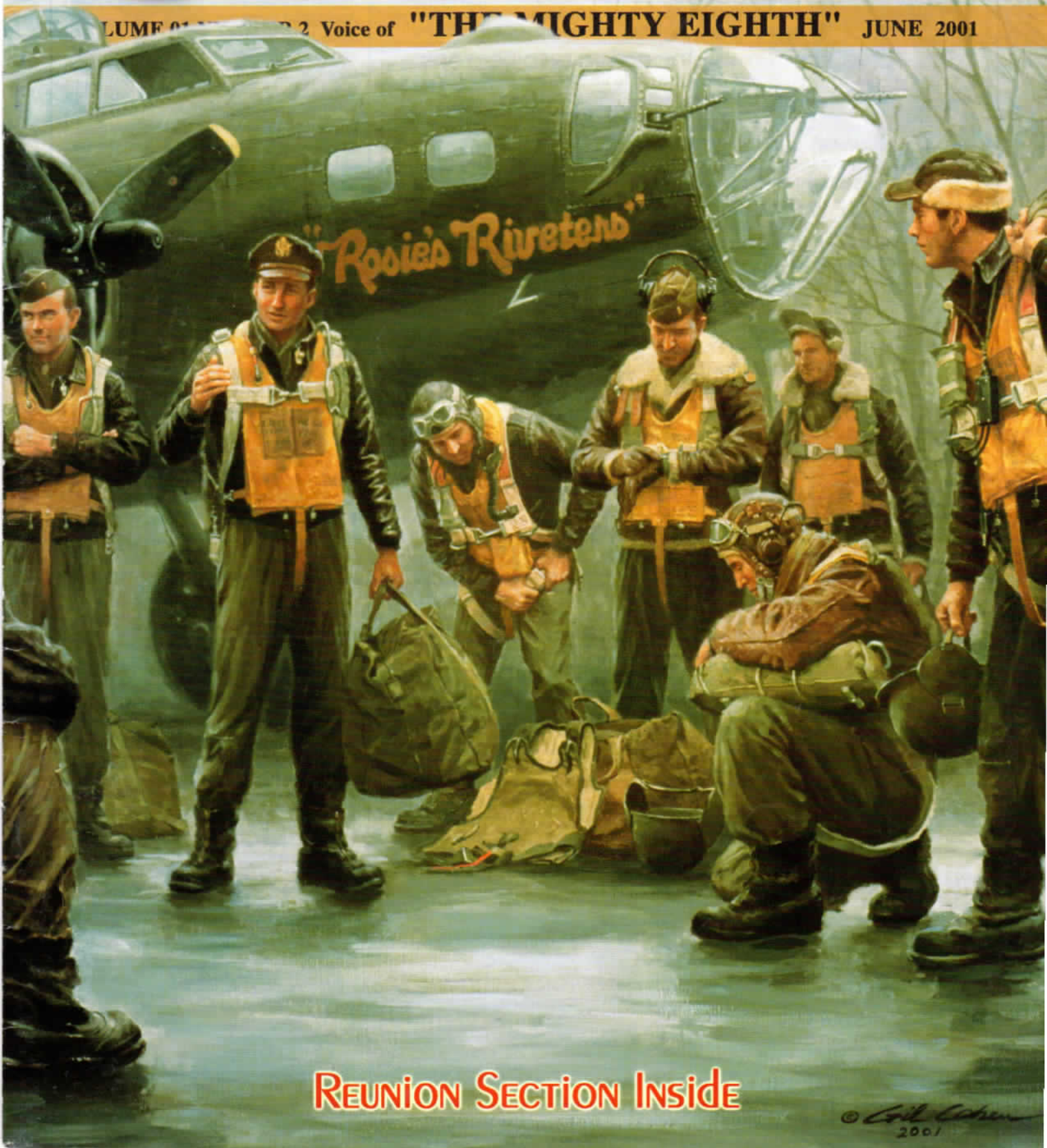




th AF NEWS

VOLUME 01 NUMBER 02 Voice of "THE MIGHTY EIGHTH" JUNE 2001



REUNION SECTION INSIDE

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2001



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

Save this issue of the 8th AF NEWS. Everything you ever wanted to know about the 2001 annual 8th AFHS reunion is included. Application forms are ready to be filled out and room reservations can be made.



Donna Lee of Armed Force Reunions has done her always superb work in putting this reunion together for us. The North Texas Chapter will be out in force to welcome us all to Texas - Irving, Texas that is! Come and enjoy the hospitality.

I want to say a personal Thank You to several folks for their exceptional contributions to this issue. Robert "Rosie" Rosenthal gave much time for consultation with artist Gil Cohen for the exquisite painting featured on the cover. Writer Mark Copeland flew in to New York for extended interviews with Rosie at his home to get the accurate facts for the cover story to accompany Gil's painting. Mark's words were, "What a fantastic experience!!" It is generosity and enthusiasm such as theirs that makes the 8th AF NEWS a special publication. I consider the efforts of these three gentlemen as gifts to all 8th veterans.

On the inside back cover, in the tailgunner's slot, is another very fine How About It? article to leave each of us, as it so often does, with encouraging thoughts to carry with us; to help us along the way. This is the 35th How About It? Earl Wassom has written for me - he authored twenty others during the five years I edited the Tennessee Flyover newsletter. Earl always comes up with unique and comforting looks at things spiritual, always does it willingly and with his big friendly smile. He and Cynthia are seen at all Society functions and at his 466th Bomb Group and 2nd AD gatherings. As Past-President of the 2nd ADA and with over ten years of service as Tennessee Chapter Chaplain, Earl has many friends across the country. It is my privilege to have been one of them.

Your editor and staff have tried to squeeze as much material into this 52-page edition as we could. Extra articles will be rolled over into the September issue. We wish all Historical Society members and their families a well-earned Happy Fourth of July!

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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Reunion 2001

Come to Irving, TX for a big Texas welcome and a great reunion planned by our capable Reunion Chairman, Larry Goldstein, his committee and the Texas Chapter. Bring your family and enjoy the Western hospitality. Registration, hotel, program, and tour information are included in this issue.

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT THE SOCIETY

Older members of the Society remember when volunteers handled many functions of our Society. It then developed that the tasks were so time consuming that we paid some of our volunteers to partially compensate them for their work and diligence, and we purchased the equipment necessary to do their jobs, i.e. computers, etc.

Could we still find volunteers to do some of our work? Very probably yes, but at our age we begin to worry about continuity. Your Board of Directors decided that it was time to set up a professional office to handle many of the details of the Society, thus the move to establish our Membership Records Office at The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah, GA. We are continuing to work on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of this office to better serve the members and the Society. As we have mentioned before, we are not a last man's organization. We are trying to establish a system that will outlast the lives of World War II veterans.

For years, leaders of the Society have realized the need for a "home" for our organization. Various areas were studied, but until the establishment of The Mighty

Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah, none proved satisfactory. The Heritage Museum seems ideal, and although we are two separate and distinct organizations, the synergy that exists between the two can be a great benefit to us all.



8th AF NEWS

The 8th AF NEWS, our quarterly publication, has developed into a world-class publication. It is the lifeblood of our Society, and is the one item that reaches all our members, as well as a host of others who are exposed to the quarterly. We encourage each of you to share your copy and use it as a tool to get new members.

OUR SPECIAL APPEAL TO MEMBERS

The special appeal that we made to members of the Society for a one-time voluntary contribution was made reluctantly, after much consideration. As mentioned before, we did not raise our dues soon enough. Our choice of action was to drastically cut the two major expense items; namely **8th AF NEWS** and the **Membership Office**; or make a one-time appeal to our members for a special contribution. We hope you agree that this special appeal was the right decision.

Dick Baynes, President

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Mission Briefing	2
Presidents Message	3
Cover Story "We were just determined"	
Robert "Rosie" Rosenthal	5-10
Reunion Section	12-17
The Long Wait "The Story of William Patton Jr."	18
A Bluenoser Makes it Home	19
Loss of a Flying Fortress	20-21
Heritage Museum Activities	22-23
American Memorial Association Tribute	24
Eighth Air Force Pilot Awarded DFC	25-27
Mail Call	28-31
An Introduction To Twin-Engine Fighters	33
Reunions	34-35
Chapter News	36-39
Taps	42-43
Bulletin Board	44-45
Debriefing	46-48
Book Reviews	48-49
How About It?	51

How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world.

Anne Frank

THANK YOU!

THE INITIAL RESPONSE OF OUR HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP TO THE SOCIETY'S RECENT FUND DRIVE MAILOUT HAS BEEN OVERWHELMING. THE FIRST WEEK BROUGHT IN OVER \$50,000 IN CONTRIBUTIONS. THANKS TO EACH MEMBER FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MAINTAINING AND PROMOTING EIGHTH AIR FORCE HISTORY AND HERITAGE

by Buck Shuler



It is important that members and supporters of The Eighth Air Force Historical Society, The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum and the Memorial Museum Foundation known

as the MMF understand these are three separate and distinct entities. Each is a registered 501 non-profit organization established in its own right. The Society formed the MMF some years ago with a specific mission to present the history of the Eighth Air Force and to establish a museum. The MMF did not establish a museum, but the Society provided the initial seed money to establish The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum as a separate entity. Although the MMF was established as an arm of the Society, it recently became a totally separate entity. Each entity now has its own membership, leadership and objectives.

Currently there exists some misunderstanding as to the financial status of each organization. While I cannot speak for the Society or the MMF, I can speak for the Heritage Museum as its Chairman of the Board of

Trustees. The Museum is not in financial difficulty. As many of you know, Chatham County sold bonds in 1994 and made \$12.5 million available to the museum organization with which the Museum was created. This \$12.5 million is a legal fiduciary obligation that must be repaid per the agreement with Chatham County. Over \$1.7 million of this bond debt has been repaid to date and recently the Museum made another payment to that end. Attendance and cash flow from the Museum's operations are rising. Additionally, the Museum recently embarked on a new fund raising effort entitled the Victory Campaign. The objective of the campaign is to raise \$9.0 million that will propel the Heritage Museum towards becoming debt free. To date over \$1.8 million has been raised in the Victory Campaign. The Museum needs the support of every Eighth Air Force veteran, their families and friends to help achieve the Victory campaign objectives.

When an individual contributes financially to the Society, the Museum or the MMF, those contributions are separate and distinct, and designated for purposes as determined by the leadership of each respective organization. Contributions to the Society

go to the Society's office, which is maintained in the Museum facility. The Society and the Museum maintain separate bank accounts. Society contributions are NOT mingled with Museum money. When an individual contributes to the Society or the MMF, that money does NOT go to the Museum. I ask that you make sure your contributions are going to the intended organization.

The Society, the Museum and the MMF all share a common goal of preserving and promoting Eighth Air Force history and heritage. Let's join together and cooperate in this worthy goal. I trust this statement is helpful to the constituencies of the Society, the Heritage Museum and the MMF. If anyone has a question, please call me at 256-234-5374 or contact me by E-mail at egshuler@mindspring.com. Thank you.

Lt. Gen E.G. "Buck" Shuler, Jr.
Chairman of the Board of Trustees
The Mighty Eighth Air Force
Heritage Museum

Editor's note: Many thanks to Buck Shuler for his explanation of these three 8th AF veterans organizations. A number of letters have been received by the 8th AF News asking to clarify this. – Editor

MISSION: TODAY, TOMORROW AND BEYOND

A Report of the Long Range Goals Committee

The Long Range Goals Committee is continuing to evaluate the nature of our Historical Society's membership, but is not quite ready to report on that. We are still in a learning phase on our new membership database program, and do not want to reveal our findings until we are more certain about what we are finding.

The failure of many members to pay their current dues is a severe complicating factor. Just who is a member? Everyone listed, or just those who are currently dues-paid or some grade of Life Member? This situation is addressed elsewhere in this issue of the 8th AF News. Some very interesting activities by some of our members which have very positive long-range-goals impact have come to light. We refer to those members who are spending time and effort talking to children in schools. They report receiving surprisingly enthusiastic responses on the part of students and teachers alike. Also many of our members have donated subscriptions of the 8AF NEWS to their local libraries. You are all encouraged to use your talents and time in these truly rewarding projects with both

immediate return and long-range benefits.

An exciting new idea has surfaced. It had been suggested that the Eighth Air Force Historical Society generate a curriculum teaching guide for schools across the country that is analogous to the curriculum guide developed by the D-Day Museum, called "The Lessons of D-Day" - ours called "The Lessons of the Mighty Eighth Air Force". This would be a cooperative venture with the Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, but would depend heavily on input from our members. This committee is taking a look at this special project and will report on it as developments take place. It is not a trivial project, as it will require funding and many hours of work. If you would like to work on this please let us know.

Craig Harris, Chairman
Long Range Goals Committee



“We were just determined.”

The Story of Robert “Rosie” Rosenthal and the Crew Of “Rosie’s Riveter’s”

by Mark S. Copeland



*Robert “Rosie”
Rosenthal
England 1943
418th / 350th BS –
100th BG – Pilot
Veteran of 52 Combat
Missions*

The Air echelon and Ground personnel of the 100th Bomb Group anxiously awaited the return of the bombers. From atop the Control Tower at Thorpe Abbots, men could be seen staring upward for any sign of the returning Fortresses. Below,

ground personnel were milling about nervously. Crew Chiefs were waiting at respective hardstands all over the base for the return of their B-17, their airplane, their crew. Tensions were high. You could feel it. Two days prior on October 8, 1943, the 100th BG had lost eight B-17s over Bremen, Germany. On October 9, 1943 the Group had flown a deep penetration raid to Marienburg, Germany with no losses. But what would be the result of this one? Would they all make it back?

It was the afternoon of October 10, 1943. Fourteen 100th BG Boeing B-17 Flying Fortresses left their base at Thorpe Abbots, England that morning to strike the marshalling yards at Munster, Germany. It was mission No. 114 for the still fledgling VIII Air Force Bomber Command. Munster, which was just over the Dutch/German border didn't seem to be a particularly hazardous target. After all, the Group had flown much farther the day before. But for the 100th Bomb Group October 10, 1943, would be a devastating day.

Of those fourteen Fortresses that left on that cold autumn morning, only one returned to Thorpe Abbots that afternoon - a “rookie” crew, flying only their third combat mission in a ship named “Royal Flush.” A Boeing B-17F-45-VE (42-6087) had been assigned to them as a replacement aircraft due to the fact their regular ship, “Rosie’s Riveters” (B-17F-120-BO – 42-30758), had been damaged on the Bremen mission, October 8th. The pilot of the crew was 2nd Lieutenant Robert Rosenthal, more commonly known as just plain “Rosie.”

This is the story of Robert “Rosie” Rosenthal and the crew of “Rosie’s Riveters.” While much has been written about Rosenthal and the “Bloody Hundredth,” this article illustrates the very special bond between men. The bond of a bomber crew. A bond which exists to this very day.

Robert Rosenthal was born on June 11, 1917, in Brooklyn, New York. Young Robert was a good student and eventually graduated from Brooklyn College with high honors and a degree in Law. In 1940, his father, a Health Department worker in New York City, passed away. Robert had a close family, but on December 7th, 1941, it all changed.

Rosenthal states, “I was working at a very distinguished law firm in New York City and I was supposed be at work on Monday morning (December 8th), but instead I went down to the Federal Building on Church Street in Manhattan and enlisted. I imagine I was like a lot of other people in those days. I was very frustrated when the war broke out. You could see what the Germans were doing across Europe, wiping out democracies and killing people. It was a period I felt very deeply about, but I was very frustrated; I wanted to be in it. When December 7th happened it sort of lifted the load.”

Rosenthal was sworn in to the United States Army on January 1, 1942. His training was completed at numerous air bases throughout 1942 and 1943, the last portion being at Dyersburg, Tennessee in the summer of 1943. He excelled through his pilot training and was assigned as a 1st Pilot/Heavy Bombardment classification. It was during this time, Rosenthal first met his crew. “We were a very divergent group of people from all parts of the country. We had different educational backgrounds and so forth, but I could immediately see that the crew had a certain camaraderie,” says Rosenthal. “We were just like a family.”

The Rosenthal crew flew across the Atlantic to England via the “Great Circle” route (Greenland/Iceland/Scotland). Upon their arrival they were immediately assigned to the 100th Bomb Group at Thorpe Abbots as a replacement crew. They were to fill part of the Group’s losses from the costly August 17, 1943 mission to Schweinfurt/Regensburg. The crew of “Rosie’s Riveters” were fairly informal around one another. There was no saluting and rarely any military protocol.

“I never was the military type,” describes Rosenthal. Bill DeBlasio,



June 8th AF News cover



*William DeBlasio
Tail Gunner*

the tailgunner states, "We called everyone by their first name, even Rosie. But if there were any brass around, then we would call him Sir."

Once in the air, it was all business. Rosenthal recalls, "There was no kidding around in the air. I wouldn't stand for it." Prior to each mission it was reinforced to the crew, even if repetitious, what was expected of them. Each man knew his job.

Jim Mack, a replacement waist gunner recalls, "Rosie would talk to us before every mission. He would brief us on what to expect. Where the flak was going to be. How many fighters to anticipate." But the crew pre-flight briefings were not always without incident. Rosenthal recalls, "I remember that Mike Boccuzzi, our radio operator and a wonderful warm human being, would get very nervous before each mission and throw up. I would end up putting my arm around him and we would chat. He was a wonderful, intel-



*Jim Mack – Waist Gunner
(Replacement Waist Gunner for
John Schaffer who was wounded on
October 10, 1943)*

ligent person."

On October 10, 1943, the 100th Bomb Group flew one of its most horrific missions of the entire war.

The target was Munster, Germany. General Tom Jeffery, Group Commander of the 390th Bomb Group and later Group Commander of the 100th Bomb Group, best described it as "one of the most intense air battles of the war." The 13th Combat Bomb Wing (95th Bomb Group / 390th Bomb Group / 100th Bomb Group) took it the worst. Especially the aircraft of the Bloody Hundreth. The 100th Bomb Group lost almost all of their entire force that day. For Rosenthal's crew it would be their third mission in three days. They were assigned an alternate B-17F ("Royal Flush" 42-6087) that day due to the fact their regular ship was in for battle damage repairs.

"By the IP (Initial Point) flak had pretty well wiped out the Group," recalls Loren Darling, original waist gunner. He adds, "I remember going up to the front of the aircraft near the flight deck to transfer fuel or something. I looked up and saw "Pappy" Lewis and Rosie sitting in their seats. Right above them were two windows. I looked up through one of the windows just in time to see two bombers above us burst into a ball of flame. Just like that, they were balls of black dust!"

Rosenthal adds, "We dropped our bombs over the target and the fighters laid off us because of the flak. At that point, we were alone. Then the fighters came in, except this time they attacked us in waves. The gunners were complaining that I wasn't giving them a level shooting platform to fire from." Instead of flying straight and level, pilots Rosenthal and Lewis flew "lazy S's" and chandelles to prevent the fighters from attacking a level tar-



*Loren Darling
Asst. Eng./Waist
Gunner WIA -
Munster Mission
October 10, 1943*

get. "If I would have flown straight and level, they would have got us," recalls Rosenthal. Loren Darling remembers, "As the fighters came in on us, I remember I could hear Pappy Lewis saying a prayer over the intercom and I remember Rosie started to hum a song. I think Rosie was just trying to keep us calm."

During this time, the gunners shot down and damaged numerous German fighters. Both of the waist gunners aboard were wounded. John Shaffer suffered wounds to his abdomen and Darling was struck in the head and hand. He also suffered a bad case of frostbite due to long exposure. Mike Boccuzzi, the radio operator, administered a shot of morphine to each of the wounded men.

The crippled B-17 continued its flight toward England. It was heavily damaged.

Rosie descended to 10,000 feet and went off oxygen. Two engines had quit and there was a large hole in the wing. The crew started throwing out everything that wasn't nailed down to lighten the ship.

