



# th AE NEWS

VOLUME 05 NUMBER 2

Y EIGHTH" JUNE 2005



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REUNION ISSUE

## WARTIME GUNNER

Wartime drawing by Luke Doheny





# AF NEWS

Magazine of

## The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

The Eighth Air Force News is dedicated to Lt. Col. John H. Woolnough, founder of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society and editor for sixteen years. It is published quarterly and is the official newsmagazine of the Society. 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.

June 2005

### OFFICERS

**President** Lawrence Goldstein (Rose) 2005  
707 Continental Circle Apt. 1521  
Mountain View, CA 94040-3315  
Tel. (650) 938-2474  
lgoldie01@aol.com

**Immediate Past-President**  
William C. Rawson 2005  
1417 Currant Way  
Flower Mound, TX 75028-5108  
Tel: (214) 513-1788  
FAX: (214) 513-1688  
wcrawson@aol.com

**Secretary** John S. Pearson 2007  
1900 Lauderdale Dr. C-315  
Richmond, VA 23238  
Tel. (804)740-2635  
jonpearson@att.net

**Treasurer**  
Ivan L. McKinney (Mary) 2008  
331 Greenacres Blvd.  
Bossier City, LA 71111  
Tel. (318)742-0895  
ivanmckinney@direcway.com

### STAFF

**Finance Manager** Jeffrey R. Tucker, CPA  
400 Mall Blvd, Suite K  
Savannah, GA 31406  
Tel. (912)354-6321  
FAX (912)351-0226  
jeff@cpa-ht.com

### 8TH AFHS NATIONAL OFFICE

**Membership Records Manager** Connie Metts  
PO Box 1787  
Savannah, GA 31402  
Tel. (912)748-8884  
eafhs@hotmail.com

### 8TH AFHS UNITED KINGDOM CONTACTS

Gordon & Connie Richards  
U.K. Office 14 Pavenham Road  
Oakley, Bedford  
MK43 7SY, England  
01234 823357

### 8TH AFHS PX

Carlita Carter, Director PX  
175 Bourne St.

P.O. Box 1992  
Savannah, GA 31402  
912-748-8888 store@mightyeighth.org

### 8TH AFHS HISTORIAN

Roger A. Freeman  
Mays Barn  
Dedham Colchester  
Essex CO76EW England

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Walter E. Brown, MD (Alice) 2005  
**EDITOR 8TH AF NEWS**  
Ewell Farm, 2340 Sugar Ridge Road  
Spring Hill, TN 37174  
Tel. (931)486-2968  
FAX (931)486-9974  
olddocbrown@msn.com

Mark S. Copeland (Monica) 2006  
20681 Hazelwood Trail  
Lakeville, MN 55044  
Tel. (952) 469-2633  
moke388@isd.net

C. Craig Harris 2006  
2701 Pickett Road Apt. 2035  
Durham, NC 27705-5649  
Tel. (919)489-5685  
FAX (919)419-1705  
charris4@nc.rr.com

Gerald J. Miller 2007  
360 Burroughs Drive  
Amherst, NY 14226-3909  
Tel. 716-839-3472

Harry Tanner (Lorene) 2008  
2923 Roy Bunch Road,  
Sulphur, LA 70663-0762  
Tel. (337) 527-0322  
hdtanner@bellsouth.net

Earl E. Wassom (Cynthia) 2007  
**CHAPLAIN 8TH AFHS**  
548 Brentmoor Drive  
Bowling Green KY 42101-3772  
Tel. and Fax: (270) 842-0412  
email: e.wassom@att.net

Belton C. Wolf (Mary Anne) 2006  
4032 Twyla Lane  
Campbell, CA 95008-3721  
Tel. (408)374-4723  
belmaw\_49@hotmail.com  
bel49maw@attn.net

### DIRECTORS EMERITUS

Aida Kaye  
Robert Vickers

Sherman Small  
Richard Baynes

### CHAPTER/UNIT DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Jim Erskine (Joe Ann)  
568 Colima Drive  
Toledo, OH 43609  
Tel. (419)382-8595  
Fax (419)382-4242  
jimjake2@juno.com

### OPERATIONS



Staff are (l to r): Capt. James Ainsworth, Lt. David Vinson, Lt. Matthew Murray, Sgt. M.D. Horn, Lt. Col Louis Thorup, (Air Executive) and S/Sgt. Joe Haddonfield.

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Board of Directors of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society at their mid-term meeting in Arlington, Virginia, reviewed the plans for our annual reunion to be held September 27 to October 2. This promises to be a very emotional gathering as we meet in the shadows of our nation's capitol. We have been granted permission by the National Park Service to place a wreath at the site of the World War II Memorial. We plan to honor our comrades of the "Mighty Eighth" who gave their lives as part of service to their country.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II, and the Eighth Air Force Historical Society joins the millions of Americans who will observe the many memorials that are planned. Our planned visits to the World War II Memorial, Arlington cemetery, and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier are all part in this national memorial.

One of the major problems facing our Historical Society is the question of how we continue the Society as we lose more and more of our veterans each year. This is a subject that has been tabled for the past few years.

None of us wish to see our Society just fade away. The Board of Directors at our recent meeting discussed this problem and created a Committee and a Chairman to review his matter. I can report to the membership that they have not only begun this review but have already produced a list of ideas to review and discuss. Their ideas are published in this edition of the 8th AF News.



**Lawrence Goldstein**



Lawrence Goldstein

Plan to attend our 2005 annual reunion. It will be one that you will remember for the rest of your life.

**Larry Goldstein, President 8th AFHS**

Larry Goldstein

## THE TALKING CLOCK

An old airman had stayed a bit too long at the bar and was carrying a pretty good load of booze. He got to bragging to his drinking buddies about his big talking clock that was flat as a dime and was four feet high, he had in his apartment. His friends had to take a look at this talking clock, so after closing time they drove him home and went up to his apartment.

In his bedroom they saw the clock – a huge gong hanging by a chain from the ceiling. His friends asked him, “Is that it?”

"Yep," replied the drunk.

One friend in the group, squinting at the contraption asked, "That's it? How's it work?"

"Watch," the inebriated one said. He reached over and picked up a big mallet, swung back, and gave the gong a loud ear-shattering blow, and

then stepped back.

The group all stood there for a few moments looking at one another.

Suddenly, an irate voice from the other side of the wall screamed, "You dumb imbecile! It's ten past three in the morning!"

From **Alabama Chapter  
PROPWASH,**  
**Red Harper, Editor, 100th BG**

## COVER STORY

Cover art for June 05 8th AF News is by wartime artist Luke Doheny. Many of his works accompanied print material and publications usually coming from higher Headquarters and reached the troops in reports and instructional flyers. A number of his original pieces, such as that on our cover, are part of the Jacob W. Fredericks Collection, which will be available in the archives of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Savannah.

Gunners were the crewmen who flew in medium and heavy bombers of the Mighty Eighth. This edi-

tion pays tribute to them through their own words, with their histories continuing for the upcoming issues of the newsmagazine. These are the airmen who were behind the defensive armament of the aircraft that carried the war to the Germans and Italians. The worn-out description that the bombers “bristled” with guns, does not do justice to the power and effectiveness of the .50 caliber machine guns and even the slightly smaller .30 caliber weapons, with trained gunners manning them. German pilots were well aware of the damage, and fate, that awaited them from this combined firepower from 8th AF aircraft. Eighth fighter

pilots were dependent on these weapons of war as well.







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

Every now and then the 8th AF News presents an issue that is weighted somewhat towards things I call "business." But it's interesting and important business.

In light of Taking Care of Business, this June 05 edition of the newsmagazine has a special feature section which includes a number of themes: the future of the 8th AFHS, actions from the mid-term Board of Directors meeting in March, educational initiatives of the Society and its Chapters, Support and Fund-raising programs, and upcoming events. Following

our long-standing tradition, this issue also includes complete information and registration forms concerning the Society's 2005 annual reunion in Arlington/Washington at the end of September this year.

The reunion hotel is just a couple of blocks from the National Cemetery at Arlington and if you get past the nearby corner restaurant *Ethiopian Cuisine*, there are numerous great restaurants to try out in Washington.

Appreciation goes out to George Hoidra, Gen. and Mrs. Reginald Rider, and the National Capital Area Chapter for their hospitality to the Society's Board members during our mid-term meeting weekend. With the NCAC serving as Host Chapter for the 2005 reunion, you can be sure we will receive a fine welcome and an unforgettable opportunity to see our nation's capital among our buddies of the 8th AF Historical Society.



Sincerely,  
Walter Brown, Editor  
8th AF News



Donna Neely

We have managed to finalize another issue with some very informative business and reunion sections. Your memories and articles are very important to us. We are trying to keep the cost/pages per magazine down, which is very difficult with all the material submitted. If you don't see your pictures or article published, we have plans to include a large number of them in future issues. Please continue to know that we are very proud of each and everyone of you!!

"Looking for Live Varga Girl?"

We found one!! Check out Mail Call, page 29, titled "Vargas Girl", submitted by Henry G. Wulbeck, Dayton, Ohio. Also noted in Mail Call is a suggestion for "A Varga Fix".

Feel free to contact us for **your** Layout/Design, Printing needs and with your suggestions.

Our contact information is:

**Alpha Graphic Consultants**  
2090 Cairo Bend Road  
Lebanon, TN 37087  
donna\_neely@msn.com  
Phone: 615.418.1200  
Fax: 615.453.2343

Sincerely, **Donna Neely & Telisha Gaines**



Telisha Gaines

At our reunions, we join together because we want to be with people we respect and enjoy.  
We trust in one another.

**Lt. General Brett Dula, USAF (Ret)**

## HISTORICAL SOCIETY IS LOADED WITH ACTIVITIES!

The recent mid-term Board of Directors meeting not only set up the details for the annual reunion but the entire day was spent on Society business reports and addressing the various Historical Society programs. These are really exciting times – it seems the more years that go by, the more active the Chapters and Chapter members are. This Business Section is a first, and of course is the location of many of our ongoing programs. The interaction with the Heritage Museum, HS educational initiatives, Fund raising efforts, and the Committee for the future course of the 8th AFHS are all addressed in this June 05 issue. You will be glad you became familiar with What's Happening! and you will be proud to be part of it.

## EDUCATING THE YOUNGER GENERATION KEEPS ONE YOUNG

Belton C. Wolf, 305th BG

8th Air Force Historical Society Chairman Educational Committee

Most of those 8th Air Force Historical Society older generation members who have taken on lecturing the younger generations on Eighth Air Force History, have voiced an opinion on youth. They say, "Speaking before a schoolroom full of young people keeps grey cells functioning, reduces aches and pains, and gives one a youthful appearance". In fact, some claim they come away, "Wrinkle-free, and feel so youthful they can now indulge in hip hop dancing at the local adult center."

The doubters reading this may not have taken the plunge into the so-called fountain of youth, therefore you cannot imagine lecturing the younger generation as being an elixir of life. Still, one cannot pass judgement as to the reliability of the believers, until you do take the plunge. So rather than being a doubter, why don't you dive right into that fountain?

Between the lines of member's real time experiences in lecturing can be noted a ring of enthusiasm. All the lecturers voice similar feelings after appearing before a youthful group. Some said, "It gives me a lift in life - the verve to continue such lectures." With one voice, they urge other members to join them for a swim in a youthful sea of students.

This brings me to the point where I bring you further tales of success in lecturing on 8th AF history. For those who have not entered the venues of classrooms or museums - read on, and then go forth.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Alabama Chapter appears to be vastly involved in teaching the history of the 8th Air Force. Fifty-nine members visited schools statewide. In particular, those in Northern

Alabama set up a replica of a bomber group briefing room at the old Huntsville Military Museum. Visiting teachers and students are lectured on World War II History and in particular, 8th Air Force History.

One active member of the Alabama Chapter, Dr. Don Wilson, Professor of History at Samford University, has been taking at least 100 students each year to England. They tour former bomber bases in East Anglia and become immersed in museums devoted to the air war in Britain and Europe during World War II.

The Alabama Chapter has other members who are also high on continuing to educate others on 8th Air Force history; they are Amy B. Arnold and her spouse, Henry Arnold. She writes, "The Chapter is involved in lecturing to ROTC groups, Scouts, Daughters of the American Revolution, and other civic organizations." She personally has lectured to the Alabama Historical Association; and was informed by them, "We members of the Association knew nothing of 8th



Amy Arnold and Alabama Chapter past-President Glenn Taylor

With one voice, they urge other members to join them for a swim in a youthful sea of students.

AF History until Amy Arnold lectured us." Amy is also writing and lecturing on her book titled: *Alabamians in the Eighth Air Force*.

Up north, a member of the Ohio Chapter, Orlando "Pete" Petrillo, wrote, "I've been visiting classrooms around Ohio for many years." His inroad into elementary schools read

like others, who have tried and succeeded. As he puts it, "Once you approach

a school and convince the teachers you have historical stories worth telling, they accept you like a student aide."

As former 8th Air Force Sergeant Petrillo, of the 447th Bomb Group, described one encounter, "I eyed the students sauntering into the classroom and wondered how an elderly man could teach American history to a group of daydreaming,



sleepy, and noisy students. I also wondered how I could teach these students, who appeared uninterested when I was introduced." But as you'll read, this former Army Air Force Sergeant had an old military trick to

gain their attention, "I startled them to attention. I bellowed at them. . .How'd you guys like to go on a bombing mission to Merseberg, Germany?" Pete added, "There would be no students daydreaming, talking or sleeping as I took these students from crew wake-up, to breakfast, briefing, take-off, form-up, bomb run, and return to base!" Pete also noted, "I supplement lectures with displays of military artifacts, uniforms, and my own medals." Pete said, "The questions just pour forth from classes of eager students. They want to know more about 8th Air Force missions into Europe during World War Two, and I told them - with pride and a feeling of accomplishment."

Another active chapter is the Birthplace Chapter in the State of Georgia. Ken Hoddinott, a stalwart member of the Chapter wrote, "We have a Speaker's Bureau in lieu of an Educational Committee, which is headed up by Bud Porter. He is also the Director of Volunteers for the Mighty 8th Air Force Museum in Savannah." Ken added, "More than half of the Museum's volunteers are members of our Chapter. Members act as docents for student groups visiting the museum. We also go into local schools giving lectures on what is termed: 'Quonset Life and The Mission Experience'." He added, "We augment our lectures with

VHS videos, personal experiences, uniform displays and aircraft models." For those of you who have not visited the museum in Savannah, you're missing stories from those who lived it.

Just a word

on one way to initially get into the classroom. You must first touch base with school officials, and even teachers. One means in gaining attention of these school personnel

is by sending a letter containing an outline of your presentation.

Another point of strategy is to enclose your letter with a copy of the 8th Air Force News magazine. Send copies to the school's principal and to the heads of the history or social science department. In this way you create an atmosphere wherein the principal and department head

have a dialogue on the program you have outlined. In most instances you'll be contacted. However, if not, your follow up would be to contact the principal within a week of mailing your outline. You can then have a dialogue with the official and teacher(s). At this point you will have a foot in the school door - and you on your way to drinking from that "Fountain of Youth."

These related programs point out what I hinted at early on - we former members of the 8th Air Force have stories to tell. These historical stories are the legacy we leave to

today's and tomorrow's generations. If you want to send me a

written copy of your experiences, and perhaps any photos taken in the classrooms, museums, or other venues please do. Send to: Belton C. Wolf, 4032 Twyla Lane, Campbell, CA.

You must first touch base with school officials, and even teachers.

"I also wondered how I could teach these students, who appeared uninterested when I was introduced."



**Bill Varnedoe 385th BG teacher, worked the Briefing room, Memorial Museum April 15, 2005**

### Earl Wassom, Chairman of the Continuance Committee

The life span of over 350,000 men assigned to the 8th Air Force, European Theatre of Operations, extends over eight decades. Our period of service was between the years 1942 – 1945. We came from all walks of life, nationalities and geographical areas. In our late teens or early 20's, we recognized our role as being a part of the Defenders of Freedom in the world. This role came with a price. About 225,000 of us saw combat in the air over occupied Europe and Germany. Of this number, 26,000 were killed or missing in actions, another 28,000 became prisoners of war. The 8th Air Force suffered the highest casualty rate of any combat unit in all theatres of World War II.

A great majority of us (195,000) survived the war, returned to civilian life, and we furthered our education, married, bought homes, had a family and became integrated into society. Life was great! We warriors were grateful for survival and health, a normal life and we allowed the horror of war to fade from our memory. But gradually, a sense of community emerged in which we again met with old war time buddies. We began reviving and sharing our memories. As a consequence of these contacts, small groups came together which eventually resulted in the formation of the 8th Air Force Historical Society. We and our families began collecting artifacts, letters and other memorabilia to produce journals, books, audio and video records which documented our military past. We were preserving our heritage. To bring focus to our efforts, a movement began to establish a gathering place for these materials. This 1985 concept grew into reality when our dreams and vision resulted in the establishment of a museum in Savannah. The collections and exhibits in this new organization portrayed life during this traumatic period of time in the history of our Nation. One historian gave a name to these intrepid men and their

military unit that fought and were based in England. He dubbed them, "The Mighty Eighth" and this title has stuck. A journalist saw these men as a part of "The Greatest Generation." The men did not create these titles but they have gratefully accepted them as a part of their legacy.

This generation has shown outstanding loyalty, creativity and faithfulness. However, our children have observed their parents across the years and admire their strengths but also are aware of their frailties. These men will always be 8th AFHS men. Nothing will change that. They will serve and be active as long as "Father Time" will allow. But the Legacy must be carried on. Learning from them and determined to preserve the Heritage of the 8th Air Force are three groups, which have become identified.

The membership of the 8th AFHS stands united in its support of these three groups. These units already exist but they are without concerted direction and it is the purpose of the Society to provide an umbrella under which all three can operate as a unified one. For the time, these three units are described as the **VDF Initiative**.

**V....VETERANS.** The Eighth Air Force is a numbered military unit. It was born in Savannah, Georgia at the beginning of World War II. It still exists today. It fought first in the European Theatre of Operations and has been involved in every military conflict since that time. Veterans from all of these conflicts can be a part of the Legacy and add their accomplishments and history to the story of the MIGHTY EIGHTH.

**D....DESCENDENTS.** The descendants; children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, of WW II Veterans are currently eligible and many are already involved with the 8th AFHS. Further, any descendent of the veterans of subsequent 8th Air Force units may become a participant in the

initiative.

**F...FELLOWS.** Men and women, neither a veteran nor descendent of a veteran, are eligible and encouraged to become a part of the initiative. A large number of individuals fall into this category. There are those actively pursuing research, publishing, or are history buffs. These are a very important ingredient in helping preserve the legacy and continuing the story of the Eighth.

At this time in the history of the Society, many of the VDF Groups are active and are carrying on and expanding their activities for the preservation of the heritage and legacy of the Eighth for the Old Eagles of WW II.

The 8th AFHS wishes to encourage activity and provide assistance in developing a linkage between the Veterans and all of the individuals who are a part of a VDF Group. An initiative has been introduced by the Society to allow time at the September 27 – October 2, 2005 Annual Convention of the 8th AFHS in Arlington, Virginia for these individuals to meet together. A time and place will be announced to provide dialogue opportunities and begin the process of developing a linkage among all interested groups. It is not the purpose of this meeting to remove the autonomous nature of any existing organization representing a Fighter, Bomber, Division, Group, Squadron, or any other entity actively engaged in fellowship, research or publications. Efforts and accomplishments for each of the above are to be commended and encouraged to continue in their present status. Common goals need to be identified, however, allowing all elements in the VDF Groups to be unified and form strong linkages thus insuring a progressive continuation of the Heritage and Legacy efforts of the WW II story and together, develop a common bond among Veterans and descendants of post WW II men and women.

Earl Wassom



## UNIT/CHAPTER COMMITTEE

### IF YOU WERE THERE – YOU WERE IMPORTANT

Very often it is heard “I wasn’t aircrew so why should I go to any reunions?” If it wasn’t for the personnel that stayed behind those aircrews would not have gone anywhere. If you think your job was not important you had better start thinking again.

General Jimmy Doolittle was, to most people, the most important person in the Mighty Eighth. With all respect to the General he didn’t turn a wrench on an engine, do any KP, clean a latrine, load a bomb or a round of ammunition, drive a truck (in fact he didn’t drive his own car), crawl into an airplane to pull out a wounded crewman, wake up crews for briefing in the middle of the night, walk a patrol as an MP – the list could go on and on.

The aircrews tell of the things that happened to them on missions but they also should hear what work ground personnel did so that they *could* go on that mission. Mechanics that worked all night in all kinds of weather to get their planes ready to go, cooks and KPs that were up all night preparing the breakfast for the aircrews and couldn’t go hit the sack after the mission was started because they had to feed the ground crews and others who stayed behind.

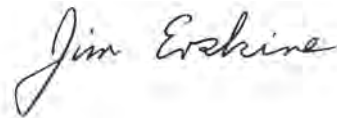
Every man or woman on that base was important or they would not have been there. One thing that was not needed over there was a lot of dead weight. All contributed to the missions and the missions contributed to final victory. So get it out of your mind that you were not important and therefore should not attend the reunions! By reunions is meant the Historical Society reunions, the Unit reunions and the Chapter reunions. If you have not attended any of these you will be very pleasantly surprised how welcome you will be among friends. Yes, after 60 years these people are still your friends. They have changed in looks over the years but they are still the young people you once knew. Please let them show you that:

### IF YOU WERE THERE – YOU WERE IMPORTANT!

#### AT THE REUNION

The Unit and Chapter Committee  
The U&C Committee meeting will be for all Unit and Chapter Newsletter editors. Editors please plan to attend. There will be an exchange of information and ideas.

Jim Erskine, Chairman



**I joined a Health Club and when I signed up they told me to be sure to wear some loose-fitting clothing for the exercise classes. If I had any darn loose-fitting clothing, I wouldn’t have joined up to start with.**

**Clyde White, 390th Bomb Group**



## 8th AFHS WANTS TO HEAR FROM YOU



This 60th Anniversary celebration of the end of the war in Europe was examined in the March 05 8th AF News. Many Historical Society members were there on VE Day and some of their stories have been told. If you were there and have a special remembrance or story of 8 May, 1945 or thereabouts, send your info in along with your name, rank and position on that day.

A special use will be made of these stories during our 2005 HS annual reunion this September in Arlington. Email: bel49maw@sbcglobal.net or snail mail before 31 August to Belton Wolf, 4032 Twyla Lane, Campbell CA 95008-3721



# 8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2005 ANNUAL REUNION

## SHERATON NATIONAL HOTEL – ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA SEPTEMBER 27 – OCTOBER 2

Summer will come and go quickly, so Fall is closer than you think. Make plans now to attend the 31st annual reunion, to be held just a few miles from our Nation's Capital. We have expectations for a large reunion this year. After all – everyone should want to see the new World War II Memorial, as well as the Stephen F. Udvar – Hazy Center. Make your reservations early, as rooms may be limited, as well as some of the tours. The weather is almost perfect this time of year with daytime temperatures in the seventies.

### REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

See choices below and complete the Registration Form noting your event choices and personal information. By "WWII GROUP," we're asking for the Group or Unit in which you served (specific Bomb Group, Fighter Group, PRG, HQ, etc.). We use this information for tallying totals for each group, nametags, and seating arrangements. If you prefer to sit with a different group, please give us that information too. Remit by check or money order payable to Armed Forces Reunions by **August 25, 2005** (no credit cards or phone reservations accepted). Forms received after this date will be accepted on a space available basis only. Hotel reservation forms should be filled out completely and mailed to the hotel by **August 25, 2005**.

### ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC. CANCELLATION POLICY

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

### MEALS / EVENTS CHOICES

#### CHOICE #1 TOTAL PACKAGE \$182

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

#### CHOICE # 2 PARTIAL PACKAGE \$130

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

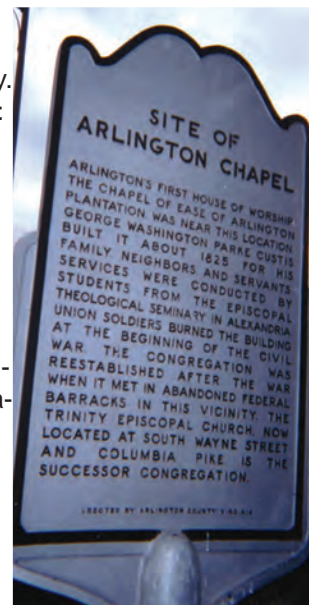
#### Breakfast menus:

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

#### CHOICE #3 INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

Friday Rendezvous Dinner \$35 and Saturday Banquet \$42 can be purchased separately, but are included in both packages above.

**TOUR OPTIONS** Tours and trips are described on the Reunion Highlights Pages. Prices are listed on the registration form. Driver and Guide gratuities are not included in the tour prices.



# 8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REUNION SEPTEMBER 27 – OCTOBER 2, 2005 SHERATON NATIONAL HOTEL – ARLINGTON, VA (DC AREA)

## TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

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

## WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

8:00am - 9:30am Reunion Registration open 9:00am - Tbd Hospitality/Gathering Room & Memorabilia Room opens  
9:00am - 12:00pm ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY  
10:00am - 3:00pm CITY TOUR  
1:00pm - Tbd 8AFHS 'PX' open through Sunday  
1:00pm - 5:00pm Reunion Registration open  
2:00pm - 8AFHS Board Meeting  
7:00pm - 10:30pm SHEAR MADNESS SHOW

## THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

7:00am - 8:30am Continental Breakfast  
8:00am - 9:30am Reunion Registration open  
8:00am - 9:30am Unit Advisory and Chapter & Unit Development Meeting 1  
0:00am - 3:00pm STEVEN F. UDVAR-HAZY CENTER  
11:00am - 2:45pm SPIRIT OF WASHINGTON LUNCH CRUISE  
2:00pm - 5:00pm Reunion Registration open  
3:30pm - 4:30pm Medical Advisory Seminar: PEARLS, by Dr. Walter Brown  
4:45pm - 5:30pm Seminar: "The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum - The Future and You."  
6:00pm - 7:00pm Cash Bar Reception  
7:00pm - 9:00pm Group Dinner & Entertainment

## FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

7:00am - 8:30am Continental Breakfast  
8:00am - 9:30am Reunion Registration open  
8:30am - 10:00am Individual Group Meetings  
10:15am - 2:15pm WWII MEMORIAL  
10:30am - 4:00pm WWII MEMORIAL / THE MALL  
2:30pm - 3:30pm Session for Unit Historians & Archivists  
4:15pm - 5:15pm Next Generation, Looking Ahead -- First Annual Meeting  
2:00pm - 5:00pm Reunion Registration open  
6:00pm - 7:00pm 8AFHS Cash Bar Reception  
7:00pm - Rendezvous Dinners and 'Hangar Flying'

## SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1

7:00am - 8:30am Full Breakfast Buffet  
9:00am - 11:00am General Membership Meeting  
11:15am - 4:15pm CITY TOUR  
1:00pm - 3:30pm Norman C. Grant Symposium: LITTLE FRIENDS  
5:30pm - 6:00pm Reunion Registration open  
6:00pm - 7:00pm 8AFHS Cash Bar Reception  
7:00pm - 8AFHS Gala Banquet

## SUNDAY, OCTOBER 2

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



## ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY / CITY TOUR

Wednesday, September 28 Almost four million people visit the Arlington National Cemetery annually. For some, it is an opportunity to walk among the headstones that chronicle American history; for many, it is an opportunity to remember and honor the nation's war heroes. Tour the Arlington National Cemetery aboard Park Service Trams. See Arlington House, home of General and Mrs. Robert E. Lee. The 1,000 acres of the cemetery were once part of the Lee Estate. Visit the Tomb of the Unknowns where you will see the changing of the guard, and then visit the gravesites of President and Mrs. John F. Kennedy and his brother Robert, lit by the eternal flame.

**9:00am board bus, 12:00pm back at hotel**

**\$32/Person includes bus, escort, and tram ride.**

## CITY TOUR

Wednesday, September 28 and Saturday, October 1 See the sites of our nation's capital during a driving tour of Washington, D.C. Ride by the Lincoln Memorial, Jefferson Memorial, WWII Memorial, the Mall, Capitol Building, Washington Monument, White House, and other notable monuments and federal buildings. A brief stop will be made at the National World War II Memorial, the first national memorial dedicated to all who served during World War II. Lunch on your own and shopping will be at Union Station. Built in 1907, this Beaux-Arts train station houses 125 stores that include unique shops, restaurants, galleries, and more.

**Wednesday: 10:00am board bus, 3:00pm back at hotel Saturday: 11:15am board bus, 4:15pm back at hotel \$33/Person includes bus and guide. Lunch on your own.**

## SHEAR MADNESS AT THE KENNEDY CENTER

Wednesday, September 28 The Kennedy Center is home to the entertaining show, *Shear Madness*, Washington's hilarious whodunit murder

mystery. Someone's been killed in the apartment above a Georgetown hair-styling salon, and the police haven't got a clue... take a stab at catching the killer. It's a riotous, improvisational plot with topical humor where you spot the clues, you question the suspects, and you solve the crime! The ending is different every night so you'll never see the same show twice. If DC critic Arch Campbell says *Shear Madness* is "the most fun I ever had at the Kennedy Center," you are guaranteed to have a great time! Note: The dress code is casual. Amphitheatre-style seating in the Theatre Lab and a cash bar will be available.

**7:00pm board bus, 10:30pm back at the hotel**

**\$53/Person includes bus, escort, and show.**

## STEVEN F. UDVAR-HAZY CENTER

Thursday, September 29 This new museum, part of the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum, is dedicated to the preservation and display of its collection of historic aviation and space artifacts. Located at Washington International Dulles Airport, the facility has large aviation and space exhibit hangars. The museum currently has over eighty aircraft and dozens of space artifacts on display including the Space Shuttle "Enterprise," an SR-71 Blackbird, the Dash 80 prototype of the Boeing 707, and the B-29 Superfortress "Enola Gay." Currently showing in the IMAX Theater is *Fighter Pilot: Operation Red Flag* (admission on your own). You may tour the exhibits at your own pace, but there is a lot of walking, so please wear comfortable shoes.

**10:00am board bus, 3:00pm back at the hotel**

**\$31/Person includes bus and escort. Lunch on your own.**

**\* OR \***

## SPIRIT OF WASHINGTON LUNCH CRUISE

Thursday, September 29 Enjoy a two-hour lunch cruise with live enter-

tainment, narration, and a bountiful lunch buffet, onboard the Spirit of Washington. While you relax on one of the three fully enclosed, climate-controlled decks, you will cruise the historic water of the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. Your captain will point out landmarks – the Washington Monument, Ft. McNair, Washington National Airport, General's Row, and Old Towne Alexandria. After lunch enjoy a stroll and the fresh air on the outdoor decks.

**11:00am board bus, 2:45pm back at the hotel**

**\$68/Person includes bus, escort, and lunch cruise.**

## DINNER BUFFET & ENTERTAINMENT

Thursday, September 29 Spend the evening with your comrades and friends at the hotel. The dinner buffet will feature two entrees (pasta and chicken) along with plenty of side dishes. After dinner, take a trip down memory lane as you watch and listen to USA Canteen. This trio of ladies will remind you of the Andrew Sisters; complete with military attire, tight harmony, and the songs of yesteryear. **6:00pm Cash Bar Reception, 7:00pm Dinner.**

**Cost is included in Package #1.**

## WWII MEMORIAL

Friday, September 30 The highlight of the reunion is probably the visit to the National World War II Memorial, the first national memorial dedicated to all who served during World War II. The Memorial, which was established by the American Battle Monuments Commission, honors all military veterans of the war, the citizens on the home front, the nation at large, and high moral purpose and idealism that motivated the nation's call to arms. Pending Park Service Permission, the Society will have a wreath laying ceremony. On the way back to the hotel, buses will stop at Pentagon City Mall for lunch and shopping on your own.

**10:15am board bus, 2:15pm back at hotel**

**\$25/Person includes bus and escort. Lunch on your own.**

## COME JOIN YOUR BUDDIES AT THE 8TH AFHS ANNUAL REUNION!



The 353rd Fighter Group Hospitality Room, Colorado Springs, CO  
L-R: Grover McLaughlin, Joe Schmidt, Bill Fraham, Bill Barlow, Fred Lefebre, Roger Freeman, Vic Hernandez, Bill Nevitt, Dave Inman and Bill McGarry

**\*\*OR\*\***

### WWII MEMORIAL / THE NATIONAL MALL

Friday, September 30 We'll start the day with a visit to the National World War II Memorial, as shown above. We'll proceed to lunch at Union Station that houses many specialty shops, eateries, and restaurants. Then, buses will shuttle between two stops on the National Mall for about two hours. Some can visit the National Air & Space Museum, while others may want to spend time at the Lincoln, Korean, and Vietnam Memorials. A more detailed schedule will be given to you at the reunion, depending on the number of buses needed.

**10:30am board bus, 4:00pm back at hotel**

**\$33/Person includes bus and escort. Lunch on your own.**

### RENDEZVOUS DINNERS

Friday, September 30 Gather in your respective banquet rooms with your individual groups for dinner featuring Chicken Marsala. Units (BGs, FGs, PRGs, etc.) with approximately fifty or more people in attendance will have a private room. Smaller groups will be combined with others. Think

of this as your "reunion within the reunion."

**6:00pm Cash Bar Reception**

**7:00pm Dinner.**

**Cost is included in both meal packages or \$35 separately.**

### 2005 NORMAN C. GRANT COMMEMORATIVE 60th ANNIVERSARY SYMPOSIUM

Saturday, October 1 This year's Symposium will focus on our "Little Friends": The Groups, commanders, pilots, and ground personnel of Eighth Air Force Fighter Command. We will feature several legendary fighter pilots and groundcrew for what promises to be a most memorable and emotional afternoon.

**1-3:30pm at the hotel**

**Cost is included in your Registration Fee.**

### 8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL GALA BANQUET

Saturday, October 1 Assemble in the ballroom for the Posting of the Colors and Memorial Service. Dinner will be a choice of Prime Rib or Salmon and the usual accompaniments. After dinner, we'll proceed with the awards ceremony and guest speaker.

6:00pm Cash Bar Reception, 7:00pm Banquet. Cost is included in both meal packages or \$42 separately.

Driver and guide gratuities are not included in the tour prices. Please plan to be at the bus boarding area at least five minutes prior to the scheduled time. All tours must have a minimum of thirty people, unless otherwise stated.



**At the Reunion:**  
Board member Gerry Miller with Pat Bauchman, daughter of one of the 353rd FG's Commanders, shot down and became a POW



**SHERATON NATIONAL HOTEL**  
**(703) 521-1900 OR (800) 325-3535**

The Sheraton National Hotel is located at 900 S Orme Street, Arlington, VA 22204. Call the hotel directly for accurate driving directions. The hotel is on high elevation overlooking many Washington, D.C. famous landmarks and is just blocks from the Metro and the Pentagon. Downtown Washington, Crystal City, and the National Airport are just five minutes away. Complimentary shuttle van service departs every 30 minutes to and from Washington National Airport, Metro at The Pentagon, and Pentagon City Fashion Center. A pharmacy is conveniently located five blocks from the hotel. The hotel has eleven handicapped accessible rooms along with many non-smoking rooms, which are based on availability. Please request these special accommodations when making your reservation. We recommend that you *reconfirm* these special requests before arriving at the hotel. The Sheraton National has deluxe guest rooms with individual climate controls; color TV with in-room movies, and video check-out. Rooms offer in-room coffee makers, hair dryers, and irons/ironing boards. Guests can enjoy a rooftop indoor swimming pool (please check with the front desk for the hours of operation), sundeck (during the summer season), and an exercise room. Currently, garage parking is available for **\$8** per night for registered hotel guests. There are 390 parking spaces available with a six-foot ceiling height. Oversize vehicles or RVs can park in the hotel's satellite parking lot across the street from the hotel. Check-in time is 3:00pm; check-out is 12:00 noon. *Potomac Restaurant* is open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner for snacks and full course dinners. *Potomac Lounge*, in the Atrium lobby, serves regular cafe menu. Room service is available.

A limited number of suites with a special rate are available at the hotel for groups who want to entertain. The parlor of the suite is about the size of a standard sleeping room. Some parlors have conference tables; others are arranged in a typical living room format. Both types of parlors have a bar and refrigerator. The special rate for a two-room suite (parlor and sleeping room) is \$179 (plus tax) per night. As suites are limited, we request that group spokesmen make reservations early.

Complimentary shuttle van service departs every 30 minutes from 6:00am - 11:30pm to and from Washington-Reagan National Airport. Go to the Ground Transportation area of the airport to catch the shuttle. SuperShuttle offers transportation from Dulles International Airport and Baltimore/Washington International Airport.

The hotel does have the space to park RVs, but if you require RV hook-ups please contact Harmony Place located on Rt. 1, Richmond Road, which is about 8 miles from the hotel. Call (703) 360-4460 for information, reservations, and directions.

Should you require a wheelchair Apria Health Care rents standard wheelchairs. Please call (703) 642-3141 for information. Also ScootAround rents wheelchairs, please call (888) 441-7575 for more information and to make reservations.

**Vendors, Schedules, and Prices are subject to change.**

----- CUT HERE AND MAIL TO HOTEL -----  
**8<sup>th</sup> AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY – HOTEL RESERVATION FORM**  
**REUNION DATES: SEPTEMBER 27-OCTOBER 2, 2005**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS (if available) \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE # (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

ARRIVAL DATE \_\_\_\_\_ TIME \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM DEP. DATE \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF ROOMS NEEDED \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN EACH ROOM \_\_\_\_\_

**SPECIAL REQUESTS:** Wheelchair accessible room \_\_\_\_\_ Nonsmoking room \_\_\_\_\_ Smoking room \_\_\_\_\_  
King Bed \_\_\_\_\_ Two Double Beds \_\_\_\_\_ Bed types are not guaranteed.  
Conference-style suite \_\_\_\_\_ Living Room suite \_\_\_\_\_

**RATE:** \$89 (1-2 people) + tax (currently 10.25%). Suite rates are \$179/night and includes the parlor & sleeping room (plus tax)  
**CUT OFF DATE: 8/25/05.** Reservations received after this date will be processed on a space available basis, at the prevailing public rate.

**CANCELLATION POLICY:** Deposit is refundable if reservation is canceled 24 hrs. in advance of arrival date. Record your cancellation number. Call (703) 521-1900.

**GUARANTEE:** Reservations must be guaranteed by credit card or first night's deposit, enclosed.

MC ☐ VISA ☐ AM. EXPRESS ☐ CARTE BLANCHE/DINERS ☐ DISCOVER ☐

CREDIT CARD NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_ EXP. DATE \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE (regardless of payment method) \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Sheraton National Hotel, 900 South Orme Street, Arlington, VA 22204 Attn: Reservations

Hotel will send you a confirmation letter once the reservation has been made.

# 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS ACTIVITY REGISTRATION FORM

Listed below are all registration, tour, and meal costs for the reunion. Please enter how many people will be participating in each event and total the amount. Send that amount payable to ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC. in the form of check or money order (no credit cards or phone reservations accepted). Your cancelled check will serve as your confirmation. All registration forms and payments must be received by mail on or before August 25, 2005. After that date, reservations will be accepted on a space available basis. We suggest you make a copy of this form before mailing.

**Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.**  
**322 Madison Mews**  
**Norfolk, VA 23510**  
**ATTN: 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS**

## OFFICE USE ONLY

Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Date Received \_\_\_\_\_  
Inputted \_\_\_\_\_ Nametag Completed \_\_\_\_\_

**CUT-OFF DATE IS 8/25/05**

	Price Per	# of People	Total
<b>REGISTRATION FEE</b>			
Includes Unit rebates, Saturday's Symposium expenses, and other reunion expenses.	\$40		\$
<b>MEAL PACKAGES</b>			
Choice #1 includes 7 hotel meals beginning with breakfast on Thursday. Choice #2 includes 5 hotel meals beginning with breakfast on Friday.			
Choice #1	\$182		\$
Choice #2	\$130		\$
<b>Please select your entrée choice(s) for the Banquet:</b>			
Roast Prime Rib of Beef		#	
Salmon w/ lemon butter sauce		#	
<b>SEPARATELY PRICED MEALS (if not purchasing a package)</b>			
Friday: Rendezvous Dinner (chicken)	\$35		\$
Saturday: Banquet ( <b>please select your entrée</b> )			
Roast Prime Rib of Beef	\$42		\$
Salmon w/ lemon butter sauce	\$42		\$
<b>TOURS</b>			
Please choose one of the following two tours:			
Wednesday: Arlington National Cemetery	\$32		\$
Wednesday: City Tour	\$33		\$
Wednesday: Shear Madness Show	\$53		\$
Please choose one of the following two tours:			
Thursday: Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center	\$31		\$
Thursday: Spirit of Washington Lunch Cruise	\$68		\$
Please choose one of the following two tours:			
Friday: WWII Memorial	\$25		\$
Friday: WWII Memorial / National Mall	\$33		\$
Saturday: City Tour	\$33		\$
Total Amount Payable to <b>Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.</b>			\$

PLEASE PRINT  
MEMBER NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Please do not staple or tape your payment to this form.  
1<sup>st</sup> 8AFHS REUNION? \_\_\_\_\_

LIFE MEMBER? \_\_\_\_ 8AFHS MEMBERSHIP # \_\_\_\_\_ WWII GROUP \_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSE NAME \_\_\_\_\_ LIFE MEMBER? \_\_\_\_ MEMBER # \_\_\_\_\_

GUEST NAMES \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBER'S STREET ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, ST, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_ PH. NUMBER (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

DISABILITY/DIETARY RESTRICTIONS \_\_\_\_\_

MUST YOU BE LIFTED HYDRAULICALLY ONTO THE BUS WHILE SEATED IN YOUR WHEELCHAIR IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN BUS TRIPS? ☐ YES ☐ NO (PLEASE NOTE THAT WE CANNOT GUARANTEE AVAILABILITY).

EMERGENCY CONTACT \_\_\_\_\_ PH. NUMBER (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_



# BLACKOUTS

Nighttime bombing raids on British cities and towns were commonplace throughout the war. Unmanned V-1 and V-2 German rocket bombs were a special threat, but the manned bombers looked for particular targets in England. No towns were spared the effects of enemy air raids. Especially hard hit were cities such as London, Coventry, and Norwich.

Blackouts were one of the defenses, with dark window and door curtains drawn, the tops of vehicle headlights painted black, streetlights extinguished, and even cigarettes being lit under cover. All lights which might be seen and give away target locations to the enemy were extinguished. Traffic slowed in the virtually total darkness of the blackout and pedestrians manipulated the pitch-black streets, and each other, by hand. Blackouts, for years, were part of a wide range of civil and industrial defensive procedures in an England which underwent the daily mental and physical stresses associated with imminent and fearful German air raids. The British population in towns and in the countryside was cognizant of the fact that if you spell "air raid" backwards, you get "diarria."

In America, every town had its blackout guidelines. Practice drills were frequent in preparation for possible enemy air attacks on our country. Even at Air Corps training bases right in middle America, such as Will Rogers Field in Oklahoma, blackouts were a fact of life. It apparently was not well understood that the Germans did not have bomber aircraft which could reach Oklahoma where the winds come rushing down the plains, but blackouts were still *de rigueur* at every airbase in the States. Every home and business had copies of the procedures prominently posted.

Homefront Americans, who were flattening tin cans for re-use, conserving automobile tire rubber by drawing as little as three gallons of rationed gasoline fuel per week, saving their cooking grease to turn in at grocery store collection points, and making childrens' toy models out of compressed sawdust and glue, felt an immediate part of the war effort by religiously observing and practicing blackouts. Note is to be taken here that German engineers did develop a multi-engine bomber which could reach New York and other coastal targets (the aircraft was dubbed *The New Yorker by the Nazis*), but it never was used in that capacity. There was no way for the aircraft to return home from their missions.



London, Piccadilly Circus during Blackout

Coastal towns in the States were a somewhat different story. German submarines frequented the Atlantic coast and were sometimes seen surfacing offshore. Untersee-boat submariners were said to have come ashore in darkness to walk the streets of major Atlantic coast cities and frequent American bars and clubs.

Modern technology has superseded the necessity of blackout drills in recent years. Blackouts have gone the way of the Norden bombsight. The wartime participation of civilians and servicemen in doing everything they could to reduce the enemy's chances for success in their air attacks, boosted civilian morale and afforded some sense of additional security after sundown.

Walter Brown, Editor

## Blackout Instructions

1. When you hear a long, wavering, 2 minute blast on whistles and sirens, or see street lights flicker on and off three times at 2 second intervals, **BLACKOUT** and get off the streets.
2. Extinguish all lights visible from the air.
3. Warn others.
4. If driving a vehicle, pull over to the curb and **STOP**
5. Keep streets clear for emergency traffic which must travel without lights.
6. Don't smoke in the open.
7. End of Blackout is signalled by steady 2 minute blasts on sirens and whistles.
8. Refrain from using telephone during blackout so that lines will be available for warden's use.
9. **KEEP CALM!**

## IT'S 'ARD TO BE GOOD IN THE BLACKOUT

It's 'ard ter be good in ther blackout  
When yer battery's flat as two snakes,  
When yer very best corn gets kicked till it's worn  
An' ther shadders fair gives yer the shakes.

It's hard ter be good in the blackout  
When yer can't see two yards front or rear,  
When yer never know 'oo may be startin' to woo  
An' ye're tryin' ter stay real austere.

It's 'ard ter be good in ther blackout  
When yer boy friend's been sent outer town,  
When every few feet yer gets asked for a meet-  
The persistence! It fair gets yer down!

