



8th AF NEWS

VOLUME 03 NUMBER 3 Voice of THE MIGHTY EIGHTH[®] SEPTEMBER 2003

Regensburg

Osnabruck

"Wilbur Wright has made the statement that in his opinion the use of the aeroplane for dropping bombs or explosives into hostile army is impracticable, as the machine must rise 1,000 or 1,500 ft above the ground to escape shell fire. At that height accuracy would be impossible in dropping explosives when moving at 40 or 50 miles an hour."

— Popular Mechanics, July 1909

Nurenburg

Chartres



Magazine of

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

The Eighth Air Force News is dedicated to Lt. Col. John H. Woolnough, founder of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society and editor for sixteen years. It is published quarterly and is the official newsmagazine of the Society. The 8th AF NEWS is sent to members of the Society and is not for public sale. The home office is at 175 Bourne St., Pooler GA. 31322 - P.O. Box 1787, Savannah, GA. 31402.

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Berlin

Old men forget; yet all shall be forgot, but he'll remember, with advantages, what feats they did that day.
Shakespeare, *Henry V*

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EXCITING NEWS FOR THE MIGHTY EIGHTH!

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum is debt free in 2003!

President/Ceo C. J. Roberts of the Heritage Museum recently announced the payoff of all bond debts on the Heritage Museum in Savannah. After seven very successful years, the twenty-year bond notes totaling over \$13 million dollars, will be paid-in-full this year.

On March 18, 2003 the voters of Chatham County in Georgia approved the continuation of a special sales tax referendum, funds which will be used to retire the debt which was incurred in order to construct the museum in the early 1990s. The success of the museum, its programs, and its contributions to the community and the nation were overwhelmingly affirmed by the citizens. The museum staff and Board, working closely with the Chatham County Commissioners headed by Chairman Dr. Billy Hair, and previously by past-Chairman Joe Methany, to secure the commitment to retire all debts after many months of interactive and cooperative deliberations.

The Heritage Museum, through its attendance and from wide support of members of the 8th AF Historical Society across the country, has made payments of almost \$2 million up to this time. The Museum is now debt-free.

Pres. Roberts, in a letter of appreciation to all support-

ers of the museum, said, "The retirement of the bond-debt leaves the museum healthier than ever, but our day-to-day challenges continue. This is a crucial time for the museum, and we need your help to continue to preserve and share the stories, artifacts, and history of the 8th Air Force with the more than 115,000 people who visit the museum annually. Remember that our annual operating budget is funded by the generosity of our donors."

Every 8th AF veteran and their families should be justly proud of what their efforts and support has achieved in creating a permanent Home for the Mighty Eighth. With no debt accounts to face, the museum will be able to effectively approach corporations and foundations for specific sponsorship of expansions and future programs now being developed by the Heritage Museum. New doors will open, and you will see continued growth in your museum as a result of these significant recent events.



C.J. Roberts
President/CEO
Heritage Museum

Presidents Message

The 2003 Reunion, Oct. 14 - 19 at the Sheraton Colorado Springs, is upon us. The pre-registration deadline may have passed by the time you read this, but don't let that stop you. Register anyway, and we will do our best to work you in. **For information call Connie Metts at 912-948-8888.**

On Wednesday, Oct. 15, Bob Books webmaster of www.B24.net, will lead a discussion of **website development.** Here is your chance to learn how it is done.

Thursday, Oct. 16 sees us going to the **Air Force Academy** to visit the Cadet Chapel and to have lunch at the Officers Club, followed by a tour of the Visitor Center. This is a unique opportunity to visit a unique facility.

By popular demand, Brig. Gen. James H. Graves, returns with his illustrated talk on patriotism and diversity, "The American Experiment" on Oct. 17.

This you should not miss: "**SEVEN DAYS IN OCTOBER**", the Norman C. Grant Memorial 60th Anniversary Commemorative Symposium. It will take place on Oct. 17, three days after the 60th anniversary of "Second Schweinfurt". Moderated by Roger Freeman, the symposium will bring together a panel of expert speakers, at least some of whom were on the October 8-14, 1943 missions.

Lt. Gen. Bruce Carlson, Commander of the Eighth Air Force, will be the speaker following our Gala Banquet on Saturday, Oct. 18. The event should be memorable.

Get your plans together and get to Colorado Springs for the 2003 Reunion!

World War II Memorial Dedication, May 29, 2003. The 8th AFHS will be there! We mention it to urge you to get room reservations NOW. If you wait you may not get a place to stay. **See details elsewhere in this issue.**



Craig Harris
President

In June of this year, I was honored to be invited to the Second Air Division 2003 Convention in Oak Brook, IL, by their president, Dick Butler. Among many things we enjoyed was video coverage of the rededicated Second Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich. I enjoyed seeing many friends of long standing in addition to meeting new friends, some in the Heritage League, 2ADA's second- and third-generation organization. The Heritage League anticipates stepping up as the parent organization enters its end-game. This concept has been discussed among members of 8th AFHS, and is worthy of more discussion and even some action by us.

God bless you. See you in Colorado Springs.

Craig

Mission Briefing



**Walter Brown, Editor
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Sixty years after the activation of the 8th Air Force in Savannah, Georgia, and after decades of planning and hard work, veterans of the Mighty Eighth can now call the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum their own. The Heritage Museum – the home of the Mighty Eighth – is now debt-free. The Bond debt, the future payoff of which fueled fires of doubt in some corners, is now a thing of the past. All museum loan accounts are paid-in-full. Years of hard work

by many believers and supporters of the concept of a world-class permanent home for the 8th has resulted in another successful mission.

The preservation of the history of the 8th AF and of those airmen who sacrificed for the cause of freedom is assured.

The future of the Heritage Museum has never been brighter. Each member of the Historical Society should plan now to continue their support and contribute to the development programs and museum endowment funds so that expansion of the facility and construction of future exhibitry can be accomplished. Museum education initiatives will continue to reach out to our younger generations. Those of us on the museum Board of Trustees and members of the museum staff will guarantee that you and your family members will always have a one-of-a-kind museum to be proud of. Support from each of you will be sincerely appreciated; every dollar given to the cause will be spent wisely. And each future visit that you and your family members make to your Savannah Home will find impressive new exhibitions and exciting new programs awaiting you.

See you in Colorado Springs for Reunion 2003 - and I'll see you in Savannah.

Walter Brown, Editor

In the Bible, Lot's wife looked back and turned into a pillar of salt. Recently my wife was driving over to her bridge club luncheon. She looked back and turned into a telephone pole.

Clyde White, 390th BG

Vickers Presents Air Force Academy Track Award

U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. -- Cadet First Class Timothy J. Fritz, Punta Gorda, Fla., received the Most Valuable Men's Track Competitor Award for the Air Force Academy's Class of 2003.

The 8th Air Force Historical Society, in memory of Mr. Arne U. Arnesen, sponsors the award to recognize Fritz's demonstration of superior athletic achievement in men's track and field competition. Arnesen was an accomplished track coach and associate professor of physical education. He dedicated 28 years of his life to the Air Force Athletic Department and all cadets who attended. Fritz received a bachelor of science degree and a commission as an Air Force second lieutenant May 28, during the Academy's 45th ceremony. The number of Academy graduates who have served throughout the Air Force is now 35,998.

8th Air Force Historical Society Director of Awards and Protocol, Robert Vickers, made the Award presentation to Cadet Fritz at a special awards ceremony held at the Academy on May 26, 2003.

The Air Force Academy provides a balanced program of military training, academics, athletics and character

development. Recognized as one of the finest colleges in the nation, the Academy's curriculum allows cadets to acquire a broad education in the basic and engineering sciences, social sciences and the humanities, and to choose from among 30 academic majors.



Cadet First Class Timothy Fritz and Col. Robert E. Vickers, USAF Retired

Heritage Museum Activities

NAILS HONORED AT HERITAGE MUSEUM CEREMONIES

Kenneth and Ethelda Nail of Tupelo, Mississippi, were awarded the first annual Lt. Gen. E. G. "Buck" Shuler, Jr. Award in a special presentation during the recent Seventh Anniversary celebration at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum. The Award is given by the museum Board of Trustees for Achievement, honoring those who show outstanding support of the Heritage Museum and who exemplify museum goals of the preservation of 8th Air Force history, character, and education.

Ken and Ethelda were recognized for their roles of leadership with the Mississippi Chapter 8th AFHS and in engaging Chapter members in the development of programs at the museum. They played an important role in the founding of the Mississippi Chapter. Ken is currently Vice President of the national Historical Society and served several important years as treasurer of the organization. Both serve in the Volunteer program at the museum. Ken is the editor of the anthology produced over several years by the members of the Chapter, *Mississippians In The Mighty Eighth* which was recently published. Profits from the volume's sales – over \$50,000 – were

contributed by the Chapter to the Heritage Museum for use in development of programs and exhibitions.

The Shuler Award, which was presented in the form of a ribbon and bronze medal, was accompanied by a special plaque of appreciation and gratitude for the Nail's continuous support of the Heritage Museum. The ceremonies were attended by a number of Mississippi Chapter and Heritage Museum Board of Trustees members. Remarks of appreciation were given by museum President/CEO C. J. Roberts.



Ken and Ethelda Nail with presenter Dick Kennedy

AT THE HERITAGE MUSEUM ...

- Opening now and running until April 2004 is the Art Exhibition of noted Aviation Artist Keith Ferris. This is a special return art show for Keith and is entitled "A Celebration of Flight," featuring a variety of his outstanding works of flight and aircraft design techniques in the Colonial Oil Art Gallery. An exhibit not to be missed in this year of the 100th anniversary of flight.
- Julia Smith has in stock a large number of 8th AFHS PX items, many of which will accompany her to our annual reunion PX in Colorado Springs October 14 –19, 2003. Caps, shirts, logos, and books will all be available. An 8th AFHS magazine PX insert is being prepared for the Dec 03 issue 8th AF News. **Julia 912-748-8888 ext. 116**
- The Dan McGovern collection of combat film and videos are now being received by the museum archivist, Michael Telzrow – over 25 shipping boxes of original film in all! Dan flew combat with the 8th AF during the war and also has a large number of 8th AFHS war seminar films in his collection. The combat films are unique. About them Dan says, " If some of the film taken during combat missions seems a little shaky, it's not the camera's fault – it was me." The Dan McGovern Special Collection will be a valuable source for researchers and historians in the future.
- A Major museum exhibit is now being developed, entitled *Fly Girls of World War II*. The walk-through exhibit is an in-depth depiction of the part female WASP pilots played in flying and ferrying war aircraft to be used in combat. The detailed story of the female flying heroes, a number of whom were killed in service, will now be told as part of the museum's permanent exhibitions.
- Judy Walker, Director of Development, is excited about

the responses to recent initiatives for the Endowment Fund of the Heritage Museum and the Planned Giving programs, as well as for the Annual Funding Campaign. Call her at 912-748-8888 to support these important programs. Contributions to enhance the John Woolnough Library can be made now, as this fund drive is this year's 8th AFHS museum support project.

- Many 8th vets readily remember the liner Queen Mary, now permanently docked in Long Beach, California. The beautiful new Cunard Queen Mary 2 will be christened in 2004 and a special educational ten-day cruise will leave New York for England on May 18th, featuring lectures each day by noted war historians, with passage available to 8th AFHS veterans and their families. The QM 2 is the largest, most luxurious cruise ship in the world. A trip of a lifetime! Or for some 8th airmen, a *second* trip over! Call Judy Walker at the museum in Savannah now for further info.
- The Georgia State Legislature has passed the final bill recognizing the Heritage Museum as a Center for Character Education in Georgia – a proud designation to benefit members of the younger generation for many years to come.
- You will soon see much more to come at the Heritage Museum. Consider for instance: The Warbirds Ball in April 2004; an addition of an original fully-restored nose section of a B-24 Liberator in the combat gallery; revisions of present exhibitry and post-WWII sections of exhibitions; close interactions with other prominent historical museums – the museum's growth continues...

WRIGHT BROTHERS AT KITTY HAWK - 1903

"There is no question in my mind that men can build wings having as little or less relative resistance than that of the best soaring birds. The bird's wings are undoubtedly very well designed indeed, but it is not any extraordinary efficiency that strikes with astonishment but rather the marvelous skill with which they are used . . . The soaring problem is apparently not so much one of better wings as of better operators."

Wilbur speaking to the Western Society of Engineers, June 24, 1903



The Wright brothers' workshop at Kitty Hawk

"We are expecting the most interesting results of any of our seasons of experiment, and are sure that, barring exasperating little accidents or some mishap, we will have done something before we break camp."

Wilbur to Octave Chanute, October 16, 1903

Dear Dr. Brown:

At the Tennessee Chapter gathering in Lebanon, I was pleased to be introduced as a friend of Orville Wright. When you asked that I correspond with more detail, I submit the following: In rummaging through memorabilia from Kitty Hawk, I came upon a postcard that was circulated on the day of dedication of the Wright Memorial, which may briefly outline my connection. I am the son of Capt. Kindervater, the Resident Engineer.



J. L. Kindervater and Heather at the Tennessee Chapter meeting.

Orville, on several occasions, visited the construction project and was a guest in our home which was on the property of their residence in Dayton, Ohio during the first flight. That home had burned and we lived in a Methodist parsonage with the historical marker in the front yard.

We have many souvenirs including gifts. A most treasured one was Lindberg's book, "We", autographed by Orville.

He and Dad became close friends and corresponded frequently.

Dad died at the Veterans Hospital in Dayton and Orville came to see him that morning.

Yes, I was very proud to have known Orville Wright. How old was I? I was born 4th of July 1920 - a firecracker.

Yours truly,

J.L. Kindervater
7th Photo Recon Group
Chattanooga, TN



A Foggy Day in London Town
No Explanation Necessary!

From Carroll Lewis of Houston, Texas, 379th Bomb Group pilot, comes this photo taken in London, 1944. Not to be lost on American 8th airmen are the significant initials displayed on the pole above Carroll's head.



Rotterdam Mission Lead Crew

303rd BG from left: Smith, Collins, Jake Fredericks, Fonorow, Semomick, Romig, Schnelderman, Nardine, Anderson, Hoyt, Murray

Material from the confidential files of Headquarters, Third Air Division for this issue of the 8th AF NEWS emphasizes the role of fighter aircraft during the war. Summaries published just after the war's end were based on years of intelligence obtained from widespread sources and from in-depth interviews with German Generals and leaders conducted during the weeks following VE Day in May 1945. Jake Fredericks served at Elveden Hall as Director of Operational Research and Plans, accumulating numerous restricted files and photos which he generously forwarded to the 8th AF NEWS. These records and photograph files flesh out significant components of the 8th Air Force's role during World War II.

THE DEFEAT OF THE GERMAN AIR FORCE from The U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey

The significance of full domination of the air over the enemy - both over its armed forces and over its sustaining economy - must be emphasized. That domination of the air was essential.

The Germans were far more concerned over attacks on one or more of their basic industries and services - their oil, chemical, or steel industries or their power or transportation networks - than they were over attacks on their armament industry or the city areas.

ATTRITION OF THE ENEMY FIGHTER FORCE

The GAF fighter army was a major obstacle opposing the Allied strategic air offensive. Its history is marked with periods of temporary successes which were turned to eventual defeat by the effective measures of the Allies. When the full onslaught of the Allied offensive was felt, the GAF could not mount a defense in the strength for

which it planned and worked so desperately. This was partly due to the deterioration of the GAF when faced with a major opponent. It was primarily due to the aggressiveness of the Eighth and Fifteenth AFs in the air battles fought during the attacks on German aircraft production. It will be noted that the tempo of the air war, expressed in losses of German single-engine fighters, increased moderately through 1942, spurted ahead in 1943, and skyrocketed in 1944. It is apparent also that the war on the Eastern Front involved a fairly steady attrition of the German single-engine fighter force which was never so excessive as to become a source of alarm to the German High Command. This is revealed in German aircraft production plans for the years 1941 and 1942 when fighter losses on the Eastern Front constituted a high percentage of the total German losses. These plans called for virtually no increase in production until the daylight strategic bomber threat began to be appreciated in the latter half of 1942. At this time, the German Air Ministry in a study dated 16 December 1942, called for a tripling of fighter production in 1943. With mounting losses in the air and

STRAIGHT FROM JAKE!

on the ground, successive studies demanded further increases in production. These were not accomplished in time to cope with the greater expansion of the Allied air forces.

Reduction of GAF Fighter Experience Level

The cycle which underlay the deterioration of the GAF worked in this manner: When more pilots were killed in 1942 than the German High Command had anticipated, pressure was put upon the fighter training schools to speed the output of replacements. But Germany's fuel situation, inherently weak, required careful allocation of all

oil products, especially aviation gasoline. Increased fuel allocation for pilot training was very difficult for the schools to obtain. The alternatives were either to fall short of the number of replacements or to cut hours of training so that fuel allocations would be sufficient to train the requisite number of pilots. The Germans chose the latter course, with the result that replacements arrived at combat units subnormally trained. As skilled and experienced pilots were killed they were replaced with pilots with no battle experienced and with insufficient training. Thus, the average level of experience fell, reducing the tactical capabilities of the force. The rising tempo of combat worked cumulatively against the GAF. On the other hand, combat seasoned many Allied pilots who were fighting on a solid background of thorough training at less than expected rates of attrition.



