



# 8TH AF NEWS

VOLUME 07 NUMBER 3 Voice of "The Mighty Eighth" SEPTEMBER 2007



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**NEW "COST SAVING"**  
**2008 Annual Dues Notice**  
**and Return Envelope**





# AF News

Magazine of

## The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

September 2007

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.

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### Ground Crews



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# PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Our September 8th AF News is in your hands a little later than normal. Please excuse our tardiness, but we did have reasons for the delay. We wanted to report to you the latest news and changes in your Society as early as possible, we did not want to wait until the December issue to report all this as well as our 33rd annual reunion in Kalamazoo. I trust that you will also agree that the delay was worthwhile after you browse through this issue of your magazine.

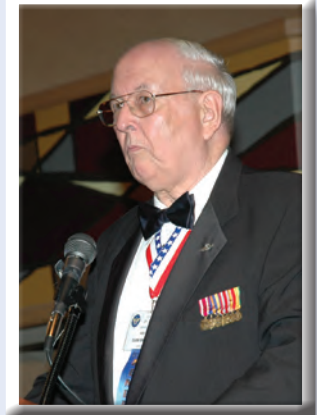
Our Society from now on will be even more responsive to its members, and it will operate in a more business-like and cost-conscious fashion. We have totally revamped our Membership Office, hired an outstanding customer-oriented Membership Records Manager, installed a new computer system, and we are doing our own

banking out of this office instead of hiring an outside accounting firm to do it. As time goes on, I think you will all be extremely happy with the changes in our Membership office. This issue of your magazine is full of new information, so please review it completely for all the changes.

Mark your calendars now for our 34th Reunion, which will be held "back home" in Savannah, Georgia, **4 - 7 August 2008**. It will have been 10 years since we were there, and we're planning some major events involving the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum. In order to get the lowest room rates at the Marriott Hotel, we moved the Reunion first day to Monday, and the last (banquet) day to Thursday from our usual Saturday. This small itinerary change will save each attendee considerable money, and we believe

that it will not inconvenience anyone. In your mind, just "move the Reunion backwards two days" from "normal" and you'll be all set!

It is a pleasure to be of service to you. I'm looking to a great year for us all!



**Ivan McKinney**  
President

Ivan L. McKinney  
President 8th AFHS

## At twenty thousand feet the world's not flat: Boundaries, race and nation, disappear.

*Lifted above himself, air gives him armor.*  
To sacrifice friend and home, family and lover,  
Exuberant body and omniverous mind  
Pursued for wit and learning the world over;  
Delighting in debate, company of kind,  
And famous with children as another child-  
Only in the air can he find strength enough; only  
In flight can love and death be reconciled.  
The altered life that follows change of heart-  
Study by night; by day the work as porter  
In cheap hotels to earn his flying-time,  
Help buy the ship, and master every art  
Useful for navigation over water-  
All are done quietly, not for them, for him.  
Rising from Marignan, when the time has come,  
Death can be faced to tell them what he loves  
More than his life. Then if their sight approves  
Each in himself can answer for his freedom.  
But if at this time they will not rebel  
Against authority, the Sovereign Father,  
Still will the Great Bird rise from that cracked shell  
And after him another and another.

**Selden Rodman**  
in *The Airmen 1941*

## ON OUR FRONT COVER:

It took a lot of equipment to Keep 'em Flying in the 8th Air Force's airwar of World War II. The inner workings of fighters and bombers were a vital part of a mission, and the men who made sure things were operating correctly trained continuously to make the missions a success. The aircrews depended on them.

These portable training displays demonstrated instruments and equipment not often seen by the crews flying combat. Farmlife continued on by British farmers at a number of 8th airbases in East Anglia; note the haystacks, a tractor, and the tin-roofed farm shed. Note also the concerned gaggle of geese in the foreground - seen here but rarely seen in 8th AF mess halls.



## MISSION BRIEFING



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

In one word, let me say that the Kalamazoo Annual Reunion was an *Absolute Success!* On Target – Mission Accomplished – 5 x 5 – CAVU – All hits within 500 feet – Bloody Good Job - Spot on! – Take your pick, Michigan in July showed us all a great time. And good ole Southern Hospitality abounded, east of Chicago. Congratulations to all of our planners who spent countless hours to ensure a memorable 8th AF Historical Society annual reunion.

For next year's annual, let me personally guarantee another uniquely memorable reunion in Savannah. Your

host, the Birthplace Chapter, and the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum staff have already begun planning for the August 2008 event. As they say in Baby Boomer circles: *Save the*

*Date.* The Museum will have their new expansive exhibit in place, namely the 2nd Air Division's expanded area, the AFEES Escape and Evasion exhibit, and the Savannah to the UK expansion will be open, and the huge Chronology of the Mighty Eighth exhibit will be well underway. Put out an eye for the plans which will appear in the March issue 8th AF News.

For now, let me promote a sincere plug for our Society's 2008 annual fund drive. The Board of Directors has chosen the establishment of an extensive Ground Crew Exhibit to be installed in the Mighty Eighth Museum. The efforts of these invaluable ground crew airmen made the 8th AF missions, and their successes, possible. Every aspect of their responsibilities will be depicted and presented to all visitors to the Museum. Your opportunity to take part in this important project presents itself in our enclosed dues and contributions envelope in this issue – please consider utilizing this method of joining in with your donation for the exhibit.

Cheers and Good Luck!

Walter Brown, Editor

**I never gave anybody hell. I just told them the truth and they thought it was hell.**

**Harry S Truman**

**God help those who do not help themselves.**

**Wilson Mizner**

## BEHIND THE SCENES

We have had more reunion pictures submitted this year than ever before. Thank you to all that sent CD's, emails and prints; that's a good sign that the Kalamazoo reunion was a great success. We will feel honored next year in Pooler, Ga to join you for all the reunion activities. We have saved the date and are looking forward to meeting some of you wonderful guys that we have enjoyed corresponding through email, phone, and through the articles submitted in this magazine.

Earl Wassom's book *Hello Darkee* is in the final proofing stages and may be in print by the time you receive this magazine. Earl's book will include his 15 year collection of 8th AFHS **How about it** columns (look on page 47 of this magazine).

Book signing and purchase options will be announced in our December magazine.

Don't forget to use the provided envelope on page 8 of this magazine for your 2007 Dues payment.

Sit on the porch and enjoy the Fall weather  
Sincerely Donna Neely & Telisha Gaines



**Donna Neely**



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# WE KNEW THE PRICE OF FREEDOM

by Paul Grassey, 446<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group

This is the story of seven young men who graduated from Ridgewood High School, New Jersey in 1941-42.

These seven had a role model with an unusual military history, Mr. Bill Dolan, who was at that time a 50 year-old successful businessman and the stepfather of two of the boys.

The seven young men, age 17, played sports together and attended classes together and were great friends.

Don McCullough, twins Harry Van Tassel and Ed Van Tassel, Don Haldane and his cousin Bob Haldane, Walt Hays, and Paul Grassey. These were the kind of young people that you might find on every corner of every town throughout the United States at that time. They had one goal in mind:

to put their personal goals of college, sports, or professional careers aside and decide "what branch of military service we wanted to join so that we could

best serve our country". The United States was at war.

Speaking in London on June 16, 1941, British Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill made the point, entitled *The Spell of Duty*.

"The destiny of mankind is not decided by material computations. When great causes are on the move in the world, stirring all men's souls, drawing them from their firesides, casting aside comfort, wealth and the pursuit of happiness in response to impulses at once awe-striking and irresistible, we learn that we are spirits, not animals, and that something greater is going on in space and time, which, whether we like it or not, spells duty."

I can remember the day as if it were yesterday. At my class graduation in June 1941, war was raging in Europe and the Japanese were causing havoc in the Pacific. Sitting at our graduation ceremony, we had no idea of what effect those dark clouds of war would have on our lives or on our future, but we were thinking about it.

My father's career was in the textile industry and he worked for a time in Havana, Cuba. The family returned to the States so that I could attend Bergen Junior College while also working night shifts at Wright Aeronautical. Harry and Ed Van Tassel were among my closest friends and worked at a local mill while attending night classes with me. Bill Dolan had two sons and was known by the twins as "Pop." I had an older brother who also worked at Wright Aeronautical and who loved to fly. Henry often took me up in a Piper Cub in order to teach me how to fly an airplane. We were at Caldwell, N. J. airport on December 7, 1941 when we learned that our country had been attacked by Japanese forces. Our lives would never be the same.

Henry shortly thereafter became a Navy ensign flight instructor at Memphis Air Station. Our friends were getting into uniforms of different branches

of the service and I liked the Army Air Corps. I longed for the day that I would be able to wear those silver Pilot's Wings.

Don McCullough joined the Marines and was on the aircraft carrier *U.S.S. Hornet* when Jimmy Doolittle's B-25 unit took off on their historic mission to bomb Tokyo. Newspaper headlines screamed "U.S. Bombs Tokyo" following that raid – an inspiration to our whole nation.

One Sunday afternoon in the spring of 1942, we gathered at the Dolan home to discuss our upcoming enlistments while enjoying some of Mrs. Dolan's delicious cooking. Pop Dolan, a very confident, well-groomed gentleman, walked into the room. Almost in unison we said, "Mr. Dolan, do you think that we ought to enlist?" He replied, "I can't make that decision



Bill Dolan



Bill Dolan



Walt Hays



Don McCullough



Don Haldane



Bob Haldane



Paul Grassey in training



for you, but I want to show you guys some things." We had known very little of his past, but he returned to the room with pictures of himself from World War I. He had served as a pilot in the Lafayette Escadrille with Eddie Rickenbacker, Carl "Tooe" Spaatz, and other early flyers. Pop Dolan had gone through the intense French training course at Issoudun, undergoing their unusual but effective training methods. We were impressed with his tales.

One week later we all re-convened in the large sunroom for further discussions, when Dolan walked in wearing his Air Corps officer's uniform with Captain's bars on each shoulder and his pilot's Silver Wings. He had re-enlisted during the week and said to us, "I'm leaving for duty on Tuesday – you guys will have to make up your own minds." That motivation was all we needed. Bill Dolan was the first recruit of the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force's 384<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group. After lengthy training in the States, he soon became the spirit behind the men who made up this Heavy bomber group. In England, Dolan went on to become one of the top Intelligence officers during the war.

Intelligence officers led the Briefing sessions to the airmen preparing to fly the day's mission. They described the target and related the type of enemy airplanes the group would encounter that day along with time, place, and altitude at all points of the operation. They discussed the headings from the initial point and along the bomb run to the target as well as what to do if shot down and landing in enemy territory. These and other details were covered by Intelligence on every mission before taking off. Pop Dolan also took over the Chaplain's duties himself as the 384<sup>th</sup> did not as yet have a chaplain assigned to them. In addition to



**Twins Harry & Ed pictured with Stepfather Bill "Pop" Dolan**

publishing the base newspaper "Plane Talk", he flew nine early missions as an Intelligence officer so that he would know first-hand what the flyers faced.

In his later years, Pop Dolan recalled that in World War I there was an element of mutual respect among pilots of both sides. Regarding the Armistice signed on November 11, 1918 ending The Great War Dolan commented, "That marked the end of an era. The French, British, and Americans all loved each other. Even the Germans were conceded a certain tragic grandeur by our American pilots. There was a good bit of camaraderie then. When I was an Intelligence officer in WWII, I always told the pilots, 'If you get shot down and can't evade capture, try to get to Luftwaffe airfields. There is a certain amount of understanding on their part. Above all, avoid the Hitler Youth; the kids are the worst.'" He noted that time had changed the world of aviation that he knew. "Even the people have changed," Dolan said. "Young people today are entirely different."

The story of what happened to the seven young men who followed Colonel Dolan into the service of his country centers around one concept – it was their duty to their country. Don Haldane was both inducted into the Ridgewood, N.J. Sports Hall of Fame and was outstanding in college sports. He earned his Navy Wings of Gold and was commissioned an Ensign. He was killed while on a training mission in July 1944. Walt Hayes flew combat missions as a tailgunner

with the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force's 95<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, was shot down over Germany and ended the war as a Prisoner of War in a German Stalag. His B-17 crashed in Denmark but not before Walt shot down the German fighter pilot who had ended their flight. After the war Walt and the Luftwaffe pilot Gunther Sinnecker met, as friends, to relive their most memorable wartime mission.

Bob Haldane, Don's cousin, had a distin-

guished 40-year career in the U.S. Army, graduating from West Point and retiring as a Lt. General. During his career he served in Korea and Vietnam, making 97 parachute jumps and landings in the Army's 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne and winning 17 Air Medals, 7 DFC's and the Silver Star in helicopter gunships of the Big Red One. He had also served as Chief of Staff in post-war Germany. Bob was honored as the featured banquet speaker at the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary reunion of the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Historical Society. Pop Dolan's stepsons, twins Ed and Harry Van Tassel, both achieved the rank of Captain, serving with the Ninth Air Force Troop Carrier Command and in France after the invasion.

Pop Dolan's two sons, Bill and Walt Dolan, also served in the Air Force, Bill flying the Berlin Airlift postwar.

I was fortunate to become a B-24 Heavy bomber pilot after completing Primary, Basic and Advanced training at Air Corps training bases in the southern United States. With several other members of my cadet graduating class, I was assigned to the 446<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force, in Bungay, England. I flew my missions with them during the war. We learned by the technique of on-the-job-training, becoming seasoned veterans as our missions flew by. We developed defensive skills such as always flying in tight formations, but we also felt that luck became a factor when flying into flak. I recall feeling like a "pebble on a beach"



when our huge formations of bombers and fighters headed for Germany. On the bomb runs in particular, we could see all that flak sitting out there and knew that for half an hour going through it the tendency was to think, "Can we leave? Can we get out of here now?" We knew we couldn't. Our training taught us to take commands and follow orders. That is what we had to do and that is what we did.

Flak looks pretty innocent, just puffs of black smoke, but we quickly learned that death and destruction awaited us in those innocent-looking floating clouds. On a typical mission enemy fighters attacked our airplanes before and after we had bombed our assigned targets, but the gunners in the crew felt that at least they had a chance to defend themselves against their attacks. But you didn't have to be over enemy territory to experience danger in a B-24. Flying planes that were loaded to the hilt with bombs, fuel, and ammunition for the twelve .50 caliber machine guns, crews could be lost to accidents on takeoff or in mid-air collisions, since there were often hundreds of bombers attempting to form up in the usually cloud-filled skies over England. Just getting up and into position to go on a mission was some of the most dangerous stuff. There were often 42 of the big bombers in our bomb group taking off every thirty seconds. Prop wash was so deadly it could actually flip a fully-loaded bomber over. It was a pretty big and dangerous job to get all those planes into formation and then get them to the target. And if that wasn't dangerous enough, frostbite played its part. Even though we wore heated flight suits to help encounter the extreme cold – 45 degrees below zero – at high altitudes, I never remember having to turn them on. You were so scared, you'd be perspiring and that kept you plenty warm enough!

It was very tough. You worked hard. You were scared and you had your neck out, but boy – I wouldn't have missed it for the world! My principal reasons for feeling that way were the life-long friendships I developed with my flying buddies and the pride

Paul Grassey kneeling second from left and his crew



which we all shared in our country, like so many of us during that era and in subsequent conflicts that have been fought by American servicemen and women with commitment and bravery.

We put it all on the line because we knew The Price of Freedom!

The six young men who sat in Pop Dolan's living room that day in

1942 were influenced by his example to serve their country and to do their duty. Pop had done that in World War I and had re-enlisted for a combat outfit in early World War II. These men performed admirably as did so many of America's young servicemen during the war. Their lives were changed forever as they became part of the wartime Allied forces of freedom that changed the course of history.



Christmas 1945 with Don McCullough



# MIGHTY 8TH AF HISTORICAL SOCIETY DUES FOR 2008

Following the Bossier City Reunion held in October 2006 the Board of Directors decided that in order to more effectively fulfill the Society's Mission of serving the needs of our membership it was necessary to reorganize the Savannah Membership Office. In November of that year we started an extensive re-alignment and reorganization of the office to carry out the decision of the Board.

We changed the management of the office, replaced the outdated data base for tracking and supporting the needs of our members. Some functions that had in the past been outsourced such as accounting are now being handled by the membership office. Undertaking these actions, which in some cases has been painful, the end result has been positive as verified by the many compliments that we have received from our members.

One area where we can effect substantial savings is by sending our **annual dues notice to our members inserted in this September 8th AF News magazine**. Some feel that our membership might disregard such a system and will not respond to a notice sent in this manner. We trust this will not be the case and that we can continue to depend on our members to **support this serious money-saving system**.

Dues by Board action will increase this coming year by \$5.00. The attached form which is self explanatory requires the member to detach the form, complete the data requested including change of address, phone number, e-mail if applicable, and **include your check in the self-addressed envelope**. Should our members prefer to pay by credit card, mark the applicable credit card that you prefer and send the notice back to our office. Should you prefer to not damage the magazine you may either make a Xerox copy of the notice or write the applicable information on a plain piece of paper.

Life Members, while not required to pay dues, will be offered the opportunity to make a contribution toward the operation budget if they so desire. This contribution is strictly on a volunteer basis.

We have selected as our 2008 Historical Society special fund raiser the support of an exhibit at the

Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum to honor the valuable members of the Mighty 8th who played a very important roll in making sure that the birds were ready to fly their important and dangerous missions. This exhibit, sponsored by the members of the 8<sup>th</sup> AF Historical Society, will be developed and fabricated in the Museum Exhibit Galleries to honor the **GROUND CREWS AND OTHER SUPPORT ELEMENTS OF THE MIGHTY 8TH**. All donations are tax deductible.

submitted by Darrel Lowell



THE EIGHTH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## 2008 DUES NOTICE CARD

PLEASE RETURN OR COPY THIS CARD

WITH YOUR \$30.00 DUES PAYMENT BY 12-31-07

Annual Dues \$30.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Lifetime Member Volunteer Operations Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Contribution to the Mighty Eighth "Ground Crew Exhibit" \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*Enclosed is my check made payable to the 8th Air Force Historical Society

\*Please charge my ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express

Account Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Change of address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Member number if available \_\_\_\_\_



### THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Do you have suggestions as to how your membership office might better serve YOU?

PLEASE CALL

Mamie Kent or Darrel Lowell @912-748-8884

Should you prefer to not damage the magazine you may either make a Xerox copy of the notice or write the applicable information on a plain piece of paper.



# The Eighth Air Force Historical Society Office Welcomes New Membership Manager



Hello Members,

My name is Mamie Cash Kent.

I was hired as the Membership Manager for The Eighth Air Force Historical Society on November 22, 2006. It was an honor and blessing to accept this position and I am absolutely thrilled to serve your needs as Membership Manager. It has almost been a year since I was hired. I must say I am having a great time serving your membership needs. My job as Membership

Manager is solely to serve your needs and to make life easier for you when in doubt about anything pertaining to your membership needs. I can handle any task you may have; address changes, member inquiries etc. If I can't answer your question right away, I will get an answer and get back to you.

