



th AF NEWS

VOLUME 01 NUMBER 1 Voice of "THE MIGHTY EIGHTH" MARCH 2001

THUNDERBOLT



**The Guys
on the
Ground**

**Then shall the right aiming thunderbolts go abroad; and from the clouds,
as from a well-drawn bow, shall they fly to the mark.**

Wisdom v:21



AF NEWS

Magazine of

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

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.

MISSION BRIEFING

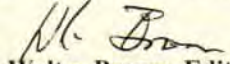
Getting through the winter isn't quite as easy as it used to be, or so it seems. I did see a couple of crocus heads pushing up out of the ground today so I can guess that Spring will



sometime appear. The Historical Society mid-term Board meeting is in Irving, Texas this month and it should certainly be pleasant there. A lot of positive things have been going on in the Society since our Salt Lake City reunion and we are looking forward to a most productive mid-term Board meeting at this site of our annual reunion next October.

The December issue of the 8th AF NEWS seemed to have been well-received and I appreciate all of the correspondence sent to me since then. Many of you enjoyed getting the tear-out page of the Mission to Leuna artwork by artist and 8th veteran Alfred Vetromile. We will try to present more of that type of feature in upcoming issues. Also, a few reports from members came in of some mail-shredded magazine copies, a disconcerting fact of life which occurs usually with the holiday issue and is sourced at outlying post offices. I have had our mailing service and our publisher checking on this and they report no problems on their end of it. Anyone whose copy was not intact can request another by calling Connie Metts at the national membership records office.

This Winter issue is an opportunity to delve into several areas of the Mighty Eighth not usually reported on and is a chance to feature several articles about subjects which are a significant part of the history of the 8th Air Force. Many of these stories are thought-provoking and add interesting depth to our ongoing look at the experiences and history of the Mighty Eighth. As always, my sincere thanks to every contributor for their efforts in making the 8th AF NEWS a magazine of interest to the many varied members of the Historical Society and their friends around the world.


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

OFFICERS

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

Vice President Norman C. Grant (Margaret)
7633 Thomas Avenue South
Richfield, MN 55423-3517
Tel. (612)866-7974
Off. (952)934-3456
FAX (952)934-3939
norman_grant@hotmail.com

Secretary John S. Pearson
11308 Blendon Lane
Richmond, VA 23233
Tel. (804)740-2635
jonpearson@worldnet.att.net

Treasurer Ivan L. McKinney (Mary)
331 Greenacres Blvd.
Bossier City, LA 71111
Tel. (318)742-0895
ivanmckinney@prodigy.net

STAFF

PX Manager Mark S. Copeland (Monica)
16264 Goodview Trail
Lakeville, MN 55044
Tel. (612)953-0121
moke388@isd.net

Finance Manager Jeffrey R. Tucker, CPA
400 Mall Blvd, Suite K
Savannah, GA 31406
Tel. (912)354-6321
FAX (912)351-0226
jeff@jrtuckercpa.com

8TH AFHS NATIONAL OFFICE

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

8TH AFHS UNITED KINGDOM CONTACTS

Gordon & Connie Richards
U.K. Office 14 Pavenham Road
Oakley, Bedford
MK43 7SY, England
01234 823357

DIRECTOR EMERITUS

Aida Kaye Sherman Small
Robert Vickers

8TH AFHS INFORMATION OFFICE
1-800-982-1942

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Walter E. Brown, MD (Alice)
Editor 8AF News
Ewell Farm, 2340 Sugar Ridge Road
Spring Hill, TN 37174
Tel. (931)486-2968
FAX (931)486-9974
olddocbrown@msn.com

Abraham "Hap" Galfunt (Kathy)
110 East End Avenue #1-C
New York, NY 10028
Tel. (212)737-9388
FAX (718)274-8588
jollyrogertoo@aol.com
katnapzzz@gateway.net

Hal Goetsch (Suzanne)
4151 Marla Drive
Albuquerque, NM 87109-1924
Tel. (505)889-9418
santafesunset@aol.com

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

C. Craig Harris
2701 Pickett Road Apt. 2035
Durham, NC 27705-5649
Tel. (919)489-5685
FAX (919)419-1705
charris4@nc.rr.com

Henry Hughey (Jean)
1529 Delia Drive
Decatur, GA 30033
Tel. (770)939-2462
FAX (678)206-0254

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

Stanley A. Peterson (Lois)
1644 12th Fairway
Wellington, FL 33414-5934
Tel. (561)793-8231
peters19@msn.com

CHAPTER/UNIT DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Jim Erskine (Joe Ann)
568 Colima Drive
Toledo, OH 43609
Tel. (419)382-8595
Fax (419)382-4242
jimjake@buckeyenet.com

8TH AFHS INFORMATION OFFICE
1-800-982-1942

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Your Board will be holding its mid-term meeting at the Harvey Hotel, in Irving, Texas in March to plan the coming reunion there later this year. The Annual reunion dates are October 25-29, 2001. This issue of the 8th AF News will have gone to press before our meeting, so there will be no report of our Board meeting at this time.

It has been several years since we have met in Texas and we have picked an easy to get to location, handy to the Dallas-Fort Worth International airport. Irving, Texas is near the airport and is between the cities of Dallas and Fort Worth. **Put the dates on your calendar now.**

ATTENTION STATE CHAPTER PRESIDENTS & WING COMMANDERS

As new members sign up and submit their membership applications to the Membership Records Office in Savannah, GA, our Connie Metts will send you, or a designated member of your

organization, an e-mail, giving the name, address, etc. of the new member. You can then contact him or her, welcome them into the Chapter and invite them to the your Chapter Function.

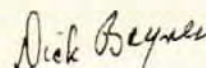
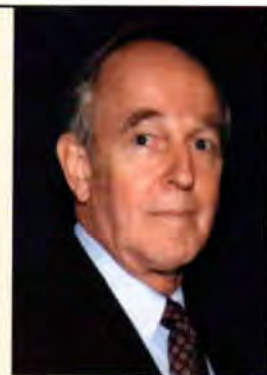
Your participation in this program and the camaraderie it develops will help improve our retention rate.

Our quarterly 8th AF NEWS more than does its part, but we need the added personal touch - person to person.

Please appoint one of your members who has e-mail capability to receive this information, then have him or her send their

e-mail address, name, Chapter or Wing name and address, to Connie at eafhs@hotmail.com **Please do it today.**

Dick Baynes, President

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Mission Briefing	2
Presidents Message	3
Cover Story	4-5
Fighter Scramble	11
Reunion at Alexandria	13
Debriefing	14-16
Tom Landry Fondly Remembered	17
465th Service Squadron	20
A Return To Pierrepont	21-24
Mail Call	28-32
Reunions	34
Flak and Friendly	37
Chapter News	39-42
Taps	44-45
Bulletin Board	50-51
Book Reviews	49-51
The Last Reunion Of Heroes	52-56
How About It?	59

With broken wing they limped across the sky,
Caught in late sunlight with their gunner dead,
One engine gone - the type was out of date
Blood on the fuselage turning brown from red...

So two men waited, saw the third dead face,
And wondered when the wind would let them die.
-John Bayliss, 'Reported Missing'

ELECTION NOTICE

Nominations for those 8th AFHS members desiring to run for the Board of Directors positions that will become vacant the next General Membership Meeting must be submitted to the Secretary no later than May 15. The following information must be included:

Nominee's full name and address
Nominee's 8th AFHS membership number
Unit of 8th AFHS in which nominee served
Short resume of nominee
Nominating individual's full name and address
Nominating individual's 8th AFHS membership number and unit, if applicable

The Secretary will send all nominations to the Nominating Committee. Nominations received by the Secretary after May 15, 2001, or any nomination without complete information will not be considered.

Send all nominations to:

**John S. Pearson
8AFHS Secretary
11308 Blendon Lane
Richmond, VA 23233**



THE GUYS ON THE GROUND

Roger A. Freeman
Mays Barn Dedham England

In identifying the organisation based at the Eighth Air Force airfield station in the UK, it has always been the practice to list the combat group. While the combat group was the major occupant in terms of personnel, there were between nine and twelve supporting units whose input was essential to the combat group being able to fulfil its mission. The total personnel strength of a bombardment station increased from some 2,400 men in 1942 to an average 3,000 in 1945. Likewise fighter airfield personnel numbers went from around 1,200 to approximately 1,650. In both cases this was primarily due to squadron aircraft assignments being advanced from 32 to 72 for bombers and from 75 to 108 for fighters. By 1945 a bomber group averaged 450 officers and 1,825 enlisted men and a fighter group 220 officers and 830 enlisted men, this including both aircrew and ground personnel.

Although the supporting units were generally considered part of the combat group they were not officially assigned, some being moved between airfields as the need arose.

On all combat stations it was the practice to set up sections for a particular activity and intermingle men with the necessary skills from different support units to meet the requirement. Every airfield base had a Station Complement Squadron average of about 110 men. This was a caretaker and house-keeping unit which looked after a station whether or not it was in use by a flying group. Its duties were diverse but primarily to see the station was able to receive operational units. It had Flying Control, communications and transportation capabilities.

The largest supporting unit on a fighter base was the Air Service Squadron which averaged about 230 men, 5 or 6 being officers. There were two Air Service Squadrons to a Service Group, so that every other fighter station also had a Service Group HQ. On bomber stations service squadrons were disbanded in December 1943 and reorganised into so-called Sub-Depots which had similar strengths, some 220 to 230 men each. The purpose of the service units was to carry out the major repair and other engineering tasks that could not be handled by the squadron ground crews.

The Ordnance Supply and Maintenance Company had a strength some 70 men. This unit was responsible for maintaining the bomb and armament stores plus the maintenance of vehicles that served these sections. A Quartermaster Company usual had 50 or thereabouts on a station and provided domestic stores and requisites, ranging

from food to coke heating fuel. At bomber bases there was a Chemical Company detachment with 60 personnel to deal with incendiaries, flares, smoke markers and associated devices. An MP Company Detachment usually had 50 men who apart from station security duties and dealing with miscreants on and off base, guarded operations buildings when a briefing

was imminent or in progress. Their motorcycle riders gave warning clearance round the perimeter track when a mission was about to be dispatched.

On bomber stations a Medical Dispensary unit consisted of two officers and 10 enlisted men but on fighter stations each squadron had its own doctor and medical support personnel. An Engineer Fire Fighting Platoon had one officer and 22 men, manning the fire fighting trucks. A

detachment of the 18th Weather Squadron ranged from 7 to 11 men who operated the weather office in the control tower. Fighter stations had a Signal Company Detachment, usually with two officers and about 45 enlisted men to operate the radio direction finding and listening posts situated at the tower and off

base sites. Most bomber stations had a numbered Finance Section, usually about eight strong to handle pay, whereas this appears to have been handled by group personnel on a fighter base. The average total sum paid monthly on a bomber base was \$250,000, but this included savings and moneys sent home. Some stations had a Postal Unit with a typical strength of one officer and eight enlisted men. The postal unit usually served three or four other bases in the locality.

In April 1945 all the supporting units serving one combat group were redesignated and organised into Air Service Groups. Post-war this was taken a step further when both the combat and service groups would disappear and in practice this move amounted to a redesignation of the Group as a Wing.

Oh the fliers get the glory,
And draw the flying pay;
They swagger all around the field
and have a lot to say,
But I'll tell you a little secret
And I'll certify it's true
That a flier isn't worth a damn
Without a good ground crew!

-author unknown

Ground crew working on a 383rd FG P-51 Mustang



THE GROUND CREW

Gladly will I send more info about the ground crews because I loved those guys, and would not have been able to carry out my flying duties without them.

Starting in early 1942 when I arrived in England as a member of the RCAF, I flew with #121 Eagle Squadron and our ground crews were RAF British, very experienced and dedicated. I also did time with an RAF Mosquito Squadron with the same kind of results. These people were not as friendly as our Air Corps guys. They were trained not to show too much friendly and personal feelings toward higher ranks. We were often Sergeants in those days. I graduated in Canada with three stripes. That worked better with the Crew Chiefs who were mostly Sergeants too, but devotion to their work on our airplanes were very evident.

In 1943 when I transferred to the USAAF I found the same devotion and pride in work done on all kinds of aircraft. I was closer to my ground crew being a fighter pilot. We mostly had dedicated people for each fighter, and they insisted on letting us know the airplane belonged to them, and was loaned to us fly boys as long as we brought it back in the same shape as when we left the base.

This was an ongoing message from them, and as we completed our missions we grew closer to these guys and often treated them to meals and beer in the local establishments. Once I was asked if I was sucking up to them to get better service on my ship. If so it was useless because they did the best job possible on the ship regardless!

I found out that many times the crews spent the night while we slept, getting our airplanes ready for early missions and were waiting at our hardstands when we returned, counting the returning numbers to be sure we had made it. If there was anything wrong in our ship they sweated the possibility that one of the crew had missed a check point. In Winter our ships were cleaned of dark paint so as not to stand out against snow when parked. Then in Summer often we had camouflage paint applied to blend with the ground colors. I actually saw them scrubbing off the paint with gasoline and bare hands with rags. I looked at the Chiefs hands and asked if there were no protective gloves available. He said most of the time they were out of stock. I tried to get the store room to keep a larger inventory of such items, and the Medical Officer backed me up. He had seen plenty of cases of ground crews' hand damage.

Most of the time we were trucked out to our ships lined up at the runway end. The chief and one of the crew had done the taxi job for us as we attended briefing, one in the cockpit the other on the wing to guide him.

I learned so much about each airplane type from those men. They were full of pride and liked to answer questions about their own work on the ship. It paid off sometimes when they said do this or that during difficult times to keep the engine or other function going. It sure saved me when my P-51 Mustang coolant line was penetrated by flak over Frankfurt, Germany. I stayed up high with

reduced throttle and the oil cooler was still working. I made it to the English Channel before having to bail out and so got rescued by Air/Sea Rescue and was brought back to base. They had told me how to nurse the heated engine to keep flying longer. I really owed them on that.

I personally had the greatest respect for ground personnel who seldom got credit for their contributions to the war against our enemies. No way could the battles have been even waged, let alone won, without those very contributions. For those still living, God be with you, and to those passed on, God bless you.

**Capt. Pete Hardiman 8th Air Force
Fighter Command WWII
Hillsboro, OR**

THE THUNDERBOLT

Many a pilot who flew the pursuits,
Has winged his way into heaven,
But I know the jock who led the flight
Was a kid in a P-47
We can point to the Mustangs and Lightnings
with pride,
And the P-40s may also claim votes
But I'll pick the bird I know turned the tide,
The deadly and feared Thunderbolts.
As missions grew longer through death-laden skies
Our bomber crews had little to no fear,
Their best escort acclaimed by them all,
Was a squadron of Thunderbolts near.
Many a bomber crew, knocked out of a fight,
Forever their praises will sing,
While limping home through treacherous skies,
A "White Nose" protected each wing.
How well I remember the beautiful sight
Of fighter contrails high in the heavens,
And how we grinned at the tail gunner's words,
Here come the best, the P-47s!
Many the enemy that zoomed through our flight
Discovered his doom he had sealed;
A 'Jug' quickly followed with all guns ablazing
And the enemy's wings were soon peeled.
It soon will be over, but they'll never forget
The remarkable job you have done
How Thunderbolts fought against terrible odds
And all the battles they won.
Long after the din of battle has ceased,
O'er your deeds pilots will
gloat;
Press onward you heroes,
there's more glory ahead
For the lads in their great
Thunderbolts.

-78th Fighter Group Newsletter

"Watch your six"



TREASURER'S REPORT



I was elected as your Treasurer just last October and this is my first report to you concerning our financial condition. The "bottom line" is improving from very grave to still ailing - out of the intensive care unit, and into a regular hospital room with watchful care, so to speak. As you know, we have raised both our annual dues and our Life Member dues, and without these increases we would at

this time be approaching insolvency. I am going to tell what is in my heart: Your dues should have been raised in increments beginning 2 1/2 decades ago, in order to keep up with inflation. The very reason that we are in our present situation is due to the extreme benevolence of my predecessors, your Board Members of yesteryear, who hoped that somehow everything would come out all right. They hesitated to raise your dues because of this collective benevolent attitude, even as they were witnessing increasing inflation, which compounded to nearly 350% up to year 2000. These were good-hearted men who constantly had your interests in their thoughts and plans and we should not fault them for their attitude.

But we have lost forever the time/value of monies we could have collected, the opportunity to glean the value to our Society from incremental dues increases as time went along. We owe both our predecessors and our successors

a "fix" which will keep our Society moving along on its mission throughout the 21st Century. We must face the fact that we are a business, and we cannot accomplish our mission in an insolvent condition. My predecessors have cut expenses everywhere they could, and now we must consider increasing the revenue stream. To that end, I am going to ask the Board to approve a one-time shot a member contributions, which I will call a "tincup" plea for a contribution in lieu of the needed dues increases of yesteryear. We all trust that the membership will respond favorably to such a plea, and if they do, we will once again be a first-class Society without red ink. Our goals will remain to first improve our financial condition, then restore loans withdrawn from the Life Membership Fund, and finally to fund worthy projects which further our reason-for-being. I believe that we can accomplish the first two goals during this year without pain for our members. Then we can concentrate on the third goal as time unfolds and as worthy projects are brought to our attention.

A parting thought is that our Society is considerably different than a Bomb Group or a Fighter Group, because we not only help support a great museum, we publish a really first-class magazine that has international distribution, and we also support a system of Chapters throughout our nation and even overseas. We are the one Society which "binds it all together." We are NOT a last-man's organization!!

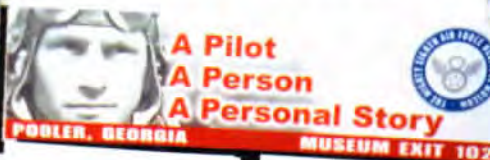
Ivan L. McKinney
Your Treasurer

MEMBER NON-PAYMENT OF DUES

There are almost 2000 members of our Historical Society who have not sent in their 2001 dues payments. It takes all of us to pull our loads in order to accomplish our goals to put the Society on firm financial footing. We have made much progress in this regard during the past year but need everyone's help and need your payment. If it has slipped your mind, please send in your dues

payment to our Membership office ASAP. The address is on the inside front cover of this issue. If you have questions, call Connie Metts at the office number. Your 8th AF NEWS, the main form of Historical Society communication with you and others, will have to be terminated after the next issue to all who are not fully paid up.

Abraham "Hap" Galfunt Chairman, Membership Committee



HERITAGE MUSEUM NEWS

UPDATE BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE HERITAGE MUSEUM



I am pleased to report to the membership of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society on three museum activities in which many people have expressed interest.

First, I am pleased to report that on 2 March the Museum's President/CEO, C.J. Roberts, made a payment presentation to the Chatham County Commission to begin further retirement of the bond debt. This is the first repayment action beyond the

Museum's original \$1.7 million payment against the \$12.5 million bond debt. The Museum leadership remains committed to honor this fiduciary obligation to Chatham County.

Secondly, the Museum's Executive Committee and staff have received inputs from three architect firms for follow-on proposals to scale down the Chapel project in order to

meet budget limitations. This action became necessary when earlier bids from three contractors were all higher than anticipated. While a delay in beginning construction has resulted, it is still envisioned that construction will begin later this year. The Chapel project is alive and moving forward.

Lastly, the Museum's \$9.0 million capital fund raising effort entitled The Victory Campaign has kicked off under the able leadership of Dr. Curtis Tarr: a member of the Board of Trustees. The objective of this vital campaign is to establish the Museum on a secure financial course so that more focus can be placed on preserving and presenting the distinctive history of the Eighth Air Force. The Victory Campaign is deserving of everyone's support.

The Board of Trustees and Museum staff join me in expressing sincerest appreciation to The Eighth Air Force Historical Society membership for the continuing support of The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum. Please come visit your Museum and view the progress!

Respectfully,

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

HERITAGE MUSEUM TO CELEBRATE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

CEO/President C. J. Roberts invites everyone to the big Fifth Anniversary Celebration at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah. Activities will take place the weekend of May 11-13, 2001. A special schedule of events will be held as always at the fun-filled weekend which is becoming a much-anticipated tradition for 8th veterans and museum visitors.

The recent annual community Museum Day was a big success with nearly 2000 visitors coming out to enjoy the Heritage Museum, meet the staff and museum Volunteer Corps. A special feature now at the museum is the extensive exhibition in the Colonial Oil Art Gallery. The United States Air Force Art Collection documents the

story of the Air Force through the language of art. The Air Force Art Program had its beginnings in 1950 and is the most extensive collection of combat-related air force artworks in the country. This collection preserves the Air Force story in a stimulating and dramatic fashion. The exhibition will remain open to the public at the Museum through June.



THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ART COLLECTION



**MISSION:
TODAY, TOMORROW
AND BEYOND**
*A Report of the Long
Range Goals Committee*

The Long Range Goals Committee is, as charged, examining the membership makeup of the 8th Air Force Historical

Society. How many of us are WWII veterans, spouses, and Associates? And of the Associates, how many are children and grandchildren of veterans, post-WWII vets? Once we know who we are, perhaps we can make projections of who we will be five or ten years from now. What can we do to alter those projections beneficially? Ten years from now, what will be the nature of our Society, its reunions, the 8th AF NEWS?

As time goes by, we will share our thoughts with you. At this time, membership is not declining. New members gained have exceeded losses due to attrition, but that is not likely to last long. We must continue to try to expand our membership. There are some good tools to work with. First and foremost, a quarterly journal of high quality and relevance: second, there is our 501 (c) (3) IRS status, which means that anyone can join. Another is the fact that Associates can become full members after only two years as dues-paid Associates and all life members are full-fledged members immediately. So, we should be able to continue to gain new members, with concerted efforts toward that goal.

However, in considering the longevity factors, one cannot refrain from the observation that, whatever the membership make up of the 8AFHS is ten years from now, it will not have the same perspectives that it now derives from its WWII veteran members. While it would be supportive, the 8AFHS is not likely to be the sole agent of our preserved history.

That is the sobering news. However there is, waiting in the wings, an entity that does have a lasting future, and one which can be the agent for the lasting, meaningful presentation of our legacy to future generations. That entity is The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum.

This facility is in place, with its robustly physical existence, its vibrant activity, its achievement of status in the public eye and its beneficial presence in its community (Chatham County, Georgia). However, our Heritage Museum's long-term existence will require an enduring, underwriting endowment. That may be just the opportunity the Eighth Air Force Historical Society can begin to address now.

Now is Forever. Think about it. We can begin now to create NOW something that will endure FOREVER. The 8TH AFHS can lead the way in the generation of an endowment that will insure the continuing prosperity of the Museum. What better long range goal can we have?

"The Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum is the physical expression of the mission of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society." So spoke Judy Walker, Director of Development of the Heritage Museum. The more I think about it, the more sense it makes.

**Craig Harris, Chairman
Long Range Goals Committee**

SUSTINEO ALAS

I Sustain The Wings

Those two Latin words beneath a golden urn in which repose three plumes are the literal motto of THE ARMY AIR FORCES TECHNICAL TRAINING COMMAND.

Many an Air Force enlisted man cannot translate Latin, but his heart translates the meaning---

"I SUSTAIN THE WINGS"

I am the Air Force technician who makes it possible for flyers to be heroes and heroes to be flyers. I drill and work, and fight. I work that others may fly and fight. I fight that I may work to keep them flying. I am the mechanic, the machinist, the radio man, the armorer, the weather observer, the gunner, the instrument man. I'm a technician but I flight like a commando.

I am one of those three plumes signifying an unbeatable trio--the Plane, the Air Crew, the Ground Crew--each indispensable to the other two. Without me the plane would be a motionless machine, the pilot a helpless gladiator.

"When I trained, I chafed at the constant stream of repetition, of routine, but now I realize I was learning to act on instinct. I griped at scrubbing and shining and cleaning, but now I realize neatness means a clean job of every task. An unbuttoned pocket seemed trivial, but now I know a forgotten key might mean a plane destroyed and a crew killed. Because of strict training I am good, and I know I'm good.

The folks at home may never know how important I am; the public may never see my name in print. I am the plodding lineman of modern football. I make long runs possible for All-Americans. I am the blocker that never carries the ball.

But that pilot there knows me. He knows when he climbs aboard, she sits ready. He knows those engines are perfect, the radio, his ears, the instruments, his eyes. That bombardier knows his hits are going to be perfect. And when they come back there is something in their handshake no newspaper could describe, no medal could equal. It is the grip of men whose lives depend on me.

-submitted by

**Christos Armenis 1216th QM - 8th AF
445th BG Kalamazoo, MI**

Teenagers Honor Aviation Veterans In *Ghost Wings*

While it may be common for young people to acknowledge their appreciation for veterans, few can say they have devoted their personal lives to them. Such is the case of an intrepid group of teenagers from Montoursville, Pennsylvania, who have labored since 1994 to document the exploits of American air- men, culmi- nating in the production of an aviation magazine called *Ghost Wings*.



Ghost Wings staff with best-selling historical author and founder of the National D-Day Museum Dr. Stephen E. Ambrose. From L-R: Erica Makos, Adam Makos, Dr. Stephen E. Ambrose, Bryan Makos and Joe Gohrs.

The four young pub- lishers, all high school and college stu- dents, create the only student-produced aviation magazine in the world. Now in its second year of publication, *Ghost Wings* fea- tures forty-eight glossy pages, filled with action-packed stories, illustrated in brilliant color. The cover of the maga- zine proudly displays their mission statement: "Preserving the Sacrifices of America's Veterans."

The stories in *Ghost Wings* are anything but run-of-the- mill; they are the seldom-heard accounts from World War II to the war in the Persian Gulf. Readers have described the content with words such as "impressive," "poignant," and "humbling." As Robert Morgan, pilot of the B-17 "Memphis Belle," has stated: "I read *Ghost Wings* reli- giously; it calls it as it was, and that's the way I like it!"

HOW IT STARTED

Back in 1994, while only middle school students, brothers Adam and Bryan Makos, along with a friend, Joe Gohrs, searched for a way to share their interest in aviation with others. Inspired by their grandfathers' service stories and pictures from World War II, they soon began producing, on the Makos family computer, a two-page publication called the *Ghost Wings Newsletter*. The newsletter, sent to family and friends, derived its name from a 5th Air Force B-17 bomber in the Makos' grandfather's squadron which van- ished in-flight, "like a ghost," its crew lost to this day.

In May 1999, nearly five years after the newsletter was first published, *Ghost Wings*, the magazine, took flight. Amazingly, these young entrepreneurs are self-taught in creating, designing, and publishing a magazine. They also raised the funds to produce the first issue with most of the money coming from Editor Adam Makos' car savings. As a senior in high school at the time, he decided that produc- ing *Ghost Wings* was more important to him than using his savings for a car. The car is still on hold as the young peo- ple have invested everything to have their mission suc- ceed.

SECOND YEAR OF PUBLISHING

Today, the magazine remains funded solely by the staff's efforts. They have spent their last two summers selling *Ghost Wings* at as many air shows as possible to meet the soaring printing costs (over \$11,000 per issue). Working late nights, camping on airport grounds, and enduring other harsh realities of busi- ness have not deterred them from moving forward.

THE FUTURE

As the original staff members grow older, they plan to continue with *Ghost Wings*, while recruiting younger students to help as well. They have already received requests from a number of high school and college students interested in becoming a part of the magazine. This is welcomed news to the staff, who have made it a goal to extend their mis- sion to high school and college class- rooms across America. Many *Ghost Wings* readers have realized the signifi- cance of the history taught by the maga- zine and have ordered gift subscriptions for their local schools and libraries. A number of organizations, including The Eighth Air Force Historical Society, have endorsed their work and encouraged their members to support this important project. "The assistance of the very veter- ans we seek to honor will ensure the suc- cess of our mission," editor Adam Makos commented. "We've held our own finan- cially to this point, but now we need the support of others to move forward. We have to act fast to gather veterans' stories and to get them into the hands of young people who can learn so much from them. We have to do this before such valuable history is lost."