It's 'ard ter be good in ther blackout  
With ther Navy, the Army, the Air,  
An' ther gallant allies jest as thick as ther flies  
All lurin' yer inter their lair.

If ye're never picked up in ther blackout-  
An' mind yer, no oil paintin' me-  
Then yer must be a dame with a reel out-size frame,  
Fer that's jest about all they can see!

*Kay Grant - 1943*



A very elderly gentleman, very well dressed, hair well groomed, great looking suit, flower in his lapel smelling slightly of a good after shave, presenting a well looked after image, walks into an upscale cocktail lounge. Seated at the bar is an attractive elderly looking lady.

The gentleman walks over, sits along side of her, orders a drink, takes a sip, turns to her and says, "So tell me, do I come here often?"

## Eagle Tours

Official Tour Operator to the American Air Museum, Imperial War Museum, Duxford.  
Renowned for client care, camaraderie, Unique tour content and quality accommodation.

### THREE AIR SHOW EXTRAVAGANZA - 11-Day Tour

Thursday September 1 - Sunday September 11, 2005

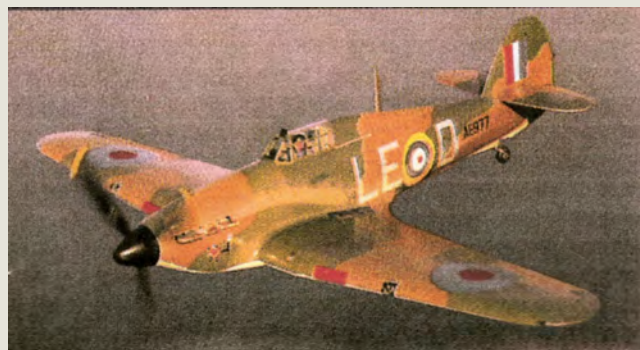
#### Three spectacular Air Shows:

- Duxford 2005 - 65th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain
- Biggin Hill Air Show • Shuttleworth Summer Air Display

#### Other Highlights:

- RAF Hendon. Mosquito Museum, Bletchley Park, RAF Uxbridge and the Cabinet War Rooms
- Buckingham Palace, Blenheim Palace, and Paris option
- Welcome and farewell dinners. English breakfast each morning.
- Based in the 4-Star Melin White House Hotel - gives a great opportunity to those who do not wish to be 'under the wing' to explore London's infinite variety.

**LAND PRICE:** US \$2495.00 per person based on 2 people sharing a twin room/Single supplement - US \$750



For further information, visit our website:

[www.eagletours.co.uk](http://www.eagletours.co.uk)

E-mail: [info@eagletours.co.uk](mailto:info@eagletours.co.uk)

Or, contact John Shumate - E-mail:

[johns@carlson Garner.com](mailto:johns@carlson Garner.com) (800) 624-6579 ext. 132



# THE GUNNERS ...

## REGARDING THE B-24 TURRET GUNS AND THEIR REMOVAL

The ground crew armorers would slip them out. They were easy to remove. None of the guns were difficult to take out. The ground crew armorers would remove them and lay them on a cart pulled by a tug and take them to the armament shop. They would have a complete set on the cart ready to put in after a mission and take back the used ones.

The only responsibility the Air Crew Gunner had on the ground was to be sure there were no bullets in the chamber of the gun after landing. It was a court martial offense to leave a shell in the chamber when turning it over to the ground armorers. My tail gunner Dabbs left a round in the chamber in training in Pocatillo, Idaho and in the armor shop it fired and went through several offices and a soldier's leg. He went through court martial proceedings and was given a second chance, because they needed Air Crews so bad at the time.

There was one item that the Air Crew gunner checked before take off and that was the barrel clearance in the breach. If it wasn't set right the gun barrel contracted in the cold temperature at altitude and wouldn't fire. We had to have it set right and have a bullet in the chamber. At altitude when the gun iced over and turned white, the bullet in the chamber was fired to break the ice and heat the barrel. If you didn't have a bullet in the gun, the gun would be no use to you for the mission. It was frozen and stayed that way. Steel crystalizes at low tempera-

ture (60 below).

We had a prince of a Ground Crew Chief and he couldn't do enough for us. He worked 20 hours a day at times keeping our A/C in flying condition. He always managed to get assigned or trade places for the day to the A/C we were to fly. For some reason he thought the world of us, especially when we let him name *Tennessee Dottie* after his girl friend in Chatanooga, TN. Those A/C's belonged to him, and he was going to be sure they could fly and get us back. These were the Airmen that won the war. With out their dedication and hard work the air war couldn't have been won.

I only wish that what they accomplished with nothing but their hands were better known. Our ground crew would be the first to greet, hug, and meet us when we returned to the hardstand. The waiting suspense for them must have been a real ordeal wondering if their A/C and crew would return. Then thinking, "Did I do something wrong? Did I put it back together right?" He would walk around the A/C, look, and count the holes. Look in on the waist floor to see how many spent shells were stacked up and then know what kind of mission hell that we had. He would stand there and look at us saying a prayer. Then he would always say, "We will have it ready to fly tomorrow." It had to be a tremendous burden. He and his crew were the heroes of the air war. God Bless Them.

**John Harold Robinson, 445th BG  
Waist gunner, B-24 Collierville, TN**

## BASE DEFENSE

On our return to the barracks following our meeting with Bob Davis, Buck Krouse, Jim Eshelman, Phil Flynn, and I were ordered to spend the night manning fifty caliber machine guns out on the flight line. On infrequent occasions, the Germans flew in at night to bomb and strafe British and American airbases. They had done major damage to the 385th before. For that reason, the base was guarded day and night. Machine gun emplacements were located around the perimeter of the landing strips and near the hangars and hardstands on which the B-17's rested. The four of us were trained as gunners and were on standby in case any German planes paid us a visit. We took turns on lookout during the night. Next to our machine gun nest was a shelter which houses a cot, some blankets, a little coke stove and a small table. While two of us were on watch, the other two were resting or toasting sandwiches and brewing coffee in the hut. It was a beautiful night with a full bomber's moon sharing the time with us.

**Roy Jillson, 385th BG**



# THE GUNNERS ...

## .50-CALIBRE M2 BROWNING MACHINE GUN

The 'point fifty' weighed 64lb (30.4 kg) and was 57 inches (1.45 m) long. Muzzle velocity was 2850 feet (870 m) per second and rate of fire 750 rounds per minute. Extreme range, the point at which forward travel terminated, was 21,500 feet (6550 m) and effective range, that at which penetration of an airframe or engine had destructive force, was 3,500 feet (1070 m). These figures were USAAF specimen stated figures, there being considerable variation in battle performance through factors such as the condition of individual weapons, temperature and ammunition feed.

'Point fifty' rounds were 5.47 inches (13.9 cm) long and weighed 1.71 ounces (48.5 g). They were available as armour piercing (identified by black painted tip), tracer (red), incendiary (blue), and armour piercing incendiary (silver). There were combat tests of experimental ammunition, the most notable was identified as T-48, a concentrated incendiary round intended for use against the low-grade fuel in jet aircraft. Muzzle velocity was 3400 feet (1036 m) per second and fighter aircraft required a new harmonisation pattern to use it effectively. The 56th Group tested T-48 successfully in strafing attacks on airfields in April 1945.



Note ring and post sight and charging handle on right side of breech mechanism on the right waist gun, manned by S/Sgt Louis Skinner of the 306th BG.

## .30-CALIBRE M2 BROWNING MACHINE GUN

Fitted as nose defensive armament in the early 8th Air Force B-17s and B-26s, the 0.30-in (7.62 mm) M2 Browning was rarely used after the spring of 1943. Both B-17E and B-17F models reaching the UK in 1942 had four sockets in the nose plexiglas for use with the .30 guns. At 23lb (10.4 kg) basic weight and 40 inches (1.02 m) long, the .30 was supposedly easy for the bombardier to move from socket to socket as required. In practice it was quite a feat to do this at 25,000 feet and these guns usually remained in one location throughout a mission. Although most of the early B-17Fs were eventually modified to take a .50 gun through a nose socket, some retained a .30 in one of the other sockets. The .30 had a muzzle velocity of 2600 feet (792 m) per second and an extreme range of 5400 feet (1650 m). Although the rate of fire was 1,200 rounds per minute, for bomber defence the .30 was considered to be largely ineffective, lacking range and destructive power. Rounds, which weighed 2.1 ounces (59.5 g) each, were armour piercing and tracer for 8th Air Force use. A similar rifle-calibre weapon, the .303 Browning, was part of the armament in the Spitfire VBs by 8th VIII FC squadrons.

Courtesy of Roger Freeman



Cartoons drawn during Aerial Gunner Training at Yuma, Arizona by Charlton Ellis, 94th Bomb Group, on Glen Cook's B-17 Crew. Chattanooga, TN



# THE GUNNERS ...

## EARLY MISSIONS

We shipped out the first part of September 1942, processed for overseas at Fort Dix, NJ, boarded the Queen Mary and arrived in Scotland the 12th of September, 1942.

Then we went to Molesworth, a British Air Base. The flight crews arrived in October. After the flight crews arrived, we were sent to The Wash, another British Base, for a gunnery refresher course -- all British instructors -- didn't get much from them either. We went back to Molesworth. The aircraft were ready and so were the crews.

On November 17, 1942, the 303rd Bomb Group made its first mission. The target was the submarine pens at St. Nazaire, France. The target was covered with clouds, so no bombs were dropped. Our crew did not go on this mission. When a mission was planned, each Bomb Group would schedule three squadrons of six or seven aircraft each. All other aircraft were held in reserve. On Nov. 18th, the same target was scheduled, but there were clear skies. We were lead crew for this mission. The take-off, forming the formation, and heading for France went well. When we got out over the Channel, we were told to test fire our guns. At that point, I realized

that I had never fired a .50 caliber gun from an aircraft in flight. But within that same hour, I was firing with German fighters as my target.

On that first encounter, I had about 400 rounds of ammunition. In those days we didn't have fighter escort. Sometimes they would escort us to the French Coast, and then we were on our own. On this mission, one B-17 went down. I made 25 missions and the only time we had problems was on our 12th mission. About mid-way to our target we were hit by enemy aircraft. One 20-mm projectile came through the window by the co-pilot and knocked the control off as it exploded. The co-pilot and the top turret gunner were injured. They were the only crew members injured during our 25 missions.

We were the first and only crew to complete 25 missions out of the original crews of the "Four Horseman Bomb Groups," the 91st, 303rd, 305th, 306th, both B-24 aircraft and B-17 aircraft. These groups were the first bombers to reach England.

**Harvie Collins, 303rd BG  
Alabama Chapter**

*Harvie Collins from Hoxie, AR, flew on the Jake  
Fredericks Crew. -Editor*

## THE END OF TRAINING

Gunnery school was the most fun of any work I ever had in my entire career. We spent many hours at aircraft recognition, as we had in pilot preflight, learning to recognize both Japanese and German fighters, as well as our own friendlies, in glimpses as brief as 1/100th of a second. We spent hours learning to tear apart the .50 caliber machine guns and put them back together after proper lubrication. The culmination of that training was a night test in a completely darkened room. We were given assembled guns which we were to strip down, then have the instructor feel the parts to insure that our strip-down was complete.

Then we had to reassemble the weapon, cock it, and snap the firing pin to show that we had done the procedure correctly, all this in a strictly limited time. Once again I had a big advantage over the other fellows, as I had spent countless hours working on those guns, both in Armament School at Buckley Field and at Myrtle Beach, so this part of the course was very easy for me.

But the fun came after the classwork with live firing. We again spent a lot of time on the skeet range before going to live-firing with machine guns. We fired regular skeet on the range; we fired skeet from power turrets, turrets like those in aircraft except that they had 12-gauge shotguns mounted; and we fired skeet from the backs of moving trucks.

There was an oval track perhaps a half-mile around. A group of five of us rode in the back of the open truck. The man firing stood near the rear of the truck facing aft. The others stood forward near the cab. We never knew just where or when a clay pigeon might arise from the mesquite bushes bordering the track, but we still had to kill a certain percent of the birds. Coming toward us, away from us, or across our paths behind us - it didn't matter. We had to get them.

Some days later, we began our aerial firing, first from the back of open cockpit AT-6s, then from the turrets of B-24 *Vega Ventura* bombers, and finally from the turrets of real combat bombers - B-24 *Liberators*. This latter plane offered extra challenges, since it went to high altitudes and we had to clamber from turret to turret throughout the plane and fire while encumbered with oxygen masks. All of this firing was directed at long canvas sleeves towed on cables behind AT-6s, which we had firm orders not to shoot down. Each student's ammunition was painted with a different color. We were scored by the number of hits registered by our daubs of paint on the sleeve when it reached the ground.

**Frank Moyer, 351st Bomb Group  
from DR AHEAD, Journal of the Navigators  
Observers Association**

# THE GUNNERS ...

## ENLISTED COMBAT GUNNERS

We had a good crew, both four officers and six enlisted men. Our plane was *Hell's Belles*. We were a replacement crew from the Martin Group of 50 crews. All of our crew were volunteers. While in training in Moses Lake, Washington, I was notified to report to the Commanding Officer. Major Martin informed me that I was approved to go for pilot training. Major Martin told me that gunners saved his life in the Pacific. I went back to my barracks and I told the crew that I was leaving. Pilot Jones and all the officers and crews begged me to stay with them as we were a team trained together. I went back to Major Martin and told him that I would stay with the crew. He said that I could go for pilot training when I got back. Major Martin made General and retired in San Antonio, Texas.

Coming back from my 19th mission we were shot up and the oxygen system in the back of the plane was out. This meant that coming out of high altitude the lack of oxygen made you pass out or act differently. Heroic efforts by the waist gunner Jules Kaufman and ball turret gunner Leland Welch were able to pull the tail gunner Tommie Griffin out of the tail gunner area. They did not unload the two .50 caliber guns. After I shot flares for landing and check the tail wheel to see if it was down, as we were in the process of landing when the tail wheel went back up. Our plane went crazy all over the runway and the twin fifties shot up the area, causing many investigations. I was able to convince the authorities that the tail wheel was down and that the electrical system was damaged from our flack or bullets.

On one mission, pilot Jones said get those bombs out! The bombardier said there are two or three still in the shackles! This time I asked radio operator to hold on to me as I could not get the shackle to release. So I straddled the bomb bay open door and put my foot on the right pad and shook the bottom bomb and caused it to fall. Then the next one fell. I crawled back through the catwalk and gave two thumbs up to the radio operator. I was exhausted but pilot Jones was happy and said to get those guns going. What a life.

One other time my right gun in the top turret jammed or froze. I pulled with all my strength to try to force a release. I popped the cable. The gun was out so I shot with one gun. When we landed I reported the cable and the armament said no way could I do that. The Head of Armament also said no human could rupture that cable. I said there it is and gave a salute to adrenalin.

Since that time I have reflected on the role of the engineer/gunner and the many times that the engineer and others on the ten-man crew worked together. Two of our enlisted men borrowed several cases of .50 caliber ammunition from a bomber that was not going on a mission at the last minute. These gunners loaded the extra ammunition in the plane. Our pilot cornered me, the engineer, about having a hard time taking off as we were almost near the trees. I mentioned this to our crew and they asked me if I remembered running out of ammunition. I said "Yes, I remember." So they confessed that they overloaded the plane but we did not run out of ammunition.

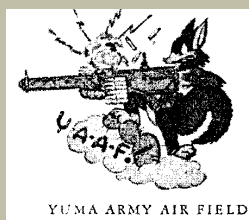
**T.M. Rhodes, 96th Bomb Group  
North Charleston, S.C.**

## THE FIRST FIVE

An assignment such as ours meant that a group of ten men worked, fought and often times died together. Not infrequently, we were required to fly six days consecutively - always under a very high tension. As this was before pressurization of aircraft, and as we were at altitude before leaving England, we were on oxygen for the entire mission. At this phase of the war, all of the Western Continent was controlled by Nazi forces; therefore, it was a running battle from both the air and the ground from the time we crossed the Channel.

The policy of our squadron, the 360th, was that bombardiers and navigators would clean their own .50 caliber machine guns after the first five missions; subsequently, we could pay an enlisted man (or an officer if you could get him to do it) to clean the guns for you. This operation required approximately one hour per gun; that is, of course, if you didn't drop any of the minute parts on the dirt floor of the tent provided for our use.

**-303rd BG**





## FROM THE EDITOR

*For several years, Dr. Vivian Rogers-Price has met with hundreds of 8th veterans to interview and obtain their individual oral histories in their own words. The 8th Air Force Historical Society's annual Fund Drive 2005 is directed at obtaining funds to further refine her material, making it available as a subject and time catalogue for historians and researchers at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum. The time has come for us to ensure that this valuable resource material – from our members and their families – is preserved for future years.*

*I met with Vivian earlier this year and asked her to prepare an article that explains, in part, her work with 8th veterans in her career as a researcher of 8th Air Force history. 2005 is our year to successfully support the Oral History Project with our annual Fund Drive contributions, just as we did in the past with the unique English Chapel project for the Memorial Gardens.*

Walter Brown, Editor

## Oral History at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum

by Dr. Vivian Rogers-Price, Coordinator, Oral History Project

On December 30, 1943, during their sixth mission, ten men on one Eighth Air Force heavy bomber crew dropped their bombs on the target, but then lost two engines on their B-17 Flying Fortress. Forced to leave the bomber formation, they began losing altitude. In this real life story that parallels the one portrayed in the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum's Mission Experience, museum volunteer Thomas A. Hollingsworth tells of an FW-190 that came around and "shot us, and it killed the top turret gunner, Frank E. Pifer. Frank was 20 years old." Of the other nine men on this B-17, three evaded capture and six became prisoners of war. Hollingsworth became a POW, spending the rest of World War II in Stalag Luft I near Barth, Germany. He told this story as part of the Oral History Project at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum.

Launched in 2001, the Oral History Project at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum continues to be committed to collecting and preserving individual memories of courage, character, and patriotism in the belief that each veteran and civilian supporter has a unique and significant story to tell. These oral histories provide individual insight, add historical documentation, and inspire younger generations to learn and remember their heritage. In collecting and preserving oral histories, the Mighty Eighth Air

Force Museum is a Partner Archive with the Veterans History Project of the Library of Congress, and the oral histories at the museum receive a listing in the Veterans History Project Database and the National Registry of Service. This provides maximum accessibility for the museum's collection. The public has access to this collection in a secure research environment. Dr. Vivian Rogers-Price serves as the oral history coordinator. She is a Fulbright Scholar and received her doctorate from the University of Georgia.

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum uses oral history interviews in exhibits in the museum galleries, in the Shearson-Prentice Hall Curriculum Guide, "Honoring the American Past: The Stories of America's World War II Veterans," and as part of the official museum website ([www.mightyeighth.org](http://www.mightyeighth.org)). Earlier in 2001 and 2002 the museum played an active role in training graduate students as oral historians in collaboration with Armstrong Atlantic State University. In addition, Dr. Rogers-Price with World War II 8th Air Force veteran Thomas Hollingsworth, Dr. Barbara Fertig, and graduate student Russell Grosse presented "Reflecting on the Mighty Eighth: Oral History in Teaching and Research" at the 2002 Georgia Association of Historians Annual Meeting. With a collection consisting of over 500 oral histories and a developing



World War II photograph of Bombardier Thomas A. Hollingsworth, who is presently a museum volunteer.

core of volunteer interviewers, the museum is poised to expand its collection. Interviews are conducted in person or by telephone. Following the interview, a copy is made available to the veteran. The original recorded video and tape is stored in an archival environment in order to preserve it, and a duplicate copy is used to index and transcribe the interview. Once transcribed, a typescript copy is sent to the individual who was interviewed for comments that are then incorporated into the edited transcript. The duplicate copy of the interview is available for research as

is the index and transcript. The Oral History Project is an essential component in the museum's activities. In past centuries historians were limited to diaries and letters to gain insight into how participants viewed significant events. Now through oral history interviews, veterans who did not keep journals or save their records and letters may still preserve their personal accounts. Likewise, veterans who give lectures to students in their classrooms now have a way to reach even more students. To preserve and share our veterans' stories is historically important! The museum's Oral History Project is also important to families. Often the oral history interview marks the first time a veteran ever talks about his wartime experiences. It is an opportunity to preserve a parent's story for children, grandchildren, and each future generation. One son expressed his thoughts. His father's interview was "a one shot deal for us. As you know, he is nearly 80, and we are trying to preserve as much of his experiences for future generations as we possibly can." The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum is dedicated to preserving veterans' stories for future generations in the belief that collecting the personal accounts of those who were there and sharing these stories with the public is one of the museum's most important activities.



**Bud Porter and Vivian Rogers-Price**

Albert S. "Bud" Porter, World War II Ball Turret Gunner and museum volunteer, records his wartime experiences with Vivian Rogers-Price. View an excerpt from his oral history on the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum's web site: [www.mightyeighth.org](http://www.mightyeighth.org).

### ***Luck of the Draw***

From time to time as I look up at the young, happy faces of the men of the 100th BG who fell in battle so long ago at Regensburg, Bremen and Munster smiling down at me from their pictures on my wall, I shed an emotional tear. They gave their country their most precious possession - all their tomorrows. They failed neither themselves, their leaders nor their nation. They were my brothers, my comrades-in-arms, and will always be my heroes. I believe, therefore, it is incumbent upon those of us who survived, who knew them personally and served with them, to do all in our power to ensure that their deeds and dedication will be honored and preserved from discredit or oblivion.

**Frank Murphy, 100th BG  
Atlanta, Georgia**

### **MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE MUSEUM FOUNDATION**

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum Foundation is now heading into it's third year, with over one million dollars committed to the future of the of the museum. N. Kenneth Nail, 457th BG, National 8th AFHS Treasurer and Mississippi Chapter organizer, left a significant amount for just that purpose. Ken's support of the Heritage Museum for over a decade is still an activity in progress, through his thoughtful bequest.

The Mighty Eighth Foundation will send you information explaining how simple it is to leave a bequest or place a codicil in your will to ensure the long-term activity of the Museum and its programs. Call 912-748-8888 or write the Foundation at PO Box 1667, Savannah GA 31402.



## Join the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum Today!

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum is a place where your stories are told; stories of courage and honor, discipline and teamwork, duty and sacrifice. Through these stories, history is preserved, and heroes of the past are introduced to those who may become the heroes of the future.

We depend upon the financial assistance of our members to preserve this history and share these stories with future generations. Your support makes everything we do possible. You know what we represent, you know the power of the stories that we share, and the importance of sharing these stories with future generations.

We invite you to take a moment and join the thousands of others who are helping the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum fulfill its mission. Please review and fill out the attached reply card. Thank you for helping us preserve this important part of history.

