



8th AF NEWS

VOLUME 02 NUMBER 4 Voice of "THE MIGHTY EIGHTH" DECEMBER 2002



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AF NEWS DECEMBER 2002

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. The 8th AF NEWS is sent to members of the Society and is not for public sale. The home office is at 175 Bourne St., Pooler GA. 31322 - P.O. Box 1787, Savannah, GA. 31402.

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OPERATIONS

When you have tasted flight you will always walk the earth with your eyes turned skyward; for there you have been and there you will always be.

Leonardo daVinci
1452-1519

submitted by cigar-smokin'
Stanley Friedman
Yorktown Heights NY



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PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

"This is the best reunion ever!" Those words were heard many times at the 2003 reunion in Norfolk, VA., especially after the Gala Banquet on Saturday night, Oct. 5. It was a good reunion, and a lot of smiling faces were in evidence. The tours to the Naval Base and the Virginia Air & Space Museum were especially interesting.

Our early publication of erroneous dates for the reunion likely caused several units to set their reunions either in direct conflict with our reunion or very near in time. For that reason, we have verified the following **dates for the 2003 Reunion — Oct. 14 - 19, 2003**, at the Sheraton Colorado Springs. That should be a good time to be in Colorado Springs, which is nestled in the foothills of the Rockies and surrounded with attractions. While our access to military installations, including the Air Force Academy, may be limited for security reasons, we will get whatever access the situation will afford. Airline connections to Colorado Springs are many and good. Mark your calendars now, and set the date aside to be there.

We have worked hard to bring you at this time the dates and site for the **2004 Reunion: October 5 - 10, 2004** at the Westin Crown Center in Kansas City, Missouri. With this foreknowledge, units can set their fall reunions to avoid conflicting with these dates. Better yet, units can join with us at the Westin, a fine hotel in Kansas City's Jewel: Crown Center.

Dues and other things: Those of you who pay dues annually have been billed for 2003. We urge you to send your payments in as soon as possible. As the saying goes, "If you have paid, please disregard this message." If you haven't, please do so and take advantage of the opportunity to contribute to:

The Library Programs Fund for the Woolnough Library at the Heritage Museum. This tremendous resource is under-utilized because access to its research material needs improvement. Life Members also have the opportunity to make a tax-deductible contribution to this worthy effort. You have contributed generously over the years to the Heritage Museum, and once again, it needs your help.

Membership in the Heritage Museum is another way you can help your Museum. Visit its website at www.mightyeighth.org to learn how to join, or write Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, PO Box 1992, Savannah, GA 31402.

Curriculum Guide: Prentice Hall, the well-known textbook publisher, working with the Heritage Museum, is developing the curriculum guide we have been telling you about. The project is nearing completion. In the next issue of the 8AF NEWS we will be able to disclose details of its content and availability.

WEBSITE: www.8thafhs.org, the 8AFHS website, is being upgraded by Bob Books of the 392nd BGMA website. However, we still need a webmaster to continue the high-quality start Bob has given the site. Here is a chance for some of you second-generation; high-tech types to really help your Society. If you would like to give it a try, visit the existing site and send your sample page to Dick Baynes at rcbaynes@hotmail.com.

The 65th General Hospital reunion association held its final reunion in Durham, NC Oct. 25 - 27. As described elsewhere in this issue statutory commemorating this fine unit was unveiled at Duke University Medical Center. Dr. Walter Brown and your president were honored to be in attendance and to meet the people who compiled a spectacular record taking care of 8th Air Force and Normandy wounded. For more on the 65th see 8AF NEWS, Sept. 2001.

Finally, we wish for you all the joys of the holiday season and for 2003, health and happiness. Looking forward to seeing you in Colorado Springs.



Craig Harris
President

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Craig".



I am the tomb of one shipwrecked; but sail thou. For even while we perished, the other ships sailed on over the sea.
Theodorides

ON OUR COVER:

Flames engulf a B-24 Liberator hit by Flak on the way to the target. Close formations put surrounding aircraft in jeopardy when a bomber caught fire. Explosions were common due to fuel and bomb loads on board. This crew in Little Warrior had little chance of getting out.

MISSION BRIEFING



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

It's been a busy year, and a short one it seems.

The rewards of the year include seeing friends at a number of bomb group reunions, chapter meetings, and at our annual reunion in Norfolk. Heritage Museum events and activities were especially memorable. The 60th anniversary seminar in January was outstanding, special Unit and Chapter events at the museum were entertaining and fun, and the ribbon-cutting of the Memorial Chapel of the Fallen Eagles and Charles

Beard Gardens were most meaningful and impressive.

The 8th AF News staff, Donna Neely and Telisha Gaines, and I have enjoyed the interactions with all of you this past year and deeply appreciate all of your contributions and suggestions to help make the 8th AF News the best veterans' newsmagazine in the country. Special thanks go out to our HS office staff and for the support of the Society's Board of Directors.

We wish each of you a Merry Christmas! - and an exciting and healthy **2003**.

Walter Brown, Editor



TO ALL UNITS AND CHAPTERS



Now is the time for all good men and women to come to the aid of their Unit, Chapter and Historical Society!! The Historical Society Board of Directors at the urging of the Membership Committee has increased the finders fee from \$5.00 to \$10.00. Now there is incentive to go out and recruit new members. A new member contributes \$10.00 to the your treasury before they pay any Unit or Chapter dues.

TO THE UNITS

You can get \$5.00 more for each member by having your Unit Reunion with the Historical Society. All you have to do is forget about selecting a city, a hotel, the entertainment, tours, menu and all the other nagging items that go with putting on a reunion. All of that will be done for you. Get at least 10 people to attend the Historical Society reunion and register before the cutoff date and your treasury will receive the \$5.00 rebate. You can have your own hospitality room, eat together at the Unit dinner. If you have enough people in attendance you can have your own dining room. There will be time for your Unit business meeting in a private room.

TO ALL CHAPTERS

Be sure to have your members that pay their dues annually to the Historical Society, pay them before December 31 for the next year. For all of those that do that your treasury will receive \$1.00 rebate. Your Chapter will also receive \$1.00 for each Life Member. No one has to go anywhere or sign up for anything; just pay their dues in a timely manner. This is a bonus to your Chapter and there is basically no effort on the part of the Chapter.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The **2003** Historical Society reunion will be **October 14 through 19** at the Sheraton in Colorado Springs, CO. The **2004** Historical Society reunion will be **October 5 through 10** at the Westin Crown Plaza in Kansas City, MO.

Please leave enough time between these reunions and your reunions so there will not be any conflict. It is suggested that there should be a couple of weeks between reunions.

HELP!

Both Units and Chapters PLEASE keep the Committee informed of any changes that occur in either your officers, newsletter editor or Unit Contact. The only way we can keep our records up to date is if YOU tell us.

Jim Erskine
Unit/Chapter Development Committee Chairman

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEET IN NORFOLK

New members elected; new officers installed

The Historical Society's Board of Directors had two days of meetings during the annual reunion in Norfolk. Reports from all officers and Committee Chairmen were presented, discussed and actions taken for the good of the order. The Society is gaining a significant number of new members and Treasurer Ivan McKinney and Finance Officer Jeff Tucker reported that our finances are in excellent shape. Plans are underway for a very big turnout in Colorado Springs at our 2003 reunion next October 15 -19.

New officers were voted in and installed. They are Craig Harris, President; Ken Nail, Vice-president; John Pearson, Secretary; and Ivan McKinney, Treasurer. The next official Board meeting will be the mid-term at the end of March 2003.



**8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2003**

Front, from left: Society officers Ivan McKinney, Kenneth Nail, Craig Harris, John Pearson In the rear: Directors Walter Brown, Bill Rawson, Dick Baynes, Larry Goldstein, Mark Copeland, Belton Wolf, Henry Hughey, Tom Parsons



At the general assembly Annual Meeting three new Directors were elected for four-year terms. From left, Mark Copeland, Minnesota Chapter; Craig Harris, 457th BG, North Carolina Chapter, re-elected to another four-year term; and Belton Wolf, 305th BG, General James H. Doolittle Chapter.



A view of Operations at the annual reunion

65TH GENERAL HOSPITAL HOLDS FINAL RETREAT Sculpture Dedicated on Lawn of Duke University

Members of the 65th General Hospital Association held a weekend of activities at Duke University with the dedication of statues in honor of those who served in wartime England and of the patients they cared for.

The 65th General Hospital was a reserve unit which was called to active duty in July 1942 and served till September 1945. After an extended training period at Fort Bragg, the 65th sailed to England as a unit on the Queen Elizabeth and shortly thereafter began receiving their first casualties from the North African Campaign. In 1944 the hospital moved from Malvern, England into the heart of 8th Air Force territory at Botesdale.

The hospital served as an evacuation hospital for casualties direct from 8th Air Force aircraft as well as a center for advanced specialty surgical and medical care. It had 1,456 beds and treated over 17,000 medical and surgical bed patients. An additional 30,000 were treated there as outpatients. A number of wounded were seen from the Normandy invasion. It was known that if a wounded serviceman made it to the 65th General for treatment, his chances of survival were greater than 99 %.

Social events and a formal banquet were held in this final meeting of the organization, which has been meeting annually for 47 years. The highlight of the reunion was the dedication of bronze statuary depicting a 65th General Hospital nurse, doctor and corpsman



Frank Holt conducts the retreat ceremony and flag lowering ceremony with color guard. Ivan Brown stands at right.



Ivan Brown is presented a reproduction of the bronze physician's hand from Amelia Howle of Duke University



Gen. Eric Schoomaker, M. D.



Sanders Williams, M. D.



Craig Harris and Walter "Lefty" Nairne, 92nd BG and former 65th patient

taking care of a newly wounded 8th Air Force flier. The statue was researched and designed by noted sculptor artist Stephen Smith and is located in front of Duke University Medical Clinics in Durham, North Carolina. Sculptor Smith's works are in over 26 private and museum collections around the world, and he has taught art techniques at numerous Universities. A grant from the Duke Endowment and the Mary Duke Biddle Foundation sponsored the statues. The Duke University Medical Alumni Association sponsored the event and luncheon which followed.

Speakers at the unveiling included William G. Anlyan, M.D., Chancellor Emeritus of Duke University, Ivan Brown, M.D. of the 65th GH and the Duke Medical Staff, Brig. Gen. Eric B. Schoomaker, M.D., Commanding General of the Southeast Regional Medical Command, and R. Sanders Williams, M.D., Dean of Duke Medical School.

A final retreat with lowering of the American flag was conducted by M/Sgt Frank Holt, as he often did while serving with the 65th in England.

Music for the special occasion was supplied by the 82nd Airborne Division Band from Fort Bragg, N.C.



Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Smith with the corpsman.



The men and women of the 65th General Hospital



The depiction in bronze of the wounded 8th airman and the 65th medical team

SAVE THE DATE!
MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE
HERITAGE MUSEUM
The Warbirds Ball
Saturday, March 22, 2003

Join us for a star-studded evening with toe-tapping big band music, the fabulous USO Troupe of Metropolitan New York, great food, and an enthusiastic crowd. The

Museum will host our second annual Hangar Dance at the Jepson Hangar in Savannah, Georgia, Saturday, March 22, 2003. Spend the evening dancing in the hangar surrounded by vintage P-51 Mustangs. Get in the mood with period dress. Jitterbug to the very latest 1940's hits. It will truly be an evening to remember. Tickets will go on sale January 15, 2003. Proceeds will support education programs of the Museum so students can learn of the courage, commitment, and patriotism of veterans of the Mighty Eighth. For more information, please call Krista Pierce, membership coordinator at (912) 748-8888.

ON GUARD

by **Dave Weinke, 100th Bomb Group**

A jeep comes roaring up to our hut. "Hey Winkie" is the cry. "Yeah, I'm here" as I come out the door. "You're on guard tonight, report to the guard room at 8 PM" the driver announces. I think to myself, what's going on here, I've haven't been on guard in a long long time, but I guess I am now.

Then I began to ponder, why me? Well, I remember a conversation I had with the first sergeant a week or two earlier, when I spoke to him about my contract with the government. My three year enlistment was up and so since I had fulfilled my part of the arrangement, I was prepared for the Army to do its part and send me home. He merely snorted and went on his way. Hence my name stuck in his mind.

So here I am, on my way to the guard room with helmet and carbine in hand. The shifts were divided, mine being the second one, from midnight until morning.

While there, I struck up a conversation with a fellow whom I knew slightly. He had come to us as a radio operator. What made him different was that he was an infantry type who had endured heavy fighting in the Battle of the Bulge and had damaged his feet in some way and now was limping around. He looked really drained and it was apparent that he had been in a bad situation for some time. At any rate, he was upbeat about it all and

he told me that he would be back at his hut and in the sack not any later than one AM!

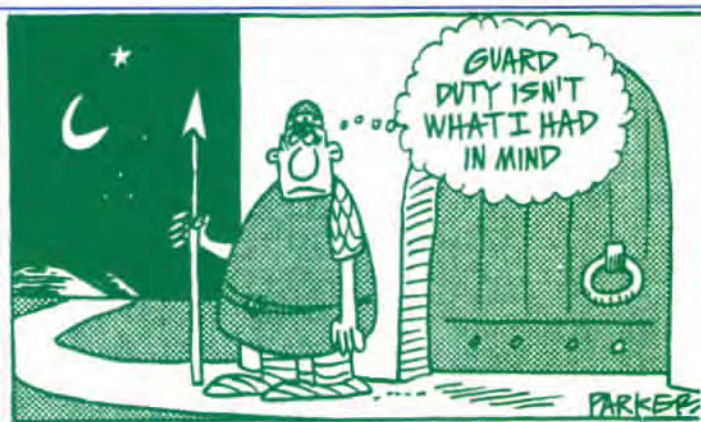
So it was that we went out and were assigned our posts, mine being next to his. Soon you could hear the jeep making its first inspection. The officer of the guard was a very junior 2nd Lt. and none too sure of his job. It was a quiet night. You could hear the jeep come, the shout of "Halt" and then a little later the same sequence again, until the Officer of Guard reached the post of our infantry friend. The jeep came rolling along and then "POW, POW, POW". The jeep skidded to a halt, both the driver and the OG bailing out, hitting the dirt.

"Oh my gawd, oh my gawd, I'm sorry sir, did you give the password? I didn't hear it, I must be having a flashback," all BS of course.

Well in a trice, he was disarmed, placed in the back of the jeep and was on his way to the guard room. The next morning, when I saw him he told me that not only did they relieve him but they even gave him a ride back to the hut. They didn't want to see that guy again, and all it cost him was the cleaning of his carbine. Not a bad trade.

Meanwhile, we never saw the OG again that night. But I did my duty well and with diligence. I was guarding a coal pile, And Not One Piece Of Coal Escaped!

Dave Weinke, 100th BG
St. Paul, MN





(2nd SAD)(RAF 6TA 127)(11-15-43) B-17 CRASH LANDING

November 15, 1943
 Joseph Minton, East Meadow NY,
 forwards photos of a troubled 306th
 BG Flying Fortress with a wheels-up
 landing, prior to being repaired by
 the 2nd Strategic Air Depot teams.
 Note cut engines; intact propellers.



“Patriotism is easy to understand in America; it means looking out for yourself by looking out for your country.”
Calvin Coolidge

**THE WAR ON TERRORISM
 1942/2002**

It is impossible to escape from other men's wrongdoings, when they are cruel and hard to remedy, or even wholly irremediable, otherwise than by victorious fighting and self-defence and by punishing most rigorously; and this no soul can achieve without noble passion.

Plato

We must prepare for the coming hour. The claims of the Future are represented by suffering millions; and the Youth of a Nation are the trustees of Posterity.

Benjamin Disraeli

Patches at Abbots Ripton getting a new wing root from the 2nd SAD airmen before her return to the 379th BG at Kimbolton



DECEMBER 2002 (02-4)





"LITTLE FRIENDS" HELP OUT AGAIN

Members of the 353rd Fighter Group Association donate a copy of their outstanding 353rd FG Unit History, "Jonah's Feet Are Dry" by Graham Cross to Judy Walker of the 8th Air Force Heritage Museum.

The book will become a part of the permanent archives of the reference collection of the Museum. Oh, how we love our "little friends!"

submitted by
Mark Copeland

353rd Fighter Group members present "Jonah's Feet Are Dry" to Judy Walker - 8th AFHS/8th AFHM

Isaiah's Eagles Rising

Barney and Sunny Nolan stayed busy at the annual reunion signing copies of his recent book, *Isaiah's Eagles Rising*. In it Barney tells a fascinating tale of his days with the 487th BG and the Nolan's return to England. You can get your signed copy by giving Barney a call at home: (703) 567-1882.



PAYNE NAMED MOST VALUABLE MEN'S TRACK COMPETITOR

U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. -- Cadet First Class Benjamin R. Payne, Arvada, CO., has earned the Most Valuable Men's Track Competitor Award for the Class of 2002. Historical Society Director Emeritus Robert Vickers was present to present the Award to Cadet Payne at special ceremonies.

The 8th Air Force Historical Society, in memory of Mr. Arne U. Arnesen, sponsors the award to recognize Payne's demonstration of superior athletic achievement in men's track and field competition. Arnesen was an accomplished track coach and associate professor of physical education, who dedicated 28 years of his life to the Air Force Academy Athletic Department and all cadets who attended.



Cadet Benjamin Payne with Robert Vickers and Mom, Dad, and family

MADINGLEY ENGLAND

by Ron Jensen

Frank Murphy found the name of Oran Petrich among the 5,127 listed on the Wall of the Missing at the Cambridge American Military Cemetery. The name, chiseled in stone, represented flesh and blood to Murphy.

"He was killed on the very first mission we flew from England," said Murphy, a former navigator with the 100th Bomb Group during World War II. A few feet away, Murphy, with help from Jim Schoenecker, the cemetery superintendent, found the name of Stanley Morrison. Morrison had been given a mission that Petrich would have flown.

"I remember him rushing around to get his flying gear together," Murphy said.

"And he never came back."

Murphy has been back to England many times since the end of the war. But the 81-year old had never been to this cemetery, where he paid a quiet moment of respect at the grave of Woodrow Barnhill, a pilot he knew well and who, like him, was an original member of the 100th Bomb Group.

"We were aware that our chances of completing a combat tour were less than 50 percent," he said later in the cemetery office. "But when they say go, you go."

Murphy responded to the command to "go" 21 times while stationed with the 100th BG at Thorpe Abbots, an airfield in England's Anglia region.

Stars and Stripes

Frank Murphy is the author of a fine wartime volume, "Luck of the Draw." -Editor



"Oh, don't worry about Charlie - he's a tail gunner."

A TRIBUTE TO THE MODEST MAIDEN

From out of the bleak grey skies above
Searching hard for a crew to love
Came this huge silver bird -
A hard luck ship is what we heard.

All she wanted was a crew to love and serve
So we all said O.K., after finding the nerve,
We cleaned, painted, and polished her, below & above;
Then we opened our hearts & accepted her love.

She took us over Germany, and brought us safely back
Completely ignoring all the enemy flack,
Mission after mission she looked after us
Never spitting, or sputtering, or making a fuss.

Then when the war ended, she took us all home
Flying across the sea's turbulent foam,
Then, when to our homes we all departed
She just stood sad and broken hearted.

The "MODEST MAIDEN", whose pain we had healed
Once again stood alone, on a wind swept field,
The terrible end for this broken hearted bird
Was the government scrap heap, so we heard.

Yet when the crew meets - and we try -
For us, she can still spread her wings & fly,
And until the last of us, is layed to rest,
With the memory of her love, we are all blessed.

T/Sgt Ray Snook
491st Bomb Group



Modest Maiden

The Rice Crew: Back row L to Rt: Bob Dicks - w. gun, Jack Chapman - nose guns, Ray Rinto - tail gunner, Dwight Hoff - flt. eng., Ray Roberts - w. gun, Ray Snook - radio. Front row L to Rt: Bob Hacker - nav., Dick Rice - pilot, Bill Melaun - co-pilot, - Dog Stray



Ser.# 42-50448H

Daisy Mae & EarthQuake McGoon with crew
466th Bomb Group 787th Bomb Squadron

Front Row, L to R: Sgt. Eugene Person , 2nd Lt. Victor D. Peternel, Sgt. Thomas J. Nolan, S/Sgt. Herbert J. Litchfield, S/Sgt. Perry Kerr
Back Row, L to R: 2nd Lt. Bernie L. Lathrop, Sgt. Leon R. Pontbriand, S/Sgt. Jack Cahill, 2nd Lt. Richard D. Koch



You can never be sure of anything in this life. That's the only thing I'm sure of.

Clyde White
390th Bomb Group

A familiar sight to many bombardiers: farmhouses, haystacks, English countryside - and the main runway.

A REAL NICE MAN by Roger Freeman

On the fiftieth anniversary of the D-Day landings in Normandy I accompanied a Second World War fighter pilot to the US military cemetery near Omaha Beach. He wanted to find the graves of three men from his squadron that had been lost in a 1943 air battle. As we walked in our raincoats between the hundreds of graves we met a man standing forlornly by a stone. Obviously wanting to tell somebody why he was there, we became his audience. An infantry private during the invasion of Normandy, he told that the grave marker by which he stood was that of a friend who was killed beside him on that fateful day a half century ago. We stood and listened, reverently. When the man finished his tale he asked my companion, "Were you over here?"

The gentle reply was "Not here. I was in the Air Force." My companion was Gerald W. Johnson, one of the most successful Eighth Air Force fighter aces of the Hitler war, who after a spell as a POW decided on an Air Force career, rising through the USAF to become a Lt. General and commanding the Eighth Air Force during its Linebacker II missions over North Vietnam. The veteran infantryman never knew who he was addressing for it was typical of Jerry Johnson's modesty that he said nothing to mar that man's concentration of emotions on his friend who died.

Jerry was understandably proud of his career achievements but in retirement he never paraded his military status; he just wanted to be an ordinary guy. But he was not an ordinary guy; he was extraordinary, as anyone who knew him will agree. The disarming smile and pleasant disposition concealed a sharp intelligence and determination to succeed. Happy to tell tales against himself and possessed of a subtle sense of humour,

there was nothing false about Jerry; he did not nurse an ego. Perhaps he is best summed up by what an old squadron mate, Francis Gabreski, said of him several years ago. "Jerry Johnson? He use to play the old Kentucky farm boy but he was a tiger underneath. You won't find a nicer man. Yes, a real nice man."