Fighter Escorts would allow increasingly deeper penetration into German targets by 8th Air Force bomber crews



Regensburg

The deterioration of pilot quality was first really apparent about March 1944. The cycle had undoubtedly been operating all through 1943, since the first large cut in total training hours of German pilots came late in 1942, followed by a similar cut in mid-1943, and a much greater cut in mid-1944. The last reduction in training hours of German pilots came at a time when oil targets were in.

*Note: The few facts now in hand indicate that between 2 1/2 and 3 aircraft were destroyed per pilot killed.

German transportation lines were given first priority for Allied strategic bombing. Then the inadequate allocations of fuel which the fighter schools had received could no longer be delivered. The early decision to skimp on gasoline allocations to training schools was turned painfully against the GAF planners who were now unable to ward off the attacks on oil. This was doubly painful because it occurred at a time when German fighter production was increasing.

The GAF situation was recognized by General Feldmarschall Hugo von Sperrle who stated that the Luftwaffe was most seriously handicapped by a dearth of experienced pilots. This became extremely patent early in 1944. In July of 1944 he canvassed his command and found that, with rare exceptions, only group and squadron commanders had combat experience exceeding six months. A small percentage of other personnel had an average of three months of combat duty, while a majority of pilots had seen active service for periods as low as between eight and thirty days. In the autumn of 1944, disorgani-

zation and deterioration of the Luftwaffe began. Lack of fuel, shortages of pilots and a decreasing number of replacements hampered efficiency.

Rise of US Fighter Power

Critical losses of German fighter pilots were indirectly caused by the overpowering pressure applied by the USAAF on daylight missions. This pressure was carried deeper into enemy territory as a result of a series of improvements in US fighter aircraft and their tactical exploitation.

a. May 1943. P-47s arrived in Britain and joined British Spitfires in escorting the heavy bombers. As US pilots gained experience in the handling of their aircraft and in air warfare, the P-47 pilots extended the range of their penetrations beyond that to which the Spitfires could go. Because of increased escort range, the bombers made somewhat deeper penetrations with the result that air fights increased in intensity - the P-47's giving an excellent account of themselves.

b. July 1943. Belly tanks of 75-gallon capacity became available, adding more than 100 miles to the range of the P-47s, whose effective strength now had reached the 200 mark. The use of the tanks gave the P-47s tactical surprise over the enemy for a few missions, resulting in an increase in the number of kills. The enemy's twin-engine rocket fighter, so deadly to Allied bombers, was no match for the P-47 and learned early to stay beyond its range.

c. August 1943. One hundred and eighty-gallon belly tanks became available. This gave the P-47 a further extension in range, with the result that, after reaching the point where the enemy's twin-engine fighters had expected them to turn back, the P-47s attacked and shot them down instead. Enemy loss rates rose.

d. September 1943. Three groups of P-38s of the NW Africa Air Force made a low-level strafing on the enemy airfields near Foggia, Italy. The attack was a complete surprise; a great many enemy aircraft were destroyed on the ground and only a few rose to give combat. The success of this attack marked a turning point in the air war in the Mediterranean; thereafter losses of Allied bombers to enemy aircraft declined to a marked degree.

e. November 1943. P-38s with two 165-gallon wing tanks became available for escort in the Eighth AF and although mechanical difficulties marred their utility, their range was great enough to reach well into Germany. With the increase in bomber penetrations into Germany, the enemy attacked savagely, and the escort had all the targets it could desire. German losses continued to rise.

f. Mid-December 1943. P-51s now made their appearance in England. Their range without external tanks was nearly as great as the P-38 with the two 165-gallon wing tanks. Their four .50-caliber machine guns gave formidable



Me 109 "Black 10"

firepower and flight characteristics were excellent. Early successes were so great that an increase in the number of P-51s was eagerly awaited.

In January 1944, General Jimmy Doolittle took over as commander of the 8th Air Force. He redirected the role of 8th fighters in the war against Germany. – Editor

h. January 1944. At this juncture, a change in the tactical employment of US fighters took place which was more far-reaching in its effects than any of the increases in range. Up to this point, because of the limited number of escort fighters available, they had operated under the strict injunction that their duty was to "protect the bombers." This method of employment resulted in flying relatively close to the bombers in order to block enemy attacks. It placed US fighters in a defensive position, leaving the initiative to the enemy. US pilots spent all their time "looking over their shoulder." With the increased strength of fighter escort, tactics were changed to more fully exploit the characteristics of fighter aircraft. The fighters were now charged with the primary duty of "pursuing and destroying the enemy." Although a third of the escort remained in constant final defense of the bombers, the rest ranged out from the bomber formations watching for the appearance of hostile aircraft. Upon sighting the enemy, this "ranging escort" would attack and pursue him wherever he fled. The enemy soon lost the initiative. He was hunted and harassed wherever he flew.



"Black 11" Bf 109 E-4

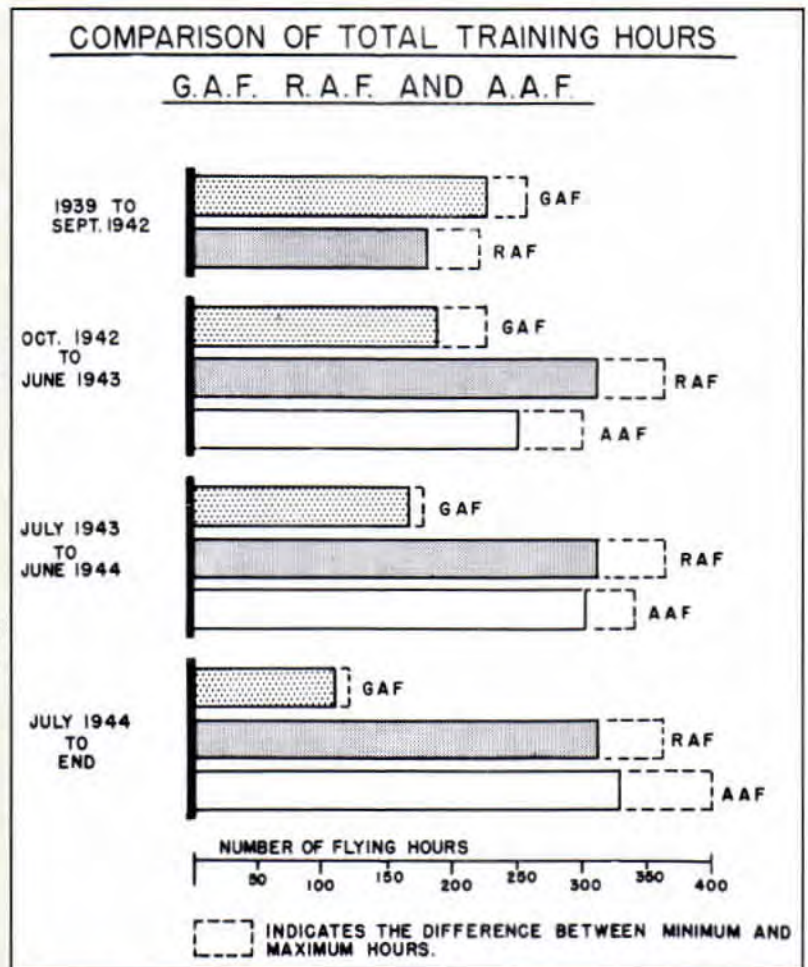
STRAIGHT FROM JAKE!

Enemy losses began to rise sharply. Lieutenant General Karl Koller, Chief of Staff of the Luftwaffe, stated in this connection that the American long-range fighter cover came as something new and fatal to Germany. Without this cover, Koller had hoped to be able to inflict losses as high as 30 per cent upon unescorted bombers which, in his opinion, would have made the continuation of the bombing attacks impossible. He laid considerable stress on the fact that neither the British nor the Germans thought of fighters except in terms of the last war and of narrow ranges associated with land warfare in Europe. The German aircraft industry had claimed that an effective long-range fighter could not be built.

m. May 1944. Enemy loss rates mounted rapidly on the Western Front while US bomber and fighter losses declined at the same rate. Enemy opposition to the bomber raids had grown very little numerically in the last nine months. The number of bombers in US task forces had multiplied by four in the same time period, and fighter escort numbers also had become four times as great. The GAF by this time could oppose only part of one of the US task forces. The remainder of that task force plus two other entire air divisions were often able to fly the full route without seeing a hostile fighter. By late May 1944, the war in the air against the GAF was won. The exploitation of air superiority was now possible.

n. June 1944. On 6 June the Allies landed on the Normandy beaches. The final phase of air preparation had started on 17 April with the bombing of enemy airfields over a wide area to rid the battle zone of enemy aircraft. By the day of the assault, the GAF had been forced to deploy to airfields beyond the cleared zone. The constant bombing had caused GAF tactical units to disperse aircraft in woods and hiding places well away from airfields. Regarding the invasion, General Feldmarschall Hugo von Sperrle spoke as follows: "At the time of the invasion, fewer than 500 operational planes were available to meet it; Allied attacks against airfields in the few days preceding D-Day made the use of these planes for the most part impossible; as a result, we could offer no resistance." From D-Day to the end of the war, the GAF never constituted more than a harassing threat to our surface operations.

The "pursuing the enemy" policy was established shortly after Gen. James Doolittle took command of the 8th Air Force on 14 January 1944, as a direct order from him. -Ed.



Training Chart - German Pilots and Allied Pilots



Luke Doheny, wartime artist, did the drawings for a number of informational publications which were distributed to 8th Air Force service personnel on airbases throughout England.

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421 Wilson St.#2 Clinton, MA 01510

Michigan Maurice Sumney 1595 W.
Center Ave. Suite 108 Portage, MI

Minnesota Clyde Thompson 4429
Dunham Dr. Edina, MN 55435-4139

Mississippi Howard Richardson 39
Westridge Dr. Brandon, MS 39047

Missouri Frank Siler 11501 Baltimore
Kansas City, MO 64414

National Capitol Area Regner Rider
1704 Maple Hill Pl. Alexandria, VA
22302

Nebraska Roy C. Stroud 2622 N
56th St. Omaha, NE 68104-4212

New Jersey Irving Pliskin 36 Lafferty
Dr. Cherry Hill, NJ 08002

New Mexico Hal Goetsch 4236
Louisiana Blvd. NE Albuquerque, NM
87109-1807

New York (Central) Louis Lupi
P.O.Box 218 Burnt Hills, NY 12027-
0218

New York (South) Gus Nathan
P.O.Box 297 Centuck Station
Yonkers, NY

New York (West) Richard H. Waring
602 Birchwood Dr. Lockport, NY
14094-9162

North Carolina George Hood 700
Mills St. Raleigh, NC 27608

Ohio Roger Laib 1444 Hill Av.
Cincinnati, OH 45231

Oregon John Horne 32475 S.W.
Estates Post Rd. Wilsonville, OR
97302

Pennsylvania Arthur E. Swanson
505 Honeysuckle Ct. Pine Grove, PA
17963

Rhode Island Eric A. Spurrier 1130
Narragansett Pkwy. Warwick, RI
02888-4741

Savannah GA R. K. Hoddinott, Jr. 2
White Horse Ln. Savannah, GA 31411

Tennessee James L. Bass P.O.Box
500 Carthage, TN 37030-0500

Texas (Rio Grand) Perry Kerr Box
576 Three Rivers, TX 78071

Texas (North) Clarence (Kit) Carson
1659 Burton Hill Rd. Ft. Worth, TX
76017

Utah Claude Sherwin 1951 East
Terrace Dr. Sandy, UT 84093-6940

Virginia James E. Trask 1184
Jamestown Rd. Apt. 35 Williamsburg,
VA 23185-3357

Washington Gregory S. Pierce 1600
28th Av. W Seattle, WA 98199

West Virginia Jack Kings 3376
Magnolia St. Huntington, WV 25704

Wisconsin William Bergner, Jr.
9632 W. Metcalf Pl. Milwaukee, WI
53222-2657

I Was Only "A Volunteer"

written at Cochran Field Macon, Georgia 1942

Why didn't I wait to be drafted and be led
To the train by a band,
Or put in a claim for exemption.
Oh why did I hold up my hand.
Nobody gave me a banquet,
Nobody said a kind word, the puff of an
Engine, the grind of a wheel was the only
Good-bye that I heard.
Then off to the Camp I was hustled
To be drilled for the next half a year,
And in the scuffle forgotten
For I was only a volunteer.
And now someday in the future as a child
Sits on my knee,
And asks what I did in the Army,
Its little brown eyes look at me.
I shall have to look back at those little
Brown eyes that at me so trustingly peer,
And confess I wasn't a draftee,
I was only a Volunteer.



In memory of Sgt. Paul Postel, submitted by Phillip Moody, Union, ME

Reunions

351ST BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

28th Annual Reunion June 12-16, 2003

Choo Choo Holiday Inn
Chattanooga TN

Contact: Clint Hammond, PO 281,
Mechanicsburg PA 17055
Tel (717) 766-1489

436TH FIGHTER SQUADRON - 479TH FIGHTER GROUP

September 28-October 1, 2003

Biltmore Hotel, Oklahoma City, OK
Contact: Edward Akin, 10528 Willow
Ridge Drive, Midwest City, OK
73130-6034. Telephone (405) 732-
5169.

452ND BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

October 2-5, 2003

Mariott Hotel in Oklahoma City, OK
Contact: Hank North, 901 Poling
Drive, Columbus, OH 43224-1936 or
call 1-800-452-9099.

361ST FIGHTER GROUP ASSOCIATION

October 12-16

Holiday Inn in Shreveport, La.
Contact: Murff O'Neal, 235 Bruce
Ave., Shreveport, La. 71105
Telephone: 318-861-7840 or Dave
Landin, 8419 Michael Rd., Richmond,
VA. 23229. Phone: 804-288-5998
FAX: 804-288-5999 email:
d.c.landin@verizon.net

78TH FIGHTER GROUP ASSOCIATION

September 11-14, 2003

Crowne Plaza Hotel in Dayton, Ohio
Contact: Tommy and Randy Thain
803-359-2106 email:
tommy51@earthlink.net.

34TH BOMB GROUP

September 10-14, 2003
Radisson Hotel in San Antonio, TX

390TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

September 9-14, 2003
Cincinnati airport Erlanger -
Covington, KY

Contact: Ken Rowland, P.O. Box
28363, Spokane, WA 99228-8363
Telephone 509-467-2565, FAX 509-
467-2565, email: rkenrow@aol.com.

SECOND SCHWEINFURT MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

October 10-15, 2003

Washington Athletic Club and Hotel
Seattle WA

Contact: Arvid Dahl (253) 853-5409
arv246@aol.com

27TH AIR TRANSPORT GROUP ASSOCIATION

September 11-13, 2003

Spokane, Washington
Contact: Don Diehm 246 Laurelwood
Lane
Horseshoe, NC 28742 (828) 891-
5422

306th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

December 4-7, 2003

Savannah, Georgia
Contact: Russell Strong,
Editor *306th Echoes*
5323 Cheval Pl., Charlotte, NC
28205

305th BOMB GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

September 16-21, 2003

At the Gault House Hotel in
Louisville, KY
Contact: John Butler, 858 Donna Dr.,
Orange, CT 06477
Tel (203) 795-3020

NINTH AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION

September 20-23, 2003

At the Salt Lake City
Plaza Hotel (Best
Western) in Salt Lake
City, Utah.

Contact: Fern Mann,
Secretary, 135
Riverwalk Place,
Memphis, TN 38103 Phone: (901)
578-5333
FAX: 901-578-9999. Email:
cmann1525@aol.com



100TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

October 8-12, 2003, Houston, TX

Adams Mark Hotel
Contact Bill Clift 12423 Overcup Dr.,
Houston, TX 77024
(713) 461-4150
gafuller@webtv.net

37TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

October 8-12, 2003

Salt Lake City Hilton
POW Symposium on Friday
Contact: Teresa Cabawski
Tel 303-697-6265
email Cabawski@aol.com

490TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

October 8 - 11, 2003

San Antonio TX Radisson Hotel
Contact: Fred Seals 405-321-1522
Email: fseals@aol.com

25TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

October 5 - 10, 2003

San Diego CA
Contact: J. Sheen 13003 N. 12th
Ave. Phoenix AZ 85029-1755
tel. 602-863-3142



MISSING AIRCREW REPORT # 6721

by Brian Lindner

In a secure area of the National Archives is the original file for Missing Aircrew Report (MACR) #6721. This MACR is remarkably short and gives only the vaguest hint of the whole story behind the loss of 2nd Lt. John H. Hansen's crew on June 29, 1944 over Fallersleben, Germany. Lt. Hansen's crew was assigned to the 493rd Bomb Group stationed at Debach in southeastern England. The MACR also gives no hint to the existence of a very famous photograph that shows his B-24 Liberator at the very instant it met its fate. The photo has been widely published in books, articles and even advertisements since the war.

