



# 8TH AF NEWS

VOLUME 06 NUMBER 3 VOICE of "The Mighty Eighth" SEPTEMBER 2006



HEADQUARTERS 2nd Bomb Wing AT BARKSDALE





# AF News

Magazine of

## The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

September 2006

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 956, Pooler, GA. 31322.

### OFFICERS

#### President

Ivan L. McKinney (Mary) 2008  
331 Greenacres Blvd.  
Bossier City, LA 71111  
Tel. (318) 742-0895  
mckinneyivan@bellsouth.net

#### Vice President

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

#### Secretary

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

#### Treasurer

George Hoidra (Betsy) 2009  
6504 Old Sandy Springs Road  
Laurel, MD 20707-2954  
Tel. (301) 953-2813  
ghoidra@yahoo.com

### STAFF

**Finance Manager** Jeffrey R. Tucker, CPA  
440 Mall Blvd, Suite A  
Savannah, GA 31406  
Tel. (912) 351-0525  
FAX (912) 351-0226  
jeff@cpa-lt.com

### 8th AFHS National Office

**Membership Records Manager** Connie Metts  
PO Box 956  
Pooler, GA 31322  
Tel. (912) 748-8884  
eafhs@hotmail.com

### 8TH AFHS United Kingdom Contacts

Gordon & Connie Richards  
U.K. Office The Croft 26 Chapelwnt Rd.  
Haverhill, Suffolk  
CB9 9SD, England  
01440 704014

### 8TH AFHS PX

Felice Steljes, **Director PX**  
175 Bourne St. Pooler, GA 31328  
P.O. Box 1992  
Savannah, GA 31402  
912-748-8888 store@mighty eighth.org

### CHAPTER/UNIT LIASON

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

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Robert Books (Carol) 2009  
1432 Little Creek Drive  
Pensacola, FL 32506  
Tel. (850) 458-0777  
bob@8thafhs.org

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

Joseph P. Keeley (Andrea) 2009  
1335 **Belmont Ave.**  
North Haledon, NJ 07508  
(973) 423-4854  
fxe84@optonline.net

Gerald J. Miller 2007  
37 Union Common  
Williamsville, NY 14221  
Tel. (716) 631-0817  
P51GJM@aol.com

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

Earl E. Wassom (Cynthia) 2007  
**CHAPLAIN 8TH AFHS**  
548 Brentmoor Drive  
Bowling Green KY 42101-3772  
Tel. and Fax: (270) 842-0412  
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 Sherman Small  
Robert Vickers Richard Baynes  
Walter E. Brown, MD

### HISTORIAN

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

### 8TH AF NEWS EDITOR

Walter E. Brown, MD (Alice)  
**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

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## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

My comments will be short this time in deference to "more important stuff," like how to drive to the Reunion hotel and transportation info from the airport to the hotel.

By this time, all of you should have sent in your Reunion Reservation Form and your Hotel Reservation Form to me. If you haven't done so yet, please "jump on it," for there's very little time left to do so. This will be a good Reunion!

It would be a good idea for all of you to call the Diamond Jacks' Hotel and get your room reservation confirmation number. This will eliminate all potential slip-ups. Call the toll-free number 1-866-552-9629.

I'm looking forward to seeing and serving you all. Please

keep your health and come enjoy the camaraderie with your good friends!

See separate Transportation Info, whether driving or flying in to Shreveport/Bossier, in this magazine!

Sincerely,  
Ivan L. McKinney  
President 8th AFHS



Ivan McKinney  
President

## 2006 Annual Reunion Hotel Name Change

The Hotel for our annual reunion has changed names. The new name is "Diamond Jack's Casino and Resort."

Our coordinator & contact numbers have remained the same.

### ***Driving Instructions to the Reunion***

Since many of you are driving to Bossier City for our Reunion, there are basically four ways to get to the Reunion Hotel, now renamed "**Diamond Jack's Casino and Resort**" from its prior name of Isle of Capri Casino:

- (A.) Coming West on I-20, passing thru Bossier City, just before you come to the Red River, take Exit 20A "Hamilton/Isle of Capri Blvd" to your right. At stoplite, turn left, back underneath I-20, straight ahead ¼ mile to the hotel. The free parking garage is on your left as you approach the hotel. If desired, free concierge parking service is provided at the door (tips only).
- (B.) Coming East on I-20, passing thru Shreveport, cross the Red River, & ¼ mile later, take Exit 20A "Hamilton/Isle of Capri Blvd." At stoplite, turn right & hotel is 1/8 of a mile straight ahead.
- (C.) Coming North on I-49, take the exit to the right marked "I-20 East to Monroe." Once on I-20, merge left as soon as traffic will allow to the second lane from your left. You'll soon see, painted in the middle of the lane, a painted "I-20" logo. After crossing the Red River, follow instructions in (B.) above to the hotel.
- (D.) Coming South on LA Rt 3 from Hope, AR, pass under I-220 as you enter the Bossier City area. Continue on Rt 3 for about 2--3 miles until you come to a stoplite at Old Minden Road (easy to find, because just after the stoplite, Rt 3 goes up a hill toward I-20). Turn right on Old Minden Road, and ½ mile later, turn left at the stoplite on "Hamilton/Isle of Capri Blvd." The hotel is then straight ahead 3/8 of a mile.

### ***Transportation Info – Airport to Hotel***

During heavy arrival times, we intend to have an officer at a table upstairs to steer you to the baggage area. He will also have the Diamond Jack's Hotel Bus Schedule for the hotel. In addition, a sign will be displayed in the baggage area, indicating the times that Diamond Jack's will have a bus outside. They intend to meet all aircraft, but of course, they may wait a few minutes if two or more airlines' arrivals are close together in time. Just look for the sign and then look outside the adjacent window for the Diamond Jack's bus. If all fails, call the hotel at 458-0386.



## MISSION BRIEFING



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

The annual reunion will be one to remember this year - a return to the Home of the Eighth: Barksdale AFB in Shreveport. A B-24 and Pursuit training base during the war, Barksdale holds a lot of memories for airmen of the 8th right up to the present day in the war in the Middle East. It was on the front page as the place President Bush flew into for a debriefing on 9/11 when the World Trade Center was attacked. I spent over two years on the base during WWII, as a small kid growing up in a warring world.

Ivan McKinney, with the help of the loyal crew at the Retirement Center at Barksdale, has nearly single-handedly put together great activities and programs for the Reunion Week October 4 - 8. There is still plenty of time to sign up for the festivities. Complete info is in the June issue of the 8th AF News, or contact Connie at our home office: tel 912-748-8884. We'll see you in Shreveport.

Our good friend Henry Heckman served with the 384th BG and is Past-president of the Indiana Chapter. Henry notes that lately we are publishing some articles and reviews other WWII Air Force outfits in the 8th AF News. He is correct about that and the answer to his query is that we are hearing more and more from airmen of the other Air Force groups who flew during the war. They are part of our country's legacy and their younger generations are connecting with the 8th AF Historical Society. They seem to like what we are doing and want to take part. There are a good number of our dues-payers who served in these other services and wars and they are now active and full members in our Society. And being a Historical Society, it is my thought that their military history, which often meshes with the story of the Mighty Eighth, is of interest to a number of our supporters, historians and researchers. Needless to say, we are heavily weighted to telling the unique 8th Air Force story - be assured that course will be followed in the upcoming years.

In that regard, keep sending me the News of your Groups, Chapters, and yourselves - or bring them with you to the Reunion. Your inputs are the core of the 8th AF News.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'W. Brown'.

## Spitfire Weekend Celebrating the 70th Anniversary of the Spitfire 16th - 17th September 2006

The Royal Air Force Museum is celebrating the 70th Anniversary of the first Spitfire, as unveiled to the public at RAF Hendon in 1936. The centrepiece of this weekend of events will be an outdoor living museum display featuring one of the four real Spitfires that can be seen at the Museum's London site.

In a scene reminiscent of the Normandy Campaign, set in the late summer of 1944, Museum staff wearing period clothing will recreate the atmosphere of the time, engaging with visitors. Period vehicles and equipment will complete the display.

A variety of presentations about different aspects of the Spitfire will be repeated over both days, and will be accompanied by a display of Spitfire artifacts and documents.

The weekend aims to provide a nostalgic appreciation of this amazing machine and of the people involved with it throughout the 1930s and '40s. A range of Spitfire activities are available for younger visitors during the weekend. Entry to the event and to the rest of the Museum site is free.



September 2006 (06-3)



## BEHIND THE SCENES

2006 Mighty Eighth Air Force Calendar is over half way gone and we are in full production with the "2007 Calendar" Our 2007 Calendar should be ready for purchase in October. Walt will announce the availability date during the 8th AFHS Annual Reunion. This year ALL calendars can be purchased through the Mighty Eighth Museum PX store. The front cover of the Calendar and more purchase options will be displayed in the December 8th AF News.

Please plan to support your Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum by purchasing several calendars for Christmas gifts. Call - 912.748.8888 and ask for the PX store (after the 8th Annual Reunion).

Thank you for all your contributions. A special thank you to artist Roger Stuch, Kentwood, MI for his amazing Illustrations that he has contributed in our last three 8th AF News issues. We are always in need of your good pictures (digital or hard copy) for this magazine. Please continue to email me and/or Walt Brown with your articles.

**Donna Neely & Telisha Gaines**  
**Alpha Graphic Consultants**  
**2090 Cairo Bend Road Lebanon, TN 37087**  
**donna\_neely@msn.com**  
**Fax: 615.453.2343**



**Telisha Gaines**



**Donna Neely**

## 8th AF Historical Society PX will be Present at the Annual Reunion

The 8th AFHS Reunion in Bossier City is fast approaching. Peggy Harden and I will have the PX open Oct 4th, 5th, and 6th from 9am until 5pm and on Oct. 7th from 9am until 1pm in our PX room at Diamond Jack's Casino and Resort. We will be bringing with us a variety of exciting items from books to patches and everything in between. The Winged Eight will be flying! This will be my first reunion and I'm looking forward to meeting all of you there.

The PX page in the December issue of the 8th AF News will feature many new items. One item we are especially excited about is our Mighty 8th Air Force Museum wooden collectible by Sheila. We will have wine goblets, beer mugs, victory bags and much more. This will be a great place to do your Christmas shopping.

**Felice Stelljes Museum Store Manager**

## ON OUR FRONT COVER

The Headquarters building at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana has been the home of the 8th Air Force and an integral part of its history for many years. The impressive structure, built in the late 1930s, greets visitors as they enter the base and will greet the 8th AF Historical Society this year during our annual reunion in October. The air base is one of the most beautiful in America - its buildings are on the National Historic Register as national treasures.

## ON OUR BACK COVER

A B-17 off the runway and in an embankment at Ashford





## CHAPTER/UNIT LIASON REPORT

As Chapter/Unit Liason Director I am in the process of setting up new files on all Chapters. Your help is needed. For those of you have not already contacted I need the following information.

A current list of the Officers of your State chapter and their address. This includes President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Editor of the newsletter and any other offices. Also, please send the latest issue of your Chapter newsletter. By the time you receive this issue of the 8th news the 2006 reunion will be right around the corner. Our Unit/Chapter meeting will be held during the reunion on Friday, October 6th at 9:00 A.M. Please try and attend this meeting. Some very important issues will be discussed, including the Chapter rebates for 2007.



**Harry "Doug" Tanner, Director**

## 2006 NOMINATIONS FOR 8TH AFHS BOARD

### **Mark S. Copeland**

#### **Life Member #24110**

Historian-8th Air Force Historical Society. Age 45. Supervisor/Check Airmen-Flight Control/Dispatch-Mesaba/Northwest Airlines. 8th AFHS Board of Directors 2002 to present. National PX Manager-1996 to 2002. Board member for Minnesota Chapter 1994-1998. Volunteer - "Mighty Eighth Theater" - 1990-1996. Married to Monica M. Copeland with one daughter Emily Anne Copeland. Nominated by Craig Harris

### **C.W. "Bill" Getz**

#### **Life Member #11476**

Member of the 491st Bomb Group (B-24 Pilot) and the Second Air Division Scouting Force (P-51) of the 8th Air Force during World War II. Retired Air Force Officer-assistant

Controller, Atomic Energy Commission. Founding member of the James H. Doolittle Chapter, past President and Board member. Nominated by himself.

### **Darrel D. Lowell**

#### **Membership #33567**

During the Cold War was a pilot on a B-47 Bomber with the 370th Bomb Wing at Lincoln, Nebraska from 1955-1958. Discharged from active duty in 1958 he remained inactive in the Reserve. Very active with the Birthplace Chapter of the 8th AFHS since its inception as a wing of the Atlanta Chapter. He served as committee chairman to restore the B-47 bomber on display at the Mighty 8th Air Force Museum. He is a graduate of Kansas State University. Married to Becky Lowell. Nominated by Eugene H. Buttle, membership #35980

## UPCOMING AT THE REUNION...

### **2006 NORMAN C. GRANT MEMORIAL SYMPOSIUM**

This year's Reunion Symposium subject will be a detailed examination of the POW experience in World War II Germany. The program will feature an excellent documentary film, followed by a panel discussion featuring former 8th Air Force Prisoners of War. It promises to be a very emotional and memorable afternoon. Saturday, October 7th - 1:30 pm - 4:00 pm.

### **HISTORICAL ROUNDTABLE**

This is an organized gathering for authors, researchers, webmasters, historians, archivists and enthusiasts of the Eighth Air Force to exchange and share thoughts and ideas about the historical preservation of the "Mighty Eighth." Wednesday - October 4th - 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm.

8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY  
ANNUAL REUNION

OCTOBER 3-8, 2006  
BOSSIER CITY LA

"Diamond Jack's Casino and Resort"



## LOOK FOR A NEW FUND DRIVE TO BEGIN THIS FALL, TO FURTHER HONOR THE 28,000 PERSONNEL WHO DIED WHILE MEMBERS OF THE 8TH AIR FORCE, 1942-1945

Did you know that a Roll of Honor exists listing the names of 28,000 Eighth Air Force personnel who died, circa 1942-1945, and that this list is located in the American Memorial Chapel, in St. Pauls Cathedral, in London, England?

It was suggested, at a time when the US Army Air Force was erecting memorial tablets on small airfields, that a central memorial be established somewhere in the in Britain by the American people. Lord Trenchard, Air Marshal of the RAF, was quoted as saying, "It is not for you to erect the memorial, but for the people of this country to pay tribute to their American brothers-in-arms."

The cost of the chapel project was borne totally by people all over Britain. The location of the chapel was offered by the Dean of St. Paul's General (later President) Dwight D. Eisenhower was so moved, he asked if he might present a Roll of Honor to those whose memory the chapel was intended to enshrine.

On Independence Day, July 4, 1951, in the presence of Princess Elizabeth (later Queen Elizabeth II), General Eisenhower presented the Roll of Honor to the Dean of St. Pauls.

In the year 2005 a suggestion was made by the St. Pauls Cathedral Foundation to create a project to place the Roll of Honor on a web site. In that way the names and the ornate book of art would be made available to the public outside the cathedral. This means families of those listed, historians, and researchers would have access to the names, without having to travel to England.

The cost of digitizing the names and artwork contained in the book will run approximately \$28,000. Your 8th Air Force Historical Society Board of Directors has approved a fund drive to assist in raising funds needed for this worthy project. And so, we are coming to you, the members of the 8th Air Force Historical Society, to help fund this project in the 2006-2007 period. You will receive further information during and after the October reunion.

Sincerely,  
Belton Wolf, Director 8th AFHS



**The American Memorial Chapel**



**American Roll of Honor**



# NUMEGEN

## Memorial Service to the Citizen casualties of the War, 1944

On 22 February 2006, the Burgomaster of Nijmegen and Gary Keith, the representative of the American Embassy of The Hague in The Netherlands, took part in a ceremony remembering the fateful day of 22 February 1944 when areas of the town of Nijmegen were accidentally hit on a bombing raid on German targets. Several hundred citizens were casualties of the bomb explosions. Albert Postma, who was a member of the Dutch Resistance during the war and has remained close to the activities of the 8th Air Force's 355th Fighter Group Association, sends in the speeches as delivered on that day of memorial tribute to those who gave their lives in the war.

The Burgomaster, in his speech to the attendees, stated that there was confusion and many factors that took part in the bombing, but there never was any question of anger at the Americans by the citizens of Nijmegen. They began to rebuild the damaged city and the central tower of the town's Stevens tower. When, six months later, the town was liberated from years of German oppression, the Americans were received with open arms, despite German propaganda concerning the accidental bombing. The citizenry, in the Burgomaster's words, realized mostly: "Its war, these things happen."

