



8th AF NEWS

VOLUME 02 NUMBER 2 Voice of "THE MIGHTY EIGHTH" June 2002

Inside this June 2002 issue:

- Reunion Information October 1-6
- Chapel of the Fallen Eagles
- Charles D. Beard Jr. Memorial Gardens



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.

4 DAYS
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REG. 70
MEALS 232
770

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OPERATIONS



Flying Control
385th Bomb Group

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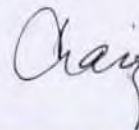
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

REMARKS FOR THE CHAPEL DEDICATION

General Shuler, Judge Smith, Dr. Brown, gentlemen of the clergy, ladies and gentlemen. It is an honor and privilege to speak to the successful completion of a mission. The Chapel of the Fallen Eagles has been, to members of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society, a major personal and organizational mission. Society members contributed, over time, a major share of the funds that made this chapel completion and dedication possible. They made

donations large and small, each according to his means, and the results you see around you. We thank the members, and share with them, the satisfaction and pride that come with a successfully completed mission. The Society was honored to have a role in a major donation by Mrs. Ruth Eaker as a memorial to her late husband and our commander, Lt. Gen. Ira C. Eaker. Gen. Eaker was the Commander of the 8th Air Force from December, 1942 to January, 1944. The Eighth Air Force Historical Society expresses its gratitude to all

the many donors who made possible the establishment of this enduring memorial and congratulates the Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum on this milestone achievement. Thank you.



Craig Harris,
President

MISSION BRIEFING

My Friend Jack

For several years in the late 1980s, I had worked on a restoration project with Jack Hagler and another old friend, Gordon Davis of Sylvester, Georgia. We were on a committee restoring the original 1835 Old Medical College of Georgia building in downtown Augusta. Jack, who was in charge, loved restorations and had served as President of the Georgia Historic Preservation Commission. One afternoon as the project neared completion, I was at Mary Anne and Jack's home in Augusta, and I commented on a small bronze B-17 which stood among the stacks of papers on Jack's desk. He said, "Yeah, I used to fly those things." As much as we had worked together, he had never mentioned that to me before.

Jack was a pilot of *Charlies Kids* with the 447th Bomb Group at Rattlesden. He continued, "Do you know the Major General who is traveling around the country trying to establish a Memorial museum to the 8th Air Force?" I replied, "No, I never met any two-star Generals while I was in the Air Force."

Jack gave me a telephone number to call and along with it a contact number to join the 8th Air Force Historical Society. A few days after I had returned home, my phone rang. It was Jack. He wanted to know if I had made the call to General Lyle yet. I told him I had not, but promised I would get in touch with the General at the upcoming 50th Anniversary of the 8th Air Force celebration in Savannah.

I drove down to the Anniversary celebration and on the third morning there, I got up enough nerve to stop Lew Lyle in the lobby of the Radisson. Since that week, for the past ten years, I have had the opportunity and distinct privilege of meeting wonderful friends in the 8th from all over the country and also of being part of the development of the Mighty 8th Air Force Heritage Museum, long envisioned by Lew Lyle and by the Historical Society.

Jack died peacefully at his home last weekend – the weekend of the Heritage Museum's Sixth Anniversary

celebration. I was in Savannah at the time. Jack and Mary Anne were among the earliest and strongest supporters of the Heritage Museum, taking part in its growth.

Some friends make sure you are headed in the right direction. Jack was my friend. He did just that for me.

Skinny Issue

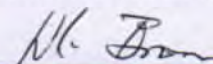
This skinny issue, going out by first-class mail, will finish out the fiscal year of the 8th AF NEWS, which we are proud to say is coming in under budget again for this year. The support and encouragement of all Society members are sincerely appreciated by our staff and your Board of Directors, which oversee the project and also keep one eye on your editor.

I am very excited about the next couple of issues coming up. We are calling them *Combat Issues*, containing a wealth of material covering every phase of air combat and personal stories from the troops. We are privileged to have received boxes of material from Jake's Attic – original articles, publications and photos from J. W. Fredericks who, following a tour with the 303rd Bomb Group, served in Operations, Third Air Division till the end of the war. His material, from Division Headquarters, is original primary source, previously unpublished, and is definitively authentic. These papers, photographs, and publications have been in his storage for almost sixty years. Let me assure you that it is fascinating stuff; we will print things in these future issues which you, and many others, have never seen before. Material thought-provoking and unique in its content. Now is no time to even think of canceling your subscription to the NEWS!

Remember to check out the Annual Reunion information presented in this issue and reproduce or clip your registration forms for Norfolk – see you at Reunion 2002.



Walter Brown, Editor
Ewell Farm
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MEMORIAL CHAPEL OF THE FALLEN EAGLES DEDICATED - CHARLES D. BEARD JR. MEMORIAL GARDENS -



**Chapel of the Fallen Eagles
Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum**

"When you hit a home run, you can take your time running the bases," so said New York Yankees manager Casey Stengel. The 8th AF Historical Society and the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum have hit a home run with the Chapel of The Fallen Eagles in the Museum Memorial Gardens in Savannah. Six years in the planning and three years in its funding, the Memorial Chapel was dedicated May 18th, 2002 in honor of those 8th Air Force airmen who died in service to their country. Several hundred visitors were present to take part in the grand opening of the beautiful edifice.

With funding in large part by the members of the Historical Society, the non-denominational chapel is open daily to the public and available for services and events. The structure, designed after typical East Anglican local churches by noted Savannah architect Ken Spriggs, has turned out to be far beyond the expectations of the original planners of the Museum's Board of Trustees.

Opening ceremonies included the dedication of the Charles D. Beard, Jr. Memorial Gardens which is a special area surrounding the chapel. The formal services were led by Chaplain Martin Loyley, after an invocation

by Mississippi Chapter Chaplain Billy Jones and opening remarks by Museum Board Chairman E. G. "Buck" Shuler, Jr. The principal dedication presentation was given by Judge Ben Smith, 303rd BG, with remarks of appreciation to those who helped make the chapel a reality being made by Historical Society President Craig Harris. Dedication of the Memorial Gardens remembering Charlie Beard was presented by Board member Walter Brown. The services were attended by a number of members of the Beard family, including Charlie's wife Sue, his sons and daughters and his grandchildren. Members of the Strategic Air Command Association were also present for the occasion, as were a number of members of the Historical Society Board of Directors who represented the organization.



Honor Guard and colors were presented by the 165th Air National Guard Wing with bagpipe music and colors by members of the Savannah Scottish American Military Society.

Chapel construction was headed up by Sandy Miller of American Builders. A feature of the chapel are the numerous special stained glass chapel windows designed by various donors in conjunction with management and input by Staff Director Judy Walker.

Chapel of the Fallen Eagles

Dedicated to those who have served
in the Eighth Air Force
for the cause of Freedom and Liberty
Realized through the vision of
The Eighth Air Force Historical Society



Within this chapel lives
the memory of those airmen
of the Mighty Eighth Air Force
who gave their lives for their country

At the entrance foyer to the Chapel

The windows, fabricated by Aurora Glass of Savannah, were completed by Aurora artisans Gerald Schantz and Jon Erickson, and are unique artworks in their content and presentation. The central window is a replica of the wartime stained glass window of the 96th Bomb Group in Quidenham Church at Snetterton Heath. Several other 8th AF Bomb Groups have sponsored their special designs included in the windows along the side-walls of the chapel. Interior features include an original ornate Anglican lectern and four original choir benches.



Chapel Sanctuary

Antique pews have been sponsored and dedicated in honor of individuals and Groups of the 8th Air Force. Replicas of English chandeliers light the entire chapel interior, and outdoor lighting illuminates the exterior at night. The Memorial Gardens feature an antique chapel bell donated by member Jim Reeves who served with the 8th Air Force.

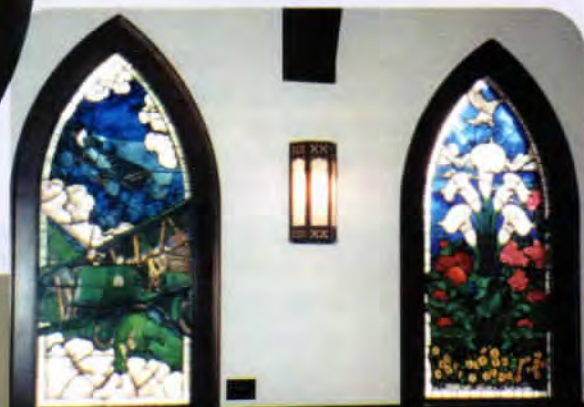
The Chapel of the Fallen Eagles is unique in this country and is an edifice of honor of which every member of the Historical Society can be very proud. Plans for future additions include a musical carillon for the bell tower, similar to the Chapel carillon in the American Cemetery at Madingly, and which is still currently available for sponsorship. A Book of Contributors will be placed in the chapel foyer listing the name of each donor who took part in

the funding of the building.

The Chapel is available for daily meditations by visitors and organizations. It can be scheduled for special services and appropriate events through Andrea Adkins at the Heritage Museum 912-748-8888. A Christening service was performed the first day of opening and a number of weddings have already been booked for the upcoming months.



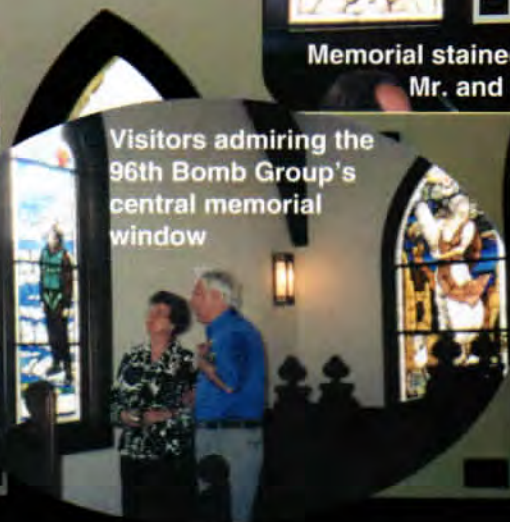
Memorial window
100th Bomb Group



Memorial stained glass Chapel windows
Mr. and Mrs John Herrin



Plaque to be set in the Charles D. Beard, Jr. Memorial Chapel Gardens



Visitors admiring the
96th Bomb Group's
central memorial
window



The Charles D. Beard, Jr. family



Director Judy Walker giving an orientation tour to
guests in the Chapel of the Fallen Eagles

REUNION 2002

8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REUNION NORFOLK, VIRGINIA OCTOBER 1-6, 2002

Plans are well on their way for the **28th Annual Reunion**, to be held on Norfolk's downtown waterfront. Mark your calendars now for a great time of renewing old friendships and seeing everything that Norfolk has to offer.

For those of you who haven't been to Norfolk recently, you're in for a big surprise. No longer is it the city where dogs and sailors are told to stay off the grass. After years of poor relations between the Navy and Norfolk, the two have long since reached a great deal of harmony. The downtown area has recently undergone a huge revitalization. It's now home to world-class shopping and dining, along with museums, art galleries, and much more.

In addition to the largest Naval Base in the world, the entire Hampton Roads area is home to Naval Air Stations, Langley Air Force Base, and Army Bases. In addition to the modern military, you will find a wealth of early American and Civil War history. Within a stone's throw of each other are Colonial Williamsburg, Jamestown, and Yorktown. You'll find the oceanfront at Virginia Beach only a short drive in the opposite direction.

The reunion is planned for a perfect time of year. Temperatures are typically in the low 70s in early October with very little rain. You may want a jacket for cool evenings. Be sure to come early and/or stay late to enjoy all that the Norfolk area has to offer. The hotel will extend the rate three days before and after the reunion, based on availability.

REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

See choices below and complete the Registration Form. Remit by check or money order payable to Armed Forces Reunions (NOT "8AF REUNION") by August 30, 2002 (no credit cards or phone reservations accepted). Forms received after this date will be accepted on a space available basis only. Hotel reservation forms should be filled out completely and mailed directly to the hotel by August 30, 2002.

MEALS / EVENTS CHOICES

CHOICE #1 TOTAL PACKAGE \$168

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

CHOICE # 2 PARTIAL PACKAGE \$116

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

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

CHOICE #3 INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

Friday Gala Rendezvous Dinner \$32 and Saturday Banquet \$38 can be purchased separately, but are included in both packages above.

TOUR / EVENT OPTIONS

Wednesday: Colonial Williamsburg \$54, Welcome Reception \$6, Fisherman's Wharf \$41. **Thursday:** Virginia Marine Science Museum \$23, Navy Base / Naval Museum \$26. **Friday:** Lunch Cruise / MacArthur Memorial \$34. **Saturday:** City Tour \$15, Virginia Air & Space Center \$21.

