincial city. Almost daily and nightly the city's sirens sounded. But in the initial attack of the 9th no sirens sounded and the bombs on the Boulton & Paul factory came without warning, resulting in 26 people killed and many more injured. By the end of 1940, the air onslaught resulted in 260 separate raids.

It was during the series of 'Baudecker' raids of 1942 that Norwich received its heaviest bombardment. On 27 April at a half hour before midnight a large enemy force approached Norwich. The railway station was the first building under attack and quickly erupted into flames making it an ideal marker for the streams of bombers. Whole areas and streets were devastated in the raid which lasted 1 1/2 hours, leaving 158 people dead and 161 seriously injured. Not a single enemy aircraft was destroyed.

Norwich immediately became a gun-defended area. Two nights later the Germans bombed Norwich again, this time killing 68 people. Again, two days later the Germans

returned in strength but were hoodwinked by decoy lights and fires and dropped their bombs on nearby open countryside. The city suffered its last air attack on 6 November 1943. During the raids a total of 1600 civilians had been killed or seriously injured, with 4,700 houses destroyed or seriously damaged.

For three years - from 1940 to 1943 - the huge and costly task of building the thirty-seven airfields was undertaken. The Royal Air Force occupied 19 bases and the Americans 18. The first US airmen made their appearance in late 1942 and by the following year the trickle became an ever empty of aircraft. By day hundreds of American heavy bombers filled the sky, and by night there was the constant throb of R.A.F. bombers passing overhead. The lull between operational air traffic was taken up by low level training and test flights. During late 1944 over 4,000 flights were mounted daily which resulted in some air collisions and accidents. Indeed, more Allied aircraft came to grief over Norfolk than any other English county, resulting also in the loss of civilian lives.

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

from Louis and Eiken Pignatelli
Bloomingdale, IL



An explosion following a mid-air collision of two 8th AF aircraft near Buckenham, taken from a 93rd BG Liberators.

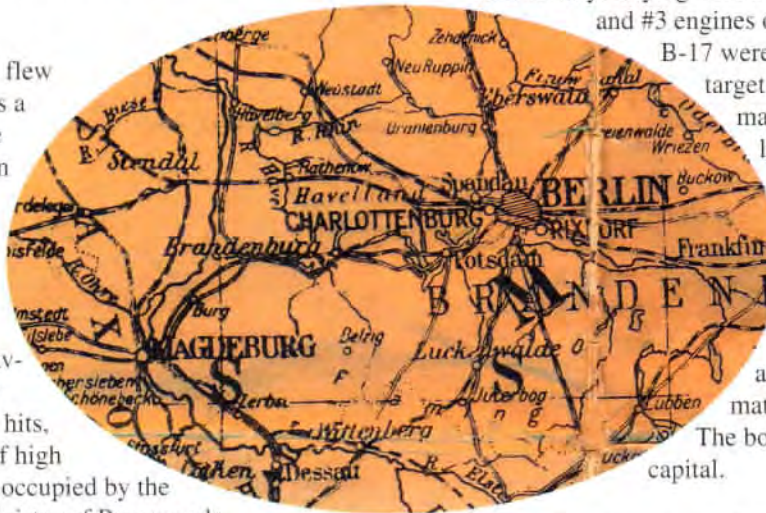
BACK TO BERLIN

The February 3rd, 1945 mission to Berlin was presented in the June 00 *8th AF NEWS* as the most destructive raid to date by the 8th Air Force and was the first to target the administrative and operational headquarters of the Nazi Third Reich in Berlin. The results of the raid from information at the time confirmed the effectiveness of the February 3rd maximum effort of the Mighty Eighth.

John Greenwood, Alton II, flew with the 351st Bomb Group as a navigator on that mission. He sends in information printed in the Daily Express on February 5th, 1945.

Report last night from the U.S. Eighth Air Force:

Photographs show that Berlin's "Whitehall" was heavily battered. The German Air Ministry received eight direct hits, and eighteen concentrations of high explosives blanketed the area occupied by the War Office, the Chancery, Ministry of Propaganda, Gestapo Headquarters Ministry of Agriculture and other important buildings near the Air Ministry. There is fire and smoke over an area two miles long by one mile wide. A huge column of smoke billowed up to a height of more than two miles as the



Forts turned for home.

Col. Lewis E. Lyle, who led the first formation dropped his bombs near the Air Ministry. "Pretty big fires were burning," he said, "and the heat drove up the clouds as if they were boiling." His bombardier, "Togglin" Ed Millson, 379th BG, states, "I was the luckiest guy on our airplane - instead of sitting there sweating flak, I was very busy. On the way off the bomb run we passed a very long column of 8th Air Force bombers still going in to Berlin." Joe Conroy, Portland, Oregon, remembers the mission vividly. Flying with his 306th Bomb Group the # 4 and #3 engines on the right wing of his

B-17 were knocked out by flak over the target and his aircraft fell out of formation. His aircraft and crew limped back home after #2 engine also was hit by fire.

German "Achtung" radio began broadcasting air raid warnings that morning at 10:30 AM: "Bomber formations are flying over Hanover and heading East..." "Fighter formations are heading for Berlin..." The bomber spearhead was nearing the capital.

A number of news articles and Strike photos of this mission are submitted from the files of Harry Gobrecht, 303rd Bomb Group Historian, who was the pilot of *Neva - The Silver Lady* on this day.

From the London newspapers: "In a wild 41-minute period, more than 1000 U.S. Flying Fortresses, escorted by more than 900 fighters, blasted Berlin. They poured some 3000 tons of high explosives and fire bombs on military targets in the refugee-packed city. More than 400 B-24 Liberators, staging a diversionary attack that confused Berlin's defenders, pounded a synthetic oil plant and railyard on the outskirts of Magdeburg, 65 miles southwest of Berlin. For the day, twenty-one German fighters were shot down and seventeen more were destroyed on the ground. Nineteen U.S. bombers and five fighters are reported missing."

The February 5th edition, Stockholm Daily Herald: "Berlin is today a city of confusion and disruption of hunger and wild rumours, a city of flames and smoke and mounting fear. The German censorship has suddenly clamped down with a complete blackout on news. Many buildings were destroyed, including the royal palace. Casualties, it is feared were very large ... The bombs caused a massacre among refugees crowded in and around the railway stations. As the attack was intended to hamper German troop movements to the east, the railway stations were major targets."

Major Merle Nichols, flying a P-51 Mustang fighter stated: "I have been over Berlin ten times and I never have seen anything to compare with today's bombing. The bombs seemed to have been guided by hand and judging by the number of fires and great billow of smoke, Berlin took the worst beating it ever had."

Jack Rude, 493rd Bomb Group, sends in a report from the **London Edition of The Stars and Stripes:** Reporter Herb



First bombs hit Berlin - 3 Feb 45 raid

Granberg was in Berlin during the raid:

"The first bombs came. The ground heaved; the lights flickered. It seemed the concrete walls bulged. People scrambled about like frightened animals. A girl in a group of Russian laborers began to sing mass. 'Shut up' somebody shouted, but the girl sang on. Then came the next bomb load, six or seven right above us...we sat in musty darkness. Some pocket torches were lit, but they proved useless in the cloud of chalky dust which came welling through the tunnel. It penetrated the eyes, the mouth, the nose and ears. People knelt and prayed. After ear-shattering explosions there was silence. Air pressure increased and I held my mouth open to equalize the impact on the eardrums.

"I experienced more than 700 alerts and at least half as many attacks during 2 1/2 years in Berlin, and this attack was unquestionably one of the war's worst. Deep bomb craters blocked the Bellevue Strasse and many buildings along it were burning, including the detested People's Court. Germans were rushing past with bundles and suitcases. It began to rain. Time bombs started bursting. The detonations could be heard for two days.

"Every other street was blocked because of duds - waiting for life-time convicts to remove the charges. More than 25,000 people were killed. Water, gas and electricity were restored only after a long time, and for over two weeks it was possible to telephone from only one sector of the city."

