



8TH AF NEWS

VOLUME 05 NUMBER 3 VOICE OF THE "EIGHTH" SEPTEMBER 2005

The
Windows of



The
Chapel
of the
Fallen
Eagles



AF News

Magazine of

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

September 2005

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.

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
37 Union Common
Williamsville, NY 14221
Tel. (716) 631-0817
P51GJM@aol.com

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@att.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



Groundcrewmen surround the 91st BG's Triangle A with distinctive red paint

Inside This Issue

Cover Story.....	3-6
Presidents Message	7
Dedication - Jacob W. Fredericks ...	7
Mission Briefing	8
Dedication - Frank Decicco	9
Reflections of a Radar Mechanic .	11-12
Museum Activities.....	14-15
Continuing the 8th AF Legacy ...	22-23
Mail Call.....	24-27
Debriefing	29-31
Chapter News	33-36
Book Reviews	37
Tannoy.....	40-41
Bulletin Board	42-43
Taps.....	44-45
How About It?.....	47

COVER STORY

THE WINDOWS OF THE CHAPEL OF THE FALLEN EAGLES

It is unique in the world and it is located in the Memorial Gardens at the permanent home of The Mighty Eighth. *The Chapel of the Fallen Eagles* was built by contributions from the veterans of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society and its beautiful stained glass windows were commissioned by 8th AF Units and individuals. The Memorial Chapel was dedicated in 2000 by the 8th Air Force Historical Society and the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in honor of those 8th Air Force



The Chapel of the Fallen Eagles



The World War II 96th BG window at Quidenham Chapel, England

airmen who were killed in World War II.

After detailed research into old English chapel designs, the final chapel design was developed by Ken Spriggs Architects of Savannah and the project was headed up by Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum Board member Curtis Tarr, with assistance of the museum staff and members of the 8th AF Historical Society. Each unique window was financed individually by its sponsor, their unique designs being developed in close consultation with Bomb and Fighter Group members and with individual sponsors. Gerald Schantz and accomplished stained glass artist Jon Erickson of Aurora Glass, using materials and colors from around the world, completed the window fabrications and installation.

The original window, the first commissioned, is the double panel at the end of the main chapel aisle – one that duplicates the only stained glass window approved during the war by British Royalty to be placed in a chapel in East Anglia. The 96th Bomb Group installed their original window in the chapel in Quidenham in 1944. The Memorial chapel and especially its



The centerpiece of the chapel windows is that of the 96th Bombardment Group who duplicated their original chapel window placed in their local chapel near their airbase at Snetterton-Heath. The dedication reads: In Memory of Comrades Who Gave Their Lives in the Cause of Freedom; 1943 – 1945; *We Have Not Forgotten*; 96th Bombardment Group (H) USAAF

windows have received nationwide acclaim for their beauty and their content.

The Chapel of the Fallen Eagles is open every day and has been the locale for weddings, Christenings, Bar Mitzvahs, and memorial services for servicemen and women of the Armed Forces. All of the stained glass windows presently in the chapel are presented here, with their donor history. Contributions such as the carrillion, chapel pews, the lecturn, choir benches, lanterns, the Charles Beard Jr. Gardens and other features within the chapel will be featured in the December issue of the 8th AF News.



Abraham "Hap" Galfunt, 493rd BG, Debach England, POW Stalag Luft I, contributed the window in memory of the Jewish veterans of the Mighty Eighth. He was a copilot flying B-24s and B-17s and served on the Board of Directors, 8th AF Historical Society. The depiction of Moses with the tablet of Commandments from God is inscribed: *The Lord is My Shepherd, I Shall Not Want. Shalom.* The inset of a Stalag guardtower with barbed wire is surrounded by the inscription: *Never To Be Forgotten.*



An 8th Air Force B-17 in God's hands rises to the skies above an English Chapel and graveyard. The winged shield and scroll states the Group's proud motto: *Fait Accompli* – "the mission is complete."

The plaque of honor dedicates the impressive window: In Memory of the Men of the 457th Bomb Group Who Fought for Freedom, Not for Conquest.



A 7th Photo Reconnaissance Group P-38 and photo recon Spitfire fly above reproductions of the Group's squadron patch emblems. The Group flew over 5700 sorties from March 28, 1943 till VE Day, war's end. In the camera film scroll at the bottom of the window is inscribed: *In Honor of All 7PRG Who Served; 7th Photo Recon Group; Eyes of the Eighth; Mount Farm England*

Morning sun glows through the chapel's stained glass window of the 448th Bomb Group. Given by Mrs. Richard M. Kennedy in honor of her husband T/Sgt. R. M. Kennedy, 448th Bomb Group, 8th AAF, this window depicts the Savior cloaked in red, with hands extended in protection of the fliers of the B-24 Liberator seen above.

The plaque is inscribed in tribute: *The Liberators came with airmen brave and valiantly Kept 'em Flying.*





William Sidney Wilson was a pioneer aviator in World War I and was the uncle of window donor John Herrin. He flew the Martin bomber depicted banking in flight above a country church against bright blue skies. *In Memory of William Sidney Wilson, Pioneer Aviator, 1897 – 1998*



The floral window with dove in flight above white Calla lilies, yellow daisies, camellias, and red roses was given by Mr. And Mrs. John Herrin *In Memory of Caroline Wynn Wilson 1904 – 1998*. Caroline Wilson, a gardener, was the wife of William Wilson.



355th Fighter Group fighter airplanes, a P-51 Mustang and a P-47 Thunderbolt, fly high above Shield and insignia against a beautiful blue background. The scroll reads: *Our Might Always*. In the clouds is the emblem of the 2nd Air Division Scout Force that served at the Steeple Morden airbase. 355th Fighter Group; Steeple Morden; AAF Station 122 & 2nd Air Division Scout Force



Donated by Ms. Daisy Andrews Smith, the depiction is of a benevolent Jesus, arms uplifted towards a dove of peace, with cherubs below: *In Memory of 1st Lt. Jack W. Thrasher; 100th Bomb Group; Greater Love Hath No Man Than This, That A Man Lay Down His Life For His Friends – John 15:13; 349th Squadron, 100th Bomb Group; 9-22-21 to 3-3-45 KIA*



Front Cover Photo: From the 100th Bomb Group, a beautiful depiction of an 8th AF airman with before three B-17 bombers on a bombing mission. The Bomb Group's insignia is in the center above the scroll: *Remembering*. The memorial plaque reads: In Memory of the 100th Bomb Group Comrades Who Died In Battle

On the Back Cover: The 384th Bomb Group is honored in its window *Coming Home*, traditionally not only the return from rough missions over Germany, but also in the minds of the airmen and their families back home awaiting their return. The North sea and the White Cliffs of Dover are seen at the bottom of the B-17 heavy bomber of the 384th. American and British flags fly proudly above 384th squadron insignia and the Group shield, inscribed: *Keep the Show on the Road*.

The accompanying plaque states: This Window is Dedicated before God in Remembrance of Those Who Gave Their Lives for Freedom During World War II; 384th Bomb Group; Grafton-Underwood; 1942 – 1945



A Memorial service was held in memory of 8th Air Force leader Andrew S. Low, Jr. at the dedication of the stained glass window in his honor. Family members, representatives of the 2nd Air Division, and friends who served with him were in attendance.

Save All Who Dare the Eagle's Flight. The design was suggested by Major General Low's daughter and was sponsored by his West Point Class of 1942 and by the 453rd Bomb Group, 2nd Air Division.

The inscription reads: Dedicated In Memory of Major General Andrew S. Low, Jr., USAF; West Point Class of 1942; 453rd Bomb Group; 2nd Air Division; 8th Air Force

Judge and Mrs. Benjamin Smith, Waycross, Georgia, designed and donated a rendering of the 303rd Bomb Group's famed B-17 *Knockout Dropper* flying over a hangar at Molesworth airbase. Ben Smith completed a combat tour as a radio operator/gunner with the 360th squadron, 303rd BG and received the purple heart.

Located between an airman's Wings and a Distinguished Flying Cross medal is the inscription: *In Memory of Our Glorious Dead*; 303rd Bomb Group; Molesworth England; 1942 - 1945



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I am happy to report to the membership that the 8th Air Force Historical Society is alive and well. On September 27, we will gather in Arlington, Virginia for our 31st annual reunion. We have planned an outstanding schedule of events. The feature event will be presenting a memorial wreath at the World War II Memorial honoring our comrades who were casualties and POWs. Arlington is a magical name in our country's history. So many of our American heroes are remembered with memorials to the men and women who have defended our country in all wars.

The Board of Directors has been working hard to make our reunion a success. Unfortunately there has been a glitch with the Tuesday night reservations. Neither Armed Forces Reunions or the 8th Air Force Historical Society are responsible for this. The Sheraton National hotel sent the wrong signal to our membership regarding the room rate and the fact that

the hotel was sold out. Together we have attempted to straighten this out.

I invite our membership to come to this reunion, to enjoy the gathering of friends and family, and to participate in as many of the planned events as possible.

Sincerely,
Larry Goldstein
President 8th AFHS



Lawrence Goldstein

Larry Goldstein

BEAUTIFUL MURAL DEDICATED TO JACOB WAYNE FREDERICKS

The impressive mural depicting a typical airbase flight line in wartime England was unveiled in an evening ceremony at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum. The huge mural covers the walls near the Mission Experience feature and measures 90 by 20 feet. Its centerpiece is a rendering of Jacob Wayne Fredericks' B-17F Flying Fortress *snap! crackle! and pop!* which he piloted as a member of the first contingent to fly missions from Molesworth airbase, 303rd Bomb Group. The logo originated with the artist for Kellogg's of Battle Creek, Michigan, Omar Cook. Jake worked at Kellogg's before the war. Jake Fredericks remained in England until the end of the war, assigned to Headquarters at Elveden Hall as Plans and Operations officer.

The mural illustrates a J-type hangar and T-type hangars and some visiting P-47 fighters are parked on the ramp. It draws the viewer into the airbase life, and with the Mission Experience Nissen hut nearby, the feeling is impressive. A number of 8th veterans who have viewed it are in full agree-

ment.

The wall mural is sponsored by the Fredericks family with donations from the 356th Fighter Group and the 384th Bomb Group. During the ceremony speakers included Lew Lyle, who roomed with Jake Fredericks in the early months on the base. His stories of the early bombing efforts of the 8th and personal stories of his buddy Jake were well-received by the guests in attendance. Speakers also included Mrs. Anne Fredericks and their son William, and artist Patrick Dempsey of Savannah

Renaissance Studios, the artist group who researched and rendered the mural. At the reception following the ceremony, a number of relics, given by the residents of St. Nazaire, from the crash site of the airplane were displayed. The aircraft was shot down while being flown by another crew.

The Fredericks mural depiction will be featured in the December edition of 8th AF News. It will be used to publicize the museum and will be available on posters and notecards.



Mrs. Jacob Wayne Fredericks with her family, Maria Fredericks at left, William Fredericks and his wife Ivy. *snap! crackle! and pop!* looks on.

MISSION BRIEFING



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

It is fitting that during this 60th Anniversary of the end of World War II, the members and friends of the 8th Air Force Historical Society will have their annual reunion in the environs of the capital of our great country.

We will gather once again to enjoy the friendship of those we enjoy being with and we will pause to pay tribute to those who served in the Mighty Eighth. There will be visits to memorials throughout Washington - especially to the new memorial dedicated to those who fought in WWII. We will have ceremonies, seminars, receptions and entertainment, banquets, and memories.

Regarding the 60th anniversary and the end of the war in Japan, it has been gratifying of late, to see some of the press media print articles which explain the circumstances of the atomic bombing of Japan with a fair amount of historical accuracy and even genuine integrity. The B-29 *Enola Gay*,

flown by 8th AF pilot Paul Tibbets, is now on display at the Udvar-Hazy annex of the National Air and Space Museum near Washington. Several years back, that aircraft was the center of a proposed historically misrepresented exhibit that was to show the Japanese as prime victims of the Allied war machine. The groundswell of opposition, led by a number of American veterans organizations, negated that inappropriate display and precipitated the firing of the Smithsonian's director.

Our 8th AFHS members can take pride that the true story of German, Japanese and Italian aggression in the war is accurately presented at our 8th Air Force Museum in Savannah - exhibitry which will remain as a permanent display for all younger generations to see. We can't leave a better legacy than to tell future generations the story of the accomplishments of the Mighty Eighth.

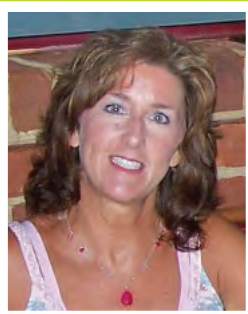
I look forward to being at our reunion and hope to see you in attendance. If you can't make it to Washington, look for a big report on the reunion events in the December issue, 8th AF News!

Walter Brown, Editor
8th AF News

BEHIND THE SCENES

I'm happy to announce The 2006 Mighty Eighth Air Force Calendar is currently in printing production as we print this magazine. The 8th calendar is 17 x 11 and is packed full of A-2 flying jackets from January's *Heaven Sent* 100th BG, (with Varga Girl) to December's *Punchy Powell's* 352nd Fighter Group A-2 Jacket.

We've spent several months with the layout/design while working closely with Walt Brown to include top quality photos of A-2 jackets, detailed information, great photos of 8th Bombers, Fighters and crew members.



Donna Neely

For your advanced copy of The 2006 Mighty Eighth Air Force Calendar, please contact: Turner Publishing Company www.turnerpublishing.com or call 1.800.788.3350.

Please fax or email your suggestions for the 2007 calendar.

Alpha Graphic Consultants
2090 Cairo Bend Road Lebanon, TN 37087
donna_neely@msn.com
Fax: 615.453.2343

Sincerely, Donna Neely & Telisha Gaines



Telisha Gaines

UNIT AND CHAPTER COMMITTEE

2006 REUNION

The 2006 Historical Society reunion will be Oct. 4 through Oct. 8, 2006. It will be held at Isle of Capri Casino, Bossier City, LA near Barksdale Air Force Base, Headquarters of the current 8th Air Force. Now you do not have any excuse for scheduling your Unit or Chapter reunion in 2006 that interferes with these dates.

TO ALL NEWSLETTER EDITORS

If you, as the newsletter editor for your Unit or Chapter, would like to exchange newsletters with other editors please contact the Committee through the Chairman. The Committee will compile a list and send it to those who wish to be on the exchange list.

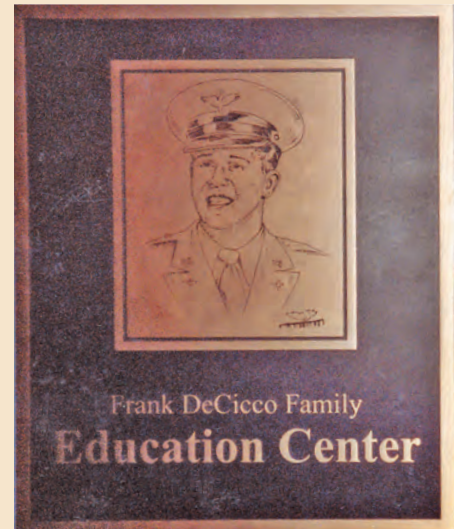
Jim Erskine, Committee Chairman

FRANK DECICCO FAMILY EDUCATION CENTER DEDICATED IN HONOR OF 303rd BOMB GROUP AIRMAN



Frank DeCicco

Frank DeCicco of Houston, Texas, flew with the 303rd Bomb Group as a waist gunner during the war. For several decades, Frank was active in 8th Air Force activities and served on the Board of Trustees of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum. His sponsorship of the educational guide book and videos *Honoring America's Past* allowed the Museum and Prentice Hall Publishers reach over 15,000 classrooms across the country with instructional materials and books telling of the history and character values embodied by those who served in the Eighth.



This past May, his family and supporters of the museum gathered to dedicate the Frank DeCicco Family Education Center Classroom. The museum's acclaimed education program at the museum reaches over 14,000 grade-school students each year in a formal education curriculum that teaches the story of the Mighty Eighth. School buses and dozens of smiling enthusiastic schoolchildren are seen every weekday at the museum facility.

After the ceremonies and ribbon-cutting, tours of the facility and an evening reception was held. Mrs. Jean DeCicco and their daughters, all of whom have careers as educators, have arranged funding that ensures that the museum's educational initiatives will be carried on into the future as permanent programs.



Judge Ben Smith, M/Gen William P. Bland, Jr., Jean DeCicco, Angela DeCicco Voss, Maj/Gen Lewis E. Lyle (Founder of Mighty Eighth AF Museum) & Gary Voss at ribbon cutting of the Frank DeCicco Family Education Center dedication ceremony May 20, 2005.

A military pilot called the Tower for a priority landing because his single-engine jet fighter was "running a bit peaked." Air Traffic Control told the fighter jock that he was number two, behind a B-52 that had one engine shut down. "Ah," the fighter pilot remarked, "The dreaded seven-engine approach."

submitted by Al Lea

LETTER RETURNED TO SENDER IN EAST ANGLIA AFTER SIXTY YEARS



Mabel, Jonny, and the letter

Jonny Fridell was a young American airman stationed at Hardwick Airfield near Long Stratton as a ground crew member with the 93rd Bomb Group during the war. Mabel Fairhead was a young girl of eleven, living with her family on a farm near the airfield.

Mabel wrote letters to several of the 8th Air Force men as a means of learning how to write well, and to let the airman know that the British people appreciated their efforts in the war. One of her letters was returned to her recently, in the hands of its recipient, Jonny Fridell, now 80 years old. He was attending a celebration of the 60th anniversary of VE Day with fourteen other 8th veterans and decided to track her down. To his surprise, she still lived at her same address in Norfolk, under her married name, Mabel Locke. Jonny recalled, "Mabel's mother helped us with our laundry and occasionally sold us some fresh eggs – a special treat during those hard times. When I left England, Mabel asked for my address and

she wrote me a letter, that I have saved for these 60 years." Mabel was overwhelmed by the surprise visit.

The return to England trip was organized by Colin Mann, a Friend of the 2nd Air Division Memorial and culminated with a wreath-laying at the airfield. He states, "They all have got amazing stories. What they did for our country through the war was incredible and the bonds of friendship they made here are strong. There have been quite poignant emotions these four days."

With Fridell on the trip were Sam Harris, a lead bombardier with the 93rd BG and Bill Sargent, whose father, William Rueckert, died in a B-24 crash at the airfield when Bill was only two years old.

In addition to replying to his wartime pen pal in person, Jonny is on the go in the States. On his recent visit to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum with his wife, he dropped by the Historical Society's office and when he left, had become a full-fledged original 8th veteran member of the Society.