Just to tell you a little bit about myself, I moved to Savannah, Georgia June 2, 2006, from my hometown of Bowling Green, KY. I worked in the property Management field as a property Manager for a college town community. That alone should tell you that I have great patience. I am also a newlywed of 1 year. My office is located downstairs in the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum building. I am available Monday-Friday 9am-5:00pm. Please stop by my office when you are in Savannah. You are always welcome.

I had the opportunity to attend our 33rd annual reunion in Kalamazoo, Michigan, I had a great time and met some of the most incredible people. As you may know, we will host next year's 34th Reunion right here in Savannah, Georgia, August 3-8, 2008.....so if I did not get the opportunity to meet you in Kalamazoo or if you are a new member, I sure hope to meet you at next year's reunion.

Lastly, I would like to thank our awesome Board of Directors for such a warm reception and for all of their help and direction, as well as all of the Mighty Eighth Museum employees. I am very blessed and greatly appreciative of the opportunity to work with such great people.

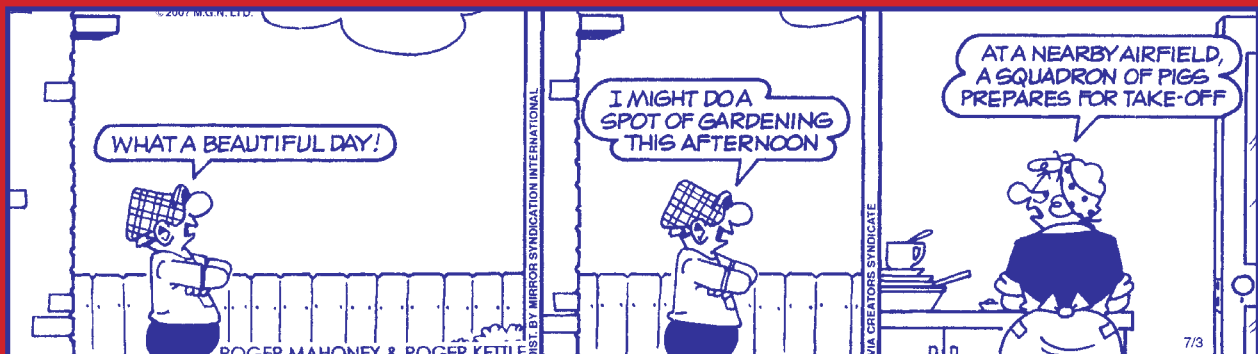
Rich Blessings to all,  
Mamie Cash Kent  
Membership Manager



**Mamie Cash Kent presented Dr. Walter Brown with a plaque of "Appreciation" for 10 years of dedication working on the *Eighth Air Force News Magazine*.**

**Illegal aliens have always been a problem in the United States. Ask any Native American.**

**Clyde White, 390th BG**





# ONE OF THE BEST!

## THE KALAMAZOO 2007 ANNUAL REUNION

All 8th AF Historical Society Attendees Find Kalamazoo

*Yes, There Really Is A Kalamazoo.* That's the slogan Kalamazooans use to promote their beautiful city in Michigan. The first-ever 8th AFHS reunion ever to be held in August did indeed accomplish its purpose: 8th AFers and NexGens turned out in force, enjoying the hospitality of the hotel, the tours and attractions, and great seminars and great food. Donna Lee and her crew from Armed Forces Reunions did their always exemplary job in keeping track of all of the Society members and Keeping the Show on the Road. A number of our Board of Directors also spent the months before, working all aspects of the reunion to ensure its success.

There were the usual meetings to conduct Society business and seminars always ever-present at the annual reunion, and several of them witnessed a few surprises. The Nexgens initiative of the past five years is making significant progress, with meetings being "standing room only" at the hotel. Historian Mark Copeland's Saturday Seminar on Berlin – Big B – was likewise full to capacity. The Rendezvous Dinners, traditionally gathering on Friday evening, were another highlight, with several dining rooms presenting programs and films to the guests. Daytime hours were the purview of the 8th AFHS PX, being operated with smiles by the Mighty Eighth Museum's Store Director Felice Stelljes and her sidekick Peggy Harden, familiar old friends of the Society.

Tours were taken. A most impressive surprise of the week was the Car Museum just outside of Kalamazoo – half a dozen huge barns full of hundreds of immaculately restored antique cars, a history of America's



love of the automobile from as early as 1896. Therein were the cars you always wanted in your earlier days: huge Packards, Cadillacs, LaSalles and Bugattis from the 20s and 30s. There were the 57 Chevy convertible, several Nash Metropolitans, Studebakers, a 64 Corvette Sting Ray convertible and even some early Airstream trailers. They also had a Tucker on display. Notable was a giant collection of hood ornaments – hundreds - of every car, both American and foreign; unique artifacts not seen on automobiles since the fifties when Congress declared that hood ornaments were safety hazards to pedestrians who were hit by a car (what about the automobile itself?).

The day at the car museum featured box dinners on the grounds, along with perfect weather.

The Air Zoo adjacent to the Kalamazoo airport (airline service to Big K is another subject entirely) was slightly more oriented toward aviation enthusiasts. Yes,

there were a few vintage aircraft, but there were also multiple educational displays and interactive exhibits and flight and space simulators to take you away, and bring you back again. Then there was an evening trip to the Turkey Dinner Theater in Turkeyville, Michigan where we saw the play "Nunsense," put on by a theater group of male actors outfitted in Nun's habits – an interesting concept itself. Some

attendees spent an afternoon at the impressive Kellogg mansion, lakeside home of the inventor of Kellogg's Corn Flakes. Others whiled away some of their time visiting, with recurrent trips, a number of Group Hospitality Rooms at the hotel, such as that of the 352nd BG, 353rd FG, 445th BG, and Molly and Lou's 446th BG friendly bar and food emporium – always open late.

There were two meetings of our Board of Directors during the week, doing business, reporting budgets and finances and strategic planning for the Society's future. Two active topics were the work of Director Bob Books and his crew's months of work on the Honor

### 8TH AF Historical Society Board of Directors 2008



**Mark Copeland, Harry Tanner, Earl Wassom, Mamie Cash Kent, Ivan McKinney, George Hoidra, Pat Keeley, & John Pearson**  
Not pictured: Norma Chessner & Darrel Lowell



# THE KALAMAZOO 2007 ANNUAL REUNION

Roll of 8th Air Force servicemen killed in action and the plans for the 2008 reunion, the Historical Society's return to Savannah after ten years. The Board also discussed the expansion of the Society's NexGens program and the annual Fund Drive initiative for 2008: sponsorship of the establishment of a tribute to the ground crews to be constructed at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum.

The annual Big Gala banquet was held on Saturday evening and featured a candlelight ceremony, presentations of the Ira Eaker Award to active duty aircrew members and to maintenance engineers, and Big Band dance music. The highlight was Gala Banquet speaker Jonna Doolittle Hoppes, granddaughter of 8th Commander Gen. Jimmy Doolittle and author of his story, *Calculated Risk*. She spoke on her relationship with her famous grandfather and expanded on several of the stories included in her book. After the banquet, she met the attendees and

signed a number of their books.

After a Sunday morning breakfast and goodbyes-till-next-time, the 8th AFHS annual reunion was stood down, but just until next time. Full information of that reunion will be included in the March 08 8th AF News.

**Walt Brown, Editor**



**Jonna Doolittle Hoppes excepting her award from George Hoidra**



**Banquet speaker Jonna Doolittle Hoppes, granddaughter of 8th AF Commander Gen. Jimmy Doolittle**



**USAF ACTIVE DUTY AWARDEES OF THE 8AFHS GENERAL IRA EAKER AWARD**



**GALA BANQUET CANDLELIGHT CEREMONY**



# THE KALAMAZOO 2007 ANNUAL REUNION

Reunion pictures compiled & edited by Donna Neely



Earl & Cindy Wassom



Beverly Baynes, Dick Baynes,  
Molly & Lou Lovensky



Martin Bowman  
& Cindy Wassom



Medical Seminar, PEARLS



PEARLS Speaker,  
Dr. Walter Brown



# THE KALAMAZOO 2007 ANNUAL REUNION

Reunion pictures compiled & edited by Donna Neely



**8AFHS Board Member  
Norma Chesser**



**Armed Forces Reunion  
Donna Lee**



**8AFHS Board Member  
Harry "Doug" Tanner**

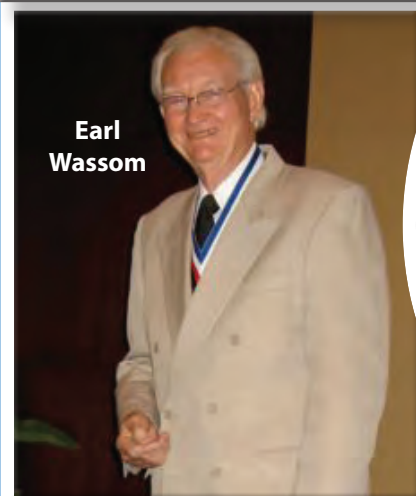




# THE KALAMAZOO 2007 ANNUAL REUNION



Members of  
466th BG Assn.



Earl  
Wassom



Alice & Walt  
Brown



PX Chiefs Felice Stelljes, Peggy Harden with CAO of the  
Mighty Eighth Museum Brenda Elmgren





# THE KALAMAZOO 2007 ANNUAL REUNION

Reunion pictures compiled & edited by Donna Neely

**Yankee Girl at Kalamazoo Airport**



**B-25 at the Kalamazoo AirZoo**



**Impressive model of Dave Schilling's P-47 Thunderbolt**



**Two northerners meet again: At left, Larry Goldstein, now President of the Southern California Chapter 8th AFHS with Gus Nathan, President Southern New York Chapter**





# MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE MUSEUM ACTIVITIES

The past few months at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum have been busy with a number of activities ongoing, many directed at the future plans for the "permanent home of the Mighty Eighth." Here are a Few Short Bursts:

★ Of prime importance is the final establishment of a Columbarium program at the Mighty Eight Museum Memorial Gardens. This project has been in the works for over a year and all permits and plans are now in place. Construction of this beautiful area in the gardens will begin in a few weeks. Niches for cremation ashes for 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force veterans and their spouses are now available and may be purchased from the Museum. A dozen Historical Society members and spouses have already made plans to be interred in the Columbarium, to rest with their fellow airmen of the Mighty Eighth.

Memorial services will be part of the package and delineated Museum staff will be responsible for every aspect of the program. The permanent resting place will be located adjacent to the Chapel of the Fallen Eagles with niche plaques being formatted and placed by DePue Memorials, the Savannah Memorial company that has fabricated all of the memorials at the Museum for the past 12 years.

One very special tribute will be the incorporation of the original terrazzo floor into the Columbarium design. This floor has an American star within and was the original floor of the wartime Operations Building at Hunter Field, a staging base that 7,000 aircrews left from in their airplanes to fly missions

from East Anglia. This special floor was the last floor many crews stood on in America.

Details of the program and services, guidelines for transfer of cremation ashes, pricing, and schedules are available from the Museum. Subscriptions for niches are available to 8<sup>th</sup> veterans and families now. Call 912-748-8888 ext 165 and speak with Museum CAO Brenda Elmgren.

★ The Warbirds Ball was held in the Lew Lyle Rotunda of the Museum on 15 September. Among many highlights of the evening was the presentation of The Shuler Award to three volunteers who have spent every Wednesday cataloguing and photographing 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force archival materials that have been donated to the Museum in recent years. Known as "The Three Amigos," they have designed their own uniforms and remain enthusiastic about their volunteer work in Collections. The award, given for exemplary service to the Museum, was presented by Lt. General E. G. "Buck" Shuler with an introduction by Board of Trustees Chairman Dr. William Cathcart to volunteers Jim Grismer, Jerry McLaughlin and Russ Bland.

Music was provided by the 18-piece Jeremy Davis Equinox Jazz Orchestra who covered many of the WWII-era hits and Johnny Mercer tunes, as well as up to date popular music. Mark Scomo's Sophisti-Catering food stations were open after a Champagne reception in the Colonial Group Art Gallery. Silent Auctions and raffles yielded great results in support of the Museum.

The event was put together by Special Projects Director Allison Stelljes with staff assistance from events Director Susan Eiseman and Facility manager Rick Ennis. Floral decorations by Alice Brown and Annette Shuler featured table decorations utilizing mahogany wooden models of 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force aircraft in the air.

Next year's Warbirds Ball is in the works already and is

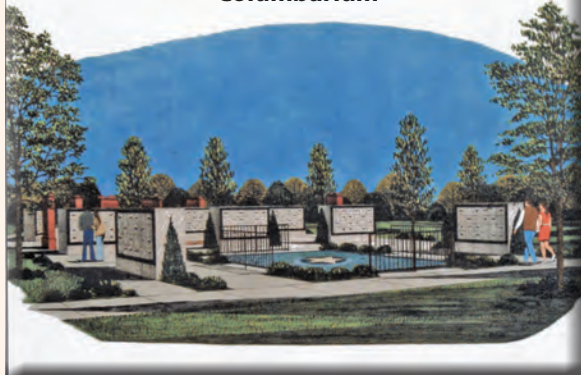


**Warbirds Ball - Cigarette Girls**

scheduled for the weekend of 6 September 2008 at the Museum.

★ **There are a number of activities underway at the Museum:** three extensive exhibits are under design and fabrication: the 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division expansion, the Escape and Evasion expansion, and the chronology of the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force exhibit. The Honor Roll book, sponsored by the Historical Society, honoring the servicemen of the 8<sup>th</sup> who were killed in action will be in place along with its touch-screen computerized counterpart. There is a new touch-screen listing all 8<sup>th</sup> veterans and crews on the Wall of Valor and in the Memorial Gardens and two new stained glass windows are being prepared to add to the Chapel of the

**Columbarium**





## MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE MUSEUM ACTIVITIES

Fallen Eagles. A new Art Gallery exhibition, *Southern Wings*, will open on 9 November 2007. Recent seminars include lectures by Dr. Larry Lewis: Two World War II Heroes: How I learned the complete History of my father and his brother on the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the

U. S. Air Force; and another: Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum, POWs and Liberation Day.

★ Veteran's Day activities will be held on November 10-12. The Museum is working with several Bomb Groups for future reunions and events to be

held at the Museum as well as both the AFEES in April 2008 and the annual Historical Society reunion in August 2008.

★ The Museum will also recognize the National **8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Week – October 8 – 14.**

### *Parachute Wedding Dress*

Robert Ellsworth Wickham and Hilda Galloway were married on October 14, 1945. Hilda wore this wedding gown made from Wickham's parachute. Wickham and his fellow crew members bailed out of a B-24, January 3, 1945 and landed in Putte Lange, Alsace-Lorraine, France. His broken leg was taken care of by local residents until an American patrol took him to a hospital. He kept the chute with him and gave pieces to nurses and doctors for their use as scarves. He recovered from his injury and flew seven more missions before the end of World War II - total 22. Wickham was a radio operator in the 8th Air Force, 453rd Bomb Group with the rank of Technical Sergeant during World War II. He graduated from the University of North Carolina in 1947 and re-entered the Army as a Second Lieutenant in December 1948. He served in Germany, Korea, Turkey, and Vietnam and retired as a Colonel in 1974.



**Above is the wedding photo of Robert E. Wickham and Hilda Galloway Wickham on October 14, 1945.**

**The Parachute wedding dress is on display in the art gallery, Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum.**

### USAF AIR FORCE ANNUAL AWARDS – 2007 – PRESENTED

The Organizational Awards Parade was held on 28 May 2007 on Stillman Parade Field at the USAF Air Academy in Colorado Springs. The Clune Field House was the site of the ceremony and the 8<sup>th</sup> AF Historical Society was well represented.

For decades, the Most Valuable Track and Field Competitor Award for Men has been presented in person by 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS Board member Emeritus and past-President Col Robert Vickers, USAF (Ret.). The award is in memory of Mr. Arne Arnesen, track coach at the Academy for 28 years.

This year's recipient is cadet Kevin Hawkins, class of 2008, Squadron 31. He set several track records at the Academy.



**Awards Winner Kevin Hawkins  
with The Historical Society's  
Col. Bob Vickers**

# REUNIONS

## 339th FIGHTER GROUP ASSOCIATION

Sept. 30- Oct. 4, 2007  
San Antonio, TX  
Holiday Inn El Tropicano  
Riverwalk Hotel  
Contact: Richard Thieme  
2732 South 7th St.  
Sheboygan, WI 53081-6802

## AIR FORCE NAVIGATORS OBSERVERS ASSOCIATION

October 4-7, 2007  
Reston VA Hyatt Regency Hotel  
Contact: email AFNOAPresident@CFL.RR.com

## 486TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

October 3-7, 2007  
Evansville IN Executive INN  
Contact: Bill Phelps tel 812-867-2991

## 401st BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

October 8-14, 2007  
Sheraton National Hotel  
Arlington, VA near Washington  
Contact: George Menzel  
POB 15356  
Savannah GA 31416

## 457TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

November 1-4, 2007  
Pensacola Beach FL  
Hilton Garden Inn Hotel  
Contact: George Grau

POB 1473, Gulf Shores AL  
36547-1473  
graugulfshores@gulftel.com  
251-968-2673

## 398TH BOMB GROUP REUNION

Nov. 27 - Dec. 1, 2007  
Best Western Grace Inn at Ahwatukee  
Phoenix, Arizona  
Contact: Sharon Krause  
11690 Paciocco Ct  
Plymouth, MI 48170  
734-416-5993  
tink46@comcast.net

## 467th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

October 4-8, 2007  
Crowne Plaza Hotel  
Dayton OH  
Contact: Ralph Davis tel#  
937-426-2988  
mrdavis@ameritech.net  
1-877-882-7235

## 455th BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

October 17-21, 2007  
San Antonio, TX  
Omni Hotel  
Contact: AFR Inc. P.O. Box  
11327  
Norfolk, VA 23517

## BURTONWOOD ASSOCIATION - U.S.

October 8-14, 2007  
Folsom, CA  
Lake Natoma Inn  
Contact: Richard Simmons

122 Fargo Way  
Folsom, CA 95630-2906  
simonrr@comcast.net

## AIR FORCE GUNNERS ASSOCIATION

September 20-23, 2007  
Omaha NB Marriott Hotel  
Contact: Dan Danish  
9550 Haviland Court  
San Antonio TX 78251

## 352ND FIGHTER GROUP ASSOCIATION

Sept 27-30, 2007  
Columbus OH during the Gathering of Mustangs and Legends  
Contact: Punchy Powell  
1545 Ranier Falls Dr.  
Atlanta GA 30329

## 27th AIR TRANSPORT GROUP

Sept. 27-29, 2007  
Washington, DC  
Best Western Capitol Skyline Hotel  
Contact: Fred Garcia  
1190 N 77th Drive  
Peoria, AZ 85345  
(602) 878-7007

## 457TH BOMB GROUP ASSOCIATION

Pensacola Beach FL Hilton Garden Inn  
November 1-4, 2007  
Contact: George Grau, POB  
1473, Gulf Shores AL 36547  
Tel #251-968-2673

## 361ST FIGHTER GROUP REUNION

Dayton OH Doubletree Hotel  
October 1-3, 2007  
Contact: Jim Olmstead  
1818 Belltower Circle  
Batavia OH 45103

## 801st/492nd BOMB GROUP CARPETBAGGERS

November 11-14 2007  
Pensacola Beach FL  
Spring Hill Suites Marriott Hotel contact: 1-850-932-6000

## 491ST BOMBARDMENT GROUP INC.

October 3-7, 2007  
DAYTON OH Marriott Hotel  
Contact: Harry Dean  
7645 60th Ave.  
Mecosta MI 49332-9705

## 8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## 34TH ANNUAL REUNION

**August 4-7, 2008  
Savannah, Georgia**

# NATIONAL 8TH AIR FORCE WEEK OCTOBER 8-14







Brandy Howard, granddaughter of Bob Howard – ball turret gunner on the George Donovan crew, 398<sup>th</sup> BG, is gathering information from those who want to attend Remembrance Services at Nuthampstead base on June 14-15, 2008. The Events will be conducted by the English Friends of the 398<sup>th</sup> at the Group's monument site and at St. Georges, Anstey. Brandy may be reached at tel #815-238-4706 or email [bhoward25@hotmail.com](mailto:bhoward25@hotmail.com).