In his response, Mr. Keith reiterated the history of those days of the war. American bombing missions were taking the 8th Air Force bombers deep into the German homeland. Big Week, with its bombing of Berlin targets, would happen in the next two weeks, and the campaign to get ready for the Allied invasion of the continent the following June was underway. Mr. Keith stated that he realized that the accidental nature of the bombing could not console those who lost loved ones that day in 1944, and that we, as Americans, stand by the people of Nijmegen in sorrow and sadness. He asked that for some consolation, "we draw strength from the memories of those lost



**Albert Postma at the Remembrance Service at Nijmegen**



**Albert Postma and great friend Ike in Steenberg, Holland.**

as we strive to build a world where children will never again look skyward in fear - but in hope and freedom."

*A feature story of the Resistance and Escape and Evasion efforts of the European citizens will be presented in the December 06 8th AF News. - Editor*



**Albert Keith lays the wreath**



## An Officer and a Gentleman: Two New Collections in the Eighth's Archives

by Matthew Perry

As far as can be determined, Russell Moriarty (353rd FG, 352nd FS) and Peter Edgar (448th BG, 713th BS) probably never met, but their paths may have crossed at Macy's Department Store on the Atlantic City Boardwalk, or at a recruiting station in New York City. Their hometowns were only twenty-five miles apart – as the bomber flies – and their military stories are remarkably similar, though Moriarty was a commissioned officer and flew a P-47 while Edgar remained an enlisted airman and B-24 radio operator. Working as a graduate student assistant on loan from Savannah's Armstrong Atlantic State University this summer, I had the unique opportunity to catalogue their respective collections of personal papers and correspondence. Over five hundred letters and documents were abstracted and entered into the archive database for the benefit of researchers, authors, and family members. The value to future generations of such collections here at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum is incalculable.

Both Moriarty, who lacked professional direction but was the tougher and younger of the two, and Edgar, the dapper, mustached, skilled artist and advertiser, joined the Air Corps in 1942. Their descriptions of travel and training in the United States provide first-hand accounts of life in the barracks, people and culture in numerous



A 448th BG crew takes a break on the hardstand prior to takeoff

*"Just before the battle, mother!"  
Resting before take-off time  
on April 9, 1945. The ship  
is "Rocco D for Dog," a 712<sup>th</sup>  
Ship. French sitting up.  
England Jack McDaniel*



states, and the trials and tribulations of Air Corps training. Moriarty often sent technical information related to schooling and flying to his family while Edgar liked to recount more personal experience. Writing to a friend Edgar said, "Two ground engineers who came along puked all over the radio compartment. Never knew a B-24 could be so rough. Had a hell of a time operating the station. Lots o' fun though flying in between the peaks of mountains." One thing is certain - however; both loved their families. "Dear Mom" letters are numerous in the collections, and in each communication both Moriarty and Edgar inquired about and addressed the questions of, various family members and friends. Often they apologized for not writing often enough.

Once in the ETO, letters censored regarding operational detail were filled with accounts of English culture and people. The truth became stranger than fiction as Peter Edgar told of his marmoset monkey (impossible to house train) and as Moriarty's friendship with a British naval officer cum Cadbury cocoa buyer unfolded. Unfortunately, the two airmen's time in Europe's skies were shortened by German fighters (Moriarty) and flak (Edgar). Moriarty managed to evade the enemy for five months before being captured and sent to Stalag Luft 1 in Barth, Germany. Edgar on the other hand managed to evade for an afternoon. He succumbed to a German soldier who offered his congratulations for being caught on Hitler's birthday and a little girl on a bike singing, "For you the war is over." Edgar spent the next year doing artwork in Stalag 17B and survived the 281 mile march from Krems to Braunau.

Of the information so generously given in these collections, the most enjoyable and insightful is the

glimpse into the personal thoughts and feelings of the airmen as they reflected on life once away from home and under the enormous stress of wartime service. In one such instance Moriarty wrote, "Before I got into the cadets, I was just drifting along, just living from day to day and not fighting for 'a place in the sun.' Now I'm fighting harder than ever before in my life for a goal that, a year ago, I would have thought unattainable. With that goal so close and with the new found knowledge that I *can* do something if I try hard enough for it, you can imagine how I'd feel if something were to happen to stymie my chances. You see, you and Daddy are the ones I owe it too. If you hadn't always instilled into us the fact that we were as good and even better than the common herd, endowed us with healthy bodies, intelligence, etc. I, and Rob also, would in all probability be a drafted foot soldier of Uncle Sam right now."

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum is "fighting harder than ever" to provide a "place in the sun" for the experiences of the Eighth's members. The museum is the offspring of those members, and to make it "better than the common herd," it relies on the generous donations of archival and artifactual material to attract not only tourists, students, and family members, but those of the next generation who will research, analyze, and write the stories of the Eighth Air Force within the context of their era; for how will they make sense of their own experience without understanding those who have gone before?

Matt Perry  
Graduate student  
Archives Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum

## ROBERT VICKERS PRESENTS TRACK AND FIELD AWARD

On Monday, 29 May 2006 at the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Col. Robert Vickers, USAF (Ret), presented the Most Valuable Track and Field Award to Nicholas Wilson, Class of 2006. Vickers has single-handedly established an 8th AF Historical Society tradition with this annual award presentation presented by the Society in memory of Arne Arnesen. He has served for many years as Director of Awards and Protocol for the Historical Society.

This year's award went to a fine young man who has excelled in the 5,000 and 10,000 meter events, setting the Mountain West Conference record dating back to 2004. The ceremonies were preceded by a formal parade and followed by a reception in the Academy Field House.

Newly-commissioned 2nd Lt. Wilson will be stationed at Pensacola for weapons training before entering USAF pilot training to follow.



**Cadet Nicholas Wilson and Col. Robert Vickers**



## Former Enemies Reunite

The Kassel Mission battle of 27 September 1944 was remembered in a special memorial rededication ceremony in Germany on August 1st, 2006. Prior to that, Kassel Mission Historical Society Honorary Chairman Bill Dewey led forty-four 445th combat veterans, families and friends to their old air base at Tibenham airfield in England. The American group included 445th combat veterans Dewey, Herb Schwartz, Ray Lemons, Chuck Walker, Joe Reus, and Billy Stephan. Other attendees included several next of kin of men who perished that day.

The group visited Mattingley Cemetery, the American Air Museum in England at Duxford, and the Second Air Division Library in Norwich. The Americans hosted British supporters in a special showing of *Pride of the Nation*, a documentary created by the Dzenowagis Group about the Kassel Mission.

The group attended a memorial ceremony at the ancient Tibenham Anglican Church and then visited the Norfolk Gliding Club at the Tibenham airfield. Several vets took off one last time down runway 21. A final farewell salute by a P-51 Mustang in a beautiful slow roll finished the day.

In Germany, the travelers toured Kassel Mission crash sites where twenty-five B-24's came down within a fifteen-mile radius. German host Walter Hassenpflug and German 445th fan Eberhard Helbig guided the tour. Helbig, of Eisenach—formerly in East Germany—has developed a passion for American aviation, especially for the B-24 and the Kassel Mission since the Berlin wall came down in 1989. Hassenpflug, a boy of twelve at the time of the WWII battle, has identified all German and American crash sites of the battle.

The visit culminated in a rededication ceremony of the German-American Memorial erected in 1990 by the Kassel Mission Memorial Association and the community of Ludwigsau. More than 400 attended. Sarah Naugher and Juanita Jones laid a wreath at the three monument stones—one with names of the dead Americans, one for the Germans who died that day, and a center monument telling the Kassel Mission story. The United States Air Force Band in Europe, a combined German and American Honor Guard, and the Ludwigsau Community Choir performed during the ceremony. Col. Carl Andrews, head of the American chaplains in Europe, German dignitaries, and Bill Dewey representing the veterans, each spoke about the ferocious battle and the healing that has taken place since.

Information about the Kassel Mission, including the *Pride of the Nation* documentary, is available at [kasselmission.com](http://kasselmission.com) or by email [kmmaone@aol.com](mailto:kmmaone@aol.com) or write KMHS, P.O. Box 215133, Auburn Hills, MI 48321.

Linda Dewey, President  
Kassel Mission Historical Society



Tibenham Base from the air 2006  
Dave Shafer Photography



**445th Combat Veterans return to base in England.**  
L-R: Chuck Walker, Bill Dewey, Herb Schwartz, Joe Reus,  
Ray Lemons and Billy Stephan - Dave Shafer Photography



**Germans help American ex-POW find site where he parachuted near Eisenach, Germany.**

L-R: Dr. David Lemons (son), Hassenpflug, Ray Lemons, Eberhard Haelbig, Jean Lemons (wife) and Julie Lemons (daughter)



## CONTINUING THE 8th AIR FORCE LEGACY #6

Earl Wassom, Senior Advisor

C. S. Lewis, during his lifetime, met many people from Royalty to Commoners. He was in touch with folks from all walks of life and they intrigued him. In fact, many were the characters in his stories and literature. He recognized their worth and once remarked, "At every tick of the clock, on every inhabited part of the world, an unimaginable richness and variety of 'history' falls off the world into total oblivion."

The Veterans of the Mighty Eighth Air Force have much in common with this famous British author. We of the second world war who have served in the Mighty Eighth are desirous that its legacy not be lost, not because we are so vain, but rather for the preservation of Democracy and civilization. We have encountered the enemy, experienced death and destruction, looked for hope, encouragement and faith. We survived our military experiences and have enjoyed the abundant life that followed. During this period of time and many times since, we have, as C.S. Lewis' fictitious character ASLAN did, "come to many forks in the road". Individually, we have made choices that have produced, some good and some bad, fruits during our span of life. One of our big challenges in recent years has been to face the realization that the life of the Legacy of the Eighth Air

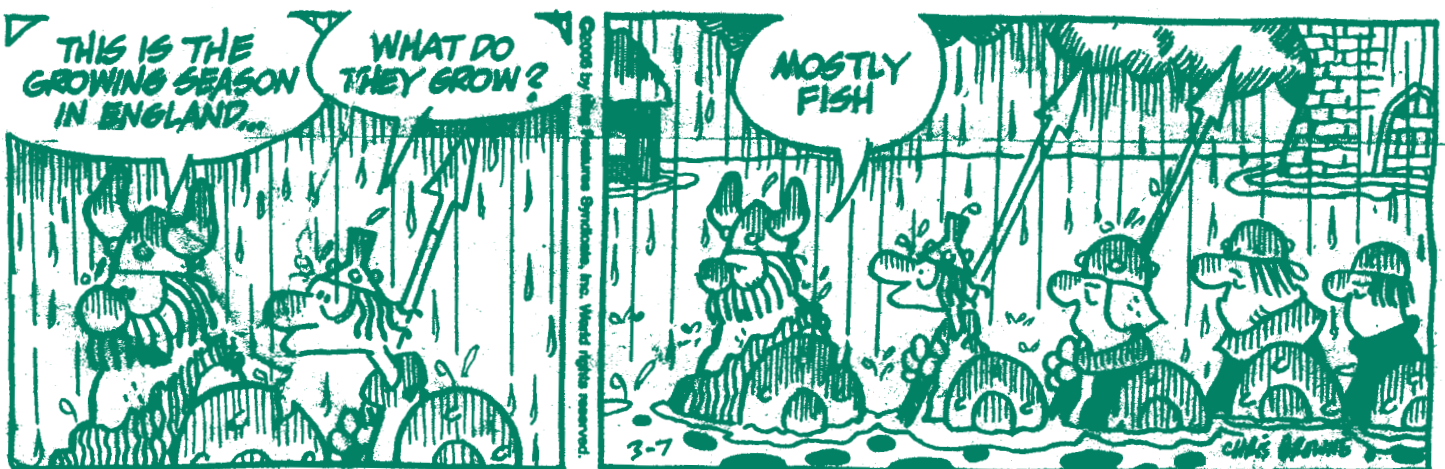
Force will end unless action is taken. At every tick of the clock, the "old-warriors" are falling and their history is falling off the world into total oblivion.

Fortunately, in recent years, the children of these Veterans saw the need to keep the history and experiences of their fathers alive. The Warriors are completing their tour of duty and the next generation is stepping forward as replacement crews. The responses of these groups are amazing. (1) One such body of men and women recently held a "History Roundtable" with a number of serious NEXGEN researchers formulating and coordinating plans to pursue further research into military records and experiences. (2) An Eighth Air Force organization in the south east reports that although the Veteran ranks are thinning, 400 members anxiously anticipate the two reunions in their annual schedule. (3) In the northwest, a group of NEXGEN'ers are growing stronger as they recruit younger members into their ranks. (4) Another group representing many military units of the 8<sup>th</sup>, with its membership spread across the country, reports over 500 members (this includes some Veterans who have been made honorary members). By-laws are being modified to incorporate the younger generation into existing organizations and consequently, electing them into roles of leadership.

The Veterans have been very active in their organizations. Across the years, they have maintained their member-

ship rolls, collected dues, held reunions and published a newsletter. Now they are welcoming the NEXGEN population who are assuming responsibility and who are carrying on the traditions of the past and are encouraging the remaining Veterans. In addition to the organized groups, there is a large number of this present generation working independently in their research activities. They would profit by affiliating with one or more of these groups. Not only would their endeavors be strengthened but the groups would profit as well.

There will be a seminar of the NEXGEN's on Wednesday, October 4, 5:30-7:30 p.m., at Bossier City, LA. in the Diamond Jack's Casino and Resort. Our first meeting was in Arlington, VA last year. Over 50 filled out Data Forms giving their military affiliation, organizational membership status, and areas indicating expertise and preference in serving in this movement to preserve the Legacy of the Eighth Air Force. From these data, a Registry is in the process of being developed showing those who will serve in this endeavor and in what capacity. This Registry will be invaluable to the NEXGEN population in keeping in touch with one another, planning reunions, planning joint educational initiatives, strengthening the Museum, supporting memorials both foreign and domestic, and recruiting like-minded researchers and history buffs.





## Guest Editorial

### Comments of a Mighty Eighth Volunteer

During the last ten years it has been a pleasure and an honor to serve as a docent at the Mighty Eighth Heritage Museum here in Savannah. It has been a fascinating experience to visit with, and hear the stories as told to me by WWII veterans, members of "The Greatest Generation" about the years they served this country in the Military. Having served in the 8th Air Force for 3 years during the Cold War, I have always, even as a small boy had the greatest respect for the men and women, who have served in this country's Armed Services. This respect has increased even more as I perform the duties of a Docent at the Heritage Museum. The stories that these Veterans from all branches of the service, have spoken about during the last 10 years are truly amazing. After 10 years and over 900 hours of volunteer duties at the Museum I never fail to have a sense of pride as I arrive at my duty station to carry forward this important work.

The Heritage Museum has several missions to accomplish. One obviously is to continue the work of paying tribute to the brave men and women of the Mighty Eighth who made that supreme sacrifice of protecting this Country's freedoms by laying down their lives. As Frank Murphy emphasized in his book 'The Luck of the Draw,' these gallant men and women gave all of their "tomorrows" to protect this country.

Those tomorrows started over 60 years ago.

Another important mission is to broaden the education of the youth that visit the Museum, providing these young minds with a deeper sense of what WWII was about and the important role that the "Mighty Eighth" played in bringing this historic conflict to a successful conclusion. Our education system in this country is one of the best in the world. However, I feel that the system is falling short in teaching the story of World War II. As we point out areas of interest in the Museum many of these young people seem to show an expression of pride and patriotism as they focus on what a true sacrifice these military people made to protect their freedoms.

In closing, I feel deeply that our most important mission is to dedicate our combined efforts of all Museum supporters to insure that this Museum and all Military Museums remain a vital part of the Heritage of this country. We must never forget this great sacrifice these young men and women made for our Country.

Darrel Lowell  
8th AF SAC  
Savannah, GA





# MIGHTY EIGHTH MUSEUM ACTIVITIES

## Roger A. Freeman Archives Dedication set for October

A very special occasion will take place on Tuesday, October 17th, at the Mighty Eighth Museum. Jean Freeman, wife of revered 8th AF historian Roger Freeman, will be in Savannah to dedicate the Museum Roger A. Freeman Archives section in memory of her husband. The afternoon dedication ceremony and reception will be followed by a special program of tribute to Roger to be presented in conjunction with a special dinner with the Birthplace Chapter of the Historical Society. The events are open to all friends of Roger and Jean and of the 8th AFHS. Details may be obtained by calling Jean at the Museum tel 912-748-8888.