Roger Freeman
Mays Barn-Dedham
England
8th Air Force Historian



Roger Freeman
8th AFHS Historian



Jerry Johnson with a model of his P-47 Thunderbolt on his recent return to Halesworth.

U&C CHANGES AND ADDITIONS

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The Eighth Arm Historical Society

The Flatland-Cloggers



The Strolling Silver Strings



2002 ANNUAL REUNION





Col. James Graves



Tech Sgt. Jay Perkins receives the prestigious Pursuit of Excellence Maintenance Award from Gen. Bobby Efferson, with Col. James Graves



Guest Speaker and author Dr. Donald Miller

NORFOLK REUNION HIGHLIGHTS 2002

Many Say It Was the "Best Historical Society Reunion In a Long Time!"

It began with a Virginia Patriots Welcome Reception and a big Virginia seafood buffet at Fisherman's Wharf. It ended with an impressive Gala Banquet. In between there were trips to many historical sites in the heart of the birthplace of our country; and lots of good times all along the way.

We saw the city of Norfolk and took the commuter ferry across the Elizabeth river to Portsmouth. We visited the Norfolk Naval base and saw Museums: the Naval museum, the Virginia Air and Space museum, and the Virginia Marine Science museum. A trip to the Gen. Douglas MacArthur Memorial and the Battleship USS Wisconsin tied in Army and Navy military history to the reunion activities. A number of specialized Seminars were presented at the Sheraton Waterside for everyone. Col. James Graves presented "The Third Generation of the American Experience," a tribute to those who served in the 8th AF. Judy Walker, Heritage Museum Director of Development, spoke on the museum's Planned Giving program to assure the 8th's legacy for future generations,

and the fifth annual "Pearls" Medical Seminar had a good turnout. Most members made visits to the busy PX in the gathering room.

A special day at Colonial Williamsburg imparted the theme of our country's early history of not so long ago to most of our attendees.

Business got taken care of in between dinners of crabcakes and seafood. The Society Board of Directors had two productive meetings and new Board members were installed. Our annual General Membership meeting was informative and interactive. Each day ended with the night owls in Bomb Group hospitality rooms, who always welcomed everyone in for good company and a nightcap.

The Historical Society now goes from the roots of America to today's America – we will next meet in October 2003 in Colorado Springs; the home of the U. S. Air Force Academy, several air bases, and the center for our NORAD defense system and missile country.



President Craig Harris presides at the Gala Banquet



The Laying of the Flowers Memorial Service, dedicated to former President and friend Norman Grant



Speaker Donald Miller, author of *The Story of World War II*, talks on the wartime years and of those who fought for freedom of all people



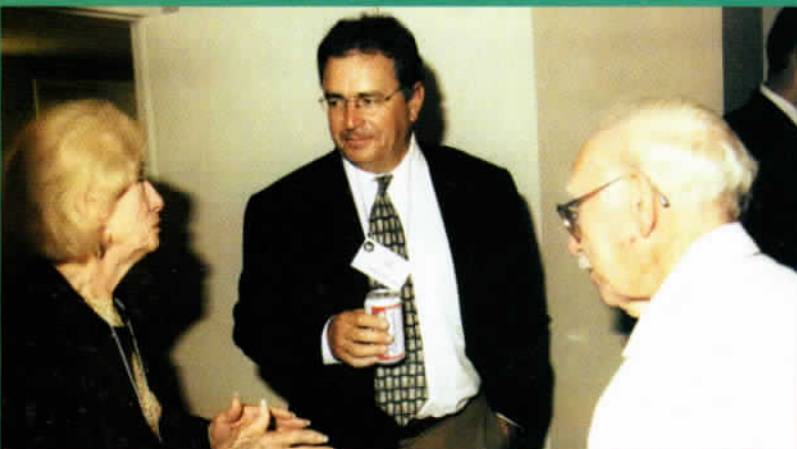
Participants in the Laying of the Flowers Memorial Service at the Gala Banquet



Larry Goldstein, 388th BG, and Gen. Bobby Efferson, 8th AF Headquarters Barksdale



Heritage Museum Oral History Archivist Vivian Rogers-Price and M/Sgt. Randy Coffman



Molly and Lou Loevsky with Don Miller in the late hours after the banquet



Wives and guests of the Awardees at the Gala Banquet



2nd ADA President Dick Butler and wife Ardith



The General Ira C. Eaker Outstanding Airmanship Trophy recipients – 20th Bomb Squadron B-52 Bombardment crew, 2nd Bomb Wing, 8th Air Force, Barksdale AFB, LA.

Awardees are: Major Eric Johnson, Instructor pilot; Captain Brian Micolosi, pilot; Capt. James Dunn, Instructor Radar Navigator; Capt. Christopher Baird, navigator; and Capt. Robert Simonsen, Instructor Electronic Warfare Officer.



Bobby and Abbe Dodd



John Cashman received the Historical Society's Distinguished Service Award for 25 years of service with membership records and administration. At the banquet with his wife Susan



Dick Baynes with an 8th AF scarf presented to his wife Margaret



In the background from left: Jim Lorenz, 466th BG, Douglas Tomb, Paul Andrews, George Hoidra, 447th BG, Mary Ellen Lynn and Ellen Fleming



Bill and Jeanette Zachar, 303rd BG



Pete Petrillo, 447th BG, at the mike in the annual meeting



Good conversation – from left: Irene Horan, Donna Strachocki, Mary Lorenz, Ruth and Russ McNair



Elmo Maiden and Richard Rozner in the 466th BGA Hospitality Room



Paul Andrews with Beverly Tomb, Mary Ellen Lynn, and Margaret Baynes

Dorsey Maiden and her daughter Nancy Shattuck



John Fleming, Army Air Corps Historian and John Garrity, 466th BG

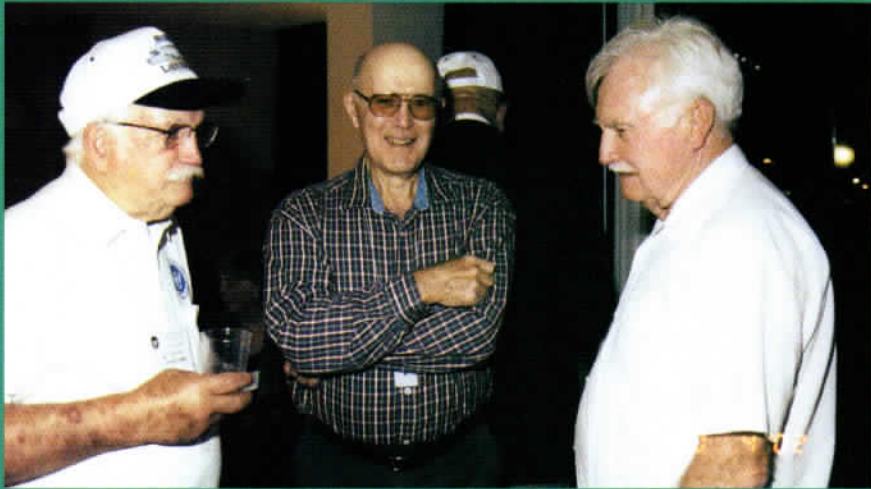


The PX team from the Heritage Museum with big smiles, Julia Smith and Peggy Hardin

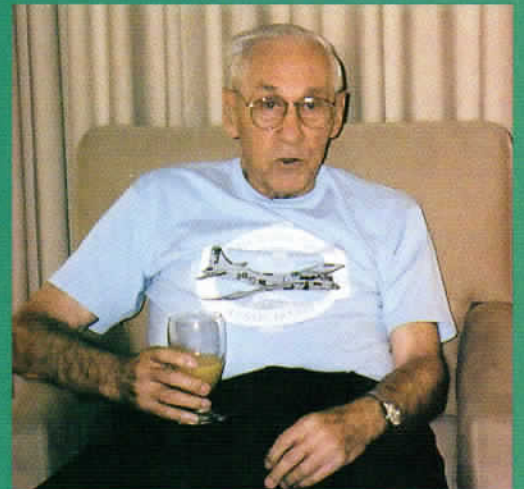


PX manager Julia Smith talks with John O'Neil and Fred Breuninger, 446th BG





From left, its Bob Himes, John Horan, and Clint Maiden



Father Walter Lohse, 96th BG Chaplain enjoying a glass of orange juice



President Craig Harris with Mayor Paul Friam of Norfolk who spoke to the troops at the Virginia Patriots reception, presenting the 8th AFHS with a proclamation and the key to the city

James Bass,
457th BG, HS
Parliamentarian



from left, Alfred Dusey, George Hoidra, and Shorty Codman





Many reunion attendees took a walk down the riverfront to visit the historic Battleship *USS Wisconsin*



The Navy has its own 8th
The Cruiser Destroyer Flotilla Eight



Familiar faces observing the river traffic on the Sheraton waterfront



THE FORGOTTEN PHOTO OF CHRISTMAS

by Marion Hoffman, 91st BG, Miamisburg, OH

During WWII, in England flying with the 8th Air Force, 91st Bomb Group, 323rd Bomb Squadron this 1944 Christmas story occurred.

At the time I wanted to send a photo home to my family for a Christmas present, convincing them of my well-being while flying in combat.

It was at photo shop in Royston, England this story began. Royston was about three miles from our air-base. When I approached these British folks who operated the photo shop they understood the situation about Christmas presents. But they did not question whether I was flying combat missions or not; I was just another Yank with money to spend.

We as a crew had attained up to Christmas at that time different combat fatigue problems. I had completely forgot about picking up the photo from the photo shop. I must have had a mental block. I do remember yet this day celebrating Christmas 1944. It was the Christmas Eve 23rd mission when we were diverted to another base landing in darkness and we did not get home to our base until Christmas Day at 1800 hours for Christmas dinner.

Then as luck and life would have it on my 25th mission, I went through the four month POW ordeal. Three months of that time for my parents, I was MIA. In these months my mother had been in contact with U.S. Representatives, U.S. Congressmen, Indiana State Politicians, Generals and others wondering where her son was. She was desperate. She had four sons out of eight in the service. Was this one dead or alive?

With no knowledge of her son, she was about to post a Gold Star Banner on the front window of our house. I was liberated on April 29, 1945 and began the journey back home to America.

When I arrived back home in Indiana on June 14th, 1945, going through the front door of my home, on a mantle in the living room was this individual photo. I was shocked into reality. I had remembered the photo taken back in England in December. I was completely flabbergasted; really I cried. The urgent question for that moment, I asked my parents. "How did you receive that photo?" My parents thought their son had sent it home and did not forget them for Christmas, yet they held it in question because it came with my personal belongings. Then I told my parents the truth of my story about the "Forgotten Photo of Christmas."

After getting shot down, some good soul from my H-Block dormitory room must have received the call from



The Marion Hoffman wartime photo

the photo shop in Royston. Somehow, someway the photo was ready. It had to be after Christmas 1944 and after we were shot down January 6, 1945. That someone made the purchase. They knew I was shot down either MIA maybe a POW or dead. That someone knew how important the photo would be for my parents; their son who might be dead. So with my personal effects as commonly done, they sent the photo along home to my parents. My parents did not receive many of my personal effects. Maybe the Chaplain or whoever decided what to send home thought the photo most important. The personal effects that were missing did not bother me. I was home alive. I survived. But seeing that photo on display here in my home made the culmination of an adventure complete.

In closing, my wife Bernita and I cherish the photo yet today; it has played a very important part in our life relationship. The photo sits on a prominent shelf in our home with many of our momentos of yester-year. At Christmas this year it will be the 59th anniversary for this once forgotten, then remembered, photo.



Bernita and Marion Hoffman

- MEMORIAL PLAQUE - GLENN MILLER SUPPORT TEAM

Dear Mr. Brown,
Whilst out and about in Chelsea in London on a fine spring morning, I came across a plaque set in the pavement. As I was reading the inscription a Chelsea pensioner, who are mainly ex-WW2 servicemen, was passing in his motorized wheelchair.

He explained, "The people killed there by a V-1 buzz bomb were mainly from the Glenn Miller support team, who were billeted at Sloane Court. Many years ago the plaque was put in the pavement by a G.I. survivor from the building in their memory"

He continued, "A couple of years ago a British ex-paratrooper did not think it right that people should be walking on it, so he, along with some friends, clubbed together and paid for a proper wall plaque.

The only nearby wall available was a military barracks. It is almost impossible to get anything put on defense property, but when they heard what it was, they agreed to it. So the plaque was placed on the barracks wall."

I was also told that a bunch of flowers appears at this location every 3rd July.

On the 3rd July last, I was there early, but not early enough. However, I did get a picture of the flowers at the Plaque Wall.

I thought this was such a touching story. You may be gone, but you are certainly not forgotten.

Leonard Alsford
Associate 8th AFHS
Crouch Hill
London England



The Wall Plaque with
memorial flowers



The original Pavement Plaque - circa 1970



The rebuilt block of Flats as it is today.



The Wall Plaque circa 1990/9

THE FIX

Historian Harry Gobrecht's extensive compilation of 8th Air Force Group Names and Mottos in the Sept 02 issue brought out a good response. Harry's research was based on available source materials referenced at the bottom of the article and was not expected to be complete, so here are some comments and additions.

Merle Olmsted, 357th FG historian, states that the 357th Fighter Group shot down more German aircraft and had more aces (43) than any other group and carried the proud name The Yoxford Boys. L. J. Mantoux was the 482nd BG's Group Operations officer from its activation in 1943 to the end of the war. He notes that the 482nd at Alconbury operated a radar and navigation bombing school and supplied the lead Pathfinder crews and aircraft for the entire 8th AF on all blind bombing missions to Germany.

C. E. "Becky" Beck writes to correct the mis-ident of the B-17 Gremlin Gus II's as a 100th BG aircraft. The Square D tail marking in the background was the red herring- the editor's apologies to the guys of the 388th BG!

The 91st BG's Whit Hill notes that the missing 91st BG motto, My God, Am I Right is a paraphrase of the British motto My God, I Am Right.

EDWARD GIERING RECEIVES BELATED PURPLE HEART AWARD



Lt. Col. Edward Giering

Ed Giering, 303rd Bomb Group radio operator/gunner, was shot down on the Munster raid of 16 February 45 and was captured near the front lines by German troops. On the mission, his crew had made two passes over the primary target and then was the only crew to hit the secondary target of the day. Twice hit by flak, Ed bailed out of the damaged aircraft. Three of his crew members were killed. Under interrogation, Ed was beaten by his German captors, and could not retaliate because he and his fellow prisoners

would have been immediately shot. He later heard that other captured crews had been burned or hanged by the Germans.

Fifty-seven years later, Retired Army Lt. Col. Edward Giering received the Purple Heart in ceremonies held at Hanscom AFB, Massachusetts. Army authorities have

recently publicized a change in regulations which now allow servicemen injured while being held as prisoners of war to apply for the Purple Heart Award. Giering's buddies helped arrange the award, presented by Brigadier Gen. Robert Latiff, ESC Vice Commander.

Giering, who now lives in Connecticut, retired in 1973 having served in Korea and Vietnam. He came out of retirement during Desert Storm to lend assistance as a contracting officer during that campaign.



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GLENN MILLER

Dear Editor,

In reading about the Twinwood Control Tower restoration, I was delighted that Connie and Gordon Richards are gathering Glenn Miller memorabilia. But I wonder how many of your readers saw the PBS special this year on the downing of Miller's plane.

As we know, he took off in bad weather against recommendations. As his plane headed towards France, it was considerably off course. At the same time, a squadron of British night bombers was returning from a scheduled mission in Germany without dropping their bombs due to the bad weather.

These bombers headed towards an assigned area for disposing of bombs before landing. As they jettisoned their bomb loads, one of the navigators told his pilot that they had hit a plane below them. This remark went unnoticed for years until a researcher put the two trajectories together. He has confirmed from British records that the Miller plane was under the returning bombers at the time of bomb release.

It is a tragic ending for a man who sacrificed much to form a band to entertain the troops. Glenn was a major part of many of our lives. August Bolino
Navigator, 388th Bomb Group
Silver Spring, MD

JOINT RESOLUTION

Dear Friends,

I received a call today from Stan Holcombe, a Mighty 8th Air Force veteran. He asked me to send you a copy of a resolution I authored in the Wisconsin State Assembly. Assembly Joint Resolution 92 (AJR92) honors veterans of the Mighty 8th Air Force by designating the week of October 8th through the 14th as Mighty 8th Air Force Week in the State of Wisconsin.

Stan was instrumental in recognizing the veterans of the mighty 8th Air Force as he brought it to my attention. AJR92 received wide bipartisan support through both houses of the legislature and by the Governor.

Stan is a true patriot; a true patriot, a true hero and a true friend.

Thank you also for all that you have done to recognize veterans, especially in the 8th Air Force, throughout the United States. AJR92 is as much a tribute to the fight for freedom across the globe as it is to you who have dedicated so much time and effort out of your daily lives to remember America's heroes.

Sincerely,

Steve Wieckert State Representative
Wisconsin

EUROPEAN MEMORIALS

Dear Editor,

The following may be of interest to other members of our association.

In July my wife and I visited four memorial sites in Europe that had been erected by and dedicated in the memory of crews from our group by the local community. These sites are in Eemnes, The Netherlands, and in France at Schoeneck, Barembach, and Marcillac. We felt that someone from the group honored should say, "Thanks." This was done with a plaque to each community. The welcome and response was outstanding in each case even though we arrived during a normal work day.

It was a humbling experience as in most cases someone present had been a witness of the crash or had helped a member to hide and escape capture.

We were taken to another memorial some distance from Marcillac where we were asked about a memorial to a crew that crashed the same day, December 31, 1943, as our crew. We have since been able through the names on the memorial and help from Alan Hague, Norfolk Suffolk Aviation Museum and J. Fred Thomas of the 392nd to identify the crew as 392nd BG.

I wonder how many such memorials to 8th AF crews and other groups exist? I would like to hear about any others.

Bill Davenport, 446th BG
13382 Wheeler Place
Santa Ana, CA 92705-1934



PROMOTIONS

Sir,

I believe someone asked in a previous issue as to what Regulation people were promoted if they were POW's or MIA's (Evaders).

Enclosed orders cite the regulation. I don't believe I read it but I was glad it was there. Geyers' crew and ours were the first two replacement crews the 331st SM SGD., 94th BM GP. received in early 1943 - Geyer's A/C was Lt. Naowitz; they went down on the 17 August '43 Regensburg mission. We went down flying with a Lt. Watts on the 14th of July '43 mission to Le Bourget - our original pilot Lt. Ben Kordus finished a tour on the 16th Nov. 1943. Kordus later was MIA in the Pacific on a B-24 crew some time after 1944.

Geyer and I were in Spain together after we got out of occupied territory - later on we both were gunnery instructors at Sioux City, Iowa for a while.

You do a great job on the magazine. I'm only sorry I didn't join sooner. But then again there are so many groups, etc. organizations. Keep up the great work on the magazine, and take care.

Pro Patria,

Joseph E. Marios

M/Sgt USAF Ret.

RESTRICTED

SPECIAL ORDER No. 105 AAF
Sta 468 13 Dec 1943 Page (3)

13. UP of AR 615-5, and upon the recom of the orgn comdr, the folw EM, Combat Crew members, are promoted to grade indicated:

331st BOMBARDMENT

SQUADRON (H)

**TO BE TECHNICAL SERGENT
(TEMPORARY)**

S/Sgt. Beverly C. Geyer, 31152049

S/Sgt. Joseph E. Manos, 12145982



14. OPEN

By order of Colonel CASTLE:
OFFICIAL:
Willis E. Schwartz,
1st Lt., A.C., Asst. Adjutant

LETTER

Dear Walter,

A fellow 8AFHS member and neighbor, Herb Nuber, recently stopped at a restaurant near the 8AFHS Heritage Museum, and was browsing through an 8AFHS publication kept on the premises when he was surprised to see there a letter of sympathy from me addressed to the mother of my bombardier, 2nd Lt. Donald F. Dickson, Charleston, W.Va. We had been shot down over the North Sea after bombing Kiel, December 13, 1943.

My mother had been corresponding with her during the many months when there was very little information available. When I returned from POW camp in the summer of 1945, I found out that my mother had died in Dec. 1944. It was very difficult to finally write with details of the mission and tell her, Jessie Dickson, that there was no hope that her son, Don, was alive.

I had only made brief, scribbling notes when I sent the letter. I hope that with the meager information above, you are able to obtain a copy of the letter for me.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,
Bernard A. Grossman
Lakewood, N.J.

FLYING THE MISSIONS

Dear Sir:

The last issue (Sept. 2002) was indeed humbling in many respects. In the first instance I was reminded how vulnerable the B-24 aircraft was under the conditions we flew. On

one of the 491st BG first missions we lost Lt. M. Butler's crew; the plane exploded while bombing Orly Airbase near Paris. The pilot of the crew to which I was assigned would tremble in horror if anyone mentioned Paris. The flak batteries along the coast of France were deadly. I met my fate (was wounded) on my 28th mission which we were bombing for tactical support of the troops during the Caen breakthrough. One never knew when your number was up. Of course combat was only a small portion of the hazards that we faced constantly. To mention a few: Take off, prop wash, flying up through

miles of clouds for assembly, extreme cold, fuel supply, etc. On a mission to Munich we were to bomb a bridge with blockbusters (2000 lb bombs). Suddenly the group met head-on with a cloud bank. The entire formation scattered and our plane flew alone in a southeasterly direction for two hours until we tacked on to another crew. We dropped our bombs on the primary target. End of story, not hardly. On the return flight the lead navigator erred and we found ourselves under intense flak over Frankfurt. About half of our small formation were shot down. My pilot flew evasive action and I prayed real hard. The flak over Munich was bad but it didn't compare to the intensity and accuracy we experienced flying up the Rhine. I was so horrified that I was unable to speak when we landed. One of the guys from another crew kidded me when I tried to carry on a conversation with him. My comment was "we had a rough time today."

The other article which distresses me was the Historical Report (p. 58) with regard to Award of Medals. I didn't receive a DFC for the missions which I flew (total/lead) but did for the mission on which I was wounded. This was supposed to be a milk run and I don't feel that my duties were performed with anymore heroism/valor than any other mission that I flew. No one in the group was aware of the award so I don't feel ashamed of receiving it. By the way, I'm still feeling the lasting effects of the injury.