The Generations Network owns the website Ancestry.com, and spent \$3 million and 270,000 hours to review and enter in more than 90 million war records of U.S. servicemen and women. The records include 37 million images, draft registration cards, POW records, military yearbooks, unit rosters and the like from wars of the Jamestown settlers in 1607 through the Vietnam war. Included are the names and gravestone info of 3.5 million U.S. deceased soldiers, including War in Iraq casualties.

A long-secret archive of Nazi war records is now being released this year by an 11-nation body at The Hague. An estimated 30-50 million pages docu-

menting the Holocaust will be available for use by WWII Holocaust survivors, victim's relatives, and scholars.

The Kassel Mission Historical Society and the 445<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group is returning to Tibenham and to the Kassel Mission Monuments in Germany in the summer of 2008. All veterans, families and friends are welcome to make this journey. The Society preserves the history and honors those who flew on the mission that saw the 445<sup>th</sup> BG lose more aircraft on a single mission to enemy action than any 8<sup>th</sup> AF group during the war. For information contact the KMHS at tel #248-364-2187. Linda Dewey, KMHS President, also reports that their website has been revamped: <http://kasselmission.com>. Their PX is also found at that site.

Of interest is the Ken Burns 16-hour presentation *The War*, to be aired on PBS television on Sunday, 23 September – 8 pm. A premiere reception was held at the Rialto Theater in Atlanta, Georgia in August.

The National Aviation Hall of Fame in Dayton, Ohio has inducted five members, all of whom have made significant contributions to aviation and aviation history. The Class of 2007 includes flight instructor Evelyn Bryan Johnson; America's first woman in space, astronaut Sally Ride; USMC combat pilot and FedEx founder Frederick Smith; aviation adventurer Steve Fossett; and Historian Walter Boyne. Actor Michael Dorn served as emcee of the Awards Show.

The Historical Society's program offering 5 years of membership for the

cost of 4 has been well-received by grandparents who served in the Mighty Eighth. They purchase that special option as gifts for their NexGen family members. The program is available for all other comers as well, all from our Office Director Mamie Kent. One Society stalwart who jumped in early on is the well-known Lionel LeBlanc, 385<sup>th</sup> BG, Manchester NH, who donated \$1000 to sponsor HS memberships for ten underprivileged NexGens. Lionel also has a program of regularly purchasing telephone Calling Cards for Units deployed to Iraq.

A new dogtag machine is on the way to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum courtesy of 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS member Ed McElroy. The original WWII machine has been in daily use making dogtags for Museum visitors and students, but needs an overhaul. The new Addressograph machine is supplied by CIM-USA, the same as that making dogtags for our troops in Iraq, and will duplicate the original tags worn by 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force personnel – which we all remember reasonably well.

Alan Senior, 446<sup>th</sup> BG and Past President of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division Association suggests that 2<sup>nd</sup> ADA members join the membership rolls of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in addition to the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Historical Society. He notes that as membership attrition occurs in both organizations, the interaction of both memberships would be a positive for all 8<sup>th</sup> veterans and the Nexgens. The Museum's contact info is tel #912-748-8888 and the Society info is on page #2 of this issue.

The laws of war force us to secure what belongs to the enemy, but when men proceed to wreak their fury on inanimate objects, the destruction of which cannot profit them at all nor prevent their antagonists from carrying on the war - especially if they burn temples and destroy private property - what can we say but that such acts are devoid of all decency and are the work of maniacs?

Polybius

## MEMORIES

Dear old Editor:

Congrats on having the best edition I can remember....June 2007. It brought back so many memories....I could hear Glenn Miller in the background as I read By the bye, Isn't that Frances Langford on page 6...upper left? She usually accompanied Bob Hope on his tours. Thanks for the memories....!!

John M. Fisher  
92nd BG

## NORDEN BOMBSIGHT

To: The Eighth Air Force Historical Society!

I have found this letter among other things, and I have received it from an old friend of mine, a son of Captain Schulz. The ship "Norden" was the first Danish ship that was sunk by the Germans. It was in a convoy with supplies to the US troops in North Africa. I hope that the letter is of interest for you.

The best regards,  
Henning Bencard

Dunedin ??FL

27 May 1986

Dear Forgen Falkstein,

As promised I am sending a photo of M/S Marden that I painted. I dedicated the painting as a memorial to the memory of our friends who perished with her. You will notice the flat at half mast on the stern.

The m/s Marden did most of her war time duties in the Pacific, making two trips to Australia.

On our second trip the Norden received a very special assignment. A new invented bombsight which would greatly improve the accuracy of the bombing planes was to be sent to Austrailia to be installed in the planes.

One morning, while in route, an American Navy Lieutenant, who was accompanying the shipment of bombsights said, that the bombsight had no name, just a number, he therefore suggested that the bombsight be called the Norden Bombsight in honor of the ship that was bringing it to the bombers.

This the 'Norden Bombsight' was christened with a cup of coffee at breakfast. The 'Norden Bombsight' became

widely known by that name among the American people during the war, Old Timers like me would certainly remember it, however not many knew how it got it's name. I am surprised as you are that so little has been written about the M/S Norden, she really deserves a more prominent place in the book. She was a valient ship.

I am writing this story because it involves the M/S Marden and the Marden Company in a Wartime incident.

We also wish the Marden Company continued success.

Love and blessings,  
Betty and Charles Madsen

## MEDAL OF HONOR

Subject: Rediscover & Reconnect to the Legacy

Attention: Dr. Walter Brown,

I recently read with great interest your memo re: your 2007 Fund Drive, and am enclosing a modest contribution to it. In reading through your memo I came across the name of Forrest Vosler who received the 1943 Medal of Honor for his heroics while in the 303rd Bomb Group of the 8th Air Force. I have been well aware of that honor bestowed on him for many years but never have been made aware of where he is currently living or whether he may be still alive. I bring this matter to your attention for this reason.

Forrest & I grew up in the small town of Lyndonville, New York (population 1000). While we were in either grade school or high school there, we picked cherries together, sometimes off the same tree, being paid at best 1/2 cent a pound. We picked most all day for some eighty or ninety cents per day - and happy to get it. That was in the late 30's. I'm not sure I ever saw him again after our cherry picking experiences -- which was 65 to 70 years ago. It is also interesting to note that my Father assisted Forrest's Dad in finding a job in those difficult days of the late 30's and 40's.

I should note in closing that I was attached to the 384th Bomb Group at Grafton-Underwood during the war, arriving there in mid-1943. Good luck in your Fund Drive.

Bob Brinsmaid, 384th BG  
Cincinnati, OH

*A photograph of the painting that depicts Forrest Vosler's memorable mission for which he received the Medal of Honor appeared in the Museum Activities Section of the July 07 8th AF News. -Ed.*

## CENTSLESS

Dr. Brown,

The photograph on the back cover of the June 07 8th AF News raises a question: Do you have any info on the identity of the persons or of the Group of the two airmen pictured?

The guy with the one Pfc stripe sewed on his sweater looks like one of my 367th BS, 306th BG associates.

Sincerely,  
Bill Houlihan, 306th BG  
Farmington MI

## CONTRAILS

Dear Walter,

The letter is in response to your request for thoughts on the contrails article in the last AF News. I was a pilot in the 55th Ftr. Group, from the fall of 1943 until the spring of 1946. We flew P-38s until the late summer of 1944 when we changed to P-51s. The 55th was the first long range fighter escort for the 8th. We had a steep learning curve. I flew over 600 hours on more than 120 missions. With this background I have some thoughts on the impact that contrails had on our operation.

Flying a few thousand feet above the bomber stream, and seeing their contrails, we could see the various boxes and their position from their contrails. Most of the Germans were single engine and left a single trail. We used this information to help us position ourselves to the best advantage. The introduction of the P-51 with its single trail complicated our assessment of the situation.

The P-38 left double trails which showed the Germans that we were American fighters and they would try to position themselves to attack from above with an advantage. It was said they could identify us before we





could see them. When we changed to the P-51 in Sept of 1944 our kill ratio jumped from 1.5 to 1 to 3 to 1 mainly because they couldn't identify us from all the other single engine fighters, including their own. In our view the playing field was leveled.

Certainly the flying and fighting strengths and weaknesses of the two planes figure into the European Theater. That is another story in itself.

Sincerely,  
Edward Giller  
President, 55th FG  
Albuquerque, NM

### 9TH AF FIGHTER PILOT

Dear Dr. Brown:

I am a World War Two fighter bomber pilot who was in the Ninth Air force based near the city of Louvane, Belgium. Eighth Air Force B17 and B24 bombers flew over our airbase nearly every day, eastbound to their assigned targets in the morning. Westbound if they were fortunate enough to have evaded German fighter pilot's cannon fire or anti-aircraft fire from the ground, or having survived either, as was the case of a lone B17 bomber that I met unexpectedly while on a local flight test of a P47 from our squadron.

After completing the flight test I was heading back to our base near Louvaine when I observed the bomber several miles southeast of our field, westbound at a very low altitude and with two engines feathered. Suspecting that pilot was looking for a field in which to make an emergency landing. I slowed my P47, put the wheels and landing flaps down and flew alongside of the bomber. They fired a couple of flares to indicate they had wounded on board and the copilot gave me a thumb down signal that they wanted to land. I flew ahead of them and they followed me to our airbase, got their wheels down and landed safely.

I landed behind them and noticed they continued the full length of our six thousand foot runway and went beyond into the mud. I parked my P47, borrowed a jeep from maintenance that was parked close to the back door of the plane and the emergency medical technicians were helping the wounded off the bomber and into the

ambulance. The navigator, a first Lieutenant who was only slightly wounded and apparently in a state of shock, told me the pilot and the bombardier had both been killed and he had dragged the pilot out of his seat and onto the floor so that his lifeless body wouldn't interfere with the copilot being able to control the aircraft. The copilot had his feet badly injured and could not use the rudder or brake peddles; thence the reason they overran the end of the paved runway, stopping in the mud. Our emergency crew took the wounded to the base hospital which was a large tent and their wounds were treated and they remained there overnight. The next day they and the bodies of the pilot and bombardier were flown to their airbase in England in our group C47 that we had based on our field. With all the excitement I didn't get any names of that bomber crew and for many years have wondered about their continued service as a bomber crew through the remainder of the war. There were probably several similar incidents of this nature that took place in Holland, Belgium, and France with the thousands of Eighth Air Force bombers that flew daily missions over the continent of Europe. I'm thankful that I was there at the right time to lead that B17 crew to our P47 base and perhaps help save some lives.

Respectfully,  
Thomas J. Carpenter, 9th AF  
Roswell, NM

D. Put small back cover photo with this one:

MAIL CALL

### Dear Sir:

In May my wife and I took a great trip to Russia. We visited St. Petersburg, spent 6 days on the Volga River, and on to Moscow for 5 more days. The Russians are still very interested in World War II. In Moscow there is a huge World War II museum. After we toured the area, six veterans from World War II spoke to us. Having read about the Night Witches, I wanted my photo taken with one of the "Witches". These "Witches" were very successful and deadly. The Germans feared them, calling them "Nichthexen" or Night Witches. They were all female



**Sam Darby and Night Witch**

pilots flying only at night in obsolete aircraft. The women who survived flew 1,000 missions each.

Sincerely,  
Sam Darby 452nd BG  
*Sam had 12 missions on his second tour. After the war he went to pilot training and flew F-80s, B-47s, and B-52s. -Ed*

### PINK LADY

Dear Editor,  
I am a member of the 351st Bomb Group, 511th Squadron. We were stationed at Polebrook Air Field, which was located in East Petersborough, in the Midlands of Great Britain. I loved the article on the "Pink Lady", which is on page 3 of the June 2007 issue of the 8th AF News (Volume 07 Number 2).

The markings on the "Pink Lady", the triangle J on the tail, and the M plus DS on the fuselage, are those of the 511th Squadron.

I flew 35 combat missions with the 351st Bomb Group from September 1944 to the end of February 1945. Unfortunately, I do not remember seeing the "Pink Lady" while I was stationed at Polebrook. The photograph of the "Pink Lady" appears to be a B-17F, since there isn't any nose turret visible. All the B-17G Flying Fortresses have such a nose turret, under the firing direction of the bombardier. To the best of my knowledge, all the B-17's that flew combat missions with me were B-17G's. The article states that the "Pink Lady" flew combat missions in the Spring of 1945. Is that true?

In any event, it was a thrill to read about this airplane, and the fact that it is still in flying condition.

My Best Regards,



Stan Edelman, M.D., 351st BG  
New York, NY

*We have searched our literature for the combat history of The Pink Lady and cannot confirm that she was a 351st aircraft as Stan discusses. We will follow up on this Paris-based B-17. -Ed.*

## STORMY WEATHER

Dear Sir,

The March issue contains a question about *Stormy Weather* on page 25, by Hal Kiena. It may be of some interest to readers that *Stormy Weather* of the 96th BG was trashed by fighters May 12, 44. Charles Filer (P) was wounded, Lavigna (CP) was killed, w. gunners, Fred Beck and Carl Brogen killed. All three of the Charlies aft the bombay got out but I, the radio-op., was severely wounded in the legs by schrapnel and gunshots. I

was finally formally presented with a purple heart 4/09/07 at the executive mansion, Olympia. The pilot and the crew chief, Lido Mochetti, went down with the plane at Balmuth, Germany. Also, Al Kiena seems to question whether or not Hubert Zemke was shot down. For my last three months as a prisoner, I was in Stalag Luft I and Hubert was the P.O.W. Commander.

Sincerely,  
Charles Williams, 96th BG  
Oak Harbor, WA

## NOTE FROM A SOLDIER

Dear Sir,

My name is Bryan Richardson. I'm a few days away from going over to Iraq as a combat medic.

In March of 2006 I visited the Mighty Eighth Museum after returning from

my initial training in Texas. I just want you all to know I was very moved by the Chapel of the Fallen Eagles, on the grounds of your museum. I think it's so admirable that the veterans of the Eighth honor their fallen friends and aircrews so diligently and with such beauty as is present in the chapel and the monuments on those same grounds. You not only have a great museum, but you maintain the memory of the men who fought and died as part of the history you display - and that's what sets your establishment apart. Keep it up! I hope in the years to come, we soldiers do the same for our fallen in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Truly Impressed,  
SPC Bryan Richardson 535th MP,  
US Army Operation Iraqi Freedom

## CHAPTER/UNIT LIAISON REPORT



Please allow me to introduce myself, as I will be the new Chapter/Unit Liaison for the Society. My name is Joseph 'Pat' Keeley and I am on the Board of the 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS.

I would like to thank Harry Tanner for his work as the Societies Liaison. The 33<sup>rd</sup> 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS Annual Reunion was held in Kalamazoo, MI. the week of July 17 – July 22. The Chapter/Unit Development Meeting was held Thursday morning from 8a.m. to 9a.m. with an attendance of 17.

The main discussion was membership and also the need to update the Society's current Chapter & Unit listing, which is located on page 46 of the June 2007 edition, *8th AF News*.

A good discussion was held regarding membership and the need to promote this with both Chapter/Units and the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Historical Society. Good ideas from the New York Southern Wing Chapter President Gus Nathan and Joe Conroy representing the Membership Records of the Oregon Chapter, just to mention two, were discussed. Both of these Chapters have an impressive next generation (NexGen) membership. I am in the midst of contacting each Chapter to discuss how we can move forward with membership and keep both the Chapters/Units and the Society also moving forward.

I would like to welcome the 'new' North Alabama Chapter to the Society with Ann C. Vaughn as President. I am looking forward to working with each of you.

'Keep The Memories Alive'  
Committee Chairman  
Pat Keeley

## "Is the coming winter going to be cold?"

It was October and the Indians on a remote reservation asked their new Chief if the coming winter was going to be cold or mild. Since he was a Chief in a modern society, he had never been taught the old secrets. So, when he looked at the sky he couldn't tell what the winter was going to be like.

Nevertheless, to be on the safe side he told his tribe that the winter was indeed going to be cold and that the members of the village should collect firewood to be prepared. After several days he got an idea. He went to the phone booth, called the National Weather Service and asked, "Is the coming winter going to be cold?"

"It looks like this winter is going to be quite cold" the meteorologist at the weather service responded. So the Chief went back to his people and told them to collect even more firewood in order to be prepared.

A week later he called the National Weather Service again. "Does it look like it is going to be a very cold winter?"

"Yes", the man at National Weather Service replied, "it's going to be a very cold winter." The Chief again went back to his people and ordered them to collect every scrap of firewood they could find.

Two weeks later the Chief called the National Weather Service again. "Are you absolutely sure that the winter is going to be very cold?"

"Absolutely," the man replied. "It's looking more and more like it is going to be one of the coldest winters ever."

"How can you be sure?" the Chief asked.

The weatherman replied, "The Indians are collecting firewood like crazy."

Craig Harris, 457th BG  
Durham, N.C.



# Chapter News

## FLORIDA CHAPTER

The Florida Chapter held its Spring reunion in beautiful Venice, Florida this past April. Reunion Chairman Jim

Stuthers, ably assisted by co-chairs Jerry and Mary Lund, really put out the welcome mat at the Venice Holiday Inn. During the Directors Meeting on Monday Bill

Roche and Ken MacNichol, both past officers of the Chapter, stepped down as directors

and were thanked for their many years of service to the Florida Chapter. New director Bob Groen joined the board to fill one of the vacancies. During the Directors Meeting President Jim Hart, Vice-President Bill Uphoff, and Secretary John Quinn also announced they would be stepping aside as of our next meeting. All of these gentlemen have done superior work in helping the Chapter continue to grow and prosper and their leadership will be missed. They did stress, however, they they would be continue to be active in the Chapter and they would help transition new officers into the positions. We are hoping for many nominations that can be put before the membership at our Fall meeting, which is planned for the Cocoa Beach area sometime near the Veterans Day holiday.