REUNION 2002

8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REUNION

OCTOBER 1 - 6, 2002

SHERATON WATERSIDE HOTEL - NORFOLK, VIRGINIA

Tuesday, October 1

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

Wednesday, October 2

7:30am - 8:30am Reunion Registration open
8:30am - 3:30pm COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG
9:00am - Tbd Hospitality/Gathering Room & Memorabilia Room opens
1:00pm - Tbd 8AFHS 'PX' open through Sunday
1:00pm - 5:00pm Reunion Registration open
2:00pm - 8AFHS Board Meeting
5:30pm - 6:30pm VIRGINIA PATRIOTS WELCOME RECEPTION
6:45pm - 9:30pm FISHERMAN'S WHARF DINNER

Thursday, October 3

7:00am - 8:30am Continental Breakfast
8:00am - 10:00am Reunion Registration open
8:30am - 10:00am Unit Advisory and Chapter & Unit Development Meeting
10:15am - 3:15pm VIRGINIA MARINE SCIENCE MUSEUM
10:30am - 2:45pm NAVY BASE / NAVAL MUSEUM
3:30pm - 4:30pm Medical Advisory Seminar by Dr. Walt Brown
2:30pm - 5:30pm Reunion Registration open
6:00pm - 7:00pm Cash Bar Reception
7:00pm - 9:00pm Southern-style dinner and Hoe-down

Friday, October 4

7:00am - 8:30am Continental Breakfast
8:00am - 10:00am Reunion Registration open
8:30am - 10:00am Individual Group Meetings
10:00am - 11:00am Special Seminar: Planned Giving
11:15am - 4:00pm LUNCH CRUISE / MacARTHUR MEMORIAL
3:00pm - 5:00pm Reunion Registration open
6:00pm - 7:00pm 8AFHS Cash Bar Reception
7:00pm - Rendezvous Dinners and 'Hangar Flying'

Saturday, October 5

7:00am - 8:30am Full Breakfast Buffet
9:00am - 11:00am General Membership Meeting
11:30am - 3:30pm CITY TOUR
12:45pm - 4:30pm VIRGINIA AIR AND SPACE CENTER
5:30pm - 6:00pm Reunion Registration open
6:00pm - 7:00pm 8AFHS Cash Bar Reception
7:00pm - 8AFHS Gala Banquet

Sunday, October 6

7:00am - 8:30am Continental Breakfast
8:30am - 9:15am Separate Protestant and Catholic Services at the hotel
9:30am - 8AFHS Annual Board Meeting

REUNION 2002 8th AFHS ACTIVITY REGISTRATION FORM

Listed below are all registration, tour, and meal costs for the reunion. Please enter how many people will be participating in each event and total the amount. Send that amount payable to ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC. in the form of check or money order (no credit cards or phone reservations accepted). Your cancelled check will serve as your confirmation. All registration forms and payments must be received by mail on or before August 30, 2002. After that date, reservations will be accepted on a space available basis. We suggest you make a copy of this form before mailing.

Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.
 242 West 22nd Street
 Norfolk, VA 23517
 ATTN: 8th AFHS

OFFICE USE ONLY	
Check # _____	Date Received _____
Inputted _____	Nametag Completed _____

CUT-OFF DATE IS 8/30/02

	Price Per	# of People	Total
REGISTRATION FEE	\$35		\$
MEAL PACKAGES			
<i>Choice #1 includes 7 hotel meals beginning with breakfast on Thursday.</i>			
<i>Choice #2 includes 5 hotel meals beginning with breakfast on Friday.</i>			
Choice #1	\$168		\$
Choice #2	\$116		\$
Please select your entrée choice(s) for the Banquet:			
Roast Prime Rib of Beef		#	
Char-Grilled Salmon		#	
SEPARATELY PRICED MEALS (if not purchasing a package)			
Friday: Rendezvous Dinner (chicken)	\$32		\$
Saturday: Banquet (please select your entrée)			
Roast Prime Rib of Beef	\$38		\$
Char-Grilled Salmon	\$38		\$
TOURS / EVENTS			
Wednesday: Colonial Williamsburg	\$54		\$
Wednesday: Welcome Mixer	\$6		\$
Wednesday: Fisherman's Wharf Dinner	\$41		\$
<i>Please choose one of the following two tours:</i>			
Thursday: Virginia Marine Science Museum	\$23		\$
Thursday: Navy Base / Naval Museum	\$26		\$
Friday: Lunch Cruise / MacArthur Memorial	\$34		\$
<i>Please choose one of the following two tours:</i>			
Saturday: Norfolk City Tour	\$15		\$
Saturday: Virginia Air & Space Center	\$21		\$
Total Amount Payable to Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.			\$

PLEASE PRINT MEMBER NAME _____ Please do not staple or tape your payment to this form.
1st 8AFHS REUNION?

LIFE MEMBER? ___ 8AFHS MEMBERSHIP # _____ WWII GROUP _____

SPOUSE NAME _____ LIFE MEMBER? ___ MEMBER # _____

GUEST NAMES _____

MEMBER'S STREET ADDRESS _____

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

DISABILITY/DIETARY RESTRICTIONS _____

Do you use wheelchair assistance? _____

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

For refunds and cancellations please refer to our policies outlined at the bottom of the reunion program. **CANCELLATIONS WILL ONLY BE TAKEN MONDAY-FRIDAY 9:00am-5:00pm EASTERN TIME (excluding holidays).** Call (757) 625-6401 to cancel reunion activities and obtain your cancellation code.

REUNION 2002 SHERATON NORFOLK WATERSIDE HOTEL

The Sheraton Hotel is located downtown at 777 Waterside Drive, Norfolk, VA 23510, adjacent to the Waterside Festival Marketplace, featuring lots of restaurants and eateries. The Norfolk International Airport is about fifteen minutes from the hotel. If you are driving, please call the hotel for directions. The hotel has over 400 guest rooms. Guests have a view of the working harbor or Norfolk's skyline. Each guest room is equipped with an iron/ironing board, hair dryer, and coffee maker with complimentary coffee. Handicapped accessible rooms and non-smoking floors are available. Please request these special accommodations when making your reservations. The hotel has an outdoor pool, which is open seasonally, and an exercise room. A gift shop is located on the first floor. The Riverwalk Cafe serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Alexander's Bar serves dinner and drinks. Valet parking is currently \$12 per night, and self-parking in the adjacent First Union parking garage is currently \$8.00 per day. Check-in time is 3pm; check-out time is 12 noon.

There are a few suites blocked for hospitality purposes. The parlor suites consist of a parlor room (about the size of a normal sleeping room) and connecting bedroom. The reduced rates for these suites are \$200 per night for city view and \$300 per night for harbor view. We suggest you call the hotel for more information and to make these special reservations.

Brown Airport Shuttle Service provides shuttle service to and from the hotel. Call (757) 857-3991 for reservations. The current rates are listed below:

- Green and White Checker Cab service is also available. Currently their rates are approximately \$20.00 per cab. For cab service, call (757) 855-6611.

One Way Fee	Roundtrip Fee
\$15 for one person	\$25 for one person
\$20 for two people	\$37 for two people
\$25 for three people	\$45 for three people
\$7 per person if four or more	\$13 per person if four or more

- RV parking is available. Upon arrival, the valet will be able to assist you. For full hookup services, consider one of the following: Chesapeake Campground - (757) 485-0149 or KOA Campground - (757) 428-1444

- Med Emporium rents wheelchairs. Call Med-Emporium at (757) 588-1487 for information.

————— CUT HERE AND MAIL TO THE HOTEL —————

8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY - HOTEL RESERVATION FORM

NAME _____ TEL. NUMBER (____) _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

ARRIVAL DATE _____ APPROX. TIME _____ DEPARTURE DATE _____

OF ROOMS ___ # OF PEOPLE IN RM. ___ HANDICAP ACCESS ___ SMOKING ___ NONSMOKING ___

KING BED ___ 2 DOUBLE BEDS ___ If room type requested is not available, nearest room type will be assigned.

RATE: \$94+ tax (currently 11.5%) for up to 2 people in room (\$15 for each additional person). Rate will be honored 3 days before and after reunion dates, based on availability.

CUT OFF DATE: 8/30/02. Reservations received after 8/30 will be processed on space & rate available basis.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Deposit is refundable if reservation is canceled by 6pm on your arrival day.

All reservations must be guaranteed by credit card or first night's deposit, enclosed.

___ AMEX ___ DINERS ___ VISA ___ MASTER CARD ___ CARTE BLANCHE ___ DISCOVER

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE (regardless of payment method) _____

MAIL TO: The Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel * 777 Waterside Drive * Norfolk, VA 23510

REUNION 2002 HIGHLIGHTS

COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG

Wednesday, October 2

Board bus for Williamsburg, the capital of Virginia in the 1770's. Once at the Capitol Building, begin a professionally guided walking tour.

Proceed down Duke of Gloucester Street, along which you'll visit the homes and shops of the day. The tour continues on toward Bruton Parish Church, the Governor's Palace, and ends at Merchant Square. After the walking tour you may wish to return to one of the re-created colonial taverns for dining 18th Century-style, or dine on your own in Merchant Square, which is surrounded by eateries, restaurants, unique shops and boutiques. After lunch you may have some free time to visit some of the sights you missed before. This tour requires extensive walking on uneven surfaces.

Restored homes and shops are not wheelchair accessible.

8:30am board bus, 3:30pm back at the hotel

\$54/Person includes bus, guide, and admission. Lunch on your own.

VIRGINIA PATRIOTS WELCOME RECEPTION

Wednesday, October 2

Enjoy fellowship, drinks, and music in the Memorabilia/Gathering Room.

For those pre-registered for this event, beer, wine, and sodas will be included. The number of drinks included will depend on the type of drink desired and the total number of people participating. A cash bar will also be available for those wanting to purchase a mixed drink.

5:30-6:30pm

\$6/Person includes limited drinks and musical entertainment.

FISHERMAN'S WHARF

Wednesday, October 2

Enjoy an all-you-can-eat seafood buffet featuring crab legs, shrimp, clams, catch of the day, and other entrees and accompanying side dishes at one of the favorite local restaurants, located on Willoughby Bay. Here, naval aviation was born when

Eugene Ely first flew from the deck of the USS *Birmingham*.

6:45pm board bus, 9:30pm back at hotel

\$41/Person includes bus, escort, and dinner.

VIRGINIA MARINE SCIENCE MUSEUM

Thursday, October 3

Board bus for Virginia Beach for a self-guided, walking tour of the Virginia Marine Science Museum.

This museum is one of the top aquariums in the country with more than 800,000 gallons of aquariums and live animal habitats, over 300 hands-on exhibits, an outdoor aviary, ten acres of marsh habitat and a 1/3-mile nature trail. Getting to know the area's real "locals" which make Virginia's waters their home has never been more fun. Animal highlights include sharks, sea turtles, harbor seals, river otters, stingrays and more. Also included in the tour is an IMAX film, title to be determined.

Lunch on your own in the Cafe'.

10:15am board bus, 3:15pm back at hotel

\$23/Person includes bus, escort, and admission. Lunch on your own.

NAVY BASE / NAVAL MUSEUM

Thursday, October 3

Board bus for a tour of Norfolk Naval Base, the world's largest naval facility. Pick up your guide at the Naval Base Visitor Center and continue on a driving tour of Admiral's Row, the Naval Air Station, and the piers. Enjoy lunch at the Officer's Club, featuring lemon-pepper chicken. After lunch, continue back downtown to Nauticus, home of the Hampton Roads Naval Museum. It contains artifacts and exhibits of regional naval history, and is home to the USS Wisconsin, the largest battleship ever built by this country.

Afterwards, return to the hotel or stay at Nauticus to tour the 120,000 square-foot science and technology center exploring the power of the sea (admission to be paid by the individual).

The bus will leave Nauticus at 2:15pm, 2:45pm, and 3:15pm to return to the hotel. Notes: If for any reason the Naval Base is closed to the public (ie: security issues), the tour length will be shortened, but refunds can't be issued. Due to heightened security, participants may be searched and a photo ID is required. Unless you choose to tour Nauticus on your own, this tour does not require an extensive amount of walking.

10:30am board bus, 2:45-3:30pm back at hotel

\$26/Person includes bus, escort, and lunch.

SOUTHERN-STYLE DINNER BUFFET & ENTERTAINMENT

Thursday, October 3

After a cash bar reception, enjoy a group dinner at the hotel featuring baked chicken, fried catfish, and pork BBQ. Entertainment will be provided by the Flatland Cloggers, a lively group of people ranging in age from five to seventy-five! You'll be amazed by their fancy footwork.

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

Cost is included in Package #1.

LUNCH CRUISE / MACARTHUR MEMORIAL

Friday, October 4

Board bus for the Spirit of Norfolk, the premiere cruise boat on Norfolk's waterfront. Enjoy a wonderful buffet while the captain narrates. The harbor lunch cruise with live entertainment features the sights of Hampton Roads harbor and the mighty ships at the Norfolk Naval Operations Base. Due to security restrictions, the Naval Base is no longer offering ship tours. Therefore, this tour is an excellent way to see the Navy's ships. After the cruise, continue on to the MacArthur Memorial, the final resting place of the late General and eleven-gallery museum. Visit the gift shop and see a film summarizing the General's life and achievements. For those who prefer to not tour the

REUNION 2002 HIGHLIGHTS

MacArthur Memorial, buses will return back to the hotel after the cruise.

11:15am board bus, 4:00pm back at hotel

\$34/Person includes bus, escort, and lunch cruise.

RENDEZVOUS DINNERS

Friday, October 4

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

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

Cost is included in both meal packages or \$32 separately.

CITY TOUR

Saturday, October 5

Board bus for a brief driving tour of Norfolk, but first stop at MacArthur Center Mall for lunch and free time. Choose from full-service restaurants to fast food options. Visit Nordstrom, Dillard's, and over 100 other shops. After lunch, begin the driving tour by riding by the Moses Myers House, where one of America's first millionaires lived; the Willoughby-Baylor House, built in 1794 and representative of both Georgian and Federal architecture; and St. Paul's Church, built in 1739 and the lone survivor of the British bombardment and fiery destruction of the city by Lord Dunmore in 1776. A British cannonball is still embedded in the southeastern wall of the church. Other sites to drive by and hear about are the Chrysler Art Museum, Nauticus, the Battleship Wisconsin, and the Chinese Pagoda.

11:30am board bus, 3:30pm back at hotel.

\$15/Person includes bus and guide. Lunch on your own.



VIRGINIA AIR AND SPACE CENTER

Saturday, October 5

Board bus for Virginia Air and Space Center. Exploring the official visitor center of the NASA Langley Research Center, you will learn of NASA's many historic achievements. The Center features more than 100 permanent exhibits, from the F-84 Thunderstreak and the F-106 Delta Dart in the main hall to the Apollo 12 Command Module. Don't miss the east wing, where you'll find the Hampton Roads History Center, featuring 17th century artifacts. This is a self-guided walking tour. See the current IMAX film.

12:45pm board bus, 4:30pm back at hotel

\$21/Person includes bus, escort, and admission.