Meanwhile back at Thorpe Abbots, B-17s were starting to land, but they were not ships from the 100th BG. The markings on the tails were from the 390th BG. Upon arrival, some of the "Square J" (390th BG) aircraft could not land at their Framlingham base due to heavy fog and deteriorating visibility, so they diverted to Thorpe Abbots. Captain Rodney Snow, pilot of "Herky Jerky II" with the 390th BG was one of



*Mike Boccuzzi
Radio Operator*



*C. C. Hall – Engineer
Top Turret Gunner*



**The Crew of "Rosie's Riveters" – Boeing B-17F-120-BO
42-30758 – 418th Bomb Squadron / 100th Bomb Group – LD-W.**

Standing (L to R) S/Sgt. Loren Darling – Asst. Engineer/Waist Gunner, M/Sgt. Joe Woodward – Crew Chief, T/Sgt. Mike Boccuzzi – Radio Operator, S/Sgt. James Mack – Waist Gunner, T/Sgt. C.C. Hall – Engineer/Top Turret, Assistant Crew Chief (Unidentified), S/Sgt., William DeBlasio – Tail Gunner, S/Sgt. Ray Robinson – Ball Turret Gunner.

Kneeling (L to R) – Lt. Ronald C. Bailey – Navigator, Captain Robert Rosenthal – Aircraft Commander, Lt. Clifford "C. J." Milburn – Bombardier, Lt. Winford T. "Pappy" Lewis – Co-Pilot.

the Fortresses to land at the 100th BG base. Quoted from *The Munster Raid* by Ian Hawkins, Snow recalled, "While we were taxiing back to a hardstand, the tower told us we were at Thorpe Abbots. The Commanding Officer of the 100th then inquired as to the whereabouts of his Group. I told him, "I'm sorry to say this, Sir, I don't think that you will have anyone from your Group home this day."

But Rosenthal and crew did make it back. On approach to Thorpe Abbots, Sgt. C. C. Hall fired flares off to indicate "wounded aboard" to prepare the ground personnel. Rosenthal and

crew had brought their crippled Fortress home. Jim Mack recalls, "Rosie made a smooth landing. After we stopped, Loren and Shaffer were taken to the hospital. Rosie went along with them in the ambulance."

After debriefing, Rosenthal recalls, "I remember going to the officer's club and the place was empty. Our bombardier, C. J. Milburn sat down at the piano and a couple of us gathered around him. There was nobody in the place, and I remember it being deathly quiet and nobody came over to talk to us." After the Munster mission, the Rosenthal crew was given R & R at a

"flak house" near Salisbury in Wilshire. This aggravated Rosenthal who wanted to keep flying missions.

General Curtis LeMay, Commander of the Third Air Division at the time, called a regular mission critique soon after the disastrous Bremen (10/08/43) /



*Clifford "C. J." Milburn
Bombardier*



*Robert C. Bailey
Navigator*

Munster (10/10/43) / Schweinfurt (10/14/43) missions. VIII Air Force Bomber Command was at a pivotal time.

They had lost well over 100 aircraft during that week and

LeMay wanted to know why. They couldn't afford to suffer such heavy losses and something had to be done, and done quickly, to improve tactics.

Robert Rosenthal, Pappy Lewis, C. J. Milburn and Ronald Bailey were summoned by LeMay to add their story to the mission critiques.

Rosenthal remembers, "We were asked to attend a critique, along with other air staff at Elvedon Hall. I was the only one around that had flown Bremen, Marienburg, and Munster, so

I went to the critique. At first I just sat back and listened. I had never done that before and I think I was the lowest ranking person there. I was still a Second Lieutenant



*Winford T. "Pappy"
Lewis - Co-Pilot*

and all the other guys were Colonels and Majors and so forth. Each of them had flown as command pilots for their respective Groups, so I just listened to them all. General LeMay was there with an unlit cigar butt in his mouth and he had a scowl on his face. He was very cryptic and very critical. He demanded perfection and he wanted the job done his way and he really let some of the people have it! Then it was our turn. Bailey and Milburn got up and discussed bombing and navigational techniques. Then it was my turn to speak. I told him what had happened and promptly sat down. He looked at me and said, 'Good.' Good?

What does that mean? In my book good means sort of mediocre. But after the meeting was finished some Colonel came over to me and said that he had never heard such lavish praise from the General!"

On March 8, 1944, the crew of "Rosie's Riveters" finished their final mission. But Robert "Rosie" Rosenthal stayed on. He stayed on to fly a total of 52 combat missions. To the men of the 100th, Rosenthal was the heart and soul of the Group. Every pilot wanted to be like "Rosie." During the remainder of his tour with the 100th BG, Rosenthal was shot down and was wounded on two separate occasions. He rose to the rank of Lt. Colonel and became Squadron Commander of the 350th Bomb Squadron and 418th Bomb Squadron, respectively.

To begin his third tour of duty, Rosenthal led the Third Air Division on February 3, 1945. The target was Berlin, Germany. Although wounded, Rosenthal kept flying and led the striking force to the target.

After the war, Robert Rosenthal returned to New York City where he resumed his practice in law. He was selected as an assistant prosecuting attorney at the Nuremberg trials. During his time in Germany, he met his future bride Phillis, who was also an assistant prosecuting attorney at the infamous war crimes trial. Upon returning to the United States, Rosenthal opened a private practice. The Rosenthals have three beautiful children - Peggy, Steve, and Dan. They now live peacefully outside of New York City where they enjoy frequent visits from their grandchildren. At 83 years old, Rosie is a very active tennis player, playing up to four times a week.

So much more could be written about Rosie Rosenthal and the crew of "Rosie's Riveters", far too much for this brief article. But in interviewing him I learned one thing right away - he is a very humble and modest individual. He believed in his crew and in their capabilities. Rosenthal explains, "Once you have an experience like we

had you realize that you're vulnerable. You become closer and you're quite aware of what you're going into."

Rosenthal doesn't think of himself as a hero. Perhaps he sums it up best by saying, "People talk about courage; I don't believe I was courageous. They talk about heroics; I don't believe in all that stuff. It never entered my mind to stop at any point. There was a certain toughness about our Group and the whole Eighth Air Force in general. We were just determined."

Thank God they were.

Mark S. Copeland

For his service Robert Rosenthal was awarded the following: Distinguished Service Cross with Cluster, Silver Star with Cluster, Distinguished Flying Cross with Cluster, Purple Heart with Cluster, 7 Air Medals, Distinguished Flying Cross (British), Croix de Guerre (French)

Author's Acknowledgements: The author would like to thank the following people for their assistance in writing this story: Gil Cohen, Mike Faley of the 100th BG Association; Photo Archives, Roger Freeman; Jim Mack and Bill DeBlasio (phone interviews); Loren Darling (personal interview in Waterloo, Iowa); and especially to Robert and Phillis Rosenthal for their gracious hospitality and for allowing me the opportunity to visit their home for personal interviews.



Robert and Phillis Rosenthal at their home in Harrison, New York. In love with one another for over 50 years.

Ray Robinson – Ball
Turret Gunner



“See you in the States!!”

The Rosenthal Crew upon completion of their 25th Mission
March 8, 1944 – Berlin

Standing: (L to R) Unknown Replacement Navigator, C. J. Milburn – Bombardier, Robert Rosenthal, Aircraft Commander, W. T. “Pappy” Lewis – Co-Pilot, Jim Mack – Waist Gunner, Kneeling: C. C. Hall – Eng./T.T., Marion Sheldon, Waist Gunner (Replacement Waist Gunner – Loren Darling – WIA 10/10/43), Bill DeBlasio – Tail Gunner, Mike Boccuzzi – Radio Operator, Ray Robinson – Ball Turret Gunner

THE STORY OF THE PAINTING

by Gil Cohen

It was sometime during the Fall of 1991 while visiting the 100th Bomb Group Memorial Museum at Thorpe Abbots in the farm country of East Anglia, England. My friends and I were in the control tower of the former air base and were looking over uniforms, flight equipment and other memorabilia when I spotted a group of photos with captions describing the exploits of Rosie Rosenthal. I recalled having read about this man several years before in Edward Jablonski's book, “Flying Fortress”. At the time of that visit to Thorpe Abbots I had just completed the second painting of my series depicting the Mighty Eighth. As I was gazing at the display, my friends suggested that perhaps I should consider doing a painting depicting Rosie. Nine years later, after having produced several more Eighth Air Force prints, my thoughts returned to Thorpe Abbots and Rosie. In late 1999, I finally



Rosie and Gil Cohen

phoned him and told him of my idea of depicting him in some way. Rosie was modest about himself, but nevertheless, very cooperative and enthusiastic about the project. He described many harrowing and dramatic situations during his time with the 100th BG from October 1943 until the German surrender in May, 1945. After mentally digesting all of this, I decided that my best approach would be to focus on Rosie's first tour of duty and depict him going over last minute details with his crew before boarding their B-17, “Rosie's Riveters”, for another mission. This would be more symbolic of the Mighty Eighth than any specific incident. At Rosie's suggestion, I contacted former crew members Bill DeBlasio, Jim Mack and Loren Darling, who supplied me with invaluable verbal descriptions and personal snapshots taken during that time. I received many photos from Mike Faley, the

photo archivist of the 100th BG Foundation, including a diagram of the air base at Thorpe Abbots, plus an oblique aerial photo clearly showing Hard Stand 43 at the edge of the woods where "Rosie's Riveters" would be parked. In addition, Mike sent me a photo he took last year of the same hard stand site as it looks today.

Eighth Air Force re-enactors from Ohio, Michigan and New Jersey posed for the figures shown in the painting. Jack Lefferts, a collector and expert on uniforms and equipment from that period, supplied much of the equipment kept in my studio and used as reference for authenticity while I executed the painting.

After many preliminary studies, I commenced with the finished painting itself on a canvas measuring 56" wide x 34" high. It took about three months to complete. During this time, alone in my studio, there were many moments of spirituality when I felt that I was not looking at canvas and paint but was within the ambience of the painting itself with those young men back in time on a chilly English morning nearly 60 years ago.

It is a feeling that will stay with me always.



Rosie's Crew / Thorpe Abbots 1943

A Limited Edition Art Print reproduced from an original oil painting by Gil Cohen, AAAS.

"ROSIE'S CREW / THORPE ABBOTTS 1943" Copyright 2001 Knightsbridge Press. All Rights Reserved. Doylestown, PA 19001

ROSIE'S CREW / THORPE ABBOTTS 1943

by award winning aviation artist Gil Cohen. The Crew of "Rosie's Riveters" receive last minute instructions from their pilot Robert Rosenthal prior to takeoff.

**Gil Cohen's Limited Edition print is available from Mark Copeland's 8th AFHS PX
(see center PX section) overall size: 17" x 25". \$145.00 + \$4.50 s & h**



TO EVERYONE

Friends don't let friends drive drunk. A friend in need is a friend indeed. Take a friend to church! Take a friend (old comrade) to an Eighth Air Force Historical Society reunion, a Unit reunion and/or a Chapter reunion!

Ask someone to join you at one or all of these reunions as your guest. It might be that this is all it will take for them to become an active member.

You will get the usual arguments "I don't know anyone." Neither did I when I joined and now Joe Ann and I have many friends not only in the States but in England as well. "I'm not a joiner." Why not? If you could fight a war and win there is no reason to be shy with those who helped you win!

Time is running out for all of us - just read "Taps".

UNITS

The Unit is the very foundation for the organizing of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society. In John Woolnough's first newsletter dated January, 1975, he devoted the entire one sheet-two sided letter to Units. He needed Unit Contacts and Unit organizations. There was no mention of the Historical Society as such. Therefore, it blows my mind when members of Units say they want nothing to do with the Eighth Air Force Historical Society. Many if not most of the members of the Units were connected with their Unit through the efforts of the Historical Society. I know I was. So why the animosity? We are getting too old for this.

CHAPTERS

How is your Chapter doing?? If your Chapter seems to be dull, maybe you need new blood. RECRUIT!!! All it takes to get new members is to ASK!!! There is an old adage in salesmanship "Give everyone a chance to say No." Not everyone you ask will join, but you will be surprised at the number that do. Some of those who join might drop out after a year or two, but you gave them a chance to see what we are like. And again someone you recruit just might be the "Fireball" your Chapter needs to brighten things up. Get young blood into the Chapter. Associates can be very young when they start. The Ohio Chapter has a young man for Secretary. His mother had to bring him to meetings at the start because he wasn't old enough to drive. He has since graduated from college, continues to attend Chapter meetings, was a member of the Board of Directors and is a great asset to the Chapter. Also, on the Board is a young man, who with his wife, are very active in the Chapter. The newsletter editor, another eager young man is on the Board. The keeper of the roster is also the son of a member (me). If someone had not asked these fine young people to become members we would have missed out on a lot. They are the future of the Chapter and the Eighth Air Force Historical Society.

TO ALL CHAPTER PRESIDENTS AND UNIT CONTACTS

Connie Metts in Savannah has a supply of the new tri-fold brochures for recruiting and will be glad to send you some upon request. Get them, pass them out at your meetings and get everyone involved in RECRUITING!

Jim Erskine, Chairman

FESTIVAL OF REMEMBRANCE IN BRITAIN

The Royal British Legion recently held a Remembrance Festival at the Corn Exchange in Bedfordshire - the building where Glenn Miller played concerts for 8th Air Force airmen in 1944. The Historical Society's English representatives, Connie and Gordon Richards, were organizers of the event and exhibited their collection of World War II memorabilia.

The British Legion was founded in 1921 as a group of four service organizations to assist needy families of servicemen who served in World War I. Today the Legion has expanded their services and is composed of thirty-one branches with three registered social clubs. In addition to the exhibits, bands and concerts were part of the celebration. The Bedford Town Band played a selection of Glenn Miller music. A Memorial Service of Remembrance was also held.



Several attendees visit Gordon and Connie Richards' exhibit

8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REUNION IRVING, TEXAS OCTOBER 24-29, 2001



The 27th annual reunion is fast approaching. Keep in mind the reunion starts on Wednesday this year and ends on Monday (instead of our usual Tuesday-Sunday pattern). Everything about Texas is B-I-G, so let's keep with the tradition, and make this



one of the biggest reunions ever!

More than 150 years ago, pioneers came to Dallas searching for the "myth of the American West" with few ideas of what lay ahead. From their hard work and dedication came what we now know as Dallas. Pulling themselves up by their bootstraps, these individuals worked together building shops, hotels and other necessities along the way. Today, many of these landmarks are restored to their original grandeur. But the dusty trails are now highways, and the railroads and airports provide the vital links to the rest of the nation and world. The spirit of the original pioneers lives on in today's residents. Irving is the middle child of the entire Dallas-Fort Worth metro area, and just minutes from one of the world's busiest airports. We encourage you to come early and/or stay late to enjoy all the city has to offer. The weather should be wonderful this time of year, with highs in the 80s and lows in the 50s.

REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

See choices below and complete the Registration Form. Remit by check or money order payable to Armed Forces Reunions (NOT "8AF REUNION") by **September 24, 2001** (no credit cards or phone reservations accepted). Forms received after this date will be accepted on a space available basis only. Please complete the entire form (Member number, WWII group, etc.). Hotel reservation forms should be filled out completely and mailed directly to the hotel by **September 24, 2001**.

MEALS / EVENTS CHOICES

CHOICE #1 TOTAL PACKAGE \$159

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

CHOICE # 2 PARTIAL PACKAGE \$113

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

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

CHOICE #3 INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

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

TOUR / EVENT OPTIONS

Thursday: Irving/Dallas City Tour \$35; Texas Welcome Mixer \$5. **Friday & Saturday:** Cavanaugh Flight Museum/Historic Grapevine \$33; Ft. Worth/Stockyards \$28. **Sunday:** Dallas City Tour \$28; Sid Richardson Art Museum \$22.



THE HARVEY HOTEL & SUITES
(972) 929-4500

1-800-922-9222

The Harvey Hotel is located at 4545 West John Carpenter Freeway, Irving, TX 75063. The hotel is on the northwest corner of Highway 114 and Esters, Boulevard, close to the north entrance of DFW International Airport. The hotel is only twenty minutes from Downtown Dallas and five minutes from Las Colinas Urban Center. Please call the hotel for accurate driving directions.

The Harvey Hotel features a heated indoor/outdoor rooftop pool, exercise room with a whirlpool spa, gift shop, Cable TV and pay-per-view movies, and coin laundry. The hotel restaurant, *Benton's*, serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner. In addition, *Scoops*, is open for lunch and dinner.

Handicapped accessible and non-smoking rooms are subject to availability. Please request these special accommodations when making your hotel reservations. Parking is complimentary for hotel guests.

Check-in time is 3 pm; check-out is 12 pm.

A few suites have been blocked with group rates for Hospitality purposes. A deluxe parlor rents for \$100 per night; the *adjoining* sleeping room can be reserved at the group rate of \$80. These parlors have a wet bar, refrigerator, table for eight, and a sitting area. The hotel also has Executive Suites available for \$100 per night. These suites have a sitting area, wet bar, refrigerator, and a king bed in a secluded alcove. We suggest you call the hotel directly for more information and reservations for these suites.

The Hotel offers complimentary transportation to and from the DFW International Airport. The shuttle runs every thirty minutes. There is a courtesy phone at the baggage claim area in which to call. You may want to consider other transportation, as space is always limited on complimentary shuttles.

RV parking for guests staying in the hotel is limited. The Irving View Recreational RV Park is located about twenty minutes from The Harvey Hotel. Call (972) 790-2560 for information.

Should you need to rent a wheelchair while at the reunion call Scootaround at 1-888-441-7575.

8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REUNION
OCTOBER 24 – 29, 2001 HARVEY HOTEL – IRVING, TEXAS

Wednesday, October 24

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

Thursday, October 25

8:00am - 9:30am **Reunion Registration open**
9:00am - Tbd Hospitality/Gathering Room & Memorabilia Room opens
9:30am - 3:30pm IRVING / DALLAS CITY TOUR
1:00pm - Tbd 8AFHS 'PX' open through Sunday
1:00pm - 5:00pm **Reunion Registration open**
2:00pm - Board of Directors Meeting
5:30pm - 6:30pm Texas Welcome Mixer

Friday, October 26

7:00am - 8:30am Continental Breakfast
8:00am - 10:00am **Reunion Registration open**
8:30am - 10:00am Unit Advisory and Chapter & Unit Development Meeting
10:15am - 4:15pm CAVANAUGH FLIGHT MUSEUM
10:30am - 11:30am Medical Advisory Seminar by Dr. Brown
10:30am - 3:30pm FT. WORTH STOCKYARDS
1:30pm - 3:00pm "Round The Clock" Lecture - Roger Freeman
2:00pm - 5:00pm **Reunion Registration open**
6:00pm - 7:00pm Cash Bar Reception
7:00pm - 9:00pm Tex-Mex Dinner Buffet

8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY REUNION HIGHLIGHTS

IRVING / DALLAS CITY TOUR

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 25

Board bus for a guided driving tour of Irving, highlighting the Texas Stadium, home of the Dallas Cowboys and the Mustangs of Las Colinas. See the Las Colinas Flower Clock, where fresh flowers are planted year-round in this larger-than-life landscaped clock, and the unique sculpture of five marble cows atop Bluebonnet Hill. Enjoy time for shopping and lunch on your own at the West End Historic District in Downtown Dallas. West End is a multi-block area of turn-of-the-century storefronts and warehouses that have been transformed into over thirty eateries and specialty shops. After lunch begin your tour of nearby Dealy Plaza and the Sixth Floor Museum, Dallas' # 1 visitor attraction. The museum, located in the former Texas School Depository, examines the life, death, and legacy of President John F. Kennedy with over four hundred photographs, artifacts, displays, and videos.

9:30am board bus, 3:30 back at hotel.

\$35/Person includes bus, guide, and admission. Lunch on your own.

TEXAS WELCOME MIXER

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 25

Enjoy fellowship, drinks, and music in the Memorabilia/Gathering Room. For those pre-registered for this event, beer, wine, and sodas will be included. The number of drinks included will depend on the type of drink desired. A cash bar will also be available for those wanting to purchase a mixed drink.

\$5/Person includes limited drinks and background music.

CAVANAUGH FLIGHT MUSEUM / HISTORIC GRAPEVINE

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 26 & SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27

Board bus for the Cavanaugh Flight Museum. Enjoy one of the finest privately owned collections of vintage warbirds in the country, covering World War II through Vietnam. On display are fighting aircraft such as the Sopwith Camel and modern military jets like the F4 Phantom, all housed in four adjacent hangars. Also featured at the facility is the Cavanaugh Flight Museum Art Gallery, highlighting original oils, limited edition prints, and artwork depicting famous aviation battles. Enjoy lunch on your own while discovering historic Grapevine, where many of the original homes and buildings have been preserved by descendants of Grapevine's original pioneer families. Along Main Street you will find a mixture of seventy-five antique shops, boutiques, and restaurants. Grapevine, founded in the mid-1800's, is home to many of the annual art, wine, and music festivals in the Metroplex area.