IN BROAD DAYLIGHT

Along the perimeter on a Spring day
I stopped and talked to Mr. Porter
Who was burning leaves not far from
The entrance to the Briefing Hall.

You used to go through those doors,
He said, smiling at me
I'd hear you boys taking off at first light
Sometimes I'd be in the back garden

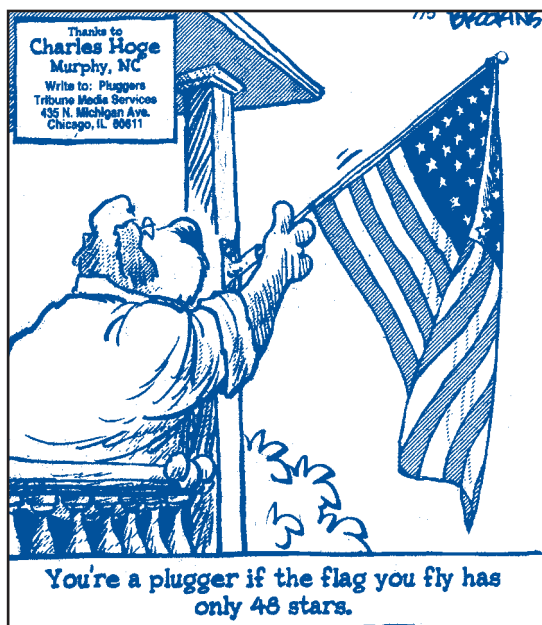
I'd watch you with the Mrs. and the kids
Landing late in the afternoon.
You were something, even though your
Planes were mortally wounded

You made your way back, soon you'd be
In the air again. Let me tell you, I see
You Americans when I go to London.
Sometimes you look a bit down, a bit low

As if you didn't remember who you were
When you were here. I remember when your planes
Were still flying, and you boys, you
Were the best, magnificent.

Don't ever forget that,
Mr. Porter said to me,
Lifting his cap for a moment, and
Turning to the Briefing Hall.

**Marvin Silbersher, 447th BG
Lake Hopatcong, NJ**



SOME REFLECTIONS OF A RADAR MECHANIC

by Bill Moule, 305th BG
Hidden Hills, CA

When I arrived at Chelveston in early February 1945, I was assigned to the 422nd Squadron where Arnie Carlson was my Squadron Executive officer. I was subsequently introduced to the men at the Radar Shack and learned what the duties were.

The radar technicians worked a 21-day war time schedule. We worked for 12 days in the Radar Shack (repairing sets, etc), 6 days on night shift and then we got three days and two nights off. On the night shift about a dozen of us would start at about 6 pm and spend the night at the Radar Shack. About 9 pm headquarters of the first division would notify the groups of the next day's mission. They would inform the group what type of bombs to load: high explosives, incendiaries, etc. We would get a list of the particular aircraft that were flying the mission so that the Radar Jamming Transmitters could be tuned to jam the frequency spectrum used by the German Wuerzburg radar controlled Flak Batteries. The frequencies they used were:

- A Band, 553-566 MHz (initial operating band)
- B Band, 517-529 MHz (introduced in Fall of 1943)
- C Band, 440-470 MHz (introduced at end of 1944)

Our planes used the AN/APT-2 "Carpet" Airborne jamming transmitters having a tunable range over a 450 to 720 MHz band to jam these threats. Each of these jammers had a noise modulated band 6 MHz wide with a power output of 5 watts. Therefore, the radar technicians had to find out which of the 30 to 40 planes were on the new mission and then go to each aircraft and tune its transmitter to its assigned frequency and check that it was radiating required power. By this method, a Bomb Group in a tight box formation could effectively jam the Wuerzburg Radars and require the enemy to rely on optical methods which were less accurate.

Also, two cartons of chaff containing a total of 144 packages were loaded on each of these aircraft by the night crew. The chaff consisted of thin Tinsel paper strips, a little stiffer than that used on Christmas trees. Each strip was cut to a length

of one half wavelength, approximately 11.4 inches for the Wuerzburg Radars. Each bundle consisted of many strips and when properly dispensed would give a radar reflection approximately equivalent to an airplane. Usually, every plane in the

Lead Combat Wing of the Division carries and dispenses chaff. They fly at altitudes ranging from 23,000 feet to 27,000 feet. The dispensing procedure starts four minutes before the target is reached, and continues until three minutes after leaving the target.

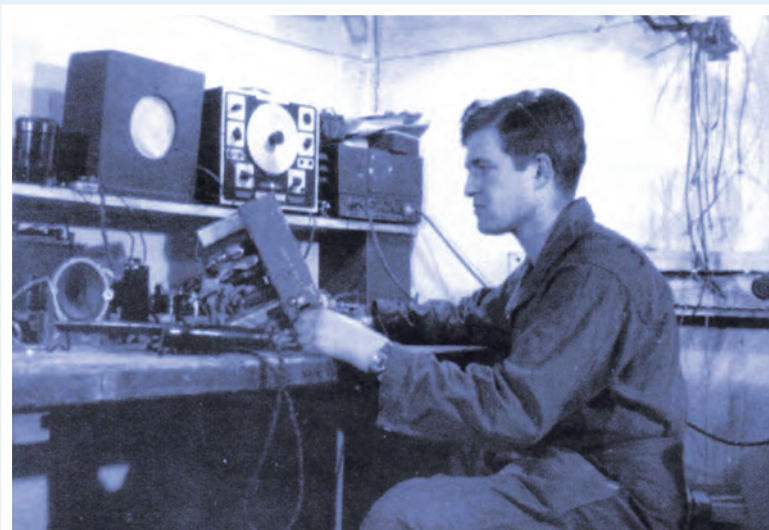
A situation that bothered me when I arrived at the base was that the bat-handle on/off toggle switches on the IFF (Identification Friend or Foe) Transmitter/Receiver Sets were safety wired to their front panels in the off position. The IFF sets were designed to

cover the frequency band of 100-108 MHz and would reply by transmitting a coded response at the same frequency to any signal of sufficient strength received in this band. These sets were intended to be used to identify unfriendly aircraft such as might be following our bombers home from a mission.

I recently researched this problem and found that the German Freya early warning radars were involved. Initially, the Freya radars operated on frequencies of 120-130 MHz which caused no problem. However the RAF began using "Mandrel" jammers against them in December 1942, and initially the losses during raids on Germany fell by about a third. The Germans reacted swiftly to the radar jamming and in January 1943, a British monitoring station picked up signals from a Freya near Calais on a new frequency of 107.9 MHz. This radar installation would have triggered our IFF sets which effectively doubled the Freya's maximum search range from about 100 miles to about 200 miles.

Thus began the extension of the Freya band to avoid jamming. It would be matched by the extension of the frequency spread of Mandrel, and this would continue for the rest of the war. The Freya's frequencies used were 57-187 MHz (by the end of the war). I might add that post WWII IFF sets were designed to reply only to properly encoded interrogation signals to prevent this problem.

Stored in the Radar Shop were the remains of an IFF set



Bill Moule in the radar shop at Lechfeld repairing a civilian radio using captured German Military components.



The cramped quarters of the Radar Observer in a 36th Bomb Squadron "Droop Snoot" P-38

Facchinei Crew. Ray said that coming home from a mission around Christmas 1944 they were diverted to a base east of Chelveston. While parked on the ground, he wondered what the two red buttons were for at the navigator's position, so he pushed them with the resulting explosion. Ray said that nobody had explained what they were for, and then he was worried

that had had its internal explosive charge detonated, resulting in a balloon shaped mess of scrap metal and wires. Since the IFF sets were designated as secret equipment, the explosive charge could be detonated by simultaneously pushing two red button switches located in the radio room and at the navigator's position. There also was a backup external inertial switch to set off the explosive if the plane crashed.

I had asked around at several Reunions about the blown-up IFF set and I finally found the man who was responsible. It was Ray J. Baker, 366th, Navigator on the Clement

about receiving a statement of charges, which didn't happen.

After VE Day, the 305th was selected to remain in Europe for the Casey Jones Operation. This consisted of using Mickey Pathfinder Radar guidance on photographic missions flown at 20,000 feet to update military maps of Germany and occupied areas. We moved the base to St. Trond, Belgium in July and then on to Lechfeld before Christmas 1945.

As the Radar Shack mechanics had to service all the military radios and radars used on these missions, the work routine was reminiscent of our war time duties. Several of us repaired personal radios on the side for extra money. Also at Lechfeld, there were two former German Luftwaffe Radio Technicians working for us as civilians. Their names were Karl Stoeppel and Hans Stiegler.

My most memorable experience with Karl and Hans was listening to them argue for over an hour whether they could replace a shorted 100 picofarad capacitor from an English radio with a German military capacitor marked as 100 centimeters. They finally agreed that the substitution was okay as the small difference in capacitance value could be corrected by readjusting the powdered iron core in the IF (Intermediate Frequency) Transformer and retune to the correct IF Frequency.

I finally found out in my second year of Engineering at Michigan State University that the German Military system of marking capacitors in centimeters was based on the value of an isolated metal sphere one centimeter in radius. The capacitance of this isolated sphere is equal to 1.111 picofarads so that a 100 centimeter capacitor would equal 111 picofarads. My guess is that Hitler didn't like to use markings in farads because Michael Faraday was English.

MOONLIGHT SONATA/SUNLIGHT DREAM

by Steven Scott

Fortunately, the rain had stopped but a damp, cold, blustery, boisterous wind buffeted the dank and dreary flatlands of Bomber Country. The moon shines a pale, Camembert yellow through thin, watery cloud as the bundled-up aircrew board their aircraft. The starting drill commences with the starboard inner: the whining electric starter pulls the engine through the compression as the propeller turns over in short jerks. There is a momentary ragged misfiring, a stab of flame and a cloud of grey smoke which is whipped away by the wind as if from a garden bonfire. The flight engineer is scanning gauges and flicking switches. The cracking backfire of four throttled-back Merlins dominates. Then it is brake release and there is no going back now: faster and faster until the aeroplane feels spongy as the wings pull the weight off the oleos. Almost running out of runway,

the roaring, straining Merlins pull the bomb-laden bulk of the aircraft off the ground and the slow, laborious climb to altitude commences. Soon, the crew can see the frightening, nauseous heaving grey swell and chill chop of the seemingly limitless North Sea. The gunners ask for permission to test their guns and the hammering thump of their Brownings reverberates through the aeroplane as acrid propellant fumes seep back into the gun positions. The enemy coast looms up ahead.

The sky was a clear-rinsed blue, intense, faraway and chill. On the ground at RAF Waddington it was a glorious, warm day; it could have been Summer Bay. Over she comes in a bomb-doors-open banking turn, seeming to hang in the limpid air, leaving four faint trails of exhaust smoke. That

shape. And that sound. I have never known so many people fall so silent so fast. Back round the circuit for a low-level pass down the centreline of the runway and the crisp, crackling, whistling exhaust note of those four mighty Merlins brings to the back of my eyes the urgent prick of tears. Now she is just a diminishing dot on the horizon and disappears as if it had all been a dream.

In front of me a couple of little girls are giggling and tumbling as children do. They know nothing of the Lanc. They are here for their packets of crisps and cans of Coke. We know something which they do not: fifty-five thousand men of Bomber Command never came back. They gave their lives for children's laughter.

from Bomber Command Association
Newsletter

THE NATIONAL WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL

It all started at a fish fry in a township hall just west of Toledo, Ohio in 1987. Roger Durbin, a rural letter carrier from Berkey, Ohio and WWII veteran, asked Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) why there was no WWII memorial in Washington, DC. Congresswoman Kaptur said there was, it was the troops raising the flag on the battlefield. She was told that was for one battle and the Marine Corps. When she returned to Washington her staff researched the area and found that Roger was right.

Congresswoman Kaptur presented HR 3742 authorizing the erection of a WWII Memorial on Dec. 10, 1987. July 1988 the amended bill was reported to the full House after favorable comment from the Commission of Fine Arts and National Capitol Planning Commission. The 100th Congress ended, putting the finish to the Memorial.

Basically the same thing happened with the 101st Congress, also with the 102nd Congress.

On Jan. 27, 1993 Congresswoman Kaptur introduced HR. 682 which passed the House by voice vote.

The Senate approved the House version of the bill. On

May 25, 1993 President Clinton signed Public Law 103-32 authorizing the American Battle Monuments Commission to build a memorial, without a museum, on federal land.

Roger Durbin died before he could see his dream come true. However, when President Clinton signed the authorization for the memorial, Congresswoman Kaptur told him "It is a done deal". He died a few days later, but knew that there would be a World War II Memorial.



**Congresswoman
Marcy Kaptur**

The rest is history and all of us now enjoy the WWII Memorial because a veteran of the Battle of the Bulge made a casual remark to his Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur.

submitted by a member of the Ohio Chapter

THE FIRST NAPALM MISSION - 8TH AIR FORCE

Dear Sir,

Received my first issue of the 8th AF News. It is just great. Thank you. On page 35, I noticed an article from Jack Van Acker on the 4/15/45 mission at Napalm. I flew that day from the 458 BG with John Moran pilot. My diary for the day is enclosed as well as a photo of the "bombs" falling. Hope you can print it for Van Acker and others to read.

Sincerely,

Maurice L. Watson, 458th BG Hagerstown, MD
website www.458bg.com

MISSION #28

DATE	April 15, 1945
SHIP #	
TARGET	Royan, France
B.L.	3200lbs
TYPE	6-85 gallons "Napalm" - 2-100lb S.M.
G.L.	2700 gallons
TIME	0830 hours

DATA:

Today was going to be a rough mission as we knew we were carrying the new "Fire Bomb". Briefing was at 0340 and we saw our target to be the German "pocket" of Bordeaux with 122,000 Jerries. We are to lead the 2nd squadron into the target where 27 guns were reported.

We went out to the ship and pre-flighted it, finding one bomb leaking badly, but we could do nothing about it. We carried no guns or ammo, so gunners didn't go. T.O. was at



First 8th AF use of Napalm "Bombs" Away – 15 April 45

0610 and assembly over Belgium went off OK and we took on course, using 100% oxygen due to the gas fumes. We climbed to 15,000 feet to bomb at 1109, and we took out the right waist window and opened up the escape hatch in order to take K-20 pictures. "Bombs Away" was at 1112 and the "bombs" went away like eggs as they had no fires to guide them. All below was flame and smoke and the 15 pictures were good. Jerry had a "hot" day. Just 2 to go.

I went as an observer in the waist section of the aircraft.

NOTES:

Intelligence Reports

Same area as yesterday to finish job. First use of napalm, in 75/85 gallon tanks. 27 A/C, results unobserved.

No enemy A/C or flak. One A/C #298E left formation after bombs away was headed inland. His #4 engine was feathered, has not reported.

UPDATE MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE HERITAGE MUSEUM

Summer 2005

There are a lot of happenings underway at the Heritage Museum in Savannah. Take a look:

The Charles "Chuck" Glover Gallery Dedication is on 22 & 23 September 2005. The gallery is sponsored by Cox Enterprises, Delta Airlines and several other contributors and is an exhibit presentation entitled *Fly Girls of World War II* - a major new exhibit area that pays tribute to the WAFS and WASP pilots who ferried aircraft to combat areas during the war. Those interested in attending the opening events may call Brenda Elmgren at 912-748-8888.

Roger A. Freeman, Historian of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum and author of dozens of aviation and historical books, has donated his extensive files of wartime 8th Air Force and related aviation materials – over 150 files researched and collected over a 60-year period – to the Heritage Museum's permanent collections. This valuable treasure will be an addition that will be used by researchers, authors and WWII historians for many years to come. Arrangements are currently being made to transfer the materials from Roger's office in England to our catalogue section in the museum archives. Roger has long been a valuable friend of 8th AF veterans, their Units, and of the Historical Society.

- We have a new Interim President/CEO of the museum following the recent announcement of resignation by C. J. Roberts, who has resigned the post to pursue other career opportunities. Mr. Timothy Bottoms has agreed to fill the Interim position as a search process for applicants gets underway. Tim has served as curator for over twelve years at the Cape Fear Museum in Wilmington, North Carolina. He states that "being part of a World War II-oriented museum has been my dream for all my

life. This is the perfect spot for me to land." Tim has already looked at current museum programs and has discussed ideas that will immediately take the museum forward. He has met with staff members for their input and is active with the museum Volunteer program and also interacts with the members of the Board of Trustees. His door is always open and he welcomes all telephone calls and emails from our supporters.

The 8th AF News will keep Historical Society members up-to-date on Tim's activities and programs.

- The Museum's Oral History program is underway again after a brief respite. Dr. Vivian Rogers-Price will be in attendance for six days at the 8th AFHS annual reunion in Arlington. Please get in touch with her to record your history for permanent entry into museum archival files, either at the reunion or on a visit to Savannah. The Heritage Museum is linked with the Veterans History Project at the Library of Congress and is directed by the American Folklife Center in Washington. Their telephone number is 1-888-371-5848, if you would like to connect with their program as well.

- Funding to develop an expanded detailed presentation of the history of the B-24 and the Units of the 2nd Air Division is a drive well on its way, but not finished. The **Second to None: The Legendary Liberator** project at the Museum is underway featuring an exhibit story line and interactive displays centered on the front fuselage section of the B-24 Liberator *Fightin' Sam*. This original aircraft was assigned to the 389th Bomb Group. This major museum exhibit will be in the Combat



Mr. Timothy Bottoms
Interim President/CEO

Gallery of the museum. A number of 8th airmen who flew the Liberator have contributed to this gallery and our goal of \$125,000 is about half-way completed at this time. Your support to complete this tribute is needed. Contributions are tax-deductible and may be sent to The B-24 Liberator Exhibit restricted fund at the museum: P.O. Box 1992, Savannah GA 31402-1992.

- Remember to spend a few minutes with the PX pages in this issue. Of note are many new items, specifically designed for and related to the museum. Gift shop director Carlita Carter has developed a series of note cards featuring the stained glass windows of the Memorial Chapel. Also, a brand new full-size poster featuring a collage of two dozen items from our extensive museum archival collection is now available – a proud one to hang or to give as a gift.

- The Heritage Museum's Board of Trustees Executive Committee, in a series of meetings this summer, has announced that the Memorials program and the Wall of Valor plaque initiatives in the Memorial Gardens have been reinstituted after having been stood down by Administration for some time. Information on this significant program of tribute and recognition will be forthcoming, encouraging participation by 8th veterans and their families and by 8th Units and Chapters.

- Recent events such as the dedications of the Jacob Wayne Fredericks Mural and the Frank DeCicco Education Department are reported elsewhere in this issue. Finally, and most importantly, is the drive to increase our endowment of the Heritage Museum. The Mighty Eighth Foundation is moving into high gear and each of us must feel the need to support the Foundation and ensure the long-term success and viability of our museum. This is most important and it is vital that we accomplish this now. Call 912-748-8888 for advice and help in this regard.