The American Operational Analysis Section's official report on the raid compared the bombing results with the area of an American football field:

"Within the 72-acre area encompassed within a circle having a radius of 1000 feet, on the average each area the size of a football field received five hits by 500-pound bombs."



Berlin - 3 Feb 45

The 77 Eighth Air Force squadrons which bombed Berlin on February third accomplished their mission with great precision and effectiveness - 1.25 tons of bombs fell on each acre of their target for the day.

EPILOGUE

The irrepressible spirit of the American youth serving in the Mighty Eighth always seems to make itself known. Buried deep in the back pages of the official files of Lt. Gobrecht's records is his Short Interrogation Form - the Debriefing report from the 358th squadron's Gobrecht crew for this mission as filed by the S-2 Interrogation officer after the crew's return from this mission to Berlin:

#3 Fighter Support: Good

#4. Enemy fighters: Two seen in distance, but not identified as Enemy a/c

#6.Crew observations: None

#7. Casualties: None

#8. Crew suggestions and comments: Candy and sandwiches for this crew were taken by another crew - "Q" for Queenie a/c in 359th squadron took them.

Things of importance are important. The mission may have been, as the British often say, a piece of cake, but a crew's lack of candy and sandwiches is most significant. Gobrecht's crew, in addition to the theft of their candy and sandwiches, on this mission were assigned to the Tail-end Charlie slot in their squadron's formation.

THE FIX

Fred Hoxey, 442nd ASG, noticed a couple of omissions from his "Working in Flying Control" article published in the June 00 8th AF NEWS. He recalls, "The last names of the officers I worked with in the 55th fighter Group's Wormingford Station were as follows: Bracken, Botti, Rogers, Wohl, Bailey and Davidson. I remember one time we had a P-47 Group of about 20 fighters land on our base beside our own planes. They were from the 56th FG at Boxted six miles away. Their base was closed due to fog. We didn't have many parking spaces for them."

THE TARGET IS BERLIN

The briefing room grows quiet and still
As the C.O. enters in...
"The target for today, he says
"Is the city of Berlin."

The laughter gone, a somber quiet
Now settles in the room...
As many men now contemplate
Today may spell their doom.

The preparation now is over
For the mission for today,
The gas and bombs are all aboard,
They'll soon be on their way.
The Flying Forts now lift their noses
And point them to the sky...
How many will return today?
How many men will die?

Four hundred planes were sent aloft
From the English countryside,
All were from The Mighty Eighth
Where they belong with pride.
Above the Channel now at dawn
The gunners clear their guns,
They know that it will not be long,
They'll be firing at the Huns.

As Rotterdam comes into view
The crews are in suspense,
For it can only be a little while
"til flak bursts will commence.
They make it through the Netherlands
And across the German lines,
The dreaded puffs of smoke ahead
Are the first resistant signs.

The flak bursts now are all around
And begin to take their toll.
Now one, now two, three Forts go down
And a fourth is in a roll.
As Hanover comes to view ahead,
Many Flying Forts are gone
From flak and German fighter planes
But the bombers still go on.

The Bombardier now in his sight
Has the city of Berlin.
In spite of all the hell he sees
He now can force a grin.
With bombs away it's homeward bound
For the planes which now remain,
From friends and foe the bullets fly
As thick as heavy rain.

The homeward trip
seems very long
As flak shells now
return.
Another bomber
takes a hit
And now begins
to burn.
The German
border far
behind.
The battle now
is over
For those who
made it to return,
They see the cliffs of
Dover.

Planes now landing one by
one,
The flares go out ahead

To warn of wounded men aboard.
Some are wounded, many dead.
Another mission now behind,
The groups count up the cost.
Seven hundred men and seventy planes
Were on this mission lost.
The crews debriefed, now get some rest
For tomorrow without warning...
Another mission must be flown,
It is Frankfurt in the morning.

Justin A. Parrish
305th BG



LT. COLONEL EARLE ABER AIRCRAFT FOUND

From John Degrange in England: The story now can be concluded - the mortal remains of Col. Earle Aber and co-pilot Lt. Maurice Harper have been recovered. Irving Christensen, 94th BG, confirms the saga with a recent newspaper article that relates the recovery events. Joan Peterson of Avon Lake, Ohio likewise sent in additional notices.

Earle Aber was one of the early pilots flying with the Special Leaflet Squadron, 406th BS, of the 8th Air Force. In March 1945 returning from a leaflet-drop mission, Col. Aber's B-17 was hit by fire from an English anti-aircraft gun battery at Clacton who were expecting a final raid from the German Luftwaffe. Aber steered away from Harwich and stayed at the controls long enough for his crew to bail out over England, and then time ran out. He and his copilot ditched the bomber at the mouth of the River Stour near London. The plane has rested there for 55 years.

Earle and sisters Jean, Margery, and Georgia were friends of Irving Christenson growing up in their hometown, Racine Wisconsin. Three of the siblings, including Earle, are listed in the Park High School Hall of Fame.

Earle Williams, the son of Aber's sister Jean Murphy, organized a search team with the assistance of the U.S. Army Central Identification Laboratory, to locate the crash site and locate remains, if any. His search was successful. Neil Burrows of Bedford, England says that the remains of Aber's hand and his Racine Boy Scout ring have been recovered. The sisters flew to

England to observe the excavation of the crash site. Margery Aber says, "This week, I have been wearing Earle's ring around my neck every day. I just think my family would all like to see it. There is a big dent in the ring."

The remains of the two airmen will remain at their final resting place in Cambridge American Cemetery near Madingley.



Col. Earle Aber, left, congratulating T/Sgt. Thomas Thompson on his Air Medal award.

SIX BOMBING MISSIONS OVER GERMANY

Touring Europe through a bomb-sight...

by Robert O. Stephens, 381st Bomb Group Helotes, TX

All 30 missions that I flew were challenging and exciting in some special way but several were most memorable. Here's why.

My fourth mission on August 24, 1944 was to a radio factory at Weimar. The load was eight 500 lb. high explosive. We flew back in the formation of our squadron and salvoed when the squadron lead dropped his smoke markers. Only five of our bombs released, three were still hanging by their shackles in the bomb bay. Electrical wiring and bomb door linkage was flak damaged. Weimar was too far from Ridgewell and our fuel supply would not be sufficient to get back to home base unless we got rid of 1500 lbs. of hung bombs.

I had briefed and demonstrated emergency bomb release to all of the crewmembers before our first mission. The Radio Operator was nearest to the bomb bay and carried a long hook to reach and trip the shackles but when asked to trip out the bombs his response was "Sir, I don't know how to do it." The Flight Engineer/ Top Turret gunner was the next nearest but he would have to enter the open bomb bay to trip the releases. His response was the same, "Sir, I don't know how to do it."

That left me, the bombardier, to release the bombs. I hooked a walk-around oxygen bottle onto my chest pack parachute harness instead of the chest pack parachute because of the restricted space on the catwalk, eased my way into the open bomb bay and manually tripped out the three bombs.

The co-pilot, Rodney Layton had the ball turret gunner follow the bombs to the ground for spotting any significant hits. The first bomb hit on an autobahn, the second on a small secondary road and the third in a small stream. Lt. Layton claimed the best hits of the squadron because five bombs hit the target area, destroying buildings, starting fires and hurting many people.

The first manually released bomb hit on the autobahn to keep the fire trucks away, the second bomb hit the small road to keep the ambulances away and the third dammed up the small stream so if the fire

trucks got there they wouldn't have water to fight the fires with.

Looking down through an open bomb bay from 25,000 ft up is a bit nerve wracking. About a week after the mission I was approached by one of the crewmembers "that didn't know how to release bombs" with an apology, "Sir, I knew how to release those bombs, but I was afraid." I didn't blame him as I felt a bit uneasy myself.

Mission number 5 - 25 August 1944 was to New Brandenburg, with the approach from over the Baltic Sea. As we passed Peenemunde to our left I spotted gun flashes that appeared as though I was looking right into their muzzles. Prior to becoming an aircrew member I was a gun commander in a Coast Artillery Anti-aircraft Battery and held an expert gunners rating. With that background I knew just about how long it would take for a flak shell to reach us so I warned the crew "If you don't have your flak vests on you had better wrap up" - we had about 45 seconds. Our Navigator, Gerry Scoones timed almost every little incident as it happened and in this case we had flak bursts off our left wing in a 43 seconds.