The staff of *Ghost Wings* welcomes subscriptions, donations, story ideas or story submissions. For more informa- tion about *Ghost Wings*, visit www.ghostwings.com, e-mail ghostwng@csrlink.net, or call 570-435-4523. One-year subscriptions (four issues) to *Ghost Wings* are available for \$14.00. To order, send your check or money order to *Ghost Wings Magazine*, 1004 Yeagle Road, Montoursville, PA 17754. All subscriptions and donations help keep *Ghost Wings* flying high!



THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

Only the Medal of Honor stands higher than the Distinguished Service Cross for "extraordinary heroism" in connection with military operations. Of the 38 Medal of Honor awards to Second World War airmen exactly half were flying from Britain, 17 assigned to the Eighth Air Force and two to the Ninth. However, one of the Ninth Air Force recipients, Lt. Col. James Howard, was flying a P-51 under VIII Fighter Command control and won the award through his spirited action in coming to the defence of a beleaguered B-17 group.

At the end of the hostilities the Eighth Air Force announced that there had been 226 awards of the DSC, six of which were Oak Leaf Clusters. Unfortunately, no overall listing of the DSC recipients, with the unit to which they were assigned or the date of the action involved, appears ever to have been made. As the DSC is the second highest award for heroism, I have for some years been trying to rectify matters by compiling such a listing. In an effort to complete this I will be most interested for any input from



veterans who have positive information on men who won a DSC. Either email me on rafmaybarn@aol.com or write the Editor of 8th Air Force News. Hopefully, if all 226 awards are identified the information can be published in the News.

Roger A. Freeman
8th Air Force Historian

ADVERTISING

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

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

OUR RATES ARE: 4/Color

Full Page.....\$960.00

1/2 Page.....\$495.00

1/4 Page.....\$260.00

1/8 Page.....\$140.00

All copy must be camera ready or disk ready.

The print run is 20,000 copies per issue

Mail to: Walt Brown 2340 Sugar Ridge Road
Spring Hill, TN 37174

Want a terrific tour of the WWII air sites of England as well as war museums and a blockbuster air show?



Exclusive Holidays in Great Britain

This event has become so successful that 2001 will be the 3rd consecutive year!

Renowned English War Historian Roger Freeman will accompany you on an unforgettable visit to these special places.

Dates are:

September 1 - 9, 2001

Hotels, most meals and transportation are included in the United Kingdom.

Air fare from any departure point in the USA or Canada to the UK can be arranged easily when you call for tour brochure and space.

GINGER.FRANKIEPLUNKTRAVEL@wspan.com



You want references?

Just ask any of the above and we promise they will give you an ear full.

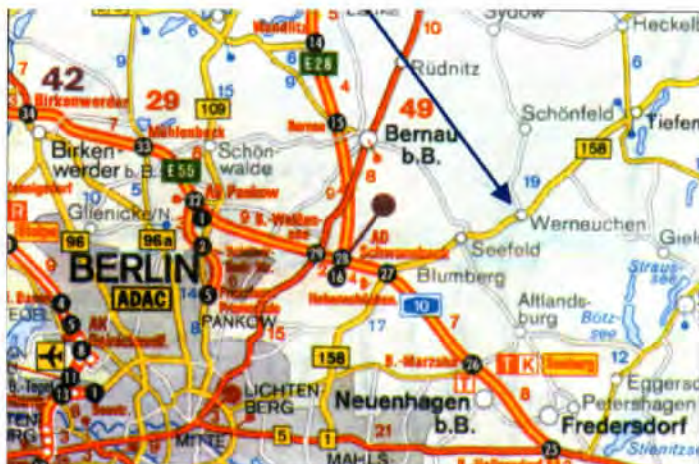
Names and phone numbers available upon request.

Simply call 1-800-264-3401 and ask for Ginger or John.

FIGHTER SCRAMBLE

FW 190 pilot tells his story...

It was the end of April or the beginning of May, 1944. I was a pilot in the 1st Squadron of FW190 Night Fighter Group 10 stationed in Werneuchen, Germany (15 miles NE of Berlin). One day just before noon our pilot scramble alarm rang. Cloud cover was 10/10 at 3,000 feet. About 15 minutes later we heard the sound of bombers approaching from the northeast. When the bombers were about two kilometers from the town and the airfield we suddenly heard aircraft cannons firing and the howling of aircraft engines. A few minutes later three to five B-24s fell burning. They didn't drop any bombs and there were no bombs in the B-24 that were shot down. So, it was assumed they were on their way home.



One B-24 came steeply out of the clouds and we saw parachutes at about 2400 feet. For the next five minutes we waited for them. They landed next to the town of Werneuchen at the edge of a forest. On the same day at 2 pm I started my FW190 for a training flight. During that flight I saw a parachute hanging in some trees in a large forest. My thought was immediately to get the parachute. I landed back at the airfield and found a bicycle. I rode out to the forest and climbed the tree, cutting the shroud lines from the parachute. I had the parachute in my bag, and was startled when I heard a 'Hallooo' nearby. About thirty feet away was a man in flight gear laying on the ground who motioned me over. Our communication was the offer of chewing gum. He pointed to his leg, indicating it was injured, but there was no open wound. This injury probably happened when he landed in a tree.

Since I didn't speak English he tried to communicate through gestures. The first contact was with a stick of chewing gum that he gave me. I thought, "How can I get this American pilot to the airport?" On the saddle of my bicycle I pushed him in the direction of the airport. In the village of Hirschfelde we each had one beer at the town's restaurant. I used the phone to call for a car, explaining that I had a downed American airman with me and that I had transported him on my bicycle. The man on the phone didn't believe me. After a half hour, no car showed up. I looked down the street from the restaurant and all of a



sudden I saw a man and woman walking. They were armed with sticks. They wanted me to surrender the flyer to them. My answer was "if you attack the prisoner, I will use my weapon" and I pointed to my pistol, which was hanging from my belt. I told them that I was a pilot myself and that in a similar situation, for me, I would not want to be beaten.

The next thing we did was get on the bicycle, going in the direction of the airfield. One kilometer from the village a VW van came by, which we stopped. In the van was an American speaking meteorologist who had a brief conversation with the pilot. I asked them to give me his pilot insignia, but they said they needed it. Perhaps this pilot related the story of his recovery while in captivity, or perhaps he's still living. If he could get in contact with me, it would make me very happy.

Gerhard Walter Stefanstrasse 6
85435 Erding, Germany

Translated from Jager Blatt, the publication of the organization of German fighter pilots.



Baron Manfred von Richthofen

The deadliest fighter ace of World War I, the Red Baron won acclaim by shooting down eighty aircraft.

FROM THE UNIT AND CHAPTER ADVISORY AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE



The committee has compiled a list of Station Contacts in England. The list is too long to publish in the 8th AF News, but if you wish information concerning a base or station contact you may call, write, e-mail or FAX the Committee Chairman Jim Erskine or the Membership Records Staff in Savannah. For some contacts we have name, address, telephone number, e-mail and

FAX number. For others we have only some of these. If you are going to England to return to where you were stationed you can get the information about the Station Contact from either source.

UNITS

The committee has heard from several Units that are considering holding their reunions with the Historical Society. We know there are questions concerning this change. The committee cannot anticipate all of these questions nor can they be answered here. However, if you need an answer to the questions to clarify if you should or should not join the Historical Society for your reunion by all means - ask! If the committee cannot answer it they know who can.

An advantage to joining the Historical Society for your Unit reunion is that the Unit will receive \$5.00 per person

attending. There must be at least 10 persons at the reunion and they must register at least 30 days before the reunion.

In the Unit Rebate Report I goofed - I listed the 353rd Fighter Group as the 353rd Bomb Group. I wish to apologize for such a dastardly error.

CHAPTERS

Spring will be with us sooner than you think. Now is the time to start making plans to publicize the "Mighty Eighth". Find out where the air shows are in your state and inquire if you may set up a booth at these shows. Get publicity and recruiting material to get new members. If you have a PX ask if you may sell at the air show. If you may, it is a good source of revenue. Also, the Chapter may keep \$5.00 of the first year's dues of all new members. Don't forget if you can get an old member who has not paid dues for at least 3 years, to re-up him is the same as a new member.

STATES WITHOUT CHAPTERS!!! If anyone in any state without a Chapter would like to start one please contact the Committee through the Chairman Jim Erskine. You may write, call, fax or e-mail and the Committee will send you all the information and give you all the assistance you need. It takes a little effort on your part but it is very rewarding.

Jim Erskine, Chairman

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>

U&C CHANGES AND ADDITIONS

1/10/01 X 2/18/01

CHAPTER

Changes:

Texas Rio Grande Chapter: President unknown at this time.

Georgia Chapter President: Henry Hughey 1529 Delia Dr. Decatur, GA 30033-3373

Telephone 770-939-2462 FAX 678-634-9594

UNITS

Changes:

IM/CB Harold E. Province 153 North Hill Dr. Carriere, MS 39426 601-798-2059

e-mail provih@datastar.net

448BG Robert Angle 1445 Forelle Lane Toms River, NJ 08755 732-286-0948

457BG Joseph A. (Joe) Toth 449 Sunset Ln. Pueblo, CO 81005-1140 791-566-1714 FAX 719-564-6458

e-mail joetoth457bombgroup@juno.com

486BG Robert A. Harper 410 Deer Lake Rd. West Carbondale, IL 62901

ADDITIONS:

1FG Herschel Baird 702 Valley View Dr. Scottsbluff, NE 69361-1452 308-632-3946

e-mail firstfighter@yahoo.com FAX 308-632-6290

406BS Walter R. Longanecker 758 Ballast Way Annapolis, MD 21401-7111 410-798-1313

e-mail wrlj@annapolis.net

406BS Martin Katz 142 Bon Air Ave. New Rochelle, NY 10804 914-576-0472 e-mail rxpharm142@aol.com

455BS (323BG) James L. Vining 921 Ware St. SW Vienna, VA 22180-6424 703-938-8297

E-mail jvining101@aol.com

REUNION AT ALEXANDRIA - 56 YEARS LATER



1944, Bassingbourn, England
Donald Sparkman & Donald Almon



Alexandria, VA August 11, 2000
Donald Sparkman & Donald Almon

When a brand-new B17G Bomber No. 43-37675 took off from Kearney, Nebraska, on May 28, 1944, among the crew were Lt. Donald H. Sparkman, co-pilot, and Lt. Donald W. Almon, the navigator. After stops at Bangor, Maine, and Gander, Newfoundland, they crossed the Atlantic and eventually landed at Prestwick, Scotland, on June 1, 1944. The crew proceeded to Bassingbourn, England, to perform their combat duties in the 322nd Squadron, 91st Bomb Group.

Little did Almon and Sparkman realize when they shook hands on 24 October, 1944, the day that Almon began the long trip home after having completed his tour of 35 missions, that they would not be seeing each other again for almost a lifetime.

Almon eventually returned to civilian life and a career in sales and sales-administration. He participated in the Air Force Reserve, being retired as Lt. Col. in 1968, and is currently active in TROA and the 8thAFHS.

Sparkman, had received a DFC for superhuman effort in returning a critically disabled B17, *Easy Does It*, on that most fateful day for the 91st, November 2, 1944. The target: Merseburg. Losses for the 91st: 13 bombers and crews. He remained in and made his career in the Air Force. He participated as pilot in the Berlin Airlift, put in two hitches in Germany, and flew many missions for the Air Transport Command, attaining rank of Lt. Col. before being retired for health reasons.

These two combat veterans completely lost contact with each other and all the members of the crew. Then, in September 1999, one of Almon's friends offered to put out an inquiry on Internet. The response brought six different addresses for a person named Donald H. Sparkman. Almon dispatched a letter to each one on the list with a picture of *Easy Does It* and details of activities with the 91st Bomb Group. The desired response came on September 21 when he answered the telephone and heard, "Hi, Don. This is Don Sparkman!"

The actual get-together was not achieved until Almon flew from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to Washington, D.C., on August 9, 2000, and was greeted by Sparkman at his apartment, some 56 years later, in Alexandria, Virginia.

For those fortunate bomber crews who have kept in touch since WWII, the question could well be, "What took you so long?" Well, there seems to be only one answer, "Better late than never."

NOSE ART



The Kaylor Whitehead crew's 453rd BG B-24 Never Mrs.



Carolina Moon flew more missions than any other 490th BG B-17

DEBRIEFING

The 1st Baldwin Air Crew whose B-17 Hell's Angels story was featured in the Dec 00 8th AF News. The fatigue of frequent combat missions is evident in their faces. This Debriefing session followed the crew's return from a mission to Hamm.



TOMMY HAYES...

In my opinion, the great Eighth Air Force fighter leaders in Europe were Lt. Col. Donald Blakeslee, 357th Fighter Group, and Lt. Col. Hubert Zemke of the 56th Group.

Blakeslee really orchestrated his flights. He always knew where his three squadrons, six sections and 16 flights were, though all were frequently changing positions. As needed, he moved his units like a maestro calling into play his strings, brass, and so forth. Zemke was more like a street fighter leading his gang across town to engage another gang. "Follow me! Do as I do!" When I led the 357th, I leaned toward Blakeslee, but when our group of 40 to 45 P-51s was about to engage a force of 150 Germans, each squadron leader would be a Zemke.

Bombing formations ranged from 600 to as many as 1,200 bombers in three air divisions, each of which was comprised of from 300 to 350 bombers in "box" formations. The Germans generally made several head-on attacks against bombers unless broken up by our fighters. The first enemy attack was engaged by P-47s around mid-point of the mission. The P-51s would assume the escort just before the Thunderbolts reached the limit of their range. The P-47s were then re-armed and refueled to pick up the escort against those formations.

On a mission to Berlin, for example, there were 175

miles to "bombs away" and 175 miles on withdrawal. During that leg of the mission, we wanted to be up front so we could break up the Germans' planned head-on attack. If we were not up front we would miss the intercept. The P-51s flew well in advance of the bombers. There would be about 200 German fighters up and we'd meet 'em with 35-40 aircraft, seeing how many we could shoot down. For five minutes, they'd be all over the sky and then, suddenly, there'd be nothing. The Me109s would try to better their position by climbing, while the Focke Wulf FW190s would generally dive to the deck. When the fight was over, we all would join up with our bomber division and resume escort.

The March 6 mission to Berlin was our first big raid after two aborted sorties. We engaged the Me.109s, Me.110s and FW.109s between the initial point and the target, and we took them on in an air battle that descended to the rooftops of Berlin.

I went after the leader of the initial enemy group. He decided to fight and we engaged each other at 28,000 feet. As I was gaining a position on his rear, he rolled over and dove for the deck with me in pursuit. In the dive we both hit compressibility. At around 10 to 12,000 feet, he was able to turn while I still had no control and lost him in the smoke rising from defensive smoke generators deployed around Berlin. Then something swished by - a

stick of bombs, looking like rungs of a ladder. I looked up and all I could see were four-engine bombers. I rolled over and dove straight for the deck to parallel the falling bombs, leveling out over the rooftops of Berlin, then headed for the nearest open area.

Brig.Gen. Thomas Hayes, Commander
357th FG, submitted by Arthur Swanson, 357th FG, Pine Grove, PA

CAROLE LANDIS...

Mac and Joe, the two fliers she had met on their first day in England came to visit Landis in the hospital. She gave them each an egg, some of her white bread, and a sliver of the fruit-cake. "The cake is for Christmas", she told them. "You're to wait until then and save it so you'll all have a piece of Christmas cake." "To hell with waiting," Mac said. "We'll eat it tonight." "You can't do that," Landis told him. "You'll have to wait for Christmas."

"We take things as we get them," Mac said. "We don't wait." As she told it, "I gulped, realizing the significance of what he was saying. All right, I said. Special dispensation."

"The hospital was on the route the bombers took to go over, and every morning and every night while I was there I would hear them roaring out or coming in, and I would think of what Mac had said about taking things as you get them and not waiting...My kids, I knew, were up there, somewhere in that roar and speed, and I would lie there thinking of them and praying for them.

"Fooling around with them after a show at some camp, or at the Savoy in London, I hadn't thought very much of how they lived constantly in the valley of the shadow. They were too young, too gay, too enormously alive to permit one to think of it. But here at the hospital, with the bombers roaring over and with the nurses reporting each day another batch of flyers brought in to be patched up, you couldn't very well forget it."

As a matter of fact, she was too late with one of her presents. As she told *Woman's Home Companion*, "One egg I saved for a boy named Johnny [McHugh] back at the field who had talked incessantly about what it would be like to taste an egg again. We noticed on the bulletin board that Johnny was up on the operations schedule for



a noon flight. One of the boys ran to the field and put the egg beside the wheels of Johnny's fighter. But Johnny in his haste took off without seeing it.

"The squadron came winging back in the afternoon and Johnny wasn't there. He'd been shot down somewhere over France. Nobody would touch that egg. Day in and day out, it stood there on the ramp with taxiing planes circling all around it.

"Thirty-nine days later Johnny walked out onto the ramp and found his egg. He'd escaped from France. 'It's a perfectly good egg,' Johnny said gravely. 'It couldn't be better for what I plan to do with it.'

"The first time Johnny got the chance he dropped the egg on Germany."

Carole Landis, Hollywood Star,
from *The High Ground* - submitted by
Thomas Jordan, 5th AF, St. Paul, MN

DORICE BARROUX LINDSEY...

In 1944, I was 14, living in the town of Chatou, about 10 km from Paris, France, when during one of our frequent air raids, our eyes were, as usual, riveted toward the sky and our excitement reached a crescendo as we saw Flying Fortresses in the distance, heading our way. They would bomb Villacoublay airfield, factories, or rail centers not far from us.

We had been under German occupation for four long years and looked forward to being liberated.

During an air raid, instead of seeking cover we would quickly run outside to our garden and look for the first planes to arrive. It would not take long to spot them with their contrails behind them, before the German AA all around us would begin their action. We watched in horror as a plane was hit one day, a wing broke off and slowly circled to earth, while men jumped from their plane. Some airmen had their chutes deployed; some didn't. Our hearts broke as we witnessed these sights. I still am haunted today by these scenes.

I remember seeing two bodies plunge to the ground without chutes opening. I saw one airman come down with his chute deployed, and watched in horror as the Germans machine-gunned him. His head tipped down all of a sudden, and we knew he was gone. Another parachuted to safety on an island across the Seine from us. He was so close, we could watch him wrap up his chute and hide it, about 150 yards from us, then disappear. The Germans never found him.

Dorice Lindsey, Venice, FL

JOHN DEWITT...

The good Lord was riding Command Pilot that day.

Carrying a full load of bombs, we were on our way to Darmstadt, Germany when an exhaust stack on the left

outboard engine blew. We were just at the Channel and were forced to drop out of the 493rd Bomb Group formation. The Group went on to hit the target, the Darmstadt marshalling yards serving the Nazis along the Western Front.

The damaged engine on our B-17 burst into flames as we flew towards the base. Gray clouds huddled over the countryside, forcing me to come in low as I approached the field. Manuevering the plane to land, I saw the flaming left wing sag.

With one engine dead and carrying a big bomb load, *Devil's Own* was constantly losing speed. It was already too late to jump, and too late to gain altitude quickly. I had to land before the plane exploded.

Devil's Own was clipping tree tops as it approached the field, and then, just at the runway, the burning engine dropped out of the wing. The plane staggered. Straight ahead was a parked B-17 and the Flying Control caravan. I kept worrying about hitting that trailer full of G.I.'s, but fortunately I angled *Devil's Own* between the plane and the caravan. I headed for the mud rather than the parked runway, figuring that the soft earth would stop the bomb-filled plane more quickly. *Devil's Own* hit the ground going around forty miles an hour, but I spared using the brakes for fear that the Fort would nose over. The four enlisted men in the back of the plane about then tumbled from the rear escape hatch.

I kept *Devil's Own* rolling as straight as possible, while the engineer, navigator and bombardier dropped through the front escape hatch. The engineer and navigator catapulted themselves, one after the other, between the fuselage and the left inboard engine and scampered away like jack rabbits. As he dropped, the bombardier was hit by the whirling propeller, but lost only his left jacket and shirt sleeves while escaping with bruises and lacerations.

Our co-pilot then made his way out of his window to the right wing. By this time *Devil's Own* had slowed down to less than ten miles an hour, because the melted left wing was just dragging along the ground. I slid over to the co-pilot's seat and climbed out through his window onto the right wing. I skidded off the plane, just as the flames crept into the bomb-bay. Running for cover, I was less than 500 feet away when there was a terrific explosion that shook everything to its roots. The thirty-foot high doors of a nearby hanger just jumped from their rollers and slammed to the ground. Not a minute and a half before, I was standing where there were now only geysers of fire and smoke from the remains of *Devil's Own*.

-John DeWitt 493rd BG

submitted by Jack Feller, Mullens, WV

FABIAN FOLMER; IRL BALDWIN...

Fabian: "One time I was in the barracks sound asleep and you came in the barracks and said something about how you had a problem with the airplane. You had left the airplane someplace - I don't remember what the problem

was. You said, 'We gotta go down there and fix that darn thing.' So we went down there. For sudden stoppage we were supposed to change the engine, but for some reason we didn't know if there was sudden stoppage or not. You said, 'You think we can fly it out of here?' and you said, 'If we can get it off the ground we can feather the darn thing until we get up in the air.' I remember we buzzed the tower at that time.

Irl: "I wonder if that was the time the brakes went out and I went through a barrier to avoid hitting a row of airplanes?"

Fabian: "It could have been."

Irl: "My right engine went out while I was taxiing and I started to swerve over towards a row of airplanes so I gave it the gun and went through this barrier and I think we ruined the engine that way. We later had to change the engine that time."

Fabian: "All I know is that we really buzzed the tower - we had a lot of fun!"

**Fabian Folmer and Irl Baldwin, 303rd BG
Crew Chief; Pilot - Hell's Angels**

SHERLOCK HOLMES AND DR. WATSON WENT ON A CAMPING TRIP...

and after a good meal and a bottle of wine they laid down for the night, and went to sleep.

Some hours later, Holmes awoke and nudged his faithful friend. "Watson, look up at the sky and tell me what you see."

Watson replied, "I see millions and millions of stars."

"What does that tell you?"

Watson pondered for a minute.

"Astronomically, it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets.

Astrologically, I observe that Saturn is in Leo.

Horologically, I deduce that the time is approximately a quarter past three.

Theologically, I can see that God is all powerful and that we are small and insignificant.

Meteorologically, I suspect that we will have a beautiful day tomorrow. What does it tell you?"

Holmes was silent for a minute, then spoke.

"Watson, you idiot. Someone has stolen our tent!"

TOM LANDRY FONDLY REMEMBERED



At the age of 19 Tom Landry earned his wings in the Army Air Corps and went off to war in Europe as copilot of a B-17 bomber. He is second from the left in row two of the training group photo below.

The Kenneth Sainz crew joined the 493rd Bomb Group of the 8th Air Force, based near Debach, England on Nov. 20, 1944.

Air crew members were generally known by the pilot's name and their crew duty. Thus the 20 year-old copilot was known to many simply as "Sainz's copilot". The copilot's name was Tom Landry.

Joining the 493rd must have been a very emotional experience for young Tom. During his first few months of pre-war college word came that his older brother, Robert, whom he had looked up to all of his life, had been lost somewhere in the North Atlantic while ferrying a B-17 to England. Our base commander's name was Robert Landry -- no relation.



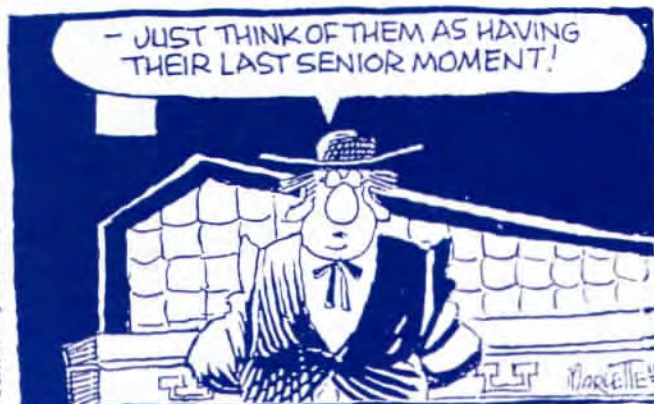
J. Clark Long of Lake City, MI and Apache Junction, AZ was ball turret gunner on the original Sainz crew. Clark described Tom as a friendly but quiet and serious young man.

The Sainz crew had their share of excitement. On their first mission Dec. 6, the weather was so bad when they returned from the target they were forced to land at a B-24 base, some distance from our B-17 base. On Dec. 31, Tom's prompt action saved the crew from having to bail out over enemy territory. The Feb. 15, 1945 mission was one of the longest -- over nine miserable hours. The Sainz crew ran out of gas and crash landed in a too-short Belgium farm field. The trees at the end of the field tore both wings off the aircraft. The entire crew walked away due to the ruggedness of those great B-17s. The Sainz crew eventually became a lead crew. A tour of missions for a lead pilot was 30 missions. For others, it was 35. Ken Sainz and crew were part of the 47.4% of the 493rd that came and went home safely before war's end.

In his autobiography, Tom states "I knew what it meant to look my own fear in the face and go on to do my duty because the lives of my crew and the destiny of my country depended on it. I'd seen the world. And it was far bigger than anything I expected to face back in Austin at the University of Texas." Also in his autobiography, Tom described himself as a good, church-going boy from the small town of Mission, Texas. Following his outstanding football career Tom joined the Billy Graham organization, not as a football hero but as a friendly, quiet and serious man doing his duty.

We have lost one of the greats of Tom Brokaw's greatest generation.
John O. Ramsey
Sault, MI

Tom Landry was the first head coach for the Dallas Cowboys - a distinguished career for over two decades. -Editor



Dear Editor,

Please find enclosed a copy of the picture you published in the September 2000 issue of the *8th Air Force News* magazine, the 466th BG basketball team. Also included are the names of the nine gentlemen. Lt. Jack Regan (back row right), Sgt. Howard Goodner (front row right) were both members of the crew that flew a B-24 called *The Black Cat*. *The Black Cat* reportedly was the last B-24 shot down in World War II. Both Lt. Regan and Sgt. Goodner were killed.

There is a book titled "Wings of Morning" authored by Professor Thomas Childers who is Sgt. Howard Goodner's nephew. The book is based on some 200 letters Sgt. Goodner had written to his mother.

I was a member of the 466th B.G. I was the tail gunner on the Westbrook crew, The Ironman Crew. We flew for thirty-five missions together (not one man missed a mission). There are 6 members of the crew still living and we meet someplace in these United States once every year, wives included. Each crewmember is still married to his original spouse and each couple is married well over the 50 year mark-tougher than the 35 missions! I really look forward to receiving my copies of the 8th AF News. In appreciation of same, find enclosed a check for \$1,000. Keep it flying!

