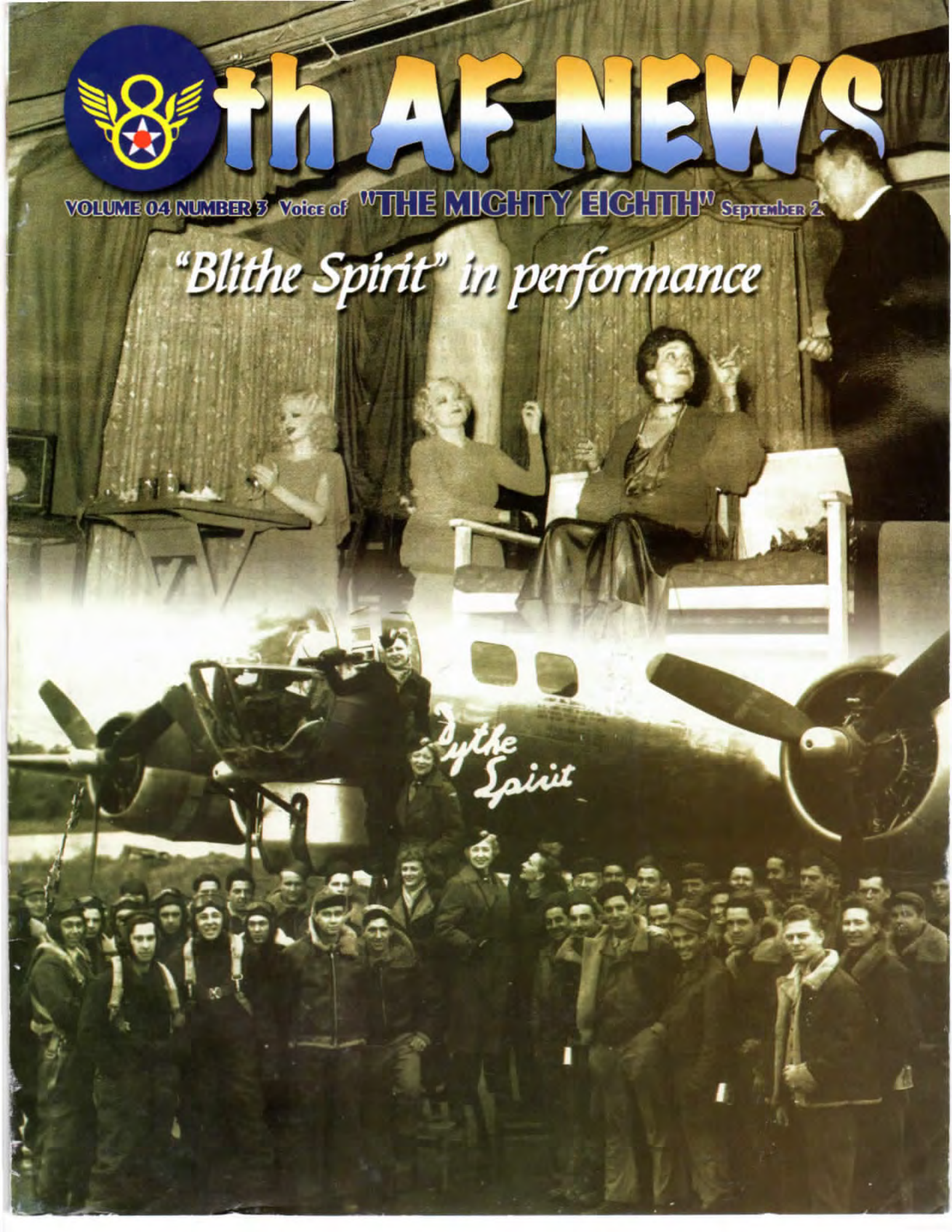




8th AF NEWS

VOLUME 04 NUMBER 3 Voice of "THE MIGHTY EIGHTH" SEPTEMBER 2

"Blithe Spirit" in performance





AF NEWS

Magazine of

September 2004

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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A. J. Sinibaldo at his navigator's table on left side of his 91st Bomb Group B-17.

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Blithe Spirit over the Target



COVER IDENTIFICATIONS:

Members of the cast, from left: Claire Luce, Peggy Wood, Ethel Intropidi, Geoffrey Lumb.

COVER STORY

BLITHE SPIRIT

There are not too many perks that accompanied getting shot at in an 8th Air Force airplane over Germany during World War II, but as the saying goes: "What other combat unit can be over Berlin in the morning and dancing at the Savoy that night?"

Sleeping in a muddy foxhole was not part of the Eighth's daily routine, even though life in the airbase barracks was not exactly the Ritz, and there was plenty of mud to go around. Special evening entertainments were often found at 8th air stations. Big Band dances, USO Hollywood tours and Broadway plays shared the limelight for the troops. Actors and actresses – especially the actresses – were always very welcome; good for morale and as reminders that home was still home.

A troupe of stars presenting distinguished playwright Noel Coward's play *Blithe Spirit* toured the United Kingdom, making a stop in October 1944 at Rattlesden, home of the 447th Bomb Group. Marvin Silbersher, R/O for the new B-17 Flying Fortress #43-338731 "Q" – Queen, recorded the events of that week. His pilot, "Gus" Neal' took delivery of this brand new aircraft after having flown a number of missions in the war-weary B-17 *Round Trip*. Marvin notes that the actual nose painting of the

Blithe Spirit was done in a hurry and the artist had a misspell of *Blithe*, spelling it *Blythe*, but the circumstances are no less fascinating.

After the Neal crew finished their 35 missions, the *Blithe Spirit* was taken over by their sister crew of pilot Harluff Jessen. The aircraft received a direct hit in the bomb bay at the IP of the 15 March 1945 raid to Oranienburg, north of Berlin. The unforgettable words in chalk, on the board, in the Briefing hall stated: Flak at the I. P. - #338731 – Lost. Two crewmembers, Walter Hoffman and Robert Dwight were thrown out of the nose and survived. The bombardier, Harry Pfautz, was thrown out of the nose without his parachute and was killed. None of the rest of the crew was able to leave the spinning airplane and all were killed in the crash. Forty years after, Marvin learned that they were buried at the American cemetery in the Ardennes, Belgium, and he traveled over to pay his respects.

Marvin Silbersher had a post-war career in television and in successful plays and productions. He heads up Silbersher Productions in Lake Hopatcong, New Jersey. He is a frequent contributor of poetry to the 8th AF News. In forwarding these photographs and materials to the 8th AF News, he was assisted by a close friend and 447th BG historian Iver Igelsrud of Littleton, Colorado and his granddaughter Laura Thurlow, who did computer enhancement of many of the photos.

THE NAMING OF BLITHE SPIRIT: #43-338731

When the mist rose over the Rattlesden airfield that morning, a voice inquired:

"Sgt. Jarvis, what's all this going on with your new B-17G?"

"We're going to have a naming of the plane this morning!" the crew chief replied.

A jeep suddenly appeared with a photographer and someone to paint the chosen name on the nose of the brand-new bomber. As Sgt. Jarvis, a tall Texan watched, the words "Blithe Spirit," appeared just below the cockpit. In a moment, quite a multitude began to gather around the Christening. Our crew had been designated to be the one to fly in the gleaming aircraft, piloted by Lt. "Gus" Neal. We had survived raids to Merseburg in a battle-scarred veteran called "Round Trip," and were thrilled to move on.

"Marv", our engineer top-turret-gunner, Rex Shearer, said to me, "she's a honey!"

"Who thought of 'Blithe Spirit' for the name of the plane?" someone queried.

At this moment, with the appearance of several jeeps bearing the cast of Noel Coward's play, "Blithe Spirit," it was understood that this show that was touring the UK was the immediate connection with #338731. Peggy

Wood, the female star, explained to us that "Blithe Spirit" was the title of a poem by the great English writer, Percy Bysshe Shelley. The cast then began to shake our hands and introduce themselves.

"Very glad to meet you, Gus, Fred, Roy, Earl, Rex, Marvin, Ivan, Byrl, Vernon." Peggy Wood came back to me for a moment. "Don't I know you?" she asked.

"Yes, Miss Wood," I replied. "I played your son three years ago on the radio series, "War Letters From Britain." She looked at me, smiling. "Do you think we ladies could go into the plane for a look?" "We'd be delighted," Lt. Neal replied. In a moment the mysterious interior of the plane was occupied by the visitors. The ladies paused for a moment at the waistguns.

"Would you mind if we wrote a note to you?" said Miss Wood, referring to the armor-plate below the waist-guns. In huge letters, in bright red lipstick, Peggy Wood and Virginia Barton, wrote on each side:

WE LOVE YOU FOREVER

Lt. Col. Edward McCray, our 711th Squadron leader who had organized the naming, applauded the procession as they emerged from the plane. "You are a wonderful bunch of young men," Peggy Wood exclaimed. That night, we were all in the audience of the performance of "Blithe Spirit" at the base theatre, a marvelous production.

**Marvin Silbersher
447th Bomb Group**



Ladies of the cast, Doreen Lang and Virginia Barton



Peggy Wood, Rollo Peters, and Claire Luce at Rattlesden

Blithe Spirit

We're all there

In the photograph

At the naming of our plane, piloted by Lt. "Gus" Neal,
Gathered around a brand-new
B-17G (#338731, tail-letter "Q")

By the light of day

The cast of "Blithe Spirit"

(Noel Coward's play was touring the UK)

Turned out with us in honor

Of the famous poem by Shelley.

The ladies of the cast wanted to

See the inside of the bomber

And, I remember, that on the

Armor-plate below the waist-guns

In huge letters they wrote in lipstick:

"We Love You Forever"

One day over Oranienburg,
after we'd finished our missions,
another crew (Lt. Harluf Jessen)
flying *Blithe Spirit*
was lost at the target.

Marvin Silbersher, 447th BG

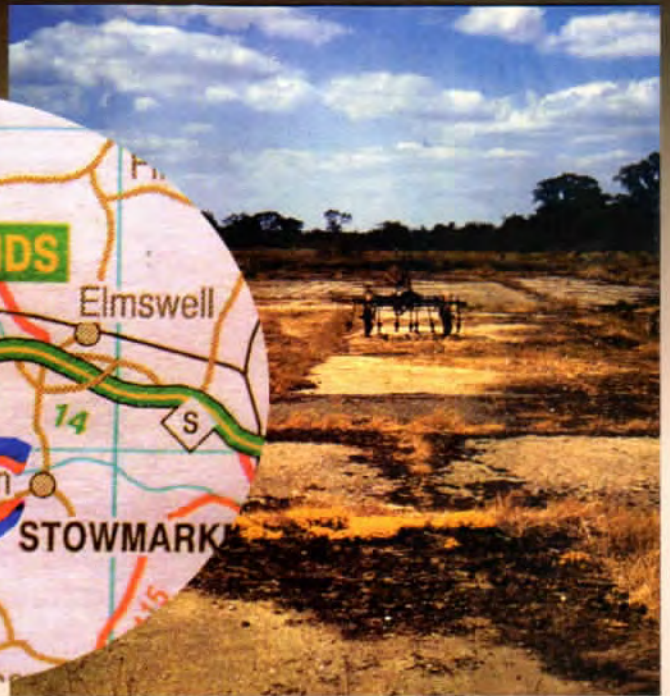
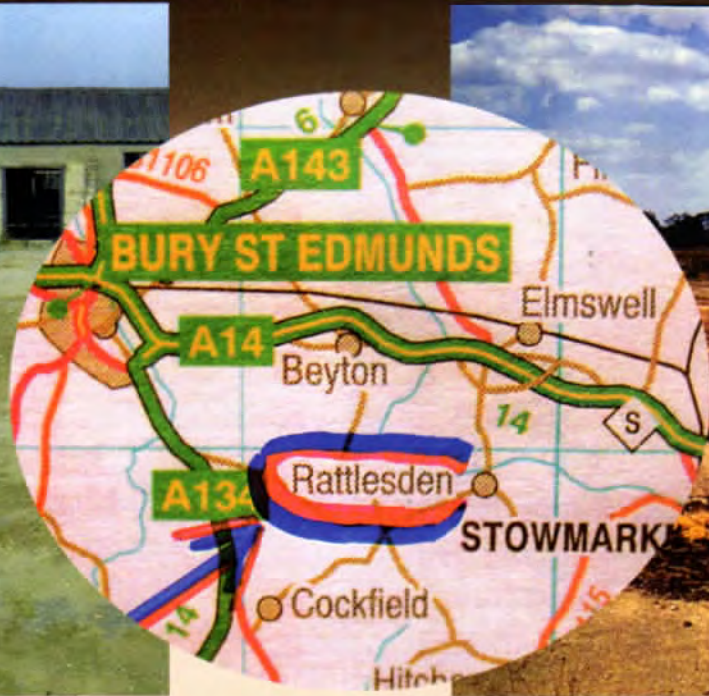
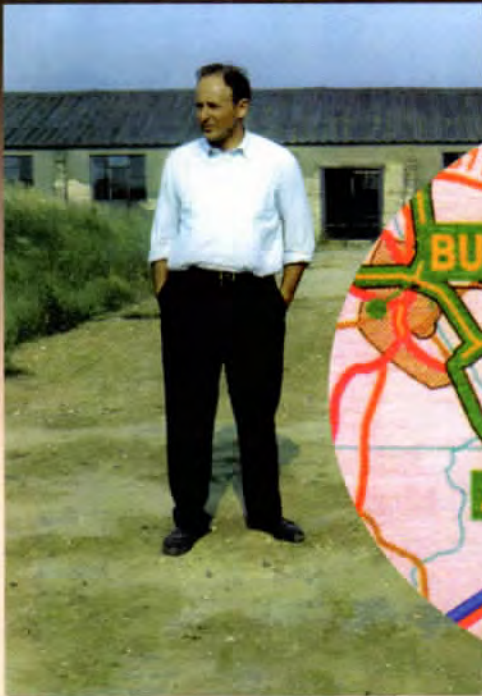
447th TROOPS WITH THE LADIES OF THE TROUPE



The Gus Neal Crew

Top row from left: Fred Beach, CP; Leroy Sands, N; Earl Lumpkin, B;
Gus Neal, P; Rex Shearer, eng; Bottom row from left: Marvin Silbersher, R/O;
Ivan Holland, tg; Vernon Burtner, btg; Byrl Wilson, armorer

BLITHE SPIRIT continued...



Marvin Silbersher 447th Bomb Group, Rattlesden, 1962

The *Blithe Spirit* hardstand, 1962, Rattlesden



B-17's with Little Friend at nine o' clock low



Presidents Message



I had the privilege of representing the 8th Air Force Historical Society at the dedication of the WWII Memorial in Washington on May 29th and at the Memorial Service at Arlington National Cemetery on Memorial Day, May 31st. These were truly memorable events for me and for thousands of visitors to our nation's Capital.

The National Capital Area Chapter of the 8th Air Force Historical Society hosted a weekend of activities, including attending the Dedication and Memorial Services.

More than 200 members of the Historical Society from across the country enjoyed the Chapter's hospitality during the four-day weekend of the Dedication. Many more of our members attended the Dedication services with their 8th Air Force Group Units. We joined a vast number of WWII Veterans Organizations representing all military services and Theaters of War. All together nearly one million people were present for the dedication; veterans and a grateful public.

The National Capital Area Chapter hospitality team, led by George Hoidra, son of a veteran of the 447th Bomb Group, did an outstanding job in preparing a weekend of programs reminiscent of the annual 8AFHS reunions held each autumn.

Dinner the evening following the dedication was hosted by Reg Rider, President of the National Capital Area Chapter. Guest

speaker for the evening was General T. Michael Moseley, Vice Chief of Staff of the Air Force. Following General Moseley's address, I spoke briefly on behalf of the 8th Air Force Historical Society to thank the General for his stirring tribute to the heritage of the 8th Air Force of WWII and to express our members' appreciation for the splendid weekend made possible by the efforts of George Hoidra and NCAC members.

Monday morning was gray and a steady light rain was falling. Colonel Elwyn "Stub" Warfle, USAF Retired, a veteran of two tours with the 447th Bomb Group in WWII, and I represented the 8th AFHS at the Memorial Services at Arlington National Cemetery. Secretary Rumsfeld and President Bush spoke briefly during the commemorative service in the Cemetery's Amphitheater. Following the service, Stub and I presented the 8th Air Force Historical Society's wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns. The 8th AFHS wreath was one of forty presented by military organizations. Presenting the wreath is a simple yet moving tribute to all who have died in the service of their country. Even though some 1500 people stood in the rain to watch this service, the entire tribute was carried out in silence, as is the custom.

The ceremonies at Arlington were the close of a marvelous weekend.

Since my return to Texas, I have focused on our Reunion 2004 in Kansas City. Plans are nearly complete. We expect a large attendance in a fascinating city, at a great hotel. In addition to Tours and entertainment, we have the



**William Rawson
President**

important business of electing two individuals to fill the Board of Director seats being vacated, as the terms of Dick Baynes and Ivan McKinney expire at the 2004 reunion. Dick Baynes retires from the Board following eight years of service due to term limits specified in our By-Laws. Ivan, our Treasurer for the past four years, will run as an incumbent for one of the two open seats. In addition to Ivan, we have two additional well-qualified candidates. These three will be competing for two open Board seats. Please note that this year the Board has chosen to leave vacant the Board seat held by the late Ken Nail. The Board will be composed of eleven members for the coming year. We look forward to seeing you in October.

**Sincerely,
William Rawson, President
8th Air Force Historical Society**

MISSION BRIEFING

It's been a good year for the 8th troops. The World War II Veterans Memorial was dedicated in Washington, DC. A long-overdue recognition and tribute, but I'm still thinking about that memorial. The ceremonies and speaker selections were of interest also. Next issue of the 8th AF News we'll put in some ideas and thoughts about the memorial. Let me hear from you on that. The NCAC of the Historical Society did a superb job of hosting our guys for the events of the week. Well Done!