Tuesday morning saw us on the way to the Ringling Museum in Sarasota by bus. The Ringling is administered by Florida State University and includes the John Ringling mansion right on the bay. Naturally, there are many exhibits from the Ringling Brothers, Barnum and Bailey Circus, which, for many years, had its winter home in Sarasota. This complex also includes a world class art museum with many of the art works on display from Mr. Ringling's personal collection. Tuesday night included a welcome buffet at the hotel and "hangar flying" late into the evening in the hospitality suite. Mr. James Decker of Fort Lauderdale furnished us with his excellent models of World War II aircraft for display in the hospitality suite.



Florida V.P. Bill Uphoff



**Florida Chapter Officers with their wives L to R: Barbara Green; Scty John Quinn and Dorothy; Constant Galys and Margaret; Kay and James Struthers, Sheldon Green**

During the general membership meeting on Wednesday the group was informed of the transition of our leadership and urged to consider serving as a officer, or as a member of the Board of Directors. Treasurer Connie Galus gave a thorough financial report. Evie Kapp Martin, an associate member of the Florida Chapter and National Chapter Nex-Gen member, gave us an update on her search for more information on her uncle, "Shimmy" Sherman. Trude Hart, President Jim Hart's wife, who is German, offered to translate or help write any letters Evie needs to send to German authorities.

Wednesday night's banquet was followed by a genuine USO style World War II show. The ladies portraying the Andrews Sisters were incredible in their re-creation of all the wartime melodies. You could almost feel yourself at an English airfield in 1943 or 1944, enjoying a brief respite from the terrors of war. All that was missing was the uniforms and warm beer. Oh, and a B-17 or B-24 parked nearby. After the dinner and show the usual auction was held in the hospitality suite and the Chapter re-couped some expenses and those participating got some excellent bargains on left-over refreshments.

The Thursday morning memorial service was an exceptional one, as usual. The twin buglers playing taps lent an air of solemnity to the proceedings. Those widows who were unable to attend sent word that the recognition the Chapter bestows on those who are no longer with us is much appreciated.

If you are going to be in the Central

Florida area during the first part of November and would like to attend our fall meeting you can contact Jim Hart at hartklamking@aol.com, or give him a call at (561) 795-4854 or Ken Sweet at (407) 869-6693, or ksotown@earthlink.net, for more details as they become available.

Jim Hart and Ken Sweet

## OREGON CHAPTER

by Clint Gruber

The August quarterly Chapter meeting was held on the 11<sup>th</sup> of the month at our regular site, the Beaverton Elks Lodge. The date happened to conflict with the Blue Angels headlining the annual three-day Oregon International Air Show at nearby Hillsboro Airport, which accounted for a somewhat reduced number of members and guests attending the Chapter meeting. Also a factor was, as usual for the mid-summer meeting, some really hot weather. Here in Ory-gun, we consider temps in the 90's combined with humidity readings anything over 30% to be uncomfortable!

Following our schedule for keeping up to date with museums and other aviation activity in our area, President Davis called upon members for reports. Veteran Chapter member Eldon Bevens, a B-17 ball turret gunner who flew in the 390th BG, gave today's report on the Evergreen Aviation Museum at McMinnville, Oregon. Eldon has served as one of Evergreen's most valuable volunteers from its very beginning.

Evergreen is one of the most active and popular museums on the Pacific coast, and is rapidly becoming a top tourist attraction in Oregon. The museum is home for it's most publicized and most popular exhibit the "Spruce Goose", a name bestowed upon the giant airplane by media reporters; a name reportedly detested by it's designer and builder, aviation legend Howard Hughes. The museum has grown rapidly since inception and now, new construction has provided space for many more historical and important aircraft and related displays, as well as the just-opened IMAX Theater.

The program for our meeting was presented by Gary Mortensen, President of the National Combat History Archive. The NCHA, with offices in Hillsboro,



# Chapter News

Oregon, is the largest non-government military archive in the country, containing rare film and video footage as well as still photographs and written and oral histories of all the wars of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Mortensen welcomes inquiries from researchers, as well as input for the archives from veterans. The NCHA website is [info@combatarchive.com](mailto:info@combatarchive.com).

Mortensen has just finished the production of a feature length documentary titled "This Is War - Memories of Iraq", and his program for our group consisted of three excerpts from the film, telling the story of a unit of the Oregon Army National Guard during its year-long stint in Iraq. Nearly 90% of the very graphic film was actually shot by soldiers of that unit, and is accompanied by narration of many soldiers who participated in some of the most dangerous and critical actions in such Iraqi hotspots as Najaf and Fallujah. Adding to the impact of the film was the presence of Oregon Army National Guard Sgt Kris Peterson, who appears in many of the scenes in the film, and who was kept very busy after the showing fielding questions from veterans of "our war". At closing, Sgt Peterson was given a well-earned standing ovation for his and his fellow soldier's service to our nation.

Our November 07 quarterly meeting is scheduled for Saturday, the 10<sup>th</sup>, at our regular meeting site, the Beaverton Elks Lodge, Beaverton, Oregon. If the reader expects to be in our area at that time, you will be welcome to attend. For details, contact President Tom Davis at [tdavis262@aol.com](mailto:tdavis262@aol.com) or Secretary Tom Philo at [tom@taphilo.com](mailto:tom@taphilo.com).

## WISCONSIN CHAPTER

We have been quite busy since the first of the year. George Michel spoke to the students at Maranatha Baptist College in Watertown, WI for three hours on February 27<sup>th</sup>. He repeated his program on May 17<sup>th</sup> for 400 ninth grade students at Muskego High School. Attendance at each function exceeded expectations.

On the weekend of June 28<sup>th</sup>, the EAA's B-17 "Aluminum Overcast" made a tour-stop at Crites Field, Waukesha. Thirteen Wischap members were there to act as tour guides and talk to the visitors. Once again, four Wischap members were invited to speak to the EAA Mu-



**Wisconsin Chapter members Bill Bergner and Bill Zauner demonstrate the Norden bombsite to a visitor.**

seum visitors on July 25<sup>th</sup> for this year's Airtventure at Oshkosh, WI. Bill Bergner described a typical (if you can call it that) PFF mission with the 92nd Bomb Group and Ed DePreter told about several of his experiences as a navigator with the 96th. Bill Meier, also with the 96th, talked about his job as a bombardier and Dick Rasmussen described what it was like to work on every type of aircraft in the 8th AF's arsenal at Goose Bay.

August 5<sup>th</sup> saw Bill Bergner, John Rosenberg and Bill Zauner setting up our display of 8th AF combat aircraft models and artifacts at the Commemorative Air Force's Open House at Crites Field. This year's display included a borrowed Norden bomb sight. The collector/owner said we could have it for a measly \$3000 bucks. Sadly, we had to decline.

The Wisconsin Chapter continues to get the word out!

## NORTH ALABAMA CHAPTER

The newly-activated 8<sup>th</sup> AF Historical Society North Alabama Chapter (nee North Alabama Wing) held its September meeting with an opening welcome by Chapter President Ann Vaughn. After an invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance visitors Paul Rook, Jessica Umphrey and Coleman Irwin were introduced to the Chapter.

After a luncheon, September's program was presented by Melvin Horton, A POW's Story, by the late O. D. Tully of Guntersville. Tully spent two years in German Stalags after surviving a crash of his B-17 during an early mission to Germany. Diana Polin read a moving poem by her brother Irv Soble.

The Chapter meeting was closed in its usual fine style with member

George Ferrell playing a medley of harp tunes on his harmonica, ending with a rousing "Dixie."

## MISSISSIPPI CHAPTER

The Mississippi Chapter of the 8th AFHS held its spring reunion at Lake Tiak O'Khata, April 27-29, 2007. This beautiful lakeside resort, located just on the outskirts of Louisville, MS provided the perfect backdrop for this, the 17<sup>th</sup> annual reunion of our Chapter.

Kin Hensarling, Chapter President, rolled out the red carpet to provide a warm welcome and thanked everyone for coming. Members renewed their acquaintance with old friends and a few tears were shed when hugs and handshakes became the order of the day. Following a light lunch attendees viewed the latest memorabilia provided by several collectors as well as the many items donated for the raffle. The Board of Directors met to compile a slate of officers for the coming year and determine a time and location for the fall meeting.

After a Friday evening cookout Bob Moses of the Tennessee Chapter outlined the plans and programs being made by the AFHS to increase the number of second generation members in the Society and the state Chapters. Bob, who is the chairman of this program, stated that the interest and support of children, grandchildren and friends of veterans is necessary if the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum is to continue as a first class museum. He believes that the interest of younger people is on the rise and this will in turn result in added numbers of second generation members joining the society.

At our Saturday evening banquet, the main speaker was Major General Harold Cross, Adjutant General of Mississippi, who was accompanied by his lovely wife Marilyn. General Cross proved that he is a real student of US History and cited examples of leadership, courage and daring in the many wars from the American Revolution to the present. As an example of this courage he cited the magnificent record of the Mighty Eighth Air Force in never turning back from a target due to enemy action. General Cross observed that a popular cry today in regard to the current Iraq situation is "bring them home", but

# Chapter News

cautioned that history of previous wars has shown that this is not often the best solution. He cited the words of Prime Minister Winston Churchill during the dark days of WWII when it appeared that Britain could easily lose the war. He said "We will fight them on the sea, in the air, on the beaches, and in the streets. We will never give in."

The evening's events came to an end with the seven candle lighting ceremony which honored Eighth Air Force air and ground personnel who lost their lives in defense of freedom.

On Sunday morning we held our regular church service in Honeysuckle Lodge. Following an inspirational message by Chaplain Cal Smith, members lighted a candle to honor and remember a special person who was no longer with us. It was announced that five members had flown their last mission since our fall meeting of 2006. On a happier note, eleven new members have joined the Chapter in this same time period. The service ended with member Bob Lence playing Amazing Grace on the bagpipes and trumpeter Bert Hill playing Taps.

The 2007 fall reunion will be held in Tupelo, MS October 10-11 at the Marriott River Garden Hotel. Reunion chairman is T.C. "Cobb" Gibbs.  
George Roberts

## OHIO CHAPTER

The Ohio Chapter met on May 18th - 20th at the Midwest Hotel and Conference Center in Columbus, Ohio.

The banquet speaker was Jay Johannigman, M.D., who is an Associate Professor of Surgery at the University of Cincinnati, and Director of Trauma and Critical Care at University Hospital in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Dr. Johannigman is a flight surgeon in the U.S. Air Force, holding the rank of Colonel and has deployed three times to Iraq where he served as Deputy Commander of the 332nd AEW/EMEDS hospital. The 332nd AEW traces its legacy to the Tuskegee Airmen of World War II, the "Red Tails."

Dr. Johannigman discussed treating battlefield trauma and how he helped develop small medical surgical teams to treat soldiers. The injured person is first stabilized on the battlefield and then transported to the hospital for treat-

ment. Dr. Johannigman described how this medical team works by providing an example of how an injured soldier was saved and within eighteen hours was in a hospital in Germany. As part of a team with University Hospital, Dr. Johannigman is working with the Air Force in training doctors in trauma care. In addition, he is helping to develop new technology to help treat wounded soldiers.

Dr. Johannigman in his closing statement said that one of his proudest jobs is helping today's war fighter.

The Chapter will meet in again in October in Dayton.

Chris Weber, SCTy.

## IOWA CHAPTER

The Iowa Chapter of the 8th AFHS held its 24th annual reunion at the Quality Inn, Ames Iowa, on Saturday August 25, 2007. At the noon luncheon, Paul Nelson spoke on myths and truths of the Norden Bombsight. Paul has three other bombsights that he is restoring to working order.

Eighty-five people attended our Banquet. Rhonda Minner, with a great voice, sang WWII songs. Our guest speaker was retired Lt. Col. Richard Asbury who was a P-51 ace with the Ninth Air Force and flew 240 missions over three wars. Ernie Ley from St. Cloud Minnesota again displayed his WWII memorabilia and it was great to have Ernie with us again.

Robert Aguilera of Iowa Falls hosted a PX of aviation collectibles for the second year. Great to have Robert again. The raffle of a B-17 clock was won by Vera Mehring and an aviation print by Charles R. Taylor was won by Greg Johnson.

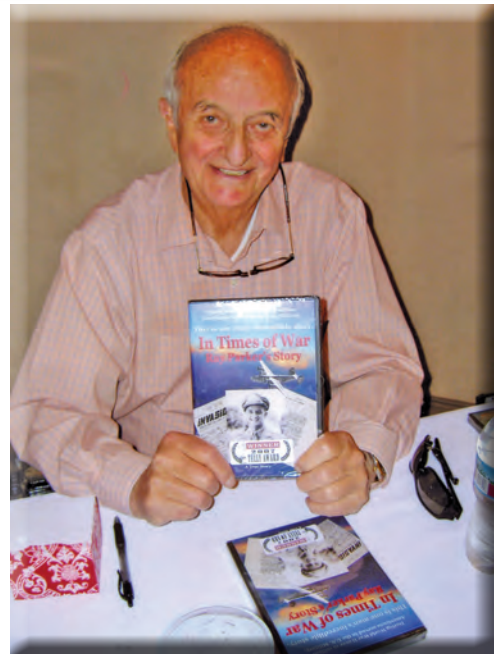
A great time was held by all in attendance.

Leon Mehring, Treasurer

## New mexico CHAPTER

The 8th AFHS New Mexico Chapter held the summer General Membership meeting 06 June 07; members and guests totaled 95.

The highlight of the Summer meeting was the speaker, a life member of the New Mexico Chapter, Ray Parker. Mr. Parker presented to the membership a



**Ray Parker**

viewing of the outstanding documentary titled "IN TIMES OF WAR." This WW II Documentary is the personal account of Mr. Ray Parker, a navigator with the 445th BG, who relates his tales of battle, imprisonment and, at long last, freedom. Shot down behind enemy lines on his 11th mission, Ray was captured and interned for more than a year at Stalag Luft 1. While imprisoned, Ray eagerly agreed to secretly edit the underground newspaper, "POW WOW" for the camp of 9,000 captured soldiers using information received via a hidden radio.

After the war Ray became a reporter and feature writer for the Los Angeles Examiner and then the Los Angeles Times before moving to network television at CBS and NBC. He wrote for numerous TV celebrities, including Bob Hope, Dinah Shore, Dick Van Dyke and served as Art Linkletter's head writer for twelve years.

His "IN TIME OF WAR" documentary won a premium Telly Award for its creative work. It also was the winner of documentary-short, Jury Commendation at Durango's 2007 Independent Film Festival.

The Fall General Membership meeting will be held at the Sheraton Albuquerque Uptown Hotel, October 27, 2007. Submitted by:

Al Schwery, Secretary



# 8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY PX

## at the Mighty Eighth Museum Store

QTY	8TH AFHS PX ORDER FORM DESCRIPTION	PRICE	OPTIONS	TOTAL
	Golf shirt w/8 <sup>th</sup> AFHS logo, Circle size and color choice	\$29.99	S, M, L, XL, 2X Red, White, Navy	
	Baseball Cap w/8 <sup>th</sup> AFHS logo embroidered	\$12.95	Red, White, Blue	
	8 <sup>th</sup> AFHS 4" jacket Patch	\$3.95	NA	
	8 <sup>th</sup> AFHS ¾" pin w/clutch back	\$3.50	Member, Life Member	
	8 <sup>th</sup> AFHS bumper sticker	\$.90	NA	
	8 <sup>th</sup> AFHS 4" round sticker	\$.75	NA	
	8 <sup>th</sup> AFHS plastic license plate	\$3.95	NA	
	8 <sup>th</sup> AF logo silk tie	\$27.99	Red, Navy	
	8 <sup>th</sup> AF 3" patch	\$3.98	NA	
	8 <sup>th</sup> AF 1" pin w/clutch back	\$3.50	NA	
	8 <sup>th</sup> AF logo white T-shirt	\$10.99	S, M, L, XL	
	8 <sup>th</sup> AF logo gray T-shirt	\$12.99	2X	
	Puppy Power T-Shirt	\$12.99	S, M, L, XL	
	8 <sup>th</sup> Logo watch	\$14.99	2X	
	Gold Mighty 8 <sup>th</sup> Challenge Coin	\$79.99	Men, Ladies	
	Embroidered Baseball Caps	\$8.95	NA	
	Mahogany Replica Plane	\$19.99	P38, P51, B17, B24	
	A-2 Jacket	\$49.99	B17, B24, P38, P51	
	Extreme Sports Mighty 8 <sup>th</sup> Jacket	\$299.99	40, 42, 44, 46, 48	
	Sheila's Collectible Mighty 8 <sup>th</sup> Museum World War II Monument Armed Service Tribute	\$49.99	M, L, XL, XXL	
	Jimmy Stewart Bomber Pilot (Book)	\$29.99, \$24.99, \$23.99	NA	
	Masters of the Air (Book)	\$21.95	NA	
	Flags of Our Fathers (Book)	\$35.00	NA	
	Chick's Crew (Book)	\$8.95	NA	
	Ball Christmas Ornament	\$24.95	NA	
	Etched Crewman Christmas Ornament	\$8.99	Red, Blue	
		\$6.99	NA	
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#3



#3





# THE GERMAN OIL INDUSTRY

Abstracted from the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey - 1945

*At the close of the war in May 1945 German industrial leaders, military commanders, and Adolph Hitler's staff were interviewed by U.S. authorities including a team led by Col. Jake Fredericks, 8th Air Force Headquarters. The U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey integrated and summarized the effects of bombing on strategic German industries. The consensus was that destruction of the Nazi oil production industry was a vital factor in the defeat of Germany.*

*-Editor*



## **THE GERMAN OIL INDUSTRY AS A TARGET FOR STRATEGIC BOMBING IMPORTANCE AND VULNERABILITY OF TARGET SYSTEM**

The vital importance of oil in modern warfare needs hardly any elaboration. Without it, the wheels of industry and the war machine must come to a grinding stop.

Aerial reconnaissance proved a vitally important -- and as time went on became almost the sole -- means of assessing the enemy's oil position. Photographs went to the Central Interpretations Unit (C.I.U.) where British and American experts interpreted them and compared their interpretations of the evidence shown. Aerial photographs

enabled checking up on actual construction progress.

### **VULNERABILITY OF TARGETS**

Of the various targets, the hydrogenation plants were the most vulnerable spot in Germany's power to wage war. Their importance to the German war effort was much greater than is reflected by their contribution to Germany's



overall oil production, because the hydrogenation plants were practically the sole source of Germany's aviation gasoline production.

From the inception of allied intelligence on the enemy oil positioned therefore, industrial experts consulted recommended the hydrogenation plants in particular be treated as top priority targets for this reason. Such recommendations with which the E.O.C. (Enemy Oil Committee) identified itself, were fully discussed with the British Hartley Committee in the summer of 1943. The Anglo-American discussions unanimously recommended, first and foremost, the "bombing and destruction of synthetic oil plants and oil refining capacity."