Mission number 22 - 14 January 1945. The target was the Rodenkirchen Bridge across the Rhine River at Cologne. It was a classic mix-up. The sky was clear and the ground was completely white with snow limiting most visual navigation except for the rivers and larger cities.

The IP was way south of Bonn and the Group Lead started his bomb run

toward Bonn. Realizing his target error just short of Bonn he altered course toward Cologne. I have always thought the lead bombardier had used extended vision in his sight and did not remove it when he changed targets. It caused an early bomb release and his load hit about 3 miles short in the Rhine River. The low Squadron was doing evasive action essing back and forth all the way from Bonn to Cologne, gradually sliding back in the bomber stream until they would soon be under the high squadron that was flying a straight line to the release point. I couldn't understand the evasive action because there was no flak and no reported fighters in the area to evade. Our strike photos did show some low squadron airplanes in our high squadron's pictures. The low squadron's bombs struck to the right and beyond the bridge and the high squadron's bombs hit on and around the bridge. At the mission debriefing the low squadron's squadron bombardier, who was on the ground at Ridgewell during the mission, insisted that his bombardier



Mission #22 - 14 Jan 45 Cologne, Germany

hit the bridge because he told him where to aim. Eighth Air Force bombing analysis was used to determine who to credit with the hit. The high squadron was flying a thousand feet above the low squadron and according to the average of navigator's release times was 15 seconds after the low squadron---the last bombs to hit the ground hit the bridge. As the high squadron's bombardiers, flying my first squadron lead mission, I received credit for the hit.

Mission number 24 - 28 January 1945 was briefed to bomb Cologne. The weather was broken undercast and we expected to bomb with data provided by our Mickey Operator.

The Group lead received a flak hit that accidentally released bombs early on the bomb run to the target and they scattered bombs all over south Cologne. Our squadron then took over the lead position to bomb a secondary target at Bielfield. The approach to Bielfield was mostly broken undercast and the bomb run was started with radar. When it broke clear I placed the crosshairs on the marshalling yard and made a visual drop. I never knew what was in that marshalling yard, but a cloud over the strike turned pink from the explosions. It wasn't even Bielfield. Two bends in a river were almost identical, two towns of the same size and two similar marshalling yards were confusing on the radarscope. We had bombed Guttersloh about 8 miles from Bielfield. The most distinguishing

difference was a railroad turn around loop off the end of one marshalling yard. We were allowed to count the mission but without credit for a hit because we weren't sure at the debriefing just what was hit.

Mission number 26 - 14 February 1945 was scheduled to go to Chemnitz or Dreden. I don't remember which was our assigned target since we never bombed it.

The entire 8th AF was overflying Paris - a morale booster for the French people. It was 100% undercast the entire route so the French's only morale builder was from the drone of the bomber stream overhead. As we progressed east we followed the 8th AF lead and were way off course to the south. One of the last radio calls to the lead was asking if they knew that they were 80 miles south of course. That far off course and the planned length of the mission didn't allow for much reserve fuel. Our radar was inoperative and I had ignorantly turned off the bombsight expecting that I could drop on the lead smoke markers. Then the lead pilot called that they were bombing a target of opportunity, visually. The only clear hole in the clouds was over an industrial complex that must have created enough heat to burn off a small hole in the low undercast. I was informed by our pilot of the situation and let him know that I had turned off my sight and that there probably wouldn't be sufficient time for the gyros to stabilize without making a 360 degree turn. Flak began sounding like

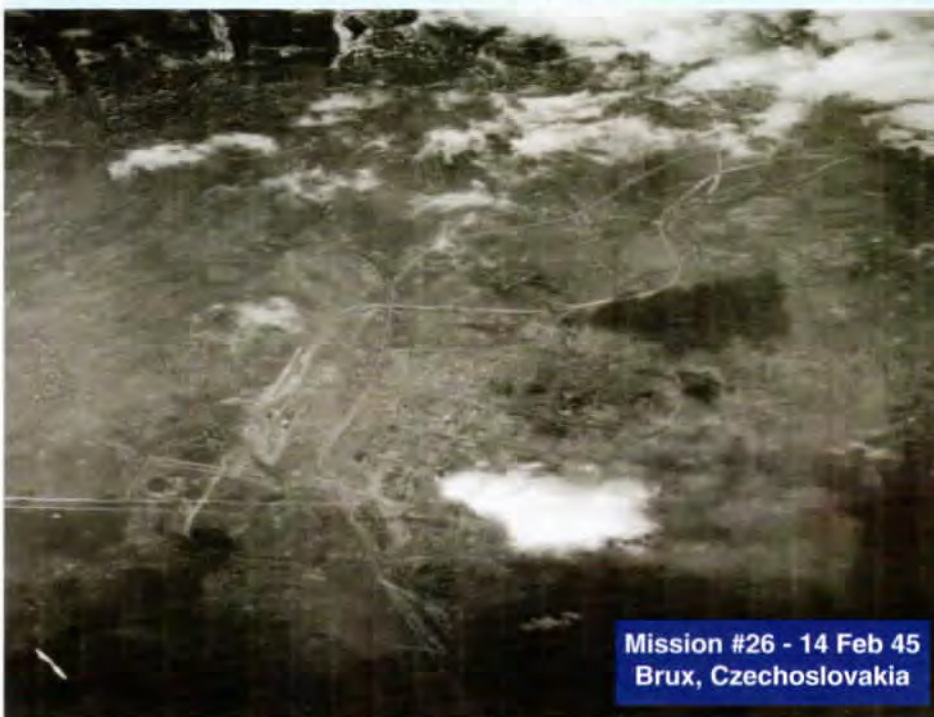
throwing rocks on a tin roof and he said "What else can you do? We are not going to go through this flak twice." I said I could guess. With that as a last resort and some aid killing drift with a caged bombsight, the leads of smoke markers and sighting over my toe I guessed, salvoed and eleven B-17's behind us salvoed on our smoke markers. Bombs hit on the target but we were not sure of what we hit. Gerry Scoones backed in some of his D R navigation when we definitely knew where we were and concluded that it was Brux, Czechoslovakia. We got a flak hit in the induction system of one engine. It would still run but not with enough power to keep up with the rest of the bomber stream.

When we passed Frankfurt, the undercast had burned off and the bomber stream ahead looked like a swarm of bees. A P-51 pilot flew along with us for a few minutes, wanted to know if we knew we were a mile south of course, wished us luck and left because he didn't have enough fuel to stay and escort us home.

We landed at Brussels but were refused fuel and permission to make a three-engine takeoff. We spent three nights in a Belgian school that had recently been vacated by the Germans, slept on bedbug infested straw pads they had left behind and finally three days later caught a flight back to Ridgewell.

In the debriefing room we reported that we had hit the target of opportunity, a synthetic oil plant just outside of Brux. When asked to give my bombsight data I couldn't give any but preflight data. The Intelligence officer had used the deputy lead bombardier's data in his report and informed us that our bombs hit between two prisoner or labor camps, one on each side of the plant and photos showed that all of our bombs hit in the storage tank area. None hit in the camps. I couldn't get a good copy of the strike photos as the crews that returned on time already had the best ones available. Mine shows a cloud over the strike area but all exploding bombs were beneath the cloud.

Mission number 30 - 25 February 1945, my last, was to the marshalling yard running east/west about in the center of Munich. It was a clear day but the Germans had put a smoke screen over all of the north half of the city. Our approach from the I P was from north and



**Mission #26 - 14 Feb 45
Brux, Czechoslovakia**

the target was not visible due to smoke. I tracked toward a kidney shaped training field south and east from the target until the aiming point came in sight then made a right turn just before bombs away.