The other big Spring event was the 60th anniversary of the D-Day landings, all made possible by two years of intensive bombing and combat by the Mighty Eighth. The invasion of the continent was certainly a day to remember for everyone who took part. We didn't see much on television about the other invasion of Europe – that one on the beaches of southern France, sometimes called the Riviera. D-Day there was on 23 August 1944 – it was designated *Operation Dragoon*. Thousands of soldiers lost their lives in the landings; many still rest in American cemeteries there. The ground forces, with tactical air support, pushed the German

armies north and east, to fall into the hands of Allied forces moving across western Europe. Heritage Museum founder Lew Lyle gives a good description of the bombing raids that August day – he was one of the very few 8th AF airmen to take part in both invasions of Europe. He flew several bombing missions with the 15th Air Force out of Italy.

All of which brings us back to the annual reunion in KC – there is a lot of Hangar Flying to be done this October. Come to the reunion and get with your buddies! See you there.



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

**Sincerely,
Walt Brown, Editor**



Heritage Museum Activities



FIGHTIN' SAM

Pooler, Ga. – The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum is now exhibiting the forward section of the fuselage of B-24 *Fightin' Sam*. The section is on loan from the Imperial War Museum – Duxford, England. The artwork on the nose section portrays Uncle Sam with one eye blackened representing Pearl Harbor, rolling up his shirt sleeves, preparing to take on the Axis powers.

The original *Fightin' Sam* initially was assigned to the 389th Bomb Group at Hethel, England, and later transferred to the 801st Bomb Group.



The Original 389th *Fightin Sam* at Hethel



WALL OF VALOR UNIQUE MEMORIAL

More than a memory...

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum's Wall of Valor stands as a tribute to the men and women of the Eighth Air Force...a memorial celebrating their courage and sacrifice for generations to come. It is not difficult to imagine the pride felt by families and friends as they read and touch Wall of Valor plaques honoring their loved ones, and recall their heroic deeds.

The Wall of Valor is seen by tens of thousands each year, reminding all visitors of the

extraordinary service of the members of the Eighth Air Force. Every rank or service of Eighth Air Force veterans is accorded equal status on the Wall of Valor.

Please take this opportunity to ensure that one of these plaques will forever honor a WWII veteran you love. Your donation to the Wall of Valor helps ensure their gallantry is never forgotten.

HURRY! Only 88 plaques left...Call Jean at 912-748-8888 for information.





Heritage Museum Activities



Work Progresses on Mission Experience Mural at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum

The oil-on-canvas mural, a key element in the Mission Experience diorama, is in the second stage of development. Artists from Savannah's Renaissance Studios will create a composite of Molesworth Airfield, home of the 303rd Bomb Group and the *Snap! Crackle! Pop!* crew, on two adjacent walls surrounding the Quonset hut and control tower. Noted aviation artist and muralist and Mighty Eighth board member, Keith Ferris, is providing technical and aesthetic guidance during the entire process.



The completed mural will span an area ninety-feet long and fifteen-feet high (1350 sq. ft.) with the B-17 *Snap! Crackle! Pop!* as the focal point. The B-17 in scale with the surrounding gallery has a projected wingspan of fifteen feet, approximately 1/6th of the aircraft's original size. The mural will capture life on the airfield with all the activity of the aircraft, support vehicles and support crews. The Mission Experience mural will be installed in fall of 2004.

GUNNER'S EXHIBITS NOW COMPLETED

Opening to the public on May 15, the Mighty Eighth's new Gunner's Exhibit has the action, visuals and sound to engage visitors of all ages. The exhibit includes a fast-paced hands-on activity and a touch-screen program; together these give users a clear understanding of the gunner's job. Visitors who take the position of a B-17 waist gunner in the interactive exhibit quickly spot their rapidly-moving target ...an enemy aircraft... and have a .50 caliber machine gun to take the situation in hand.



The touch-screen program expands viewers' knowledge of the gunner's role. Interviews with three Eighth Air Force WWII gunners give personal stories of the combat experience, while other touch-screen options reveal information about gunners' equipment, weapons, ammunition, uniforms and the science of gunnery.

VICE PRESIDENT CHENEY VISITS THE MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE MUSEUM

On Monday, 17 May 2004 Vice President Richard Cheney was a special guest at an event hosted by Congressman Max Burns of Georgia. The event was held in the Lewis E. Lyle Rotunda of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum.

"It was an extraordinary honor to have Vice President Cheney at the museum and to have him tour the facility," noted C.J. Roberts, the museum's president and CEO, "I was impressed with his knowledge of Eighth Air Force history." Vice President Cheney toured the entire Museum during his visit.



THE DIVE OF HIS LIFE

by Roger Freeman

8th Air Force Historical Society Historian

During World War II fighter pilots were warned about the dangers of a then only partially understood phenomenon termed compressibility. An aircraft entering a vertical dive from high altitude and reaching terminal velocity found the flight controls held in a vice-like grip the pilot could not overcome. The only recommended action for recovery was to wind up the elevator trim tabs in the hope they would bring recovery in the denser air at lower altitude. Many pilots did survive such dives but many others did not.

One survivor's detailed account of what occurred so impressed Republic Aviation's technical representative in the UK, Tom Leonard, that he sent a detailed report on the incident to the corporation's Vice President. It follows verbatim;

"Lt. Maxwell, 84th Fighter Squadron, was flying Capt. Irving's wing in airplane No. 42-7961 (a P-47). They were on a fighter sweep over enemy territory at 29,000 ft. July 1, 1943. A Jerry was sighted below and to the right. Capt. Irving turned and dove after the Jerry with Lt. Maxwell on his wing. The Jerry turned into them and dove down. This maneuvering required Lt. Maxwell to cross over. He had to open everything up to maintain his position. At approximately 23,000 ft. he was doing a steep tight spiraling turn to the left when Capt. Irving dove straight down after the Jerry. Lt. Maxwell did a half roll into a vertical dive to maintain his position. He was doing slightly over 400 mph indicated and had everything forward when he entered into the dive at approximately 23,000 ft. His airplane was highly waxed.

At this point I had better add that Lt. Maxwell is not a green pilot. He has over 125 hrs. in a P-47. He has also heard Joe Parker (a senior Republic test pilot) tell about compressibility while he was in Florida so he knew what

would happen. He watched Capt. Irving for a few seconds and he was in compressibility. He was going straight down at the time.

The airplane had a tendency to go past the vertical. He had to use the elevator trim tabs to keep the airplane going vertical. He remembered Joe Parker saying that two full turns on the elevator tabs were best. He estimates he took at least three turns just keeping the airplane going vertical.

The stick was frozen. He could not move it with both hands. He would take one hand off the stick to trim and get the airplane back to vertical; then continue using both hands trying to pull it out. He left everything forward knowing the tendency of the nose to drop without power. He experienced neither buffeting or rolling about the longitudinal axis. The airplane did have a slight tendency to go to the left during the last part of the dive. He felt if he had let go, it would have gone into a tight spin to the left and on in. This might be explained by his rudder tab. Prior to the dive he had taken some right trim to counteract the torque. This wanting to go left was not noticed until he was well into compressibility. He might have passed the speed at which the propeller ceases to be helpful and acts as a brake. From this speed on, his slight right trim would tend to take him left.

He does not recall his air speed exactly. The pointer was around 650 mph indicated air speed. This must have been around 15,000 ft. This figures to roughly 845 mph depending upon the correction constant used. This might be more as I understand our airspeed gage is slow. During the dive he heard his canopy glass cracking as if from an outside suction which was trying to pull the canopy off. His canopy was completely closed; however dust and particles from the cockpit were sucked up into it and by his face. His cockpit vent was closed.

He does not recall his altitude. The pointer was unwinding so fast no reading could be taken. His last impression of the altimeter was that it had unwound to approximately 8,000 ft. and he was still going straight down. It was at



P-47's - 78th Fighter Group at Duxford

this time things happened fast. There was no doubt in Lt. Maxwell's mind that he was going to crash. He did not have time to get worried about it and continued trying to pull out. He knew he would not have time to make the pull-out but kept trying.

His guns started firing. He thinks he pulled the trigger because he had his feet braced and both hands around the stick pulling.

His main gun switch was on. He slid his hands down on the stick away from the trigger, but his guns continued firing for a while longer. The rounds per gun varied from 35 to 65 rounds each. A total of 390 rounds were fired and no stoppages occurred.

This all happened as the airplane started to catch hold. He knew what would happen next so he reached for his elevator trim control as the ship pulled out fast.

He had the impression of being very low. The ground was blurred haze and he recalls seeing trees as the plane pulled out. He was worried about hitting them on the pull-out so he must have been very low. He did not have long to worry for as he reached for the trim control his hand was pulled to the cockpit floor and he was thrown into the left side of the cockpit. It was here he blacked out, being unable to take off any of the trim. He does not know what happened next. This was the first time he had ever blacked out completely.

He came to under these conditions: he was hanging by his shoulder straps; the windshield and sliding enclosure were completely frosted so he could not see out; his ball was not centered; the altimeter read 4,000 feet. It is hard to imagine what he had done; he had evidently experienced his zoom and came down again. He pushed the stick left and rolled over righting the ship on instruments. His next thought was the defrosters, which he pushed. He noticed the pull and they worked. (This was a pull control.) He had not experienced any frost during the dive or before he blacked out.

He then completed leveling the airplane and noticed the airspeed, which was 400 mph indicated. A small strip one-inch wide on the bottom of his windshield cleared first. He squinted through this strip to orientate himself. While he was waiting for the rest to clear he established a compass course home. When the rest of his windshield had cleared off, his speed had dropped to 300 mph indicated so he dropped the nose and dove to the deck. He was indicating 360 mph with 60 inches Hg. when he reached the deck. This later dropped to 350 mph with 59



The P-47 Thunderbolt *Spokane Chief*

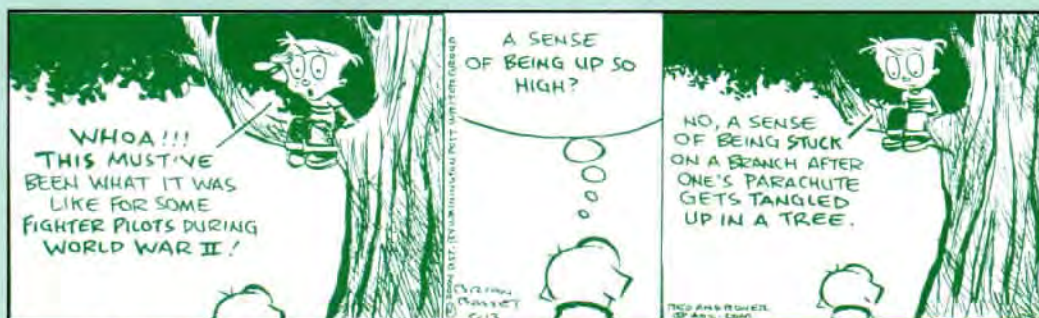
inches Hg. which he was able to hold.

He landed at another airdrome for gas. He checked the airplane over very closely. The surfaces were not bent or buckled. He pulled a good instrument check. Everything seemed in order so he flew back to his base at Duxford. The airplane is still flying and functioning normally. Inspection revealed cracks in the primary cowling support brackets, the external vent pipes bent back, and the new type rod antenna bent back and around. No metal particles were found in the oil strainer.

The following day Lt. Maxwell felt sore all over as if he had played a hard game of football. His ears ached and to date his eardrums are still sore. He feels that firing his guns saved him. Firing guns would slow him up and might possibly change the airflow so the elevators would grab. This seems likely as Capt. Irving, who also went into compressibility, recovered higher and less abruptly, wrinkled his stabilizer, while Lt. Maxwell did not wrinkle any of his surfaces. "If this is the case, and it seems very likely, this information should be gotten to all other pilots who might need help pulling out over enemy territory. Changing the air flow at this point as well as slowing the airplane up could not do the pilot any harm."

Julius Maxwell went on to complete two tours with the 78th Fighter Group at Duxford, surviving 133 missions and 433 combat hours in P-47s and P-51s between April 1943 and May 1945. As for P47D 42-7961, WZ:M, it only survived another 29 days. On July 30th it was used by the group C.O., Lt. Col. Melvin McNickle, to lead a mission. Over the Netherlands the oxygen system failed and when McNickle eventually regained consciousness he was being extracted, badly injured, from the wreckage of the Thunderbolt in a field at Herpen, near the German border in the Netherlands.

**Author Roger Freeman
Dedham Colchester England**



MEMORIAL ESTABLISHED IN FRAME FOR 305TH BOMB GROUP CREW

by Claude Helias

A Eighth Air Force B-17 crew shot down in action in 1943 were honored in Brittany on 13 October 2001. A memorial was unveiled in the village of Brec'h, 28 km east of Lorient. On 17 May 1943, 118 Flying Fortresses attacked the U-boat base and the power station at Lorient, while 34 Liberators made a wide sea sweep to bomb to sub pens at Bordeaux and 11 Marauders were detailed to Ijmuiden and Haarlem in Holland. Mission 58 was notable for the fiasco of the B-26 attack on the Dutch targets; one Marauder aborted; the rest were lost. The U-boat pens at Lorient were being targeted by the Eighth Air Force for the eighth time since October 1942.

Six Forts did not return from the two Lorient strikes, four coming from the Chelveston - based 305th Bomb Group.

While crossing the Brittany coast, B-17 42-5219 developed engine trouble and lagged behind the rest of the formation. The propeller of #4 engine had to be feathered. The Fort was attacked by FW 190s and badly damaged. The intercom was knocked out, the two pilots in the cockpit had no way of knowing the extent of damage to plane or injuries to crew. With the glycol system on fire, the aircraft was filling with fumes and it was difficult to see anything. After leaving the target, German fighters made another attack on the crippled Fort. The engines were hit and enemy fire riddled the plane. One engine after another was lost and finally the pilot, Harry W. Indiere, sounded the bail out bell but only four crew members were able to escape. The rest of the crew were killed. They are: Roy E. Richards (navigator), John W. McFarland (top turret gunner), Walter E. Schenk (ball), Dennis T. Cullinan, Jr. (right waist), John D. Norris (left waist), Henry A. Mitchell, Jr. (tail).

Co-pilot 2nd Lt. Joseph B. Boyle landed in a wooded area. Two young Frenchmen were first to reach him and offered to help. Unfortunately, a small group of German soldiers arrived on the scene almost immediately and captured him. The following morning, Boyle was taken to the railway station at Vannes where he met Indiere. He learned that the pilot had bailed out, half blinded by smoke and injured his leg when he landed in a tree.

Bombardier 2nd Lt. James S. Wilschke and Neil were able to evade capture.

S/Sgt Henry A. Mitchell, Jr. (tail gunner, KIA)

Wilschke landed in a field near the village of Ploeme, about half way between Auray and Carnac in Morbihan. He hit a fence on landing and knocked himself

out. When he recovered consciousness, he saw a farmer who picked up his flying gear. The Frenchman took Wilschke to a barn and

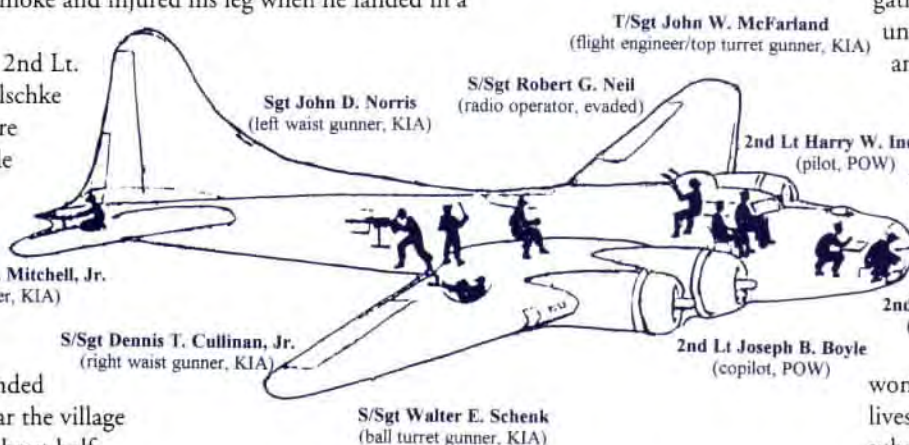
put him in a wagon, covered him with clover and left. In an hour the farmer was back with another Frenchman who could speak English. They moved Wilschke to a field and hid him in a hedgerow until dark. That evening the airman was taken to a nearby farmhouse. The next morning, he was told that another American airman was hidden in the area and both would be moved together to another location. They put Wilschke in a horse-drawn cart and moved him several kilometers to where a car was waiting. In the car was Neil, along with several other people. This was the beginning of a long and complicated journey with the underground. The two evaders stayed in barns, churches, basements and out in the fields, often right under the noses of the Germans. They even attended Holy Mass in a forest. "We posed as everybody and everything except what we actually were", said Neil. "I finally wound up with a fancy zoot suit outfit. Bet I could have won a prize as the best dressed refugee in occupied Europe. It sure took a sharp eye for anybody to know I was an American in that outfit." Wilschke and Neil crossed the Spanish border on 17 November 1943. Just before Christmas, the two airmen arrived back in England. At Chelveston, they learned things had changed much in the six months they had been away. Many new men were there, many old friends were missing.

A memorial was unveiled near the crash site of B-17 F 42-5219 by Mr. Joseph B. Boyle and M. Pierre Baudic, Mayor of Brec'h. The standard - bearers of local veterans associations provided a colour guard around the memorial. More than one hundred people had gathered to honour the crew. After the unveiling of the memorial, the French and American national anthems were played. "Six airmen died on a beautiful day of May 1943 to liberate our country. The freedom we enjoy today has a price; we shall not forget it as too many men, women and children paid it with their lives," said the Mayor in his speech.

submitted by
Claude Helias, Conservatoire
Aeronautique de Cornouaille
Plomelin France



Joe & Nancy Boyle beside the Brec'h memorial



B-17 F 42-5219 WF ★ K

305th BOMB GROUP - 364th BOMB SQUADRON

A story in the September 03 issue 8th AF News featured a research article by Brian Lindner, Missing Aircrew Report #6721, investigating the fate of members of the crew of the stricken B-24 Little Warrior. This Epilogue is derived from a related story by William Rawson, 493rd BG, and Brian Lindner with Kenton Mc Elhattan.