10:15am board bus, 4:15pm back at hotel.

\$33/Person includes bus, guide, and admission. Lunch on your own.

Note: This tour may be limited to 86 people. Reservations will be accepted on a first-come first-served basis.

FT. WORTH / STOCKYARDS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 26 & SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27

Board bus for Ft. Worth, known as "the City of Culture and Cowboys." Stop at the Stockyards National Historic District, once the biggest and busiest cattle, horse, mule, hog, and sheep marketing center in the Southwest. Authentic western buildings house Old West shops and restaurants. The Cowtown Coliseum features Wild West Shows, rodeos, and concerts year round. Weather permitting, make sure you see the daily Longhorn cattle drive through the middle of town. Your guide will suggest some great places for lunch. Your day also includes a stop at the Cattleman's Museum.

10:30am board bus, 3:30pm back at hotel.

\$28/Person includes bus, guide, and admission. Lunch on your own.

TEX-MEX DINNER BUFFET AT HOTEL

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 26

After a cash bar reception, enjoy a group dinner at the hotel featuring chicken enchiladas, beef fajitas, and all the Mexican trimmings. A Mariachi band will provide the entertainment.

**6:00pm Cash Bar Reception, 7:00pm Dinner.
Cost is included in Package #1.**

RENDEZVOUS DINNERS

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27

Gather in your respective banquet rooms with your individual groups for dinner featuring Chicken with mustard-tarragon sauce. Bomb Groups (FGs, PRGs, etc.) with approximately fifty or more people in attendance will have a private room. Smaller groups will be combined with others. Think of this as your "reunion within the reunion."

6:00pm Cash Bar Reception, 7:00pm Dinner.

Cost is included in both meal packages or \$30 separately.

DALLAS CITY TOUR

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 28

Enjoy time for shopping and lunch on your own at the West End Historic District in Downtown Dallas. West End is a multi-block area of turn-of-the-century storefronts and warehouses that have been transformed into over thirty eateries and specialty shops. After lunch begin your tour of nearby Dealy Plaza and the Sixth Floor Museum, Dallas' # 1 visitor attraction. The museum, located in the former Texas School Depository, examines the life, death, and

legacy of President John F. Kennedy with over four hundred photographs, artifacts, displays, and videos. During the drive to and from the hotel, hear interesting facts about Dallas and Irving.

12:00pm board bus, 5:00pm back at hotel.
\$28/Person includes bus, guide, and admission.
Lunch on your own.

SID RICHARDSON COLLECTION OF WESTERN ART

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 28

After having lunch on your own at the hotel, board bus for Ft. Worth. Arrive at the Sid Richardson Collection of Western Art at Sundance Square. View the permanent exhibit of paintings by Western artists Frederic Remington and Charles Russell. The sixty paintings are from the collection of Sid Richardson, oilman and philanthropist. In addition, drive through the Cultural Districts, and stop at one of the museums there. You'll hear stories about the family foundations that funded the museums, as well as other interesting stories.

12:45pm board bus, 4:15pm back at hotel.
\$22/Person includes bus and guide.

8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL BANQUET

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 28

Assemble in the ballroom for the Posting of the Colors and Memorial Service. Dinner will be a choice of Roast Prime Rib of Beef or Grilled Salmon with Citrus Basil Reduction along with the usual accompaniments. After dinner, we'll proceed with the awards ceremony, guest speaker, and entertainment.

6:00pm Cash Bar Reception, 7:00pm Banquet
Cost is included in both meal packages or \$36 separately.

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

Reunion 2000 Good Times in Salt Lake City.



L-R: LaVerne Sedore 493rd BG, Margaret & Joe Gualano 493rd BG, Paul Johnston 96th BG, Richard (Cardy) Farias 493rd BG & Connie Metts, Membership Records Manager.



L-R Standing: Newell Moy, Tom Parsons, General Frank Smoker, **Sitting:** Gerald Folsom secretary of the Utah Chapter and Larry Goldstein chairman of the reunion committee.

THE EIGHTH AIR FORCE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
REGISTRATION



Truet Woodall and Jack Rude



Allen Chapin and wife, Bonnadene

Mary and Cliff Peterson
Cliff is a founder and Past-president of the 8th AFHS.

8th AFHS ACTIVITY REGISTRATION FORM

Listed below are all registration, tour, and meal costs for the reunion. Please enter how many people will be participating in each event and total the amount. Send that amount payable to ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC. in the form of check or money order (no credit cards or phone reservations accepted). Your cancelled check will serve as your confirmation. All registration forms and payments must be received by mail on or before **September 24, 2001**. After that date, reservations will be accepted on a space available basis. We suggest you make a copy of this form before mailing.

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

OFFICE USE ONLY

Check # _____ Date Received _____
Inputted _____ Nametag Completed _____

CUT-OFF DATE IS 9/24/01 Price Per # of People Total **REGISTRATION FEE \$35**

MEAL PACKAGES

Choice #1 includes 7 hotel meals beginning with breakfast on Friday.

Choice #1 \$159

Choice #2 includes 5 hotel meals beginning with breakfast on Saturday.

Choice #2 \$113

Please select your entrée choice(s) for the Banquet:

Roast Prime Rib of Beef Grilled Salmon

SEPARATELY PRICED MEALS (if not purchasing a package)

Saturday: Rendezvous Dinner (chicken) \$30

Sunday: Banquet (please select your entrée)

Roast Prime Rib of Beef \$36

Grilled Salmon \$36

TOURS / EVENTS

Thursday: Irving/Dallas City Tour \$35 **Thursday:** Texas Welcome Mixer \$5

Please choose one of the following two tours:

Friday: Cavanaugh Flight Museum/Historic Grapevine \$33 **Friday:** Ft. Worth Stockyards \$28

Please choose one of the following two tours:

Saturday: Cavanaugh Flight Museum/Historic Grapevine \$33 **Saturday:** Ft. Worth Stockyards \$28

Please choose one of the following two tours:

Sunday: Dallas City Tour \$28 **Sunday:** Sid Richardson Collection of Western Art \$22

Total Amount Payable to **Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.**

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

PLEASE PRINT
MEMBER NAME _____ 1st 8AFHS REUNION _____

LIFE MEMBER _____ 8AFHS MEMBERSHIP # _____ WWII GROUP _____

SPOUSE NAME _____ LIFE MEMBER MEMBER # _____

GUEST
NAMES _____

MEMBERS STREET
ADDRESS _____

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

DISABILITY/DIETARY
RESTRICTIONS _____

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

Full refunds will be sent for the above-mentioned activities if cancellation is received by 10/17/01 less a \$3 processing fee. After that date, refund amount will depend on vendor policies and/or the resale of tickets. **CANCELLATIONS WILL ONLY BE TAKEN MONDAY-FRIDAY 9am-5pm eastern time (excluding holidays).** CALL (757) 625-6401 to cancel reunion activities and obtain your cancellation code.

THE LONG WAIT

THE STORY OF WILLIAM PATTON JR.
by Dick Atkins - Scouting Force Historian



On 22 February 2001 a farmer near the Village of Longueville, France was digging in a field he attended to drain. Almost immediately his backhoe began to encounter bits of metal which he soon recognized as pieces of an airplane. His suspicions were confirmed when he unearthed an engine and a propeller and other parts of the P-51 Mustang fighter. He soon realized that the pilot was still in

the airplane and immediately contacted officials at the local Gendarmerie in the village of Feignies who in turn, notified the American Attaches office in Lille. A US Air Force forensics team from a German base was soon on the job to conduct a thorough search of the wreckage. This was completed in about two weeks. From the dog-tags and clothing found on the remains, the pilot was apparently William W. Patton of the 3rd Scouting Force, a native of Stark City, Missouri. Final identification is pending as this is written.

On 15 January 1945, Lt. Patton, who had joined the Scouting Force only 3 weeks prior to the fatal mission, was flying as wingman to Lt. Bryan Booker on a mission to Munich. On the return leg, the pair were down to about 1200 feet when fog was encountered. Booker alerted Patton by radio that he was turning left; Patton did not respond. Booker did not see or hear from him again. Assuming that Patton had landed in France, no action was

taken until 18 January when a Missing Air Crew report was issued. In the report, Lt. Booker stated that he believed that Lt. Patton had become disoriented and spun in. Evidence at the crash site supports that assumption. Early newspaper reports identified the aircraft and pilot as "bullet riddled," a claim that seems highly questionable given the altitude and weather conditions.

The Patton family, which consists of a sister-in-law, a brother-in-law and six nieces and three nephews, received the news with shock and sadness, softened by a sense of closure. Fifty-six years is a long time to wait for news of the fate of a loved one. "Bittersweet is the best description of our feeling" said Margaret Patton, sister-in-law of "Junior", as he was known by his family and friends. During a recent visit to their Missouri home by the the wife and me, Margaret shared her memories of "Junior" while nieces Connie, Donna and Joyce reflected deep emotion concerning the uncle they know only from family discussions and photographs.

There are a number of mysteries concerning this case: *the unusual circumstance surrounding the mission itself; the claim of bullet holes in the aircraft; the failure of Graves Registration personnel to find the wreckage in spite of much evidence; Patton's request for transfer from the 388th Bomb Group to the Scouting Force; his Aphrodite mission and a visit to the crash site by niece Joan Taylor Spee, daughter of Patton's brother-in-law, Norman Taylor, who returned with disturbing stories from local French citizens.*

I will continue my investigation into this most intriguing story and report the results in future issues.

Dick Atkins Arlington, TX

Appreciation to Dick for his timely contribution to The 8th AF NEWS. -Editor



A BLUENOSER MAKES IT HOME ...With a Little Help From His Friends

First of all, friendly Greetings from Belgium. I am a Member of the 8th Air Force Historical Society since 1991, and I am proud being a member of such a great association.

I just received my 8th AF News magazine march 2001. Please accept my sincere compliments for all the nice stories and wonderful photos. I really love your Magazine. Despite of my poor English that I learned the past years and yet I am able to understand it all, but it takes some time.

Needless to say how much interest I have in the Air War history 1940-45, and my extremely admiration I have for the men who flew the bombers and fighters. We owe them so much.

May I offer you these authentic photos which you probably might enjoy having?

I was pleased something to see and to hear about the Bluenoser Bastards of Bodney. As follows an approximately description of the photos.

I thank you for your time. May this find you and yours all very well and in good health.

further warm personal regards to you and your co-operators.

Yours sincerely,

**Janssens Marcel
Belgium/Europe**



Once again the same Fighter. To my opinion the local residents of the village are helping the pilot to turn his plane in the good wind direction for take-off.



This Famous Bluenoser P-51. Mustang Serial #414397. Nickname THE EX-LAX - SHHT'N GIT! Regular Pilot was Cyril Doleac. The pilot made due to engine trouble a successful wheels down landing about three miles away from my village on Oct. 6, 1944. Fortunately after some repair work the pilot could take off again and reached his base.



This is the same Fighter but another pose, being guarded by a member of the Resistance. Look at the man dressed in white overall and he carries a rifle on his back.

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND PUBLICITY COMMITTEE

This is the time of year when Chapters should start their planning work necessary for annual Proclamation signing events, including publicity that be attained if the events are newsworthy. For best results, these meetings must be staged no later than mid-August, because media, especially newspapers, often need 6-8 weeks lead time.

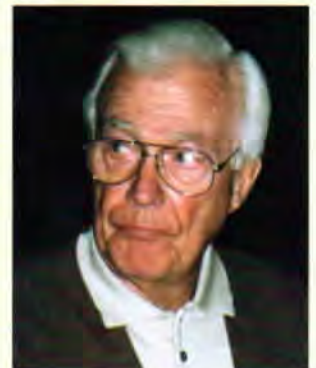
"Mighty 8th Air Force Week" was the week of October 8-14, 1943 which we commemorate every year at that time. It was the week when missions flown validated effectiveness of daylight, precision bombing. Losses of bombers and their crews were heavy, but that famous week signaled the beginning of the end of Hitler's Third Reich.

Well planned, staged and implemented Proclamation signing events with your Governors, Mayors and Commanders of Air Force installations are excellent publicity opportunities. Senators and Congressmen/women do not issue Proclamations but will write testimonials, paraphrasing the Proclamation or including other information heralding "Mighty Eighth" achievements.

Large newspapers, television and radio stations ordinarily can't provide space for Proclamations, of which there are

many. But they're interested in good WWII stories featuring 8th Air Force veterans. Media will use these, and frequently include side-bars with stories paraphrasing our Proclamation and publicizing your Chapter's membership meeting to commemorate "Mighty 8th Week". When the Proclamations are feature stories about exploits of our members, they offer great opportunities to showcase our history and achievements. They're also stepping stones for interesting prospective members who probably don't know your Chapter or the Historical Society exist.

Let's make this a year when every Chapter participates in 5th Annual Proclamation events. Be sure to send copies of your Chapter's success publicizing Mighty Eighth Air Force Week. No aborts! Go for it, and good luck in your endeavors. They will pay big dividends for your Chapter and Society.



**Hal Goetsch
Chairman, Public Relations and Publicity Committee**

LOSS OF A FLYING FORTRESS

Cynrik De Decker, a war historian in Belgium, has obtained a fascinating series of photographs from the files of a German fighter pilot who witnessed a crash of an unknown 8th Air Force B-17. Adam Lynch of the Western Pennsylvania Wing is assisting him in his efforts to identify the aircraft and the surviving crew members and submits this unusual series of photos to the 8th AF NEWS.

Frederich Keller was Kommander of II./JG 27 after a long combat history as a Luftwaffe fighter pilot. Keller witnessed the crash of a B-17 near his base at Merzhausen airfield, between 13 and 20 May, 1944. These pictures were released from his files and Cynrik De Decker has researched the records for information regarding them extensively but with little success. He has determined that two 96th BG aircraft were lost on 12 May 1944, one falling near Merzhausen, the others near the town of Wehrheim. Pilots of those two B-17s were Lt. Robert Lewis and Lt. Harold Tucker. The 452nd BG airplane which was shot down that day was flown by Capt Robert Patrick, pilot.

The two 96th Bomb Group airplanes are thought to have been involved in a mid-air collision. B-17 42-97382 was broken in half and there were three survivors of the crew: R/O David Long and gunners Floyd Tams and Helmuth Sickerott. Sickerott, whose ability to speak fluent German eventually allowed him to ride a bicycle out of Germany to friendly lines, recently stated that his aircraft was severely damaged in the nose section, rather than in

the fuselage area. German records report that the bomber in the photos was cut in half by a collision with Leutnant Heinz Schlecter's Bf 109.

De Decker states that it is possible that the captured crewmen in the photos may not be from the same crash site. He will appreciate any information or identifications of the crew members in the photos. Contact with Cynrik De Decker may be made through website: (<http://users.pandora.be/airwareurope/b17crash>). Historical Society member Adam Lynch may be reached at 2301 Haymaker Road, Monroeville PA 15146-4325.

The tail, falling as a leaf, would have slowly hit the ground with the gunner unhurt...



The explosion



The B-17 dives.

A German mechanic seeks cover behind a "Gustav" of II/JG 27. The bomber fell close to the airfield.





A parachute is seen through the smoke.



German soldiers run to the spot where the crew landed.



One of the crewmen with his chute.



Under escort, one of the American flyers is wounded, being helped by a comrade.

—Frank McKinley Stoneham, MA



The 7th Photo Recon Group's *Dot & Dash* flown by Claude Murray from the Mount Farm base

Lazy Lou a 446th Bomb Group B-24 with several dozen missions



photos courtesy of Jeff Ethell

FIFTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION AT THE HERITAGE MUSEUM

On May 11 - 13 the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum celebrated its fifth anniversary with several special events. Several of the crew of the 91st Bomb Group's *Memphis Belle* presented a seminar on their experiences, a program which was telecast internationally on C-Span television. Pilot Robert Morgan, co-pilot Jim Verenis and radio operator Bob Hansen were also part of a special showing of the original *Memphis Belle* movie produced in 1943 by Hollywood Director William Wyler at the renovated Lucas Theater in downtown Savannah, Georgia.

Military Appreciation Day at the Museum was an opportunity for a number of Army and National Guard units to show their wares and weapons to a large crowd of visitors. Several ROTC Drill Teams performed in front of the Museum facility. A special concert of patriotic and WW II-era music was presented by the Parris Island Marine Band to a packed house in the museum's Lewis E. Lyle Rotunda. Special opening ceremonies conducted by Board Chairman Buck Shuler were followed by presentations to honor the Volunteer staff who have played an important part in the Heritage Museum's success during these past five years. C. J. Roberts, President/CEO of the museum awarded five-year certificates to a number of members of the Volunteers.

The museum's galleries, gift shop and canteen were filled with appreciative visitors the entire weekend. Museum staff members worked around the clock to make the weekend a success. A special St. Nazaire Memorial exhibit was dedicated with several officials of the American Memorial Association from St. Nazaire, France in attendance. The Colonial Art Gallery featured artworks from the U.S. Air Force Art Collection.

A Board of Trustees meeting was held the first day of the celebration. Productive committee meetings laid out agendas for museum development for the upcoming year. Final plans for the Memorial Chapel of the Fallen Eagles were approved at that Board session. Architect Ken Spriggs will meet with engineers and contractors to begin Chapel construction in the Memorial Gardens in August. The Board acknowledged the ongoing Victory campaign fund drive, noting and recognizing the success achieved by the administration and staff in the Heritage Museum's planning and finances during this past year.



**Board of Trustees
Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum**



The U.S. Marine Band plays on



**l-r: Bob Hansen, Buck Shuler and Bob Morgan show
the signed print of the *Memphis Belle* presented to the
Heritage Museum**

HERITAGE MUSEUM ACTIVITIES

FIFTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION AT THE HERITAGE MUSEUM cont'd

Meet the crew!



A big night in old Savannah



The Chapel plans are finalized - Architect Ken Spriggs on the right points out the features to Chairman Shuler

MIGHTY EIGHTH HERITAGE MUSEUM MOVING FORWARD

C.J. Roberts President/CEO

On May 12th, 2001, over one thousand visitors gathered to celebrate the fifth anniversary of The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum. In the past five years, the museum has welcomed nearly a half million visitors, educated thousands of school children, and helped to link one generation to another. When Lew Lyle and others began planning this institution, they envisioned a museum that was nothing less than world-class: an institution that celebrated the deeds, the courage, and the sacrifice of the men and women of the Eighth Air Force.

With five years of successful operation under our belt, it is time to focus on the future. It is time to begin thinking about the museum five, ten, and even 20 years from now. It is time to share the stories of the Eighth Air Force with an even larger audience. It is time to achieve our full potential as an institution. In order to do this, we must all rally and work together. One tool that will enable us to move forward is the Victory Campaign, a \$9 million capital campaign. Funds raised through this effort will be used to create new exhibits and programs, make facility improvements, and increase our marketing---ensuring that we reach an even broader audience. The success of this campaign will ensure that we tell this story in a world-class setting and that we are able to continue to tell this story into the future. We chose to name this campaign the Victory campaign because of its World War II usage as a rallying cry for bringing everyone together. It is time once again to come together. This time we are coming together

not to liberate, but to teach. Together we can teach Americans about the price that was paid for freedom by a group of men and women who have worn the patch of the Eighth Air Force.

Nine million dollars is a lot of money, but it is obtainable if we work together. To date, we have already raised \$1.8 million toward this goal. In this campaign, no gift is too large or too small. I encourage everyone who feels that this museum is important to

come forward and contribute whatever sized contribution one is able to make. Your donation does not have to be paid all at once. This campaign will last for three years and pledges can be paid over this three-year period of time. In addition to requesting assistance from our members, the Board and I will be soliciting gifts from foundations, corporations, and individuals. Working together we will achieve the vision and carry this institution forward. I thank you for your past support and look forward to continuing to work together in the future.

-C.J.



AMERICAN MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION TRIBUTE

St. Nazaire Exhibit Dedicated at Heritage Museum

Michel Lugez and several other dignitaries from St. Nazaire, France attended the dedication of an exhibit memorializing American airmen who flew missions against German submarine pens in the early days of the war. St. Nazaire, on the coast of France, was heavily defended by German flak batteries and fighter aircraft and was regarded by 8th airmen as one of the most formidable targets of the time. Many aircrews of the "Four Horsemen" bomb groups were lost in the 1942-43 raids. In the attacks much of the coastal town was destroyed with heavy loss of civilian lives.