The plane in question was B-24H #42-94812, known as "Little Warrior." Lt. J.J. Oling's crew picked it up as a brand new plane in Idaho and flew it to England. This same crew flew it on a number of combat missions before being transferred. Oling had personally applied the nose art to *Little Warrior* and recalls the Liberator as a valiant warbird.

The MACR provides a brief description of what happened to *Little Warrior*:

"Aircraft No. 812 flying No. 3 position in A group received a direct flak hit near No. 3 engine at 0939 in the target area just after bombs away. It was enveloped in flames from the nose to the rear of the bomb bays. It fell out of formation and disintegrated at about 10,000 feet."

It lists only one eyewitness to the loss of Hansen's crew: 1st Lt. Benjamin L. Mims, but it provides no details of what he had seen. The MACR did not list S/Sgt. Clifford Stocking who was standing at the left

waist window of the lead aircraft, The *Green Hornet* (B-24 #44-40286) flying the No. 1 position to the immediate right of *Little Warrior*.

In 1997, Stocking wrote what happened from his viewpoint. "Our pilot, Capt. Marion G. Lloyd, called me and asked if we had a camera on board and I told him we did have a K-20, so he asked me to take some pictures of the bomb run. Just as I looked out, Hansen got hit. I snapped one shot and dropped the camera - you can see that the plane is veering in toward us. I snapped on my chute

etc. A loud crash told me that something must have come down in the back of my house. Upon going there I saw parts of a plane's cockpit behind the houses 7/9 & 9/11 Birkenweg."

Only copilot Lt. S.A. Benson managed to get out and deploy his parachute. Whether he was able to get out before the plane exploded or if he was blown clear will never be known. As soon as he hit the ground, he stood up, removed his parachute, and raised his hands. His captors included German police and a member of the nearby Luftwaffe flak battery. Benson became a Prisoner of War.

At the end of the war, the Americans captured the Luftwaffe "KU" files. These were records maintained by the Germans to document

the identity of Allied aircrews that were killed or captured in Germany. Luftwaffe "KU" file #2389 contains the dog tags of six members of the crew. One once hung around the neck of Tailgunner S/Sgt W.A. Boykowski. It is badly burned and dented.

Three aircrew bodies were found in the wreckage. Other bodies were found nearby and were gathered that evening by local firemen. Members of the Luftwaffe searched the bodies and removed their dog tags. The body of S/Sgt Billy Gomillion was so battered that they were unable to find any identification and he was buried



The Hansen Crew

Lt. Hansen standing beneath prop; Lt. Benson second from left. R/O Jose Ramos, who missed the final flight due to illness is kneeling second from right.

and looked out the waist window, I watched the *Little Warrior* until it went out of sight below us. I did not see a chute get out or see it explode."

It seems that the plane went down in three major pieces. German witness Albert Konitz stated, "During the air raid I was standing in front of my house at 1 Birkenweg and saw when a heavy thing came down on the roof of the house opposite, which I discovered to be a bullet-proof vest. Several other articles fell to the ground around the house, like a life-raft, an oxygen tank, canned food



as "Unknown." When exhumed in March 1946, Americans found both of his dog tags where the Germans had missed them, still with his remains.

The crew was buried side-by-side in the "enemy" section of the nearby Forest Cemetery outside Wolfsburg. All indications are that the crew was buried with respect although bodies were not in caskets and the graves were not marked. The Germans had identified the first seven of the crew but were unable to identify the last two. Lt. Hansen was buried as an "unknown" although they had the leather name tag from the left breast area of his flight suit. Under his name, Hansen had written in ink, "Big Dog" – perhaps a reference to himself as the pilot. Eleven days later, an additional burned body was accidentally found in a field outside of Wolfsburg. He was buried with the rest of his crew.

In March 1946, an American Graves Registration team opened the graves and made preliminary identifications of most of the crew. Upon viewing the 10th body, now known to have been Lt. Benson, they could not establish an identity but recognized he was different from the others. Benson was quickly reburied in the same location but now as "Unknown X-1118." In a document written by S/Sgt. H.E. Aaron of the 612th Quartermaster Graves Registration Company he stated, "all facts point to an atrocity case."

It didn't take long for the Americans to return to Wolfsburg and begin an investigation into the death of Unknown X-1118. The investigators began to uncover evidence that Air Raid Wardens had beaten a flyer to death outside the local hospital. As more and more Germans were interviewed, the story of Lt. Benson's fate came to light.

When Benson landed, he immediately surrendered by raising his hands. A Luftwaffe crewman from a nearby flak battery ran to the scene and took him into custody, with possible assis-

tance from a local policeman. The flak crewman returned to his station due to the bomber formation still being overhead. He turned Benson over to Helmuth Lippman, a former soldier in the German Army and current commander of the local Hitler Youth.

Lippman covered Benson with his German 6.35mm pistol and indicated to him to march the few hundred yards to the outskirts of Wolfsburg. He followed Benson on a bicycle. He later alleged that Benson made a sudden run for freedom and they shot him as an escaping POW. Benson was hit by at least three bullets in the lower left pelvis. All German witnesses, including Lippman, stated that Benson continued to keep his hands raised. Lt. Benson staggered as the bullets hit him, but he did not fall. He continued as directed toward the town. Lippman marched Benson to the local hospital. He claimed to have turned the young flyer over to a group of Air Raid Wardens while he went to call the police station to request directions on how to handle his prisoner. When he returned, he claimed that the wardens had beaten Benson with fists, feet and steel helmets. One of Benson's arms was broken as he tried to defend himself. It is clear that Benson was brutally beaten and, when taken into the hospital grounds minutes later, was dragged to a shed or garage where he was left unattended on the floor. Twelve hours later, doctors learned of the American flyer and directed that he be brought into the hospital proper. Benson was carried to the tuberculosis ward and received some basic care. He was unconscious and had a great deal of head and facial trauma. German doctors examined Benson just prior to his death but concluded there was nothing they could do to save his life. They diagnosed a major skull fracture but never were able to conclusively say if it was that or the bullet wounds that caused his death. Within an hour, he was dead.

After the war, American investigators hunted down Lippmann and several of the Air Raid Wardens. Three men were formally charged with War Crimes as follows:

In that Robert Buhler, Kurt Kuhnert and Helmuth Lippmann, German Nationals, did, at or in Wolfsburg, Germany, on or about 29 June 1944, willfully, deliberately and wrongfully encourage, aid, abet and participate in the killing of a member of the United States Army, believed to be 2nd Lt. Sidney A. Benson, ASN O-818558, who was then and there a surrendered and unarmed prisoner of war in the custody of the German Reich.

The charges against Buhler were soon dropped. Americans determined that they did not have enough evidence to arrest several others who were believed to have participated in the beating.

Lippman and Kuhnert remained in jail until April 4, 1947 when their trial by military tribunal began. Sentence was pronounced almost immediately. Kuhnert was sentenced to life imprisonment and Lippman to death by hanging. The court ruled that Lippman had purposely tried to kill Benson by shooting and that Kuhnert had participated in the beating while Lt. Benson was a legitimate and protected POW.

Upon automatic review by a higher military tribunal, Kuhnert's conviction was overturned and he was set free on April 13, 1948. In a similar review, Lippman's sentence was reduced to 25 years, but he was a model prisoner and was eventually paroled in 1954.

In 1996, a few short links of .50 cal machine gun ammunition and other small wreckage from *Little Warrior* was found in Wolfsburg during new construction.

An Epilogue from the 493rd Bomb Group Association newsletter editor, William Rawson, will appear in December 8th AF News. –Editor

NOMINEES FOR EIGHTH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society Nominating Committee presents the following candidates for the Board of Directors. Three positions are to be filled by voting at the Annual Reunion on October 18, 2003.

Murray Codman, Member #16293
447th Bomb Group, 35 missions as Top Turret Gunner; DFC and six Air Medals. Following tour, assigned as Aircraft Instrumentation and Bomb Sight Instructor. 8AFHS member since 1988, attended every reunion since. First full-time 447th Bomb Group Association PX Manager which became profitable enabling placement of memorials in England, France and the U.S.A. President of 447th Association 1993-1995. President of 8AFHS General Curtis LeMay Chapter, 1998 to present. President of California Chamber of Commerce 1985-1990. Commander of Jewish Veterans, named U.S. Army Air Force Veteran of the Year by Los Angeles City Council.
Nominated by Orlando A. "Pete" Petrillo.

Arthur W. Fonzo, Life Member #29544
B.S. Fordham University 1961, 2nd Lieutenant USAF, assigned as Supply

Officer 1961. Volunteered for Missile Crew, 556th Strategic Missile Squadron, 8th AF; Atlas "F" Atlas ICBM Launch Crew 1962-1964, Cuban Missile problem October 1962. Active with Georgia Chapter Board of Directors, Special Projects Manager. Nominated by Henry Hughey.

Gerald J. Miller, Member #17868
353rd Fighter Group, P-51 Pilot with 22 combat missions, credited with 11 enemy aircraft destroyed on strafing missions, DFC and Air Medal with clusters. B.S. Hartwick College 1948, M.S. University of Rochester 1954, M.S.W. University of Ottawa 1958. Professor of Graduate School of Social Work at State University of New York, Buffalo, 1961-1994. Service as regional Vice President of P-51 Mustang Pilots Association, archivist of P-40 Pilots Association. Member of P-47 Pilots Association, 8th AF Heritage Museum, U.S. Air Force Museum, Dayton, Ohio. Board of Directors of Aero Club of Buffalo several years. Served as Historian, Vice President and three terms as President of 8AFHS Western New York Chapter.
Nominated by Edgar G. "Gerry" Scoones.

John S. Pearson, Life Member #20776
457th Bomb Group, Glatton, Navigator. Retired as Deputy Superintendent of Virginia State Police with 38 years service. Secretary of 8AFHS Virginia Chapter 1995-2000. Current Treasurer of 457th Bomb Group Association. Completing four-year term on 8AFHS

Board of Directors, three years as Secretary.
Nominated by Colonel James E. Trask.

Byron Schlag, Life Member #19528
447th Bomb Group. B.S. Marketing and Economics, Cornell University, 1955. Retired 2000, Marketing Consultant to Industry. Four years as President, 8AFHS National Capital Area Chapter; President two years of 447th Bomb Group Association. Member: 8AFHS Western Pennsylvania Wing, Military Order of Purple Heart, Disabled American Veterans, American Ex-POW's, Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, National Sheriffs Association, Commemorative Air Force.
Nominated by Larry Goldstein.

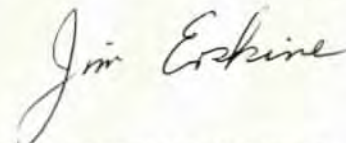
Earl E. Wassom, Member #25743
466th Bomb Group, Attlebridge, pilot, 35 combat missions, 8 gasoline hauls into France. Five Air Medals, Purple Heart, four European Campaign Stars, Distinguished Unit Citation. A.B. from Southern Nazarene University, M.A. from East Tennessee State University, Ed.D. from Oklahoma State University. Career included clergyman, educator and administrator. Retired 1985 as Professor Emeritus and Dean Emeritus of Academic Services, Western Kentucky University. Active in several Air Force Veteran's Organizations, served on policy-making committees, President of the 2nd Air Division Association, frequent contributor to several veteran publications.
Nominated by R.C. "Dick" Baynes.

UNIT/CHAPTER DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

TO ALL UNIT ASSOCIATIONS

Not all Units have finalized their 2004 reunion plans. For those that have not, the Committee would like to give you some incentives to join the Historical Society for your reunion. First off, the reunion will be held from October 5th through October 10th, 2004 at the Westin Crown Plaza in Kansas City, Missouri. That should take a load off your Reunion Committee because they now know when and where. Next, all tours, meals and other functions will be arranged for them. Your Unit will have the opportunity to hold a business meeting. They will sit together at the banquet and at the Rendezvous dinner. Any Unit that has 10 or more people in attendance and they have registered before the cut off date will receive \$5.00 per person. Also, a free hospitality room will be provided for all Bomb Groups or Fighter Groups that have

at least 50 in attendance and they are staying at the Crown Plaza Hotel. All other smaller Units will receive a free hospitality room if they have at least 25 in attendance and they are staying at the Crown Plaza Hotel. Your \$5.00 rebate will not be affected by this. This whole package was approved by the Historical Society Board of Directors at the Mid-year Board meeting. A letter from the Committee will be going to all Unit Associations explaining the details of these arrangements. This may be a one time deal so do not expect it for sure in 2005.



For the Committee, Jim Erskine, Chairman

OCTOBER 8-14, 2003
MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE WEEK
Show your colors!

CHAPTERS REINFORCE LEGACY OF 8TH AIR FORCE

by Byron Schlag, 447th BG
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Many years ago when I was President of the National Capital Area Chapter of the 8th AF Historical Society, it became obvious that the schoolchildren of today knew nothing of WW II. To make it even worse the school curriculums did not offer WW II history to the student body. This resulted in a number of requests to our members to speak at groups and classes to educate our young children about this very important event in our history.

The NCAC and the Collings Foundation initiated a program whereby the students would have one full day to tour the Collings B-17 and B-24. After touring the planes, each group of children went into a hangar at which time Chapter veterans of the 8th would explain their experiences and take questions from the kids. This hands-on approach leaves an indelible impression on the students and their teachers.

The program has now expanded to 400 students per yearly field trip, with more and more requests coming in each year.



Dear Mr. Schlag,

Thank you so much for giving us the opportunity to experience first hand the bomber planes from World War II. Our students truly had a memorable day at the Allegheny County airport. The students will long remember the stories the 8th airmen told that day. We are grateful for the experience and all the time your men gave us.

Sincerely,

**Mrs. Cathy Drake and
Mrs. Jean Saunders
Western Pennsylvania
School for the Deaf**



8th Veterans touring the aircraft



Byron Schlag in the classroom

Mail Call

EARLY ON

Dear Sir,

I'm writing this to correct a small error in Luther's Cox's letter in the December 2002 issue. The 93rd Bomb Group (B-24s) couldn't have flown their first mission on 9 August 1942 if they didn't leave the States until September 1942.

I'm not just trying to be picky, but the credit for the first American Heavy bomb mission out of England goes to the 97th Bomb Group (B-17s) which bombed the marshalling yards at Rouen, France on 17 August, 1942. The 97th departed Goose Bay, Labrador for England via Bluie West 1 or Bluie West 8, Greenland; then to Reykjavik Iceland; then on to Prestwick, Scotland. Due to weather, eleven of the planes made forced landings due to low fuel. All were safe. The fourth plane, #19043, flown by Fred Dallas and navigated by Knox Oakley landed safely at Bluie West 8. One of his downed planes, #0032, "My Gal Sal" piloted by Ralf Stinson has been recovered from the ice cap and is being restored as a static display at Blue Ash, Ohio. Fred Dallas landed #19043, "Peggy D" in Prestwick in 4, July, 1942. The group proceeded to bases at Polebrook and Grafton Underwood. After a good deal of training, we became operational. Our stay in England was short-lived as we departed for North Africa in November, 1942.

Edward J. Leary, 97th BG
Santa Clara, CA

FIGHTERS

Dear Dr. Brown,

I was fortunate to view the telecast of the P51 Group (352nd FG) which flew with the 8th in England during WWII. It was interesting that quite a few of the "Blue Nose Bastards of Bodney" appeared in such good health! Although this group may have flown in support of many of the Second Air Division missions (normally P-51's flew beyond 200 miles), as a navigator I was not up on fighter support except on one mission when

the Luftwaffe attacked our group over Hanover, Germany. We really needed fighters on the mission to Munich. Timing was an element in fighter effectiveness.
Sincerely,
George Risko
Troy, MI

GOONEY BIRDS

Dear Mr. Brown,

As a Life Member of the 8th AF Historical Society I would like to echo the sentiments expressed by Leslie Viet in Mail Call in the December 2002 issue of the 8th AF NEWS. In all my years of reading the 8th AF NEWS I cannot recall a mention of the Gooney Bird (C-47) in any way, shape or form. Considering the role they played in the overall war effort in Europe, this is a very serious omission. After all, we were in the same Air Force.

I know Leslie Viet, and whereof he speaks; we were in adjoining squadrons in the 27th Air Transport Group. What he says about the accomplishments of the Gooney Birds is not exaggerated. A little research will bear this out. Further to your comment to Mr. Viet's letter about future articles on the Berlin Airlift. The C-47's we flew in as crew members in the 27th ATG, and those in our sister outfit, the 31st Transport Group, were the very ones used in the initial efforts on the Berlin Airlift. They did the job until the C-54's could be mustered and flown in. Once again the ubiquitous Gooney Bird was in the front lines.