8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL GALA BANQUET

Saturday, October 5

Assemble in the ballroom for the Posting of the Colors and Memorial Service. Dinner will be a choice of Roast Prime Rib of Beef or Char-grilled Salmon with the usual accompaniments. The Strolling Strings will provide dinner music. This is a group of gifted and talented students from the Norfolk Public Schools.

After dinner, we'll proceed with the awards ceremony and guest speaker.

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

Cost is included in both meal packages or \$38 separately.

Driver and Guide gratuities are not included in the tour prices. Please plan to be at the bus boarding area at least five minutes prior to the published times.

CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY FOR ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC.

For attendees canceling reunion activities prior to the cut-off date, Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. (AFR) shall process a full refund less a \$3 processing fee. Attendees canceling reunion activities after the cut-off date will be refunded to the fullest extent that AFR's vendor commitments and guarantees will allow, less a \$3 processing fee. Cancellations will only be taken Monday through Friday from 9:00am until 5:00pm Eastern Time, excluding holidays. Please call (757) 625-6401 to cancel reunion activities and obtain a cancellation code. Canceling your hotel reservation does not cancel your reunion activities.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY REACTS TO THE PIN-UP GIRL

Response to the March issue of the 8th AF NEWS was much greater than expected. Several dozen calls, letters, and emails came in with opinions about that issue which featured Pin-up art and The Girl Back Home. I received only one negative note and so far no one has "canceled their subscription" to the magazine.

Edmund Myles, Kentucky Chapter President, writes, "The Pin-up Girl issue is bound to be a favorite with many old fly-boys. It reminded me of my return to civilian life. I was proud of having been in the 8th Air Force so I continued wearing my A-2 jacket with the nose art on the back. My mother, being of the Victorian persuasion, insisted that I remove the artwork from the jacket. Being a dutiful son, I did so. How I wish it was still there!"

Jim Lorenz, 466th Bomb Group, comments, "With that cover I'll have no problem in getting new member contacts to take them! One of our lady Vets at Valley Church said she once lived next door to Vargas here in Phoenix. I don't believe she was one of his models." Forrest Clark, Poinciana FL, says, "Great issue on the Vargas girls. Sort of a Sports Illustrated swim suit issue for the Greatest Generation. I think it was a great idea and should have been done long ago. One question, 'How do you go about determining which Varga girl was pictured on a specific aircraft?' When we crash landed our Liberator, I was told we had a Vargas girl artwork on the nose art. How can I pin down which pin-up it was?"

One of the founders of the North Carolina Chapter, George Hood, says in his email: "The 'Playboy Issue' is Great! But it might be tough on some old hearts." Jim Erskine, 487th BG, voiced the same concerns: "A great issue, but what are you trying to do? Knock off all us guys with heart attacks?! From Harold Robinson, 445th BG: "This issue of the 8th AF NEWS is really great and a keepsake for future generations to see. And I thought I was past the keepsake

stage. You even found the polka dot swim suit pin-up of Chili Williams!" Ben Smith, 303rd BG, says the "pin-up girls were plastered over every spare inch of space in the barracks." William Johnson, 306th BG, from California recalls the pin-up in his outfit. He states, regarding the pin-ups, "For the guys it was a pat on the pin-up butt, good luck, and then out to the airplanes for a combat mission."

The singular item of complaint which was received stated in part, "After reading the Pin-up Issue of the 8th AF NEWS I first concluded that our WWII generation has finally hit bottom. Then I re-read the comments of the Chaplain and realize that the Chaplain is theologically clueless." This opinion came from Jim Agnew, 487th Bomb Group. He continues, "The pin-up girl was little more than a vulgar expression of a GI's fantasy. The 8th AF NEWS has diminished its own image by devoting so much emphasis and space to something so trivial and suggesting it be exalted to the level of the genuinely worthwhile events of WWII." Conversely, coming in from 180 degrees, Jim's fellow 487th BG member and B-17 pilot Ken Hoddinott writes, "Sensational! Terrific! Just finished reading it cover to cover. 4.0! E+! Nothing like a VARGA!"

As for me, I have read Chaplain James Good Brown's 800-page volume of his experiences with the 381st Bomb Group – a group that was right in the thick of it. Conway Hall, 381st BG Commander, and author Roger Armstrong introduced me to Chaplain Brown about ten years ago. Chaplain Brown was Base Chaplain for three years and stowed away on bombers for several combat



Barracks wall - Lee Bennett, 96th BG

missions. If the Chaplain's opinions are good enough for himself and his troops, they are certainly good enough for me. Freedom of expression and diversity of opinion are two of the things the 8th fought for during the war. To each his own. I like it.

There have been many other much-appreciated calls and letters. Jim White, 352nd FG, is a pin-up artist and collector; one of his paintings was featured in the pin-up girl cover story. He writes, "Your front cover has nothing to do with bombers, but what bombshells they were! Your choice of pin-ups is superb and the centerfold is awesome - from a design standpoint the centerfold layout has balance, rhythm and flow. It is a pleasure to see an historic review of an age when women and girls were portrayed with decency, not wholly as sex symbols. Whoever complains has rocks in his head!"

Eighth veteran Whitmal Hill, 91st BG, included in his letter a query about perhaps the most famous of the pin-up girls. He asked, "What happened to the Betty Grable pin-up?" Well Whit, I am pleased to say, here it is.

One lasting perspective on the pin-up girl issue was voiced at the recent Mississippi Chapter annual reunion during a humorous presentation by an 8th veteran who entertained Chapter members and guests dressed in drag as "Old Aunt Blabby". Aunt Blabby pulled out the 8th AF NEWS issue and turned to the centerfold which featured pin-up artwork with *The Varga Girl* printed across the center of both pages. She said, "When I opened this newsmagazine and saw the centerfold, I thought it said, *The Viagra Girl!*"

Walter Brown, Editor



Betty Grable



THE FIX

About the time - and after the fourth reading of the near-final proofs - when you think everything is ready for the press, gremlins rear their heads. With thanks to several members who wrote in with corrections to

Production Aerodrome. Milton Genes picked up on a typo on the engine displacement of the B-36 Peacemaker: 4360 cu in instead of 360 cu in., and Ralph Ambrose correctly remembers witnessing the first V-1 attacks on London, which took place during the night of June 12-13, 1944 rather than December 1943 as stated.

I also discovered that in the SSMA article from Flakenhelfer Gerhard Bellosa, Gerhard's first name was incorrectly written as Gerald. Heritage Museum Education Director Debbie Dannell turned out as Debbie Kannell in the photo cutline, and Goxhill Airfield appeared as Goxfield Airfield in the title of the article submitted by Ron Parker.

Finally, apologies to 8th AF General Bobby Efferson whose last name appeared as Epperson.

Perhaps the gremlins will disappear sometime in the Springtime.

Editor

the March 02 issue the following Fixes are submitted for your consideration:

From Becky Beck, station 136 was Knettishall where he was stationed from 7/43 to 8/45. Jack Sergeant correctly identifies his base as Poddington Aerodrome, not

STRATEGIC AIR COMMAND ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REUNION HELD IN SAVANNAH



Strategic Air Command former Commander General Russell Dougherty addresses the Gala Banquet audience

Over three hundred-fifty members of the Strategic Air Command Association held their reunion this May enjoying the sights of a springtime Savannah and attending events at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum. The reunion was a joint effort of the Association, the Heritage Museum Staff and Board of Trustees, and the Birthplace Chapter of the 8th Air Force Historical Society. Daytime tours and golfing were followed by evening socials and

dinners in the rotunda of the museum. The museum was open to all members of the reunion each day and evening.

During the week, special memorial services were held in memory of those who served with SAC in the Cold War and other wars and conflicts since the Command's formation shortly after World War II. Dedication of a B-47 Stratojet bomber painted in SAC and 303rd Bomb Wing colors were held in the museum's Memorial Gardens.

The SAC Association Gala Banquet emceed by reunion Chairman Tommy Harrison featured a keynote speech by former SAC Commander General Russell Dougherty, who spoke on some of the difficulties which faced the men and women of the Strategic Air Command throughout its forty-year history. General Dougherty also related some of his entertaining and notable "war stories" about his personal contacts with SAC members during his career – stories much appreciated and enjoyed by those attending the banquet dinner.



Rotunda crowd at SAC reunion ceremonies



Memorial Services in honor of those who served in the U. S. Air Force Strategic Air Command

B-47 STRATOJET BOMBER DEDICATION SERVICES HELD AT MUSEUM

At ceremonies held during the Sixth Anniversary celebration at the Heritage Museum, the restored B-47 Stratojet bomber was dedicated in honor of those who have served in Air Force Commands since World War II. The bomber, newly painted in Strategic Air Command markings, stands in the Memorial Gardens in a prominent place alongside Interstate 95. The restoration was meticulously completed under the direction of members of the Savannah Birthplace Chapter of the 8th AF Historical Society, Darrel Lowell, Chairman. Funding to complete the painting was supplied by the 303rd Bomb Group Association membership, who contributed \$45,000 towards the project.

The aircraft, perhaps the most beautiful airplane flown by the post-war U.S. Air Force, was the centerpiece for presentation ceremonies held

the morning of May 18th, 2002. After a prayer by Museum Chaplain Martin Loyley and the National Anthem and Pledge of Allegiance, museum President/CEO C. J. Roberts made remarks of welcome and appreciation to those who participated in the acquisition and restoration of the jet bomber. His comments were followed by Darrel Lowell's words of thanks to the many people who worked together as a team to complete the project. Special thanks went out to members of the Savannah Unity Fellowship who were vital to the efforts, as well as to the 165th Airlift Wing; volunteers from Gulfstream Corporation; the museum's next-door neighbor, JCB



The B-47 Stratojet bomber in SAC 303rd Bomb Wing and 303rd Bomb Group markings



Corporation, for use of their heavy equipment; the 303rd Bomb Group Association; and to members of the Heritage Museum staff and of the Birthplace Chapter, 8th AFHS.

Harry Gobrecht, 303rd Bomb Group historian and museum Board member, gave a detailed presentation on the history of the B-47 Stratojet and of its specifications. He included remarks explaining the Might In Flight emblems on the nose of the aircraft, its connection to SAC's 303rd Bomb Wing, and the Triangle C tail markings representing the link of the WW II 8th Air Force Groups to the present 8th Air Force headquartered at Barksdale AFB and now flying missions in Afghanistan.

The ceremonies and ribbon cutting were punctuated by enthusiastic diesel horn blasts from patriotic and knowledgeable 18-wheeler truckers passing by on the adjacent I-95 highway.



Principal speakers Harry Gobrecht, Darrel Lowell, and C. J. Roberts at the B-47 ribbon-cutting ceremonies



303rd BG tail markings denoting the link between WWII units and the modern Mighty Eighth

CHAPEL OF THE FALLEN EAGLES CELEBRATES FIRST CEREMONY Emily Copeland Christening

Three hours after the Dedication ceremony of the Memorial Chapel at the Heritage Museum in Savannah, Georgia, Emily Copeland, daughter of Society PX manager Mark and Monica Copeland was Christened in the main sanctuary before family and several dozen friends.

Father Michael Travaglione, Chaplain at Hunter Army Base, conducted the Christening ceremony. General and Mrs. Lewis Lyle served as stand-in Godparents for the grandparents of young Miss Copeland, who happily made

her presence and approval known throughout the ceremony. Afternoon sunlight streaming through the stained glass windows of the Chapel added to the very special atmosphere present during the event.

After the ceremony, Mark, Monica, and Emily Copeland presented the Lyles a beautifully framed and signed print by noted artist Gil Cohen depicting a wartime Lew Lyle in combat gear, just returning from a mission.



Father Travaglione at the lectern during the Christening ceremony



Betty and Lew Lyle, Mark Copeland with Gil Cohen drawing, and Monica and Emily Copeland

CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

MISSISSIPPI CHAPTER GIVES \$50,000 TO HERITAGE MUSEUM Book Project a Huge Success



Members of the Mississippi Chapter 8th AFHS have spent the past four years on a special project directed toward preserving the history of their individual members and also



the legacy of the Mighty Eighth. They wanted to support the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in a positive manner and they completed their mission.

At the Chapter's recent annual reunion Gala Banquet at Lake Tiak O'khata the Chapter presented a check for \$50,000 to Heritage Museum President/CEO C.J. Roberts to be used at his discretion to further the goals of the museum and preserve the legacy of the 8th Air Force. Members of the museum staff and officers of the Historical Society were present for the presentation ceremonies. The monies donated came from the sales of the unique Chapter anthology *Mississippians in the Mighty Eighth*, a volume of over 85 stories of individuals from Mississippi who served in the war. Compiling, editing, publishing and marketing the beautiful volume was done by members of the Chapter, with the express intent from the beginning to donate all proceeds to the museum.

Editor Ken Nail states that the four-year project served its purpose and also served to bring all the Chapter members together. The popular volume has been through several printings and has been marketed throughout the entire state of Mississippi, as well as to 8th veterans around the world. Ken says that Chapter members hawked the book at airshows, various library functions, book signings at

book stores, civic organization luncheons, family reunions, and numerous super-market openings. It has been sold on the Internet and through Unit and Chapter newsletters. Its widespread acceptance has surprised even those involved in getting the book into print.

The Mississippi Chapter is proud to be able to support the museum in such a significant manner. In addition to the funds from booksales, the Chapter added an additional \$1800 for the museum - funds derived from the annual reunion auction held during the meeting.

The book is still available; a beautiful large format high quality publication. A true one-of-a-kind historical volume. The price is \$45 plus \$4.00 s&h. All proceeds will continue to go the Heritage Museum. Call Ken Nail at 662-844-1553 or email at cotbooks@netbci.com.



C. J. Roberts with excited words of thanks to all of the Mississippi Chapter members for their generous donation to the Heritage Museum



Gala Banquet presentation of the \$50,000 check by Ken Nail to Heritage Museum officers Lew Lyle, C.J. Roberts, and Walt Brown

TAGS

Doctor Brown,
This plate belonged to a civilian friend, William Fortson, Little Rock, AR. When I pointed out to him that I was in the 423 BS, in England, in 1944 he donated the plate to me and got himself another one. Matched up with the 306th Bomb Group plate holder it makes a nice display.