### Membership Privileges

- Unlimited Museum admission for one year
- Personalized membership card
- Subscription to the Mighty Eighth News, the Museum's newsletter
- Discount at the Museum Store
- Museum window decal
- Smithsonian Affiliate membership



### Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum Membership Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Area Code/ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Level: Please Check

☐ Wing Commander - \$1,000

☐ Family - \$50

☐ Squadron Leader - \$500

☐ Individual - \$35

☐ Honor Guard - \$100

☐ Veteran/Student/Heir of the Eighth - \$25

*\*\*Smithsonian Affiliate membership included* ☐ Smithsonian Membership - \$15 (in addition to fee)

\*Method of Payment: Check one ☐ CASH ☐ CHECK ☐ CREDIT CARD

Credit Card: ☐ VISA ☐ MC ☐ AMEX ☐ DISCOVER Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Exp Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum P.O. Box 1992 Savannah, GA 31402

**For more information, please phone Jean Moore at 912-748-8888, Ext. 122.**

## FROM THE INTELLIGENCE FILES: Extract from German instructions on dealing with Prisoner of War 28.8.44

### Measures immediately after capture.

- a) Immediately after capture the prisoner's official and personal property (maps, letters, note books, cheque books, pay books, leave passes, railway tickets, mess bills, photographs, escape kits, money, both identity discs, etc.) with the exception of rings and watches must be removed. The confiscated articles must be kept as separate batches, according to their owners.
- b) The enemy crew must immediately be taken away from their aircraft and any other equipment. All communications between prisoners must be prevented.
- c) Any attempt on the part of the crew to destroy the captured equipment or documents must be countered by all possible means.
- d) In order to determine the crashed aircraft to which individual P/W belong, it is permissible to question individual prisoners about their aircraft, colleague's etc. If necessary, pressure may be brought to bear on prisoners, assumption of sabotage even, so as to force him to

give information which can lead to the rapid capture of the other members of the crew.

e) All personal conversation with P/W is forbidden. They must be treated in such a way that they are neither embittered by unnecessary severity, nor spoiled by excessive friendliness, and thus rendered unreceptive, to small concessions during interrogation. Prisoners who are treated in too friendly manner on capture and on the journey, lose the discipline inculcated by British propaganda and frequently become arrogant and "cocky".

f) If members of crews are taken prisoner near the scene of the crash, it is advisable to hand them over, with the articles confiscated from them, to the crash officer of the Fliegerhorst (station) who will take them to the Fliegerhorst.

g) The prisoners must be carefully watched until their arrival at Dulag Luft. Any peculiarities observed must be reported by the escort on handing over the prisoner at Dulag Luft.

**From: Bomber Command Association  
UK Newsletter**

A U.S. Navy Admiral was attending a Naval conference that included Admirals from the U.S., English, Canadian, Australian and French Navies. At a cocktail reception, he found himself standing with a group of half dozen so so officers that included personnel from most of the countries.

Everyone was chatting away in English as they sipped their drinks but a French Admiral suddenly complained that, whereas Europeans learn many languages, Americans learn only English. He then asked: "Why is it that we always have to speak English in these conferences rather than speaking French?"

Without hesitating, the American Admiral replied: "Maybe it's because the Brits, Canadians, Aussies and Americans arranged it so you wouldn't have to speak German." Suddenly the group became very quiet.

## 64,000 German Prisoners In Southeast United States

Increasing public interest in the management and employment of German prisoners of war within the Fourth Service Command has resulted in many questions recently. To answer those most often asked, Major General Frederick E. Uhl, Commanding General, presents these facts.

First, there are approximately 64,000 German prisoners of war within the seven southeastern United States, in more than 80 camps. They can be and are compelled to work at a variety of assignments. Exceptions are provided for commissioned officers may be compelled to accept jobs of a supervisory nature only, but

may be given other jobs if they agree to the assignment in writing. In the management of prisoners, the stipulations of the Geneva Conference must be followed, just as any law enforcement officer must follow the law of the land.

A minimum task must be performed by each POW in a work detail, the volume of work being determined on a fair basis. For example, 100 pounds of cotton per day is the fixed task in cotton-picking areas. This may be less than civilian production, but account must be taken of the fact that POW teams are under guard, and must be transported to and from work camps.

from *The Flexigun*, March 1945



### **BAD 2 ASSOCIATION**

Warton, England 8th Air Force  
Neenah, Wisconsin  
Sept. 15-18, 2005  
Dick McClune, 527 Quarterfield Rd.,  
Newport News VA 23602.  
Ph: (757) 877-3826 email:  
BAD2trsr@msn.com

### **351ST BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION**

July 14 - 18, 2005  
Reno NV  
Golden Phoenix Hotel  
Contact: Clint Hammond  
PO Box 281  
Mechanicsburg PA 17055  
Tel (717) 766-1489

### **457TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION**

Sept 18 - 22, 2005  
Savannah GA  
Savannah Hilton

### **100TH BOMB GROUP AND FRIENDS**

Sept 29 - Oct. 1, 2005  
Pittsburgh PA  
Contact: Don Bradley 1310 Hansen  
Ave., Bellevue NE 68005  
email: donduckdk@aol.com

### **388TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION**

Sept 7-10, 2005  
Albuquerque Marriott  
Contact: Bit Snead Ph: (253) 838-  
9291  
Email: bfsnead@comcast.net

### **379TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION**

September 20-24, 2005  
Memphis Marriott East Hotel  
Memphis, TN  
Contact: Teresa Cabanski Ph: (303)  
697-6265  
Email: cabanskit@aol.com

### **352ND FIGHTER GROUP ASSOCIATION**

September 22-26, 2005  
Wichita, KS Marriott Hotel  
Contact: Bob Powell 1545 Rainier  
Falls Dr.

Atlanta, GA 30329 Ph: (404) 636-  
3747  
Email: bluenoserbob@352ndfightergr  
roup.com

### **452ND BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION**

Sept 8-11, 2005 Salt Lake City UT  
Hilton SLC Center Hotel  
Contact: Hank North, 901 Poling  
Drive  
Columbus OH 43224-1936  
Tel 1-800-452-9009  
Email: hanknorth@core.com for info

### **44TH BOMB GROUP VETERANS ASSOCIATION**

September 4-7, 2005  
Seattle/Tacoma Washington  
Doubletree Hotel Airport  
Contact: Ruth Morse tel.717-846-  
8948 email rewdm@blazenet.net

### **303RD BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION**

August 23-27, 2005  
Dayton OH Crowne Plaza Dayton  
Contact: PO Box 5953, Vacaville CA  
95696-5953

### **95TH BOMB GROUP REUNION**

27 September 2005 - 2 October  
2005  
Dayton, Ohio  
For more information, check out the  
95th's website at  
<http://www.95thbg.org/> or contact

### **8th AF HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REUNION - 2005**

**Arlington, Virginia  
Sheraton National Hotel  
September 27 - October 2, 2005**

Marilyn Gallagher at  
503-649-6080 or mlg2@att.net

### **490TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION**

Sept. 21-25, 2005  
Colorado Springs, CO.  
Contact: John J. Beckmann 217 SE  
10th St.  
Ankeny, Iowa 50021

### **355TH FIGHTER GROUP ASSOCIATION**

October 6-10, 2005  
Tucson, AZ  
Contact Robert E. Kuhnert  
???587 or 287 Pine Needles Dr.  
Dayton, OH 45458  
(937) 439-1893 or  
bobnhelen355@mailstation.com

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

**J. R. R. Tolkien**



# ROBOMB SCARE WORSE THAN RETURNEE'S 27 MISSIONS

"I spent nine months completing 27 missions, but I nearly lost my life while on pass in London," says returnee waist-gunner S-Sgt. Norman Klein.

"It happened one evening about nine o'clock," he related. "A buddy and I were walking near the Thames river listening to the robombs crash in the distance. Suddenly we heard a screeching whistle; we looked up and about 1,000 yards away we saw the trailing flame die out and heard the engine of a V-1 robomb stop. The whistle of the deadly missile was nerve-racking and stunned us for an instant.

"Within that instant I saw some sand bags piled under an archway. I made a dive for them. My buddy was still in the street watching the bomb and I had to pull him into the shelter of the archway, which was a support of a six story building. I never believed it before but everything that happened during my life passed through my mind in those few seconds before the bomb struck.

"I can't say that I prayed because I thought that my end was at hand. The bomb hit the river bank less than 100 yards away. The breath

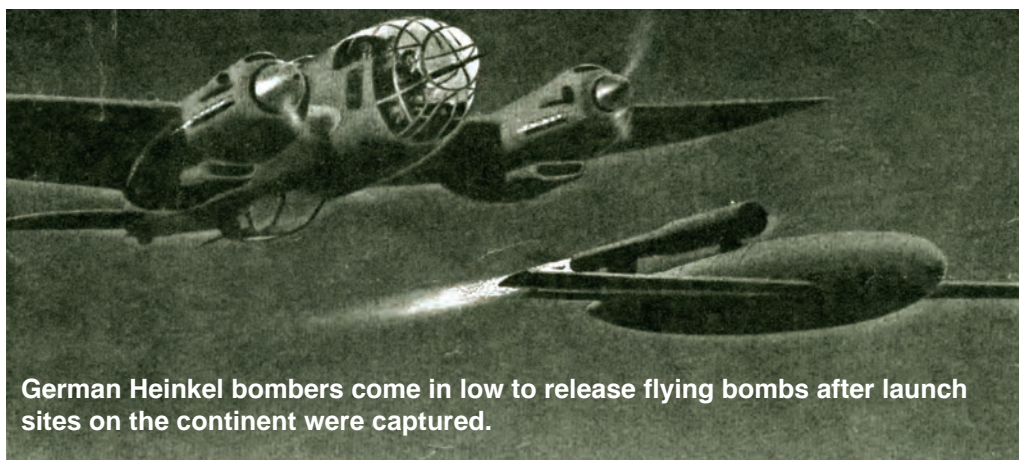
was sucked out of me; glass and debris fell over us. We expected the building to collapse on us at any moment, but it didn't. When we finally found strength enough to get up we saw that all the windows had been blown out and some of the masonry had been chipped off. Where the bomb hit was the only thing that saved us from an early grave of rubble. The soft bank of the river and the water cushioned the concussion so that the full force of the bomb wasn't released.

"I don't know what it is like to die, but I had a similar sensation a hundred times during those few seconds."

While overseas he was a member of the B-17 crew of the "Arabian Avenger."

His worst combat mission, he says, was over Ludwigshaven, Germany, during which the plane received 140 flak holes the bombardier was wounded. Klein says that this and the other 26 were nothing compared to his experience with the robomb.

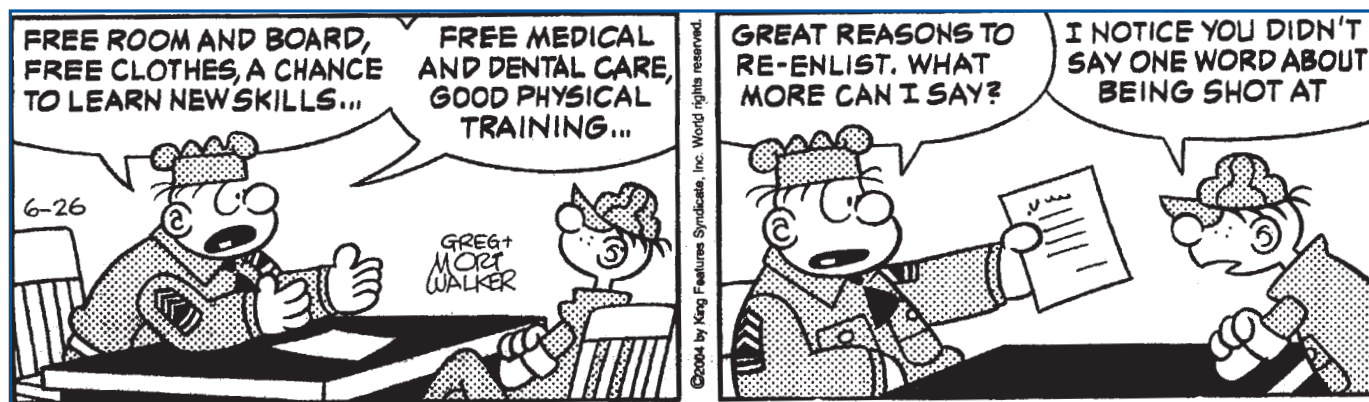
from *Flexigun*, 1945



German Heinkel bombers come in low to release flying bombs after launch sites on the continent were captured.

"No country is wretched, sweet lady," returned the knight, "till by a dastardly acquiescence it consents to its own slavery. Bonds and death are the utmost of our enemy's malice; the one is beyond their power to inflict when a man is determined to die or live free; and for the other, which of us will think that ruin which leads us into the blessed freedom of Paradise?"

Jane Porter  
The Scottish Chiefs (1809)





# THE END

by Roger Freeman

**VE-Day, May 8th 1945.** For those men and women of the Eighth Air Force it was a day when most were confined to their UK bases Command fearing celebrations might be a little too wild. Thoughts were of going home; it was all over. There was still Japan, but few who were in England on VE-Day ever got to that theatre of war. Peace was just around the corner.

Sixty years on, the media makes its usual superficial fuss over an anniversary. But somehow those who were not around in the Second World War never seem to grasp the reality of the situation and either glorify or chastise. Warfare has come a long way since three thousand aircraft and twenty thousand airmen, friend and enemy, were involved in a day's battles. So often contemporary comment fails to understand that era, using today's politics and morality in judgments. The Second World War was a total war, involving whole nations as never before. Civilian populations sustain the military and due to airpower did not escape the conflict. The airpower of 1939-1945 was an imprecise weapon and may not have achieved the desired goals, but it was decisive in bringing victory.

In that, the Eighth Air Force was the supreme exponent of high altitude daylight precision bombing in destroying strategic targets and met its brief admirably. That the bombing was often not accurate was simply that the technology of those days was insufficiently advanced to meet the requirements, despite the valiant efforts of the airmen. The airmen of the Eighth gave their all and suffered a higher casualty rate, relative to their numbers, than any other formation of the United States military. In the heavy bomber units only 35 per cent of men completed the 25-mission tour during the first eighteen months

of operations. That figure hides the fact that in some squadrons only 10 per cent survived from the original air complement - one crew. There were examples of less. In October 1942 one squadron of the 44th Bomb Group commenced operations. Its attrition was such that following losses sustained on the Kiel mission in May 1943 only two men of the original 90 were still available for combat duty. The others had either been killed, made prisoner, or transferred.



With landing gear and bomb doors open to reduce speed, 385th BG B-17's prepare to unload food containers at Utrecht

The survivors were the squadron commander and Lt. William R. Cameron who had been on leave in London. In later years when asked if at that juncture he thought it was time to quit, Bill Cameron proclaimed that "I knew nothing was going to happen to me." When it was suggested that most of those lost might have believed the same, Bill's comment was "Well, sadly, they were wrong. I knew I was going to survive." This confidence took him through many more missions, including the infamous low-level mission to the Ploesti oil plants. There were many other airmen imbued with the spirit of survival who endured despite the odds. By the end of hostilities a bomber crewman had over an 80 per cent chance of surviving his 35 missions, but it remained a dangerous lottery. In addition to the enemy defences, flying was a dangerous occupation in

those days. Accidents were frequent and there is not one of the forty heavy bomber airfields that did not experience a fatal take-off or landing crash. At many, several.

There is a general belief that fighter pilots had a better chance of survival. In fact their overall survival rate was little different from that of bomber crewmen. One only had to take a look at the complement of a typical 25-pilot squadron to see how few were still around when the war was over. A round trip of up to a thousand miles relying on one engine could always be a gamble. And the north-west European weather alone claimed many victims.

Sixty years on, survivors of that long gone conflict are sometimes viewed as ageing curiosities in the twenty-first century. The world has moved on to a point where Hitler is just another villain of history in young minds. But the US Eighth Air Force has its undisputed place in history: achievements and sacrifice apart, in terms of men and machines, it stands as the largest air striking force ever committed to battle.

**Roger A. Freeman,  
8th AF Historical Society Historian  
Mays Barn, England**



**This yellow nose 334th BS B-17 has opened its bomb bay doors more than 60 times to unload lethal cargo. On this occasion food containers are about to fall on a dropping zone near Utrecht, Netherlands.**



# Nose Art B-24 Style



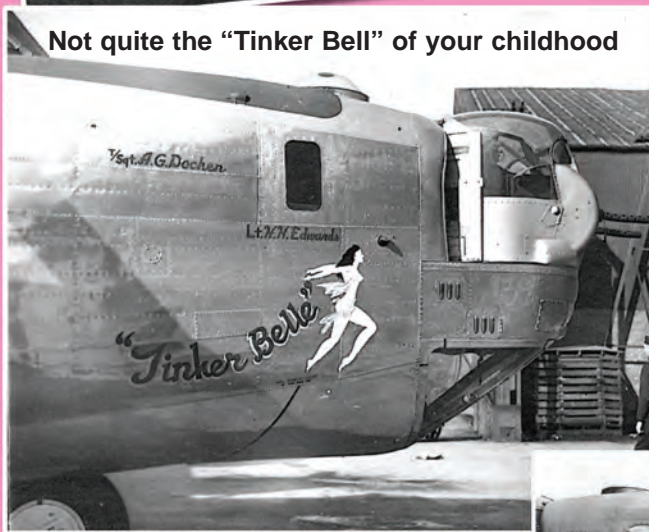
Gentlemen,

A friend, an 8th AF Veteran, recently passed away and in his footlocker we found photos of nose art on B-24s.

It might be an interesting project to run them in your magazine asking anyone having flown or serviced a B-24 shown to respond with data on the group, squadron, crew, mission, etc. Hope you find them interesting.

Fred Renken  
Souderton, PA

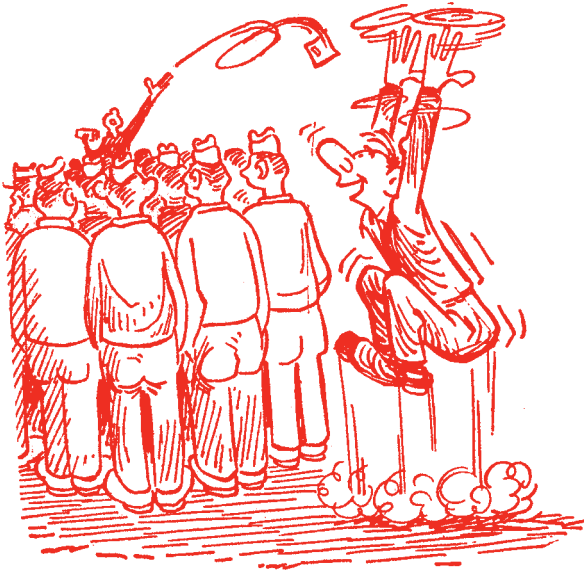
8th AFHS Historian Roger Freeman has stated that over 90% of 8th AF aircraft names and nose art included themes of women back home. This is confirmed by this collection. —Editor



"What's cookin' Doc?"  
B-24 nosewheel still intact







## THE BUNDE MISSION

Dear Sirs,

With your help I really hope to get further information of what happened on the 22nd of February - but 61 years ago! I'm on a historical research for my home town and I would like to talk to eye-witnesses of that particular day in the past.

I am living in a town amongst about 45,000 other inhabitants. Situated about 100km to the west of Hannover, the town called BUENDE. In English and in American language this word, unfortunately is always spelled without the 'e' in the middle hence it became 'BUNDE' in Allied terms.

In 1944 my mother was amongst BUENDE's less than 10,000 inhabitants, and she remembers "the one of only" bomb run of four-engined heavy bombers quite well.

Aged 17 those days, my mother was very confused to see that attack, as BUENDE was so unimportant those days! Hence nothing really important had been destroyed by the bomb run.

Anyway, I would like to learn the things from sources from the other side if you agree. Maybe there's someone who remembers the mission very well, would like to contact me and tell me his story about him attacking 'BUENDE' in Germany!

I would like to thank you for your help, and please take my apologies for my clumsy English!

Hartmut Feldmann  
Schaeferholzweg 39  
32257 BUENDE  
Germany

## VARGAS GIRL

I just received, the March 05 edition of the 8th AF News & would like to comment on re: "Behind the Scenes" on page 8.

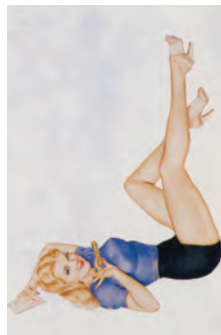
Like those before me, I enjoy and I'm totally guilty of "ogling" those sensuously silky & playful Varga girls. For your 8th warriors, I recommend a visit to a local hOoter's restaurant. It helps sev-

eral of us architect and engineer types to review project issues, over lunch.

Incidentally, there already is a live Varga girl - Elizabeth Vargas, the NBC news girl that substituted for Peter Jennings on weekends, who now co-anchors 20/20.

Last year as the presidential campaign was heating up, radio talk shows first began interviewing Dr. Louis Letsen and John O'Neill and finally numerous other Swift Vets. I first remember hearing Dr. Letsen on the Neal Boortz radio show. What a story! After several weeks it seemed as if the big 3 alphabet networks refused to air any of the reports. Finally Elizabeth Vargas, while substituting for Peter Jennings ("Petie" as she calls him), broke the story - Elizabeth Vargas gave a great delivery - factual and unbiased with no liberal innuendo, unlike the three news anchors.

I'd like to think it helped make a positive difference for our country - and that's what's important in this life. Truly a great job, delivered by a live Varga girl! Henry G. Wulbeck  
Ruetschle Architects  
Dayton, Ohio



Thank you for this email on the "Live Varga" - I will suggest "A Fix" to visit hOoters! I'll look for Elizabeth Vargas. -Donna Neely, 8th AF News Staff

## RESPONSE TO TRIBUTE FROM BELGIUM FRIEND, LUC DEWEZ

I know Luc Dewez & I was there March 6, 1944. My BG lost 15 crews in 10 minutes over Dummer Lake starting at 11:59. I'm sure no one gives a damn what I saw or what I was involved in that day but I saw Lt. Rish's plane break in half at the radio room - then it exploded and blew navigator Leingenfelter out the side. Lt. Lautenschlager's plane was on fire and spinning. I saw German pilots firing on Americans dangling from their parachutes. The Berlin area was filled with the flaming wrecked planes of Capt. Miner, Lieutenants Brannan, Rish, Terry, Barrack, Handorf, Grannack, Koper, Kindall, Lautenschlager, Radke, Bartun, Murray, Amerio and Montgomery.

I was there. Along with a bunch of other damage, all my oxygen tanks were blown out and I made a 300 mph dive to get some air. We shot down two Me109s confirmed that day. My first five missions were Brunswick, Berlin, Berlin, Berlin & Brunswick. Our crew received a citation from Group CO John Bennett for those five missions.

Sincerely,  
C.B. "Red" Harper, 100th BG  
Birmingham, AL



## HOLIDAY INN VERSUS NURSING HOME

Dear Doc Brown,

May we ask permission to reprint this hilarious copy from the December 8th AF News in our next Bomber Command Association newsletter, which is targeted on all the remaining RAF Bomber Command chaps who are hanging around in the departure lounge! A copy of our newsletter is on its way to you. Meanwhile if possible, my kind regards to Sherman Small and Mark Copeland.