Sincerely,
**R.F. "Chappy"
Chapdelaine
466th BG
New York, NY**



Standing: Captain John Mohur Spec Ser., Lt. Cunio, Cpl. Cohn, Lt. Ripplaine, Lt. Jack Regan. Kneeling: Sgt. Myran, Sgt. Richard Chapdelaine, Sgt. Prichard, Sgt. H. Goodner. February - March 1945, 2nd Pl. - Red Cross Tournament picture 3-10-45



The Westbrook Crew - The Ironman Crew

Standing: Mel Westbrook, Leonard Seigal, William Pond, Richard Cramer. Kneeling: Eugene Rogers, Richard Chapdelaine, John Roche, Woodrow Werner, John Mimnaugh, Roy Finley

Own the Collector Plate that Captures the Power and Glory of the Legendary B-24 Bomber



*Fine Porcelain decorated in USA
 Limited edition - 45 firing days
 Hand numbered & rimmed in 24 Karat Gold
 Issue Price: \$ 29.95.
 Money back Guarantee*



The Great Liberator
 shown smaller than actual size of 8 1/4"

YOUR Purchase directly benefits Paralyzed Veterans of America.

The most versatile World War II bomb hauler, the B-24 made the oceans safer for Allied forces, flew through desert storms, delivered supplies to the resistance and parachuted agents into Europe. And, this winged warrior destroyed more U-boats than any other Allied craft, helping to turn the tide of the war.

Paralyzed Veterans of America is proud to issue an original collector plate by acclaimed military artist Major David Wayne Russell, depicting the B-24D of the USAAF dropping depth charges over a type VII-C U-boat, a scene constantly repeated

in crushing the U-boat menace.

This is the first plate in a series of Legendary Planes of WWII issued to honor and support those paralyzed veterans who sacrificed so much for their Country. Your purchase will directly benefit them in their quest for a life of dignity and independence.

**Order today
 your satisfaction is guaranteed
 100%
 by PVA.**



Mail to: **Paralyzed Veterans of America** *Please mail promptly!*
 Veterans Commemoratives Order Center
 7453 Shipley Avenue, Harmons, MD 21076

YES, I wish to support Paralyzed Veterans of America by ordering The *Great Liberator* commemorative plate including a Certificate of Authenticity and Lifetime Guarantee. I need send no money now. I will be billed for \$29.95* when my plate is ready to be sent to me. I understand I may only acquire one plate.

*Plus \$4.00 for shipping and handling. PA residents add 6% state sales tax.

Signature _____ ALL ORDERS ARE SUBJECT TO ACCEPTANCE

Mr/Mrs/Ms _____ PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone (_____) _____

Paralyzed Veterans of America

TGLPLT-8AP-301

465TH SERVICE SQUADRON UNCLE JOE'S TRAVELING CIRCUS

There is glory in being attached to a Bomber Group or a Fighter Squadron, but very little glory when it comes to being assigned to a Service Squadron.

Our Squadron had six officers and 200 enlisted men, and we never lost a one through enemy action during World War II. You might say that is remarkable, but you've got to remember, we were the ones to "Keep 'em Flying". Our job was on the ground, and the closest we came to combat was to wave good-bye to the B-17's and B-24's as they took off, and sweat them out till they returned.

The 465th Service Squadron was organized at Santa Maria, California in February, 1943. We went through our several phases of training at Pendleton, Oregon, Fort Benton, Montana and Great Falls, Montana, then headed for the Port of Embarkation at Camp Shanks, New York. Our first overseas assignment was at Attlebridge AB, England. The base was just getting started, and we helped build their Quanset Huts. On Christmas day, 1943, we were reassigned to Cheddington AB, England, and performed our Service Squadron duties. After establishing a reputation for excellence, we were reassigned to Cluntoe AB, North Ireland, as mentioned in Pat Carty's book: "Secret

Squadrons of the Eighth". We performed our Service Squadron duties there, then helped close that base, and returned to England in October, 1944, where we were assigned to the 1st Strategic Air Depot at Honington-Troston AB. We were there when the war ended, then it was our lot to help form a new squadron, the 354th Airdrome Squadron. We would head home for a month's furlough, then on to the South Pacific to help with the war over there. As luck would have it, we landed in Boston on August 15, 1945, the day the war was over in the Pacific. It was then furlough, and then discharge. The 465th was officially disbanded in France in July of 1945.

Anxious to get on with our lives, we all waved good-bye, and headed for home, little realizing it would be forty-four years before we saw one another again.

We had our first reunion in July of 1989, and then met periodically for ten years. We had our final reunion in San Antonio, Texas in October of 1999. At that time our members were down from 206 to 65, and at this writing, we're down to 50, with an average age of 81. Many of those 50 can't travel anymore, but are kept close through a quarterly newsletter published by one of our members, Bill

Butts.

Our squadron has been published in the book: "50 Years USAF". In fact, we are the only Service Squadron mentioned in that



Major Joseph D. Wager-Smith (Uncle Joe)
Commander, 465th Service Squadron, 8th Air Force
"Uncle Joe's Traveling Circus"

book. In the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, we are represented with a plaque in the Rotunda, and two in the Memorial Garden. In the library there, we have placed eight albums with over 700 pictures of the squadron in action plus a portrait of our Commander, Major Joseph D. Wager-Smith (Uncle Joe to all of us). We were known as "Uncle Joe's Traveling Circus".

What memories we have. We were all like brothers, or closer than brothers. It was a grand and glorious time for us, and one that we will never forget.

Bill Butts, Secretary/Treasurer



The 465th Service Squadron, 331st Service Group, Eighth Air Force, better known as "Uncle Joe's Traveling Circus". They were tagged with this title because of their many stations within the Eighth Air Force. It was a unique outfit in that hardly anyone transferred in or out. The 465th serviced B-17's and B-24's, had all the Flight Line crews, shops and administration staff. They also had their own Medics, Transportation, Mess Personnel, Tech Supply and other support personnel, and could operate on their own anywhere in the world. Here is a quote from a report on the 465th Service Squadron from Eighth Air Force Composite Command: "The high efficiency and the functional success of the organization as a unit may be largely attributed to the intelligence, skill and superior technical training of enlisted personnel led by competent officers." Uncle Joe was our commander, Major Joseph D. Wager-Smith. The 465th was composed of six officers and 200 enlisted men. The picture of the Squadron was taken one Sunday morning in 1944 at Cluntoe Air Base, North Ireland.

A RETURN TO PIERREPONT SUR AVRE

... Questions are Answered

by Norman Grant, 493rd BG, Richfield, MN

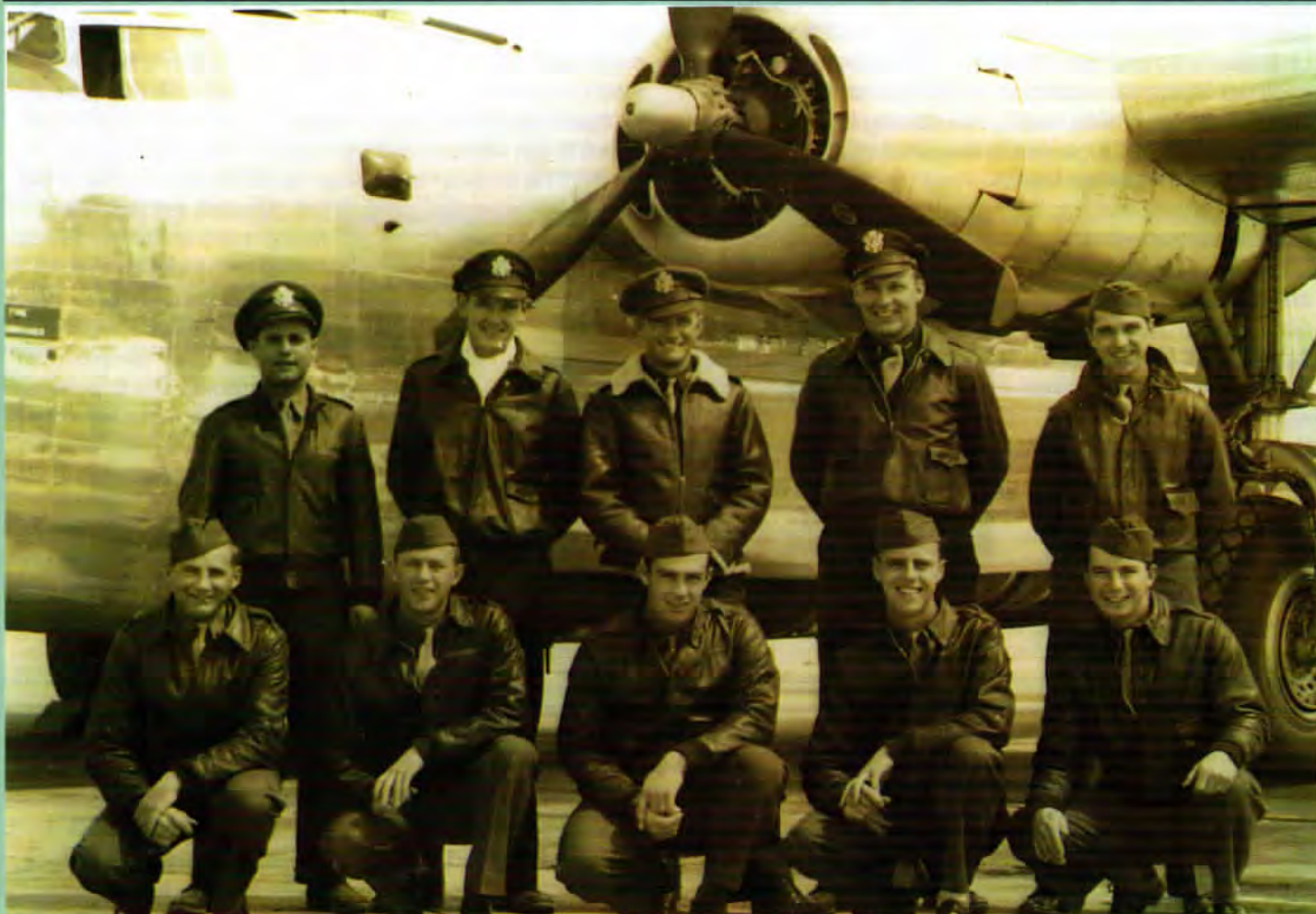
PROLOGUE

It was beautiful, sun-filled sky that early morning of August 18, 1944. The crew members were carefree, laughing, joking as they proceeded toward the hardstand where their silvery B24J was parked - the plane they had flown over from the States and which had carried them on all their own missions. Smiles and laughter ceased when they realized they weren't heading toward their regular hard-stand and their silvery B24. Instead they stopped at another hard-stand occupied by an olive drab, war-weary old bird. Disappointed as they were, all members did their preflight examinations,

and the inspections indicated the need for service and much needed attention. The navigator, flight engineer, and radio operator each found some of their equipment that needed repair and felt it would justify the grounding of the plane, but not so serious that the plane couldn't fly. The pilot advanced two reasons why they should fly this mission. One, the target was the Roye Air Base in Northern France, home to a German fighter group that was strafing and raising havoc with our ground forces, and those soldiers needed our help. Reason number two was more selfish as the pilot said, "Hey, it puts us one more mission closer to going home.

It's a short mission and remember they said no expected fighter opposition and the flak would be light". Two B24s fell from the beautiful sun-filled sky that morning, one silvery and shining, the other a dull and dirty olive drab, and they took 20 young 8th Army Air Force airmen to a fiery end, victims of the "light flak" over the target. For them, the shortest mission became their longest mission and only one of them eventually reached home.

**Norman C. Grant Sr. Navigator
Captain U.S. Army Air Force
Sole survivor Ex-POW**



THE GEORGE WASHINGTON CREW

kneeling, from left: Roy Patterson, BT; Felix Shostak, WG; Ray Guthrie, TG; John Doyle, NT; Robert Allen, RO; standing from left: Glen Guyer, B; John Kehoe, CP; George Washington, P; Norman Grant, N; Ray Gourley, FE

For the past fifty-six years I have been asking myself the same question many thousands of times, and I come up with the same answer every time, but I continue to ask the same question. Some of you will understand, others may never.

On August 18, 1944, my 493rd Bomb Group, then a B-24 group, was assigned the Roye-Amy airbase as our target. It was a German fighter base and we were to destroy the runways and airfield and render it inoperable.

At briefing that morning we were assured there would not be any fighter opposition and very little flak. As we approached the I.P. we started to encounter a fair amount of flak, but from I.P. to the target the concentration was extremely heavy. We were somewhat surprised because the first flight

ahead of us had only encountered a few token bursts of flak. The first casualty was the aircraft of our flight leader Lt. Glaze, who had a pathfinder crew aboard. The flak knocked off the tail section of their plane and they went into a dive. No chutes were seen coming from the plane. They crashed into a garden in the small village of Assianvillers, France.

Just after the bomb drop we were hit on the left side knocking out both engines and starting a fire in #2. My nose gunner John Doyle said he was hit. I was pulling him out of the turret when the co-pilot John Kehoe gave the order to prepare to bail out, and advised me our pilot George Washington was hit and he thought he was dead. He asked for a heading out of the area and I told him to just turn right into the two good engines and when I had taken care of Doyle I would get back to him.

Doyle was severely wounded; the lower part of his flight clothes had many holes and he was covered with blood. Just as I put his parachute on him we got hit with the second burst on the right side and Kehoe gave the order to bail out. I opened the nose wheel door and tried to get Doyle around me and out the door, but the space is small; it is difficult to move around in the nose of a B-24.

Doyle said GO. I bailed out and assumed he followed me and also presumed that other crewmembers had also bailed out. I didn't see any other chutes in the air nor did I see the plane. There was no sign of Doyle.

On the ground, I was immediately captured by a large group of very young armed German soldiers and taken to a small jail cell in what I have learned was the village of Figniere, France which was another airbase for German fighters. At my interrogation in Figniere and in Brussels, Belgium I was told that all my crew had perished in the crash, but I thought this was just an attempt to get me to give them names and information. In Belgium the Germans gave me the names of my crewmembers and assured me that they all died in the crash, but I still believed they were lying.



Service for members of 493rd Bomb Groups killed Aug 18, 1944 - Pierrepont, France. Flowers brought by villagers.

After my liberation from prison camp and my return home, my wife told me the Germans had told me the truth; all the crew had died in the crash. If they all died in the crash, then Doyle hadn't gotten out of the plane. So the question all these years has been: "Could I have done anything different to get Doyle out of the plane?" Would he have lived? The answer has always been the same; "No" - but



Caskets carrying bodies of Washington, Kehoe, and Guyer to Cemetery at Pierrepont sur Avre, France, August 19, 1944. Building with barred window was the home of the carpenter that built the caskets.

the question still persisted. In late 1999 an 8th Air Force friend, Don Hanson, asked me questions about the crash as he was researching information for other people and said he would like to pursue mine. I gave him what information I could along with the military report stating that all the crew had died in the crash. When he gave me his report it stated that five bodies were found in the crash, two were missing and presumed completely burned in the crash and Doyle was found some distance from the crash. If that was so, then Doyle did in fact get out of the plane.

To learn more about the crash and what happened to John Doyle I wrote to the Mayor of Pierrepont sur Avre, France. I found there were eyewitnesses to the crash and of my being captured. I was invited to come over for the 56th anniversary of the crash.

On August 16, 2000 my wife Margaret, and one of our

daughters, Deena, and I departed for Paris to meet our hosts, Jean Rene and Claudine Mercier. On the morning of August 17th we were met at the Charles DeGaulle airport by Jean, Claudine, their daughter Catherine, and a friend, Jean Maheiu. Strangers meeting strangers. A language barrier, as only Claudine could speak a little English and we couldn't speak any French. As we emerged from Customs and saw Claudine holding a big sign saying NORMAN GRANT, the sparkle in their eyes, the smiles on their faces, transcended any language barrier.

We were driven to their home in Pierrepont sur Avre, north of Paris. That was to be our home for the next twelve days. Every day's activities had been arranged. We learned that the letter I had written to Claudine searching for answers about John Doyle, and the crash, had been published in the newspaper that covered a large part of that area of France, and people from all over wanted to share information and have an opportunity to thank the American.

On the morning of Friday August 18th at 10 o'clock in the morning, exactly 56 years to the day and the time of our being shot down we gathered at the site of the crash and had a memorial service. People had come from several other communities to participate. They had prepared a beautiful bouquet of flowers to be laid on the forest floor at the exact spot where the plane had crashed. Emotions were high and the tears ran freely from the eyes of those who remembered, from the eyes of those who had heard of the sacrifice made by the Americans, and from the eyes of the little youngsters who probably didn't fully know why, but they knew it was right to cry.

The villagers told me that on the afternoon of the crash five bodies had been removed and laid in the field alongside the wooded area where the plane had crashed. A German officer came up and viewed the bodies, saluted, did an about face and walked away. The bodies of radio operator Robert Allen and Felix Shostak weren't found. It was believed the fire consumed them.

The afternoon of the crash three bodies were brought to the village of Pierrepont sur Avre. The local carpenter stayed up all night building caskets for the three bodies. On Saturday morning, defying the orders of the Germans, the Catholic priest held a Mass in a courtyard across the street from the church. The Church couldn't be used due to heavy damage caused by the Germans when they captured the village some four plus years earlier.

People came from several villages and brought huge bouquets of flowers and placed them on the caskets and the ground around them. Following the service the caskets were placed on a horse-drawn cart and carried to the local cemetery where they were buried among the graves of the parents, grandparents, and siblings of the people of Pierrepont. Eventually five of the crew were buried in this cemetery. This left the question of where was Doyle's body taken after he was found in his chute some distance from the crash?



Burial in Cemetery at Pierrepont, France

Following our memorial service at the crash site, we went to the home of the Merciers where we met many more visitors and friends. Some of them were eyewitnesses to my capture, others to the falling and crashing of the plane. Many had brought items from the crash site that they visited after the Germans had cleared the area. Most were small items, pieces of metal, some tubing, a small piece of the fuselage, little pieces of cloth. I believe most of the small metal pieces and cloth were from the "flak vests".

The next day we spent searching the many small villages trying to find the jail where I was first taken

after my capture. We couldn't find the jail or any of the buildings I recalled, so we presumed it must have been torn down.

One evening there was a huge historical pageant chronicling the past 2000 years in French history. Over 600 people participated in what they called "The Spectacular." Part of the history depicted was the liberation of France by the American Armed Forces. A group of fifteen men wore WWII American uniforms and rode in review with two jeeps, two half-tracks, and a couple of American military trucks. I was asked to ride in a jeep, as in their promotion

they advertised that I was an American servicemen who fought for the liberation of France. The applause was long and loud. The French are very grateful for our sacrifices and they love Americans.

We visited the Village of Assainvillier where Lt. Glaze's plane had crashed. On a table near the entrance of their church was a display of American flags and news articles about the crash. This was a small shrine dedicated to the men of Glaze's crew for the sacrifice they made. They all perished. This shrine has been there ever since the village was liberated.



The next day I visited with eyewitnesses to the crashes of both Glaze's and our crew. Our translator was an English professor from a University in Paris.

In his introduction he said that only one parachute came out of the plane, but a man sitting across from me said, "No, no - two parachutes came out, one close after the other." It was then I really had the answer to my question. John Doyle had gotten out of the plane, but he apparently died from his many wounds.

After some wine and cheese and other snacks we visited the site of Glaze's crash. One of the persons with us told us he was only a small boy at the time, but the Germans made him carry one of the bodies around the village to the school house where identification was made. They were buried locally until after the war then transferred to the American Cemetery that overlooks the Omaha invasion beach in Normandy. Five of my crew are buried in that cemetery; pilot George Washington, bombardier Glenn Guyer, flight engineer Ray Gourlay, nose gunner John Doyle, and our tail gunner Ray Guthrie. John Kehoe was returned to the family plot in Virginia and is buried alongside his brother, a B-26 pilot also killed in Europe. Radio operator Robert Allen and gunner Felix Shostak have their names inscribed on the wall of the missing at the American Cemetery at Ardennes, France.

Each day of the week we had lunch and dinner at different homes. Everyone wanted us as their guests. No two meals were the alike, but all were served with Bordeaux wine. One evening our friends took us to Amiens for a lovely dinner at a sidewalk cafe and we stayed for the evening laser display of the Cathedral of Notre Dame. A special Memorial Mass was held and people came from many villages to participate. A group of French WWII vets carried the flags of their military units along with the French and American flags leading the procession into the church. The service was beautiful with organ music and a small choir. It was all in French but we did understand the Mass. Following the Mass we all gathered in front of the church, where on the entrance steps the Mayor of Pierrepont gave a speech. He gave it in French but furnished me with a copy in English. After his speech we went down to the street level where in front of the church was a large monument erected in the memory of the French soldiers who gave their lives for France. On the base of this monument they had attached a beautiful black marble plaque commemorating the sacrifice of my crew for the liberty of France. The Mayor and I placed a lovely floral arrangement on the ground in front of the monument and unveiled the plaque. The inscription reads, "To the aviators of the 493rd Bomb Group who gave their lives on August 18, 1944 at the average age of 20, to help in the liberation of France". The tears were flowing from every eye as I thanked them for their tribute to my crew. Following the dedication we walked a short distance to the City Hall. In a large meeting room they had prepared tables of wines, champagne, cheeses, breads, and snacks. I was asked to autograph informative books, plus many other pieces of literature. My hand got very tired but I was never without a glass of wine or champagne on the table beside me! When we departed from this gathering we journeyed to the edge of the village to the Mayor's farm to a wine-field picnic. The Mayors of five villages had par-

ticipated in these events, as well as their constituents, and all of them wanted us to extend their thanks and gratitude to the Americans. We spent the next day seeing the sights of Paris.

Our departure was difficult. We had met so many people, adults and children alike, all saying "thank you".

As several seniors who lived through their occupation said, "If it had not been for you Americans, we would be speaking German." The drive to the airport was rather quiet and the hugs and kisses on the cheeks and long embraces made it difficult to say good-bye. We had met, and were now leaving, some wonderful friends. They had given me answers that gave me the piece of mind that I had searched for and had wanted for 56 years.



Norm and Margaret Grant Monument - Pierrepont sur Avre France with 493rd BG plaque

Norman Grant and his wife Margaret make their home in Minnesota. He has served two terms on the 8th AFHS Board of Directors and one term as President of the National Society.



The Grants - Norm, Margaret, Deena, with French hosts Catherine, Jean Rene, and Claudine Mercier

BELLY LANDINGS

Where a pilot, faced with a wheels-up landing, has a choice, should he make it on or off the runway?

Experience has shown that with heavy bombardment aircraft, such a landing should be made on the runway. In any type of plane, a runway landing probably will cause less damage to a ship than setting it down on dirt or sod. The reason is that dirt rolls up into balls, fracturing a plane's skin and rupturing the members. Photographs taken at the specialized four-engine school, Hendricks Field, Fla., graphically display what happens in the two types of landings.

Fear of fire mainly is responsible for a pilot's distaste for a belly landing on the concrete. In combat areas, where a damaged plane might have loose gas aboard due to a punctured tank or broken line, the friction created by a runway landing is a fire hazard. But in the U.S., if the gas

system is intact, such fears are largely groundless.

However, a prudent man will get out of any plane that has made an emergency landing under any conditions as quickly as possible.

-Air Force Mar 44

To those who have accomplished a wheels-up landing, what do you think? Any difference with a fighter aircraft?

-Editor



Partially cannibalized after a wheels-up landing, this shiny B-17 will become a hangar queen.

THE NIGHT THE OLD HAYSTACK BURNED

by Stan Peterson

96th Bomb Group Wellington, FL

Riding a bus from London to Snetterton-Heath in May 1990 with a group of loyal 96 Bomb Group members, I overheard two vets discussing the farmer's haystack fire. They were trying to recall the approximate month of that major event which occurred in the 338th Squadron compound. I let their conversation run its course all the while sizing them up before deciding to confess to having played a major role in the destruction of the farmers' aged haystack.

The story begins with the crew of *The Saint* returning to base on the afternoon of January 1, 1944 after crash landing at Gravesend the evening before. Upon returning to Snetterton by truck and having completed nine missions, I announced that I felt my long john underwear needed to be laundered. The bombardier, Jornod, who had early on found a laundry service and was always neatly dressed went into a lengthy sermon with great reasons why I should continue to wear unlaundered long johns to the completion of our magical 25 missions. Upon reflection and applying superstition which only grew in power and aroma with each passing mission, those long johns and I and the crew of *The Saint* returned from Brunswick on March 15, 1944 with Mission 25 and a ticket back home. By the pre-determined hour of 21:00 and with several of the crew including myself well into their cups, we gathered at the neighboring farmer's old moldy haystack and started a good blaze on the far side. At this point and with a good deal of ceremony, the cherished long johns were thrown into the blaze where upon an explosion of some consequence occurred and the crew of *The Saint*

disbursed in a most unorganized manner. The night sky took up a most unusual glow as a result of the sacrificial fire and any aircraft in the sky that night made their way to see what had happened. The gentlemen mentioned early on in this story were permanent party personnel at the 96th BG and as a consequence suffered a good deal of distress and discomfort as a result of the fire.

The ancient hay stack had over the years become the permanent home of hundreds of field mice and once the fire drove them from their condos they sought a warm home. When they went to the combat huts all they found was cold and bleak surroundings, but the nice cozy homes of the perm party met their requirements and they invaded in happy droves. This development was to make life very uncomfortable during the next several weeks.

Interrupting my two companions' conversation, I broke in to say "The fire you refer to happened March 15, 1944 and I played a role in the event". At this point I was introduced to Len "Speedy" Helminski and Joe Robustellini. It was at this point that our "victims" told me of the mouse invasion and a great deal of jolly conversation ensued as the bus rolled toward Norwich and the dedication of our museum at the Snetterton Academy.

The following days included the emotional service at St. Andrews and the Window reunion and the pilgrimage to the Cambridge Cemetery - all unforgettable experiences along life's trail.

The friendships I have made with the members of the 96th Bomb Group and the 8th Air Force Historical Society seem to grow in depth with each passing year. The stories sometimes seem to also.



Stan Peterson

THE 2ND AIR DIVISION MEMORIAL ROOM NORFOLK & NORWICH MILLENIUM LIBRARY BUILDING

By Jim Lorenz, 466th Bomb Group, Scottsdale AZ

Early in 1945, before Victory in Europe Day, members of the Second Air Division, Eighth Air Force, began talking about a Memorial in the East Anglia dedicated to their fallen comrades. Commanding officers approved the idea, and most everyone in the 2nd AD's fourteen B-24 bomb groups, Headquarters and associated fighter groups contributed over the next month. As all our bases were surrounding Norwich city, the proposed new Norfolk Central Library to replace the one bombed out seemed a likely setting for a memorial hall.

On May 25, 1945, General William E. Kepner handed over to Norwich city officials trust deeds establishing a Trust Fund of some 20,916 pounds. In 1963, the Governors of the Trust approved building a 2nd Air Division Memorial Room in the new library.

This original room is shown in the photo-- under the tail colors of each group are books on the history of the group. The city and county councils also contributed books and personnel.

The Second Air Division (USAAF) Memorial Room was a big hit.

Later, a second fund was set up and the Fulbright Foundation agreed to select an American Scholar or Fellow librarian for a year or so. Our Memorial Room is well used, as we also keep it up to date with state books, magazines, videos and literature.

This is how it operated, even being written up in Frohmer's Travel Book as a "must see" in the Norwich area, until August 1, 1994. On that fateful morning, the entire Library was destroyed by a fire, starting in an electrical box and quickly spreading to all areas. Temporary quarters were located nearby--and are still in use at the present time.

A new much larger library is nearing completion on the old site. The Norfolk & Norwich Millenium Library Building will include a larger 2nd Air Division Memorial Room. There is a car park underneath, our memorial on the ground floor and two more stories with a theater, dining facilities and meetings rooms.

This will be truly a "state of the art" facility with computer links to the

8th AF Heritage Museum and others.

Like more information? You can check on Library construction progress, 9am-4pm (Norwich time) with live photos from the site:

www.esnet.norfolk.gov.uk/millennium/lib/lib2.