#### **AIMS OF THE COMBINED BOMBER OFFENSIVE**

The Casablanca directive called for "... the progressive destruction and dislocation of the German military, industrial and economic system to a point where capacity for armed resistance is fatally weakened." The Combined Bomber Offensive Plan, April 1943, formulated target categories and specific targets to be attacked in four major phases from April 1943 to April 1944.

The first priority in the operation of British and American bombers based in the United Kingdom shall be accorded to the attack of German fighter forces

and the industry upon which they depend." In pursuance thereof, top priority for bombing was given to plants manufacturing air frames; engines, and components, ball bearings, repair depots, and storage parts. However, oil was not included as a primary target, although it was recommended that oil and ball bearings were given second priority after the German fighter strength, but with the recommendation that the attack on petroleum be withheld until the refineries at Ploesti should have been successfully attacked from the Mediterranean.

Regarding oil, the report stated: "The quantities of petroleum and synthetic oil products now available to the Germans are barely adequate to supply the life blood which is vital to the German war machine. The oil situation is made more critical by failure of the Germans to secure and retain the Russian supplies. If the Ploesti refineries, which process thirty-five percent (35%) of current refined oil available to the Axis, are destroyed, and the synthetic oil plants in Germany which process an additional thirteen percent (13%) are also destroyed, the resulting disruption will have a disastrous effect upon the supply of finished oil products available to the Axis."

#### **STEPS TAKEN BY THE GERMANS IN ANTICIPATION OF INTENSIFIED BOMBING**

The Germans were fully aware of the vulnerability of their plants in general, and their hydrogenation plants in particular, and had lived for many years in constant fear of the bombing of these targets by the Allied Air Forces. As Speer in this interrogation of May 18, 1945, admitted when discussing the first concentrated bomber attack on German hydrogenation plants on May 1, 1944, "the happenings of the 12th of May had been a nightmare to us for more than two years."

#### **IMPORTANCE OF INDIVIDUAL PLANTS**

Regarding the priority to be given to the individual plants, oil experts recommended that Leuna, Poelitz and the two Blechhammer plants (Blechhammer and Heydebreck) should be given top priority because not only were they the most important single producers -- or prospective producers -- of synthetic oil in general, and aviation gasoline in particular, but in the case of Leuna also because of its integration with the chemical industry. Ludwigshafen was recommended for a higher priority then corresponded to its relatively small oil production, mainly because of its importance as a research center. The other sources of Germany's oil, such as benzol, low-temperature carbonization, etc., were on the whole too dispersed and the units were too small to form a sufficiently attractive target for strategic bombing.

#### **CAMOUFLAGE**

Several of the plants were provided with camouflage on orders from the Luftwaffe. However, it was not found very effective; in many cases the cure was worse than the ailment, in as much as camouflage added considerably to the fire hazard (owing to lack of steel, wood was used extensively in camouflaging), and the debris interfered with the repair work.

#### **STRUCTURAL PROTECTION**

In several of the plants, the more important elements were protected by blast walls, but up till the summer of 1943 the program of structural protection was far from completed.

**A Flying Fortress in flames passes over smoke-screens at German oil industry target.**



A letter from Krauch to Goering dated May 5, 1944 shows, for instance, that even at that late date, the program of protection of elementary parts of the plants by these means was only one-third completed.

#### **BALLOON BARRAGE**

Some plants were provided with a balloon barrage, but no data is available regarding the extent of the use of such balloon barrages. Generally, the balloon barrage was not very successful, and several opinions (e.g. interrogation - Dr. Ringer of June 26, 1945) considered them more of a liability than an asset, in as much as they gave away the plant location.

#### **DECOY PLANTS**

Some decoy plants were built, and it is claimed by the Germans that they were rather effective, in as much as they attracted, in some cases, about 30% to 35% of the bombs. It has not been possible to check this figure, nor is data available to show the extent of the use of decoy plants lost most of their value.

#### **THE SMOKE SCREENS**

At a conference of the Zentrale Planung (Central Planning) in October 1942, hydrogenation plants and power plants were given top priority for smoke-screening. In some cases, high smokestacks which stuck out of the smoke-screen were cut off to a lower height. Smoke-screening both black and white has been a very effective passive method of plant protection. However, large areas had to be screened in order to be effective, requiring enormous quantities of sulphonic acid. Shortages of this acid caused the Germans to resort in many instances to makeshift smoke materials and prevented the Germans from using it as extensively as they might have wished. Also, some of the principal smoke acid producing plants (for instance Leuna) were located at the very targets that the bomber offensive hit in their raids on oil plants. Consequently, such raids had a dual effect of not only putting the plant out of production but also of denying it one of the means of self-protection, smoke acid.

#### **FLAK**

Hitler was a great believer in flak as a means of protecting objectives from aerial attack, and on several occasions



boosted the production of flak guns and ammunition. The principal synthetic oil plants, and particularly the hydrogenation plants, were provided with rather extensive anti-aircraft defenses, which made the aiming of the bombs by the attacking aircraft more difficult, increasing both losses and the percentage of misses.

#### **FIGHTERS**

Fighters were considered the most effective and desirable means of protection. There is no data on the amount of fighter protection given to the oil targets, but Speer in his letters to Hitler, written between October 1944 and January 1945, strongly insisted on the making available of greater fighter protection for oil targets, even at the expense of withdrawing all fighters from the Eastern front. However, no such drastic measure was ever taken, and the available fighters were entirely inadequate to prevent the successful attacks on the German oil plants.

#### **THE ATTACK ON OIL**

On May 12, 1944 strong allied bomber formations released their lethal load of bombs on 5 synthetic oil plants: Bruex, Luetzkendorf, Leuna, Zeitz, and Boehlen, a total of 1,404 short tons. If this should have left any doubt in the minds of the Germans that the Combined Bomber Offensive had entered into a new phase, the heavy attacks on May 28 in which another 5 synthetic plants were raided, and the heavy raid on Po-

elitz on the following night, dispelled all doubt from those objecting.

#### **THE GERMAN COUNTER MEASURES**

Fully aware of the disaster these raids spelled for them, the Germans were quick in taking measures. Speer, in his interrogation of May 18, 1945, for instance, states, "When you attacked several hydrogenation plants on May 12, 1944, it became clear to me that a continuation of these attacks would be deadly danger to us. I flew to Poelitz on the same day in order to look at the bombed plants (Speer must have in mind the raid of May 29 on Poelitz). I continued my journey the following night to Obersalzberg to get a special authorization which I transferred to Geilenberg, who carried through the reconstruction of the hydrogenation plants with special effort."

By August 1944, about 150,000 men were working on the reconstruction of the hydrogenation plants alone.

In August 1944 Hitler decreed a nine-months complete stand-still of industrial expansion except those projects that were on the eve of completion. The other new plants under construction were butchered to speed up repairs on damaged plants.

Notwithstanding Germany's plight up till the last, the battle for priorities continued and many attempts by other industries, particularly the armament and airplane industry was made to maintain and expand production in their partic-





... A Trail of Fire

## OTHER SOURCES

The other German sources of oil products such as coal distillation and benzol plants, were given still lower bombing priorities than crude oil refining, and there was little loss in production from these until October 1944. By July 1944 production from synthetic oil plants and crude refining was estimated to have been so reduced that benzol was the largest remaining source of German motor gasoline.

The hydrogenation plants had 48% of the pre-bombing capacity, received 44% of the bomb tonnage, and the consequent loss in production amounted to 65% of the total suffered by the industry. Clearly, bombing of the hydrogenation plants was more profitable than that of any other element of the industry.

It is further indicated that the Fischer-Tropsch synthetic plants were considerably overbombed, and that some of the effort against these could possibly have been used more advantageously elsewhere.

One respect in which such area bombings did affect the oil picture was the increased oil consumption for the rescue work and emergency transportation for which the Germans had large mobile units. In the months of the worst bombing of Hamburg, in the summer of 1943 for instance, such emergency actions required about 20,000 metric tons of liquid fuels.

## BOMBING OF OVER-ALL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Although the bombing of the over-all transportation system and its eventual complete breakdown, has been an important strategic factor in the German power to wage war in as much as it limited their ability to move troops and supplies in sufficient quantity and at the right moment to places where they were most needed, there is no concrete data that it interfered with oil production to any appreciable extent. It was rather the other way round: the lack of oil caused by the bombing of oil targets increased the transportation snarl, since it prevented the Germans from making up by motor transport for the loss of their other means of transportation.

ular industries at the expense of the oil industry.

## DISPERSAL AND UNDERGROUND PROGRAM

It was soon realized that repair of damaged plants alone could not assure a sufficient production of oil. By August 1944, after many discussions had taken place at the highest levels, it was decided to proceed with an elaborate program of dispersal and underground plants to partially offset the effects of the increasing damage which was being caused by the air raids on oil targets.

## CHANGES IN PROCESSES

It is remarkable indeed that the German industry had not made any applicable technical progress in the course of the war in the field of the oil industry. Till the very end, the processes employed were those known to, or developed by, the Germans in pre-war years.

For the planned dispersal and underground plants, with one exception, a catalytic cracking plant project, no new processes for the manufacture of aviation gasoline from crude oil was contemplated.

## CHANGES IN FINISHED PRODUCTS

Shortly before the concentrated attacks on the oil plants began, the Germans had a big construction program for jet-propelled fighter planes. It was

anticipated that large quantities of high grade aviation fuel could thus be replaced by the more readily available and easier to make J-2 fuel, a fuel of the Diesel oil type. Revision of planned production provided for a substantial increase of this J-2 fuel, but the bomber offensive prevented the Germans from putting this program into effect. The jet-propelled plane had not played a big part in this war.

## CRUDE REFINING

The volume of production from crude oil refining suffered much less than that from the synthetic plants. The main reasons for this much smaller loss were, that the crude refineries had some spare capacity and also were given lower priorities in the bombing, since in general the plants were of smaller unit output, more widely dispersed, and the products of less importance than those from the synthetic plants.

However, the indicated reduction in output from crude oil refineries understates the loss to the German economy from the bombing of these plants. Many partially damaged refineries were able to continue crude oil topping operations, producing only motor gasoline of poor quality, diesel oil and residual fuel oil, whereas previously they had in operation more complex facilities.

## EFFECTIVENESS OF VARIOUS BOMBS AND METHODS OF ATTACK

**Fueling:** American H.E. bombs were fused for depth and had very little horizontal effect, contrary to the British H.E. bombs. Consequently, American bombs caused deep craters and therefore heavy damage to the particular part of the plant hit, but did not affect buildings and equipment nearby. British bombs on the other hand were effective in the immediate surroundings of the hit and even caused great blast damage at considerable distances. At great distances it caused destruction of doors, windows and roofs, and at still greater distances destruction of window panes. The R.D.X. bombs used toward the end of the war by the Americans resembled much more closely the effect of the British bombs.

**Size of Bomb:** While heavy bombs naturally cause heavier damage, a large amount of small-calibre bombs (100-lb) can cause considerable damage. Even though the amount of individual damage caused by each 100 lb. bomb may be relatively easily repairable, the large number of relatively small damages causes a considerable delay in the resumption of production. The use of a great number of small bombs has the additional advantage that it covers a large part of the works, whereas the effectiveness of a small number of heavy bombs is limited to a few spots. Bombs with delayed action, i.e., bombs with delay of one to twenty-four hours, were found "unpleasant" because the roping off of the area interfered with the putting back in operation of the equipment in the immediate vicinity. Later, however, the Germans found that such bombs could be isolated with paper balls (*recjtzeitig mit papierballen verdammen*) and from then onward, these bombs were no longer very effective and apparently were not used later on.

**Incendiaries:** Incendiaries were primarily effective where combustible material, particularly wood, was present. However, they were only effective when dropped in great density before fire-fighting crews could put them out. For tanks containing combustible materials, incendiaries were found to be ineffective, since they extinguished in the liquid.

Incendiaries with detonaters, with or without explosives, were only effective in the beginning. After the Germans had learned to master them by awaiting the detonation of the explosives before fighting the fire, they lost their effectiveness. These bombs, in order to be effective, must be dropped with a high density.

Liquid-filled incendiaries are considered effective only on targets where materials which are easily combustible are present. The Germans mastered them by first awaiting the first flare before taking up fire-fighting.

**Methods of Attack:** Precision bombing is considerable most effective. Pattern bombing is only effective when the bombs fall right on the target and is made by successive waves of planes. However, this requires split-second precision and even a fraction of a second may make all the difference. There have been several cases where the whole pattern fell outside the works.

It is considered the most effective method of attack would be a precision attack of long duration, since this would hinder damage repair, in as much as the people would have to take cover for each subsequent attack. For greater effect in such attacks high explosives and incendiaries are used simultaneously.

**Aiming Points:** All parts of the plants are more or less vulnerable to direct hits. Fragmentation damage is mainly to lines and mains for the transportation of liquids or gases. Fragments perforate such lines and may cause a number of small fires which can, however, with a trained crew, be easily mastered. The use of a sufficient number of valves in such pipes greatly helps to localize the damage.

Fragmentation damage to gasholders is not considered serious; such damage can be quickly repaired. Tanks containing combustible liquids are very susceptible to bomb fragments because the liquid is easily ignited. However, it is generally possible to repair even such damage quickly. Damage to the tracks and roads in the works generally seriously delays repairs.

The bombing of tetraethyl lead plants would have put the Germans in a serious predicament to produce the desired quantity of high octane aviation

gasoline. Bombing of these facilities was recommended by some industrial experts as early as 1942, but the reasons why such plants were not attacked are unknown.

There is insufficient data to determine to what extent bombing of the steel and equipment industry has been a contributory factor in the success of the bombing of the oil industry, by slowing up repairs of existing plants and the completion of new plants.

Plants were too much integrated, making single targets too vulnerable. Intergration of hydrogenation with ammonia, methanol and buna may have been understandable up to a point, but the integration of D.H.D. with hydrogenation meant that Germany's entire aviation fuel program was made dependent on hydro plants. An important reason for this close integration has undoubtedly been I. G. Farben's desire to keep their finger in every pie. Their political influence and the fact that they had their men in several of the most important key positions in Berlin, could stifle any opposition.

Over-optimism regarding invulnerability from air attacks.

Bad system of priorities -- Priorities were by class of industry rather than by specific needs. For instance, the tank industry had such a high priority that certificates for raw materials and labor were issued to this industry almost without checking the urgency of their specific needs. Thus, it was possible for that industry to maintain, almost till the last, men in non-essential jobs, whereas other industries lacked men in even the most vital places.

The overlapping authority of various agencies; this resulted in an unclear distinction of responsibility and continuous fights over priorities for labor and materials.

Failure to prevent private interests from being put before the national interest -- for example, I.G. managed to get their men in key positions in practically all the government agencies, and much of the fuel and chemical program has accordingly been shaped to the I.G. interests.

### INFLUENCE ON STRATEGY

1. There can be little doubt that the oil position has greatly influenced the Ger-



man strategy both as regards building and the extent and type of their campaigns.

2. In his interview of June 27, 1945, Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel admits that the German War Lords had not anticipated that out of the Polish Campaign of 1939 global war would result. The low stocks of oil products at the outbreak of the war confirms this, and the so-called "phoney stage" of the war must be regarded as a temporizing of the war on the part of Germany until such time as the larger part of the capacity under construction would come in operation. It can be hardly a coincidence that Germany started its lightning war in the West in May 1940 at a time when substantially all of the hydrogenation capacity then under construction came in full operation.

#### **IMPAIRMENT OF MILITARY EFFORTS DUE TO OIL SHORTAGE**

Germany's military effort has been impaired in many respects by the oil shortage both directly and indirectly. For instance, the shortage of aviation fuel necessitated drastic cuts in the training program of pilots for the Luftwaffe, which resulted in a rise of the number of German plane accidents and combat losses.

From the interrogation of Colonel Walter Schwartz on May 21, 1945 it appears that training flyers had to stop entirely in September 1944 when no further fuel was allotted to training fields, most of the installations closing down, and the personnel returning largely to infantry units.

Goering, in his interrogation of June 29, 1945, stated that the HE-177, which was put in operation on the Russian front after it had been used against England, had to be grounded because it consumed too much gasoline and Germany didn't have enough of it. In the same interview Goering also points to the high loss in ferrying aircraft, especially in fighters, due mainly to inexperienced pilots. Goering also states that not all of the fighter production became operational in the end due to lack of gasoline.

During the period July to September 1944, the Army High Command imposed a reduction in allocation of motor gasoline which was further de-

creased almost daily during October due to the effects of our bombing of the oil plants. This continued bombing caused Von Rundstedt to call for still greater economy and a more extensive use of producer gas generators.

These economies could only be effected at the sacrifice of a certain amount of mobility and efficiency. For instance, all trucks were required to pull trailers; gasoline trucks were substituted to a large extent by hot bulb tractors and trailers; and several are the instances where animal-drawn vehicles were used by the army. Even at the front, artillery and munitions were often brought up with animal and human force.

Even more incisive impairments of the German Army's mobility caused by fuel shortage were related by General Buhle, of the Army Armaments and Equipment Office, in his interrogation of May 24, 1945, when he stated that due to the lack of gasoline the motorized supply columns of all Infantry divisions had to be converted to entirely horse-drawn transportation toward the end of 1944, greatly reducing the Infantry divisions' combat effectiveness.

General Buhle, in his interrogation on May 29, 1945, related that during the Ardennes offensive of winter 1944-45, several armored divisions were robbed of their effectiveness for three to four days when stalled due to lack of fuel. At that time there was not enough fuel left at the front to send back truck columns for fresh supplies. General Buhle ascribes the German High Command's failure to fully exploit its initial success in this Battle of the Bulge partly to the lack of fuel which had immobilized those tank reserves which were to carry further the initial thrust to the Meuse River.

In conclusion, there can be no doubt that the havoc wrought by the concentrated bombing of oil targets has been a major factor in Germany's defeat in the field, and has thus saved many precious lives.

The frequent personal interference of Hitler with his impul-

sive and often incompatible decisions regarding what had to be produced, when and how. Confirmed that Hitler expected the maximum by asking the impossible. Since few, if anyone, dared to argue with him, the consequences of his demands for more production of one item resulting in a loss of another item were never pointed out to him. If thus a shortage resulted in that other item, and it was called to his attention his solution was simply, "produce more of that item." Consequently, it soon became a continuous patching of the one hole by springing another. The interrogations of several of Hitler's closest collaborators clearly show that, "No one but the Fuehrer knows the complete picture." However, it is evident that, not only did he keep his closest associates in the dark regarding "the complete picture", but he himself, by cutting short arguments, cannot have been sufficiently aware of the full import of his decisions on the oil production program.

### **Thursday, 2 November, 1944 (F.O. #467) (168/169) MERSEBURG**

Like an inkwell tossed into Hell  
Head to heels  
The wind roared across the sky  
Spilling 500 105mm and 128 flak guns.