I was flying the group lead and missed about a thousand feet to the left. The two squadrons behind did the same thing but got some overlapping of strike patterns along the marshalling yard. Strike reports were sent back by radio in code - mine was primary target bombed visually, results good. The two following squadrons reported primary target bombed visually, results excellent. At debriefing, instead of the usual part on the pilot's back for an excellent mission the question for the bombardier for just "good" was "Why?" General Gross was attending the debriefing and looked at the strike photos and said to give every bombardier an "excellent" - a great finish for my tour of duty. My reason for reporting the strike only as good was because I had missed my aiming point. The marshalling yard overpass to the west was the aiming

point briefed to hit. Our maintenance crew counted at least 165 flak holes and no one on board was wounded. I returned to the U.S. in April 1945 and relieved from active duty in May. A short time later I received a written commendation from General Gross for that miss.

Other missions varied from hours and hours of boredom to moments of stark terror, flak holes and one in particular that flak entered through the chin turret gun shroud, passed under the bombardier's seat cutting the gun charger hydraulic lines and the brake fluid lines under the co-pilot's foot. Our pilot, Robert Gotthardt, landed and turned off the runway intentionally groundlooping on the grass instead of running off the end of the runway. He was reprimanded by the operations officer for what he did but was highly commended by the crew for his good judgement. On occasion even our own aircraft were the enemy. Flying in the low position of a four plane diamond formation the lead airplane cleared their guns in preparation for landing, dropping

live fifty caliber shells. Our plane was hit on the plexiglass nose and I was showered with powdered plexiglass. Another glanced off the nose into the # 3 engine; it exploded and the projectile came back in the airplane between the navigator and myself after passing through the drift meter.

Returning from England after missions were very emotional times knowing that we had all survived without wounds to fly another day. On board the troop ship while returning to the U.S. I overheard a conversation between the ship's Chaplain and a young fighter pilot. The Chaplain asked if he prayed when on a combat mission, His answer was "yes" and said his prayer was always the same "Lord, if you hear me, please get me the hell out of here!" The Chaplain thought it was a good prayer and I wonder if all of us who survived didn't say a similar prayer.

Robert O. Stephens
533rd Sqdn., 381st Bomb Group
Bombardier on Robert Gotthardt crew



**Mission #30 - 25 Feb
45 Munich, Germany**

ZEMKE'S WOLFPACK

The success of a fighter group mission cannot be adequately judged simply by noting the number of enemy aircraft destroyed. Many fine jobs of bomber escort have resulted in comparatively few claims, but the low losses of the bomber forces have attested to the excellence of the fighter protection.

The radio conversation between Colonel Hub Zemke and Ralph Johnson, as recorded in the field control tower:

Johnson: I have one wheel down. I am going to Annwood station. Hello, Wayne [Lieutenant Brainard] get ahead of me.
Ground Station: You have one wheel down.
Johnson: I know it - I'll try to get it down if my pills hold out. I do not have any hydraulic fluid. What is your position, Colonel?
Zemke: I am over the field, I'll come over the tower for you.
Johnson: Roger.
Zemke: Let me form on you.
Johnson: Roger.
Zemke: Have you tried to shake it down?
Johnson: Yes.
Zemke: Get way up and try again. If you can't shake it down, you'll have to jump. Be careful. Put your landing gear handle in down position, do a bank on the left wing and snap it over to the right. Let me get a little ahead.
Johnson: Okay.
Zemke: That hasn't done it. Do some violent weaving back and forth.
Johnson: Sir, my landing gear handle is stuck.
Zemke: Is it stuck down?
Johnson: Yes, sir.
Zemke: Let's go upstairs. Follow me. Do you want to try one wheel?
Johnson: I certainly do, sir.
Zemke: Let me take a good look at

you. You don't have any flaps and you'll need plenty of field.
Johnson: Whatever you say, sir.
Zemke: Better bail out. How much gas have you?
Johnson: About 30 gallons. That fellow didn't do a very good job of gunning on me.
Zemke: I'm afraid of a landing.
Johnson: You're not half as scared as I am, sir.
Zemke: It's not so bad. [To Station]: His plane is in bad shape. I'm going to have him bail out northeast of Norwich. [To Johnson]: We'll go up to ten thousand feet. Be sure you hold your legs together when you go over, and count to ten. Try shaking it once more.
Johnson: Yes, sir.
Zemke: You don't have to sir me up here. Head out to sea.
Johnson: Yes sir. Is it okay now?
Zemke: Open up the canopy.
Johnson: It is open, sir. It's been open for a long time.
Zemke: Okay, mighty fine. [To Station]: The crate is heading out to sea. I'm following him down.
Ground Station: Do you think he will land in the water?
Zemke: No, I don't think so. Switch to C and call Bullfinch.
Ground Station: Roger.

Ralph Johnson returned with the D-ring in his hands.



The P-47 Belle of Belmont with the scarlet noseband of the 56th Fighter Group

USN Blue Angels

The U.S. Navy's precision flight demonstration team, the Blue Angels, was still selecting pilots for its year 2000 team at press-time following the death of two members but has released its schedule for the year.

Sept.	2-4	St. Louis, Mo.
	9-10	Grand Junction, Colo.
	14-17	Reno, Nev.
	23-24	NAS Oceana, Va.
	30	Redding, Calif.
October	1	Redding, Calif.
	7-8	San Francisco, Calif.
	13-15	MCAS Miramar, Calif.
	21-22	Jackson, Miss.
	28-29	NAS JRB New Orleans, La.
Nov.	4-5	NAS Jacksonville, Fla.
	10-11	NAS Pensacola, Fla.

USAF Thunderbirds

The Air Demonstration Squadron -- the *Thunderbirds* -- have announced their schedule for the 2000 show season. The team's first performance was June 8, 1953 at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona.

Sept.	2-4	Cleveland, Ohio
	9	Peterson AFB, Colo.
	10	Kirtland AFB, N.M.
	16-17	Klamath Falls, Ore.
	23-24	Burlington, Vt.
	30-Oct.1	Springfield, Ill.
Oct.	7	Vance AFB, Okla.
	8	Laughlin AFB, Texas
	14-15	Vandenberg AFB, Calif.
	21	Shaw AFB, S.C.
	22	Langley AFB, Va.
	28-29	Long Island, N.Y.
Nov.	4-5	Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.
	11-12	Lake City, Fla.

Veterans

by Forest Jones

The trenches are empty,
warplanes are gone,
the only thing left is memories.
The widows have stopped crying,
The soldiers have stopped dying,
The war is over.
But for the veterans the battle has begun
against the memories of the friends
that are dead.
Long recovery is ahead.

*written by an Alabama Junior High School student
in a Veterans Day Competition*

JAMES T. DUVALL

398th Bomb Group Chaplain

On every mission in 1944 and 1945 he stood at the end of the runway at Nuthamstead and waved to them as they took off. "There was always a prayer in my heart that God would give those young men the strength and courage to face whatever the day would bring," said Chaplain Duvall. He was the group's first Protestant Chaplain and spent his later career in the ministry serving others. After his retirement from the Air Force, James Duvall had pastorates in several cities in the western United States. He always maintained his contacts with the members of the 398th Bomb Group and held a special place for them throughout the years.

"I officiated at the funerals of most of the 398th men buried in England. Whenever I hear the playing of 'Taps,' I see again in my mind the rows of white crosses and Stars of David at Cambridge. Emotions well up within me and I think of the brave young men who gave their lives that others might live in freedom."

He and Marguerite, his wife of 64 years, lived in Loveland, Colorado and have two daughters, Margaret and Nancy. Chaplain Duvall died in peace on Veterans Day, November 11, 1999.



GOD'S PEACE

Peace, peace, God's peace
Not as the world gives, give I unto you,
But peace in the darkness of your soul,
And peace through the valleys of life,

Be anxious for nothing my little one,
Cast your cares on Me,
I care for the sparrows and the lily of the field.
How much more than that will I care for you.

Peace, peace, God's peace...
Not as the world gives, give I unto you,
But peace, peace God's peace:
I am here, by your side, take my hand; all is well.

Nancy Duvall Miller

A Peaceful Mission

The welcome coast to England
You have seen before
On a wartime mission -
Coming home once more.