EPILOGUE

LITTLE WARRIOR REMEMBERED

In 1990, Kenton McElhattan, 458th Bomb Group, noticed a monument in a schoolyard honoring a WWII aircrew. It consisted of a B-24 on top of a globe and the plaque with the words: "Remembrance to my only son, S/Sgt Walter A. Boykowski and his crew." Beneath were listed the names of the crew – Lts J.H.Hansen, S.A. Benson, J. Levy, M. M. Stich, and Sgts V.J. Polzin, C.R. Aidala, B.B. Gomillion, S.G. Haskill, J.E. Sanders, and W. A. Boykowski - and the words: "Dearest son, in my heart you will live forever."

Not knowing which Group the crew belonged to, Kent wrote the 2nd ADA *Journal* and received enthusiastic help from researcher Brian Lindner. The grim story of the 493rd Bomb Group's *Little Warrior* came to light. The entire Hansen crew was lost on the Fallersleben mission of 29 June 1944. Gunner Clifford Stocking flying in the lead crew aircraft of Marion Lloyd had taken a photograph of the plane immediately after it was hit on the bomb run

by German flak. The *Little Warrior* exploded shortly thereafter.

Kent McElhattan carried his investigation further. He learned that Walter Boykowski's mother had used her son's GI insurance to pay for the monument that stood in her front yard at McKees Rock, Pennsylvania until her death, after which it was moved to a local schoolyard by the local Chapter of the American Legion. In 1998, the 493rd BG and Kent attempted to get the members of American Legion Post 862 to help develop the monument further and provide for its future protection. Receiving no replies to his inquiries, he later learned that Robinson Township had begun a campaign to raise money for the memorial, which is now titled Robinson Township Veterans Memorial.

In May, 2004 the Veterans Memorial was completed, and the *Little Warrior* monument is now permanently in place. Paul Stinner, local Chairman of the Memorial



EPILOGUE (cont'd)

Committee, states that the Memorial features a large marble walkway of stones, with benches and flagpoles donated by contributors to the project. At the Dedication ceremonies, the 493rd BG was represented by veterans Bill Craig and Jack Feller, who unveiled the 493rd plaque inscribed:

In Memory of Our Fellow Airmen, The John Hansen Crew, KIA June 29, 1944.

The 493rd Bombardment Group (H) Memorial Association, Inc.



The Monument to the *Little Warrior* crew adjacent to the three flag poles of the Robinson Township Veterans Memorial. The U.S. flag is at half staff in respect to President Reagan.



The Arc of Service Medallions that are the center piece of the Robinson Township's Veterans Memorial Garden. The Boykowski *Little Warrior* Monument is in the garden to the left of the arc of Medallions. Three memorial flag poles are directly behind the arc.



J.J. Oling

The *Little Warrior* was picked up at Mountain Home, Idaho and named by pilot J. J. Oling and his crew. The name was their second choice, as their first choice, *Little Lackanooky*, was felt by their base HQ as being a little too risqué for the time. Oling drew out the Indian cartoon character and the crew had it painted on the nose of their B-

24 a/c 42-94812. They flew the aircraft over to England via the Southern route whereupon the crew was immediately assigned to a Carpetbagger squadron, flying night missions to deliver "Joes" and supplies low-level to Resistance groups on the continent. The *Little Warrior* was eventually assigned to the 493rd Bomb Group at Debach.

J. J. Oling completed his 35 missions and had returned to the States when he saw in the news a photograph of his airplane with another crew just as it was hit by enemy flak. He states that the timing for the unfortunate event was right – his wife back home would have realized that was his airplane that went down and that

he was probably its pilot.

His postwar career was spent as an airline pilot and he traveled extensively. He was a noted cartoonist – a talent that had its roots back to his training days during the war. He is noted for his excellent realistic and creative paintings of nature and wildlife and has received many awards over the years for his artistic work, signed as *Oling*. He resides in Torrance, California.





Mail Call



ALUMINUM OVERCAST

Dear Dr. Brown:

The word in the June 04 issue that *Aluminum Overcast* made a wheels up landing recently in California (Van Nuys) is incorrect. The televised landing clearly showed the plane on the runway with the mains extended - the tailwheel as well, a very few seconds before the mains collapsed. The tailwheel could be seen shimmying. Could the shimmy have been because the tailwheel was not locked? Were the two things related? I propose to find out at Oshkosh later this month.

Gray Berg
La Canada Flint CA

LONDON

Dear Walter,

I am enclosing a Post Card I received



PICCADILLY CIRCUS AND REGENT STREET, LONDON

from my Father-in-Law as a keepsake of London, which he knew I enjoyed visiting, years and years ago.

My Father-in-Law was a Missionary of the Mormon Church in 1914. I find it interesting to compare with my wartime visits to Piccadilly Circus and my six visits since.

John Lusk Moore, 492nd BG
Salt Lake City, UT

THE BLIND MAN

Walt:

There are times in war that the human consideration of your fellow man comes to the forefront.

The 351st fighter revetments were, if I remember right, on the approximately Northern area of the Raydon Airfield, east of the bomb disbursal area. We were on the perimeter of the land that was bordered by farm. Mrs. Clark had

the unique opportunity to collect our mess hall left overs in the area.

Her pigs were the best fed in the area. One afternoon after doing some work at the dispersal area, Mrs. Clark appeared at the fence that separated the revetment from the farm.

Mrs. Clark, in an apologetic way, asked if there was someone who she could talk to re a problem in the village. I spoke to this charming lady and found out that in the area was a blind man that made his living by making door mats from jute. It seems that the machine he used to shave the top of the mats had stopped working. I told her that I would come and look at the machine.

That afternoon I was free and went to the home of the blind man. I surveyed the machine and found the problem. Something had broken loose and jammed the cutter and broke a portion of the cutting blade. I took the item back to the shop and rebuilt the cutting edge and refurbished the rest of the cutter. The next day I went back and reinstalled the cutter. It worked.

There is nothing more rewarding than a thank you.

Joe Schmidt, 351st FG

We regret to report that Joe Schmidt recently died in his sleep at his home.
-Editor

THE NEWS

Dear John,

I'm not sure if I'm sending this to the right person but I'm sure it will end up in the right mail box.

I belong to the 8th Historical Society and I read the news letter from end to end as I get it.

In the Sept. 2002 issue on page 12 the article by Dan Neilsen sent me back a few years and from his discription of everything I'm sure I was on the plane with him. I'd often told my family of that trip with the hanging underwear and the man waving his fist at us and Dan came through for me.

The next issue of June 2004 page 35 the article on the B-17 *Half and Half* was another story I had told my family about and now I could show them a picture of "Arf and Arf" as we called it.



So you see by reading it from cover to cover I find things I could tell my family about.

I'm also enclosing a picture of my Wisconsin car plates.

Every now and then I see some plates in the magazine, but I don't remember any from Wisconsin. We do our share of bragging about the 8th.

Keep up the good works - we enjoy reading it all. I was with the 457th from beginning to the end.

Sincerely,

Doug Simonis, 457th BG
Lake Tomahawk WI

Dear Doug:

It was good hearing from you. I am forwarding your letter and photo to Dr. Walter Brown, 8th AF NEWS Editor. I was a navigator in the 748th Squadron of the 457th Bomb Group. I did not witness what Don Nielsen described but recall that I was on the May 8, 1945, flight over the school house at Reims where the surrender was signed, and up through the region of Cologne and Dusseldorf. We, too, were carrying ground crew folks to observe the bombed-out cities.

I was at Conington for the dedication of our monument. It is an outstanding tribute to those who served in the 457th Bomb Group and those who gave their lives. I wish to thank you as one of the many contributors who made it possible.

The best to you,

John Pearson, 457th BG
Scty 8th AFHS
Richmond VA

THE LEFT SEAT

Dear Walt:

Re: Cover photo June 04

No doubt by now you have been flooded with email from ex-navigators advising that pilots did





Mail Call



not share the navigator's seat. Having spent many hours hoping those propellers would not fall off and slice up my table, I can attest that it's "The View From the Navigator."

Cordially,
John Wilson, 306th BG navigator
Wellesley MA

You are correct, John, and thanks for the note. And even though I have heard from the navigator troops, can I maintain the weak argument that the "left seat" might apply to the portside navigator position? Or not? - Editor

APPRECIATION FOR D-DAY

Dear Walter Brown and all the 8th AF Historical Society:

I to pay tribute for all the aviators, soldiers, U.S. Marines who to give their lives for our freedom. For you our gratitude and our remembrance.

6 June 1944 – 6 June 2004

The sea-fog on that sad morn
The madly sea-tossed Landing craft.
They climbed aboard with anxious heart
As if Heaven itself dared not see
The Hounds of Hell that day set free.

Sincerely yours,
Jean-Paul Favrais, life member
8th AFHS
Breal – sous- Montfort France
President of Memorial Assoc. for
Lt. Russell G. Quinn

7TH PHOTO RECONNAISSANCE

Dear Walt:
My wife and I were pleased to see the four English Pubs listed in the recent June issue of the 8th AF News. Two of them, The George and the White Hart Hotel, are located in Dorchester on Thames near RAF Mt. Farm AAC Station 234. This air base was the home of the 7th Photo Recon Group which with the 25th Bomb Group formed the 325th Recon Wing at High Wycombe. Mt. Farm flew both the P-38 and Spitfire aircraft. The 25th at Watton flew many types including B-24, B-17, Mosquito, B-25 as well as several liaison models. Nearby was RAF Benson, also a photo



Recon Group, with whom we shared missions covering targets, mapping and damage assessments. Cooperation with the British was excellent. Dorchester on Thames is about ten miles southeast of Oxford and has a fine restored Abbey built, I believe, during the 12th Century. John J. Shatynski, 7th PRG Hillside N.J. P.S. The attached photo was taken in 1992 when the monument and a window in the town church were dedicated.

COVER PHOTO

To the Editor of 8th AF News:
That is a good picture on the cover of 8th AF News, but it is not from the left seat. I have attached a small photo taken by me flying group deputy lead off the lead ship "A" Apple. I think the picture on the cover was taken from one of the two windows over the navigator's desk. Also - Waiting for the Green Flare - should be Waiting for the Green - Green Flare.

Sincerely,
A. Johansen, 306th BG
Doylestown, PA
email: APittJo@aol.com
Okay, okay - I should have known that our eagle-eyed 8th guys would pick up on last issue's cover with editor's perogatives. 306th BG Pilot Alfred Johansen is right on target! He watched for the green-green flares many times at Thurleigh. -Editor

CHAPLAIN GANNON

Hi Walter:
Just wanted to thank you for using the photo and information I sent you on Chaplain Gannon (June 04).

The issue looks very good and you gave my item some nice coverage. If you ever get any comments on it please let me know. Keep up the good work.
Regards,
Hal Roth, 446th BG

THE BIRDIE SCHMIDT

Dear Sir:
The June issue 8thAF News featured the B-24 *Birdie Schmidt*, a plane named after the Red Cross Aero Club director at the 392nd Bomb Group, Wendling, England. As co-pilot of the replacement crew that took over this plane after the original crew completed its tour, I thought some might be interested in what happened to this plane. To begin with, when our crew was driven out to this plane for our first mission on Feb. 15, 1945, the first thing we noticed was a big Red Cross on the starboard nose. If we wondered what that was all about, we were really surprised to see a large portrait of *Birdie Schmidt* on the port nose. We all wondered who the heck was this gal! None of our crew knew her (we were new at the base) but we figured we'd find out on our return from the mission. The problem was we never did return as we were hit on the mission to Magdeburg, had to bail out, and were taken prisoners. It wasn't till a year later I found out about Birdie. While reading a history of the 2d Air Division, 8th Air Force, there was a picture of our plane being christened in 1944 by Birdie, head of the Red Cross Aero Club; a job she did so well she had a plane named after her. Everyone knew her back at the base except a green crew like us. Then it wasn't until 40 years later while reading *The Crusader* - the 392d News that I learned her address. She had been working overseas and her name was now Birdie Schmidt Larrick. I wrote her detailing the final mission of "her" B-24. She telephoned me as soon as she received the letter and was flabbergasted at what had actually happened. Evidently the report back at the base the day of our mission had us probably lost in the North Sea at around 1pm, when



Mail Call



actually at that time we had been on the ground as POW's for over an hour!
John C. Kenyon, 392nd BG
Chatham, MA.

FORMING PLANES

Hi Doc:

After reading Jack Umphrey's version of forming planes (June 04) I have to submit my version.

I was a lead pilot in the 446th BG. As such, part of my duties on off days could include flying the forming (yes, we called it the forming) plane. The forming plane always took off first and climbed to assigned altitude and circled the two assigned radio beacons. The lead plane and deputy lead would go, off next and settle on the forming plane's right wing; in echelon we carried on.

The reminder of the Group would assume their assigned positions. When the Group was formed, the forming plane would do a left wingover and return to base.

Over and out,

Eric Sherman 446th BG

FORMING PLANES

Dear Editor:

The article in the March issue about forming planes of the Second Air Division brought back memories of when I flew in the 467th Group's plane *Pete the POM Inspector* - a name suggested by our bombardier, John Gile. POM stood for "Preparation for Overseas Movement." I was a radio operator and one of our extra duties was to fly in "Pete" and fire flares until the forming was complete. However, when I flew in "Pete" it wasn't all dressed up in those yellow polka dots - it was just plain, dark



green. I might add that John Gile also wrote a piano composition - "*Pete the Pom Inspector*."

I also enjoyed the article about the B-24 Carpetbagger modifications. Our 788th Squadron transferred to the 801st on 5/11/44 and came back to Rackheath on 8/12/44.

Best wishes,
Leonard Schutta 467th BG
Milwaukee, WI

1944

Dear Sir:

Everytime I read "1944" (page 20, June 04) I cry and cry and cry!

Annette Hedges Maidenhead, England
A very moving perceptive story by Marvin Silbersher, 447th BG - Editor

THE CROW FILES

Hi Walt,

I have recently received my copy of the June 8th AF News and would like to ask if you can please help me to contact James Crow of Elmhurst, IL re the photographs you have published?

For the past several months, I have been trying to locate photographs and info of the aircraft repaired by MRU#2, attached to 1st SAD at RAF Honington. I am in contact with some of the guys from MRU#2 but thus far, all attempts to locate info and photographs have failed. I live in England and I want to write up their story. Also the guys themselves are interested. The photograph of the B-24 at Woodbridge was what inspired me to contact you - MRU#2 are known to have repaired planes at Woodbridge. Those guys deserved a Unit Citation for the number of aircraft they put back into the air - 80+, but they didn't get one, and no one seems to have any info.

Any help you can offer would be much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Iris (Knight) Rowe

<iris@rebel999.freemove.co.uk>

STARS AND STRIPES

Doc,

Great edition!! And thanks for the review of my book!

Two comments regarding the June 04



Crew of 385th BG B-17
Stars and Stripes



388th BG B-17

issue:

1. On the B-17 named *Stars and Stripes*, p-44. S&S was an original in the 385th BG, serial no. 42-3544. It was lost July 7, 44. Then another of our B-17s serial No. 42-31349, was named *Stars and Stripes, 2nd Edition*.
2. The 385th BG also had a B-17 named *Half & Half*, for the same reason as that of the 457th BG on P 35. Ours was 42-97940, picture attached.
Bill Varnedoe, 385th BG
Huntsville, AL



P-47s

Dear Walt,

Gil Burns featured in the June 04 Debriefing Section, may be interested to know that the P-47C serial number 41-6237 he pranged on 16 July 1944 start-



ed out with the 61st Fighter Squadron of the 56th Fighter Group. An original combat aircraft of the squadron it was assigned to Lt. Milton Anderson, who named it *The Idaho Spud*. Anderson had at least one victory claim with this fighter.

The Ninth Air Force in Europe was the tactical buddy of the Eighth. It started out as a re-labeling of VIII Air Support Command, taking over its combat units and personnel. Much of the rear echelon training and servicing for the Ninth was carried out in the UK by the Eighth. There were many ways in which the two commands were interlocked.

Sincerely,
Roger A. Freeman
8th AFHS Historian
Dedham England

PUBS

Dear Walter,
On page 25, June issue of the 8th AF News, there are photos of four pubs. These four pubs are all within a mile of Mount Farm in Oxfordshire, formerly the home of the 7th Photographic Reconnaissance Group. Just wondered who is responsible for this montage of photos, as well as the "Eyes of the Eighth Air Force" (the 7th again) on the back cover.

My curiosity is gnawing at my gut. Thanks.

Ray Korczyk
22nd Photo Recon Squadron
7th Photo Recon Group
Ray, these great photographs are "Straight From Jake," the J. Wayne Fredericks files, 3rd Air Division HQ.-Editor

B-17 LANDING GEAR

I read with interest the short article on the *Aluminum Overcast*, which carries the Triangle W of my old Bomb Group, the 398th. We were the ones that furnished the funds to refurbish the aircraft. The article did not state what type of malfunction the landing gear had, whether hydraulic or mechanical. I wonder if any one attempted to crank down the landing gear by hand, before they wiped out the undercarriage? As I

remember it took 139 turns to crank down each gear, which I had to do after a mission to Germany with our hydraulics shot out, among other things. It has been 60 years but I think the landing gear did not have a down lock but the wheels were forward of center when fully down. I could be wrong. If the gear was not all the way down there should have been a warning light, at which time it could have been checked manually, with the crank.

Just a thought
Howard Jennings, 398th BG

GENERAL SPAATZ

Dear Walt,
The June 2004 issue of the 8th Air Force News was quite interesting in content and style. The picture of Gen. Carl Tooley Spaatz caught my eye. Prior to WW#2, Tooley was a Lodge Brother of my Dad in Boyertown, Pennsylvania, where General Spaatz was born. In the mid to late thirties I even had a force landing with my little plane on one of his farm fields. We had to take the plane out on a flat bed truck.