We took a hundred holes  
In "Round Trip" - moved up  
To lead, when Tietjen's plane  
Dropped out of formation.

Oh, Leuna Synthetic Oil Plant --  
You Hydra-headed monster!  
We cut off ten heads, a dozen more  
Appeared! We'd have to come back!

But all those wonderful boys  
Who were lost that day!  
Femoyer and Allen and Moses ---  
Too many, too many to count!  
- but History changed.

Marvin Silbersher, 447th BG  
Lake Hopatcong, NJ

# MISSION NO. 33

## OIL REFINERY AT RUHRLAND, GERMANY

### SEPTEMBER 11, 1944

The Eighth Air Force assigned 1,131 bombers to strike various oil refineries in Germany; 1,016 effectively hit the assigned targets. The 100th Bomb Group put up three squadrons totaling 36 bombers, losing one bomber in a crash landing prior to leaving England.

At briefing we were informed that Ruhrland would be our target, however, there was no mention that we would be the only Bomb Group to hit Ruhrland. We proceeded along the path of the bomber fleet with a heading toward Berlin.

Near Frankfurt, at about 10 A.M. the 100th alone headed east toward Ruhrland. About

ten minutes later, I became aware that we no longer had fighter escort protection.

I notified our pilot, Murray "Muley" Johnson of our situation and he became concerned that we were the only group heading to Ruhrland, especially without fighter support.

This has fortified my contention that we were never briefed that the 100th Bomb Group would alone strike Ruhrland. The Czech border is a long way to travel without fighter escort. As we approached the target area, all three Squadrons High, Low and Lead, made a turn at the initial point (IP) to start our bomb run.

The Low Squadron swung wide in the turn and were immediately pounced upon by about forty-five FW190s coming out of the sun. The two Wingmen off the Low Squadron Leader were hit by gunfire and turned into the leader and all three bombers became one mass of fire and bodies. Several aircraft exploded showering airplane parts and human bodies all over the sky. Other aircraft went down in tight spins. Some crew members managed to bail out and were taken prisoner. We lost one hundred airmen on this day plus numerous wounded crewmen.

We lost twelve crews and aircraft. The whole ordeal took no longer than thirty seconds.

The attacking FW190s were now below the remaining Lead and High Squadrons. Presumably to save fuel, the FWs attacked from below in elements of three flying side by side, an unusual maneuver. This caused a very slow rate of closure between the attacking and attacked aircraft. A dangerous maneuver for the enemy fighters.

I was flying in the tail position of "The Silver Dollar." The tail gunner in the aircraft below was seriously wounded when a 20mm cannon shell exploded in his gunner's compartment and as he could no longer protect the rear of our element, we exchanged positions in the formation.

The leader of the three attacking FWs would press the at-

tack after his wingmen peeled off at about three hundred yards from our formation. Cannon shells burst all around the fuel tanks in our wings and all about the aircraft. The first attack on the Low Squadron caused bedlam among our crew and I could not communicate with the ball turret gunner, Clyde Forrester, who was the only other gunners position who could bring his gunfire to bear on the attacking FW190s. The co-pilot, Don Rolhfs, finally established some intercom discipline and I directed Forrester to a position of five-o'clock low, the direction of the oncoming fighters. He had difficulty in orientation himself and barely fired a shot.

I hit one leader about a hundred yards out with a burst of continuous gunfire as I thought he was going to ram our aircraft. His engine burst into flames from nacelle to tail. He headed for the ground and I was credited with downing one enemy fighter.

When the next three FWs approached, I ran out of ammunition in the left gun and at the same time the right gun jammed with 19 rounds remaining in the belt. I immediately lifted the hinged armor plate in front of me and hooked it to the top of the gunner's compartment to allow access to the two guns.

All of sudden, the armor plate came loose and hit me in the back of my head, knocking me unconscious for an unknown period of time. When I regained consciousness we had already dropped our bombs and were headed for home. I cleared the jammed gun and put my position in order, when suddenly our fighter escort appeared and the remaining trip home was uneventful.

Our aircraft was one of the first to land at our base, Thorpe Abbots, and as I alighted from the aircraft an officer in a jeep rushed up inquiring where the Low Squadron was, as they were scheduled to be the first squadron to land. When I told him that the whole squadron was wiped out, tears came to his eyes. He turned and left hurriedly in his jeep to inform the Group Commander of the calamity that had befallen the 100th Bomb Group.

The Germans sent up five hundred fighters this day. The Eighth Air Force lost 40 aircraft on September 11, 1944 and 35 on the 12th, the day of my last mission.

**Richard K. Thormahlen**  
Tail Gunner, 100th BG  
Hot Springs Village, AR



### Lost Crews - 11 Sept 1944

Crewmen	KIA	MIA	POW	EVA/CL
109	48	2	47	12

**12 Aircraft lost in combat; 1 crashed on takeoff**



# Book Reviews

All reviews are of books of interest to and for the pleasure of the membership of the 8th AF Historical Society and are current and available in print. All reviews are by the editor.

## RHAPSODY IN JUNK

### A Daughter's Return To Germany To Finish Her Father's Story by Marilyn Jeffers Walton

The story is told by the daughter of Thomas Jeffers, 458<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, who flew his missions out of Horham St. Faith airbase as a bombardier on the B-24 named by its first aircrew, *Rhapsody In Junk*. The aircraft was on its 67<sup>th</sup> mission, this time – 18 June 1944 – to German oil refineries at Fassberg and Stade, north of Kiel. The bomber crew of pilot Henry Northrup were destined not to return from this one. Flak batteries knocked out two engines and then a third. Jeffers and his buddies bailed out. One crewman was killed and the remainder spent the rest of the war in Stalags, being freed at Moosburg by General George Patton's Armored Corps on 29 April 1945.

The *Rhapsody In Junk* crashed near a farmhouse in the northern German town of Blick, a crash witnessed by many of the townspeople. Pilot Northrup stayed at the controls until the last minute in order to avoid crashing into the village. Marilyn Walton's book records her trips to Germany 60 years later to search out the crash site and to interview German citizens who were involved in the capture of

her father. The families welcomed the Waltons as families who had mutually suffered the horrors of war together many decades ago. She and her family found interesting relics of the crash and uncovered details of the fateful day of the crash. They travel to the sites of POW camp Stalag Luft III and Moosburg, the last stop for her father before being liberated. The personal tales of the prisoners ordeals as POWs are a highlight of the volume.



The author concludes the book with stories of her interactions with crewmembers' relatives and with the *Rhapsody's* crew careers after the war was over. Photographs throughout the volume show wartime

scenes and a number of current depictions of relevant sites as related in the story. The raising of the American flag in the town of Moosburg on liberation day is shown and the scene vividly depicted.

There are 77 Chapters and an Epilogue in this fascinating 490-page softback volume. Author Walton writes with an authentic and personal style best described in the Foreword by Lt. General A. P. Clark, one of the Eighth's early POWs (33 months) and later in his distinguished career as Superintendent of the U.S. Air Force Academy:

"Marilyn Walton is one of very few people to my knowledge who has immersed themselves in the POW experience to the point where they can write about it as if they had lived the experience themselves."

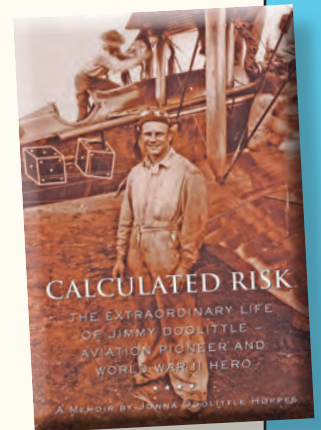
The book's first edition was published by AuthorHouse on 30 April 2007. Contacts to obtain

a copy are at [www.authorhouse.com](http://www.authorhouse.com) or write: AuthorHouse, 1663 Liberty Drive, Suite 200, Bloomington IN 47403 tel # 1-800-839-8640 or in the UK at: [www.authorhouse.co.uk](http://www.authorhouse.co.uk) or tel # 08001974150 Usual online book outlets also feature the volume.

## CALCULATED RISK

### The Extraordinary Life of Jimmy Doolittle – Aviation Pioneer and World War II Hero A Memoir by Jonna Doolittle Hoppes

This personal volume is the story of General James "Jimmy" Doolittle, pioneer aviator and Commander of the 8th Air Force. The author, Jonna Hoppes, is Jimmy Doolittle's granddaughter and along with her parents and other members of the Doolittle family, has put together an inside history of Doolittle's life and accomplishments. She chose the title, *Calculated Risk*, because of her grandfather's ability to carefully consider risks involved in flying and on his many accomplishments on the ground.



Doolittle is best known by veterans of the Mighty Eighth for his intense and effective command of the 8th during World War II, duties which began in January 1944 and continued until the war ended in May 1945. Author Hoppes relates the many aspects of Doolittle's life as an early advocate of flying after WWI and of innovations such as blind flying on instruments and on techniques of air racing. He also was instrumental in commercial spheres, especially with his innovations developing high-octane gasolines by the Shell Corporation. Her volume, however, goes far beyond this histori-



# Book Reviews

cal depiction of this famous American. She tells the story of his relationships with his family and close friends, relating her personal remembrances of her grandfather. The result is a unique tale of a man revered by 8th veterans, dignitaries world-wide, and many others involved with the history of American aviation.

Jonna Hoppes was the guest speaker at the Gala Banquet of the Historical Society's 2008 annual reunion in Kalamazoo and over 500 attendees applauded her story of their wartime leader, many purchasing a signed copy of the book, proceeds of which the author donates to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum. You may obtain your copy of this very well-written book by contacting Santa Monica Press LLC, PO Box 1076, Santa Monica CA 90406-1076 email [books@santamonicapress.com](mailto:books@santamonicapress.com) The volume is hardback, 336 pages, with photographic sections.

## LUCKY DOG

by Douglas E. Holt

This new release is the story of one member of the U. S. Army Air Corps during World War II. Douglas Holt presents an authoritative presentation of a combat crew member of the 8th Air Force. After training, author Holt arrived at Ridgewell airbase in England and flew his first mission with the 381st Bomb Group as copilot of a B-17 on the Willis Black crew. Their first mission was to Munich on 16 July 1944 on their way to completing their tour of 35 missions.

Describing each mission individually, Holt includes details of the technology as it was developing during the last half of 1944. Especially memorable is mission #20 – to the German oil complexes at Merseburg. On that mission the crew's B-17 was hit by heavy flak, lost an engine and

hydraulics, and wound up with a crash landing at Ridgewell. Flak had injured most of the crew members and one piece hit the author between the eyes. They all made it home okay. The book's final page is composed of an impressive photo of the bomb blasts on the synthetic oil refinery at Merseberg. Other missions are similarly depicted in this softback volume that includes period photographs and maps.

This book will give the reader an intimate look at what a young 8th AF combat crewman experienced during the war. An additional feature of interest is the author's description of his return to the States at the end of 1944 and his meeting movie actresses Jeanne Crain and Judy Garland and his mustering out in 1945. The 174-page book is available by contacting Douglas Holt, 13106 NW Shoreland Drive, Mequon WI 53907 tel #262-242-1709

## WHISTLE FOR THE WIND

My Collection of Short Stories

by Proctor R. Bright as told to Mary Bright

This unique volume depicts the side of war not often found in circulation, faith-based as indicated by its title *Whistle for the Wind* – an old farmer's whistle appeal to God for wind to blow the chaff from their daily harvests of grain, an appeal always effective. The individual stories relate the author's youth and his experiences as a black American soldier during World War II. Porter Bright had, as a young man, bragged to his wife that he was going to join the army to end the war. "You want it over? Send me to get the job done!" He possessed the youthful confidence and spirit of Americans, white or black. He was ready to serve his country, contributing to the progress beginning to be made in America's culture of the early 1940s.

Drafted into the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps, Bright was stationed in France after the invasion, one of his duties being to guard German prisoners. His unit worked with the prisoners to stack gasoline drums flown in by bombers of the 8th AF during the shortage for American ground troops

moving across the continent towards Germany. They were near the front lines and the threat of enemy fire was always present. Towards the end of the war, Bright was assigned to the war in the Pacific

– the Phillipines – working in an engineering and mechanic unit. His trip back home after the war by ship and a 3,000 mile train ride back to his South Carolina home are especially notable. He began life from scratch again and states, "World War II had taken me to worlds I never knew. God had taken me over a path I never dreamed I would go."

The stories, in chapters, stand separately to give a fascinating look into one southern man's life and family and his wartime experiences. The author's life has been one of faith and proud accomplishments.

This uplifting informative 178-page softback book is available from Get the Message Out Publishers, PO Box 1144, Rincon GA 31326 [www.whistleforthewind.com](http://www.whistleforthewind.com) email the last 1@alltel.net



## THE LAST OF THE COMBAT B-17 DRIVERS

by Harold D. Weekley, USAF (Ret.) and James B. Zazas

Hal Weekley was still flying B-17 Flying Fortresses at age 80, most recently not on bomb runs but flying the big bomber in to air shows and reunions of World War II airmen, piloting the EAA's B-17 *Aluminum Overcast* – the aircraft that displays the colors and group insignia markings of the 398th Bomb Group. During the war his B-17 flew out of station 131 at Nuthampstead, the home





of the 398th Bombardment Group.

Missions became routine for pilot Weekley, right up until 13 August 1944 when he and his crew took off for a target at Le Manoir France, bombing a large railroad bridge which was to be used by the German army in their withdrawal from the Normandy front. Hit by flak on the relatively brief bomb run, three engines were damaged and there was a fire between #1 and #2. Weekley's bailout was successful and he was befriended by two young French boys. His aircraft, *Bronx Bomber II*, had exploded after the crew exited and landed near Lammerville, France. The last half of the author's volume is a fascinating story of his Escape and Evasion experience.

In the course of relating his evading capture by occupying German forces, Weekley gives a detailed and personal account of the trials and experiences of Allied airmen who were assisted by helpers and local citizens. He realized then, as did the helper families, that if they were found out by the Germans, the airmen would be executed as spies and the families deported or summarily executed.

This attractive large format 335 pp book with period photographs was 20 years in its preparation by the author and is available in soft or hardback. It includes a fine Bibliography and history of the 398th Bomb Group following the text materials. The publication is distributed by Atlasbooks, 30 Amberwood Parkway, PO Box 388, Ashland OH 44805 tel #1-800-247-6553 [www.atlasbooks.com](http://www.atlasbooks.com)

## FORTRESSES OVER NUTHAMPSTEAD

**The 398th Bombardment Group (H) 1943-1945**

**by Cliff T. Bishop**

The history of the 398th Bombardment Group, who initi-



ated missions from their airbase at Nuthampstead in April 1944, is told in this quality volume from East Anglia Books. Cliff Bishop has thoroughly researched the group's records and presents the story in detail in this large format hardback book.

The chronological history is told month

by month, followed by the missions and fates of each Flying Fortress flown by the 398th.

Period photographs are presented throughout and mission maps and targeting charts are included. Each aircraft is presented and missing aircrews are listed with the events of their fateful missions. Names and tail numbers of each 398th B-17 are itemized along with aircraft histories. Crash site photos are included with the stories of the aircraft accidents. In addition to crew photos are numerous memorial plaques of airmen and crews as seen in the Memorial Gardens of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Savannah, Georgia. There is a color section towards the back of the book depicting the 398th airbase as it appears today.

This high quality book presents 278 pages and is available from East Anglia Books, Station Road, Eisenham, Bishop's Stortford, England ISBN 1 869987 10 1

## A VIEW FROM ABOVE

**A World War II Memoir & History European & Pacific Theaters by Carl D. Petit**

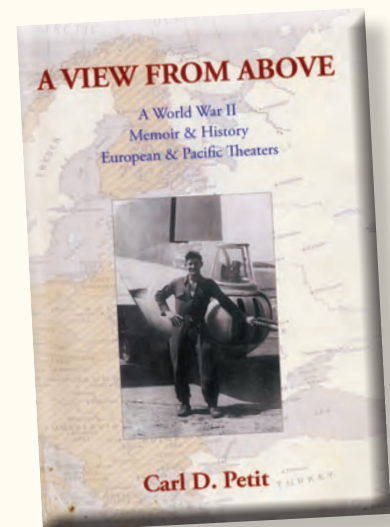
Carl Petit's book is his story of World War II and he has it divided into four sections.

He flew his missions as a radio operator with the 493<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group and after a description of his training period and trip to England he tells of the basics of what a serviceman expe-

rienced in the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force. Using his wartime diary with input from recollections of fellow airmen, the author talks of his combat missions and the shootdown of his crew. Throughout the volume, original diary records of servicemen are used to describe various views and events of combat.

As the book evolves, the technology and the details of the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force in its war against Germany unfold. Section 2 of the book explains the situation in the Pacific – the war against the Japanese. The history of details of the war deepens in this section and Petit's military career evolves as well. His post-war assignments in the military are a refreshing inclusion in books that tell the story of an 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force airman. The reader, in finishing the book, will understand the challenges faced by Americans during the war in the most important combat theaters. Appendices outline the roles of the Merchant Marine and Women in War. Naval and Naval air battles are reviewed.

The book is softback and is 440 pages in length. Photographs are dispersed throughout the volume. To obtain a copy, the author may be reached at tel #843-795-3553 or Book Surge, LLC tel #866-308-6235.



## CONTINUING THE 8TH AF LEGACY #12

Joseph Patrick Keeley

Greeting fellow members of the Mighty Eighth. Another summer has passed and so has the 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Eighth Air Force Historical Society Reunion held the week of July 17 – July 22, the first Reunion held in July and the weather and the Radisson Hotel in Kalamazoo were up for it. Over 400 attended from all over including from across the pond in the UK.

I would like this article to update you on what happened at the Reunion regarding our NexGen movement. Having the Reunion in July was to attract and welcome more NexGen members and those curious to attend our annual reunion.

As it turned out, it did work for the Society's first-held Reunion in July. Next year the 34<sup>th</sup> Reunion will be held in Savannah, Georgia, in early August and should prove to be one the Society's best, having the Mighty Eighth Museum located in Pooler, Georgia.

I hosted the NexGen seminar along with Norma Chesser for membership, Bob Books for Communications and Mark Copeland for Education. We had a good turnout of 100 plus with good

ideas and open discussions regarding all of the facets of the Initiative. I had a very informative and interesting conversation with John Leathley from Suffolk County in England. John and I discussed how we can educate those in his area about the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Historical Society which, John explained, many are unaware exists.

The Research Seminar followed with a good turnout. This was the first time such a seminar was held and was hosted by Bob Books and the Heritage League of the 2nd Air Division consisting of Greg Hatton, Annette Tison, John Gilbert and Ben Jones both from the UK, Brian Mahoney - the President of the Heritage League, and Dr. Vivian Rogers-Price from the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum. This panel was comprised solely of NexGens. This was a very informative and well-received seminar. Remember we recommend two great websites for those doing research. [www.8thafhs.org](http://www.8thafhs.org) & [www.b24.net](http://www.b24.net)

I would like to mention those who attended the Reunion that came from England, all being NexGen John Gilbert, Belinda & David Crow, John Leathley and author Martin Bowman. Please forgive if I missed someone.