*Thank God you made it this time
"What next?" you tiredly say,
Get some sleep before the dawn -
But that's another day.*

Fifty years have gone since then
And you are still alive.
Alive to sounds and life itself
But memories survive.

This time your journey is happy
And you are very proud.
The shores of England loom
again
From far below the cloud.

Now a peaceful mission
Back to that friendly shore,
To remember all your buddies -
You're coming home once more.

Connie Richards Bedford, England

*Connie Richards and husband Gordon are the 8th
AF Historical Society's Representatives in England
- Editor*

IN MEMORIAM

Major General Andrew S. Low Jr.

Andrew Low graduated from the U.S. Military



Academy in 1942 and served with the 8th Air Force in England, becoming a squadron commander of the 453rd Bomb Group at Old Buckenham then under the command of Col. Ramsey Potts. In 1944, Low was shot down while leading a mission and became a Prisoner of War in Germany.

In his lengthy Air Force career, General Lowe received numerous awards for outstanding service, leadership and valor, including the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Legion of Merit, the Distinguished Service Medal and the Purple Heart. He also was authorized to wear the Missileman Badge and Wings of a command pilot in the Turkish Air Force. He is an inductee of the Rhode Island Hall of Fame.

Andrew Lowe died in August 2000, and leaves his wife, Helen, four daughters and two sons, ten grandchildren and five great grandchildren. He will rest at the U. S. Military Academy Cemetery in West Point, New York.

Fairchild, John, M.D., Kansas City KS; four years as medical officer in England

Ferguson, William McLouth KS; 303rd BG, POW shot down on Cologne mission

LeSeur, Herman "Paul", Leawood KS; 35 missions as B-17 pilot

Sowell, Milton Ray, Nashville TN; B-24 pilot

Adams, Leroy Lynn, Kenwood IA; 30 missions, POW

Arn, Robert, Iowa City IA; 385th BS, ballturret gunner on *Madame Shoo-Shoo*

Chancellor, James, Hattiesburg MS; Mississippi Chapter

Titus, Austin Titus, Columbus OH; 95th BG, Escape and Evasion Society, B-17 navigator on *Winsome Wyn* - the last of his crew; conservationist, musician, scholar; waffles and sausage breakfast chef for his many friends and family - from Pat Brown

Abbott, William, Milan MI; 66th Fighter Wing, Yankee Air Force Museum - from Harold Sherman

Browning, Eric, San Geronimo CA; 7th PRG, lover of life, his family and all his many canine friends - from daughter Valerie Browning Fontenot

Sawyer, Robert, Scotia NY; 379th BG pilot

Crowther, Samuel, San Antonio TX; three years in 8th AF Supply Corps England; member of Phi Delta Theta; pharmaceutical sales career; - from Charles Harkins

Belanger, John, St Louis MO; St Louis Missouri Chapter

Babb, George, Logansport IN; 452nd BG; on Cliff Eccles crew - from Ken Wilson

Abernathy, John, Overland KS; 398th BG, 35 missions

Ferebee, Thomas, Windermere FL; bombardier on *Enola Gay* who dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima Japan - a duty he recognized as having played a vital part in ending the war with Japan and thereby helping save the lives of hundreds of thousands of American and Allied soldiers in 1945

Schutze, George, Austin TX; 392nd BG, B-24 bombardier, over 11,000 hours in volunteer service in Austin hospitals; Texas Central Chapter - from Tom Lawler

Good, William, 457th BG; a Founder of Pennsylvania Chapter and Vice-President before he and his wife Jennie moved to Florida - from Carolyn Swanson

Doucet, Lester, Omaha NE; 448th BG, POW after 30 Dec 43 -from Harold Kennedy

Donner, Richard, 388th BG; bombardier on *Quarterback* and *Suzi*

Mulcahy, Robert, Cedar Rapids IA; lived his life by the Will Rogers creed, "I never met a man I didn't like."

Weichman, David, Cedar Rapids IA; B-24 pilot

Williams, David, 357th FG

Clark, Alvin "Freddy", pilot 20th FG

Linden, Harry, 20th FG prop specialist

Link, Robert, Muskego WI; 1st Strategic Air Depot

Thomas, Robert, Beaver AR; bombardier and Public Relations; artist and sculptor with international awards; Mayor; known as well for his faith in God and his A.A. beliefs

Baldwin, Charles, Tulsa OK; bombardier with 33 missions

Floyd, John, Shaker Heights OH; pilot 458th BG - from Joan Peterson

Weiss, Norman, Wilmette; bombardier 401st BG - from crew member Jim Wells

Glankler, Francis, pilot 361st FG - from B. J. Redden

Crouch, Clyde, Houston TX; navigator 379th BG; artist, writer

Bergholz, Robert, Pearland TX; navigator 390th BG; - from Alfred Lea

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

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

Brunner, Joseph, Milwaukee WI; 389th BG; bombardier *Outhouse Mouse* - from his wife Paula, and from Ken Jones of Janesville WI

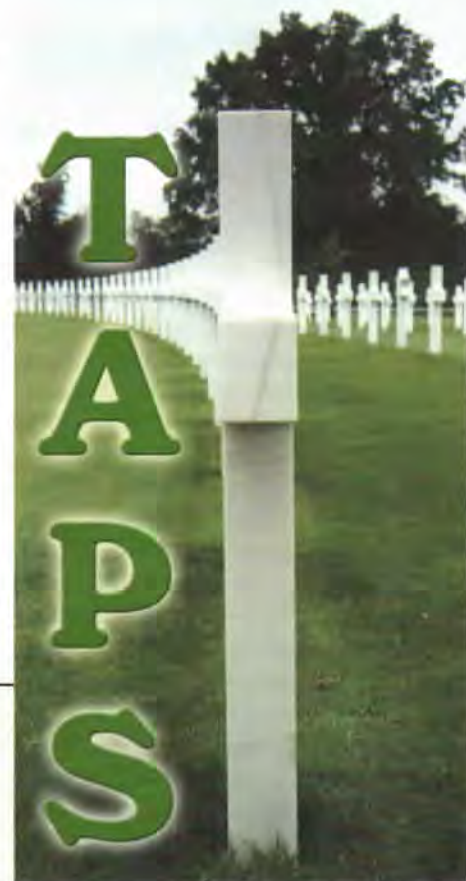
Worden, Leslie, Huntsville AL; 486th BG; Alabama Chapter

Minor, Jerry, Leawood KS; insurance broker, golfer, outdoorsman

McGinn, John, 55th FG; Commander of 338th fighter squadron - from Walter Konantz

Myers, Lawrence, Saraland AL; 392nd BG, Alabama Chapter

Glankler, Francis, pilot 375th FS/361st FG



WALTER MATTHAU

After ending his wartime career as a B-24 gunner in the 8th Air Force, Walter Matthau embarked on a second career in show business as one of the most respected and lovable characters to appear on the silver screen. Born in poverty conditions in lower Manhattan, Matthau became world-famous for his roles in movies such as *The Odd Couple* with Jack Lemmon, *Grumpy Old Men*, and *The Fortune Cookie*, for which he received an Oscar. He also appeared in many Broadway plays. His slouch and frown became a trademark in many of his movies, and his was the ultimate comedian character in many of them. Walter Matthau died of a heart attack in Santa Monica, California.

**Blow bugles, down the skies of all the world.
This is no time for bivouac. Rise and shine,
You comrades in the earth. We shall go on,
And you shall march beside us as we go.
Blow us the call, the "Charge!" - and we shall strike
And strike again until the world is ours
And we may live in dignity and truth.
Blow, bugles, we have won a victory-**

**But not a war. Blow down the myth of race,
The arrogance of states, the pride of self.
Blow down the fragile barriers of creed,
The lust for power over other men.
Speak for our brave, now lying where they fell.
Say for them what their deaths have said
already:
"We paid in the bright currency of life."**

Taps is Not Enough
by Carl Cramer

THE HANGER DANCE

8th Veterans Return to England...