St. Nazaire's connection with American soldiers goes back to the days of the First World War. It was the port at which American soldiers disembarked to fight on French battlefields during World War I. The monument erected in 1926 to honor those troops was destroyed by Nazi forces in December, 1942. Michel Lugez helped establish the *Association du Memorial American* to rebuild the monument in St. Nazaire



American Memorial monument - St. Nazaire, France

harbor. His group raised \$500,000 to reach its goal in 1989. Two plaques, one in French and one in English, are inscribed "To the memory of American airmen, sailors and soldiers who died for the liberation of France 1942-1945"



St. Nazaire Commemorative plaque - Heritage Museum

During the Fifth Anniversary events at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah the St. Nazaire exhibit was officially dedicated in special ceremonies conducted by Harry Gobrecht, member of the Board of Trustees. Funded with contributions of \$35,000 from the American Memorial Association, several French officials were in attendance. In addition to President Michel Lugez were Mrs. Helgard Graham, Vice-President; M. Alain Kossura, research historian; and M. Alain Charles, translator. Remarks by Mr. Gobrecht paid tribute to the ongoing friendship of the people of St. Nazaire and President Lugez, through his translator, extended their appreciation to the men of the 8th Air Force.

The group was honored with a dinner in the library of the Heritage Museum and took part in several other activities during the anniversary weekend. The St. Nazaire exhibit occupies a prominent place in the Combat Gallery of the Museum and tells part of the story of the earliest bombing missions of the war.

Michel Lugez has authored numerous articles on the contributions of the 8th Air Force to the cause of freedom as well as a book *Missions de Bombardements Americains Sur Saint-Nazaire*. He has been honored by the French government with the Chevalier of Merit National Order Medal for his efforts to honor American military sacrifices.



French contingent - l-r: Alain Kossura, Alain Charles, Michel Lugez, Helgard Graham



Crash Historian Alain Kossura explains several of the hundreds of aircraft crash sites he has researched in France to Harry Gobrecht and others in the Heritage Museum library

EIGHTH AIR FORCE PILOT AWARDED DFC AFTER MID-AIR COLLISION

Howard Richardson Elects Not to Live near Savannah...

After his retirement from the Airforce, Howard Richardson returned to his hometown of Louisville, Mississippi and opened a successful real estate business there.

He flew his World War II combat missions, 35 of them, as the pilot of the B-17G *Mississippi Miss* with the 385th Bomb Group at Great Ashfield. Thirty-one years later he retired from a lifetime of service to his country as a member of the U.S. Air Force. Although his months of combat from May to September, 1944 are still very real in his mind, Howard Richardson's most memorable mission may have occurred on the night of February 5, 1958 on a training mission during the Cold War. Flying a 19th Bombardment Wing B-47 Stratojet on a night flight from Homestead AFB to a simulated attack on the town of Radford, West Virginia, Richardson's crew experienced an accidental mid-air collision with an F-86 Sabrejet, whose job was to simulate defensive fighter engagements with the bombers. The Strategic Air Command routinely flew missions with atomic weapons on board in order to accurately reproduce conditions which may face the aircrews if war broke out. These were USCM's - simulated combat missions. It was the Cold War and the threat of a Russian attack on the United States was a constant reality.

Howard recalls, "We left Homestead and went up through central Florida and flew almost to the Canadian border; then turned towards the target city. After that run we picked up fighters and my copilot turned around and used the electronic calculating gear and watched the fighters make passes at us. We turned south and got where we thought we were in friendly territory - I guess this was in South Carolina. I was messing with the fuel transfer and the copilot was helping the navigator shoot stars and things like that. All of a sudden we saw fighters going underneath us. We were at about 39,000 feet, it was February, real cold, with contrails all around.

The fighters had gotten something messed up. There we were - fat, dumb and happy - and all of a sudden we saw a flash out there on the right wing. Our copilot, Robert Lagerstrom, immediately knew it had to be another aircraft. What else would you hit up there at that time? It really jarred us."

The attacking F-86 fighter, flown by 1st Lt. Clarence Stuart, had a malfunction in its radar unit and had accidentally hit the horizontal stabilizer and right wing of Richardson's B-47. The fighter jet disintegrated and Stuart ejected safely. "We looked out and saw that the number six engine was hanging down," Richardson says. "The fuel tank - there is a drop tank right underneath the engine. It was gone. We couldn't see much but we knew



Lt. Col Howard Richardson



The SAC crew with B-47 Stratojet in the background l-r: Howard Richardson, Robert Lagerstrom, and Leland Woolard



The aircrew being awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross

we were in trouble. I got the copilot to call 'Mayday' and try to contact somebody. Finally we contacted Hunter Airbase in Savannah, Georgia and told them what was going on. I told the crew immediately 'Don't hit your ejection. We're gonna talk this over.'" Richardson dropped the aircraft down to 20,000 feet and dropped their flaps and landing gear to determine if they could maintain airspeed to effect a landing at Hunter. He dropped the fuel tank that remained on the left wing. The next problem was the atomic bomb they had in the bomb bay. The nuclear detonating device was not installed but 400 pounds of explosives which surrounded the nuclear center was a factor. Richardson realized that the number one priority was the safety of the crew. They had been informed that there was construction work going on at the runway at Hunter and he knew that if they crashed, the bomb would come forward through the flight deck and kill all of the crew members. At that point he decided to unload the bomb.

They flew out over the Atlantic ocean and dropped the bomb. "We decided to go out and toss the bomb offshore. I thought we went further out, but we dropped it. We told Hunter tower to tell SAC exactly what we were doing. We just flew a little ways off shore and dropped it and turned around and came back. The navigator, Leland Woolard, released it. It was about one o'clock in the morning and clear. Then we headed for the runway and pulled a long approach leg to line up with the runway. I had about 2000 hours in the aircraft and we landed it the first time in, but the speed was high - about 220 knots or so. We had a heck of a time lining up due to the damage. The wings on a B-47 sort of droop and I didn't know if that damaged #6 engine was gonna drag. Touching down at that high speed we skipped and when we came back down, I pulled the brake chute. We pulled the plane off the taxiway and stopped all the engines. The fire department and ambu-

lances, staff cars, everybody was out there. We got out and kissed the ground, and left it." The Stratojet never flew again.

The bomb drop coordinates were duly recorded by navigator Woolard. For the next five weeks, military diving teams searched for the bomb in the drop area with no success. Other events in the Cold War overshadowed that problem. The "Broken Arrow" search was officially terminated on April 16, 1958. The atomic bomb was never found. The fighter pilot, Lt. Stuart, spent the night in the low country marshes and was eventually located by a forest ranger. Suffering from frostbite, Stuart spent several weeks in hospitals. Strategic Air Commanders General Tommy Power and General J. P. McConnell investigated the accident and shortly thereafter, for their skill, courage and keen judgement under adverse circumstances, awarded the three bomber crew members the Distinguished Flying Cross. Recalling the mission, Howard Richardson speculates that the bomb disintegrated on impact or at the very least is buried in forty feet of mud off Wassaw Sound, near Tybee Island.

Richardson recently talked to Clarence Stuart for the first time since the eventful night. "I didn't know him before. The first thing I asked him on the phone was 'Why in the hell did you run into me?' We both laughed, but he didn't have too much to say. He said that his equipment was supposed to throw his plane off before it reached us, but it later was found and had proved to have malfunctioned. All he saw was a big old aircraft in his windshield. He turned but hit our wing. His aircraft just went apart. He said his mother was born in Louisville, Mississippi - a strange coincidence since Louisville is my hometown. It's just ten miles south of Jackson."

During the early months of 2001 local interest has been renewed concerning the lost bomb. The Tybee Island, Georgia Town Council has addressed possible dangers of radiation from the lost bomb. There are even reports by local shrimpers that deformed fish and crabs have been



Howard Richardson with his 385th Bomb Group B-17 Mississippi Miss

Eighth Air Force Historical Society PX Insert

Summer 2001

Greetings to all! We hope this message finds everyone well. The grass is growing, the flowers are blooming and Monica and I have some terrific new items to offer you in the PX.

The first offering is a brilliant new book entitled, *Luck of the Draw* by Frank D. Murphy (ITEM B19). This is the amazing story of 100th BG / 418th BS Navigator, Frank Murphy. Without any further description, I can truly say, this is one of the finest 8th Air Force books that has ever been written. Factual and well organized, Murphy describes his experiences as a B-17 crew member and subsequent POW at Stalag Luft III. Many photos and appendices accompany this fine work. You can't put this one down once you start!! Only \$35.00!!

8th Air Force Fighter Command at War - *The Long Reach* (ITEM B14) by Michael O'Leary is our next book selection. A classic survey of tactics written by over two-dozen 8th Air Force fighter pilots. Schilling (56th FG), Zemke (56th FG), Meroney (352nd FG), Christian (361st FG), Nichols (20th FG), Beeson (4th FG), Preddy (352nd FG) and Stewart (355th FG) are just some of the names that make up this important piece of 8th Air Force history. Along with the personal narratives by each pilot, the author also supplies a fine selection of photographs and color profile artwork!! Only \$22.95!!

The next item is another fine book relating to VIII Air Force Fighter Command, called *Aces and Wingmen II (Volume II)* (ITEM B20). Written by noted historian and author William Hess, this superb book illustrates the history of VIII Air Force Fighter Command. Each respective 8th Fighter Group is represented in this magnificent volume. It is packed with over 1200 black and white/color photos, many that have never before published. Hess gives a great account and a true testament to our "Little Friends." A book not to be missed! Only \$49.95!!

Lastly, Monica and I are very pleased to offer a new painting by award-winning aviation artist, Gil Cohen. Every once in a while, a piece of artwork comes along which literally takes your breath away. Well, this one certainly qualifies. *Rosie's Crew / Thorpe Abbotts - 1943* by Gil Cohen is a limited edition, signed and numbered print. Overall size 30" wide x 21" high - image size is 26" x 15 1/2." No sales pitch will do any further justice to this painting. Just look on the cover of the *Journal* and read the amazing story of Robert Rosenthal and his crew in this issue. Personally signed by "Rosie" and Gil, this is truly a piece of 8th Air Force history. Get your copy now, because it will be out of print soon. Prints will be shipped directly to the buyer from the publisher. Only \$145.00 each. (If you care to have your copy per-

sonalized by Gil, just let us know on a separate piece of paper and enclose it with your order).

8th Air Force Week is coming up; October 8th through October 14th, 2001. Remember we have a great selection of shirts, caps, flags, etc. for you to show off your spirit!! All the profits of the 8th AFHS PX go directly back to the Society. You are helping the organization by your purchase.

Until next time, Monica and I wish you all good health and blue skies!! It is an honor and a pleasure to serve you. With all of God's Blessings!!!



Mark and Monica Copeland

**8th Air Force Historical
Society PX Managers**

**REMOVABLE PX
4 PAGE INSERT**



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Prices listed are good through 1 August 2001.

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___	B1 Mighty Eighth Warpaint & Heraldry , Roger Freeman, 1997. Hdbd, 8 1/2 x 11, 160 pp, Color photos. \$ 34.95	___
	The latest edition from 8th AF historian Freeman. Examines the colors, markings and heraldry of every 8th AF unit. A must have book!	
___	B2 Fight for the Sky , Allied Fighter Aircraft in Europe and North Africa 1939-1945, Roger Freeman, 1999. Hdbd. Comprehensive \$ 29.95	___
	history of the fighter airwar over Europe and North Africa. Well written and contains over 250 superb black and white photos.	
___	B3 Airfields of the Eighth, Then & Now , Roger Freeman, 1987. Hdbd. Each 8th AF base is presented in this 'must-have' book. \$ 49.95	___
	The history of the base, and the 'then and now' photos illustrate this great work!	
___	B4 The Mighty Eighth - The Colour Record , Roger Freeman, 2001. Hdbd, 224pp. A new expanded edition of this 8th AF classic. \$ 39.95	___
	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!	
___	B5 56th Fighter Group , Roger Freeman, 2000. Stbd. 128 pages, numerous photos, 58 color profiles. Superb history of the 56th Fighter \$ 19.95	___
	Group known as 'Zemke's Wolfpack'. Brilliantly researched and skillfully written. A very enjoyable book - another Freeman classic!	
___	B6 The Mighty Eighth - A History of the Units, Men and Machines of the US 8th Air Force , Roger Freeman, 1970/2000. \$ 24.95	___
	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.	

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	AF logo. Outdoor \$ 49.95	___
	Indoor (with gold fringe) \$ 59.95	___

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—	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, 65 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	_____
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—	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, 1998. 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	_____
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—	B20	Aces & Wingmen II - Volume 2 - Hess, 1999. Hdbd, 8.5" x 11", 256 pp., 1049 b/w & 176 color photos. Photo journal of the 8th AF Fighter Command. Excellent book detailing every 8th AF Fighter Group by world renowned author William Hess. Well researched & brilliantly written!	\$ 49.95	_____
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—	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 August 2001.

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—	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	_____
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—	P1 The Crewman, by Gil Cohen. Limited Edition print by aviation artist Gil Cohen, as shown on the front cover of the Fall 1999 edition of the 8th AFHS Journal cover. Open edition. \$ 75.00	_____
—	P2 Rosie's Crew/Thorpe Abbots - 1943, by Gil Cohen. Limited Edition print by aviation artist Gil Cohen of 100th BG pilot Robert Rosenthal and crew. Featured on the Summer 2001 issue of the 8th AFHS Journal. Signed by Rosenthal and the artist. 900 s/n Limited Edition prints. <i>If you wish to have your print personalized, please include your request on a separate piece of paper and enclose it with your order.</i> \$145.00	_____
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—	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	_____		_____
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—	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	_____		_____

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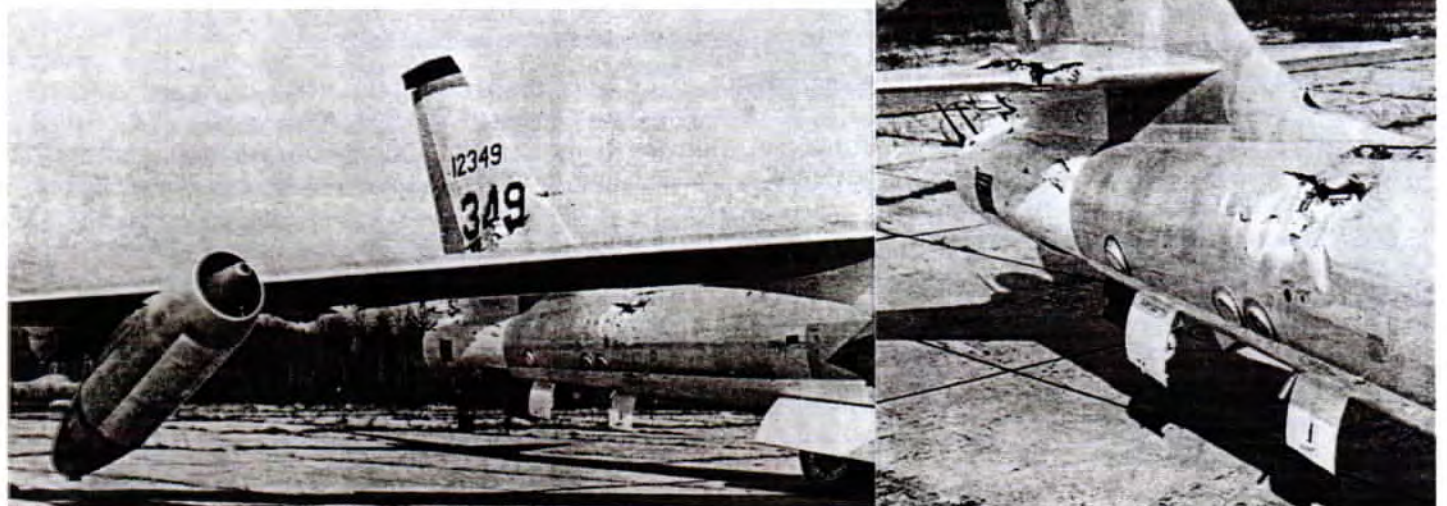
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found in the area. The Air Force has been requested to resume a search for the nuclear weapon. Richardson and several previous SAC Commanders have done their best to assure local residents that the weapon was definitely not armed when it was lost and that there is no danger of a nuclear explosion.

Howard Richardson is enjoying his retirement 500 miles away in his hometown of Louisville as a community leader and as an active member of the Mississippi Chapter of the 8th AF Historical Society.



Photos of the Richardson crew's damaged B-47



MIGHTY EIGHTH IN ENGLAND

Hi Walter,

I thought I would drop you a line regarding the article *Intelligence Wings* issue. The most important part of the article is missing because the realignment of the Intelligence Wings means that the 8th is now back in England, for the first time since WW2. On February 1st last at the American Air Museum here at Duxford, the 488th Intelligence Squadron held a ceremony to realign under 8th AF control. Ever conscious of their history, the ceremony was held at Duxford for the obvious reason!

Most of the Squadron is non-flying, but the important point is that the 8th is back where it belongs!

I would imagine a lot of the veterans will be pleased to know this. If you need more info, get in touch with RAF Mildenhall as they covered the event for their base magazine. They can be contacted at;

marauder@mildenhall.af.mil.

Keep up the good work with 8th AF News!

Andrew Height Duxford 78th FG Association UK Contact Friends of the Eighth, 8AFHS

POW EVACUATION

Dear Mr. Brown,

I am writing in response to the Mail Call Letter "Late Mission/POW Evacuation" written by John Frencho - Columbus OH. I was one of the Stalag residents who received a free ride to France. My recollections are different in some cases.

First, I do not recall any fighters being assembled in the area. There was a flack and radar school where they trained operators. There was one plane that would take off and fly out over the Baltic Sea whom we labeled "Fearless Fosdick". When the air raid siren would signal the 100 mile alert, Fearless would return to the strip at top speed.

The senior allied officer was Col. Hubert Zemke. When the Germans abandoned our camp and left for the American Front, Zemke put our own people in the towers and started working on safeguarding our Red Cross

parcels and obtaining more food for POWs. We never heard anything about the Russians hating the British, although they did have a big dislike for the Germans. There was no apparent difference in the activities of the British vs the Americans in the compound during the period. We mostly remained in camp and waited for transport.

When the evacuation fights started we were all ready to go, luggage not being a problem. We did get sprayed with a flit gun in our hair and other places, in case of lice. We were all very grateful to the men like John Frencho who took part in our return to France.

Anyone interested in further, and probably more accurate details, should consult "Zemke's Stalag - The Final Days of WW2" as told to Roger Freeman by Zemke. It was published by Smithsonian Institution Press in 1991. The song we heard on the Hit Parade that week was "Don't Fence Me In." Keep up your good work as the AF News is outstanding.

Warm regards,

W.W. "Bill" Moller Los Altos, CA

2001 ANNUAL REUNION

Gentlemen:

THANK YOU for including Texas Chapter Members in your Board Meeting in Irving, Texas and to compliment you on a very professional and efficient Board meeting. From what I saw and heard, it is very clear to me that the 8AFHS is well governed and that heritage of the 8th is in the best possible hands.

I will also take this opportunity to accent comments I put forth during the Board meeting:

1. The North Texas Chapter will do everything possible to help make this the best reunion ever!

- We will man two chapter tables if you will have the hotel provide the tables. We will furnish handouts and promotional material and a nice professionally done sign.
- Will try to get as many members as possible to attend.
- Will garner as much publicity as possible prior to and during the reunion.
- Will provide info on the various

attractions offered so you can make decisions on preferences.

2. Launch a serious effort to obtain as many oral histories as possible from the membership. Begin by interviewing all of the board members at the Texas reunion and then use this as an advertising point in the 8AF News. I will recommend a professional Video photographer for oral histories if the budget allows. If not, I will bring my camera and do the Board members.

3. Bringing all 8AF veterans under one banner is critical and I believe that the 8AFHS and ultimately the Savannah Museum are the way to go. The idea must be sold and we only have few years to do it. My prognosis is 5 years. To make it happen we must want to do it and commit to do it! We need a 5 year plan with clear objectives a methodology and assignment of individuals to make it happen.