Sincerely yours,

Fred Garcia
325th Ferrying Squadron
27th Air Transport Group
Glendale, AZ

LOW MEMORIAL CHAPEL WINDOW

To: F.C. "Hap" Chandler
Atlanta, GA.

Dear Hap,

I traveled to Savannah for my first look at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum and the dedication

of the 453rd stained glass window created in Andy's (Andrew S. Low, Jr.) memory. It was a trip that I wish each of you could take, as the Museum itself is wonderful - a very imposing building with a marvelous collection of memorabilia all would truly enjoy.

On the grounds of the museum, amidst many poignant memorials to those who have served in the 8th Air Force scattered throughout the grounds, is an incredible chapel very much like one you would see in the English countryside. Named the "Chapel of the Fallen Eagles," it is just the right size, perfectly positioned, with a quiet dignity. Inside, the windows stand out in vivid colors, each with wonderfully significant symbolism to remember the deeds and people who have contributed so much to our country. We know Bill and Dottie Eagleson, along with Frank and Jackie Thomas, conceived of this project long ago. We also know that they did not limit it to a 453rd project, but also included other 8th Air Force groups and Andy's classmates from the Class of 1942 at West Point. The fact that so many different individuals from Andy's career were involved just heightens our appreciation for the project.

We are honored that our daughter, Jessica Low Kalfian, an artist and jewelry designer, was asked to design the window. She did the preliminary drawings and included logos for the 8th Air Force, West Point, the USAF, and most importantly, the B-24 airplane. The window is just inside the main entrance to the chapel, and the execution of her design was extraordinary. It is hard to describe our awe in having Andy remembered in such a special manner.

It is so difficult to find the words to describe how meaningful this window



The Low Window

Mail Call

is to my family and me. To know that so many of you cared enough to bring the project to fruition is very humbling. Andy considered the military life he chose as a privilege to serve and he did so with great respect and honor. Thank you so much for recognizing this and helping to create a lasting memorial to your shared experience.

Thank you for your help in planning the 453rd window. Also we were grateful for your presence at the ceremony.

Sincerely,
Helen F. Low
Narragansett, RI

LOST LOVE

Dear Walter:

Because there were so many, during WWII, who had broken love affairs and marriages due to the time and the conflict, I am suggesting that now at this late date some tribute be given to those who "carried on" after getting the well known "Dear John" letters: I enclose a copy of a poem that took place during the war, sent to me by my beloved. I went back only recently. Ours was the result of a long engagement and a "quickie" marriage in Florida where the 3 day limit was by-passed, and as it turned out the marriage was not legal.

Poem Written by Mary Anne Thomson To Her Lover and Fiance In 1945 During World War II; Capt Harlan G. Oakes

*There was a time when all my life revolved about an hour with you when nothing in the world seemed right
If you weren't there to share it too.*

*There was a time my heart stood still
If you smiled, your laughter filled an empty world with light and glee
Like tinsel on a Christmas tree.*

*That time long gone, I seek to keep
in memory, and senseless rhyme*

*And yet I know there was a time
There was a time, when you were mine.*

As a censor of stateside and overseas mail from GI's of all ranks, I found that the promises and the vows were so ill-used and so many fellows, and girls too, were left with broken promises and broken hearts. It is an area that has never been touched either in the media or in the Unit archives, as far as I can see. I come home in May '45 with a new ring and a promise of that which I have not to this day recovered from. Mary Ann's poem was written in April '45 just before my return. In 1997 I searched for months to find her, having lost my wife of 48 years just before this effort.

To those who got to marry and keep the great loves of their lives the enclosed will not affect, but to many that I ran across that were not faithful or had a change of heart, or were not committed, the enclosed will empathize therewith.

I am now 90, and in good health, but still as lonely as I was the day I was turned away by my first wife in 1945. Only recently did I find her sister who told me that Mary Ann died in 1987, with my letters and my picture in her bed, and this did not ease the pain. If this aspect of a GI's life has any place in the course of history of WWII, then print the enclosed; if not, mark it down to the thoughts of a romantic and sentimental old fool.

*Oh love that will not let me go
that haunts my every thought,
to be forever with thee
is something God has wrought*

*Where ever you are, be it near or far,
please ask the angels around you
to let you go, and let me know
that I will again have found you.*

Our ranks are thinning all too fast.
Best regards,
Harlan Oakes

Vandenberg Village, CA

BLACK 109'S

Dear Sir:

Regarding the question whether there were any black-painted ME 109's in the Luftwaffe, Capt. Juchheim in his conversation with editor Brown, who wrote the article in the March 2003 issue (03-1), states Juchheim had a conversation with a General who claimed he had a black airplane with a number 5. Also his wingman saw a black airplane go down and the pilot bailed out. Could this pilot have been Guther Rall from JG 11 who later was a General in NATO?

I have a lithograph with a certificate of authenticity by artist John D. Shaw and validated by aviation historian Larry T. Chambers. The photo shows a ME 109, and it appears to be black, in a dogfight with four P-47s from the Zemke 56th Group. The ME 109 (Rall) was after Zemke and nearly got him after shooting down both of his wingmen. Zemke managed to escape and head back to England. The four P-47s pursued Rall and he dove for tree top level with one P-47 following him and saw Rall bail out.

Sincerely,
Angelo A. DeCarlo
56th FG Service Group
Morgantown, WV

BONNIE-B REPRISE

Dear Walter:

Thank you for the pictures and story of my ship the *Bonnie-B* in the June 2003 issue of the 8th AF News. I have never seen the pictures shown. I would like to express my gratitude to James Crow of Elmhurst, Illinois who furnished you the pictures.

SEQUEL TO THE FINAL MISSION OF THE BONNIE-B

I want to tell you the rest of the story concerning the *Bonnie-B* and how I'll always be grateful to our 359th Bomb Squadron Commander, Lt. Col. Richard H. Cole, who wanted to fly my ship back from the emergency

Mail Call

landing strip A62, near Paris, France, after her last mission with two engines out.

M/Sgt./Crew Chiefs were assigned periodically to serve as charge-of-Quarters (CQ). His responsibility was to relay a message from squadron headquarters if a mission was scheduled the next morning. This meant, I as the CQ, would stay up all night and then wake up all the ground personnel for breakfast and then go out and pre-flight the ships. I had just gone to bed, after being CQ, when someone shook me and said Lt. Col. Cole wants to talk to you on the phone. Much to my surprise and delight, he told me to get my tool box ready because he was going to fly to France and fly the *Bonnie-B* back to Molesworth. I recall we taxied out to the runway for the take off and ready

letter from a young German, asking for information about my 10 April 45 shoot down over his home town Oranenburg, Germany, just north of Berlin. I wrote him a fairly detailed account of my getting shot down. I mentioned a P-51 pilot (no name) because I felt it would be of no value to him. Turns out he had been in touch with the P-51 pilot, shot down the same day as I. He sent my name to the P-51 pilot Joe Petersburg in Colorado Springs, Co. Petersburg and I had escaped from prison camp together, and had not seen or heard



C-47s

Dear Walt,
For a long time I wondered if any other 8th AFHS member can honestly say that they have driven a car higher than they flew. Let me explain. My first ever plane ride was in a new fresh off the line C-47 at Long Beach. Then I was trained in Troop Carrier operations at Sedalia. All my flying was in planes with no oxygen equipment so we never went above the 'glass ceiling' of 10,000 feet. On a trip out west after the war we went through Rocky Mountain National Park on US. Rt 34. At the highest point the sign read Elevation 12,138 feet, so you see I have driven a car higher than I have ever flown. I wonder how many others can say the same.

Sincerely,
Les Viet

The troops will get their chance at the 8th AFHS annual reunion in Colorado Springs this October. Nearby Pikes Peak is over 14,000 feet high. -Ed.

OLD PILOT

I wish in the past I had joined the 8th Air Force Historical Society, but attempting to join now makes me feel better. I thought I would pass on a rather unusual way to enter the 8th. I as most all cadets went through a Primary Flight School and for me it was at Cape Girardeau, Missouri and the Basic at Walnut Ridge, Arkansas. and finally to twin engine at Stuttgart, Ark., with great instructors at all three flight schools. I personally wished I could have talked to those three and given them my thanks. After the three Cadets programs we found ourselves with wings on our blouse and bars on our collars along with papers directing us to fly a combat aircraft. My personal orders were to Maxwell Air Field at Montgomery, Alabama. Here was the first time I had ever seen a B-24 Liberator. Here again I spent many hours with a profound instructor, and in a couple of weeks I felt very comfortable in this giant airplane. I received directions to report to Davis Monthan Air Field in Tucson,



Bill Zachar with *Aluminum Overcast*

to roll on our E-W runway when we were stopped dead in our tracks. Lt. Col. Cole received a call from our Control Tower, stating that the 41st Combat Wing said to cancel the flight and leave the *Bonnie-B* for salvage purposes. You can imagine how I felt to have to abandon an old work-horse like the *Bonnie-B*. The 303rd Bomb Group put up 39 ships that day and she was the only one that didn't make it back.

Sincerely,
Bill Zachar Davenport, IA
303rd BG- Crew Chief *Bonnie-B*

THE YOUNG ONES

Dear Walter:
A year ago - April 02 - I received a

from each other since. We had forgotten each other's name, but the young German had recognized that our stories were similar - that we must have been together. Turns out to be the case.

This led to pictures and stories in the German Newspapers. A Danish Author, Erik Dyreborg, picked up on this - thus the book "The Young Ones" includes our story. Sincerely,
Frank E. Lewis, 398th BG
Mobile, AL
P.S. As a sidelight, I was in Templehoff in Berlin with a P-51 pilot Captain Richard Tracy. Joe Tracy and Joe Petersburg were in the same squadron, we all ended up at Lucheuwalde POW camp. Tracy was four days late in getting to Templehoff. I asked him what happened since we were shot down same day. He said he landed in Herman Goering's backyard and they had grilled him for three days.

Arizona.

I picked up a crew of nine in Omaha on the way to Tucson and from that day on (59 years) we have continued as a close group and we that are still alive still communicate often.

Tucson area was great but we were flying almost every day in a formation and we continued to bomb the Boulder Dam and the Navy fleet in the bay at San Diego. We did not harm anything but we got some great photos. We did drop some small bombs at targets in the desert area. We finally arrived at Liverpool England by troop ship. As we were leaving the deck I heard my name called and I was given papers which directed my team and myself to Chelveston, by train. We were met with a driver who took us to the 305th Air Station and a room for the night. I slept well. When I got up in the morning I looked out the window and all I could see were B-17s. I ran to headquarters telling them they made a mistake. They soon made it clear they did not make a mistake. I was told to take my time in loving the B-17 and forget the B-24. I spent 5 to 10 hours of flying in the local area, plus a lot of time studying the instrument locations. It did not take me long to love my new plane and feel I was given a positive advantage. With my crew we flew 31 missions. I do not know why I wrote this note. I guess I needed to write for my own needs.

Sincerely,

An 81 year-old pilot
Robert Armstrong, 305th BG
Battle Creek, MI

BRAMPTON GRANGE

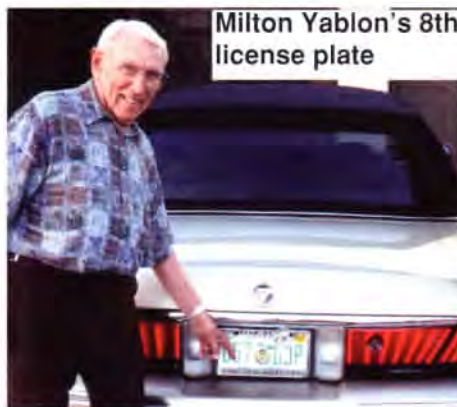
Dear Editor,

I was a member of Headquarters, Headquarters Squadron, 1st Air Division at Brampton Grange, near Huntington, England. I was part of the transportation and inspection team, going to many different air bases everyday watching the bombers take off and to be there when they returned. I took the film of the Schweinfurt raid to Kodak in

London and saw the damages this raid had on the planes that returned and to realize how many in these groups did not return.

I've been associated with the 8th Air Force Historical Society since 1979. I've saved all the books since then and enjoy rereading them.

Very truly yours,
Milton Yablon, HQ, 1st AD
West Palm Beach, FL



Milton Yablon's 8th license plate

P.S. I played drums with the Flying Forts Dance Band, if anyone remembers this group. We played in all the Red Cross Clubs and the bases in our Division and in Cambridge.

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTION

To the 8th AF News:

This is to inform you that we are sending a memorial donation for Col. Clarence "Rusty" Webb Jr. USAF (Ret). The Lord called him home on 3-19-03 and he answered the call. The Col.'s wife, Muriel Webb, wanted us to send this in memory of Col. Rusty Webb.

Thank you for the greatness you all do. We love our guys and girls in uniform and we thank you for the goodness you did for this country.

Sincerely,

The Staff of The One Day Services
Palms of Pasadena Hospital
South Pasadena, FL

8 AFHS REUNION

Hi Walter,

Yesterday we received our 8th Air Force News magazine and we must say and tell you what a wonderful job

you did printing the magazine.

We went to the "2002 Norfolk Convention" and also enjoyed all of it - when we got there - we only knew a few couples but by the time we left we met many more wonderful people. The Convention was planned very nicely to get around the areas and we met other people.

If possible Joseph Kerr, my husband, and I would like if you can give us the information on how we can purchase the C.D. that the Band "The Strolling Silver Strings" played at the convention. We loved it - we couldn't get the address or any information because we left the meeting early as we had to get some rest before we got up at 3 A.M. so that we could get home and attend a wedding in the family by noon. We made it - we got there at 11:57 a.m. - a whole three minutes, but we made it.

Sincerely,

Joe and Penny Kerr

P.S. Joe was a P.O.W. and was on the "Death March" in Germany.

ROUND ENGINES

From Richard Hill, Coon Rapids, MN. comes the comments of Bob Arthur and Bob Scribner at their recent MCAS reunion in Yuma, AZ.

"Dedicated to all who flew behind round engines, and those who wished to, we gotta get rid of these turbines, they are ruining aviation," Bob wrote. "We need to go back to big round engines.

"Anybody can start a turbine, you just need to move a switch from 'OFF' to 'START', and then move it back to 'ON', after a while. My PC is harder to start.

"Cranking a round engine requires skill, finesse and style. On some planes, the pilots aren't even allowed to do it.

"Turbines start by whining for a while, then give a small lady-like poot to start whining louder.

"Round engines give a satisfying rattle-rattle, click-click, BANG, more rattles, another BANG, a big macho fart or two, more clicks, a lot of smoke and finally a serious low pitched roar.

We like that. It's a guy thing. "When you start a round engine, your mind is engaged and you can concentrate on the flight ahead. Starting a turbine is like flicking on a ceiling fan. Useful, but hardly exciting. "Turbines don't break often enough, leading to air crew boredom, complacency and inattention. A round engine at speed looks and sounds like it's going to blow at any minute. This helps concentrate the mind. "Turbines don't have enough control levers to keep a pilot's attention. There's nothing to fiddle with during long flights. "Turbines smell like a Boy Scout camp full of Coleman lanterns. Round engine planes smell like God intended flying machines to smell." Fly the Harrier? "Hell no. It has no prop and it's already on fire!"

THE PIN-UPS

Dear Dr. Brown:
I was stationed at Camp Santa Anita in Arcadia, California. When in HQS company I was assigned lodgings in the stall that had been Seabiscuit's stall when racing. It had plaques and mementos and a nice tack board. I cut the Betty Grable pin-up picture of the week from Yank magazine and placed it on the tackboard, and it got by inspection. Then I was assigned to a company for training and placed in Army tents on the fenced enclosed grass area outside the race track which is now part of the parking lot. As the tent didn't have a place to pin anything, I folded the picture and put it in my jacket pocket and forgot about it. Then on Monday night pass, I went

to Los Angeles and the Hollywood Canteen. Harry James was the band and his future wife Betty Grable was behind the sandwich and soda bar signing autographs. Next to her was a very pretty starlet, signing also. When I saw the name she signed on another soldier's paper, I reached in my pocket and pulled out the pin-up from Yank magazine of Lenore Aubert. It was a pleasant surprise for her and the group around as she had never heard of Yank and the studio had sent the picture out. She had to correct me on the pronunciation of her name where the "t" was silent. She was from the French Canadian part of Canada and was given a contract as part of a beauty contest. Never heard of her again, but she sure made a good pin-up girl. I started going to the Hollywood Canteen while on pass as they had not only stars but the best music in town. Every Monday was Harry James, Wednesday Kay Kyser, and Friday Freddy Martin after their radio shows down the street at NBC. On Tuesday the big dance hall, The Palladium, was closed so the name band who was appearing there would be at the Canteen - Dorsey, Goodman, Miller, Artie Shaw. Thursday Les Brown would be there when in town and not on USO tour



with Bob Hope; otherwise Paul Martin from the NTG nightclub was on tap. Spike Jones played on Sunday afternoons Saturday and Sunday nights we got the bands in town that were at the movies studios to shoot a picture.