As a kid, always interested in airplanes - I soloed at age 15 - and knowing that Mr. Spaatz was in the military Air Arm, I used to be very happy to sit with him and my Dad in the Lodge Hall in Boyertown. Then one day my Dad told me that "Tooley" was going to fly the *Question Mark* around our town area and MAYBE would land at the Pottstown Airport if time permitted. It did not, as I recall. But "Tooley" made history with that plane, The *Question Mark* ... and I think the name *Question Mark* had to do with what they were doing ... they were conducting endurance flights and I think had some type of aerial refueling as well. That was my childhood memory of Tooley Spaatz. And then came the war. I was assigned to the 303rd "Hell's Angels" Bomb Group (H) of the 8th Air Force at Molesworth in the English Midlands. Going from wingman to lead pilot to Squadron Commander, I led some of the missions. Whenever it was a Division Lead and perhaps the Division was leading the Strike Force that day naturally, upon return to base, a bevy of

Generals and VIPs would meet the plane and shake hands with the crew. On a few of these, General Spaatz was among those meeting our plane. We were introduced to all. Never did General Spaatz even indicate that the name Heller jogged his memory. Never!

When the war was over, my Dad was Exalted Ruler of another Lodge, the Elks, in Pottstown, Pa. One night, after the war, the Pottstown Elks were going to honor General Spaatz. Naturally, with my Dad as the Exalted Ruler, the Guest of Honor sat beside him at the head table. When the opportunity presented itself, my Dad leaned over to the General and said, "Tooley, I do not know if you knew it, but I had two sons as pilots in your 8th Air Force, and ..."

General Spaatz interrupted my Dad and.... said, "Yeah, Dutch, I know. One of them was a Squadron Commander and used to fly down to London with Hoss Lyle to visit my Daughter, Tatty! And I knew the two brothers were at the same base too!"

And never did the General even nod that he knew me when we were introduced during the war.

To me, seeing the picture of Tooley, whose picture still hangs in my Den here, brought back a lot of memories which preceded the war days!

Bill Heller, 303rd BG
Las Vegas, NV

Lt. Gen. Carl "Tooley" Spaatz was commander of the 8th Air Force in England during the war. -Editor

JOSEPH McCULLOUGH CREW

Dear Walter,
Thank you for your long time service as Editor of the 8th Air Force News. It is wonderful to have your "News" and the 401st Bomb Group "Poop From The Group", edited by George Menzel to keep us in touch with the activities of both organizations.

My role as navigator on a B-17 flying out of Deenthorpe did not last long as we were hit by anti-aircraft fire on our approach to Berlin on March 28, 1945. Twenty minutes after turning for home base, we were forced to bailout due to fire in our left wing causing our pilot to



Mail Call



JOSEPH McCULLOUGH'S CREW #424
Top row L to R: Pascal Santora, bombardier; John M. Maxwell, navigator; Joseph McCullough, pilot; Alan M. Kuechler, co-pilot; Bottom row L to R: Thomas P. McGurn, radio operator; Robert W. Jacobson, tail gunner; Nick W. Loris, flight engineer; Oren J. Tish, waist gunner.

loose control of the plane. During our training as a crew, we were chosen two weeks in a row as "The Crew of the Week". But when it came time to go into battle, sadly we did not fair well. Norman Schock replaced Alan Koechler, copilot shown on the photo, on this mission, and Robert Wintersburn was added to our crew. Fate played a role in each of their lives. Norman survived but Tom McGurn, Robert Winterburn, Robert Jacobson and Oran Tish were killed in action. Surviving crew members were captured and interned at Barth, Germany.

Respectfully,
John M. Maxwell, 401st BG
Greenville PA

DOCTOR'S OFFICE

Dear Connie,
Many thanks for magazine you sent me. Don't ever want to lose an issue. Wish I could purchase binders, and an index for them. Anyway, thanks again and I promise never, to leave my 8th AF News in the Doctors waiting room again. Happy Holidays to all.
Sincerely,
Bill Fraser

DOG-FIGHT OVER BREST, FRANCE

by C.P. "Buck" Sloan

The Second Indian Head Infantry Division had come in D+1 at Normandy Beach Head. We were in hedgerow country. I looked up and there was a B-24 with two engines knocked out and the other not running too good. I kept listening for a crash but never heard one. I figured he made it back across the channel.

You fellows do not know how much we appreciated you, because you would soften them up and bomb before we would get there.

We went on across hedgerow country and were about to take Brest around September 1st, give or take a week and it was a beautiful day. It was a couple of weeks before I captured some Germans. We were taking a little community, and there was a Messerschmitt in a dog-fight with a P-38. Jack Thomas and I were watching the dogfight. The P-38 was after the Messerschmitt, and they came out of a cloud and the Messerschmitt missed the

B-17, but the P-38 caught him right in front of the tail. The P-38 split and it also cut the tail off the B-17. The crew did not get out, undoubtedly they were pinned against the side. The tail was just floating down. The next couple of days we saw where the B-17 crashed and burned. At the time, they were bombing Brest, France.

We never knew what happened to the tail until forty years later. I was visiting my Mother and Dad and was reading this magazine. I was reading an article where the tail gunner survived. If I am not mistaken, I think it was the 8th Air Force. I would love to see this man if he is still living and talk with him about the incident. What a Reunion that would be. There are a number of men interested in it, and they would love to see him also.

C.P. Buck Sloan
7402 Lewiston Rd.
Houston, TX 77049

Phone call 4/29 - found tail gunner who survived in severed tail was in 385th BG. This second severed tail is a separate less fortunate situation.

Col. Robert K. Morgan and the Crew of the *Memphis Belle*

Saturday, July 31, 2004, a beautiful day, saw a gathering of people at the Chapel of the Fallen Eagles at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Savannah Georgia for a memorial service of remembrance of Bob Morgan and the crew of the *Memphis Belle*.



Bob Morgan

A hymn sung by the Gerrat Sisters, Deb, Mary and Philippa, in a performance strongly reminiscent of the style of the Andrews Sisters, opened the service. Henry Hughey of the Georgia Chapter of the 8th AFHS, who— with the able assistance of Wilbur Bell, Frank Kaye and Albert McMahan — organized the service, introduced Major Dee Parker, 116th Air

Lift Wing at Warner-Robins AFB.

Major Parker introduced a video film of Bob Morgan's career from the *Memphis Belle* to the B-1. The video showed a flyby of a B-17 and a B-1, the latter almost stalling to stay with the B-17. The flyby at Bob's funeral was the finale.

David White read a proclamation from the Memphis Belle Memorial Association.

A reading of RAF airman John Gillespie Magee, Jr.'s poem "High Flight" by Col. Ed Wexler of the 165th Air Lift Wing, GA ANG, left very few dry eyes in the Chapel. This emotional event was followed by one even more intense when the Gerrat Sisters sang an "echo" version of "Taps" with the lead, Deb, at the front of the audience and the "echoes", Mary and Philippa at the rear. The sisters returned to the front to conclude the service with a rendition of "The Air Corps Song," which brought the audience to its feet.

Surely, Bob Morgan looked down and smiled.

Submitted by Craig Harris 457th Bomb Group



Debriefing



LEO PEARSON...

The barracks were soon filled with exhausted men. Each full of tales as to what had happened that day over Germany. The cots were filled in no time flat. I had been assigned to a cot next to one that was occupied by a sleeping boy about my age. He must have been tired from eight hours of flying where the temperature could reach 40 degrees below zero. We will not even consider the other activities. After a brief rest he got up and introduced himself to me as Lorne Peterson from Minnesota. He was clean cut and well spoken and he could best be described as a nice person. He seemed to be the type of person that I would like to know. It was also a relief to know that he had the cot next to me. As in most any crowd, there are some people you just don't want around. That was the first and last time I ever saw Lorne Peterson. He was shot down the next day. Of course, he could have survived and been taken as a Prisoner Of War but we never heard one way or the other. I was later selected to go through his possessions for shipment to his home. Among his things that the authorities would not ship was a box of oil paints. I took them for myself and had them for many years after the war ended.

I had not thought about Lorne Peterson and our short acquaintance until yesterday. I was surprised to remember his name. It is strange how some events leave such a lasting impression, as this one did. My

memory was so stirred by his death it all became real and vivid again, after 55 years.

If you were to search my attic you would find four unfinished portraits of



Crew 32

my older sons and my wife's parents; all were done with the paints that I inherited by default from Lorne Peterson.

Leo Pearson, 446th Bomb Group
in Beachbell Echo

AL; B-17 RADIO OPERATOR...

JULY 17 Mission over Germany today. We knew at the briefing that this one was going to be rough. Lt. Hamilton walked around the ship before takeoff, kicking at the ground. And Lt. Hoerr whispered to me: "Ham's tuned in on God's Frequency this morning. Signal Strength five, Readability five." About forty minutes off the target a flock of ME 109s went to work on the formation behind ours. Afterwards they came in on us, but while they worked the high group behind us I was watching them through the radio hatch. It was like watching a show. Not a musical comedy either. Way off to one side

there was a single plane, probably the enemy group leader directing the attack. It was like watching a well-conditioned team of athletes, weaving, feinting, diving, then suddenly breaking into the direct pass at the formation. After the red winking fire from their guns, you saw rings of smoke in a line like rings of cigar smoke. Also there was stuff I hadn't ever seen before, a kind of silver spray, like the stuff you throw on Christmas Trees. Couldn't figure it out. Then I lost interest as the fighters combed us. Our fire control was good and smooth, and not too much talking - just the rapid-fire reporting "two o'clock high - four o'clock coming around to you Mac" A black twin-tailed plane came through our formation and so close you couldn't even bring your gun around in time. Got some bursts in on a plane about seven-thirty and could see the tracers spanking all around the fighter but don't know what they meant. You can't trust tracers too far. Saw two fighters nose down trailing smoke. Saw a Fort in formation behind us going down low and disappearing into the cloud level at 8,000 feet. We turned back finally. Vincenti of Lt. Cruikshank's crew turned up at the interrogation with a 20-mm. shell that had burst through the ship and finally lodged in the leg of his heated suit.

from Yank 21 Nov 1943

Diary of a Flying Fortress Radio Operator
by Saul Levitt



FROM THE EDITOR . . .

It is especially vital these days, that we accurately recall the military history of our country.

* * * *

- We have invaded a country that has not attacked us.
- We have had no definite plans for the post-defeat organization of that country.
- We have deposed a sadistic dictator who has systematically imprisoned, tortured and killed hundreds of thousands his country's citizens.
- We have opposed a dictator who took away almost all of his people's personal rights and liberties.
- We have deposed a dictator who spent millions building palaces and edifices for himself and his regime.
- We were aware before defeating him, that this tyrant was developing Weapons of Mass Destruction, including nuclear weapons, and was going to use them.
- We were aware that every male citizen in his country, of all ages, was conscripted into his army and was ordered to "fight to the last man."
- In attacking this dictator, our coalition forces crossed his borders and faced minimal opposition from his armies within his own country.
- After deposing him and destroying his ability to fight, we turned his country's government back over to its people, assisting them in the rebuilding of their nation and their economy. Many of his stockpiled weapons were found to be located beneath the ground.

The country was Germany; the war was World War II; the dictator was Adolph Hitler.



It is said that if we had not accomplished our mission in WWII, Americans would now be speaking German; that the Eastern half of the United States would be a German province and the western portions Japanese. More accurately: we would now be Russians. If we had not liberated Europe and defeated Germany, Russian armies would have done so, and the Russian Communists would, from their subsequent extensive European base of power, have had a very real opportunity to win the Cold War.

We are not speaking German or Russian. Because of our defeat of the Nazi regime in 1945, the free nations maintained their presence in much of Europe, eventually resulting in the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Russian state.

Maintaining a firm presence among our friends in the Middle East, the Far East, Africa, and in all other areas of world unrest should remain the top priority for our future generations of Americans. Lessons learned from our recent past, well understood by airmen of the 8th Air Force, must be remembered.

Walter Brown, Editor 8th AF News

* * * *

We must look to the end of everything; for many men, God shows them a glimpse of happiness, and then destroys them utterly.

**Herodotus
Greek Philosopher**

In the U. K., two British guards were standing night duty at a gatehouse of an RAF airbase. In the dark they saw men approaching.

"Halt! Who goes there?" they demanded.

A reply came from the night: "Two Limey soldiers, by jove, returning home."

"Pass through, Brits" the guards said.

Shortly thereafter, several men approached the gate. "Halt! Who goes there?" came the challenge. The voice responded: "If you please, we are members of ze Foreign Legion here on ze trois-day pass, Monsieurs."

"Pass on through, Frenchmen."

Late on into the night hours, two more people came up the road to the gate.

"Halt! Who goes there?" came from the guards.

The voices replied out, "Who the hell wants to know?!"

"Pass through, Yanks."



Not according to P-47 Thunderbolt Pilot's Training Manual.

UNIT AND CHAPTER COMMITTEE

TO ALL CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

Please check the list of Chapter Presidents found elsewhere in this issue of the 8th AF News. If there are any additions, deletions or corrections let the Committee Chairman know so our records can be brought up to date.

TO ALL UNIT PRESIDENTS

Advise all people who will be registered for your Unit to check their reunion packet to be sure they are registered to your group and not the squadron. Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. is responsible for the Unit count and do not know which squadron goes with which group. This count is for the Unit rebate.

TO ALL UNIT AND CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

It is requested that if you cannot attend the Unit and Chapter meeting to be held at 8:00 AM on Thursday Oct. 7 at the Reunion in K.C. please have your representative attend. There is a lot of information that can be of help to all Units and Chapters.

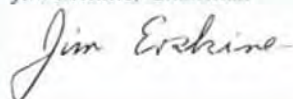
TO ALL MEMBERS

It has been brought to the attention of this Committee that the Unit and Chapters are having trouble getting members to attend the meetings and reunions. It is understood that we are getting older and are not as spry as we once were. However, with a little planning and forethought these activities can be attended. Don't use age and health as imagined reasons for not attending. If you do not wish to drive at night, come a day early and spend the night. If

the trip is longer than you wish to drive in one stretch, break it up and stop overnight half way. If you cannot drive at all, have a younger person drive you. They might like listening to the old stories in the hospitality room. This will give you a new audience for all of the old stories we have all heard for years.

Remember, there will come a time when your friends will be gone. It would be too bad if you have to say "If I had gone to the reunion I would have seen him one more time." Make the effort now so you will not regret missing someone later.

For the Committee,
Jim Erskine, Chairman



Subject: Pilot Rules

The only three things a wingman should ever say are: 1. Two's up. 2. Lead, you're on fire. 3. I'll take the fat chick. In a multi-place aircraft, there are only three things the copilot should ever say: 1. Nice landing, Sir. 2. I'll buy the first round. 3. I'll take the fat chick.

About check rides:

a. The only real objective of a check ride is to complete it and get the bastard out of your aircraft. b. It has never occurred to any flight examiner that the examinee couldn't care less what the examiner's opinion of his flying ability really is.

- If a mother has the slightest suspicion that her infant might grow up to be a pilot, she had better teach him to put things back where he got them.

- Any flight over water in a single engine aircraft will absolutely guarantee abnormal engine noises and vibrations.

- The ultimate responsibility of the pilot is to fulfill the dreams of the countless millions of earthbound ancestors who could only stare skyward...and wish!

from Billy Garmon,
submitted by Robert "Punchy" Powell,
352nd FG

- Form may be reproduced -



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Include me as a full Associate Member

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MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY: LIFE MEMBER ANNUAL DUES \$25

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SIGNATURE:

SEND APPLICATION AND PAYMENT TO 8TH AFHS P.O. BOX 1787, SAVANNAH, GA 31402

TEL: 912-748-8884

\$25 MEMBERS DUES NOTICES ARE MAILED ANNUALLY

Website: www.8thafhs.org



Roger Freeman, Historian for the 8th AFHS, sends his sincere appreciation to his many friends who have sent good wishes and good luck to him following recent major surgery. He is recovering well, undergoing further therapy, and says that he will be back in action before you know it.

In considering health matters, Joe Jameson is very alive and very well. His name was included in the June 04 TAPS pages by mistake. Seems his letter sending the names of his St. Louis Wing members for Taps got his name on the list as well and of course he couldn't have sent the letter if he was not able to. Our apologies to Joe and his friends for the error.

Information from inquiries as to how to obtain Jim White's book *I Was a P-51 Fighter Pilot* which was reviewed in the June 04 8th AF News is as follows: you may contact the author at 254 Eagleton Estate Blvd, Palm Beach Gardens FL 33418 - or get your kids to email him at JNWHITE51@aol.com - his website is www.JN WHITE.net.

A big event in September is the Kentucky Military Vehicles Show and Swap meet and Military Collector's Show and Sale on Sept 24-26, 2004 at Bullitt County Fairgrounds, Shepherdsville KY. Take Exit 112 off I-65 daytime hours to find thousands of interesting items of your past. For info contact Steve Crum at tel 270-352-4223.

NASA has successfully tested a supersonic jet designed to reach speeds of 5,000 miles per hour. The unpiloted X-43A made a ten-second flight followed by a 6-minute glide down. Technology will allow the aircraft to quickly reach any future target on the globe.

The 353rd Fighter Group invites all fighter group guys attending the national 8th AFHS reunion in Kansas City October 6-10, 2004 to come make themselves at home in the 353rd Hospitality Room during the week. Come on in!

Dr. Helmut Schnatz, Koblenz, Germany, has researched recently released information records and published a book on the 8th AF Swinemunde raid of 12 March 1945. The author of several aerial war volumes, he says that although *Swinemunde, March 12, 1945* is written in German, it will be of interest to those, such as Bill Heller, who can read German, and it shows a continuing interest in the air war history in Germany. Dr. Schnatz can be reached at email Hschnatz@t-online.de

The Third Coast Squadron of the CAF in Alice, Texas is honoring all WWII WASPs at their annual Fly-in at their airfield Sept. 18th, 2004. Naval Air Captain Paula Hinger will be the guest speaker. A squadron name change will take place, honoring WASP Maxine Fluornoy - The Maxine Flournoy 3rd Coast Squadron.

National Mighty Eighth Air Force Week this year will coincide with the annual reunion of the 8th AF Historical Society. The week of observation is each year, **October 8 -14**. All veterans and supporters of the 8th AF are urged to show their colors! Place notices in your local clubs, newsletters and newspapers, and wear your insignia. Visits to school classes during that week would be welcomed by most school teachers and administrators. Make your plans now.

MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE WEEK - OCTOBER 8 - 14

The United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs recently celebrated its 50th anniversary. The event was marked by a visit and commencement address by President George W. Bush. The Academy was established by Congress and signed in by President Dwight Eisenhower in April, 1954.

Mayor Jean-Pierre Dardenne of LaRoche-on-Ardenne, Belgium recently gave a talk at the crash site of a B-17 praising America's strength of purpose in Iraq. He encouraged us to stay the course and stated that without it, democracy and liberty were threatened world-wide.

Citizens of Belgium understand the effects of foreign aggression and terrorism, and appreciate the value of freedom. They are proud of what American soldiers have done through several wars to free them from brutal attacks on their country and preserve their freedoms.

What Women Say - And What They Really Mean

"Can't we just be friends?" - I like you like a brother - and that's it!

"I just need some space." - Without you in it.

"Do I look fat in this dress?" - We haven't had a fight in a while.

"Come here." - my puppy does this too.

"Pizza's just fine." - You cheap slob!

"I'll be ready in a minute." - I'm ready, but I'm going to make you wait because I know that you will.

"You never listen." - You never listen.

Reports are in that one more last surviving Confederate widow of a War Between the States soldier is alive and well, living in Little Rock, Arkansas. The United Daughters of the Confederacy recognizes that Maudie Celia Hopkins did in fact marry William Cantrell in 1934. She was his housekeeper at the time and was living in the poverty of the Great Depression. She has fond memories of her first husband, who died in 1937.

After 20 years of research, Jaap van der Kuylen sends notice from The Netherlands that a book in English about the events of the 8th AF mission of 11 January, 1944, *The Killing Sky*, is available. For a look, try website rijpsma@euronet.nl

Three out of every four people make up 75% of the world's population.

Clyde White, 390th BG

One Extra Mission For The Road



493RD BOMBARDMENT GROUP (HEAVY)

Here's a never-before-told story about how my crew did something that no other crew did in the entire European war.

We were a replacement crew in the 493rd. It did not happen that the plane we replaced was lost on a mission. It was wiped by a dumb shmuck pilot who broke rule number one. If you are at a low altitude as he was over the field never turn

into a dead engine. Everybody was lost, poor bastards. We flew nine missions in B-24s before we switched over to seventeens. Oil! did we have adventures in B-24s! On our third mission we all had to bail out. On our ninth we had an adventure that I have told here before. But I love it so much I will tell it again. We got the hell shot out of us over Brussels. They were defending synthetic oil. Our plane never flew again.

We're coming in for a landing. We start skidding off the runway to our left. Bob said, "Gene, get off the brakes." Gene said "I'm not on the brakes." Bob said, "Gene off the frickin' brakes." Gene said, "I'm not on the frickin' brakes." Fact was our left tire had been shot out. We are doing eighty going right for the tower. I did not see this. Thelbert our engineer saw it. But I wish I had. He said guys were running out the front door and jumping out of second story windows. We pulled up in front of the tower and stopped cold like Avon calling. Colonel Helton had this dry sense of humor, may he rest in peace. He came over to Bob and he said "That was smart getting the plane off the runway so others could land behind you."?

When we went all the way to Czechoslovakia I dropped short. I thought I heard the command "Bombs away." No it was not a command, it was a question. I've always hoped that nobody got hurt; that I wiped out a herd of cows.

At the debriefing which I did I not attend, Helton did not ream out anybody on my crew. He said simply, "Millholland, get an alarm clock for that bombardier." So begins my story about how my crew did something that no other crew did in the entire

European war.

On our sixth mission we aborted, did not even get as far as the buncher. Everybody smelled gas. We presumed, of course, we had a gas leak. We came back but they could not find any leak. I do not know the practices of ground crews. I speculated that they had been cleaning out the engines with gasoline and that is what we smelled. Naturally we had to account for our abortion.

Bob and Thelbert went up before no good cowardly Colonel Fitzgerald. He had avoided flying missions for some time. And he made a ruling. We not only had to fly the aborted mission over, which we expected of course, but we had to fly an extra penalty mission. Bob said, "I'm responsible, I'll fly the mission". We wouldn't have let him do that Fitzgerald said, No, the whole crew has to fly it." And so we did. We flew thirty-six missions when everybody else did thirty-five. Fortunately, number thirty-six was a piece of cake.

When Helton realized what was going on with Fitzgerald he said, "Get wings, Fitzgerald, get wings!" And Fitzgerald complied.

I understand that Fitzgerald stayed in the service. Later he got in big trouble. Good! Good!

I was not made of the stuff then that I am today.

Today I would have gone to the Inspector General and demanded an investigation.

Stan Friedman
493rd BG
Yorktown Hgts, N.Y.



"SIR, THIS IS LT. SLUGSWORTH, REPORTING BACK FROM A HIGH-ALTITUDE RAID OVER THE CONTINENT."
—Sgt. Paul G. Rushlow

Eve Whitney

YANK

Pin-up  Girls



Elaine Shepard



Helen O'Hara



Kay Booth



Noreen Roth

8TH AFHS REPRESENTED AT ANNUAL MADINGLEY MEMORIAL DAY EVENT

Connie Richards, 8th AFHS contact in Great Britain, placed an 8th AF Historical Society wreath during recent ceremonies at the American Cemetery in Madingley. On a hot spring day in East Anglia, Connie met a number of 8th veterans among the thousands of attendees who attended the event.

The ceremonies are an annual event conducted at the Wall of the Missing by the reflecting pool in front of the Cemetery chapel. Featured were an Honor Guard from RAF Lakenheath, a flag raising by the Joint Analysis Center Honor Guard from RAF Molesworth, and music by the United States Air Forces in Europe Band. Memorial addresses were given by Mr. Hugh Duberly CBE, Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire and Mr.

David T. Johnson, Charge d'Affaires A. I., U. S. Embassy London.

The solemn laying of flowers by over 122 Units, veterans associations and individuals is the highpoint of the ceremony. Connie has made the trip representing the Historical Society at this event for a number of years. This year, in a flyover, the familiar engines sounds of the B-17 *Sally B* added a special touch to the memorable ceremonies.



Connie Richards



Madingley Memorial Ceremony
1944-2004



60 Years of Remembrance



31 May, 2004
Cambridge American Cemetery

When, in any of the convulsions that come upon the world, Great Britain finds herself struggling single-handed against the gigantic powers that spread oppression and darkness, there ought to be such cordiality that she can turn and say to her first-born and most illustrious child, "Come."

I will not say that England can not again, as hitherto, single-handed manage any power, but I will say that England and America together for religion and liberty are a match for the world.

Henry Ward Beecher (1863)

From the James Crow Files

During the war, aircrews were on the lookout for American aircraft that had been captured by German forces, some obtained by them after having been shot down in action. Reports filtered back to 8th headquarters of captured bombers flown by Germans alongside Bomb Group formations. When recognized by alert gunners, they were often fired upon.

These photographs confirm that Germans flew several 2nd Air Division B-24 Liberators during the war.



German markings still are evident on this Liberator in late 1945.

If you openly play the part of Liberators, the more certain will be your victory in war.

Greek Philosopher Thucydides, iii. 13

B-24H 41-28641, 453rd Bomb Group was captured by Germans on 4 Feb 1944 and flown by I/KG-200 coded A3+KB. This aircraft was recaptured by Americans near Salzburg, Austria in 1945. Notice status of nose wheel.



LICENSE PLATES

NAVIGATOR PLATES

Navigator license tags are few and far between these days. Rowland Eisenbaumer flew 35 missions as navigator on the Tom Casey crew with the 486th BG out of Sudbury, England. He states, "Trying to abbreviate 'Navigator' to four letters was a challenge." He adds, "A lot of younger drivers say, 'I know what a B-17 is, but what is NVGR?'"

Rowland's Navigator's wings on the front of his car were purchased at the 8th AF Heritage Museum PX.



Wilton Curtis of Richmond, Virginia has spent his life around airplanes, as indicated in his automobile's license plate. He served during the Cold War in communications and was a Controller on the battle staff of the 8th AF's Airborne Command Post. The EC-135C aircraft went by the call sign "Grayson", similar to the term "Looking Glass" used with the primary plane in the system. Wilton has written an article outlining the Strategic Air Command's Post Attack Command and Control System (PACCS), to be published in an upcoming issue of the 8th AF News.





Chapter News



NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

The Fall business meeting will be held Nov. 13 at the Holiday Inn, Statesville. We need all Board members to attend to help plan the coming year.

On June 5, the **Eastern Wing** participated in a fitting exhibit to honor the Eighth Army Air Force contribution to the D-Day Invasion. The 8AFHS exhibit of memorabilia and artifacts was demonstrated in the State Capitol rotunda in Raleigh by Bob Berly, Levin Beasley, Alec French and George Hood of the Eastern Wing. One of many participants was an impressive model plane exhibit of WWII aircraft. Attendance was so good that all agreed to repeat the program next year.

Our Wing members have been busy giving talks to various groups and displaying exhibits in the area. Our July 22 meeting, held at Abbotswood Retirement Center in Raleigh, included our own Wing member, Craig Harris as guest speaker. Craig highlighted his 19 day trip to England. This trip over was aboard the new cruise ship "Queen Mary" on her maiden voyage from the States. Craig took part in several ceremonies at former 8th AF bases including a dedication of a Memorial at one and, of course, a visit to his own former Base. Also this summer, our group had a large display of artifacts at the Commemorative Air Forces' Pinehurst Air Show and it gave us the opportunity to distribute back issues of 8th AF NEWS and tell the 8th AF story to many, both young and old, as well as signing up several new members for our Society. Our next meeting will be Sept. 22 at Abbotswood in Raleigh.

The **Metrolina Wing** met Sept. 7 at the Red Rocks Cafe, Charlotte. The guest speaker was NC Chapter Pres., John Miser. Our June 8 meeting, had 30 members and 3 guests attending. The speaker was Mack Jones who told us about his experiences as a B-17 pilot in the 384th BG 1944 -1945. Wing member, Jim Jeffers attended the Memorial Service for Col. Robert Morgan at the 8th Air Force Museum, Pooler, GA on July 31. Also attending was Craig Harris, and one of the children of a Memphis Belle waist gunner, Bill Winchell. It was a very touching service.

The **Western Wing** meets the third Thursday of every month with interesting speakers and good attendance. In June, 20 members and guests heard Dr. David Dorondo, Prof. of Modern European and German History at Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, NC speak about his particular interest, Germany's role in the war on terrorism. In July, 32 members and guests enjoyed a presentation by our own Wing member, Frank Morris, a B-26 pilot, 323rd BG, described his experiences. He also brought along a nice selection of interesting memorabilia.

NORTHWEST - IOWA CHAPTER

Northwest-Iowa Wing of the 8th AFHS were represented at the Annual Glen Miller Festival at Clarinda, Iowa from June 9th thru Sunday June 13th 2004. With ten big bands from all over the world, the 100th birthday celebration over a five-day period with a record crowd was outstanding. This is the first performance of the Jan Slottenas Orchestra from Stockholm, Sweden. The 17 year-old girls from Japan were exceptionally remarkable. Milo Noble from Aurelia, Iowa, former member of the 466th Bomb

Group, drove his 1954 Antique Thunderbird decorated up with 8th signs in the parade on Saturday. We had four tables of artifacts set up near the doors to the auditorium. Frank Frison and his wife Ede, plus Anne Person helped at the memorabilia tables.

Gene Person

VIRGINIA CHAPTER

The Chapter held its Spring meeting at the Stonehenge Country Club in Richmond. Following a luncheon, President Jim Trask introduced retired Navy Lt. Commander L. Peter Wren who served on the *USS Bassett* during the war. His ship was involved in the rescue of the crew of the *USS Indianapolis* which had been torpedoed by a Jap submarine several days earlier. The *Indianapolis* had delivered the nuclear weapons for the atomic bombing missions of Japan. Commander Wren was in the boats that pulled a number of survivors from the shark-infested sea. He is author of the book that describes the events, *We Were There*.

Member John Pearson of the national 8th AFHS Board of Directors presented the details of the upcoming national reunion in Kansas City, Missouri this October.

NORTH ALABAMA WING

Wing members enjoy the music of member Jennie Scott, wife of 100th BG veteran Jim Scott, at their meetings. The NAW stays busy with luncheon meetings, work sessions, and educational workshops. Jim is a member of the Wing Speakers Bureau and conducts classes at the Veterans Memorial Museum in Huntsville, Alabama.



Jennie Scott

OREGON CHAPTER

The quarterly meeting of the Oregon Chapter was held on Thursday August 5, 2004 at the Beaverton Elks Club. Fifty-four people attended.

Present at this session were photographers and reporters from the *Oregonian* newspaper. In the week following the meeting, an article about this meeting appeared in the *Oregonian*.

President Eldon Bevens, who is also a volunteer at Oregon's fine Evergreen Air Museum, the home of Howard Hughes' "Spruce Goose," told the attendees that he and others were the guests of Evergreen Air at the dedication of the World War II Memorial held in Washington DC in May. The group was flown from Oregon to Washington on an Evergreen Citation jet and treated royally during the time that they were there. Other Chapter members who attended the dedication ceremonies included Joe Conroy and his wife.

Board member Don Bourgeois gave the group a brief talk on his



Chapter News



June visit to Normandy for the ceremonies marking the 60th anniversary of D-Day. In short, the ceremonies conducted by the French government at Arromanches were very moving and obviously heartfelt. In that part of France, the sacrifices made by American and other allied forces to free Europe of totalitarianism have not been forgotten, nor will they be at any time soon. The speaker for this quarter's meeting was Mrs. Mildred Bradley Harris.

Mrs. Harris was educated at the University of Washington where she earned her degree in chemical engineering. Thereafter, she went to work as an engineer for the Boeing Aircraft Company helping to build B-17s. She gave the group a fascinating talk on the World War II efforts of women both at Boeing and in World War II.

Mrs. Bradley described her engineering duties as "the inspection of the hanging of B-17 engines and the installation of gear and fuel tanks." Each inspector had to apply his or her individual stamp to the final assembly. In this way each inspector had a personal stake in the assembly's performance.

Mrs. Bradley went on to a successful and rewarding career as an engineer for Boeing. Our group greatly appreciated receiving a talk about America's "home front" in World War II. As so much emphasis is placed on combat, the fact that the entire American people made victory possible must not be forgotten.

The next meeting will be held on Saturday November 13, 2004 at the same location.

Don Burgeois Board member

Mrs. Harris' story will be published in detail in the Dec 04 AF News.
-Editor

NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA CHAPTER

Our Chapter was honored to host the 365 veteran and family members who joined with us for the WW II Memorial Dedication Weekend - in many ways, a mini-reunion of sorts.

We all enjoyed the Dedication Ceremony from our front row seats. After the ceremonies, we patiently navigated back to the hotel to enjoy a good dinner. Following dinner, 8th AFHS President William Rawson spoke of his enjoyment of the day and thanked everyone for attending. Our guest speaker, General T. Michael Moseley, VCSAF, gave an informative talk and confirmed to all the veterans who served in the Mighty 8th that they set the standards which today's Air Force still maintain. Dinner was followed by entertainment from "The Silver Satins", an outstanding local "swing" band.

Several bomb groups were well represented including the 34th, the 96th, the 100th, the 306th, the 379th, the 384th, the 445th, and the 447th. Additionally, there were eight fighter pilots in attendance, including one pilot from the 9th Air Force who came with his extended family of 18. His family participation was topped only by a member of the 388th BG who had 33 family members in attendance. Our oldest attendee was 93, the youngest was 4 - quite a group indeed.



Further activities included brunch and a city tour, a visit to Udvar Hazy Air and Space Museum; a luncheon cruise on the Potomac; the placing of a wreath at the tomb of the unknown soldier at Arlington Cemetery; and endless food, friendship, and libations in our hospitality suite overlooking the Potomac River.

It was the NCAC's sincere pleasure to host the many local and out of town guests for this memorable weekend. We were very fortunate to have the right people together, in the right place at the right time. We thank each of you all for your participation.

George Hoidra

WASHINGTON STATE CHAPTER



On May 29 - 31, 2004 the Museum of Flight in Seattle Washington hosted an action-packed weekend to honor all who served our nation in that horrific time of need sixty years ago. Special emphasis was put on learning more about D-Day from those who were there or supported the invasion. Four World War II flyers participated in a panel discussion followed by a question and answer period. The Museum of Flight Theater was packed and audience participation was remarkable.

Greg Pierce, President of the Washington State Chapter led the discussions by asking questions about various aspects of the D-Day invasion; the panel participants did a great job of sharing their experiences.





Chapter News



Panel participants were:

Dr. Kenneth Brown, B-26 bombardier/navigator; Stanley Richardson, P-38 pilot; Keith Anderson, B-17 pilot; Walter Bergstrom, B-17 ball-turret gunner.

These gentlemen did a fine job of representing all of the airmen who served with them.

It was also mentioned that the ground crews played a very important part in getting the job done by keeping the aircraft flying.

When asked what they thought about being called the "Greatest Generation" they all said they did not think they were. One of them said he thinks the title should go to the Fathers of our nation.

Special thanks to Craig O'Neill and all the Museum of Flight staff who put this program together.

Washington State Chapter leadership team:

Greg Pierce - President; Tony Caruso - Vice President; J.W. Roundhill - Secretary/Treasurer; Ann Brown - Newsletter Editor
Tony Caruso, Associate Member

LOUISIANA CHAPTER

Another successful reunion by the Louisiana Chapter, with twenty-seven Chapter members meeting in Alexandria, Louisiana. The scheduled activities generated much interest and excitement.

Lorene Tanner and Earline Noble gave all those that arrived an envelope containing ID Tag, reunion agenda and other informa-

tion. Chapter President Harry Doug Tanner had his World War II Airmen collection on display.

Friday night's dinner concluded with speaker Lt. Michael Noonan, a United States Army combat helicopter pilot based at Ft. Polk Army base in Leesville, La. He spoke on training for combat and his experiences as a combat pilot. He also brought some of his flying gear and explained each item and how it is used. For over two hours a panel of veterans answered questions from the audience. The entire reunion got coverage from local TV stations. Panel participants were Hiram Mann, P-51 pilot; Norman Sisson, B-17; Stan Johnson, B-52 pilot; Al Fessenden, Commander of Polk Army Air Field; and Sara Hall, B-52 navigator. After a noon meal, Al Fessenden spoke to the group on operations at Fort Polk Army base.