## Donald Miller to hold Book Introduction, Seminar and Book Signing

Friend of the Eighth, Professor of History at Lafayette College and noted author Donald Miller will introduce his new book, *Masters of the Air, America's Bomber Boys who Fought the Air War Against Nazi Germany*, during a special weekend at the Museum. The October 13th evening affair will feature a reception and presentation of the story of his extensive volume which focuses on the 8th Air Force war, being published by Simon and Schuster Publishers. The following morning Don will host a Seminar along with Museum Director of Archives and Oral Historian Dr. Vivian Rogers-Price on *The Usage of Museum Archives and Collections in Research for Publications*. Everyone will be welcome for the special visit and programs by Don Miller.

## Lots Going On . . .

The Museum is active. Peggy Harden is in charge of the newly-reopened Crew Plaque and Wall of Valor programs in the Memorial Gardens of the Museum. She reports that there has been a noticeable increase of interest in the purchase and placement of these memorial tributes to airmen who served and she stays busy every day working with the embers and their family who wish to be part of these unique 8th AF Gardens. Likewise, Museum Collections and Archives has seen a big increase in donations to the permanent archives by families of 8th AFers and by the veterans themselves. All related items and artifacts, including diaries, books, photographs and records are being welcomed by Registrar Vivian Rogers-Price and museum Librarian Jean Prescott.

Several days each week are currently being spent developing new Exhibit presentations at the Museum, with emphasis on expansion of the 2nd Air Division exhibit, the Escape and Evasion and AFEES story, and

a complete presentation of the chronology of the 8th Air Force WWII history for all visitors to the museum. Plans for a special ground crew exhibit are underway and considerations of facility expansion to include the "jet-age" 8th story are in the works.

Note should be made, with regard to these extensive plans and programs, that the Annual Campaign Fund letter of museum support is in the mail. Please give it special consideration for your contributions this year. Memorial donations in memory of deceased 8th AF veterans are on the increase and are appreciated by the staff and Board.

The Board of Trustees of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum will be held on October 13th at the museum, one week after the Board meeting of the 8th AF Historical Society in Shreveport. Any items to be presented to both of these Boards should be sent in to the appropriate address or email found on the inside front cover of this issue.



# MIGHTY EIGHTH MUSEUM ACTIVITIES

## 357th Fighter Group Archives Arrive at the Museum

Merle Olmstead has spent most of his years serving as Historian of the 357th Fighter Group Association. He recently arranged to have his entire historical collection of the history of the 357th Fighter Group packed and sent to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum for future use by researchers, historians and by the upcoming generations of families of the 357th. Merle's valuable files will also be used as a primary source for future historical articles in the 8th AF NEWS and other publications. This is a valuable collection of rare photographs and records of one of the top fighter outfits of the 8th Air Force and will help preserve the legacy of this proud Group. It will help tell the story of the part that 8th fighter groups played during the war. The Museum is indebted to Merle and other members of the Group for their contribution to the Archives.

## Inaugural Mighty Eighth Heritage Gala Ball to be held in October

Big Band music, entertainment in a wartime mode, and fantastic food will be the features at the Museum on October 14th. This annual fundraiser and evening of revelry had been postponed from its usual Warbirds Ball time in the spring, to a fresh start and new look for the fall. The 18-piece band, Equinox Jazz Orchestra, and food presented by the top caterers in the Savannah area will be among the highlights featured. Entertainment, as always, will be special.



The huge Rotunda at the museum will be the place with a special reception in the Art Gallery and the details can be obtained by contacting Brenda at the museum. Tables may be sponsored by individuals and corporations, however individual attendees are equally welcome for this unique event. Wartime period dress by attendees is once again a special attraction of the event, but it is promoted as a black tie optional evening. The Mighty Eighth will be flying high that weekend - come and be part of it.

## Colonial Oil Art Gallery Home to New Art Exhibit

The Art Gallery at the Mighty Eighth Museum hosts the newly-hung art exhibition of the unique original painting collection accomplished in the early 1990's by British artist Keith Hill. The Museum's collection features an original artwork piece of every Bomb Group and Fighter Group of the WWII 8th Air Force - over 65 large original paintings in all. Special Operations Groups are a special feature. The exhibit paintings depict the aircraft of the Mighty Eighth and are hung in sections with text materials relating the history of the 8th groups and missions.

There is a section for the D-Day invasion, with aircraft in the air wearing their classic invasion stripes. An explanation panel tells what a Bomb Wing was and how it flew combat during the war, using the 31st Combat Wing paintings together as a typical example. One section depicts the aircraft of the Second Air Division; another depicts the artist's rendition of each German aircraft in combat with 8th Fighters and bombers. Aircraft of the Royal Air Force are depicted in similar fashion.

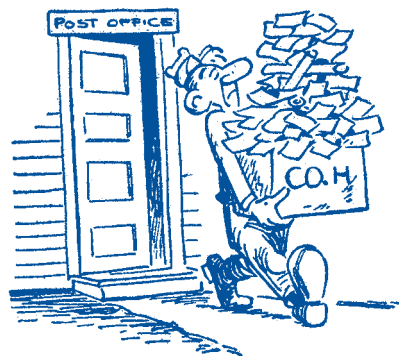
The impressive exhibit will be featured in the Museum Art Gallery until the turn of the year into 2007.

## Special Art Exhibition Set for the Colonial Oil Art Gallery

An art exhibition featuring works by students of the Savannah College of Art and Design will be hung and juried during the last week of September at the Museum Art Gallery. Kristie Brusniak's students and others of the college will present art work accomplished from previous visits to the museum exhibits and collections. The Warbirds of WWII are the prime subject of the art works and of the show, which will be open to the public.

Awards presentations will be made at the Birth-place Chapter dinner to be held in the Art Gallery on October 17th. A special reception will be held for the opening of the SCAD Art Exhibition at the Museum on the evening of Friday, October 13th in conjunction with the Publication Announcement and presentation of Author Don Miller's new book *Masters of the Air - The Story of America's Bomber Boys of World War II*.





## Nemesis

Dear Sir:

I enjoyed the cover of the June 2006 magazine ("Nemesis"). Any thoughts to selling this as a print?

Regards,

David J. Nowack  
Schnecksville, PA

*A number of the troops have similar inquiries about General Charles Cabell's donation of Nemesis to The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum Archives. It may soon be available, with info to come. -Editor*

## THURLEIGH MUSEUM

Dear Sir:

I write to you as a long time member of the 8th Historical Society, also a member of the 306th Bomb Group. We of the 306th (first over Germany) have an up and running Museum at Thurleigh, Bedford England at our old base, which by the way is intact. Ralph & Daphne Franklin, our British representatives, run it. Well stocked and put together very well. It shows the war years while the 8th was there and also the 306th was first in England and the last unit to leave in 1945. Our Museum has grown to be known internationally and is a very popular tour stop. Also many groups of school children from the area are bussed there to learn of what went on during the war. The setting of the Museum is right near the old main runway and in the summer months you can picnic outside on a patio with tables and chairs. Any 8th member of any group or family would be welcomed and I would say would be impressed with what they would see.

Information:

Ralph Franklin  
National School Cottage

Mill Hill, Keysoe, Bedford U.K.  
Email 306Museum@nscmh.fscmh.net.co.uk  
Sincerely,  
Robert G. Rockwell, 306th BG  
Munster IN

## LIL QUAKER

Dear Editor,

I recently came across some slides I'd taken of this B-24 called *Lil Quaker* a print of one is enclosed. Fortunately, I had dated the time and place where I found this Liberator. It was Dec. 1949 in a farmers field outside of Lansdale, Pa. Shortly thereafter I was transferred from Phila - and the slides were misplaced before I could check how the 24



**B-24 Lil Quaker**

got where it was.

I wonder if you could show this in your "News" to see if anyone could shed some light on this. I vividly recall driving along a country road and coming upon this sight a B-24 there in a rough field (with high tension wires) with no one or building in sight. I was also intrigued by the configuration - see indentation on fuselage which was on both sides. I had seen many 24's but never one shaped like this. I was co-pilot on the "Birdie Schmidt" 392nd Bomb Group 8th, Wendling, England lost on Magdeburg mission 2-15-45, so that added to the intrigue here. Although Lansdale was in the boondocks in '49 it wasn't too far from Doylestown, north of Phila. So maybe someone has a clue here.

Thanks!

John C. Kenyon, 392nd BG  
307 Training Field Rd.  
Chatham, MA 02633

## Red Gal

Dear Sir:

My husband is a member of the 8th Air Force Historical Society and recently received his latest magazine (Mar 06).



We were curious about the cover art on the back of the issue. The red "uniform" that the gal is wearing is quite stunning. But we couldn't figure out what branch of the services she was representing. I looked through the magazine, but couldn't find any kind of caption or credit for it and wasn't sure who would be able to tell me about it.

At first we thought it might be some kind of civilian outfit made to look military, which was fairly common during the war years, but the cap made it look like it was really a military uniform, especially with the cap device attached. But we couldn't see it clearly enough to figure out who it was. My husband guessed that it might be the uniform adopted by a USO chapter, since they didn't seem to have a standardized nationwide uniform. But he didn't know and we couldn't find any information about a scarlet uniform in any of his multitude of reference books and quartermaster catalogs.

My husband and I both participate with several living history groups, and try to find ways to represent all the men and women who served in the different branches of the military. If you have any information about that uniform, or could direct my letter to someone who might know, it would be greatly appreciated. Thank you for your help and for putting together such a neat magazine. Sincerely,  
Barbara Skaggs  
barbara.a.skaggs@boeing.com

*Anyone got the answer for Barbara? - Editor*



## THE THEATER

Walt,  
You mentioned the story of our theater in the South Compound at Stalag Luft III.

The South Compound was opened by the Germans in September 1943 to house American flying officers. Construction of the theater began in October 1943. Col. Frieherr von Lindeiner, German Commandant of Stalag Luft III, had no problem with building a theater but all labor would have to be provided by the American prisoners.

The theater was erected entirely by men of the camp. Larger sections were fabricated and bought from the Germans with (book entry) money theoretically to cover pay owed to the prisoners under the Geneva Convention. With the assistance of one German supervisor, the whole building was completed by the American POWs. We laid the foundation, erected the walls and put up the ceiling and roof. POWs who were bricklayers, carpenters and electricians back home were pressed into service as were POWs who were civil engineers. The general laborers who mixed mortar and were hod carriers were all Kriegie volunteers. About 400 theater seats fabricated using discarded Canadian Red Cross boxes were made on a production line. They all had reclining seats and backs and rounded arm rests. They were installed in rows on an inclined floor. Each row was jogged to permit a full, unobstructed view straight ahead. An orchestra pit was built in front of the stage. Footlights and headlight reflectors were made from large British biscuit tins. A catwalk was constructed above the stage for electricians and their movable spotlights. In back of the stage were two dressing rooms and a storage for props and furniture. The theater was opened in February 1944 with its interior painted in two tones of blue. Choice seats in the center were reserved for the American and German senior brass. When the footlights slowly dimmed and the curtains parted the *Luftbandsters* struck up a snappy tune. There were a number of musical selections played in a show entitled "Strictly From Hunger." For the



final number the *Luftbandsters* moved out of the pit and onto the stage and played "Summertime" in a Dixieland band style.

How 'bout them Americans!

Sincerely,  
Frank Murphy, 100th BG  
POW Stalag Luft III  
Atlanta, GA

## WAR

Dear Dr. Brown,

The article written by Chaplain Earl Wasom, in your June issue should be required reading for every American. For the young it is a brief but powerful lesson in history. For us oldtimers it recalls events we lived and fought through to survive and prevail.

I well remember the time before the United States entered World War II. I was then a refugee from Hitler's Germany, living in England. The London Blitz was in full swing. Bombs rained from the skies every night and the city burned all around us. We received one egg per week and a tiny slice of meat. Clothes were rationed, as was everything else. Milk and juice were for babies, small children and pregnant women only. We slept on the floors of the subway stations and carried our gasmasks wherever we went.

America's entry into the War provided a glimmer of hope. The Nazis had conquered all of Europe. We in England stood alone, protected only by the choppy waters of the English Channel. As time went on and the powerful war machine of America sprang into action, the tide began to turn. On VE day in May 1945, people danced in the streets. But there was terrible sadness in many hearts for the tens of thousands Americans who had died.

Once again, today, America is engaged in hostilities in Iraq.

This time we Old-timers are not in the

thick of it. We sit in our livingrooms watching War on the screens. And our hearts still ache as we see another generation fighting new battles and a new foe.

Sincerely,  
Frances Nunnally  
Richmond, VA

## BAD 2

Dear Sir:

In your June 2005 issue you published some photos of nose art on B-24s (and one B-26) that were sent in by Fred Renken of Souderton, PA. I would like to provide some additional information about these photographs. These photos are from the photographic collection of my father, Ray L. Albright, who was stationed at Base Air Depot No. 2, Warton, Lancashire, during World War II. I believe that the B-24s shown in these photographs are planes that were serviced at BAD 2, but I don't believe that my father took these photographs, as they differ in size from his wartime photos. I suspect that they were taken by the base photographer, if BAD 2 had such a position.

My thanks to Michael Howell who provided information on some of these planes, which you published in your March 2006 issue. I hope other people will write in with information on some of the other planes. I can provide a little bit of info on a couple of them. "Sagittarius" and "Aries" were a part of the "Zodiac" squadron, 486th Bomb Group, 834th Bomb Squadron. The artwork was done by Corporal Philip S. Brinkman, while he was stationed at Army Air Force Station 174, Sudbury, England. The 834th has a nice web site, from which I got this information.

The B-26, "Demon Deacon," was (according to Harry Holmes' *The US 8th Air Force at Warton, 1942-1945*) part of the base's own "Air Force," used by the 310th Ferrying Squadron.

By the way, I think that Roger Freeman's estimate that over 90% of nose art included women is a bit high. Of the 34 nose art photos in my father's collection, 28 (82%) are of women. Of the 24 nose art photos in the appendices of the Holmes book only 8 (33%) feature women. Assuming the photos in the Holmes book were selected to



exhibit the broad range of subject matter, it's my guess that a more accurate estimate of the percentage of nose art that included women would be somewhere closer to 75%.

I hope this information is useful to you. Sincerely,  
Gary A. Albright  
Harleysville, PA

### Last Mission

Dear Sir,  
You may have heard from others, but I believe that the last operational bombing mission of the Mighty 8th was to Pilsen, Czechoslovakia, 25 April 1945, aimed at the Skoda Munitions plant near Pilsen. Warning fliers were dropped on Pilsen a day or two before informing them of the pending raid. We were told that the reason for this mission was to keep a very up and coming munitions plant from being taken over by the advancing Russian troops. Our group, 398th BG, was a part of that little run. I am sure that there were others but that is all that I know about. The 602nd Squadron lost two B-17s in that exercise. If others were lost, you might have to use the stop watch to determine just who was the last to pay the final price. The *Black Cat* crew might have been the last B-24 to go down, but the "last plane honor" would have to go to someone on the 25 April mission to Pilsen. I was a 600th Squadron first pilot on that mission, completing our 25th run that day. One of the downed crews went out on their first and only mission with the Mighty 8th that day. Thanks,  
James Dean Hill  
Bountiful, Utah  
398th BG  
jdhillbount@netzero.net

### Old Friend

Hi, Donna: In your article in the June issue of the 8th AF News I was delighted to see a photo of an old friend, Roy Trask. I lost track of "Tracker" in the latter



Roy "Tracker" Trask

part of 1944. We went through advanced flying school, B-17 pilot transition, B-17 crew training and wound up in the 8th A.F. (at different groups). If possible, would you please pass this to him? If you do, would you please tell him I'd like to hear from him.

My address: John C. Walter  
9601 W Tulip Drive Columbus, IN  
47201-8423  
812-342-6946  
johnb17@earthlink.net

*Roy E. Trask is a member of the Tennessee Chapter 8th AFHS and 306th BG. Roy lives in Chattanooga, TN -Donna Neely*

### MALE CALL

Hello,  
I am a passionat reader of your bulletin since several years. I am surprised I did not receive the number for the month of June 2006 for "AF News Magazine."  
Can you say to me how I can make to obtain this number?  
Thank you very much. I am sorry for me bad english.  
Sincerely  
Jean Paul Favrais life member  
34238 "8th AFHS"

*Jean Paul is a long-time contributor to the 8th AF News - We have another copy in the mail for you. Our editorial apologies for not getting the June issue in the mail until the third week of June. Internal problems as an excuse. This issue goes out earlier. -Editor*

### Little Friend

Dear Mr. Brown,  
On page 25 of the June 2006 issue of Eighth Air Force News appears a wonderful photo of a B17G escorted by four P51Ds.  
The B17 has a Square C on the tail, the symbol of the 96th Bomb Group (Heavy), my old group where I flew 33 missions. P 51s were the escort fighters that had the ability to take us all the way to Berlin (I went twice).