Meeting, dancing or talking with the entertainment people whether stars, songwriters, directors, producers or starlets in a relaxed mode was a treat for many of us. They waited tables, signed autographs, danced or just engaged in plain conversation with us. They would enter by a rear security door and the GI's would come in the front door. Although they played and sang all service songs, they repeated the Air Force song very often. More praise was heaped on the Air Force with the Marines second. Many of us had experiences that we wouldn't have had in normal life except for the war and the people who tried to put some enjoyment in our lives. Places like the Hollywood Canteen, The Stage Door Canteen in New York, The Red Cross club on Shaftsbury Ave. in London. My wife says I'm living in the past, but I say the memories are worth it. She sees this at the reunions and the closeness that we share with those that we faced disaster with, and their families, after the war. We have each gone in different venues of life, but share in a different way than school reunions or work reunions. Sincerely,
Edward F.P. Morrison
95th Bomb Group
Fairfield, CA





George Contos flew Mustangs with the 352nd Fighter Group. He writes, "I was pleased to see the excellent article of our Group's reunion in Richmond, Virginia. Here is my license plate, which has caused a few horn beeps from time to time."



Bob Voss, Swansea, Illinois, is proud to show his colors. He writes, "I am indeed proud of my service in the 8AF and the 94th Bomb Group as indicated by my license plate."



When Don Sutherland, Cathedral City CA, first got his Explorer, he applied for license plate B17 BTG but found it was taken by Bill Stewart, a friend and fellow member of the Palm Springs Air Museum. He ended up with DON B17. Then he bought a Lincoln off a little old lady for a song, and reversed it, getting B17 DON on those tags.

Don states, "This drove my neighbors nuts for awhile because at first glance, they thought I had

the same tags for both cars."



Two 8th veterans had some spare time on their hands. One said, "It's a beautiful day today. Lets go over to the course and get in a round of golf." The other replied, "I'm sorry. I would really like to, but my doctor says I can't play." The first vet said, "Oh, he's played with you before?"

A B-17 WITH FIVE ENGINES

During the war, residents of the Caldwell-Wright airport became used to seeing strange aircraft being tested in the air over New Jersey, but one afternoon in 1947 they were shocked to see a five-engine heavy bomber flying over their homes at 3,000 feet.

It turned out that the Wright Corporation in Woodbridge was testing its 5500 horsepower XT35-W-1 engine which weighed over 5,000 pounds. It sported a Curtiss electric four-bladed prop 15' 8" in diameter. The engineers dubbed it the TYPHOON and installed it in the nose section of a Flying Fortress along with the usual complement of four Cyclone engines on the aircraft's wings. Test flights of this strange-looking B-17 bomber soon became a routine sight to the locals.



Submitted by Francis Marc, Wayne NJ

Editor's note: This aircraft has recently been purchased and is undergoing restoration.

STRANGE B-17 – INFO SOUGHT

Eugene Fletcher was a pilot with the 95th Bomb Group and flew on the mission to Kassel, Germany on October 18, 1944. He relates that he was inbound to the target at 25,000 feet when his crew spotted a B-17 flying close in to his group – its gun stations were manned. After several minutes the strange B-17 sped up and flew alongside of the group just ahead, and after a brief time, went

over to another group. It never did join in with any of the group formations.

What seemed strange to Fletcher's crew was that the trailing wire radio antenna with its pear-shaped weight was extended out to about 100 feet. Fletcher notes that this was never done by American crews because of the potential danger to other aircraft in the formation, which might fly into the wire. The antenna was extended briefly on occasion after a bomb run in order to relate the bombing info back to 8th

AF Headquarters, and sometimes an aircraft returning home alone might use it in such a manner. This unusual incident is told in a book titled *Fletcher's Gang*.

The daughter of a 95th BG waist gunner, Gerald Hoefert, would like to be in touch with anyone who remembers the flight of this strange B-17 on that mission to Kassel. Contact Helynn Schufletowski at (715) 964-8367; or write to: N2896 County Road F, Humbird, WI 54746.-- web: edschuf@discover-net.net.

The squeaking wheel doesn't always get the grease. Sometimes it gets replaced.
Vic Gold

THE FIX

A photo of a plaque exhibiting Norman Dunphe's tour in the 448th Bomb Group appeared in the Mar 03 issue 8th AF News Taps section with the name of his late crewmate John Gant beneath it. The plaque was intended to appear elsewhere in the issue to emphasize the 448th's motto: *Bombardment, and Destroy*. This motto was to be added to the list of Group Mottos earlier published. My apologies for any confusion this may have caused.

The Air Forces Escape and Evasion Society article title appeared in June 03 8th AF News as *Armed Forces ...* A regrettable error – perhaps subconsciously related to the Iraqi War material in that issue. One would think that this editor would have picked up on that in proof reads, since I had an unforgettable time at their annual reunion in Wichita Falls, Texas this past April. The accompanying AFEES logos got it right.

The B-17 *Bonnie-B* crew chief, old friend Bill Zachar's name turned out as "Zacher" twice in one article; and Bob Schottelkorb, author of a reviewed book about his P-38 pilot brother Bill, *From Model T to P-38 Lightning*, graciously notes that his email got misprinted. Bob's correct email address is john2@pictorialhistoriespublishing.com.

Name-spells, titles, and gremlins are the scourge of editors.



448th BG's Norman Dunphe

EIGHTH LICENSE PLATES

James Leonard, Bedford NH, has had his automobile plates since 1979 and states, "As far as I know, they are the only 8th AF plates in New Hampshire. Many people and kids tell me they see missions of B-17s on the TV History Channel."

James served with the 306th Bomb Group at Thurleigh.



"My plate has a double meaning to me. I was a bombardier on a Heavy bomber!" says Leo Higgins, Bradenton, Florida. Leo served with the 95th Bomb Group at Horham.



TOOEY SPAATZ STAMP

Pennsylvania state lawmakers are recommending that Gen. Carl A. Spaatz be immortalized on a U.S. postage stamp. A resolution passed this week has been sent for review by the U.S. Postal Service Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee.

Born in Boyertown in 1891, Spaatz graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1914 and served as a pilot in France during World War I.

In World War II, he commanded the 8th Air Force and developed the strategic daylight bombing of Germany, which helped lead to the German surrender.

Tooey Spaatz later commanded the U.S. Strategic Air Forces in the Pacific and supervised the final strategic bombing of Japan, including two atomic bomb missions. Spaatz, who died in 1974, was the only U.S. military officer to attend all three surrender ceremonies to end World War II. Among his accomplishments, he is credited with developing the concept of air-to-air refueling in 1929.

submitted by
Marin Ennis Assoc. Member 8AFHS
West Lawn, PA

WEAPONS LOADERS

Laser and global positioning systems-guided munitions have taken a lot of the guesswork out of bombing so the accuracy and precision of putting bombs on targets gets better and better.

At the root of that process are weapons loaders. Since the beginning when someone first strapped a bomb under the wing of an airplane, the "loaders" became the people with the critical responsibility of making sure bombs are attached, armed and ready.

"Bombs are smart enough to hit where they're aiming," said Staff Sgt. Ryan Skocz, a weapons loader with the 336th Expeditionary Fighter Squadron. "But in this business, you have to make sure you do your job right every time out. Peoples' lives are at risk, not only the pilot's, but the people on the ground as well. One wrong move here, and someone's life could be at stake."

by **Capt. Don Kerr 379th Air Expeditionary Wing**



Weapons Specialists of the 379th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron hoist on AIM-9 Sidewinder missile before mounting it to an F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft.

UNIT ACTIVITIES

351ST BOMB GROUP ANNUAL REUNION

The 351st Bomb Group Association held its 28th annual reunion in Chattanooga, TN June 12 to 15, again enjoying a good attendance. The main speaker at the banquet was the unit's former Commanding Officer, Robert Burns, Major General, Retired. Bob Burns was one of the original cadre that took possession of the base at Polebrook early in the war. He was among the leaders who led a number of missions during the war and became the Group's CO, serving in that capacity until just before the war ended.

Colorado Springs, Colorado was chosen by the membership to be the site for the 2004 reunion. The dates and hotel have not yet been chosen. Clint Hammond was re-elected President by the Board of Directors, all of whom agreed to serve another term.

If Ya Gotta... YA JUST GOTTA!

IF YA GOTTA GO....Ya gotta! But for the love of Mike.... when that irrepressible urge comes over you, use the thunder juga provided by your long-suffering ground crew. Don't use the bomb bay!

Bomb bay doors have been frozen shut and bomb racks have oaked with ice, resulting in malfunctions and abortions because solenoids have been thoughtlessly sprayed...and the motors whose operations depend upon them have thereby become useless. In some cases it has been necessary to rig up shields to keep icicles off the poor solenoids.

Nix, brother, NIX!

- From the October
1944 Chaff comes the
necessary advice



6

8th Air Force UNIT CONTACTS

- Scouting Force Asso. E. Richard Atkins** 1304 Cochise Dr. Arlington, TX 76012
- 8AFHQ Aida V. Kaye** 445 Glenwood Pl. SE Atlanta, GA 30316-1819
- I.M./C.B. Harold E. Province** 153 North Hill Dr. Carriere, MS 39426
- 2ADHQ Ray E. Strong** 320 Burlage Cir. Chapel Hill, NC 27514
- 2BAD Dick McClune** 527 Quarterfield Rd. Newport News, VA 23602
- 1SAD William H. Crockett** 5173 S. Troost Av. Tulsa, OK 74105-5718
- 2SAD A. R. Ballinger** 1019 E. Jordin St. Appleton, WI 54911-5167
- 3SAD Wiley Noble** 7266 Goodwood Av. Baton Rouge, LA 70806
- 3CCRC/5AS Roger King** 110 Spring Lane Rockport, ME 04856
- 1/11CCRC Arthur V. Belkowski** 7 Tekening Way Hamilton Square, NJ 08690-1648
- 7 PRG George Lawson** 4390 14th St. NE St. Petersburg, FL 33703
- 18WX Arthur Gulliver** 5119 S 81st St. Omaha, NE 68127-2736
- 27ATG Jon Maguire** 3017 Middlesex Dr. Oklahoma City, OK 73120
- 315TCG William Brinson** 760 Riverside Ave. Jacksonville, FL 32204-3352
- 325RW Eric V. Hawkinson** 109 Evelyn Cir. Vallejo, CA 94589
- 442ASG Robert M. Littlefield** P.O.Box 3644 Carmel, CA 93921
- 65FWHQ George M. Epperson** 2369 Oak Crest Dr. Riverside, CA 92506
- Eagle Sq. James Gray** 7238 Kolb Pl. Dublin, CA 94568-2744
- 1FG Herschel Baird** 702 Valley View Dr. Scottsbluff, NE 69361-1452
- 4FG William G. Spencer** 730 Poplar Hill Dr. Boone, North Carolina 28607
- 20FG Jack Ilfrey** 1409 Nacogdoches San Antonio, TX 78209-2751
- 31FG Dalton Smith** 374 Pine Lane Hawthorn, NJ 07641
- 55FG Edward B. Giller** 14415 Soula Dr. NE Albuquerque, NM 87123
- 56FG Frank Gyidik** 509 Torrence Vestal, NY 13850
- 78FG C.E."Chuck"Behrens** 1021 Parakeet Tr. Lakeland, FL 33809
- 339FG Jim Mankie** 304 Lake Forest Ln. Charlottesville, VA 22901
- 352FG Richard J. DeBruin** 234 N. 74th St. Milwaukee, WI 53213
- 353FG Bob Brackstone** 6106 Willow Hwy. Grand Ledge, MI 48837
- 355FG Robert E. Kuhnert** 587 Pine Needles Dr. Dayton, OH 45458-3323
- 356FG Kenneth J. Male** (Sept.-May) 8282 NW 47th St. Ocala, FL 34482
- 357FG Joseph DeShay** 465 NE 34th St. Boca Raton, FL 33431-6031
- 359FG Anthony Chardella** 511 Chresthaven Dr. Pittsburgh, PA 15239-3609
- 361FG Willis Walling** 120 Lakes @ Litchfield Dr. Apt. 311 Pawley's Island, SC 29585
- 364FG Paul Goldberg** 12616 Gulf Blvd. Treasure Island, FL 33706
- 479FG J. Ralph Helms** 1103 Pinecroft Dr. West Columbia, SC 29170
- 496FTG Merle Gerling** 5040 Blacksand Rd. Fremont, CA 94538
- 36BS Stephen Hutton** 4016 Old Sturbridge Dr. Apex, NC 27502
- 406BS Walter R. Longanecker, Jr.** 758 Ballast Way Annapolis, MD 21401-7111
- 406BS Martin Katz** 142 Bon Air Ave. New Rochelle, NY 10804
- 455BS James L. Vining** 921 Ware St. SW Vienna, VA 22180-6424
- 25BG Jack W. Sheen** 13003 N. 12th Av. Phoenix, AZ 85029-1755
- 34BG Hal Province** 153 N. Hill Dr. Carriere, MS 39426
- 44BG Richard D. Butler** 16828 Mitchell Cir. Riverside, CA 92518-2803
- 91BG U.S.A. Asay B Johnson** 590 Aloha, Dr. Lake Havasu, AZ 86405-4559
- 92BG Arthur V. Belkowski** 7 Tekening Way Hamilton Square, NJ 08690-1648
- 93BG Alfred Asch** 6205 Meadow Ct. Rockville, MD 20852
- 94BG Mort Robinson** 1333 W. Steel Ln. #443 Santa Rosa, CA 95403-2901
- 96BG Thomas L. Thomas** 1607 E. Willow Av. Wheaton, IL 60187-5950
- 97BG Gene Aenchbacher** 432 N. Longford Ct. Wichita, KS 67206
- 100BG Mike Faley** 12400 Ventura Blvd. Studio City, CA 91604
- 303BG Harry D. Gobrecht** 505 Via Deseo San Clemente, CA 92672-2462
- 305BG Stan Soderblom** 5904 Dashwood Rd. Bethel Park, PA 15102-1318
- 306BG Russell A. Strong** 5323 Cheval Pl. Charlotte, NC 28205 704-568-3803
- 323BG (See 455BS)**
- 351BG Benjamin Schohan** 398 Catawba Av. Westerville, OH 43081
- 379BG Howard Fibel** 692 Ascan Rd. Franklin Square, NY 11010
- 381BG Joseph K. Wadell** P.O.Box 6064 Madison, WI 53716-0064
- 384BG Ted Rothschild** 650 Snug Harbor Dr. Apt. G-402 Boynton Beach, FL 33435
- 385BG Tom Newton** P.O.Box 34 Dallas, OR 97338-0034
- 386BG(M) Skip Young** 5594 Buring Ct. Fort Meyers, FL 33919
- 388BG Bittner Snead** 2449 SW 328th St. Federal Way, WA 98023-2565
- 389BG Bernard F. Driscoll** Rt. 2 Box 3245 Richards, TX 77873
- 390BG John Warner** 4081 E. Pontatoc Canyon Dr. Tuscon, AZ 85718
- 392BG Charles E. Dye** 4949 San Pedro Dr. NE #87 Albuquerque, NM 87109-2583
- 398BG Sharon Krause** 11690Paciocco Ct. Plymouth, MI 48170-2870
- 401BG George H. Menzel** P.O.Box 15356 Savannah, GA 31416
- 445BG Fred Dale** 401 West Dunbar Box 352 Mahomet, IL 61853-0352
- 446BG Link Veazey** 1938 Harbour Oaks Dr. Snellville, GA 30078
- 447BG George R. Hoidra** 6504 Old Sandy Springs Rd. Laurel, MD 20707-2813
- 448BG Robert Angle** 1445 Forelle Lane Toms River, NJ 08755
- 452BG Hank North** 901 Poling Dr. Columbus, OH 43224-1936
- 453BG Lloyd Prang** 2451 Willow St. Greenwood, IN 46143
- 457BG Joseph A. Toth** 449 Sunset Ln. Pueblo, CO 81005-1140
- 458BG Edmund A. Rokicki** 2605 Chapel Lane Dr.#207 Gambrills, MD 21054
- 466BG Louis Loevsky** 16 Hamilton Dr. East North Caldwell, NJ 07006
- 467BG Walter J. Mundy** 23020 Basin Harbor Ct. Tehachapi, CA 93561
- 482BG Truman Hermansen** 5414 Capella Ct. Atlantic Beach, FL 32233
- 486BG Robert S. Bee** 2064 Tuckaway Ct. Columbus, OH 43228
- 487BG Arthur W. Silva** 1002 N. Rosalind Dr. Santa Maria, CA 93454
- 489BG James M. Davis** 2519 Shell Midland, TX 79750
- 490BG George W. Pickard** 8331 Chisum Tr. Boca Raton, FL 33433
- 491BG Hap Chandler** 18 Willow Glen Atlanta, GA 30342
- 492BG W.H. (Bill) Beasley** 1525 South Garfield St. Denver, CO 80210
- 493BG Jack D. Rude** 2609 S. Bowie Amarillo, TX 79109
- 801/492BG (Carpetbaggers)**
- Sebastian Corriere** 4939 N 89th St. Milwaukee, WI 53225

TANNOY



Many 8th AFHS members would like to own a wooden model of a B-17 and B-24. For information you may call member Bill Harvey at 252-237-2440 or at email www.gungrip.com

Maurice Rowe, UK member and 8th AF researcher has access to an A-2 jacket given by Walter Meehan to a unit buddy, Al Leknes before going on a bombing mission from which he did not return. Both of them were assigned to the Don Ford Field Photo Unit during the war. The present A-2 owner would like to return the jacket to the Meehan family. Maurice would like to know the Unit location and be in touch with anyone who has information. His email is:

Emcrowe#@aol.com or phone/Fax +44 1579 349071 or in the UK: (01579) 349071.