The music was Miller, Goodman, Ellington, Shaw, Berigan, Basie, and a number of others. Big Band melodies drifted out through the open entrance doors and across the damp grass where runways once launched thousands of American bombers for missions into enemy territory. The musical notes disappeared into the low hills of trees in the countryside of East Anglia where sounds of hundreds of airplane engines once were heard.

Inside the T-hanger, the joint was jumping - the British once again welcomed the men and women of the Mighty Eighth with a joyous reception. It was the 2000 Hanger Dance at the Joint Analysis Command base at Molesworth, the site of Station 107 and the 303rd Bomb Group, and the United States Air Forces in Europe Band was playing the hits of the Forties before an enthusiastic crowd of American and British men and women. Big Band Swing music was the order of the night and many of the couples were dressed out in forties jitterbug attire, intent on "cutting a rug" into the late hours. Those who didn't make it onto the dance floor were thoroughly entertained by those who did. The huge hanger was decorated with American and British red, white and blue and the hanger perimeter walls were lined with exhibits and exhibitors, many selling memorabilia and souvenirs.

RAF Molesworth air base is very active and continues to play an important role in the defense of freedom and liberty. The Joint Analysis Center is the center for collecting and processing vital worldwide intelligence information, supported by a number of NATO and coalition countries in the free world and manned by top men and women of the armed services of these countries. All U. S. armed services are represented at the base. The 423rd Air Base Squadron operates the latest satellite and all-source informational technology around the clock to monitor terrorism and aggression around the globe. During the week, special briefings of JAC activities and tours of

JAC facilities at Molesworth were fascinating highlights for the 8th veterans and families. They found the presence of the Mighty Eighth in offices and operational rooms in the form of photos, paintings and memorabilia of the wartime years. The tremendous respect of the Joint Analysis Center staff for the 8th Air Force veterans is evident throughout.

The first week of June was *Return to England* week for a number of Eighth Air Force bomb and fighter Groups. All 8th veterans and their families enjoyed events at their air base sites and all were warmly greeted and entertained by British contingents who remembered with appreciation the important part U.S. airmen played in

their battle against enemy aggressors during the Second World War.

Some of the WW II Units attending the Hanger Dinner and Dance were the 7th Photo Recon Group, the 94th, 34th, 303rd, 397th, 100th, 401st, 452nd, and 351st Bomb Groups. Each had special ceremonies and memorials remembering the men who fought in their outfits. All

Groups were well represented at memorial ceremonies held dedicating a beautiful 303rd BG monument near the airbase entrance just before the veterans' grand march through the hanger entrance - greeted by an emotional twenty minutes of standing applause from the crowds who welcomed them back.



Memorial Color Guard



The B17G Sally B



8th Veterans Return to England at the dedication ceremonies of the 303rd Bomb Group memorial, Molesworth air base - monument design and development by Ken Clarke, 303rd BG: Brian McGuire; and Joint Analysis Center and 303rd supporters



The Band of USAFE on stage for the swing dancers



Betty Kelley, 303rd BG, wife of the late Ford Kelley



Alvin Meiklejohn, 100BG, signs a print for an English admirer



"Stompin' at the Savoy"



The Captains always got the pretty girls



John Snede, 303rd BG, with French Resistance fighter Rene' Baillie', who helped him evade and escape capture after being shot down over enemy territory



Mr. and Mrs. Fred Waltz, 34th BG



Eighth veterans are baggiped into the hanger



All ready to trundle up the carriageway



Aviation artist Keith Hill and wife Allison at the busy sales booth with his new print
Any Gum, Chum?



Mayor and Mayoress of Huntingdon Brian and Christine Luckham

THE HANGER DANCE CONTD.

Return to England week had other highlights as well - multiple low-altitude passes of the B-17 Sally B; a Memorial service for all groups held at the reflecting pool at the American Cemetery on the road to Madingley; solemn visits to gravesites of never-forgotten comrades while Chimes from the chapel respectfully played "It's a Grand Old Flag" and "This Is My Country;" walks through the historical streets of Cambridge; tours of the American Air Museum at Duxford and a flying air show at the old 78th Fighter Group air base; and a visit to the impressive air museum at RAF Hendon. Several days of the sights and traditions of London capped off the trip for most of the veterans. Some continued their journeys on to the European continent. For many of the 8th Air Force visitors, it was their first time to return to England since the days of their youth - since their experiences of the war. For those veterans who return in years to come - they can fully expect a



Memorial ceremonies at Cambridge American Cemetery

similar warm welcome from an appreciative British nation. The music will be heard once again.

PROMOTE THE MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE WEEK

October 8 - 14, 2000

Place this tear-out poster, where it will be most visible -
a community bulletin board, a storefront, or your car window.

Or make some color copies and pass them to friends.

CELEBRATE THE WEEK! SHOW YOUR COLORS!

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 (\$20 U.S. and \$25 non-U.S.). Your annual dues will be billed for subsequent years.

Mighty Eighth Air Force Week

OCTOBER 8-14, 2000

To honor those who preserved our freedom



The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

For information:

Telephone 1-800-982-1942



Proclamation

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

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

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

Whereas: The number of missing in action and wounded have not been counted and

Whereas: In a one week period of October 8 - 14, 1943, the Eighth Air Force lost over 100 Heavy Bombers to enemy action over the skies of Europe, and despite heavy losses, many feel that this was the turning point for daylight strategic bombing. Targets during this week were:

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

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

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

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

NOW , THEREFORE, we do hereby proclaim every October 8 - 14 to be

Mighty Eighth Air Force Week

MIGHTY EIGHTH LICENSE PLATES

8th VETS SHOW THEIR COLORS!

A number of Eighth Air Force veterans are proud of their personal state license plates on their automobiles. Here is a collection recently submitted to the 8th AF NEWS by Historical Society members.

Bob Kelley, Shasta Lake City, CA, flew as the pilot of the B-17 "My Babe", 91st Bomb Group. The aircraft, with it's nose art of Carmen Miranda, was shot down on a 1944 mission to Ludwigshafen. Bob has returned several times to reunite with the families of the French underground who aided him in his escape from enemy-occupied territory.



George Bolstetter, Sun City Center, FL, with his MY T 8TH tag at the Mighty Eighth.



Robert Ryerson, 96th BG pilot July 44 - January 45, now resides in Chesterfield, Missouri.



Ken Anderson, Laguna Beach, CA, sports his 447th BG plate.



Ken "Deacon" Jones, Janesville WI has had this license plate for over forty years. He has made a number of new friends from people who recognize what the plate means and stop to talk.



Junice and Ken "Deacon" Jones



Mayo Adams, Roanoke VA, was a pilot with the 379th Bomb Group at Kimbolton flying 31 missions. The family sedan wears this license plate proudly.



Fred Breuninger, 446th Bomb Group, writes from his home in Muskegon, Michigan that he was pleased to see a B-24 on the cover of the latest 8th AF NEWS. His Air Force blue license plate spells out his long-standing loyalty to the Mighty 8th.



Gremlin Gus lives on with C. Ellison Beck's Ford Tempo in Jamesville NY. He served with the 388th Bomb Group and states that the car "has over 138,000 miles - old, like ole man Becky."



The Jim and Joe Ann Erskine's family cars both have 8th plates. Jim, 487th BG, of Toledo OH, writes, "It pays to advertise."



BULLETIN BOARD

Veteran's CERTIFICATE

The United States Government will send a very nice certificate in memory of a deceased veteran upon request, writes Mary Link of Muskego, Wisconsin. The veteran's name is inscribed on the document and as many copies as desired may be requested.

To obtain an application form for the certificate write to:

Office of the Presidential
Correspondence
Attention: Code VA-NCA
The White House
Washington DC 20500

MEMPHIS BELLE HONORED AT AIR SHOW

The highlight of the annual Smyrna Air Days Air Show on September 5 - 9 will be the *Memphis Belle*, the legendary B-17 Flying Fortress presently housed on Mud Island in Memphis. There will be half a dozen or more B-17s flying in for the weekend and members of the original *Memphis Belle* crew will be honored by Tennessee Governor Don Sundquist.