VIETNAM MEMORIAL PROGRAM IN FULL SWING



The participation from all military services in the Vietnam War exceeded 2.7 million Americans. Since getting off the ground in 1999, the Heritage Museum's Vietnam Memorial is rapidly becoming a reality. In place in the museum's Memorial Gardens, the tribute is accompanied by two tall flags. Memorial bricks will be laid surrounding the area and the formal dedication of the memorial will be held in late September,

2005. To honor a loved one who served and to support the completion of this special project, engraved bricks may still be purchased, by order from the museum.

The Vietnam Memorial will be seen by thousands of visitors each year, and will be an important section of the unique Memorial Gardens at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Savannah. Call Coordinator Peggy Harden at 912-748-8888 for ordering information.



SAVANNAH TECHNICAL COLLEGE TO ASSIST MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE MUSEUM

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum is pleased to announce a new partnership with Savannah Technical College. Starting in July 2005 selected students from the Medical Transcription Program and the Medical Assisting Program will begin transcribing the Museum's collection of over 600 oral history interviews. The work-study program, developed by Jackie Muller of the Department of Allied Health Programs, will employ eight students from each program. For the first time in the program's history, researchers will be afforded the opportunity to access interview transcriptions through Department of Research & Interpretation at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum Library and Archives. Finished transcriptions will also be listed on the Library of Congress Veterans History Project Registry.

Contact: Brenda Elmgren
Director of Communications, Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum
P.O. Box 1992, Savannah, GA 31402
Tel: 912.748.8888 x165, Fax: 912.748.0209
email: admin@mightyeighth.org
internet: www.mightyeighth.org

Roger Freeman, 8th AF Historical Society Historian, Offers resignation after 30 years

Owing to illness, it is with great regret that I have to tender my resignation as the Historian of the 8th Air Force Historical Society. I have acted in this capacity, both officially and unofficially, since the inception of the Society some thirty years ago. In that time there has been an opportunity to meet many wonderful veterans of my beloved "Mighty Eighth," including those of fame and great distinction. The many hundreds of 'tell-me' letters I have answered during these years has been an interesting task, sometimes as many as twenty in a week. In recent times e-mail has made for quicker response and a less costly means than postage. The twenty symposia devised and moderated gave a unique opportunity to meet many famous airmen -- and its delicate moments when some panellists suddenly became monosyllabic or others would not stop talking to give others an opportunity. It was also a great honor to act as the 8AFMMF and 8AFHS representative in the UK and take an active part in bringing about the substantial recognition of the Eighth Air Force via input at the Imperial War Museum at Duxford. Our efforts were a major factor in bringing about the grand American Air Museum in Britain. So much has been accomplished since that day back in the early 'seventies when John Woolnough came up with the idea for a veterans' association when I took him to a deserted airfield.

I thank all for friendship and wish the Mighty Eighth well for the future.

Sincerely, Roger A. Freeman

HONORED TRADITION CONTINUES

8th AF Historical Society Award

Presented to Outstanding Cadet at Air Force Academy

Colonel Robert Vickers, 8th AF HS Director Emeritus, continued the long tradition of presenting the 8th AF Historical Society Most Valuable Track Competitor (Men) Award to Senior Cadet Brian A. Dumm, AFA Class of 2005. Competition by this outstanding Air Force cadet was in the Track and Field events of the Mountain West Conference during 2005.

Vickers, Director of Awards and Protocol for the Society, attended the Awards ceremonies at the Academy, and made the trophy presentation, an inscribed bronze eagle in flight, to Cadet Dumm, who will enter Intelligence training at Goodfellow AFB, San Marcos, Texas. The annual award, established in 1966,



has been sponsored by the Society for many years and is presented in memory of Mr. Arne U. Arnesen, an accomplished track coach for 28 years at the Air Force Academy.



Most Valuable Track Competitor Award (Men)
Sponsored by The 8th Air Force Historical Society in memory of Mr. Arne U. Arnesen. Presented by Col. Robert E. Vickers, USAF, Retired, Director of Awards and Protocol for the Society. Presented to Brian A. Dumm, Class of 2005, May 30, 2005



NOMINEES FOR EIGHTH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS



The Eighth Air Force Historical Society Nominating Committee presents the following candidate for the Board of Directors, to be voted on at the Annual Reunion on October 1, 2005.

George R. Hoidra, Life Member #30257

Son of a 447th Bomb Group navigator and career officer. Self-employed home improvement contractor in the Washington, D.C., area since 1977. Life member 8AFHS since 1994; Life member 8th Air Force Museum since 1994; Life

member 447th Bomb Group Association since 1992; member of several other bomb group associations including the 91st, 100th, 306th, 390th, and the Second Air Division Association. Secretary/Treasurer of 447th Bomb Group Association, three years and current. Treasurer of 8AFHS National Capital Area Chapter, four years and present. Member of 8AFHS Financial Oversight Committee, three years and current, member of 8AFHS Continuation and Preservation Committee, one year and current.

Nominated by William C. Rawson

8th Air Force Px

Seventeen & Twenty-Four: The Barnstorming Bombers

This video celebrates the B-17 and the B-24 as well as their pilots and mechanic crews. New photography is combined with rare combat footage to make a unique tribute to these incredible bombers.

Chapel Window Note Card Set

Each note cards depicts one of eight different windows selected from the Chapel of the Fallen Eagles. The dedication and design notes appear on the back of the note card. Notes are blank inside and white envelopes are included.

USAAF Chatham Field T-shirt

A museum reproduction T-shirt with original logo and design celebrates the roots of today's Air Force. Navy Blue screen print on a muted heather gray makes this a perfect choice for anyone's casual wardrobe.

Museum Collection Poster

This original poster captures the collection and story of the Mighty 8th Air Force museum through the art of photography. Unique items that help tell the story of the Eighth and WWII are noted on the key guide that comes with each poster. Perfect for teenager, history buffs and all supporters of the Mighty Eighth.

8th Air Force PX ORDER FORM

QTY	8TH AFHS PX ORDER FORM DESCRIPTION	PRICE	OPTIONS	TOTAL
	Golf shirt w/8 th AFHS logo on pocket Circle size and color choice	\$29.99	S, M, L, XL, 2X Red, White, Navy	
	Baseball Cap w/8 th AFHS logo embroidered	\$12.95	Red, White, Blue	
	8 th AFHS 4" jacket Patch	\$3.95	NA	
	8 th AFHS ¾" pin w/clutch back	\$3.50	Member, Life Member	
	8 th AFHS bumper sticker	\$.90	NA	
	8 th AFHS 4" round sticker	\$.75	NA	
	8 th AFHS plastic license plate	\$3.95	NA	
	8 th AF logo silk tie	\$27.99	Red, Navy	
	8 th AF 3" patch	\$3.00	NA	
	8 th AF 1" pin w/clutch back	\$3.00	NA	
	8 th AF logo white T-shirt	\$10.99	S, M, L, XL	
		\$12.99	2X	
	8 th AF logo gray T-shirt	\$12.99	S, M, L, XL	
		\$14.99	2X	
	Adult gunnery school white T-shirt	\$14.99	S, M, L, XL	
		\$17.99	2X	
	Youth gunnery school white T-shirt	\$10.99	XS, S, M, L	
	USAAF Chatham Field gray T-shirt	\$14.99	S, M, L, XL	
		\$18.99	2X	
	Blue deluxe travel mug w/pewter plane	\$19.99	B-17, B-24, P-51	
	Chapel window note cards, set of 8	\$10.00	NA	
	Museum collection poster 18" X 24"	\$12.99	NA	
	USAAF Fighter Stories-A New Selection by Ian McLachlan, 212 pg	\$34.95	NA	
	Weapons of the 8 th Air Force by Frederick A. Johnson, 128 pg	\$24.95	NA	
	Jimmy Stewart Bomber Pilot by Starr Smith, 287 pg	\$21.95	NA	
	Seventeen and Twenty-Four: The Barnstorming Bombers Video	\$20.00	NA	
SUBTOTAL				
6% SALES TAX-GEORGIA RESIDENTS ONLY				
SHIPPING FROM CHART BELOW				
TOTAL ORDER				

Shipping and handling charges:

\$4.00 for orders under \$20.00

\$8.00 for orders \$20.01-\$40.00

\$10.00 for orders \$40.01-\$100

Alaska, Hawaii & International Orders Add \$15.00 to normal shipping charges

Order by mail or phone at 912-748-8888 ext. 116. Shipping and handling is added to all orders.

SHIP TO:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number (_____) _____

To pay with credit card.....complete the following:

VISA MasterCard Discover American Express

Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

Or.....pay by check made out to the Mighty Eighth Museum Store

Send completed order and payment information to:

Mighty Eighth Museum Store, ATTN: Carlita Carter, P.O. Box 1992, Savannah, GA 31402.



Detailed
description
of these items
on bottom of
page 16.

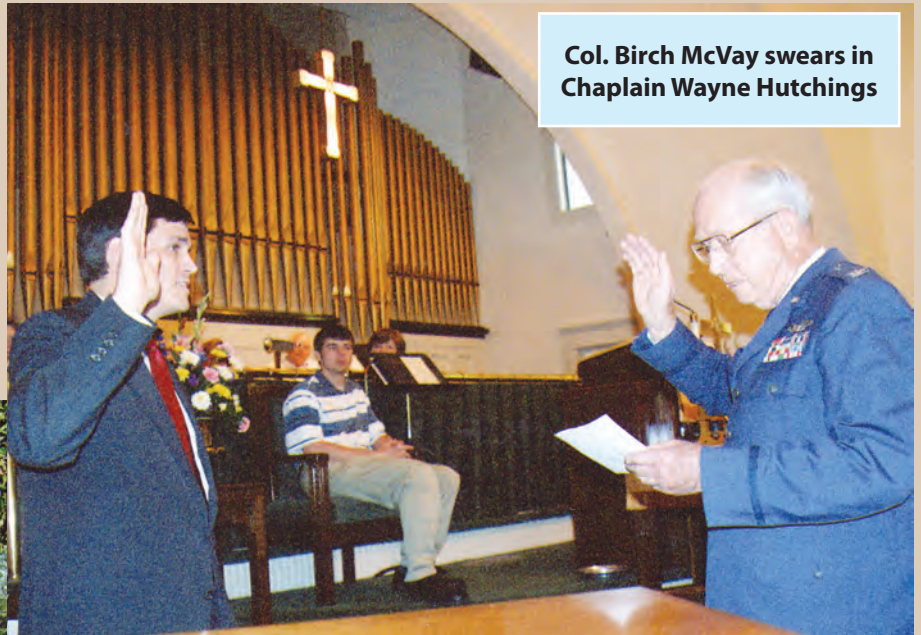


MILITARY CHAPLAIN SWORN IN BY 8TH AIR FORCE B-17 PILOT

The pastor of the Cochran, Georgia United Methodist Church, Wyne Hutchings, was sworn into the Army Corps of Chaplains on 17 April, 2005. Performing the ceremonies was Col. Birch. McVay, USAF (Ret) who was a pilot



Col. Birch and
Hilda McVay



Col. Birch McVay swears in
Chaplain Wayne Hutchings

in the 8th Air Force during World War II. McVay was shot down on his 25th mission and became a Prisoner of War.

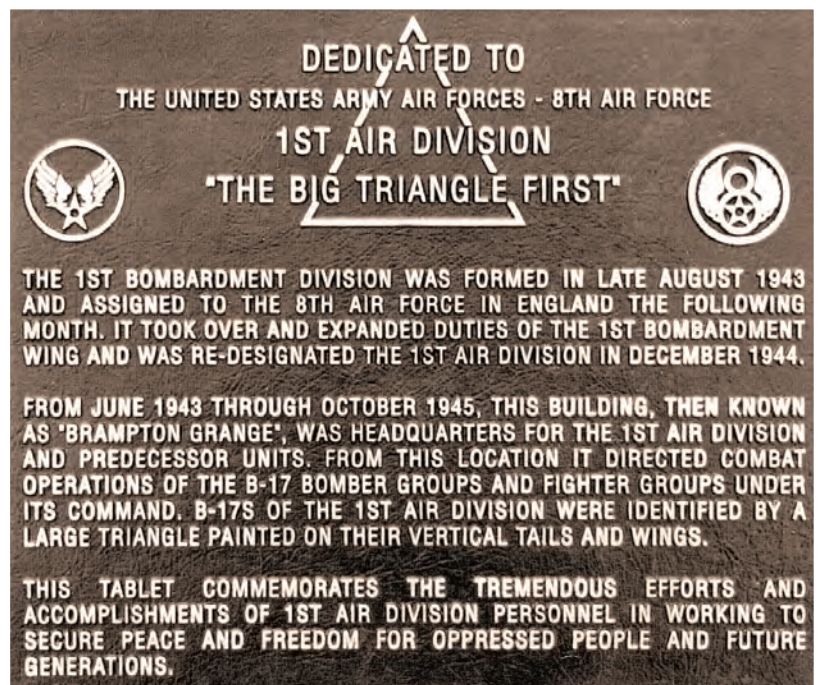
He married Hilda McVay, an Army nurse assigned to the Air Corps when they met. His career before his retirement was as a Pharmacist. Their son Kip McVay says that his parents have been strong supporters of the 8th AF Historical Society for many years.

1ST AIR DIVISION PLAQUE DEDICATED AT BRAMPTON GRANGE

A plaque in tribute of those who served with the 1st Air Division, The Big Triangle First, was dedicated at Brampton Grange – now Brampton Hotel – on 8 May 2005. An Honor Guard from Alconbury presented the colors and a history of the 1st Air Division in World War II was given by Historian Fred Preller. Hosts for the event were Nick and Susanna Steiger.

Connie and Gordon Richards represented the 8th AF Historical Society at the ceremony and displayed some of their 8th AF memorabilia collection. Contributors to the monument included individuals from the United States: Debbie Anderson, Nancy Bausch, Lee & Shelley Chamberlain, Greg Hichens, Kevin Pearson, Fred and Gail Preller, Barry Siegle, Yvonne Barnett (Moofy) from Cheshire England, the Scouting Force Association through Dick Atkins, and the Burleson Monument Company in Texas.

Historian Fred Preller's website may be accessed at <http://Mighty8thAF.Preller.US>



REUNIONS

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

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@mail-
station.com

491ST BOMBARDMENT GROUP

October 12-16, 2005 San Diego CA
San Diego Marriott Hotel
Contact: William Hagan
5387 Saxon St.
San Diego CA 92115-1144

487TH BOMB GROUP

The Gentlemen from Hell
October 19-23, 2005
San Diego CA; Red Lion
Hanalai Hotel
Contacts: Don, Darlene,
and Debbie Denbeck
Tel 402-336-3124
email denbeck@mor-
comm.net



SECOND SCHWEINFURT MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION (SSMA)

October 11-15, 2005
St. Petersburg FL Hilton
Contact: HB Associates, 419 N. Ring Ave.
Tarpon Springs FL 34689
Tel 727-937-3232
email: info@hbassociates.net

352ND FIGHTER GROUP

September 22-26, 2005
Wichita KS – Marriott Hotel
Contact: Norma Williams
3445 N. Webb Rd Wichita KS 67226
tel 316-643-1617
email nwilliams@cphut.com

27TH ATG ASSOCIATION (WWII)

Sept. 29 - Oct. 1, 2005
Crockett Hotel, San Antonio, Texas
Contact: Fred Garcia 1190 N 77th

Drive, Peoria, AZ 85345, (602) 878-7007
or Donald Diehm 135 Arbor Drive,
Myerstown, PA 17067, (717) 866-9356

479TH FIGHTER GROUP/ 436TH FS ASSOCIATION

October 13-17, 2005
Sheraton Reston Hotel, Reston, VA
Contact: Tom Galloway Fergusson
Phone: (703) 421-2675 email: Tferg65@
aol.com

355TH FIGHTER GROUP ASSOCIATION

October 6-10, 2005
Radisson City Center Hotel
Tucson, AZ
Contact: Bob Kuhnert, (937) 439-1893

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

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

Only 3 per cent of people in the United States lead a healthy life style. That's good,
because that means I have only a 3 per cent chance of running into these annoying people.

Clyde White, 390th BG

**God! I will pack, and take a train,
And get me to England once again!
For England's the one land, I know.
Where men with Splendid Hearts may go;
And Cambridgeshire, of all England,
The shire for Men who Understand;
And of that district I prefer
The lovely hamlet Grantchester.**

**Rupert Brooke
1912**

**"WEAR YOUR
DECORATIONS"
TO THE ANNUAL
REUNION GALA
BANQUET**

**Here is Past -President Craig
Harris with his blazer and
decorations**



1ST LT. MARVIN FRYDEN

384TH Bomb Group 544th Bomb Squadron 8th Air Force



Marvin Fryden

Marv enlisted on January 13th, 1942 from his home in Chicago. He was sent for pilot training but then went on to Bombardier School in Albuquerque where he got his Wings in October of 1942.

We married and went to training command at Chandler, Arizona and Deming, New Mexico. In Deming on June 6th – D-Day – his comment was, “I should be there helping them,” after which he was assigned to advanced training in Midland, Texas. There he met bombardiers who had returned from their missions, and he became even more dedicated to serving in a combat zone. He requested combat duty and was sent to Salt Lake City, was assigned to a crew, and went on to Ardmore, Oklahoma for B-17 training.

His pilot, John Buslee, was from Forest, Illinois. The copilot, his wife and infant daughter were from Chico, California. They lived at the same place we did. I think that his name was Dick Albrecht or Albright and that her name was Patty, but I can’t recall for certain. The navigator was



The crew of the Tremblin Gremlin

Back row from left, John Buslee, pilot; Dick Albright, copilot; Navigator (w/cap) and only survivor – Pennsylvanian; Lt. Marvin Fryden, bombardier in A-2 jacket

from Pennsylvania and was the only survivor of that crew.

They left Ardmore on the 26th of June in 1944, flew to Kearney, Nebraska, picked up the Tremblin Gremlin, and flew it to England via Iceland. On August 4th they flew their first mission. Marv wrote me, “Your pappy’s a veteran now...”

On the mission flown the next day, Marv was fatally wounded and died in a hospital of chest wounds. He is buried in Cambridge, England. I have seen several of his student classmates’ names on the Wall of the Missing at the cemetery there. The crew’s plane was blown up on a subsequent mission and all of the crew but the navigator, who was not aboard, perished.

I treasure the 8th AF News magazine. I wear Marv’s wedding ring, proudly. I remember it all and read your magazine eagerly, knowing that

so many might share my story.