I would like to thank them for attending as it is very encouraging having a NexGen representation from the UK.

My next article will update you on all of the Society's Initiatives consisting of Membership, Communication and Education. Our online membership enrollment has been very impressive and I would thank you all.

If you have any comments or ideas regarding the Society's NexGen Initiatives, my address is posted on the back of the front cover page and my email address is [fxe84@optonline.net](mailto:fxe84@optonline.net).

On a sad side note I would to say how much Craig Harris will be missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing him. Craig left us on August 7<sup>th</sup>. Cheers Craig.

Please remember to "Support Our Troops".

**Pat Keeley**  
Board of Directors 8AFHS



## LICENSE PLATES OF THE MIGHTY EIGHTH



Tom Hardin, 303rd BG pilot now flies a much-decorated golf cart with clubs, which won honors in a 1200-cart parade at his retirement community. Tom and his wife have a grandson who is now a cadet at the USAF Academy and a son who is Retired USAF.



The beautiful Mustang belongs to 8th AFHS Charter member Ken Anderson, 447th BG, of Laguna Beach, California.



# BULLETIN BOARD

## **GORDON AND CONNIE RICHARD HONORED AT CHANGE OF COMMAND CEREMONY**

Honored guests at the Alconbury airbase Change of Command Ceremony were Connie and Gordon Richards, long-time dedicated 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS representatives in the U.K. USAF Col. Jack Jones was reassigned and Col. Robert Steele took command of the 423<sup>rd</sup> Air Base Group.



At Milton Earnest Hall, Station 506, a plaque in memory of all who served and to Major Glenn Miller was dedicated. A very nice replica of the plaque arrived along with a photograph of Gordon and Walter Cronkite, who flew with the 8th and wrote columns for the Stars and Stripes during the war.

Connie planted a tree where the flagpole stood and recorded the event on a DVD, of which Connie states that she will forward a copy of to whoever may want one. Find the Richards' address on the Masthead, page 2 of this issue.



**Gordon Richards with Walter Cronkite**

## **JOINT POW/MIA ACCOUNTING COMMAND**

The Mission of the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command located on the island of Oahu in Hawaii, is to achieve the fullest possible accounting of all Americans missing as a result of the nation's conflicts. The command was officially created in October 2003 and is manned by 400 hand-picked members of all Armed Services civilians. The laboratory portion of JPAC, the Central Identification Laboratory (CIL) is the largest forensic anthropology laboratory in the world.



JPAC carries out technical negotiations with representatives of foreign governments around the world to assist in investigative and recovery operations wherever JPAC teams deploy. The facility identifies an average of six MIAs each month, now totaling over 1300 identifications. There are currently 18 Recovery Teams whose members conduct in-depth research and recovery missions to recover and identify remains of U. S. servicemen. One recovery mission and its archeological excavations usually lasts from 35 to 60 days. A recovery team consists of 10-14 individuals. Storage facilities are located in numerous countries to assist the teams in their recovery programs.

Missing in Action servicemen from World War II number approximately 78,000, with 35,00 deemed still recoverable, the remainder being lost at sea or form airwar fatalities. Identification of remains and artifactual evidence recovery enable JPAC to contact families of veterans who have been recovered. They assist in arrangement for their return and with honors for the deceased. Contact may be made by writing the JPAC Public Affairs Office, 310 Worcester Ave., Bldg 45, Hickam AFB HI 96853-5530 or tel # 808-448-1934 [www.jpac.pacom.mil](http://www.jpac.pacom.mil)

Susie Stephens  
President, GA Committee  
for POW/MIAs inc





# BULLETIN BOARD

## V-J Day in TEXAS

On 15 August 2007, the state of Texas paid official tribute to the Texans who served with unquestionable valor in World War II. The Memorial to these men and women was dedicated on the anniversary of the Victory in the Pacific war – V-J Day - on the State Capitol grounds in Austin, with the dedication speech made by Texas governor Rick Perry.

In his talk, Perry stated "Our country is built on the desire for freedom, forged in conflict some 224 years ago. This memorial is a simple yet stirring reminder that we esteem most highly those who shed their blood in our nation's defense." I hope that you veterans here today will accept my thanks and the gratitude of more than 23 million Texans. It is fitting that we should place the monument here on the capitol grounds, with a view of the Goddess of Liberty as she stands guard on the capitol dome. I pray that our love of liberty will always compel us as a nation, as individuals, to fight for freedom the world over."

Governor Perry is a fifth-generation Texan, coming from a tenant farm in West Texas to become governor of our nation's second largest state. He is a lifetime member of the American Legion. His father, Ray Perry, was a tailgunner in the 95th Bomb Group, completing 35 missions from July 44 until May 45. Anita Perry's father was also an 8th Air Force veteran serving as a P-38 pilot in the war.

A special guest, personally invited to the Governor's mansion and to the event by the governor and his wife, was Cecil Rigsby, who also flew P-38s. Rigsby says, "It was a moving dedication ceremony and the governor gave a great speech. All World War II veterans who were present were recognized. As I was leaving after the luncheon at the governor's home, I took the opportunity to plant a big kiss on the cheek of the lovely Anita – who would expect less from a pilot!! This is the kind of leadership we have here in Texas. Governor Perry didn't know me from Adam, but included me anyway."



## WOUNDED WARRIOR PROJECT

The Wounded Warrior Project is unique in its concept and in its implementation. In recent conflict, more than 22,000 American service personnel have been injured, many seriously. Often the wounded troops require extensive surgical procedures and experience extended hospital stays.

The WWP helps these soldiers become active again, supplying daily civilian clothing and toiletries and helping them plan rehabilitation activities. They include family assistance in their programs. Some of their methods

of encouraging the disabled troops include adaptive sports programs that enable amputees to take part in skiing, scuba diving, boating, camping, fishing and other active sports. Wounded warriors go out to civic and military organizations and promote the WWP program with lectures, video and power point demonstrations.

Recently Ed Salua, himself a lower extremity amputee from an explosion while deployed to Afghanistan, visited the Savannah Chapter of the Air Force Association. He states that the morale of the hospitalized personnel is noticeably improved after being visited by WWP volunteers. In his presentation, he stated that the Wounded Warrior Project receives no governmental funding – all activities are funded by private contri-

butions and support by military and civic organizations. Contributions to the WWP 501c3 organization may be made to the Wounded Warrior Project, 7020 A. C. Skinner Parkway, Suite 100, Jacksonville FL 32256 tel #904-296-7350 email: woundedwarriorproject.org





# TAPS

## CECIL CRAIG HARRIS

Craig Harris served two consecutive terms as President of the national 8th AF Historical Society and was an Emeritus member of the Board of Directors. Craig was known to many members across the country. During the war, he flew a tour of missions as a B-17 copilot with the 457th Bomb Group in Glatton, England. His post-war career included serving as an Engineer at Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee and in the Department of Radiology at Duke University in Durham North Carolina. Craig served as President of the 457th Bomb Group Association and co-authored the Group's three-volume history, *Fiat Accompli*.

Craig Harris spent his years after the death of his beloved wife, Bobbie, deeply immersed in activities of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum, serving on its Board of Trustees and also as a docent. He contributed for years to the educational endeavors of the Museum, active in writing publications directed toward students and teachers. He was interested in exhibit production at the Museum, serving on the Exhibit Planning Committee working with the history of the 8th Air Force.

His presence at the Museum as well as at Historical Society functions will be missed.



**Craid Harris**

**Fox, Robert**, Middleton MA; 55th FG P-51 pilot

**Walker, Jack**, San Diego CA; 55th FG pilot

Wolff, Walter, Naples FL; B-17 bombardier, 33 missions

Rottman, Robert, Dearborn MI; 466th

BG Group navigator; Exec to 466th Group commander; career with Ford Motor Co. -from his daughter Patricia Healey

## B/Gen Robin Olds

Fighter pilot and ace in both the P-38 and P-51 aircraft, 479th FG; graduate of West Point where he was a member of the football team. Olds often said that the two best things about World War II were London and Hub Zemke. An aggressive warrior, he once was heard to say, "When I shot down my first two airplanes, I was relieved to see that they had black crosses on their wings."

He flew jets and flew aerobatics. He always regretted not getting to fly combat in Korea, but became known as a tough commander of The Wolfpack, fighting enemy MIGs in the air over Vietnam. He valued most the courage and skill of his aircrews. Olds returned from combat to become Commandant of Cadets at his alma mater, West Point.

General Robin Olds finished his career with 17 enemy kills: 13 in WWII and four in Vietnam.

Dunn, Carl, Southland OR; 361st FG mechanic

Rogers, William, LaFarge WI; 361st FG pilot

Hoffman, Glenn, Mesquite NV; 361st FG armorer

Gazze, Jack, Midland TX; 457th BG pilot; active in the Commemorative Air Force (formerly Confederate Air Force); volunteer reader for Midland Tape Lending Library for the Blind for 24 years, becoming a listener of up to five books each week as he lost his eyesight

Lotsch, Charles, Brooklyn NY; supporter of Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum

Mills, Harold; 384th BG 8th AF -from Bert Milling  
Cramer, Darrell, Springville UT; P-51 pilot  
Ethridge, Jack, Luling TX; 55th FG pilot; businessman, owner of the E&K Lumber Co.; active in community services; past member of the Watermelon Thump Society

Mullins, Tom;  
34th BG pilot; flew Lancaster bombers with the Royal Canadian Air Force early in WWII;

Treasurer North Alabama Chapter Jewell, David, Dallas TX; 55th FG pilot

with 67 missions; geophysicist -from his wife Helen Longo, Joseph, Milwaukee WI; 448th BG B-24 waistgunner; 34-year career as an educator

Kostan, Michael, Chicago IL; 453rd BG Petty, William Marvin M. D., Louisville KY; 351st BG B-17 pilot; forced landing/flak; interned with crew in Sweden  
Christ, George "Mike", Winter Haven FL; 491st BG nose gunner on Doug Hart crew; 28 missions; granddaughter, graduate of West Point, pilots helicopters -from crewmate Ralph Jacobs crew #40 navigator  
Maynard, Willie, Augusta GA; 446th BG; DFC

Southwick, Leslie, St. Louis MO; 55th FG Headquarters

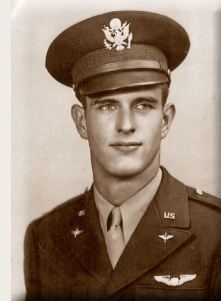
Ford, Gervais "G.W.", San Jose; flew a 35-mission tour in B-24s and then 18 more missions as a P-51 fighter pilot; shot down and evaded capture with assistance of French Helpers; followed family tradition serving 40 as college professor, at Cal State; Charter member of the Doolittle Chapter  
Sowers, Dr. Paul, DDS, Orlando FL; -from Dr. George Starks, 92nd BG Scarborough, John "Jack", Stratford Harbor PA; B-17

pilot; POW shot down on Second Schweinfurt "Black Thursday" mission 14 October 2007  
Lydic, Robert, Verona PA; 384th BG bombardier and Mickey radar navigator -from 384th BG friend Jack Russell

Bogue, Georges, St. Louis; 8th AF



**Tom Mullins**



**Paul Sowers**



# TAPS

Hutchinson, Jack, Ft. Myers FL; 389th BG lead pilot  
 Kendrick, Albert Joseph, Birmingham AL; served as a machinist in Field Maintenance at Alconbury, 1942-45; -from Charlotte and Rick Graham  
 Hildebrand, Kenneth, Columbus OH; 303rd BG; last surviving crew member of the B-17 One O'Clock Jump – from Robert Carter  
 Plotcher, Martin, Riverside CA; 303rd BG pilot  
 BeAbout, Edgar Guy, Dallas TX; 55th FG radio operations; career with Texas Instruments; as a member of the EAA built and flew acrobatic aircraft and constructed his own airport; HAM operator  
 Fox, Robert, Middleton MA; 55th FG P-51 pilot  
 Walker, Jack, San Diego CA; 55th FG pilot  
 Roszell, Thomas, Troy OH; 453rd BG – from nieces Cathy Roszell and Janice Moore  
 Furlong, Harold "Pat"; 93rd BG flight engineer – from crewmate Chester Bruzinski  
 Bruyette, David, St. Albans VT; 31 missions 8th AF  
 Lindstrom, Adair, North Augusta SC; 453rd BG; 25 combat missions; career in construction in Florida for 37 years; burial in Arlington National Cemetery – from his daughter Vivian Grkovic

Nathan, Dr. Daniel, Fort Valley GA; Flight surgeon WWII; flew numerous bombing missions to learn what the airmen experienced in combat; dedicated family physician and active in community organizations  
 Kinch, Bartholomew, Long Island NY; 8th Air Force war correspondent in England; 37-year career editing and reporting with United Press International; interviewed bandleader Glenn Miller just before he took off on his final flight  
 Kuti, William "Buff", Lehigh Co. PA; 51 missions in the 15th AF;  
 Gallina, Joseph, Whitehall Township PA; 8th AF

Kissling, James, Spring Township PA; B-24 pilot; shot down on 7 July 1944; POW  
 Roat, William, Philadelphia PA; 446th BG  
 Miles, Harold, Anderson IN; 8th AF; POW; 38 years in hardware business in Toledo OH; -from Bert Milling, 486th BG, copilot of Slammin' Spammy Garrison, Jerome "Jerry", St. Simons Island; B-17 pilot 8th AF; flew Dachau concentration camp evacuation missions and Operation Chowhound food drop missions to the Netherlands the week of VE Day; career as noted architect  
 Greenamyre, Vernie "Doc", Leavenworth KS; 55th FG; Medical Administrative Officer; P-38 pilot; shot down on 16 June 1944; POW  
 Thomas, E. C., Graniteville SC; 55th FG; active lifetime in his church activities as Deacon and Music Director  
 Kruty, Samuel "Sam", Chicago IL; 390th BG bombardier with 35 missions –from Jack Washington  
 Garvin, Edward, Savannah GA; 386th BG mechanic and Chaplain's assistant; career in family business at Crystal Ice; Richard Stone Exports; inventor of offset crankshaft engine mechanism; Woodbury, Marion, Savannah GA; WWII Pacific Theater, bronze star; distinguished career in Insurance industry U.S. and international; early Foundation member Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum  
 Kern, Bentley; 389th BG Lead crew; 30 missions –from crewmate Roy Duffey  
 Holcombe, Malcolm; 389th BG Lead crew, 30 missions –from crewmate Roy Duffey  
 Pfeiffer, Henry, Redding CA; 357th FG P-51 pilot –from his buddy Ken Scott  
 Lubozynski, Frank, Orlando FL; 351st BG B-17 pilot; career as a civil engineer and Director of Engineering at Orlando Naval Training Center  
 Mousty, Roy, Simpsonville SC; 388th BG pilot - from his friend Thomas Davis, Pres. Oregon Chapter  
 Brown, Victor Earl, Fletcher NC; 8th AF; Eagle Scout with Silver Beaver Award;

career as engineer and educator; active



General Russell Dougherty

General Russell Dougherty, USAF (Ret.) devoted his life to the missions of the United States Air Force and to his country. A native of Kentucky, he flew combat in World War II and was instrumental in developing and carrying out plans of United States nuclear warfare and nuclear missile defense programs during the Cold War.

His career in the Strategic Air Command as SAC commander saw him as a visionary for American strategic warfare and after his retirement he continued his service as an attorney and advisor on various government and defense-related advisory and planning Boards. The Strategic Planning Center is named The Dougherty Conference Center in recognition of his patriotic leadership during an important era in our country's history.

Throughout his military career General Dougherty valued his friends. He was known in his Commands as a personable caring officer who treated people of all ranks with fairness and compassion. He stayed active in military affairs, serving for six years as Executive Director of the Air Force Association and as a personal advisor to the leaders of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Savannah.

General Russell Dougherty will rest at the National Cemetery in Arlington, Virginia.



# TAPS

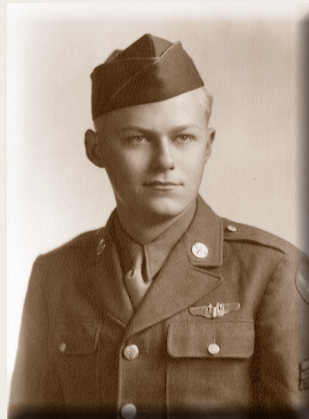
in community service  
Husak, Victor, 493rd BG top turret  
gunner/engineer; POW, freed after the  
1945 winter march to Moosburg -from  
Al Stelles 447th BG  
Bruyette, David, Savannah GA; 31 mis-  
sions, 8th AF - from his wife Evelyn  
Hammond, Betty, -from her husband  
Clint, 351st BGA President  
Hopkins, Frank "Hoppy", 351st BG;  
Association Scty/Treasurer  
VanEvery, Harold, Minneapolis MN;  
447th BG pilot; shot down on 9th mis-  
sion; POW; star athlete on University of  
Minnesota Golden Gophers champion-  
ship football teams 1936-39



**Harold VanEvery**

Kail, Leonard, Nitro WV; 490th BG  
-from his wife Anne  
Malmstrom, Robert, Tualatin OR;  
8th AF; career in flying in helicopters;

formed Oregon Old Bold Pilots and  
Friday Flyers organizations; involved  
with Angel Flights; Oregon Chapter-  
Wootten, James, Chaska MN; 466th BG  
tailgunner on B-24 Madame Shoo Shoo



**James Wootten**



**Madame Shoo Shoo and crew**

Jimmy Greene grew up dur-  
ing the war on his family farm  
on Bumphead Road in Americus,  
Georgia. As a ten year-old, he  
became accustomed to the pres-  
ence around the house of RAF  
air cadets in training at nearby  
Souther Field, as his attractive  
sister seemed to be a point of  
interest for a number of them.  
Evenings, she would play the  
piano in the front parlor and  
they would all gather around  
to sing wartime songs. Young  
Jimmy would sit outside the win-  
dow on the porch just swinging  
in the porch swing.

Jimmy recalls that as the  
hour grew late, the cadet airmen  
would always turn to a rendition  
of The White Cliffs of Dover, which  
ends with the verse:

The Shepherd will tend her  
sheep, the Valley will bloom again,  
and JIMMY WILL GO TO SLEEP, in  
his own little bed again!

- Form may be reproduced -



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## LEWIS GITTLER...

All German cities look strikingly alike today. Each consists of a circular area of ruins - the heart of the town, where public buildings, hotels, amusement places and shops are rubble and ashes - ringed by virtually undamaged small factories, suburban housing developments, and the pretentious villas of the well-to-do. It is hard to tell whether you are in Munich or Hamburg, Cologne or Nuremberg. It doesn't really matter; everywhere the pattern of living is the same -- the same food rations, the same daily habits, the same mood of selfishness and apathy. The hard labor and sacrifice with which for years the Germans supported the Nazi regime and Hitler's war have disappeared completely. There is no national spirit, no community spirit, not even any neighborly spirit. Few Germans of any class are doing anything toward solving Germany's present problems. All the German does is try by hook or crook to get his dwelling patched up and accumulate nonperishable food to hide in his cellar.