Regards,
George A. Risko, 491st BG
Troy, MI

MICKEY MAN

Dear Walter,
The September issue was great. It lived up to the word "Historical" in our name. There is one minor correction. In the story on "The Black Cat" you write that John Murphy was a Radio Operator. He was a Radar Navigator. (Mickey Man).
Stan Goldstein
466th BG Radar Navigator
Kingston, NY

ZOMBIE

Dear Dr. Brown,
I am seeking information regarding a painting that was done of my P-47D Thunderbolt named "Zombie". This beautiful rendition of my plane was the featured centerfold of the July 1974 issue of Air Power Magazine. I do not know who the artist is and would like to get in touch with him. If anyone has information regarding this matter, I would be most appreciative if you would contact me.
Best regards,
Thomas Bailey
200 West Bolivar Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53207
(414) 481-1373

TED'S TRAVELING CIRCUS

Dear Dr. Brown,
First off I congratulate you on the outstanding Eighth Air Force News. I am a life member of The Eighth Air Force Historical Society and one of the original members of the 93rd Bomb Group (B-24s), 328th Sqdn. I joined them when they were forming up at Barksdale Field in April 1942. I first flew as a navigator in the plane, "Shoot Luke". Our plane led the group across the North Atlantic departing out of Grenier Field, N.H. to England, via Gander on 1 September 1942. We arrived at Prestwick, Scotland 9 hrs. 27 minutes after leaving Gander. My plane had Major Addison E. Baker and Lt. John H. Murphy as it's pilots. We

MAIL CALL



then proceeded to Alconbury Air Base in England where we flew our first Combat Mission on 9 August 1942. My oxygen system went out and I fell unconscious to the floor of my position in the nose. The alert bombardier, Lt. Ed Janic found me and saved me (altitude approx 27,000 feet) by using a walk about bottle. I ended up in the hospital, outside of London for several weeks. This necessitated my position be replaced. After being released back to flight status I filled a vacancy on "Double Trouble." After ten missions over Europe out of Alconbury, and twelve out of North Africa in Tunisia, we were shot down while bombing the harbor target of Sousse, Tunisia, NA. Flack got three of our engines and not able to stay with our outfit but still heading for our base in the Lybian Desert, we were finished off by German ME 109s and FW 190s. Of the crew of ten, eight were MIA/KIA. Our bombardier and myself were rescued from the Mediterranean sea by an Arab fisherman. Both Gus Gray and myself were badly wounded. Gus my bombardier, leaped out of the sail boat into the sea and saved my life for I was floating in my Mae West, face down and unconscious. The fisherman returned and hauled both of us back into the boat and sailed to the shore where I finally came to with my head in Gus's lap. Shortly an Africa Corps group of soldiers came in and captured us. We both ended up in various POW Camps over Europe. Liberated at Stalag 7-A by General Patton and his Corps, on 29 April 1945. Excuse the wordy message, but I thought I could add more authenticity to drawing to your attention an error on page 31 under Names and mottos of the Bomb Groups. In particular 93rd BG B24s Group name: TED'S Traveling Circus not "the Traveling Circus." This man, General Ted Timberlake meant the world to us and was a great American WWII combat hero. This correction may seem slight, but to those who fought, flew and knew him so well, simply cannot over look the error. Ted is

very symbolic to us who are still alive. Ted Timberlake's entire outfit would follow him through Hell, and frequently did, in particular when those were the days of no friendly fighter escorts. Keep up the great work.
Sincerely,
Luther C. Cox, 93rd BG
Orlando, FL
email: shootluke@juno.com
Luther Cox is author of a book his experiences as a medic in the wartime Stalags "Always Fighting the Enemy." - Editor

Sincerely yours,
Ralph Patton, AFEES
Chevy Chase, MD
My sincere thanks to Ralph Patton and the members of AFEES. I look forward to being there! -Editor

MOTTOS

Dear Editor,
On page 31 of the Sept. 02 issue the 448th BG is listed with no name of our motto. The motto is "Destroy". If I was called upon in hindsight to pen a motto - I would suggest "GAUDT TENTAMINE VIRTUS", "COURAGE DELIGHTS IN A TRIAL" or "COURAGE SEEKS A TEST."
Sam & Trudy Zarcoff
Los Angeles, CA

AIR FORCES ESCAPE AND EVASION SOCIETY

Dear Walter,
Thank you very much for the very fine spread in the last issue of your excellent 8th AF News.
As you are well aware, the main mission of AFEES is to remember the Helpers who risked their lives to save our necks; your help in doing this in the 8th newsletter, and at the Heritage Museum, is truly appreciated.
It takes a number of dedicated members to keep an organization such as AFEES alive and well for more than 35 years, especially when no young men, or women, are becoming eligible for full membership (thank God). No one is more deserving of recognition for this effort than Scotty and Clayton David.
Our next effort to honor our Helpers will be in Wichita Falls, TX next May 1-4. We truly hope that you will be with us to lend a helping hand. Please consider this a personal invitation from Ralph Patton and all of the AFEES members.

BINGEN

Dear Walter:
First of all, I wish to compliment you and your staff for doing such a terrific job on the publishing of the Eighth Air Force News. As a combat member of the 457th BG it brings back many memories (some good, some terrifying). In reading its articles, on page 47 of the September issue you show a photo of the railroad switching yard at the town of Bingen on the Rhine. This was part of a railway yard article showing how these yards were busted up by the 8th Air Force.
On Dec. 29th 1944 the 457th bomb group hit this target. If I remember correctly, it was a beautiful clear day with very little anti-aircraft fire (that was certainly unusual) and no enemy aircraft were in sight. Captain Burningham and I had enough lead missions together so we were very comfortable as to what each of us had to do. I compiled the data in the sight and kept the hairs, both rate and drift, solid on the target. The Captain kept the plane as horizontal as possible and at a constant speed. When these things were put together and with all other conditions almost perfect, you really couldn't miss the target.
Lt. Kenneth Nail and Lt. Ellis were great to work with and we hit all our checkpoints right on the button. I flew a fair number of missions with Lt. Nail as our lead Navigator. We always got there and always got back. On Dec 24th, 1944 we even crashed landed together at night at a strange fighter base - but that is



another story.

Attached is the commendation sent by General Lacey to Colonel Rogner, the 457th commanding officer. The high squadron received an EXCELLENT rating on our bomb drop.

My very best wishes to you and your staff.

Frank Bernd, 457th BG
Naperville, IL

SIR BABOON McGOON

Dear Walter,

From day to day I meet 'problems' with my work on the 8th AF History (in England) during World War II. As you know since 1945 I do intensive research on aspects from the many USAAF bases. And one of the 'problems' is over B-17F - 75 - DL, serial nr. 42-3506. This plane belonged to the 91st Bomb Group(H) and was based at Bassingbourn. Nick name of the plane was Sir Baboon McGoon. I know that many 8th AF planes had their own stories, but I think the story of Sir Baboon McGoon is not what happened every day. In short here it is:

At the end of November 1943 the Sir Baboon McGoon - the nickname was painted by famous Tony Starcer - came back from a mission to Germany and nearby England the fuel tanks ran dry and pilot Robert Slane was able to land the big plane in a sugar beet field near Braisworth Hall, Tannington in Suffolk. It meant lots of damage to the B-17. But enthusiastic mobile repair crew members did what seems to be impossible: In two week's time Sir Baboon McGoon came to life again as a grand new 'son' of the 8th Air Force. Many workers made a temporary runway and the pilot (who?) did it: as a young bird left the sugar beet field...! It was 5 December 1943 and our "Sir" went to Honington for a

thorough check-out.

Later on, the B-17, back from a mission to Germany on 29 March 1944, went down in my country and the crew survived but was sent to a POW camp. On that day I think the pilot was Edgar Downing. And I am very sorry, but while I live in Holland I still do not know where the B-17 came down. In my documentation. What I hope is: Are there still 8th AF members who were at the sugar beet field, names of the crew of the B-17, and for what reason 8th AF Teams spend so much time and hours to help the B-17 to fly again? By the way: you probably do not know: but in Holland we have a club of friends, all interested in the history of the 8th Air Force. And be sure it is amazing that some of them are so deeply documented as if they were themselves members of the 8th during the war!

Best wishes,

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

THE GOONEY BIRDS

Dear Sir:

As a long time member of the 8th AFHS I find it hard to understand the editorial policy established years ago by John Woolnough. I refer to the complete lack of any stories about the Air Service Command branch of the 8th AF. When you get down to specifics and analyze the work done by all the different planes used during the war, it becomes clear that the C-47 was the single most indispensable airplane of the war. Even Eisenhower said the three most valuable weapons we had were the Jeep, the Bazooka and the C-47. Stop and think a minute, why the war so successfully pursued to the rapid conclusion. The facts are that the C-47s delivered materials to the front when and where needed, then evacuated the wounded to base hospitals in England, many on the same day they were wounded.

Had the war depended on ground transport alone the Germans would have been able to dig in and create defensive positions that would have made the war much longer and more

costly in lives lost. Also the wounded, at least many who I carried would have never been able to withstand the rigors of ground transport and the ferry trip across the channel. So you see the "Goony Birds" shortened the war and saved countless lives in the process. And there was no other aircraft in the war that could tow gliders or drop paratroops and parachute supplies where needed. We went into cow pastures delivering supplies close enough to the fighting to hear the gunfire at times and took wounded back to England. So please, give us a break that we so rightly deserve - at least admit we were part of the war effort.

Yours truly,

Leslie Viet, 86th ATS; 27th ATG
302nd Wing
Levittown, PA

Les Viet makes a good point. In upcoming issues we will feature articles on the role the C-47 and their crews played in the war, as well as in the Cold War's Berlin Airlift. -Editor

IDEAS

Dear Walt:

Thinking of potential subjects for future issues of the Air Force News, maybe a feature story on the folks that worked on the assembly lines manufacturing the 17's and 24's would be of interest. Certainly, there are many pix available. Indeed, one focusing solely on the Rosie the Riveters could make one story. Yet another could be about the gals who ferried some of the planes over. There are a whole group of pix, any one of which could provide a cover for either of the above. Another thought is a feature about the line folks, without which the planes never would have been kept flying.

Regards,

Arthur Schmauder
Incline Village, NV
Great suggestions, Art! Feature stories to follow. -Editor

NAPALM MISSIONS

Dear Editor,
Thanks for a great magazine of memorable articles, a great job. Mention was made of the 8th carrying out its sole napalm bomb operation, 1945, September 2002 issue. Recalled, as a participant in this April 15, 1945 operation, P-51 drop fuel-tanks were filled with gasoline and liquid rubber. The ballistics were poor from an altitude of 15,000 feet, however, the results were unknown until now. Overall, a very spectacular show.

This was the second of three missions to the Grave-Royan area where German fortifications on either side of the Gironde River denied Allies use of the port of Bordeaux. The Robert Glazener crew, 447th BG 709th Squadron, flew all three. Fragmentation bombs were carried on April 14th and 500 and 1,000 pounders on April 16. As per instructions, we cleared the area by noon sharp when began a naval barrage under which Allied troops moved in, cleared and secured the area. Reportedly, following the April 16th mission, General Spaatz considered the strategic air war over and future targets for the heavy bombers would be purely tactical. Hopefully, this and the enclosed will be of some interest.

Hobart Jarvis
Barbourville, KY
fhjarvis@barbourville.com
Hobart forwards newspaper articles of the missions, as reported by the Associate Press.

"More than 460,000 gallons of this liquid fire and more than 6,000 of the usual type incendiary bombs as well as 1000 high explosive bombs were spread over this target area on both sides of the Gironde."

"It was just like hurling a gigantic flame thrower" related George Hacks, a Fortress gunner in describing the effect of the tanks filled with inflammable fluid which explode on impact and splash flames over an area of 60 square yards. -Editor

AFEES

Doctor Brown:
Many thanks for the story about the Escape & Evasion Society on page 15 of your September issue. It is no exaggeration to say that AFEES would not be what it is without Scotty David, who has been searching for members for many years.

We are unique among veterans organizations. All we have is a common experience of being converted from airman to tourist in enemy territory and being able to return to allied control, thanks to courageous and dedicated patriots in occupied countries.

You probably know that for 50 years, most of our members were sworn to secrecy about details of their evasion experience, and only now, are free to talk about it. That was to protect patriots in the occupied nations. I do not hesitate to adapt material from other vet newsletters and consider most of this stuff to be in the public realm after this length of time.

Best regards, and hope you are having a great time in Norfolk. How about joining us in Wichita Falls next May, where you could hear some great war stories and visit with several Helpers from Europe, whom we welcome as very special guests. Best regards,
Larry Grauerholz
Editor, AFEES Communications
Wichita Falls, TX

FROZEN ASS

Dear Dr. Brown,
With reference to the letter from John A. Clark, co-pilot 418th BS 100th BG concerning the small donkey that "Cowboy" Roane brought back from North Africa, I was lucky enough to actually meet Mr. Roane when he visited the 100th BG Memorial Museum in Thorpe Abbots, England in a about 1996. He was kind enough to sign his book "A Year in the Life of a Cowboy with the Bloody 100th" for me. Subsequently, in January 2002, I donated this autographed book to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in



Savannah. When anyone reads this book, they will find a first-hand account of the unusual event. I do seem to remember the donkey was called simply "Moe". Incidentally, I also donated a collection of correspondence relating the personal WW2 history of the late Wayne B. "Tex" Frye, Navigator with the 91st Bomb Group, and a reproduced photograph of his aircraft the "Wicked Witch" along with the crew. Anybody remember him? I do so enjoy your magazine! With very best wishes,
Annette Hedges
8th AFHS
Maidenland
Berks England

COVER PHOTO - SEPT 02

Dear Dr. Brown:
The cover of the Sept 02 issue documents one of the most vivid memories of my experience as an 8th AF gunner. I could have taken that picture if I had a camera at that moment.

It happened on the Dec. 24th 1944. I was left waist gunner on 1st. William T. Moore's PFF crew flying lead of the high group of the 447th BG. It was a beautiful clear day as the picture shows. We were in the area of the front lines when flak started to break in the lead group. As I watched, the deputy lead plane flown by 1st. M. King



MAIL CALL



caught fire in the left wing and almost immediately the wing folded and the

plane fell scattering debris as it went. I watched until it fell out of sight; there were no chutes. I am interested in who the photographer was and where he was in the formation. He must have been taking pictures of the flak when King was hit, it happened so fast. Also, the picture on the third page must have been taken within seconds of the first.

Would it be possible to get copies of those pictures? I am active with the Santa Maria Museum of Flight and would like them for our WWII section. Thank you for your time and effort putting together the great 8th AF News.

John Killpack, 447th Bomb Group
Ball turret gunner

AMERICAN AIR MUSEUM RE-DEDICATION

by Ivan McKinney

On Friday 27 September 2002, approximately 6,000 people assembled at Duxford, England, for the Re-dedication of the American Air Museum in Britain. Many 8th Air Force veterans of WWII and many British citizens who lived during those dark days of aerial bombardment 60 years ago were in attendance. Also attending were many active duty USAF personnel who were stationed in the U.K. and in other European countries. The Guest Speaker was the 41st President of the United States, George Bush. President Bush stated that he was pleased to be there, "with America's best friend, the United Kingdom." The Prince of Wales and the Duke of Kent also spoke, reflecting high praise and love for the American people. The ceremonies ended with a memorable airshow, with the B-17 "Sally-B" making several overhead passes, alone and with P-51 and P-47 escort. The British aerobatics champion "wrung out" a Corsair, and several flybys were made by a TBM, the aircraft in which President Bush saw combat as a naval ensign during WWII in the Pacific. Flybys by formations of three F-15's and three C-130's based in England were also made. The weather was "perfect," according to Treasurer Ivan McKinney, who attended the ceremonies.



8th AFHS Treasurer Ivan McKinney posing with RAF Air Chief Marshall Peter Squire.



The Museum's newest addition, a B-24 with 493rd BG markings, named "Dugan," the B-24 that 8th AFHS Director Emeritus Robert Vickers flew.



Guest speaker for the Rededication was our 41st President, George Bush. On the President's left is the Museum's Royal Patron, the Duke of Kent, and on his immediate right is Prince Charles, the Prince of Wales, and Admiral Sir Jock Slater, President of the Museum.

8th AF HISTORICAL SOCIETY PX

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A-2 JACKET MADE IN THE USA

The most famous piece of flight gear in military history... Official military issue Brown Mil spec goatskin Poly-cotton lining. Knit waistband and cuffs. Perfect for your HS and Unit patches!
34-60 Regular, 38-60 Tall, \$200.00-\$260.00

AMERICA'S MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE Conception to D-Day

The Eighth Air Force rose from a small cadre of young men to a fierce fighting force that ultimately crippled Germany's ability to wage war. Warren Bodie and Allen Macpherson are bringing you their immense collections to reveal the history of the men, the units and machines that banded together to heroically abolish the axis forces.
NEW BOOK \$39.99

ULTIMATE SOLDIER ACTION FIGURES - 8th Air Force

B-17 Waist Gunner "Moonlight Serenade" and the P-51

Fighter "Ace's High". The history of aviation is being recognized with these two action figures available with all their cold weather gear. Even the big kids will enjoy these action figures.
\$34.99

HATS, HATS AND MORE HATS

In stock we are carrying both the Museum's Logo and the 8th Historical Society Logo on our hats. Available in many colors and styles. If you would like a hat with the aircraft you flew, we have those in stock now. (B-17, B-24, P-51 and P-38.)
\$12.00-\$21.99

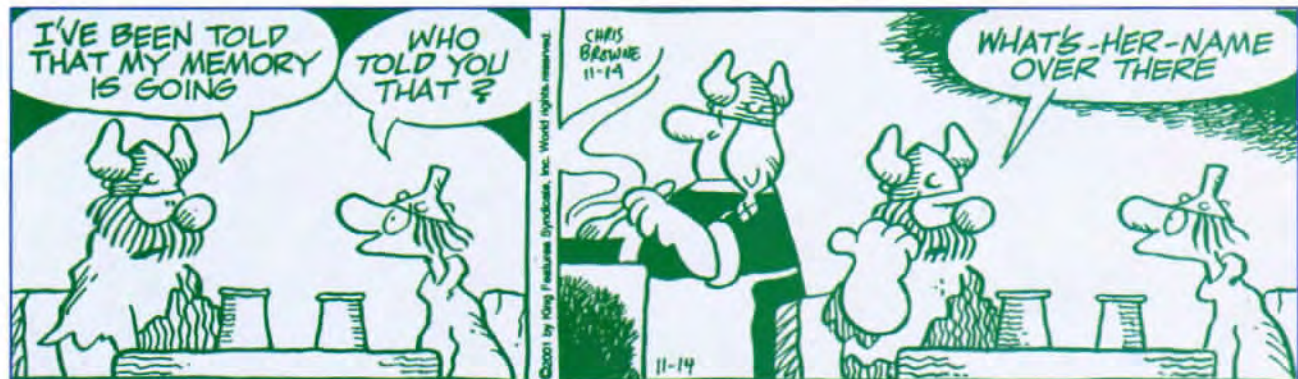
DOG TAGS

Four lines on replica metal tags with neck chain. \$5.00 per set plus s&h. Call PX shop number to order.

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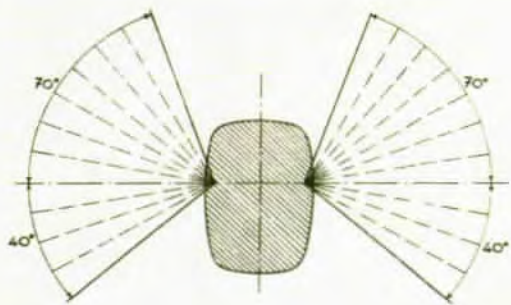
Not What It Seems To Be!
Waistgunner Kenneth Boone, 303rd Bomb Group, on the Neil Cunningham crew, gets a little sack time in a shiny B-17 waist after a March 1945 mission to Germany.

photo by crewmate Bill Carter, BTG
-submitted by Harry Gobrecht



VIERMOTORIGES KAMPFFLUGZEUG

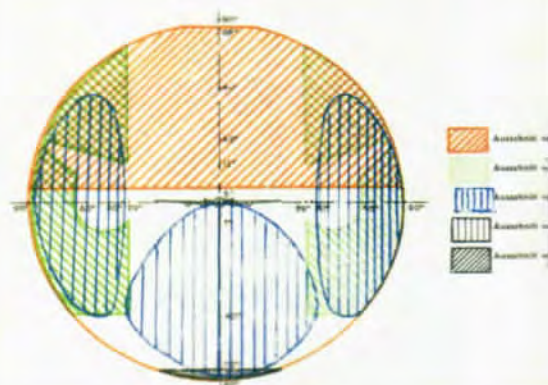
Einzelheiten der Seitenwaffen des Rumpfes



Jede Waffe hat ihren eigenen Schützen

Darstellung des Überschall

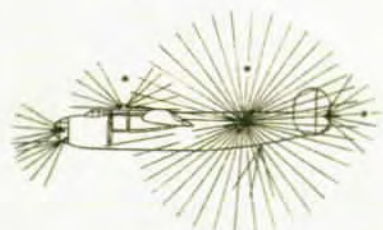
Vorderansicht



Darstellung der von den Bo

Alle Waffen sind Kaliber 12,7 mm.