More about the 2nd Air Division (USAAF) Memorial Room:

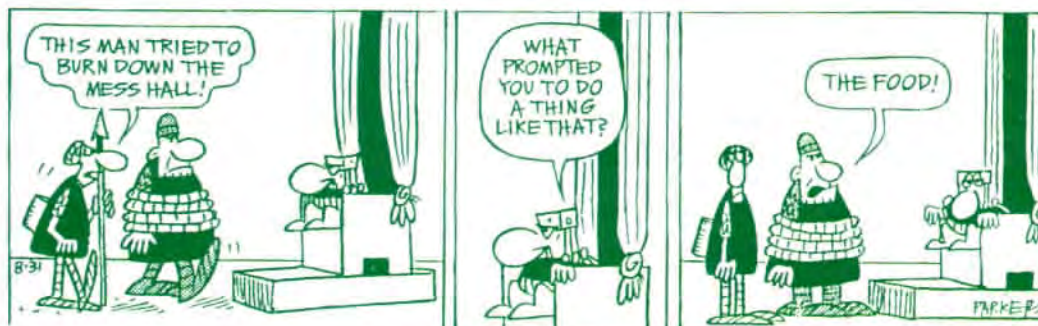
www.obycity.com/2ndmemorial/index.html

The 2nd Air Division Association will be going to Norwich on November 1-9, 2001 for the dedication of the new Memorial Room. This will also be their annual meeting for 2001--we expect some 700 people on this trip. Whenever 8th AF veterans visit, it is a week long holiday week for Norwich.

Each county in England has a "Personal representative of the Queen". For Norwich/Norfolk it is Lord Lieutenant Coleman. He and his wife always attend our meetings and he always has a wire from the Queen to greet us again. Each of these visits to Norwich seems to be billed as "maybe our last one" as our average age now is over 80. We and our children have formed many lasting friendships--and it is still nice to be treated as "heroes"--whether by the Lord, Mayor, by people on the street, or by the small farming villagers near the old bases who say "their boys are back."



2nd Air Division (USAAF) memorial room, June 1991 Norfolk Central Library Norwich, England



IOWA CHAPTER DEDICATION

Rock Island National Cemetery Memorial
September 23, 2000

It was a cool, rainy, damp day at the Rock Island National Cemetery, Illinois when members of the Mighty Eighth Air Force along with the Eighth Air Force representative from Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana dedicated the memorial monument in memory of 47,742 8th Air Force airmen of WWII and paid homage to those who paid the supreme sacrifice for the price of freedom.

The ceremony was presided over by William Zachar, former M/Sgt. Crew Chief with the 303rd Bomb Group who spearheaded the drive to establish the memorial monument. Honored guests were Mayor Ann Hutchinson, Behendorf, IA; George Nickolas, Mayor Pro-Tem, Davenport, IA; Chuck Taylor, President IA Chapter 8th Air Force Historical Society, Leon Mehring, Treasurer. Others present were M/Gen. David Easson, USAF (Ret.) and Lt. Col. Richard Asbury, USAF (Ret.) a P-51 fighter pilot ace of WWII.

The Eighth Air Force was represented by Col. Charles M. Schencke, Air Force Reserve Command's advisor to the 8th Air Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Thomas J. Keck. Col. Schencke, who gave the dedication speech, is a recipient of the highly prestigious MacKay Trophy. He and his crew were awarded this high honor for a mission flow non-stop around the globe during the Iranian Crisis in 1980. In his remarks, Col. Schencke said, "What you did for our nation was priceless" and "it's important that we never forget the contributions from a great generation - your courage, tenacity and character." he added, "No matter how sophisticated we get with technology, it is still people who are needed to operate it. You are the giants whose shoulders we stand upon."

Mr. Zachar, in his welcoming remarks, asked the question: "Why is the Eighth Air Force referred to as mighty?" It wasn't to be boastful. During its peak strength, The Eighth Air Force could launch 2,000 bombers and more than 1000 fighters at a time. He quoted Herman Goering, longtime chief of the Luftwaffe, who said: "The Allies owe The 8th Air Force the success of the invasion; they made it possible; they carried it through."

Also in attendance was Major Daniel Block, Chaplain of the U.S. Army operations support command, Rock Island Arsenal, the Marine Corps League Honor Guard, the Vietnam Veterans of America who gave the 21-gun salute, and Roy Gustafson, American Legion Post 246. The laying of the memorial wreath was by Col. Schencke and William Zachar.

The monument is part of the Historical Walkway, the only one of its kind in any National Cemetery in the United States. The monument was a gift from William Zachar and his wife Leannette with generous donations from the Iowa Chapter, 8th Air Force Historical Society and James Miller, President, Moline Monument Co, Ill.

At the completion of the ceremony, all present were

invited to a reception held in the Caisson Room of the Rock Island Arsenal Officer's Club.
submitted by William Zachar, 303rd BG
Davenport, IA



Col. Charles Schencke



Bill Zachar and Col. Marty Schencke at the monument

8th AF Historical Society	
Life Member Fee (U.S.A. only) - others add 50%	
15 times annual	60 or under\$300.00
10 times annual	61-70\$200.00
6.75 times annual	71-80\$135.00
4.5 times annual	81 or over\$90.00
Spouse of Life Member: \$40 less than applicable fee, based on LM's age.	

MAIL CALL

CHARLES GLENN

Dear Walter,
I have been referred to you as a possible source of help. My older brother died about 25 years ago and unfortunately as he was dying of cancer his



house burned down and was a total loss. I am trying to find out some information about him during WW II. I am hoping that one of your readers might recognize him or the emblem on his jacket in the enclosed picture. The only facts that I have are: his name was Charles Warren Glenn he enlisted in Baltimore, Maryland he was a top turret gunner on B-17s he flew a lot of missions from England he had several medals one of which was either (I think) the Air Medal or the Distinguished Flying Cross

Please contact me at
Raymond Glenn
3694 Woodbine Rd.
Woodbine, MD 21797
410-489-4105
Sincerely,

Raymond Glenn

DAYTON

Dear Walt:

On 25 August 2000, the 351st BGA dedicated their memorial at the U.S. Air Force Museum at Dayton, OH. Clint Hammond, President - 351st BGA, conducted the ceremony and about fifty attended the affair. The memorial stone is a duplicate of the one that is in the Memorial Gardens at the Heritage Museum, Savannah, GA. -- looks great!



I went in a day early to the Air Force Museum so I could make a 'missionary visit' and revisit the 8AF exhibits there. The 8AFMMF Memorial Control Tower is one of the more popular displays at the museum and the staff is maintaining it in great shape. The control tower is a nucleus for an expanded WWII complex where they are adding several Quanset Huts, Red British telephone booths, briefing rooms, officer club bars, rest room facilities, air conditioning and other interesting WWII displays.

The Air Force Museum is breaking ground on a third major building which will increase the floor space by many thousands of square feet. That is a very busy place. The cost of the new addition will be about \$10 Million.

**John Greenwood, 351st BG,
Alton, IL**

THE NEWS

Dear Walt:

The December 2000 issue of the 8th AF News is a professional delight. It's not only an immensely effective amalgam of articles, photos and the bits and pieces that your readers look for, but the elements are all held together by impressive creative layouts. As a fellow editor with a lifetime in the profession, I salute you and your outstanding team.

With best wishes,

Eddie Deerfield

Sincere thanks Eddie, from all of us involved in publishing the 8th AF NEWS. Eddie Deerfield is the editor of the much - acclaimed Hell's Angels Newsletter

JIMMY STEWART

Dear Sir:

During my years in England I flew on B-24 Liberators and B-17's which has caused me to be involved in friendly arguments as to which was a better aircraft. All I can say is I was lucky to survive the war because the crew I was with on the B-24s (453rdBG) were killed while I was in a hospital recovering from a wound suffered on a previous mission.

While I was with the 453rd B.G. Jimmy Stewart, the actor, was the Group Executive Officer, and I am

perhaps one of the few retirees who did not fly with him. My anecdote about James Stewart concerns the awarding of my Purple Heart. We were lined up on the tarmac in dress uniform when Stewart took the medal out of the case it fell to the tarmac. Instinctively we both stooped down to pick it up and our heads bumped. In 1978, I took my wife to England to visit the airfields that I had been assigned to. In Norwich, England The 8th Air Corps veterans paid for and donated a library in memory to those air crew members that had been killed.

Sincerely,

Herman Schlender

453rd BG, Palm Desert, CA

See article on the 2nd ADA library in this issue.

8TH AIR FORCE WEEK MISSIONS

Dear Mr. Brown,

Subject: Mighty Eighth Air Force Week

I haven't seen anything in print asking for name and names of crews who participated in all of the missions named in Mighty Eighth Air Force Week, October 8-14, 1944.

If it interests anyone, I was one of them. Members of my crew that also made them all are as follows:

F/O Robert L. Templeton - Pilot
1st Lt. Bartholomew K. Cobey - Navigator

1st Lt. Kenneth L. Johnson - Bombardier

T/Sgt Norbert S. Jost - Top Turret
T/Sgt Robert E. Bryson - Radio & Gunner

S/Sgt Robert M. Dawson - Ball Turret
S/Sgt Phern Stout - Tail Gunner
379th H.B. Field orders #214 - #215 - 216 and #220.

Yours sincerely,

**R.L. Templeton, 379th BG
Terre Haute, IN**

ALFRED VETROMILE

Dear Walt,

I would like to thank Alfred Vetromile for the copy of his excellent painting of the 490th bomb group over the Leuna Oil Refinery in Merseburg. I also have a copy of his excellent

MAIL CALL

painting of the 490th Bomb Group on the 1944 Dec 5th mission to Berlin, which was chosen as a commemorative print for the 50th anniversary of WWII.

I can confirm the accuracy of this article because I was on both these missions flying as flight engineer/top turret gunner on Lt. Lyon's crew.

Sincerely,

Frank McKinley Stoneham, MD
490th Bomb Group

COPILOTS

Dear Mr. Brown:

It was something in the way of a shock to open the December number of the 8th AF News to page 32 and find an account of the most memorable bombing raid in which I participated during WWII. I was the bombardier on the ship with Steves and Hart that day. How that happened was thus: Leo Baumann's own copilot, navigator, and bombardier were grounded for the day (why, I never knew), and my own copilot, navigator, and I were awakened by the CQ that dismal morning of 5 November 1944, and told that we were taking their place for the day's mission. My copilot was Eddie Dunne and my navigator was Gerry Melmood. Our target was Karlsruhe. I never knew the names of any of Baumann's crew except Baumann himself and his tail-gunner, Leo Henry; so I was unfamiliar with the names of Steves and Hart until your article. But that is more or less beside the point.

The mission that day was fraught with one problem after another. I was especially distressed by the death of Leo Henry, whom I had known on that day only. We knew he had never pulled the ripcord of his chute, but we had attributed that to his having "counted" too long after jumping. We were very low - I was at 410 feet above the ground when I jumped - the last to leave the waist. It may be true that Henry hit his head on the escape hatch, as the article states. Steves, as flight engineer, jumped from the bomb bay. Hart, as assistant engineer, may have been back in the waist with the gunners and me, rather than up front with Steves.

For Gerry Melmood and me, the deep and terrible sorrow of that day was the death of our own copilot, Eddie Dunne. He could have gotten out, but instead stayed behind to help Baumann try to put the ship down - at the time diving toward the ground at a sickening angle of about twenty degrees. Eddie's death was a personal sacrifice for which he was awarded a posthumous Silver Star for gallantry, but that didn't really ameliorate our grief at losing him.

As a rather ironical aftermath, Baumann's own copilot, Bernard Abel, was assigned to our crew to take the place of our dead copilot, who had substituted for Abel on the mission of 5 November.

A brief account of the mission is recorded on pp 422 and 423 of "Ted's Travelling Circus", Cal Stewart's magnificent record of the Eighth's most illustrious (ahem!) Group.

Most sincerely,

Marshall V. Minister

Fr. Marshall V. Minister, 93rd BG
Canon of Omaha
Bellevue, Nebraska

LAST MISSION/POW EVACUATION

Dear Dr. Brown:

First of all I want to say I read with great interest two articles in the Dec. issue of the 8th AF News. These two articles were almost exactly as I recalled them. I, as a navigator in the 91st BG, flew in *Lady Freda* with our crew headed by William P. (Bill) Steffens. We flew both the subject mission and the POW rescue from Barth (Stalag Luft #1).

There had been conflicting articles written on the subject of the "Last Bombing Mission Of The 8th AF", specifically as to the target for the day. It indeed was the Czech Skoda Works and the flack that day was tremendous. We attributed it also, as does the author, to the radio message being sent to the Czech people that we were on our way to bomb the Skoda works. This too was picked up by our Radio Operator W. L. Swanson. In the article, their group was the last over the target. We were

somewhere else in the train, but had the identical problem. On our first pass, the Deputy Lead Bombardier was wounded and inadvertently dropped his bombs and of the rest of us (except for our lead ship) dropped our bombs. Upon regrouping, our Squadron Commander, who was in the lead ship, wanted the rest of us to go back over the target. The entire squadron denied his request and regrouped, telling the CO to join us. Of course he was furious and dropped his stores on a target of opportunity on our return. We were held from landing until almost out of fuel and then proceeded to land. Once on the ground, he called all of the 1st Pilots and court martialed all with an additional 10 Mission penalty. Of course this penalty was moot since it was the "Last Mission".

Regarding the other article, The Air Evacuation of Stalag Luft #1, we in the 91st BG were I believe the first, or nearly the first, group to arrive at Barth. When we arrived we expected to immediately load the ex-POWs and leave. However, this was not to be. According to the American POWs, the Russian General refused to talk to our CO since he was of a subordinate rank and insisted that we have our General fly in to talk to him. So we had to stay in our planes and wait for Gen. Cross to arrive. In the meantime the American POWs were put in charge of the camp by the Russians and were told to keep the English in lock-up. We were told that the English removal was a top priority since the Russians disliked (to say the least) the British and the Americans feared for their lives.

On our flight into Barth the Russians did indeed give us a 20-mile corridor to fly in and out. In fact they periodically sent up flack on both sides of this corridor to prove their point. So, on the first return flight, we took out the British, fitting in as many as possible, and by using the "Short Field Take-Off" technique, made the take off safely. It should be noted that the field at Barth was a fighter strip to accommodate the planes the Germans were assembling there. The British were taken to a base in southern England. We then returned

MAIL CALL

to our base at Bassingbourn for what we thought was our end of that effort. However, we were called from the Mess Hall to report for a second run to Barth to pick up the Americans, which we did.

We picked up the Americans who were thrilled with the improvement version of the B-17G, over that which most of them flew. We took the Americans to an airport near Paris and, after a second de-lousing, departed for our base at Bassingbourn. I still have some of my Flack Maps, specifically the ones from Barth. I also have a couple Mission Flight Logs, but these were from missions in April.

The only part that I had a different remembrance was that the Americans told me the Sr. American at Stalag #1 was Col. Gabreski, but that was hearsay from them.

Since I participated in both of the subject missions, I would appreciate knowing the mailing addresses of the two authors of the articles. Please send me their addresses if you have them on file.

Respectfully,

John (Jack) Frencho
91st BG Columbus, OH

FEATHER MERCHANT

Dear Mr. Brown (Walt),
Who could tell me which crew from the 381st Bomb Group was flying B17F 42-30009 "Feather Merchant" on June 25th 1943 mission to Hamburg. On its return it landed on the unfinished base at Lavenham Suffolk, at which time I was employed on its construction. This was the very first airplane to land there, and being a young lad caused me great excitement, especially as I had never seen a B17 in close-up before. The crew were a bit up-tight after the mission, and understandably so, and I viewed them with a mixture of feelings as I examined bullet holes in the airplane. My one regret is that I didn't ask for names of the crew, but at the time I was overwhelmed by the event. One gunner obviously came from Texas - that I noticed written on the peak of his baseball cap as he handed me a round of .50 Calibre ammunition as a

souvenir.

It would give me much satisfaction to know which crew I saw June 25th 1943, and even more to know if they survived the ordeal of WW2, as I sincerely hoped they would.

Have written to Leo Jarvis who flew 42-30009 to England. And to Jacy Pry who was pilot when the airplane was shot down Oct 8th 1943 on the Bremen mission. But neither Leo, or Jack was flying it on June 25th 1943. Please DO write me - anybody - if you can help.

All Best Wishes Walt, and same to all readers.

Yours sincerely,

Bertram M. Carter
"Green Bungalow"

Howe Lane Cockfield Nr. Bury. St. Edmunds Suffolk IP30 OHT England.

You might check the autobiography of 381st BG Chaplain James Goode Brown "The Mighty Men of the 381st Heroes All", or contact the 381st BG Association Historian. - Editor

BRITISH MESS HALLS

Dear Sir,

Browsing through the 8th AF News and reading various articles, brings the distant past vividly to life. No, I didn't fly Fortresses on missions over the continent, nor labor through freezing English nights to ready the bombers for dawn sorties. My battles were fought on terra firma, on kitchen and messhall battlefields.

I served in the ATS, the women's section of the British Army and we were stationed in Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, amidst all those American bases. Our reveille in the morning was the drone of the U.S. bombers as they flew toward Fortress Europe, meeting life and death challenges on the way.

Our won challenges were confined to doing our part in feeding thousands of British troops, month after month, in what seemed to be a neverending War. Oh, those enormous kettles of stew; those starchy suet puddings saturated with treacle, dripping and making small puddles on the messhall plates. Fruits and green vegetables, touted in today's diets, were rare, but

our soldiers seemed to thrive on their starchy fare.

Thank you for continuing your wonderful magazine into the new century. Using some of those old war stories, I've been trying to sell my 15-year-old grandson the idea of joining the U.S. Airforce when he is old enough. But all he has on his mind at present are CDs and video games!

Sincerely,

Frances Nunnally Richmond, VA

EIGHTH AIR FORCE WEEK PUBLICITY

Dear Editor:

About two weeks before Mighty Eighth Air Force Week, I sent the information sheets to out local paper.

I called the paper's attention to the information. It was suggested that they interview some survivors of combat with the 8th Air Force to honor them by a write-up in the newspaper. However, not a single line of print was devoted to the event. Probably other 8th Vets were more successful. I would appreciate suggestions as I plan to continue to remind the newspaper editor of the 8th Air Force in WWII.

In January 1945, I was transferred to an Infantry Replacement Center. I would like to hear from other men that shared the experience.

Sincerely,

Wayne Detwiler, 385th BG
9058 College Corner Road
Greens Fork, IN 47345-9774
email cabodet@infocom.com FAX
765-855-2546 Phone 765-855-2546

NEW MUSEUM AT KINGSCLIFFE

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you in the hope that you may be able to assist me in a project in which you may have an interest yourself. I have been offered a great opportunity to try to open a historical aviation museum at Kingscliffe in Northhamptonshire, England.

I spent many of my teenage years in the 1980's at the old airbase and had a great interest which has continued into adulthood.

I was chatting to the owner of the communal sites, a Mr. Steven

Eighth Air Force Historical Society PX Insert

Spring 2001

Wow!!! It has been a cold and snowy winter here in Minnesota, but Spring has finally arrived!!! At least I don't have to shovel the driveway anymore! We hope that all of you fared the winter well.

We are offering several new items in this issue of the *8th AF NEWS*. First being a new book by Roger Freeman! Roger has always had a fascination for WWII 8th Air Force color pictures. He has been gathering photos since the end of the war and has massed an amazing collection. Some of these wonderful pictures were published in 1991 in a book called *MIGHTY EIGHTH IN COLOR*. The book has been out-of-print for quite some time and has become quite desirable by veterans and collectors alike. We are very pleased to offer a **NEW EDITION** of this fine work entitled, *MIGHTY EIGHTH - The Colour Record*. This new volume now includes over 200-plus **NEW COLOR PHOTOS!!!** It is a fantastic, one of a kind record of 8th Air Force color photos and is now in stock at the low price of only \$39.95 (Item B4).

The next item we are offering is a new automobile **LICENSE PLATE**. We have replaced the old aluminum plate with a more sturdy, washable hard-plastic

plate; the best thing is that they are still priced at only \$3.95 each (Item A2). Check your respective State License Plate laws to make sure that having this plate on the front of your vehicle is allowed.

October 14th, 1943. This date saw one of the worst losses in the entire war for the Eighth Air Force. **TARGET: SCHWEINFURT, GERMANY**. The "Mighty Eighth" lost sixty bombers that day. One of the key figures on that day was J. Kemp McLaughlin, Lead Command Pilot from the 92nd BG. General McLaughlin flew over 40 missions in the early days of the 8th Air Force and has written his amazing story in an exciting new book entitled, *THE MIGHTY EIGHTH IN WORLD WAR II* (Item B32). Brilliantly written and highly recommended!! Only \$22.00.

Next, we have a great re-print of an 8th Air Force classic. "*CASTLES IN THE AIR - The Story of B-17 Crews in the 8th Air Force* (Item B33). This fine account, by author Martin Bowman, vividly describes life as a 8th Air Force B-17 crewmember. Out-of-print for years, this new edition has been expanded with more stories and photographs. This book will surely bring back a lot of memories! Only \$27.95.

Lastly, we have a new item in our Sale Items section. *THE SKY WAS NEVER STILL* (Item S1) is a one of a kind collection of 8th Air Force poetry and prose. These are the last remaining copies and best of all it is priced affordably at only \$9.95 each (Was \$14.95). Get yours while stocks are still available!!!

We want to wish each and everyone a happy and healthy Spring!! Till the next time, take care and keep well! With God's Blessings!!! Cheers!!!

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 May 2001.

8TH AIR FORCE LOGO PATCHES

QTY		TOTAL
___	P1 4" Jacket Patch (Blue/White with 8th AF emblem)	\$ 3.95
___	P2 Special Blazer patch (Gold Bouillon thread)	\$ 22.95
___	P3 8th AF Shoulder Patch (wartime patch reproduction)	\$ 2.95
___	P4 Deluxe 8th AF Shoulder Patch (Gold Bouillon thread)	\$ 19.95

JEWELRY

___	J1 3/4 inch 8th AFHS Lapel Pin	\$ 2.95
___	J2 3/4 inch 8th AFHS Life Member Lapel Pin	\$ 3.50
___	J3 8th AFHS Tie Tac (Regular)	\$ 3.95
___	J4 8th AFHS Tie Tac (Life Member)	\$ 4.50
___	J5 B-17 Belt Buckle, (Pewter finish)	\$ 13.95
___	J6 B-24 Belt Buckle, (Pewter finish)	\$ 13.95
___	J7 8th AF Bolo Tie	
___	___ Gold Medallion Clasp with Gold Rope	\$ 17.95
___	J8 Solid Pewter Tie Tacs @ \$6.95 each	\$ 6.95
	<i>please circle your choice(s)</i>	
	B-17 B-24 P-47 P-51 P-38	
___	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)	
___	J12 Miniature Wings - lapel type	\$ 4.95
	<i>please circle your choice</i>	
	Crew Member Pilot	

AUTOMOTIVE ACCESSORIES

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

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
	___ XXL	\$ 24.00
	___ Red ___ White ___ Blue	
___	C6 A-2 Jacket, genuine goatskin <i>Order one size larger than your suit size</i>	
	Indicate ___ Regular ___ Long	
	<i>Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery</i>	\$190.00

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

___	M1 8th AF Wall Clock	\$ 19.95
___	M2 8th AF Luggage Tags	\$ 4.25
	or 2 for \$7.95	\$ 7.95
___	M3 8th AF Zippy Letter Opener	\$ 2.00
	or 3 for \$4.95	\$ 4.95
___	M4 8th AF Golf Towel - Embroidered 8th AFHS logo, w/ grommet	\$ 13.50
___	M5 8th AF Tea Towel - Full color English style tea towel	\$ 10.95
___	M6 8th AF Flag - 3'x5' white nylon flag with full color 8th AF logo.	Indoor \$ 49.95
	Outdoor (with gold fringe)	\$ 59.95

8TH AIR FORCE ART

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

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 Mighty Eighth - The Colour Record , Roger Freeman, 2001. Hdbd, 224pp. A new expanded edition of this 8th AF classic. Over 600 full color photos (200+ more than 1991 edition) illustrate this new 'must have' book. One of Freeman's finest! Not to be missed!	\$ 39.95
___	B5 56th Fighter Group , Roger Freeman, 2000. Stbd. 128 pages, numerous photos, 58 color profiles. Superb history of the 56th Fighter Group known as 'Zemke's Wolfpack'. Brilliantly researched and skillfully written. A very enjoyable book - another Freeman classic!	\$ 19.95
___	B6 The Mighty Eighth - A History of the Units, Men and Machines of the US 8th Air Force , Roger Freeman, 1970/2000. A must for every member of the 8th Air Force, now in a revised softbound edition. The cornerstone in every 8th AF library. A great book to pass along to the next generation at an affordable price.	\$ 24.95



Please use the latest PX page when ordering.

Prices listed are good through 1 May 2001.