Sincerely,  
Doug Radcliffe  
Secretary of the Bomber Command Association UK.

*Doug, your excellent magazine has arrived, with my Thanks! The 8th AF News looks forward to future exchanges. -Editor*

## DONALD DUCK

Dear Sir,

My aunt Olive from England married a GI John W. Cherrington stationed at Snetterton Heath Norfolk during WW2. Sadly my uncle passed away fourteen years ago. My aunt still lives in the USA and during one of her visits to England she arranged a visit to the museum at the new Eccles Road school on the former 96th Bomb Group site. I found it very interesting and moving to see where my Uncle Jack (as he was called) was stationed during the war. I have always been interested in aviation and the war and even more so now. *Silver Dream's* a perfect memorial dedicated to all the personnel of the 96th Bombardment Group.

During my uncle's time in the Eighth Air Force I believe he won, in a game of cards, a type A2 flying jacket. Because of my interest, my aunt had kindly passed this jacket on to me. On the rear is Donald Duck and inside are



the name Joe Duran and the number 39831483. I am very keen to find out more about Joe Duran. Was he stationed with my uncle at Snetterton Heath? Was he a crewmember? If so, which squadron and aircraft? Is he still alive? Maybe his family would like to hear this story. These are questions going on in my mind and if any of them could be answered with the help of your organization, I would be extremely grateful.

Enclosed is a photograph of the painting on the rear of the jacket.

Martin Smith  
22 Chilvers Bank  
Baldock HERTS  
SG7 6HS England  
Tel: 01462896030

## DONALD NIELSEN NOTE

Dear Walter,

I read our news magazine from one end to the other and I noticed Donald Nielsen's note in Debriefing of the March issue.

On May 8th I was on his plane and I'm glad he did not have any notions about flying under the Eiffel Tower on that date because I do believe we would have all bought the farm!

The rest of the story to the best of my recollection is also very accurate.

I'll never forget that ride as long as I live.

Yours truly,  
Douglas Simonis, 457th BG  
Lake Tomahawk, WI

## WITH THANKS

I just wanted to say a very heartfelt thank you to the Eighth Air Force for sending a very nice flower arrangement to my father's funeral. He was very proud of his service in the 8th AF and 92nd BG in WWII. My wife and I flew both my parents to visit us in Columbia, SC and we had the opportunity to come to the Mighty 8th AF Museum in Savannah and my father had a wonderful time. He even refused to ride in his wheel chair as he wanted to walk and see all the artifacts on display. My family is now going through his belongings and will ship any and all pictures and mementos to me and I will bring them in to see if we might donate

them to the museum. That, I am sure, is what he would want us to do with them. Again, let me thank the 8th AFHS for the flowers. They meant so much to my mother she may never get rid of them.  
Sincerely,  
Leland E. George  
Grateful son of John E. George  
P.S. I think my entire family will join the Historical Society in honor of my father and all WWII vets. We want to help keep the stories and memories alive.

## A COMMEMORATION OF V-E DAY

On May 8, 2005, we observed the 60th anniversary of V-E Day, May 8, 1945. What a glorious day that was for all of us in the 8th Air Force and all of our troops in the ETO. It took five years, eight months, and seven days to destroy Hitler's regime, and the 8th had a big part in its demise. You will remember on that day we all had a first-hand look at the jubilation of the English people, and rightfully so, they having endured for so long the wrath of incessant bombing by Germany's V-2 rockets and Luftwaffe bombers. America paid a very high price for that victory and those of us who survived that terrible war shall never forget it.

Jack Keller, 486th BG  
Belleair Bluffs, FL

## CREW

Dear Connie,

Thanks for the quick response. First annual dues check enclosed.

I have lost all contact with my original B-17 crew. I was stationed at Kimbolton, England, and I was a tail gunner.

I hope to make some contact with the help of the 8th AFHS.

I did complete one tour of 25 missions.

Sid Paul  
3609 Windward Way  
Louisville, KY 40220-1817

## TROLLEY MISSIONS

Walt,

The cover brought back a number of misty recollections of those years,



now sixty years ago - all recalled now in vivid focus by the Mar 05 issue of the NEWS!

My B-24 Liberator crew, as many others at war's end, flew down the Rhine River taking our ground crew personnel for a "Victory view" trip. These planned after-war sorties were called "Trolley Missions" and at low-level altitudes (almost authorized "buzzing" heights!) the panorama of destruction seen almost everywhere from 8AF bombing was incredibly awesome in magnitude, as typified especially by the scenes around Cologne which the NEWS front cover depicts. We flew down over the Remagen bridge at Ludendorf, Germany where the first U.S. forces crossed the Rhine, continuing on up by Cologne. I recall, ironically enough that, as we crossed low over the destroyed Remagen bridge-works, some small boys tried were trying to throw rocks at us!

And probably the most unusual sight I remembered was flying by the bridge at Cologne, down the river as the cover shows, and seeing of all things, a very tall, red brick smoke stack on the west side of the River just NW of the Cathedral, standing apparently undamaged throughout the war. The irony that struck us was that down its side in bold letters was the word - FORD. Interesting certainly.

Thanks again, Walt - for a task 'well done' in beating the media to the line on the 60th anniversary of VE-Day in Europe!

Best Regards,  
Bob Vickers, 392nd BG  
Albuquerque, NM

## MCGUIRE P-38

Dear Walt:

We were pleased to see the previous cover story in your December 2004 issue of the 8th Air Force



News, which featured the P-38s, 13th, 22nd and 27th, as well as one Squadron of Spitfires (14th).

Our Group was located at Dorchester-on-Thames on RAF Air Base Mt. Farm. Operations included Target Identification, Damage Assessment and Mapping.

P-38 flyable aircraft are currently scarce, however, we do have one in top condition at McGuire Air Force Base in New Jersey. This aircraft represents the fighter "Budgy" flown by Thomas B. McGuire, Jr. of Ridgewood, N.J. in the Pacific theater. While Richard I. Bong had 40 Japanese kills before he returned to the USA, McGuire had 32 of his 38. Unfortunately, he crashed when in a steep power dive while attacking the enemy near New Guinea.

McGuire Air Force Base obtained a P-38 from David C. Tallichet, a California restaurant owner who swapped it for a C-130 with the condition that the P-38 be maintained in operable status even if would not be ever flown.

Sincerely,  
John J. Shatynski  
S-2, 22nd PR Squadron  
7th PR Photo Group  
Hillside, NJ



Dear Walter,

You and your organization helped us with the sale of our 2005 B-24, B-17 and B-26 calendars. We hope the response you received from your members in regards to the calendars was positive.

As promised, we closely tracked the sales of the calendars, and are sending you \$1.00 for each calendar purchase that referenced your group. We have also added an additional \$10.00 donation as a small token of our appreciation.

As you're probably already aware, in addition to the calendars we also produce *Bomber Legends* magazine. Our goal

is to continue to capture the stories and letters from veterans and their families for future generations. The 8th AFHS can distribute *Bomber Legends* magazine for free at your bomb reunions or meetings. If you'd like to receive a package of magazines, please feel free to contact me toll free 1-866-788-3624.

We are seeking high quality photographs and historical information for three 2006 calendars: B-24 Liberator, B-17 Flying Fortress and a *Bomber Legends* Calendar.

Thank you for your support of our organization. We look forward to sharing your group's stories and experiences with the younger generations to come.

Most Sincerely,  
George B. Welsh  
Editor-in-Chief, *Bomber Legends*  
Romona, CA  
Tel: 760-788-3624  
[www.bomberlegends.com](http://www.bomberlegends.com)

## 479TH FIGHTER GROUP

Dr. Brown:

Thank you for the kind review of my book, "The 479th Fighter Group in World War II".

My purpose in producing the text was to collect, preserve and make public in one body of knowledge, as much of the group's history as I reasonably could. That resolve began after I determined the 479th was not well represented in historical references and in fact was referred to as "The Mystery Group" by some individuals outside of the group.

I hope through the publication of the book, I have achieved what I set out to do. I also hope that, for those men who served with the group during World War II, some measure of the honor and respect due them for their sacrifice and service will be directed their way.

Thank you again.

Respectfully,  
Terry A. Fairfield  
Fort Wayne, IN  
email: [wattisham@verizon.net](mailto:wattisham@verizon.net)



## BIG MOOSE

Dear Dr. Brown,

May I request that you will as editor of the 8th A.F. News and with the good offices of the Mail Call column publish the following enquiry.

I am seeking any information regarding the Nose Art details of a B-17 a/c which flew with the 305th BG 365 BS. The aircraft had been named Big Moose B.17 F BO 42-29870 XK-T.

Its last mission with the 305th was to Stuttgart on the 6th September 1943. It sustained battle damage and the crew prepared to ditch in the Channel, however it maintained flying ability and having lost three engines prepared to make a forced landing at R.A.F. Heston to the West of London. It overshot the runway and with the fourth engine failing it made a wheels-down landing in a field. Quite a feat of flying by the pilot John "Jack" Kney.

After repair it was returned to the 384th B.G. at Grafton Underwood; subsequently it was shot down over the same target on the 14th October 1943.

I would appreciate being contacted by any person who may have first-hand knowledge of nose art details or ideally, a photograph. I will cover any expenses.

Sincerely,  
George J. Brinckley  
Delhaven Bridge  
St. Columb Major  
Cornwall TR9 6BE England  
Email: jeepman@beeb.net

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

Dear Sir:

I would like to know if I can subscribe to your magazine, Don had a life membership (I am his wife). He passed away in Sept. 03. If I can, let me know how much a year so I can subscribe.

Also, has anyone ever put all the poems you print in the magazine into a little book?

If they have I would like to buy one. Thank you.

Dorothy Cundiff  
Peoria, IL

*Dorothy, surviving spouses of 8th*

*AFHS members receive a complimentary one year subscription to the 8th AF News. All family members who join the organization receive the news magazine quarterly. -Editor*

## VE DAY

RE: War's End, etc on page 17.  
Volume 05 Number 1 8th AF News

I was there on the day of turnover to Allied control of the Moosburg POW camp. My recollection is that an American Army jeep with four people under a white flag of truce came to the camp to arrange take over before the 29th of April 1945. In fact the German guards were allowed to leave without being interred. The senior Allied officers assumed control of the camp and the flags of various countries were raised and flown with TAPS being played at nightfall.

It was reported in later newspaper accounts that over 138,000 Allied prisoners were at Moosburg, including English taken at Dunkirk. I was captured on March 9, 1945, after bailing out of a 95th BG B-17; it was my 2nd mission.

I trust that this will add to the information you already have.  
Arthur S. Billings, 95th BG  
Fair Oaks, CA

## NEWS MAGAZINES

Dear Connie:

Thank you for the extra copies of the Mighty Eighth. We had our reunion in Savannah in 1999. Had a nice dinner cruise there. I'm sending you a \$20 bill to pay for the \$7.70 postage, and the other \$12.30 you can have a breakfast on me.

I was on the cadre of the 351st in Nov 42. I was the prop specialist for hte 509th Sqd. Our group had a distinguished unit citations, and the 509th had a special Commendations for 54 consecutive missions from June 13, 1943 to Jan 10, 1944. So once again, I say thank you.

Sincerely,  
Frank Markut, 351st BG  
Ottawa, IL

## P-38 PHOTO COVER

Hello Dr. Brown:

It seems like I am constantly sorting through boxes of STUFF in an effort to please my wife and make the house look better. As

you know, pack rats hate to throw anything away.

I sometimes think my memory is failing, but maybe not. When I received the December 2004 issue of The 8th AF News, the cover photo showing a formation of P-38 Lightning aircraft seemed familiar to me and I wondered why.

Well, in my sorting last week, I found that very same photo of the P-38's, proving to myself that my memory is not as bad as I thought it was. Having an interest in GRAFLEX cameras, quite some time ago I contacted their office in Rochester, New York and asked for a copy of their brochure titled "Great Moments of the War" and I did receive it.

This publication by GRAFLEX was meant to tell the story of photography during the war, and how their equipment played a large part in recording the war. On page 17 is the very same photo that was on the cover of our 8th AF News. It is noted as an official US Army Air Forces Photo GRAFLEX made and titled: A Squadron of P-38 Lightnings, in perfect formation, streaks toward France on D-Day.

I wondered if you might be interested in this information so I decided to pass it on. Those of us who flew in Heavy Bombers (mine a B-17 in the Bloody Hundredth) were always happy to see the easy to identify P-38 fighters as escorts on missions. Sincerely,  
John Legg, 100th BG  
Wayne, PA

*Many thanks John. Our original wartime photograph came from the Jake Fredericks files, 3rd Air Division Headquarters. -Editor*





## WW II MEMORIAL VISIT

A week after the World War II Memorial opened to the public, a few friends from our American Legion Post took a one-day bus tour to Washington D.C.

When we arrived it was raining all day. I told my friend who I took with me that the rain wasn't going to stop me from seeing all I could that day, rain or not. The bus left us off close to the WWII Memorial.

I found it very interesting walking around the inside of the Memorial. While we were making our tour I told my friends what was what at all the different locations with the writing on the stones. We walked around the Pacific and Atlantic side.

My friend asked me why do they have Atlantic and Pacific.

Well, I told him during WWII we fought on both fronts.

As we walked around I did all the explaining of the different places that our marines and army fought.

While I was explaining things I did not know that many other people in back of me heard what I was telling my friends. The great things our boys did here and there. Then a few people that were in the rear of me started asking me questions about different things.

Well, I turned to them and told them I was not a park ranger, just a veteran who knew about many war places. I met a female ranger who said some of the people told her about me explaining different things.

I said I was just a veteran visiting the Memorial, but it made me feel good answering the questions that I knew about. She asked me if I would be interested in a park job! I told her, "No, thank you." I am 85 years young and that would be a big job for me.

I hope I can get a chance to go again soon. This time I will go for a few days. Hope all the veterans get a chance to see this wonderful Memorial for our WWII boys. I signed the WWII Book of Visitors

telling where we were in the war and what we were.

Thank you,  
John J. Manocchio  
WWII Historian  
Altoona, PA

*Visits to the National WWII Veterans Memorial will be a highlight of our 2005 annual 8th AFHS reunion. - Editor*

## GREMLIN'S HIDEOUT

Dr. Brown,

In response to a request for a picture of *Gremlins Hideout*, by Clint Cansdale (see first letter, Mar 05, RING under Mail Call), here is a site with a color photograph of a B-17 restored as Gremlins Hideout: [http://www.atterburybakalarairmuseum.org/B17\\_Gen\\_Hoffs\\_Gremlins\\_Hideout.jpg](http://www.atterburybakalarairmuseum.org/B17_Gen_Hoffs_Gremlins_Hideout.jpg)

Tom Davis  
Portland Chapter



Gremlin's Hideout

## DUKE

Dear Sirs:

Thanks to all you wonderful people for your spread on my "Doggie Duke" story and short bio of John Carroway. I am astounded! What more can I say except thank you! Sincerely,  
Steve Schmidt  
Chicago, IL

## GRANDCHILDREN

Dear Ms. Metts,

Thank you so much for your kind words. Cliff was so proud to be a member of the Eighth Air Force and truly enjoyed the magazine. It was

just the last five years that he began opening up about his flying experience. Our grandchildren would ask the questions and he would answer and elaborate on his experiences.

Thank you again, as I too enjoyed the magazine.

Sincerely,  
Betsy H. Dueholm  
St. Paul, MN

## RIDGEWELL

Dear Sirs:

Please find enclosed a check for \$90.00 for life membership - I was born 6/27/33.

Our B-17 crew flew 30 missions over Germany Lt. William E. Helms was our pilot - is there any way that I can find out the whereabouts of any one on our crew?

We flew out of Ridgewell Air Base, England 381st Bomb Group 533 B Sqd.

Can you put an article in the News Letter?

Thank you,  
Ernie Krech  
22674LM/card

P.S. Do I get a Life Membership card?

Ernie - welcome, and yes you do. -Editor

## A BEAUTIFUL MORNING OVER EUROPE AT 25,000 FEET

Dear Sir:

It was January in 1945. I was in the top turret of a 401st Bomb Group B-17 - the best view in the sky. We were in the middle of the First Air Division's column, headed for Germany.

The clear blue sky was alive with the contrails we hated because they enabled the flak batteries far below to locate us more easily. Dozens of Flying Fortresses were ahead of us and behind us - an armada marvelous to behold as I swiveled 360 degrees.

Suddenly I felt very proud to be an American airman. Here we were, doing so well what had to be done to defeat the Nazis who had overrun so much of Europe. I thought of Adolph

Hitler down there somewhere. If only he could come up here and see what we were about to hit him with. . . he might surrender. I thought about how America had responded so well to our great challenges from Germany and Japan in only three years.

I remembered my father's service in France in 1918. I thought of my uncle building Army half-tracks on a factory night shift. I thought of my brothers somewhere on land or sea in the Pacific.

Then. . . the first puffs of black smoke darkened the beautiful sky and I prayed for all of us.  
William Harty, 401st BG  
Morristown, NJ

## FOUR YEARS

Dear Connie Metts:

It is very special to be back in the Mighty Eighth. Thank you so much for the magazines. They are so special I really appreciate all your efforts

for bringing me back into the fold.

A little about my "Bio": I joined the Army Air Corp in April of 1941, went to Armorers school in Denver and was there when Dec 7th happened. I returned to Grenier field in Manchester, N.H. and soon after became an enlisted bombardier. Flew many anitsub missions out of Dover, Delaware and Miami, Florida - "9th Unit Sub Patrol". I went to Tucson, Arizona and trained for High altitude flying in B-24s, formed the 486th Bomb Group, and started flying missions in B-24s out of England.

I am now a tail gunner. After a few missions in B-24s we were told that we were to start training in B-17s. In B-17s I finished my tour of 25 missions and went back to the states.

There is much more but it is beginning to bore me and I expect you, too!

Thank you again,  
Sincerely,  
Everett Chase, 486th BG

Weave, NH

## B-24 COVERAGE

Dear Sirs,

Sorry for the delay - I have delayed my renewal because of the small amount of B-24 coverage, compared to B-17 news. Compliments on a nice job otherwise.

Harold Samuelian, 44th BG  
orig "Well" Gunner on  
B-24D #41-23778

"JENNY-LADY LUCK"

Harold - glad you stayed in the fold. Incidentally in my review of the March 05 issue, 8th AF News, we printed 8 different B-24 photos and just 5 B-17's. There were 194 fighters pictured. We realize there are three Bomber Air Divisions - two B-17 and one B-24 to cover, but we also realize its about the 8th men and their history - not necessarily the aircraft they crewed. -Editor

## VE DAY

Dear Sir,

The front cover of the March issue, Cologne Cathedral, struck some very old memories of an antique lead navigator. It is possible that the foto was taken on May 7, 1945 from my B-24. The attached pages from my diary may explain and be of some interest and amusement.

Harold Dorfman  
448th BG lead navigator  
Flushing, NY

### MISSION 9 (ADDENDUM) COLOGNE, GERMANY V-E DAY minus 1 7 MAY 1945

One day before V-E Day, three officers, two pilots and a navigator, made a small mistake and walked past Group Headquarters. Colonel Westover stepped out of his office, walked over to us and with a big smile on his face thanked us for volunteering for a special "Trolley" flight. He herded us into his office and introduced us to an Associated Press photographer, whose name I forgot to remember. None of us remembered volunteering.

The flight assignment was to take the gentleman on a photographic sightseeing tour of bombed-out Germany. By mutual agreement we decided on the Ruhr Valley area including Cologne. The weather was absolutely magnificent, CAVU (ceiling and visibility unlimited) all the way. The entire flight was at low level, 1000 to 2000 ft. altitude as requested by the photographer. He took

dozens of pictures from the waist gun positions. I particularly aimed him at the Cologne Cathedral very mindful of the chaos of my 9th mission's bomb run where an entire squadron did a bomb drop on my best guess as we flew over the Cathedral with the railroad terminal target only a few yards past the Cathedral. To my relief the Cathedral appeared undamaged.

A few days after the flight, each of us on the crew received a complimentary set of the best of the photos. The photo of the Cathedral, shows the undamaged structure surrounded by a totally devastated area of roofless building shells.

Harold Dorfman, 448th BG



On every occasion a man should ask himself: "Is this one of the unnecessary things?" Now a man should take away not only unnecessary acts, but also unnecessary thoughts, for thus superfluous acts will not follow after.

**Marcus Aurelius**  
**Meditations**



## **JACK VAN ACKER...**

### **NAPALM IN BOMB BAY**

On April 15, 1945 my crew was briefed on a mission to the French Cherbourg area to drop napalm on heavily fortified troops that were bypassed by Patton. Heavy bombs were to be dropped first, then napalm, followed by Frag's, then troops. A milk run was expected because there would be no flak.

This mission turned out to be one of the most dangerous for my crew even though we did not get credit for it as a mission. The napalm was filled into fighter drop tanks; 12 to a plane as I recall. We took off, climbing through the cloudy haze to about 4000 ft., when the odor of fuel hit us. Frank Sine, engineer, excitedly told us that napalm was all over the bomb bays & catwalk. Walt Mahard took over the controls and I went back to the bomb bay where I saw pink napalm flowing out of two fill holes, like giant tooth paste, landing on the bombs below & the bomb bays in big piles.

We stopped climbing, calling the tower & were instructed to fly over the Wash to drop the bombs. The fumes were so strong that I ordered all to go on full oxygen & opened the windows. I started to crack the bomb bays when I thought about static electricity. The thought of those sliding, squeaking doors & the bomb release mechanism stopped me cold. I called the tower & told them of my fears. As we circled around the Wash we refused every request to drop, requesting to land with the bombs. Finally the field was clear & we were cleared to land. We did not turn on the auxiliary hydraulic pump, it had an open spark and our B-24 broke out of the undercast at 300 foot according to my log and we landed before sun-up. We were up 40 minutes of hell. Without the hydraulic pump, I had only two small applications of the brakes & the plane used the entire 5000 foot runway, turning a little fast at the end, but OK. A jeep led us to an empty area - we went out the nose wheel,

very happy to get away from the plane.

An armament Major, as I recall, sped up in a jeep & proceeded to chew me out for not dropping the napalm in the Wash, in spite of my reasoning. Frustrated, I offered to drop them if he would be my engineer. The wheels of his jeep spun and he was gone. Five minutes later Col. Stephey, our squadron commander, drove up and said "I hear you have some trouble." I reached up through the cracked bomb bay and retrieved a hand full of napalm, threw it on the grass away from the plane. Col. Stephey took out a lighter and PUFF! it went off from over two feet away. As I remember he said, "Van, you made the right decision" for which I will always be grateful. But I have always felt for the poor men who had to clean out and dispose of the stuff. They had a dangerous mission right there at N. Pick.