Theodore C. Hood 423 BS, 306 BG Little Rock, AR



MUSEUM SEEKS POST WW II ARTIFACTS

During the SAC Reunion, the Heritage Museum held several presentations of the new Post-World War II exhibit model. This exhibit endeavor is currently being designed by the New York firm Chermayeff & Geismar Inc. The new layout encompasses a 17,000 square foot space that will fit into a new building expansion. The larger space allows for the placement of four original aircraft surrounded by a large ramp system. The areas examine the progression of air power, the major American war efforts from the Cold War through the current Afghanistan conflict, and the 8th Air Force's involvement in these events. The Museum hopes to place an F-84, A-10, and MiG-17 alongside the F-4 currently in the collection.

The reaction of the SAC attendees was extremely positive toward the proposal. Many people asked how they could help in this endeavor. Now is the time to collect the materials that will enhance the exhibit. We need items from the post-World War II era, such as flight gear, journals

and logs, and original photos. We must rely on our veterans to supply us with these materials. If you are interested in donating items for the permanent collection, please contact Wade Scrogam, Curator of Collections. And of course, we all know that funding is necessary for these projects, so if you would like to donate toward the new exhibit, please contact Judy Walker, Director of Development. I hope that you can all aid us in furthering our mission of exhibiting the post WW II 8th Air Force.



Shasta Ireland
Curator of Exhibits

THE TANNOY



Arlington National Cemetery is expanding by 60 acres to make room for the honored dead until the year 2060. This will add 35 years to the current projected life of the cemetery.

In Tokyo, a new museum is open dedicated to the 10 March 1945 firestorm which resulted from B-29 bomber attacks on the Japanese enemy and which killed over 100,000 Japanese. Katsumoto Saotome, museum curator, lived through the bombings, and has been planning the museum for the past two years.

The War Damage Archive Center houses hundreds of photographs, artifacts, and personal effects contributed by the survivors. Saotome says, "I think the United States should be held responsible for the raid, which was an indiscriminate attack on civilians."

A couple of good websites courtesy of the Minnesota Chapter, which has weekly luncheon meetings inviting members and guest speakers from all branches of military and civilian services:

www.geocities.com/mighty8thmn
www.8thMN.org

• In the first six months of operations in Afghanistan, there were nearly 4,800 airlift missions, totaling nearly 100,000 flight hours. These missions moved more than 64,000 passengers and more than 125,000 tons of cargo from the U.S. to the Afghan theater of operations.

• USAF B-2s, B-1s, B-52s, F-16s, F-15Es, and AC-130Us have flown more than 48 percent of the combat missions in Afghanistan, dropping more than 9,000 tons of munitions.

The PX information center section is not included in this issue of the 8th AF NEWS. The PX operation is being inventoried and restructured by PX Manager Mark Copeland and the Historical Society Board of Directors. Full info will be printed in the Sept 02 edition of the NEWS.

If you brush your upper teeth in the morning and your lower teeth at night, you can cut your toothpaste bill in half.

Clyde White, 390th BG



**MIGHTY EIGHTH
AIR FORCE WEEK
October 8th to 14th, 2002**

We are approaching the fifth year of our attempt and desire to make this week truly a time for bringing National recognition to the Mighty Eighth. We are grateful to the many individual members, Units, and Chapters, who have participated to bring us the level of success that has been achieved. Many of these participants have been the backbone of our support for all the past four years, now we must put additional effort on all our members to assist in this worthy endeavor.

To date I do not have an accurate update on the number of Governor proclamations we have received. When we get a list of those States that have issued Proclamations we can focus on those that haven't participated and hopefully effect a 100% participation. I see the day when Proclamations from all Fifty States will be displayed for all visitors to see.

Equally as important as the Governors proclamation are the news releases to Newspapers, T.V. and Radio Stations and not to limit them to just the major news sources. We have had fine results with the small communities where the small newspapers are always searching for newsworthy items. This is where the individual experiences and stories are published with pictures of local 8th Air Force Historical Society members. Included in their story is our search for 8th Air Force veterans and others that may have an interest in becoming an associate member. We also include in the news release our availability to speak to Civic groups, Service Clubs, [Rotary, Elks, Eagles, etc.] and most importantly the Schools. Our stories will be about our experiences during WWII but remember, the Mighty Eighth is still flying today in Afghanistan. Our 8th Air Force is still in the forefront of the defense of America and all who served at any time in the 8th are welcome to our organization.

Norm Grant, Chairman

Proclamations are available by calling the Society's office at 912-748-8888 or by writing to the office (address is on the inside front cover). A copy will be in the mail to you.

Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper.
Robert Frost

**Join the 8th Air Force Historical Society!
Enjoy Chapter activities; reunite with old buddies; meet new friends;
receive the quarterly 8th AF NEWS. Be part of the 8th AF heritage!**



JOIN THE 8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY!

Name _____

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

Address _____

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

Telephone _____ **Email** _____

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

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

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

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

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

SIGNATURE: _____

**SEND APPLICATION AND PAYMENT TO 8TH AFHS P.O. BOX 1787, SAVANNAH, GA 31402
TEL: 912-748-8884**

**\$20 MEMBERS DUES NOTICES ARE MAILED ANNUALLY
- Form May be reproduced -
Tel. 912-748-8884**

GABBY

from Roger Freeman
Eighth Air Force Historian

One day near the end of April 1944 my best friend, another aero-plane mad fifteen year-old, excitedly informed me that the Thunderbolt marked HV*A on the nearby airfield that was our haunt had no less than 18 Nazi flag symbols painted on the left side of the fuselage. When the red nosed Thunderbolts had replaced the Mustangs on Boxted airfield earlier in the month I had 'adopted' this particular fighter as I thought that A being the first letter of the alphabet this P-47 must belong to somebody important. We boys each had our favorite planes whose fortunes we followed from the public road that ran close to the parking hardstands of this particular unit -- which we junior spies soon identified as the 61st Fighter Squadron through the simple means of reading the markings on the jeep and truck bumpers. My bit of guesswork, via the newspaper mention of leading American ace, must have been that of Bob Johnson. But who flew HV*A? The mystery was not solved for some weeks when via another village boy, who had a friend who had a friend who had a sister who was friendly with a GI mechanic, the word was the usual pilot was called Gabby.

Couldn't find anything in the newspaper about an ace called Gabby. Strange. But he was obviously of some importance because his camouflage painted high-back P-47D was soon replaced with a 'silver' high-back P-47D and then, just before D-Day by one of the new 'bubble' cockpit canopy P-47s, the first we kids had seen. Meanwhile my friend's HV*P has disappeared and we learned from the newspapers that Bob Johnson had returned to the States. As for HV*A the lines of victory symbols grew longer and there was no doubt that my adopted Thunderbolt was ahead of the field. And on one occasion I saw a lean pilot get into the cockpit. Was he the ace called Gabby?



Then one day my friend, who was far more diligent in his investigation of national newspapers, smugly informed me that the top American fighter ace in Europe, Lt. Colonel Francis Gabreski was missing in action, believed a prisoner. "He's Gabby."

I hopped on my cycle at the first opportunity and pedaled to the gap in the roadside hedge where HV*A could be seen. It was gone. A sad day; but I must confess that it was more for the loss of that immaculate fighter than its pilot. Shameful of me.

Many years later I was to meet and get to know Gabby. His hallmark was determination; it was easy to see why he had been such a successful fighter pilot. The determination also extended to his getting his views over. If Gabby had a fault it was loquaciousness; he tended to live up to his nickname but the flow was never, ever boring. I recall my concern when Gabby was a panelist at a Historical Society/Foundation symposium and his flow looked as if it would deny the others on the podium a chance to air their views. But how

could this English farmer acting as moderator check America's greatest living air ace? No way.

Francis Gabreski (he appreciated being addressed by his Christian name) was a very devout Catholic indeed and attended Mass regularly. The father of a large family it was very obvious he was devoted to his wife Kay, and I don't think he ever really recovered from the tragedy when she was killed in a car accident a few years ago.

His place in history is assured and it was an honor to have known him.

Roger A. Freeman
Mays Barn England



436TH FIGHTER SQUADRON - 479TH FIGHTER GROUP

13-17 October, 2002
The Gold Coast Hotel, Las Vegas, NV. call (888) 402-6278. For information contact Stanley Steele, 2412 E. Oakley Blvd, Las Vegas, NV 89104. Phone (702) 457-1241.

447TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

July 4-8, 2002, Washington, D.C. Hyatt Regency Hotel, Crystal City, VA. CONTACT: Tamarac Travel, 10837 Piping Rock Circle, Orlando, FL. 32817. Tel. 888-486-9922

1ST STRATEGIC AIR DEPOT ASSOCIATION

(Honington Troston, England) in New Orleans, Louisiana September 26-29, 2002.
Contact: Warren L. Stanley 390 N. Winchester 5-10-G Santa Clara, California 95050
wstanley@neteze.com

361ST FIGHTER GROUP ASSOCIATION

Williamsburg Hospitality House, Williamsburg, VA. October 13 to 17, 2002. Contact: David C. Landin, 8419 Michael Rd., Richmond, VA. 23229 or call (804)288-5889.

390TH BOMB GROUP (H) VETERANS ASSOCIATION

The 390th Bomb Group (H) Veterans Association, WWII, 8th Air Force (Station 153, Framlingham, England) will hold its annual Reunion in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Tuesday, September 24 through Sunday September 29, 2002.
Contact: Ken Rowland, P.O. Box 28363, Spokane, WA 99228-8363. Telephone 509-467-2565, Fax 509-467-2565 or eMail rowlandr@mindspring.com

78TH FIGHTER GROUP REUNION

The 2002 Reunion will be held September 26-29 at the Sands Ocean Club Resort in Myrtle Beach. The cost for double occupancy will be \$175 + tax per person. Cost for a single occupancy will be \$249 + tax. This includes breakfast and the banquet on Saturday night.

94TH BOMB GROUP (H) ASSOCIATION

October 10-14, 2002 at the Marriott Hotel in Omaha, NE. Contact: Mort Robinson 1333 W. Steele Lane #443, Santa Rosa, CA 95403. Tel. 707-578-8663.

44TH BOMB GROUP VETERANS ASSOCIATION

October 7-11, 2002 Omaha, NE, Holiday Inn Central. Contact: Roy W. Owen, 6304 Meadowridge Dr., Santa Rosa, CA 95409; Ph. 707-538-1212
email>Rowen44bg@aol.com

308TH FIGHTER SQUADRON, 31ST FIGHTER GROUP

The reunion will be held 26, 27, 28 Sept. 2002 at the Holiday Inn, Moline, Ill. For complete details including reservations, activities, etc. contact Roger H. Robinson, 2327 High St. Davenport, Iowa 52804. Phone: 563-324-6546. Post-WWII members are welcome also.

25TH BOMB GROUP REUNION

October 6-10, 2002 Norfolk, VA. Contact Keith Clinton, 236 Forest Hills Ave. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546-2314 (616)949-0245.

305TH BOMB GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

October 1-6, 2002 Memphis, TN, Adams Mark Hotel. Contact: John Butler, 858 Donna Dr., Orange, CT 06477. Tel: (203) 795-3020.

388TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

Boise, ID. Sept. 4-7, 2002. It will be our 60th birthday. Contact: Bit Snead Federal Way, WA. 253-838-9291.

339TH FIGHTER GROUP 8TH AF

October 9-13, 2002 Charleston, S.C. Contact: Larry Powell, 17270 Devonshire Rd., Northridge, CA 91325. Phone: 818-363-3950.

27TH AIR TRANSPORT GROUP

September 12-14, 2002 Kansas City, MO. Contact: Donald Diehm, 246 Laurelwood Ln., Horseshoe, N.C. 28742. Tel: 828-891-5422.

**HAPPY
FOURTH
OF JULY!**



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Schulz



ANNUAL REUNION 2002

Dear Walt,
 On behalf of the North Texas Chapter, I want to thank the Board and the members for selecting Irving, Texas for the 2001 Reunion. Knowing that so many of the Air Force - both flying and ground crews - had trained in Texas, we were anxious for them to come back and see how the cities and villages of North Central Texas have grown into the great Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex of which we are so very proud!

A few weeks prior to the Reunion, several of our members were privileged to meet with the national Board of Directors as they conducted their routine business and previewed the reunion events. We were really impressed with the dedication and professionalism each board member demonstrated in stating the status of the Society's business for which he had responsibility. The members are fortunate to have such a group working to preserve and advance the principles of the organization.

The Reunion programs obviously were well received by those attending: Lew Lyle's Hangar Flying, Doc Brown's "tongue in cheek advice for healthy living, and Roger Freeman's slides and description of "Round the Clock Bombing". And then the Memorial Banquet which not only gave respect for service and losses by each Eighth Air Force Unit, but honored the excellence of outstanding airmen presently on active duty; and the address by General Efferson; plus the 40's music all made a fitting finale for a great week. Bravo! Well Done!

As President of the North Texas Chapter, I had a special experience in meeting the then national President of the Society, Dick Baynes. I recognized that we both had grown up on the same street in a small town, Mansfield, in the hills of northern Pennsylvania. Being a few years different in age, we were not close friends as kids, but our families were friends and our parents were loyal members of the Odd Fellows and Rebekah lodges. It was great to

reminisce about the "Old Home Town" and to learn that we both had fought with the Mighty Eighth - he in a B-24 and I in a B-17, each had returned to complete his education and earn a degree as Civil Engineer, married, and lived the American dream. What a great country we live in!

By the way, just three weeks after the 9/11 attacks, the 381st BG held its annual reunion at Hampton, Virginia, across the river from Norfolk. We had an attendance of almost 250 members -- not bad considering the uncertainty in air travel. The Naval Base and Langley Field were not available for visitors due to the high state of alert, but we had a wonderful time at the many other places of interest. I can assure everyone that Norfolk is a great location for a reunion. The beauty and historical significance of this part of our country is unique, and should not be missed. Thanks again for coming to the Lone Star State! "Ya'll come back!"