Two years ago, for a birthday present to myself for surviving to 80, I purchased a P51D, it has been under restoration since, and will have its first test flight August 21st. I plan to name it *Little Friend*. I am telling you all this to indicate that I have a very serious interest in this particular photo and would appreciate a good print of it to frame and hang on my wall.

Please advise how I can secure a print. Thank you.

John Croul, 96th BG  
Corona del Mar, CA

*Jack - the photo scan is on its way to you. Send us a photo of "Little Friend!" -Editor*

### 8th AF NEWS

Dear Dr. Brown:  
Good work on the 8th AF News. As an early member/subscriber, I have donated my nearly complete collection of your fine magazine to the Rougham Tower Museum, Rougham Airfield, England.  
Preston Clark, 94th BG  
Austin, TX

### Strength

Walt,  
Thanks for remembering my old friend, Leland Forsblad, in the Taps section of our museum publications. As you know, Lee was known as an extraordinarily competent B-17 pilot in the 91st Bomb Group of the Mighty Eighth as well as an outstanding musician. When one has been a longtime military prisoner of war, as both Lee and I were, those who were always there to give you faith, strength and encouragement when you needed it, will forever have a special place in your heart. Sincerely,



Frank Murphy, 100th BG  
Atlanta, GA

### Movie Stars

When the war ended on May 8, 1945, our group, 92nd BG, immediately took out all combat components and installed bench seats in our planes. This allowed us to carry 35 to 38 persons who qualified for return to the United States by air. These were combat infantry men with 85 points or more. The two groups flying out of Istros, our field just west of Marseille, was the 92nd and the 384th. This was to be known as the "Green Project". After several months on the Green Project, both groups were assigned to fly several hundred Greeks from Munich, Germany to Athens, Greece. These people were forced laborers made slaves by the Germans. I was assigned along with an officer from the 384th group 15th Air Force and 35 - 40 enlisted men to Foggia Main Airfield, Italy. Our job was to overnight as many as 1000 to 2000 persons when the planes left Munich. Bad weather kept them from going through to Athens. While there, we had USO groups spend several nights for shows that had been

scheduled while the war was going on. Jinx Falkenburg was a movie star at that time. She was accompanied by a small blond girl and 4 or 5 back up personnel. They were traveling in a stretched out Pontiac that seated 8 or 10 people. The base personnel and her troop went over to Bari Italy, on the east coast, and went swimming every afternoon. It was great while it lasted.

**Ralph Hoffman, 92nd BG  
Oneida, TN**

### SNAFU

Hi Doc:

I usually read and reread the 8th Air Force News many times after I receive it. In the June 2006 issue I think I noticed an error on page 28. The *Extra Joker* hole in the wing was on the left



side not the right. Am I correct. Been a life member for many years. Great work on the NEWS.

**Norm Friedman**  
493RD Bomb Group

*You are correct sir. They may have been flipped photos - the editor's scourge - but I don't think so. Thnx - Ed.*

MAIL CALL



- Form may be reproduced -

## JOIN THE 8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY!

Name

FIRST

MIDDLE INITIAL

LAST

Address

CITY

STATE

ZIP

Telephone

Email

8th AF Unit

Not in 8th

Include me as a full Associate Member

In service

Branch

Dates

to

Were you a former member?

Member # if available

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY: LIFE MEMBER ANNUAL DUES \$25

PAYMENT: CHECK

MASTERCARD

VISA

CARD #

SIGNATURE:

SEND APPLICATION AND PAYMENT TO 8TH AFHS P.O. BOX 956, POOLER, GA 31322 TEL: 912-748-8884

\$25 MEMBERS DUES NOTICES ARE MAILED ANNUALLY

Website: [www.8thafhs.org](http://www.8thafhs.org)



# REUNIONS

## **BURTONWOOD ASSOCIATION**

October 3-7, 2006  
Holiday Inn Philadelphia PA  
Contact: George and Edna Loomis  
geoloomis@juno.com

## **SECOND SCHWEINFURT MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION**

October 11-15, 2006  
Las Vegas, Nevada  
Contacts: Julee and Bob MacDonald,  
336 West Rolling Hills Drive, Conroe, TX  
77304 720-254-7418

## **452ND BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION**

Sept. 28 – Oct 1, 2006  
Washington DC  
Sheraton National Hotel Arlington  
Contact: Hank North  
Tel 1-800-452-9099  
email hanknorth@core.com

## **352ND FIGHTER GROUP ASSOCIATION**

October 4-8, 2006  
Bossier City LA  
Diamond Jack's Casino and Resort

## **SWISS INTERNEES ASSOCIATION**

Oct. 20-23, 2006  
Holiday Inn, Arlington VA  
Contact: James Goings  
2991 Eastburn Ave.  
Broomall, PA 19008  
Phone: 610-353-0385  
Email: jdgoings@aol.com

## **78TH FIGHTER GROUP ASSOCIATION**

October 12-14, 2006  
The Royal Sun Inn, Palm Springs,  
California

## **486TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION**

Oct. 11-14, 2006  
Holiday Inn Select, Dallas Texas  
Dallas-Ft. Worth Airport North  
Contact: Bill Phelps  
Phone: 812-867-2991

## **361ST FIGHTER GROUP ASSOCIATION**

September 11-15, 2006  
Marriott Riverfront Hotel, Savannah GA  
Contact: David Landin, 8419 Michael  
Rd., Richmond, VA. 32210  
Phone: 804-288-5889  
Email: david.c.landin@verizon.net

## **398TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION**

Livonia, Michigan (Detroit)  
September 6-9, 2006  
Contact: Sharon Krause  
11690 Paciocco Ct.  
Plymouth, MI 48170-2870  
Tel 734-416-5993  
Email tink46@comcast.net

## **491ST BOMB GROUP**

Denver, Colorado  
October 11-15, 2006  
Marriott Denver South Hotel  
Contact: Bill Hagan tel 619-583-9388

## **303RD BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION**

September 12-16, 2006  
San Antonio TX  
The Menger Hotel  
Contact: 303rd BGA  
3552 Landmark Trail  
Palm Harbor FL 34684

## **339TH FIGHTER GROUP ASSOCIATION**

October 12-16, 2006  
San Diego CA  
Red Lion Hanalei Hotel  
Contact: Richard Thieme  
2732 South 7th St  
Sheboygan WI 53081-6803  
Tel 920-452-4780

## **401ST BOMBARDMENT GROUP ASSOCIATION**

September 11-17, 2006  
Nashville TN  
Sheraton Music City Hotel  
Contact: Armed Forces Reunions  
322Madison Mews Norfolk VA 23510

## **385TH BOMBARDMENT GROUP ASSOCIATION**

October 3-8, 2006  
Bossier City LA  
Contact: P.O. Box 134  
Barksdale AFB LA 71110-0134

## **44TH BOMB GROUP**

October 11 -16, 2006  
Fairview Park Marriott - Falls Church VA  
Contact: E. Cohen  
6410 Delaire Landing  
Philadelphia PA 19114-4157

## **466TH BOMB GROUP**

October 4-7, 2006  
Diamond Jack's Casino and Resort  
Bossier City LA

Contact: Elmo Maiden  
8136 Cozycroft Ave.  
Canoga Park CA 91306-1712

## **55TH FIGHTER GROUP**

May 3 - 7, 2007  
St. Louis MO  
Renaissance St. Louis Hotel  
Contact: Edward Giller  
14415 Soula Dr. N. E.  
Albuquerque NM 87123  
Tel 505-298-8053

## **97TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION**

OCTOBER 19 - 22, 2006  
Washington DC  
Contact: Tom Gulley tel 813-908-1132

## **359TH FIGHTER GROUP**

October 5 - 8, 2006  
San Francisco Bay Area  
Contact Pres. Nancy Jennings  
Tel 408-551-0444  
email Nancy.Jennings@MCDATA.com

## **28TH WING ASSOCIATION**

September 7-11, 2006  
Rapid City, South Dakota  
Contact: Al Leenknecht  
Phone: 605-348-7244  
P.O. Box 3092  
Rapid City, SD 57709-3092

## **379TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION**

September 6-9, 2006  
Doubletree Hotel Seattle Airport  
18740 Pacific Highway South  
Seattle Washington 98188  
Phone: 206-246-8600  
Contact: Teresa Cabanski  
Phone: 303-697-6265  
Email: cabanskita@aol.com

## **490TH BOMB GROUP**

September 7-10, 2006  
Crystal City VA  
Crowne Plaza Hotel  
www.490th.org

## **355TH FIGHTER GROUP ASSOCIATION**

October 5-9, 2006  
Philadelphia PA  
Contact: Bob Kuhnert  
PO Box 750062  
Dayton OH 45475



## Chapter News

### BIRTHPLACE CHAPTER SAVANNAH GEORGIA

Our June 20, 2006 monthly dinner meeting was both a happy and sad one. It was Leo Wery's last before he and Catherine make their move back to the Netherlands.

The dinner celebrated Leo's years as Vice Commander of the Savannah Wing, writer of the Chapter's By-Laws and his Constitution and serving a term as its Vice-President. He was also very instrumental in the development of and was active in the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum Volunteer Program. Leo was presented with a plaque by the Board of Directors of the Chapter outlining the many contributions he made to the Museum and Chapter. Echoing many, he will be greatly missed, but never forgotten. Because of the strong financial contributions of our members through their dues, donations and purchase of 50/50 dinner raffle tickets, a check for \$1000 was presented to Dr. Walter Brown, President of the Mighty 8th Air Force Museum for their purchase of a color printer.

### NEW MEXICO CHAPTER

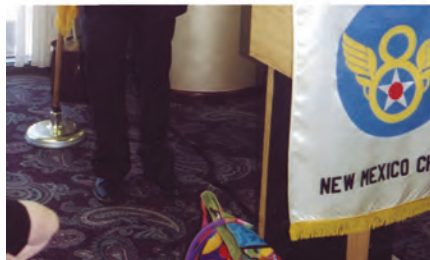
The New Mexico Chapter of the 8th AFHS held its annual Spring General Membership Meeting & Luncheon at the Albuquerque Petroleum Club, on Saturday June 10, 2006. President Hal Goetsch (385th BG), opened the meeting with the introduction of Chaplain Lem Boyles USAF (Ret.) who gave the invocation. The Guest Speaker was Gerry G. Taylor Senior Master Sergeant USAF (Ret.) a Trustee of the National Atomic Museum's Foundation in 1994. His talk included such topics as the Manhattan Project, and why the atomic bombs dropped on Japan were of two different types and the third bomb that was never used. And also the Japanese and German atomic programs during WWII. Also recognized was Honored Member Everett Hayes, who recently celebrated his 90th birthday, 446th BG, completed 30 combat missions as CP/P and was awarded the DFC and Air Medals. Returning to the U.S. he became a B-24 instructor pilot. Later joined the Ferry

Command and flew B-24, B-25, P-47, P-51, P-63 and P-40 airplanes.

Submitted by:

Al Schwery

Secretary, 8th AFHS, NM



**New Mexico Chapter  
Guest speaker Gerry Taylor**



**Everett Hayes seated with his son, Jack**

### LOUISIANA CHAPTER

We are encouraging our Louisiana members to attend the Eighth Air Force Historical Society annual reunion in Bossier City. The dates are October 3rd through 8th. You still have time to sign up and attend the reunion. We will set up a meeting for our members who attend the reunion there in the Isle of Capri Hotel. We will discuss plans for the future of our Chapter. In the last couple of issues of the 8th AF News you may have noticed the

articles about the "2nd Generation" or the "NexGen" as it is being called. This is a program started to keep the legacy of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society alive. As we all know our so-called Greatest Generation is leaving us at a rapid rate. The next generation following them thinks it is worthwhile to keep the Legacy of the Mighty Eighth alive. I ask all of all of you to encourage your children and their children to get involved.

A NexGen update meeting is planned for Bossier City. We are at the forefront of an important task and a unique opportunity to help ensure the continuance of the Legacy of the Mighty Eighth.

Harry "Doug" Tanner, President

### OREGON CHAPTER

Our Chapter meeting was well attended with many new people in attendance as a result of a continuing advertising campaign to reach new people in the Pacific Northwest.

A press release published a month before the February meeting resulted in a local reporter interviewing three members of the Chapter: Joe Conroy 306 BG, Clint Gruber 93 BG, and Edwin Dey 92 BG, for a feature article of their service in the 8th Air Force in the local newspaper. The article was published to only one county of the 50+ counties the paper is delivered to in Oregon and Southern Washington but it resulted in over 29 people from Washington County contacting the Chapter and many new people showing up at the quarterly meeting.

The opening introduction of the guests resulted in so many interesting stories, service histories, and questions from others to the new attendees that the planned presentation had to be postponed until the next meeting due to a lack of time. Guests included people from the 5th and 15th AF. The Chapter has members who served in the 5th, 13th, 15th, as well as ground units from WWII. There are many ex-military members who served during the Korean War to our modern conflicts.

The Chapter's web site (<http://www.8thafhsoregon.com>) continues to expand with more archive mate-



## Chapter News

rial being posted on the site as well as additional research material relating to the Eighth Air Force and their aerial and ground opponents.

# WISCONSIN CHAPTER

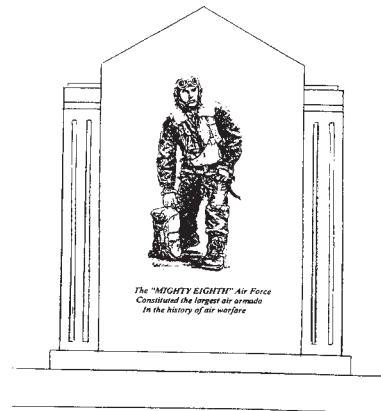
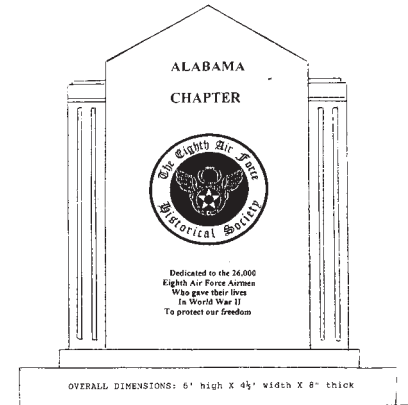
Three years ago, I spoke on PFF bombing at the EAA Fly-in. I gave some of the listeners a copy of our newsletter and a man from Oklahoma asked if he could join the Wisconsin Chapter. I told him that he couldn't join as a member, but he could subscribe to the newsletter. We do this to keep the heritage of the Mighty Eighth alive. Two weeks later our treasurer got a check from him with a note saying, "Send me that newsletter!" Every December we get ten bucks with a note telling us how much he enjoys reading it.

Yesterday, I got a call from him asking if it was okay to tell some of his friends that they could subscribe to the newsletter. He said he passes his copy out and by the time he gets it back, it is pretty dog-eared. I told him to tell his friends that they could subscribe and that would keep his copy from becoming ragged. We have subscribers of all ages from as far away as California. I have Wisconsin Chapter business cards and give them out whenever I meet an 8th AF Veteran.

Bill Bergner

## ALABAMA CHAPTER

The members of the Alabama Chapter are erecting a Memorial to the 26,000 men of the Eighth Air Force who lost their lives during World War II.



The Memorial will be located on the grounds of the American Village at Montevallo - the geographic center of the state. The large granite monument will feature the Gil Cohen depiction of The Crewman, the official logo of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum.

Funding is being solicited from members and supporters of the Chapter, with a goal of \$6,500 for its completion. The Chapter will hold its dedication in the late fall. The American Village is the educational campus of The Citizenship

Trust, whose mission is the promotion of Liberty and good citizenship. Its programs service over 65,000 students and teachers annually.