A Board of Directors meeting was held on Saturday afternoon. President Tanner pointed out that we received the best news media coverage in Alexandria area. Both local newspapers had articles. President Tanner and Hiram Mann, former Tuskegee Airmen, were both on television.

OHIO CHAPTER

The Ohio Chapter met in May at the Holiday Inn in Columbus. The guest was Joe Chevraux, executive director of the Military Aviation Preservation Society (MAPS) aviation museum located at the Akron/Canton Airport near Canton, Ohio.

MAPS is a non-branch specific museum; it is about the people. It has around 700 members and between 17-22 aircraft. Some of the unique aircraft in the collection include: a 1908 local homemade glider, an L-2 and one of the first one hundred B-26 Marauders manufactured. Recent additions to be delivered yet are an A-7E and F11F-1 from the Intrepid Sea-Air Space Museum and a B-47E from the United States Air Force Museum. MAPS encompasses 76,000 square feet over five acres and is now Ohio's second largest aviation museum, behind the United States Air Force Museum in Dayton.

MAPS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization currently doing fund-raising to restore the former 1950s Ohio Air Guard hanger that MAPS took ownership of. This will serve as the main facility once renovated.

People come to MAPS with their story and memorabilia, are interviewed and photos are taken of their items. *Project Scrapbook* was started to promote their history. This is then recorded onto compact discs for posterity.

A slogan that is frequently used by MAPS is "Northeast Ohio's Best Kept Secret." For more information about MAPS, visit their website; www.mapsairmuseum.org.

Chris Weber

Secretary, Ohio Chapter

IOWA CHAPTER

President Charles Taylor, Leon G. Mehring, Treasurer, and his wife Vera, attended the Air Force ROTC at Iowa State University for their annual dining out awards dinner on March 27th, 2004.



Norman Sisson, 401st BG & B-17 Pilot, Hiram Mann, Tuskegee Airman & P-51 Pilot, and Harry Doug Tanner, President.



Chapter News



The Iowa Chapter of the 8th AF Historical Society gave two three hundred dollar scholarship awards to their outstanding cadets. The awards were given to Daniel Gregorich from Dubuque GA. and Brook Zern from Conrad GA. This was our fourth year that

we have given scholarships awards to outstanding cadets. Many of the cadets drank from the Grog Bowl for violating rules of the mess. It was an enjoyable evening.
Leon G. Mehring



Leon Mehring, Treasurer; Daniel Gregorich, outstanding cadet; and Charles Taylor, President.



Cadets drinking from the Grog Bowl

Great men hallow a whole people, and lift up all who live in their time.
Sydney Smith

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. The Board has voted to reduce the number of Board members from twelve to eleven; therefore, two positions are to be filled by voting at the Annual Reunion on October 9, 2004.

Ivan L. McKinney, Life Member #22014

Retired Lieutenant Colonel, USAF. Staff Sergeant control tower and GCA operator, OCS 54A, then navigator school, over 4,000 hours as SAC navigator. Staff officer and commander in several fields. Baccalaureate degree Eastern Michigan University, Master degrees LA Tech. and University of Oklahoma. Former National Director of Air Force Association and Aerospace Education Board of Trustees; AFA Member of the Year 1998. Currently member of 8AFHS Board of Directors as Treasurer. Nominated by C. Craig Harris.

Bernard Mirotznik, Life Member #1720

452nd Bomb Group. Active practicing attorney in Nassau County, New York, for 31 years. B.A., N.Y.U. Washington Square College; Bachelor of Laws, Brooklyn Law School; Juris Doctor, Brooklyn Law School. Admitted to the Bar of New York State Second Department, April 1953; admitted to U. S. Supreme Court

and U. S. District Court, Eastern District of New York. Legal Counsel to the 452nd Bomb Group and New York Southern Wing of 8AFHS. Nominated by Larry Goldstein.

Harry "Doug" Tanner, Member #34052

Degree in Archaeology from Northwestern College; two years in Air Force R.O.T.C. at Northwestern. Joined Army National Guard in Alexandria, Louisiana, in 1970; served until end of Vietnam War. In 1998, started writing to World War II airmen for autographs, pictures, stories, etc., trying to preserve the memories of the men and women who served during the war. Elected in 2001 and still serving as President of the Louisiana Chapter, 8AFHS; associate member of many bomber and fighter groups. Military collection of more than 20,000 items. Speaks at high schools on the Air War of WW II. Nominated by Ivan L. McKinney.

MEMORIAL SERVICE HELD FOR 466TH BOMB GROUP CREW



Lou (466th BG) and Molly Loevsky



The Lubbock (Texas) Area Veterans War Memorial was dedicated on Pearl Harbor Day, 2003. On March 22, 2004 a special ceremony of remembrance was held in memory of William "Bill" Terry and twelve members of a 466th BG crew lost over Berlin exactly 60 years earlier on the 22 Mar 1944 raid. Speeches by American Legion Commander Post 575 Commander Bob Bland and representatives from Cannon AFB were accompanied by a 21-gun salute and the playing of "Taps". A 466th BG Association flag and banner were present at the event. The memorial service was initiated by Bill Terry's cousin, Christell Sealy, and was attended family members and by the 466th's Lou and Molly Loevsky, North Caldwell NJ.

Lou told the audience that he was the last American to see Bill Terry alive. After Lou had freed his bombardier, Len Smith, from the nose of their stricken B-24, *Terry and*

the Pirates, he was ready to bail out when Terry called, "Hey, Lou! Wait for me!" Lou turned and saw him leaving the flight controls and coming across the flight deck to the bomb bay, so he went ahead and jumped free. Lou recalls seeing Bill in his parachute descending above him. Enemy groundfire from Berlin was coming up at them. Lou believes that Bill was hit on the way down and did not escape. His body was not found.

Family research years later confirmed Lou's belief that he was killed on the descent and that German officials did not want to release his body with groundfire being the cause of death. Lou was captured and was marched through the streets of Berlin amidst angry, threatening crowds of German civilians.

A bronze marker for Bill Terry has been placed in the family plot in a Plainview cemetery.



THE LONG WAY HOME - 13 DAYS AND 9,000 MILES IN A "WAR WEARY"

by Bill Harty, 401st Bomb Group

The story begins in a familiar way for members of 401st Bomb Group air crews. It ends after a long and exciting voyage home but not on a troop ship.

As the engineer on Don Scheller's great crew in the 613th, I arrived in Deenethorpe in October, 1944 via Savannah, Goose Bay, Iceland, etc. Our 35 missions were relatively uneventful - no casualties - and I finished on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 1945. I volunteered to stay for two weeks and had a ball tooling along the Deenethorpe-Kettering road in command of my big "6 BY".

Then I was ordered to Stone, the "repple depple" so many of us patronized. On Easter Sunday, I was relaxing in a bunk near the barracks door, awaiting orders to board a troop ship to the good old USA. Suddenly a pilot appeared, saying he had completed his missions and had orders to fly a "war-weary" to Florida to be used in training pilots transitioning to B-29's. He needed a B-17 engineer and a radio operator. I was the first man "in his face".

He recruited another 8th Air Force pilot and an Air Transport Command navigator was assigned to us, selected because he knew his way around Africa and South

America. Our vintage B-17 had a horrendous fuel appetite and

could not survive the long over water segments of the North Atlantic pathway.

So we headed south; 1,500 miles to Marrakech, Morocco, staying over the Atlantic to avoid neutral Portugal and Spain.

We landed just ahead of an intense sandstorm. Our #3 engine was ready for the scrap pile and we learned that the closest replacement was in Casablanca. No one could help us beyond our room, board, fuel and weather forecasts. Someone sternly informed us that there was a war

going on and we were lucky to be headed home. Very true! Our resourceful leader soon befriended a C-46 pilot in the officer's bar and supplied him with free scotch. The next day they returned from Casablanca

with a rebuilt R-1820. The five of us borrowed an engine hoist

and changed the engine. It took us two days as I desperately tried to remember what I learned in mechanic's school back in Amarillo.

One morning, as we approached the mess tent, we noticed that the French flag was flying at half-mast. Inside we were told "Your President has died."

Next stop was Dakar in Senegal, a 1,300 mile leg. The locals kept the mess hall open an extra hour for us and after we satisfied our bird's huge appetite, we took care of our own. Your map will confirm that our next stop should have been Recife, Brazil. But a 2,000 mile over water leg was too much for our war-weary. So we flew 700 miles southeast to Monrovia, Liberia.

The next morning's briefing prepared us for a 1,000 mile hop to Ascension

Island, a rocky pinhead in the South Atlantic.

There was no alternate and the

weather forecast was a little iffy.

Four of us wanted to go but the copilot refused until he received a direct order from the base commander.

Before climbing aboard, he wrote and mailed a farewell letter to his wife.

When we found Ascension with little fuel left, the tower informed us that the sole runway had

a slope of several degrees so that planes landing into the usual (90% of the time) head wind could stop before the edge of the cliff. Great idea, we thought, until the

tower added that, unfortunately for us, it was "10% of the time". It seemed that the copilot may have been right but he and the pilot touched us down perfectly and stood on the brakes until we stopped a few

yards from the cliff's edge.

Our hearts had stopped pounding by the time

we finished refueling. In the PX, we found copies of the Miami Herald with the story and pictures of FDR's funeral.

The rest of the journey was a sight-seeing trip, relatively speaking:

Ascension Island to Recife, Brazil - then to Belem, Brazil. From there to Georgetown, British Guiana and to Borinquen Field, Puerto Rico. We wound up in West Palm Beach.

To celebrate our successful journey each of us brought a quart of PX milk and chug-a-lugged it. An unforgettable experience! Nearly 9,000 miles with nine stops, mostly in places that Americans rarely visit. Would I trade those 13 days for a ride on a troop-ship? No way!

Unfortunately, I soon lost the names and addresses of my fellow adventurers. I would be most grateful to anyone who has heard this tale before and can put me in touch with my four crewmates of long ago.

Bill Harty
13 Brookfield Way
Morristown, NJ 07960
Phone: 973-538-9308

Bill Harty gives us a memorable description of one way to get home - the Southern route. A long and exciting trip. -Editor

Before climbing aboard, he wrote and mailed a farewell letter to his wife.

"We landed just ahead of an intense sandstorm."

The morning comes not, yet the night
Wanes, and men's eyes win strength to see
Where twilight is, where light shall be
When conquered wrong and conquering right
Acclaim a world set free.

**A.C. Swinburne
The Commonwealth**

BOOK REVIEWS

All Reviews are for the information and enjoyment of members of the 8th AF Historical Society and unless otherwise attributed, have been written by the editor, 8th AF News.

Our appreciation goes out to Robert Vickers, 392nd BG, for his review of the latest volume by Historian Roger A. Freeman.

THE PLOESTI RAID - THROUGH THE LENS

by Roger A. Freeman

Roger Freeman, our renown 8AF historian, has once again remarkably excelled in the authorship of this truly extraordinary, in-depth factual summation of one of the most famous air attacks ever executed during the Second World War.

The low level B-24 bombing raid on Sunday, August 1, 1943 - against seven major oil refineries in the Ploesti, Rumania, area complexes has undoubtedly attracted more historical interest than any other USAAF offensive operation during WWII. Three Eighth Air Force Liberator bomb groups based in England, the 44th, 93rd and 389th, would join two additional Ninth Air Force groups, the 98th and 376th, in North Africa to plan and carry out this daring mission.

In the annals of air war history, it has been proclaimed as the most ambitious, the most disastrous, the most heroic and possibly the most foolhardy, to name but a few superlatives accorded this legendary raid. A combined force of 179 aircraft was committed to carry out this very first massed low-level, heavy bomber mission in history. The cost was high: 55 planes were lost and of the 1,753 men who were known to set out on this operation, 516 failed to get back, with 308 losing their lives and 208 taken as prisoners of war or interned.

This 160-page volume provides a straightforward, historical account of extensively documented facts, never-before-known, told or reported - all generously supplemented by more than 230 photographic images and over 60 maps, diagrams and sketches directly related to the mission. Also researched and presented are the names and fates of all known airmen involved, in addition to detailed listings of all participating aircrews, aircraft and their final disposition. This noteworthy research effort tends to clear up a number of mysteries, puzzlements and some myths which have always clouded the accounts of this famous raid.

AN INNOCENT AT POLEBROOK

A Memoir of an 8th Air Force Bombardier

by Charles N. Stevens

Author Charles Stevens flew with the 351st Bomb Group during the summer and fall of 1944. His autobiography consists of almost fifty chapters covering practically every aspect of a B-17 bombardier's tour of duty with the 8th Air Force.

The chapters, many of them brief and to the point, are written in a personal style, informally and with much feeling as



experienced by author Stevens while serving at Polebrook. As he states: "Very little has been left out." His recall of the details of the missions and life among the airmen on the base is impressive. The events of the crew's 34th and final mission, to the armament works at Kassel, Germany are most exciting and memorable.

The volume is a very good depiction of a combat crewman's wartime experiences. Soft-cover at 286 pages, the book may be obtained from 1st Books Library. Contact the publisher at www.AuthorHouse.com.



Freeman's fine work here is "must" reading for any avowed student or historian of air war history and certainly for those who have been dedicated for many years to the Ploesti low level mission saga.

Publishers: Battle of Britain International Limited, (After The Battle Series) Church House, Church Street, London E15 3JA
Website: www.afterthebattle.com

E-mail: hq@afterthebattle.com

In the USA contact:

RZM Imports, PO Box 995, Southbury CT 06488

Tel. 1-800-562-7308 rzm@rzm.com

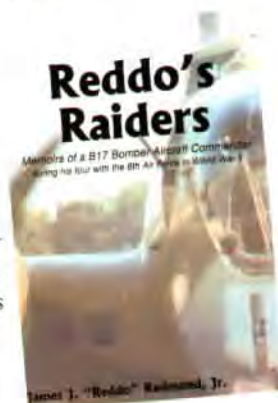
Reviewed by: Colonel Robert E. Vickers, USAF (Ret)
8th Air Force Historical Society

Bob Vickers is a Director Emeritus of The 8th Air Force Historical Society. - Editor

REDDO'S RAIDERS

by James J. "Reddo" Redmond, Jr.

"Reddo" Redmond joins in the story of the 351st Bomb Group with the release of his personal story as a B-17 pilot who completed his tour of 34 combat missions during World War II. His story divides into three sections: the early years of preparation and training, his combat missions while stationed at Polebrook, and a



78-page sequence of over thirty letters written post-war between the author and the crew's radio operator, Lloyd Bogle. A unique section of vignettes follows the main text of the book and there is a thirty-page section of photographs.

This volume is a very different tale of the air war experience as seen through the eyes of an 8th AF pilot. It's about the life of a combat crew in England. The section of correspondence recalling particular missions and events, after having read the details of the author's combat missions, is very much like having the crewmates sitting in the reader's living room listening to their thoughts and innermost feelings about their years during the war. It's an unusual approach and an effective one, thought-provoking and well worth spending time with.

For information about the 252-page volume, *Reddo's Raiders*, contact the author at 5634 Lagoon Drive, ft. Lauderdale FL, 33312 or at email jamesredmond@msn.com. or you may contact the publisher at www.AuthorHouse.com.

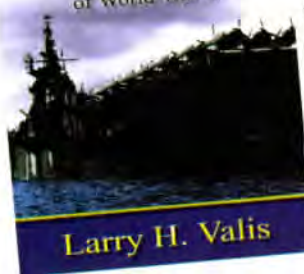
FROM YOUNG BOYS TO FIGHTING MEN

Combat Veterans of World War II

by Larry Valis

From Young Boys to Fighting Men

Combat Veterans of World War II



The author of this volume has three brothers who fought in WWII, he being the fourth and youngest, serving as a homefront aircraft spotter during the war. His presentation contrasts the stories of eight individual servicemen from every branch of service and in every theater of war. Their individual stories offer an in-depth picture of the variety and extensive experiences of American fighting men, each having an entire chapter devoted to his wartime experiences.

Of interest to 8th AFHS readers is the last entry in the book: a lengthy and compelling tale of Ken Valis' tour as a pilot

with the 446th Bomb Group *Bungay Buckaroos*. Ken Valis comes across as a responsible professional airman of the Mighty Eighth, serving his country well. Personal knowledge and discussions between the author and his brothers add a note of special authenticity to their stories. It was a dangerous business. Ken states: "We had gone overseas with 12 new B-24 planes in our squadron, each manned by a crew of 10. Eight went Missing In Action. One plane and its entire crew was lost in a takeoff accident and three crews survived to complete the combat tour – not a great percentage when you look back. We were one of the lucky three."

Author Larry Valis has had much experience in writing and publishing, evident in the style with which he presents these tales. He and his family and their ancestry are deeply rooted in American history – true patriots, proud of their country. His 288-page volume, a tribute to those who fought, is soft-back and is available by contacting Glenlaw Books, 2314 East Doublegate Drive, Albany GA 31721 or at 208 South Branch Road, Hillsborough NJ 08844. The author's email address is lawmil@mchsi.com.

Postscript: Author Larry Valis states he will donate \$5 to the 8th AFHS for each volume purchased by our members. Remember to identify your status as a member!

32 Co PILOTS

by Charles Bastien

This is the only book ever written solely about the experiences of WW II Heavy bomber copilots – a unique concept and a very interesting one at that. Charles "Dick" Bastien has spent years tracking the stories of the 32 Copilots from pilot Class 43 K at Waco, Texas. These airmen went to England as members of the 492nd Bomb Group, an 8th AF Group that lost more aircraft on dangerous bombing missions than did any other Bomb Group during a three-month period. He pays special tribute to those crews lost, to the ground crews who worked day and night

to keep the bombers in the air, and to his crewmates of B-24 44-40072, named the *B.T.O.*, for Big Time Operator.

Interviews with surviving members of the 43K class offer the reader a variety of remembrances of experiences on the base and in the air during the existence of the 492nd BG.