The "Ringmaster" has little about this mission, and this record is silent about our abort. I later heard that some B-24's were lost on this mission with no enemy action, but I could never confirm this. It was a dangerous mission for my crew as everyone on my crew would have told you. Few heavy bomber crews with this experience are as fortunate to have God's help, but I am sure that we all had his help many times in the 491st.

Jack Van Acker, 491st BG  
Dundee, IL

## **FRANK MOYER...**

### **AN AIR TOUR OF WESTERN EUROPE**

On the morning of May 9th, 1945, I was awakened early for a special sort of flight in a B-17. For the preceding two days our bomb group had been conducting Cook's Tours over France, Belgium, and Germany. These flights had been authorized by the headquarters of the 8th Air Force so that various ground personnel who had done their jobs at the base for so many dreary months and years

could have an opportunity to observe the battle damage on the continent. Our B-17s had been stripped down so that they could carry groups of about fifteen men, and seats had been arranged throughout the planes so that the passengers could be comfortable during the flight.

In order that we might show our passengers just how a combat mission was planned and carried out, these special flights were patterned after our Standard Operational Procedures. We were awakened early to attend briefing, where we were given the geographical coordinates of the various turning points along our route. After briefing we drew our parachutes and flying clothes, then quartermaster trucks took us out to the planes. Our plane was carrying a pilot, copilot, navigator, engineer, radioman, and me - serving as tail gunner in order to inform the pilot of the locations of the other planes in our formation. We, the crew members, instructed the ground personnel regarding the proper wearing and use of their parachutes and Mae Wests. After seeing that each man was in his proper seat, the pilot started the engines, warmed them up, and checked each one for proper operation.

In a few minutes we received instructions from the control tower by a colored signal flare to taxi out to the runway, and we were shortly in takeoff position. A second flare from the tower alerted the pilot to advance the throttles and release the brakes. The ground began to slip behind us more and more rapidly, and with no apparent change of motion we suddenly discovered that we were airborne. We climbed to 300 feet, at which time we turned toward our first control point. This point was simply a radio beacon, called a buncher, where we were to rendezvous with five other ships in our formation. We circled the buncher until the other ships had joined us and then headed for the point on the British coast which was our jumping-off point.

Already many of our passengers

were enjoying themselves, for several of them had never flown in an airplane before. It was difficult for them at first to recognize their location, as villages and landmarks appear very different from the air. When we had crossed the English Channel, one of the passengers remarked that he had never realized that the fields made such a gorgeous patchwork picture of color. A field of yellow, another of green, still another of brown, all served to give the impression of a crazy quilt spread out beneath us. We were flying at about 1,000 feet, so our vision was totally unobstructed. First of all we flew over the area near Ostend, Belgium. It was a tragic sight to see, for the retreating Germans had broken the dikes, allowing the water to flood the countryside. For miles and miles we could see a vast expanse of water, and we could not help thinking that this would mean starvation for many Belgians, since their fields were too wet to plant grain and other food crops. Everywhere we looked we could see the Belgian flag flying where some person, freed at last from the yoke of Nazi oppression, had joyfully loosed the symbol of his freedom. Soon we came to Ghent, and the town seemed alive with small children stopping to look up at the low-flying planes.

Many of them could be seen to be cheering as they recognized the United States insignia on our wings. Without fail each child had a friendly

wave with which to greet us as we passed overhead.

In five minutes we came to outskirts of Cologne, famous Rhineland stronghold. The city had been hit very hard by the general destruction, and five bridges over the Rhine had been bombed.

At the southeast corner of the city we saw the Autobahn, Hitler's super highway. It was a beautiful section of paved road, and three lanes ran in each direction. Their cloverleaf intersections were most elaborate and had been designed by the best of German engineers. The sky over Cologne was filled with B-17s and B-24s from other bomb groups who had also come to pay an aerial visit to the historic and formerly beautiful city.

We came to Remagen, scene of the Allies first bridgehead across the Rhine. There were three bridges, all of which had been demolished. Only one small footbridge remained intact. South of the city we came upon a huge prisoner-of-war camp containing thousands of Germans sleeping in small, shallow foxholes dug in the hard clay. Their dejection was very apparent to us, since not one of them even looked up at the planes overhead. A little farther south we soon came to two more huge camps of prisoners, and they were even larger than the first camp we had observed. At the city of Coblenz, formerly one of the most deadly targets in Europe, we noticed both the terrific

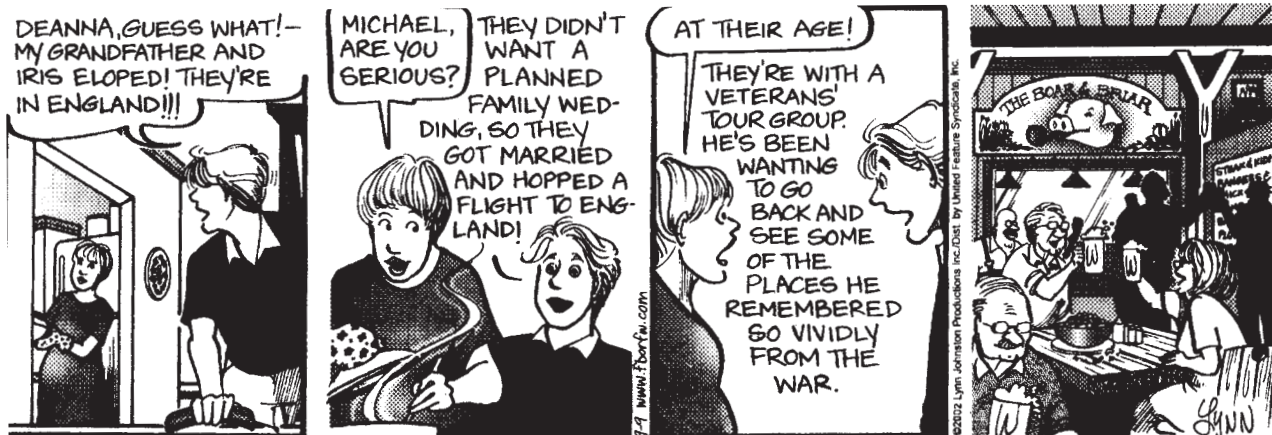
destruction and a huge castle atop a high granite cliff.

Before long we reached Metz, which was the first city in Europe bombed solely with radar equipment. The RAF had used their new equipment called "Stinkey" on the city back in 1942 with fair results. Since that time, however, both the RAF and our own Air Force had repeatedly bombed Metz until there was little of it untouched.

At Mannheim we found a large airfield being used by our occupation air forces. There were perhaps 200 P-47 *Thunderbolts*, two B-17s, and a single B-26. We noticed that the B-17s were from a group based not far from us. Our formation of six ships circled the field twice and then gave the men below a good buzz job. The other five ships stayed in perfect formation behind us, and we passed along the main runway at an elevation of about fifteen feet.

About three miles from Mannheim we came to Ludwigshafen, where we noticed another large POW camp. The most striking thing we observed here was the mammoth I.G. Farben plant for making explosives, chemicals, and dyes. I don't believe that there was a single piece of masonry standing. When our ground forces occupied the city they completed the destruction wrought by our air forces and artillery.

Frank Moyer, 351st Bomb Group from *DR AHEAD*





## The 353rd FG - "The Next Generation"

I am Bill Nevitt's son, Bill Nevitt, Jr. and I'm asking for your help. Several of us children of 353rd members have attended the annual 8th Air Force Reunions the past 2-3 years. During these times, we have enjoyed learning about the group's history and its members, as well as discussing trying to encourage more children and grandchildren of 353rd vets to attend these functions.

I am so very fortunate that I've been able to learn about all of this with my folks while I still have them with me, rather than based on anecdotal stories or hearsay. My only regret is that I waited so long in my life to attend these functions!

As this year's reunion will be held in Arlington, VA in late September, this will be an excellent opportunity for them to learn about the 8th Air Force and see many historic sites, as well.

I am Nicholas Centorani, the grandson of Sgt. Lester Dean, 350th FS, 353 FG, 8th AF. My grandfather died before I was born. I do have his scrapbook but that does not tell the whole story of his life in the Air Corps during WWII. Over the last year I have been able to make contact with several surviving members of other deceased Veterans of the 353rd FG. These contacts have given me great reward in just communicating with my grandfather's comrades and filling in some holes of missing history.

The descendants of the 353rd FG have developed an affinity and commitment to preserve the memories and the identity of the 353rd FG for the future. We call ourselves "The Next Generation" and would like to invite and encourage veterans to have your children, grandchildren or other family members to join us in our quest to preserve your great sacrifice, dedication, and service for the generations to come.

## Allied Memories

From these deserted acres flow  
the sights and sounds of long ago  
Then the scene of times less kind  
those days stay vivid in the mind

How we lived for just that day  
and of the morrow...none could say  
Now fate has made me hear  
and glimpse again my yesteryear

Appearing through the mists of time  
faces known do now define  
Who gather round and with me tell  
of grim dark days when many fell

Many come and pause a while  
then vanish down that concrete mile  
In planes soon doomed to burn  
for they I know did not return

Now buildings are untended graves  
and runways are with memories paved  
That for a moment briefly shone  
in the afterglow...of times long gone

Dedicated to all aircrew of the Allied  
Air Forces during World War 2, especially  
those who flew up to the sky... and vanished  
from our sight.

Dennis Oldham  
Milton Keynes  
March 2005



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To be neutral in others' wars is wise, if you are strong enough to be safe whoever wins; otherwise you may be prey to both victor and vanquished. But the most fatal neutrality is that which springs from indecision.

**Francesco Guicciardini**



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## Chapter News

### NEW MEXICO CHAPTER

The New Mexico Chapter of the 8th AFHS held its annual Winter general membership meeting and luncheon on Saturday, 12 Feb 05. The Members and guests in attendance totalled 93. Current Chapter membership stands at 217.

President Hal Goetsch opened the meeting at noon with Maj. Gen. Don Harlin (Ret.), Former Chief of Chaplains, USAF, giving the invocation. There followed a discussion regarding the expenses of building a monument dedicated to the veterans of The Mighty Eighth. The assembly voted in favor of this project. Abraham Lincoln's birthday and Valentines Day was celebrated with songs featuring "THE ENCHANTERS" a singing group of talented men and women who presented a program of patriotic and Valentines Day Songs. The Spring General Meeting and Luncheon will be held on Saturday, 11 June 05.

Submitted by Al Schwery, Scty

Chapter President Hal Goetsch sends notice of a very special Chapter Spring meeting on to be held on June 11. The speaker will be WWII Air Corps veteran Bill Petynia.

Bill spent 32 years with the National Advisory Commission for Aeronautics, playing vital roles in the design and testing of the Shuttle Orbit Spacecraft, the Lunar LEM Module, and design and flight testing of the Mercury and Apollo spacecraft. The event begins at 11 AM – call Scty Al Schwery at 505-856-1834 for info.



**"The Enchanters" vocal ensemble at The New Mexico Winter Meeting.**

### COLORADO CHAPTER

Our Chapter has participated in the seminars at Regis University for the Study of War Experiences. These seminars started January 25 and continued through April 26th. This program is an accredited course for all disciplines, 55 students in the latest class. Members of the Chapter told of their experiences in The Air War in Europe. Attendance is open to the public and seminars are usually standing room only. I am a graduate of Regis and have been on the board for five years. It has been very gratifying to see that Regis University has seen fit to institute this program in conjunction with the History Department. The guiding light in this program is Dr. Dan Clayton. His father was an infantry man in WWII, and is determined that after students take this course and program they will better understand the greatest war and what it meant in those living through those days. This gives you an idea what Regis University and our Colorado Chapter is doing so students will not forget what the price of Liberty is.

Mike Quering

### JOHN HAROLD ROBINSON TENNESSEE CHAPTER

The annual reunion of the Tennessee Chapter in Lebanon TN went off well. The usual cadre of regulars were there for the weekend and there were a number of new faces, all of them smiling. Organized by James Bass, 457th BG, and Scty-Treas. Harold Robinson, the home-cooked food and special programs were superb. New officers elected were Henry "Hank" Barker, 453rd

BG, as President for the upcoming year. James Bass will serve as VP. Treasurer Robinson reported a flush Chapter bank account with a total of \$7,121 dollars in the kitty. He will



**James Bass presenting a certificate of appreciation to Banquet speaker, Ivy Agee**



continue to edit the Newsletter, the Tennessee Flyover.

There were two special banquet speakers during the event. Dr. Bert Coble, now music Director at the Carthage Methodist Church, was in the Pacific on Leyte when the two atomic bombs were dropped on Japan, ending WWII. He served in Korea in a tank regiment with 24 American tanks under his command.

He recalls, "We were up against thousands of Chinese troops in Korea and were well aware of the Air Corps P-40 fighters of WWII's *Flying Tigers*. These aircraft had tiger's teeth painted on their noses early in the war and we were aware that the Chinese were afraid of tigers. So we looked at our tanks and said, 'Let's get them

painted on there.' We were afraid of tigers too, but we were inside the tanks. It seemed to have a positive effect against the superstitious enemy troops."

At one time Coble outfitted the tanks in his command with Confederate Rebel flags, since the tank crews were all from the South. Being from Tennessee, Bert flew a Tennessee state flag on his. These were always cheered on by the ground troops. In one fierce night-time firefight with the enemy, he realized that his tank was taking an extraordinary amount of fire – lots of pings off the armor and shell hits. After turning the enemy back, he raised the hatch and looked up to see his flag there in tatters, except for the three stars in the center of the Tennessee flag. They were all still intact and flying. Then it hit him. 'I realized the enemy thought they had a 3-star general in there and they gave our tank a lot of extra attention. Safe to say that I didn't fly my state flag again in any tank battles.'"

The gala annual banquet featured Ivy C. Agee, who spoke of his experiences in the infantry as a member of The Bedford Boys, the 29th National Guard Division that landed on Omaha Beach on D-Day and lost 24 young soldiers on the beach, all from the small town of Bedford, Virginia - now the home of the National D-Day Memorial. The loss was the greatest of any American National Guard Division, the 29th being the only Guard unit to lead a landing attack during the war. Ivy fought across Europe and was awarded the Silver Star for his leadership in battling out of a town in southern Germany after crossing the Rhine river. His family accompanied him to the banquet and

showed films of his emotional return to Normandy in recent years.

James Bass closed the banquet event with recognition of several special guests in attendance. Mary Frampton of Memphis, brought several scrapbooks depicting the career of her father, Alfred Frampton, who was in 8th Headquarters during the war and died in a commercial plane crash in Virginia near the war's end. She has done extensive research of the crash and has published a book about her Dad. Harry Williams, President of the Middle Tennessee Four-engine Bombers Association attended with his wife, and Mr. and Mrs. James Elkins were present for the weekend. A benediction by Chaplain Earl Wassom followed by a playing of Taps and a solemn tribute to Chapter members who died this past year ended the formal banquet program. The Hospitality Room was opened.

### NEW YORK STATE SOUTHERN WING CHAPTER

On April 9th, 2005 the NY State Southern Wing Chapter had a Spring luncheon/meeting in Flushing, New York. President Gus Nathan presided.

We had a total of 46 in attendance. Items of interest from the meeting was an update regarding the New York State 8th Air Force license plate, which is now available and seen below.

Our Historian, Pat Keeley, commented on our new website that has been active for some time. The address, [www.ny8thswcath.org](http://www.ny8thswcath.org) list the various happenings in the Chapter,



**New York State Southern Wing**

the President's Report, The National Reunion in Arlington, Va., "This Month 60 Years Ago" links to other sites. He has received comments on the site from many places overseas, even the Czech Republic.

The subject of the lack of knowledge of WWII by the students in the local area was discussed. They don't even know that WWII existed. Members are attempting to correct that situation and stated the need for members to get out to the schools. Harold stated that he had a slide presentation that he used and offered to give the presentation that used and offered to give the presentation in schools not to distant from him.

V.P. Greene introduced our speaker, Art Forster, of the Defense Contract Management Agency and Lt. Col. USAF retired and was PR Officer of the present day 8th AF at Barksdale AFB. Mr. Foster gave a very interesting talk and slide presentation about the agency. The agency employs 11,000 personnel at 900 locations worldwide to help prepare, utilize and furnish defense equip-





## Chapter News

menta and services. They are the involved in 360,000 prime contracts. He then answered questions from the floor to conclude a well-received presentation.

Joseph Keeley, Historian

### NEW YORK CHAPTER

The Chapter will have its next Board of Director's meeting tentatively on June 18th 2005. There is discussion of the Chapter attending the upcoming September 8th AF reunion in Arlington, VA. and having its fall meeting there.

As the Historian for the Chapter I am not a WWII veteran. I am very much interested in hearing from our younger members of all Chapters to discuss our future efforts in "Keeping the Memories Alive". We must start to organize and consider this. My email address: [fxe84@optonline.net](mailto:fxe84@optonline.net).

### NORTH EAST IOWA WING MEETING

The North East Wing, of Iowa Chapter, met at the Elks Lodge in Waterloo on Friday April 22, 2005 for a noon luncheon. 52 people attended the meeting.

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

Iowa Chapter President, Charles Taylor, gave a report of our Iowa Chapter activities, our up-coming August state convention in Ames, and our Iowa Chapter members' album. The album will be a hard-cover book of about 450 pages, in large print with good sized pictures of each Iowa chapter member. The album is expected to be available in July.

Leon Mehning, Treasurer, served double duty as cashier for the meeting with the very able assistance of his wife Vera. This was a great help, and very much appreciated. Leon also reported that our Iowa chapter of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society awarded two \$300 scholarships to two Air Force ROTC

cadets at Iowa State University. They are 1st Lt. Stephanie Nichols from Boise, Idaho and 1st Lt. Raymond Kingery from Muscatine, Iowa.

Leon called our attention to the birth date of the U.S. Air Force (formerly United States Army Air Corps) which was Sept. 18, 1947.

Our program was presented by Jeff Kennedy, our KWWL weatherman from channel 7 TV. Jeff is also a pilot, and presented an interesting color slide show of the many different types of weather.

Robert C. Reeves  
N.E. Iowa Wing Commander

### LOUISIANA CHAPTER

The Louisiana Chapter met in April at the Louisiana Convention Center in Alexandria with an attendance of thirty members and guests. Members went on a tour of the 'Kent House,' which is the oldest standing structure in Central Louisiana, built in 1795.

A Friday night fish dinner followed; guest speaker was LTC Russel Fairbanks USAF (Ret), a former P-47 Fighter pilot with the 9th AF during the war. President Harry Doug Tanner presided over the annual meeting. Saturday morning the group went to the old U.S. Army base (Camp Beauregard) in Pinerville, LA and took a tour of their museum. At a noon luncheon national 8th AFHS Treasurer Ivan McKinney gave a talk on the 2005 and 2006 Eighth Air Force reunions. After lunch the main speaker was Mr. C.J. Christ of Hauma, LA, a former B-29 pilot in the Korean War.



**Louisiana Chapter Board 2005 Meeting**  
**Standing L-R: Charles Shankles, Henry Pearce, Wiley Noble, Harry Tanner, C.J. Christ.**  
**Seated L-R: Earl Williamson, Stan Johnson, Norman Sission, Al Lind, Ivan McKinney**

He spoke on the subject "World War II in the Gulf of Mexico." Mr. Christ has written and lectured on the subject of German U-Boats in the Gulf of Mexico during World War II.

The Louisiana Chapter will meet in Bossier City, LA in 2006. This will be held in conjunction with the annual reunion of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society.

by Harry Tanner

### MISSOURI CHAPTER - ST. LOUIS WING

The St. Louis Wing held our 33rd meeting, and our 11th annual



**The winners of the gift tickets to various restaurants. Bob Ryerson, St. Louis Wing President, is at far right**



**Just a few of the attendees at The St. Louis Wing Christmas luncheon**

## Chapter News

Christmas luncheon event at The Columns Convention Center in St. Charles, MO. It was our largest turn/out of members and their wives to date, thanks to the support of the "Rally Point", and the quarterly Air Force News.

Robert Ryerson, President, who then took over the podium, held a short meeting and served as Master of Ceremonies for the balance of the activities.

Wives received an 18" solid brass candle stick as a party favor. Needless to say they were all very pleased! At the end of the festivities several of the wives posed in the lobby, and requested a photo be taken showing their party favor.

Entertainment was provided by the "Broadway on the Driveway" troupe. They performed their popular broadway-style variety show. Our membership enjoyed familiar selections from the past, light harmonies, tap dancing, with a full array of costumes. Our entertainment was received with excellent reviews from all. A number of the guys stated that it reminded them of the USO shows they had seen in the ETO.

After the entertainment we held the drawing for the Christmas gifts, which consisted of six \$25.00 tickets to various restaurants. After the close of the activities many of the membership gathered in the lobby to say their goodbyes to members they might not see until our next meeting.

Al Villigran

### KENTUCKY CHAPTER

The more I get involved in this Honoring America's Past Educational Kit, the more enthusiastic I become. You wouldn't believe the favorable reactions we get when they use this kit. It was educated by the supervisors of Social Studies in the Jefferson Co. school system and their response was great. They think this fits in their curricu-

lum at the high school level. Some schools teach it at upper middle schools.

I believe this kit could be sold in the larger school systems with a minimal effort.

The Kentucky Chapter has purchased twenty of these kits and plan on buying 150 more as soon as we raise the money - about \$8000 total. I hope that all the Chapter's would jump on the "bandwagon" and get a kit in every suitable school in their state.

Wayne Tabor, President

### NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

The 21st Annual Reunion was held on April 9 at the Statesville Holiday Inn with 32 in attendance. Levin Beasley of the Eastern Wing brought his great display of WWII artifacts, photos and memorabilia. Also on display were collections of photos from the Metrolina and Western wings. Pres. John Miser announced his resignation due to his upcoming move to Arizona. He will be greatly missed by chapter members and especially the Western Wing where he made his home in Hendersonville. Thanks John, for all your contributions to the Chapter and Wing. Jim Jeffers of the Metorlina Wing will serve as the interim President until the next election. Jim reminds us our mission is to preserve memories of WWII and share them with they younger generations. Maj. Gen. Tom Sandler,

our guest speaker, spoke about his experiences during WWII and the difference in the way war is fought from WWII to the USAF today. The highest morale builder is that the troops believe there is support at home.

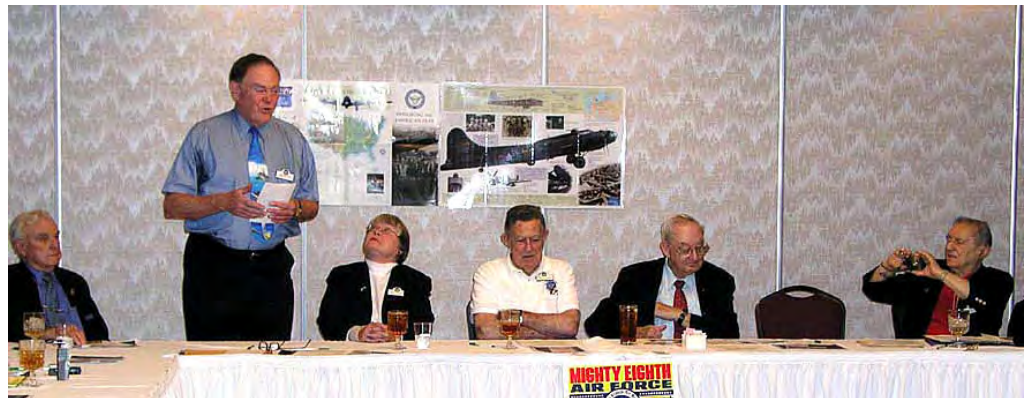
On May 11, the EASTERN WING members presented a program at the NC Museum of History in Raleigh. Two local TV stations interviewed the members and taped the entire program. The audience showed a lot of interest.