There will also be a special ceremony marking the creation of the six-million dollar Tennessee State Air and Space Museum, being constructed on 22 acres at the old World War II training base.

BRONZE B-29 SUPERFORTRESS MEMORIAL TO BE DEDICATED

The perpetuation of World War II warbirds is still in full swing. On September 8th, 2000 sponsors of the B-29 Superfortress Memorial will attend special ceremonies at 10:00 AM to unveil and dedicate the Robert Henderson bronze aircraft at the Study Hall of the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. The replica will stand with the other WW II heavy bombers, the B-24 Liberator and the B-17 Flying Fortress, previously placed at the site in recent years. The B-29 Superfortress was the bomber which closed the War in the Pacific against Japan.

Groups Memorial Inc. of the Army Air Forces - Dale Brown, 398th BG, President - has organized much of the fund-raising for the project. Individual or Corporate sponsors who contribute \$900 or more will be recognized on a special bronze plaque to be affixed to the monument. Donations of any amount are being sought to put the drive over the top. Checks may be made to "B-29 Historical Association, Inc." and mailed to B-29 Memorial Project; 816 Water Street; Canon City, CO 81212. For information call 1-800-305-1738.

FOR THE RECORD

On a recent visit to Cambridge American Military Cemetery, Stan Soderblum, 305th BG, Bethel Park PA obtained record-tracking information from the Superintendent at Madingley.

Information concerning the cause of death of an American serviceman may be available from:

Department of the Army; U.S. Total Army Personnel
Command; T.A.P.C.-PED-F; 2461 Eisenhower Avenue; Alexandria
VA 22332-0482

Information of individual's service records, muster rolls for all services: National Personnel Records Center; 9700 Page Blvd; St.
Louis MO 63132

It is advisable to include a self-addressed stamped envelope with your request.

FOODDROPPINGS APRIL/MAY 1945

Collecting everything on the famous food-droppings of 1945 over Western-Holland I still wants to know more and more (as a neverending story) about the fooodrop-

pings. While I know something about some planes and pilots who were on the droppings, I hope via this 8th AF News to hear from anyone who was in the 'food planes', which planes were on the missions and who were the pilots and other members of the planes? In the missions were: 390, 34, 385, 490, 493, 95, 100, 388 and 452 Bomb Groups.

I hope to hear from many of you and/or the historicans of the here named Groups. Thank you very much!

Henny Kwik, A. Dubcekplaats 7, 2332 HX Leiden, Holland.

Henny Kwik and his wife, Tiny, of "The Air War Study Group 1939-1945" and the "Bulletin Air War." -Editor

MAJOR MOVIE TO FEATURE 8TH VETERANS

"The Last Man Club" is the working title of a motion picture now being filmed starring distinguished actor Charlton Heston who also starred in "The Ten Commandments", "Ben Hur", and "Planet of the Apes." It is the story of three aging members of a World War II bomber crew who cross the country on a nostalgic last trip together. Along the way they encounter various unusual situations and wind up in Texas to hijack and take a last flight on a B-17 - the *Thunderbird* - from its home field in Galveston.

The movie will feature original photos of 8th crews and airplanes in its publicity and marketing, and a number of 8th veterans are actively involved in the movie production and filming. The film's release comes fifty years after the Academy Award film "Twelve O'Clock High" which starred Gregory Peck.

353rd Fighter Group Association

At the Salt Lake City 8th AFHS reunion October 17-22 this year, the 353rd Fighter Group Association will be holding its meeting in conjunction with the Historical Society at the Salt Lake City Centre. For information, 353rd FG members may call **Bob Brackstone at 517-627-9819.**



Distinctive checkerboard nose markings of the 353 FG.

Stephen Ambrose to Address Historical Society

Historian Stephen Ambrose will be the featured speaker at the Gala Banquet Saturday evening of the 8th AFHS annual reunion in Salt Lake City October 17-22, 2000. Mr. Ambrose is the author of a number of historical World War II books as well as a biography of General Dwight Eisenhower. He played a major role in developing the D-Day Museum, which recently opened in New Orleans.

Stephen Ambrose's latest work to be released this Fall relates the history of America's Trans Continental Railroad.



AIR FORCE HERITAGE FOUNDATION OF UTAH

Report from Hill AFB Museum, Ogden, Utah

Work has commenced on our second display gallery of 44,800 sq. ft. to compliment our existing gallery of 40,000 sq. ft., built in 1991. This new building, entirely financed by personal donations, will cost \$1,354,000 plus some additional for landscaping, etc. It will be used to display fighter planes of the post WWII and Korean vintage. Underway now, by Kal Aero, is the restoration of our B-24 D recovered from Great Sitkin, Aleutian Islands in 1996, by the Hill volunteers. The cost of the restoration is estimated at \$400,000 and we are short about \$175,000 to meet this expense. The museum is offering the Group colors and/or nose art "for sale" to any person or organization desiring to help us in this endeavor.

Also on display inside are four kiosks, featuring Maj. Gen. Chelsey Gordon Peterson, Lt. Col. Hite, the 384th B.G. (H) and the 493rd B.G. (H).

Any artifacts relative to these subjects would be welcome. For more information, write or call:

John A. Lindquist
3408 Washington Blvd.,
Ogden, Utah 84401
(801) 394-6666

Oh yes, we are a 501 (C) 3.



EDUCATOR PRESENTS LECTURE ON VOYAGER FLIGHT



The Heritage of Values Series of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah continues with its acclaimed programs of educational seminars and lectures. Recently Patrick Conner of Gulfstream Aviation Corporation gave a detailed presentation to a large museum audience on the planning and flight of the Voyager aircraft, the first aircraft to fly around the world nonstop.

Using slides and a very entertaining lecture format, Conner told of the efforts and adventures of Dick Rutan, his brother Burt Rutan, and Jeana Yeager in their record-breaking flight; one that received the Presidential Citizen Award from President Ronald Reagan. After extended development and test flights of

the unique aircraft, Rutan and Yeager climbed into the aircraft's telephone booth-size cockpit and took off on their nine-day flight. After 26,400 non-stop miles through every kind of weather situation, an average of 122 knots airspeed, and getting 23 miles per gallon of gas, Rutan and Yeager landed at Edwards Air Force base on 23 December 1986. There were just eighteen gallons of fuel left in their tanks.

The historic Voyager aircraft is now housed at the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum alongside the 1903 Wright Brothers Flyer and Charles Lindbergh's Spirit of St. Louis.



Patrick Conner animates his Flight of the Voyager lecture in traditional pilot fashion

There was an old Jewish fellow crossing the street who was accidentally hit by a passing car. A woman ran over to him lying in the street, took off her overcoat, folded it, and put it beneath his head.

She asked the old gentleman, "Are you comfortable?"

He looked up at her and replied, "Oh, I make a living."

Norm Grant

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! *Support the Library!*



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

FIGHTING SCOUTS OF THE EIGHTH AIR FORCE 1944-1945

by E. Richard Atkins

The Fighting Scouts of the Eighth Air Force 1944-1945 tells the history of one of the unusual units of the Eighth Air Force and represents sixteen years of research by its author Richard Atkins. The Scouting Force was well-known by those who flew missions during World War II the last two years of the war. Its history was buried until the 1980s when author Atkins began to research and record this history and founded the Scouting Force Association.



Col. Budd Peaslee, 384th Bomb Group Commander, realized in mid-1943 that rapidly changing weather conditions over enemy targets frequently limited the effectiveness of 8th Air Force bombers. Bomber streams were difficult to manage in terms of course alterations and no information was readily available about current weather conditions out in front of them. The formation of the Scouting Force solved many of these problems. Scouting Force pilots took on the formidable and dangerous task of flying their fighter aircraft alone or in small groups out ahead of the bomber formations to radio back weather conditions over targets. Pilots who flew in the Scouts were volunteers who had already completed a full tour of missions in 8th AF bombers.