Erwin Strohmaier recalls the mission to Politz, Germany on 20 June 1944: "We lost nearly all of our 856th squadron planes today and also our Commanding Officer in today's first mission. The Germans still have lots of fight in them."

From Frank Miller: "... but over the base, luck finally ran out for the crew of the *Lucky Strike*. Pits saw Fleming coming down above him and called him to hold off so he could land.

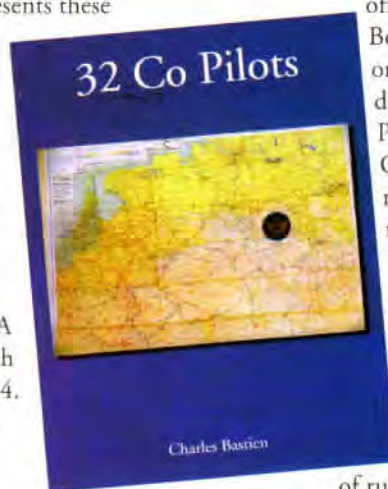
Both aircraft continued on with Fleming descending closer to Pits every second.

Over the threshold of runway 12, Pits turned to the left and his right wing came up, which hit Fleming's left wing flipping his aircraft on its back and straight into the ground at the side

of runway 12. Still in his

left turn, Pits banked to the right and went down at the side of runway 19, which was not in use. The *Lucky Strike* hit nose and right wing first. Pits cut the ignition switches so she wouldn't catch fire. The right wing was ripped off and the fuselage broke in two at the rear of the bomb bay, throwing out the new tail gunner, Bradford Barber, and killing him."

Dick Bastien's book is an extensive project, presenting the air war from a different and very refreshing perspective. There are 24 Chapters in this large-format book – 293 pages, with followups on the 32 copilots, an Epilogue and a Bibliography. Check with the author at 2174 Tower Court, Woodbury MN 55125-1670 or email Trafford Publishing at sales@trafford.com. or see the website www.trafford.com.



BULLETIN BOARD



EIGHTH AIR FORCE FLIERS TO BE HONORED

On October 1, 2004, seven individuals and a combat unit will be inducted into the American Combat Airman Hall of Fame. Several are well-known to veterans of the Mighty Eighth.

This year's inductees are: George Preddy, 352nd FG pilot shot down over the continent on Christmas Day 1944; Col. Donald Blakeslee, 4th FG; Col. R. E. Cole, USAF; The Flyboys of Chichi Jima; B/G Robin Olds, 479th FG pilot 8th AF; Capt Paul Stevens, USN; and the 95th Bomb Group - First over Berlin.

A notice from Joe Noah, Founder of the Preddy Memorial Foundation, states that the ACAHOF Induction Dinner will feature a video of each inductee, along with a fine dinner and entertainment. Plaques for each individual will be permanently placed in the American Airpower Heritage Museum. For further information on the event or about the Preddy Foundation, contact Joe at tel 434-374-2781 or email noahbjr@member.afa.org.

2005 8th AFHS Reunion Plans

I am pleased to report that we have contracted to hold our 2005 Reunion at the Sheraton National Hotel in Arlington, Virginia, September 27 - October 2. This hotel is just minutes from downtown Washington D.C. We expect highlights of the reunion will be visits to the new WWII Memorial on the Mall in Washinton as well as other sites of interest. And of course we will devote one day to a Tour of the new Smithsonian Aerospace Museum at Dulles Airport. Plan on Washington in 2005.

Royal Air Force Museum HENDON

RED ARROWS AND RED EGGS

THE ROYAL AIR FORCE MUSEUM HAS COMMISSIONED AN EXTREMELY UNUSUAL SERIES OF COLLECTIBLE FABERGE EGGS, EACH BEARING THE TRADITIONS AND NAME OF THE HISTORIC FABERGE COLLECTIONS.

THERE ARE THREE STYLES AVAILABLE, EACH ONE PATTERNED AFTER THE FAMOUS RAF AIR ACROBATIC TEAM, THE RED ARROWS, WHICH MANY 8TH VETERANS HAVE SEEN AT AIRSHOWS DURING THEIR RETURN TO ENGLAND. THERE IS A 40TH ANNIVERSARY EGG, THE DIAMOND NINE EGG, AND THE CFS (CENTRAL FLYING SCHOOL) EGG. THEY FEATURE HANDCRAFTED MINIATURE FACSIMILES OF THE GNAT AND THE HAWK, WITH VAPOR TRAILS APPEARING AS THE EGG IS ROTATED. EACH IS MADE BY DIRECT DESCENDANTS OF CARL FABERGE USING HIS ORIGINAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES.

FOR INFO, EMAIL AJAY SRIVASTAVA AT THE MUSEUM: ajay@rafmuseum.org OR TEL 020 8358 6410. THE WEBSITE IS [HTTP://WWW.RAF.MOD.UK/REDS/](http://www.raf.mod.uk/reds/).

THE ALBERT MACUCH STORY

Many months ago I contacted you, and you were most helpful, in my research for a radio production. The radio drama is now completed. The program is titled "The Albert Macuch Story" by beginning my search through you, I was able to obtain a copy the crash report and names of the crew. With the help of Belgian citizens who remember the crash, I have obtained photographs of the crash site as it was on November 16, 1944. With the help from a young man who became very interested in the story, I received photographs of the site as it is today and a picture of one of the props, which is in a museum. I also received relics of the B-17. I want to thank you personally and the Eighth Air Force Historical Society. I am Charles Langdon, a Radio Visions Producer/Director. You can see some of the program by going to www.radiovisions.blogspot.com

BULLETIN BOARD



NEW COMMANDER TAKES OVER 8TH AIR FORCE

United States Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has announced the nomination of Major General Kevin P. Chilton as Commander, Eighth Air Force, Air Combat Command, Barksdale AFB LA. He currently is Director, Programs, Deputy Chief of Staff, Plans and Programs at the Pentagon in Washington DC. He will achieve the rank of Lt. General upon approval of his nomination.

Present 8th AF Commander and friend of the 8th AFHS, Lt. Gen. Bruce Carlson, will receive his fourth star and assume command at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, Air Force Material Command.

8TH Air Force Commander Recalls 9/11

To: New York Times

5 July 2004

July 9, 2004

"With Bush On 9/11

To the Editor: Re "Moore's Public Service," by Paul Krugman (column, July 2):

I am not sure where Paul Krugman and Michael Moore were on 9/11, but I was with President Bush for almost two hours. As Commander of the 8th Air Force, I was present when President Bush stopped to deliver a message to the American people at Barksdale Air Force Base. Throughout my career, I have seen the best and the worst of people under extreme pressure. President Bush arrived at Barksdale deeply saddened and obviously concerned, but he was man on a mission, courageous and decisive. He was totally in command.

I have kept relatively quiet about my experiences with the president on 9/11, but I cannot sit back and allow Hollywood and the media to rewrite history. I was there, and I consider myself a good judge of leadership. We were fortunate that President Bush was our commander in chief on 9/11.

Lieutenant General Thomas J. Keck USAF (Ret)
Tucson, AZ

*Lt. Gen. Tom Keck served as 8th Air Force
Commander at Barksdale AFB, LA - Editor*

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION BENEFITS

Fred Campbell is a volunteer American Ex-Prisoners of War National Service Officer and Chairman of the Outreach Committee. He is working to help 8th veteran POWs and their widows receive all their benefits to which they are entitled. There are over twenty presumptive medical conditions that are approved for POWs by the Veterans Administration, including heart disease, peptic ulcer disease, irritable bowel syndrome, and most recently, cirrhosis of the liver. There are many others.

If you are qualified and do not have a 100% Disability Compensation rating, now is the time to upgrade. If you have a 100% rating, your wife or widow is eligible for the free Medicare supplement, Champ VA for life, and free medications-by-mail. Fred suggests that you contact a National Service Officer in your area. The VA is trying to reach the 11,000 POWs who have never received their benefits.

Fred Campbell may be contacted at 3312 Chatterton Drive, San Angelo TX 76904 or email Fredrev@webtv.net.

457th Bomb Group Association Dedicates Memorial Monument at Glatton

On a beautiful May 30th afternoon, under blue skies with puffy white clouds, sixty people attending the 457th BGA's 2004 British reunion gathered to dedicate a monument to its fallen comrades. It isn't just any monument, but a magnificent black marble edifice at the World War II base of the 457th, "Glatton", USAAF Station 130. The site, on land-lease held by the 457th BGA, is a highly visible corner where Conington Lane intersects B1043 (formerly the "Great North Road"), nine miles south of Peterborough in north Cambridgeshire. Station 130 could not be named for the village where it was located, Conington, because of possible radio call confusion with Honington, home of the USAAF 364th FG, so it was named "Glatton" for the town three miles west.

The ceremony at the monument site began with a flyover by the Royal Air Force's four-engine Lancaster, accompanied by a Hurricane and a Spitfire. The assembly of some six hundred persons, including the sixty attending the 457th reunion, thrilled to multiple passes by the RAF aircraft.

Past President and reunion coordinator Will Fluman opened the ceremony. The monument, six and one-half feet tall, was unveiled by John Walker, 457th historian, and Don Sellon, past President of 457th BGA. After veteran John D. Ward pronounced the invocation, Gordon Townsend of Huntingdon, RAF (ret.) and 457th BG historian, laid a floral wreath at the base of the monument.

Fluman described the history of the monument effort which had languished for several years until Ray Pobgee,



former Peterborough Mayor and 457th BG historian, facilitated the transfer of the land to the 457th BGA. Members of the Association subscribed, in less than eight months, the \$48,000 needed for the monument.

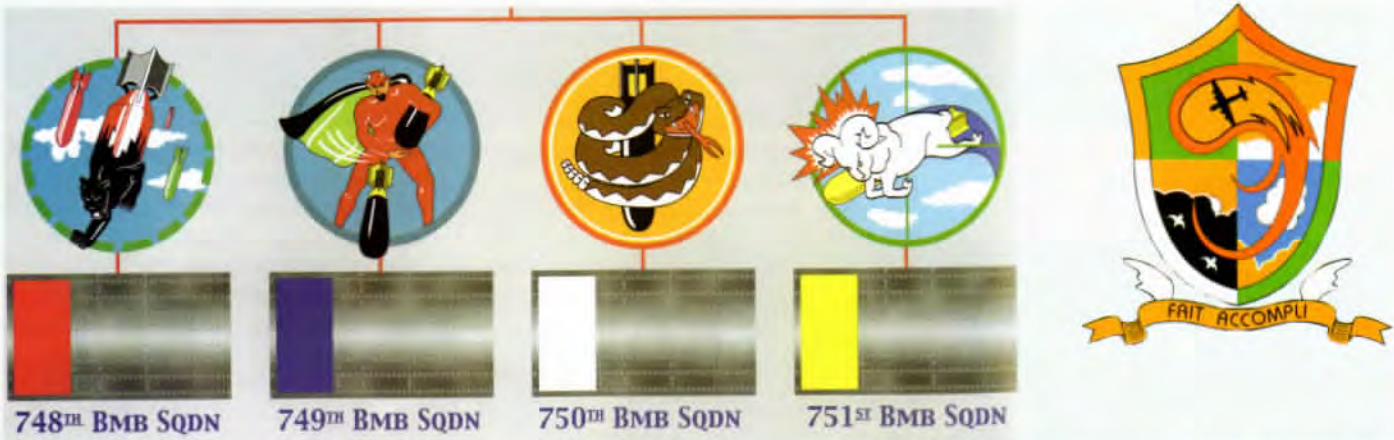
Lee Zimmerman, past President of the Association, spoke to the cordial relationships between the Glatton airmen and the British people. Don Nielsen, current 457th BGA president, spoke to the real purpose of the monument and alluded to the warm relationships we enjoyed with our British friends. Craig Harris, past President, representing the surviving Glatton airmen, paid tribute to the fallen including those of the RAF Bomber and Fighter commands. He concluded with the prayer that appears in the narthex of the Chapel of the Fallen Eagles at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum, written by the very Reverend Robert C. Martin, 392nd Bomb Group pilot, and Dean of the Cathedral (retired) Erie, Pennsylvania.

Ray Pobgee, the person who made the event possible, spoke briefly, after which Will Fluman closed the dedication ceremony. After the ceremony, the villagers of Conington hosted the 457th reunion group with a tea at a home within sight of All Saints Church of Conington, in a nostalgic setting. For those whose dream such a monument had been for many years, this was a most fitting conclusion for a very emotional event.

from reports submitted by Craig Harris, 457th BG Durham, NC



Royal Air Force flyover -- Avro Lancaster, with Hawker Hurricane and Supermarine Spitfire. Part of crowd of over 600 persons is in lower foreground.



At right, the person responsible for 457th BGA lease ownership on land for memorial, Hon. Ray Pobgee, Her Majesty's Deputy Lord Lieutenant for Cambridgeshire, former Mayor of Peterborough, RAF (ret.) and 457th BG historian. At left, Eric Brumby, Peterborough, 457th BG historian.



Part of VIP row at memorial dedication. From left, Don Nielsen, Pres. - 457th BGA, Sally Duberly, Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for Cambridgeshire - Hugh Duberley CBE, The Right Worshipful Mayor of Peterborough - Cllr. David Raines, Mayoress Mrs. Carole Raines.





Taps



Greenberg, Sol, Atlanta GA; B-17 pilot, POW for 16 months; organized the camp trading post in Stalag Luft I

Semelvis, Wilbur, 448th BG; from crewmate Norm Dunphe

Barber, Edward, Albuquerque NM; 445th BG navigator; requested and received a singing by his family of his favorite "Take Me Out To The Ballgame" at his funeral; from his wife



Edward Barber

Rosemary

White, Robert, Lafayette TN; 306th BG; Charter member TN Chapter

Oakes, Curtis, Riverside CA; 306th BG pilot; Vice-President of LeMay Chapter; active in March Field Museum

Perkins, Robert "Perk", Houston TX; 386th BG "The Crusaders", B-26 pilot; completed 69 missions in *Perkatory*; from Al Lea

May, Leslie; 361st FG pilot; completed 90 missions including aerial support on D-Day

Divis, Louis, Prospect Hgts. IL; 361st FG pilot

B/G Charles Sweeney, Milton MA; General Sweeney flew both missions which dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, flying as lead pilot of the B-29 Superfortress *Bocks Car* on the Nagasaki mission. Those two missions finalized the Japanese surrender,



Charles Sweeney's Bocks Car

ending World War II. His copilot, Fred Olivi, recently passed away.

Johnson, Frank, Williamsburg VA; 361st FG pilot; served in Korea and Vietnam; an experienced sailor on the East coast and the Gulf

McClellan, Lauch, Laurinburg NC; 361st FG mechanic

Holter, Paul, Sausalito CA; 361st FG pilot with 85 missions and 12 additional in Korea

Decker, Earl, Oak View CA; 91st BG Morgan, Clinton, Nashville TN; B-17 navigator/bombardier; lawyer; life-long member of Phi Delta Theta fraternity

Diracles, John, Minneapolis MN; 91st BG navigator with 31 missions; Born in Salonika, Greece, founded accounting firm later merging with Arthur Young, Inc; Professor at University of Minnesota

Adkins, Richard "Gene", Sautee-Nacoochee GA; 93rd BG B-24 pilot with 28 missions, followed by a tour in P-51s with the Scouting Force; from his wife Carol

Blessing, James, Cape Coral FL; 486th BG navigator with 36 missions

Connally, Marie, Albuquerque NM; a lifetime proud supporter of the Mighty Eighth; from her husband Roy 306th BG, Bergener's crew, who notes that "her on high regard for the 8th AF may have been the reason she married me!"

Gumm, Jack, Largo FL; 457th BG pilot with two tours of duty; from Jerry Silverman, crew navigator

Mackenzie, Ian "Mac", Scottsdale AZ; 92nd BG from his wife Phyllis

Mirotznik, Rosalyn, East Meadow NY; a staunch advocate of the 452nd BG and the 8th AFHS; from her husband Bernard

Linford, John, Piedmont CA; 445th BG pilot with 34 missions; returned to Tibenham for the 50th reunion and was privileged to fly a glider from his old airbase accompanied by his wife Louise

Shinault, Charles, Gulf Shores AL; 96th BG copilot of *Cabin In The Sky* and later pilot of *Sittin' Pretty*; flew the dangerous B-17 Project Aphrodite missions

Morse, Frank, 7th PRG; long-time Treasurer Ohio Chapter

Thomas, Marie; wife of Tom Thomas, 96th BG and 8th AFHS past-President

Michener, Ben, Tulsa OK; 7th PRG; career in photographic research and development; from his son Ben

Phlegley, John "Jack", Eureka CA; from his wife Mary Jane

Gocek, Edward, Alachua FL; 487th BG btg, 35 missions; from W. B. "Gator" Dyal, crew tailgunner

Brown, Clifford; from his daughter Tina – for his acquaintances her email is foghorn2246@aol.com

O'Hara, Richard, Smyrna GA; 306th BG pilot of B-17 Scarlet; career in the USAF flying over 35 types of aircraft, over 6,000 hours

Sassmannhausen, Walter, Ft. Wayne IN; 401st BG navigator; cherished to the end the men, the experiences and the B-17s of Deenthorpe; from his son Skip

Stoldt, F. W., Houston TX; 452nd BG btg on B-17 *Our Buddy*

Gilbert, David, Houston TX; assigned to the 8th after having fought through the Battle of the Bulge with the 424th Infantry Regiment; active in radio control a/c and editor of the SAM newsletter (Society of Antique Modelers)

Hendrix, William, Wichita KS; 466th BG

Lee, W. Wright; 447th BG

Schmidt, Joe, Rancho Cucamonga CA; 353rd FG Crew Chief; frequent contributor to the 8th AF News; from his pastor, Rev David Rude; and a buddy Phil: "I just missed him by a couple of hours last June. I hope he had drunk the beers I had put in front of his door. He made his last flight toward a rendezvous known only by the lost pilots. God will take care of them."

Gurr, Woodrow; 306th BG; crew member of *Eager*

Beaver

Purdy, Walter: at his son Warren's home in Greece; flew 35 missions

Barry, Learned

Walter, Williamsburg VA; 467th BG lead pilot; career in USAF; Virginia Chapter

Manchester, William, Hartford CT; author of 18 books including biographies of Douglas MacArthur and a multivolume set on Winston Churchill, called *The Last Lion*.