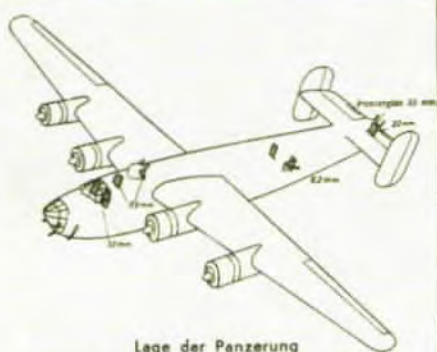
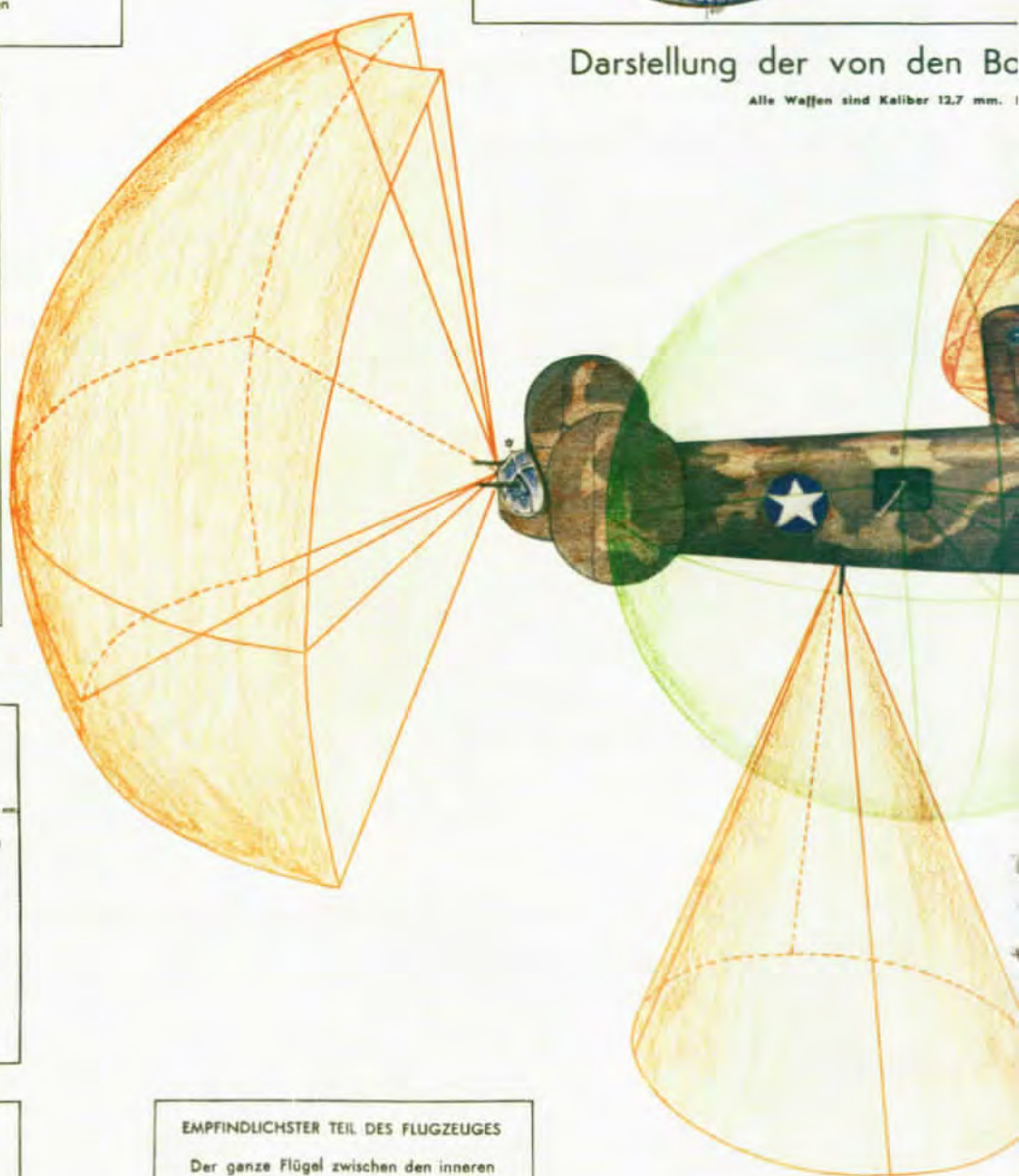
Feuerabschnitte



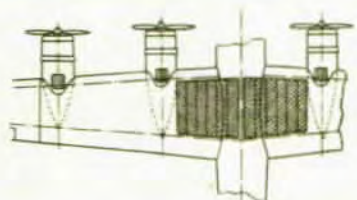
Seitenansicht



Ansicht von oben



Lage der Panzerung



Lage der Behälter

EMPFINDLICHSTER TEIL DES FLUGZEUGES

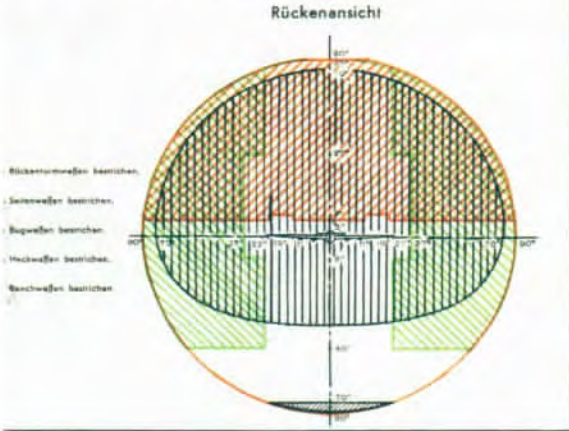
Der ganze Flügel zwischen den inneren Motoren bis ca. 2/3 der Tiefe

ÖLBEHÄLTER

in den Gondeln hinter den Motoren

CONSOLIDATED B. 24 D. "LIBERATOR"

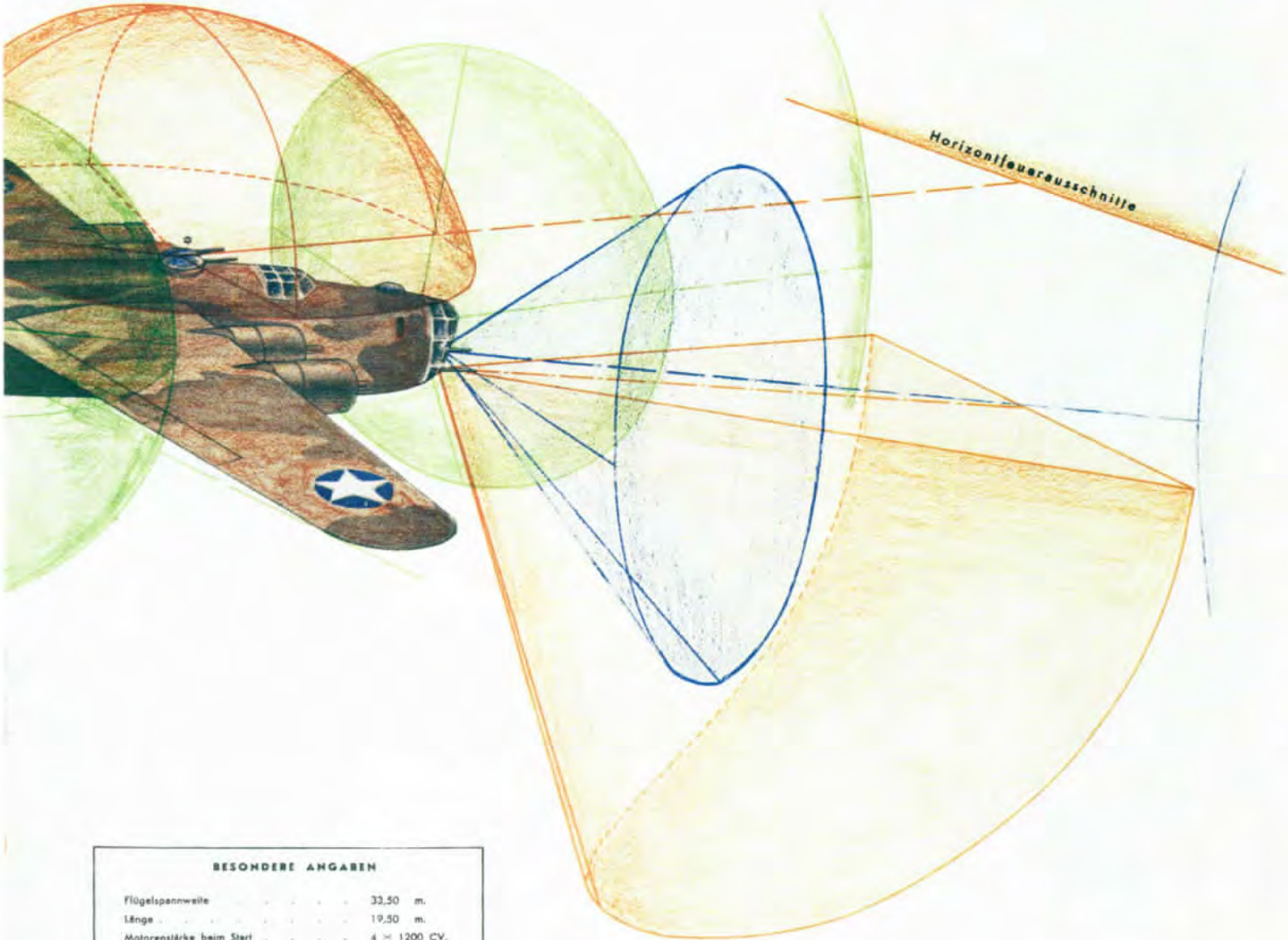
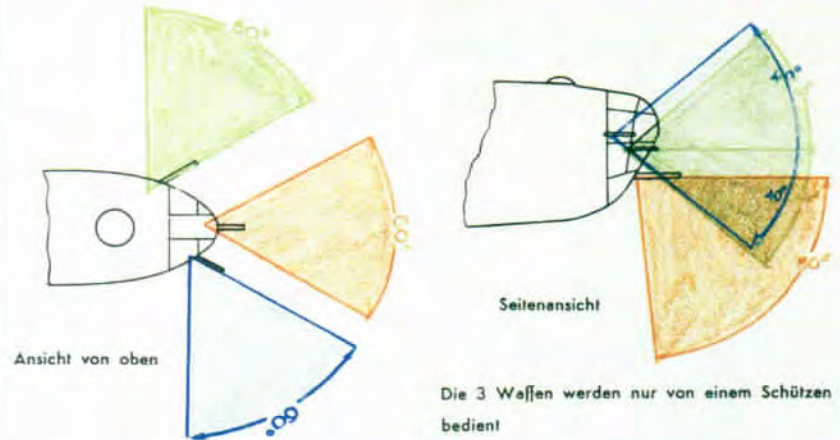
dens der Feuerabschnitte



dwaffen bestrichenen Räume

wirkamsten sind gekennzeichnet (*)

Einzelheiten über die Unterbringung der vorderen Waffen



BESONDERE ANGABEN

Flügelspannweite	33,50 m.
Länge	19,50 m.
Motorenstärke beim Start	4 × 1200 CV.
Besetzung	6 - 9
Günstigste Flughöhe	5000 m.
Höchstgeschwindigkeit in vorteilhaftester Flughöhe	490 St/km.
Reisegeschwindigkeit in bester Flughöhe	340 St/km.
Gipfelhöhe	9000 m.

Whenever any principle, be it what it may, tends to the establishment of absolute dominion in Europe, there is invariably opposed to it a vigorous resistance, having its origin in the deepest springs of human nature.

RANKE (1834)

STRAIGHT FROM JAKE!



Jake Fredericks has opened his files from his days at Headquarters Third Air Division where, following twenty-five missions as a pilot with the 303rd Bomb Group, he served as Director of Operational Research and Plans.

Immediately after VE Day in May 1945, Jake was assigned to inter

Jake Fredericks

view top German Wartime leaders after they were taken prisoner. The interviews were top secret at the time, and some were officially published as the United States Strategic Bombing Survey.

These interview excerpts are of interest in that they came from Jake's original handwritten notes taken at the time of the interviews. Photo layouts are from his confidential 3rd Air Division files.



B-24 Liberator formation with scattered cloud cover



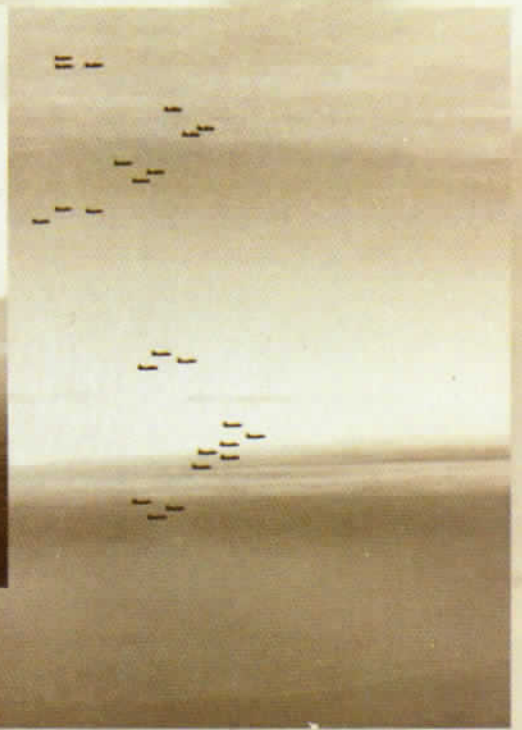
8th Air Force P-47's in familiar finger-four element cover formation



A tight element of B-24s

FORMATION FLYING

Close formations on missions were vital in getting to the target and getting the bombs on the right address. Combat boxes by Groups and Wings were used throughout the war as seen in these photographs. The most successful Bomb Groups were those who practiced strict close formation flying and then flew their missions in that tight configuration. German fighter pilots frequently chose loose formations to attack because the spread of bombers would lessen effective defensive firepower from bomber gunners. Tight formations offered better protection for the 8th fliers and assured a better bomb pattern after the drop.



View of a B-17 formation as seen by attacking enemy fighters at 12 o'clock.

The 447th BG heading out in the familiar combat box formation



Above the clouds - as far as the eye can see

STRAIGHT FROM JAKE!



Bombs Away!



Smoke pots at left of photo - apparently ineffective



Lt. Gen. Werner Kreipe
Command of Flying Training to Aug 44,
later on general staff.

- III.
 - 1. Amazed at discipline of AAF in bomber formations and in close cooperation of escort with bombers.
 - 2. Target selection generally good but surprised at not hitting oil sooner.
 - 3. Accuracy on whole "good"
 - 4. Envious of AAF crew training.
- IV.
 - 2. Not satisfied with G.A.F. training. Shortage of gas, relatively poor training WX.
 - 3. Too much indecision in committing German production.
 - 4. Believes U.S. a/c technically superior until Me-262, but that was too late.
 - 5. If 262 had been developed 2 years earlier, Germany would have still won war.
 - 6. Germany behind on heavies, JU 388 might have compared with B-24



THE EFFECTS OF THE ALLIED BOMBING OF GERMANY

from Albert Speer Interviews

- Q. What measures were taken to deal with the threat, and how effective did they prove? Did the German High Command consider they could stop strategic bombing by these measures?
- A. Unfortunately no energetic measures were taken in regard to fighter production. From the time of the attacks on Hamburg from August 1943 onwards, Milch, Galland and I combined to press for priority to be given to the construction of fighters and represented that their operational use within the Reich was more urgent than their deployment at the front. Nevertheless, the High Command ordered it was only by means of retaliatory attacks that the Allied assault on German towns could be halted. This accounts for the fact that even in 1945 the construction of four-engined bombers was ordered once again! Moreover, considerably more importance was attached to the Flak programme in the battle against the bombers. From time to time and particularly from autumn 1944 onwards, the Flak programme was given a higher priority than the Fighter programme. The Fuhrer was frequently ordering that air craft production should be reduced in order that more Flak guns could be built, but these orders were in fact incapable of realization.

Fredericks' Notes from May 1945 Interview with Albert Speer

Speer thought underground dispersal an error. Wanted us to continue to hit finished product rather than source. Feared attack on chemical synthetics.

U.S. always gave time between attacks for reconstruction. RAF bombs better on synthetic plants.

Decision of war forced about May 44 with attacks on oil. Could not keep up flow of fuel.

Transportation in Dec-Jan 44-5 decided war. With force of bombers over Germany and with only one target you could have brought about collapse of Germany in 8 weeks. Felt that we held up because we did not want Russians to advance to Rhine.

Repeat one system:

Hydrogenation
Ball bearings
Steel

Distribution of bombers on broad basis was a waste.

**Interview with Albert Speer, Minister of War Production
18 May 1945**

(Adolph) Galland and myself were of opinion that one cannot say how many fighters were destroyed by your attacks. Anyway, the case was that the number of useable fighters never exceeded our monthly production. That is perhaps the most interesting figure. Every month

We had to produce the fighters to keep in combat. So you destroyed every month my production and, therefore, the number of my battle ready fighters was always small. Because the destruction of fighters was so high we had made all efforts to keep production on a high level despite the gasoline shortage. From Dec 44, our gasoline was so short that we could not get it to balance at all anymore. This relation between monthly production and the fighters at the front can be proved.

10 June - 10 Sept.

Constant harassing of 70 A/F not only caused the G.A.F. to lose large numbers of their operational a/c but by forcing their units to move every few days raised the unserviceability rate to such an extent that by the end of July only 15% of their force in France was available for daily ops.

Figures on production as given out A/C cannot be considered truly indicative since modifications needed to place there. A/C in operation were continually hampered by lack of materials, and accordingly not more than 50% of industry's claim was actually available for combat use. Transport of a/c from plants to distribution centers and from dist. centers to ops bases brought further losses due to a combination of factors including bad weather and inexperienced piloting.

Speer Interview 17 May

It can be seen that bombers were cut out only too late, in favor of fighters. That was only in July 44, thus too late. The reconversion had taken too long before making itself noticeable.

Speer Interview 18 May

Col. Eschenhauer should have detailed plans re a/c

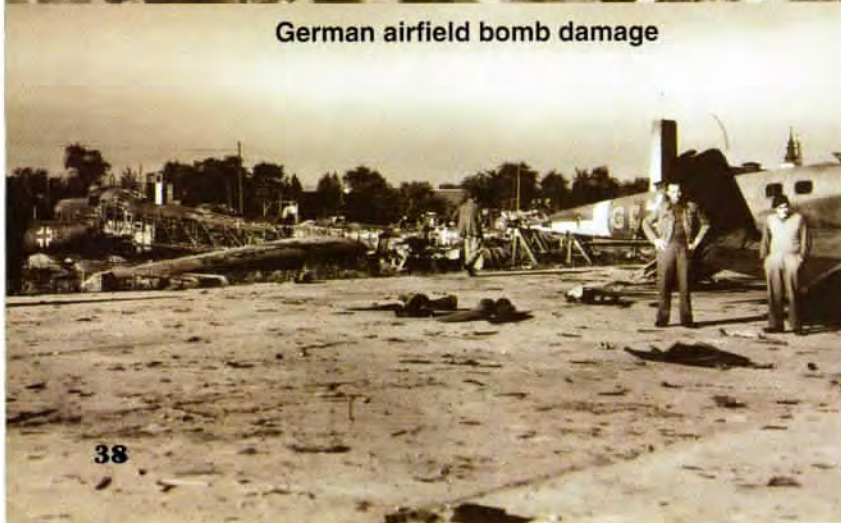
production.

Speer Interview 18 May

You would see the tragedy of the German air armament to its fullest extent if you could see the collection of valid programs which had been turned over to the German industry. You would note that nearly every three months a new valid program was issued to the industry.



German airfield bomb damage



EFFECTS OF BOMBING ON AIRFIELDS

Interviews with General Adolph Galland

Statements from German PW's indicate that several lines of investigation should be followed in determining the effect of our bombing and strafing of airfields. Some of these statements may be accepted as indications of effectiveness of airfield attacks and as indicative of the best types of tactics to be used.

Statement No. 1. In an interview on 16 May 1945, General Galland states: The aircraft industry suffered very heavy damage at a time when they were starting to disperse. Completed and half completed aircraft in particular sustained damage. We were very short of testing facilities. It was arranged in such a manner that airfields, on which a plant for mass production was situated, were also used for running in aircraft. Adverse weather conditions often resulted in a bottle-neck, and as a result airfields like Leipzig/Mokau, etc. were frequently crammed full when they were hit.

Statement No. 2. Interrogation of 23 May, Galland states: Moreover, your raids on the airfields for jet propelled aircraft naturally had their effect, but they were not so decisive. For instance, we wondered for a long time why you didn't raid Brandenburg/Briest. Brandenburg/Briest was an assembly factory for the 262 and 234, and a group of jet propelled aircraft was stationed there. I was there as well. You tried it once, but it was cloudy, thank goodness, and you dropped your bombs in the town; but apart from all that, one cannot say a decisive delay was caused by that. What was decisive was that the whole program was undertaken too late.

Statement No. 3. In answer to question, "Our fighters, fighter bombers and also four-engined bombers attacked your airfields. What effect did that have?", Galland answered: "For the people on the airfields your



William Mitchell

Through expert tactics, the World War I hero proved the superiority of airplanes over battleships.

most unpleasant attacks were the ones which you used the small fragmentation bombs; they caused incredible damage to the aircraft, vehicles and equipment -- everything on the airfield was destroyed. However, these small bombs didn't make the airfields useless. You could land on them again, even with fighters, once some of the fragments had been cleared. The craters didn't even need filling up as they were very shallow. Your attacks with heavy bombs didn't affect the aircraft on the airfields

as they caused relatively little damage, even when they exploded quite near. The danger was not so much the bombs themselves, as the rubble, stones, fragments and things of that sort which were thrown up by the bombs and came down again. They penetrated the aircraft. The craters made the airfield useless, and then it was a question how much manpower and machinery you had to clear up the place. There was a definite lack of construction machinery, such as tractors, dredges and bull-dozers, to fill in the craters. If before an attack or even better, after an attack, a few of your fighter-bombers had attacked

this machinery, you would have put us out of action completely."

Statement No. 4. In answer to question, "By what means could we have inflicted more damage by our attacks on airfields?", Galland answered: "You would have done it by making combined attacks: first a rain of quite light bombs, and then by heavy bombs, to destroy the runway and landing area. You would have achieved more by that. You did that at RIEM. I was there then when you laid that carpet -- not one of them but eight were laid -- that shook us, that was terrific! But then you also dropped stick-incendiaries as well, and we couldn't quite follow that. But this combination of small bombs, fragmentation bombs and heavy bombs promises the greatest success. When using large bombs, one should use the very heaviest possible, the heavier the better, and not delayed action ones either."

From: Appreciation of Allied Bombing by Generalfeldmarschall Milch

Milch professed to be unable to say at what stage of the war strategic bombing began to cause the German High Command real concern, and could not point to deliberate policy of effective countermeasures. His own previous anxiety was increased by the first heavy attack on Cologne which he regarded as the justification of his repeated warnings, and this anxiety became acute in July 1943. All previous attacks had been inconsiderable in their effects and had not impressed either the High Command in East Prussia or the inhabitants of Berlin, of

whom 90% used to watch the early raids from the streets.