Dick Shaw, President
 North Texas Chapter, 8th AFHS
 381st BG - Dallas TX

Dick's endorsement of Norfolk for our October 2002 annual reunion is right on target. Take his advice - plan to be in Norfolk with the 8th AF Historical Society. - Editor

LUCKY STRIKE

Dear Walter:
 Each issue of News is better than the previous one. Your feature article on Pin-Ups was smashing, as they say in East Anglia.

A buddy, Stan Greer, 389th BG had a Pin-Up over his cot in the Nissen Hut with Lucky Strike cigarette advertising words, "So round, so firm - so fully packed."

Have a short story for you. An observant wife noticed her husband was staring at a pretty girl walking by. The wife said, "What are you doing, trying to guess her weight?"

Cheers,
 Ken Jones, 389th BG
 Janesville, WI

DOODLEBUGS

Dear Walter:
 That was a great 8th AF News you put out this time. I notice that there are lots of various pieces on experiences. The article on Doodlebugs, took me right back to one night in Debach, when I was on C.Q. I heard the sound of the engine on buzzbomb. It seemed to rev up and die down. I debated with myself about whether to get the others up or not. I reasoned, "If I woke them up, and it did not come down, they would be mad. However, if I did not wake them up and it came down, they would be mad too." In this short time of indecision, the engine revved up and passed over. Talk about one happy person. I shall never forget that night.

Sincerely,
 Clarence Burnett, 493rd BG
 Hanna City, IL

2ND SAD

Dear Walter,
 Reference; Second Strategic Air Depot Page 22, 8th AIR FORCE NEWS, March 2002

The pictures in the article by Mrs. Murl Harris are not indentified correctly. I am sorry that I have to disagree with her but I was stationed at Little Staughton and at Abbots Ripton. Little Staughton was near Bedford and Abbots Ripton should read Little Staughton. The mud on the wheels of the trucks tells me the pictures were taken at the MUD HOLE - Little Staughton.

I was stationed at Little Staughton the last two weeks of 1943 and at Abbots Ripton from Jan 02, 1944 to Aug 02, 1945. When I arrived at Abbots Ripton the Corps of Engineers were just finishing the base. Abbots Ripton was adjacent to Alconbury. Planes for repair or modification were flown to Alconbury and taxied to Abbots Ripton. Alconbury was a active bomber base. Today Abbots Ripton is part of the Alconbury base with Headquarters





where 2nd SAD Hq. was. The base was up for sale but I was recently informed that the Air Force had reoccupied the base and would not allow anyone in to view the 2nd SAD MEMORIAL placed there in 1995 and dedicated in 1996. Finally, the 2nd SAD moved to Abbots Ripton during the month of February, 1944 and was fully operational March 1, 1944. Yours in comradeship, Ralph Ballinger, Unit Contact 2nd SAD Appleton, WI

RED BARN

Dear Mr. Brown: Enjoyed your March issue very much. I'm writing this to tell you about one of our crew's missions. We were in the 351st BG, 508th Squadron. Flak knocked out one of our engines, and we had to drop out of the formation as we couldn't maintain enough speed to keep up. I was the navigator. As we were returning to England, the tail gunner, Ed Ryan, came on the intercom, and said, "Tail gunner to navigator." "Go ahead, tail gunner." "Sir, can you tell us where we are?" I knew there was a feeling of tension on the part of our crew members so I said, "Tail gunner, do you see that red barn down there to the right of us?" "Yes, Sir, I see it." "We're just to the left of it," I told him. Other crew members chuckled, and we have laughed as we recall that story at our crew reunions. William B. (Bo) Byers, 351st BG Austin, TX

INSPIRATION

Dear Walt, You certainly have the troops' attention with the March 2002 issue! These beautiful "pin-up girls" did indeed inspire the troops as to what we were fighting for. Our enemies under-estimated our courage and resolve. We would fight to the death

to protect our women and our country. God bless America and our own "pin-up girls" that some of us were fortunate to come home to. While working for Polaroid Corp. after the war, I attended Vesper George Art School three nights a week for 2 1/2 years. I have always had an appreciation for beautiful works of art like the "Varga Girls" and the B-17 (oops! the B-24 was beautiful also--- - a great bomber). I was pleased to see that you were able to use my illustration of the "Doodlebug" for your very informative article, "Doodlebugs". I will continue to send pictures as soon as a new idea comes to me. Sincerely, Frank McKinley Stoneham, MA

DEAR JOHN GALLERY

Dear Dr. Brown: Congratulations on your outstanding March Edition, 8th AF NEWS. Those pin-ups and stories were great, and brought back old memories of our barracks displays that were on lockers doors and barrack walls. As a ground crew member of the 91st Bomb Group, we were at Basingbourn 1942 to the bloody end. A long time from home, and the girl of our dreams. During this long period of absence many of the girls we left behind met other men folk, and were straight enough to write and send one of the famous "Dear John" letters. Well, in one of the barracks rooms where were about 12 to 16 men with double bunked beds, they dedicated one corner wall locker top as the "Dear John Gallery." On this locker top was placed the photographs of the girls who sent a "Dear John Letter," all facing the wall. That particular locker top was never dusted, even though on inspections the inspecting officers would complain of the dust, they never gave an order to clean it up. But for the men and women, it worked both ways as many GI's married British girls. When the American girls asked what did the British girls have the American girls

didn't have, the reply was "Nothing, but it was over here." (England). Sincerely, Whitmal W. Hill 323B & 441 Sub Depot 91st Bomb Group Alexandria, VA

LADY MOE

Dear Dr. Brown: I was surprised to read in the March 2002 issue of the 8th AF News that Lady Moe was in the 100th Bomb Group (article in Taps about Owen D. "Cowboy" Roane). As a member of the 96th Bomb at Snetterton Heath, I have many memories of Lady Moe. She often came to our hut to get out of the rain and would beg cigarettes, which she loved to eat. I don't think there were two Lady Moes in the 8th Air Force. She died at Snetterton Heath when she wandered on to the railroad tracks and was struck by a train. Please unravel this mystery of two Lady Moes. Very truly yours, Sam H. Stone, M.D., 96th BG Woodland Hills, CA
Sam, we checked with Red Harper, 100th BG, who has first hand knowledge of the Lady Moe arrival to England. Red says that he understood that several donkeys may have been stowaways on B-17s returning from the North African mission. The 96th BG photo albums document the Lady Moe you recall. - Editor

PIN-UP CONFRONTATION

Dear Walt, You may remember me from my article in "Tennessee Flyover" about my friend, Orville Wright. Yesterday I received 8AF News with the sexy Pin-up Girls. At AAF Station Mount Farm on this particular day our Squadron was selected for a stand-by inspection by Wing Commander Elliott Roosevelt. Usually when he was seen on base he was accompanied by Colonel Gwyn, who always preceded him. This earned him the nickname, "Mother Gwyn". My bunk was in the center of the hut right by the familiar potbellied stove.



Directly across on the opposite side of the room was my friend, Bob Roddy, whose pin-up collection equaled or exceeded any other in the ETO. While awaiting Roosevelt's arrival, I commented to Roddy that if Mother Gwyn bent down to look at his pin-ups I would just about die laughing.

Looking out the front door someone called out, "Here comes Mother Gwyn". He was followed by Elliott. We snapped to attention when Gwyn entered and came down my side of the room inspecting each of us and past me to the end of the room and back down to Roddy's bunk just as I was standing tall and looking directly into the face of General Roosevelt. At this moment Mother Gwyn bent down to get a better look at Roddy's pin-ups and Roddy thought about what I had just said and went "eek". When I heard it I could not control myself and burst out laughing in Roosevelt's face. "Oh, boy, I've had it!" Elliott turned to my CO and said, "Name, rank, and serial number of the two EM's and see that appropriate disciplinary action is taken. Forward copy of same to Wing Hdqs. and 8th AF Hdqs."

They left and my CO asked "What was going on there?" I told him and he thought it was funny too. He complied with orders and a copy was placed in my 201 file which read "Appropriate disciplinary action taken".

My pass for that evening was cancelled. This is another story. Elliott was told that a member of the 7 PG lived in my town when he visited. He found me and invited my wife and me to an afternoon tea and a gala cocktail party in the evening. I told him that I listened to the telephone conversation when Eleanor told him of his father's death for fear of cutting him off at the switchboard, which I was unfamiliar with. I could not afford another confrontation! I asked him if he remembered when a GI laughed in his face at an inspection and that I was the GI. He said he did and that I was the only GI that ever laughed in his face and got away with it. His

wife cracked up at hearing the story. We were invited to their home to visit, as he put it, "my, her, and our children."

Yours truly,
J.L. "Kindy" Kindervater
55th Squadron, 7th PG
Chattanooga, TN

PATCH

Dear Walter,
I am a Post WWII Era Life Member of the 8th AF Historical Society & WWII 8th AF Historian and have been at it now for close to 40 years. Got my 1st wars end 8th AF unit history of the 447th in 1964 just to give you some idea of how far I go back to being a NUT on the 8th AF. I recently found an unknown patch from a friend of mine from out of state who found this in a bunch of WWII era shoulder patches. I as well as he are both interested in finding out it possible what the patch is? I think it may just be from one of many WWII



Aviation Cadet Schools & with the letters BAC it could have even been for one of the schools that trained British aviation cadets? Any help you could give me on this will be most appreciated. I really enjoy every issue of the 8th AF News very much. KEEP EM' COMING. All the Best, Jim Young 221 Ramsey Ave. Bridgeville, PA 15017-1968

PIZZA

Dear Doctor Brown,
The mention of Pope AFB in Bulletin Board of the March 2002 issue of 8th AF News reminds me of a story. During service with the Royal Air Force, I was often flown to and from Belize, the UK and Europe along America's east coast. Once, we landed at Pope AFB, overnight stop. As a student of the Civil War, Pope seemed to me an unlikely name for a base in North Carolina. However, that is where we were told we were, and the navigator seemed a competent sort, so we took his word for it. Being hungry, we soon found ourselves standing in line at the pizza counter, where I noticed my boss, a Captain, or Flight Lieutenant, as we called them, a few people ahead of me. He asked for a pizza and was briskly asked to specify, large, medium, or small. Now in the Royal Air Force, hash slingers tend to treat officers with great deference, and my boss was clearly taken aback by the abrupt and businesslike approach of the American version. "Large", he said. In seconds he was in possession of a culinary masterpiece two inches thick and the size of a cartwheel. In dismay, he opened his mouth, but too late, other customers were already being attended to. Eventually, four other people including myself dined very well off that wonderful pizza. It only goes to show that the meaning of large is entirely different in the US and the UK. Yet more proof that we are two peoples divided by a common language.

Sincerely,
Owen Flint - Assoc
Chippenham, Wiltshire
England

THE MARCH ISSUE

Dear Walter:
I have received the March 2002 issue of the 8th AF NEWS - the pin-up girl issue. You have always put out an excellent magazine each quarter, but the March issue absolutely has to be the best one you have ever produced! There was something for everyone -



the 60th Birthday Anniversary of the 8th Air Force, the story on the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library, the tribute to Col. "Gabby" Gabreski, the story of the German "Doodlebugs", and your own special story treatment of "The Girl Back



Home" together with these unforgettable pin-up photos and drawings, to name just a few of the many outstanding features in this extra-special edition!

Thanks for bringing back a lot of memories (mostly pleasant) to a lot of us old ex-throttle jockies.

Sincerely,
Norm Kratschmer, 390th BG
Knoxville, TN

Norm, you have hit the purpose and policies of the 8th AF NEWS right on target! Thanks for the encouraging words. -Editor

**GABBY
RE: A TRIBUTE TO COL.
FRANCIS S. "GABBY"
GABRESKI**

Dear Sirs:

We were shot down over Hamburg, Germany in November, 1944. After a short stay at an interrogation station, I was shipped to Stalag Luft #1 in Barth, Germany and was assigned to a barrack in the newer section of camp for approximately one month. It was then that I had the pleasure of knowing Col. Francis S. "Gabby" Gabreski who was our commanding officer. The situation was fairly stable and things were going all right until some weeks later.

Although we were Prisoners of War, we were better know in camp as "kriegies. Several of us were told to fall out in front of our barracks where Col. Gabreski, with a heavy heart, proceeded to inform is that we were to be shipped out. He strongly protested to the German officers saying they had no right to separate us and were in violation of the Geneva

convention. Looking around at our group, about 10 or 12 of us, we saw that we were all of the Jewish faith. We were told to get all our belongings and place them in one of those two-wheeled carts that the Germans used.

Much to our dismay we knew there was an extermination camp in the city not far away from our camp. Many hours later we were marched to the old part of the camp, which was a very large separated complex and assigned to a building. After a while we realized that all the prisoners of war housed there were Jewish service men, some of who were very distinguished personal, including some great fighter pilots. We were later liberated by Russian troops in May of 1945.

I read of Col. Gabreski's passing in the March 2002 issue of the 8th AF NEWS and it brought back memories of a wonderful man who always went to bat for his men. He was a fine gentleman and it was my honor to have known him.

Sincerely,
Harold Scheer
Pompano Beach, FL

THE BUZZ

Dear Dr. Brown:

My wife has an electric typewriter but I don't even know how to turn it on let alone type on it so you'll just have to put up with my rather sloppy lettering. I flew my tour with the 351st B.S., 100th BG, as navigator/mickey operator of that famous (infamous?) B-17 known as "Hang The Expense" from Oct., '43 to July, '44.

The picture of Gabby Gabreski on page 50 of the March 2002 issue of the 8th AF News brought back memories.

It was late 1943, the copilot, John Booth, and I were out to our a/c for some reason when a P-47 buzzed the field. He came right down the E-W perimeter strip in front of our a/c. John and I walked out to the strip and when we saw the P-47 turning around to make another pass we got down on our hands and knees and pounded the concrete in the old Air Corps sign to "come on down". He did. He laid us both flat on our bellies!