Looking forward to 24-29 October... Cheers,

Dick Atkins, Scouting Force North Texas Chapter

APPRECIATION

Dear Jerry,

Enclosed are the pictures of you at the controls of a Delta Air Lines Boeing 727 just after our arrival in Cincinnati, Ohio on board Delta Flight 1531. I'm sure the cockpit is a little different then your World War II Liberator but with a couple of hours of dual instruction you would be ready to solo in no time. And just imagine, no one would be trying to shoot you out of the sky.

It was a real pleasure visiting with you and once again I sincerely thank you, your Liberator crew, and your generation for your dedication and the sacrifices you all made during World War II. I learned early on in my military career that no matter if you wore one stripe or four stars, you always honored the veterans that went before you. If it had not been for your honor, courage, and commitment we would not be enjoying the liberties and freedom we have today. You are a wonderful role model for all that is great about our country.

All the best and happy landings!

Sincerely & SEMPER FI,
 Scott Robertson
 Captain Delta Air Lines &
 Colonel United States Marine Corps
 Reserve

*A fine letter of appreciation from a
 Delta Air Lines crew to Jerry Schorr,
 492nd BG of West Hartford, CT.
 - Editor*

PIERRPONT SUR AVRE

Dear Mr. Brown:

I just received the March 2001 edition of the 8th AF News and was reading the article, "A Return to Pierrpont sur Avre" by Norman Grant. It was a wonderful article. I find that I meditate and reflect quite a bit on stories like these, especially when there is a photo of the men as there was here. It's a very somber feeling when I see so many young, happy faces whose lives came to a sudden and tragic end. It makes their sacrifices even more meaningful for me. My father served as a B-17 radio operator/gunner with the 401st BG and sometimes I think how he could have easily been one of those who never came home. Thanks for all the work you do to keep the past alive for those who were there and for the generations that follow.

Sincerely,

Donald R. Kent, Jr.
 Saint Cloud, MN

CY WILSON

Dear Walt,

I just read the article "Combined Reunion" in the current issue of 8th AF News and "King's Cliffe" jumped out at me. Here is why. I was the radio operator on one of the 305th planes (21 in all) that flew to Barth on May 13, 1945 to pick up the POWs at Stalag Luft 1. A few years ago I went to the National Archives to see what I could find out about the mission. After all our aircraft returned to base our C.O. sent this letter to the 1st Air Division: 1. Twenty-one A/C were dispatched. 2. All aircraft landed at Barth as briefed. 3. 604 Americans were evacuated from Barth. 4. 603 Americans were landed at A-70. 5. One American was landed at King's Cliffe. He was Lt. Col. Wilson and

he ordered and cleared the pilot to take him there. Apparently, he flew the 30 POWs from Barth to King's Cliffe and then to A-70, minus Wilson. I would appreciate anything anyone call tell me about this. Thanks.

Sincerely,

Tom Creekmore, 305th BG
 Severna Park, MD (410) 647-1555

P.S. Now, after 56 years and contacting Ken Ashbaugh, Secretary of the 20th Fighter Group, I have a picture of Lt. Col. Cy Wilson and the group report of the day he went down. Also a story by Wilson, "Behind the Wire" life in a prisoner of war camp. Sent to me by Ken Ashbaugh. Ken also told me Wilson was killed in an airplane accident in Texas in 1948.

GROUND AND SUPPORT UNITS

Dear Ed:

Enclosed is a picture of the plaque that our pilots presented to the "ground" people of the 364th Fighter Group. It now is on a wall at the Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson. The plaque honored every man, no matter what his job was. I do not know if any other Air Force Group has done this or not, but I can tell you that those of us who were the recipients - both officers and enlisted men - are very proud, and very appreciative of this plaque.

It does recognize the good relationship that existed on our base at Honington. As you can see, this relationship still exists.

Sincerely,

O.W. "Ollie" Joiner, Sec.
 364th F.G. Association
 Monroe, IA

8TH AF PATCH

Dear Sir,

Reading "A Very Short Story" by Donald Shee on page 35 of the 8th AF News March 2001 reminds me of the following.

Friday, April 3, 1998 was a day to remember for me. I was at the Cold Spring Branch of the Campbell County Library, where I volunteer, giving out trees for Arbor Day.

I was wearing my leather jacket, with the Eighth Air Force patch on it. A young man wearing a suit and carrying a brief case came up to me when he saw the patch, he said, "Eighth Air Force." He shook my hand and said "Thanks." I don't know who he was, but it made my service in World War II worthwhile.

Robert R. Hartman, 493rd BG
 Alexandria, KY

THE VETERANS

Dear Sir:

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to you for allowing my request for information to be published in the 8th AF News last year. My request was for interested 8th AF veterans of World War II to answer my inquiry concerning the names and art they chose and applied to their bomber aircraft. The purpose was to assist me in writing a thesis titled, at the time, "8th Air Force Bomber 'Nose Art', From a Crewman's Perspective." The school asked me to change the thesis name to "History and Background of 8th Air Force Bomber 'Nose Art' in World War II." The name change came about because I felt necessary to discuss the environment in which the crewmen flew, fought and died to better explain why and how they came about the names and art of their aircraft. Because the thesis was more than just a research project on plane names and art, I went with my professor's suggestion. The thesis is now in it's final stages of being approved by the school and I would like to say that I received several notes and phone calls from the faculty and staff commenting on the quality of the document. Without your support and the willingness of the veterans to



assist, the thesis would have been a far less meaningful study. If the Historical Society is interested, I would be honored to donate a copy of the thesis for their records and archives. Additionally, The World War II Institute at Florida State University asked for a copy along with all the original questionnaires and letters I received from the veterans. I will support their request since I think it absolutely critical to maintain such valuable first-hand information for future generations.

Personally, the thesis was one of the more rewarding experiences of my life. Many veterans accompanied the stories of the names and art with stories of their experiences during the war. It is so sad that more of my generation do not know of the sacrifices and service World War II veterans performed on our behalf. I hope that my document somehow helps educate our present day society of what the veterans of World War II experienced.

I would like to ask you for one more favor. Is it possible for you to publish my thanks to all of the participating veterans in the next publication of your magazine? For their help, I am eternally indebted, and because of this, I dedicated my thesis to them. Thank you once again.

Respectfully Yours,
Gregory B. Griffith Reno, NV

“MOUSE”

Dear Walt,
Just received the March 2001 issue of 8th Air Force News, which happened to be upside down in the mailbox and I immediately saw “Cripes A ‘Mighty” on the back cover. I recognized it immediately, as I knew George Preddy, who was from Greensboro, NC, my hometown. His brother, Bill Preddy, was about my age and I knew him better than I knew George, whose nickname was “Mouse.” Everybody in Greensboro knew him as “Mouse” Preddy; as a teenager, I didn't know for some time that his real name was George. If you look at the picture of him in the cockpit (on page 52), you'll see his sharp nosed, pointed face -- thus the nickname “Mouse.” I saw Mouse once when he came

home on leave - probably just before I went into Cadet Training in late 1942 - and at that time I believe he was already an Ace and could have quit, but he just wouldn't quit flying, and as you probably know, was shot down by our own anti-aircraft gunners after having shot down two planes that day, was on the tail of the third, which dove toward the ground to escape him, when our AA tried “to help him.” SAD! Incidentally, his brother Bill, also a fighter pilot, only lasted for a few missions and was shot down and killed, too. Furthermore, the family had a daughter, who was killed in Greensboro in an automobile accident.

I thought this might be of interest to you.

Sincerely,
Tom Taylor Hilton Head, S.C.

BASKETBALL TEAM

Hi Doc,
When I got to Page 18 in the March 2001 Issue I was so pleased to see that my photo of the Attlebridge Basketball team prompted Richard Chapdelaine to write his letter, furnish the flight crew pic and give the generous donation of \$1000.00. You caused it all to happen by printing my photo in Sept. 2000. Thanks from all the members.
The issues keep getting better.
Best Regards,
Robert J. Morin Matthews, NC

GUYS ON THE GROUND

Dear Doctor Brown:
I was most happy to read the article “The Guys On The Ground”, by Roger A. Freeman. I have always been interested in anything written by Roger, but particularly when he mentions the ground crews.
I was a S/Sgt of the 2016th Engineer Aviation Fire Fighting Platoon, stationed at Horsham St. Faith, Norfolk, England, from October 1943 to July 1945. During that period our outfit answered numerous crash and explosion fires on and off the base, as well as barracks fires.
All of the organizations such as Ordnance Supply and Maintenance, Quartermasters, Chemical Company,

MP's, Medical Dispensary, Weather Squadron, Signal Company Detachments, Finance Section, Postal Unit, and Station Complement Squadron, made a very important contribution to the war effort, but they were completely forgotten when it came to awarding battle stars as a recognition of their efforts.

This oversight was the cause of several minor uprisings at several locations after the end of the war. Speaking in behalf of my own Fire Fighting Platoon, the failure of the government to properly recognize the efforts of my men, who narrowly escaped with their lives on several occasions is something I have never been able to forget.

Thanks again to Roger for the article and to the 8th AF News for publishing it.

Sincerely,
**Tom Wholley 2016th F/F Platoon
458 bomb Group New Bedford, MA**

DID I OR DIDN'T I?

Recently I was looking over (for the 18th time) the December 2000 Issue of the 8th AF News. My eye caught the cartoon on page 58 regarding the absent-minded I.P. Freely.
Fortunately, in this instance, it turned out to be a laughing matter. It did make me recall a similar incident that happened to me on 6 Sept. 43. I was the Bombardier on the B17-F “Short Stride” that took off at 05:30 from Snertherton Heath headed for Stuttgart. Our target had an extremely effective smoke screen and after two unsuccessful runs we went after a secondary target in France, i.e. Strasbourg. On the way home we had about an hour and fifteen minutes running battle with FW 190s. One FW came at us from one o'clock. I started firing at about 600 yards. His engine began to pour black smoke and he went straight under us to the rear. I called to our ball turret and asked him to try and witness my “kill”. Well - “Mr. Freely” had also utilized our relief tube without warning the ball turret gunner who was eager to advise that he couldn't see a thing. The rest of our gunners were busy with their own problems so there was no one that could confirm “One FW 190



destroyed" - or even damaged. Under the circumstances I decided that there was no point in mentioning the incident at debriefing. This all happened about 57 years ago and I have always wondered whether or not I actually shot down a FW 190. Guess I will just keep wondering.

**Frank Wiswall 96th BG
Boonton, NJ**

P.S.: I kept a log of the combat missions I flew as well as a daily diary of my 'war years'. That's the only reason I have such a "sharp memory" today.

BELLY LANDINGS

Dear Sir:

In reply to your question about wheels-up landings, March 2001 issue.

I was the navigator on a B-17 that was shot down over Germany and we made it across the front lines to land in Russia occupied Poland. From the moment we were hit, we assumed that the landing would be wheels-up, so we did not feather an engine that was vibrating very badly. This reduced the odds of the prop tearing the engine loose. Also, several of our chutes were damaged, so we did not have the option of jumping. My pilot picked a freshly plowed field and executed one of the smoothest landings I have ever seen. I can only compare it to the way a seaplane lands, almost no travel after contact. The bombay had dirt up to the catwalk and the ball turret was scuffed up but not much other damage to the plane. It was already scrap from the battle damage and it was taken over by the Russians as soon as we landed, so the safety of the crew was the one and only consideration in selecting our landing. All but the pilots were in the radio room with hands behind our heads as we had been trained to do and no one had the slightest damage from the landing. It was my great pleasure to testify before a flying board on why the two pilots should be awarded the DFC for this landing. They were so honored. They were Merrill Jensen, pilot, and Charles Kemp, copilot.

In considering landing on a runway, I can think of very few reasons why a plane would keep its wheels up, if all

the systems were intact as you describe. Above all, the first consideration must be the safety of the crew for any wheels up landing. If the plane survives, so much the better, but that must be a distant second consideration. I believe that some fields have a foam that can be applied to a runway to reduce friction. That should help.

Not only will a prudent man leave a crashed plane quickly; a scared man, a brave man, anyone still breathing, should assume that the plane might blow up in less than 20 seconds after touching down, regardless of how smooth the landing is.

Happy landings,

Richard Scroxtton Apalachin, NY

HORN HONKING

Dear Sir:

A few years back the family was pondering, what shall we get dad for his birthday? My son Joe came up with the best idea, a vanity license plate. I've met a lot of nice people asking about the plate. Also a lot of horn honking, I never know if its the plate or my driving.

Does anyone know or remember Carmen Root? Root was our radio operator, Tarvid's crew on *Old Black Magic* - late 1944-45. He is our missing link. Six of us are in contact with each other and meet at reunions, two are deceased. Any info would be appreciated. His last known residence was Pontiac, Michigan.

Lou Grand Williams

Co-pilot - *Old Black Magic*
Rory50@webtv.net



5TH EMERGENCY RESCUE SQUADRON

Dear Walter:

I am enclosing the Logo created and designed by Frank Fong who served as a P-47 "Thunderbolt" pilot with

356th Fighter Groups and later with 5th Emergency Rescue Squadron. Frank was a commercial artist in civilian life.

Toward the end of the war, the Logo was painted on the cowling of the P-47s in the 5th.

Frank Fong now lives in Aventura, Fla.

I thought it may be of interest as part of the 8th's history. I am well and happy and wish you the same.

Sincerely,

Virgil F. Thompson

5th Emergency Rescue SQ

Virgil Thompson has been a long-term contributor to the 8th AF News. -Editor

A TOAST TO THE EIGHTH

One of the 8th Air Force's most marvelous accomplishments is the fact that no attack was ever abandoned because of enemy action. No matter how deadly the flak or fighters, we always penetrated to the chosen target unless bombing was prohibited by weather conditions. It took gutsy leaders and indomitable crews to establish this tradition. There was never any waiting until we had superior forces; we flew with what we had right from the gitgo.

Many military units, both domestic and foreign, have many established customs and traditions. Perhaps at a ceremony with other military units, a suitable toast to our outfit might be solicited. May I suggest for everyone's consideration:

To "The 8th Air Force,
For whom retreat is
solely a ceremony at sundown"

Such a toast could also be used as a motto, a vow by present and future 8th Air Force personnel to help keep this sterling record intact. Would this not be an affirmation of our best tradition?

**Gerry Scoones 381st BG
Orchard Park, NY**



James H. Kindelberger

He built more planes in his forty-six year career than any other man in history.

Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work.

Thomas A. Edison

**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>**

THE FIX

From March 01 8th AF NEWS:

The story Fighter Scramble, page 11, has received much favorable comment from the troops. It was translated from *Jager Blatt* and submitted by Gene Anderson of Escondido, California.

Apologies to artist Jim Caiella for the inadvertent omission of the copyright tag on his artwork on the issue's back cover. Included should have been: Copyright 2000 Jim Caiella.

The editor's comments following Eddie Deerfield's letter in Mail Call chopped off his hometown and BG: 303rd BG; Palm Harbor, Florida.



Dear Sir,
Enclosed is a copy of a poem I wrote to my wife when I was overseas. I was fortunate enough when at Hamilton Field in April of 1941 to be assistant crew chief on the Cal Ira Eaker's P-40 Tomahawk. What a kind gentleman to work for - Commander of 20th Fighter Group.
Sincerely, Frank "Pete" Neason
Hudson, FL

A CREW CHIEF'S VICTORY
By Frank "Pete" Neason

Up in the morning at the break of dawn
Over to chow with the hungry throng.
Off to work with the lighting of day
To get the ship ready and on its way.

Out on the line like a waiting bird
She waits the Monkey's commanding word.
"Good morning, Lieutenant. An early flight?"
"I have to loosen the cob webs, I've had a rough night!"

"Is she ready to go, everything Okay?"
"Yes Sir, it is, in shape One A!"
He slips into his chute, fastens his belts
The engine kicks off with the Monkey's help!

"Happy Landings, Lieutenant. Good Luck to you!"
Down the long runway he soars into the blue.
Listen to that engine purring so true.
"For pilot alone?" "No, us Monkeys too!"
"Is he all alone?" "Not on your life!"
"Us Monkey's are with him even out of sight!"

Here he comes with a steady drone
After an hour's work, she is coming home!
"Did you have a nice flight, Sir? How did it perk for you?"
"Just fine. Did you see my landing?"
"It really has improved!"

So day after day it goes on and on
Teamwork into the blue
Headed straight for victory
Peace and happiness for all at home
"Especially, Sir for me and you!"

Pete Neason wrote the above poem in 1943 for his wife. Last August 4 they celebrated 56 years of marriage. The "Monkey" he refers to in the poem is to the crew chief charged with maintaining an airplane. . . a "grease monkey" or mechanic.

-Editor

**"Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power."
Abraham Lincoln**

AN INTRODUCTION TO TWIN-ENGINE FIGHTERS

by W.E. "Bill" Satterwhite, Captain 367th Fighter Group 9th Air Force Savannah, GA

Having been trained in single engine aircraft, and having time in P-39 and P-40 fighters, I had never even ridden in a twin-engined aircraft. Nor, do I believe, had any of the other pilots in the 367th Group. So it came as a surprise when, upon our arrival in England in the late Winter or early Spring, to find awaiting us large, sleek, silver P38s. We were given ten hours time to familiarize with the flying characteristics of the plane. The long range capability of the P38s with belly tanks, though assigned to the Ninth Air Force, made it useful in escorting Eighth Air Force bombers engaged in deep penetration missions as was the case on May 28, 1944.

Our departure from our base in Southern England, the climb-out and the heading to intercept the bombers was routine. Crossing the Channel coast of France, as always, we passed over the ten to twenty mile "Flak Belt" installed along the entire coast of Europe controlled by Germany. Enroute we encountered intermittent Eighty-Eight millimeter antiaircraft fire with no serious damage.

Upon intercepting the bomber stream the short range fighters turned back and we set-up our weaving pattern over the groups we were assigned to protect. Our altitude was slightly more than thirty thousand feet, and we were throttled back to limit speed so as not to overrun the bombers. As the target

was approached the flak became intense. A burst exploded especially close to my plane and that of my wing man. I felt an impact and concussion from the explosion. My wing man called saying I was hit and my left engine was smoking. It actually was coolant streaming out. I assessed the damage to the engine, feathered the prop to keep it from "windmilling" and cut off fuel to the left engine and shut off the ignition. I had fallen from formation while checking the other engine, trying the flying characteristics to determine if controls were intact. Being stabilized, I dropped my exterior tanks, told the Squadron Leader I was damaged and I was authorized to turn back to the UK. My wing man, as was the custom, remained with me to provide cover, if needed. Course was set to home with nearly six hundred miles of enemy territory to cross. The weather was worsening. The next two and a half to three hours proved to be uneventful which was helpful as flying instruments, holding the torque against the powered engine and navigating by chart when I could see a landmark, was keeping me occupied.

Somewhere nearing the Channel Coast my wing man and I became separated. Crossing the Channel I made landfall in mid-England, saw a grass strip and made my first single engine landing in a P-38. It was a British/Australian Fighter Field. I was pleased to be back on friendly turf. To say I was tired would be an understatement. It felt like "home" though I was not on my own base. It was close enough. I was not about to fly on and try to find my field near Stoney Cross. My base and made ready to go again.

It was a memorable day. Subsequent days supporting the landings at Normandy, "beating-up" enemy airfields, strafing the retreating German Seventh Army, knocking out Tiger Royals (Tanks) for Gen. Patton's Eleventh and Ninth Armored Divisions and softening the Drop Area at Nijmegen for paratroopers became more exciting.

Thanks for the memories!

Bill Satterwhite's story was submitted by Bill Barber, Savannah, GA

P-38 twin-engine fighter of the 7th Photo Recon Group



You would think the fury of aerial bombardment
Would rouse God to relent; the infinite spaces
Are still silent. He looks on shock-pried faces.
History, even, does not know what is meant.

-Richard Eberhart

'The Fury of Aerial Bombardment'

A fellow from Kona went to Arizona for his health, but after two months there, he died. He was brought back home where family and friends paid their last respects at his funeral. "Oh, doesn't he look nice?" said one visitor. "He sure does", whispered another, "Those two months in Arizona did him a lot of good!"

REUNIONS

BAD 2 ASSOCIATION

Blackpool, England Reunion

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

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

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

361ST FIGHTER GROUP WWII

Doubletree Hotel Tucson, Arizona
October 14-17, 2001
Contact: David C. Landin
8419 Michael Road
Richmond, VA. 23229
(804) 288-5889.

44TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

Annual B Wing reunion Oct. 15-18, 2001 Isle of Capri Casino & Hotel, Bossier City, LA & Barksdale Field. Contact: Mike Yuspeh, 7214 Sardonyx Street, New Orleans, LA 70124-3509 Phone: (504) 283-3424 Fax: (504) 283-3425
email: Mikeyuspeh@worldnet.att.net

ANNUAL REUNION

The 455th Bomb Sqd./323rd Bomb Grp. (M), "White Tailed Marauders" 9th Air Force, WWII, September 29-October 2, 2001 The Ramada Hotel, Natchez, Mississippi.
Host: Robert Mims, 615 State Street, Natchez, MS. 39120
Email: mimsr.101@bkbkbank.com

452nd BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

27th Reunion
October 11-14, 2001 Sheraton North Charleston Hotel, Charleston, South Carolina. Contact: Hank North, 901 Poling Dr., Columbus, OH. 43224 or phone 1-800-452-9099.

479th FIGHTER GROUP

The 436th Fighter Squadron - 479th Fighter Group October 3-7, 2001 Four Points by Sheraton Hotel, Niagara Falls, NY. Reservations call (800) 325-3535. Information contact Al Massey, 485 Fries Road, Tonawanda, NY 14150. (716) 832-5760

2nd AIR DIVISION ASSOCIATION

November 1 - 9, 2001
Norwich, England

351ST BOMB GROUP REUNION ASSOCIATION

The Four men shown were all gunners in the 8th AF and play softball with the Kids & Kubs in St. Petersburg, Florida. Kids and Kubs play a number of baseball games to benefit charities of the St. Petersburg, FL area.



Listed left to right: **Bob Goren**, S/Sgt, Waistgunner/Toggler, 33 missions, 398th BG. **Joe Klosterman**, T/Sgt, Eng./TopTurret, 17 missions, 398th BG. **Joe Marks**, T/Sgt, Eng./Top Turret, 35 missions, 351st BG. **Joe Coro**, T/Sgt, Radioman, 44th BG. Shot down at Brunswick on April 8, 1944. Prisoner at Stalag 17B till end of war. Submitted by Joe Marks, 351st BG St. Petersburg, FL



2002 REUNION DATES SET

The national 8th AF Historical Society's annual reunion will be held in Norfolk VA at the Sheraton Waterfront. The dates are **October 1st - 6th, 2002**. Units and Chapters should try to make plans around these dates if possible, so as not to miss all the activities going on reunion week.

NATIONAL EIGHTH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REUNION

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



Here is my WWII plate which I have owned for six years. I was stopped for speeding in a 25 mph zone. A decent officer looked at the plate and said he was in the Marines. He had always admired us older WWII Vets for what we did for our country. He decided not to give me a speeding ticket (\$144). He did, thankfully, cite me for not wearing a seat belt (\$44). Is this justice or what?

Jim White 352nd FG Palm Beach Gardens, FL

ADVERTISING

The 8TH AF News will only accept advertising that has to do with the 8th Air Force, 8th Air Force units or personnel, 8th Air Force memorabilia, or the Air War over Western Europe. The 8th AF Historical Society does not endorse or guarantee products or services advertised in this journal, although all have been screened for content and relevancy.

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Spring Hill, TN 37174

CHAPTER NEWS

NORTH EAST IOWA WING MEETING

The North East Wing, of our Iowa Chapter, met at the Elks Lodge in Waterloo April 20, 2001 for a noon luncheon. Fifty-four people attended the meeting.

After signing in and getting seated, the program began with the singing of "America" followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and the invocation under the very able leadership of board member, Rudy Nelson. Bob Reeves played piano for the opening ceremonies.

One of our young associate members, Greg Piper from Iowa City, came dressed in World War II class A Army Air Corps Officer's uniform. He really looked good! It's good to see our young Associates taking such an active and enthusiastic part in the history of the Mighty Eighth!

Our program was a presentation on "Flying The Highway Patrol Plane" by Robert Conrad, who flies the Iowa Highway Patrol plane in Northeast Iowa. Patrolman Conrad flies one of the two planes based at the Waterloo Municipal airport. He gave a fine presentation which held everyone's interest, and answered questions from the audience.

Among our guests were a number of former B-29 people who enjoy coming to our N.E. Iowa Wing Meetings.

Leon Mehring Treasurer

NEW YORK STATE SOUTHERN WING CHAPTER

The New York State Southern Wing Chapter held it's tenth Anniversary luncheon, Saturday, April 28, 2001 at the Wyndham Gardens Hotel, Flushing, New York. One hundred members, their families and guests attended. A full program of friendship, humor, and recall of the great effort of the Mighty Eighth was the major part of the program.

The V.P. of the Chapter, Gus Nathan, 486th Bomb Group, served as Master of Ceremonies. A unique event, the award of a medallion honoring the Chapter members of the Chapter was a part of the program. The awards were presented by "Gabby" Gabreski, a Charter member. Gus Nathan also honored the President, Larry Goldstein by presenting a beautiful plaque to him for his effort in forming the Chapter ten years ago, his effort to keep the New York State Southern Wing Chapter in the forefront of every major Air Force activity in the New York area, and lastly, for his serving on the Board of Directors of the Historical Society.

The President addressed the luncheon guests and summarized the efforts of the Chapter over the ten year period. They include the recognition by New York State Governor, George E. Pataki, the New York State Senate, and State Senator Serphin R. Maltese, and the efforts of the members of the Eighth for placing a plaque in the State Justice Department Building in Albany, N.Y. The State officials gave a second \$1,000 which was recently received by the Chapter, and a permanent Memorial for Eighth Air Force Prisoners of War will be placed in the Museum.

The Guest of Honor was Jeff Clyman, CEO of the American Airpower Museum, and CEO of Averix Corporation. He spoke of the effort being made by the American Airpower Museum to preserve the honor and

history of American air power in all conflicts.

The meeting closed with a benediction by Father Kenneth Ross, a Chapter member, and a former ball turret gunner in the 306th Bomb group and an Ex-POW.

GENERAL CURTIS LEMAY CHAPTER

The Gen. Curtis LeMay Chapter had a luncheon meeting at the Los Angeles Air Force Base featuring a great roast beef buffet was enjoyed by all.

Our guest speaker was Lt. Col. Robert Shofner, USAF. He is a pilot but his present assignment is in the space program which is being conducted on this base. This program is so big that Lt. Col. Shofner feels it should be separated from the Air Force and should be a space force as the training is completely different. They are working on a Hyper Spectral Program that can see through chemical agents and gases. They also have space cameras and space radar that can see things on the ground from space such as tanks, cars, trucks, personnel movements, missiles etc. There was a lively question and answer period which was very interesting and informative.

This was followed by hanger flying by the audience which is really enjoyed by the Wives and Women as they rarely ever heard the stories of the ordeals that their mates never or rarely talk about. This part is good for cleansing the soul. Bob Alvis, who is the West Coast Rep for the World War II museum, gave us a report that the museum is not only completely funded but they have money to spare for future maintenance. 'Big Shorty' Codman is planning the next meeting at Vandenberg Air Force base around August when there will be a space shot. This will be a program shared with the Gen. Doolittle Chapter of Northern California. We shall have tours of the base and the meetings will be two a day program, possibly three.

Our group will also be attending Memorial Day Services at the Wadsworth Veterans Cemetery in Westwood which is managed by William Livingston. Music will be by the 63rd Army Band. Master of Ceremonies will be Rear Admiral William H Butler, USNR. Deputy Commander Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet

Governor Gray Davis, Governor of California will also be speaking.

Murray 'Big Shorty' Codman

COLORADO CHAPTER

March 2001

Mike Quering was elected President of the Colorado Chapter and all nominees for other offices and board of directors were so elected. A second petition to save the Lorient sub-pens was circulated for those that did not sign the first one. It will be forwarded by David Shomper to Lorient, France. A standing ovation was given to our member George Meshko, all trussed up like a robot man, after the crash of his experimental aircraft. Thank the Lord and his good luck genie, he survived the crash, but his plane was not salvagable. Our speaker was Mr. Jim Buck, research scientist whose topic was "WWII Science and

Luck." Mr. Buck, was drafted but remained a civilian during the war under the command of LCDR Hyman Rickover. A team of research scientists were a top secret organization. Their main projects were to assist in ending the war with secret weapons and devices, such as sonar, night vision, camouflage convoy lighting and a scheme to blind the German bombers bombing London, help underwater naval teams to get back to their positions after fulfilling missions in enemy waters. After the war he worked in R&D at GE and was also a consultant to NASA on project Apollo.

We had a great turnout and will start planning our annual luncheon at the Air Force Academy this summer.

by **Mike Quering, President and Unit Contact**
Littleton, CO E-Mail wquering@earthlink.net

WESTERN NEW YORK CHAPTER

President Dick Waring really ran the whole show at the April meeting of the Western New York Chapter. In addition to running the meeting, Dick proved to be the mystery speaker. During the luncheon and meeting, it was apparent there was no non-member in attendance, and concern developed that something was amiss. When Dick concluded the meeting and introduced himself as the speaker, it delighted the crowd. In his narration, he explained that after he completed his regular tour as a navigator, he joined the Scouting Force. As a member of the scouts, he checked on conditions of the target areas and routes in and out of Germany, before the bomber stream arrived. He would then relay the information concerning weather conditions to the mission commanders and headquarters. This early warning allowed the mission commanders and 8th Air Force headquarters to make adjustments to the original battle plan. He also stated that contrary to rumor, the members of the Scouting Force did not wear short pants and merit badges. The June meeting will be held in the Niagara Aerospace Museum in Niagara Falls. Following luncheon, the Executive Director, Richard Byron, will give a short talk before leading the tour of the site. Much of the material on display will be recognized as designed and built in Western New York, including a fully restored P-39.

Gerry Scoones/"Chapter Chatter."

LOUISIANA CHAPTER

The Best Western Motel in Alexandria, Louisiana was the site of our Spring meeting. Friday night was just sitting around and visiting and a time of fellowship. President Harry Tanner spent most of Friday afternoon and evening showing his vast World War II Airmen collection which was open to the public. Saturday morning started with a meeting of the Board of Directors. A chapter noon meeting followed with a buffet style lunch and was called to order by President Tanner. The chapter voted to start a Newsletter with Wiley Noble as editor. Guest speaker was General Peyton Cole (Ret), former Commander of Eighth Air Force at Barksdale and new Chapter board member. The fall meeting will be held in Bossier City, La., in late September or early October.

OREGON CHAPTER

President Joe Conroy opened the February meeting with the nominating committee's proposed slate of officers for the coming year. The slate was approved unanimously. The officers are: President, Joe Conroy, 306th BG; Vice President, Clint Gruber, 93rd BG; Secretary, Don Keller, Associate Member; Treasurer, Frank Bueneman, 96th BG; Chaplain, Roland Stewart, 466th BG. In his added role as Historian, President Conroy announced that seven members thus far have responded to his plea for written memories of the Chapter members. Input ranges from one or two page incident reports to full-fledged published books. Conroy repeated his plea for memoirs, emphasizing that the true history of the Mighty Eighth was made not just by combat personnel, but also by all the many thousands of critical support people who kept them flying.

The speaker for the meeting was Ken Reusser, Marine Corps fighter pilot in the Pacific in WW2, who also served in the Korean War. Reusser was stationed on Okinawa in May, 1945 when Japanese Kamikaze attacks on the huge American fleet was at its height. The attacks were preceded by a Japanese observation plane flying at extreme altitude, too high for anti-aircraft or ordinary fighter interception.

On May 10, 1943, Reusser led a flight of four stripped-down Corsair fighters against the observation plane. After a long climb, with two of the flight forced to abort and with wingman far behind, Reusser finally closed in on his quarry at 43,000 feet! Discovering that his guns were inoperable, Reusser closed and began chewing away at the intruder's "tail feathers" with his prop. Finally joined by his wingman Robert Klingman, whose guns also were inoperable, the two Marine pilots downed the Japanese plane by destroying it with their props. For their epic struggle, both Reusser and Klingman received the Navy Cross. Before closing the meeting, President Conroy commented that 31 percent of our Chapter membership is now composed of Associate Members, thanks to an aggressive recruitment effort. This bodes well for the future of the Chapter, and Conroy welcomed three new Associates who signed up at the meeting, as well as four new 8AF veteran members in attendance.

Clint Gruber

ARIZONA CHAPTER

The Arizona Chapter made its annual trek to the Ramada Hotel and Casino in Laughlin, Nevada for our annual reunion where they cater to Veterans. Iris McCoy was again the responsible person who made sure all was organized and did the super job she always does. Overheard during the banquet was that several members had made their donations to help pay the light bill. The usual good time was had by all. As we used to say "You have to expect some losses in a big operation."

As usual, the food was super as was the service. The museum in the Pavillion room containing WWII memorabilia continues to grow and improves in quality and quantity. President, Gene Jensen; Vice President, Robert Tatro;

CHAPTER NEWS

Secretary, Dick Sykora; Treasurer, Myron Smith; Directors and Editors remained the same.

After several days of full stomachs and lighter wallets, our warriors went their separate ways and look forward to another good time, camaraderie, and tall tales.

Frank E. Birtciel Scottsdale, AZ

NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA CHAPTER

The NCAC's Spring Luncheon was held at the 94th Aero Restaurant on March 20, 2001. Featured speaker was Air Marshal Ron Dick, (RAF), who spoke on his personal adventures with B-17's. For the May meeting former Astronaut Joseph P. Allen spoke about his experiences. A special program was the presentation of the French Thank-You America certificates to Chapter members by the French General Council.

ALABAMA CHAPTER

The Alabama folks have done it again! They held a fantastic Luau party at their annual Chapter meeting in Gulf Shores on April 6-8. Music, a roasted pig, hula dancing and hula girls were the highlights of the affair, which is becoming legendary in those parts of the country. Many attendees joining in the festivities were from other HS Chapters.

The featured banquet speaker was Lt. Gen. E. G. "Buck" Shuler Jr. who gave an in-depth presentation of the activities and status of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah. Headed up by George Grau, the weekend was one to remember. The next Chapter meeting will be held July 13th at the Southern Museum of Flight near Birmingham.

The North Alabama Wing chose March 17th, St. Patrick's Day, to journey in four carloads to Huntsville for the annual parade and the wearing of the green. Newly-elected Wing officers are: Delome Cumbaa, Sec-Treas; Doug Garner, Vice Commander; and Ann Vaughn, Commander.

KENTUCKY CHAPTER

The Kentucky Chapter reports an excellent response to their call for period artifacts to use in displays at the Aviation Museum of Kentucky. This Museum in Lexington has been open six years and has had visitors from all 50 States and 40 foreign countries. Annual memberships can be obtained by sending a \$35 check to Steve Parker, AM of Ky, POB 4116, Lexington KY 40544.

At this year's Kentucky Derby the Chapter's booth was visited by a large number of attendees and by

Kentucky Colonels. Several new members were enlisted into the Chapter.

GEORGIA CHAPTER

The Members of the Georgia Chapter enjoyed their annual meeting last January in Pooler GA. They decided to have a special night during the fifth anniversary celebration weekend at the Heritage Museum. A great dinner was served and awards were presented to several members. Karaoke singing brought out the best in a number of would-be Elvises. In a very special ceremony, Chapter President Henry Hughey and Al McMahan presented Heritage Museum Chairman Buck Shuler a check for \$7700 from the Chapter to go towards the constructions of the Chapel of the Fallen Eagles at the Museum. Five members of the national HS Board of Directors attended this evening of fun and camaraderie.

SAVANNAH WING

The Savannah Wing was once again one of the highlights of the big St. Patrick's Day parade in downtown Savannah. Col. Ed Wexler and members of his 165th ANG were present and contributed to the success of the 8th AFHS Float. Bev Poole, Connie Metts, and others also were enthusiastic workers for this big day in Savannah. The Wing also saw action in the "Stand Up for America Day" parade in Port Wentworth on April 28th.

Many Wing members were on hand in their role of Heritage Museum volunteers to help with the crowds of folks who attended the Military Appreciation Day and 5th Anniversary activities at the museum.

VIRGINIA WING

The Peninsular Wing is taking an active part in educating the younger generations about the values and lessons of the 8th Air Force, and World War II in general. Class schedules have been set to include members of the Wing visiting the local schools and taking part in their history curriculum. The veterans and their stories are received with great interest and enthusiasm by the students and teachers alike. Other Virginia districts are also becoming involved in this program.

ILLINOIS CHAPTER

The U. S. Navy has once again visited the Illinois Chapter. The May meeting speaker was retired Navy Captain Ralph Laedtke. Capt. Laedtke was a Navy Corpsman at Pearl Harbor, Guadalcanal and Guam, along with other interesting assignments. Chapter meetings are always preceded by an informal dinner gathering of the troops at the Old Country Buffet, near the meeting hall.



At the 2001 Ohio Valley Military Societies Show of Shows. L-R: Ken Payton, Wayne Tabor, Maj. Gen. Philip Ardery, Robert Conley, Woody Briscoe, Tim Pryor, Joe Gagliardi, Tom Ray & Joe Milner

Lake Tiak O' Khata

Mississippi Chapter holds its Annual Reunion



L-R: Jean Blassie, Ethelda Nail, Lou Pennebaker & Major Pat Blassie

Tucked into the middle of the State of Mississippi is a spot of beauty and serenity called Lake Tiak O'Khata, where in April every imaginable wild flower is blooming, every conceivable bird is singing, fish of every denomination are jumping. The water is a sparkling blue and a light breeze ruffles it slightly in the afternoon. Only a minimum of man-made development has marred the landscape.

There is comfort here - comfortable hotel or cabin rooms, air conditioned, but the air conditioning is hardly needed in April among the large oak, hickory and maple trees that dominate the scene. Another major comfort is the compelling food served in the idyllic spot. If you have been disappointed in the food you've been served along a Southern highway, disappointed because it in no way lives up to the reputation which the South has for great cooking, that's because it was along the highway, not out here in the last country! This is the country, hidden away in the hills, and the country food is not just excellent, it's magnificent.

All of the above is but a preamble, a little bit of the thinking behind the Mississippi Chapter's continuing to repair to lovely Lake Tiak O'Khata in April every year. In spite of our rapidly approaching "Senior Citizen" status, we keep having good attendance and you can bet we keep having a good time. The management of the resort facility seems to like our group; everyone from the lowest ranking retainer, or cook, or waitress, or maid, or clerk, to the top management, seems to take

it as a personal responsibility to meet our every need; to make us enjoy our stay.

When we in the Mississippi Chapter met for our Eleventh Annual Reunion this year at Lake Tiak O'Khata, we all knew about the setting, we all knew about the good Southern food, we all knew in advance about the helpful staff. We also knew all the folks who had registered as attendees - without a doubt, the best folks in the world - what more could we ask for a great Reunion? What we had to do to make it a great Reunion and more was to have an outstanding program of activities. Just look at this program: Friday evening we were thoroughly entertained by that spiffy musical organization know to all as "Bert Hill and His Over the Hill Jazz Band." This year Bert just added a special icing on the cake by bringing with him Morris and Pamela Hubbard who absolutely wowed the audience with their rendition of the songs the Mighty Eighth loves. Then, for good measure, and as a splendid change of pace, Deborah Tierce of Itawamba Community College spoke some inspiring words, sprinkled with gems of wit and moments of hilarity. Then, more dance and listening music kept us engaged until we people of World War II vintage considered that a decent bed-time hour had arrived. Our Saturday luncheon featured something we all deemed particularly wonderful and which we shall long remember. Air Force Major Pat Blassie gave a talk on the disinterment of her brother, Michael Blassie, a fighter pilot who was killed in Viet Nam and was buried at Arlington as the Unknown Soldier of that war. Pat told how she and other members of her family went through years of meticulous research to prove the Unknown Soldier was not unknown, but was indeed her brother, Michael. In a very moving account of the removal of her brother's body from Arlington and his reburial at home in St. Louis, Pat had us all with tears in our eyes and lumps in our throats. With Major Blassie at the luncheon was her mother, Jean Blassie, and the

girl Michael had planned to marry, Lou Pennebaker of Meridian. Later, Lou told of starting the Memory Tree Foundation, an organization which mobilizes school children and many, many others to tie ribbons on a tree on Veterans Day in memory of Michael Blassie and all the other veterans of America's wars and all those who made the supreme sacrifice for our country.