## MINNESOTA CHAPTER

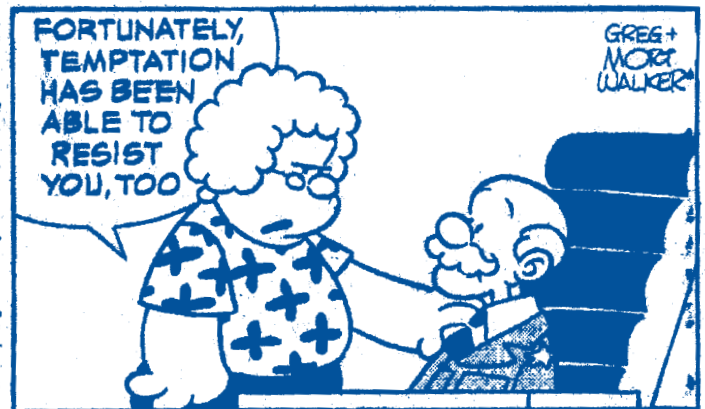
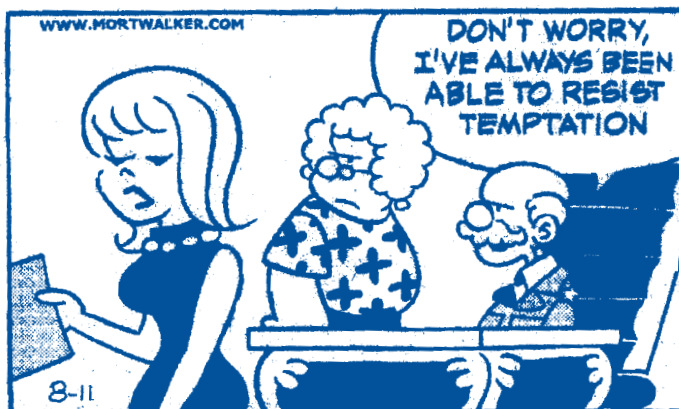
## Board of Directors Meeting

President Dick Kaminski called the meeting to order. Minutes of the previous meeting were approved as read. Al Anderson handed a printed Treasurer's Report to each person present. Total balance was \$13,269.69 as of June 30, 2006. The Treasurer's Report was accepted. Randy Penrod has a copy of our local By-Laws.

Old Business: PX closing was discussed. Motion made, seconded and passed to give the PX inventories to seminar attendees, except caps and .50 caliber inert shells.

New Business: The new, revised roster was discussed. Motion made, seconded and passed to donate \$1,000.00 to Wings of North. We will be given one flight on the B-17 at the Wings of North Air Show. Drawing for the free ride will be on September 6, 2006 at the luncheon.

Motion made, seconded and passed to donate \$500.00 to the USO.  
Purchasing a new or used TV for our programs was discussed. In about a month, a decision will be reached.  
We have a luncheon and program every Wednesday noon - 30 to 70 in attendance - Bloomington, MN. Legions Club.





## NEXGENS

Greetings to all who attended the Next Generation Meeting at the Arlington Reunion last October. The Eighth Air Force Historical Society NEXGEN is the name which has evolved for ours and future generations following that of the WWII Veterans.

Thank you for filling out the Personal Data Forms, which have now been processed. Beverly Tomb and myself, Norma, as co-chairs of the Membership/records Initiative, are sending out this first communication since the reunion. We hope all of you will plan to attend this year's reunion in Bossier City, LA on October 4-8 at the Diamond Jack's Casino and Resort.

More info at this web page:

<http://www.8thafhs.org/reunions.htm>

All the info and forms you need for this are in the June issue of the 8<sup>th</sup> AF NEWS.

If some of you are not yet members of 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS and receiving this quarterly journal, please contact me, and I will send you the registration forms for the reunion.

A two hour NEXGEN update meeting is planned for Bossier City. This includes a thirty minute general info session, followed by a 1 ½ hour time frame for individual groups to meet, according to the areas of interest which many of you checked on the Personal Data Form. If you checked one or more of these areas of interest, you will be getting more information on the other people involved in your group. These sessions will be the opportunity for all to set goals, plan and personally get involved in the transition of responsibilities from our WWII Veterans to the 8thAFHS Next Generation. We are at the forefront of an important task and a unique opportunity to help ensure the Continuance of the Legacy of the Mighty Eighth.

That terminology comes from Earl Wassom in a series of six articles he has written for the last four issues and

the next two issues (June, Sept. '06) of The 8<sup>th</sup> AF NEWS, and entitled "Continuing the Legacy". Earl is one of our two senior advisors for NEXGEN, is on the Board of Directors of 8thAFHS, and started to spear-head the transition more than a year ago. You probably remember that he conducted the

first NEXGEN meeting at the Arlington Reunion.

Again, if some of you do not receive the 8thAF NEWS quarterly journal, and would like to read these articles, please let me know if you would like me to send them to you.

Also, I would be happy to send a complimentary (March '06) copy of the 8thAF NEWS to anyone who is not yet a member. Let me know.

We hope to see all of you at the reunion. See some links to a few interesting web sites:

8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Historical Society

[www.8thafhs.org](http://www.8thafhs.org)

Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum:

[www.mightyeighth.org](http://www.mightyeighth.org)

8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Museum at Barksdale Air Base:

[www.8afmuseum.net](http://www.8afmuseum.net)

Norma Peace Chesser  
13047 Bassford Drive  
Houston, TX 77099

**If you aren't part of the solution, there's good money to be made in prolonging the problem.**

**Timothy Erskine**



by artist Roger Stuch Kentwood, MI



## AN AMERICAN FAMILY IN WORLD WAR II

Edited by Captain Ralph L. Minker, Sandra O'Connell, Harry Butowsky

Ralph "Lee" Minker left his home in Wilmington, Delaware for cadet training when he was 18 years old. He and his replacement crew members arrived at Rattlesden, the home of the 447<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, in the fall of 1944 after flying over the Northern route to East Anglia. Their B-17 bomber was named *Blue Hen Chick* after the fighting mascot of the state of Delaware.

This volume is a rare piece of American history chronicling the interactions of a young 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force airman who volunteered to fly combat missions against the Axis of WWII. The Minker family agreed with Lee before he and his crew left Hunter Field in Savannah, to preserve all the correspondence and photographs exchanged while he was overseas. The result is over 800 letters and photos that, in their reading, unfold a very personal story of the war. The reader is included as part of the Minker family.

In letters while training at Roswell Army Air Field in New Mexico, one letter to his sister begins, "Today I flew a Flying Fortress! I shot seven landings and practiced stalls, climbs, glides, and steep and shallow turns. By the end of the period I was really worn out

for during the constant maneuvering (sic) every muscle in the body was at work and every pore sweated." Just a few weeks of strenuous flying the big bomber caused a slight change in his comments to his family. His view changed from "she sure is a sweet ship" to "the damn truck we fly." Months later, as his combat missions tallied up, he and his crew developed great trust in the Fortress' abilities to bring them home.

Lee completed his tour, earning his Lucky Bastard's Club certificate. The letter on 8 May 1945 to his high school sister begins, "It is VE Day at last! You can probably imagine the joy, relief, and thanksgiving felt by us over here." His mother's letter was a bit more introspective. "My Dear Lee: The news of the last few days has been very welcome. It is difficult to imagine how the Nazi ideology could so completely grip people with the potentialities of the Germans. Yet we have seen it take place – and the "spanking" we have given them is just the beginning of the work necessary to a changed point of view."

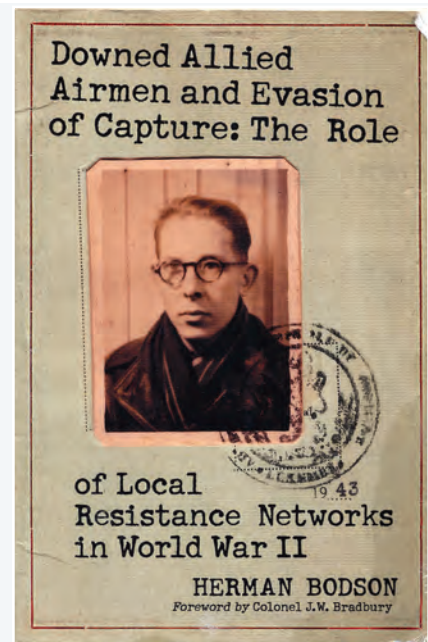
Mrs. Minter's words hold validity for America and the free world today.

The 432pp soft cover volume has photographs and charts. For information contact: Word Association Publishers, 205 Fifth Ave., Tarentum PA 15084 tel 703-471-7929 [www.wordassociation.com](http://www.wordassociation.com)

## DOWNED ALLIED AIRMEN AND EVASION OF CAPTURE: THE ROLE OF LOCAL RESISTANCE NETWORKS IN WORLD WAR II

by Herman Bodson

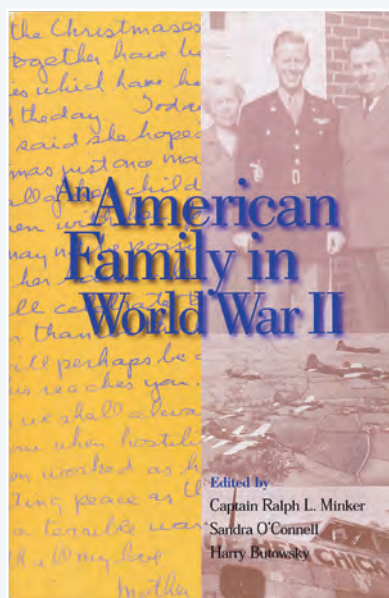
This book was compiled by Herman Bodson's family from his manuscript written in the 1990's. It is a concise but in-depth analysis and reiteration of the activities of the Escape and Evasion efforts by civilian individuals and families on the continent during the war. The "helpers" as they are called, assisted in concealing downed Allied airmen helping them avoid capture by the Germans and transporting them through "escape lines" through occu-



piated territory to the coast and then back to England, and freedom.

Author Bodson opens with a description of the Northern continental topography and its effects on escape activities. Belgium, The Netherlands and Northern France are described in detail and the development of escape lines are depicted. Involvement of helpers in the Vichy area of Southern France and the trek over the Pyrenees into Spain are told, as are stories of the safe houses used to hide airmen throughout Europe. He notes that American airmen had little prior training in E&E activities compared to the knowledge imparted by the RAF to their fliers.

Herman Bodson was instrumental early in Resistance activities after Nazis occupied his country of Belgium early in 1940. With a Doctorate in Chemistry, he took part in explosive sabotage missions against the Germans and quickly became involved with Escape and Evasion movements, arranging civilian passports, clothing and transportation to disguise RAF, RCAF, and USAAF fliers in attempts to protect them from capture, imprisonment, and often death. Bodson tells of thousands of helpers and their relatives summarily executed by German Abwehr and SS troops. He speaks of English-speaking German invaders into the escape line systems and of traitors who disclosed information and names to the enemy.





The author's wife, Tinca Bodson and their daughter Catharine, have arranged to make this valuable historical volume available to historians and students of WWII. The work of the helpers during the war was indicative of the intense feeling of patriotism exhibited by civilians under the oppression of Nazi Germany. They represent one of the few groups of Allied civilian supporters that sacrificed their lives and those of their families voluntarily to save the lives of our airmen shot down over enemy territory. Herman Bodson's book is a most effective depiction of this aspect of Eighth Air Force history, now being preserved by the Air Forces Escape and Evasion Society.

This 216-page softback with photos features the false identity card of the author on the cover. Contact info is by way of McFarland & Company, Inc. Publishers, Box 611, Jefferson NC 28640 and London. [www.mcfarlandpub.com](http://www.mcfarlandpub.com)

### LIVE BAIT

#### WWII Memoirs of an Unde-feated Fighter Ace

by Clayton Kelly Gross

Two weeks after arriving at Boxted airbase near Colchester, the 354th Fighter Group flew their first combat mission, receiving a pre-mission briefing by the 4th Fighter Group's Commander Don Blakeslee. That was in December 1943. Clayton Kelly Gross was a part of a 48-plane formation flying his first to Emden shortly thereafter.

It was on his eleventh mission, to Saarbrücken (see *Chick's Crew* review), that he scored his first air combat victories in his P-51 Mustang *Live Bait*. The name stuck after his buddy Bob Stephens suggested that he pull his fighter up and back, leaving Gross, in his words, out there in front as "live bait" to be jumped by enemy airplanes. Author Gross devotes the first third of his book to his early days in the Air Corps - the months of training, learning the ins and outs of flying and of the combat fighter business. Throughout the rest of the book, he frequently refers to his



family and home, interspersed with detailed accounts of combat action in the air and his thoughts of the war and the men who were fighting it, many sacrificing their youth and the rest of their lives. Gross recalls his feelings about his fellow fighter pilot airmen:

"It's hard to figure these guys out. These are the only men you've known for some time now. These are the men you live with, eat with, work with, fly and fight with. These are the storybook characters in the flesh and you are one of them. They don't look it and you don't feel it. In all this time, you're not sure you know them at all and hours of trying to figure yourself out make you realize that you may be crazy."

The author ends his wartime missions flying out of front bases on the continent after the D-Day invasion right up until VE Day in 1945. His descriptions of combat remain personal and vivid throughout. There were also some ground trips to Paris mixed in. This hardback 310-page volume, 39 chapters with photo section, is a fine addition to a WWII aviation enthusiast's collection. To obtain one, you may contact Inkwater Press in Portland, Oregon or better yet, the author at 2306 S.E. Spyglass Road, Vancouver WA 98683-5102.

### CHICK'S CREW

#### A Tale of the Eighth Air Force

by Ben Smith, Jr.

*Chicks' Crew* is considered by many to be one of the classic volumes of the 8th Air Force's World War II history. Its 189 pages tell the story of the author's experiences during the war and in his combat episodes as a crew member of B-17 pilot Anthony Cecchini. The book has been recently revised with new chapters added by author Ben Smith and as such, is now back in print and available.

Mission descriptives are brief and accurate. The author tells of the crew's incredible return from a rough mission to Saarbrücken and the crash on an English coast fighter base of their B-17 *Sweet Melody*. Smith received his Purple Heart from the events of this particular mission, and afterwards was sent with his buddies to a Flak House, an old English manor, for some much-needed R & R. The crew never flew with Chick again, but inherited an equally capable replacement pilot in a famous musician - a harmonica player - named Stan Fisher.

There are over forty succinct chapters in Smith's book, each with a well-made point or two - many with humor and some with tragedy, but all part of the personal story of a young airman from South Georgia flying dangerous missions from the 303rd Bomb Group airbase at Molesworth.





## Book Reviews

The book has numerous threads of the author's feelings and philosophy running through it.

"I believed that we fought in a righteous cause, but men will fight heroically and to the death for good causes and bad causes. It does not seem to matter once they have gotten their battle blood up. The combat crews had a dogged pride, knowing

that they had never been turned back by German opposition or heavy losses. The aircrews had few illusions about the glory of flying in the big bombers. We were an elite fighting organization, and we knew it. A strong spiritual bond had been forged between the men of the aircrews - heartbeats against the cosmic shredder. I saw that the instinct to band together and fight on

to the end was very strong in men. It transcended pain, terror, and death - a primeval emotion, even far more basic than love of country."

Hard cover with period and recent photographs; contact info: Rose Printing Company, Inc.; P.O. Box 5078; Tallahassee FL 32301 or P.O. Box 1586, Waycross GA 31501.



### Chick's Crew

Standing: Cecchini, Fisher, Veigel, McDevitt Kneeling: Bachman, Cogdell, Kepics, O'Heam, Smith and Hudson  
- Molesworth, England March, 1944

### ALEXANDRIA ARMY AIR BASE ALEXANDRIA, LA.

Alexandria Army Air Base located in Alexandria, Louisiana during World War II was conceived as Alexandria Municipal Airport in 1939. Built on the site of McNutt Plantation, it included parts of two other plantations comprising a total area of 1,339 acres. During World War II the city of Alexandria leased the base to the Army Air Corps for one dollar a year. It became "Alexandria Army Air Base" on October 16, 1942, and the corps formally activated the base on February 12, 1943.

In early 1943 three of the four runways were extended to support heavy bombers. From June 1943 until the end of

the war, Alexandria Army Air Base served as a training base for B-17 pilots and crews and later B-29 combat crews. In 1946 the base was reactivated as Alexandria Air Force Base. It was assigned to the Tactical Air Command (TAC). In June 1955 in honor of Lt. Col. John B. England the name of the base was changed to "England Air Force Base." The base was used for F-84, F-80, T-33, F-86, F-100 and A-10 aircraft. On December 15, 1992 the base was closed, but not before the people of central Louisiana put a fight to keep it opened. Today it is "Alexandria International Airport" and is operated by the City of Alexandria and the England Air authority.

Harry "Doug" Tanner  
Sulfur, LA



# B-24 Liberator Memorial

The Netherlands and the United States Friendship Association dedicated this beautiful impressive monument April 16, 2004 to all the Allied Airmen who died in the liberation of The Netherlands. The monument designed by Leendert Verbom depicts the "Missing Man Formation" in shaped three-quarter inch thick aluminum, with cutouts in the shape of the B-24 Liberator aircraft representing the aircraft in formation, as well as the missing aircraft "Connie". The monument is precisely aligned to permit the sun to shine through the missing Liberator at 1PM on every June 21st to a specific spot on its base where the "Connie" is placed during Memorial Services. The eight foot tall aluminum structure on the two-foot tiled base has an etched photo of the "Connie" crew that crashed at 12:58 PM June 21, 1944. The monument is located adjacent to the Royal Dutch Aviation Museum.