The WESTERN WING March meeting speaker was Bob Grosso, a B-24 navigator in the 448th BG. He spoke about his first experience flying in formation and hitting the thermals. The April meeting speaker was a newcomer, Bill Sullivan, a B-17 navigator with the 384th BG.

Jacques Morel



Leon Mehring with Cadet 1st Lt. Stephanie Nichols, AFROTC



North Carolina Chapter, L to R: Maj. Gen. Tom Sadler, Speaker; Jim Jeffers; Mary Wylie, NC VP; John Miser, Pres.; Craig Harris; Lou Baffaro, NC Treas.



## Chapter News



Cadet 1st Lt. Raymond Kingery

### IOWA CHAPTER

President Charles Taylor and his wife Jane, and Leon G. Mehring and his wife Vera attended the annual dining out and awards banquet for the Air Force R.O.T.C. of Iowa State University at Ames, IA. on April 9th, 2005.

The Iowa Chapter Air Force Historical Society presented two top ROTC cadets with a \$300 scholarship award. This makes \$2,400 that

we have awarded. The awards were given to Stephanie Nichols, from Boise, Idaho, and she is a cadet 1st Lt. and Cadet 1st Lt. Raymond Kingery from Muscatine, Iowa. Iowa State Air Force ROTC has 150 cadets.

A good time was had by all. Leon G. Mehring, Treasurer Iowa Chapter 8th AFHS

### 8TH AF LICENSE PLATES

Glenn Taylor, Birmingham, proudly drives his 466th Bomb Group plates everywhere he goes around Alabama. Glenn is past-President of the Alabama Chapter and is on the Board of Directors of the Mighty 8th AF Heritage Museum.



Theodore Gradin of Delray Beach, Florida writes: The State of Florida issued in July, a new US AIR FORCE license plate for the first time. As a navigator on B17's in the 8th Air Force, 381st Bomb Group, 535th Bomb Squadron, I applied for the license. Unfortunately the Department of Motor Vehicles only allowed five spaces so I chose: B17NV.



And from Jack (Ed) Griswold, Margate, Florida:

Above is a picture of the rear of my 2004 Honda Odyssey. This art work was created by Joe Jones of Denver. I was a waist gunner in the 96th BG 337th Squadron, Rudy Kostka's crew, on "I'll Get By". So proud to be an American I wanted to advertise it. We flew two missions on D-Day.

As far as we know we still have four living crew members. Originally I am from Ohio but now in Florida for twelve years.

What a great magazine you publish.



Impressive tags of Bill Clark, Wallingford, CT



8th AFHS member Tim Bivens is researching the history of Dyersburg Army Air Base, which served as a large

heavy bomber training base during the war. He would like to contact air personnel who were stationed at the wartime Tennessee airbase. Write him at 5080 Upper Finley Road, Dyersburg TN 38204-7144; tel 731-286-5900 email [elcamino@ecsis.net](mailto:elcamino@ecsis.net)

Many 8th veterans are planning a Return to England trip this summer. Serious consideration should be given to grabbing a copy of Sayre VanYoung's new book *London's War: A Traveler's Guide to World War II*. The well-researched paperback volume has over 180 photos and maps, uniquely illustrating wartime views of London and includes information of the sites. There are 20 detailed walking tours, also detailed. For remembrances and for younger generations and for those not on this summer's loading list to East Anglia, the book is exceptional. For info call Ulysses Press at 1-800-377-2542; [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) or your local bookseller.

Pres. Larry Goldstein suggests that anyone interested in the heritage of the 8th Air Force take a look at the excellent NY State Southern Wing Chapter website, mastered by the son-in-law of an 8th veteran. The site is: [ny8thswcafhs.org](http://ny8thswcafhs.org)

Grissom Air Museum recently received an F-14 Tomcat fighter for permanent display. A crowd gathered to welcome the aircraft which made several flyovers prior to landing. The 434th Air Refueling Wing has donated hangar space to prepare the airplane for display in the museum. A dedication ceremony is planned – for info call (765) 689-8011.

Andrew Toti died recently at his home in Modesto, California. Toti held patents on over 500 inventions including the surgical endotracheal cuff tube, the automatic chicken plucking machine widely used in Kentucky, and notably, the pop-top beer can.

Of special interest to 8th Air Force veterans is that Andrew Toti also invented the Mae West flotation jacket which was worn by 8th airmen and saved numerous lives of those who ditched their aircraft or bailed out over water.

Speaking of interesting volumes, Leonard Zerlin writes to say that he still has a number of his softback large format book *World War II Memories* available. His is a collection of wartime songs, slang, short articles, letters, cartoons and an extensive section of eclectic statistics regarding the men and equipment of WWII. Leonard, an ex-B-26 turret gunner, can be found at FAX/ tel 805-492-2272.

The American Air Museum In Britain held a Gala Dinner in honor of Major General Ramsay Potts USAF (Ret) at the Washington Ritz-Carlton Hotel on May 11, 2005. The event was also a celebration of the British-American relationship at the American Air Museum. Present were numerous dignitaries including The Duke of Kent and the Honorable James W. Symington as Master of Ceremonies.

Ramsay Potts flew with the 453rd BG and was on the low-level Ploesti mission. He spent the rest of the war in Plans and targeting at Division HQ. He has supported the American Air Museum and the Mighty 8th AF Heritage Museum for many years.

Our usual and ongoing update from our buddy in England, Roger Freeman: "As we say, 'I'm not doing so bad.' The last scan showed no residual disease, which is very promising, but I am continuing on six or

eight two-week cycles of the hard Chemo as a final "clean-up" measure. Morale is good and I hope to make the annual reunion in Arlington this September." – *Roger that, Roger and We'll See You Later! – Editor*

Two new WWII documentaries will be of interest to certain 8thAFHS members. DEOPHAM GREEN is a 60-minute production about the 452nd Bomb Group in England. THURLEIGH MEMORIES depicts the 306th BG wartime experiences. Both are available on VHS Video and DVD format. For info, it's: 1-888-562-8451 or online at: [www.oldsegundo.com](http://www.oldsegundo.com)

Art Driscoll, Unit contact for the 385th Bomb Group Association, has spent several years planning an impressive Return to England trip, with additional historical excursions to sites in France, Luxembourg, Belgium and the Netherlands. The trip is focused on his 385th Bomb Group at Great Ashfield, and follows the very successful course of similar trips of past years. American Cemeteries will be visited along the way, along with several unusual museum tours. Everyone is invited to participate, especially those of the younger generations. This is a memorable educational opportunity, professionally organized and conducted.

The 385th BG Association 60th Anniversary tour will take place from **15 June to 21 June, 2005** or extended if you desire to **30 June, 2005**. It certainly is not too late to contact Art in Nashville at tel 615-352-3530 or email: [artdriscoll@hotmail.com](mailto:artdriscoll@hotmail.com).

The long-awaited 466th BG volume *Attlebridge Arsenal* is now available. 8th AFHS Chaplain and Board member Earl Wassom and co-author Chris Brassfield have completed an extensive compilation of the crews and their ships of those who flew with the 466th. Numerous other related photos are also within. A full Book Review will be included in the Sept 05 issue 8th AF News; for info



right now, call 1-800-788-3350 or online at: [www.turnerpublishing.com](http://www.turnerpublishing.com).

The custom of clinking glasses during a toast goes back to the middle ages, when it was not unusual to get rid of your enemies by offering them a poisoned drink. It was customary to pour part of one drink into the other to show good faith, and both imbibers would then drink simultaneously. Touching glasses became a sign of mutual trust. If you weren't poisoned, you would be "on cloud nine." That was the highest number cloud level, which were numbered according to the altitudes they attained – except in England where there never was a "highest cloud."

The Overseas Development Group of The University of East Anglia is promoting their five-day course *East Anglia and the 20th Century American Presence*. Course dates are July 18 – 25, 2005. The course is open to everyone and their experienced staff and professional speaker line-up make this one of the premier events of the summer. For info call tel +44 1603 592340 or check their website at: <http://www.odg.uea.ac.uk/summer/course2htm>

The Duxford B-17 *Sally B* is the only flying Flying Fortress in the U. K. and, in notes from William Bergner, Norman Feltwell, 95th BG, and Bill Varnedoe, 385th BG President, the aircraft was stood down for the 60th Anniversary of VE Day celebration in Southampton. Apparently

Parliament added an additional cost to the insurance coverage for the flight – over \$1900 dollars – and the bomber was not able to take part in the events. Several fighter a/c did participate. For information on the *Sally B* and the full story check out their website: [http://sallyb.dcservices.com/news\\_frameset.php](http://sallyb.dcservices.com/news_frameset.php)

Notice is made of a generous contribution to help with expenses and programs of the Historical Society made recently by member Dale Cannon. For those who wish to follow suit, amounts may be sent in to our 8th AF HS office at P.O. Box 1787, Savannah GA 31402. All amounts contributed for the good of the order are deeply appreciated and they are tax deductible.

Things must be put into perspective. A billion is a difficult number to comprehend. A billion seconds ago it was 1959. A billion minutes ago Jesus was alive. A billion hours ago our ancestors were living in the Stone Age. A billion days ago no one walked on two feet on earth. And a billion dollars lasts 8 hours and 20 minutes at the rate our government spends it.

George Epperson, 8th AFHS and Director of the Retirees office at March AFB, California, reports the recent inactivation of the 730th Airlift Squadron. The 730th was originally one of the squadrons of the 452nd Bomb Group at Deopham Green in England. The Airlift Squadron



Lt. Col. Michael Fortanas, 730th Airlift Squadron Commander

at March flew C-141 Starlifter aircraft for 37 years and is presently scheduled to surface again at Elmendorf AFB, Alaska. Retirement ceremonies, with comments from Commander Lt. Col. Michael Fortanas and the sheathing of the unit's guidon, followed a formal presentation and the playing of Taps.

8th AF News back-issues are available. Call Connie at 1-912-748-8884 or email [eafhs@hotmail.com](mailto:eafhs@hotmail.com) to order.



## Book Reviews

### FOR GREAT SUMMER READING!

Here are a number of recently published books written by and about our 8th Air Force vets. These brief reviews give just hints at what awaits inside for the reader. Reviews are by the 8th AF News editor and further information can be obtained through the contact info provided with each. Have a great 8th summer!

#### JIMMY STEWART

##### Bomber Pilot by Starr Smith

Starr Smith was an intelligence officer with the 453rd Bomb Group during the war. One of his duties was to stay close to Stewart and protect him from the media. He has the inside track on actor Jimmy Stewart's wartime career, much of which the private and modest Stewart did not even disclose to his family.

Jimmy flew 20 missions as a B-24 pilot who was also a Squadron Commander. Author Smith follows the Academy Award winner movie star's path from his duty as a private on guard duty during the Pearl Harbor attack to the top ranks of leadership in the war over Germany. Stewart flew with the 445th Bomb Group at Tienham and then moved over to Old Buckenham with the 453rd BG, serving under Group CO Lt. Col. Ramsay Potts.

Smith's book – just released – gives the reader an intimate look at a part of Jimmy Stewart's career through interviews with family members and with those who served with the actor. The book compiles a broad examination of previous historical documentation available and adds new and authoritative looks at this American Hero's career.

Starr Smith, who now lives in Montgomery, Alabama, has a long and active career as an author and researcher. His 224-page hardcover volume, with its foreword by Walter Cronkite, includes 64 photographs and is available from Zenith Press for \$21.95. Barnes and Noble Booksellers promotes this book as one of their featured selections.

#### NEVER GIVE UP

##### A biography of Thomas L. Thomas by Cheryl Price

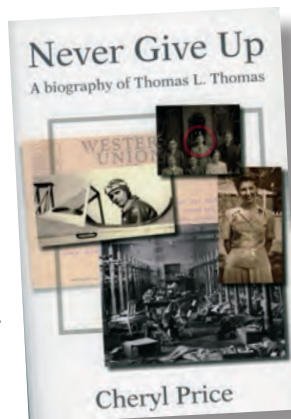
Known more recently as a leader



with the 96th Bomb Group Association and active in the 8th AF Historical Society, Tom Thomas served at Snetterton Heath as the navigator of the B-17 The Chief. Author Price relates his story of his wartime training and missions.

Hit on a mission to Berlin on 8 May 1944, the Niswonger crew, with Tom Thomas as navigator, bailed out of the fiery Flying Fortress. Tom was wounded by the flak burst and saw his airplane explode just after he jumped. His remaining days of the war were spent as a POW in Stalag Luft III, Sagan, Germany. His return home and marriage to Marie, who had stayed by his side during the war years, are well documented – a war story of combat and personal trials, successfully overcome by an 8th airmen of World War II.

The 204-page volume includes personal photos and a bibliography. Info is at: iUniverse, Inc. 2021 Pine Lake Road, Suite 100, Lincoln NE 68512. [www.iuniverse.com](http://www.iuniverse.com)



#### UNTOLD VALOR

##### Hidden History of the Air War Over Europe in World War II by Rob Morris

Rob Morris' book is one for those who are familiar with the stories of airmen in World War II; those who have read numbers of books relating the stories and exploits of combat crewmen of the 8th Air Force and are familiar with their contents. Morris set

out to write a different type of book. He pays tribute to those who flew and fought and to those who did not return, but in searching out material for his chapters, he focused

on those experiences that related the human experience, the unusual untold tales, tales not found in other published works, tales of the human spirit. Morris spent five years traveling the country researching this volume.

There are fifteen distinct chapters in Morris' book. The stories range from Jewish fliers over Nazi Germany and Jewish POWs in Germany; the competition between the 91st BG's *Memphis Belle* and the 303rd BG's *Hell's Angels* to be the first to complete a 25-mission tour; individual stories of ball turret gunners, and those who wound up in Sweden and Switzerland. The photo section includes Then and Now photographs; the Introduction is by noted author Ian Hawkins.

This noticeably different 294-page book is soft-back and available from Xlibris Corporation, tel 1-888-795-4274; online at [www.Xlibris.com](http://www.Xlibris.com); email: [Orders@Xlibris.com](mailto:Orders@Xlibris.com).

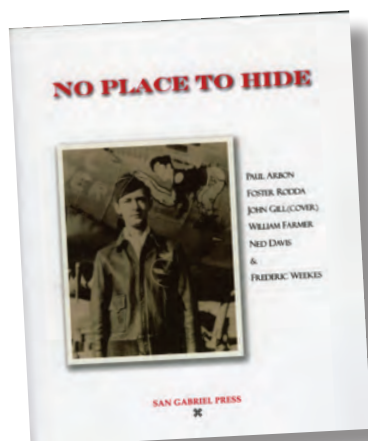


#### NO PLACE TO HIDE by Frederic Weekes

Here is another unusual and fascinating book – with a premise that works well. Each recalling missions in their own chapters are five airmen who flew in heavy bombers early in the war. The airmen have many pages to relate details of his wartime experiences, ones that normally would not make it into print.



## Book Reviews



Following these presentations, there is a 20-page treatise on Strategic Bombing, followed by eleven biographical sketches of notables such

as the 8th's Carl "Tooey" Spaatz, Arthur "Bomber" Harris, Ira C. Eaker, and early fliers Henry Trenchard, William Mitchell, and Henry "Hap" Arnold.

You get to see aviation and the bombing war with a lot of different looks here. Flying and war from a myriad of perspectives. An extensive section on fighter roles rounds out the book, but author Weekes saves a fascinating surprise for a great finish: The original typewritten paper by Capt. Claire L. Chennault – of future Flying Tigers fame – entitled *The Role of Defensive Pursuit – 1933* is reproduced, 41 pages in all. It's about fighters. A treat well worth the price of the volume.

Photographs appear for emphasis throughout the 331-page softback large-format book, available from San Gabriel Press, P.O. Box 40279, Pasadena CA 91114. website: [www.sangabrielpress.com](http://www.sangabrielpress.com) or may be ordered through usual bookseller outlets.

### **THE WARLORDS** **Volume 1** **The 4th, 20th, & 55th Fighter Groups** **by Barry & Ann Money**

*The Warlords* is one of those unusual books that fulfills its premise. There are over 500 color profiles of fighter aircraft here in volume #1, with more to be depicted in upcoming

volumes. The goal - and the Moneys are well on their way - is to reproduce in color accurate depictions of every fighter aircraft flown by pilots of the 8th Air Force in World War II. Group and Squadron markings as well as nose artwork and individual tail numbers are in full color for each airplane. It's nice to see the spinners in their natural reds and yellows. The only black and white in this book is the text material and the period photos of fliers and ground crews.

On each page, at the bottom, is a full description of the aircraft shown

and information about their pilots. It emphasizes the lesser-known fact that a large number of 8th Air Force fighter pilots went down during the war. A fighter could be a powerfully dangerous machine. The 8x11 160-page softback includes an Appendix listing each pilot of

each Group and his airplane markings.

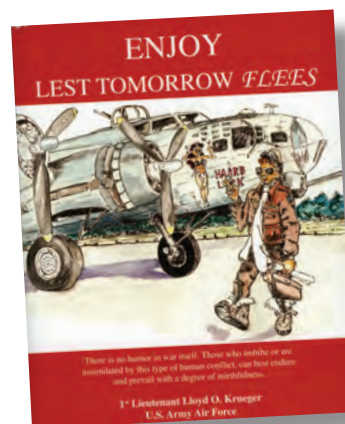
Specialty Press at 1-800-895-4585 can get you a copy, listed at \$29.95 + \$4.95 s&h. Their website is: [www.specialtypress.com](http://www.specialtypress.com). In the UK: email: [beketley@dircon.co.uk](mailto:beketley@dircon.co.uk)

### **ENJOY** **LEST TOMORROW FLEES** **by Lloyd O. Kreuger, U. S. Army Air Force**

Read this one to get a true feeling of tell-it-like-it-was war experiences, many humorous – because there was a lot of stress-relieving humor back then – many morbidly light-hearted; all interesting to the reader. Author Kreuger, who flew as a lead navigator for the 95 th Bomb Group, is on his third book here. This one is hard to beat.

He teaches you things about flying: Walking the Ramp, how to effect a Spin, Lead Navigation, airbase mascots, Madam Tussaud, London

Cabbies and their tricks of their trade, Blackouts for the Piccadilly

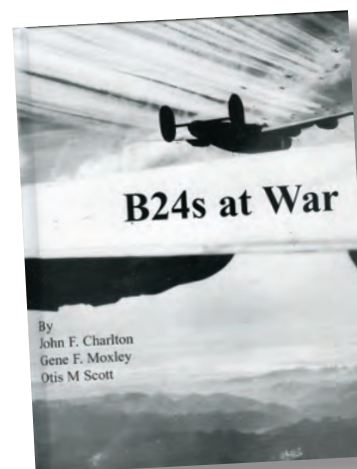


Commandoes and *their* tricks of their trade, trips to (over) Berlin, and there is included a special tribute to those who served as ground crews.

This book's been published for longer than some others, but it's still findable, and still very enjoyable. Try Trafford Publishing at tel-888-232-4444 or email: [sales@trafford.com](mailto:sales@trafford.com) – OR just call Lloyd at 608-445-9834 email: [lkreuger@tds.net](mailto:lkreuger@tds.net). Good Luck.

### **B-24s AT WAR** **by John Charlton and Gene Moxley**

As part of the 55 th Bomb Wing, the 465 th and 464 th Bomb Group runways lay adjacent to each other. As one of the last Groups to go over to Italy the 465 th BG flew their first mission with the 15 th Air Force on 5 May 1944 and by Mission #191 the unit had built up an impressive bombing record. For those who want a factual understanding of what a Bomb Group bombing Germany from bases to the south, this book supplies the



## Book Reviews

facts.

Each mission is described day by day, with target descriptions and bombing results included. The Group went to heavily-defended oil refineries and to crowded marshalling yards. They hit a number of Airdromes and other military targets. This is B-24 action. A special section depicts details of enemy fighter activity during the last year of the war.

The book is dedicated to Group Commander Col. Charles Clark, the Group's first CO.

The book is relatively thin at 62 pages, but is large 8x11 format hard-back and is packed full of information. Call author Charlton at tel 919-383-1010 - email: [jdc@CharltonCorp.com](mailto:jdc@CharltonCorp.com) to obtain a copy. The book is \$24.95 and includes shipping.

### **AN EMOTIONAL GAUNTLET** **From Life in Peacetime America to the War in European Skies** **by Stuart J. Wright**

Well documented and well-written, this 334-pager tells a number of stories. Centered on the training and combat days of 453rd Bomb Group navigator of the B-24 *Corky*, *Burgundy Bombers* Donald Lawry, life in the 4353rd at the time of Commander Ramsay Potts, Andy Low and Jimmy Stewart. Stewart's effect on the morale of the 453rd and his example as a top combat pilot are depicted in this volume's pages.

*Corky*, which also appeared on the transom of Lawry's boat years later, went down during Big Week of March 6, 1944. For an extended time after



receiving the Missing In Action telegram from the War department, Don's family did not know if he was alive, but they finally received word that he was seen in a photograph of a Stalag POW publication.

The story features stories of Fighters and their exploits and is replete with photos, including those of the Homecoming of the Jack Nortridge crew and their reunions. Comments from crew bombardier Bill Eagleson emphasize the close relationship of Lawry and the rest of the crew. Check this fine book out at Pen and Sword Books Ltd, 47 Church St. Barnsley, South Yorkshire S70 2AS email [enquiries@pen-and-sword.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@pen-and-sword.co.uk) or on the web at: [www.pen-and-sword.co.uk](http://www.pen-and-sword.co.uk)

### **SOMETHING WILL COME ALONG** **by Malcolm Lawrence**

Malcolm Lawrence, a radio operator/gunner with the 94th Bomb Group at Bury St. Edmunds has written an enjoyable autobiography entitled *Something Will Come Along: Witty*

*Memoirs of a Foreign Service Officer with Nine Children.* Some of Lawrence's World War II adventures were carried in our December 2001 issue.

In his new 216-page hardback book, Malcolm tells of his youth in Washington, D.C., his days as a drummer in the Swing Era, his wartime experiences in the 8th Air Force, his marriage and days of college, and the adventures of his family as they prepared for and experienced living abroad. Other aspects of Malcolm Lawrence's diplomatic career include his visits with the Queen of England and his building a school in Switzerland.