Sincerely,

**Marilyn A. Fryden-Samet
Cary, North Carolina
Memorial Day, 2005**

Postscript: I am a member of the 8th AF Historical Society Chapter here in Raleigh, North Carolina. I am also a Gold Star wife. Although over sixty years have passed since those terrible war years, I am still deeply affected by the tragedy which shaped my life. Sometimes, I can’t read the articles in the magazine because they touch me so specially. I hope that I will be notified when renewal time comes for my subscription.

Keep up your wonderful work ... even as those of us who remember are passing into the other world.

BOB McKEE RETURNS HOME

He was a B-24 gunner who flew out of Pantanella, Italy on a December 17, 1944 mission to bomb targets near Blechhammer, Germany. Robert McKee didn't return that day. His airplane was hit over Felsőseged, Hungary and he was one of two crewmen who were not able to bail out. His remains were buried with the other crewman who died in the crash, in a local cemetery. Bob McKee left a wife and son back home.

For decades it was thought that his place of burial was near Vienna, Austria due to a mixup with his lost dogtags. In 1992 an undertaker recovered the remains that were buried in Hungary, and the German Graves Commission had them sent to the JPAC Central Identification Lab at

Hickham Field in Hawaii for identification by American scientists. Items found with the skeleton were some U. S. Coins, and aerial gunner's Wings, a compass, and a button with some clothing material. Recently, after obtaining DNA samples from several of Robert McKee's relatives, a positive identification was made.

His parents, now deceased, never knew for certain what had happened to their son. His wife, now Phyllis Drake, never gave up hope and states that having been notified of the identification of Robert, there is now peace of mind for the family.

Appreciation for contributing source material for this article goes to John Manocchio, Altoona PA, and Roy Test, 398th BG, Baldwin Park CA



"The picture speaks for itself." – Wally Blackwell, 398th BG.

CONTINUING THE 8TH AIR FORCE LEGACY #2

Earl Wassom, Chairman of the Continuance Committee

I remember the words and recall the melody of an old song that was popular when I was much younger. A phrase of that melody which I recall seems appropriate for the "Next Generation" who are following us old WW II Veterans. It goes, "hitch your wagon to a star." During the air battles in which the Veterans fought during the 1943-45 period, the aircraft that carried them had white stars on the sides of the fuselage as well as the outer wing panels. But the stars of which I speak were not on the outside of the aircraft but rather the men on the inside. "The Next Generation" (our descendents and those who have served in the 8th since then) shows great honor, respect and loyalty to the "stars", the military units and their fathers that served so faithfully and courageously. These younger men and women come to the reunions, and we recognize that they feel they are needed now as part of the support team. And more and more of them come, not only in support of Dad, but also in support of the legacy of which the old Vets have been a part. So many of them are eager to remember and carry on the story that began years ago.

The "Next Generation" is encountering a "Genesis experience", a new beginning for them to continue to participate in an expanded role in preserving the heritage and legacy of the Mighty Eighth Air Force. Throughout the many different units which make-up the 8th Air Force Historical Society, this new generation is active and participatory, but all of these units need to come together and become a part of a concerted effort in order to become more efficient and effective. This is the reason that a brief period of time has been established at the next reunion of the Historical Society. The official program has been billed as follows: "*Next Generation, Looking Ahead...First Annual Meeting*". This event is scheduled for Friday September 30 from 4:15 – 5:15. Signs will be posted at the Registration Desk and elsewhere telling where we will meet.

Encouraged to attend are those who are now active in their unit organizations as well as others, including those described as the **VDF Initiative**. **V...Veterans:** The Eighth Air Force is still a numbered military unit that had its beginnings in Savannah, Georgia at the beginning of WW II. There are still Veterans of that conflict that need to be involved as well as the Veterans of all Eighth Air Force military units since that time. Their stories and the history of these more recent military units and the conflicts in which they participated must be told and preserved in addition to WW II events. The "Next Generation" can encourage the initiative to begin this process. **D...Descendents.** Not only WW II relatives, i.e., children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews are included (and many are already involved) but any descendents of the veter-

ans of subsequent 8th Air Force Units as well may become a vital part of the initiative. **F...Fellows:** Individuals who are neither veterans nor descendents are urged to become a part of this movement. A large number of individuals are already involved in research, publishing, and/or are history buffs. These are an important ingredient in helping preserve the legacies; past, present and future.

The 8th Air Force Historical Society has been endowed with a host of children, individuals who have shown great loyalty to the military units in which their fathers served. They have given of their time to these organizations and the military units and have done this with much zeal and loyalty. They have served skillfully as officers, published newsletters, maintained a roster of its members, collected dues, participated in reunions, supported financially the memorials and the Museum and are the future of the parent organization. These are men and women with great talent and loyalty *who are now being called upon to fill a vital new role, that of stepping forward to serve the Society as the Veterans begin stepping down.*

Our first meeting will be brief, given the time restraints. It is envisioned that a number of tasks will be identified and those present who have specific skills or desires to work in a given area will volunteer their expertise. There are several obvious areas of service that will require the skills of those present. They are:

1. Legal. Become aware of the existing by-laws, the history, governance of the Society and make recommendations regarding future administrative activity.
2. Financial: An interest in and knowledge of accounting, money management, and investment strategies.
3. Records: Management techniques in bringing together all of the various membership rolls of the various units and compiling a master list of "The New Generation".
4. Electronics: Communication strategies via Web Page, e-mail, and future new high tech developments to keep in touch and distribute information.
5. Publishing: It is an accepted fact that the organization lives or dies, in accordance with keeping the members informed and to promote new initiatives.
6. Reunions: Plan for future events with an eye on the convenience and desirableness for the members rather than economic considerations or past traditions.
7. Recruitment: Expand the base of membership through existing descendents including those who have never been recruited or approached or involved in any way as well as future Veterans and descendents of later wars, those children of existing Veterans Groups who have never participated in Society activities.

From this brief first meeting, some guidelines can be established and dialogue will begin with the presence and assistance of "the Next Generation" members from the Board of Directors (and there are four of them). Hopefully another meeting, (tentatively scheduled to follow the General Membership Business Meeting which will convene at 11:am

Saturday, October 1) for those interested individuals to come together and volunteer to serve as members of an *an-hoc committee* for the year 2005-2006. They should make plans to contact and coordinate with the 8th AFHS for the next reunion, establish an agenda and guidelines for themselves, recruit and identify individuals with specific talents, plan for a series of workshops and present operational concepts at their general business meeting.



8th AFHS Board of Directors at 2005 mid-term meeting in Arlington

This is a tight schedule but time is of essence that "The Next Generation" prepares now for a challenging and interesting future!

Earl Wassom, Committee Chairman

A WARTIME ROMANCE by Charles Halper, Lakewood CA

I didn't have to go. As a construction worker for the Dupont Corporation I had a yen to be an airplane pilot, so I took the Aviation Cadet Examination and was accepted. I planned to fly the P-38 Lockheed Lightning fighter but instead, they sent me to Bomber School.

My first look at the B-17 Flying Fortress I was assigned to fly made me feel like throwing up right there on the Tarmac. There it sat, tail dragging on the ground, nose pointed in the air like a hound dog on the scent, olive drab paint, studded tires, and no guns or turrets. After dreaming about the P-38, now this thing.

After two months learning to fly this wreck, they gave me a new silver B-17 and nine men to train with. When we finished up we flew over to England, put some Girlie Art on the nose of the plane and named her "Maiden America".

She and I began to go steady and we started to fly bombing raids into Germany. We dreamed up a safe way to get home in bad weather and avoid

those all too often, mid-air collisions. We learned the railroad routes to our field and flew the tracks back to base. The Maiden and I thought this was great sport.

She let me do partial stalls to dump altitude on the final approach and wingovers for priority landings. Whatever the antics, she was always patient with me and never complained.

When, on occasion, the Germans again proved they didn't know how to treat a Lady, they slapped her around and wounded two of her crew with anti-aircraft fire, but she simply turned away and brought us all home safely to an English emergency field.

By the time the Maiden had carried us in and out of Germany the required 35 times, all thoughts of the P-38 had vanished. I parked her on her hardstand for the last time, patted her chin turret and said "Goodbye."

Back in the States I flew everything from the B-29 Superfort to sailplanes,



but there never was a competitor. I had long before lost my heart to the B-17.

Years later I saw her once again at the airport in Long Beach, California. She was surrounded by her admirers and looked as young and beautiful as I had always remembered her. Of course she would never recognize me. How could she imagine that the Old Man standing apart from the crowd and gazing at her so wistfully was that young pilot who once courted her so passionately?

I'll take one more look and then I'll be ready to go.

Hey, wait a minute! Did you see that? She remembered! She just winked at me with her Landing Light!

-Charles Halper



photo by Kirk Brown

print material with other organizations for like content and purposes! -Editor

GEORGE ABBOTT

A Remembrance of George E. Abbott, Togglier 601 Squadron - by Wally Blackwell

On October 15, 2004 Ozzie Osborn held a remembrance service for George E. Abbott at the 398th Monument in the old Station 131 area of Nuthampstead, England. George Abbott was the togglier that perished in the nose of Larry Delaney's plane on that day sixty years ago. The story of Delaney's amazing return of a B-17 flown back to home base with a major portion of its nose blown off has been told elsewhere on our web site. As far as I know, no one has ever remembered George in any special way until Ozzie and Les Dear decided it was an appropriate time. George E. Abbott had a very special remembrance ceremony that day. His service was attended by the group of English friends that Ozzie has always referred to as his Station 131 Historical Research Society. Les Dear, a thoughtful member of these 398th friends took pictures of Ozzie and the wreath, and the wreath with George's picture laid on the memorial at the Monument. Les sent me the attached pictures because he knew that George had flown as a substitute member of my crew on an earlier mission.

A few months later one of those happy but mysterious events happened! The web site guest book received an e-mail from Dave Thomas, who identified himself George's nephew. Dave had discovered the web site and had viewed the picture of the Delancey crew posted there. He was very pleased that the crew photo taken in November 1944 after Delancey had returned to flying combat missions. He had his uncle's picture included as an overlaid on that photo. What a find for Dave! Dave asked if any of the crew shown in that picture were still alive so he could try to contact them. Dave did not know of the October service for his uncle. Thus because of this "coincidence" I was able to forward the pictures to Dave and explain how the special memorial service had been held for his uncle. I also was happy to report that the 398th had

thanked Ozzie and Les for their initiative for completing such a meaningful and gracious act. Dave's response to me after receiving the pictures must be quoted.

"Words cannot express my deepest thanks enough! I am very moved and I can assure you that on behalf of my entire family we thank you for remembering our uncle. These thanks come from my mother, her sisters and brother. All of George's three sisters are living. My mother is the youngest. Be assured that I will make sure that they all receive copies of these pictures and know of the memorial service."

I was sure to explain to Dave about the 398th Memorial Window in St. George's Church in Anstey, England and how George E. Abbott's name is etched into its glass among the names of all those lost in combat in the 398th. It is truly amazing how the 398th web site activity produces so many of these almost unbelievable "happenings."

Sincerely,

Wallace Blackwell, 398th BG President

SHACKLETON

Dear Mr. Brown,
I am a Committee member of the Shackleton Association in UK and have recently been passed a copy of your June 2005 magazine via a friend of Connie Richards. Our association is formed mostly of ex-RAF air and ground crew involved in Shackleton aircraft operations during its forty-year service on maritime patrol and AEW with the "kipper fleet", as our Naval colleagues or "fishheads" called us. We have approx. 1100 members, mainly in the UK, but also a number spread across the world. We have a quarterly magazine called "The Growler".

I was very interested in your magazine and would like to ask for your permission to reprint two small items from the June 2005 edition. Firstly, on page 24, the piece about the US Admiral and speaking French; secondly on page 45, this item about how a billion can be put into perspective. An acknowledgement to your magazine would be made. Hope you can agree to my request. Best wishes from across the pond.

James Box

Committee Member and Events Officer
Shackleton Association

James - Thanks for the transmit.

The 8th AF News is honored to share its

VE DAY MEMORIES

Hi Doc,

I was a kid of 8 years at VE Day, my home was the village of Basingbourn, home of the 91st BG my dad used to take me to watch them going out and coming back. Vivid memories.

Best memories are the VE party given to us kids by the men of the 91st a great party and we each received a toy and an empty box, we were then loaded into the back of 6x6 trucks with an escort, great excitement for an 8 year old, we were taken to the big hospital base at wimpole park (have not seen the park mentioned in 8AF News.) where we were escorted around the mens living quarters with our empty box which was soon filled to overflowing with fruit and candies which most of us had never seen before, we were then taken to our homes. I was not old enough to understand at that time but in later life the Mighty 8th became my main interest. I have stood on most of the base runways in East Anglia and for over 20 years lived three miles from Duxford one time home to 78FG and now we have the American Memorial Museum and B17G Sally B a flying

memorial to all your fly boys.
I enjoy my membership of the 8AFHS
your magazine is very much looked forward to. Keep up the good work.
Sincerely,
G.F. Donaghy
25 Evans Way Sawston Cambridge
CB2 4BX UK

HOME GROWN HEROES

Dear Dr. Brown,
I want to thank you again for your very nice review of my book, *Home Grown Heroes*, in March edition of the 8th AF News.
Our mutual friend, Kenneth Nail, was to help me with marketing. Since he passed away, I am attempting to market my book by myself. I am writing to ask your permission to use part of your review in our Contrails and Propwash, the MS Chapter magazine/newsletter. My idea is to encourage our members to purchase a book to put in the public and private schools.
I would, of course, give credit to the 8th AF News. Will this meet your approval? Thanks very much.
Sue Ann Dilworth
Author Dilworth has full permission to use our Book Reviews to spread the story of the Mighty Eighth. Other authors whose books are reviewed have reprint permission for similar purposes. -Editor

8TH AFHS REUNION

Dear Jim Erskine:
I am responding to your letter regarding the 8AFHS reunion in Arlington, VA, and your appeal for newsletter contributions.
As 398th Bomb Group FLAK NEWS editor, I would love to be there, but sadly, Virginia is far too distant and journey funds too few. However, our president, Wally Blackwell, of Rockville, MD, surely will attend.
Meanwhile, I will contribute by sending a package of our FLAK NEWS, gleaned from 20 years of publication. They will be addressed to you at the Sheraton National Hotel.
For these 20 years I have compiled three filing cabinets of material of all sorts, including photos, charts, etc., so I seldom lack for "stuff" to print. I still receive contributions from members, but this is dying out as our members

die out.
We are currently embarked on a second generation web site called **www.398th.org**. I am not involved, but it is proving very successful.
President Blackwell is closely aligned with this project.
Best of luck at the 8AFHS reunion.
You can count on my FLAK NEWS bundle to arrive on time via UPS.
Sincerely,
Allen Ostrom, 398th BG
Editor, FLAK NEWS

MISSION TO KASSEL

Dr. Brown:
Your PX girls failed to come up with a copy of "Mission to Kassel" 9-44 - flown out of Tibenham - B-24s. Jimmy Stewart's original group, the 445th. Our 452nd Group was nearby at Deophan Green, On a standown. I used to go over there and spend the night. Page 17 of the Dec '04 issue of 8th AF News mentions this ill-fated mission. Can you help me find a copy? It should be reprinted!
Sincerely,
J.R. Quinton, 452nd BG
Heyworth, IL

CHICKEN SCRATCH BOMBERS AND THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

Dear Walter:
Maybe you two can help me ferret a bit of correct info that has eluded me for a while, involving my hero General Ira C. Eaker.
I was a flight engineer-gunner with the 386th Bomb Group (B-26 Marauders) in England from June 1943-April 1944. We were in the 8th Air Support Command until 15 October 1943, when B-26s were shifted to 9th AF. I flew 16 missions with the 8th AF and 34 with the 9th AF. We were trained for low level operations without escort, which worked fine for B-26s in the Pacific. It



Winnie - a B-26 of the 386th Bomb Group at Boxted

turned into utter disaster on the 2nd B-26 mission out of England, in May 1943 (322nd Group) while the 386th was enroute to England. Ten aircraft dispatched to two power stations at the U-boat pens on the Dutch coast. None returned. Zip. Zero. Thank God for Ira Eaker. The next day he grounded the B-26s. We were retrained for medium altitude (12,000 ft) and were henceforth provided fighter escort. This action by Eaker did not impress 'Hap' Arnold. He thought Eaker was somewhat soft on us.
Here is the question/basis: I've always heard/read that Charles A. Lindbergh received the first DFC. No problem with that; except I'm not so sure but what there has been some degree of literary license "depending on what the words received/awarded/authorized" mean. For the moment, my money is on Ira C. Eaker as a 'recipient' of the DFC before Lindbergh.
I've always understood that my 386th Group Commander, Colonel Lester J. Maitland, "received the 2nd DFC ever awarded," for piloting the first flight from California to Hawaii, in June 1927. Thank you for your time,
Billie Boyd, 386th BG
Mississippi Chapter

FIRST DFC

The Distinguished Flying Cross Society 2000 Book, states that "The DFC was first awarded to Captain Charles A. Lindbergh for his dramatic solo flight of 3600 miles across the Atlantic in 1927. No date shown for the medal presentation by President Coolidge. James Parton's Book "Air Force Spoken Here" states "Upon arrival at

Boiling Field, Washington, the eight weary fliers of the Pan American Goodwill Flight lined up in their rumpled coveralls to be greeted by President Calvin Coolidge, who was wearing a gray Homberg



perched squarely on his brow while the other dignitaries wore toppers. Coolidge gave the eight fliers the first Distinguished Flying Crosses, a medal authorized by Congress a few months before. The date of this presentation is not shown in the "Air Force Spoken Here" book.

The book "A Few Great Captains" by DeWitt S. Copp states that the Boiling Field DFC award to Eaker and the seven others was made on May 2, 1927. Charles Lindbergh's triumphant return to Washington, DC was on Saturday June 11, 1927. On this day President Coolidge, at the foot of the Washington Monument gave a speech about Lindbergh. He ended his speech by stating: "And, as President of the United States, I bestow the Distinguished Flying Cross, as a symbol of appreciation for what he is and what he has done, upon Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh."

Upon completing his address the President then conferred upon Lindbergh the Distinguished Flying Cross and made the first DFC medal presentation to him.

The presentation dates, however, should not be used to determine the actual date of the DFC Award. The determining factor is the set of orders that authorized the award and the date on the Certificate that was presented with the DFC Award.

I can find no record that shows the actual DFC authorization date. I just spoke with Alexander D. Ciurczak, founder of the Distinguished Flying Cross Society. He stated that Charles Lindbergh was the first person to receive the DFC Medal.

When Lindbergh arrived in Paris the

Medal had not been minted following the July 26, 1926 DFC Medal authorization by the United States Congress. When Lindbergh landed in Paris President Coolidge demanded that the Medal be minted so that he could present one to Lindbergh when he arrived back in the USA in Washington, DC. This was accomplished so that the Medal presentation could be made on June 11, 1927.