The High Command thought only in terms of reprisals, of hitting back by bombing England, and London in particular. When in 1943 Milch repeated his 1941 suggestion of the need for a stronger fighter force and defence in the West, Goering demanded angrily: "Are you in charge of the G.A.F. or am I?" The most conscious realization of the need to go over to the defensive came in June 1944, when planning was based on "Fighters only". From 1941 to 1943 Milch had been allowed to proceed with the plans to increase fighters only on condition that bomber and transport production was maintained.

Interview with Dr. Karl Frybag - Chief of German Air Frame Industry

- Q. In our talks with others the statement has been made that the loss of aircraft, that is, operational losses and a stage losses, such as landing accidents, etc., used up the same amount of aircraft as you were producing. Is that substantially true?
- A. Yes, that is true. I do not have the figures, but they did remain nearly the same. We have climbed up in these months, and we do not know where the production has gone. I have already told you that approximately 1,300 262s were produced. Where they went and where they are, I do not know. I have seen only one 262 in the air. These planes were ready to go, but the German Air Force was not ready to fly them.
- Q. From the beginning, your industry was based on excess capacity and you operated it on one shift per day. Is that right?
- A. Yes, we did put in two shifts after the bombings, and we worked day and night.
- Q. Approximately in March 1944, what was the Government policy governing your dispersal? Was there an overall policy on dispersal?
- A. When these companies had been attacked, we gave the order to all other companies to dislocate. Although the intention had always been to disperse, the companies did not like the idea, and so we gave them strict orders in February 1944.
- Q. Did these figures have to be changed in the face of intensified bombing attacks?
- A. Yes, they were altered very much by two reasons: 1 - material shortage; and 2 - transport - the biggest reason - lack of transport. The greatest efficiency of bombardment is the transport bombing. You can lose hangars and make airplanes in forest works, or even construct airplanes under trees; but the railway and bridges can not be repaired. At this time engines were being bombed and that is the reason we had no 003 engines.
- Q. Did you alter any of your operational aircraft to training aircraft?
- A. Yes, the ME 109. Perhaps 10% of the total number were training ships.
- Q. Did you have any long range programs?
- A. Yes, running from one to one-half years beginning in 1939-1940. After that they were only for one year. We had many alterations and then we would get new programs. For example, the ME 210 was a catastrophe to the German Aircraft Industry. The jigs were made and series began to start in 1940 while Udet was in power. He and Messerschmitt had some difficulties in the testing of the aircraft and Udet sent me to investigate. I came back and said to give Messerschmitt three months, but some months later Milch spoke with Goering and they did away with the whole machine. They lost nearly five thousand machines by that wrong decision.
- Q. You did not have a chance to expand production of other airplanes because of the plans for the 210?
- A. I had to continue the 210 and I had to lose the production of the first three months. All of this labor for jigs was lost because they did away with the 210. One other thing, Goering and Hitler were always against fighters and for bombers. There were big discussions between Hitler, Milch and Goering on this problem. Germany needed fighters in 1943 and not bombers. Only when it became very bad they did make fighters. Goering and Hitler were responsible for that big error. Messerschmitt made the 262 as a fighter, but Hitler ordered him to make it a bomber and fighter-bomber. In the first months of the Jaegerstab the 262 was delivered as a bomber and not as a fighter.
- Q. Did they apply strict measures to keep workers on the job?
- A. No. I was chief at Henschel and it was not a big problem for me. But when you have to disperse, it is bad for organization and you have to put responsibility in a lot of people. It was difficult, but it was because of the bombardment.
- Q. Prior to April 1944 the American and English bombing was not very intense. Were there any effects on the aircraft industry in 1943?
- A. There was an attack on Heinkel at Rostock - the hangars for final assembly - and there was a loss of perhaps one month's or one and one half month's production's of machines.
- Q. Generally speaking, did the aircraft industry suffer much loss in 1942 or 1943?
- A. No, it began in 1944.
- Q. Were estimates made of the damage?
- A. No, but I gave the number at Luther and Gotha. It was 467 airplanes which were lost there. That month you attacked two of the aircraft industries - repair and manufacturing. I have a paper here in my pocket about that.
- Q. Someone said the attacks on the aircraft industry hit 75% of the industry and destroyed about 75% of the buildings.
- A. That is possible.

- Q. Of the production output, how much would say was destroyed?
- A. That could be 50% of this 75% which dropped. If you look at Erla, you think it is finished.
- Q. For how long did this 50% exist?
- A. For about two and one-half months.

- Q. You means to say that you lost 50% of your production for two and one-half months?
- A. Yes. It would take two and one-half months to reach production again and Erla was one of our best companies.

Confidential.

Interview No. 56.

Subject: Reichs Marshal Hermann Goering

- Q. Why did the quantity remain below par prior to the time Speer took over?
- A. Because the Luftwaffe was dependent on them for the allocation of raw materials and stood alone in this respect. After the Minister of War Production (Speer) took over, he included the Air Force armament in the whole picture, where, up until then, we stood alone.
- Q. Were you satisfied with the aircraft production after Speer had taken control?
- A. The production was marked by the fact that the biggest priority was given to the manufacture of fighters, and the bombers fell back so that, toward the end, they were hardly worthwhile mentioning.
- Q. Do you think that even more than 55% should have been put into that part of your total war effort - as distinguished, for example, from your land effort?
- A. I would not say that. But I do believe very definitely that in the years 1940 to 1943, we should have invested even more in the Air Force.
- Q. Did we destroy many finished aircraft in those attacks on the assembly plants?
- A. That depended on the circumstances. If a certain accumulation occurred in these plants, then naturally a lot were destroyed. When the weather was favorable and we were able to fly away all the machines, then the losses were comparatively small.
- Q. Do you think that the increases of quantity of aircraft had anything to do with the decrease in quality?
- A. It had as well. I can talk here quite freely. Production was transferred to the Speer Ministry. The man responsible for the production there was Saur. Saur was a man completely sold on figures. All he wanted was a pat on the shoulder when he managed to increase the number of aircraft from 2,000 to 2,500. Then the Luftwaffe was blamed that we had received so and so many aircraft and where were they. We said they would have to see those aircraft of which a large part was immediately destroyed. Secondly, spare parts were never made because spare parts would have cut down the number of aircraft produced, and so there was a continuous fight between the

Luftwaffe and the Speer Ministry, in which Speer himself, would stand up for us, but Saur lived only for his numbers, numbers, and numbers. The 262, for instance, was one of the most delicate machines, where we always had to keep changing the engine, or at least overhaul it, and we just simply could not even get a fraction of engines in the reserve because they were needed for the manufacture of new airplanes. A Group would have 80 machines - the 262, of which only 20 would be operational. There would be some 40 aircraft idle, which were intact except that they required an engine change, and when we demanded extra engines, we were told that we could not have them because new airplanes had to be built. Then we would get 40 new aircraft. This would then in turn increase the inventory to 120 aircraft, but the ones already used were still grounded because they were without engines. Consequently, the number of operational aircraft was not increased at all.

- Q. Did the production provide the Luftwaffe with all the aircraft which it needed for operational purposes? Production records indicate fairly large quantities of aircraft while the aircraft in operation is a much lower figure.
- A. As long as we had enough fuel, there was no particular difference.
- Q. When was it decided to produce the ME-262 as a fighter-bomber instead of a fighter?
- A. That was in May, 1944. The Fuhrer had originally directed that it may be produced as a fighter, but in May, 1944, he ordered that it be converted into a fighter-bomber. This conversion was one of the main reasons for the delay in getting this plane into action in any quantity.

Interviews with Reich Marshall Hermann Goering

Over half of the 1400 Me 262's produced were lost through bombing of A/D's crashes, conversion training, etc.

Bombing forced decision to give priority to production of Me 262.

Attacks on A/F generally effective but very easy to make repairs in short time. "The race between shovel and bomb."

Further Notes From Goering Interview

#146-152 - Oil transport

#152 - Goering's opinion of priority:
to burst gas most important
Synthetic oil
Communication
Engines
Airframe
Ball bearing
Airfields

#153 - Attacks not followed up soon enough

#161 - Camouflage. No removal of debris but continue work underneath this leading us to believe more damage than actual.

#199-200 - Plans for Me 262 handed to Japanese early in '45.



8th AF bombs heading directly for Tempelhof Field - Berlin



BOMB DAMAGE
Me-262 Jet fighter

Interrogation of Sperrle

Airfields were not seriously affected unless concentrated efforts had been made and a bomb carpet (Bomber-teppick) laid.

States that, at the time of the invasion fewer than 500 operational a/c were available to meet it; that allied attacks against A/F in the few days preceding D-day made the use of these planes for the most part impossible that they could offer no resistance.

Operationally the constant bombardment of strafing of

A/F and the presence of so many of our fighters over A/F in the latter days of the war kept their fighters grounded.

Figures on production as given out cannot be considered truly indicative since modifications requisite to place their a/c in operation were continually hampered by lack of materials and accordingly not more than 50% of industry's claim was actually available for combat use. Transport if a/c from plants to distribution centers and from dist. centers to ops bases brought further losses due to a combination of factors including bad weather and inexperienced piloting.

Interviews Regarding the Me 262 Jet Fighter
Interview with Major General Sperrle

Speaking of Me 262: A/C
There were quite a few difficulties arising out of the airplane itself, because it required many modifications. Consequently modifications and delays in production. Finally, large scale production was demanded, but delivery of the model was rendered difficult owing to constant bombing.
Many demands for alterations were sent in from the front, and such suggestions had to be taken into consideration.



Me-163 Comet



Jet-Propelled Jobs

Between the jet "bursts" the aircraft glides along "with the greatest of ease". Fuel is saved through such use of power unit.

Fast as these babies are, our own fighters have kept down the number of rocket and jet-propelled in action...and it may confidentially be expected, bombings will continue the good work. Some of you going to have air-visits by these Messerschmitts so be ready to sight and to shoot faster than you done before.



THOSE QUEER-LOOKING Buck Rogers airplanes (above) that Jerry has been using lately are Messerschmitt 163s — rocket planes that zip around like the well-known "bat out of hell". Another speedy newcomer, of more conventional appearance, is the jet-propelled ME-262.

Both of these sky-scooters are dangerous customers. Because of their great speed, they're most likely to attack from the tail — or to swoop down from sun or cloud...and pull up from below. ME-163s have been known to make frontal attacks. So, if they break through your fighter screen, you've got to recognize 'em fast, sight 'em fast, and shoot 'em fast, too. On the other hand, both of these speed spooks have less time and opportunity to throw it at you.

Apparently both of the new MEs have least armor protection on fuselages and pilots' sections. Both use fuel at a terrific rate and the fuel capacity of the planes is a matter of vital importance. The jet unit of the ME-163 is used intermittently to restore altitude or to increase speed. Be-

1944

a blurred photograph
like a hummingbird
disappears
under smoke

floating
into
space
as my comrade's airplane

falling over Berlin
slips
away
in the wind

an American flier
searching
for
justice

handsome as a movie-star
smart as a whip
straight as
an arrow.

he might have changed the world
he might have had a family
he might have lived
his life.

1980

the wind rises and falls like a voice.
the Briefing Hall is empty.
the map is gone.

I walked into the abandoned room
years later.
no one is there.

a bird hovers at a window
like a shadow that does
not depart.

I walk toward the wall
at the end of the room
where the map was.

I imagine the ribbon running
from our airfield to the target in
Germany.

I reach up and touch the
faded green
bricks.

it's just a
wall,
I say.

Marvin Silbersher
447th Bomb Group
Lake Hopatong, NJ

*Happy Holidays
from the
8AF News Staff*

*Walt Brown,
Telisha Gaines
&
Donna Neely*

THE CHRISTMAS MESSAGES

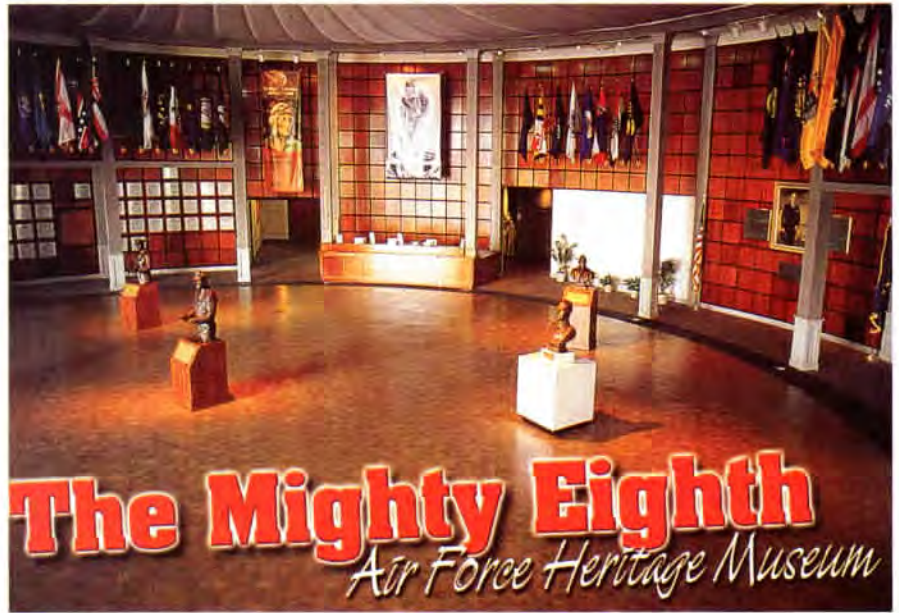


Museum Names Society for Ben F. and Margaret Love

by Judy Walker, Director of Development

The Board of Trustees of The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum announces The Ben F. and Margaret Love Society in recognition of the Love's generous gift to the Museum's endowment... a fund that will help ensure future operations of the museum. Membership in the society is open to all who wish to support the endowment with a current or planned gift. Response thus far has been strong with members wishing to be a part of the museum's future.

Ben Love served as a member of the 351st Bomb Group earning eleven combat decorations. Following the war, he earned a degree from the University of Texas Business School. Ben entered banking in 1956 as the President of River Oaks Bank and Trust and continued his career with Texas Commerce Bank-Houston where he served as president, and then Chairman and CEO. He retired in 1989 completing seventeen years as Chairman and CEO. During his tenure the TCB grew from one bank with \$1 billion in assets to 80 banks with over \$20 billion in assets. Ben continues to serve the community on several charitable, cultural and civic boards. The Museum is enriched with his service on the Museum's Board of Trustees. Mrs. Love is also a leader in the Houston civic and cultural community serving on many boards including the Houston Grand Opera and Houston Youth Symphony & Ballet. They are the parents of three children, Jeff, Julie and Jan.



In speaking with Ben, last month, I asked him why this planned gift and why now. While watching Ken Burn's Civil War program recently, he reflected on what needs to happen to keep the museum open in the years ahead. "If the museum serves its purpose to preserve the stories of the Mighty Eighth, it deserves all the support our veterans can muster. Health problems remind many of us of the shortness of the time remaining to make a difference. The time to plan is now."

Ben spoke of the importance of the lessons taught in the Museum's exhibits and programs. The examples of commitment, patriotism and sacrifice are presented to the visiting public. According to Ben "If you, the members of the Mighty Eighth, believe in the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum, it is your responsibility to make a significant contribution with an estate gift. Your planned gift will preserve the stories of sacrifice for the future so that new generations will have a milestone to measure themselves by and help them to decide what actions they should take when facing challenges such as those faced by the World War II veterans and their families."

"Many Eighth Air Force veterans took out GI Life Insurance Policies upon their return home following WWII. These policies with a face value of \$10,000 were purchased to help their young families. Now their children are grown, many of them are grandparents. The beneficiary of the policy can easily be changed to benefit the Museum," said Love. In addition to gifts of life insurance, there are numerous other ways to make a planned gift to the museum's endowment. For more information on estate gifts, please contact Judy Walker, 912.748.8888 ext. 123.

Museum Store Designated as Official Historical Society PX

In an effort to relieve the Historical Society of the burdens of running a PX, The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum has assumed the role of PX operator. Historical Society logo merchandise, books, and other gifts can now be ordered through the Museum's store. The Museum will carry a large inventory of Society merchandise. Orders can also be placed by telephone, mail, and in the coming weeks, via the internet. Of course you can also purchase your Society merchandise at the Museum during your next visit to Savannah. For more information please contact:

Julia Smith, Manager
The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum Store
PO Box 1992
Savannah, GA 31402
912-748-8888 x. 120
www.mightyeighth.org

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS SOCIETY

I attended the dedication of the Distinguished Flying Cross Memorial at Pines Park, Capistrano Beach, Dana Point California on 21 September 2002. The monument overlooks the Pacific Ocean in a beautiful park.

The Distinguished Flying Cross Society was formed in Capistrano Beach, Dana Point, California on 6 June 1994 by Al Ciurczak, currently has about 3,500 members, and is growing.

Membership information can be obtained from:

The Distinguished Flying Cross Society

National Headquarters 4442 Vandever Avenue San Diego, CA 92120-3322

PH: 1-866-332-6322 (Toll Free) or (619) 269-6377

FAX: (619) 269-6378

E-mail: dfsc@dfcsociety.org

Web Page: www.dfcsociety.org

**Harry Gobrecht
at the DFC
Society
Memorial**

Harry D. Gobrecht 303rd BG San Clemente, CA



HERITAGE MUSEUM BOARD OF TRUSTEES WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Two new members with strong 8th Air Force ties were recently elected to the Board of Trustees of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah.

Frank DeCicco, Houston, Texas, flew as a gunner/toggler in 303rd Bomb Group B-17s during the war, later becoming a private pilot. In 1965 he moved from his home in Katskill NY to Houston, Texas where he founded the

successful Texas ReMax realty organization. For years he has been active in the 8th AF Historical Society, his Bomb Group Association, and with his wife are strong supporters of the Heritage Museum. Frank and his wife Jean have five daughters and are interested in educational and historical endeavors.

Keith Ferris is an internationally known

artist well-known to most members of the Historical Society. He is founder of the American Society of Aviation Artists and has been instrumental in bringing displays to the Museum's Colonial Oil Art Gallery. His Aviation art has received numerous awards, many on exhibitions in museums and available as prints as well. Keith's wall mural depiction of the 303rd BG's B-17 Thunderbird at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington is perhaps the most famous depiction of an 8th Air Force Aircraft flying a WWII mission.

Keith has spent his career flying most of the USAF and Navy aircraft, giving him an intimate association with flight and fliers, this being reflected in all of his artwork. He is an Honorary of the USAF Thunderbird Flight Demonstration team. He and his wife Peggy make their home in Morris Plains NJ.

44TH BOMB GROUP B-24 CREW RESEARCHED

On a mission to Frankfurt 29 Jan 1944, a 44th Bomb Group aircraft flown by the Harold Pinder crew was shot down. The wreckage was discovered in Belgium in 2000 and a memorial to the crew was dedicated in 2001. Now Forrest Clark is trying to compile the history of that mission from the crew. Several were killed in action, but some survived. Harold Pinder was taken prisoner. Others were hidden by partisan army at various locations. A couple of his best friends were on that crew, and he would like to have the full story in print.

Surviving crew and family members may contact him at Forrest Clark, 705 Duffer Lane, Kissimmee FL 34759. Email b24vet@aol.com tel (863) 427-0371



Ted Karner, 486th Bomb Group, of Broken Arrow OK, promotes the Mighty Eighth on his truck. People, and police, have pulled him over to ask about his plate and talk about the 8th Air Force.



Elliott Klein, White Oak PA, served as a weatherman in the 18th Weather Squadron. He has had this tag on his automobile since 1984.

LOOKING FOR MISSILEERS??

Dear Editor,

The events of Sept. 11th have left a mark on Americans. There has been a move across our nation to find 'lost' friends. One major communications company for years used the motto "Reach out and touch somebody." And that is exactly what I am trying to do and it's why you have received this letter.

Thirty months ago I started reaching out, trying to find former military buddies. Being an Air Force vet I remembered the interesting times I had as a member of a SAC Combat Crew. Yes, as a teen these long tours of duties away from family and friends made you lonely, but then I remembered that I was with my 'new' family, other crewmembers. It was indeed a first class team, something to be proud of. A team that was needed for the hottest time of the Cold War. A team that helped maintained our freedom that we still enjoy today.

Most likely, you never heard of the 551st Strategic Missile Squadron. The unit was in existence for only four years, 1961 to 1965, at Lincoln AFB, in Nebraska, and was one of six Atlas "F" ICBM units. These were the first American long range missiles to be housed below ground. The unit in its short time had its share a line of duty fatalities.

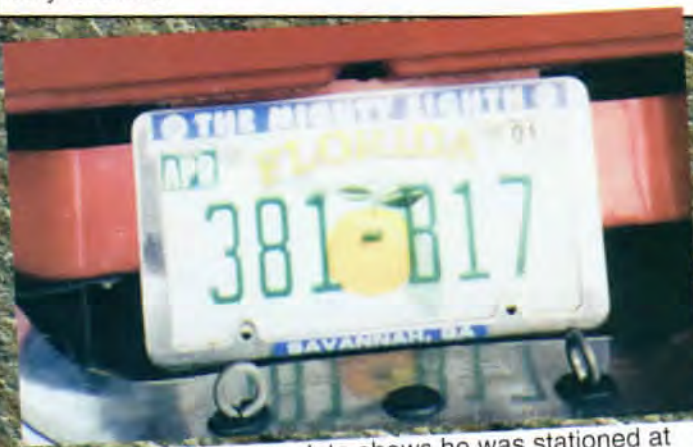
September 11th changed us, but now I need your help to try to find my former buddies. So far, over four hundred members have been accounted for; our first reunion is in the planning process as you read this. Since I have retired from the New York City Fire Dept., I have made this my full time assignment. I know that nearly 80 of the 400 plus members accounted for have passed away. The youngest former member today would be in their 50's and the oldest could be over 85. Some have moved several times after leaving the service making it almost impossible to locate them.

The reunion will be held at the Cornhusker Hotel in downtown Lincoln, Nebr., between Wednesday, April 23, 2003 and Saturday, April 26, 2003. Our mailing address is: 551st S.M.S. Association, POB #158, Bronx, N.Y. 10465. Thank you on behalf on my military brothers.