Lawrence's story entertains from beginning to end and allows readers a chance to relate and relive their own life stories. For further information call the author at 301-652-4962 or write him at 3807 Taylor Street, Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815.





# BULLETIN BOARD

## JANE RUSSELL STILL KNOWS HOW TO THRILL HER AUDIENCE

Legendary movie star Jane Russell wowed the 215 attendees at the 24th Annual Regional Reunion of the Second Air Division of Southern California on February 26th at the Phoenix Club in Anaheim, California. Mr. Russell said she couldn't hear or see as well as used to but she could still sing and dance, then went over to the piano and sang an old favorite, "It Had to be You!"



**Jane Russell**

Added to Jane Russell's guest appearance, was a talk by an inspirational speaker, Vi Cowden, Women's Air Force Service Pilot (WWII) WASP, one of 1078 women out of 25,000 who applied to earn her wings and go on to fly 19 different kinds of airplanes during WWII.

The committee that planned the event were: Dick Baynes, 466th; Chairman; Bud Chamberlain, 489th;

Malcolm Dike, 466th; Julian Ertz, 44th; Amador Espinosa, 445th; John Rowe, 448th; and J. Fred Thomas, 392nd and founder of this annual reunion 24 years ago.



Head table at the 24th Annual Regional Reunion of the Second Air Division of Southern California

Seated l to r: Master of Ceremonies, Academy Award winning Director Delbert Mann, 467th & 491st; Movie Star Jane Russell; friend of Jane Norma Day; Scott Cowden; speaker Vi Cowden (WASP).

Standing l to r: Chairman, Dick Baynes, 466th, Edward Royce, Sr., Congressman Edward Royce.

## HISTORICAL SOCIETY TO HELP FUND THE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Members of the 8 th AF HS will be an important part of developing the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum 's Oral History Project. With consultation and advice of museum President/CEO C. J. Roberts, the annual Fund Drive will be directed to assistance of Dr. Vivian Rogers-Price's years of work with oral and video recording of veterans of the 8 th .

Money donated to this drive will be used to archive and make accessible to researchers, historians and families details of particular stories recorded on the lengthy tapes. Computer technology such as that in the newly dedicated Harry D. Gobrecht Family Research Room will help in retrieving special topical information of practically any subject, missions, and crews of the 8 th Air Force during WWII. Gobrecht's extensive 303 rd BG archives are now in place and already are being used for research. The Oral History project will be used in a similar manner.

The initial thrust of the 8 th AF HS fund drive will be seen on the annual dues mailout statements this fall, but contributions may be sent to our national office at any time. The office address appears in the first column of the masthead – page 2 – of this issue 8th AF News.

## THE NATIONAL WWII MEMORIAL

The WWII Registry of Remembrances was initiated for veterans who saw service during the war. But in addition, the Registry includes: The National Archives list of those killed in service; the names of those buried in American Battle Monuments Commission overseas WWII cemeteries; and, the names of those listed on ABMC Tablets of the Missing. The Registry is online for all to use; web site is: [www.wwiimemorial.com](http://www.wwiimemorial.com). If you have not yet registered I urge you to do it soon. Deceased veterans' families can also honor their family veteran on the Registry. If you do not have a computer you can call (800) 639-4992.

Jack Keller Sr., 486th BG  
Belleair Bluffs, FL



# BULLETIN BOARD

## VETERANS ADMINISTRATION OUTPATIENT MEDICAL CARE ELIGIBILITY

The Veteran's Benefits and Services Act of 1988 (100-322) provides for a number of outpatient medical care services to qualified veterans.

Without limitations: to service-connected disabilities; for any disability of 50% or more service-connected disabled veteran; to former Prisoners of War regardless of length of captivity – including medications, eyeglasses and prostheses; to any veteran whose annual income is less than the pension rate of the veteran.

Various other categories and percentages may also apply: WW I or Mexican Border period vets; aid for

housebound pension recipients; any of over 16 medical conditions which are extensions of prisoner conditions; nursing home assistance; dependents of former POWs rated 30% disability or more burial benefits up to \$2000. There are many others.

Veterans now do not have to prove they were Combat Veterans – their statements of fact must be accepted, according to VA Regulation 38CFR 3.304(d). Carl Fyler, 303rd BG pilot and a POW for 510 days during the war, suggests checking into possible benefits available to 8th airmen. Carl has spent decades as an advocate for veterans' benefits. He says to contact your local or national Veterans Administration offices.

## AIRBASE IN ENGLAND LACKS A MEMORIAL PLAQUE

Connie Richards, 8th AF Historical Society Contact person in the UK recently arranged a display of 8th Air Force Memorabilia at Millon Ernest Hall, one of the few remaining air-bases which does not have a memorial plaque honoring those who served there during the war. Glenn Miller resided there for some time in 1944.

Connie is the British contact for Millon Ernest Station 506 and would be able to arrange the details for a proper tribute. She would like to hear from anyone stationed there who might be interested in helping get a plaque for the base, now a residential home.

She notes that the recent display is the first time in 60 years that American uniforms have been seen there. Connie's contact information may be found in the inside front cover of this 8th AF News.



## BIG EVENTS UPCOMING AT GENESEO, NEW YORK, AIRPORT

The 1941 Historical Aircraft Group Museum is looking forward to a big summer and invites everyone to take part. The Memories USO Show will be held Saturday **June 18th, 2005** with food and bar available. The Show and dance will be reminiscent of USO shows which toured the airbases of WWII – everyone is encouraged to wear wartime period outfits.

The museum's premier event of the year is the Geneseo Air Show to be held July 9-10. This year's show theme is the History of Flight, celebrating the 65th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. An RAF Hurricane

fighter, a Spitfire and a German Me 109 will participate in the event. Many other warbirds and classic aircraft will arrive on July 8th. Transportation from parking lots to the gates, which open at 6:00 AM, will be available all three days. The Air Shows on the 9th and 10th will be from 10AM to 4PM.

Numerous events will be held throughout the summer – the museum is open from 10 in the morning to 4 in the afternoon, seven days a week. A special day will occur on Sunday, September 11th with a Chicken BBQ/ Corn Roast and Hangar Flying in the museum's vintage aircraft hangar, Rt. 63 west of Geneseo NY.

For information call 585-243-2100 or check [www.1941hag.org](http://www.1941hag.org) email: [office@1941hag.org](mailto:office@1941hag.org)



# BULLETIN BOARD

## 2005 THUNDERBIRDS SCHEDULE

### JULY

2 Tinker AFB, OK  
3-4 Battle Creek, MI  
9-10 Pittsburgh, PA  
11-17 Dayton, OH  
23-24 Terre Haute, IN  
27 Cheyenne, WY  
30-31 McChord AFB, WA

### AUGUST

13-14 Abbotsford, BC  
20-21 Chicago, IL  
27-28 Westfield ARB, MA  
30-31 Atlantic City, NJ

### SEPTEMBER

3-5 Cleveland, OH  
10-11 Portland, OR  
16-17 Reno, NV  
18 Mountain Home, ID  
24-25 Fort Worth, TX

### OCTOBER

1-2 Salinas, CA  
8-9 Little Rock, AR  
16-17 Travis AFB, CA  
22-23 NAS New Orleans, LA  
26 Guatemala  
29-30 El Salvador

### NOVEMBER

2 Acapulco  
5-6 Randolph AFB, TX  
12-13 Nellis AFB, NV



## B-24 STAMP APPROVED

The US Postal Service will issue a B-24 stamp, July 14, 2005. It will be one of 10 aircraft in a sheet labeled, "American Advances in Aviation." The B-24 on the stamp is an 8th Air Force, 466th Bomb Group plane called, "Black Cat," the last B-24 to be shot down over Europe and featured in the book, "Wings of Morning," by Thomas Childers. A B-17 stamp was issued several years ago in a sheet labeled, "Classic American Aircraft."

Dick Baynes, 466th BG



## PEP TALK GIVEN BY VETERAN OF EIGHTH TO AUGUST GROUP

F. C. 'Hap' Chandler, 491st BG, recently spoke to the Piedmont Chapter Sons of the American Revolution in Alpharetta, Georgia. His talk focused on the Mighty Eighth and the continuing educational programs being conducted locally and across the country by 8th veterans.

Hap says, "This was really a live wire bunch! We had a great time, and at the close they presented a check to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum to fund Curriculum Guides to local schools."

Presenting the check to Hap is Integrity Bank President Steve Skow.



# Taps



**Emily Harper**  
American Red Cross  
Kentucky

**Fesmire, Dr. Robert**, Nashville TN; 801st/492nd Carpetbaggers B-24 pilot; flew clandestine and nighttime missions for the O.S.S. dropping secret agents into the European continent and the North sea countries; author *Flight of a Maverick*; career as dentist in Nashville  
**Russell, Robert**, Houston TX; 490th BG  
**Mezera, Frank**; from his wife Irene  
**Showers, Hugh**, Bradenton FL; 356th FG  
 Grice, John, Washington PA  
**Turner, Gale**, Toledo OH; from his wife Virginia  
**Knox, Peter**, Allentown PA; B-17 pilot; flew C-119s in Korean War; member of Warbirds of America and taught formation flying in T-38 jets for airshows including Oshkosh; National Ski patroller for 30 years and flew volunteer missions as pilot for Airlife Line  
**Wilding, Ray**, Connelville PA; 352nd BG navigator; B-17 shot down over Berlin; POW; from

Michael Prestia  
**Mitchell, Charles**, Drexel Hill PA; 351st BG  
**Hinteremeier, Paul**, Derby NY; 95th BG  
**Robinson, Arthur**, Sherwood TN; 447th BG; career as US Postal Service Postmaster; Tennessee Chapter  
**Cloftelter, Otis**, Lilburn GA; 384th BG  
**Luber, Vernon**, Biloxi MS; 7th Photo Recon Gp  
**Luber, Elsa**, Biloxi MS; HS member wife, deceased 2003, of Vernon Luber; from their son Eric  
**Hill, Robert**; R/O on B-17  
*Karen W*, Ivan Woodburn crew; shot down on mission 23; all POWs except for three crewmembers who were hanged by the Germans upon their capture

**Salisbury, Major Gen. Arthur**, Colorado Springs CO; led 57th FG in battle on the "Palm Sunday Massacre" during which 76 German transport planes and 13 fighters were shot down; shot down himself, three times  
**Gee, Wayne**; 379th BG B-17 pilot; long-time active member Colorado Chapter  
**Hubbell, Franklin "Bud"**, Knoxville TN; 446th BG B-24 pilot; played in football Sugar and Orange Bowls and three years with the Los Angeles Rams – 1947 NFL Championship game; appeared in movie *Easy Living* with Victor Mature and Lucille Ball; hosted radio show *Hold That Line*; lifetime interest in sports organizations; from friend Hank Barker  
**Lewis, Jay**, Green Valley AZ; 452nd BG B-17 pilot; played football for Univ of New Mexico in the 1939 Sun Bowl  
**Green, Percy**, Nashville TN; 7th Photo Recon pilot; three bronze stars and the DFC for his missions

to photograph enemy installations  
**Bruce, Sidney**, Nashville TN; Commanding Officer of 1st Weather Reconnaissance Squadron, tracking weather conditions between Newfoundland, Iceland, and Scotland – the Northern Route flown by numerous 8th AF crews; career in US atomic energy program developing offensive and defensive nuclear weapons - the "Mayor of ground zero" during the Cold War; later 8 years in the Pentagon; Exec to Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff; a lifetime devotion to his 'Heavenly Commander'

**Kitowski, Vincent, M. D.**, Houston TX; 301st BG 8th AF; volunteer physician during Viet Nam War specializing in Rehabilitation; Baylor Medical College professor  
**Capriotti, John**, Houston TX; 335th BG 30 missions; from Al Lea

**Mason, Francis**, Kingwood TX; 95th BG; served in North African campaigns; enjoyed long service as Santa Claus at local schools  
**Evans, Oren "Chick"**, Bakersfield CA; 381st BG flt engineer; from crewmate Neil Perry  
**Hutton, Iredell**, Burlington NC; 36th Bomb Squadron tailgunner; 54 missions specifically aimed at fouling up German Radar detection. His Squadron's logo was RAFU – Radar All Fouled Up. Served with Community service programs; traveled in his career as theater management and his love of Big Band Music.

From his son  
**Stephen Hutton Peet, Clyde**, Frederick MD; 388th BG from





# Taps

neighbor Frederick Biggs, 486th BG

**Lane, Harold**, Sonoma CA; 389th BG copilot on Walter Kedron's crew; 30 missions with no aborts; from crew navigator Bob McCormack, who also includes to the Society a thoughtful remembrance gift of his friend Hal

**Thompson, Leonard**, Oregon City OR; 401st BG tailgunner on the K. D. Speer crew; long career as building contractor; from crew navigator Robert Simon

**Woodruff, Dwight**, Loveland CO; 303rd BG on the Bernard Fontana crew; from niece Denise Barber

**Sullivan, James**; 361st FG pilot

**Pitassi, Michael**; 361st BG; from B. J. Redden, Scty 361st FGA

**Souder, Lee**, Higginsville MO; 303rd BG, Robert Sheets crew; from Richard Mueller

**McGibany, Darrell**, Alton IL; Mighty 8th AF Museum in Savannah designated for memorials - from his wife Mona

**Devine, Joseph**, Temple Hills MD

**Agnon, Robert**, Kirkwood MO

**Nelson, Rudolph**, Marion IA; 95th BG

**Newman, Robert**, Soddy-Daisy TN; 466th Bg

**Rygiel, Frank**, Lakewood NJ; 486th BG

**Caudle, Morris "Morrie"**, Fresno CA; 492nd BG engineer/gunner; crewman on post-war Midget auto racers and at the Indianapolis 500 for 15 years; career with Ford Motor Co.

**Dueholm, Clifford**, St. Paul MN; 305th BG

**Everhart**, Kansas City MO; Missouri Chapter

**Lux, Kenneth**, St. Joseph MO; Missouri Chapter

**Rakes, Allen**, Kansas City Missouri Chapter

**Davis, Lionell**, Ripley OH; 447th BG crew chief of Virginia Lee II

**Kantor, Emil**, Vancouver WA; career USAF

Wheeler Lipes, New Bern NC; pharmacist's mate aboard submarine *USS Seadragon*. Lipes, then age 22, performed an emergency appendectomy on boatmate Darrel Dean Rector 120 feet beneath the South China Sea surface, saving the sailor's life.

There was no doctor on board and the sub was a week away from a port. He had witnessed the operation once before as a lab technician and used bent spoons for incision retractors, gauze pads for ether anesthesia, and alcohol from torpedoes and ground sulfa pills for sterilization. The procedure took 2 1/2 hours and Rector returned to duty in two weeks. His successful feat became one of the famous life-saving stories of the war.

Wheeler Lipes had a post-war career as a hospital administrator, receiving belated honors for his actions two months before his death. Burial is at Arlington National Cemetery.



**George, John**, Las Cruces NM; 92nd BG

**McCrea, William John**, Doylestown PA; 91st BG; from his wife Audrey

**Anderson, Robert**, Moreno Valley CA; 100th BG; from his daughter Karen

**Zunic, William**, Youngstown OH; 96th BG; from his wife Edna

**Griggs, W.C.**, Americus GA; B-17 navigator; POW; Purple Heart

**Maag, Robert**, Cleveland OH; 94th BG B-17 pilot; war injuries from flak caused him to lose one eye, but did not prevent him from establishing a very successful Bindery business post-war; from Joan Peterson

**Sessions, Keith**, Portland OR; 452nd BG copilot; Oregon Chapter; from Joe Conroy

**Groomes, C. Berl "C.B."**, Export PA; 486th BG

navigator; captain Carnegie Mellon

Institute football Tartans; career in

architecture; private pilot in EAA and active in Yachting; from his wife Lois: "C. B. so enjoyed the 8th AF News and appreciated reading about the past efforts of the Mighty Eighth, and of its present endeavors."

**Warburton, Arlis**, Tucson AZ; 303rd BG tailgunner; 35 missions on Schlecht's crew; from Gary Moncur

## Charles E. "Chuck" Glover

A fine friend of many, Charles Glover served in the Navy in the Pacific on the *USS Rocky Mount*, a floating amphibious Command Center. Japanese kamikazes were a frequent occurrence for his ship, which took part in five amphibious landings. His post-war college degree and subsequent career was in Journalism and in 1959 he became Managing Editor of the Dayton Daily News. Chuck's career with Cox Enterprises continued throughout his life,



C. B. Groomes

## Taps



**POW/MIA Remembrance Setting**

becoming President and in charge of the Newspaper Division, serving as Editor-In-Chief of Cox Newspapers.

He continued to write stories and for four years in the 1990's wrote numerous articles as a weekly series, carried in over 600 news publications, on WWII American troop actions in the war. Chuck was a valuable member of the Board of Directors of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum for over five years and was the force ensuring the completion of the museum's new special exhibit *Fly Girls of WWII*. This exhibit Gallery bears his name as the Charles E. Glover Gallery.

A special Memorial Service honoring his life and his contributions to American history of World War II was held in Atlanta, Georgia.



**Combat Crew of the *Green Hornet* - 2nd row: Everett Millard, standing 3rd from left.**

Millard, Everett Monrovia CA; 381st BG waistgunner on *Green Hornet 2nd*, Joseph Gallagher crew; 1st of his 34 missions: D-Day 6 June 1944; Gen. Curtis E. LeMay Chapter; from his wife June and daughter Anna Millard Rogers

Dear Folks,

I just got all of the back mail from the states. Believe me I was sure glad to get it to. We're now at our permanent base, and its not half bad. We all live in Nissen huts. One of those little houses where you can't tell where the ceiling ends and the walls start. Pin-ups all over the walls. Even have a radio. Believe it or not, we get American jive from Germany that is better than from England. There's a mouse that we've all tried to catch. Every night he gallups around and we toss shoes. I'm going to put him in the engineer's bed, if I have better aim tonight.

The food is good over here. Had steak for dinner, no green vegetables though. They only let us have three candy bars a week. Didn't think I would miss candy so much.

The beer or (Horsepiss) isn't so bad. There's a great pub on the base. My buddy just finished his missions so we tried to drink all of the suds up. Afterward we tried to ride the old plow horse again. Didn't make it, as we couldn't hold him down. Did ride him all over a couple of days ago.

I've written twice to Warren, but haven't heard from him yet. Maybe today.

Went to Cambridge one night. Now here I go asking for things - like Warren - pretty soon. Clara's got ambitious since I left, and has written a lot. Sure makes me feel good. Ida sent a picture, and I sure like it.

Well, I've kind of run out of things to say, but now that I'm stationed, I'll write more often. So - so long for now.

Love, Everett



## FACING REALITY

Instinctively, man is always in search of ways to protect himself from the pain of living. Through the ages, regardless of religion, race, or station in life, men have prayed. This seems to be an automatic response to the awareness of danger. Self-preservation is an instinct created in every creature for its own survival. Prayer becomes an enabling element that gives comfort and confidence in overcoming fear. Prayer helps an individual to realize that his help comes from beyond his own created instincts. Instinct alone, breeds fear. Prayer gives mental and spiritual power and strength to deal with and overcome fear, even the fear of death.

In 1940, during the height of the Battle of Britain, the Royal Air Force was greatly outnumbered in men and machines. The limited numbers of pilots available for combat were under-trained. Losses were high to German fighter and bomber forces. The Jerrys had combat-experienced pilots and unlimited numbers of replacements of aircraft and men. Survival for the British pilots was uncertain. "You didn't spend days moping around," reported one RAF pilot when losses were high and friends were missing or killed. Survivors would remark, "Poor old so-and so's bought it." To play down the gloomy thoughts of death, pilots in some squadrons would place money in a kitty to be kept behind the bar in the mess so their friends could toast

them on the evening of their death. Fear? Certainly! They felt there was little hope for survival.

There was always an increase in the flow of adrenalin when ten American men were assigned to fly a combat mission, in a four-engine bomber loaded with 2,700 gallons of high octane gasoline and 8,000 pounds of sensitive explosives. Acceleration was sluggish and slow as the machine tediously moved down the 6,000 foot runway straining to gain sufficient air speed to become airborne. Once in the air, the anxiety was not over as there were problems with low visibility and violent turbulence created by the prop wash of the aircraft that took off 30 seconds ahead. Once the dozens of aircraft were in combat formation, thoughts of eight hours or more over enemy territory were on everyone's mind. If providence allowed, another mission would be completed, one less mission left to be flown. There was always the question, "Will we complete this one?" Survival was the theme of the thinking of these men.

Instinctively, these men were all filled with uncertainty and fear. Fear is a condition that comes before the possibility of harm, trauma, death, or any unpleasant future event. However, prayer is the ingredient that enables one to be confident in any undertaking because no task is insurmountable. But remember to always be humble before God for no one is invincible. There are no coincidences

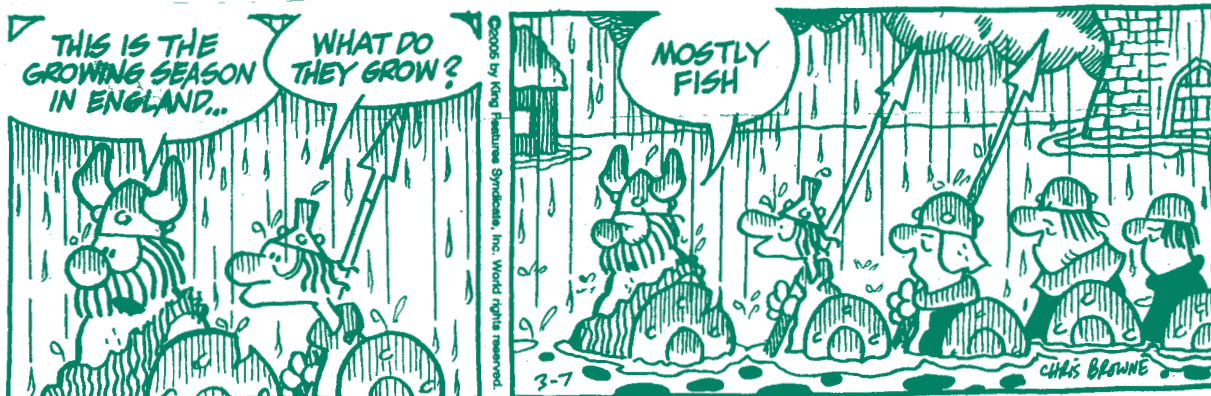
in God's plan. Everyone is a prayer in this great divine drama that was written by God, the author and creator of our lives and our destiny. When accompanied by a genuine faith in the Divine, prayer is the most powerful force in the universe. Paul the Apostle declared, "Always try to do good to each other and to everyone else. Always be joyful; keep on praying. No matter what happens always be thankful, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus."

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (NLT)



Earl Wassom

**Earl Wassom, 466th Bomb Group Chaplain, 8th AFHS**





Happy Fourth of July, 8th Air Force!

Childe Hassam 1913



Dated Material Inside

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