The "Connie" crew of the 446th Bombardment Group crashed near Haarlemmermeer, The Netherlands after dropping its bombs on a target near Berlin. On leaving the target area "Connie" pilot Nicholson radioed that he was low on fuel, eventually dropping out of the formation. A flak battery in the crash area brought it down killing 9 of the 10 crew members aboard. One was blown out of the waist suffering flash burns and became a POW after his capture.

The 446th Bomb Group Association authorized a plaque expressing its



**B-24 Liberator Monument**



**Missing Man Memorial**  
L-R: Bill Davenport 446th BG,  
Jack and Maria Van der Woude

thanks and appreciation for this memorial and recognition of one of its crews to The Netherlands United States Friendship Association, the Memorial sponsor.

Bill Davenport a founder of the 446th Bomb Group Association and currently its Historian together with wife Jean, were guests at the annual wreath laying ceremony on June 21st, 2006. Bill gave a talk about the 446th Bomb Group and its Association together with his experiences in flying 35 combat missions as a Navigator, July to October 1944. During this four month period one-half of his fellow barracks mates did not return from missions.

At the conclusion of the Wreath laying Rob Peters, Chairman, presented Bill Davenport with one of the seven Liberator cutouts from the Monument. This had represented "Connie" during the ceremony having been placed on the monument's base where the sun shown through the Missing plane, "Connie". Wreaths were brought to the participants by children from the Soesterberg school that keeps the monument area clean during the year.

The Memorial is one of eight recognizing 446th Bomb Group crews who crashed. Four are in France, three in The Netherlands and one in England. The purpose of the Association is to perpetuate the memory of the 446th Bombardment Group (H).

Bill and Jean Davenport look on their travels to present these "Thank- You's" as people to people diplomacy.

Reported by:

**William F. Davenport, 446th BG**  
**Santa Ana, CA**

## NATIONAL 8TH AIR FORCE WEEK

## OCTOBER 8-14



Military names were assigned to Operations such as Operation Torch for the North African campaign in 1942. There was Operation Bolero and today Operation Iraqi Freedom. During WWII there was also Operation Chattanooga Choo-Choo - the 23 May 1944 8th AF massive bombing of railway and airfield targets in France and Germany just before D-Day.

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The national dedication ceremonies of the United States Air Force Memorial will be held in Washington DC on October 14 - 15, 2006. Attendees will number more than 20,000. The celebration will take place at the beautiful memorial near the Pentagon site of the bombing of 9/11. National television will cover the event. Info can be obtained from the Air Force Memorial Foundation, 1501 Lee Highway, Arlington VA 22209.

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The 44th Bomb Group Diorama depicting the low-level Ploesti raid at the Mighty Eighth Museum has been enhanced. Three years in the works, a professional sound description of the mission has been added to the exhibit. Tom Parsons, 44th BG, delivered the fine addition along with the sound technology that will make it readily available to museum visitors.

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A Call for Histories has been put out by Heritage Museum librarian Jean Prescott for acquisition of all Group Histories. Many original histories are now out of print and some 8th AFers and their families are looking for a location to place them in good hands. The permanent home for the Eighth will make them a part of the historical research archives at the museum. Contact Jean at 912-748-8888.

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An additional note regards the dedication ceremonies of the Roger A. Freeman Archives planned for October 17th at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum. If you would like information for that event and the dinner that evening, with an opportunity to meet Roger's wife Jean, call 912-748-8888 and ask for Brenda.

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From Gen. Brian Gunderson's *Slanguage*: RAF Term: Candles - USAAF term: Searchlights; RAF: Grand Slam - USAAF: Enemy aircraft shot down; RAF: Golden Eagle Day - USAAF: Payday; RAF Chopburg - USAAF: Berlin (heavy losses of a/c); RAF: Rats - USAAF: Enemy aircraft; RAF: Walking out - USAAF: Parachuting out of a burning aircraft RAF: Starkers - USAAF: Naked

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A Gathering of Mustangs and Legends will occur at Rickenbacker Airport in Columbus, Ohio on September 27-30, 2006. The event is expected to draw over 100 P-51 Mustangs according to the Stallion 51 Corp. Info is at [www.stallion51.com](http://www.stallion51.com) <<http://www.stallion51.com/>> email [gathering@stallion51.com](mailto:gathering@stallion51.com). A P-51 connection at the airport is the fact that the Tuskegee Airmen were assigned to the base after the war.

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"If life were fair, Elvis would be alive and all the impersonators would be dead." - Johnny Carson

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The USAF is planning retiring 38 BUFFs, the venerable B-52 Stratofortress. Strong opposition to this move is mounted in both Houses of Congress, proposing to maintain the entire fleet of 94 B-52s. Note is made that there are no plans to replace it with a long-range bomber, the operational cost of 17 B-52s for 30 years equals the purchase price of one B-2 Stealth bomber.

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Millions of Nazi files outlining the suffering and deaths of concentration camp inmates during the Holocaust of WWII. Historians have campaigned for years to open the 30 million documents in the vast archive. Eleven nations, including the U.S.A. and Israel, have been active in the governing body of the Red Cross Committee pursuing the files.

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The Isle of Capri Hotel in Bossier City LA has changed its name. For the attendees to the annual 8th AFHS reunion, look for the Diamond Jack's Casino and

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Resort. Fear not. No need for those registered to contact the Reunion office or the hotel - everything is still on course, heading towards the IP on October 4-8.

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"Bigamy is having one wife/husband too many. Monogamy is the same."  
Oscar Wilde

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The Air Force Enlisted Village has a mission to provide a home for widows of enlisted Air Force servicemen. The facility, located in Fort Walton Beach, Florida and in nearby Shalimar, has three housing locations - all near Eglin AFB. Two are independent living facilities and the other is a 64-apartment assisted living structure. The Foundation was founded in 1967 with the assistance of General John Ryan and his wife, in order to aid indigent widows in need of a place to live. Jim Binnecker, President and CEO, urges those who wish to contribute or those widows eligible to get in touch.

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The complex is a 501(c) 3 organization and funding comes from supporters and corporations. Their newsletter Voice of Hope with complete information is available by calling 1-800-258-1413 or email [afef@afenlistedfoundation.org](mailto:afef@afenlistedfoundation.org).

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I am researching the bicycles used at 8th AF bases in England. What I particularly need is information regarding the make(s), colors and any identification numbers or letters appearing on the bicycles. Any assistance would be greatly appreciated! Please contact Marin Ennis at 1405 Dogwood Drive, West Lawn, PA 19609-1011 (610) 678-2997 or at [marin.ennis@gmail.com](mailto:marin.ennis@gmail.com)

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Pilot's view of the F-35  
Joint Strike Fighter,  
now termed the  
Pilot - Vehicle Interface



# BULLETIN BOARD

## MADINGLEY MEMORIAL CEREMONY - 29 May, 2006

They will never be forgotten. Again this year, a very impressive memorial ceremony was held to remember and honor those who rest and those on the Wall of the Missing at Cambridge American Cemetery in England. The impressive ceremony is presented with full military honors and all 8th Air Force Groups and Units are recognized with the laying of the wreaths.

Attending this year along with our representative in the UK, Connie Richards, was 8th AFHS Past-president Craig Harris, who laid the wreath for the Historical Society. Featured address was delivered by Mr. Hugh Dubberly, Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Cambridgeshire. Fly-by aircraft included a Dakota, an RAF Spitfire and the B-17 Sally B. The United States Air Forces in Europe Band supplied the music and Taps during the Memorial Ceremony.



## GEORGIA NATIONAL CEMETERY DEDICATION CEREMONY HELD IN CANTON

On 4 June, 2006 under the guidance of the Department of Veterans Affairs, the National Cemetery Association officially opened an extensive new cemetery in Canton, Georgia. The Georgia National Cemetery is the second in Georgia and the 123rd National cemetery in the nation. The dedication featured patriotic music and a Keynote Address by R. James Nicholson, Secretary of Veterans Affairs, who was introduced by Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs William Tuerk.. Additional remarks were by Georgia Commissioner Pete Wheeler.



Birch McVay, 8th Air Force veteran, has been involved with the cemetery and its progress, working with Director Sandra Beckley, who is responsible for all burials and the maintenance operations of the Georgia cemeteries. The beautiful facility rest on the banks of the Etowah River near Canton.

## 351st BOMB GROUP BEGINS TO "PASS THE TORCH"

At its annual reunion in Saint Louis early in June, 2006 the 351st Bomb Group Association board of directors recommended, and the membership ratified, the naming of Second Generation Associates to its governing board. Bylaws were amended to increase the number of board members from nine to twelve...with the three additional names coming from the growing ranks of dues paying Associates and Special/Honorary members. Clint Hammond who was re-elected President of the Association, advised that "time has taken its toll of the original membership, so now we wish to pass the torch to the next generation." It was agreed that this innovative move would best preserve the honorable history of the 351st Bomb Group, 8th Air Force, in World War II. In addition to the regular board members who were reelected, the following associate/special members were elected to the Association Board of Directors: Sally Hatcher Ewald, Rick School and Bruce Nocera.





# BULLETIN BOARD

## AIRFIELDS OF BRITAIN CONSERVATION TRUST ESTABLISHES NATIONAL CHARITY

The airfields of Britain carry the history of Britain and the story of freedom with them. The Airfields of Britain Conservation Trust is established to preserve and protect the historic sites that lay across the hillsides of England. Airfields that date back to 1909 will be supported by museums and interpretative centres associated with individual airfields. Many of the airfields were home to the airmen of the Mighty Eighth. Memorials will be erected at airfields that do not have one in place already and the fields' stories will be told and preserved.

A number of airbases of the wartime 8th Air Force have impressive monuments in place, promoted and dedicated by those who served at the bases. Many have museums associated with them either in control towers or in original buildings used during the war. The Charity will include those bases in their activities to preserve the bases and their history.



## OPERATION MANNA MANNA ASSOCIATION DISBANDED

As part of the 60th Anniversary celebrations of Operation Manna, the Association went to Holland on the 29th April - 3rd May visiting the dropping zones at the Hague, Valkenburg and Vlaardingen. We were greatly indebted to the Dutch Food & Freedom Foundation for its help and support. During the visit it was decided that it would be appropriate to disband the Association during the 60th Anniversary of VE/VJ. A final reunion was held in Lincoln during October visiting the William Farr School in Welton (Dunholme Lodge) talking to pupils about Operation Manna, a visit to RAF Waddington provided the members a little nostalgia, then a farewell dinner in the Lincoln Hotel Eastgate. Finally, on Sunday morning a Service of Thanksgiving took place in the Chapel of St. Hugh. Edward King House, Lincoln Cathedral, this bought to an end twenty years of comradeship to those taking part in Operation Manna.

VOEDSEL UIT DE HEMEL.

from Bomber Command Association Newsletter

The American component is "Operation Chowhound," whose members are still active in 8th organizations. -Editor

## MEMORIAL PLAQUE TO BE DEDICATED AT MILTON ERNEST HALL

Plans are set to dedicate a special plaque at Milton Ernest Hall in England on 15 December 2006 to commemorate the last time Bandleader Glenn Miller was on the base 62 years ago. The proposed tribute will be funded in part by those who were at M. E. Hall during the war. Everyone is invited to the ceremony which will be performed with an Honor Guard and full colors, with military personnel taking part. Connie and Gordon Richards are heading up the event and may be reached for information through their new contact info on page 2 of the 8th AF News.



IN MEMORY OF ALL THE  
PERSONNEL WHO SERVED  
IN WORLD WAR II AT  
MILTON ERNEST HALL.



HEADQUARTERS USAAF EIGHTH AIR FORCE  
SERVICE COMMAND. STATION 506.

1943 ALSO. 1945

**MAJOR GLENN MILLER**

**&**

**THE BAND OF THE ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCE**

**WHO WERE STATIONED HERE FROM**

**JULY TO DECEMBER 1944.**





**Ziemere, Dan**, Denver CO; 447th BG bombardier of the *Due Back*; POW Stalag Luft III -from Dorothy Burwell

**Eisenhart, Mary Shore**; wife of 303rd BG Bill Eisenhart; former U.S. Army Nurse Corps; long-time supporter of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum

**Whitcomb, Kenneth**, Corona CA; 94th BG ground crew on B-17 maintenance; flew combat missions

**Pierson, Ellis**, Pensacola FL; 379th BG radio operator; shot down on 29th mission; POW -from his wife and daughters

**Fumerton, Robert "Moose"**, Huntsville, Ontario; Royal Canadian Air Force Squadron 406 night-fighter unit; got his nickname because the cockpits in 1940 were a tight fit; scored the first night-time aerial combat victory by a RCAF pilot; fighter ace with 14 kills, the last being a Junkers 88 in 1944

**Holmes, Besby Frank**, San Rafael CA; fighter pilot who took part in the famous mission that shot down the aircraft of Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto, mastermind of the Pearl Harbor attack by the Japanese; flew his fighter in combat during the Dec. 7, 1941 attack; aware of the shoot-down claims of fellow pilots Rex Barber and Tom Lanphier, he realized the significance of the Yamamoto mission: the Japanese did not win a single major engagement after his death -from Ralph Ambrose

**Hines, Russell**, Hillsboro OR; BAD 2; active in Elks and American Legion organizations

**Macgowan, Bates**, Baton Rouge LA; 401st BG tailgunner on the John Conolly crew -from son-in-law Tim Romain

**Trapp, Ray**, Atlanta GA; 491st BG -from

his wife Sarah

**Kitowski, M. D., Vincent**, Houston TX; 301st BG, 8th AF; author of numerous articles and books on Rehabilitation Medicine -from Al Lea, his final 8th AF

**Barlich, Steve**, South Bend IN; 467th BG

**Krozel, Joseph**, Chicago IL; 401st BG

**Mason, Thomas**, Evanston IN; 446th BG navigator on first raid on Berlin; 30 missions

**Green, Louis**, Pasadena TX; 55th FG

**Hoffman, Ted**; Chadron NE; 55th FG pilot; career in USAF

**Dayville, Donald**, Norwich CT; 55th FG P-51 pilot -from his daughter Loretta Hayes

**McKee, Robert**, Decatur GA; 91st BG clerk -from his daughter Sally Franklin

**Eames, Charles**, Waycross GA; 379th BG

**O'Brien, Michael**, Chicopee MA

**Helms, Leo**, Pickerington OH; 34th BG

**Brandt, Estelle**, wife of Melvin Brandt 401st BG; Illinois Chapter

**Berger, Ernst Henry**, Winner SD; 467th BG B-24 ttg/engineer - from Len Schutta

**Recht, Victor**, Pewaukee WI; 305th BTG

**Manson, Alfred**; 359th FG pilot

**Forsblad, Leland**, Fresno, California, 91st BG pilot, POW Stalag Luft III; Career as noted professor and composer of music, a founder of *The Luftbandsters* band in Stalag III. His tribute to the 8th Air Force musical concert was recently featured in a special musical event at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum presented by the 60-piece Army Ground Forces Band from Ft. McPherson, Georgia. His daughter, Marcia, represented the family at the concert. Fellow POW Frank Murphy, sponsor of the memorable concert, writes about his friend, "I shall never forget those snowy, bitter cold dreary central European winter nights in Sagan in 1944 when our fellow kriegies, bundled up in everything they could find to keep from freezing, filed into our theater at Stalag Luft III to hear a concert by the *Luftbandsters*. They applauded wildly after every number, most of them written or arranged by Lee Forsblad. When the notes of our finale faded away and we had been given several standing ovations, many of them quietly left the theater with a faraway look on their faces and tears in their eyes. We knew we had given them a few minutes of pleasure and thoughts of home instead of the unhappy circumstances of our imprisonment."

## June Allyson

The unique raspy voice and slight lisp of June Allyson came through in movies enhancing her fresh clean cut appearance - the Pinup Girl the guys wanted to come home to. In 1945 she married Richard Powell. She starred in her career with movies heroes such as Van Johnson and with Jimmy Stewart in "The Glenn Miller Story" and "Strategic Air Command."

Born Eleanor Geisman, she got her stage name from a family name Allyson and from her birthmonth of June. She in later years appeared in television show such as "Love Boat" and "Murder, She Wrote." She appeared also in commercials for Kimberly-Clark and had a Foundation named after her, the June Allyson Foundation.





**Pawlyshyn, Methodius "Ted"**, Bronxville NY; 392nd BG 1st armorer of the B-24 "Sweet Chariot" from his son Bill, who writes: "After reading his diary of his exploits in the States and Europe, I feel even closer to you who fought in WWII."