Ken Fisher
President

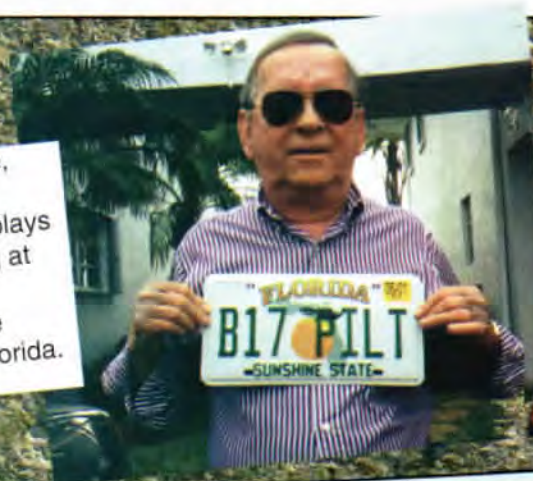
Visit Our Web Site:

<http://members.tripod.com/sms551association/index.html>



Bob Pospisils' license plate shows he was stationed at Ridgewell England with the 381st Bomb Group.

George Kyle, 303rd BG, proudly displays his auto tag at his Ft. Lauderdale home in Florida.



CENTENNIAL OF FLIGHT COMMEMORATION

US Air Force planning events for Wright Brothers 100th year celebration

The USAF will capitalize on the Centennial of Flight celebration in 2003 as an opportunity to showcase its leadership in aviation. Their objectives will include:

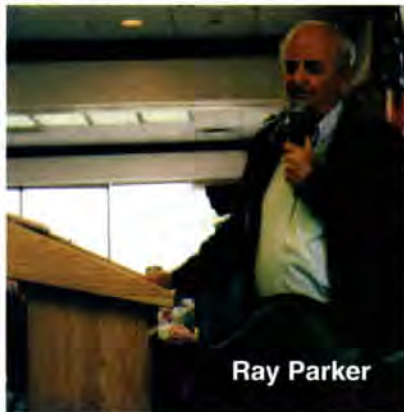
- Increase public awareness of the Air Force mission
- Lay the foundation to support recruiting efforts, near and long term
- Enhance retention of personnel in the Air Force
- Strengthen relationships with the worldwide aviation community

Local, national and international events are being planned to celebrate the centennial of flight. The first powered airplane flight took place on December 17, 1903 at Kill Devils hill near Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. Wilbur and Orville Wright of Dayton, Ohio spent several years at the Outer Banks of North Carolina in preparation for their historic flight.

NEW MEXICO CHAPTER

The New Mexico Chapter of the 8th AFHS held its annual Fall General Membership Meeting and Luncheon on Saturday, 12 OCT 02. The members and guests in attendance totaled 118.

Our featured speaker was New Mexico Chapter member, Ray Parker, who shared his experiences as a veteran TV comedy writer, lecturer and magazine humor columnist. He has written for numerous comedy "legends" including Bob Hope, Art Linkletter, Lucille Ball, Dick Van Dyke and Dinah Shore. Ray served as a navigator with the 445BG. He was also a POW at Stalag Luft I in Barth, Germany. During his imprisonment, Ray produced an underground newspaper - "The POW WOW" - which provided his fellow POWs with news of the war that he had secretly



obtained from a variety of sources. Following his presentation, Mr. Parker received a Certificate of Appreciation from the New Mexico Chapter of the 8th AFHS. President Hal Goetsch (385BG) acknowledged Chapter member Al Zimmerman (493BG) for his work in producing the two

excellent videos: "Start Engines - Plus Fifty Years" and "Behind The Wire".

Certificates of Appreciation were also awarded to departing Board Members Dean Hall (95BG) and Roy Connally (306BG) for their years of faithful service and generous work with the New Mexico Chapter's Board of Directors. The Winter general meeting and luncheon will be held on the 15th of February, 2003.

Ray Dehner Secretary

NORTH EAST IOWA WING CHAPTER

The North East Wing, of our Iowa Chapter, met at the Elks Lodge in Waterloo Oct. 18, 2002 for a noon luncheon with 64 members present.

The program began with the singing of "America", followed by the pledge of allegiance and the invocation under the very able leadership of Rudy Nelson. Bob Reeves played piano for the opening ceremonies.

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! Iowa Chapter President Charles Taylor gave a report of our August state convention in Ames, Iowa. He also mentioned plans for Iowa 8th Air Force Museum displays

- possibly at Ankeny, Iowa - where displays will be properly displayed and cared for.

President, Taylor was the artist and featured speaker at the Wing meeting. His presentation, entitled: "Murals in Malcom", was a color slide show of the murals he has painted on the walls inside the American Legion building in Malcom, Iowa. Some of the murals are so large they reach from floor to ceiling. The history of America is depicted from Revolutionary war days to present. There were outstanding murals of 8th Air Force events during World War II, and the artist's commentary made it a very interesting presentation.

Leon Mehring, Iowa Chapter Treasurer, reported that the Chapter has made a contribution in the amount of \$300 to the general fund of The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah. Leon incidentally, has not missed an Iowa Chapter meeting or reunion in fourteen years. Robert C. Reeves N.E. Iowa Wing Commander

GENERAL JAMES H. DOOLITTLE CHAPTER, NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

During April and July 2002 a new slate of four Directors and four Officers were installed. They are: President Abel Dolim, 94th B.G.; Vice President Paul Wallace; Secretary Janett Raymond; and Treasurer Edward Joyner, 445th B.G. New Directors - Paul Wallace; Albert Freitas, 100th B.G.; Larry Goldstein, 388th B.G.; Ray Levine, 305th B.G.

Belton Wolf became President Emeritus while still a Chapter Director. Additionally, he was elected to the 8th AFHS Board of Directors at Octobers reunion. The Doolittle Chapter thereby becomes another Chapter boasting two 8th AFHS Directors. The other is: Larry Goldstein, formerly with the New York Chapter. Larry brings prestige and experience to the Doolittle Chapter. Another member, Heber Smith took on tasks related to building a Chapter Historical Education Committee, whose purpose is to bring the Mighty Eighth's History into the classrooms of Northern California schools.

Belton C. Wolf

NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

George Hood, President of the North Carolina Chapter, chaired the Board meeting held in Statesville on Oct. 18. It was attended by 17 members. It was mentioned that National membership dues are due before the end of December. There was a discussion of upcoming events including the Festival of Flight in Fayetteville, May 16 - 26, 2003.

The Eastern Wing Christmas meeting will be held at Abbotswood Retirement Center in Raleigh on Thursday, Dec. 5 at 11:00 AM. Each person attending should bring a gift of approximately \$5 value. For reservations please call Wing treasurer Morris Turner at 919-876-0522 by Dec. 2. It is suggested that each member bring guests in addition to his spouse or friend.

For their Christmas meeting, the Western Wing has been invited to join the Western Carolina Air Museum at the Opportunity House in Hendersonville on Dec. 7 for their annual holiday dinner. The menu is a choice of prime rib or apple cider chicken. Cost \$16 per person. Reservations must be made by Dec. 3. Call Linda Harney at 828-692-0007. If you get the answering machine leave your name and phone number and your choice of meals. No refunds after Dec. 3.

ALABAMA CHAPTER

At the August Meeting in Birmingham, Amy Lawley was the featured speaker. Amy told of her experiences being married to a Medal of Honor recipient, Col. William Lawley. There are highways named for him, bridges dedicated in his honor, a monument at Maxwell AFB, a monument in Leeds, as well as others at the Heritage Museum in Savannah, the Southern Museum of Flight, the Air Force Museum in Dayton, and at the Pentagon. Bill Lawley had friends all over the country, many of them members of the Medal of Honor Society and in the various organizations of his beloved 8th Air Force. Amy stated that he would have been somewhat embarrassed by all of the monuments of recognition, but that she is proud of them!

The South Alabama And Northern Alabama Wings continue their activities of regular meetings, luncheons, and guest speakers. Members talks at schools and at organizations and community activities keep Chapter members in a high profile status, spreading the word of the 8th AFHS across the state.

SAVANNAH BIRTHPLACE CHAPTER

The Savannah Chapter's annual fund-raiser and fund-raiser was held on November 9th to the tune of Big Band music, dancing and great fellowship. Many of the forty new Chapter members who have joined the Chapter since June attended. The evening's festivities were followed by a Sunday Massing of the Colors at the Hope Baptist Church the next morning.

Dinner/speaker meetings are held at the Heritage Museum monthly and all local military active duty, Reservists, and National Guard members are invited.

Art Howe and Ken Hoddinott received the Proclamation of Mighty Eighth Air Force Week October 8-14 from Chatham County Chief Commissioner Billy Hair. Proclamations were also made by Pooler Mayor Buddy Carter and Savannah Mayor Floyd Adams.

The Birthplace Chapter announces a new website. Check it out at: www.birthplacechapter.com

TENNESSEE CHAPTER

For several months a number of members of the Chapter and friends of deceased member Ray Zuker have been working on a plaque of remembrance to be placed in the Memorial Gardens at the Heritage Museum in

Savannah. A planning breakfast was held in Knoxville with three of the Zuker sons attending as guests. The plaque bought by donations to the Zuker Memorial Fund will be installed in early 2003, with special dedication ceremonies to be held at that time. Ray, who was a pilot with the 486th Bomb Group, served as Editor of the Chapter newsletter, Tennessee Flyover, and was active in Chapter affairs for many years.

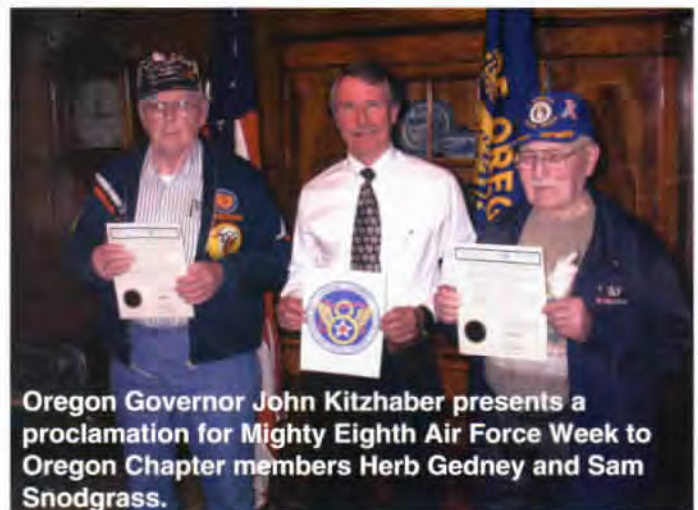
James Bass, President, reports that the annual Chapter reunion meeting is scheduled for April 25th and 26, 2003.

OREGON CHAPTER 8TH AF HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Our August quarterly get together was held at our regular meeting site, the Beaverton OR Elk Lodge. It was a hot day, in a long string of hot days this summer, resulting in a shortage of attendees, some of whom probably sought the air-conditioned Oregon Coast for relief from the heat. Even so, sixty-seven of our members, associates, and guests arrived to share in the good lunch provided by the Elks, and to hear our speaker for the day.

Our quarterly meeting is scheduled for 7 November, and our Chapter President, John Horne, emphasizes that we always welcome guests at our meetings. If you are visiting in the Portland area in early November, drop by and get acquainted. We are easy to find at the Elks Lodge in Beaverton, a suburb just to the west of Portland. Many of our members arrive an hour early for the 11:30 AM start of the meeting, in order to trade war stories and meet new members and guests.

Clint Gruber Director, Oregon Chapter



Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber presents a proclamation for Mighty Eighth Air Force Week to Oregon Chapter members Herb Gedney and Sam Snodgrass.

IOWA CHAPTER

We had 100 attend the annual Chapter meeting, who listened very attentively to the slide presentation of Andrew Dekock. We had 113 at the banquet for Jack Shelbey. Before the banquet we held a memorial service for our fallen 8th Air Force members, past, and those who died in

Iowa since our last annual reunion.

James R. Zigland gave us a beautiful model B17F for our annual raffle. The PX run by Duff Coleman and his son Joel did an outstanding booming business as usual.

Officers for the coming year will remain the same.

Charles Taylor, President

Wayne Ziegler, Vice President

Barry Johnson, Secretary

Leon G. Mehring, Treasurer

New Board member: Steve Elliot.

Taylor, Johnson, and Elliot are all associate members.

submitted by: Leon G. Mehring

UTAH CHAPTER

President Charles Sherwin arranged a meeting with Utah Governor Michael Leavitt for discussion of the Eighth Air Force. Gov. Leavitt issued a signed proclamation declaring October 8-14 as Mighty Eighth Air Force Week in Utah. The proclamation will be placed in permanent files at the central office of the 8th AFHS.

John Moore, Scty-Treas.

COLORADO CHAPTER

The November Chapter meeting featured Paul Donohoe as guest speaker. Paul gave a very interesting talk about his great-uncle Gen. Clarence Tinker, the man for whom Tinker AFB in Oklahoma City is named.

Newsletter Editor Davis Shomper reports a current Chapter member of 105 members. The election of officers for 2003 will be held at the February meeting.

ILLINOIS CHAPTER

Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley signed the Chapter Proclamation proposal declaring Eighth Air Force week for October 8-14, 2003.

Recent Chapter meeting guest speakers included Art Shay who related his experiences as lead navigator, flying 30 missions in Col. Jimmy Stewart's squadron. Art and his crew were one of just four crews to survive the Kassel mission of 27 Sept 44, when 30 445th B-24s were lost in combat – the highest loss of any group on a mission over enemy territory.

WASHINGTON CHAPTER

Washington Chapter has enjoyed a great year...

Our March meeting; P-51 Ace Clayton Kelly Gross who flew in the 9th AF treated us to some of his insights of chasing and being chased by ME-109's. A great presentation from a "Little Friend" and outstanding pilot.

At the July meeting B-24 Pilot James Keefe gave a very stirring account of being "Shot up and bailing out over Holland. Jim described in vivid detail his account of eluding the Germans for a number of months, his time in a Stalag after his capture. All this laced with some great humor and laughter.

Three cheers and a very big "thank you" has to go to the

Collings Foundation. They honored two of our veterans by providing free rides on their B-17 "Nine-O-Nine". On July 27th Jeff, Dan, George and Greg gave tours to the general public of the Museum of Flights B-17(F) "Boeing Bee". Once again a great turn out by our Chapter members to educate and promote the 8th Air Force and it's role in WWII.

Chapter members Jeff Bomstad, Dan Cathcart, Kirk Skaggs, George Bowling and Greg Pierce reenacted a 8th AF "Target for Today" briefing at the request of the EAA Arlington Airshow. The briefing came off very well with Black curtains being pulled back to show the mission route to Anklam Germany. The "Old Man" gave a "Let's hit Jerry where it hurts" talk. This was followed by the Group Operations Officer giving a detailed plan for the mission. The S-2 Officer noted POW instructions, flak areas, enemy aircraft that might be encountered. The Weather officer promised good visibility over the target area despite the fog in England. Our faithful pilots in the audience moaned at the bombing altitude and asked good questions.

As a result of seeing this reenactment the Museum of Flight in Seattle hosted our group in their Auditorium on Aug 31st. We gave a briefing to over 295 people. This gave way to a question and answer period between the audience and our WWII members. Bombardier Warren Beecroft described the use of the Norden bombsite. Pilots Hank Hendrickson and James Keefe educated a younger generation about "Flak" and how it was used. Waist gunner JW Roundhill was a good source of historical dates and encounters with FW-190's. Pilot Bob Kline shared his recollections of head on attacks of the Luftwaffe. A "spirited" debate about the B-17 vs. the B-24 was shared by Walter Bergstrom and Jim Keefe; glad to say no fistfights broke out...just some good kidding! Tail gunner Art Henio made his dislike of the FW-190 known why...all and all a great 8th AF education was imparted to a younger crowd.

Elvin "Hank" Hendrickson (92nd BG) was provided with a "Press Flight" and granted interviews while flying high above Seattle in the B-17 "Aluminum Overcast". A milk run compared to 1944. Look for Hank and his Radio Operators 88 mm story in WARBIRDS magazine (coming soon to a Newsstand near you.)

Chapter member and 8th AF veteran (Guam) Bill Milligan is in the process of building a B-17 model that will be used for Public School presentations and displays. Bill is a true perfectionist and a gifted modeler. His P-51 "Passion Wagon" can be found on (357th) Bud Anderson's website. In closing Chapter members Ann Brown, JW Roundhill, Kirk Skaggs, Dan Cathcart and Tony Caruso have "carried the ball" in supporting our chapter members and made my job as President much easier.

Thank you for serving.

Greg Pierce

President, WA Chapter

E-mail gregory.s.pierce@boeing.com



TANNOY

The U. S. Air Force is continuing its Public Access programs even in these times of tight security. Military facilities and bases are offering orientation programs and static equipment displays to the public, in addition to educational programs for students and interested organizations. Four new expandable ROVER display vans, Recruiter Outreach Vehicles, take the Air Force career opportunity message to schools, malls, and events throughout the country.

Nerve agents were discovered by a German scientist who was looking for an effective agricultural insecticide in 1936, however the German army never employed these organophosphate nerve agents during World War II. The first documented use of military nerve agents occurred when Iraq used sarin (GB) against the Kurds during its war against Iran.

If you think old soldiers just fade away, try getting into your old uniform.

Getting older is when your knees buckle but your belt won't.

from Naomi Zuker

Al Lea, Houston TX, a frequent contributor to the 8th AF News, cites several veterans organizations who publish their membership rosters with

addresses for contact among their members. Others have also written in to the newsletter with similar info. We will bring up the possibility of a roster publication, extensive and as expensive as it may be, at the mid-term Board meeting in Colorado Springs.

Remember that your 8th AFHS has over 16,000 members. Updates to follow.

"The F-22 Raptor, when deployed, will give us more than an edge over our enemies. It will give us an unfair advantage over any adversary."

Dr. Martin Sambur,
Assistant Secretary of the Air Force
for Acquisition

Air Combat Command will have a fully developed weapon system with initial capability in December 2005.

Brian Gunderson in Air Power History has researched some differences in British and American slang familiar to many. A few notables: An Ice Cream Cone is an American Milk Run; In The Bag is becoming a prisoner of war; Knackered is an airplane engine which has stopped functioning.

Laid On A Flight is to be scheduled for a mission; Swinging the Lead is to be malingering, for which you may be assigned to a Joe Job – cleaning the latrines; a Gasper is a cigarette, as are Fags or Faggies; A Frog is a nickname for a Frenchman; Flogging the Circuits is practicing aircraft landings, while to Flog It is to walk or plod on alone. Flimsies are the same in both languages.

Connie and Gordon Richards, our 8th AFHS contacts in England, recently celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary. Several dozen well-wishers filled a party room for the two. Connie writes, "Hope all is well. Love to all over there."

Our Mississippi Chapter friends send us by way of their newsletter Contrails and Propwash these useful bits:

For all you computer wizards out there, did you know that

"Stewardesses" is the longest word that can be typed using only your left hand on the keypad?

Wait, there's more.

The longest word you can type using only the top row of keys is, what else? "Typewriter".

A copilot is a knothed until he spots opposite direction traffic at 12 o'clock, after which he's a goof-off for not seeing it sooner.

Flying the airplane is more important than radioing your plight to a person on the ground incapable of understanding it.

Ralph Lynn, Editor of the 466th BG's Attlebridge Notes, was seen everywhere at the Norfolk annual reunion events, taking photographs for a permanent record of 2002 reunion activities. He has processed, organized, identified, and forwarded a number of these pictures for use in the 8th AF News. You will see his handiwork in this issue; a great 8th AFHS Thanks! to Ralph for his fine efforts.

The 2002 Norfolk reunion was Donna Lee's tenth 8th AF Historical Society reunion as the Armed Forces Reunions coordinator and as one of the family! She has this reunion thing fine-tuned and down to a science – looking forward to Colorado Springs in 2003!

School and town Library subscriptions to the 8th AF News may be sponsored by Society members; a great way to get our newsletter message out to the younger generations. We suggest prior arrangements with library officials. Only \$10 a year – you will be reminded and billed annually our central office. Call Connie at (912) 748-8884.

Did you drive a Jeep in the war? Ever want to own one? Society member Thomas Heck of Lake Havasu City wants his 1949 model to go to loving hands. Call him at (928) 453-5093 for the details.

RELIGION



S/Sgt Larry S. Goldstein of the 388th BG at his radio in a B-17 in 1943.

"We were called out to a very early briefing. When we entered the briefing room the chaplains were very visible. This made us uneasy and we thought it must be something big."

Larry Goldstein, radio operator, 388th BG

"The crews begin to gather and soon the Catholic chaplain is giving the prayer to all of us Protestants."

Lieutenant Robert. L. Ferrell, twenty-year-old lead navigator, 458th BG

REFLECTIONS

Combat crews, ground crews, and all those men associated with the behind the scenes planning were usually a very close group, and the only thing on our minds was survival and the end of the war. "When do we go home?" was the key phrase passed among us. In the Air Corps to my knowledge, religion never entered into our thoughts. What a man believed in was of little concern to each of us. If you did your job and were a nice guy, that was all that mattered. As far as combat aircrews were concerned, a man's religious beliefs mattered even less. The most important thing to each of us

was whether he'd do his job for the survival of the crew.

The religious background of my crewmates was not important to me. We worked together for our survival, each man learning and perfecting his skills. The thoughts of survival and going home were always in our minds.

Our crew met each other at the beginning of phase training, and the first thing our pilot said to us was, "We are a crew and nothing else is as important as helping your crewmates survive." He also stressed flying safety as a major component for our coming through combat safely. When we flew, our minds were focussed on our job as part of a ten-man crew. The six enlisted men lived together and the four officers also lived together. This did much to mold us into one unit.