QTY			TOTAL
—	B7	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.	\$ 18.95
—	B8	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!	\$ 18.95
—	B9	Thunderbolt Aces of the 8th Air Force , Jerry Scutts, 1998. Stbd. 7 1/4" x 10", 96 pp., 110 b/w photos, 85 color profile paintings. History of P-47 Thunderbolt aces of the 8th AF. Covers all 'Jug' units and respective aces. Heavy emphasis 56th Fighter Group.	\$ 18.95
—	B10	Mustang Aces of the 8th Air Force , Jerry Scutts, 1994. Stbd. 7 1/4" x 10", 96 pp., 103 b/w photos, 66 color profile paintings. History of P-51 Mustang aces of the 8th AF. Covers all 8th AF Fighter Groups and respective aces.	\$ 18.95
—	B11	Valor at Polebrook - The Last Flight of Ten Horsepower , School/Rogers, 2000. Hdbd, 152 pp. Story of 351st BG Medal of Honor recipients Mathies and Truemper. Well researched and skillfully written.	\$ 24.95
—	B12	The Bluenosed Bastards of Bodney , Ivie/Powell, 2000. Hdbd, 292pp. Superb unit history of the 352nd Fighter Group. One of the best 8th AF fighter Group histories ever written! Long out of print and available on a limited basis!	\$ 49.95
—	B13	Eighth Air Force Bomber Stories , McLachlan, 1993. Hdbd. 6 3/4" x 9 1/2", 208 pp., 150 photos. Gripping, graphic and honest first-hand accounts from 8th Air Force bomber crew experiences. Set against previously unpublished photos, this book paints a vivid picture of life as a bomber crewman in the 8th Air Force. Great reading!	\$ 37.95
—	B14	8th Fighter Command at War - 'The Long Reach' , O'Leary, 2001. Stbd, 144 pages, 100+ photos, 52 color profiles. Official training document compiled from the experiences of some of the 8th AF's best fighter pilots. A superb historical account of 8th AF Fighter Command tactics.	\$ 22.95
—	B15	The Liberator Album , Bailey & North, 1998. Hdbd, 8 1/2" x 11". 500+ b/w photos. Superb collection of 2nd Air Division B-24 photos. Each 2nd AD Group is represented in this outstanding book. Fine collection of color profile paintings. A must have book!	\$ 39.95
—	B16	Pride of Seattle: The History of the First 300 B-17Fs , Birdsall, 1988. A brief history of the first 300 Boeing B-17Fs built. Detailed accounts of their respective involvement in the Pacific, Mediterranean and Europe. Aircraft of the 91st, 92nd, 303rd, 305th, and 306th BGs are examined. 8 1/2" x 11", 64 pp.	\$ 9.95
—	B17	Ridgewell's Flying Fortresses - 381st BG (H) in World War II , Mackay, 2000. Hdbd, 255 pages, 200+ photos. Fabulous new history of the 381st BG. Impeccably researched and skillfully written. One of the finest 8th AF unit histories ever written!	\$ 59.95
—	B18	The Legendary Norden Bombsight , Pardini. History of the famous Norden bombsight. This book covers the development and use of one of the most secret weapons of WWII. 6" x 9", 352 pp., 70 photos.	\$ 29.95
—	B19	US 8th Air Force in Camera - Volume 1- Pearl harbor to Big Week 1941-1944 , Bowman. Hdbd, 7 3/4" x 10 1/2", 192 pp., 220 b/w photos. Fully illustrated in black and white photos. author captures a pictorial aspect of the Mighty Eighth at war!	\$ 29.95
—	B20	US 8th Air Force in Camera - Volume 2- 1944-45 , Bowman. Hdbd, 7 3/4" x 10 1/2", 192 pp., 200+ b/w photos. Companion Volume to Item B20. Superbly illustrated and captioned!	\$ 29.95
—	B21	Squadrons of Deception - The 36th Bomb Squadron in WWII , Hutton. 8 1/2" x 11". Superb unit history of the 36th BS Radar Countermeasures Squadron assigned to the 8TH AF. Terrific book about a subject few know about. Highly recommended!	\$ 34.95
—	B22	Happy Jack's Go Buggy , Ilfrey/Copeland, 1998. Hdbd, 8 1/2" x 11", 125 pp., 200+ photos. Story of eight victory fighter pilot Jack Ilfrey of the 20th Fighter group. One of the finest tales of aerial combat ever written. Hard to put down! Signed by Jack Ilfrey - a great collector's item!	\$ 35.00
—	B23	The Münster Raid: Before and After , Hawkins, Hdbd, 543 pp., illustrated. Detailed account of 8th Air Force mission to Münster, Germany - October 10, 1943. Well researched! Includes numerous personal accounts from 8th AF air and ground crews. Superb updated edition!	\$ 32.00
—	B24	Mississippians of the Mighty Eighth , Nail, 1999. Hdbd, 8 1/2" x 11". Compilation of 8th AF veterans from the state of Mississippi. Excellent reading and superbly edited by Ken Nail. A great anthology of veterans' accounts.	\$ 44.95
—	B25	USAAF Fighter Stories: Dramatic Accounts of American Fighter Pilots in Training and Combat Over Europe in World War 2 , McLachlan, 1997. Hdbd, 6 1/2" x 9", 192 pp., 180 photos. Well illustrated accounts of training, combat, bail-out dramas, POW, and evadee adventures. Stories from the 4th, 20th, 55th, 78th, 339th, 352nd, 356th, 361st, and 364th FG personnel. Aircraft archeology stories. Great book!	\$ 39.95
—	B26	Serenade to the Big Bird , Stiles, 1947. Hdbd. A true 8th Air Force classic! Back in print for the first time in many years. Stiles flew 35 missions in the 91st Bomb Group and wrote this fine book prior to his death in November 1944. A great read for a great price!	\$ 19.95
—	B27	Hell in the Heavens - Ill-fated 8th AF Bomb Group Missions , Hess, 2000. 6" x 9" Stbd, 144 pages, 29 photos. Terrific book documenting the worst bombing raid losses of the 8th AF. Schweinfurt, Ploesti, Kassel, Berlin are just some of the missions outlined in this brilliant book.	\$ 16.95
—	B28	After the Liberators - A Father's Last Mission, a Son's Lifelong Journey , McGuire, Stbd, photos. Story of a son's search to find the truth about his father's death. Touching reading! Superb research tool for anyone who is looking for information about an 8th AF veteran.	\$ 16.95
—	B29	Sunrise Serenade - A World War II Bomber Crew Story , Jerry Penry, 2000. Stbd, 162 pages, photos. Well researched book about the crew of the 'Sunrise Serenade', a B-17 from the 452nd BG, 3rd Air Division. Well researched and superbly written by Jerry Penry. A great story - highly recommended!	\$ 19.95
—	B30	Bombs Away! Pathfinders of the 8th Air Force , Thixton/Moffat/O'Neil, 1998. hdbd., Photos. Remarkable story of the 8th Air Force Pathfinder Groups (95th and 482nd Bomb Groups). Well written and very interesting.	\$ 25.00



Please use the latest PX page when ordering.

Prices listed are good through 1 May 2001.

QTY		TOTAL
___	B31 The Interrogator , The Story of Hanns Joachim Scharff, Master interrogator of the Luftwaffe. hdbd, 6" x 9", 352 pp., 150+ photos. The amazing story of the man who questioned captured 8th AF fighter and bomber crewmen during WWII. Long out of print! \$ 29.95	___
___	B32 The Mighty Eighth in World War II , Brig. Gen. J. Kemp McLaughlin, 2000. Hdbd. Memoir of famed leader of the 92nd BG and Lead Command Pilot of the second Schweinfurt mission, Oct. 14, 1943. Brilliant account of his flying days in the infancy of the 8th AF. Superb! \$ 22.00	___
___	B33 Castles in the Air- The Story of the B-17 Crews of the 8th Air Force . Bowman, 2001. Stbd, 216 pp, 175 photos. First hand accounts of 1st and 3rd Division B-17 crew members. A fantastic read! *One of the most revealing books ever written on aerial warfare* - John Toland. \$ 27.95	___
THE 'KIDS' HANGAR'		
Children's T-Shirts - 100% washable Cotton with 8th AF Logo in full color. Kid's size versions of our Adult T-Shirts. All sizes measured in common Youth sizes.		TOTAL
___	XS (2-4) ___ S (6-8) ___ M (10-12) ___ L (14-16)	\$ 8.95
8TH AIR FORCE VIDEOS		
___	V1 Pistol Packin' Mama , 60 minutes. Story of the crew of the Pistol Packin' Mama B-17 crew from the 390th BG. Their story is heart-wrenching, emotional and extremely stimulating. Very highly recommended! \$ 24.95	___
___	V2 Wing and a Prayer: The Story of Utah Man , 58 minutes. August 1, 1943 - Target, Ploesti, Rumania. One of the most infamous missions in which the 8th AF participated. Emmy award winner. Absolutely wonderful! \$ 24.95	___
___	V3 Start Engines -- Plus 50 Years , 60 minutes. Excellent video covering all aspects of life in the 8th Air Force during WWII. Produced by the 8th AFHS. Highly recommended! \$ 24.95	___
___	V4 Behind the Wire , 80+ minutes. Superb documentary focusing on the German POW experience. Great first-person accounts. Don't miss this award-winning film. Produced by the 8th AFHS. \$ 24.95	___
___	V5 Memories of the 91st BG at Bassingbourn , First person accounts and wartime footage make this brilliant film a superb addition to your 8th AF video library. \$ 24.95	___

QTY	Quantities are limited on Sale items	SALE ITEMS!	Sale prices good through 1 May 2001	TOTAL
___	S1 The Sky Was Never Still - Numerous authors. A compilation book of poetry and reflections from members of the Mighty Eighth. A powerful collection that should be read by everyone who served in the 8th Air Force. Was \$14.95, now just \$9.95. \$ 9.95			___
___	S2 8th Air Force Yearbook , Reprint, Hdbd., 224 pages. Superb photo book published exclusively for 8th AFHS members. Terrific! Was \$32.95 - now only \$26.95! \$ 26.95			___
___	S3 8th Air Force Album , 1978. Photo essay of the 8th AF in WWII. 1150 photos, including 250 nose art photos. Published exclusively for 8th AFHS members - a great addition to your 8th AF library! \$ 23.95			___
___	S4 8th Air Force Yearbook/Album Combination , Get the above two out-of-print volumes for one special low price! Purchased separately, these two books would sell for \$62.90. Now you can own them for only \$42.95 - over a 30% savings off the original cover price! This offer good only if both books are purchased together. \$ 42.95			___
___	S5 Eyes of the Eighth , Keen, 1996. Excellent history of the 7th Photographic Reconnaissance Group. This is a monumental study and a truly amazing book. One of the best 8th AF histories ever published. Was \$49.95, now just \$32.95! \$ 32.95			___

ORDERING INFORMATION

DIRECTIONS: Fill in quantity ordered in first blank next to Item Number. Be sure to indicate choices (if applicable) and sizes (if applicable). Fill in the total cost of items in the last blank line next to the per-item price. Add the cost of all items ordered and write the total in the blank below. Add Postage & Handling charge, write in the grand total, and PRINT your name and address. When ordering, be sure to send all pages along with your check payable to 8AFPX to the address below.

Cost of Items ordered: _____
 Shipping & Handling Charge _____
 Under \$20.00, add \$3.75 _____
 Over \$20.00, add \$4.75 _____
 Overseas orders: add additional \$5.00 _____

Grand Total, payable to 8THAFPX \$ _____

Credit Card - Please fill in information below
 ___ Visa ___ MasterCard Exp. Date _____
 Card No. _____
 Signature _____

SHIP TO:
Name: _____
Address: _____
City / State / Zip: _____
Daytime Phone: () _____ **8th AF Group:** _____

Send Orders and Payment to:
8th AFPX
c/o M. Copeland
P.O. Box 240837
Apple Valley, MN 55124
No Phone Orders Please

MAIL CALL

Dawson, who had previously expressed an interest in opening up a museum. He was unfortunately unable to do so due to other commitments.

However, he offered me the opportunity, saying that he will donate one of the communal site buildings (cinema, gym and chapel) if I can get the project off the ground.

The museum will be dedicated to the 20th Fighter Group and others who served there and also to some of the other local airfields i.e. Collyweston and Wittering.

At the moment I am in the process of forming a small committee, of other like-minded individuals. I will also have to advertise for donations or loans of artifacts from the local area. If you know anyone who can help please ask them to contact me.

I shall be applying for a grant to assist with funding the project, but otherwise it will have to be on a charity basis. If there is anything that you could help with we would greatly appreciate it.

Yours faithfully,

**M. Greenwood 55 Stowe Road
Langtoft Peterborough PE6 9NE
U.K. Telephone:-01778 341631**

THE ROXY'S SPECIAL

Dear Mr. Brown:

As a historian and member of your Society, I should like to ask you for a favor. Could you, please, put out the following note in the 8th AF News: - Richard Braun, WW2 air war historian of Pinienstr. 53, 67065

Ludwigshafen, Germany, wants to complete his documentation about the crash of "The Roxy's Special" B-17G, 322 B. Squ., 91 B.G., at

Ludwigshafen on the Rhine on Sept. 8, 1944. For this purpose, he needs a photo of S/Sgt. Charles Beebe, 19142099, waist-gunner on that aircraft. Therefore, everybody who knew this airman and/or holds a photo of him is kindly invited to contact Richard Braun at his above address. In case you are interested in having a copy of my documentation, I shall gladly send you one. From it you would see that I was an eye-witness of the crash.

I should be glad to hear from you and meanwhile remain

Sincerely yours,

**Richard Braun Pinienstr. 53
67065 Ludwigshafen Germany
Phone 621-573415**

OLD FRIENDS

Dear Walt,

I was delighted to see the photograph of Roger Freeman a recent edition of the 8th AF NEWS----I am sure that there could not be a finer tribute to him unless he is awarded some kind of medal!

He has done more to further the cause of the 8th Air Force than anyone I know. Roger and I have been in contact since just after the war when he had finished his military training and I was just starting mine. We exchanged notes on the colours, names, code-letters, numbers on every airplane we had seen, but we were only scratching the surface and the only photographs we had were cut from magazines. However, our research did form a good basis for history, and the wealth of information that is turning up today is unbelievable! In the 1950s we did write to

some veterans, but most did not want to know us and I can understand that after actually fighting in the war, as I guess they had their fill. I was always in awe of Roger as his family farm was in the middle of it all while I could only spend my school holidays sitting at the end of BAD 2's main runway at Warton, but it was great and our notebooks were full of details of those wonderful aircraft. When Roger was completing 'the book' in the late 1960s, I remember him telling me that he had come up with the title 'The Mighty Eighth' and it must give Roger great satisfaction to know that those words are the accepted reference to this great organization.

With reference to the AFHS founder John Woolnough, like Roger, I drove John around some of the old bases during his visit in the early 1970s. During our visit to Warton I showed him the very spot where I sat for many happy hours during the last two years of the war. I mentioned that I was sad that although I felt part of the whole thing, it seemed that I was always "On the outside looking in". Obviously, it could be no other way at that time, but when John published 'Stories of the Eighth' in 1983 he very kindly sent me a copy with the inscription "Harry, now you are on the inside", as he had devoted a chapter to me and my days looking over the fence at Warton. A true Gentleman.

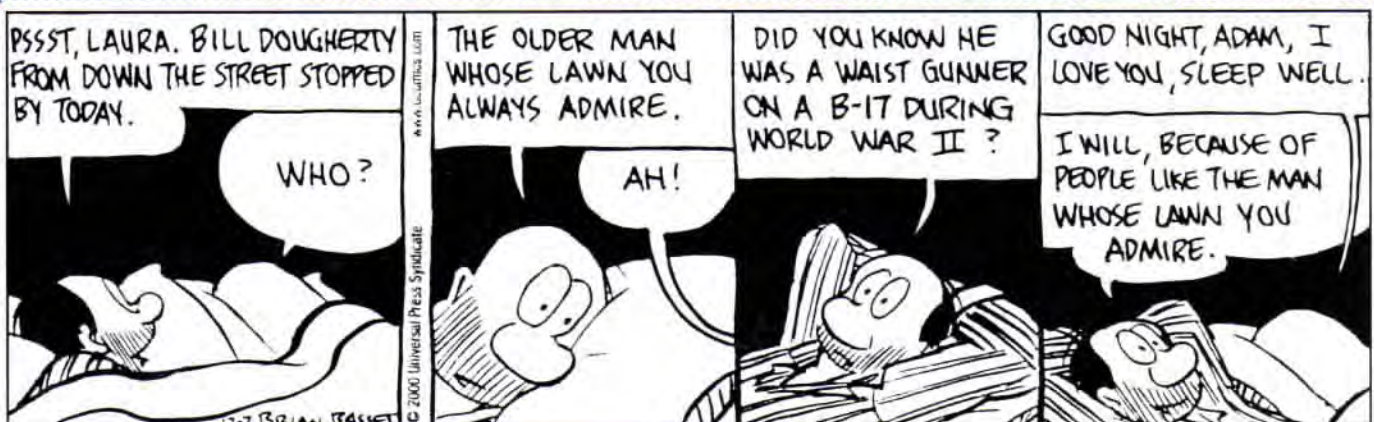
Walt, Great Magazine!

Cheers,

Harry Holmes

Middleton Manchester
England

*Society member, historian and author
Harry Holmes continues his life-long
interest in The Mighty Eighth - Editor*



MAIL CALL

SICK AND TIRED

Dear Editor Brown,
For the past "X" number of years in the periodicals, newspapers, magazines, TV, etc, practically every time they show a photo of a WWII bomber, it's a B-17 Flying Fortress. I'm sick and tired of it.

As an airman in WWII, I flew in both bombers, the B-17 and B-24. As a radio operator instructor I flew in both in the states. In combat I flew in a B-24, 34 missions. They both are good aircraft. I, will admit that the radio operators' position in the B-17 was much more comfortable.

In the Dec. issue of 8th AF News, 90% of the photos of aircraft, are the B-17's. By the way there were more than 2 Air Divisions in the 8th AF, namely the B-17's. There was the 2nd Air Division, comprised of B-24's.

Sincerely,
Francis J Peck

44th BG Spokane, WA

P.S. Your Dec. issue is one of the best. Brought back many memories, especially at Christmas time.

The feature article in Dec 00 was about the Hell's Angels' ground and air crews. Their plane was a B-17, therefore the photos were, of necessity, Flying Fortress pictures! - Ed

LACK OF NEWS

Dear Mr. Brown:

I received my copy of the 8th AF News a couple of days ago. The lack of news on any Fighter Group, as usual, was quite apparent. Is this a "what came first the chicken or the egg" deal? By that I mean, do the total number of bomber group members dictate that the very huge majority of stories are about bomber groups, or have the fighter group people just lost interest because of this and no longer belong?

I have unbounded admiration for the bomber

people. I was stationed at Honington as a CNS man. Our primary duty was to give steers to our 364th Fighter Group pilots if they needed them to get back to the base. On many occasions we were called upon to help bombers land at our base.

Sometimes this was because their base was fogged in. More often however, their plane was shot up and needed to get down as soon as possible. Some carried dead crewmen, or severely wounded. A small hospital on base was able to give medical aid to the injured until they could be transferred to one of the larger hospitals. Whenever bombers asked for help, or other fighter groups did, the Control Net System men had to hastily change the crystals in their standby radios and tune the units to a new frequency. I should explain that there were three CNS stations on our base, one receiver station, one transmitter station and one D/F station. Each station had to make the changes. All the stations were operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week. I remember one bomber came in where a large hole in front of the tail section made it look like only a thread was holding the tail on. I believe the tail gunner and others were killed, some injured.

So you see I really respect the bomber people. However, when I receive my 8th A.F. News I would like to see some stories about the fighter pilots. Sometimes it seems like a token statement, when bomber people hurriedly state that they appreciated their "Little Friends". Do they recognize that this was only one of the duties - one they took very seriously - that the fighter pilots did? Do they realize that these pilots strafed German air bases destroying German planes that might have been shooting at the bombers the next day? Do they recognize the other targets the fighter pilots damaged or destroyed? For example on one mission the 364th targets consisted of locomotives (29), steamboats, trucks, factories, switch houses, goods cars, barges, German soldiers, roundhouses, electrical plants, and a RR junction. Do they realize how many of these pilots paid with their lives on missions such as this one? So, please, can't we have a few stories in the "News"?

Sincerely,
"Ollie"

**O.W. "Ollie" Joiner, 364th FG
Monroe, IA**

By all means Ollie. Check out this issue you hold in your hands! - Ed



Frank McKinley's timely cartoon has it all - B-24's, B-17's, fighters, ground crews, and aircrews

INTELLIGENCE WINGS REALIGN UNDER 8TH AIR FORCE

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

BARKSDALE AIR FORCE BASE, LA - The Eighth Air Force became "Mightier" recently when the Air Force announced plans to realign Headquarters Air Intelligence Agency under Air Command.

Under the new proposal, the agency's two Wings, the 67th Information Operations Wing, Kelly AFB, Texas, and the 70th Intelligence Wing, Fort Meade, Md., will realign under the "Mighty Eighth" located here as the Air Force takes aim at the growing threat of high-tech warfare.

Effective Feb. 1, 2001, AIA will change from an Air Force field-operating agency to an ACC primary subordinate unit. This realignment, recognizing the growing role of information operations as a warfighting weapon, has a primary objective of enhancing information in direct support of the Joint Force commander.

"Eighth Air Force sees exciting opportunities for better integration of Information Operations into the Combat Air Forces," said Lt. Gen. Tom Keck, Eighth Air Force commander. "We've had a proud history as a 'bomber command' and expect even greater things when we integrate Information Operations into a Numbered Air Force."

Senior Air Force officials identified Eighth Air Force, through Joint Forces Command, as the single force presenter for 10 products and services worldwide. In addition, Eighth Air Force will also become the single Combat Air Force provider to U.S. Strategic Command. This move brings information capabilities of AIA into a structure similar to those of other Air Force weapon systems provided to commanders.

The AIA is the single source for Air Force intelligence and information gathering operations and shares information obtained from computers, satellites, airborne platforms, and various other methods. It also provides security for the Air Force's host of computer networks, intelligence expertise in foreign weapons systems and technology, treaty monitoring, and is actively involved in cyberwarfare.

Keck explained that the rapidly evolving nature of computer technology and growing cyberwarfare threats to the United States make the integration of information operations capabilities even more vital to other war-fighting

capabilities in the Air Force.

"The Mighty Eighth" has always had a historical role for innovation, integration and employment of new forces and doctrine," he said. "Once the integration is complete, we will have all the resources, including not only our bomber force, but also air-breathing intelligence platforms such as the U-2, AWACS, UAVs and JSTARS, to allow us to conduct the full spectrum of operations from our Air Operations Center. This gives us the opportunity to create a unique global NAF."

According to Keck, Eighth Air Force and Barksdale were the logical choice to integrate Information Operations, because of the newest "official" weapons system back in September by Air Force Chief of Staff, Gen. Michael Ryan. The AOC is essentially a "War room" that plans and directs joint air operations using the Combat Air Forces as well as intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance systems, and capabilities for agile combat support and time-critical targeting.

"Barksdale is home to one of the largest AOC facilities in the Air Force today," he explained. "Our center is a theater response package facility capable of supporting 3,000 sorties, 1,200 personnel, 24 hours-a-day, seven days-a-week. It is essentially the hub for all the planning and execution of the aerospace operations that support a joint campaign. So, with the operation that we already had in place, we were a natural to integrate the Information Operations capabilities and what they bring to the flight.

"We are clearly on the verge of something great here at Eighth Air Force," said Keck. We're excited about the future configuration and how the 'Mighty Eighth' will build an Integrated Information Operations concept of operations to include command and control, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance air-breather platforms; and a bomber force unique to the history of combat air forces. Bottomline, we have not lost our roots but spread our branches. The 'Mighty Eighth' will continue its story and proud heritage, as it becomes the global NAF of first and last resort."



THE FIX

~ Regarding Jack Russell's article in the December 00 issue "The Last Bombing Mission of the 8th Air Force" Jack submits further information on the mission from researcher and publisher Ken Decker of Chenango Forks NY. The regular crew navigator was Lester Schiitz, co-pilot Russell Graehl, top turret Charles Vickers, and the observer was Marion Nelson. Of the three Combat Wing Bomb Groups which flew this mission, the 303rd, 379th, and 384th, the 384th BG was the last group to bomb the target before returning to their airbase.

~ This editor has had a bit of trouble with his A's and E's of late. In recent issues "Hangar" was misspelled in a title, as was the proper name of distinguished 8th Air Force veteran and acquaintance Ramsay Potts in the December Debriefing section. My apologies - Spell-Check and Brain-Check will be continue to be scrutinized. - Editor

REUNIONS

BAD 2 ASSOCIATION

Blackpool, England Reunion

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

385TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

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

351st BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

June 13 - 17, 2001
Quality Resort Mission Valley CA
Contact: Clint Hammond, POB 281,
Mechanicsburg PA 17055
tel. (717) 766-1489

379TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

October 3 - 6, 2001
Harrisburg PA
contact: Armed Forces Reunions
1-800-562-7226

303rd BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

September 5 - 9, 2001
BWI Marriott Baltimore MD
contact: Walter Ferrari, 207 Lake
Circle, Hampstead NC 28443-2519
or: Dick Johnson, 5901 Joe Road
Deale MD 20757-9739

34TH BOMB GROUP(H) ASSOCIATION

September 5 - 9, 2001, Hilton De Soto
Hotel, Savannah, GA. Contact:
Harold C. Rutka, 11 East Artavia St.
Duluth, MN 55811-2330. Tel: (218)
724-1667.

487TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

487th Bomb Group (H) Eighth Air
Force AF Station 137, Lavenham,
England (WWII) October 3 - 7, 2001
Sheraton West Port Lakeside Chalet,
St. Louis, MO. Contact: Howard C.
Todt 13502 Featherstone Drive, Town
& Country, MO. 63131. 314-821-
5449, Hctodt@aol.com

7TH PHOTO RECON GROUP

The 7th PRG will hold their 2001
annual reunion with the 8AFHS,
Harvey Hotel, Irving, TX Oct. 24-29,
2001.
Contact: George Lawson 4390 14th
St. NE, St Petersburg, FL. 33783
Tel: 727-526-8480

457TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

457th Bomb Group Association
September 23 - 26, 2001 Colorado
Springs, CO, Sheraton Hotel on
Circle Drive. Contact: Joe Toth 449
Sunset Lane Pueblo, CO 81005
(719)566-1714 or Nancy Henrich
FAX: (719)564-6458
email: mylittledarlings@yahoo.com

398TH BOMB GROUP

18th Annual Reunion
October 3 - 6, 2001
Radisson Inn
St. Paul, Minnesota
Contact wally398th@worldnet.att.net
or Phone 301-762-2213 Wally
Blackwell or George R. Hilliard
grhilliard@usa.net

356TH FTR GP. (WWII) ASSN.

359th, 360th, 361st, Hqtrs. & Support
Sqdns.
October 8 - 11, 2001 Drawbridge Inn,
Cincinnati, OH. Contact: Kenneth J.
Male 8282 NW 47th Street, Ocala,
FL 34482. Tel: 352-622-9976

446TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

May 10 to 13, 2001 - New Orleans, LA
Contact: Bill Davenport
13382 Wheeler Place Santa Ana, CA
92705 1-714-832-2829

364TH FIGHTER GROUP ASSOCIATION

364th FTR GP (WWII, Honington,
Eng, 8th AF) & Support units reunion,
15 - 25 Sept 2001. Peoria, IL, Holiday
Inn City Center. Contact: Dan
Leftwich, 6630 Caldero Ct., Dayton,
Ohio 45415. Ph: 937-890-3641

100TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

100th Bomb Group, Supporting Units,
and Friends of the "Bloody Hundreth".
Oct 2001, Omaha, Nebraska. Contact
Don Bradley, 1310 Hansen Ave.,
Bellevue, NE 68005-3016. or email
duckbl@msn.com

1ST STRATEGIC AIR DEPOT ASSOCIATION

1st Strategic Air Depot Association
(Honington-Troston, England)
Branson, Missouri. October 27 thru
October 30, 2001. Contact: Warren
L. Stanley, Secretary
390 N. Winchester 5-1-G
Santa Clara, California 95050

466th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

April 18 - 21, 2001
San Remo Hotel Las Vegas NV
Contact: Lou and Molly Loevsky
16 Hamilton Dr. East
N. Caldwell NJ 07006

447th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

Return to Rattlesden
29 May - 7 June 2001
Contact: Cruise Associates Int.
5731 North University Drive
Tamarac FL 33321
1-800-228-9690
email tamtra@bellsouth.net
Also add-on tours to France/Rhine
River

AIR FORCES ESCAPE AND EVASION SOCIETY

May 2 - 6, 2001
West Coast Ridpath Hotel
Spokane WA 99201
tel (509) 838-2711

NATIONAL EIGHTH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REUNION

OCTOBER 24 - 29, 2001
HARVEY HOTEL IRVING, TEXAS
Complete details coming in the
June 01 8th AF NEWS

2nd AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

November 1 - 9, 2001
Norwich, England

VIRGINIA CHAPTER FLAG PRESENTATION

Presentation of the Eighth Air Force Flag to the Virginia War Memorial, Richmond, VA, by the Virginia Chapter 8th Air Force Historical Society was made Tuesday, January 9, 2001, with ten members of the Chapter present. The presentation was made at a regular meeting of the War Memorial Board of Trustees by Chapter President Edward C. Ewen. Receiving the flag in behalf of the War Memorial Board of Trustees was Chairman Frank D. Hargrove, Sr. and Jon C. Hatfield, Executive Director.

In making the presentation, Chapter President Ewen noted that the flag honors those who served or are currently serving in the 8th Air Force. Noted particularly were the 28,000 persons who lost their lives flying missions in the European Theater and the 30,000 crewmen taken as Prisoners of War during World War II.

The Virginia War Memorial honors those persons from Virginia who served in the armed services during World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf conflicts. The Memorial has inscribed on its walls the names of those who lost their lives while serving their country during these conflicts. The 8th Air Force flag will be displayed with other military unit flags. The War Memorial is located in Richmond, VA, the state capital.