**Bowers, William**, Duquesne PA; 305th BG

**Reinhard, Edward**, Billings MT; 401st BG; 30 combat missions; career USAF

**Carr, Willard**, Lakewood CO; 55th FG Armament

**Smith, Dick**, Glendale AZ; 55th FG Headquarters; international career with Olympic Diving and swim events; Director and trainer of Diving/Swimming at the U.S. Air Force Academy; developed a world-famous Swim Gym organization

**McKee, Robert**, Decatur GA; 8th AF; -from Bill Dreisbach

**Cumbaa, DeLome "De"**; 100th BG radio operator on Griswold Smith's crew -from Alabama Propwash

**Johnson, Hallman**; 9th AF; flew gliders on the D-Day invasion of Europe; Chaplain American Legion; Alabama Chapter

**Register, Edward "Buddy"**, Jacksonville FL; 91st BG; 30 missions; 3 of first 4 missions were to Berlin

**Mims, Edwin**, Tallahassee FL; 446th BG pilot; career in the USAF; SAC during the Cold War and in Vietnam

**Grey, Fred "the Grey Ghost"**, Jacksonville Beach FL; 92nd BG tailgunner; POW Stalag 17; 57 missions in B-29s over Korea

**Kennedy, Joseph**, Savannah GA; 790th BS crew chief; NG warrant officer helicopter pilot post-war

**Nelson, William**, Richmond Hill GA; ttg B-17; crew chief for Gen. Eisenhower on non-combat support missions

**Carlyle, John "Jack"**, Savannah GA; fighter pilot in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam

**Edwards, Eugene**; 303rd BG; Oregon Chapter

**Hanselmann, Charles**, Vacaville CA; 303rd BG -from Bill Heller

**Edwards, Frederick**, Methuen and Vernon MA; 8th AF; career with Pratt and Whitney; member of Studebaker Driver's Club  
**Buxkamper, June**, Nashville TN; WAC; Red Cross; Scty to Chief Surgeon of the Army in charge of ordering all medical supplies for the D-Day invasion



June Buxkamper

**Hildebrand, Robert**, Milwaukee WI; 392nd BG radio operator on Novik crew -from Charles Buckley, Novik crew tailgunner

**Hastin, James**, Mt. Vernon WA; 361st FG pilot; POW interned at Buchenwald  
**Stegall, Floyd**, Galesburg IN; 361st FG pilot; Evaded capture in early 1944 through Holland -from BJ Redden



**Bresh, Paul**, Fort Myers FL; 34th BG pilot -from his wife Betty

**Courtney, David**, Valencia CA; fighter pilot 8th AF WWII; flew F-84s and F-86s in Korean War

**Gage, Ripley**, Lake Oswego, OR; 447th BG pilot; owner of Gage Industries, a plastics manufacturing company; Oregon Chapter -from Joe Conroy

**Wiener, Howard**, Trucksville PA; 8th AF Squadron Exec; civic leader

**Wunder, Virgil**, Baker City OR; 96th BG; Oregon Chapter

**Gilmont, Robert**, Toledo OH; 306th BG radio operator

**Smith, Walter**, Savannah GA; B-17 waist gunner 8th AF; three purple hearts;

**Lamvic, Norolf "Knute"**, Gresham OR; 381st BG pilot;



Norolf "Knute" Lamvic

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

**A.C. Swinburne  
The Commonwealth**

**If you have a lot of tension associated with headaches, do what it says to do on the aspirin bottle:  
'Take two aspirin' and 'Keep away from children.'**

**Clyde White, 390th Bomb Group**



# WACs Trip Up 'Nazi' Officers At U.S. Camp

By Cpl. Dave Hopkins

Stars and Stripes Unit Correspondent

**MARAUDER MEDIUM BOMBER**  
HQ, Nov. 14—An officer in a light blue uniform, almost like the RAF, walked into the WAC orderly room here and in perfect American accent asked direction to the Headquarters building.

A WAC clerk, Sgt. Mary Lou Meacham, of West Point, Miss., looked up, began to give the directions, then noticed the silver braid on the uniform. She looked a little closer. On the air force wings on the officer's chest was the crooked cross of Germany, a swastika—a small one, but nonetheless recognizable.

"What kind of a uniform is that?" asked WAC 1/Sgt. Dorothy Fields, of Kansas City, Mo., who had at first thought it was that of the RAF.

"Brazilian," replied the officer.

**Another WAC, Another Question**

At this moment, WAC Pvt. Amelia Forney, of Houston, Tex., quit looking for a Christmas package on the mail desk and queried: "What the heck kind of uniform is that you have on?"

"Just Brazilian," the officer repeated.

When Pvt. Forney started for the door the officer beat her to it and climbed into a waiting station-wagon outside. The WAC caught a glimpse of two other similarly dressed officers in the car.

Sgt. Fields called the guardhouse and the chase was on. Six jeeps roared forth from the guardhouse, in each enough artillery to stop the German Army. Leading the brigade was the officer of the day.

Within ten minutes, two men in German uniforms had been captured and thrown into the cooler. But the fun was just beginning.

The CO of the MPs called the counter-intelligence officer, who in turn called the executive, the guard at the main gate called the guard house, the station adjutant called the headquarters adjutant, the headquarters adjutant called the base commander, the base commander called the counter-intelligence officer, and then each of the above named officers phoned each other to discuss the situation. Just to keep the wires humming, the mess sergeant called to order another peck of potatoes.

The MPs were told to hold the "Germans" incommunicado—a new word for them—but they nevertheless put another padlock on the cooler and managed to keep the counter-intelligence and the intelligence training officer from getting into the cell on their first tries to interview the prisoners.

The counter-intelligence officer finally got in, however, and after several more telephone calls decided that the prisoners were members of a mobile intelligence unit just arrived on the station for instruction and "testing" purposes.

If the prisoners had not insisted on shouting "Heil, Hitler," and demanding, "Where's our dinner?" and otherwise infuriating the MPs, they might have been released a lot sooner.

## The Ode of PILOT OFFICER PRUNE

Although he always tried his best  
To be efficient (like the rest) simply had not the skill  
To concentrate on COCKPIT DRILL

He tried mnemonics; used to sit  
For ages memorising it.  
But once inside his aeroplane,  
He just forgot all again.

The intercom, the airscrew pitch,  
The warning indicator switch,  
The flaps, and elevator trim  
Were one and all the same to him.

He accidentally pulled the catch  
That jettisons the exit hatch.  
It quite surprised him when he saw  
His gunner vanish through the floor.

Francis P. Leadon

## TO ALL WOP/AG'S, AIRMEN & WAAF GROUND W/OP's WOM's & WEM's

### Did you know?

Ever heard of the Morse Code? In part, you owe your mobile phone and your computer to a Christian named Samuel Morse. The world was a different place before this guy. First class news took two weeks to reach the USA. And reports of a major victory could take six weeks to reach Britain. One day a friend said, "Morse, when you were experimenting did you ever come to an absolute deadlock, not knowing what to do?" Morse replied, "More than once". His friend asked, "What did you do then?" Morse shared a secret: "I got down on my knees and prayed for light, and light came, and when my inventions were acknowledged by flattering honours from America and Europe, I said, 'Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me, but unto Thy name give the glory.'" That's why the first message sent by transatlantic cable read: "What God has wrought".

Title: . \_ . / . \_ \_ / . . . / . / . . . / . \_ . . .

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|-----------|---------|-----------|
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| C _ . .   | P . . . | 2 . . . . |
| D _ .     | Q _ . . | 3 . . . . |
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| F . . .   | S . . . | 5 . . . . |
| G _ . .   | T _     | 6 . . . . |
| H . . .   | U . .   | 7 . . . . |
| I . .     | V . . . | 8 . . . . |
| J . . . . | W . . . | 9 . . . . |
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| L . . .   | Y . . . |           |
| M _ .     | Z . . . |           |



by J.S. Webber





turn by the skipper and they escape the relentless beam. On, on, over Holland - every now and again the moon flashes a reflection in a river or canal, even gives enough light at one time for the Navigator to get a visual fix so he can give a new course and ETA to the skipper - and so a very slight change of course. Now the Dutch coast - now the cold, rough, grey North Sea. Even that looks good to them now. Then crossing the English Coast, heading for home.

A good landing, then they slowly drop one by one from the aircraft ladder, stretch their limbs suddenly feeling tired, but enjoying the cool welcoming English morning air - a sharp whistle from the engineer who is pointing to a bit of wing tip missing - about one foot of it! A quick word to their ground crew, pleased and proud to see their aircraft back - the aircrew know that tonight it will be 100% ready for them to go and do the same again. Transport to de-briefing, then the mess. As each man takes his familiar place he tries not to look at the empty places - some more drift in - then tries not to look at the empty places - some more drift in - then whisper that Johnny and his crew bought it; that Peter is thought to have 'ditched', and that Jimmy, in trouble, just made it to another airfield, but of the others missing, no word and no-one asks. They are quiet in their own thoughts, and peel off one by one to bed. They know they did a good job tonight - the best they could, and that those conquered people all over Europe are now one day nearer freedom by their work this night. And when all have slipped off to bed three WAAF's quietly clear away the empty places, and one sheds a tear.

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When war is over and peace creeps in these

aircrew may not often say it, certainly never loudly proclaim it, but sometimes cannot help but ask among themselves, when medals are being given by a grateful country, "Why none for Bomber Command? Have we not done enough?" No answer ever comes.

So, if one evening you should be in Eastern England near a dis-used airfield and see a man of military bearing standing solitary, staring down the runway to the East, silent and quite still, just stand in silence too, but when he turns to go, as he passes you, hold out your hand, shake his and simply say "Thank you" - for you may not have another chance.

Ron Ravenhall in Bomber Command Newsletter

## America For Me

by Henry Van Dyke

'Tis fine to see the Old World and travel up and down  
Among the famous palaces and cities of renown,  
To admire the crumbly castles and the statues and kings  
But now I think I've had enough of antiquated things.  
So it's home again, and home again, America for me!  
My heart is turning home again and there I long to be,  
In the land of youth and freedom, beyond the ocean bars,  
Where the air is full of sunlight and the flag is full of stars.

Oh, London is a man's town, there's power in the air;  
And Paris is a woman's town, with flowers in her hair;  
And it's sweet to dream in Venice, and it's great to study  
Rome;  
But when it comes to living, there is no place like home.

I like the German fir-woods in green battalions drilled;  
I like the gardens of Versailles with flashing fountains filled;  
But, oh, to take your hand, my dear, and ramble for a day  
In the friendly western woodland where Nature has her sway!

I know that Europe's wonderful, yet something seems to lack!  
The Past is too much with her, and the people looking back.  
But the glory of the Present is to make the Future free--  
We love our land for what she is and what she is to be.

Oh, it's home again, and home again, America for me!  
I want a ship that's westward bound to plough the rolling sea,  
To the blessed Land of Room Enough, beyond the ocean bars,  
Where the air is full of sunlight and the flag is full of stars.

submitted by Paul Neumann 8th Hdq  
Knoxville, TN

### ON REACHING 85

by Clint Gruber, Oregon Chapter

It's true....

**My engines sometimes miss a beat  
And the radios just mumble.  
My landing gear won't quite lock down  
And my gyros often tumble.**

**Some say my airframe's ancient  
And should be grounded for repair.  
But I'll be damned if that is so,  
I'm still up in the air.**

**I need a longer runway  
Just to get off the ground.  
But I'm a human DC-3,  
And Hey! I'm still around!**



# **"THINGS WERE HAPPENING AFTER V-E DAY..."**

**"The Eagle's Wrath,"  
94th BG under  
the Eiffel Tower  
in Paris 1945**



**398th BG's "Betsy Rose"  
at Berlare, Belgium  
in May 1945**



**"Wally's Wheels"  
of the 305th BG B-17  
lost December 1944  
Seen here in  
Weimar, Germany  
in June 1945**





**Almost Home - Greenland crash in January 1946**



**"Stormy Weather"**

**On its 110th mission - this one made it to Greenland and home**







**305TH BG  
"DINAH MIGHT"  
at Lechfeld**

**Holzkirchen, Germany  
B-17's  
October 1945**



**B-17's at Erlangen, Germany  
October 1945**





At Lech, B-17's blown up after  
"Project Casey Jones"  
Mapping missions completed - 1946





by artist Roger Stuch Kentwood, MI

## **IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL LIFE MEMBERS of 8AFHS**

Your 8AFHS Board of Directors last October made it a requirement that all Life Members affirm to us, during this year, their status: if living or by their family if deceased. The cost of sending the 8<sup>th</sup> AF News to the addresses of deceased Life Members has become prohibitive. Please fill out and sign the information sheet below, clip it out and send it to our Membership Office, indicating whether the Life Member is alive or deceased. If we do not receive this information from you by the end of 2006, we must reluctantly cease sending the 8<sup>th</sup> AF News to you.

**If you have already mailed in this form, you do not need to send it in again.**

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Fill out, sign & mail to: [Connie Metts, Membership Office, PO Box 956, Pooler, GA 31322](#)

Life Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I am ALIVE and doing well! Please continue the 8<sup>th</sup> AF News.

\_\_\_\_\_ This Life Member was deceased on \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
[Life Member or Survivor](#)



# Debriefing

## Larry Bellarts...

As we completed the turn, one of the gunners reported seeing some fighters in the distance. All crew members were rapidly scanning the sky for any fighters coming toward us. That was when I happened to be looking out to the right and saw a German fighter plane coming toward us at high speed from the two o'clock direction.

He fired the guns in the nose of the fighter, and the entire front of his plane was covered in flame from the muzzle blast of the guns. He was firing at Stovall's plane on my right and I could see pieces of metal being torn from the B-17 as the bullets hit the cowling and other places. I recognized the fighter was an Me 262 jet as it dived slightly to go under the squadron. Stovall's plane rolled to the right, away from me, and started down. Norvell, who had been below and behind me, moved up to my right wing position. He did not want to be in the tail-end position where he would be more likely to be attacked.

The jet fighter went out to my left about a mile and turned to come toward us. Approaching again at high speed from the ten o'clock direction, he fired at McAllister's plane on my left. His B-17 was heavily damaged by the fighter's large caliber guns with pieces of the plane coming off. Again the fighter dived under the squadron and went out to my right. McAllister's plane rolled to the left and started down. My gunners reported several parachutes coming from Stovall's plane, but none from McAllister's plane.

The fighter went out about a mile and turned to come in from the two o'clock direction. Again he fired a burst from his guns and flame covered the nose of his fighter. This time he was firing at Bob Norvell's plane and metal pieces began to fly off of the B-17 as it started down.

The fighter dived slightly to go under the squadron and went out to my left. My B-17 was now alone at the tail-end

position of the squadron.

The gunners kept a continuous report of the fighter's position throughout this battle, and now reported he was circling around to approach from behind us. This was a change in his tactics.

One of the methods used by German fighter pilots in attacking our bombers was to approach low and from behind. Was that what he was going to do? - or - After firing his entire supply of ammunition (1,000 rounds of 30mm shells) to shoot down three B-17's, was he out of ammunition and planning to ram into our tail to bring us down? One thousand rounds only supplied 250 rounds for each of his four guns.

I quickly got on the intercom and told the gunners, "Aim high and start firing NOW!"

I didn't want them to wait until he was within the normal range of our guns - that would be much too late.

All the gunners that could see the fighter started firing their 50 caliber guns in his direction. The tail gunner reported he was approaching from directly behind us, then said, "He's still coming, but not firing."

A few second later I looked out to my left, just as the fighter passed a few feet under my wing. He was only going about 10 or 15 miles per hour faster than my plane, and it gave me time for a good look at him as he went by.

The fighter was heavily damaged by our machine gun fire. The left engine, the left inner part of the wing, and the left side of the cockpit were badly shredded by bullets from our guns. Gray smoke was streaming from the left engine, and the pilot, wearing a dark colored flying suit and helmet, was slumped to his left. As the fighter moved ahead of my wing, I was able to watch as it rolled to the left and started its dive to earth. This was his final mission.

Larry Bellarts  
490th BG Boring, OR

## Ned Rooks...

We really enjoyed seeing you guys the other day. We had a nice trip the rest of the way to Florida. We were able to attend the baby shower for our granddaughter-in-law as it was scheduled for the previous Friday but postponed because of the storm. There was no damage here at the park and none of our family had any either.

Ned, the time has really flown by and I got thinking that I never did thank you for saving my life that time you crawled back into the tail to hook up my oxygen tube when it came loose. I know we always joked about you coming clear back there just to hit me but seriously I have always been so very grateful to you. I owe you a debt than can never be paid. I've never really told you how I felt because I knew I'd start crying and until I got older I always thought it was a bit unmanly to cry. The wonderful life I've enjoyed and even my family I would not have had if it were not for you. I wish I could have told you this many years ago but I just could not do it. I sort of excused myself by thinking that you knew it anyway.

Mayme always had a special feeling for you also for telling her not to worry because "you would take care of me" over the years that has gone thru my mind many, many times and I've wondered how long I would have lasted if you hadn't come back and got me back on oxygen. I know it would have been only a few moments. Its hard to tell a guy you love him and owe your life to him without breaking down and I guess that's the reason I never did. Although I joked about it whenever we mentioned it I never really thought it was very funny. Please accept my deep heartfelt thank you? I love you.