The first award - not medal presentation - was to Eaker and the other men on the Pan American Goodwill Flight. The first Medal presentation to a Navy man was to Commander Richard E. Byrd for his flight to and from the North Pole. The first civilian to receive the DFC was to Amelia Earhart.

Sincerely,
Harry Gobrecht, 303rd BG
Historian Emeritus
San Clemente CA

HOLIDAY INN

Subject. Holiday Inn versus Nursing Home by Lee Bennett, 96th BG USAF

Hello there,

The above article was in the current Bomber Command Association Newsletter and I was wondering if we could have permission to publish it in our newsletter as our members are about the same age and would really appreciate it. When I saw it I thought what a good idea and then I thought, fat chance, if only it could be true. I found it most amusing and thought-provoking. I could make 'enquiries' though!!

I look forward to your reply and thank you in advance for your time and trouble. Keep up the good work. Take care. Yours sincerely,

Ray Woodhouse

Friends of TEARS member. (Tobruk El Adem Radio Service).

Bomber Command Association member.

RAFA member. The Royal British Legion member

Chilton Oxfordshire UK

Ray, feel free to publish Lee's article. I doubt if Holiday Inn will print it in their memos. -Editor

ACT OF LOVE

Dear Connie Metts,
I am awestruck and blessed my Dad survived 30 B-17 missions over Germany. I am honored as a member of such an elite Group at the 8th AF Historical Society.
Also, just to share a bit of news: My Dad was visiting his sister in Allegan, Michigan recently. My cousin's son's 6th grade class at L.E. White school asked Dad to speak to a few classes one day. In fact, it was the day he needed to drive from Allegan back to O'hare in Chicago to catch a flight back to Orange County, CA. Dad's Angels were flying high that day! The point to my story: Dad received a mail folder of the most beautiful, poignant, precious Thank You notes from all of these 6th graders plus their teachers!
Connie, life is no less than the most important gift. My Dad does honorable "Stuff" like this Act of Love, all the time. I just felt compelled to share this with you.

With Sincere Regards,
Sandi Chase-Russell

BAGGY MAGGY

Hi Doc,

I just finished reading the great June Issue of 8th AF News, another good job on your part, and was reminded that you occasionally publish poetry. That, in turn, reminded me that my wife, a fairly accomplished and published poet, wrote a poem that might possibly be of interest.

Spurred by the interest of our friends in Holland in the crew of *Baggy Maggy*, we gathered the survivors of the crew that we could locate for a reunion in Richmond, VA in 1995--the 50th Anniversary of our liberation from POW camps. It was a joyous occasion and my wife, Barbara was inspired to write the following poem:

Reunion: The Crew of *Baggy Maggy*

Oh let us bless these gallant aging warriors,
these fragile heroes dreaming of the dark and cruel days
those awful days when evil vowed to gobble up the world
and coldly slaughter or enslave us all for

its insanity.

Our future lay like thinnest crystal in their hands
as off they flew in huge ungainly planes
over a land of hunger, fear and pain
over a land of bullets, flak and death.

And with their victory they saved us all
they gave us freedom, happiness and love,
children and progress, magic cures, the Moon!

And now, despite the crass revisions
and ingratitude of life
they hoist their old beloved flags,
and weep for buddies lost who missed
these fifty wondrous years,
and raise their glasses high
to borrowed time,
and see again the awesome
battles with each other's eyes.

Barbara Hewin

Barbara McKay Hewin, poet and homemaker, won a 1st Place award in the Virginia A.A.U.W poetry contest. Her poems have appeared in the Poet's Domain and in Poetic Voices of America.

BLACKOUTS

Dear Walter,
Thank you for the June 8th AF News that arrived this morning and, as a matter of interest, you might like to know (re photograph of London, Piccadilly Circus during blackout, on page 15) that I'm the one third from the left with the blackheads - I was always a spotty child!

Seriously, I am very touched that you published my poem 'Allied Memories' - thank you so much for that. Thinking of the latter days of World War 2 when I was at Primary School in London in late 1944, and the Doodlebugs' (V 1's) were terrifying everybody. Then, whenever the 'Air Raid Warning' sounded, we continued lessons under our desks - you had to live with the threat of sudden death somehow or other. It wasn't brave or anything like that, but life had to go on

- there wasn't any other option. In the final analysis you can't be frightened forever - can you!

In addition, as I'm sure is the case with all Veterans, memories don't fade - do they!

With all best wishes,
Dennis E. Oldham
Milton Keynes, England

P-47s

Dear Editor,
On page 8 of the June Historical 8th AF Society News, I see where you are collecting info to add to your collections on flying events.
I was a P-47 Fighter pilot with the 62nd Squadron of the 56th Fighter Group.



Walker "Bud" Mahurin on his 56th FG P-47

I have two special events you could be interested in. On Christmas day 1944 I shot two ME 109's down over Cologne, and of all that I did I'm proudest of April 10, 1945 when I shot down the last aircraft in my 62nd Sqdn. It was a ME 262 twin engine jet fighter that was attacking a Sqdn. of bombers when I made a pass and nailed him. I followed him down quite a ways and he dove into the lake below, leaving splash rings filling the complete lake. My camera film proved that for me. I was lucky to fly the greatest airplane in the war - my P-47 was a life saver for me many times.

Hope this can help you. I kinda forgot when I read about VE day in the issue.
Sincerely,
Walter Sharbo, 56th FG
Belle Fourche, SD

SEETHING

First of all I send you thanks for the great copies of the 8th AF News that I receive. Miraculously it just keeps getting better and better. Secondly, I recently sent a photo copy of Jimmy Stewart's article "Flight From Fear" that appeared in the AF News issue of Feb. 1992 to Jim Turner at Seething, England. He is one of the many truly dedicated persons who have restored the 448th BG control tower at Seething, Station 146. The Control Tower Assn. prints a newsletter several times a year and they do a fine job of keeping the vets and other Assn, members up to date. Jim is wondering if they could include this article in one of their news-

letters? The wonderful Patricia Everson does most of the writing.

I remember that when our ground crew left Sioux City for Florida en route to England, Jimmy Stewart's plane was next to ours on the runway and he was briefing his crew. We

got to fly on a couple of missions he led. At one reunion we attended my wife was introduced to him and he looked at her, told her how nice it was to meet her, then kissed her hand. That did it, he seems to have been among those rare persons who have only good things said about them.

Anyway, I thought you might like to have a copy of a photo that our English friends recently sent me showing the tower as it is today. The recently installed Nissen hut can be seen in

Station 146 - Seething Control Tower and Bomb Group Memorial



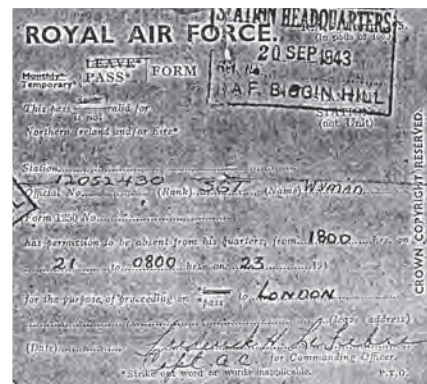
the background. They are constantly improving it and even have a WWII .50 caliber machine gun they install on the roof on open days, exactly is it was during the war. As you know, it is now a museum and the most precious item in it is our Roll of Honor containing names of our 498 comrades who gave their all. I am so happy that I was able to attend the dedication ceremonies in 1987 when the tower was officially opened. I still carry the key they gave to each veteran. Unfortunately, for some years now, because of health problems and advanced age (87) we have not strayed far from doctors. I am just now recovering from a cornea transplant because of blindness in one eye. Happily it turned out well and my vision is much improved. The other eye is a problem to be addressed in the future. Please let me know about reprinting

the article and do stay well and keep up the great work. With best wishes, Smitty
Harold Smith
Franklin Sq, NY
Smitty - The 448th BG Control Tower Association of course may reprint articles of the 8th AF News. -Editor

PASS FOR LONDON

Dear Sir:
I was in the 351st Ftr Sq. 353 Ftr Grp. stationed in England, 1943. We were sent to a RAF Base at Biggin Hill for rest leave which I believe was about ten days - three P47 fighter aircraft and a number of pilots. At the RAF base I requested a pass for London which was a few miles away. I received the pass signed by Frederick H. LeFebre Capt. A.C. dated 20 Sep. 1943.

In the latest 8AF News Vol. 5 No 2, page 12 shows a group of men of the 353rd Ftr Grp at Colorado Springs CO and Fred LeFebre is in the background. I believe he is the same person that signed my pass 62 years ago. I am now 84 and Mr. LeFebre must be 86 or 87. "Time Marches On."
Arnold E. Wyman, 353rd FG
Massena, NY



WARBIRDS STAMPS RELEASED BY U.S. POSTAL SERVICE



The 446th B-24 Liberator "Black Cat", the last heavy bomber lost in the war, is a featured aircraft.

PATTY MCCOLLOM BAUCHMAN...

I felt embarrassed when I went to my first Eighth Air Force reunion to connect with one of the Fighter Groups that my father served with in WWII. Why had I just now taken an interest in what he did during the War, some 20 years after his death?

I tried to quietly sneak into the hospitality room for the 353rd Fighter Group but was quickly approached by one of the veterans who asked who I might be. He announced to the room "Mac McCollom's daughter is here!" And there were whoops and a rush of questions. No one asked me what took me so long to come around; instead they said they were impressed by my interest. I was overwhelmed!

The previous year, I had done a lot of reading on the history of this Fighter Group and was thrilled to be able to meet the men I had read stories about and to connect with several who knew my father during the war. I was blown away to hear a first hand description of my father's P-47 being shot down - how the skin of the airplane instantly melted away and they could see my father sitting in the remaining frame of the aircraft. I could not believe I had never heard this before!

Then as the reunion wore on, it became so much more than just connecting with people who knew my father. I heard a lot of stories that have not been written in books or recorded anywhere anywhere except in the memories of the veterans. I listened to groups of veterans as they recalled stories collectively. I talked to everyone I could in many of the other Groups present at the reunion.

I spent some time in a Bomber Group hospitality suite with an interesting individual I met at the first breakfast who had been a turret gunner on a B-17. I talked to other descendants and relatives of veterans and met many people who had no relatives connected to the war at all - just an interest. There were artists, videographers, photographers, writers, history buffs and locals who grew up in the towns near the air bases in England. I had so much infor-

mation coming in that my circuits overloaded, I put my note pad away and just tried to take it all in. It has changed the way I think about my father and the war. It has given me a better sense for what the times were really like for my father and my mother - because like so many others, they never talked about the war.

I encourage anyone who has any connection or interest whatsoever to attend a reunion -- with a veteran who is a relative if you are so lucky -- or, like me, by yourself. You will be welcomed with open arms and you will be hooked to continue this legacy.

Patty McCullom Bauchman
353rd FG

WILLIAM COUNTS...

It would seem that our final flight on Thursday, June 29, 1944, was, indeed, jinxed from its very beginning. We supposedly were "standing down," but at the last minute were called to fly this mission. At the time we were awakened, around three A.M., none of us were enthusiastic about flying on such short notice. We quickly dressed and rode our bicycles over to the mess hall to eat.

In mission briefing, we learned of our target - a JU 88 plant and airfield at Aschersleben, Germany - route of flight, enemy opposition, etc. We were driven from the briefing room to where our aircraft was on the hardstand.

While still over the Channel, and before getting over enemy territory, it was customary for each of us to use the "rest-room" since we would not be getting out of our seats until we were again back over neutral territory. This was not as simple as it may sound, because of the procedure involved in disconnecting and reconnecting oxygen, electric suit, flak vest and pants, steel helmet, and radio connections, etc. When I sat back down, I reconnected everything except I forgot to fasten my safety belt and shoulder straps! I had never done this before, and it was to be the major factor later in my not perishing inside the ship.

As we approached our target, the JU-88 factory at Aschersleben, visibility was

good and we could see no flak or fighters in the area. We were not more than 30 seconds from "bombs away" when the first burst was fired, and they hit us with that burst and every ensuing burst. We could hear the flak tearing through the aircraft each time one of the 88mm shells exploded. As I reflect on this, I am amazed that our bombs were not hit in the bomb bay. Just before "bombs away," Sgt. Francis Van Veen, our radio operator, tapped my right shoulder and said, "there's a fire in the bomb bay." I looked back over my shoulder and saw the fire which appeared to be hydraulic fluid burning. I told Van Veen to try to put it out, and returned to trying to keep the aircraft in formation and clear of other planes. At almost the same instant Van Veen reported "fire," I had felt the controls go slack and my oxygen supply was extremely hot. I jerked the oxygen hose loose to avoid inhaling flames, in case that system was on fire - as it is sure death if this happens. Eye-witnesses later reported seeing the men in the back of the plane slump over and fall to the floor, and flames streaking out of the waist windows. It is my belief that they died from breathing the deadly flames from oxygen system, but there is no way to know this for certain. They could have been hit by flak fragments.

It was Robby's custom to call out "bombs away," and I didn't hear him as I felt the ship rise as the heavy bomb load was released. Our radio was out but I didn't know it at the time. Immediately after bombs away, I fed the two left engines in and cut back the right engines, in order to avoid a midair collision with anyone else and clear the formation. As we cleared the formation in a diving right turn, I fed all four engines back in and the plane began heeling to the left. I felt that we were going to go down, and told the boys on the intercom to abandon the aircraft. I repeated this twice before I realized the radio was out, as I didn't get any "feedback" through my headset. As I reached for the alarm bell to alert the crew to bail out, Lt. Bill Greble, my copilot, had risen from his seat and was

stepping around the control pedestal, when it felt to me like the right wing came off. I don't know if the wing did come off then, or there was an explosion, or exactly what happened; but for lack of a better expression - "all hell broke loose." I believe the top turret came loose and crushed Greble and nearly got me, as something grabbed my left leg and held it tight enough to pull my flying boot, electric sock and regular sock completely off. The aircraft gyrated viciously, with a whipping motion, that I find difficult to accurately describe. I was being tumbled about inside the fuselage like a pea in a rain barrel, and could not maintain any sense of direction, up or down, center of gravity or anything one might think they could do under those circumstances. I had previously thought what I might do if something like this were to happen, but I couldn't even put my hand in front of my face, so violent were the forces. After what seemed an eternity, during this period, I realized I was not going to get out and that I would be smashed lifeless upon striking the ground. I was almost unconscious from the beating I was taking inside the plane, when the violent oscillation suddenly stopped and the plane continued falling with a rolling motion - similar to the rotation of a mixing machine, such as a concrete mixer. After an indeterminate time in this condition, I suddenly felt fresh air blow across my back, and I knew that the next time the plane rotated I would be thrown out - and sure enough, I was thrown out of some hole, like a shot, into cool, fresh air. I estimate the altitude to have been about 2500 feet, and as I got my feet pointed towards earth, I looked down and saw our aircraft fuselage falling below me, rolling over and over, with no wings on it. It appeared to me that the plane had quit burning. I remembered our briefings on being shot down, to delay opening your chute until you could see trees start to spread rapidly and you would miss some ground fire at you. I did this and when I thought it was time, I grasped my "D" ring with my right hand and

pulled, but was able to pull the rip cord. I had injured my right elbow and hadn't realized it until that moment. I then put my left hand over my right hand and pushed, opening the parachute. I swung forward and then backward and started another swing forward when I hit the ground face down in a plowed field, about 100 feet from where the fuselage of our plane hit. I wanted to run over to it, but couldn't because Germans were already coming toward me from across the field.

There has been much soul-searching and considerable anguish in reliving these events. It is sufficient to say that aircrew members had a special camaraderie for each other that is found only under circumstances where they routinely face danger together, time after time, and are dependent upon each other for their safety. To this day, I cannot watch a documentary of aircraft going down in battle without tears coming to my eyes for the gallant, young men riding those machines of war to their deaths. I think of what might have been had the men of my crew been allowed to live and contribute their good minds, talents and enthusiasm to our world.
William Counts

JOHN ROY...

On Mission #4, Nuremburg (02/20/45); the anti-aircraft fire was intense and accurate, hitting and disabling #2 and #3 engines and instruments and radio equipment. As we left the target area our pilot and co-pilot did a good job of flying, however we were losing altitude and speed and trailing behind our formation. It was apparent then that we would not get back to England. Bailing out of the plane was one option, but our pilots decided to ride it down when this big open field was seen ahead of us. Rest of the crew assumed "ditching" position in the radio-room and prepared for the crash (about 5 pm) in this

wet, plowed up field. There were no injuries.

John M. Roy, 95th BG
Waist gunner
Manskra, LA

JOHN CROWE...