Contributions to help support the Virginia War Memorial may be sent to

Virginia War Memorial Foundation
621 Belvidere St., Richmond, VA 23220-6504



Virginia War Memorial Presentation

from left: S. Stanley, First Vice President, VA War Memorial Board of Trustees, VA War Memorial

8th AFHS members: James A. Kelley, Jr., David Wallace, Kirby Smith; Cmndr, VA Peninsula Wing, Edward C. Ewen; Pres., VA Chapter 8th AFHS, Paul Adams; Ordway Gates, Edward M. Smith, Jr., Richard E. McClune, not in picture: Robert E. Noziglia

A VERY SHORT TRUE STORY

It was late afternoon one day last winter, and I was on my way to the wake of a former coworker who was a WWII veteran, wounded while serving under General Patton in the Battle of the Bulge.

It was frigid and dark and I was in rush-hour traffic, in the village of Willowbrook, Illinois. I was waiting for a traffic light when suddenly there was a loud rapping on my driver's side-window. Turning to see who wanted my attention, I quickly recognized the person to be a uniformed police officer. My first thought was that my license plate sticker had expired, or my tail lights had broken from backing into a snow bank. I opened the door to find out what the problem was, and the officer said, "Hi. Got a minute?" "Sure. What's wrong?," I inquired. "Nothing," he said. "I just noticed your license plate (GUNR B-17), and I was wondering if you were a gunner on a B-17?"

"I sure was," I told him, with a certain degree of pride. With that, he extended his open hand toward me and said, "I just wanted to say 'Thanks'."

"Oh." I replied in astonishment, shaking his hand while a lump formed in my throat. "Well, thank YOU!" I said. "Thank you, very much."

Then the cop added, "I saw the license plate, and I didn't want to scare you by pulling you over, but I did want to say 'thanks' for

what you did in the service".

A bit bewildered by this totally unexpected event, I thanked him again for his recognition. By now the traffic light had turned green, so I closed the door, and continued the drive to my buddy's wake, thinking how nice that policeman was to do that, and wondering how often he does that sort of thing.

I couldn't help but think that all those GIs who didn't make it back home would be pleased to know someone really cared *that much*.

The lump in my throat lasted quite a while.

Donald Shee

34th Bomb Group
Downers Grove, IL



BOMBARDIERS



The Bombardier Tavern
center of Paris, France



Memorial Gardens
Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum

G.I. BILL

Two old 8th Air Force buddies met for lunch years after the war. One remarked, "It's really great to see you again. What did you do after you came home from the war?"

His buddy said, "I took advantage of the GI Bill and got my Master's Degree from college."

His friend asked, "What college did you attend?"

The buddy replied, "Yale."

His friend shouted back, "WHAT COLLEGE DID YOU ATTEND?!"

- Ben Love, 351st BG



LUCK OF THE DRAW Reflections on the Air War in Europe

by **Frank D. Murphy**
Formerly Captain and Navigator
418th Bomb Squadron
100th Bomb Group

Luck of the Draw is more than a war story. You stroll with Frank Murphy through the sights and sounds of inter-war Atlanta and mingle with *Emory University* students on December 7, 1941, when the world changed for so many Americans. After training in the U.S., you join Frank at his home away from home — England, a land most Americans then only knew from reading antiquated textbooks and Charles Dickens. You fly with Frank on combat missions, cheating death more than once and witnessing death far too often. You travel with him to *Stalag Luft III*, witness the *Great Escape*, and share the joy of liberation at the sight of a white star on a battle weary *Sherman* tank.

Frank has made it easier for us, who were not there, to appreciate the sacrifice and unflinching sense of duty shared by these boys of yesterday. We have a wonderful, lasting gift — to read and reread the power and honesty of Frank's prose and absorb the thoughtfulness of his insights. After finishing *Luck of the Draw*, you will join us in being thankful that Frank elected to fly one more mission for *The Mighty Eighth*.

Price: \$35.00 - 2001 - 430 Pages - ISBN 0-917678-51-6 - Hard Cover - Illustrated

Order from: FNP Military Division, 6527 Main Street, POB 374, Trumbull, CT 06611. Tel. 203-261-8587; Fax 203-261-9724; E-mail: fnpmildiv@att.net

Visa, Master Card, American Express are accepted.
Please send Name on Card, Card Number, and Expiration Date
Connecticut residents please add 6% sales tax.

INTERCEPT

Between two points my bomber must survey
The shortest distance that its bombs may fall
On those coordinates of earth this day
Prescribed to me. Not difficult at all,

Except that gunners far below may tell
Which mathematic functions satisfy
Their giant arcs of fire, and solve as well
The linear equation that I fly.

Forsworn me is that eager-muscled fate
Of sword, or ordeal touched with human grace;
I live or intercept by time and rate
Disinterested parabolas in space.

This poem, written in pencil, was discovered upon the floor of an English dance hall in London, which was frequented by flyers of the United States Army's Eighth Air Force, during World War II

Submitted by Carl Runge, 486th BG
Winter Haven, FL

FLAK & FRIENDLY

Ken Deacon Jones
389th BG, Janesville, WI

A year of hard luck began 1 January 1945 at the home of the Green Dragons and the Fighting 389th Bombardment Group. Fly and sleep. We logged more flight time than any other month of our short army career. "Achtung, Achtung" meant bombers were swarming over the Fatherland in max efforts with the addition of a fourth serial squadron called the High-High Right.

Our anxiety level was set in concrete in December by naked fear. We were shot out of formation on the bomb run to Karlsruhe. Trying to avoid a mid-air collision, I made a spit "S" out of formation, causing us to go into a steep spin, could not pull out until we reached the gates of hell on instruments, came home on instruments because the entire continent was socked-in. Under scud clouds at 500 feet, we fired red flares on a straight-in approach, we were cut off by a throttle jockey who had to go potty and we were forced to circle for a second try. We scared the hell out of some farmer's chickens and made a power landing. This is the kind of excitement that brings out the crowds.

Matthew 6:27: *Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to your life?* We understood the meaning of Matthew but it was hard to comprehend when someone is shooting you. The German Flak Gunner's Society punched holes in our airplane every time we visited the Fatherland. The one or two airplanes in each squadron equipped with radar counter measures (RCM) did not help much. The Headmaster of the flak training school on the four gun battery at the Zuider Zee frequently showed-off to the assembled class. He would down one B-24 with one four-burst salvo whenever some lead navigator got careless about staying on course. We soon "volunteered" for Lead Crew training in lieu of unlimited sack time. There were several

weeks of a mix of flying and ground school, advanced C1-autopilot instruction, being certified on the over-rated Formation stick and checked-out on the unreliable SCS-51 Instrument Landing System, slow timing engines, and so forth. In practice, we made shallow turns so the outside planes would not scatter like playing "crack the whip" on ice skates and become fighter bait. And, the planes on the inside of the turn would not have to throttle back so far



A 389th Bomb Group B-24 H landing at Hethel.

as to stall out. Life expectancy in practice formation flying was the same as actual combat. Green replacement pilots either lagged behind or overcontrolled, narrowly missing chewing off our tail or shoving a wing through the waist window long enough for the waist gunner to replace a burned-out bulb in the wing light of No. 3. Individual bombing practice was at Brest Sands range for both visual and radar runs with GEE and H2X with undercast. Strict orders were to not

deviate from the filed flight plan to go cross country or sightseeing. Crossing over water and pointing your nose to landfall would result in getting shot down.

We were rapidly becoming both proficient and bored. With radio clearance, we completed several bomb runs at Brest Sands. On still another run, we were flying above the undercast. Some guys were wondering what tender morsels the chef was marinating for our candle-lit supper at the messhall and one guy wanted to know the name of the cute, new Red Cross girl.

Without warning, we were bracketed by four bursts of white flak. It looked like 105 mm. We were toast at 10,000 feet. Having prior experience with explosive devices at altitude, I instinctively performed the popular maneuver "Let's get the hell out of here." I slapped off the autopilot, banked sharply left and dived. Anyone standing was knocked off his feet. We twisted and turned with flak snapping at our tail.

Finally out of it, I radioed Brest Sands and yelled about some eager beaver using us for target practice. They calmly said we were mistaken. In a pig's eye! I replied the nervous Nellies in the Brit flak battery had gun barrels to clean and empty shell cases to pick up. Further, we had enough of this B.S. and were going home.

Unfortunately, we didn't get mission credit at Hethel Air Base but they graciously offered to punch our T.S. card. I doubt they investigated to see who was taking shots at us. It was only friendly fire and they missed. On our return to combat we flew squadron deputy lead on two missions to Magdeburg. Flak was again banging on our fuselage.



10 Downing Street
Whitehall

Today, when after three years of publication the Stars and Stripes issues its last British edition, I am glad to have an opportunity of saying to its readers how much we in Britain have enjoyed the contacts made with them while they have been here.

They came to us from every part of the United States before moving on in large and ever rising numbers to take part with British, Dominion and Allied comrades in great and victorious battles. Now, when the immense tasks of war have been brought to a glorious conclusion, we look forward to continuing an ever-growing friendship with the United States in the achievements of peace. We believe that the friendships made between so many British and American men and women during the war will provide one of the durable strands in that companionship.

Through you I wish our wartime guests from America god-speed and happiness in the manifold activities of peace as they return home. We hope we shall have the pleasure of welcoming many of them back as peacetime visitors and renew in happier times the individual friendships made in war.

Clement R. Attlee
Prime Minister
October 1945

Richard Baynes
President
8th Air Force Historical Society



November 11, 2000

Dear Dick,
I am honored that you asked me to represent the Historical Society at the ground - breaking ceremony of the National World War II Memorial on Veterans Day, November 11, 2000, in Washington D.C. When Senator Dole asked all World War II veterans to stand up and be recognized by the tremendous crowd in attendance, I was proud to stand as your representative and to have the Mighty Eighth answer the roll call. The ceremony was very well done, and the recognition for the veterans was very well received. The veterans did not need to be reminded of their accomplishments nor of the comrades from all services that paid the supreme sacrifice in defense of our great country, but the public did have to be told again of our effort. This Memorial, when completed, will be a reminder to all Americans that we were ready to defend our way to life so many years ago. They now enjoy the wonderful American life style that our citizens often take for granted.

Sincerely,
Larry Goldstein
Member, Board of Directors
8th AF Historical Society

Eighth Air Force

it is the dead of night
it is the dark of the moon

forget siblings
forget mom and dad

the earth drops over
the edge below

Germany slides in
shadows

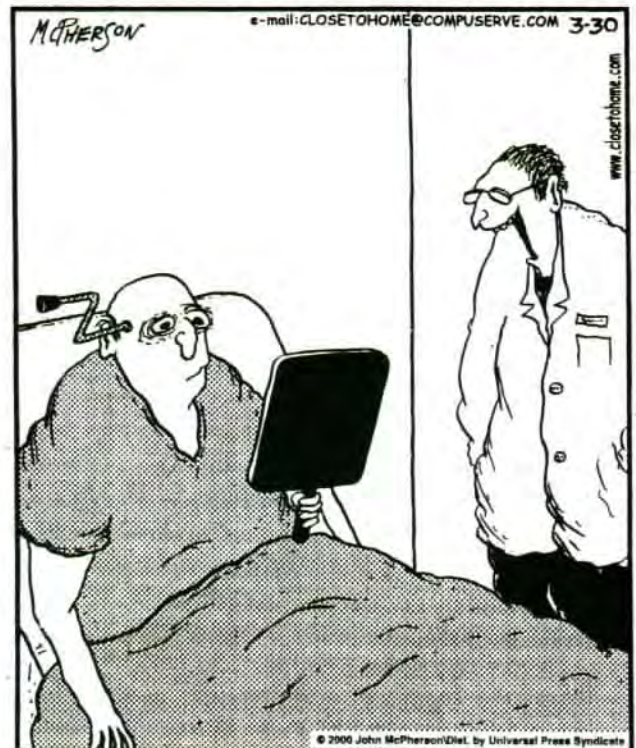
now it is time to crawl
to the guns

wandering without sleep
or food

wandering in clouds
and smoke

the whole of space
occupied by fire

Marvin Silbersher, 447th Bomb Group
Rattlesden, Suffolk, England



**"When you notice yourself becoming forgetful,
just give it 20 hard cranks and your memory
should be sharp for a good two or three days."**

ARIZONA CHAPTER

The Arizona Chapter of the 8th AFHS met at Luke AFB, AZ January 9, 2001. The 56th Fighter Wing is currently commanded by Col Steve Sergeant and is responsible for the Barry Goldwater Gunnery Range as well as Luke AFB. The 56th Fighter Wing was known as Zempke's Wolf Pack during WWII flying the red nosed P-47s and commanded by Col Hubert Zemke, ran up the leading score in the 8th AF.

The AZ Chapter members met at the Public Affairs Office and were briefed by Mary Jo May and Lt Col Dave Orr. Dave's flying call sign just had to be "Iron" as in iron ore. Mary Jo and Dave gave us a complete run down on the Luke mission which is the training of F-16 pilots and ground crew personnel and includes foreign students as well. The mission also includes the supervision of the Barry Goldwater Gunnery Range which services A-10 pilots from Davis Monthan AFB, Tucson and Marine pilots from Yuma, AZ.

Luke is home to 212 F-16s making it one of the largest air operations in the world. We were treated to videos showing the Luke mission, as well as the over 7000 acre Barry Gunnery Range, and Air Force Recruiting. The Gunnery Range size permits air to air tactics as well as live firing and live bombing. As Dave said "Our pilots' first live firing or bomb drop should not be in combat". The Range is a national treasure and must be maintained.

Following the briefing, the bus tour took us through the base housing area and on to the base proper. The old original Church still stands and has a waiting list for wedding ceremonies. It is one of the last WWII buildings still standing on the base. The Air Park has a display of most of the types of aircraft used at Luke starting with the North American T-6 through the F-16. I noticed the P-38 and the P-51 were both missing.

After lunch, Dave Orr gave a short run down on his career. Raised as a military "brat" his career includes SAC fighters as well as the F-16 and he is a patriotic career flyer.

The meeting was topped off with the presentation of the Distinguished Flying Cross to Chester J. Manteja who flew 35 missions as a navigator with the 305th Bomb Group, 422nd Bomb Squadron in WWII.

Our next meeting will be our annual reunion at Laughlin, Nevada on May 2-3, 2001.

Frank Birtciel Scottsdale, AZ

MISSOURI CHAPTER

The Missouri Chapter (Kansas City) met December 5th, 2000 at the DAV Club in southeast Kansas City. President Frank Siler called the meeting to order. After pledge to the flag, a business meeting followed, Mr. Robert Anderson, our speaker for today was present giving a very interesting talk. Mr. Anderson is a Military Historian. The membership had a time of fellowship with coffee and donuts being served. Mr. Carl Wheeler presented a plan for the group to go to a dinner theatre. Twenty-nine members and guests have signed to go to the New Theatre Restaurant to see

the dinner show featuring the The Sanders Family, the date being January 28, 2001.

-Joe Jameson, Membership Chairman

KENTUCKY CHAPTER

The Kentucky Chapter held their February business meeting at the University Of Louisville Alumni Club to discuss upcoming Chapter events. Two of these projects are the 8th AFHS booth at the February Kentucky State Fair and Exposition, and the development of a permanent 8th Air Force Exhibit to be installed in the Kentucky Air Museum in Lexington. Members will man the booth each day to distribute 8th AF information, sell 8th caps, books authored by 8th veterans, and recruit new members for membership into the Historical Society.

The Kentucky "Flying Colonels" HS Chapter stands among the top Chapters in activities and events participation. Bob Weixler as editor, is increasing the Chapter newsletter publication from quarterly to bi-monthly. Chapter leadership with Wayne Tabor at the controls, continues to do an excellent job in promoting and preserving the history of the Mighty Eighth year after year.

ALABAMA CHAPTER

Chapter members are proud of their participation in the Alabama Veterans Into Schools program across the state. This well-received program is growing in popularity with state educators and officials. Schoolchildren get a "straight from the horse's mouth" experience with 8th members who meet with the kids in classroom and auditorium settings. Most give presentations on the values they learned from their experiences during the war and answer questions proposed by the schoolchildren. Many 8th vets take personal artifacts and memorabilia along with them. One participant, George Grau, 457th BG, sent 30 copies an article he wrote, "30th Mission" to the classroom a week before he appeared, giving the class time to read ahead about the experiences of an 8th Air Force combat crewman. The troops invariably receive letters of appreciation from the children and their teachers. A bonus to Chapter participants is that they get to observe outstanding school teachers in action.

Chapter members also attended the dedication of a beautiful six-foot monument in memory of Medal of Honor awardee Col. William R. Lawley, pilot 305th BG, at Maxwell AFB, Alabama. Col. Lawley's monument, funded by friends of Bill Lawley and the Retired Officers Association, is the first in the Air Force to be dedicated to a Medal of Honor recipient. Bill's widow, Amy, and family attended the November dedication. The featured speaker was Raymond Davis.

The South Alabama Wing's George Grau is doing yeoman's duty recently. He has organized the Alabama Chapter's famous annual reunion BBQ and Spring Fling Luau at Gulf Shores, to be held April 6-7, 2001. Lt. Gen. Buck Shuler will be the guest dinner speaker. Many friends from surrounding states look forward to this event each

year and will be in attendance. For info contact George at POB 1473, Gulf Shores AL 36547-1473.

ILLINOIS CHAPTER

The Illinois Chapter continues its long tradition of having interesting and outstanding speakers at its monthly meetings. John Gustainis was a pilot in the Strategic Air Command under General Curtis LeMay. He presented some unusual aspects of the Cold War Air Force to the well-attended dinner at the Maine Township Hall. The dinner was preceded by the customary happy-hour gathering at the Old Country Buffet in Dempster Plaza.

GENERAL JAMES H. DOOLITTLE CHAPTER

Dan Raymond's Chapter newsletter fills its sixteen pages with lots of stories and information with each issue. One of the March issue's highlights is a full printing of the Chapter By-laws for all the members to read - an appropriate touch to inform and generate member interest. A good example for all newsletter editors to consider from time to time. Another highlight is the plans for the annual Chapter meeting to be held April 28th at Los Robles Lodge in Santa Rosa CA (tel 707-545-6330) - write to Janet Raymond at 1841 Stewart Ave, Arcata, CA 95521-5022. The special guest speaker will be Lawrence "Larry" Rodriggs, author of the only book exclusively about the civilian story, We Remember Pearl Harbor. Larry was nine years old when Japanese airplanes attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7th, 1941. He has received much national publicity since his book has been released and has been the keynote speaker at the Arizona Memorial ceremonies which are held each December 7th. Deadline for registration is rapidly drawing near so members and friends are encouraged to "get on the ball!" - don't miss this one.

PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER

The Western Wing of the Pennsylvania Chapter held its Fall meeting in Monroeville with 72 wing members attending. "Hap" Nicholas presented the program which spoke to the subject of how little the younger generations of Americans really know about the events of World War II and the part veterans played in the freedom we all enjoy in America today. The William P. Booth Squadron held a luncheon meeting remembering and honoring prisoners of war. Several guests were members of the Liberty Bell POW organization.

The Bill Booth Squadron is named after well-known and beloved Chapter member William Booth who passed away in September, 2000. A Radio Operator/gunner with the 446th Bomb Group and active in the 446th BGA and several POW organizations, Bill Booth was a generous patriot who was always actively involved with every project undertaken by the Pennsylvania Chapter. Ted Tate in his tribute to Bill Booth wrote: Love of God and Country - Love of Family and Comrades - this is the Legacy of Bill Booth. A fine example of a patriotic, loyal and thoughtful member of the Mighty Eighth.

SAVANNAH WING - GEORGIA CHAPTER

Down south, they are still talking about the Wing Christmas Party. The Art Howes and their guests put on a musical skit that brought the house down! Marge (Dolly Parton) Langston and the Extremes comprised a vocal group, talented members and their families who dressed up and sang and danced with exuberant Christmas spirit. Cloggers accompanied them in the show. Wes Thibodaux told a cajun Christmas story in true coonass fashion. The Marine Toys For Tots box for underprivileged children overflowed with contributions. Wing members were part of the annual State H.S. meeting held in Savannah on January 19 - 21, 2001 attending the BBQ and the Saturday night banquet and dance. Volunteers have also been active in several recent Heritage Museum events and aviation seminars.

CENTRAL NEW YORK CHAPTER

The Chapter newsletter Chit Chaff has published an interesting list of contacts for those who are, or have grandkids who are, on the internet.

The National 8th Air Force Society

<http://members.theglobe.com/straycat10.8thaf.html>

8th Air Force in World War II

<http://collectorsnet.com/milhist/>

World Wide U.S. Air Force Sites

<http://www.af.mil/sites/acc.html>

Air Combat Command

<http://www.af.mil/sites/acc.html>

The Luftwaffe Homepage

<http://home4.inet.tele.dk/mholm/index.htm>

8th Air Force Museum

<http://www.imall.com/stores/mighty8thmuseum>

Aviation Web Page

www.landings.com

MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER

About twenty Chapter members recently went to the town of Athol to take part in a dedication ceremony of the



Massachusetts Chapter members



Bill Purple, left with Bill Campbell, Chapter President.

newly finished Athol Veterans Park. Bill Purple, 379th BG, originated the plan for development of the memorial. Steep hills along the parade route precluded a lot of marching by the veterans. They rode instead on an appropriately decorated flatbed with martial music presented by loudspeakers for all to enjoy. The center of attention as they rode along the parade route was Chapter member Chester Bemis, tail

gunner in the 305th BG, who had spent many years as the town's ice cream vendor. Chester got more attention and applause than any of the local dignitaries.

The patriotic ceremony was opened with words of welcome by Bill Purple and the American Legion presented the colors. A number of guest speakers included four pastors who read a remembrance of the four chaplains aboard the troop ship 'USAT Dorchester' who gave up their life vests to save the lives of servicemen after the ship was hit by enemy torpedoes. The four chaplains were last seen on the deck of the sinking ship embracing each other and praying.

NEW JERSEY CHAPTER

The New Jersey Chapter held the final meeting of 2000 on Saturday afternoon, November 4 at Doolan's in Spring Lake, N.J.

Almost 120 members and guests attended the meeting, one of the largest groups to come to a meeting in some time. The program was conducted by members of the Society, several of them recounting their personal wartime experience.

Noteworthy speaker of the afternoon was General Michael Jackson--a fighter ace of the ETO--who was a recipient of the Silver Star, DFC and Air Medals. General Jackson spoke about his famous colleague, "Hub" Zemke and his quest to have Colonel Zemke - who had been an ace and subsequently the POW commander of Stalag Luft 1, in Barth Germany, receive the recognition he has been denied. General Jackson also discussed his fellow airman "Gabby" Gabreski and his heroic efforts during World War 2, before he, too, became a POW at Stalag Luft 1.

The first meeting of 2001 for the New Jersey Chapter will be on Saturday, April 28. In a landmark experiment, the mid-summer meeting will be held on a weekday, rather than a Saturday. The afternoon meeting will be held on July 25 at Doolans. The Chapter will make this a BRING YOUR OWN GRAND KIDS TO THE MEETING MEETING,

in the hope of giving them some view of the experience of their grandparents and their role in the 8th. Irv Pliskin was reelected President for the 2000-2001 term. -Irv Pliskin, Pres.

WESTERN NEW YORK CHAPTER

The December 7th meeting of the Western New York Chapter saw the acclamation of Richard Waring, Lt. Col. Ret., as our new Chapter President. The meeting was rapidly gaveled closed and the Christmas Party began. It started with a recounting of what individual members were doing on December 7th 1941, and closed with a spirited rendition of "God Bless America." In attendance was our newly elected Board Member, Earl T. Robinson. At age 87, perhaps he is one of the oldest directors currently serving. Congratulations to Earl, and to all the Mighty Eighth octogenarians.

Gerry Scoones, Editor "Chapter Chatter"

MISSISSIPPI CHAPTER

The Mississippi Chapter continues to work hard on selling and distribution of the book published by the Chapter, *Mississippians in the Mighty Eighth*. Book signings have been staged in stores across the state and book reviews have been given at libraries, schools, DAR meetings, civic clubs and historical museums in towns of all sizes. The Chapter has been receiving much acclaim on the work and sales have continued, not only in Mississippi, but all over the country and some overseas.

The members of the Chapter have voted that all proceeds, above the actual cost of printing, go to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum. Costs have now been paid in full, and members are paying their own expenses attending functions to sell and sign the books. The bank balance is steadily growing, proving there will be a goodly sum to transfer to the Museum. (Incidentally, if you want a copy of this much talked about volume, see the PX pages herein or write to the Mississippi Chapter).

The Chapter is now looking forward to a weekend of rest and relaxation at its usual reunion site, Lake Tiak O'Khata, smack-dab in the center of the State. Good fun, good cheer, good food, good music and good entertainment have become a way of life for all the Mighty Eighth Mississippians and their lovely ladies. This event will take place April 27-29; the doors are open to all of you non-Mississippians, as well, if you would like to participate in one of the best Reunions ever!

OREGON CHAPTER

The regular quarterly meeting of the Oregon Chapter, 8thAFHS, was held on November 9 at the Beaverton Elks Lodge. More than 70 regular and associate members were in attendance.

After the opening prayer and flag salute, Chaplain Roland Stewart read the names and obituaries of those members who had passed on in the preceding year. They were: Bennie Koon, 303rd BG

Frederick DeNeffe, 96th BG
 Maurice A. Wolfram, 487th BG
 Fred G. Boyle, 305th BG
 Edward C. Butchino, 100th BG
 James H. Downs, 91st BG

A moment of silence was observed in memory of these valiant men who served their country so honorably and well, and who were faithful members of our Chapter. President Joe Conroy reported on the National Convention of the 8th AFHS, and complimented the Society organizers and the hosts in Salt Lake City for a job well done. The speaker for the day was Tom Philo, a long-time 8th AF history buff and a researcher who has made many trips to the UK and to the Continent over the past 20 years. His program consisted of photos of many old 8AAF bases in England...in most cases sad remnants of the facilities we all remember...many bomber and fighter Group memorials as they have been erected on the base sites, and photos of pubs and other landmarks which brought smiles of recognition to many members.

The current officers of the Oregon Chapter have been reelected to serve next year. They are: President Joe Conroy, Vice-President, Clint Gruber, Secretary, Don Keller, Treasurer, Frank Bueneman, Chaplain, Roland Stewart, and Historian, Joe Conroy. The quarterly meetings for year 2001 are Feb. 8, May 10, Aug. 9, and Nov. 8 at the Beaverton Elks Lodge. For information, call Joe Conroy at (503)246-2912, or e-mail ajconroy@aol.com
 -Joe Conroy, Pres.

MICHIGAN CHAPTER - WESTERN MICHIGAN WING

A joint meeting of the Michigan Chapter and Western Michigan Wing was held on November 11, 2000 at the Comstock VFW Post 6252, Kalamazoo. We joined those from the Post in their ceremonies honoring veterans, past and present, in an 11:00 am service. Following the service we then began our meeting by honoring three of our members who have passed on with a minute of silence.

They are:

- Joseph Giordano - 398th
- Russell Haas - 452nd
- Earl Rupp - OBD2V

Discussion was held on joining the VFW and the Michigan National Guard in sponsoring a high school student in the Michigan Freedom Academy. This academy is a leadership training program for high school students in their junior or senior year. The objective of the academy is to expose these students to a variety of issues in education,

business, government and basic perspectives on freedom as outlined in the Bill of Rights. A motion was passed to sponsor one student.

Jim Erskine, Chapter Development Chairman of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society and his wife, Joe Ann were our guests. Jim suggested we try to get more involved in promoting the 8th AFHS, possibly setting up a PX to sell 8th AFHS items at air shows and other similar events.