On our crew, two of us were of the Jewish faith, myself and the navigator Lieutenant Phil Brejensky. As we were both from Brooklyn we were the butt of many jokes, all taken lightly. Our stateside training was both a happy and serious time. We had many laughs but we all knew what we were training for, and there was always a time for humor and good-natured ribbing. When we went overseas we were ready, and each of us was truly concerned with the survival of the 'Worry Wart' crew, and putting forth our best individual effort in the airplane. Flying combat was both exhilarating and at the same time frightening. The rigors of combat flying, equipment failure, the extreme cold, and the ever present danger of flak or enemy aircraft did not give a man much time to think of religion except to pray in his own way. As a flyer I never gave much thought of being shot down and never thought much of my Jewish background and how I would be treated if captured. I guess that is the way a 21-year-old man thought at that time. I know that many of the combat crewmen I met after the war thought the same way; that is until they were floating to earth in the parachute. There was some brutality by German civilians and soldiers,

and in some cases I believe that Jewish airmen were probably treated a little more harshly.

Prior to my being drafted in 1942, my childhood was spent as part of a middle-class Jewish home. My parents were religious, and my sister and two brothers, and I respected our parents and their beliefs. We all gave considerable thought to our Jewish heritage.

One of our neighbors was a very religious Catholic lady whom I considered to be my second mother. I was a part of her family, and when I was drafted she had a St. Christopher medal blessed by the parish priest and asked me to wear it around my neck. My mother had given me a Star of David medal to wear also, so I went forth to war well armed against all that might harm me. On several occasions I was asked if I was Jewish or Christian since I was wearing both medals. My answer was always the same - we can't take chances in these aircraft.

Overall, our mix of religions and regional backgrounds probably brought us closer together. We were friends and comrades working for the same thing.

Larry Goldstein, 388th BG

This excerpt is from noted author Martin Bowman from his soon-to-be released book. – Editor



Right: Larry Goldstein in the radio room of a Fortress at Duxford in 1992. (MWB)

COL. EARL ABER'S FUNERAL

I was on Lt. Cantor's Crew with the 406th Night Leaflet Squadron at the time Col. Aber was shot down on his return to England from a night mission to Holland. We arrived in England Dec. 1944 as a replacement crew, sent to Cheddington, and assigned to the 406th Leaflet Squadron. Before flying missions we were given training flights in and around England. Some of these training flights were with Col. Aber in his B-17 Tondelayo. He must of liked the B-17 as he had the only one in our squadron. The rest of us had B-24s. The 406th Leaflet Squadron was assigned to work for the OSS (Office of Strategic Service) to disburse leaflets at night over occupied Europe, as the Germans was machine had closed down all newspapers and radio stations in the occupied countries. Their people were kept in the dark as to what was happening in the rest of the world.

One plane, the "Flying Dutchman", went each night to Holland to drop leaflets. We referred to this mission to Holland as a "milk-run". These leaflets were put up in cardboard cylinders, and carried in the bombay like regular bombs. We carried twelve in all, and were given three places to drop four of these containers. They were designed to break open at 2,000 feet.

On the night of March 4th, 1945 Col. Aber took one of these missions to Holland. He didn't have a regular crew, so he made a crew of men, who hadn't finished with their regular crews. Some of these men had finished their missions and volunteered to stay on in England. One of these men was a Tech Sergeant who lived in our barracks. He flew that night as a radio man with Col. Aber. He was one of the men who bailed out, and spent the night in a English farm field.

When we left and returned to England on a night mission, we were to fly at 10,000 feet or more. Sometimes German planes tried to come in with us, so as not to be detected by the English radar. This is what happened to Col. Aber when he returned to Holland on the night of March 4, 1945.

The English anti-aircraft gunners got mixed up and shot down Col. Aber's plane instead of the German plane. We were told all the crew bailed out except Col. Aber and Lt.



Jean Murphy, sister of Col. Earl Aber, lays a bouquet of flowers on her brother's coffin at funeral services in Madingley. submitted by Irving Christensen, 94th BG, Racine WI

Maurice Harper.

The Cheddington air base was closed on March 14th of 1945.

The 406th Bomb Squadron was moved to the Harrington air base. Our plane, The Lady Grace, crashed landed at Harrington that day, which ended our flying careers. Gerben Coehorn, our navigator, was killed in that crash. He was buried at Cambridge Cemetery.

On Sept. 1982 the people who lived around the Cheddington air base put on a reunion for the men and women who were stationed there. My wife, and son and I went to that reunion. They drove us around the area in a rented two-story bus.

One of the stops was to the Cambridge Cemetery, where I visited the grave of Gerben Coehorn. Just a few feet away was the grave of Lt. Col. Earl Aber and Lt. Maurice Harper.

We were told that their plane burnt when it crashed and the bodies were not found.

In the Sept 02 issue of the 8th AF News, the bodies were reported to have been found and given a proper burial. I'm writing this to give you a little light as to what happened to Col. Aber and Lt. Harper on the night mission on March 4, 1945.

Reuben J. Hill, 388th BG Forest Lake, MN

JAMES KELLEY...

Four days before Christmas, at about 1 AM, the air sirens went off making a loud wailing noise. The RAF was over Stettin again. The explosions kept us up most of the night even though it was thirty miles away. Everyone watched what activity that was visible through a window above the doorway. We were told anyone would be shot if caught looking out the window during an air raid if we did this again.

Christmas, 1944 was certainly different from any that I had ever experienced before. According to our news reports, the war was going well and the air war over Europe was really in full swing. Maybe our liberation from Stalag Luft IV was not too far away. We could tell since downed airmen were pouring into the prison camp by the droves. They also brought with them latest news reports. The number of POWs had climbed from 3,000 when I entered the camp in July to almost 10,000 in late December. The Jerries were working feverishly building Lagers "E" and "T". The word was stay put and hang on, no escape attempts. The weather had turned bitter cold with temperatures below zero with ice and snow. There were 24 guys huddled in our little room with one little pot bellied stove trying to keep us warm. The Germans issued us two each blankets made of horse hair. I swear if you held them up to a light you could see through them. We usually slept with clothes on since each room was issued only twelve peat bricks of fuel a day.

On Christmas Eve we were permitted to walk around the compound after dark. We had to promise no escape attempts would be made. We were on parole so to speak. We could visit with other POWs in the other barracks in our compound or other Lagers until 1 AM. Our kitchen personnel had been saving pieces of beef for some time and made everyone in our compound small hamburger patties. They were great, although we all thought that it was horsemeat. We savored every morsel.

Some of us had been saving our raisins from our Red Cross packages from which we made "Raisin Jack." This was passed around the compound Christmas Eve. Other POWs made Kriegie cakes, using water, powdered milk, margarine, sugar, and crushed graham crackers from our Red Cross parcels. This mixture was put in a Klim can and baked. If you are wondering what Klim means, it is milk spelled backwards. Powdered milk from our Red Cross parcels came in these cans. The cans were used for everything.

Dr. Christiansen from Sweden visited our camp. He was with War Prisoners Aid sponsored by the YMCA. He brought many recreation articles such as cards, books, etc. The Germans handed out Christmas Red Cross parcels. This parcel contained one pipe, tobacco, cigarettes, mixed nuts, candy, fig bars, wash rag, honey, butter, tea, two pictures, variety game, roulette, cards, turkey, cheese, vienna sausage, pudding, bouillon cubes,

deviled ham, chewing gum, etc. The guys were like little kids opening up their package. Groups of Kriegies walked around the compound singing Christmas carols. The guards also went around wishing everyone a Merry Christmas. We had no roll call Monday, Christmas day. I think everyone had liberation on their mind that evening.



Tuesday December 26th everything was back to normal. A few days later we heard the news about the German breakthrough and that the Battle of the Bulge was on. The Allies were in retreat. No wonder the guards had been walking around the compound with big smiles on their faces. I think it was our lowest point. James Kelley, 446th BG from The Beachbell Echo

JERRY JOHNSON...

We started flying the two groups, in which case instead of having 16 from each squadron, we would have 12. So we would have a group then -- like A Group would 36 airplanes instead of 48, but then B Group would be 36 airplanes also, so now you've put up 72 instead of 48. And also you had additional -- you know, this group would be responsible for another area, so we gave the bombers more coverage, too. So that's why we did it and how we did it.

That happened on the day I was shot down, on the 27th of March. I was leading B Group on that day, and "Bud" [Walker] Mahurin was in A Group. Bud Mahurin was my Operations Officer in the 63rd Squadron on the 27th of March of 44. And as I was going in, I was probably half an hour behind A Group, and I heard Bud go down, and that really upset me because he was a fine guy and we were good friends. We had been classmates together in Flying School. So I guess I became a little over zealous on the way home, and not quite as careful as I should have been, and ended up getting myself shot down on that same day.

It was a bad day in every respect. Jimmy Cagney and some of his crowd had been there the day before, and we had had a show that night, and then we were going to have a show the next night, so we were scheduled to fly this mission early in the morning of the 27th of March, and it wasn't much of a mission. We were going to protect the bombers, and they were going down to the submarine pens at Marseilles, France; submarine pens down there. So then there was bad weather in the target area, and the mission was delayed. And then we anticipated a takeoff around 10:00 o'clock instead of about 8:00, and then shortly after that they said, well, it's scrubbed. And so most of us kind of got out of flying clothes, and then all of a sudden about 12:00 o'clock or a little after, something like that, it was on again, and we had a very quick takeoff. And it had been on and off and then -- I just knew it was going to be a milk run, meaning that there wasn't going to be any action. So I didn't dress very



properly for the mission. Instead of having on the combat gear that I normally flew, that day I just left on a pair of British street shoes that I was wearing, and I left on a pair of ordinary trousers I was wearing, instead of getting into full gear with flying suit and all the stuff I usually wore. And so we went down and, sure enough, it was, as far as we were concerned, just a milkrun.

The A Group had a little action, but we didn't see a thing. There weren't any enemy airplanes around or anything. So on the way back, I was looking for something to shoot at, and sure enough, as we got closer to the coast where the invasion took place, I saw this big, long freight train down there, and I thought, that's got to be a good target. So we went down and started shooting up this train, and sure enough, it apparently was loaded with ammunition and whatnot because sometimes there would be horrible explosions, you know, where you'd set off a car. So one of the things you're supposed to do is keep up your air speed, and theoretically make one pass and get out of there, if you're strafing. But if you're going to make another pass, be sure that you give yourself time to get enough speed again because a P-47, particularly if you make a pass like that and then you have to climb and turn around, you're going to lose a lot of speed. Well, I was on my third pass, and I'd lost almost all my speed, but it was just a target to shoot at, and I really wanted to destroy all that train, not just a few of the cars. I wanted to destroy it all. And on my third pass, with my air speed way down, that's when they had had time to get their own protective machine guns uncovered, and they let go with a barrage of anti-aircraft fire at me, which I got it right away. I was obviously still leading.

Suddenly I'm without an airplane and only about 2-300 feet in the air. And the first instinct, of course -- it's just an instinctive movement -- when your engine quits, to reach for the canopy, you know, to get the canopy open and get out of there. And then I realized, my God, I wasn't high enough to bail out, I was no more than 2-300 feet at the most, and I was right over rugged terrain, because this train had kind of been going through a valley between pretty high hills -- rough terrain, heavily wooded. And I was doing everything I could to see if there wasn't some way I could get the thing running again and, at the same time, trying to decide what to do, and there really was just seconds. I couldn't bail out, so the only choice was to ride it in. And I was just practically touching the tops of the trees then, and you can do what's called a "falling leaf". You work your rudders very gently to keep the wings level, and hope that the nose comes up and that you just kind of mush into the tops to the trees, so that's what I was trying to do. So I just started hitting the trees. The tail obviously is low and it was hitting them first. I could hear this banging, and I was just hitting the tops of the trees, when all of sudden, right in front of me, those trees stopped and there was a plowed field, and that airplane fell right through the tops of those last trees, wham,

down into that plowed field, and my air speed was so slow by then I don't think I skidded 200 yards. And I've always thought that God had a whole lot to do with that, because there wasn't anything that I could do.

So I did what I'd been instructed to do. I immediately got the canopy open and got out of my parachute, pulled the rip cord on the parachute and caused it to pillow out in the cockpit. We had a primer in those days, and you pumped this primer to pump fuel into the engine when you were starting it. And the primer came out about that far, had a little grip on the end of it all; you just pump fuel. It's like a little fuel pump. And I knew that it had fuel in it, so I kicked it several times and managed to get fuel dripping from this down onto the parachute -- and I always carried a Zippo lighter just for this purpose -- started a fire in the cockpit and jumped off the wing of the airplane setting on its belly there. By that time, I could see people running toward the airplane. They were Frenchmen. They couldn't speak English, I couldn't speak French, but we gestured and whatnot, and I pulled off my helmet -- which I was well into my second tour, so I'd been wearing this helmet for a long time -- and leather helmets kind of get oily, you know, so they get more comfortable the longer you wear them. I knew I couldn't keep it, and I didn't want the Frenchmen to have that because that might be too obvious if there were Germans around, so I threw it in the fire. The fire was burning pretty good by that time. And the Frenchmen, with their broken English, said "There are Germans everywhere, we can't help you. Sorry, can't help, Germans everywhere." I gave them several things that I had with me, and they accepted those, but not help.

We're always instructed to get as far away in the first hour as you can possibly get from your airplane, from where you went down. Of course, by that time smoke is going up, flames going up, which was an obvious signal of where I was. So I started running toward the woods where I'd just kind of come over, and then I realized that there was what appeared to be a deep ravine just on the other side of this plowed field. This plowed field wasn't very big. As I was running toward the ravine, I couldn't see the airplane because of the curvature of the ground, but the smoke and flames were really going up, so I suddenly heard this huge burst of .50-caliber -- I heard first the machine guns right over my head. I could hear it, and then the swish of the air right over my head. I hit the ground, trying to scratch into the dirt, and I thought, my God, the Germans are here and they have seen me, and then there was no more sound, no more firing, just this one burst. And that wasn't a very long burst. So, just a little bit I thought, that was .50-caliber guns; that was the sound of .50-caliber guns. The Germans don't have any .50-caliber guns. And then I realized that those were my own guns, and that when I set this fire in the cockpit, obviously, all the switches were still on, the gun switches were still on, the fire was set in the cockpit, so as the fire

burned the insulation off the wiring at the bottom of the stick, it shorted out the guns switch and, therefore, it fired, automatically firing the remaining ammunition from the guns.

I thought how ironical that would have been if I had shot myself with my own guns. And then I thought, well, here is this great airplane -- because I had been flying this particular one for quite a while then, and had my name on it, and the swastikas for the airplanes I'd shot down -- so I thought, here is this great airplane that's been my friend and has taken me home so many times safely, and now this is the end and it's firing its last salute at me as we both depart.

Lt. General Gerald W. Johnson, 56th FG
 Commander 8th Air Force
 from: USAF Oral History Interview; Maxwell AFB
 Alabama



Jerry Johnson's first assigned P-47 Thunderbolt: HV-D 42-7877, with his ground crew. He became the 56th FG's first ace in this aircraft.

2002 UNIT REBATES

The following Units had 10 or more people attending the 2002 Historical Society reunion in Norfolk, VA and therefore received \$5.00 per person rebate.

353 FG	\$ 95.00
96 BG	130.00
447 BG	50.00
466 BG	165.00
482 BG	75.00
493 BG	<u>375.00</u>
Total	\$890.00

BEDFORD HISTORY AND HERITAGE WEEK



Museums, galleries, and local organizations recently held a week celebrating Bedford history, events being arranged by Connie and Gordon Richards. History presentations and tours covered

early history of England of the area and the rise and fall of Bedford Castle.

Special programmes were held on Friday, September 13th featuring the Glenn Miller Wartime Display at the Bedford Museum and a talk and film show about the Yanks In Bedford – the American presence in World War II. The same week, on September 11th, the RAF Memorial Service was conducted in tribute to those in America who lost their lives to terrorism on that date in 2001.



A portion of Wartime Bedford exhibitry

351ST BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION MEETS IN NORTHERN KENTUCKY



Pictured above is the 351st Bomb Group Memorial Monument placed at the USAF Museum at Wright Patterson AFB, Dayton, Ohio. The monument was dedicated last year. At the 2002 reunion in Northern Kentucky attendees gathered again to view the beautiful piece of art that honors those who flew and died from Polebrook, England 1943-45. Pictured above are, left to right, Lee Gingery, Public Relations Officer and Clay Snedegar, Memorial Chairman.

The 351st Bomb Group Association held a very successful 27th annual reunion June 27-30 at the Cincinnati Airport Marriott Hotel in Northern Kentucky. The attendance was in excess of 270 members, spouses and families.

In addition to a delightful river boat dinner/cruise, there were opportunities to visit nearby museums. One interesting side trip involved visiting the site of the restoration of one of the B-17s recovered from the Greenland ice cap a few years ago.

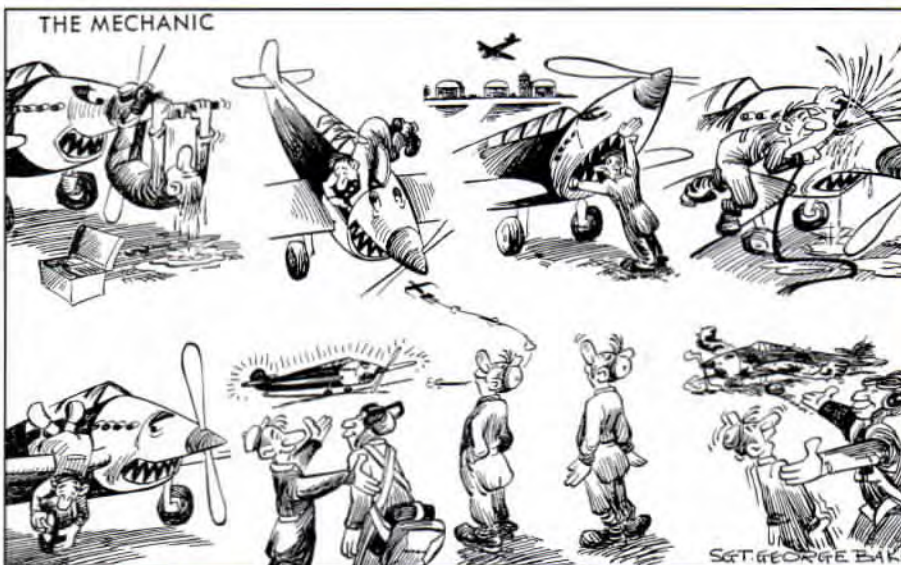
The highlight of the reunion for most of the attendees was a re-visit to the USAF Museum at Wright Patterson AFB in Dayton, Ohio. A new memorial was dedicated there in memory of the 351st last August. The monument is a near replica of the one at Polebrook Airfield in England, wartime home of the 351st, and the one at the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum near Savannah, Georgia.

At the annual business meeting the membership voted to hold the 2003 reunion in Chattanooga, Tennessee. The exact date and hotel will be announced later. Clint Hammond, president, PO Box 281, Mechanicsburg, PA is in charge of the reunion arrangements.

Time is of the essence. The crowd and players are the same always, but the man in the crowd is older every season.

Polo Grounds

Hard work never killed anybody, but sleeping never caused any casualties either.



from *The Checkerboard* 78th Fighter Group Association





TAPS

Litka, Raymond, Jasper MN; 306th BG waistgunner; crewmember of Joe Conroy, whose life he once saved in combat

Martin, Foster, Hillside IL; Pioneers of America; grandfather of 15; loving companion of Poochy and Dolly; friend of many

Hurley, John, Chesire CT; 491st BG; flew on Air Born Angel

Haywood, James, Adrian GA; 306th BG, tailgunner on Yankee Raider; loved his solitary life on a small fishing pond in Laurens County, remembering his crew and his friends in England

Bone, Thomas, Augusta GA; 92nd BG

Wuest, John; 453rd BG radio operator/gunner

Pyles, Elbert, Milwaukie OR; Oregon Chapter

Elrod, Lloyd, Harlem MO; 306th BG, navigator B-17s – from Ken Wilson

Heiliger, Robert, Milton City WI; 303rd BG, crew chief; Wisconsin Chapter – from Len Schutta

Townsend, Eugene, Heights TX; 492nd BG

Lowther, Edwin, Humble TX; 389th BG pilot; Chief Air Traffic Control Center Houston for 35 years – from Alfred Lea

Arundale, Karl, Havana IL; 303rd BG

Schwartz, Jack, Nebraska Chapter; 96th BG copilot – from wife Jacqueline

Poore, Roger, Bloomington MN; 351st BG flight engineer; mechanic on B-25s of Doolittle raid on Tokyo 1942; private pilot; MN National Guard

Laine, James, 306th BG Bombardier on John Ryan's crew; shot down Mar 43; POW – from his son James

Guimont, Donald, Woodmont OR; 364th FG electrician; Oregon Chapter

Sanchez, Myron, Albuquerque NM; 385th BG; New Mexico Chapter

Hudson, Jack, Seabrook TX; 398th BG

Slaugenhaupt, William, Sebring FL; 8th AFFC

Hunger, John, Punxsutawney PA; 3rd AD

Reynolds, Robert, Brookston IN; 466th BG

Exley, Mallie, Savannah GA; Major 8th AF

Corderman, Delmar, SAC City IA; 306th BG

Carson, Tom, Novato CA; 385th BG

Martin, Jack, Portland OR; 306th BG electrician;

Heuer, Chuck, St. Paul MN; 390th BG ground crew chief; - from Warren Hasse

Dickmeyer, Robert, Woodville TX; 4th FG squadron leader

Reilly, John, Houston TX; B-17 flight crew member

Brubaker, Thomas, 361st FG pilot

Woods, Charles, 361st FG pilot

Hobbs, Robert, 361st FG pilot – from B. J. Redden

Gunn, Hal, Highland UT; 303rd BG pilot; POW; during time in the Stalag, drew numerous drawings of prison life, many in color; a man of great integrity, humor, and charity

Hudson, Jack, tailgunner 602nd squadron – from his wife

Horridge, Richard, Nashville TN; pilot B-26 Dragon Wagon, 65 missions over Europe

Neff, William, Delray Beach FL; B-17 engineering and development officer for three years in England; developed many innovations throughout his career in TWA commercial aviation post-war

Widebrook, Max, North Kansas City; 94th BG

Mathers, Dudley, Dallas TX; 91st BG pilot of Stinky – from James Peterson 78th FG

Ahring, Harry, Kansas City KS; 305th BG

Stewart, Charles, Houston TX; 491st BG; accomplished restorer of Studebaker automobiles, many of which won trophies in Classic Car events

Schultz, Norman, Delray Beach FL; 92nd BG

Gray, Cecil, N. Charleroi PA; 446th BG

Sugarman, Sidney, Delray Beach FL; 34th BG

Lorenzo, Leo, Jacksonville FL; 398th BG

Alexander, Shelby, Houston TX; B-24 pilot; flew D-Day missions; oilman

Jeselnik, Anthony, Pleasant Hill MO; 453rd BG radio operator/gunner at age 26

Ambrose, Stephen, New Orleans LA; professor and noted author of historical and World War II books including his volume history of D-Day; instrumental in developing the D-Day Museum in New Orleans; featured Gala Banquet speaker at the 2000 annual reunion 8th AFHS

Major Gen. Joseph J. Kruzel, Ft Walton Beach FL. His 39 years in the air force began as a P-47 pilot with the 361st FG, of which he became the Group Commander. He later commanded an F-100 fighter Wing in India and an F-100 Division. He later served at Headquarters PACAF and at USAF Headquarters in the Pentagon. Burial with full military honors was at Arlington National Cemetery.