We arrived over enemy-occupied Europe just after eight o'clock and continued southeast to the I.P. (Initial Point onto the target) some sixty miles southwest of Paris. We had experienced some inaccurate, sporadic flak but the "milk run" mission was going as advertised. It was by now a little after eight-thirty as we departed the I.P. and headed northeast on our bombing run to the target at Bretigny. Then all hell broke loose and the sky around us suddenly turned black with intense, accurate flak from the enemy anti-aircraft guns below, thick enough to walk on and close enough to hear the muffled explosion with the familiar R-u-m-m-m-p-h sound that we were soon to know so well. None of us knew at the time, but the lead 489th Grp had somehow failed to take a short zig-zag left turn off the I.P. to the north, then back to the right toward the target as briefed. In so doing, we were directly over the heavy concentration of flak guns just south of the target area. It was no longer the "milk run" anticipated earlier and the sky was filled with the black mushroom explosions of 88 millimeter shells. We continued straight toward the target, Getz intent on flying the Renegade, with the instructions being passed up by Chuck Voyles in the bombardier's compartment in preparation for bombs away. We were in tight formation and with little else to do I was constantly moving my head and eyes in an arc



John Crowe, co-driver in
Renegade

from left to right and then back again. Everything except the exploding flak looked normal and then in less time than it takes to blink an eye, it happened. I was looking at the plane slightly ahead and to our immediate left. Bill Evans and his crew, flying close enough that I could have thrown a rock into the co-pilot's cockpit seat. As I looked at the co-pilot, one of the two engines on the right wing simply disappeared and there was only jagged metal, twisted pipes, and a gaping hole with smoke and flames coming from the location where the Pratt and Whitney engine had been only a second before. At the same instant, Evans' right wing dropped gently downward and the wounded plane began to drift over and down to the right directly toward the Renegade. The events that followed seemed to absorb an eternity but couldn't have taken more than two or three seconds of time. I instinctively hit the control wheel with the full force of both my hands, forcing the control column all the way forward. Bill Getz sat beside me with a look of total disbelief; his hands once full of control wheel were now empty and clutching nothing but two handfuls of air. The Renegade responded, her nose went down, and everything not fastened down went up. I hadn't taken my eyes off Evans' plane, headed toward us on a collision course, and in response to Getz's silent questioning stare, removed my left hand from the fully forward controls and pointed up above us with my left thumb. As Getz looked up, Evans' burning plane slid gently across the top of the Renegade, just above the Plexiglass canopy covering our heads. Getz later said that it couldn't have cleared us by more than a few feet but his may have been a somewhat conservative opinion. The top turret gunner, Turnipseed, who was closer than most, had this to say of the event in his service diary: "I looked up and Evans' burning plane was right on top of me. I let out a scream because I was sure it was my last." It was over as quickly as it had happened. Getz got his control wheel

back, we pulled back up into formation and continued our bomb run toward Bretigny, the primary target. The situation continued to deteriorate as the 489th approached the target and found it largely obscured by cloud cover. Only one squadron of the lead group managed to get a view through the broken clouds and dropped on Bretigny, thus the decision was made to proceed on to the secondary target at Creil, due north of Paris. Instead of turning sharp right from Bretigny, then around Paris to Creil, the lead group plowed straight north, via the Arch de Triumphe and Paris, toward the secondary target. The 491st lead bombardier had managed to see the target at Bretigny and we unloaded on the primary target and unwisely followed the 489th on their bomb run to Creil which took us over Paris. It was by then nine o'clock in the evening and the land below us had given way to the late darkness of the long summer days of the French countryside. The view below was spectacular as we crossed Paris, with hundreds of bright flashes from the muzzles of anti-aircraft guns surrounding the otherwise blacked-out city. It looked like the Fourth of July on the ground and in the sky around us, which was now blackened with the bursting intense flak from the guns surrounding Paris and continuing all the way to and beyond Creil. If the 489th had tried they couldn't have flown the route to be avoided any better than they did. We exited Paris and Creil via Beauvais, Roven and Dieppe, the most direct and dangerous route to the English Channel and home. It was well after ten o'clock when we arrived home at Metfield and to add insult to injury, upon landing, the engines of the Renegade began to sputter and cut out as we taxied back

**B-24 Renegade
Bill Getz Crew**



to our hardstand. We had been given barely enough gasoline to make the trip and return. We were no longer virgins; the Renegade had a great number of battle scars and flak holes about her fuselage and wings, all reparable. The two groups of the 95th Combat Wing (489th and 491st) had paid a high price for the mistakes in navigation from the route as briefed. Five of the seventy-seven planes dispatched on the mission of 2 June were lost to the intense flak, three others crash landed back in England, probably out of fuel. Fifty-eight suffered extensive but reparable flak damage and one had major damage.

The next day I reconstructed the first mission in my own mind and came to the conclusion that if this was a "milk-run", then there was no possible way, short of an unexpected miracle, that we would survive a thirty-mission tour with the Eighth Air Force. I therefore decided from that day forward that I was living on borrowed time and it would be prudent to enjoy to the fullest extent whatever time I had remaining. I never asked others how they wrestled with the problem of survival; perhaps they, too, came to the conclusion that I had reached. The first time I saw Paris had been one hell of an incredible experience, never to be forgotten.

John Crowe, 491st BG copilot
Elizabethton TN



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Chapter News

ILLINOIS CHAPTER

The August Illinois Chapter meeting featured as guest speaker associate member Sheridan Ostrander who served in the Philippines with the 13th Air Force. He was stationed in WWII at Clark Field with the 307th Bomb Group, 372nd Bomb Squadron, flying missions in the islands and on the coast of China. He did food drops and flew missions post-war looking for Japanese Soldiers.

The B-24 Liberator of the Commemorative (Confederate) Air Force, *Diamond Lil*, flew in to Waukegan Airport and was on display for a week in July. George Harlow, 445th BG, was quoted by the Chicago Tribune and the article was accompanied by his photograph with the airplane. The following week, Chapter members visited the Collings Foundation's B-17 *Nine-O-Nine* and the B-24 *Witchcraft* out at the Palwaukee airport.

THE BIRTHPLACE CHAPTER

Author Starr Smith traveled from his home in Montgomery, Alabama to the Savannah Chapter July meeting to tell of his experiences and to discuss his successful new book, *Jimmy Stewart, Bomber Pilot*. Smith was a combat intelligence officer with the 8th AF during the war and later served on General Eisenhower's press staff. He later served with Generals Arnold, Doolittle, Spaatz, Eaker and Kenny.

His research into actor Jimmy Stewart's wartime career unearthed new and previously unpublished details of actor Stewart's career with the 445th BG in Tibenham as a B-24 pilot and later as an officer in HQ. His volume was published this past spring as is available at usual retail booksales outlets.

The June dinner meeting of the Birthplace Chapter held at the Mighty 8th Air Force Museum, Pooler, GA was a "Roast" honoring Ken Hoddinott. Ken was a prime mover in the conversion of the former Savannah Wing of the Georgia Chapter of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society to the Birthplace Chapter, Savannah, GA. The roasters who made for a very lively meeting



consisted of Dennis Leadbetter, John Conner, Jack Young, Connie Metts and Bud Porter.

Ken was presented with a plaque commemorating his service to the Country, community and Chapter.

Ken and wife Melba have moved to the Augusta area, but Ken will still contribute as Director Emeritus of both the Chapter and Museum volunteers.

Bud Porter

MISSISSIPPI CHAPTER

They went again and once again had a memorable annual reunion. Lake Tiak O'Khata welcomed the members of the Mississippi Chapter. The beautiful setting, the great country cooking and the events of the weekend are ones that are looked forward to each year.

A special feature of this year's meeting was the presence of a number of members of the younger generation. They took part in activities, took a swim and caught a fish or two. Chapter veterans signed copies of the acclaimed Mississippi Chapter anthology *Mississippians in the Mighty Eighth*, the personal historical accounts of Chapter veterans whose sales garnered over \$50,000 as a donation to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Savannah.

A special tribute to Chapter founder Kenneth Nail was part of the Sunday morning Memorial service held in the gazebo on the lake. The Mississippi Chapter monument has been engraved with Ken's name, his 457th Bomb Group

lead navigator designation, and his offices held in the Mississippi Chapter and national Historical Society.

IOWA WINGS

The 30th Annual Glenn Miller Festival was held June 9-12 at Clarinda, IA. The 2005 Festival highlighted the music of Hunter Fuerste and his American Vintage Orchestra, Tom Dougharty Orchestra, Five By Design, Moonlight Serenade Orchestra, and of course the world-famous Glenn Miller Orchestra directed by Larry O'Brien. Also back were the 4th through the 6th graders from Kogoshima, Japan. The Northwest Iowa Wing invited the Northeast Iowa Wing and the Central Iowa Wing. Thirty-two members signed our roster. It was hard to get them all together for a picture as performances go on every hour. Northwest Iowa Wing also had a float in the parade plus three tables of artifacts.

Commander Gene Person

WASHINGTON STATE CHAPTER

The year began with elections of Chapter officers. All officers were carried over in their current positions with the exception of the office of Vice President. Associate member Jeff Bomstead was elected to fill the void left when Tony Caruso decided to vacate the post due to time restrictions. Tony had served the chapter well during the previous year.

In February, the Chapter participated in the annual model Exhibition held at the Museum of Flight in Seattle. As part of the education program, the Chapter has constructed a collection of models in 1/48 scale depicting every fighter group in the 8th as well as some B-17s and B-24s. The colorful markings are a great way to attract attention to the display which gives us an opportunity to explain the role the 8th AF had in achieving victory in WWII. Hank Hendrickson (92BG), President Gregg Pierce and Vice President Jeff Bomstead manned the table and answered questions during the event.

Our spring meeting was held on April 9th. Thirty-eight members were in attendance. Our special guest speaker

Chapter News

for the meeting were WWII WASPs Mary Jean Sturdevant and Marjory Munn. Both were flight instructors during the war and gave a wonderful talk about the role women played during the war and the outstanding service these women gave our country.

In May, Chapter representatives attended the P-47 pilots Association Reunion in Seattle. The Chapter provided a display of WWII pilots gear and P-47 models. This was the Associations' final reunion and was attended by P-47 men from as far away as France and South Africa. Although not exclusively an 8th AF event, many representatives of the 8th attended. We met people from the 4th, 56th, 78th, and 353rd FGs. A delegation from the Oregon Chapter made the trip north as well as our "adopted" chapter member Ralph Jenkins, 405th FG, 9th AF.

June found the chapter at the Olympic Flight Museum in Olympia. Chapter members Jeff Bomstead, Dan Cathcartt, Greg Pierce, and Kirk Skaggs presented an authentic recreation of the 303 BG mission briefing for October 9, 1943. Target, the Arado aircraft component plant at Anklam. After the "briefing", a re-creation of a post mission crew interrogation was presented for the audience.

July brought the warbird tours to Washington State. Chapter members Hank Hendrickson and Joe Regan of the 92nd BG and Ted Johnston of the 398th BG went aloft for medial flights on the EAA B-17 "Fuddy Duddy". Also, Chapter members Hank Hendrickson (92nd BG), Jim Keefe (389th BG), Bob Klein (92BG), and Phil Mack (91stBG) spoke at a well-attended panel discussion held at the Museum of Flight in Seattle in conjunction with the Collings Foundation's visiting B-17 and B-24.

For the future, the next Chapter meeting will be held August 13th. Our guest speaker will be F-4 Phantom pilot Capt. John Hayes. The chapter is also helping to host the 44th BG reunion in Seattle/Tacoma in early September.

Jeffrey D Bombstead
Vice President/Secretary

OREGON CHAPTER

The Oregon Chapter is actively recording personnel histories. Aircrew, ground crew, depot, and the other people that made the 8th Air Force (or other military units) a fighting force are encouraged to donate their personal history to our Chapter, or loan the information so that it can be scanned, and catalogued. These histories are then being placed onto CDs with appropriate restrictions for use where requested by the owners and given out for use as source material for future generations. This avoids having to loan our original fragile items to historians.

The last few meetings were also video taped. This allows the presentations to be placed onto digital media too for future use.

During a recent meeting a few stories were told. Clint Gruber started this off by telling of

a ditty made up in Stalag Luft 1 where he was with Hub Zemke. He stated that this had been "written by a kriegie, POW, who had been in the bag a long time, so long that he started talking like a German."

Now I've traveled this Deutschland wide over
And I've stopped at all the Gefangnislager Lufts
Some were good, some were bad,
some were different
And others were the best that they had.

Now this last one I stopped at was a lulu
So pretty and fine and neat
But all of us got Rotes Kreuz parcels
But wait till you hear what we had to eat

On Montag we had borscht and gravy
On Dienstag was gravy and borscht
On Mittwoch and Donnerstag with
gravy on toast
Which is nothing but gravy and
borscht.

On Freitag I went to the Gauleiter
And asked him for something instead
So on Samstag and Sonntag by via the
change
We had gravy without any bread!!

NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER



The attached picture is of North Texas Chapter members manning the veteran's table at the Cowtown Warbird Round-up in Fort Worth last June. As a Chapter function, members talk to visitors, hand out autographed trading cards to children and give tours of the Vintage Flying Museum's B-17. Pictured (L-R) are Harry Ackerman, 91st/34th BGs; Bob Bily, 351st BG; and Hank Plume, 390th BG. The event usually results in a few new members signing up each year as well.

Lance Anderson
Life/Associate Member

NEW MEXICO CHAPTER

The New Mexico Chapter of the 8th AFHS held it's annual Spring General Membership Meeting and Luncheon at the Albuquerque Petroleum Club, on 11 June 05. The Members and Guests

Chapter News

in attendance totaled 114. Current Chapter membership stands at 219. Bill Petynia, aeronautical engineer, was the featured speaker. A World War II Air Corps Veteran, Mr. Petynia, is an aeronautical engineering graduate of the University of Florida. He retired in 1981 after 32 years, of which nine were spent with NACA, National Advisory Commission for Aeronautics in basic research. Twenty-three years of his career were with NASA, National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Mr. Petynia was Chief preliminary designer of the Columbia Spacecraft. His work also included design, development and flight testing of the Mercury, Apollo and Shuttle. In the course of his projects he had occasion to interface with many of the Astronauts. The New Mexico Chapter will hold the Fall General Membership meeting and catered Luncheon, and a dedication ceremony for the Chapter's Memorial Monument at the Veterans Park Oct. 14th, 2005.

submitted by:
Al Schwery
Secretary



Bill Petynia, retired NASA aeronautical eng. and Carl Albright, 446th BG, New Mexico Chapter Vice President.

MISSOURI CHAPTER - ST. LOUIS WING

Our 34th social event and meeting of the year was held June 22nd 2005 on



St. Louis Wing members take a cruise

a cruise up the Missouri River on a million-dollar luxury yacht the "St. Charles Empress".

We chartered the "St Charles Empress" exclusively for the 8th AFHS, St. Louis Wing.

It was one of our more successful events. We cruised up-river past old town St. Charles on the waterfront, while dining in the air-conditioned dining room on the first deck, and listening to music of the era of Scott Joplin, the Dukes of Dixie Land, and Riverboat Classics.

After a delicious buffet luncheon, we adjourned to the upper deck. Some preferred to sit on the open deck taking in the beautiful scenery along the Missouri River. Others preferred the comfort of the air-conditioned lounge with its comfortable leather furniture, and also enjoying a drink at the open bar!

After talking to many of the members, it appears that we might consider cruising each spring on the "St. Charles Empress" as a yearly event!

OHIO CHAPTER

The Ohio Chapter met in May at the Midwest Hotel and Conference Center, Columbus, Ohio. On Friday evening, the Chapter had dinner at one of the local restaurants followed by the Board of Directors meeting. Saturday morning, the members visited in the hospitality room before the meeting. On Sunday, the members could meet again in the hospitality room if they wished before returning home.

The guest speaker was Father Michael

Smith, who is a recognized authority on the history of the American flag. Father Smith gave a lively and informative talk about flags and heraldry, and dispelled some myths about flags. In the 18th century there were no national flags; flags were used exclusively by sovereigns or governments.

Discussed were British and American flags histories and how each flag evolved. Early American flags liked to incorporate wording of some kind. Flags at this time were made by hand. As technology developed more advanced and elaborate designs were able to be created. Father Smith finished his talk by discussing proper flag etiquette.

The Chapter will meet in Dayton at the Hope Hotel at Wright-Patterson AFB in November.

Chris Weber, Secty.

MICHIGAN CHAPTER

The Michigan Chapter sponsored an essay contest for those schools that were given a copy of the education project "Honoring the American Past."

We are submitting a copy of the winning essays and a drawing we felt deserved to be included.

Essays and drawings were submitted by students at the VFW National Home for Children at Eaton Rapids, Michigan. For the safety of the children, their names could not be given nor pictures taken.

Monetary awards were given to each winner.

THE 8TH AMERICAN AIR FORCE

My thoughts and feelings about the men and women that were in the 8th American Air Force are that these people risked their lives to protect America and keep us free. Those people were so brave to risk their lives for us with the thoughts that they might never see or



hear from their family again.

In that Air Force 26,000 men and women gave their lives protecting our country from Germany. Also during the war 28,000 people lost their freedom when they were captured and kept prisoner.

I could not stand to know that I could be killed at any second, but at the same time I would be proud because I would be protecting my country and my family. I honestly would not be brave enough to be flying at 250 miles an hour at a very high altitude just 10 feet away from

another plane. It must have been terrifying.

So I would like to thank all of the pilots and marines for protecting our country - the United States of America.

by Phil
5th Grade Eaton Rapids, MI

FLORIDA CHAPTER NEWS

May Reunion

A good time as had by all as the Florida State Chapter of the 8th Air Force Historical Society gathered in Boca Raton for the semi-annual reunion. The Double Tree Inn was our reunion headquarters. Many members took advantage of the Palm Beach Princess Casino Cruise on Friday. His Honor, Steve Abrams, the Mayor of Boca Raton addressed the membership before the Friday night buffet and welcomed everyone to Boca Raton.

Saturday's General membership meeting included a talk by Marvin Krantz, of the Veterans Administration, introduced by our Vice President, Bill Uphoff. Mr. Krantz appraised the membership of the many benefits available to them and their dependents. President Hart and all the officers and board members were approved by the

membership to serve another two-year term

Saturday nights banquet was opened by the Boca Raton High School Naval ROTC Color Guard and Drill team presenting the colors, followed by the introduction of the officers and board members of the Florida Chapter, by President Jim Hart. Our guest speaker was Brigadier General Albin Irzyk. General Irzyk entertained and informed our gathering with interesting stories about his days as a tank commander with General Patton in World War II.

Our reunion committee chairs were President and Vice President, Jim Hart and Bill Uphoff, ably assisted by Secretary John Guinn and Joe Verille and his wife Betty, who kept the hospitality suite going strong throughout the meeting.

We are very much looking forward to our November meeting in Venice, Florida. Board Member Jim Stuthers had made all the plans for last year before we were visited by four hurricanes and had to cancel. So we are a year late getting to Venice and we will be glad if the storms spare us this year. Anyone who would like to attend the November meeting of the Florida Chapter can contact Jim at jimandkays27@verizon.net, or give him a call at 941-492-5599 for all the details.

Tennessee Chapter member Robert Moses, Brownsville TN, with bitters, was recently the guest of Eighth Air Force Historical Society Historian Roger Freeman and his wife, Jean, at their home in Mays Barn, England. Shown here at a local pub, Roger sends his smile and his best wishes to the Historical Society for its upcoming 31st annual reunion in September.



Book Reviews

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.

ATTLEBRIDGE ARSENAL

The Men and Aircraft of the 466th Bomb Group

by Earl Wassom and Chris Brassfield

Attlebridge Arsenal is the intimate story of the men who fought the air-war against Germany from the American airbase at Attlebridge, England. This superb volume took three years to compile and consists of the personal stories and photographs of the men of the 466th Bomb Group who organized the missions and serviced and crewed the B-24 Liberator bombing missions during the war.

Three years in compiling, the book presents the story in a unique and fresh format: every numbered aircrew, listed by the pilot's name as was the custom, is detailed on its own page, accompanied by personal stories and period photos. A massive undertaking by both authors, the material included came from many historical sources and utilized valuable input from members of the 466th Bomb Group Association. Author Earl Wassom was a pilot in the 466th and has served as President of the national (B-24) Second Air Division Association, is a member of the Board of Directors of the 8th Air Force Historical Society and has been widely published in military and academic journals. Chris Brassfield has a long-standing interest in 8th Air Force history and has served for many years as Associate editor of the 466th BGA *Attlebridge Notes*. Their work as a team is evident throughout the book.