I don't know if it was Gabreski but it was a razor back P-47 and it had 56th FG markings. Who knows??

All the best,
John Johnson, 100th BG
Salado, TX

EAGER BEAVER





EAGER BEAVER

Dear Walter:

During my most recent visit to the 8th AF Heritage Museum I was pleased to see the "Eager Beaver" nose art prominently displayed. I can't recall the number of that ship but the enclosed photo may be the only one of her, along with Capt. John E. Bennet and his crew who were together from Wendover thru V.E. Day.

Front row: Greisinger, Sacket, Bennet, Gurr, Gray. Back row: Love, Yansowski, Griffith, Green, Ainsley, Aiken, Gosnell, Blair, Sampson, Sullivan.

The twin 50 cal. machine guns mounted in the nose of this ship were designed and mounted by Sgt. Sacket.

Many thanks for your splendid work on the "NEWS".

Regards,
Bill Griffith
Beallsville, N.J.

G.I. JOE

Dear Walter,

It was so nice that you printed the story about Hasbro Toy and my crew and airplane! Thank you for that! I have already received several phone calls about it.

You have put excitement back into our newsletters and it is such a pleasure to read it and look forward to receiving it!

I will look forward to meeting you and

at that time, I will personally thank you for printing the story about my jacket. Thank you, again.

Sincerely,
Marvin Lubinsky, 447th BG

Marvin's G.I. Joe action figure dressed in it's 8th AF A-2 jacket with 447th BG markings is available at Toys R Us and other toy stores. - Editor

CRASH SITES

Dear Mr. Brown,

I am searching informations about two aircrafts of 305 BG. Perhaps readers or members of 8th AFHS could help me.

I was in touch since 1994 with Henry M. Burman former pilot of B-17 from 305 BG who was shot down february 16th, 1943 in Molac south Brittany/France. In 1993, I succeeded in meeting again Henry and I informed him of the exact place of his crash site. He decided to come in France in Molac in September 1994 and we organized with the Mayor of Molac, Mr. Le Barbier a great ceremony where he unveiled a plate in memory of the crew members of two aircrafts which were shot down the same day at few kilometers apart. The first one, the B-17 *Hun Hunter* was his aircraft; the second one, *Boomerang* was piloted by Charles J. Steenbarger.

I would be glad to be contacted by any persons who know his crew

members or the aircraft. The same is somebody has details on *Boomerang* or his crew.

Thank you in giving me news.

Yours sincerely,
Frank Bernard

La Ville Cue
56800 Augan

France

bernard-morbinhan@wanadoo.fr

MECHANIC'S LAMENT

As we rev our raunchy engines
Push our guts out on the prop,
Lug around the heavy putt-putts
Set the supercharger stops.
Clean the rusty heating system,
Get the ship up in the air
Watch it circle round the apron
Land its troubles in our hair.

As we work beside our crew-chief
(Another couldn't keep us there),
As we track exclusive headaches
And correct them in their lair.
As we moan our lot and like it
In cold or stifling air;
As we go to nearby cities
For a bender or a tare.

Of the thought begins to strike us
The women seem to like us,
And that as we, swearing, stutter,
Ev'ry word we seem to utter
Makes us feel, although we mutter,
That we're glad we're "Over There."

Anonymous

DON'T MISS ANOTHER ISSUE OF THE 8TH AF NEWS!

If you have not given the Membership Office your **second** address information, do it now!
Let us mail your *8th AF News* to the correct summer or winter home and never miss another issue!

Please complete the information below and mail it to:

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CLASS OF 2002 NATIONAL AVIATION HALL OF FAME ENSHRINES FOUR

The National Aviation Hall of Fame's 41st Annual Enshrinement Ceremony will take place in Dayton, OH, on Saturday, July 20, 2002, when four more outstanding pioneers of aviation will take their place of honor among the 174 men and women previously enshrined. Often referred to as the "Oscar Night of Aviation," the black tie gala is held in the Dayton Convention Center and draws hundreds of aerospace, military, government and industry leaders, as well as NAHF members and previous enshrinees.

This year's inductees are: Philadelphia native Frank Piasecki, founder and head of the PV-Engineering; Dick Rutan of Loma Linda, California; James Stockdale of Galesburg, Illinois; and Hubert "Hub" Zemke, 56th Fighter Group, 8th Air Force. Tactician and World War II ace Hub Zemke was a professional fighter pilot before the United States entered the war. A preeminent fighter commander in the European Theater, Zemke's 56th Fighter Group, nicknamed the "Wolfpack," was credited with 665 air-to-air victories, leading all fighter groups in the European theater. In 154 combat missions, the Missoula, Montana native had over 19 confirmed victories, making him one of the top 25 World War II aces. On his last mission, and just prior to his assignment to a desk job, Zemke was forced to bail out of his damaged aircraft and was captured by the Germans. As senior commanding officer of the Allied prisoners, Zemke developed a working relationship with the prisoners' living conditions and saved many lives. Zemke died in August 1994 at Oroville, Calif.

Advance reservations for the NAHF President's Reception and Dinner, July 19, or the formal dinner and enshrinement ceremony, July 20, may be made by calling the NAHF at (937)256-0944 ext. 10. Tickets are \$100 per person for each event.

Ron Kaplan, Director

WEBSITES OF INTEREST

POST PERSONNEL (Active, Veteran, Deceased, Family Members)

<http://members.aol.com/veterans/registry/htm>

OBTAIN MILITARY RECORDS

<http://members.aol.com/forvets/htomr.htm>

INFO ON MILITARY RECORDS FILES

send an email request to
militaryregistry@pacbell.net

OBTAIN REPLACEMENT MEDALS

<http://members.aol.com/forbets/htom.htm>

MILITARY AND VETERAN RELATED WEBSITES

<http://members.aol.com/veterans/warlib6.htm>

NATIONAL CEMETERIES

From the 351st BG's *Polebrook Post* are some points on veteran burial in our National Cemeteries. Honorably discharged vets and immediate families may be eligible. Gravesites cannot be reserved. The Veterans Administration will provide, upon approval, a gravesite, headstone or marker, Presidential certificate, U.S. flag, perpetual care, and open and close the gravesite at no cost. A copy of the discharge document is required – copies may be obtained from the National Personnel Records Center, Military Records Office, 9700 Page Blvd, St. Louis MO 63132-5100, if you do not have one. Burial Military Honors are not provided but may be arranged by the family through the Department of Defense. The cemetery can provide these contacts. Funeral services are not held at the cemeteries, but immediate family may be at the burial. Each cemetery has its local regulations regarding flowers and tributes at the gravesite throughout the year. The VA will pay a burial and plot allowance for eligible veterans.

For complete details and arrangements call the nearest Veterans office at 1-800-827-1000.

GLENN MILLER MUSEUM A REALITY

Connie Richards, the Historical Society's contact person in the U. K., has been a life-long fan of USAAC bandleader Glenn Miller. For several decades she and her husband Gordon have been keeping in touch with those who knew Glenn Miller personally and have been collecting Miller memorabilia with hopes of establishing a museum in his honor.

Miller was stationed in England near the RAF Twinwood airfield and had his recording studio near Bedford. He left Twinwood airfield heading for the continent in December 1944. It was his last flight and he was never seen again. The original control tower has now been refurbished and will house Connie's memorabilia collection, serving as a Museum in his honor. Opening festivities set for June 2nd, 2002 will feature Miller's wartime singer Beryl Davis and several members of his original band. The Glenn Miller Orchestra will present a concert of wartime music for the grand opening.

VETERANS OF THE 8TH

From Harold Myers, Civ 8 AF/HO, comes the answer to the question: "How many people have ever served in the 8th Air Force?"

Adding the NAF total strength from 1942 to 2000 provides a total of **2,788,594** people, or 46,477 people a year for 60 years. But that total includes the following facts: 1942 to 1945, 350,000 people assigned, with a peak strength of about 250,000. 1946 to 1969, 1,231,607 people assigned, or 51,317 average a year (includes low of 15,142 in 1946 to high of 82,881 in 1963). 1970 to 1974, 32,376 people were assigned, or 8,094 average a year (PCS figure only on Guam) 1975 to 1994, 999,788 people assigned, or 49,989 average a year. 1995 to 2000, 174,823 people assigned, or 29,137 average a year.

EAA B-17 Aluminum Overcast Appearance Schedule The Freedom Tour

June 03-06Bowling Green - Warren, Bowling Green, KY
 June 06-10Gatlinburg - Pigeon Forge, Knoxville, TN
 June 10-13Asheville Regional, Asheville, NC
 June 13-17Hickory Regional, Hickory, NC
 June 17-20Winston Salem - Smith Reynolds, Winston Salem, NC
 June 20-24Suffolk Municipal, Virginia Beach, VA
 June 24-27Richmond International, Richmond, VA
 June 27-July 01. Manassas Regional Davis, Winchester, VA
 July 01-05Pittsburgh - Allegheny Co., Pittsburgh, PA
 July 05-08Fulton International, Akron, OH
 July 08-11Ohio State University, Columbus, OH (OSU Airport)
 July 11-15Toledo Metcalf Field, Toledo, OH

All flight dates and locations are subject to change due to weather and other factors, EAA makes every attempt to fulfill all requests and mission flights.

MEDICATIONS AVAILABLE FOR VETS

From Hal Hagerty, Albany OR, comes a notice outlining the current program for veterans to obtain their prescription medications; level of income is not a factor. The *Veterans' Health Benefits Eligibility Reform Act of 1997* allows any veteran to have their prescriptions filled for a 30 or 90

day supply at a nearby VA facility. There is a \$17 co-pay presently in effect.

The Veterans Administration will assign you a contact doctor who will work with your personal physician to supply you medications. This system also applies to lab tests you may need, the results of which can be faxed back to your private doctor.

The sign-up form is called 10-10EZ and a telephone number for information is toll-free 1-877-222-VETS. The form may also be obtained on www.va.gov and clicking on "Health Benefits & Services" link.

FINALIST IN BEST MAINSTREAM AWARD

EPIC, the Electronically Published Internet Connection, has announced that Lt. Col. Robert Hecker is a finalist in the third annual EPIIE award, which recognize the best of electronically published books. Author Hecker's book, *Rush To Glory*, tells the story of two brothers flying combat missions over Europe.

EPIC members, all published authors, vote on the best of newly-published books, as well as awards for the best cover art and service recognition awards. Robert Hecker's volume has been previously reviewed by the 8th AF NEWS. Information may be obtained at www.double-dragon-books.com or by calling Power Productions at 830-755-4728.

BRITISH COUPLE OFFER LODGING FOR RETURNING VETERANS

Nigel and Rosemary Labrum offer accommodations for visiting 8th Air Force veterans and their families. They state that bed, breakfast and an evening meal in their family may be arranged in advance by contacting them. Their offer is much less expensive than commercial hotels and you will get to experience a bit of English family homelife, under better circumstances than existed on your first trip over in the 1940's.



Rosemary and Nigel Labrum

Nigel was a police officer for twenty years before retiring. Both Labrums are employed by a local ambulance service near Kettering and can provide several days stay in their home at a time, in addition to helping with transport and local guides. Their house is 5 minutes drive from the 384th BG at Grafton Underwood, 20 minutes from the 303rd BG at Molesworth, 60 minutes from the 78th FG and American Air Museum at Duxford, and 45 minutes from the American Cemetery at Maddingly near Cambridge.

They can be reached at: Nigel and Rosemary Labrum, 80 Pennine Way, Kettering, Northamptonshire England - NN16 9 AX. Tel. 01536-358249.

CONNECTICUT CHAPTER

Forty-five members of The Connecticut Chapter of the 8th AFHS met at the American Legion Hall in Hamden on 2 February, 2002. The meeting was called to order by Chapter President Arthur J. Ruggiero who then led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. The guest speaker was Lt. Colonel Harold Rochett (Ret). He spoke of his experiences as a B-17 pilot. He is also the author of *8th Air Force Lottery*, a personal account of events as he proceeded through training and ranks for service in the 8th. Refreshments were served before and after the meeting. Respectfully submitted,
Frank R. Cannon, Acting Secretary

MISSOURI CHAPTER

Missouri Chapter of the 8th AFHS met March 12, 2002 at the DAV Club in Kansas City. Some forty members were in attendance. President Frank Siler open the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag, and a moment of silence for our fallen comrades. A short business meeting followed. Our speaker was Mr. Doran Cart, the curator of the Liberty Memorial Museum in Kansas City. He talked about the past, present and the future of the Museum. The members present enjoyed a time of fellowship with coffee and donuts. Meeting was adjourned. Respectfully submitted, Joe Jameson

KENTUCKY CHAPTER

The Kentucky Chapter is off to a good start on another good year of activity in behalf of The Mighty Eighth. In early February our Chapter attended The Show of Shows sponsored by the Ohio Valley Military Society, Inc. This is a two day show held at the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center Louisville, Kentucky. The Show of Shows in one of the oldest military collecting clubs in the US. There were exhibitors from all over the US and some foreign countries. We put up our exhibit and shared with many people about the 8th Air Force Museum and the part of the Mighty Eighth played in WWII. One of our main attractions was General Philip Ardery. The General autographed copies of his book BOMBER PILOT. Our next project of note is a display at the Air Museum of Kentucky featuring a number of items depicting 8th, AAF participation in the Air War in Europe. Part of the exhibit will feature, an enlarged photo of an actual bomb strike on the Polesti Oil Fields and a photo of General Pilip Ardery. We have been invited to display our wares at the annual Kentucky Colonels Barbecue at Wickland located in Bardstown, KY. This event takes place each Sunday after the Kentucky Derby. Thousand of Kentucky Colonels, out of town guests and of course all the political hopefuls. Give us a superb venue to tell people about the 8th AFHS and of course The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum. There are other activities planned for the remainder of the year, which will keep us before the public and help bring

in more new members.
Edmund Myles, President

ILLINOIS CHAPTER

IN ILLINOIS or FROM ILLINOIS?