The 2001 slate of officers and directors are as follows:

- President- Suds Sumney, Kalamazoo
- Vice-President- Jim Nycum, Kalamazoo
- Secretary-Treasurer- Dick Giesing, Kalamazoo
- Dick Giesing

NEW MEXICO CHAPTER



The New Mexico Chapter of the 8th AFHS held its annual Winter General Membership Meeting and Luncheon on Saturday, 10 Feb 01. The members and guests in attendance totaled 156 setting another new record. Current Chapter membership stands at 208 with 19 new members having joined since our Fall meeting. This also represents another significant increase.

Featured speaker was Chaplain, Major General Donald J. Harlin (Ret.), former Chief of Chaplains, USAF. Chaplain Harlin spoke of his experiences while attending the 50th Anniversary ceremonies at Normandy in June, 1944. He entitled his address to the assembled members and guests: "A Hunger for Heroes", and presented a commentary about the character values that make up the "everyday hero". General Harlin was given a standing ovation.

General Harlin holds membership in the Reserve Officers Association, the Military Chaplains Association and is a Life member of New Mexico's Chapter, 8th AFHS. He is also National Chaplain for the Air Force Officers Association.

General Harlin and his wife, Carol, are residents of Albuquerque. They have two sons, Matthew and Timothy.



Major General Donald J. Harlin, USAF (Ret.) Chaplain

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

READER GUEST EDITORIAL...
8TH AIR FORCE IN VIETNAM

Dear Sir,
I truly enjoy the Eighth Air Force News. I would like to make some comments regarding the article "Vietnam Memorial Established at Heritage Museum" in the June 2000 issue. At the ceremony, recognition was given to the role the Eighth Air Force played in bringing the Vietnam War to a conclusion. It was during Operation Linebacker II that the Eighth Air Force performed this significant accomplishment. This significant accomplishment has been greatly maligned by the media for decades.
On December 18, 1972, after a breakdown in negotiations with the North Vietnamese, the United States resumed the bombing of North Vietnam that had been partially halted in October when, supposedly, peace was at hand. Spearheading this renewed bombing effort was the B-52, with targets being located in the Hanoi-Haiphong region, North Vietnam's capital and major port, respectively. The B-52's attacking this region faced some of the heaviest anti-aircraft defenses in the history of aerial warfare. These defenses shot down twenty-six US aircraft, including fifteen B-52s. Nevertheless, after eleven days of bombing, the North Vietnamese decided to return to the negotiating table. Soon after, the US withdrew from the war. Finally, a long and divisive war that had cost America over 50,000 lives, was ending.
One would think that Linebacker II would be hailed as a tremendous success. Unfortunately, it was not. Reports of huge civilian casualties were given prominence and the bombing received worldwide condemnation. Newsweek, for example, called it "Diplomacy by Terror" and that "the relentless raids seemed to amount to a campaign of terror against North Vietnam." Time magazine called the use of the B-52 a "cruel weapon." Historian and World War II veteran Howard Zinn states that waves of B-52s "destroyed

homes and hospitals" and killed an "unknown number of civilians."

According to "Linebacker: The Untold Story of the Air Raids over North Vietnam" by Karl Eschmann, the total casualties the total civilian casualties in Hanoi over the eleven day period, according to the North Vietnamese were 1,318. The North Vietnamese and American Anti-War movement cited the damage of the Bach Mai Hospital as proof that civilian areas were being targeted. Omitted is the fact that the hospital was located near Bach Mai airfield and, according to Eschmann the B-52 responsible for the damage was itself struck by a surface-to-air missile, making it difficult to control. Eschmann states, "the fairly low number of civilian casualties reported provide evidence that the raids were certainly not the 'terror attacks' against civilians as reported by some members of the media".

According to Stanley Karnow, author of "Vietnam: A History" the B-52s were programmed "to spare civilians, and they pinpointed their targets with extraordinary precision". The books by Eschmann and Karnow were published in 1989 and 1984, respectively. If the casualty figures of Linebacker II were known in 1984 and 1989, Howard Zinn should have known them in 1999.

Civilian casualties in war are always a tragedy, but considering that 20,000 tons of bombs were dropped during Linebacker II, the number of civilian casualties were small. Accusations of B-52s deliberately targeting civilian areas were exaggerated.

The history of the Eighth Air Force is a proud one, from World War II to the present day. It is one of men accomplishing great achievements in the face of tremendous adversity. Misinformation on the part of journalists or historians should not be allowed to tarnish this history.

Thank you,
Joseph Domhan 8th AFHS
Lindenhurst, NY



JOIN THE 8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Name _____

FIRST	MIDDLE INITIAL	LAST
--------------	-----------------------	-------------

Address _____

CITY	STATE	ZIP
-------------	--------------	------------

Telephone _____ **Email** _____

8th AF Unit _____ **Not in 8th** _____ **Include me as a full Associate Member** _____

In service _____ **Branch** _____ **Dates** _____ **to** _____

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

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY: **LIFE MEMBER** **ANNUAL DUES \$20**

PAYMENT: **CHECK** **MASTERCARD** **VISA** **CARD #** _____

SIGNATURE: _____

SEND APPLICATION AND PAYMENT TO 8TH AFHS P.O. BOX 1787, SAVANNAH, GA 31402
\$20 MEMBERS DUES NOTICES ARE MAILED ANNUALLY
Life members dues schedule is found on page 27



Leister, Leo, Lower Paxton Twp; 33rd SG, 56th FG; inventor; founding father 56th FG Association. Leo once fashioned a custom part to repair Roger Freeman's family tractor which was used in grass-cutting operations at Boxted.

Weibel, Carl, Savannah GA; 457th BG - from Craig Harris

Moore, Charles, Ottawa KS; pilot 388th BG; 32-year distinguished career in the Air Force - from Bob Honeycutt

Comstock, John, 447th BG; Missouri Chapter - from Joe Jameson

Hope, John, Raytown MO; B-17 bombardier

Crane, Frederick, Kansas City KS; B-24 pilot, 2nd Air Division - from Ken Wilson

Mpelkas, Christos, Mansfield MA; developer of hydroponic methods of raising vegetables high in nutrition during WW II, which were used in speeding recovery of wounded aviators

Breast, John, Nashville TN; AF 1951-53; honorary member of Middle Tennessee Fighter Pilots Association and instrumental in publishing their historical recollections "Missions Remembered"

Leibowitz, Irving, Monroe LA; navigation instructor Selman Field LA 1943-45

Seabourn, Ed, El Paso TX; tail gunner 305th BG; POW Stalag 17B; story-teller of his adventures and of his Cherokee Indian heritage

Donahue, Charles; Towson; pilot 91st BG; nationally known ballistics expert who established the theory that President Kennedy had been accidentally hit by a shot fired by a following Secret Service agent's weapon during his assassination

Kouni, Michael, Ketchikan, WA

Shaughnessy, Charles "Chuck"; navigator 95th BG; POW Barth - from Hank Korol

Phillips, Jewel, Houston TX; 305th BG; POW; career in the U.S. Postal Service

Guzman, Abel "Birdie", Houston TX; 303rd BG - from Alfred Lea

Matrician, Michael, Houston TX; B-17 pilot

Quinlan, John, Stephentown NY; 91st BG tailgunner *Memphis Belle*; credited with two Luftwaffe fighter kills and three Japanese fighters after transfer to the Pacific Theater; career as an engineer

Fallick, Jerome "Jerry", Queens NY; bombardier 493rd BG - from Bob Miller

Glankler, Francis; pilot 361st FG

Flint, Ralph, Greenwood IN; 361st FG

Odom, Reuther, Columbia SC; 361st FG

Robichaud, Louis, Monson MA; 361st FG

Tinkham, Edwin, Winter Park FL; 361st FG

Edwards, Allen, Indianola MS; bombardier 452nd BG; farmer and avid collector of Mississippi car tags; his final request was that an American flag drape his coffin and that his son play "My Tribute," both of which were done

Bittenbring, Albert, Slidell LA; Staff 96th BG - from his son Terry

Averett, Jack, Logansport LA; waist gunner 401st BG; Kenneth Speer crew; Justice of Peace - from Robert Simon, crew navigator

Walter, Edwin, Troy AL; Central Wing Alabama Chapter - from daughter Linda Walter

Kupferman, Saul, Atlanta GA; 306th BG; Georgia Chapter officer and editor of Georgia Chapter *Tall Tales* for two decades

Johnson, J. J.; composer, arranger; known as the best of Jazz trombonists; reinvented the BeBop trombone; one notable post-war hit recording was titled "Mad BeBop;" passed away the same week as RAF fighter Ace Johnnie Johnson.

Les Brown, big-band leader, made "Sentimental Journey" a #1 hit during the war. His band toured with Bob Hope's USO troupe. Hope noted, "The world has lost a great musician. I have lost my music man, my sideman, my straight man, my special friend."

FRANK P. HOPKINS

Frank Hopkins died at his home in Wallagrass, Maine on 30 January, 2001. During his later years, Frank frequently wrote short and pithy letters to the editor of his hometown newspaper, the Bangor Daily News, often concerning the newspaper's reporting of obituaries. "If only the newspaper could spend a little time personalizing their obits, give them the human touch," he once said. One obituary example which he termed "a proper epitaph, at last, and in only seven words," was one he ran across which said that the newly deceased had enjoyed "riding up one road and down another."

Frank Hopkins thus composed and submitted his own obituary as follows.

"He was afraid that no other writer than himself could do justice to his powerful intellect, extraordinary heroism and penchant for hard work. He was a navigator by trade. He leaves behind his treasured wife, Dorothy, seven children and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Disinclined to work for a living, he joined the US Army Air Corps and flew 51 combat missions as a navigator with a B-17 Group that was engaged in that grandly called "Air Offensive, Europe." He was rewarded for his terror and bad marksmanship by receiving numerous combat medals. This hapless warrior was no hero, only lucky.

"After a four year- teaching stint convinced him that the scholar's lot was hard work and somewhat boring, he used the Korean War to return to flying and later became a Master Navigator, flying to such garden spots of the Cold War as Thule, Greenland, the Old Belgian Congo, Cuba, and Viet Nam. He retired from service in 1968 and eventually settled in with the gentle people of the St. John Valley in Maine. His hobbies were patting dogs, looking at clouds, and doing powerful thinking while watching candles burn. He also liked to write cranky letters to newspapers telling them what they were doing wrong. An avid avoider of parades and ceremonies, he wishes no final services."

Bangor Daily News editor Kent Ward, the recipient of many of the Frank Hopkins' missives, visited with him shortly before his death. He was not disappointed. They talked of many things and in his words, "The hours zipped by too quickly." They talked of the country, politics, the news media, and Hopkins' Law: "There is nothing so small that it can't be blown out of proportion."

Frank's last letter was received just three days before his death. It had enclosed Frank's parting shot. "I just had another joy ride by ambulance to the hospital. Now what I want to know is why the vehicle which transports the sick and wounded must be so damn uncomfortable, while the hearse that carries the dead rides like any presidential limo."

- from a column by Kent Ward of the Bangor Daily News, submitted by Historical Society member, 8th AF veteran and old friend, Bob Umberger, West Rockport ME

JOHNNIE JOHNSON

Air Vice Marshall James Edgar "Johnnie" Johnson, the British fighter pilot who was the leading World War II air Ace in the European Theater, recently died of cancer at his home in Derbyshire at the age of 85. He shot down 38 German aircraft, 37 of which were fighters, during air combat battles. Johnson flew over 1000 missions in Royal Air Force Spitfire fighters, many early on as wingman for the legendary Douglas Bader, the British Ace who had lost both legs in a 1931 air crash. He flew support in the 1942 British evacuation from the port of Dieppe, France and flew four missions over the beaches of Normandy on D-Day in 1944. Two days after those missions, flight commander Johnson's Wing landed the first Allied fighters in France since the German occupation in 1940.

Johnnie Johnson recently recalled his early years. "I had always wanted to fly, but I had a lot of trouble. My old man wouldn't let me sign the papers to join up. He thought the air force was a young and frivolous service." He also was initially rejected by the local RAF enlistment officer.

Johnson's 38th and final kill came on September 27th, 1944 in a dogfight with nine Messerschmitts in the Netherlands. In this battle his Spitfire was hit for the first and only time during the war - by a single German cannon shell. In his five years of combat, Johnson never lost an airplane to enemy fire.

submitted by Joan Peterson and by Leonard Alsford



Johnnie Johnson towards the end of the war - His certificate and some of his awards



THUNDERBIRDS 2001 SCHEDULE

The U.S. Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron, "Thunderbirds," has announced its 2001 air show schedule. The team is scheduled to perform more than 60 shows in 29 states and will visit the Pacific for the first time since 1994. The 2001 schedule is:

March

- 24 Patrick Air Force Base, Fla.
- 25 Tyndall AFB, Fla.
- 31 Glendale, Ariz

April

- 1 Glendale, Ariz
- 7 Naval Air Station Point Mugu, Calif.
- 8 Beale AFB, Calif.
- 21 Barksdale AFB, La.
- 22 Maxwell AFB, Ala.
- 28-29 Lincoln Air National Guard Base, Neb

May

- 5-6 Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.
- 12 Millington, Tenn.
- 13 Ft. Smith, Ark.
- 19-20 Andrews AFB, Md.
- 26-27 Columbia, Mo.
- 30 U.S. Air Force Academy, Colo.

June

- 2-3 NAS Fallon, Nev.
- 9 Hill AFB, Utah
- 10 Cannon AFB, N.M.

- 16-17 McChord AFB, Wash.
- 23-24 Tullahoma, Tenn.
- 30 Scott AFB, Ill.

July

- 1 Niagara Falls, N.Y.
- 4 Battle Creek, Mich.
- 7-8 Pope AFB, N.C.
- 14 Columbus AFB, Miss.
- 15 San Angelo, Texas
- 21-22 Dayton, Ohio
- 25 Cheyenne, Wy.
- 28-29 Latrobe, Pa.

August

- 4-5 Otis ANG Base, Mass.
- 11 Minot AFB, N.D.
- 12 Ellsworth AFB, S.D.
- 18-19 Chicago, Ill.
- 25-26 Mid-season break

September

- 1-3 Bay St. Louis, Miss.
- 8 Muskogee, Okla.
- 9 Sioux City, Iowa
- 15-16 Salinas, Calif.

Pacific Tour

- 20 Sept. through 28 Oct. (Specific locations to be announced)

November

- 3 Seymour-Johnson AFB, N.C.
- 4 Moody AFB, Ga.
- 10-11 Daytona Beach, Fla.



FRONT



BACK

MILITARY OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER MEDAL

A Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal has been authorized to those members of the Armed Forces who, subsequent to 1992, have performed outstanding volunteer community service of a sustained and consequential nature. The service must be to the civilian community to include the military family community; be direct and significant in nature and produce tangible results; and reflect favorably on the Military Service.

The medal is inscribed "Outstanding Volunteer Service" and "United States Armed Forces." This special award recognizes exceptional community support over time, but does not include attendance at community service meetings. Details may be obtained from website <http://www.usarotc.com/medals/ovsm.htm>

RICHARD SUMMERS

The five remaining crew mates of S/Sgt. Richard L. Summers would like to contact him, or at least know what happened to him. His home address in 1945 was in Miami, FL. He was the toggler on our B-17 of the 401st Bomb Gp, 613th Sq. The aircraft was damaged over Gelsenkichen on February 16, 1945 and eventually had to ditch in the North Sea off the coast of Holland. All crew members survived the ditching and exposure, but were captured as POWs. We were liberated from Stalag VII-A on April 29, 1945. Anyone having any post-war knowledge of Summers is asked to contact fellow crew member Bill Jeffers, 3522 Millbrook Way Cir., Greenacres, FL 33463; PH (561) 969-6036; e-mail: robill@aol.com.

REMEMBRANCE SERVICE HELD IN CORN EXCHANGE

Gordon and Connie Richards, the UK contacts for the Historical Society recently participated in a Remembrance Service held in the Corn Exchange in Bedford, England. The memorial service honored those who served during the war. This hall was the location of Glenn Miller's last public concert, on August 11th, 1944. Connie states that she still has her original ticket for that concert, which cost just three shillings to attend.

This wedding photo of an 8th AF serviceman and his bride was found in a loft recently, and is submitted by Connie Richards to see if anyone recognizes those depicted. If the faces look familiar please write her or forward your note to the Editor. Both addresses are inside the front cover of this issue.



BOARD

MEDALS

From James McMahon, 93rd BG, Santa Rosa, CA comes the following pertinent notice.

If you want your records or recognition under the General Orders awarding you your medals, or for the medals themselves, (medals you did not receive)...Contact the following:
U.S. ARMY COMMAND

Ms. Virginia A. Barrett
Chief, Army Reference branch

NATIONAL PERSONNEL RECORDS CENTER
Military Records Branch
9700 Page Avenue
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100

Make your requests under (NRPM ARMY)
"AUTHORIZATION FOR ISSUANCE OF AWARDS"
AR672-5-1; THE PROPONENT AGENCY IS (CDCSPER)
If you do not receive the medals after you have been notified of their issuance you should send a copy of the award letter (DA FORM 1577, AUG 90)

TO:
U.S. Army Soldier and Biological Chemical Command, IMMC
Soldier Systems Directorate
700 Robbins Avenue, PO Box 57997
Philadelphia, PA 19111-7997

Remember! You were a member of the "UNITED STATES ARMY AIR FORCE!" Not a member of the UNITED STATES AIR FORCE--DURING WWII.

ISLE OF MAN

If you knew a member of the crew of "Combined Operations" out of Thurlleigh, England, 306th Bomber Group, please contact me. The B-17 crashed on the Isle of Man on 14 April 1945 killing all on board. I would especially love to find anyone who knew my grandfather, Howard E. Le Compte ("Frenchy"). It would be great if a fitting memorial could be placed at the crash site.

Robert A. VIEELLE, P

Collins E. LIERSCH, CP
Howard E. LeCOMPTE, N
Chester F. SMALCZEWSKI, R/O

Ernest E. GALLION, FE
Austin J. PARRISH
George E. CUBBERLY
Wilbur B. BUTTERFIELD
Derrell S. JONES
William C. STARBUCK
Red Cross Emily H. RHEA

Kim Sumek
LENCO1KS@aol.com
12080-146 Calle de Medio
El Cajon CA 92019

UNIFORM OF THE DAY

John Legg, Wayne, PA, submits the following from the June 1944 edition of The Yarn Carrier, a publication of Wyomissing Industries, a textile company.

Male pilots at an English base smiled in expectancy recently when the following official order was posted in the Air Ferry Command station:

ALL WOMEN PILOTS WILL WEAR DARK BLUE OR BLACK STOCKINGS ONLY. ANYONE FOUND WEARING ANYTHING ELSE WILL BE SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

SEEKING UNUSUAL & INTERESTING 8TH AF STORIES

I am looking for any interesting 8thAF stories plus I would like to include love letters from both the airmen of the 8th and their wives/girlfriends back home. So, if you, or a relative have any 8th AF experiences that are touching, heroic, romantic or just plain incredible, please send them in. Please enclose name, dates in the 8th, unit(s), plane name, base, photo(s) if any, & phone number for any follow-up questions. This collaboration is tentatively entitled: Luck & Love - Amazing stories and loving letters of the 8th Air Force. Send stories/letters to:

Rusty Briarton 5776 Dynasty Ridge Ct. Colorado Springs, CO 80918 e-mail: Briarton@aol.com

COMBINED REUNION

A combined reunion of the 20th Fighter Group and Support Units stationed at King's Cliffe during WWII, and their successor, the 20th Fighter Wing from Shaw Field through various stations in the US, RAF Wethersfield, Upper Heyford, UK and various detachments, on through Libya, Desert Shield, Desert Storm, Bosnia and back to Shaw AFB will be held at the Sheraton Hotel, Colorado Springs, September 26 through September 29, 2001.

Contact person: George Grill, P.O. Box 5260, Breckenridge, CO 80424-5260. Phone (970-453-7462) e-mail: thegrils@juno.com.

VETERANS BENEFITS BOOKLET

A comprehensive volume laying out benefits for veterans is on sale for a cheap \$5 fee. Something every 8th vet should have if you don't have one in hand already. Ask for Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents. Send your check to Superintendent of Documents, PO Box 371954, Pittsburgh PA 15211-7954. Credit cards are also accepted.

CONFEDERATE AIR FORCE

The Confederate Air Force will be operating under a different name soon. After five decades of increasing popularity, acceptance and successful growth, the warbird organization has voted to change its name to one which does not contain the word "Confederate." It will temporarily call itself the CAF.

~ Editor's note: The excellent flying Yankee Air Museum at Willow Run has no current plans to change its moniker.

THE QUIET MAN

by Judith Spinnato
Branford CT

The caliber .50 machine gun was supposed to be fired in short round bursts but, in their exuberance, young gunners-in-training, who were stationed in Gulfport, Miss. in 1943, fired them in longer bursts. Consequently the cartridge shells often ruptured within the chamber causing the guns to jam.

When planes returned from training flights with inoperable guns, the young group Armament Officer, Paul Spinnato, inspected them and frequently found ruptured cartridges in the chambers and burned out barrels.

Lt. Spinnato, one of the first members of the 493rd Bomb Group, realized that in actual combat an inoperable gun would leave men and planes vulnerable to the enemy, so he began to think of possible solutions. Quietly he set about making sketches of an insert which he believed would remove the ruptured cartridge from the gun.

Working in the base machine shop Lt. Spinnato developed a model of the insert. By the time his group was sent to Debach, England, he had successfully produced tested fifty of these inserts.

Meanwhile, faced with actual combat in England, the former exuberance of the gunners metamorphosed into anxiety and fear and the guns kept jamming - until the next briefing, when the fifty inserts were pressed into service.

Lt. Spinnato demonstrated them to the gunners and showed them how they were to be used.

Soon another problem surfaced. During saturation bombing some of the bombs that were dropped by the planes were missing their targets. Bombardiers in the three lead planes of a V-formation fed necessary information into the bomb site and then the plane was put on automatic pilot. Based on that information, smoke bombs were automatically released on the target, as a signal to the following planes to drop their bombs.

However, if the toggeliars in those planes could not immediately respond, the bombs would miss the target.

Spinnato made a trip to the radio shop where he looked for and found a seventy-five megacycle transmitter and some radio parts.

The enthusiasm he felt for the new project was shared by his assistant, Lt. Parker, who said, "Paul, I'll do anything to help - I'll even count the nuts and bolts." Since there was

no need for Lt. Parker to "count the nuts and bolts", he used his talent for telling spontaneous, humorous stories which kept things jovial while Capt. Spinnato put together a small receiver from the radio parts.

The next step was to develop a remote control mechanism. Using two jeeps for his experiment, Capt. Spinnato placed the transmitter in the lead jeep and the receiver in the other. When the receiver got the impulse from the transmitter, it toggled the bomb release system. Used in the planes the system released the bombs at the right instant, greatly increasing the efficiency of saturation bombing.

When word of this reached Headquarters in London, Capt. Spinnato was ordered to appear at a meeting before General Jimmy Doolittle and Col. Curtis LeMay. They praised him for a job well done and suggested that he stay in the Air Force to do field research. It was a very proud moment for the young captain!

World War II was won through the efforts of many: the intelligent strategies of the leaders, the heroic bravery of the men and women. Hundreds of thousands of loved ones and those, who in a quiet way, contributed to the saving of many lives.

Paul Spinnato and others like him was one of those quiet men.

Note: Capt. Spinnato left the service as Major Spinnato; he did not stay on to do field research. Instead, he went home and started his own engineering business.

This article was submitted by Judith Spinnato, wife of Paul Spinnato, 493rd BG, as a tribute to the men of the 8th Air Force who worked behind the scenes to ensure the success of the missions.



VETERANS WAR DECORATIONS

Many veterans and their families are interested in obtaining overlooked wartime medals and decorations. Harry Gobrecht, 303rd BG, forwards the following information on how to obtain them. He notes that the responsibility for initiating such a request from the Department of the Air Force rests upon the individual seeking the award, or if he is unable to do this, it must come from a relative or fellow crewman who was a witness to the combat action at the time.

The directive states: Servicemen may now submit for award consideration. A written narrative and proposed citation must be submitted. There are two criteria: 1) the narrative must be made by a person other than the member himself and who has first-hand knowledge or was in the chain of command at the time and: 2) it must be submitted through a congressional representative who can ask the military service to review the proposal based on guidelines in existence at the time of the event.

The congressional representative should forward the recommendation package to: SAF/LLI, 1160 Air Force Pentagon, Washington DC 20330-1160.

All reviews of books in this section are chosen and reviewed by the editor unless otherwise noted.

FIAT ACCOMPLI III The Fireball Outfit

**A Historical Anthology of the 457th Bomb Group (H)
compiled by James Bass; edited by Craig Harris**

This book is the third of a trilogy of volumes depicting the history of the 457th Bomb Group based at Connington village near the English village of Glatton. Ten years in the writing, this final Volume III is an anthology of first person accounts of former members of the 457th as well as remembrances of the English people with whom the 8th AF servicemen came in contact during the war years. Volume I is a 400-page history and factual account of the Group; Volume II, 224 pages, includes more than 350 photographs from the early training days of the 457th.

The story of the airbase and missions flown by the aircrews comes through in this Volume III of *Fait Accompli* in memorable fashion. A historical description of the base and surrounding villages is told, noting that the 457th Bomb Group occupied the only airbase which had the local farm house situated in the triangle between its runways. The Rose Court Farm residence dates back to the early 1800's and the farm is still operated today by the Measures family although the original runways are now agricultural. Each chapter of the book tells a different story, all fascinating in their detail, unique in their content and stirring in the depth of their presentation. Events of missions and their outcome are written as very personal stories. The reader feels as if he gets to know the airmen and are part of what happened to each of them. Combat missions are told in the words of those who flew them, and their words stay with the reader long after the reading is finished. Stories of life and events on the airbase add notes of authenticity to the entire book.

"Frank Taylor and Roy Kerr were friends, hut mates, and both pipe smokers. They had taken their pipes down to a pipe repair shop at Southoe, south of the base. They had planned to bicycle down together that afternoon to pick them up, when Roy called Frank to let him know that he was going to test hop a plane with Bill Doherty. Frank told him, 'You go on. I'll pick up the pipes.' When he returned from the pipe shop and was approaching the base on his bicycle, Frank saw the smoke in the distance. No one had to tell him that it was his friend, Roy Kerr."

In addition to stories of combat, the volume presents a variety of recollections from British villagers and friends. The appendix includes a listing of all those airmen in the

457th Bomb Group who were killed while stationed at Glatton. For those who have Volumes I and II of *Fait Accompli*, this final volume is a necessity. Those who purchase this third volume will, after reading it, certainly want to order the two companions.

Fait Accompli III 286pp hardbound, b&w photos may be ordered from JLB Publications, P.O. Box 500, Carthage TN 37030. \$33. includes shipping. Volumes I and II are in print and may be ordered from the same address.