The Oral History program at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum is in full swing. Don't let your story be forgotten. Share it with future generations. For details on interviews and submissions, give Dr. Vivian Rogers-Price, Director, a ring at the museum: 912-748-8888.

The beautifully framed Clerical stoll of the 398th Bomb Group's Chaplain James Duvall was presented to Michael Telzrow, Archivist at

the Heritage Museum in Savannah. Lee Ann Bradley, 398th BGA historian, was accompanied for the presentation by Wally and Teedy Blackwell and Hal Weekly.

Minnesota Chapter member Katie Crosby was recently named as one of twelve national Toyota Community Scholars. As a Senior at Lakeville High School, Katie will receive a \$20,000 college scholarship from Toyota. Her service in the Salute Our Veterans program and story interviews of over ninety veterans impressed the national judges for the awards. She was honored at a special Awards Banquet held in Louisville, Kentucky.

Contacts for those interested in the work of the Heritage League are: Ann Phillips, Membership VP, 3701 Chiswell Ct., Greensboro NC 27410 and newsletter editor Brian Mahoney at email

BriCamera@mindspring.com, tel. 202-232-1423. The Heritage League welcomes for membership all spouses, children and grandchildren of all 2nd Air Division veterans. Interested parties and Associates are invited to get in touch.

French Chairman of the Normandie Memoire 60 Anniversaire, Admiral Brac de La Perrier, has announced that each veteran present in Normandie during the summer of 2004 will receive a special badge (insigne de poitrine) as a token of their esteem. Special events surrounding the 60th Anniversary of the 6 June 44 Normandy invasion will be attended by a number of 8th Air Force veterans.

The Pentagon is planning an opportunity for the American public to thank our men and women in uniform. Operation Tribute To Freedom is underway at website: <http://www.defendamerica.mil/otf/index.htm>. A similar program, Hometown Heroes, will see military and civilian leaders returning to their hometowns to speak to community groups and organizations.

Visitations to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum are up significantly this year. The Georgia Legislature has passed a bill naming the museum a Center of Character Education. In addition to the daily activities of the Education department headed up by Director Debbie Dannel, the museum is asking support by International Paper in their *Be Our Guest* program whereby corporations sponsor student visits to the Heritage Museum.

Support of the Heritage Museum and its various programs by 8th AFHS members continues to be solid. So far this year, over 900 Society members have sent over \$60,000 in donations to the Annual Campaign for the first time. Another \$7000 has been given in of the John Woolnough Memorial Library Fund, and a significant number of *In Memoriam* gifts have been sent in the remembrance of friends, crewmates, and loved ones. Let's Keep 'em Flying!

An original copy of The Declaration of Independence is on the road, showing at numerous cities around the country. Valued at over 8 million dollars, the national treasure is being presented to inspire a sense of patriotism and history in schoolchildren and younger generations – the same values embodied by those who served in the Mighty Eighth. Stops are planned for Portland OR Sept 20-28, Santa Fe NM Oct 15-16, and Oklahoma City OK Dec 6-14.

Stamps depicting the Purple Heart Medal, awarded to those servicemen wounded or killed in combat, are available at the U. S. Postal Service. The Purple Heart Award is our country's oldest medal, dating back to George Washington's Badge of Military Merit in 1782.

A major effort is underway to develop the Jimmy Doolittle Air and Space Museum at Travis Air Force Base in California. The kickoff event was complimented by a reunion and meeting in Fairfield of the Doolittle Raiders and their supporters this past April. To help with costs a special

TANNOY

coin and pin are being minted; costs are from \$8 to \$20. Info can be obtained from the Travis museum at 707-424-5598.

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News Flash: On August 27th, 2003 the planet Mars will be seen at its closest distance to the planet Earth in the past 60,000 years, appearing as a large reddened orb in the southeastern night skies of the United States.

Credit Joe Harlick for the photo of Bassingbourn's B-17 Flying Fortress *Bride of Mars* 60 years previous!



See you in Colorado Springs!

PRESERVING THE LEGACY THROUGH WEB SITE DESIGN, BUILD AND MANAGEMENT

A round table discussion will be held at the Reunion 2003 on Wednesday, October 15, at 3 PM for those who have already built web sites and for those who might be interested in getting started. This program will be facilitated by 392nd BG member Bob Brooks. Bob is the author of several web sites including B24.net, 8thAFHS.org and HeritageLeague.org and is a consultant for Gulf Coast Internet Services in Pensacola, Florida.

Topics discussed will be:

Acquiring a domain name: Does it really matter where I get a domain name from? **Acquiring web space:** How

much space and bandwidth do I need? How much should I pay? Other discussions will address and tools for building a website. Tools for images, outside services, tricks and techniques, and a question session will round out the seminar. Of course the session is open without charge to all 8th AFHS Reunion attendees.

Optimizing your web site: tools for building a website. Tools for images: PaintShopPro, PhotoShop, others. Outside services: What if I want someone else to build it, how much does it cost? Tricks and techniques: Music, video. OCR programs, scripting, navigation, etc...8thAFHS opportunities and free one page hosting for your group. Free website development software for attendees. Questions will be appropriate during the presentations.



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Website: www.8thafhs.org

Chapter News

SOUTHEASTERN 8TH AFHS PLAN JOINT MEETING

Plans are underway for a joint meeting of the Southeastern Chapters for March 25-28, 2004, in Chattanooga. The meeting will be hosted by the John Harold Robinson Tennessee Chapter and the Georgia Chapter.

The Historic Read House Hotel has been selected as the site for the meeting. The Read House possesses all the charm of the Old South featuring paneled walls of natural hardwood and inlaid tile for floor cover. The Read House is located within walking distance of many of the attractions of Chattanooga.

James Bass, President of the John Harold Robinson Tennessee Chapter states, "Although all details are not yet finalized, for a meeting of this size it was necessary to secure dates and location. Details of the meeting will be made available through the respective State Chapters."

BIRTHPLACE CHAPTER

Savannah, Georgia

The Chapter will celebrate its second anniversary on 25 October 2003.

During the last 12 months the Chapter has gained 48 new members. Three members kept their appointments with God during the year. Our Fall dance was held in the Lyle rotunda at the Museum. The big band sounded like the old Glenn Miller AF group. We participated, with our trailer/float, in the Veterans Day & St. Patricks Day parades. In April we held a special recognition dinner for all past Commanders of the former Savannah Wing.

The Chapter assisted the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in celebrating its seventh anniversary by sponsoring free admission on 17 May 2003.

Monthly dinner meetings held in the Museum have included speakers from several branches of the military, authors, FBI, TV personalities, embedded reporters from Iraq, and recently Lt. Gen. E.G. Shuler.

Our website has been updated and is up and running:

www.birthplacechapter.com. This Chapter proudly supplies half the volunteer/docents for the Museum.

Jay Yost

VP & PR Chairman

NEW JERSEY CHAPTER

102 people, members and guests attended the summer 2003 meeting of the NJ Chapter on July 23 at Doolan's restaurant in Spring Lake, NJ.

In the continuing effort to have interesting and meaningful meetings, the Chapter invited Steven Perrone, a bombardier who flew in B-24's in the very hush, hush and Clandestine 'Snooper' squadrons in the Pacific during World War II.

"We were ready to go to Europe and fly with the 8th", Perrone said, "We had our cold weather gear, our

uniforms and everything. At the last moment they reassigned my crew and gave us special low level bombing training and we ended up flying night missions across the Pacific and bombing surface vessels, ports and other such places.

We even bombed a submarine, and once may have dropped bombs near a friendly sub that didn't have the IFF working," he added.

Perrone is the author of a book called *World War II B-24 "Snoopers"*, which has just been published. The book details the exploits of this most unusual squadron in the 5th Air Force.

The NJ Chapter Spring meeting was oriented to aviation, too. The over 90 members and guests who attended the luncheon which was held in Mt. Laurel, NJ paid a visit to the Air Victory Museum, which is a local landmark. There they were escorted through the museum which is dedicated to military aviation through the 1940's until today.

OHIO CHAPTER

The Ohio Chapter met on May 2, 3, and 4 at the Radisson Hotel in Worthington.

The guest speaker was Col. H. Speed Wilson, a retired 31 year veteran of the Marine Corps. The Colonel participated in three wars: World War II, Korea and Vietnam. During World War II, he flew F4U Corsairs at Bougainville in the southwest Pacific Theatre of Operations. While in the Pacific, he was shot down three times and received three Distinguished Service Crosses. In Korea, the Colonel flew F7F Tigercats over North Korea. After Korea, he flew F8F Bearcats and later became a jet instructor in Texas. In Vietnam, he was in charge of Marine reserve units before returning to Washington D.C. and retiring. The Colonel provided a fascinating look at military service from a different branch on the other side of the world and fighting a different enemy.

The whole meeting was accomplished without charging members any dues for the Ohio Chapter!

The Chapter will meet in Dayton at the Hope Hotel at Wright-Patterson AFB on October 31, November 1 and 2. Chapter members are looking forward to viewing the recently completed addition and reorganization of the Air Force Museum.

Chris Weber, Secretary

OREGON CHAPTER

The Fall quarterly meeting was called to order by Chapter President John Horne at 11:30 AM. After the Pledge and opening prayer, a short business meeting was held, including the Treasurer's report. Money short, as always, but we are still solvent.

After lunch, President Horne mentioned the scheduled trial remote meeting in Eugene OR on 23 August. This is a special, one-time, extra meeting, hopefully to attract Chapter members and perhaps new members who find it difficult to travel the distance to our regular meeting site in

Chapter News

Beaverton.

Our speaker for the day was Board Member Elden Bevens who served in the 570th Sq of the 390th BG as a ball turret gunner. Bevens is an experienced speaker, who serves as a valued volunteer talking to school groups and other visitors at the Evergreen Aviation Museum, popularly known as the "Spruce Goose Museum", at McMinnville, OR.

Selection of trainees for the ball turret position at Las Vegas Gunnery School, according to Bevens, was achieved by seeing who could pass under a string draped across a doorway at the proper height for the ball occupant! True story? Nobody knows for sure, but everyone enjoyed it.

Bevens also told about his missions at the very end of the war on food drops to the hungry residents of Holland. He has made several return trips to the area in recent years, and finds the people there still remembering and saluting those who made the special effort to keep them from starving. Bevens' talk was well received by the somewhat sparse attendance, due probably to member's vacation schedules and the recent area heat wave.

The next scheduled regular Chapter meeting will be at our long-time place and time, the Beaverton Elks Lodge on 6 November.

Visitors at the meetings are always welcome. For more details on the upcoming meeting, and the Oregon Chapter in particular, write President John Horne at 32475 SW Estates Post Rd. Wilsonville Or 97070.

Tel: 503-694-6194

Email: Nancy@thehorns.org

Clint Gruber

Oregon Chapter

8TH AFHS MINNESOTA CHAPTER "KEEFE'S KREW"

For over ten years, "Keefe's Krew" has been meeting on a weekly basis in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The namesake, Jim Keefe, former President of the Minnesota Chapter of the 8th AFHS, began lunch meetings on a weekly basis with just a few 8th Air Force veterans. Over the ten years, despite fair or foul Minnesota weather, the group has grown to an almost overflow capacity.

Every Wednesday noon, you can expect to find up to 75 members in attendance for lunch. There is a small meeting and in many cases a guest speaker. The purpose of the weekly lunch is to simply preserve the history of the "Mighty Eighth." There are no dues, nor any formality to the meetings. The group also includes many 15th Air Force and Navy veterans.

Many of the members of "Keefe's Krew" par-



Some crewmembers of Minnesota's "Keefe's Krew"

ticipate in local air shows, parades, and regularly speak in local schools. Many younger generation have joined the group too. Through all the years, the group has become a real family. Friendship and camaraderie bond this group. The founder, Jim Keefe, passed away a few years ago, but you can always find an empty chair for him at one of the tables. To our knowledge, it is the only weekly gathering of 8th Air Force veterans in the nation, certainly the largest. Jim would have liked that. . .

The lunches are open to any and all veterans, family members or WWII enthusiasts. They are held every Wednesday at 11:30 am at the Bloomington American Legion Post - 9320 Lyndale Ave. So. - Bloomington, Minnesota 55420 - (952) 884-9621.

Mark Copeland

MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER

The Massachusetts Chapter of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society received a heart-felt complement recently from Sam Miceli, president of Harvey's Salt Water Fishing Club of Quincy, Mass. The occasion was the annual fishing trip for disabled veterans, many of whom are wheelchair-bound and who look forward all year to this day on the water. For many it is the only day of the entire year they leave the VA hospital where many are in lifetime care.



Massachusetts Chapter members at sea

Chapter News

This yearly event is one of those wonderful happenings where an entire community pitches in to give the disabled veterans a special treat. The hospitalized vets are transported to Hough's Neck where the Salvation Army has its coffee truck waiting. Well known auto dealer Dan Quirk is on the dock with caps and shirts stating "No Vets. No America!" He spends \$5000 on his gifts and helping pay for the luncheon served at the end of the day at the Quincy Yacht Club which donates its facilities.

It's almost impossible to list all the agencies and people who work so hard to give the disabled vets their day. The Lobstermen's Association furnished at least fifteen lobsterboats to carry the vets. Nameless patriots waited on the dock to carry the wheelchair-bound vets down the gangway and aboard the lobsterboats. The Quincy Fire and Police Department, various state agencies, the American Legion and even ten or more off-duty Quincy Police officers volunteered their time and muscle.

Fasano's Catering of nearby Braintree was involved in serving the fine luncheon that wound up the special day. Our Chapter surprised the people who organized and conducted the affair by making a cash contribution to help defray the expenses. Sam Miceli wrote this to us: "The 8th Air Force AFHS went beyond the call of duty! A day in honor of you, our veterans, and you come with a donation toward the day, a donation kindly appreciated." Well, a long time ago many of us were known for going beyond the call of duty in the skies. Three cheers for all who made this day a great success!

John Brennan
Editor, *Vapor Trails*

NORTH EAST IOWA WING

The North East Wing of our Iowa Chapter, met at the Elks



L to R: Joseph Waldon;
Maxwell Bassman
Scholarship Awardees

Lodge in Waterloo for an April noon luncheon meeting. 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. Iowa Chapter President,

Charles Taylor, gave the 62 attendees part of plans for our August 2003 state convention to be held in Ames, Iowa. He also mentioned the progress of our Iowa 8th Air Force museum displays at Ankey, Iowa, where items will be properly displayed and cared for. Charles Taylor and Leon Mehring, Treasurer, and his wife Vera, attended the Iowa State University's Air Force

Reserve Officers Training Corps, 250th Cadet Wing's annual "Dining Out and Awards Banquet" in March. The Iowa Chapter of the 8th AFHS presented two \$300.00 scholarships to two cadets, Maxwell Bassman and Joseph Waldon. This is the third year the Iowa Chapter 8th AFHS has given money scholarships. It is a lot of fun to watch the cadets go to the "Grog Bowl" and drink from it for some violation of the rules of the mess. The "Grog Bowl" is a very special punch that does not taste very good.

Our program was video presentations: Making of the *Memphis Belle* Film; F4U Corsair; and the B-17G, *Sentimental Journey*.

Robert C. Reeves
N.E. Iowa Wing Commander

GENERAL JAMES H. DOOLITTLE CHAPTER

The Chapter's Board of Directors held a recent meeting at the Lion's Gate Hotel in Sacramento CA. New officers were announced: Paul Wallace, President; Heber Smith, Vice-president; and Ed Joyner, Secretary.