This book is invaluable as a source for crew pictures – those WWII photos of all ten crew members taken by the nose of their airplane. Included are sections depicting the base Quartermaster Company, Ground crew chiefs and mechanics, the 472nd Sub Depot, the 3rd Strategic Air Depot, airbase security, traffic control and other of the many

units which kept Attlebridge functional. Included also is a fine section of the off-base life of the airmen.

One highlight feature are the *Attlebridge Voices* sections of the crew pages. From the William Lee, crew #568, entry:

#8 – 4 December 1944 – Bebra, Germany Marshalling Yard
Long 8 hour mission. No flak. We encountered a problem with our #3 engine and it had to be feathered. Extremely low fuel and a problem with the radio made it necessary to find a place to land as soon as possible.

We landed at a recently recaptured airfield about 8 miles from the front lines at LouVaine, Belgium, thanks to a friendly P-38 that showed us the way there. After a two-man crew from Paris repaired the engine we were able to scrounge some gas and we returned to England on 6 December. They were excited to see us as they were just about to report us missing in action!

From the Harry McGregor, crew #716, page:

Captain Harry McGregor was a pilot's pilot. He had an authority with an airplane that none of us ever questioned. His crew came from Tucson and was assigned to the 787th BS at the same time ours was. He had a slow drawl that he acquired in the panhandle of Texas. When I think back on him, I think he made very much the same impression most of us now have of Jimmy Stewart. Harry was like that.

Attlebridge Arsenal is a large format high-quality hard cover volume of 352 pages; over 900 period photographs, most previously unpublished; contact Turner Publishing Company, P.O. Box 3101, Paducah KY 42002-3101; tel 270-443-0121; online at www.turnerpublishing.com

THE BEST OF TIMES

A Novel of Love and War

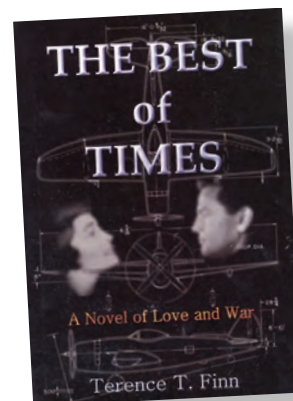
by Terence T. Finn

The story is set in England in late 1943. The main character is a fictional 8th Air Force P-47 Group Commander, Lt. Col. Tom Forester and his romance with

Helen Trent, 43, married. Author Finn describes his book as “one-third Eighth Air Force history, one-third about Thunderbolts, and one-third a romance.”

The volume takes the reader into combat – make that combat against the German enemy early on in the war – and also into areas of wartime romance with unusual circumstances and repercussions. The issues that faced the 8th Air Force are addressed in the course of the novel and interactions with 8th leaders as well as the Royal Air Force neatly play into the story, adding a sense of authenticity not often found in wartime aviation novels. The writer has a history of a life-long interest in aviation and in the Second World War, and his knowledge of the subject is most evident in the fine points of air combat and airbase life that come through in the telling. For all that, the author also has a good grasp of the romantic side of war. Note is taken that there are not too many historical novels that portray the life and problems a Fighter Group Commander faces. This one does, and does it well. It's a very good 8th Air Force tale.

The book is long enough for readers to get to know the characters and the events as they unfold – it's a hardback 502 pages. The volume is published by Ivy House Publishing Group, 5122 Bur Oak Circle, Raleigh NC 27612 tel 919-782-0281 or online at www.ivyhouse-books.com. You also can have a chance to meet the author in person at the 2005 8th AFHS annual reunion in Arlington.



JOHN McCORMICK OF THE JOLLY DUCK

Dear Walt:

On February 22, 1945 a B-24 of the 392nd BG *Jolly Duck* made a crash landing in Holland. All nine crew members survived. They split up: four of them were taken POW pretty well immediately and the five others were taken care of by the Dutch resistance group in a hunting lodge. Crewman John McCormick joined the resistance men and participated in their activities. On April 29 the Germans carried out an attack on the hunting lodge and in the ensuing firefight John McCormick was killed. He may have been the last member of the 8th KIA of WWII who was killed in action.

On the same day the four POW's were liberated at Moosburg and on that day the RAF dropped food for the first time over Western Holland. Operation Manna – Chowhound.

John McCormick is not buried at a US Military Cemetery but right under the tower of the Dutch Reformed Church in Zoetermeer. His grave is next to that of three resistance fighters who died at the same time as he did or few days later. The grave is being treasured by the people of Zoetermeer who place flowers at the grave regularly and that the site has been granted as a monument in perpetuity.

Leo Wery, Birthplace Chapter, 8th AFHS

In the Dutch community of Zoetermeer, you'll find a street named for Scranton, Pennsylvania, native John E. McCormick. The local scouting group bears his name. School children in the area learn about him and take field trips to the hunting lodge where he spent the last months of his life. In 1975, a 240-page book by a Dutch author was published that devotes several chapters to him. In 1994, a Dutch film crew came to Scranton to film a documentary about his short life. In 1995, the US Consul General spoke at the unveiling of the John E. McCormick Monument in nearby Zevenhuizen. Every year, flowers are laid on his grave to commemorate the anniversary of his death. How did a 23-year old from Scranton



1st Lt W.A. Sturm crew. S/Sgt John McCormick is on the front row, far right. S/Sgt Lingle (front row, far left) was also aboard *Jolly Duck* when it crashed, but he was captured right away.

become so well-known in The Netherlands? The story has its roots in the closing days of World War II.

John McCormick was a waist gunner with the 392nd Bomb Group. On Feb. 22, 1945, he was aboard B-24H #42-95241 on a bombing mission to Northeim, Germany. The nine men in the plane were originally part of six different crews and many had never flown together. One man was on his first mission; another was on his 35th, and final mission. McCormick himself needed only a few more missions to complete his combat tour.

Shortly after bombs away and with one engine not working, pilot Joseph Walker became concerned that he didn't have enough fuel to get back to England. Bailing out was not an option since they were taking small arms fire from the ground, so he made a controlled crash-landing near Zoeterwoude, a small farming community in the western part of The Netherlands. The nose wheel of the plane clipped a dike and then the plane slid on its belly till it finally came to rest, narrowly missing a small farmhouse, but cutting off the tops of several fruit trees with its right wing.

The nine Americans exited the plane as quickly as they could considering their cuts, bruises, and sprains. Walker ordered them to split up into small groups and get away as quickly as they could. Four of the crew headed off in what proved to be the wrong direction and were quickly taken prisoner. Harold Shea, Francis Nagle, Allan Hicks, and John A.H. Lingle spent the rest of the war in a POW camp. The other five - Walker, Ralph Casstevens, John Donohue, Elmer Duerr, and McCormick - avoided capture and were eventually moved into "safe houses" by the Underground.

Over the next few days, townspeople came in droves to gawk at the large plane that had unexpectedly appeared in their midst. On the morning on Feb. 26, 1945, photos of the area taken by an RAF reconnaissance plane revealed the apparently undamaged B-24. That afternoon, RAF Spitfires strafed the B-24 repeatedly until it was destroyed, not knowing that the Germans had already stripped the plane.

McCormick was soon brought to the hideout of a local Dutch resistance group, a small hunting lodge near

Zevenhuizen on the banks of the river Rotte. Dr. Kentgens, the dentist who headed the group, asked McCormick if he wanted to stay in hiding or if he wanted to help them. For McCormick, there was only one choice: to fight. On April 29, 1945, the hunting lodge was suddenly surrounded by German soldiers. Hidden inside were Dutch resistance fighters and some members of their families, John, a captured German soldier, and several English fliers who had been brought there after their Stirling crashed on April 11. In the ensuing gun battle, John and resistance fighter Jacob van Rij were killed. Several more people, including Dr. Kentgens and Mrs. van Rij, were wounded. On May 4, 1945, John was buried next to van Rij in a cemetery in Zevenhuizen. That evening the German command in The Netherlands surrendered. On October 31 of that year, John was reburied in the courtyard of the Dutch Reformed Church in Zoetermeer, but this time with full resistance honors. Buried next to him was Jacob van Rij. Two years later, the US Army asked John McCormick's father where he wished his son to be permanently interred. Mr. McCormick chose to leave his son's body in place. Acting at Mr. McCormick's request, Dr. Kentgens met with the US Army and formally accepted responsibility for John's remains. A memorial was erected at the burial site with the names of the four men and a Dutch epitaph that means "Faithful to Their Fatherland." In front of the graves is a small flower

The B-24 Jolly Duck crashed at The Farm site



bed with two flagpoles. The memorial is tended jointly by the Church and the city of Zoetermeer.

The John E. McCormick monument is located just outside the hunting lodge on the river Rotte.

It commemorates the attack in which John E. McCormick was killed while working for the freedom of The Netherlands.

Since its creation, the memorial in Zoetermeer has become the focal point where local citizens commemorate everyone who gave their lives for the liberation of The Netherlands. On the evening of May 4, 2005 - the Dutch Memorial Day - a march of remembrance was held. Townspeople walked silently past the memorial, many carrying flowers they placed carefully on the graves.

Why are the Dutch still drawn to the story of John McCormick? One possible explanation is the ironic juxtaposition of events on April 29, 1945: John was killed in action; his four crewmates

land.

Another explanation is the universal admiration for courage: John McCormick had already risked his life many times in the air. Before his last mission, he was no doubt advised that the war was almost over and if shot down, he should just to stay hidden until the Allies came. Instead, he chose to actively work to speed the liberation, shoulder-to-shoulder with the Dutch resistance. Perhaps the best answer is that John McCormick is now inextricably linked with the Dutch community in which he unexpectedly landed. As his father might once have hoped, S/Sgt. John E. McCormick is no longer a stranger in enemy territory, but at home.

For four days in May, 2005, gunner John Lingle's family visited Holland, attending the 8-hour Memorial Day parade, a reenactment of the firefight at the location at Camp McCormick where John McCormick was killed, and the Commemorative Monument site. They went out to the crash site of the *Jolly Duck* and shared memories with witnesses to the crash. Tributes to American and Allied servicemen were in windows, stores, and media throughout the country. The family was welcomed by everyone they met on their journey.

The trip closed with a special visit to the Old Church in Zoetermeer where John McCormick is buried alongside the resistance fighter.



The graves of 8th airman John McCormick and resistance Fighter Jacob Van Rij

who had been taken prisoner were freed from POW camp; and the RAF dropped food to the Dutch for the first time. Thousands of bundles of food, not bombs, descended on the starving people of western Hol-



A number of Units and Groups are looking ahead and indicate their desire to continue to gather with their comrades regularly after

their formal group dissociation occurs in years to come. The 8th AF Historical Society has received inquiries from several Groups and will address a proposal to include Group members with their special recognition, Hospitality rooms, and events as part of the annual 8th AFHS reunion. The HS Board will have this information out following the 2005 reunion in Arlington.

Marion Hodgson, WASP and author, will be in attendance from her home in Texas for the dedication events of the Chuck Glover Fly Girls Gallery and will be a principal speaker at the ceremonies to be held at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum on September 23rd. She also will host a book signing event at the Museum on Thursday, September 22nd. Call the Museum at 912-748-8888 for details.

Board of Directors member Earl Wassom will chair the 8th AFHS Continuance Committee meeting at the annual reunion on Friday, 30 September, before the annual Business session on the following morning. This important committee is examining areas regarding the future of the Historical Society and will report at the Business session.

The U. S. Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron, *Thunderbirds*, announced their new pilots for their 2006 demonstration season and for the first time in its 52-year history include the first female demonstration pilot as a team member.

Among a number of good websites of the Mighty Eighth Units is that of the 78th Fighter Group at Duxford: www.78thfightergroup.com. Take a

look.

British author Tony Overill, in researching his new book *Crash Boats of Gorleston*, came across an account of the ditching of a 390th Bomb Group B-17 #297830 and got in touch with tailgunner Bob Gilmore, the remaining crewman. His story turned into a chapter of the just-published volume. The book details the story of No. 24 Air Sea Rescue Unit of the Royal Air Force. For info contact Woodfield Publishing: tel 01243 821234 (0900 1800 GMT) or the internet at www.woodfieldpublishing.com.



The Rougham Tower Association is hosting a "1940's Weekend" at the restored 94th Bomb Group airbase on October 1&2, 2005 as part of their Rougham Airfield Events 2005. The nostalgic weekend will feature airplanes and memories of wartime England. Friends of Rougham have recently installed new sidewalks leading up to and surrounding the restored control tower. For info call newsletter editor Preston Clark at 512-442-6628 in Austin TX.

Michael Simpson is the webmaster of the 445th Bomb Group's website: <http://445th-Bomb-Group.com>. His father served in the 445th flying as a bomber-



dier in B-24s. Michael has developed a set of beautiful cloth embroidered squadron patches for the Group's four squadrons, which are available.

The Simpson family has served in three wars: his father in WWII, Micheal in Vietnam, and his son is presently serving with the 3rd Infantry Division in Iraq. Contact him at tel 480-577-6507 or email Webmaster@445th-Bomb-Group.com

Bomber Legends magazine is seeking high quality photographs and historical information for their three 2006 calendars, including the B-24 and B-17 editions. Also, you can take advantage of their kind offer to send a package of their fine magazine to distribute at your next reunion. Contact George Welsh tel 1-866-788-3624.

Allan Duffin and Paul Matheis have printed their book analyzing and telling the story in detail of the making of the 1949 award-winning WWII movie "12 O'Clock High," starring Gregory Peck. Book outlets will carry it – Allan's website is: allan@duffin.com

A few not-too-well-known state mottos:

- North Dakota – We Really Are One of the 50 States!
- Alabama – Hell Yes, We Have Electricity!
- North Carolina – Tobacco Is A Vegetable
- South Dakota – Closer Than North Dakota
- Texas – Se Hablo Ingles
- Oregon – Spotted Owl ... It's what's For Dinner
- Rhode Island – We're not Really an Island
- Oklahoma – Like the Play, But With No Singing

Here's a heads-up for all Unit and Chapter reunion planners: the 8th Air Force Historical Society's **2006** annual reunion will be held in Bossier City, Louisiana and Barksdale AFB LA on October 4 – 8, 2006. You'll want to be planning ahead.

The American Chapel in the East

end of St. Paul's Cathedral in London is currently being restored and cleaned – the first time since its dedication in 1958. Peter Chapan, a Lay Canon of the church is exploring the concept of holding a special event, possibly on Veteran's Day this year, to celebrate with U. S. personnel, the re-opening of the Chapel.

The case containing the names of the 28,000 8th airmen killed during the war is also being refurbished. The Cathedral Crypt also contains a memorial to Billy Fiske, the first American to fly combat with the RAF.

For those who attend the Gala Banquet at the 8th AFHS annual reunion on Saturday night, October 1st, be prepared to be entertained by the U. S. Air Force Band. Treasurer Ivan McKinney has got it arranged and there will be an Armed Forces Color Guard as well. Should be an event to remember.

The 8th Air Force veterans are doing their part in helping out with the greatest natural disaster in America's history. The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah is a collection point for donations for Hurricane Katrina support. Media coverage states

that "Debbie's Diner" is the location for museum donations and food will be transported to the area's Second Harvest Food Bank for shipping to the hurricane-ravaged communities in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama.



A nice mix of 8th troops and their families on a recent 447th Bomb Group Return to Rattlesden trip over. This photo shows Historical Society and 447th BG member Pete Petrillo in the white hat and 8th AFHS office manager Connie Metts getting a big hug in front of the B-17 Flying Fortress *Sally B* at Duxford Airfield.



Troops of the 447th BG; Big Shorty Codman at far right

BULLETIN BOARD

WARTIME DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS ISSUE ADDRESSED BY 8TH AF BOMB GROUP

Donald Casey, 379th BG and editor of the Group's newsletter, *Contrails*, has devoted his April 2005 issue to the subject of award protocols of the DFC during the war. An explanation from 379th Group Commander Lewis Lyle was included in the discussion.

The controversy revolves around the official Army Air Corps procedure of awarding a Distinguished Flying Cross medal to every crewman who completed his tour of 25 missions, the standard being "extraordinary achievement in aviation/flight." Casey outlines the numbers of DFCs awarded in the 379th BG up until the policy change in March 1944. Numbers decline after that date even though more crews



were in the air, flying tours of 30 or 35 missions.

Lew Lyle explains, "When Commanding General of the USAAF, Gen. H. H. Arnold, learned in the summer of 1944 that persons were receiving a DFC for completing a fixed number of combat missions, he declared that he would fire any group commander who did this. This new standard was not welcomed

by the group commanders or the troops. The proscribed tour of missions in the Eighth Air Force to get the award had seemed fair to us who were doing the flying. The imposing red tape requirements now caused most CO's to stop awarding the medal."

After the war, eyewitness accounts and time limits, now removed, to get

the medal were imposed. Guidelines to receive the medal are still in place, primarily being a requirement to be in touch with your local U.S. Congressman for recommendation. A Congressman must submit the recommendation of award to the Secretary of the Air Force. Affidavits are a part of the application procedures. Lately, members of Congress such as U. S. Representative Hilda Hollis, have taken it on their own to seek out potential deserving recipients.

Contrails editor Casey suggests that getting in touch with your local politicians might put pressure on the Air Force to reconsider the current policies and SOPs. He notes that 2006 is an election year and many public servants will look very good in the media, presenting a DFC to a WWII warrior. He has a list of military Archival offices and contacts that may be of help. Don Casey's email is: arcdec@aol.com

HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2005-6 FUND DRIVE TO SUPPORT ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Announcement To Be Included in Dues and Life Member Mailouts

The 8th AF Historical Society's Board of Directors voted to direct the Society's 2005 and 2006 to support the Oral History Program at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum – our permanent home of the Eighth.

The museum's program has several hundred oral history videos and tapes and recognizes the immediate need to obtain hundreds more. This historical collection will be used to tell the Eighth's history, in the words of those who made it, to future generations of students, researchers and families. It will be unique in the world. All histories obtained must be transcribed on hard copy paper and also must be dissected for subject matter and time frames. Computer entry is also a vital part of recording the histories.

For example, if a family member wants to know what happened to their grandfather on the first Stuttgart raid, they must be able to enter a computer program and find that particular area of your oral discussion. If they want to know what numbers of others who flew that mission with you thought, they need to be able to easily find that area of each video and oral presentation of every one of the other 8th veterans. Likewise, the ground crews who enabled that mission to get off the ground and the operations personnel who enabled to get the bomber stream over the target must be obtainable also. Fighters who flew that day will have their own impression of the mission, and their stories must be available.

A fascinating scenario, one that we must ensure will be obtainable – the 8th AFHS members can make it happen. The time is right now to send in your donation in any amount directed to the Oral History Fund Drive. Our previous success in funding and building the Memorial Chapel of the Fallen Eagles in the museum's gardens shows what we can accomplish together. The 8th AFHS office mailing address is P.O. Box 1787, Savannah GA 31402.