Saturday evening's banquet was a gala occasion. Our speaker was Dr. Walter E. Brown, the Editor of 8th AF News, a member of the Boards of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society and the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum. Following the dinner and Dr. Brown's talk, everyone's attention was given to the drawing of prizes in our raffle. There were many outstanding raffle items and a great deal of fun and hilarity accompanied the procedure. The raffle raised almost \$1,000.00, all of which goes automatically each year to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum.

On Sunday morning, our crowd gathered at a particularly beautiful spot down by the lake for a Memorial Church Service. After an inspiring message from our Chaplain, Col. Billy Jones, members were given carnations to drop in the water of the lake in memory of fallen comrades and those of our number who have folded their wings since the War.

Finally, everyone went back to the Honeysuckle Lodge for a sumptuous brunch before giving each other farewell hugs and kisses.

It was a great Eighth Air Force reunion! Did we eat a lot during that occasion? Yes, we did. Did we cut-up and act like a bunch of young aviators on a pass to town? Yes, we did. Did we feel inspired, amused, enraptured? Yes, we did. Would we, will we, do it again? You're dadgummed right we would. We will!

Ken Nail, Executive Secretary



THE CENTURY CLUB

by John S. Warner 390th Bomb Group Tucson, AZ

PART I

Starting almost two years ago, my interest was captured by items in issues of the 8th Air Force News indicating 100 or more missions of B-17s from various bomb groups of the 8th Air Force. After touching base with your Editor, I embarked on an effort to get a listing of all B-17s with 100 or more missions to create a "Century Club."

Letters were sent to representatives of each of the B-17 Bomb Groups of the 8th Air Force. Responses came from 14 of those Groups, resulting in the identification of 78 B-17s to be included in "The Century Club." For those who contributed to this effort, I extend my sincere appreciation.

For those of us who flew these great airplanes, we shall forever be grateful that the war we fought was in these beautiful machines. In my case, my first mission was D-Day on the third mission of the day for the 390th Bomb Group. Making my first landing in the dark was a bit interesting. After a shuttle mission to Russia and a total of 35 missions, I was returned to the U.S.

Let me turn now to those ground support people to whom we all owe so much. On a bronze plaque at the entrance of the 390th Memorial Museum in Tucson, there are words that so well express our appreciation.

Part II of the "Century Club" listing the seventy-eight 100 mission aircraft, will appear in your next 8th AF News magazine. It will show the leader to be "Ol' Gappy" of the 379th BG with 157 missions.

John Warner is 390th Bomb Group Historian and has done extensive research on Century Club aircraft.

-Editor



TO ALL OUR SUPPORT PERSONNEL

YOU ACHIEVED THE IMPOSSIBLE. YOU SCOFFED AT PRESSURE.

YOU IMPROVISED, MODIFIED AND INGENUOUSLY SUBSTITUTED WHEREVER NECESSARY.

YOU PATCHED OUR WINGS, REPLACED OUR ENGINES AND HEALED OUR BATTLE INFLICTED WOUNDS.

YOU WORKED TIRELESSLY TO ACHIEVE OPERATIONAL READINESS FOR OUR DAMAGED AIRCRAFT.

YOU AS EXPERTS, UNFAILINGLY PROVIDED FUEL, BOMBS, AMMUNITION AND ALL EQUIPMENT NECESSARY TO SUSTAIN EVERY BOMBING MISSION.

YOU TRULY EXCELLED IN MAINTAINING THE OVER-ALL EFFICIENCY OF THE GREATEST AIR FORCE EVER ASSEMBLED.

YOU EXEMPLIFIED YOUR DEEP CONCERN AS YOU HOUSED AND FED US, GUARDED AND PROTECTED US WITH GREAT CARE AND PROFESSIONAL SKILL.

YOU TURNED YOUR SPECIAL CIVILIAN SKILLS INTO A MIGHTY MILITARY ASSET.

YOU WERE A PART OF THE TEAM WHICH MADE THE NEXT COMBAT MISSION POSSIBLE.

YOUR DEDICATION, COMMITMENT AND INTELLECT WERE MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE TOTAL WAR EFFORT.

TOGETHER WE SHARE THE ULTIMATE VICTORY.

THE 390TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H)"

"A GRAND LADY"

A scorpion crawled over some of the 126 Bombs painted on the nose of a B-17 sitting on the desert out in Arizona. He then traveled down the side and over the name

"Scheherezade". He avoided some patches over flak holes and went back up over the bombs and up to the pilot's window. He didn't notice the ghostly figures of Donald MacDonald and Norman Massett who were frantically trying to start *Scheherezade's* four great engines. They knew that today the people were coming to scrap *Scheherezade*.

Up in the nose, the ghostly figure of Orlando Hamlin was shuffling maps trying to find a safe place, "up in the wild blue yonder". Tom Ellison was trying to find the bomb sight. Engineer Lawrence LePage's ghostly figure was trying to help Don MacDonald and Norm Massett get the engines started. In the radio-room, the ghostly figure of "Whitey" Plouck was on the Morse Key sending S.O.S (SAVE OUR SHIP). John Hagan was trying to get help on the radio.

In the waist, the ghostly figures of Jim Pitts and Ed Patterson were trying to get their .50 calibers loaded to protect "their airplane" from the wrecking crew. Back in the tail, could be seen the ghostly figure of Hank



Hundreds of B-17's awaiting the breakers; parked in the desert in Kingman Arizona.

Abelmann in his "office" watching for the wrecking crew with his loaded twin .50's.

Sadly *Scheherezade's* original crew faded away into the "Wild Blue Yonder," bidding a Grand Lady a fond farewell.

She took care of all the crews that flew with her and she never had a K.I.A.

Ed Patterson Homosassa, Florida

8th AF Historical Society Life Member Fee (U.S.A. only) - others add 50%

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ANDRE JARROT

A larger-than-life World War II Resistance hero, Andre Jarrot rose from being a garage mechanic to become French Cabinet minister. During the war he parachuted three times into occupied France from Britain as an Allied secret agent. He also was involved in clandestine arms drops to the Resistance by the British SOE. He was captured twice by the Germans and made his way to freedom both times, once by bicycling his way back to his home in Burgundy. Both of his brothers were in the Resistance forces, were captured, and sent to Nazi concentration camps.

Mr. Jarrot helped organize escape lines which allowed over 4,000 downed airmen to evade capture by the enemy. Gen. Charles de Gaulle wrote that Jarrot's actions "seriously harmed German Industries on French soil." He received the coveted Cross of the Liberation and was also decorated by Britain, The United States and Belgium.

Andre Jarrot was well known for his high spirits and his down-to-earth manner; he was injured in a parachute jump at age 76. He died recently at his home at age 90.

submitted by John Wilson, 306th BG Wellesley MA



ABRAHAM "HAP" GALFUNT



Hap Galfunt died unexpectedly in March 2001. A member of the 493rd Bomb Group, he was shot down and served for many months as a Prisoner of War. Throughout his life he remembered his 8th Air Force comrades and maintained a life-long interest in aviation, flying his OS2 airplane frequently. He made his home in New York.

He dedicated himself to the 8th Air Force Historical Society, his New York Chapter, and its programs. The last weekend of his life was spent attending the 8th AFHS mid-term Board of Directors meeting planning for the future success of the organization. Hap leaves his beloved Kathy and many close friends.

Abraham "Hap" Galfunt was a member of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society Board of Directors. He expressed through his ideas, a very strong stand on many issues. His main concern was for the preservation of The Eighth Air Force Historical Society, the continued emphasis on the Heritage of The Mighty Eighth of The Mighty Eighth Air

Force, and lastly the erection and success of the chapel to be erected at the Museum site. This last idea was expressed by his personal interest in the Star of David window to be included in the chapel. As an ex-POW he also took an important position in the creation of a P.O.W. exhibit at the American Airpower Museum in Farmingdale N.Y. He was also a member of the Board of Directors of The New York State Southern Wing Chapter of the Historical Society.

"Hap" was a true friend of his Eighth Air Force buddies.

**-Larry Goldstein, 388th BG
Pres. Southern Wing New York Chapter**



Hap Galfunt, at right, on the way home from life as a POW.

JAMES MYERS

James E. Myers, an obscure musician and songwriter has died in Florida at age 81. His contribution to the musical world was the writing of the seminal rock and roll song "Rock Around the Clock" which he penned in 1952. Bill Haley and the Comets' version of the song became one of the biggest rock songs in pop music, linking youth culture to a rebellious theme of Rock and Roll in the 50's.

Myers served in the Pacific during the war, and afterwards formed a band under the stage name of Jimmy DeKnight. Collaborating with Max Freedman, "Rock around the Clock" was recorded. Some historians attribute the origins of the song's name to the Around the Clock day and night bombing campaigns of the Mighty Eighth and RAF air forces.

TOM DOBNEY

Tom Dobney passed away at his home in Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire. He was the youngest military pilot in history. At the age of fourteen, Dobney, jealous of his older schoolmates who got to wear the uniforms of police messengers, accepted a dare from his schoolmates and passed himself off as a seventeen year-old. He entered the Royal Air Force and completed flight training as a bomber pilot.

He said, "It was easy for me as I was used to being in class. The others found it tough." He flew a Tiger Moth six days after his fifteenth birthday and got his wings four months later.

Tom Dobney flew twenty missions piloting RAF Whitley bombers over enemy territory. He knew his secret would one day come out, and it did. His father, who was divorced from his mother, recognized his son talking to King George VI on a royal visit to Tom's RAF base and reported him to his commanders. Tom was discharged. "I was shattered, he stated."

After the war, Tom Dobney flew missions in the Berlin Airlift and the King's Flight. He is remembered as a man too modest to brag about his youthful wartime exploits.



submitted by Leonard Alsford London, England

Sipek, John, Columbus OH; 56th FG, Past- President 56th FGA, BOD Ohio Chapter; from George Nunemacher

McGraw, Roy, Beaver WV; 447th BG flight engineer; from Ted Nurre and crew Cheokas, Arthur, Americus GA; B-17 gunner

Jones, Oliver 78th FG

van den Hurk-de Jong, "Mimi", Cujik Holland; Helper, Air Force Escape and Evasion Society

Vallely, John, Carlisle UK; 4th Battalion of Border Regiment.

After his unit was captured at LeHavre in 1940, he disappeared into the Normandy countryside and helped many Allied airmen in their escape and evasion; AFEES

Haun, James, Nashville TN; flew Spitfires fighters in the Eagle Squadron; long time flight instructor at Sewart Air Base in Smyrna

Brownfield, John, Houston TX; 352nd FG 1943-45; His life was distinguished by a spirit of generosity and great personal integrity

Bass, Joseph, Houston TX

Daniel, Edward, Houston TX; gunner on 30 bombing missions

Seale, Fred, Kerrville TX; 379th BG bombardier, from Alfred Lea

Hightower, Howard, Humble TX; 479th FG; President Mabry Millworks

Federicao, Emanuel, 361st FG

Humm, John, 361st FG

Peshyn, John, 361st FG

Unversaw, Centre, 361st FG

Shy, William, Hendersonville TN; 8th AF in England and later Commander of two Strategic Air Command Wings; Amassed over 7000 flying hours

Brandt, Mel, 401st BG; sole survivor of his crew after a training B-17 crash. Founding Vice-President of the Illinois Chapter

West, Wilburn, Breckenridge TX; 322 BG; pioneer in the auto salvage industry

Madden, Dean, Clinton MO

Dalton, Patrick, Paola KS;

Kelling, Henry, Leander TX; 306th BG; supporter of Texas A&M Mapes, George, Meadows Place TX; 306th BG; Instrument and Controls Systems engineer

Yohannan, Francis, Bombardier; The inspiration for fictional antihero Captain Yossarian, but was not a rebel in life; served in combat with Joseph Heller, the author of *Catch-22*

Cross, Gordon, Houston TX; 357th FG

Stalarow, Marvin, Houston TX

Seidel, Edwin, 100th BG; Air Attache Office, Stockholm post-war

Konantz, Walter, Lamar MO; Past - President 55th FG Association; 64 combat missions; Retired USAF; from Todd McCoy

Averett, Jack, Logansport LA;

Shalinsky, Milton, Overland Park KS; B-17 navigator, POW; supporter of Chabad House and Torah Learning Center

Crouch, William, Houston TX; 94th BG

Landry, Robert, Retired as Major General after commanding the 56th FG, 493rd BG, SAC 2nd AF Wing at Barksdale AFB, 4th AF at Hamilton AFB, and Sacramento Air Material Area at McClellan AFB. Aide to President Harry Truman 1948-53.

**FORMER PRISONERS OF WAR:
THE VA WANTS YOU!**

Of all former prisoners of war, with approximately 46,000 still living, only about 35% have connected with the Department of Veterans Affairs to accept the benefits for which they are eligible. Now is the time to step forward.

If you are an ex-POW or know of someone who is, please respond to this announcement. The American Ex-Prisoners of War, Inc., has worked hard over the past 20 years to determine the effects of the POW experience on the health in later years of our POW veterans. The VA provides benefits related to over 20 health maladies that were presumed to be initiated because of severe prisoner of war conditions suffered in the hands of the enemy. These presumptives include frostbite, heart problems, post traumatic stress, malnutrition, osteoarthritis, and many others. For instance, we who were shot down and experienced forced marches in the coldest winter, 1944-45, northern Germany had in years can well remember the swollen, cold feet; Later heart problems and residuals of frostbite are presumed by the VA to have resulted. Tax-free disability compensation is provided for such.

Join American Ex-Prisoners of War, to be kept informed about the special benefits due former POWs and their spouses or widows. Our volunteer accredited National Service Officers will do their best to help you present your valid claim to the Department of Veterans Affairs, without charge. Learn more. Call or write:

American Ex-Prisoners of War
c/o New Member Committee
National Headquarters
3201 E. Pioneer Pkwy. #40
Arlington, TX 76010
(817) 649-2979

OR

American Ex-Prisoners of War
c/o National Service Office
DVARO
3225 N. Central Av., Ste. 407
Phoenix, AZ 85012-2421
(602) 745-2203FAX

submitted by Fred Campbell
401st BG
San Angelo, TX

The 40th Annual National Aviation Hall of Fame's Enshrinement Ceremony will take place in Dayton OH July 21, 2001. Four Air and Space pioneers will join the 170 men and women previously honored.

This year's honorees are Marion Carl, first WW II Marine ace and first Marine helicopter pilot; Joe Engle, X-15 pilot and space shuttle pilot; Robin Olds, West Point All-American in football, WW II ace and founder of the first jet aerobatic team; and Albert Lee Ueltschi, barnstormer, founder of Flight Safety International, and developer of Project ORBIS, a mobile flying eye care facility for under-developed countries.

The 2001 Milton Caniff Spirit of Flight Award will be presented to The Society of Experimental Test pilots. For info call (937) 256-0944 or log www.nationalaviation.org.

**SECOND SCHWEINFURT MEMORIAL
ASSOCIATION**

On October 14th, 2001, survivors of the mission to Schweinfurt on October 14, 1943 will hold their annual reunion in Schweinfurt, Germany. Our host will be the formerly young boys who manned the flak guns that day. Some are associate members of the organization called "Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association" (SSMA). The Germans, with help of SSMA members have erected a memorial in Schweinfurt to honor those from both countries who participated in that great air battle known as "Black Thursday" when the 8th AAF suffered its greatest losses.

Regular membership in SSMA is limited to those who flew the mission, but relatives, friends and others interested may become Associate members. Our reunions are always held in October as near to the 14th of the month as possible. Anyone interested may contact me via e-mail for additional information.

George Roberts, SSMA
email: <robbie49@datasync.com>

CRASH SITE MEMORIAL

An 8th Air Force bomber was found recently by a Belgian Air Force aviation crash historian in the Ardennes region of southern Belgium. On that longlost bomber was a crew member who has some family members in Florida.

A memorial will be dedicated to the lost crew members in September 2001 at the crash site in Belgium. Surviving family members are being sought to participate in this memorial as a final tribute to the crew. The bomber was shot down by enemy fighters on Jan. 29, 1944 over the Ardennes and crashed near the small village of Wibrin. On Sept. 17 a delegation from the United States and Belgium will gather there to remember the crew and dedicate the memorial. A sister of one of the crew members is living in the Palm Beach area.

Members of the crew were: Pilot, Lt. Harold Pinder; co-pilot, Lawrence Grono; navigator, Donald S. Boomer; bombardier, Alvin Stubbs; engineer, Earl W. Hall; radio operator, Abe Soffer; ball turret gunner Robert Laucamp; waist gunner Jack C. Robinson; waist gunner Milas L. Green; and tail gunner William A. Paxton.

Anyone knowing relatives of any of these men contact Forrest S. Clark, 703 Duffer Lane, Kissimmee, FL., 34759. Email b24vet@aol.com

50TH ANNIVERSARY AIRSHOW
June 23-24, 2001
Arnold Engineering Development
Center - Tullahoma TN
website - www.arnold.af.mil

BOXTED AIRFIELD HISTORICAL GROUP

The Boxted Airfield Historical Group was formed in April 2000. The objectives of the group are to preserve and promote the history of Boxted Station 150. This important airfield was home to the 386th BG, 354th FG and the 56th FG. All Boxted veterans receive free life memberships which consists of four newsletters a year; others 5 pounds per year. Please write to:

Boxted Airfield Historical Group
 11 Dunthorne Rd. Colchester Essex
 England Co4 4hz

Flypasts by Vintage Aircraft, Guided tours of the Airfield site. Model Aircraft, Static and flying. Exhibitions and displays by other Aviation groups and Museums.

In short a great Aviation Day out!
 We would welcome warmly any veterans who could attend. We are happy to help with accomodation, arrangements, and so forth.

Regards,
 Richard Turner
 Chairman

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

353rd FIGHTER GROUP
 Come to Irving, Texas,
 October 24-29, at the
 Harley Hotel and meet
 with the Fighter Group
 that had the largest atten-
 dance last year in Salt
 Lake City. We guarantee
 you a good time and a
 good meeting.
 Contact Bob Brackstone
 517-627-9819

8TH BROTHERS

Philip G. Mack and his brother Arthur W. Mack were classmates in Pilot Class 43D. They both served in the 8th, Phil in the 91st BG and Art in the 306th. They are wondering what were the odds of them both finishing their tours, which they did. Phil finished his tour in March, 1944 and Art finished his tour in June, 1944. Art retired as a Captain for American Airlines and Phil retired as an airplane salesman for Boeing. Any other unusual 8th AF "brothers" stories out there?
 -Editor

WILLIAM "OBEE" O'BRIEN...

We'd been with the stragglers less than a minute when I spotted an Me 109 attacking the bomber box from their 6:00 o'clock position. I'd just started to drop my left wing to attack the 109 when a call came from Yeager..."Break, Break"...we broke to the left. Yeager's call saved us. About 180 degrees through the break I latched on to an Fw 190 who was in a diving turn. I opened fire at close range, which resulted in some pieces coming off the 190. Both of us were now diving near vertical, when something large went flying past my cockpit. I did not recognize what the object was at the time; however, I did see that I was fast approaching a solid undercast. It was time to start pulling up, as I had no idea how thick the cloud layer was and I figured the 190 was going straight down. I started to pull out and at this point, I did something really stupid; I let the P-51 go straight till it's airspeed dropped well below 200 mph, when I broke into a left turn. And there was old Jerry, an Me 109 on my and Moore's tail. After a tight circle, I couldn't see him anymore and Moore and I headed back to England.

The longer we flew toward England, the worse the weather became. Moore and I could not communicate with each other because of radio failure. Ceiling and visibility were becoming more restrictive and luckily for us we made it into the RAF base at Ford, England. As we spent the night at Ford, neither Moore nor I knew the group had lost both Russ Spicer and Chuck Yeager on the Bordeaux mission.

-William "Obree" O'Brien, 357th FG

"DEVIL'S BALL" 351ST BOMB GROUP...

Dearest Mom, You have wanted to hear what happened, so here goes. We (the crew) were forming one morning in September, and I won't tell you the target or the bomb load, but we had climbed by instrument through fog from 200 ft to 14,000 ft. Red McGlohan called for an oxygen check. I spoke for Roy Morrison and Ray McCloskey and myself, that we were 14,000 ft. All of a sudden, the ship started to shake. I was sitting across from Roy and Ray looking out of a waist window.