*A letter from a crewmate to Ned Rooks,  
379th BG, Brownsville, TN*



## Aircraft...an offensive weapon

"In World War I aircraft became an offensive weapon of the first order, distinguished by their great speed, range, and effect on target. If their initial development experienced a check when hostilities came to an end in 1918, they had already shown their potential clear enough to those who were on the receiving end. We do not have to be out-and-out disciples of Douhet to be persuaded of the great significance of Air Forces for a future war and to go on from there to explore how success in the air could be exploited for ground warfare, which would in turn consolidate the aerial victory."

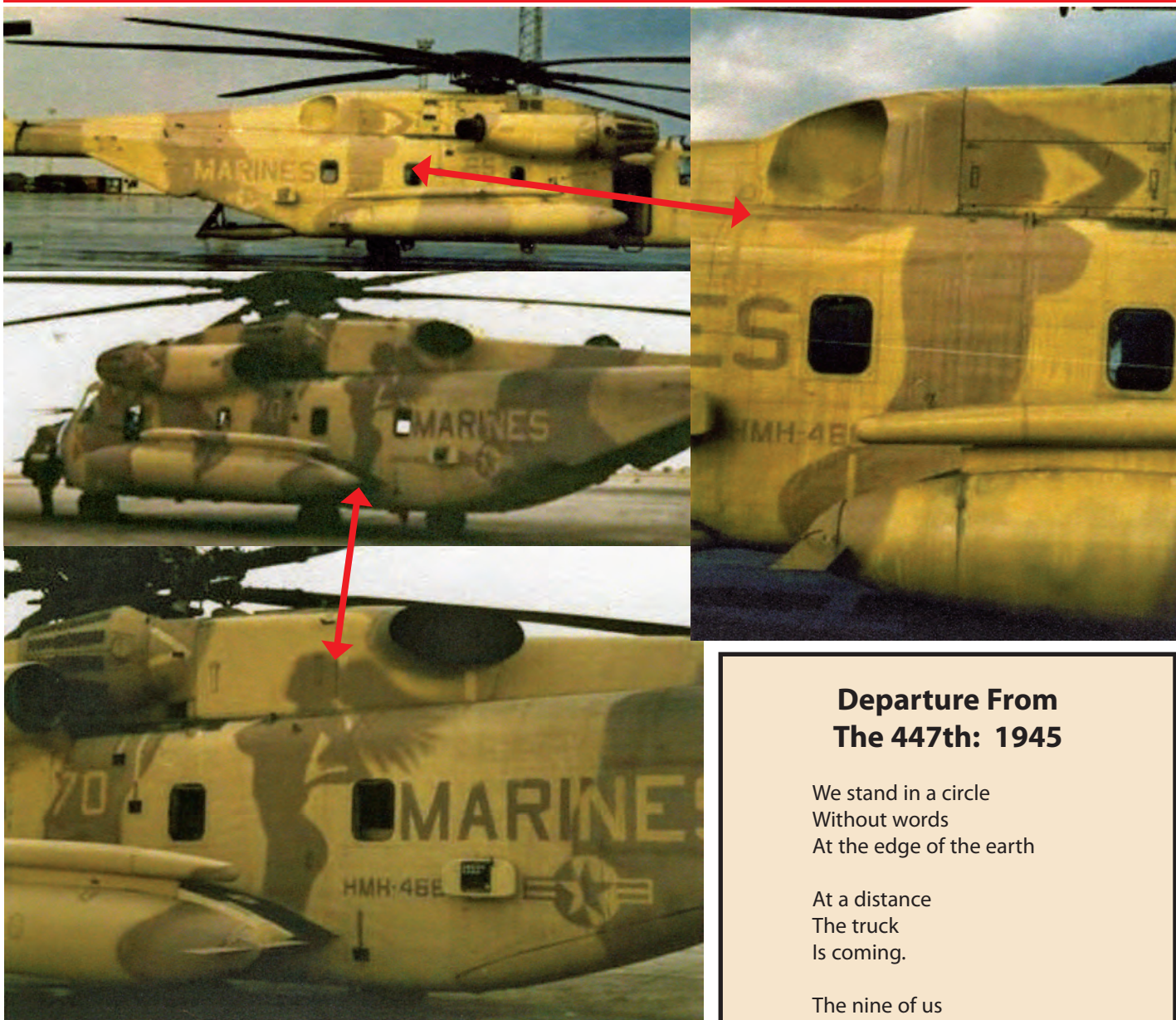
- **General Maj. Heinz Guderian; commenting in 1937.**  
**Guderian became the father of the blitzkrieg used in World War II.**

B-17's of Operation Chowhound fly over German forces of the 6th Fallschirmjager Division - May 1945. The Germans had been ordered not to fire on these food drop airplanes.  
- Photographs from Hans Wolfring





## THOSE SNEAKY MARINES - LOOK Close



### FABLE

Franklin sailed a key-hung kite  
And watched the storm-stung flight of it.  
Everyone seemed much impressed --  
But Edison made light of it.

Jim Facos, 388th BG  
Ball-turret gunner on Moreland's "Silver Lady"  
Montpelier VT

*The above quatrain has been seen in various publications and sight verse journals over the years. Frequent 8th AF News contributor Jim Facos says that it's about time to get it over to the 8th Air Force! -Editor*

### Departure From The 447th: 1945

We stand in a circle  
Without words  
At the edge of the earth

At a distance  
The truck  
Is coming.

The nine of us  
Conjuring a spell  
Murmuring something

Swallowed up in the  
Dark sky  
Like a class picture.

We will look at it  
Years later,  
And a child will ask:

Who are these people,  
What were they doing,  
Why do you have this picture?

Marvin Silbersher, 447th BG



## MIA PANEL SESSION AT THE 2006 ANNUAL REUNION

World War II Missing In Action Panel to be featured at the reunion in Louisiana

The death of a patriot in defense of our great nation is the source of Indescribable sorrow for the loved ones left behind. Defining that loss as "Missing In Action" amplifies the grief and denies closure to all concerned. The US government is addressing this issue but little to the benefit of WW II families.

There are approximately 87,000 American MIA's. 78,000(89%) are from WWII and a substantial number these from the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force. The balance of 11% are Korea, Southeast Asia, the Cold War and the Gulf wars. Fortunately, there is a DOD Directorate and a Field Command active in the recovery of MIA's. Unfortunately, only about 5% of their services are being devoted to recovery of our WWII heroes.

A group of dedicated World War II veterans and families of the missing have teamed to seek balance in this US government program. A portion of the team will conduct a panel session at the 4-6 October 2006 reunion. All are invited to hear the problem defined

and describe actions that can be taken to solve this tragic problem. Contact is Dick Atkins 817-274-5424 dick8af@flash.net

### **"WHY DO YOU STILL MARCH, OLD MAN?"**

**by Kevin Whittaker Macclesfield, England**

**Why do you still march, Old Man,  
With medals on your chest?  
Why do you still grieve, Old Man,  
For those friends laid to rest?**

**Why do your eyes gleam, Old Man,  
When you hear the bugles blow?  
Tell me why you cry, Old Man,  
For those days of long ago?**

**You seek answers from me, Young Man.  
It's by God's good grace I am old!  
But, we were once like you, Young Man,  
Of youth and once quite bold.**

**And in our youth we heard the notes  
Of the battle's bugle call.  
They put silver wings upon our chests,  
And the hope we would not fall...**

**I'll tell you why I march, Young Man,  
With medals on my chest.  
I'll tell you why I grieve, Young Man,  
For those I laid to rest.**

**Through misty skies of gossamer silk  
Come visions of distant times,  
When boys of tender age  
Climbed forth to distant skies.**

**We buried them in a blanket shroud,  
Their young flesh scorched and blackened,  
A communal grave, newly gorged,  
In blood stained gorse and bracken.**

**And you ask me why I march, Young Man?  
I march to remind you all,  
That but for those brave and fallen youths,  
You'd never have known freedom at all.**

**-398th Flak News**

### **BROTHERS-IN-ARMS**

Absent friends,  
Turn the whole sky  
Circling the sun  
Absent friends

When the sea breaks  
Wandering  
One thing follows  
Another

Absent friends,  
Please mark my words  
Present grief  
They sit together.

When the target is below  
All its waves to wash the flood  
Through all the generations,  
Absent friends

Marvin Silbersher, 447th BG  
Lake Hopalong, NY



## Those Yanks at Moosburg

The name of the Prisoner of War Camp at the end of World War II was officially Stalag VII A, but to the 110,000 POWs interned there in the last weeks of the war, it was known as Moosburg, as the nearby German village was named.

The 8th Air Force had 26,000 of its airmen shot down and captured during its three years of flying bombing missions over enemy territory and these prisoners were placed in POW camps scattered across Germany.

In early 1945 as the Germans fled from American and Russian ground force advances, they herded POWs from 27 different nationalities into the huge Moosburg Stalag, presumably to be used as bargaining chips for the imminent German surrender.

Conditions in the wartime Stalags were deplorable. Frank Murphy, a B-17 navigator with the 100th Bomb Group was shot down on a bombing mission during Black Week, October 1943, and became a POW.

He was sent to Stalag Luft III, the camp made famous in the film *The Great Escape*.

Frank recalls, "We had one cold-water spigot for all purposes in each building. The triple-deck wooden bunks with mattresses filled with excelsior were infested with fleas, lice and bedbugs. There were 400 men assigned to buildings built to house 180.

"For months we had known only snow and bone-chilling cold, which, when they eventually went away, were followed by drenching rains that quickly changed the bare ground around our dreary buildings from rock-hard ice to an impos-



**Walt Brown**  
CEO, Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum



Courtesy photo

**David Asch, left, and Don Morrison, right, members of the 93rd Bomb Group Association, examine the flag that flew over Stalag VIIA, unofficially known as "Moosburg," in World War II.**

sible quagmire. Now spring, and possibly freedom, were just around the corner."

The POWs were freed, some after years of incarceration, on April 29, 1945, when three tanks of General George Patton's United States Third Army crashed through the gates of Moosburg camp.

One of the tank commanders said about the swarming, cheering prisoners, that he had never seen such a "crazy bunch of ragged-ass people.

Murphy said, "The true end of our captivity came about 12:30 p.m. when the American flag, Old Glory, was seen being hoisted to the top of a church

steeple in the town of Moosburg a short distance away. As one, 8,000 American kriegies faced the church, came to attention and saluted, all with tears of pride in our country and pent up emotion trickling down our cheeks."

The Nazi swastika flag flying above the Moosburg town hall was lowered at the same time. A number of newly-liberated American captives took part in that event and left their names, hometowns, and some comments in ink on the flag.

Their hometowns spanned the breadth of the country. Above the German insignia is inscribed: "Nazi flag torn down

from top of City Hall in Moosburg Germany - American Flag replaced this on at 12:45 pm or near there April 29, 1945 Our Liberation Day - Hallelujah."

Elsewhere on the flag, now in the collections of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Pooler, is seen: Saw first American tank on Liberation Day at 2:30 pm in camp - "Happy Day." Heard first American program - "Hit Parade." Saw General Patton 5/2/45. Our Goon Rations: Bread - 1/6 to 1/12 loaf daily; Cheese - it smells; Soup - water; Jam - Rare; Meat - ? Who saw it? Overeating POW's Hit Song: "Don't Fence Me In." Heard of leaving and on way home by air - Date 5/3/45.

The spirit of what the Brits affectionately called "those Yanks" came through on their day of freedom. After months and years of confinement and deprivation, the youthful positive spirit of the American soldier survived the war intact.

No complaints were written on the German flag about the Nazis; no gripes about the prison camps or even the German guards. American POWs just had thoughts of American music and home-cooked food.

They understood what it meant to be free, to return home to a land of liberty and opportunity.

Frank Murphy says it best: "We were finally going to get on with our lives. Now, almost six decades later, walking with ghosts, I look back with pride and remember."

*Walter Brown is the CEO of the Mighty Eighth Air Force History Museum in Pooler.*



## MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Do you remember the name of the teacher who was your most favorite? At what age were you when this teacher came into your life? What was the subject matter? How did this teacher make a difference in your life?

Interesting enough, all of us have had a teacher in our lives with a common name. We have had instruction geared to our individual needs coming at a time when we least expected it but always there, teaching us. What is this teacher's name? Life Itself. The subject matter is as varied and different as we are. We are bombarded with information and experiences from the beginning of our life until we take our final breath. Life experiences have given more joys and astonishments than sorrows and disappointments. We all have known good and evil, love and hatred, compassion and anger, acceptance and rejection, happiness and pain, successes and failure. Considering the ups and downs, we experience, "life itself" is our greatest teacher and gift.

Teachings come through the experiences of life. Every day presents an incredible opportunity regardless of who we are. As a result, life can be a great and worthwhile event under difficult times. Under the worst of circumstances, Winston Churchill, Britain's war-time Prime Minister on 18 June 1940, spoke the following often quoted statement. ...."men will still say, 'this was their finest hour'." This was not a fine hour for Britain, in fact it was a dark hour for not only England but for the civilized world. Germany's juggernaut of military might had conquered the lowland countries and France had fallen into their hands. The British Expeditionary Force had thousands of troops deployed, the French had a smaller number of troops committed, but a German spearhead broke down all military resistance. These forces were trapped and were at the mercy of Nazi Panzer Divisions. The Battle of Dunkirk followed. The Free

Encyclopedia Wikipedia describes the action:

Operation Dynamo was the name given to the mass evacuation during the Battle of Dunkirk conducted from May 26, 1940 to June 4, 1940 under the command of Vice -Admiral Bertram Ramsay from Dover. In nine days, 338,226 French and British soldiers were taken from Dunkirk, France and the surrounding beaches by a quickly assembled fleet of about seven hundred vessels. These craft included the Little Ships of Dunkirk, a mixture of merchant marine vessels, fishing boats, pleasure craft and RNLI lifeboats, whose civilian crews were called into service for the emergency. ....Though the "Miracle of the Little Ships" is a major folk memory in Britain (at the time a useful propaganda tool too), over 80% of the troops evacuated embarked from the Harbour's protective mole onto the 42 destroyers and other larger ships participating in the operation.

Churchill's address to Parliament came only days after the Battle of Dunkirk. Following this were the attacks of the German Luftwaffe air-blitzkrieg of London and the industrial cities of Britain. The Prime Minister faced opposition and lost support of his Cabinet and there was fear that he might be replaced by Lord Halifax who favored a negotiated peace. However Churchill, the teacher, did not give up. His resolve buoyed British moral when he declared, "Britain and the British Empire will fight on, 'if necessary for years, if necessary alone.' "

His final remarks to the House of Commons on 18 June 1940 he declared to this audience and to the free world as well his teachings and convictions.

"I expect that the Battle of Britain is about to begin. Upon this battle depends the survival of Christian civilization. Upon it depends our own British life, and the long continuity of our institutions and our Empire. The whole fury and might of the enemy must very soon be turned on us. Hitler knows that he will have to break us in this island or lose the war. If we can stand up to him, all Europe may

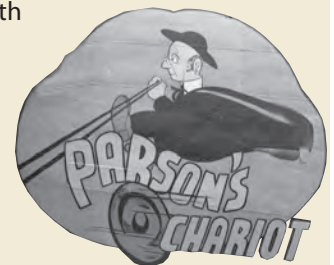
be free and the life of the world may move forward into broad, sunlit uplands. But if we fall, then the whole world, including the United States, including all that we have known and cared for, will sink into the abyss of a new Dark Age made more sinister, and perhaps more protracted, by the lights of perverted science. Let us therefore brace ourselves to our duties and so bear ourselves that, if the British Empire and its Commonwealth lasts for a thousand years, men will still say, 'This was their finest hour.'"



Earl Wassom

He declared, "I see great reason for intense vigilance and exertion but none whatever for panic or despair." At this time, the Germans had conquered a large part of the Western Europe coastline. The Nazi's had overrun France and many small neighboring countries. The possibility of intense air attacks against the British Isles and the threat of German submarines sinking, almost at will, the boats carrying life sustaining food and war materials for this nation was a grim reality. Yet, the British leader said; "We are pushed to continue the war."

At this moment in history, England stood alone. There were those who favored capitulation but Churchill was inflexible. He had the resolve to continue the war and win it. He was the teacher of the moment. The teachings of one man rallied the Free World. His life had not been an easy one. "Life itself" had been his teacher. Earl Wassom, 466th Chaplain, 8th AFHS







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**The Eighth Air Force Historical Society**  
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**A B-17 off the runway and in an embankment at Ashford**