THE MIGHTY EIGHTH

The Colour Record

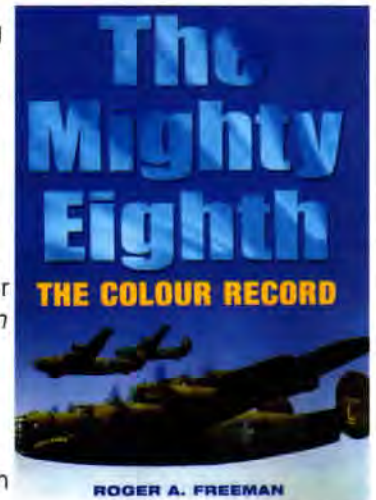
by Roger A. Freeman

This editor has been waiting for some time to get his hands on this volume and it just arrived courtesy of the author and the 8th AFHS PX's Mark Copeland two days before this issue went to press. For several years Roger Freeman's initial color volume *The Mighty Eighth in Color*, published in 1992, served as the prime reference for color photographs for Historical Society members and for the full-color 8th AF NEWS. Whenever I

needed a particular picture for an article I could always depend on the generosity of 8th AF Historian Roger Freeman. I opened the book and found just what was needed to emphasize and embellish articles and text material in the newsmagazine.

This brand new release, *The Mighty Eighth - The Colour Record*, represents years of ongoing work by Roger Freeman, gathering, researching and composing the color history of the Mighty Eighth. This brand new volume has 262 pages of color period photos with their detailed descriptions, arranged in sections representing every combat Group of the Eighth. All of the American air stations are presented in alphabetical order according to the name of the English village which gave its name to the base; e.g. Horham, Horsham St. Faith, Kimbolton, King's Cliffe, and so forth.

There are over 600 photos in all, the majority newly published and captioned. The cover jacket sports the 93rd Bomb Group's B-24 Liberator #124226 *Joisey Bounce*. The book's back cover features the ground crew of the 56th Fighter Group's P-47 Thunderbolt *In the Mood*, a picture similar to the front cover of this edition of the *8th AF NEWS*. Between those cover photos is a wealth of life-like history of airmen and planes and airbases of the Mighty Eighth: ground and air crews, hundreds of aircraft, dozens of mission photos, nose art, crash photos, life on the base, life on the continent, and a section titled "Back to the USA"



depicting the final resting place of thousands of 8th AF bombers and fighters in the Arizona sun. Each photo in the book is researched and explained in detail with typical Roger Freeman thoroughness. Look up the 56th FG's Boxted section for Leo Battista's pictures of a German Heinkel He 111H 'acquired' at the end of the war, now at home in the Battle of Britain display at RAF Hendon. Perhaps the most brightly painted bomb group assembly ship, *Pete the POM Inspector*, entirely covered with large red and yellow circles, may be found on the 467th BG's Rackheath pages. These are just appetizers.

Receiving this beautiful large format, hardback full-color volume is like finding the golden egg at an Easter egg hunt! It will be a valuable resource for me to use in presenting future stories of the Eighth in our quarterly journal. You can find your copy of this unique volume at our Historical Society PX (check the PX insert in this issue) for \$39.95 plus \$4.75 s&h - a total of \$ \$44.70.

MONTY'S FOLLY OPERATION MARKET GARDEN

by Frederick D. "Dusty" Worthen and others
Edited by Carroll A. Berner

Dusty Worthen and Carroll Berner were two of the 8th AF airmen who flew with the B-24s of the Second Air Division on a resupply mission to the troops fighting on the ground in Operation Market Garden, September 18, 1944. While Field Marshal Montgomery (Monty) was not successful in his attempts to defeat the German armies in Holland at Arnhem, the battles reassured the people of Holland that after four years of German occupation, they would soon be free.

Monty's Folly tells the story of the 8th Air Force in this campaign, and especially describes the dangers of B-24 low-level missions - at 50 feet or less - over well-defended enemy territory. Every Group suffered significant casualties on this high-priority mission.

In a briefing by the 93rd Bomb Group Commander before the mission, pilot Theodore Gourley reports his commander's admonition:

"If you guys have never chandelled a B-24 before, you better be prepared to do it today. When you have made your resupply drop, do a climbing 180 degree turn and get out of there because there will be many others right behind you." Sherman Furey, 448th BG, describes the flight into the drop zone: "We went in at tree-top level to drop supplies to airborne troops on the ground. Our flight was through a lot of small arms fire. Both of my wingmen received bad hits. We could see people below shooting from the streets and others waving at us - this was Operation Market Garden."



The 170 pages include personal accounts by 41 individual B-24 crew members, a rare chance to read first-hand the story of one of the most unusual missions among many by the 2nd Air Division Bomb Groups. The book is a tribute to these men and a memorial to editor Carroll Berner who passed away shortly after the completion of this work.

Available softbound with b& w period photos from June Berner, 4806 Whippoorwill Lane, Bonita CA 91902-1724 for \$16.50 which includes postage and shipping.

THE MIGHTY EIGHTH IN WW II A MEMOIR

by Brig. Gen. J. Kemp McLaughlin, USAFR (Ret.)

This book, *The Mighty Eighth in WW II*, seemed at first glance to be just another interesting account of one man's 8th Air Force war, however upon reading it one realizes that this volume is very different. Kemp McLaughlin went over with his 92nd Bomb Group early and returned after the war was over. He served with the Mighty Eighth in England for almost four years. In the meantime he flew the most notable combat missions, including the Stuttgart and Schweinfurt raids. He served in Group Operations as well, and during his years with the 92nd, primarily at Alconbury, he lived the typical life of 8th air force combat officers. But there the similarity in this book ends. As he states in the preface, the author writes from memory, but his memory of events and experiences is extensive. Each page depicts some detail or aspect of the subject which captures and holds the reader's attention.



THE MIGHTY
EIGHTH
IN WWII
A Memoir
Brig. Gen. J. Kemp McLaughlin, USAFR (Ret.)

Dozens of familiar names and places appear throughout the book, but the details are included in a fashion which invariably offers a perceptive look at the subject material. Preparations for missions bring out discussions of aspects not found in other books. Trips to London and for R & R at a rest home are told in a manner which is always fresh and enlightening to the reader. Combat stories are presented in a most personal manner and are told 'like they were.'

A chapter entitled "Aerial Operations" begins, "Many spectacular incidents occurred during combat missions. Some were tragic, a few amusing and all action-packed. Most tragic were those airplanes that took direct hits from flak shells and blew apart in mid-air.

"Bomber crew members did not wear their parachutes during actual combat. Instead they would wear their chute harnesses and stowed the actual parachute bundles nearby. When the airplane would get a direct hit and blow apart in mid-air, the crewman would not have the chance to grab the chute. The concussion would blow the parachute apart and it would flutter through the sky like a leaf in an

BOOK REVIEWS

autumn breeze, while all the bodies, guns, and engines fell like rain earthward."

Twenty-four pages of photographs are presented, each as unusual and interesting as the prose. The volume is in hard-cover and is 216 pages. Order directly from our 8th AFHS PX for \$22 - see the PX insert in the middle of this issue for details and ordering info.

THE SPIRIT OF BODNEY

The Virginia Air National Guard traces its lineage to the 328th Squadron, one of three squadrons assigned to the 352nd Fighter Group. The 352nd fought with distinction in the European Theater during WWII as part of the "Mighty Eighth Air Force. Stationed in Bodney, England, they flew P-47 Thunderbolts and P-51 Mustangs against the German Luftwaffe. They were known as "Bluenosed Bastards of Bodney," a name given to them by the Nazi fighter pilots.

The 328th Fighter Squadron was activated October 1, 1942 and inactivated November 10, 1945. On May 24, 1946, the 328th Fighter Squadron was redesignated the 149th Fighter Squadron, Virginia Air National Guard.

The members of the Virginia Air Guard pay tribute to all 352nd Fighter Group members who served our country with honor and distinction--especially those who made the supreme sacrifice. We are ever grateful. We will never forget your sacrifice and indomitable spirit. Dedicated on September 23, 2000 at the last reunion of the 352nd Fighter Group.

A bronze plaque bearing these words will be displayed at the new Virginia National Air Field, 192nd Fighter Wing, Major George E. Preddy Jr. Base Operations Headquarters. One out of every four pilots who flew with the 352nd FG at Bodney was killed in action or taken as a prisoner of war.

Cyberspace

The long-awaited interactive high tech computer game, *B-17 Bombers - The Mighty Eighth!* has been released. This realistic state-of-the-art simulation allows you to fly missions over Germany from any position on a B-17 Flying Fortress. Available at computer stores. The game is from Microprose company - one of the top computer gaming resources around. Lots of action - ask your grandkids!

Shortly after returning from the war, Kemp McLaughlin was appointed to the position of Commander of the first West Virginia Air National Guard squadron, which he led into combat during the Korean War. He was promoted to Brigadier General and remained with the Air National Guard for thirty years.

SUCCESS

At 4, success is not peeing in your pants
At 12, success is having friends
At 15, success is having a driver's license
At 20, success is having sex
At 35, success is having money

At 50, success is having money
At 60, success is having sex
At 70, success is having a driver's license
At 75, success is having friends
At 80, success is not peeing in your pants



The license plate of this beautiful Jeep restoration in England sums up the feelings of hundreds of 8th veterans and echoes thousands of words of appropriate language from the same group of Yanks at almost any airbase during the war. In addition to flying Allied colors, notice the smaller license plate below the Jeep's spare gas tank at lower left!

THE LAST REUNION OF HEROES

352nd Fighter Group Association Holds Its Final Annual Reunion

It was billed as "The Last Reunion of Heroes," and it was the biggest and best gathering of the 352nd Fighter Group in all of the fifteen years they have been meeting across the country. Almost 400 veterans, their families and friends, gathered in Richmond, Virginia, saddened by the fact that they might be saying final "goodbyes" to many of these friends with whom they had formed strong friendships over the years, but happy to know that their Association would be continuing its mission to perpetuate their history and that of the Mighty Eighth Air Force as well.

Hosted by the Virginia Air National Guard under the leadership of Col. Stephen Hicks, C.O. and BG Robert Seifert, this outstanding fighter group had its most colorful and fulfilling rendezvous, one that literally provided them "red carpet" treatment at the Guard's air base. When the group unloaded their buses on the airfield, 352nd FGA members stepped onto a 161-foot red carpet lined on one side by the Williamsburg Fife and Drum Corps and Virginia Air Guard troops on the other, accepting a salute of music, smiles and continuous applause as they walked into a large hangar. There they were served an elegant luncheon, entertained by a local choral group, were provided special static exhibits, and honored with special tributes.

Outside, parked next to one of the 352nd's P-51 Mustangs, was an ANG F-16 carrying the wartime markings of the Group's top Ace, Major George E. Preddy's "Cripes A' Mighty, bluenose and all. A large color print of a painting depicting the F-16 and Preddy's P-51 in flight together was presented to every veteran along with a large commemorative coin which the Air Guard had specially minted. During the ceremonies, the Guard's new Operations Building was dedicated to Major Preddy.

Betty and Bob Powell, who chaired the reunion committee, had added an extra day to their normal four-day reunion so that the group could be bussed to Washington

D.C. where two of their veterans placed a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknowns followed by a tour of the Capitol city and a visit to the Air & Space Museum.

Although there are no more official reunions scheduled, members of the 352nd FG Association may still gather at the annual 8th Air Force Historical Society reunions, the Heritage Museum



Maj. George E. Preddy Jr., in Cripes A' Mighty 2nd talks with his crew chief Lew Lunn after a mission in April 1944.

events, and in smaller groups. A Caribbean cruise has been scheduled this April for those who wish to participate, thus eliminating the annual reunion chores of arranging for a hotel, meals, transportation, entertainment and programs reunions normally require.

The 352nd will continue to be an active Association working to perpetuate their wartime history. Their highly sought after volume "The Bluenosed Bastards of Bodney," has just been reprinted and another book titled, "Bluenoser Tales," is being prepared for publication later this year.

More P-51 warbirds carry the wartime markings and bluenoses of the 352nd than those of any other U.S. fighter group, and these vintage P-51s honor the Group with the markings of 352nd pilots as their owner-pilots fly them at airshows around the country. Currently, Split/S Productions, a professional film company, is completing a 42-minute documentary on the Group titled, "The Last Reunion of Heroes." This film will be scheduled to appear on one of the TV channels later this year.

The 352nd has also been honored by several well-known aviation artists with paintings of their pilots and aircraft in action. These include paintings of Major



328th FS



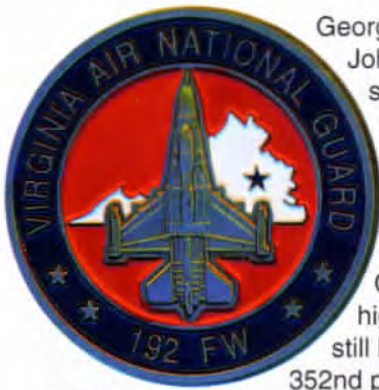
328th FS



487th FS



This is the gun camera series recording Major Preddy's six kills on Aug. 6, 1944.



George Preddy and Colonel John C. Meyer, the sixth- and seventh-ranked Air Force Aces of all U.S. Wars; Colonel William Whisner, one of only three pilots who became aces in both WWII and the Korean War; Colonel Donald Bryan, the highest scoring 352nd ace still living; and several other 352nd pilots. The artists include

Mark Waki, Keith Hill, Troy White, Marc Stewart, Billy Garmon, James Laurier, Darrell Crosby, Peter Wells, and one work being planned by Canadian artist Robert Bailey.

Obviously, the 352nd Association has not folded its tent as it will continue to actively pursue its goal--perpetuating its history of service in the 8th Air Force and to the nation during WWII into the future.

-Bob "Punchy" Powell

Robert Powell has edited the 352nd FGA News magazine "The Bluenoser" for almost two decades. He and his wife, Betty, live in Atlanta, Georgia and frequently visit The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah, where a full-scale P-51 model in 352nd colors hangs in flight in the combat gallery. Bob Powell's email address is: bluenoserbob2@juno.com



Flying high with "Old Glory" over the Virginia ANG base were the Virginia State flag and the flag of the 352nd FG for their day at the base.

Flying together during the reunion is one of the 14 warbirds now carrying the colors of 352nd pilots – "Kentucky Babe" and the only F-16 to carry these colors, "Cripes A' Mighty," a special tribute to the gathering of the 352nd fighter Group in Richmond.



A Real Bluenoser Flies Again



This is what it is all about---old soldiers getting together to reminisce about the days of their youth. Shown here are, l - r, Leroy Hill, Clint Haynes, Mike Sandorse and Al Giesting.



Pilots of the 149th Fighter Squadron, Virginia ANG, pose with Donald Bryan, the only living ace of the 328th Squadron from which the 149th fighter squadron gets its heritage. Bryan scored 13.33 aerial victories including a German jet during WWII. "Moonbeam McSwine" is owned and flown by Vlado Lench of Burr Ridge, Illinois, one of 14 bluenosed warbirds carrying 352nd markings.

Crew chiefs of two eras meet and compare notes. MSG Ray Dawson, who now crews the F-16 in the background carrying the markings of Major George E. Preddy, top Mustang ace, meets Major Preddy's WWII Crew Chief, Art Snyder. Since Snyder was also the squadron barber, his "barber pole," included on the right nose of Preddy's P-51 Mustang during WWII, is reproduced on the F-16.

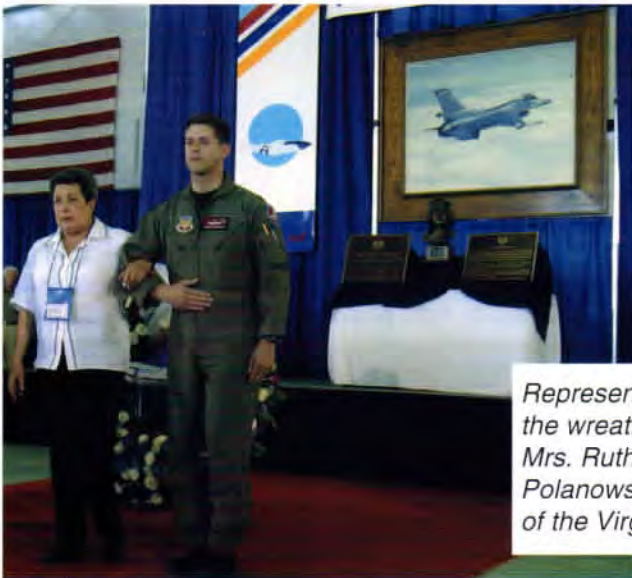




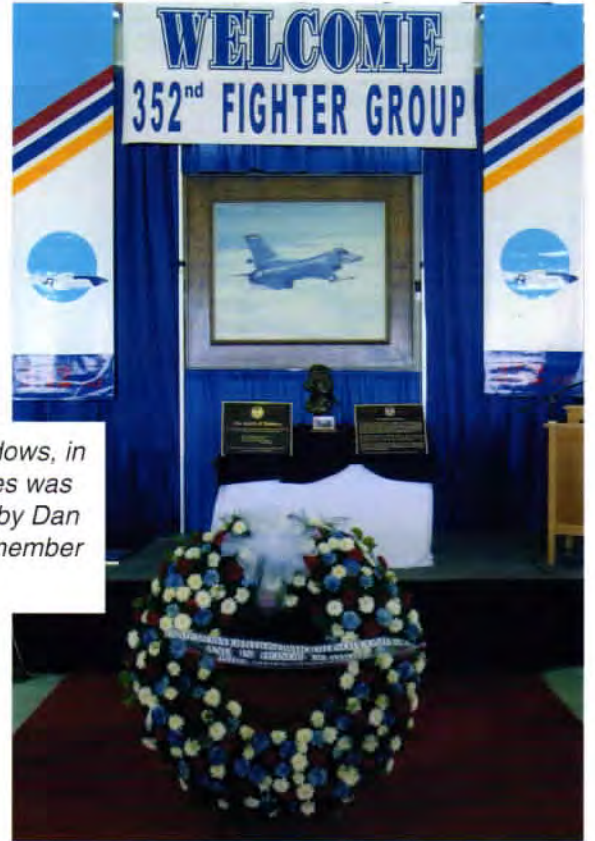
The Honor Guard prepares to "present the colors" to open the official reunion ceremonies.



At the Saturday night banquet, President Dick DeBruin plays host to Mrs. William Whisner, widow of ace Bill Whisner, and Mrs. Robert Seifert, wife of BG Robert Seifert of the Virginia ANG.



Representing the 352nd widows, in the wreath laying ceremonies was Mrs. Ruth Kreloff, escorted by Dan Polanowski, right. He is a member of the Virginia ANG.



A group of "Virtual Pilots," who simulate WWII air battles on their computers, came to the reunion to demonstrate today's techniques for the 352nd members. These men from all over the U.S., adopted the 352nd FG for their computer battles.

Ace Don Bryan checking the details of a new metal model of his P-51 Mustang named "Little One" after his petite wife, Frances.





Veterans of the 486th Squadron pose together 55 years later. They are (l - r) Bill Harris, George Nunemacher, Ralph McLain, Wayne Stock and Mike Sandorse.



The Williamsburg Fife and Drum Corp on the march



Betty and Bob Powell lead their 352nd veterans on their walk down the "red carpet" provided for the final gathering of these WWII veterans



The Virginia ANG prepared these static exhibits and photographs of the 352nd for display in their hangar for the reunion. They presented more than 100 wartime photos on a large screen.



Members of the Virginia ANG team who were responsible for decorating this F-16 Falcon with the WWII markings of Major George Preddy's Mustang, "Cripes A' Mighty". Major Preddy scored 27.83 aerial victories before he was shot down by friendly fire while chasing an enemy aircraft at treetop level on Christmas Day, 1944.

Ray Mitchell (328th) is busy telling stories about some of his fellow pilots he finds pictured in the Group's history to Dan Jones.



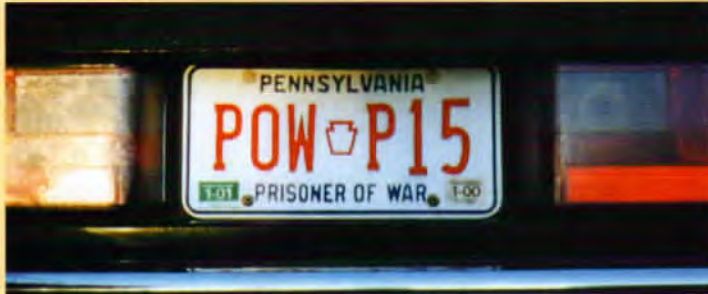
CAR LICENSE PLATES - EIGHTH AIR FORCE STYLE



James Conley's tag. James lives in Merrimack NH, and served in the 392nd Bomb Group.



Gale Moore, 493rd BG, Cloverdale CA, has had his plates for five years. He flew his first mission July 6, 1944 and his 35th and last on Christmas Day, 1944 - a great Christmas gift for his family.



Frank Rabb, 389th BG, Oreland PA, was shot down over Berlin in June 44 and was a Stalag Luft III POW.



This Michigan plate has been recognized by tourists from as far away as Massachusetts. John Ramsey from Sault Ste. Marie MI flew with the 493rd BG.



Utah Chapter's John Moore, Salt Lake City UT, has his WW II vintage 1944 street legal Jeep properly identified to cover the last fifty-seven years



The 385th Bomb Group's Robert Wilson, Van Wert OH, says that his license plates add a touch of class to his vehicle. Robert notes that they create a good bit of horn honking and waving from passing motorists who recognize the display.



This license was a Christmas present for Gary Moncur of West Valley City UT, whose father flew in the *Thunderbird*, the 303rd BG B-17 immortalized in the Keith Ferris wall mural at the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum in Washington. Gary is an Associate member of the Historical Society and is webmaster for the extensive 303rd BG website.



Our UK members show their 8th AFHS colors. This is the rear view of Gordon Brooks' Volvo in Royal Leamington Spa, Warwickshire England.

Hangar Dance 2001

All 8AF veterans and families are invited to attend the annual Hangar Dance at RAF Molesworth, wartime home of the 303rd Bomb Group, as the guests of the men and women of Molesworth. The dance will be held in a T-2 hangar, one of only three buildings (all hangars) left on Molesworth from WWII.

Date: Saturday 2 June Time: 6pm
There will be a professional band playing 1940s music, lots of WWII vehicles inside and outside of hangar to add to the ambience, many displays from 8AF - associated groups, and 1,500 people dressed up in 1940s garb. 8AF veterans will be recognized during the evening. If you ask any of the many who have attended these hangar dances the last four years they will tell you that they will never forget it. Some groups will be in England and

plan to attend. If any 8AF veterans will be in England on their own we hope they will be able to attend as well. To obtain complimentary tickets, contact the following:

**Brian McGuire PSC 46 Box 404
APO AE 09469**

PHONE: (44) 1480-896266
FAX: (44) 1480-842174
e-mail: bmcguire@acsdefense.com

In England, call the following numbers:

Day: 01480-842626
Evening: 01480-896266



Mark and Monica Copeland's PX is the place to order this excellent 8th AF flag for Chapter events and for personal use.

ENDOWMENT

By
Frank Stebbing, Stalag Luft III POW

Shall I be lame, because I am imprisoned?
Shall I be blind, for bars that split the sun?
Shall I be deaf, because my ear is pinioned?
Shall I be mute, for musics that are done?

My eyes are fuller, if feet are captive.
My ear is richer in the silent hour.
And strange new senses rise above my shackles.
And suffering bestows a monstrous power.

When I was in the world, I saw no people.
When I was in the garden, smelled no rose.
I listened to the strings and heard no music.
I kissed warm lips---and yet my own were froze.

I saw the sky but saw not the Eternal.
I sniffed the bloom but did not smell the seed.
I harked to music, hearing no Jehovah.
I felt my wealth, but did not feel my greed.

Now I am banished from the chant of color
And exiled from the scent of laughing rime
But suddenly, I see and hear beyond me.
Life's beauty, rising up for the first time.

XI

London, just before dawn-immense and dark-
Smell of wet earth and growth from the empty
park,
Pall Mall vacant - Whitehall deserted. Johnny and I
Strolling away from some party in silence profound,
Only far off in Mayfair, piercing, the sound
Of a footman's whistle - the rhythm of hoofs on
wood,
Further and further away. . . .

And now we stood
On a bridge, where a poet once came to keep
Vigil while all the city lay asleep -
Westminster Bridge-and soon the sun would rise,
And I should see it with my very eyes!
Yes, now it came-a broad and awful glow
Out of the violet mists of dawn. "Ah, no,"
I said, "earth has not anything to show
More fair - changed though it be - than this."
A curious background surely for a kiss -
Our first - Westminster Bridge at break of day.
Settings by Wordsworth, as John used to say.

-The White Cliffs
by Alice Duer Miller

HOW ABOUT IT?

Margaret had made the long train trip from Tennessee to Oregon to be with her husband. Clyde was a B-17 bombardier...his crew was finishing up their phase training and soon his outfit would be shipping out to an overseas assignment. He and Margaret would be together for a short time before saying their final good-bye prior to his combat assignment. Very early on the morning of August 18, 1943, Margaret was standing on the balcony of the old hotel where she was living when in the distance she heard a rumbling explosion and looking up, she witnessed a mid-air collision of two B-17's. High in the Oregon sky, one aircraft exploded and the second went into a steep dive. In her frightened spirit, she knew Clyde was involved.

That morning, several aircrews were assigned to a training mission. Before takeoff, Clyde had a strong premonition to put on his parachute. He ignored this "small still voice" speaking to him. Again, he was reminded a second time, "Clyde, you did not put on your parachute." This time he listened! Twenty minutes later, the collision happened! The impact threw Clyde from the wreckage. His parachute was badly damaged by fire but he successfully descended, the only survivor of twenty men. Almost immediately, the driver of a jeep picked him up. They drove over the rough terrain and eventually found a telephone. By the time he called the base operations, Margaret had run the entire distance from the hotel and was standing in base operations when his telephone message arrived. Clyde identified himself and said, "I have been in a bad accident." The young WAAC operator with whom he was speaking responded by saying, "There were no survivors!" Clyde did not argue with her for he

knew better. The operator did say however, that a young woman was standing in the office in tears. On the phone with her, Clyde said four words, "Margaret, I made it!" Clyde believes, as I do, that his obedience to that "small still voice" was the difference between life and death.

God is not a cosmic bellboy for whom we can press a button and get our way. God has placed in us a conscience...His presence in us. This He uses to speak to us! He did not create us to be robots. We determine our destiny by the obedience we exercise in Him.

Clyde listened and obeyed. He completed a tour of 25 missions with the 390th Bomb Group - his last 3 were to Berlin. Clyde and Margaret are still enjoying a full and happy life living in a small Tennessee town. Listening had made the difference. **"My sheep recognize my voice, I know them, and they follow me."**

John 10:27 NLT. God is still talking! Are you listening and following?

**Earl Wassom, 466th BG
Chaplain, Tennessee
Chapter**



Earl Wassom



You can live to be a hundred, by giving up everything that makes you want to be a hundred.

"We are here on earth to do good to others. What the others are here for, I don't know."

-W.H. Auden

Your dream is the gift of your own soul
But if its promise is to be fulfilled
You must turn your eyes from the world of men

And dare to fly among the stars.

-Robert Sexton

THE WAR IN THE AIR

For saving grace, we didn't see our dead,
Who rarely bothered coming home to die
But simply stayed away out there in the clean war, the war in the air.
Seldom the ghosts came back bearing their tales
Of hitting the earth, the incompressible sea,
But stayed up there in the relative wind,
Shades fading in the mind,
Who had no graves but only epitaphs
Where never so many spoke for never so few:
'Per ardua,' said the partisans of Mars,
'Per aspera,' to the stars.

That was the good war, the war we won
As if there were no death, for goodness' sake,
With the help of those lost we left out there in the air, in the empty air.

-Howard Nemerov
from National Capital
Area Chapter *War Stories*

Dated Material Inside

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Nashville, TN
Permit #1

8th AF News

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

P.O. Box 1787, Savannah, GA 31402



3151-8 01 3490H

W CHUCK SESSIONS

3118 SHASTA CT NE

CEDAR RAPIDS IA 52402-3335

2

179