We need to educate Illinois school children about your personal duties and stories about WWII because need-to-know excludes them from being common knowledge included in history books!

In Illinois, we would like to make your ten minute personal segment with others into videos a visiting speaker can show during a class period. We need to do so to maintain your legacy for years to come, as presented by speakers younger than you!

If you have an interesting story, please write to me: Jay Spitzer; P.O. Box 9505; Downers Grove, Illinois 60515-9505. I will send you a form to return listing our objectives and you can give us the highlights of the story. The stories will be selected by those fitting the needs of school curriculum and our determination of those which best display history we wish to share! All, which are and are not used by us, will be accepted by the archives of the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum. Nothing will be wasted!

We are also seeking members of Eighth Air Force Historical Society who could help with booth exhibits at events held in Rantoul, Illinois (north of Champaign-Urbana) by the largest Air Museum in Illinois, Octave Chanute Aerospace Museum on the grounds of the former Chanute Air Force Base. You do not need to be an 8AF Vet, just interested!

Illinois Chapter members will have a display at the Air Expo Airshow June 15th at the Lake In the Hills airport. Anthony Czerwien, a POW in the Bataan Death March told of his experiences at a reunion chapter meeting.

NORTH EAST IOWA WING

The North East Wing, of our Iowa Chapter, met at the Elks Lodge in Waterloo on Friday Apr. 19, 2002 for a noon luncheon.

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 April 13th presentation of the Iowa Chapter cash scholarship (Iowa State University Air Force ROTC) to Lance Dorenkamp of Milford, Iowa. Each year one junior student, in the Air Force ROTC, who plans to pursue a career in aviation, is chosen to receive the award. Lance has already soloed as a glider pilot, and has been accepted for pilot training with the U.S. Air Force. The Iowa

chapter received a certificate of appreciation for our support of the ISU ROTC detachment. President Taylor brought a large display of 471 photos of Iowa 8th Air Force fliers who were killed in



Leon G. Mehring, Treas. Iowa Chapter, Lance Dorenkamp, AF ROTC, Charles Taylor, President Iowa Chapter

action during World War II. The research was extensive, and the large standing display is well done and impressive.

Retired Marine Corp. Captain, Lee Foss, was our featured speaker. With the help of 3 other American Legion veterans, he presented a very interesting Flag Folding demonstration, complete with recorded background music -- Battle Hymn of the Republic and Taps. He carefully explained each of the 12 folds of the American flag. Robert C. Reeves
N.E. Iowa Wing Commander

OREGON CHAPTER 8TH AF HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The May quarterly meeting of the Oregon Chapter was held on May 9 at the Beaverton OR Elks Lodge. As usual, attendees began showing up an hour early for the scheduled 11:30 AM meeting time, ready to swap war stories with old buddies, and to meet and greet new members and guests.

President John Horne welcomed guests to the meeting, and urged new sign-ups for Mighty Eighth vets as well as interested Associates. Our membership list continues to grow at a healthy rate, the Chapter having signed up five new members since the last meeting. We now have 117 Veteran Members and 63 Associates.

Chapter Historian Joe Conroy again urged all those who served in the 8th to send in historical items from their service days in England. Many members have contributed items, ranging from published books to photographs and newspaper clippings, and from radio tapes to film and video clips.

Our program for the day was a most enjoyable talk by member Dick Pressey, pilot of "Round Trip Topsy" of the 91st Bomb Group. Pressey spoke at length about his pre-war military career as a mule caretaker in the 10th Mountain Division. When WW2 came, his earlier application for Aviation Cadets came through, and he eventually served a distinguished tour in the Mighty Eighth. A field trip to the Evergreen Aviation Museum at

McMinnville, Oregon is being planned for our Chapter members. The Museum, which moved to its beautiful new building only a year ago, has become one of the truly fine aviation museums in the nation. This is the home of the famed "Spruce Goose", as well as great old warbirds, many of them flyable. Their B17 is a familiar sight in Portland area skies, and at air shows and fly-ins around Oregon and the Northwest. Some of our members serve as volunteers at the museum, and promise a big welcome and a very interesting tour for our group.

Our meetings are held at the Beaverton Elks Lodge, at 11:30 AM on the Thursday of the first full week of February, May, August, and November. Any 8th AFHS member who might be in the Portland area on one of our meeting dates would be very welcome to attend. For more information, contact President John Horne, 32475 SW Estates Post Rd. Wilsonville, OR 97070. Tel: 503-694-6194. Email: Nhome234@aol.com
Clint Gruber
Director

MICHIGAN CHAPTER

Upcoming Chapter events include a joint meeting of the Chapter with Wolverine Chapter No. 1 of the American POWs. Member Dick Behr is coordinating the meeting. Tel 313-277-3500.

The July 6th Chapter meeting will feature Brigadier General Thomas Edmonds, Chief of Staff, Michigan Air National Guard as guest speaker, sharing his many experiences of his military career and of his five terms as Sheriff of Kalamazoo County.

VIRGINIA CHAPTER

The Virginia Chapter is getting revved up for our National annual reunion in Norfolk this October. They plan a big southern welcome for Historical Society members. The April meeting was well-attended and members heard speaker Carl Finstrom comment on the "Historical Overview of the Military Bases in the Hampton Roads Area."

Gene Snook of the Peninsular Wing announces the Veterans in Schools program and their presentation of the Eighth Air Force in England to sixth grade students in the Newport News Middle Schools.

PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER

Pennsylvania Chapter President Art Swanson announces the Chapter's plans for their eleventh annual reunion to be held at State College June 23-25, 2002. The program includes tours to the 28th Division Museum in Boalsburg for USAF Day and to the Pattee Library to see the Library's 8th Air Force archives. The meeting will be at the Days Inn - call (570) 345-4521 for further information.

TENNESSEE CHAPTER

The Chapter's Spring meeting mixed good weather with good fellowship, good food, safe hanger flying and a

good program.

The programming consisted of an update by Walter Brown on activities of the National Chapter and the Heritage Museum, recollections of two of the Chapter members of their stay in Stalags as prisoners of war, a historical account of the Army ground maneuvers held in Middle Tennessee during World War II as a prelude to the invasion and a memorial service led by a former World War II and Korean War Naval Chaplain.

The good program and fellowship was accompanied by good food, which included an old fashioned country bar-be-que and buffet dinner.

James Bass, President



Charles Lee, left, and Kenneth Powell with Awards of Appreciation for their POW seminar.



U&C CHANGES AND ADDITIONS 4/15/02

CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

Address Change:

Michigan Chapter Maurice
Sumney 1595 W. Central Ave.
Suite 108 Portage, MI 49024

UNIT CONTACTS

Address Change:

8AFHQ Aida V. Kaye
445 Glenwood Pl. SE Atlanta,
GA 30316-1819

NEW UNITS

27th ATG Jon Maguire
3017 Middlesex Dr. Oklahoma
City, OK 73120

EVER SEEN A V-3 ROCKET?

In the previous issue 8th AF NEWS a story about the V-1 Buzzbomb -The Doodlebug- was featured.

The V-3 was to be manned by a German pilot. It was never flown in combat.

"V-3," a piloted version of the buzz bomb was discovered by 9th Army troops during a clearing operation around Danberg. They were under production in a camouflaged factory which workers unsuccessfully tried to destroy before evacuating. It is believed that the pilot bails out when near his objective. Between 500 and 1,000 of them were assembled.



LIEUTENANT GENERAL BRUCE CARLSON NAMED COMMANDER 8TH AIR FORCE

Newly appointed Commander of the 8th Air Force headquartered at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana, Lt. General Bruce Carlson comes directly from his assignment as Director, force structure, J-8, the Joint Staff, Washington DC.

General Carlson was born in Hibbing, Minnesota, graduating from the University of Minnesota and later holding positions at Tactical Air Command, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, and at offices of the Secretary of the Air Force and Secretary of Defense. He also commanded the Air Force's stealth fighter Wing, the 49th, at Holloman Air Force Base.

He is experienced in multiple aircraft weapons systems, is a command pilot with more than 3,000 flying hours, and has combat experience in the OV-10.



Lt. Gen. Bruce Carlson
Commander 8th Air Force

96th Bomb Group Memorial at Old Base at Snetterton, Norfolk UK.



96TH BOMB GROUP MEMORIAL AT SNETTERTON BASE

The memorial monument is 30 feet high and weighs six tons, and is now in place at the home of the 96th Bomb Group near Norfolk, UK. The impressive sculpture depicts a B-17 Flying Fortress soaring into the sky on four silver vapor trails. A free-standing plaque honors the airmen of the 96th.

Designed by artist Martin Rance, with Jeff Sinclair, and Geoff Ward the long-awaited memorial to those who served in the 96th BG during World War II, was put in place in February 2002 after a two-year planning and fabrication effort by the design team and the 96th BG Advisory Committee.

Submitted by **Tom Thomas, 96th BG**
Wheaton IL

379TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION FUNDS ORAL HISTORY EQUIPMENT

Elliott Porter, President of the 379th Bomb Group Association, attended the Heritage Museum's May Board of Trustees meeting to make a special presentation of a check for \$5,000 to the Oral History Department of the museum. The contribution will be used to update the audio and visual equipment in the Department, headed up by Director Dr. Vivian Rogers-Price.

The museum's goal is to record and collect oral histories of 8th veterans to be used for archival, historical and museum exhibit. Over 750 histories have already been archived at the museum. Vivian says that "this generous donation will allow us to have the finest high-tech equipment for the important mission of preserving our veteran's oral histories."

Elliott stated that "The 379th has been working on ways to significantly support the Heritage Museum and its projects and we are glad to be part of the oral history area of preservation. We hope that other Units and Groups will jump on the bandwagon with similar support initiatives." The check in the amount of \$5,000 was gratefully received by Heritage Museum President/CEO C.J. Roberts.



379th BG President Elliott Porter presents C. J. Roberts and Vice Chairman of the Board Lew Lyle a big \$5,000 check

AMERICAN EAGLES AMERICAN VOLUNTEERS IN THE RAF 1937-1943 by Tony Holmes



In the days before and during the Battle of Britain pilots from a number of countries volunteered to fly with the Royal Air Force in defense of Great Britain. Australian, Canadian, Polish, and American fliers were among this distinguished group. *American Eagles* is a new book from Classic Publications in England that tells the story of these brave airmen.

Author Tony Holmes has compiled a volume which features numerous photographs of the men and aircraft of the Eagle Squadrons and presents their part and their personal stories during the Battle of Britain. Many of the names, accompanied by never previously published photographs, are familiar to the men of the Mighty Eighth: Don Blakeslee of the No. 411 "Grizzly Bear" Squadron, Art Donahue of the 91st "Nigeria" Squadron, and Polish Ace Francis "Gabby" Gabreski who had eleven kills with the No. 315 "City of Deblin" Squadron are just a few.

Personal stories presented in this volume are fascinating. The tale and travels of Eugene "Red" Tobin, Vernon "Shorty" Keough, and Andrew "Andy" Mamedoff, who eventually linked up with Art Donahue and flew in the 609th Squadron is just one of many memorable experiences related here. Opinions and comments of the Spitfire pilots upon the introduction of the huge P-47 Thunderbolt fighter into their units are especially interesting – the changeover from a sleek small British aircraft to the huge powerful American single engine fighter.

A large format presentation with



Don Blakeslee in his Spitfire V B with his wife's name "Leola" at Gravesend

color aircraft presentations affords the reader an intimate look not found in other volumes previously written about the Eagle Squadrons. This book contains more photographs to accompany its well-written text than any other similar period volume.

Specialty Press is the US distributor of Classic Publications and *American Eagles* may be obtained from them as Item #CP316 for \$24.95 + \$4.95 s&h. 128 pages; 180+ photos, b&w and color; softcover 9x12. Call Specialty Press at 1-800-895-4585 or 651-277-1400.

A NOBLE SPIRIT by Alvin L. Morton

This unique book presents the courage, valor, loyalty, and humor embodied by the men of the 8th Air Force and especially by the airmen of the author's 303rd Bomb Group. Full of anecdotes, reprinted material of the wartime era and unusual photographic material, the volume is intended to inspire and encourage younger generations of students to become aware of the sacrifices made by the servicemen of World War II.

A Noble Spirit presents men of the 303rd on the airbase and in the air; in crew pictures and their writings from the period; on their missions and under enemy fire. Author Morton has written several plays and

articles during his career and this volume reflects his personal feelings about the role the men of the Mighty Eighth played in shaping the future of our country.

There are short stories of humor and of combat:

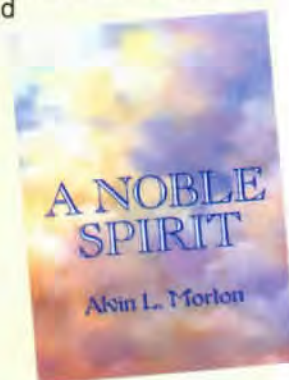
"The English Bobby came looking for a bicycle missing from a village. Someone in the barracks saw him approaching and tossed explosive powder into the coal stove. There ensued a tremendous bang. The explosion filled the barracks with smoke. The Englishman threw up his arms, said 'Crazy Yanks!', and walked away with his bicycle."

"The air war was savagely fought on the blue field in the sky. A German pilot parachuted from his burning plane on this particular engagement. The air gunner mercilessly fired on the descending flyer. He was severely reprimanded: 'Sergeant, your actions were reprehensible and won't be tolerated.'

'Sir, this is war. Tomorrow that fellow will be shooting at my ass. It's kill or be killed. Isn't this what war is about?'"

Alvin Morton and three of his veteran friends visit schools to talk about patriotism and their 8th Air Force experiences. He will use the proceeds from book sales to establish and fund two \$10,000 college scholarships in the name and memory of members of his crew.

The volume in large format, 236pp, with photographs throughout. Available from Dorrance Publishing Co., 643 Smithfield St., Pittsburgh, PA 15222. Send \$ 43.00 + \$3.50 s&h. or call: 1-800-788-7654.