National Director Belton Wolf passed out the new "Student Guide to the Eighth Air Force," the brochure now available to members for distribution to schoolchildren across the country. Dan and Janett Raymond announced their retirement from the Chapter Board because of health reasons. They will remain active in the Chapter activities as always. Dan will continue his long-time duties as editor of the Chapter newsletter *Air Power* until another editor can come on board.

NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA CHAPTER

The National Capital Area Chapter of the 8th Air Force Historical Society cordially invites all members of the Eighth Air Force, all Divisions and all Groups, to join us in attending the World War II Memorial Dedication on Saturday, May 29, 2004, at 10:00 AM. This is going to be a big event and we will be hosting this (non-political) weekend at the Marriott Crystal Gateway in Arlington, Virginia.

Our Chapter will arrange for bus transportation to and from the Dedication and is planning a dinner at the hotel later that evening. General John Jumper, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, has been invited to speak as our guest of honor and initial responses from the Pentagon are extremely positive.

We have limited room availability at the Marriott so it is imperative that **anyone wishing to attend, make room reservations now**; (Rates are expected to more than TRIPLE for 2004 bookings). Make your reservations directly with the hotel, 703-920-3230; just say that you are with the 8th Air Force. NOTE: Reservations can be held with a credit card number and are cancelable within 72 hours of arrival; no advance charges are made to your credit card by the hotel.

Chapter News

For those of you wishing to make an enjoyable extended weekend of it, the following optional tours will be offered:

SUNDAY, May 30

Air and Space Museum Tour/Lunch

MONDAY: May 31

Attend Wreath-Laying Ceremonies at Arlington Cemetery, (with seating) usually hosted by the President of the United States

Air and Space Museum Tour/Lunch

This is expected to be a very enjoyable, historic, and memorable weekend for all who attend. It is being hosted by the veterans (with 2nd generation support), for the veterans, and is priced as a **not for profit** reunion. The success of this weekend is guaranteed if you **book your rooms NOW**. There is much more detail and registration information to follow in the next newsletter, but for now, let's book our rooms for May 28, 2004, mark our calendars, and let's get ready for the upcoming reunion in Colorado Springs.

THE JOHN H. ROBINSON TENNESSEE CHAPTER

The Tennessee Chapter held its annual meeting in Lebanon, Tennessee spending the weekend seeing old friends, having great repasts, and seeing the sights of Middle Tennessee. President James Bass welcomed a large contingent of guests from the Georgia Chapter. Special talks from Reverend James McClardy, retired Colonel and veteran of the Gulf War, and from USAF Lt. Col. Pat Blassie, were among the highlights of the meeting. Col. Blassie's brother, Michael, was a fighter pilot who was shot down in Vietnam and was interred in the Vietnam Tomb of the Unknown Soldier until his final identification was established in recent years. Her emotional and gripping story of the family's involvement in his identification is a tribute to her family and to all who serve in the military.

The Chapter Board, in its annual business meeting, voted unanimously to name the Chapter The John H. Robinson Tennessee Chapter in honor of their loyal member from Collierville who flew with the 445th Bomb Group. A consistent supporter of the Chapter, organizer of all Chapter



James Bass, Tennessee President

reunions, and noted author of *A Reason to Live*, Harold Robinson has served in every office in the Chapter and on its Board of Directors since its founding. He is currently Editor and Secretary-Treasurer. The Resolution states that the Chapter wishes to recognize his dedication, devotion and loyalty in helping the Chapter grow during the years of his service. In his humble but appreciative letter of reply, Robbie states that "The Chapter belongs to each and every one of us and it is with great hope that it will outlive us old WW II airmen and keep the memories and deeds alive for the next generations."

"If more of us valued food and cheer and song above hoarded gold, it would be a merrier world."

J.R.R. Tolkien

TIME PLEASE

When the hand's nearing ten,
On your favorite, "big ben,"
And you're sipping your bitters or mild,
Hook that elbow once more,
Tho' you're weak in the knees,
For the moment's approaching,
When they tell you, "Time please."

If you're out with a lass,
Don't let nine-thirty pass,
Before you suggest, "a wee toast,"
For as sure as you're born,
Comes a droning like bees,
As the inn-keeper shouts,
"Come along, gents. Time please."

Though he might say "Towels in,"
You can bet, sure as sin,
That the meaning is there just the same,
When your fun's at its peak,
O'er the noise of the throng,
Comes his plaintive request,
"Time please, come along."

In the future before us,
Just remember the chorus,
Take heed of the things close at hand,
So if Providence takes us,
And all of us go,
Just recall these words,
Our minds to appease.
After all it's not new,
Just a case of "Time please."

S/Sgt Geo. A. Foster in *Stars and Stripes*
submitted by Walter Mysliwczyk

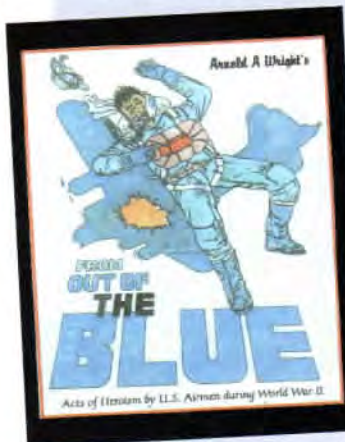
BOOK REVIEWS

A number of recent book publications have been received by the 8th AF News. An interesting assortment of 8th AF related subjects are presented for consideration and enjoyment of the Historical Society members. All reviews by the editor.

FROM OUT OF THE BLUE

Acts of Heroism by U.S. Airmen during World War II

by Arnold A. Wright



Years in the compilation, Arnold Wright's latest volume tells the stories of former Kriegies – Prisoners of War in German Stalags – and tells it

in their own words. Wright's previous volume, *Behind The Wire*, serves as an advance companion volume to *From Out of the Blue* which traces the stories of shoot-downs and capture of 8th airmen, as well as their personal remembrances of life in prison camps.

Most of these contributors were recorded in the unique list of POWs compiled for almost three years by Ewell McCright, an early POW who was able to smuggle his entire list of prisoners out of his Stalag at the end of the war. Prisoners of War stories from every Bomb and Fighter group are found here, each authentic and gripping in their telling. The book has several hundred wartime photos and photos from POW reunions along with lists from official Missing Air Crew Reports. Former Kriegies and those interested in the experiences of POWs should read this book. For information contact the author, Arnold Wright, at 525 Ruth St., Benton AR 72015, tel. 501-778-4487.

THE 356TH FIGHTER GROUP IN WORLD WAR II

In Action over Europe with the P-47 and P-51

by Kent Miller

Author Kent Miller and Schiffer

Publishing Ltd have done it again: a big beautiful war history book about a premier 8th Air Force Unit! The 356th Fighter Group was home at Martlesham Heath airfield for almost two years. This volume tells their story in fascinating detail. Daily diary records are presented and rolls of 356th airmen list personal records and aircraft flown by the airmen. Here are hundred of period photos of pilots, ground crewmen, and administrative personnel of the Group. Full-page fighter aircraft drawings in full color are a special feature of the edition. One interesting set of photographs makes the point that not all 8th AF Groups lived in cold damp Nissen huts – the Old English residences at the airbase provided a good night's rest for many men of the 356th.

The large format slick print 340-page volume is a great addition to every wartime library. You can easily check it out at Schiffer Publishing, tel 610-593-1777; email: Schifferbk@aol.com.



HEROES NEXT DOOR

By Mark D. Griffith, M.D.

For the past three decades the author of *Heroes Next Door* and 8th AFHS member Mark Griffith has been interviewing veterans of World

War II.

The American Legion aided him in his efforts and what has come out of the inquiries are stories from veterans not found in any other anthology of

wartime experiences. There are 232 pages which cover all theaters of the war, all services, and all levels of combat participants. The reader will have a good idea, after enjoying this cross-section of personal stories, of what took place with American fighting men during the entire war.

There are several tales from 8th airmen, including one from a hometown friend of author Griffith, John Deerr. Forrest Buschmann who flew 1st Schweinfurt as a top turret gunner in the 100th BG and Marion McMullin, also of the Bloody Hundredth, relate exciting experiences of several of their missions.

The book preserves the oral histories of veterans of WWII; the tales told within speak for themselves. For further info on the volume contact The American Legion Post 11, 1801S. 9th St., Lafayette IN 47905 or website: jlhufford.com.

LIFE STORIES OF MEN OF THE 486TH BOMB GROUP EIGHTH AIR FORCE – AND A LADY!

Robert A. Harper, Editor

Published by the 486th Bomb Group Association, Here are short stories which encompass home and away from home years of 486th BG



BOOK REVIEWS



veterans. At 485 pages and spiral-bound, the entire volume is easy reading. The variety of subjects is impressive and entertaining – a lot of work went into this anthology.

The choice

of type style and print format is also very nicely done.

The 486th is proud to have flown B-24s and B-17s in combat, and the airmen tell the stories with enthusiasm and in great detail. This volume is Vol. II of the series and is available from the Group. The contact is Editor Robert Harper, 410 Deer Lake Dr. W., Carbondale IL 62901.

Email: geog@globaleyes.net.

By the way, the reference to the Lady is the story of Kay Brainard Hutchins, a Red Cross girl who served on the wartime base and later on the continent, eventually becoming secretary and confidant of actor Douglas Fairbanks Jr!

There are two additional books that come recommended, but are not reviewed for this issue:

From F. C. "Hap" Chandler, 491st BG, comes a recommendation of books about the only American to fight in four theaters during WW II. Ben Kuroki, of Asian origin, enlisted in the Army in 1942 and was assigned to the 93rd Bomb Group as an armorer. After becoming proficient in the ways of the Browning .50 caliber machine gun, Ben campaigned with headquarters to be allowed to fly missions. He accompanied Ted's Travelling Circus to North Africa, flying missions on Jake Epting's B-24, *Red Ass*. He was dubbed by his crewmates, The Most Honorable Sad Saki, a name which followed him to the Pacific war against Japan as the name of his B-29. Ben flew top-turret on the low level Ploesti raid.

Ben Kuroki lived through years of oppression and prejudice, understandable to him at the time, but which he persisted in overcoming. In 2002, he



Carroll Stewart.

Norman "Bud" Fortier flew P-47 Thunderbolts with the 355th Fighter Group.

His credits as a fighter Ace include the downing of a German Stuka dive bomber on D-Day 1944. Bud completed 113 missions and returned home at the war's end in 1945. Bud's brother, Ray, flew as a navigator with the 447th Bomb Group.

His book is titled *An Ace of The Eighth: An American Fighter Pilot's Air War in Europe* and is available now at usual bookstores and at www.amazon.com.



NUTHOUSE CONTROL

Dear Mr. Richard Baynes:

The book I am currently preparing will be about ground radar and IXth and XXIXth TAC in the period of October 1944 - March 1945.

One of the chapters will deal with AAF Station 185, the only Eighth Air Force Station in The Netherlands and home to "Nuthouse Control".

From November 1944 until March 1945 Nuthouse Control, operated by the 401st Signal Company and the 57th Fighter Control Squadron, controlled all 8th Fighter Command missions over Northwest Europe. They operated from a "tent village" near the hamlet of Wittem, not far from Maastricht in The Netherlands. I am sure you will agree these men did a great job with the most sophisticated radar (MEW) available at the time.

History has forgotten to write their story and therefore I intend to incorporate their story in a book about another AF unit: **Ninth Air Force**. I would like to urge you to ask your members if they have any memories about Nuthouse Control and naturally I would like to get in contact with any of the men of the 401st Signal Co. or the 57th Fighter Control Squadron. I shall be looking very much forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

Ron Putz Airwar Historian
Graverstraat 94 6466 KX Kerkrade
The Netherlands
Tel: 31 45 5424359
Email: ronputz@home.nl
<http://www.yankee44.tk>

Taps



Smith, Walter, Vineland NJ; 486th BG, copilot B-24 and B-17; proud owner of three golf holes-in-one – from friend Carl Brown, 492nd BG

Steadman, Beverly, Houston TX; 466th BG, pilot and Group Deputy Commander; instructor RAF War College; assisted in coordinating the Berlin Airlift; career with Lockheed's interactions with NASA



Beverly Steadman

Evans, Sam, Montgomery AL; 91st BG; Alabama Chapter 8th AFHS

Dexter, Al, St. Paul MN; 398th BG

Lakey, Norman, Pinellas Park FL; 458th BG

Latimer, James, Calimesa CA; 457th BG pilot

Heller, Thomas, Kansas City MO; ball turret gunner, shot down over Berlin; POW

Kolari, Olaf; 389th BG pilot; Served with Gen. George Patton's tank groups as a medical corpsman prior to joining the 8th AF; instructor in B-29s and jet fighters; Illinois Chapter – from his daughter-in-law Karen Kolari

Mihranian, Barkis, 65th General Hospital; long-time reunion organizer of the 65th General Hospital Association, friends of the 8th; – from Emma Schutz

Moore, Augustus "Al", Chattanooga TN; 457th BG bombardier – from his daughter Lisa Moore

Campbell, Albert, Portland OR; 389th and 453rd BGs, engineer and top turret gunner; Oregon Chapter

Battista, Leo, Scarborough ME; 56th FG P-47 pilot; President 56th Fighter Group Association

Hogan

Wood, George; - from his daughter Judy Leonard

Whittaker, Joseph, Berlin PA; 392nd BG bombardier; career as explosives expert with Cyanamid Corporation

Creeden, Ed, Vernon NJ; a founder with John Woolnough of the 8th AFHS and stalwart at annual reunions thereafter. He served on the Board of Directors for a number of years. Among his contributions was his service as Chairman of the 8th AFHS Endowment Fund Committee. Active with the MMF Board, Ed received an Award of Excellence from the Historical Society for his devotion to the Society's purposes and goals.



Ed Creeden

Langdon, Robert; flew 35 missions over Germany before serving in the South Pacific bringing out American POWs from Japan

MacFtridge, Theodore, Salem OR; 466th BG;

Rendano, Olive, Milford PA; 466th BG

Ketron, Walter, Atlanta GA; 389th BG

Young, Jay, Catlettsburg KY; 448th BG

Carroll, John, East Tawas MI; 55th FG P-38 pilot, shot down Nov 43. POW at Stalag Luft I, Barth – from his son Tim Carroll

Fischer, James, Minneapolis MN; 398th BG; retired from Northwest Airlines after 43 year career – from his wife Betty

Kings, Jack, Huntingdon WV; 388th BG and Carpetbaggers waistgunner; first over D-Day beaches; boom operator refueler B-29s and B-50s in Korea; reen-

Hanson, Stanley, Arvada CA; 97th BG

Donaher, Richard, Grover Beach CA; 92nd BG pilot; interned in Sweden from the April 44 raid, Sorau Poland – from copilot Arthur Brown

Laird, Roy, Essex Junction VT; 351st BG tail-gunner – from friend John

listed to serve in Vietnam – from 25-mission crewmate Larry Goldstein

Hunton, William, Savannah GA; 492nd BG bombardier; career as Special Agent, US Customs

Hoffman, Harry, Gulf Shores AL; 356th FG; Vice Commander South Alabama Wing; - of West Nile virus

Tate, Dean, Clackamas OR; career in Education

Hall, Ken, 353rd FG Armament Svc; involved in the placement of the 353rd FG monument at Dayton AF Museum – from 60-yr friend Cliff Boche

Harding, Charles "Chuck", Atlanta GA; 100th BG pilot; Past-president 100th BGA; career with the FBI

Kratz, Lawrence, Norristown PA; B-17 gunner/armorer; a family man who loved travel, baseball, golfing with buddies, and map-reading

Brownlee, Morris, Houston TX; HQ 8th AF for three years; career in insurance, serving on the Governor's Commission and on Boards supporting Southern Methodist University – from Al Lea

Ball, John, Nashville TN; WWII fighter pilot; flew reconnaissance missions in Korea; awarded the Medal of Honor; active throughout his life in the Air National Guard

DeRuyter, John, Kansas City MO; 352nd FG – from Ken Wilson

LeSueur, Larry; one of Edward R. "Morrow's Boys" who covered Europe in WWII; reported on the London blitz and the Russian Front; gave Americans the first radio report on the 1944 liberation of Paris

Brown, Howard, Biloxi MS; 96th BG navigator; hit by flak, his B-17 broke up at 16,000 feet; after bailing out he became a POW - from Alexander Ganyu

Rice, Horace, Houston TX; 305th BG

Seale, Emmett, Houston TX; tailgunner on 35 missions in B-24s; flew as a mechanic with a pilot locating crash sites of 8th aircraft behind enemy lines, eventually locating his brother Jack's crash and gravesite

Tilton, Neel, Deer Park TX; flew in Korea; career with NASA in Houston

Fowler, Joseph, Houston TX; navigator on 33 missions in B-17s

Cain, Richard, Nashville TN; founder of Cain-Sloan Company

Vetterman, Herbert, Liverpool, NY; 306th BG radio operator; New York Chapter

Shabman, Stanley, Great Kills NY; 388th BG; shot down in 1945; accomplished painter and sculptor; taught scuba diving;

Taps

on a recent interview, he stated, "I'm a lucky guy. I came back. There were plenty who didn't."