Allen Walker Read

Mr. Read, 96 and recently demised, was a language sleuth who hunted down the origin of words. Along the way, he discovered the initials O.K., which first appeared in the Boston Morning Post on March 23, 1839. Initials and misspellings such as "oll korrekt" were oll the rage in print media at that time; they were "O. K."

MEMORIAL FUNDS

An increasing number of 8th AF deceased veterans families inquire as to how they may have memorials sent in their loved one's memory to best help preserve the history of the 8th Air Force for future generations.

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum's Memorial Fund acknowledges all gifts received and they are recorded permanently in the name of the 8th AF veteran. These funds are used to tell the 8th's story and to further the mission of the Heritage Museum.

Family wishes in this regard may be included in the local newspaper obituary notices and veterans' unit publications. Memorial contributions may be sent to:

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum Memorial Fund; P.O. Box 1992; Savannah GA; 31402-1992.

AIRMAN'S PSALM

The Lord is my Pilot. I shall not falter.
He sustaineth me as I span the heavens;
He leadeth me, steady, o'er the skyways.
He refresheth my soul.
For He showeth me the wonders of His firmament
For His Name's sake.

Yea, though I fly through treacheous storms and
darkness
I shall fear no evil, for He is with me.
His Providence and Nearness they comfort me.

He openeth lovely vistas before me
In the presence of His Angels.
He filleth my heart with calm.
My trust in Him bringeth me peace.

Surely, His Goodness and Mercy
Shall accompany me each moment in the air,
And I shall dwell in His matchless heavens forever.

from the Office of the Air Chaplain
J.W. Fredericks Files

LT GENERAL GERALD W. JOHNSON 56th Fighter Group, Commander 8th Air Force



Jerry Johnson on the main runway at Halesworth.

Gerald Johnson flew early combat missions with the 56th Fighter Group becoming the Group's first ace. He shot down eighteen German aircraft before being brought down by ground fire while on a strafing run. As a POW in Stalag I at Barth, Jerry spent his 13 months there as a camp leader, organizing and supporting other prisoners in his new command. He

earned his General's star commanding various fighter, reconnaissance, and bomber units, and served as Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Strategic Air Command Headquarters. Upon Jerry's promotion to Lt. General, he became Commander of the 8th Air Force. As 8th AF Commander, his Operation Linebacker II bombing of Hanoi and other North Vietnam targets ended the Vietnam war. Before retiring, he served as Inspector General of the

Air Force.

While serving from its inception on the Board of Directors of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, Jerry wrote his autobiography, Called To Command, relating in modest terms his remarkable career in the Air Force. He was a true gentleman; a true friend to everyone who met him over the years. He died following an accidental injury which was incurred doing what a true war hero would want to be doing.

Jerry and his wife Mardi had returned to England as special guests to attend the annual airshow and events at Farnsworth. After initial evaluation in England, he was transferred to specialized facilities in Europe. He subsequently was flown from U. S. Army Hospital, Landstuhl, Germany to his home in Florida just prior to his death.

Memorial services were held at his home and full military honors were accorded at his funeral October 3rd at Arlington National Cemetery. Many of his family and friends were present, along with Lt. Gen. and Mrs. E. G. Shuler, Jr. who represented his many friends in the 8th AF Historical Society, the Heritage Museum and the 8th Air Force Command.

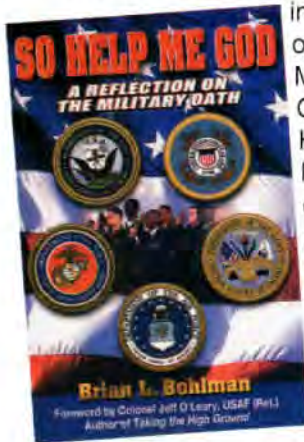


Henri - Chapelle, 27
May 2001, Belgium,
Time 10:30 am
7,984 Crosses

BOOK REVIEWS

All books are read and reviewed by the Editor 8th AF News and represent his opinion. Reviews are presented for the information of the Society's members.

SO HELP ME GOD A Reflection on the Military Oath By Brian L. Bohlman



Last year I met Brian Bohlman late in the afternoon out in the Memorial Gardens at the Heritage Museum and in our conversation about the Gardens, learned that he was an active duty armed forces Chaplain. He related that he was compiling a small volume on the origins and meaning of the oath we all took when we entered the military service. I received that book in the mail recently and realized that it should be presented to our 8th AFHS membership.

So Help Me God presents a brief history of the military oath of each branch of the armed forces declaring our loyalty and our commitment to the defense of our country, ending with the phrase "...so help me God." Chaplain Bohlman examines the solemnity of the oath and the implications of what the oath means in our daily lives – to our families, our Units, our States, and our Nation. He sees the oath as a source of assurance of God's help in our lives, as a prayer within an oath which traces back to the very roots of our country's foundation. In these times of liberal examinations of Church and State relationships, the message is very clear: our country has always included a prayer for God's help in its allegiance oaths and declarations.

In this book, the author examines the inclusion of the statement in oaths taken by our members of congress and at the swearing in of the President of the United States. His bibliography includes addresses from George Washington and many refer-

ences to the Old and New Testaments. The book serves as an affirmation of the course that our country is taking today in its present war, and relates the events of 9/11 to the importance of the oath.

Brian Bohlman is an ordained minister actively ministering to the members of our armed forces and, with his wife Shelley, is involved with the unique So Help Me God Project, a faith-based organization dedicated to the preservation of core values within America's armed forces. His book is intentionally printed in small format. Its 112 pages are 4"x6" so it can be carried in the top pockets of service personnel, ROTC students, and civilians during their daily activities. Each book comes with a mini CD disc of inspirational writings and patriotic music, very useful for Chapter and Unit meetings, and a Service of Reflection ceremony in the Appendix. A copy is a bargain at \$9.95. Bulk lots are available. For information on the book and on the So Help Me God Project, you may reach Brian Bohlman at PO Box 280662, Columbia SC, 29228.

THE 363RD FIGHTER GROUP IN WORLD WAR II in Action over Europe with the P-51 Mustang by Kent D. Miller

Every now and then I receive a book about combat groups which parallel the wartime history of the Mighty Eighth. Schiffer Publishing and author Kent Miller have assembled and published the full story of the 9th Air Force's 363rd Fighter Group, another excellent historical volume from Schiffer.

The 363rd was one of the early fighter groups to fly out of English airbases and was the third FG to fly the P-51 Mustang. They served as escorts for 8th Air Force bombers, with special assignments to pick up the bomber streams and the disabled aircraft after the bomb run and bring

them home. On D-Day and the months following they played a vital role, along with the 354th Fighter Group and others on fighter patrol over the invasion areas. Landing and supply of Allied troops and equipment would have been impossible without air superiority over the German Luftwaffe and the 363rd filled this role, achieving a distinguished combat record. The Group's first mission was led by Col. James Howard, former Flying Tiger and CO of the 354 FG, on a withdrawal support mission near Brussels. Col. Howard later was the first fighter pilot to receive the Medal of Honor for exceptional leadership and flying in combat.



The volume includes a day-to-day diary of the 363rd FG's combat experiences, both personal and factual. Extensive appendices include personnel listings and their individual brief histories. A superb 90+ page photo section brings close-ups of the airmen, their machines, ground and support crews. There is a section of numerous full-page P-51 depictions in color. The hardback large format volume 192pp will expand your knowledge of the role of a Ninth Air Force Combat Group. For information call Schiffer at (610) 593-1777 or Fax (610) 593-2002.

THE 464TH BOMB GROUP IN WORLD WAR II In Action over the Third Reich with the B-24 Liberator by Mike Hill and Betty Karle

The 464th Bomb Group was activated on paper the day of the first low level bombing of oil refineries at Ploesti, Romania. This volume is



about a B-24 outfit who flew their combat missions from Italy, bombing the heavily defended targets in Austria, Germany, and a long list of vital targets in other strategic German-held

countries. The 464th's first contingent sailed for Italy in February 1944 and entered into combat shortly after arriving at their base at Pantanella Army Airfield near Canosa, Italy.

Author Hill, who also has written a history of the 451st Bomb Group, has produced an excellent record of the life and times of a combat group similar to those of the 2nd Air Division. He presents many of their missions, and while the circumstances were somewhat different than those of the 8th Air Force, Hill's volume shows that the 15th Air Force missions were very similar in a number of ways. Vienna-Neustadt, Blechammer, Linz, and the oil fields were hostile. Losses on many missions were staggering. Pictures of the Group's servicemen, life on the base, and combat missions fill the pages of exten-

sive text material. An excellent collection of photographs fill a large special section, and as with most books from Schiffer Publishing the quality volume includes an aircraft section in full color. Combat photos and crew pictures are special presentations in this book.

If you like B-24 Liberator and want to see how it was in the 15th, this is the book for you. It is large format, quality print 264 pages. Get more information by calling (610) 593-1777 or writing to Schiffer Publishing, 4880 Lower Valley Road – Rt 372, Atglen PA 19310.



A SHORT TOUR OF THE NEW 2ND AIR DIVISION USAAF MEMORIAL LIBRARY - Norfolk, England

by Jim Lorenz, 466th BG, Scottsdale, AZ

The 2nd Air Division USAAF Memorial Library is located in a prominent area of the ground floor, to the right rear of the entrance lobby (refer to the layout photo). Our 2nd ADA/Fulbright Librarian, Andrea Bean Hough, supplied the following area descriptions:

Upon entering our Memorial Library, a 1/6 scale model of a B-24 (Witchcraft, 467th BG) hangs from the ceiling donated by Mike Caputo.

On the left there is a casual seating area (to achieve the atmosphere of an American library) next to a 28 foot-long wall mural showing the "Friendly Invasion" of Norfolk, with a "bombs away". It tells the entire story of the 2nd AD activities there.

The Enquiry desk is in the center of the library with attractive book stacks on either side containing nearly 4,000 books on all aspects of American history and culture. These may be checked out by local library patrons.

Note: the archival materials have been catalogued and are now in the Norfolk Records fireproof safes--and available veterans, historians, etc. upon request. Fortunately, these archival records were catalogued and stored in a fireproof vault prior to the 1994 fire--so these were all saved.



The Shrine and Roll of Honor, with over 6700 names of our 2nd Air Division comrades who gave their lives, is a focal point for visitors. This is designed as a "quiet area" overlooking the memorial garden and with the WAC Key and colorful banners of each of the 14 2nd Air Division bomb groups. Above the Roll of Honor is a photograph of the American Cemetery at Madingley. Next to the Shrine area is a study area, with desks and six public access computers, allowing Internet access as well as word processing, spreadsheets and databases.

Next to the offices for the Trust Library staff is a Meeting Room, with a large conference table and chairs. The walls are lined with copies of watercolor paintings by Sgt. Lund--the originals are stored in the Norfolk Record office--of our wartime life and activities and other display items. A unique item is a B-24 flight simulator computer, thanks to

David Hastings. It must be very realistic as qualified RAF pilot, David, reported that he crashed on his very first try at flying a bombing mission to Berlin!

With this larger area we now have, and the interest in the 2nd Air Division, a larger staff was needed. Currently, the British staff in our Library is: Derek Hills, Trust Librarian; and four Information and Enquiry Assistants: Jenny Christian, Lesley Fleetwood, Deborah Medhurst and Jean Pelling-Smith.

We want to give our thanks to the Board of Governors of the Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division U.S.A.S.A.F. for their timeless hours, resulting in this larger unique Memorial Library.

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

"This is the best reunion ever!" Those words were heard many times at the 2003 reunion in Norfolk, VA., especially after the Gala Banquet on Saturday night, Oct. 5. It was a good reunion, and a lot of smiling faces were in evidence. The tours to the Naval Base and the Virginia Air & Space Museum were especially interesting.

Our early publication of erroneous dates for the reunion likely caused several units to set their reunions either in direct conflict with our reunion or very near in time. For that reason, we have verified the following **dates for the 2003 Reunion — Oct. 14 - 19, 2003**, at the Sheraton Colorado Springs. That should be a good time to be in Colorado Springs, which is nestled in the foothills of the Rockies and surrounded with attractions. While our access to military installations, including the Air Force Academy, may be limited for security reasons, we will get whatever access the situation will afford. Airline connections to Colorado Springs are many and good. Mark your calendars now, and set the date aside to be there.

We have worked hard to bring you at this time the dates and site for the **2004 Reunion: October 5 - 10, 2004** at the Westin Crown Center in Kansas City, Missouri. With this foreknowledge, units can set their fall reunions to avoid conflicting with these dates. Better yet, units can join with us at the Westin, a fine hotel in Kansas City's Jewel: Crown Center.

Dues and other things: Those of you who pay dues annually have been billed for 2003. We urge you to send your payments in as soon as possible. As the saying goes, "If you have paid, please disregard this message." If you haven't, please do so and take advantage of the opportunity to contribute to:

The Library Programs Fund for the Woolnough Library at the Heritage Museum. This tremendous resource is under-utilized because access to its research material needs improvement. Life Members also have the opportunity to make a tax-deductible contribution to this worthy effort. You have contributed generously over the years to the Heritage Museum, and once again, it needs your help.

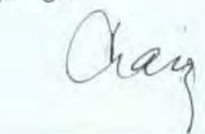
Membership in the Heritage Museum is another way you can help your Museum. Visit its website at www.mightyeighth.org to learn how to join, or write Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, PO Box 1992, Savannah, GA 31402.

Curriculum Guide: Prentice Hall, the well-known textbook publisher, working with the Heritage Museum, is developing the curriculum guide we have been telling you about. The project is nearing completion. In the next issue of the 8AF NEWS we will be able to disclose details of its content and availability.

WEBSITE: www.8thafhs.org, the 8AFHS website, is being upgraded by Bob Books of the 392nd BGMA website. However, we still need a webmaster to continue the high-quality start Bob has given the site. Here is a chance for some of you second-generation; high-tech types to really help your Society. If you would like to give it a try, visit the existing site and send your sample page to Dick Baynes at rcbaynes@hotmail.com.

The 65th General Hospital reunion association held its final reunion in Durham, NC Oct. 25 - 27. As described elsewhere in this issue statutory commemorating this fine unit was unveiled at Duke University Medical Center. Dr. Walter Brown and your president were honored to be in attendance and to meet the people who compiled a spectacular record taking care of 8th Air Force and Normandy wounded. For more on the 65th see 8AF NEWS, Sept. 2001.

Finally, we wish for you all the joys of the holiday season and for 2003, health and happiness. Looking forward to seeing you in Colorado Springs.



**Craig Harris
President**



I am the tomb of one shipwrecked; but sail thou. For even while we perished, the other ships sailed on over the sea.
Theodorides

ON OUR COVER:

Flames engulf a B-24 Liberator hit by Flak on the way to the target. Close formations put surrounding aircraft in jeopardy when a bomber caught fire. Explosions were common due to fuel and bomb loads on board. This crew in Little Warrior had little chance of getting out.

MISSION BRIEFING



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

It's been a busy year, and a short one it seems.

The rewards of the year include seeing friends at a number of bomb group reunions, chapter meetings, and at our annual reunion in Norfolk. Heritage Museum events and activities were especially memorable. The 60th anniversary seminar in January was outstanding, special Unit and Chapter events at the museum were entertaining and fun, and the ribbon-cutting of the Memorial Chapel of the Fallen Eagles and Charles

Beard Gardens were most meaningful and impressive.

The 8th AF News staff, Donna Neely and Telisha Gaines, and I have enjoyed the interactions with all of you this past year and deeply appreciate all of your contributions and suggestions to help make the 8th AF News the best veterans' newsmagazine in the country. Special thanks go out to our HS office staff and for the support of the Society's Board of Directors.

We wish each of you a Merry Christmas! - and an exciting and healthy **2003**.

Walter Brown, Editor



TO ALL UNITS AND CHAPTERS



Now is the time for all good men and women to come to the aid of their Unit, Chapter and Historical Society!! The Historical Society Board of Directors at the urging of the Membership Committee has increased the finders fee from \$5.00 to \$10.00. Now there is incentive to go out and recruit new members. A new member contributes \$10.00 to the your treasury before they pay any Unit or Chapter dues.

TO THE UNITS

You can get \$5.00 more for each member by having your Unit Reunion with the Historical Society. All you have to do is forget about selecting a city, a hotel, the entertainment, tours, menu and all the other nagging items that go with putting on a reunion. All of that will be done for you. Get at least 10 people to attend the Historical Society reunion and register before the cutoff date and your treasury will receive the \$5.00 rebate. You can have your own hospitality room, eat together at the Unit dinner. If you have enough people in attendance you can have your own dining room. There will be time for your Unit business meeting in a private room.

TO ALL CHAPTERS

Be sure to have your members that pay their dues annually to the Historical Society, pay them before December 31 for the next year. For all of those that do that your treasury will receive \$1.00 rebate. Your Chapter will also receive \$1.00 for each Life Member. No one has to go anywhere or sign up for anything; just pay their dues in a timely manner. This is a bonus to your Chapter and there is basically no effort on the part of the Chapter.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The **2003** Historical Society reunion will be **October 14 through 19** at the Sheraton in Colorado Springs, CO. The **2004** Historical Society reunion will be **October 5 through 10** at the Westin Crown Plaza in Kansas City, MO.

Please leave enough time between these reunions and your reunions so there will not be any conflict. It is suggested that there should be a couple of weeks between reunions.

HELP!

Both Units and Chapters PLEASE keep the Committee informed of any changes that occur in either your officers, newsletter editor or Unit Contact. The only way we can keep our records up to date is if YOU tell us.

Jim Erskine
Unit/Chapter Development Committee Chairman

HOW ABOUT IT?

One writer aptly used the gambling term, "Luck of the Draw" as an eye-arresting title to describe the risky experiences he and thousands of other combat crewmen encountered as they flew missions against Hitler's Festung Europa (the so-called European Fortress of the Axis Powers). Judging from the statistics relating to losses and wins, the rate of survival was always in question as the relative security of an English air base was left behind when they flew the cold, hostile skies over Europe. Upon an evaluation of these four words, "luck of the draw," one would assume that the thousands of Americans involved in this game were the players in a giant scheme of survival; those with the luck, were the winners. The rest were losers. Sitting around a huge gaming table, the win or lose outcome was decided by the ways in which the cards were dealt.

It is luck or fate that determines our destiny? The color of your skin, did you have anything to do with it? Your citizenship and nationality; any control over that? What choice did you have in the lineage of your mother and dad or the number of brothers and sisters you have? Did you choose the neighborhood where you spent your childhood, or your father's occupation or profession, or the period of time in history when you lived your life? History had provided a war for just about every generation. As an eligible participant in our war, did you have any choice in where you would fight or the kinds of weapons you would be assigned? What about the military unit and men with whom you would serve and in what battles you would be a participant? Didn't someone else always make that decision? Am I then, just a human robot controlled by the luck of the draw?

As a member of the human race, is there anything over which I have control or choice? I might choose to be in good health, have more than enough money, enjoy a loving wife and children, have a honorable and enjoyable profession or occupation, be respected, have a reputation above reproach, and have true-blue lasting friendships. Some or all of these might be life-long goals, but let's face it, not all of them have become reality! Military fliers are all familiar with contrails, those fluffy white lines of clouds trailing the path of high flying aircraft. When the atmospheric climate is right, the

movement of the aircraft through the sky solidifies the cold moist air particles producing highly visible vapors. Aircraft, often obscure because of altitude, can suddenly become visible as contrails begin forming. Just as quickly, the contrails disappear as atmospheric conditions change. The writer of Holy Scripture said, **"For what is your life? It is even a vapor which appears for a little time and then vanishes away."**

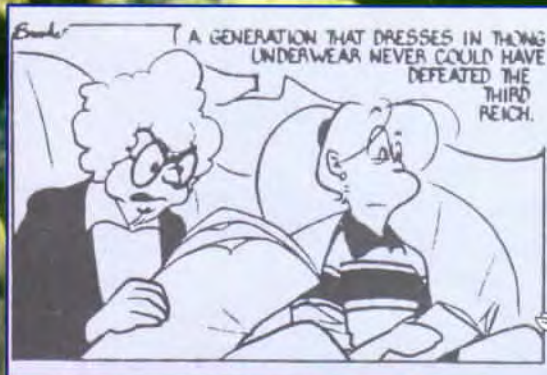
(James 4:14 NKJ). Our life is just that, a vapor that lasts for a brief period. We are here for a short time and then we are gone. There are times in our life when the decisions we make have profound and lasting effects on us. These moments of decision are God-given opportunities for us to control and determine our eternal destiny. These are not merely luck or fate. They are God-given allowing you the opportunity to take control of your life. This is not just luck, and it is controlled by your choice.



Earl Wassom

Earl Wassom
466th Bomb Group
Chaplain, Tennessee Chapter

Will you pray this prayer with me? Lord, in the midst of a world filled with turmoil, hatred, conflict, unrest, and uncertainty, you give us an opportunity to know you, the Prince of Peace. I cannot in myself change a single thing for which others are responsible, therefore, my inner rest and assurance must come from you. It is not luck but faith and trust in you, that makes me a winner. Thank you for loving me! Amen.



It is not in the stars to hold our destiny, but in ourselves.

William Shakespeare





8th AF News

Dated Material Inside

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

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Happy Holidays



The Seasons Greetings

From

The Commanding General

and Staff, Headquarters

3d. Bombardment Division (H)