Eighth Headquarters established three Scouting Forces, one for each Air Division. The 1st SF was at Steeple Morden and at Honington with organizational support from the 364th Fighter Group. Peaslee and Al Brooks were the 1st SF Commanders. The 2nd SF, Commander John Brooks, was stationed at the 355th FG base at Steeple Morden, and the 3rd SF was under the command of Vincent Masters at Wormingford, supported by the facilities of the 55th Fighter Group.

This volume depicts the operations of the Scouting Force and is a tribute to the outstanding accomplishments of these groups. Individual stories throughout the book are accompanied by numerous photos of the pilots and their aircraft. The stories of the Scouting Force fliers tell the tale. Their contributions which increased the effectiveness of 8th Air Force bombing missions made a noticeable difference in the outcome of the war and in the role the Mighty Eighth played in it.

Atkins includes the lighter side of the men of the Scouting Force as well as the narratives of those who were lost in combat. There is a fine section on the Men of the Scouting Forces and what they have done since their days flying from English bases. A chapter also pays tribute to the Scouting Force Ladies; the book closes with updates on the Scouting Force Today. The Fighting Scouts is the definitive volume on this unique part of Eighth Air Force History, giving long overdue recognition to a group of men who played a vital part in the mission of the 8th Air Force - recognition now confirmed by official documents from USAF historians and visible in a special permanent exhibit at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum. In addition,

all three Scouting Force Groups have memorials in place at their respective British airbases. Dick Atkins continues his work alongside an active contingent of Scouting Force veterans to preserve and promote recognition for the Fighting Scouts. Dick makes his home in Arlington, Texas and is the contact person for the Scouting Force Association.

Hard cover 8 1/2 x 11 volume; 260pp high quality; Taylor Publishing Co.; available: Standard - \$40 postpaid or DeLuxe personally autographed by all 3 SF Commanders and author - \$65 postpaid; from Scouting Force Assn. 1304 Cochise Dr. Arlington TX 76012, tel (817)261-3007 e-mail dick8af@flash.net

MISSION 179

The Stevenage Society For Local History

This new release, a report researched by John Amess, tells the story of Mission 179 of the 390th Bomb Group at Framlingham. The first part of the pamphlet places the mission to attack enemy defences at Brest, France in the context of the war including plans for the mission itself. Part two covers the day of the mission and a mid-air collision of two 390th B-17s at Friend's Green near Weston in north Hertfordshire. The crash resulted in the deaths of fourteen airmen and two civilians and is described using the words of twenty-nine eyewitnesses of the accident. Four 8th AF aircrew survivors also tell their stories of the event and of the weeks following the collision.

Forty-eight pages with 33 line drawings are features of this unusual booklet, which may be obtained from David's Bookshops, 14 Eastcheap, Letchworth, Herts., SG6 3DE, England; or e-mail: info@davids-bookshops.co.uk

HELL IN THE HEAVENS

Ill-Fated 8th Air Force Bomb Group Missions

by William N. Hess

Hell in the Heavens - an apt title for a book which vividly depicts tales of heroism and tales of despair on any particular day of a tour in the World War II 8th Air Force. Most of the bomb groups flew missions which, for certain unpredictable reasons, ended in misfortune and are remembered as such not only by each group but also in an historical context as being typical of what may happen on every mission flown by 8th combat crews. In this concise volume the author doesn't mince words. Descriptions of these memorable missions are put to the reader as they were flown, and together they leave an indelible impression of the valor displayed by bomber crews in war.

There are twelve chapters, each of which describes in detail the meticulously researched events of the day as seen by twelve different bomb groups. There could easily be



BOOK REVIEWS

a chapter for every bomb group which flew from air bases in England, but these stories cover a wide range of circumstances and situation which every group faced. Chapter #13 (!) itemizes the war record of every 8th Air Force Bomb Group.

The 91st Bomb Group - The Ragged Irregulars - which lost 197 aircraft in action, flew the 2 November 1944 mission to Merseberg:

Roger Armstrong, R/O on U.S.A. The Hard Way, is included: "When I got to the waist door, he shouted, 'It won't open!' We both struggled with it and found it had frozen shut due to the temperature being -40 degrees. Slackman then moved across the plane and dove into the door. It looked like a scene from a movie where a police officer breaks a door down with his shoulder. Both Slackman and the door flew out into space together."

Theodore Myers, 445th BG, engineer on the B-24 *Hot Rock* describing the catastrophic 27 September 1944 mission to

Kassel: "I turned around to get on the flight deck to tell the pilot we had been hit bad and were losing gas fast. Before I could move, one or more 20-mm shells went off under my feet, wounding me in the right foot and both legs. The blow lifted me up and hurt my back and I fell... on the catwalk. Then I saw a blinding flash and I was on fire from head to foot. I felt my face burning and that was all I remembered, as I thought I was dying."

Hell In The Heavens is about the men, the airplanes and the missions. The stories typify hundreds of others which could be told. Stories of heroism and horror, and deeds of bombers crews who rose to protect, and often die for each other in indescribable situations in the air. Softbound 6 x 9; 29 b&w photos; 144pp; available for \$16.95 plus \$4.50 s&h for each order from Specialty Press; tel 1-800-895-4585 to order.

WALL OF VALOR

As a part of The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah, there is a sanctuary called The Memorial Gardens. It is a place to reflect - a place to pray - a place to pay tribute to those who served in The Eighth Air Force and to those we loved and lost.

In these Gardens near the long reflecting pool, there is The *Wall of Valor*, much like the impressive Memorial Wall in the American Cemetery in Cambridge, England. It is constructed of stone with beautiful dark green inscription panels for each name.

Eighth Air Force veterans may have permanent recognition inscribed on this Wall of Valor by contributing a **donation of**



\$150 to the continuing development of the beautiful Memorial Gardens. Each person's name, rank, unit number will be carved on an individual 4x12 inch panel. A second line is also included for a significant message, aircraft name, crew name, or slogan up to 24 letters.

The museum staff is ready to assist you with your order. Our goal is to see that every person of the 8th Air Force has a chance to share in this great memorial. You may send your information on the form with check or mastercard/visa if you wish.

All donations are tax deductible. You may order by phone: 1-912-283-9966

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HOW ABOUT IT?

ON THE HOME FRONT

by Cynthia Wassom



It was a small congregation in a mid-western town. Over half of those who attended were young couples and teenagers. Then the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor...it seemed that overnight the church pews were half empty. We were all dazed by how fast it all happened! Many of the young men volunteered for military service; others were soon drafted.

As the initial shock wore off, we all were searching for ways to help in the war effort. Many of the young wives entered training for jobs in the Douglas Aircraft factory and the munitions plant, leaving their jobs as secretaries and clerks unfilled. We younger ones entered the work force at age 15 to become office assistants or store clerks after school hours and on Saturday.

Daily radio broadcasts, newspaper headlines and letters received from far-away places caused the home front much trauma and anxiety for the welfare of their loved ones in combat.

A large roll of honor was placed in the foyer of the church which bore the name of each service man from the congregation. The doors of the church were left open and prayer meetings were announced. There was a volunteer around-the-clock vigil as daylight, swing, and grave-yard shifts did not allow for only one prayer meeting.

From early 1942 to August, 1945 the prayer vigil continued and when the last man returned from his military duty, not a single one whose name appeared on the honor roll had been lost! What a lucky coincidence! I do not believe so. These men served in every branch of service and in every theater of the war. One sailor was dumped into the ocean four times, four ships sunk, before he was picked up again by a vessel that finally made it to port. He was the sole survivor of those who abandoned the first ship. There were other harrowing escapes and experiences equal to this. To me, the statement "prayer changes things" is not a religious cliché. Do you know who was praying for you? Thank them and thank God.

It has been declared, "Thou art the God that doth wonders: thou hast declared thy strength among the people...thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known." (Psalms 77:14, 17) Our response? "I will praise thee: for thou hast heard me, and art become my salvation." (Psalms 118:21).



A memorial to the Eighth Air Force - RAF Hendon Museum - England

Cynthia Wassom

Bowling Green, KY is the wife of Earl Wassom, Tennessee Chapter Chaplain





Dated Material Inside

8th AF News

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

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