ONE FINAL BOOK FROM BERT STILES

Although Bert Stiles died in 1944, new books have come out at the rate of one per year for the past four years. The latest -and unfortunately his last- book written by Stiles is "**A Final Serenade**," a volume crammed with short stories, essays, and tributes.

Many of you will remember Bert's "Serenade to the Big Bird" as a taut, riveting, and honest autobiography of his days flying in the rights seat of a B-17 with the 8th Air Force. It was acclaimed as one of the best books to come out of the World War II air war. Later, he transferred to fighters and died in the crash of his P-51 fighter in late 1944.

It is generally unknown that Bert Stiles had written a hundred or so short stories and essays before he enlisted in the Army Air Corps. Most had never been published. Roland Dickison, Bert's college friend and Robert Cooper, have researched Bert's life for the last dozen years and have collaborated in bringing out the best of the young writer's stories in four self-published books. Dickison and Cooper wanted today's readers, young and old, to know why they felt that Bert, had he lived, would have been an important postwar writer in the mold of Hemingway, Michener, Joyce, and Heller.

All four books are professionally prepared, in paperback, and are still available.

MIDNIGHT SERENADE (1998) is a compilation of 18 short stories and essays that Bert wrote while in high school and college.

His essays offer youthful views on his personal philosophy of life. Both his fiction and non-fiction are written with the flair, youthful charm, idealism, and fresh writing style which characterized all of his writings.

SERENADE TO THE WORLD FROM 30,000 (1999) contains 18 stories and essays pertaining to life during wartime. There are stories of action in the sky, romance, painful partings, fantasy, and inspiration among them. His essays of the hell of war in the air are a forerunner of his classic "Serenade to the Big Bird." Taken as a whole, his short writings show the versatility and dedication of this sensitive young writer.

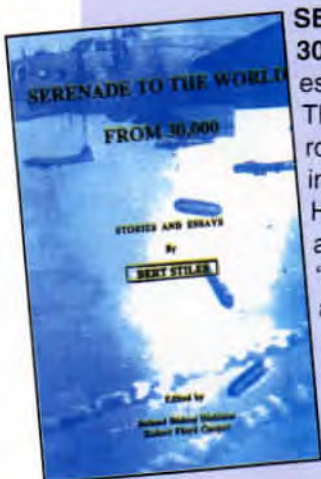
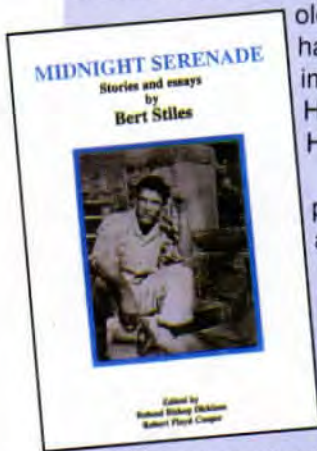
ONE YEAR, ONE LIFETIME (2000) is a never before published account

by Bert of his first year at Colorado College. The adjustments required of him during that year -his one year- is the stuff of this autobiographical novel. Readers will want to remember and compare their own freshman year in college. Bert's fresh young voice comes through loud and clear and offers romance, humor and love.

THE FINAL SERENADE (2001) contains 20 previously unpublished stories and essays which illuminate the essence of this young warrior writer. Bert writes with humor, reality, and a deep understanding. Comments from such luminaries as Richard Bach, Hugh McGovern, and Allen Mundt offer tributes to this forever-young pilot who, many people believe, would have become a great postwar writer.

Readers of 8th Air Force News who own or have read "Serenade to the Big Bird" will want to own one or more of these earlier writings of Bert Stiles. Please send a check for \$15.00 per book (includes postage) made out to "Robert F. Cooper" and orders will be filled within three days of receipt. Cooper, a member of the 8th Air Force Historical Society, flew as a co-pilot in a B-17 with the 385th Bomb Group. He and Dickison intend to donate all earnings from sales, after expenses, to Colorado College for a scholarship in the name of Bert Stiles.

Bob Cooper may be reached at College Park, Davis, CA 95616, Ph. (530)756-4088, email floyddecamp@aol.com



A BENDER OF WRENCHES

Here's to the people with greasy hands
 Who fuel the planes when the pilot lands.
 Who fix the canopies and stop the leaks
 Change the tires and oil the squeaks.
 Who smooth the scratches and rivet the panels
 Check "loud and clear" on the radio channels.
 Check the wires and cables for chafing or tears
 Who pull the chocks and walk the wings
 And do a million maint'nance things.
 Who watch as the bird takes off and flies
 So here's a salute to those wonderful guys,
 From a group of flyers who sometimes ponder
 The ones who keep them in the Wild Blue Yonder.

Anonymous

TAPS

Hightower, Billy, New Braunfels TX; 457th BG
Sullivan, Charles, Houston TX; navigator
Damak, Charlie, Houston TX; 25th Bomb Group, Watton – from Al Lea
Mahan, Robert, 96th BG; copilot; Ops officer; flew Berlin Airlift missions during the Cold War. AF Reserve officer; VP Nebraska Chapter and active in education of younger generations of schoolchildren – from George Wolfe
Wilson, John B., Peterborough England; 457th BG; Friends of the Eighth – from wife and son
Myers Philip, 487th BG; loyal crew member – from Mike Quering

Armour, Harold, Overland Park KS; 445th BG; Deacon at Countryside Christian Church; brother Floyd died in prison camp in World War II – from Ken Wilson
Kirby, Charles, Kansas City; 306th BG; POW 26 months; antique restoration; genealogist; followed the adventures of his seven grandchildren;

"If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your hand will hold me fast." Psalm 139

Vaughan, Elijah, Oklahoma City; 92nd BG, pilot; POW; shot down 22 Feb 44

Witt, Francis, Strongsville OH; shot down and walked three months across France and Spain to escape capture; flew Berlin Airlift missions postwar

Larkworthy, Bernard, Medina OH; B-17 navigator
Everhart, George, Kansas City MO; 93rd BG; flew low-level Ploesti mission; bombardier in *Boomerang*; flew US GoodWill tour in 1944; Past-President Missouri Chapter
Ratliff, Leroy, Yukon OK; B-17 ballturret gunner – from Ken Wilson

Welk, Roger, Union Springs AL; 381st BG bombardier/navigator – from his wife Jean

Brown, Thomas, Charleroi PA; 339th FG; Pennsylvania Chapter – from his beloved "G.I. bride" Edith, who was raised near Goxhill Airfield at Barrow-on-Humber in North Lincolnshire

Heuer, Charles, St. Paul MN; 390th BG Ground Crew Chief; career as police officer in St. Paul. Chuck was the 568th squadron's ground crew chief for Warren Hasse's crew

Brucker, Milton, Houston TX; 100th BG

Sheridan, Homer, Omaha, NB; 96th BG copilot; first President of the Nebraska Chapter; dedicated supporter of his Bomb Group, the 8th AFHS, and the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum

Terry, Burton, Mill Valley CA; 96th BG pilot; - from his copilot and friend for 58 years, Wayne Whitlock

Dimick, Richard "Dick", Lake Almanor CA; 303rd BG tail-gunner on Tarvids crew, *Old Black Magic*; automobile restoration expert, restoring more than 50 classics – from Lou Grandwilliams

McDonough, John Joseph, Lenexa KS; R/O 401st BG; love the Arts and Opera; generous to all, with a deep love of family and God. His best gifts to his children were each other.

Voight, Robert, Lubec ME; active and vocal environmentalist and conservationist; - from Bob Umberger

Randall, Milton, 458th BGT at Horsham St. Faith; tailgunner on B-24s – from his wife Florence

Hagler, Jack, Augusta GA; 447th BG pilot; involved in years of honoring all veterans of Augusta area; early supporter of Heritage Museum; lost his best buddy in a crash on takeoff while picking up their B-17s on the way over. Tod's aircraft couldn't clear the trees at the end of the runway at Hunter Field in Savannah, due to mistakenly chocked elevators. His buddy saved the Hagler crew several days later in one of the unusual airstories of the war (8th AF News Sept 02). from Bleakley Chandler

Hunley, Collin; 493rd BG

Harris, H.B.; 493rd BG

Sweeney, Forrest, Houston TX; 306th BG, bombardier

Bisone, Gino, Houston TX; Retired USAF; close friend of Al Lea

Tate, Hoyle, Winston-Salem NC; auctioneer, Boy Scout Scoutmaster

Staples, Alex, Durham NC; 100th BG radio operator

Hearn, Willard, Tiptonville TN; B-17 radio operator – from Tim Bivens

Hills, Kenneth, Boston MA; flew Spitfires and Mosquitoes with 518th Sq Royal Air Force, Eagle Squadron; then P-51s with the 8th AF; served in Korea and Vietnam – from Bob Umberger

Casey, Thomas, Shapleigh MA; 100th BG bombardier; POW; shot down on Munster raid, 1943

Forbes, Douglas, Parsonfield MA; 34th BG bombardier and gunner; proud of the Chowhound missions he flew at end of war; patriot; artist; loved stock car and drag racing.

Sanders, Coleman, Cape Coral FL; 303rd BG; outstanding life-long photographer – from Gary Moncur

Donofrio, Frank, Memphis TN; worked for 33 years to preserve the *Memphis Belle*, Tennessee Chapter – from Harold Robinson

Hunley, Collin, 493rd BG

Bires, George, Corpus Christi TX; B-17 pilot; hunter; fisherman; golfer – from Floyd Bieniek

Neff, Fred, Oakland MD; 486th BG; amateur photographer; NRA; 30 years service with Columbia Gas Co. – from his wife Alice

Druhl, Maurice, Beaverton OR; 323rd BG pilot, B-26 Marauder – shot down twice, the last on his 41st combat mission just before D-Day; Silver Star; advisor at USAF Academy – from Dick Baynes

Neubauer, Archie, Chevy Chase MD; 385th BG waistgunner on B-17 *Junior*; Dean of History, Professor at Dewitt Clinton High School – from his son Lonnie

Seidel, Harold, Conway AR; 492nd BG pilot; 2nd AD - from G. A. Bohlken

HOW ABOUT IT?

CHECK POINTS

Ahead, there was no visible horizon, only blackness and rain. The instruments on the panel before the pilot and the din of a radio signal were his only sources of orientation. The watchful eyes of the copilot, flight engineer, and navigator on the flight deck added little support to the pilot, but they were there, watching. As the altimeter wound down and as the ground grew closer, still there was no visual contact. A welcome navigation light flashing on the instrument panel indicated we were on course. This was the signal to take the turn toward our 150 foot wide and 6,000 foot long runway. Slowly, the heavy clouds dissipated into the mist and fog. The welcome sight of trees, hedgerows, thatched roof houses were identifiable through the murk. On our left and through the haze, the 315 foot tall spire of the Norwich Cathedral stood in all of its majesty. That 15th century steeple had guided people to God for 500 years and was a welcome check point now leading us home. Reassuringly, another light on the panel flickered on; we were moments away from our runway. To the right, the quaint moss-covered medieval All Saints Church came into view, a second check point. This landmark was just off the end of the runway we were seeking. Worshippers from the villages, past and present, found spiritual comfort in this little church and the message it proclaimed. The tires on the plane screeched as we touched the runway. Another mission was completed. Faith in our airplane, the confidence we had in our training and our comrades, the timeless check points and the awesome God who occupied the Norwich Cathedral and the All Saints Church brought us safely to our home base again.

Hundreds of B-17 and B-24 Eighth Air Force bombers were flying formation high in the frigid air heading westward. The heavies were returning from a combat mission deep in enemy territory. Some were flying without difficulty while others were struggling to stay in the air. They had been in a hostile environment for seven hours facing fighters, flak, and mechanical problems. Up ahead and to the west, as far as the eye could see, a solid bank of clouds below greeted them, blocking sight of the cold waters of the North Sea below. The sight of land and the airbase which these airmen called home was also blocked from their view. This covering of clouds, rain and fog reaching almost to the ground was the last obstacle they had to face on this mission. It had to be penetrated before the mission was completed.

Each Group Commander, pilot and navigator had the responsibility of leading three squadrons of 12 aircraft each. The entire armada began breaking up as each

Group Commander led his formations to the designated area to initiate a carefully planned maneuver to get every aircraft safely on the ground. From that moment, an instrument let-down was in effect. Until now, he had the responsibility for the fate of his aircraft and the nine other members of his crew. As the direction and rate of descent was established, the murky mass of clouds began rushing silently beneath. Thirty seconds ahead, the leading aircraft slowly disappeared from sight as it entered the clouds. In moments we would be there, all alone.



Earl Wassom

Suddenly, the aircraft was engulfed in the black mass as it followed behind in the path of the leader. Moisture formed on the windows fogging visibility even further. Thirty seconds behind was another aircraft and another and still another following one by one until all of the planes and crews in the Group were in the landing stream. There was no room for error.

It is impossible to revisit these timeless check points in East Anglia England very often. But, while driving down Interstate I-95 through the muggy atmosphere of Savannah, the sight of a rising stone tower replicating the medieval All Saints Church in East Anglia will perhaps cause people to think of God and thank Him for His sacrifice and the sacrifices of the intrepid warriors of the Eighth Air Force in 1942-1945. **The Chapel of the Fallen Eagles** is calling all of us home. Sitting in the Memorial Gardens of the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum, it is a tribute and memorial to those who paid the supreme sacrifice and also to those who survived. It serves as a constant reminder to us to worship and praise our Savior who has so wonderfully given us life in Him...salvation, redemption, peace, happiness and the promise of a safe landing for eternity.

Earl Wassom
466th BG
Chaplain, Tennessee
Chapter



"Elijah was reputed to be the patron Saint of aviators, but as he went to Heaven in a chariot of fire, this was something we weren't keen about."

Kiffen Rockwell, Lafayette Escadrille; killed in action June 1916



8th AF News

Dated Material Inside

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

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**WORLD TRADE CENTER
MEMORIAL LIGHTS**

New York City

Submitted by Lee Bennett, 96th BG