DeGiacomo, Joe; tailgunner with 25 missions; wounded in both legs on his seventh mission. Massachusetts Chapter

Steck, Herman, Folsom Ca; 44th BG; POW; from friend Walter "Boots" Mayberry

Surdez, Robert "Bud", Castro Valley CA; copilot of B-17 42-3439 that crashed in De Bilt, Holland

Town, Archibald "Archie", St. George UT; 447th BG pilot of *Hell's Bells*; shot down in the Channel on his 19th mission; became member of The Lucky Bastard's Club after completing his tour of 25; from his daughter Doreen

Segner, John, Jonesboro GA; Stack, Herman; POW

Blackwell, Charles, St. Charles MO; 457th BG pilot; shot down on mission 29; evadee with help from French Resistance helpers

Diehl, Marvin, Lehigh PA; Pennsylvania Chapter



Joe Schmidt



Taps



Hyerdall, Donald, Mundelein II; 96th BG bombardier on B-17 *Jiggs Up*; served in Korea; Illinois Chapter

Tucker, Morris "Moe", Chicago IL/San Diego CA; 493rd BG; Illinois Chapter

They laid **Roger Williams** to rest at Oakridge Cemetery in Tifton, Georgia. Mr. Williams was a Real Son, the last of three sons of Confederate veteran Basil Jasper Williams who fought in the War Between the States. His funeral was conducted with an honor guard of thirteen troops, a 21-gun salute, and a bagpiper. The piper played "Going Home" as the casket was lowered. The funeral ceremony also featured "Amazing Grace" and one last rendition of "Dixie," piped with the honor guard at Present Arms.

Weid, Clyde, 457th BG; pilot; flew 199 Berlin Airlift missions; from his wife Betty



Clyde and his twin brother Claude, who was killed in May 45 while evacuating wounded soldiers from the front, killing all 44 aboard, when his aircraft crashed.



JACOB WAYNE FREDERICKS



J. Wayne Fredericks, 303rd Bomb Group and 3rd Air Division Headquarters, of Bronxville NY died on August 18, 2004 unexpectedly. He was a pilot of the B-17 *Snap! Crackle! Pop!*, who with his crew went over with the original 303rd BG cadre in 1942. After a tour of 25 missions, he was assigned to be in charge of Plans and targeting at 3rd AD Headquarters at Elveden Hall, until the end of the war. He was placed in command of the initial liberation of the notorious Nazi death camp at Matthausen shortly after VE Day. Following that, after the Japanese surrender, he was assigned to lead a team to interview Japanese war leaders and to investigate the extensive Japanese war production industry, much of which was in full production in huge subterranean mountain factories in Japan.

Jake Fredericks' distinguished post-war civilian career included years as Deputy Ambassador to Africa during the Cold War years, working closely with top members and policy makers of the Kennedy and Johnson Presidential administrations. He served with the CIA and on the Board of Directors of the Ford Foundation for several

decades.

Jake's extensive original 8th Air Force wartime materials, interviews with German leaders, and records from the Japanese investigations have been featured in the *Straight From Jake!* section of the 8th AF News in recent years. All of his files, photographs and materials from his years with the 3rd Air Division 8th Air Force and post-war publications from Japan, will be included as part of the 303rd Bomb Group Special Collections at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah, to be utilized in future years by researchers, educators and all other interested individuals.



Jake Fredericks with his crew's plaque - Memorial Gardens at the Heritage Museum.



Nose Art painted by Kellogg Company's Clinton Dole

8TH AFHS CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

Alabama **Chuck D. Bowman** 1903 Blackjack Rd. Trussville, AL 35173
Birthplace Chapter **A.S. "Bud" Porter Jr.** 21 Myrtle Bank Rd. Hilton Head, SC 29926
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California-South (LeMay) **Murray Codman** 4341 Redwood Ave. Marina Del Ray, CA 90292
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SNETTERTON HEATH

by Peyton Woodson, 96th Bomb Group



Dear Walter:

The June issue of "8th AF News" arrived day before yesterday and I have long since devoured every page, as usual. The publication is a treat to be anticipated by this old veteran. I keep turning to the cover and its two photographs. The upper photo of the 487th Bomb Group planes straining to gain their element is a beautiful example of good formation flying on the way

out to the target.

The lower photo is even more evocative, however. One can feel the tension of take-off for a mission with the rumble of a hundred or so Wright Cyclones. The cluster of spectators on the roof of the control tower adds to the tension. The trees are bare of leaves, so it is still winter at Snetterton Heath.

The date is sometime in 1945, for the planes in the photo display the red horizontal stripes that were added to 96th Bomb Group planes early in January 1945.

As any veteran of the 96th Bomb Group will agree, the planes on the perimeter track are headed north toward the control tower and the head of runway 23, the main runway at Snetterton. They are just past the 413th Bomb Squadron hardstands and Hanger #1 is at the far right. The plane in the immediate foreground is Paintbrush "E" of the 337 Squadron; one can just make out the AW on the fuselage above the wing trailing edge, which is the 337th squadron identification. When calling the Snetterton tower (code named "Chairback") the 337th Squadron planes would identify themselves as "Paintbrush" together with either the letter or the three digit tail number (in this case either the "E" or "423"). Of course, the Square C on the tail identified all 96th Bomb Group planes.

This particular plane, whose full tail number was 48423, was assigned to the 8th Air Force 29 October 1944. I have no record as to when it was sent to Snetterton Heath but it must have been almost immediately as it flew on a mission to the notorious (and detested) target of Merseburg on 30 October 1944. The pilot of the plane on this mission was John P. Bee who had arrived at Snetterton back in June and was finishing up his quota of missions.

The next record I have of a mission for "Paintbrush Easy" (AW - 423) is 5 November 1944 to Ludwigshafen. The pilot for this mission was Bill Skelton who had arrived at Snetterton with his crew in October and moved into Hut #43 in the 337th Squadron living area (close to the LNER railroad tracks). This mission was followed with missions to Hamm (Jim Vitello the pilot) on 26 November, to

Bingen (Floyd Botsford the pilot) on 27 November, and to Cologne (Charles Shinault, the pilot) on 7 January 1945. Incidentally, Charlie Shinault was also in the Hut #43 and was one of those select few who actually flew an Aphrodite Mission, the pioneering remote control experiment.

I do not believe this photograph was taken on 7 January 1945 because the 7 January mission was scheduled for take-off in the dark. The next possibility would be in the 13 January mission to Bischofsheim with Joe Arzbecker as pilot. However, this was also an early hour mission with drizzle. Furthermore take-off was planned for runway 5, instead of runway 23, as pictured. Actual take-off was at the intersection of runway 5 and 27 thereby reducing the available runway from 6,000 feet to just over 4,000 feet. A plane on the perimeter track had run off the paved surface and got a wheel bogged down in the soggy soil; a cleetrack could not budge it.

The best possibility for dating the picture is the mission of 11 March 1945 to Hamburg. On that mission 423 - E (Paintbrush Easy) was flown by Paul Lippold of the 339th Squadron. Take-off was later in the morning, also runway 23.

I have undoubtedly told you for more than you wanted to know about this wonderful picture and the beautiful B-17 in the foreground. However, I hope it underlines how much it means to the ancient aviators and ground crews to have pictures like those on the front cover of the "8th AF News" that tie back to times and events that impacted our lives emotionally as well as physically.

Yours Sincerely,

**R. Peyton "Woody" Woodson, 96th BG
Raleigh, NC**



INSOMNIA

Twenty years after the war I couldn't sleep. My wife and I were scrapping. My kids were acting up. My car wouldn't start. Worst of all my grass wouldn't grow. You have to expect these things in a marriage, but this time it went on and on until I'd had it up to here. So one night in bed I said, "God, get me out of this. I can't sleep." And He said to me, "Listen Stanley, you don't need my help. If you can get through the war, you can get through this. When things get really tough, think about those missions over Merseberg. Dig?" "Merseberg?" "Man, you really can pick 'em. But "Okay," I said, "I'll give it a shot. And thanks." "Dinada," He said. I turned over and thought about those damn Merseberg missions. It kept me awake all night. Yes, well, I've always wondered why He's supposed to know everything.

**Stanley Friedman, 493rd BG
Yorktown Hgts NY**

8TH AF HISTORICAL SOCIETY SPONSORS AWARD

U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. -- Cadet First Class Sean C. Temple, Monument, Colo., received the **Most Valuable Men's Track Competitor Award** for the Air Force Academy's Class of 2004. The Award was presented on behalf of the 8AFHS at AFA Awards Ceremony, Monday, 30 May 04, by Col. Robert Vickers USAF (Ret).

The 8th Air Force Historical Society, in memory of Mr. Arne U. Arnesen, sponsors the award to recognize the cadet'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 Academy Athletic Department and to all cadets who attended.

Temple received a Bachelor of Science degree and a commission as an Air Force second lieutenant June 2, during the Academy's 46th graduation ceremony. Temple, along with his classmates, increases the number of Academy graduates who have served throughout the Air Force to 36,979.

Since 1959, Academy graduates have served as pilots, navigators, engineers and maintenance officers, as well as professionals in a number of other technical fields. 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



Most Valuable Track Competitor Award (Men)
Sponsored by The 8th Air Force Historical Society in memory of Mr. Arne U. Arnesen. Presented by Colonel Robert E. Vickers, USAF, Retired, Director of Awards and Protocol. Presented to Sean C. Temple, Class of 2004, May 31, 2004.

basic and engineering sciences, social sciences and the humanities, and to choose from among 30 academic majors.

If you think you are a person of importance,
try ordering someone else's dog around.
Will Rogers

Never give a woman anything she can't wear at night.
Oscar Wilde

CHURCHILL GOT IT RIGHT A LONG TIME AGO

A passage from his book "The River War" written by Sir Winston Churchill in 1899 after he had participated in the Sudanese campaign:

"How dreadful are the curses which Mohammendanism lays on its votaries! Besides the fanatical frenzy, which is as dangerous in a man as hydrophobia in a dog, there is this fearful fatalistic apathy. Improvement habits, slovenly systems of agriculture, sluggish methods of commerce, and insecurity of property exist wherever the followers of the Prophet rule or live. A degraded sensualism deprives this life of its grace and refinement; the next of its dignity and sanctity. The fact that in Mohammedan law every woman must belong to some man as his absolute property - either as a

child, a wife, or a concubine - must delay the final extinction of slavery until the faith of Islam has ceased to be a great power among men.

"Individual Moslems may show splendid qualities. Thousands become the brave and loyal soldiers of the Queen: all know how to die. But the influence of the religion paralyses the social development of those who follow it. No stronger retrograde force exists in the world. Far from being moribund, Mohammedanism is a militant and proselytizing faith. It has already spread throughout Central Africa, raising fearless warriors at every step; and were it not that Christianity is sheltered in the strong arms of science - the science against which it had vainly struggled - the civilization of modern Europe might fall, as fell the civilization of ancient Rome."

Winston Churchill 1899

submitted by Buck Shuler Alexander City AL



Reunions



BURTONWOOD ASSOCIATION

Oct. 5-9, 2004, Santa Maria, CA.
Contact: Richard Iwanowski, 4515 W.
55th St., Chicago, IL., 60632. Tel:
(773) 767-1810.

487TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

October 20-24, 2004 Arlington, VA.
Doubletree Hotel
Contact: B. Nolan, 703-567-1882
Email: Btnolan@aol.com

SECOND SCHWEINFURT MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

October 11-15, 2004
Mercure Hotel, Schweinfurt,
Germany
Contact: George G. Roberts
49 30th Street, Gulfport, MS 39507-
1804
Email: robby49@datasync.com

452ND BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

September 30 - October 3, 2004,
Savannah GA Hilton
Contact: Hank North
901 Poling Drive, Columbus OH
43224-1936
Email: hanknorth@core.com

92ND BOMB GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

October 12-17, 2004
Kansas City MO, Westin Crown
Center
Contact: Irr Banm 3935 Young Ave.,
Napa, CA 94558-2654
Email: mariv92bg@aol.com,
www.92ndma.org

91ST BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

Sept 30-Oct 3, 2004
Washington DC
Sheraton Crystal City Arlington VA
Contact 817-251-3551 for info

339TH FIGHTER GROUP

Sept 16-20, 2004 Falls Church VA
Marriott Fairview Park Hotel
Contact: Stephen Ananian
4 N. Orchard Farms
Ave., Simpsonville SC 29681

864-288-2599
email
stephenanian@mindspring.com

361ST FIGHTER GROUP ASSOCIATION

Oct 17 - 21, 2004 Orlando FL
Best Western Lake Buena Vista
Resort
Contact: Dave Landin, 8419 Michael
Road, Richmond VA 32210
Tel 804-288-5889
email david.c.landing@verizon.net

BAD 2 ASSOCIATION

Sept 30-Oct 2, 2004
Romulus MI
Contact: DickMcClune, 527
Quarterfield Rd; Newport News VA
23602
email BAD2TRSR@msn.com

352ND FIGHTER GROUP ASSOCIATION

October 9-12, 2004
Savannah GA
Contact Bob "Punchy" Powell
1545 Ranier Falls Dr.
Atlanta, GA 30329 tel 404-636-3747

3RD STRATEGIC AIR DEPOT ASSOCIATION

October 7-9, 2004
Golden CO Holiday Inn
Contact Ed Keller
2873 South Gray Way
Denver CO 80227 tel 303-985-7750
email csed@msn.com

PILOT CLASS 44-D REUNION

Oct 11-14, 2004
Branson MO
Contact Lloyd Johnson
5011 Sugar Creek Rd
Lincoln NE 68516
Tel 402-423-2304

492ND BOMB GROUP (H)

May 18-22, 2005 Tucson, AZ
Radisson City Center Hotel
Contact: Bill and Norma Beasley
1525 So. Garfield St., Denver, CO
80210-3022
Tel: 303-756-4766
FAX: 303-759-3684

Email:
WHBNMB492NPICK@prodigy.net

27TH AIR TRANSPORT GROUP

Sept 30 - Oct 2, 2004
Shreveport LA
Contact Donald Diehm
246 Laurelwood Ln, Horseshoe NC
28742
tel 828-891-5422

491ST BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION "Ringmasters"

October 20-24, 2004
Savannah GA/8th AF Heritage
Museum
Best Western Bradbury Suites
Contact Jerome Ivce, 8547 Wendy
Ln East
West Palm Beach FL 33411-6506

SCOUTING FORCE

October 28-31, 2004
Sheraton Grand - Irving, TX
Contact: Dick Atkins
tel: 817-261-3007
Email: dick8af@flash.net

MEALS

I think that I shall never see
A meal that doesn't appeal to me.
Admitted that in days gone by
I've left a piece of apple pie
Or maybe a small piece of meat,
On my plate that I didn't eat.

But now it's my firm resolve
To quickly make all food dissolve,
That any dumb unknowing fool
Might have around to make me drool.
And now I sure won't hesitate
To take that last small piece of cake.

Meals aren't missed by fools like me -
I'd even molest a helpless pea.

written by a Stalag Luft I POW
Barth, Germany
submitted by John Maxwell, 401st BG
Greenville PA



How About It?



AN UNCOMMON LANGUAGE

Babylon has been around a long time and it has been making the headlines for centuries. It's sordid history dates back for thousands of years. One occasion in its early history has impacted the entire world and its occupants ever since. When excavating the original site of the Tower of Babel, archeologists uncovered an ancient tablet verifying the fact that indeed this ancient city existed. The Biblical account tells that these arrogant leaders decided to build a structure that would reach to the heavens, a symbol of their vanity and a monument to their greatness. They had as their goal to reach heaven on their own self-serving terms, but God intervened and brought the project to a halt by confusing the language of the builders. The construction workers could no longer communicate with each other and in their frustration, the builders scattered, taking their new "languages" with them. At that time, the people of the world consequently became multi-lingual and the language barrier has thwarted civilization ever since.

These historic and existing language barriers were not enough. Modern wartime commanders never wanted their orders intercepted and understood by the enemy so their messages were further coded. Human ingenuity of enemy forces however, was able to decode even the most complex system. The process of coding and decoding strategically important messages took time and timing is always an essential element for commanders in the field. An ingenious plan was

introduced to speed communication without a breach in security. Some Native Americans were brought together during World War II who called themselves the Navajo Code Talkers. The Code Talkers used their own Navajo language to communicate military orders quickly and openly among commanders in the field. The complex nature of the Navajo language baffled even the most experienced linguists. The Japanese, who were skilled code breakers, remained baffled throughout the war by these Americans who transmitted messages in their native language openly by telephone and radio. This was a Code that the Japanese never broke.

There is also a common spiritual language that those of faith understand. It is an unbreakable Code that can be understood only by those who have heard the 'still small voice of God'. It is introduced, learned and forged in the heat of battle. Here even atheists are made aware of the mystery of this Code. Warriors in harm's way often become acquainted with the giver of the Master Code. They have had experiences that are beyond the range of the comprehension of unbelievers. They have a common spirit. War has compelled them to gaze upon the waste and carnage of battle. Everywhere about them is the reality of man's failure and evil intent. Spilt blood and the destruction of war is proof of faulted humanity. There is, however, a common language learned and understood by soldiers through the ages. Despite the reality of the world, they have looked to God who quietly revealed, opened and communicated another world to them; a spirit life, a kingdom that would have no end, not built by mankind's effort, but by the

Spirit of God and forged in the hearts of men. A very wise man living centuries ago best described this Spirit when he said:



Earl Wassom

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof. There is a river the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High. God is in the midst of her; and she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early. The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: He uttered His voice, the earth melted. The Lord of hosts is with us. The God of Jacob is our refuge...Be still and know that I am God". (Psalms 46 1-7, 10 KJV)

Earl Wassom,
466th Bomb Group
Chaplain, Tennessee Chapter



There are people who strictly deprive themselves of each and every eatable, drinkable, and smokable which has in any way acquired a shady reputation. They pay this price for health, and health is all they get for it.

Mark Twain (1835-1910)



8th AF News

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**447th Bomb Group
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