The ship went into a snap roll and threw me right at the waist door next to my chute. Roy and Ray didn't have theirs on. It wouldn't have done any good anyway. The ship was in a spin and they couldn't move. I managed to get the escape door open and finally got my legs out, but got stuck in the door. Finally the slip stream carried me out into space, but I think I hit the tail with my arm anyway. I got the chute open just in time. The ship beat me down and it exploded when it hit. I bailed out at about 200 or 250 ft as I was only in the air about five or six seconds. Anyway, I hit pretty hard and my hand was bleeding and there was blood all over everything. I couldn't move while I was on the ground, but finally some farmers came over and picked me up. Just as they were carrying me away from the burning wreck, the bombs went off and threw us to the ground. We didn't get hit, but we were pretty

scared.

They put me in the hospital and then to a rest camp. The rest of the guys didn't have a chance. I saw the burial at the American cemetery at Cambridge. I am OK now, so please don't worry any more.
love from Don

Donald Holigan, tailgunner of the B-17 Devil's Ball was the only survivor of this crash which occurred during forming up for the crew's fourth mission. He died at his home in Michigan in 1989.

from Iris Falcone
Walpole, MA

CAROLE LANDIS...

And, into her repertoire of standards, Landis would blend a few racy numbers like "Strip Polka":

*There's a burlesque theatre where the gang loves to go
To see Queenie, the cutie of the burlesque show,
And the thrill of the evening is when out Queenie steps
and the band plays the polka while she strips.*

More than once someone from the back of the crowd yelled "Take it off" in Landis' direction.

But while the shows had their share of vamp and champ, they were more about raising spirits than soft-selling sex. Much of the time, the spirits of the troop were in sore need of raising. After one show, Landis, Mayfair and Raye went into the officers' club to spend some time with the flyers. "We hadn't been at the club more than a few minutes before we sensed a tension in the air," said Landis. "The boys stood around in little groups looking pretty miserable, and nothing we could say to them seemed to help any." "Maybe we'd better leave," Martha said.

"Please don't go," the Commanding Officer said. "It's not that the kids don't like you or don't want you here. It's just that they're all feeling rather down in the mouth because



Carole Landis at far left.

they've taken one hell of a beating today. You see that kid over there? That's Lieutenant Rader. He came in today with five dead men aboard ship. We lost quite a few planes and we lost a man we all loved. So you see, he added with a fleeting smile, we really need you here tonight, desperately.

He got up on the table. "Men," he said, and the room grew silent. "Let's drink a toast to all who have gone beyond, and particularly to Pappy Grimes."

Everyone raised his glass and drained it to the bottom. Then one boy who was standing next to the table said, "Sir, may we break our glasses?"

Glasses were very precious in England at that time. They weren't making them anymore, and if you broke your glass in a restaurant they were ready to take it out of your skin. But now the C.O. threw his glass away without a moment's hesitation and everyone in the room followed suit.

The ceiling of this club was scorched with the names of French and German cities. As a ritual after one day's sortie and before the next, the fliers selected one pilot whom they all agreed had done the best job that day. Then they formed a human pyramid, and the honored flier got up on top of the pyramid and with the aid of a candle burned the name of his target on the ceiling.

I watched the name forming under the candle flame.

L-I-L-L-E. The honored flier clambered down, the pyramid broke up, and everyone got new glasses and new drinks.

by Frank Smootia "No Place For A Lady"

Submitted by **Thomas Jordan**

5th AF St. Paul, MN

JAMES MYL...

Either it was stay with the plane and die now or bail out and live who knows how much longer. I gave the order to bail out. My estimate is, it took seven seconds for all hands to jump clear of the plane.

My parachute cracked open at the same moment a lone P-51 Mustang streaked by me at a distance of 100 yards. I saluted as a thought struck my mind: Could this angel from heaven possibly be my friend Herb Strawn, the great minstrel man, who had part of a finger surgically removed to give himself a second chance for acceptance into the Aviation Cadet Program? Then, even above the din and racket of the fighter, I heard the death throes of the bomber - what sounded more like a big Whoomf! in a back bedroom than a loud explosion. Navigator Mike "Shea told me later that he saw our plane go down in three flaming sections.

While hanging in my parachute I counted eight other parachutes fanned out below me. The lot of us were still alive. So far so good! The splashdown into the bitter cold of the North Sea confirmed these waters were rightly named. The only comfort was seeing and hearing our angel in the Mustang flying a pattern of circles above us. The Mustang's distinctive sound will forever live in my head. My hack watch, wet but ticking, counted off an hour

that our angel circled overhead before streaking for England. I prayed he had been able to contact stations there to fix our position by triangulation and send help. Such time as the lot of us in the water could hang on might bring the answer.

Responding to a far off cry for help, I swam for 90 minutes to reach Engineer Lawrence "Larry" Re, a non-swimmer, calling upon some unknown reserve of strength born of near desperation. During that time, I found myself reliving my parachute jump. I did not jockey my parachute shroud lines so my back was with the wind when I splashed down. I lunged backward and came to the surface to see my parachute pointing downwind like an arrow. I wanted to save the entire chute to use as an air bag to float on - in the style of a California surfer of which I was one - but I had to settle for my pocket knife to cut out only two panels, which I stuffed into my flying suit. The part of the parachute that remained in the water - which was sinking heavily - plus the escape kit that blew out of my flying suit's left knee pocket, were the only two items of equipment that I lost.

The swim to Larry made me tired but warmer. The ninety minutes in the water had taken their toll on poor Larry, his face blue, his teeth chattering, for all intents and purposes looking like death warmed over. I asked him to tread water vigorously, to slap and punch himself, to sing. "I'm glad we're together," he managed to mumble. I found my Mae West lifevest to be woefully inadequate. It provided too little buoyancy around the waist, hence the head of anyone unconscious or unable to tread water would drown when his head went under water.

Some ninety more minutes passed before two P-47 Thunderbolts found us and dropped flares. Obviously, they were overhead because our angel in the Mustang had successfully radioed for help. Following their directions, one of the "nice little boats" of the Royal Air Forces Air Sea Rescue Service appeared on the horizon. More angels! The boat went beyond Larry and me to work its way upwind. Larry and I were the last two men to be picked up.

The word came about our savior, the angel in the P-51 Mustang. He had called for help all the while he circled above us. With gas critically low he had to leave us to fly to England. He didn't try to make it to home base in Steeple Morden, but plunked down on the first runway he saw. His P-51's engine sputtered out of gas on the way to the ramp. Bless him!

James Myl 493rd BG

From his memoir "Atta Boy Jimmy"

1943...

Out of the cyclonic air battles that studded the month of July came stories of heroism on the part of the air crews and stamina on the part of the planes that bordered on the fantastic. A badly hit tail gunner crawled back into the waist of a Fortress, not for protection or first aid, but merely to demand more ammunition. Shot down into the North Sea, a wounded navigator left the comparative safety of a

DEBRIEFING

dinghy to swim back to his sinking plane, fight his way into the radio room and drag out an unconscious gunner pinned under heavy equipment.

Coming back from bombing an airdome on July 14, a Fortress met a nose attack by three FW 190s with a blast of fire that destroyed two of the fighters and evidently killed the pilot of the third. It crashed head-on into the No. 3 engine of the Fortress with an impact that tore off the propeller and knocked the bomber completely out of formation. The German fighter did a cartwheel over the Fortress, cutting half way through the wing and a third of the way through the horizontal stabilizer. Top and ball turrets on the bomber jammed; radio equipment was smashed; all the instruments, according to the copilot, "went crazy." Pieces of metal from the disintegrating Focke-Wulf hurtled through the fuselage. A gun barrel buried itself in the wall between the radio room and the bomb bay. Other crews in the formation later reported that the Fortress had blown up as a result of the collision. It had not. On the contrary, it pulled itself together, shot down one more fighter, limped back under a canopy of sympathetic P-47's, and made a belly landing at an English base. None of the crew was scratched.

-from **Target Germany**

Leonard Alford ...

The block of flats where I lived had been hit by a very large bomb, and the people who lived in the flats had been sheltering in the basement. At the same time, the bomb had destroyed a rather large water main just by the side of the basement. People being buried all under the rubble were trapped there, and before the rescue services had a chance to get them out, this water main had flooded the basement and the fifty or sixty people who had been sheltering there had been drowned.

A few days after, the rescuers decided they could not get the bodies out, so they just cemented it over and turned it into an emergency water supply tank. Just after the tank had been completed and filled with water some weeks later, I went round there. On this tank of water was floating a wreath and on this wreath was a label. It said "From your friends in America. We are also suffering with you."

- Leonard Alford, London, from *My Love Affair with America and Its People*

BOOK REVIEWS

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

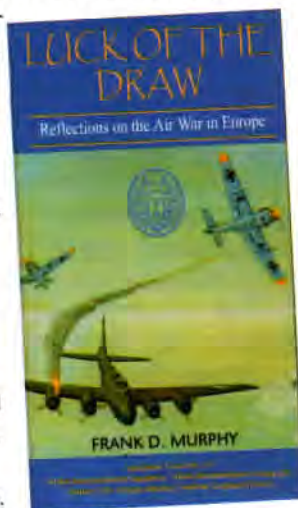
LUCK OF THE DRAW

Reflections of the Air War in Europe

by Frank D. Murphy

Many volumes have been published about the experiences of individual 8th Air Force veterans and their combat missions over German territory during the war. Frank Murphy's book, *Luck of the Draw*, stands out among them as a very honest and insightful story of a member of the 100th Bomb Group flying from Thorpe Abbots airbase in England.

Murphy describes the atmosphere and college life in his hometown of Atlanta, Georgia where he enlisted in the military shortly after Pearl Harbor. He tells of his days in training and introduction to the war, flying as navigator on the Charles "Crankshaft" Cruikshank B-17 crew. His story leading up to the 100th's ill-fated October 10, 1943 mission to Munster is one of life on a wartime 8th airbase and of the interactions among the airmen who called the base home. Frank Murphy had flown on many significant missions of the early war years, including the August 17, 1943 raid on Regensburg and the effective mission to



Marienburg. The description of the Munster mission itself, with the Cruikshank crew part of a battered and depleted bomb group, takes you into the battle with them, and into Stalag Luft III as prisoners of war following their shootdown over a heavily defended target on one of the fiercest raids of the war. Their aircraft, *Aw-R-Go*, took off from Station 139 in the seventh position on the Munster raid. Only one 100th Bomb Group crew, that of Lt. Robert Rosenthal, returned to Thorpe Abbots on this day. Rosie Rosenthal's story is depicted on the cover of this issue of the 8th AF News and is described in the accompanying cover story.

Frank Murphy was there when 76 RAF prisoners, led by Roger Bushell, escaped through a tunnel named "Harry" in what has been immortalized as "The Great Escape." His story of life in the Stalag and liberation by American ground forces is as fascinating as his combat experiences. This 344-page volume is not only very well researched and written, it includes many photographs, tables and drawings of the history and combat tactics of the 100th Bomb Group. Included as well are stories from German war files and information compiled from Luftwaffe fighter pilots who flew against the Bloody Hundredth.

An Epilogue brings the reader up to the present, and an extensive Appendix is included to offer a wealth of details of the crews and airplanes of the Group. The hardback volume's cover is from a painting by Heinz Hessling who as an eighteen year-old member of the German Air Force

BOOK REVIEWS

Auxiliary, witnessed the downing of Murphy's B-17 *Aw-R-Go* through a pair of binoculars from his flak battery position near Munster.

To order your copy, send \$35 prepaid to FNP Military Division, 6527 Main Street, POB 374, Trumbull CT 06611 USA. Shipping is included. For orders outside the USA include \$5.00 for shipping and handling. Also available in our PX. Author Murphy and John O'Neil of FNP generously are donating sales proceeds from *The Luck of the Draw* to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah.

PETALS OF FIRE

by Herb Alf

Author Herb Alf was a B-17 pilot in the 100th Bomb Group and also spent time as a Prisoner of War. He was shot down on his 19th mission on April 28, 1944. He spent his year and a half in a Stalag thinking about life and what he wanted to do with it if he survived. His POW diary was kept on pages of toilet tissue. After serving as a rocket research Administrator working with German scientists after the war, he earned a Master's Degree in writing and a Doctorate in personality psychology, teaching at several universities. Alf has spent his lifetime researching and writing *Petals of Fire*. After seven rewrites condensing the book down from 1000 pages, the volume is now available.

This novel tells the story of an 8th Air Force crew of the 100th Bomb Group who were imprisoned in a Stalag after a fateful bombing mission over enemy territory. The story is drawn from many levels and dimensions of people in relation to the war. The presentation has the freedom to present the story of four flyers in a factual and deeply personal way. One gets an intimate look at the inner lives of each character in the book. Alf's wartime experiences form the basis for the storyline and the many events which are part of the fliers' lives. His knowledge of the psychological aspect of people's lives allows him to impart feelings and actions to his characters which are more believable than if he had told stories of his crew members with whom he flew into combat. Their qualities, relationships and participation in the events of the novel are moving and and beautifully presented.

This book is a moving tale of war that has been well thought-out by the author, and is one of those rare war novels which never strays from its theme of accuracy and authenticity. The reader is absorbed into a believable tale which is hard to forget. The streams of the story as seen through the characters are well defined and are very memorable. The author's sensitive expertise is evident throughout.



There is another very special feature to this book. Herb Alf has produced a CD soundtrack of the novel utilizing music, historical recordings and scenes from the pages of the novel to augment the story in the book. Sections of the CD include Salute to Air Force Pioneers, Air Combat, Boxcar to the Unknown, Forced March and others - a provoking auditory experience which is included with each volume purchased.

Come spend some unforgettable times with Col. Dean Raymond, Buck, Tom, Walt, Sam Cliff, Jose, Randi, Sandra, Sister Joanna, Jennifer, Hauptmann Eiler and many others. They are waiting for you. You will not easily forget them.

Petals of Fire Leather Bound Memorial Edition with companion CD, 537 pp \$50 for book and CD plus \$5.00 s&h for each order; 20% discount for POWs or 8th AF Historical Society members (total of \$40). CD alone: \$15 + \$3.50 s&h. Send check to Millenium Memorial Trust, Inc., POB 1273; Roseburg, OR 97470-1273. email: half@petalsofire.com website: www.petalsofire.com.

BOMBER PILOT

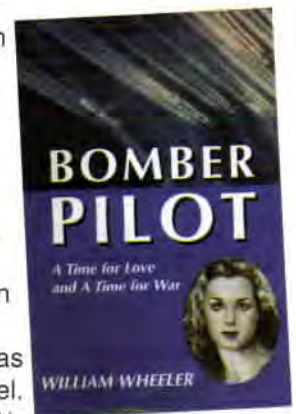
A Time for Love and A Time for War
by William Wheeler

This novel is a wartime romance story based on events of the early war years when the Eighth Air Force was beginning early missions of daylight bombing.

Bill Weyland is a bomber pilot who meets a beautiful girl on his first night in London and becomes deeply involved in a passionate relationship. During the daytime, Bill flies combat missions. As the story unfolds the couple has to face their future even as the specter of death hovers over them each day.

The spirit and atmosphere of London and the 8th airbase life is depicted with a feeling towards what many young fliers and their girls faced during the years of war. Combat scenes are written with authenticity and a feeling of tension and action.

The author, William Wheeler, has the credentials to write such a novel. As a bomber pilot with the Eighth Air Force, he knows his subject well. A great novel for your summer's read. *Bomber Pilot* is published by Rutledge Books and is available for \$24.95 hardcover. 321pp. For info call (203) 798-7272 or send check to Rutledge Books, 107 Mill Plain Road, Danbury CT 06811. Add \$3.00 s&h. The book may also be ordered from our 8th AFHS PX.



You can't go wrong betting on bad taste.

Judge Ben Smith



Proclamation



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

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

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

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

October 8, 1943	Bremen, Germany	27 Bombers lost 3 Fighters
	Veogesack, Germany	3 Bombers lost
October 9, 1943	Anklam, Germany	18 Bombers lost
	Marienburg, Upper Prussia	2 Bombers lost
	Danzig, Poland	2 Bombers lost
	Gdynia, Poland	6 Bombers lost
October 10, 1943	Munster, Germany	30 Bombers lost 1 Fighter
October 14, 1943	Schweinfurt, Germany	62 Bombers lost 1 Fighter

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

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

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

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

Mighty Eighth Air Force Week

HOW ABOUT IT?

The Presence

Our C-47 circled the field, then made an approach to the runway somewhere in East Anglia and touched down. As we taxied to the central tarmac area, the airmen of two replacement combat crews looked out on the unfolding scene. Drab colored ambulances with their vivid red crosses painted on the sides and top were lined up facing the field. An assortment of trucks and jeeps sat around in a motley array of positions. The railing along the walkway on the control tower was lined with men, some holding binoculars, scanning the skies.

Twenty nervous but excited men exited the plane. We were not the objects of the gathered troops. No one took note of our arrival. Suddenly, the crowd became animated. Everyone's attention was riveted on the sky to the east. Excitement and drama filled the air. The gathering was for the arrival of the returning aircraft and their crews, last seen in the pre-dawn light as they departed for a mission to Germany. Their comrades and friends were coming home. The atmosphere rapidly changed. Aircraft limped in firing green flares. The engines of others had props feathered, smoke and oil trailing out from behind. Jagged holes with conspicuous war damage attested to the reality that they had encountered the enemy. Red flares arching above other returning aircraft set the ambulances in motion, speeding to minister to the wounded, dying and dead aboard.

Aircraft lost over the target did not return. Others were forced to land elsewhere. We were told that fourteen aircraft sustained Class "A" damage; two were considered Class "B". We had not yet learned what that meant. But, we did observe that the morale on base was at low ebb. Empty bunks in the living quarters, vacant chairs in the mess hall, revetments around the perimeter of the field with no aircraft parked in them were facts which could not be ignored--by anyone.

The next morning we met our Squadron Commander. He minced no words. He did not gloss over yesterday's mission. "There is a price to pay in conducting a war," he declared. "Yesterday's losses are tragic and unforgettable but we must move on. You are here to

replace those who have paid the price with their life for their country. We do not want you to pay that price. Our purpose in life is to live. If you do not live you are of no earthly value to your nation. If you sit out the war in a Prisoner of War Camp, all of your training and value as a human being is lost. Both you and your country will suffer. We will do everything we can to help you but, you must cooperate."

Is it unusual for a Commander to show such interest and candor with his troops? Not really. There was a Commander twenty-five hundred years ago who had troops numbered in the thousands...he was also their King. His army listened to him and followed his instructions. This King had a Supreme Commander called God. He was tuned in to God's presence and when he made no move without first consulting God, he did not lose the battle. This was the reason behind his success. He openly confessed his reliance on God and on one occasion addressed his troops with these words, "**God is our refuge and strength, and always ready to help in times of trouble, so we will not fear**". (Psalms 46:1 NLT)

This Presence worked 2,500 years ago, it worked during those fearful days in World War II and is still effective in our individual lives today. Earl Wassom
466th Bomb Group
Chaplain, Tennessee Chapter



Earl Wassom



THIS MOMENT, NOW (Lines Before Combat, 1943)

Were I to see another spring,
The lilac tree alive with rain,
Or only hear the orioles sing
Their songs again another year,
I would go by and never know
The oriole's low, melodious sway
Along the sky, nor pause to see
A single bough, a single spray
Of lilac tree--as I do now.

James Facos, 388th BG
Montpelier, VT

NO LIMITS TO THE FUTURE

**There are no limits to the human imagination.
There are no limits to our capacity for change.
There are no limits to our capability to improve.
There are no limits to our willingness to achieve.
There are no limits to our dedication to serve.
There are no limits except those we set ourselves.
There are no limits.**

Abraham "Hap" Galfunt
493rd BG New York, NY



Dated Material Inside

8th AF News

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

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Example:

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This is your **status code**.

If it reads **01** (or higher) or **LM**, your dues are current. If it reads 00, 99, 98 or lower, this is your last issue until you pay your dues. Sorry, but we've been appealing to you to get current! We'd be pleased to have you back.

If you enjoy receiving the 8th AF NEWS, continue to be a dues-paid member.

Craig Harris Records Chairman

Happy Fourth of July
EIGHTH AIR FORCE!



NATIONAL EIGHTH AIR FORCE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
ANNUAL REUNION
OCTOBER 24 - 29, 2001
IRVING, TEXAS