BULLETIN BOARD

AMERICAN FLAG DONATED TO ST. MARY'S CHURCH

Pursuant to a request by a former nurse of the 65th General Hospital near Rickenhall, England 1943-1945, a new American flag has been presented to St. Mary's Church. The original flag was donated by the 65th sixty years ago at the war's end when the medical unit from Duke University Medical School left England to return home. Sebastian Corriere, President of the 801st/492nd Carpetbaggers Bomb Group Association and also chief of the John D'Amore VFW Post #2804, arranged to have the Post marching flag presented to the Hon. Rev. Chris Norburn, Vicar of the St. Mary's Church.

The presentation was made by the Bomb Group's English representative, Ron Clarke at the church site. The American flag is scheduled to hang where its predecessor did for the next sixty years.



Vicar Chris Norborn, at left with Ron Clarke.

EIGHTH AIR FORCE HAS NEW COMMANDER AT BARKSDALE

Change of Command ceremonies took place on 10 August 2005 in Hoban Hall at Barksdale AFB, Louisiana. Friend of the 8th AF Historical Society Lt. Gen. Bruce Carlson turned the command of the Eighth Air Force and Task Force 204 over to Lt. Gen. Kevin P. Chilton. Lt. Gen. Carlson will receive his fourth star moving into his next assignment.

Lt. Gen. Chilton is a distinguished graduate of the U. S. Air Force Academy Class of 1976 with undergraduate pilot training at Williams AFB, Arizona. He is a graduate of the U. S. Air Force Test Pilot School, having tested several models of the F-4 and F-15 fighters. He joined the National Aeronautics and Space Administration in 1987 and flew on three space shuttle missions with NASA. He has commanded the 9th Reconnaissance Wing at Beale AFB, California and has served on the Air Force Space Command Staff and the Joint Staff. Most recently, Lt. Gen. Chilton was Director of Programs, Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans and Programs, Headquarters U. S. Air Force, followed by the position of acting Assistant Vice Chief of Staff at Headquarters.

Among his numerous Air Force and NASA Awards, he has received the Defense Superior Service Medal with oak leaf cluster, the DFC, and the Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster.

The 8th Air Force Historical Society extends congratulations and a warm welcome to Lt. Gen. Kevin Chilton in his position as the new Commander of the 8th Air Force.



Lt. Gen. Kevin P. Chilton

SCHOOLCHILDREN IN SUFFOLK LEARN ABOUT THE MIGHTY EIGHTH

A primary school in Suffolk, England has been awarded lottery funding for several memorial projects for the 34th bomb Group who were based at Mendlesham airfield. Gordon Leathers, Headteacher at the school, says that the main aim is to educate British schoolchildren the reasons why they must remember the fallen servicemen and women each year. They also aim to make sure that local communities do not forget the heroism, sacrifice, and bravery of the 34th Bomb Group.

They have also developed a school museum with original artifacts, photographs, and short films about the 34th and the 8th Air Force to be shown. A special church memorial service was held this past May 6th.

The website to see is: <http://redtaileddevils.mysite.wanadoo-members.co.uk/>. Gordon Leathers may be reached at: gordonleathers@hotmail.com



Miller, Paul, Houston TX; 351st BG navigator; B-29 navigator instructor during Korean War

Brooks, Thomas, Athens AL; North Alabama Wing

Pettit, Clarence "Peck," Clarendon TX; 96th BG engineer/ttg; from close friend and crewmate Wayne "Whit" Whitlock

Ramsey, Hansell "Hank," Savannah GA; 100th BG adjutant; Birthplace Chapter; career as noted photographer

Gilmore, Donald, r/o gunner with 50 missions as B-17 crewman out of Foggia, Italy; Birthplace Chapter; Volunteer at Heritage Museum

Ottumwa, Armin, Hillsboro OR; 447th BG Crew chief; Oregon Chapter

Nelson, William, Savannah GA; tg on B-17s; Crew chief of General Eisenhower's non-combat missions

Forman, Wallace, Roseville MN; radio instructor in 8th AF; lifelong historian compiling photos and records of 8th a/c and airmen – from Mark Holmes

Durr, Malcolm, Alton IL; 95th BG lead navigator, flew 1st Berlin raid of Big Week 4 Mar 1944; career as attorney

McGuire, Brian, LaVista NE; 303rd BG Assoc; many years as contact for 303rd at the JAC on Molesworth airbase in England, establishing the "Might In Flight" designation and art collections for the Joint Analysis Building on the base – from his brother Scott

Dennehy, Bernard "Pap," Oklahoma City OK; 361st FG P-51 Mustang pilot

Kersch, Robert, Muskegon MI; 4th Strategic Air Depot

Duffy, Robert, Savannah GA; 389th BG;

POW; Birthplace Chapter

Moses, Harry, Vidalia GA; B-17 pilot with 19 missions; POW for twenty months; founded Georgia Tire Co.; served as Chairman Board of Education; founder and President Vidalia Rotary Club

Bertrand, J. Rayburn, Lafayette LA; pilot 78th FG; flew 88 combat missions; served as Mayor of Lafayette for three terms

Baker, Howard, McDonough GA; flew 28 missions as ball turret gunner on B-17s and B-24s; career as school principal and educator; served as a Volunteer at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum while living at Tybee Island near Savannah

Biezenbos, L. Raf, Littleton CO; born on 1 July 42 in Amersfoort, The Netherlands; named in honor of the British Royal Air Force; career in shipping business in Savannah GA

Gippert, Winfield Scott, Tempe AZ; 44th BG copilot on Bernard Kominski crew; bailed out of his B-24 and was hidden by the French Resistance fighters until liberated by Gen.

George Patton's 3rd Army; 31-year career in the USAF; served in Vietnam and in IG offices – from crewmate engineer Frank Schaeffer

McAvoy, James

Arnold, in Panama Canal Zone, 1969; 92nd

BG, copilot on John Booker lead crew; POW Stalag Luft I; from his son Ronald Neil, belated but to info crewmates

Hallum, Bertrand "Bert," Fort Smith AR; 303rd BG pilot; career in USAF

Gerry Thomas recently died at a Phoenix Hospice center. Thomas made his place in history after the war by inventing the TV Dinner while employed at C. A. Swanson & Sons, the first offering being turkey and dressing, sold in a compartmented aluminum tray to eat while watching television.



Winfield Scott Gippert

The TV dinner initially cost about one dollar. He may have gotten his successful idea, that changed America's eating habits, from wartime K-ration dinners, usually eaten cold by the ground troops.

Gerry Thomas was buried in Phoenix, Arizona, with a post-funeral reception for guests, fare consisting of two pieces of fried chicken, peas, mashed potatoes and a roll.

Brooks, Thomas, Athens AL; served with the 8th AF and in Korean war; Alabama Chapter and North Alabama Wing

LaPorte, Anthony, 390th BG enlisted co-pilot and engineer; Wisconsin Chapter

Rendleman, Charles "Chuck" BAD 2 from 1942 – 45; Wisconsin Chapter

Braeger, Robert "Bob" Milwaukee WI; 34th BG navigator; career as automobile dealer refusing to sell any cars other than American automobiles

Kempter, Joseph, Milwaukee WI; from Wisconsin Chapter Pres. Bill Bergner
Forman, Wally, St. Paul MN; installed military radio equipment during the war; Minnesota Chapter

O'Boyle, David, 95th BG navigator; shot down and escaped capture with help of Belgium helper family; AFEES and a founder of Colorado Chapter; from Mike Quering

Parker, John William, 303rd BG copilot; from his daughter Cheryl Parker

Thomas Oscar Seabolt, 98, passed away recently in Gainesville, Georgia. Born in Union County, he was the real son of Lafayette and Katie Seabolt. His father, Lafayette, served in the Confederate army in the War of Northern Aggression, Company G, 52nd Regiment Georgia Volunteer Infantry. He owned and operated Seabolt Scrap Iron for many years.

Burns, Francis, 303rd BG radio operator of B-17 *Skywolf* on Carl Morales crew; completed 25 missions early in the war; from nephew Paul Burns

Raab, Norman, Fort Lauderdale FL; 8th AF bombardier/navigator; founder of Villager line of women's clothing

popular in the late 1950s; from Stanley Friedman

Cramer, William; Kentucky Chapter; from his wife Mabel

Marini, Daniel, Louisville KY; 96th BG tailgunner; one of two of his original crewmembers to return home from the war; Kentucky Chapter Board member

Schaaf, Patricia, Statesboro GA; wife of Herbert Schaaf; Volunteer 8th AF Heritage Museum; Georgia Chapter

Floren, Myron, Rolling Hills Estates CA; accordion player in Lawrence Welk orchestra

James Doohan, typecast in his role as engineer Montgomery "Scotty" Scott in the *Star Trek* television series, died in Redmond, Washington.

He landed on Juno Beach on D-Day with the Canadian forces, crossing a German mine field laid for tanks, avoiding mines which were not laid for light-weight ground troops to set off. Doohan later that night took six hits from a machine gun: four in the leg, one that blew off his right middle finger, and the other in the chest, stopped by his cigarette case. He said about the landing, "The sea was rough that morning. We were more afraid of drowning than we were of the Germans."

In his numerous *Star Trek* episodes, Doohan inspired the infamous catch phrase "Beam me up, Scotty." True to form, before his death he arranged to have his ashes blasted into space to join those of *Star Trek* creator Gene Roddenberry.

Cather, Earl; 353rd FG, 866th Air Engineering Squadron; married Molly McGillicuddy in 1945; from his son Dan

Betti, Hugh, Palisades Park NJ; 55th FG communications officer

Krumwiede, Leland, Hibbing MN; Minnesota Chapter

Creech, Harvey, Charlotte NC; 447th BG; North Carolina Chapter

Grice, John, Washington PA; 18th Weather Squadron; Pennsylvania Chapter

Bell, Charles, Catonsville D; 91st BG lead pilot on B-17 *Superstitious Aloysius*; attorney with a career in Life Insurance Industry and then in Federal Services;

from his son Charles Jr.

Frances Langford, recording artist who toured with Bob Hope's USO troupe died at her home in Florida. Her song, "I'm In the Mood for Love" captivated 8th airmen on her tour of airbases in East Anglia.

The 5-foot-1 singer was a glamorous vision of home and became known as the "Sweetheart of the Fighting Fronts."



Frances Langford

Landers, Howard David, Decatur AL; 492nd BG; 392nd BG; from his wife Sarah

Demetrious Xenophon "Mitchell" Miltiades, Savannah GA; member of 29th Infantry Division who landed on Omaha beach in Normandy, D-Day 1944 with "The Bedford Boys"; Purple Heart, Bronze Star; owner of Victory Soda Shop on Waters in Savannah McIntire, Pope Barrow, Atlanta GA; B-17 pilot 8th AF; career as attorney and active in University of Georgia Foundation and athletic programs; founder Atlanta Classice Golf Tournament contributing millions of dollars to Children's Helathcare in Atlanta; supporter of Phi Delta Theta fraternity

Major General George Lynch,

Richmond Hill GA; career in USAF serving as Deputy Director of Budget at AF HQ and Commander of Commissary Serve at Kelly AFB, TX; active in Management Analysis of Chatham County, GA he was a

strong supporter of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum and served as a consultant and Volunteer.

Farris, Harold, San Antonio TX; 305th BG



Major General George Lynch

Westberg, Frank, Richfield MN

Craer, William, Hopkinsville KY; from his wife Mabel

Hollritt, Alfred; 303rd BG ballturret gunner

Evans, Oren "Chick," Bakersfield CA; flight engineer; from crewmate Neil Perry

Meisner, Verne, Milwaukee WI; accordion player, second only to Frankie Yankovic in polka accomplishment

O'Boyle, David; 95th BG navigator; shot down and escaped with aid of Belgium family helpers; AFEES; a founder of the Colorado Chapter;

Hallum, Bertrand, Fort Smith AR; 303rd BG

Shantz, Donald; Ohio Chapter; tailgunner in B-52s with over 300 missions in Vietnam War

Davis, Homer, Connellsville PA; 446th BG armorer; caree with Bradley Paint Co.; from Michael Prestia and Guy Snyder

Dumas, William Benjamin "Ben," Baytown TX; B-17 navigator 1943-44; church deacon; took pleasure in working as a crssing guard helping schooldren get to school safely

Joseph Wacker, 35 mission B-24 tailgunner, 44th BG, Meadowbrook, Pa from Jack Brand, B-17 Navigator, 452BG. Ruppert, John, Iowa City IA; 447th BG; Iowa Chapter

Holston, Charles, Elkhart IN; 44th BG Mess Hall Cook for B-24 and B-17 crews - from his wife Doreen

Bunker, Leo Bradley; 457th BG navigator; - from his daughter Janet Smith, **Ernest Earl,** Memphis TN; 486th BG; strong supporter of the 8th Air Force; - from his son Mark

Deal, William, "Bill" 466th BG top turret gunner on Glen Alexander Lead crew; flew with Robert Moore crew afterwards

McGinnis, Delbert, Delavan WI; B-17 pilot with 25 missions

Hutton, Joseph, Mobile AL; 91st BG tailgunner with 35 missions; served in Korea as Senior Navigator-Observer in F-94 fighters; - from his wife Paulette

**RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION AND DESIGNATION OF THE MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE
MUSEUM AS THE OFFICIAL REPOSITORY OF EIGHTH AIR FORCE COLLECTIONS AND CENTER
FOR THE STUDY OF EIGHTH AIR FORCE HISTORY**

Whereas, since its opening on May 13, 1996, the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum has served as the only institution in the United States and Europe whose mission is exclusively dedicated to perpetuating the history of the Eighth Air Force; and

Whereas, during the nine years since opening, the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum has used its exhibits and collections to engage and educate nearly one million visitors; and

Whereas, the Museum has assembled an artifact collection containing over 12,000 Eighth Air Force related artifacts; and

Whereas, the Museum has collected over 8,000 monographs, 20,000 original photographs, thousands of letters, diaries, and other primary source materials; and

Whereas, the Museum has recently acquired title to the 303rd Bomb Group and 392nd Bomb Group archives; and

Whereas, the Museum has proven to be a professional steward of the stories, artifacts, and archives associated with the Eighth Air Force, and

Whereas, the Museum operates to the highest professional museum standards and employs a talented, competent and professionally trained staff; and

Whereas, the Museum is an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution and a partner with the Library of Congress Oral History initiative; and

Whereas, the Museum has collected and preserved to date the oral histories of nearly 1,000 veterans; and


Whereas, the Museum is the steward of the largest memorial garden dedicated to Eighth Air Force veterans; and

Whereas, the Museum preserves the Chapel of the Fallen Eagles, a memorial chapel erected through the efforts of members of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society; and


Now, Therefore here it be Resolved that the Board of Directors of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society on this 19th day of March, two thousand and five, commend and express appreciation to the museum's board of trustees, staff, and volunteers for their accomplishments and efforts to preserve Eighth Air Force history and has designated the museum as the official repository of Eighth Air Force collections and the Center for Eighth Air Force history.

Lawrence Goldstein, President

John S. Pearson, Secretary



John S. Pearson, Secretary



Lawrence Goldstein, President

**351st Bomb Group Association
Vote for Second
and Third Generation Attendees
To be Authorized To Assume Leadership**

In a groundbreaking decision members of the 351st Bomb Group Association approved of more active participation by second and third generation offspring in the future affairs of this honored WWII 8th Air Force Unit. In the words of Clint Hammond, the Association president, "We veterans realize that the day is coming when

we must stand aside because of our ever advancing ages. If our Reunions continue, it will be up to you younger associate members to carry on. How many of you here this morning will be willing to participate?" The response was enthusiastic when this question was posed at the general meeting in Reno, NV on July 18. As a result, the first Associate Member representing this level of membership, Bruce Nocera, was immediately named a department head. The members voted to convene next year in the city of St. Louis, Missouri in the month of June, 2006.

How About It?

UNKNOWN AIRMAN

The envelop I received via U.S. Mail was mingled in among all of the unwelcome advertising flyers, a magazine or two, pleas for donations, announcements about weddings, graduations, babies, and the usual assortment of “things” which show up in my mail box. I was totally amazed that the postman was able to deliver the only letter that was directed to my attention. It was addressed to “The Chaplain” with my street address and city, hand written by a man, obviously as old as I. His penmanship skills were similar to mine—rather hard to read! The caption on the letterhead of the envelop gave the name of a Veterans Home Board in a certain city and state. This gentleman, Joel, (not his real name), had printed his name above the organizational address with his ballpoint pen, followed by the number of his assigned quarters. Out of curiosity, I checked with the Membership Records Manager at our 8th AFHS National Office. No record of him existed in any of the current or historical membership files. Who was this man? I opened the envelope looking for a letter. The only item inside was a very old and worn one dollar bill. There was no written note or message. Or was there?

Joel, apparently was one of our men. Why did he send a message to me “the Chaplain”? Without question, he was one of the 350,000 men assigned to

the 8th Air Force stationed in war-torn England during WW II. Was he one of the ground echelon men or was he an air crew member flying combat missions over enemy territory? I don’t know and probably never will. But his message is this: “I am here—thinking about you and our time together over there”.

Whether Joel is facing financial problems, or physical difficulty, or loneliness, or is he without family or anyone to love him, we do not know. But this we know, there are a few thousand surviving Veterans still around. We attend reunions, do hanger flying, and still spin our stories that we have told time and again. And, by and large, we are very grateful for life. But we must not overlook those less fortunate, those in situations similar to Joel.

A godly man was asked, “What do you want on your tombstone?” He replied, “I want it to read, He did what he couldn’t.” This little quote is true for Joel and all of us. We couldn’t do it but we did. And all of us must remember to honor and remember those who are out of sight as Joel is, just as we honor and respect one another.

Winston Churchill, Britain’s wartime Prime Minister was one who in his life time faced a few victories and many defeats. He was remembered by defining democracy, “*You win some; you lose some.*” Anthony Eden, Churchill’s young ally commented about Churchill, “*courage for some sudden act, maybe in the*

heat of battle, we all respect, but there is still rarer courage which can sustain repeated disappointment, unexpected failure, and shattering defeat.”



Earl Wassom

Churchill had that kind of courage, not for days, but for weeks and months and years. In his opinion, the goal of World War II was “*to revive the status of man.*” His ambition was to lift individuals above the Hitlers and Stalins of this world. His life strands as an example of what a free man can be. This is true for all of the Joels out there and all of us for we did what we couldn’t.

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



NEXT ISSUE

The Fredericks mural depiction will be featured in the December edition of 8th AF News. It will be used to publicize the museum and will be available on posters and notecards.





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P.O. Box 1787, Savannah, GA 31402