Marker, John, Redford, MI; 466th BG tailgunner in B-24 "Old Soar"

Madiera, Armando, Sacramento CA; 386th BG; combat aerial photographer;

Silva, Robert, Parkville MO; 8th AF fighter pilot

Rasdall, Richard, Valley Falls KS; 92nd BG; shot down over Nantes France Fourth of July, 1943; POW 23 months

Davidson, John, High Point NC; 8th AF navigator; when asked what Theater of Operations he fought in, his answer was invariably "Texas."

Campbell, H. Albert, Portland OR; Oregon Chapter

Canna, John, Chicago IL; journalist – from Jim McClain

Mackenzie, Ian James, Scottsdale AZ; - from daughter Anne Mackenzie

Chestnut, Howard; 18th Weather Squadron; opened the Weather unit at Mt. Farm; married 59 years to wife Sybil from Kneddleston

Greiff, George, Atlanta GA; 45 missions in B-24s, mostly as weather reconnaissance; career as journalist and column writer for the Atlanta Journal; Georgia Chapter – from Phyllis Williams

Zeigler, William, San Antonio TX; B-17 pilot, shot down in 1942,

recuperation for one year in England hospitals; born in Wurzburg Germany, a true American patriot – from Charles Harkins

Freebody, Robert; 305th BG navigator

Gustke, Russell, Oceanside CA; pilot 55th FG

Whittaker, Joseph, Mt. Airy NC; 392nd BG original member; bombardier; past-Pres 2nd ADA

Smith, John "Alvey", Leitersburg MD; 493rd BG tailgunner with 35 missions on Harold Hansen crew in B-24s and B-17s –from his wife Dottie

Dott, Donald, Louisville KY; Kentucky Chapter – from Bob and Lois Weixler

Bronson, Charles, Hollywood CA; US Army Air Corps WWII; starred in movies *The Great Escape* and *The Battle of the Bulge*.

Anderson, Harry, Maywood NJ; 361st FG

Wicks, Arthur, Rochester NY; 361st FG
Gurr, Woodrow Clive, Vernal UT; 306th BG crew member of *Eager Beaver*

Lewis, Frank, Dublin GA; 491st BG radio operator; Involved with researching history of the 491st BG; strong supporter of the Heritage Museum; local TV character



Lewis, Frank

on shows with many of his "Old Geezer" friends; always enjoyed being with his family and his wartime friends – from daughter Mary Lewis



LINES FOR THE UNFORGOTTEN

The days decline: no more again
The hills so clearly rise,
And even joy's a shade of pain
Where still a sorrow lies.

Nor will my soul be soon aglow,
Nor soon my heart be gay,
For here they lie--and I must go
The miles another way.

**James Facos, 388th BG
1947
Montpelier, VT**

The poem, "Lines For The Unforgotten," was written in early 1947 or so, when I was in college and 22 then and the memories of my wartime service were still keen with me.

During the war I had flown 30 missions in early 1944, as a ball-turret gunner on Lt. Arthur Moreland's 388th BG "Silver Lady" crew. After my tour, I had been immediately assigned to teach ball-turret gunnery at The Wash. Following that, I had volunteered for Pacific duty, but halfway through training, the war ended and I went on with my life, eventually as a professor.

ADRIAN WARBURTON

Declared by Royal Air Force Commander Air Marshall Lord Arthur Tedder as "the most valuable pilot in the RAF," Raf Wing Commander "Warby" Warburton disappeared 12 April 1944 on a special mission while serving as RAF Liaison Officer with the 7th Photo Recon Group at Mount Farm, England. On his final mission, approved by Wing Commander Col. Elliott Roosevelt, he was escorted by eight P-51s from the 357th Fighter Group. The mission was to the bombed city of Schweinfurt. Warburton's Lockheed F-5B recon aircraft was hit by flak near Egling, Germany near Munich – he failed to rendezvous in Sardinia and was not seen again.



Adrian Warburton has been featured in several movies detailing his wartime flying career. He was instrumental in the 1940 defense over Malta, flying reconnaissance as one of a very few RAF airmen flying those sorties. He took played an important role in the North Africa campaigns and in the invasions of Sicily and Italy before being reassigned to England. He was known as a fearless and unorthodox pilot.

In November 2002, Warby Warburton's wrecked airplane was discovered in Germany. Per his family's request, his remains were interred with full honors at the Durnbach Commonwealth War Graves Cemetary in Germany. A documentary about his life and wartime career will be released on BBC History Channels in September 2003. Internet information is online under "Warburton."

submitted by 7th PRG Commander George Lawson and 8th AFHS member Marshall Williams, Madison GA

Taps

Hope, Bob, Hollywood, California; Comedian and Supreme Commander of USO wartime shows; his first show for the troops was in 1941 – his last with his troupe at Christmas 1990 during the Persian Gulf War, flying over 10 million air miles in those five decades of entertaining; one of the most honored and respected Americans around the world.



BOB HOPE 1903-2003

Marquardt, George, Murray UT; 509th Composite Group; pilot of B-29 Superfortress No. 91, *Necessary Evil*, which carried the photographic equipment for the Bombing of Hiroshima; flew the *Enola Gay* during the bombing of Nagasaki. Regarding the atomic blast, he said, "It seemed as if the sun had come out of the earth and exploded. It ended a terrible war."

FREDDY GUERRA

The youngest member of Glenn Miller's Army Air Force Band had retired to Mesa, Arizona where he continued to recreate wartime USO Big Band sounds with his orchestra. As an 18 year-old draftee, Freddy Guerra auditioned and won a place in the Miller band as one of the four saxophone players who made up the signature sound of the orchestra. The Glenn Miller Band toured England playing at air bases and dance halls in World War II.

Mr. Guerra arranged and played music throughout his life and spent a number of years teaching at Berklee College of Music and the New England Conservatory of Music.

O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast
And our eternal home.

A thousand ages in Thy sight
Are like an evening gone:
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.

493RD BOMB GROUP RETURNS TO DEBACH

A group of 493rds recently made a special return trip to their wartime airbase in Debach England, and all had a great time. A number of Associate members accompanied them on the trip. An Open Day of military vehicles, equipment, and exhibits was attended on the base by over 3,000 people. The 493rd members were special honorees at a Saturday night Hangar Dance held in a large (cleaned) dairy barn! Over 300 people came dressed in uniforms and dress of the time – a special custom of the younger generations of Brits.

The current owner of Grove Farm, Richard Taylor, Jr., has restored the control tower back to original form. A number of Operations rooms are furnished similar to the 1944-45 period when "Whitewash" was in operation. A special thanks went out from the group to Richard and Prilly Taylor for their warm hospitality.



At the 493rd B.G. Jeep,
Front: Jack Feller, Ted Gary,
Back: Jack Rude, Bob Senger, Harold Hanson
The returning veterans and host Col. Richard Taylor.

GROUNDPOUNDERS WERE VERY BUSY AT 8th AF STRATEGIC AIR DEPOTS

by Gerald Brekke, 4th SAD
St. Peter, MN

The motto of the 8th AF Strategic Air Depots was "Keep them Flying" and they did just that throughout the air war in Europe, although they never felt that their efforts were appreciated as much as they should have been, and they suffered low morale at times compared to those performing similar duties at fighter and bomber bases.

The Air Depots were part of the Bradley plan to service the 8th AF's 65 heavy bombardment groups--divided into three bomb divisions--plus 20 fighter groups, four major headquarters and a service command with supply, maintenance and repair facilities strategically located throughout the United Kingdom. When it was established at Savannah, Georgia, in January of 1942, it is doubtful that anyone would imagine that the 8th AF would grow to be the world's largest air force with some 350,000 men and women, of whom 200,000 were combat crewmen, and that 26,000 of these would perish from enemy action, 28,000 would become prisoners of war, and that aircraft losses from enemy action or battle fatigue would claim more than 12,000 aircraft.

Suddenly one morning, several of us were pulled out of line, told to get our B-bags and board a truck for our new assignment which was Wattisham, a former RAF base which had been bombed out and assigned to the 8th AF Service Command's new 4th Strategic Air Depot. A 6 x 6 deposited us in front of a green stucco building which looked like a permanent barracks, which we discovered on entry was exactly what it was. There was only one difference. Our new happy home had no roof, a casualty of a Luftwaffe raid. Several tarpaulins had been hung from the walls to stop some of the ever-present rain from dripping down on the metal bunk beds which had been shoved under them for protection. Some, we noticed by the blankets and clothing on them, had already been taken by earlier arrivals, but I found one which appeared unused and appropriated it for my things.

Fourth Strategic Air Depot was primarily for use of Fighter Command. It was where modifications were made to the fighters, where battle damage was repaired,



Replacing engines on B-17F *Stella* after an emergency landing.

engines changed, and where gun camera film was processed. It was also where mechanics received schooling in carburetor repairs and adjustment; where QM drivers deficient in reading and arithmetic went to night school; where a public relations section kept a base history; and where correspondents kept local newspapers aware of the activities of young men from their communities and in the Air Force. It was where special services cooperated with the Red Cross to operate a club where donuts and coffee were available, and where an occasional 16mm movie from home could be shown. Sometimes big name shows were scheduled in such as Glenn Miller and his orchestra, or Bing Crosby or Bob Hope and Jerry Colonna and Frances Langford. Sometimes it was local color and boxing, football, or basketball with local units tangling with nearby army units. I reported the UK basketball tournament when we played the Army Blue team in the Corn Hall at Bury St. Edmunds and which was called off half way through when the Luftwaffe put on a particularly long and nasty air raid.

The activities did not stop with the invasion. The 19th Mobile Repair and Reclamation Squadron from the 4th SAD followed the invasion forces throughout the Continent, cannibalizing wrecked and battle damaged aircraft mainly to get useable engines which we always seemed to need. Occasionally, they would fly a plane back to England which they had found and given a new birth. The unit was led by Capt. (later Major) John English, a World War I retread, the best-liked officer on the base and a former employee of The San Francisco Herald Examiner.

GROUNDPOUNDERS (continued)...

Anyone who has not worked outdoors in an English winter would have a hard time appreciating what the mechanics of the 4th SAD went through. When they finally were issued sheepskin jackets, pants, boots, and caps, things improved immeasurably, but the dampness and the cold wind coming off the North Sea were bitter enemies of these young men as they sought to do their work. Some of that work was very technical and required great care. For example, one time they had to pull and check for hardness the engine mounting bolts from P-51's from ten 8th and 9th AF stations, amounting to 1,395 bolts of which they rejected 286 as lacking the necessary hardness to take the strains of aerial combat. The first bolt was received on March 14, and the last was finished on March 16, requiring 1115 man-hours.

The Fourth Strategic Air Depot did not remain at the Wattisham base for more than a few months when it was moved to the other end of the field near a village called Hitcham. Our quarters were taken over by a P-38 unit commanded by Col. Robin Olds, which we judged had considerable success in the skies over France and Germany by the number of young flyers who would buzz the control tower on their return from a successful mission whenever they had an aerial victory to their credit. We were back to Nissen huts again and beside each was a trenched area for use as a bomb shelter which we found useful occasionally when an errant buzz bomb came up

our way. Perhaps our greatest scare was when one young pilot buzzed the field and got too low and his props hit the tarmac and bent them back making them inoperable. The pilot was able to pull up enough to set his plane down on top of our main repair shop hanger. It slid along the top, then plopped on the ground. Fortunately several of our mechanics were right there and were able to pull the pilot out before the plane exploded and the fireworks started.

The major air depot at Honington is still in operation serving USAF planes at several air bases which we still operate in England, but the Second, Third and Fourth SAD's mission ended with the end of the war in Europe and the dispersal of the bomber and fighter groups they served.

The veterans who served in these units are dying off rapidly, but whenever the 8th AF Historical Society meets, some manage to show up and they deserve the greatest respect from those who served in the combat units, for they got little credit for what they did and their leadership did little to build the type of morale found in nearly all combat units.

**Gerald Brekke, 4th SAD, Army War Correspondent;
Stars and Stripes
Saint Peter, MN**

MOBILE REPAIR UNITS

Mobile Repair Unit Number Two consisted of 14 mechanics that worked on B-17s that had received considerable battle damage on their bombing run and returning to England would land at the first base they could reach, even landing in the open countryside. The bases were either Royal Air Force or Royal Naval Airbases. This crew would repair the B-17 ready for combat again except for radio, electrical, and armament. M/Sgt. Rowland is standing beside one of the trailers the unit used pulled by autocar trucks. The paintings of the side of the trailer represent the number of B-17s the unit had repaired. The most famous one landed on the grounds of a mental institution. The name of this B-17 was *Werewolf* and the incident was reported in most of the newspapers. The army engineers brought in heavy equipment and made a hard-packed dirt runway to fly it back to its base. A pilot that had been a Hollywood stunt pilot flew it out. One of our crew members, Sgt. Charles Bauder did the



Donald Rowland, NCDIC - Mobile Repair Unit Two Mission Record

art work on the trailer including the angel with the tool box following a B-17. Names of the rest of the crew are as follows: T/Sgt. Salvatore Santangelo, S/Sgt. Ernest L. Neiswinger; Sgts. Judson Davenport, Joseph Cropper, Roland O'Hern, Charles Bauder; Cpls. John McInernie, Maurice Lanfair, and Pfc. Luther Hughes, Jack Probst, George Chaba, John Kainrad and Frank Cirivello. When we were on

the RAF bases we all stayed in the NCO quarters. Some of my men were not really NCOS so I had them sew on Sgt. chevrons and all was ok. At the naval bases we lined up with the rest and after the evening meal we all got our ration of rum. Nearly everyone would carry a little bottle to pour it in. Very few would drink it right there. All the very best.

**Donald T. Rowland
Lafayette, CO
Greenberry16@msn.com**

How About It?

We saw him on international television. He became known after this momentous appearance as "Comical Ali." Broadcasting from a poorly-lit and drab studio surrounded by a sea of microphones, Iraqi Information Minister Mohammed Saeed al-Sahaf stood before the cameras and became a sudden TV star. He reported, on behalf of his boss Saddam Hussein, the defeat of the invading coalition forces and military units of the United States. "These forces" he reported, "have been repelled by the mighty Republican Guard and there is nothing to fear by the Iraqi people." On other TV channels with a direct link between the war front and viewers around the world, were the scenes and the sounds of bombs exploding on Iraq's targets, military tanks and support equipment, with Allied troops moving at will through the streets. Both telecasts were running at the same time but with conflicting reports. The question, did "Comical Ali" lack the proper facts or was he just reporting? Being a public information spokesman, he may have been plagued with what many journalists face: sometimes there is not much news to report. Perhaps he followed the philosophy, good news, and bad news make marvelous copy. Through the years, words have been used to influence the actions of people. During WW II, the Germans were masters of deception. One of the first attacks they employed against novice airmen was the use of false radio transmissions to lure newly arriving airmen into enemy

territory. Aircraft were directed into the paths of their fighter aircraft. Some were given false signals to lure them to unfriendly airdromes built specifically to encourage them to land in enemy-held territory. American forces in the European Theatre became accustomed to the voice of Axis Sally and the Brits were acquainted with Lord Ha Ha. These two individuals gave out information on the airwaves, some of it extremely accurate and often very deceiving. It is propaganda at its best. The reports were designed to demoralize the listeners. Broadcasts about the men and their military units, listed as "Top Secret," were very accurate. How much did the enemy really know?

The glory information about our bombing effectiveness was written off as myth. The only good feature of these radio programs was the airing of popular American music, which we rarely heard. We listened for the music, not the message.

How does one deal with things heard? Throughout life, messages come from many sources. Some ideas are believable while others are not. People decide what to believe; few are neutral. From birth to death, no one is exempt from voices bidding for our lives and influence. God loves to take the least of us and turn us into something great and significant in His eyes. It makes no difference where you are from. All that really counts is: Where are you going? Why are you going? Who is

going with you? After all, God never makes a mistake. Get hooked up with Him. Listen to His instructions and follow them. Ignore those messages and voices which are destructively wrong. Listen to what God has to say!



Earl Wassom

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 4:10-11 NIV)

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



Rest and peace are good things, are great blessings, but only if they come honourably, and it is those who fearlessly turn away from them, when they have not been earned, who in the long run deserve best of their country. . . The men who have made our national greatness are those who faced danger and overcame it, who met difficulties and surmounted them; not those whose lives were cast in such pleasant places that toil and dread were ever far from them.

Theodore Roosevelt (1900)

To souls like these, in mutual friendship joined,
Heaven dares intrust the cause of human kind.

Addison
The Campaign

What though the demon legions
Are big with blood and shame,
Yet those in starry regions
Send vengeance on the same.

Ernst Moritz Arndt



8th AF News

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