He is a disagreeable fellow, cringing before his conquerors but viciously denouncing his neighbors if he thinks he can get a reward. He tells us he hates Hitler, and he probably does - not because Hitler started the war, but because he did not win it.

Work of rebuilding could be started if the Germans were interested. The available labor pool is fairly large. Most cities, even after evacuations and air-raid casualties, have about half as many residents as ever and hundreds more return weekly. The mayors and city councils, appointed by our Military Government, have extensive powers to regulate wages and prices, plan reconstruction and allocate labor.

Only the few who are utterly destitute will voluntarily take reconstruction jobs, and the German officials do not want to alienate potential political supporters by forcing them to do the dirty labor that eventually must be done. The only men you see doing forced labor are Nazis expiating their party membership by sullenly cleaning up debris and a number of German prisoners of war the Allies released on condition they work in coal mines or on farms.

The bulk of the city population simply

looks on, and spends the time bartering and scrounging - an art highly developed during the war.

The poor live in seemingly uninhabitable cellars and patched-up first floors in the inner city. Some have built lean-to shacks in the outskirts. The utterly destitute live in wooden barracks or in the thickwalled air-raid shelters, massive fortresses housing a thousand or more people.

The wealthy, most of whom made big money under the Nazis, still have their comfortable suburban homes. Most of the middle-class folk stayed in the city during the bombings and managed to salvage two or three rooms of their apartments.

Lewis Gittler, October 1945

## JAMES AUMAN...

The target was a Pathfinder flight deep penetration, ball bearing facility in the Sarrbrucken area. After taking some very accurate anti-aircraft fire, we approached our primary objective only to find it was overcast. It was decided to hit the equally important secondary target, a supply dump. Our pattern on the supply dump was fine, however, we were peppered again very heavily by flak -- no one was injured in our crew.

On our way home, we were avoiding Aachen and Liegh -- towns where we could expect fire. However, the Germans who no doubt knew our cautious ways, placed 88MM anti-aircraft artillery in our path and we came under an intense accurate barrage. I heard four blasts very close. One made a direct hit on our right wing Liberator. The pilot Lt. Harry McGregor, whose aircraft wing broke off, turned into a flaming inferno and streaked to the earth. The crew had no chance of bailing out. Our left wing bomber was hit and lost power. The pilot fell back, then left the formation. We later learned that they went to Sweden with five crew members killed. The tail gunner on our crew, Staff Sergeant Edward Lucanic, was hit very badly in his left leg. He went into shock and trauma immediately and had to be unfastened and dragged from his turret losing a large amount of blood that froze as soon as it hit the skin of the airplane. It was apparent that he was going to bleed to death but because of the 30 degree

below zero temperature and tourniquet applied, he was stabilized. I had my right ankle shattered and my electrically heated suit wire severed. My oxygen mask was on the floor. I was frozen stiff until we lowered our altitude over Holland and the North Sea. Major Thompson, our command pilot on this mission, placed a tourniquet on my leg and administered the last tube of morphine into my upper leg.

Approaching our Attlebridge Airdrome our co-pilot shot a pistol flare from the cockpit area to alert people on the ground we had an emergency condition. We landed straight on in without taking the down wind leg. At the end of our roll, we were met by an ambulance and a team of doctors and medics who took us to the station hospital. After examination and x-rays, we were driven to the 231 area hospital. About six teams of surgeons worked until 2:30AM the next morning removing shrapnel from dozens of flyers. Sergeant Edward Lucanic was taken back to the zone of interior a few days later. It took me over a year to find him in a hospital in Ohio. He eventually died of his injuries.

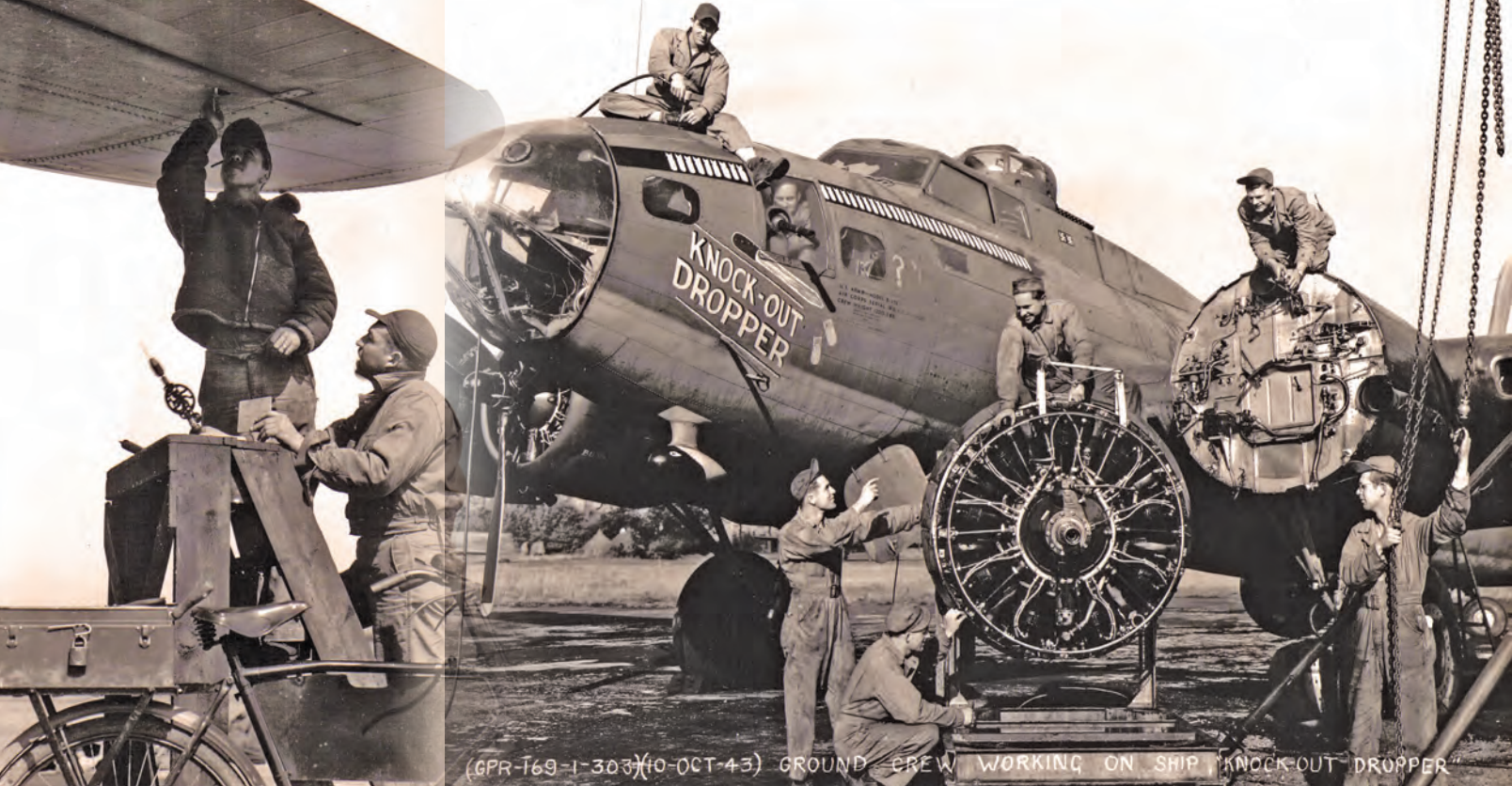
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The tragic loss of Pilot Captain Harry B. McGregor on August 9th, 1944 was painful. He had more hours than any of us and an authority with an airplane that was unsurpassed and something we never questioned. His crew came from Tucson and was assigned to the 787th. He was very much like actor Jimmy Stewart - always right! Some thought he was invincible -- a giant in a land of uncertain young fliers in a war hardly seeming to affect him. He was in the lead on most of his missions as the crew felt safe with "Solid Harry". On his 28th mission, he was assigned the deputy position due to the fact that the lead was given to Lt. Godbout and his PFF crew. Harry's B-24 was hit by AA and the #3 engine was on fire. The aircraft went on it's bank and into a spin -- no chutes were seen. The news of the shoot down shocked and saddened the 466th combat crews.

James Auman

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(GPR-T69-1-303)(10-OCT-43) GROUND CREW WORKING ON SHIP "KNOCK-OUT DROPPER"

## A TRIBUTE TO GROUND CREWS Annual 8th AFHS Fund Drive will Honor Ground Crews

The 8<sup>th</sup> AF Historical Society Board of Directors has declared that the annual Fund Drive of the Society will be designated for the establishment of a major Ground Crew exhibit at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Savannah. Planning has been in the works by Museum design teams for several years, with the premise that when that exhibit was fabricated, it would be extensive and all-inclusive, depicting the challenges and vital work performed by aircraft ground crews and their crew chiefs.

Plans are to incorporate, as a typical function of 8<sup>th</sup> ground crew maintenance engineers, the unique painting by noted aviation artist Keith Ferris, of an 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Heavy Bomber on the ramp at Molesworth airbase. This painting, *Slow Timing Bonnie B*, has been donated by artist Ferris to be incorporated into the ground crew exhibit at the Museum. The painting, featured in a 2003 issue of the 8<sup>th</sup> AF News, honors the aircraft's ground crew, its crew chief Bill Zachar, and the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force of World War II. The exhibit expansion itself will feature activities of practically every aspect of ground crew duties, including their

personal involvement with the fighters, the bombers, and the personnel of the Mighty Eighth. One exhibit area will include the work on Base Air Depots and recovery efforts at crash sites.

For the past decade the Museum has received artifacts and records of the ground crews from the airmen and their families, and many of these will be used in the exhibit to tell their story. Depictions of the planned exhibit will appear in future issues of the 8<sup>th</sup> AF News as well as being a major dedication at the 2008 annual reunion in Savannah. These initial and then final plans and the exhibit itself will be defined by the Society's support in their Fund Drive as was done during the 2001

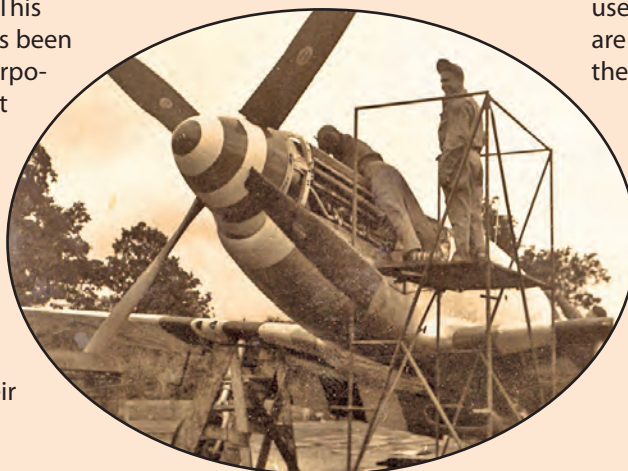
Historical Society's Fund Drive to erect the Chapel of the Fallen Eagles in the Museum's Memorial Gardens, also built and sponsored by contributions from our membership.

You will find an entry on the dues notice coupon on page eight to indicate your contribution to the ground Crew exhibit. This contribution can be sent back with your dues payment return in the included envelope in the fold of page eight in this magazine.

Life members may send their donation indicating their desires in support of the Ground Crew exhibit.

All contributions will be deposited in a restricted Ground Crew Exhibit Fund at the Museum and all donations will be used for that exhibit. All contributions are tax deductible – the Museum, like the 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS, is a 501c3 organization.

This long-awaited exhibit in the Museum Galleries will be a most fitting tribute to those who made 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force missions possible. It represents another significant opportunity to be part of the permanent home of the Mighty Eighth!





## THE P-38 HANGAR AT BURBANK

P-38 National Association Director Gil Cefaratt of Sun Valley, California forwards photos of The P-38 Hangar at Burbank (now Bob Hope) airport. Featured are many exhibits relating the history and events of P-38 lore. The full scale fiberglass model of a P-38 Lightning has Lockheed Chief test pilot Tony Le Viers nose markings: "Snafu-perman." For info and hanger viewing days P-38 Association President Ron Smith may be reached at tel# 909-987-6522.



### WORLD WAR II CREWMATES REUNITED AFTER 62 YEARS

James Zographos, a life member of the 388th Bomb Group Association, was recently reunited with Cornelius (Neil) Kelleher at a luncheon of the 8th AF Historical Society held at the Hanscom Air Force Base in Bedford, Massachusetts.

Kelleher is a long time member of the Historical Society. He was instrumental in asking Zographos to join the Society so as to be able to meet together after so many years.

Kelleher was the radio operator on the lead crew that was piloted by Orrin Merrill. Zographos was assigned as lead bombardier on this crew for the last 14 missions of his second tour of duty, 62 years ago and they first met on Dec. 31, 1944, when they were on a mission to Hamburg, Germany.

The reunion was a sentimental one because the pair had not seen each other since Zographos' last and 50th mission on March 9, 1945.

**James Zographos**  
**388th BG Westboro, MA**



Zographos on left, Kelleher on right



**388th Bomb Group**  
**Zographos standing right,**  
**Kelleher kneeling left**



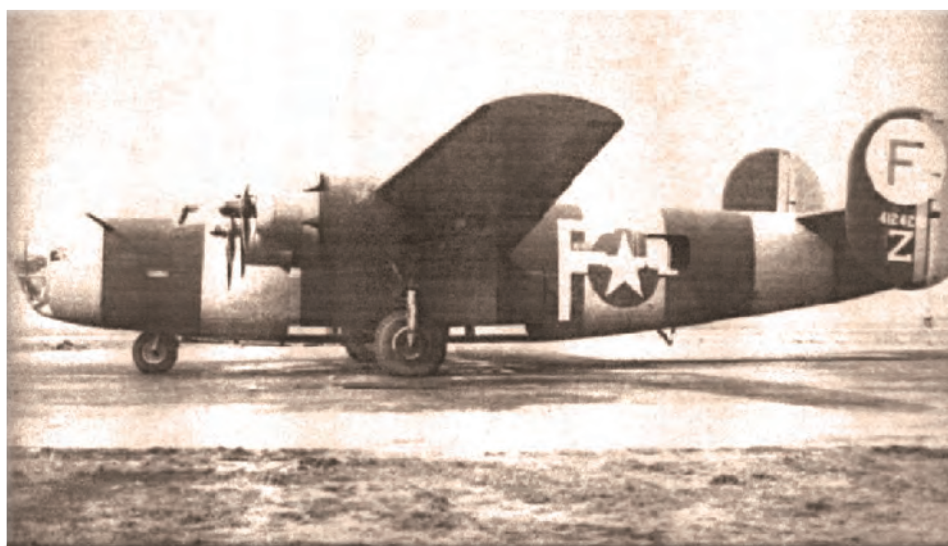
## The Skies over Kassel

The date was 27 September 1944 and Bill Mitchell was flying the Kassel mission with 39 other bombers of his 445th Bomb Group, heading to their target for the day in Germany. Near Kassel. The lead aircraft missed a turn onto the bomb run and was left in the skies by itself – a prime target for German fighters who quickly realized their vulnerable position. In twenty minutes, more 8th Air Force Heavy bombers were lost than had happened to any bomb group during the war. A total; of 268 445th flyers were shot out of the air, over two dozen B-24s went down. Attacking German fighters also were hit hard by the 8th gunners and many Luftwaffe aircraft were also shot down. The air was filled with parachutes of both Air Forces and with planes going down in flames.

Mitchell's crew and their badly damaged airplane made it back from the raid and he completed his 30-mission tour. No other mission was as significant in terms of losses to his bomb group. The 445th, based at Tibenham in the UK, was the unit with which the actor Jimmy Stewart flew combat missions as a B-24 pilot.

Fifty years later a reunion of those who flew that day was held at the site where most planes went down. German observers of the air battle were instrumental in establishing monuments recognizing both of the combatant forces. Bill Mitchell was unable to attend those ceremonies but states that he understands the importance of it. The war was fought against the Nazi regime of Adolph Hitler and no ill will between the Americans and the German citizens should still exist. He states, "Serving our country in the war was something we all had to do."

The surviving airmen who flew that mission to Kassel are now members of the Kassel Mission Historical Society, an organization that includes NexGen family members and a number of other historians of the 8th Air Force. The KMHS pays tribute to all those who flew that fateful mission.



### LICENSE PLATES OF THE MIGHTY EIGHTH

The 92nd Bomb Group was Wisconsin Chapter President's Bill Berger's home during his tour with The Mighty Eighth. The 92nd is now well-represented in America's Dairyland.

# How About It?

## AFTER SOCIAL SECURITY

At the airport and seated on the spectator side of the security check point were four girls in their late teens. They were awaiting the arrival of an airline flight and a friend. When they saw that my wife and I were senior citizens waiting for someone as well, all of them stood and politely offered us their seats. Over our protest, they insisted by vacating their seats. That left two unoccupied. We looked over the gathering crowd, spotted a guy obviously a senior citizen, and asked him to join us. We facetiously called it the Senior's Section. He was very defensive of this title and informed us that he was barely sixty-five and didn't like being called a senior citizen. SO??? What's the big deal? Look around, if a person is an American, 65 years of age and over, he is a recipient of social security, unless of course he is independently wealthy, and even then, these folks will often sign up for the benefits just like the rest of us.

The population is constantly being bombarded by commercials, urging us to do estate planning and create "nest eggs" for our retirement thus assuring us a Utopian Life in some exotic place. When we reach that magical age and no longer have to 'punch the clock,' the dreamer is ecstatic. For a few weeks life is glorious, until boredom sets in. The guy at the airport had reached this point in his life and was without plans for his retirement and was having difficulty handling it. Too often, excuses are made for doing nothing such as

"I am too old", "I don't have any talents", "I can't do it!" "Let someone else do it!" "I've already done my share!" The following account I credit to Reporter Jack Riemer of the Houston Chronicle. A concert in Lincoln Center was performed in New York City by the great violinist Itzhak Perlman. As a child, Perlman was stricken with polio. Ever since that early experience, he has walked only with the aid of two crutches. On the occasion of this November 1995 concert, Perlman laboriously made his way to center stage, and as he sat down, he released the clasps on his legs and made himself comfortable. Shortly after the concert began, a string broke on his violin. Silence reigned in that great concert hall, all eyes were on the guest performer. Would he reverse the procedure, exit the stage, get another violin, or get another string to replace the broken one? Instead, he did not move, he paused, closed his eyes for a few moments and then gave a signal to the conductor to begin again. The audience sat amazed, he was playing with only three strings making the musical changes and adjustments that were necessary to complete the score with mastery, passion and skill. When he finished, everyone arose and cheered. Then, Perlman raised his bow and the people became silent. He said softly, "You know, sometimes it is the artist's task to find out how much music you can still make with what you have."

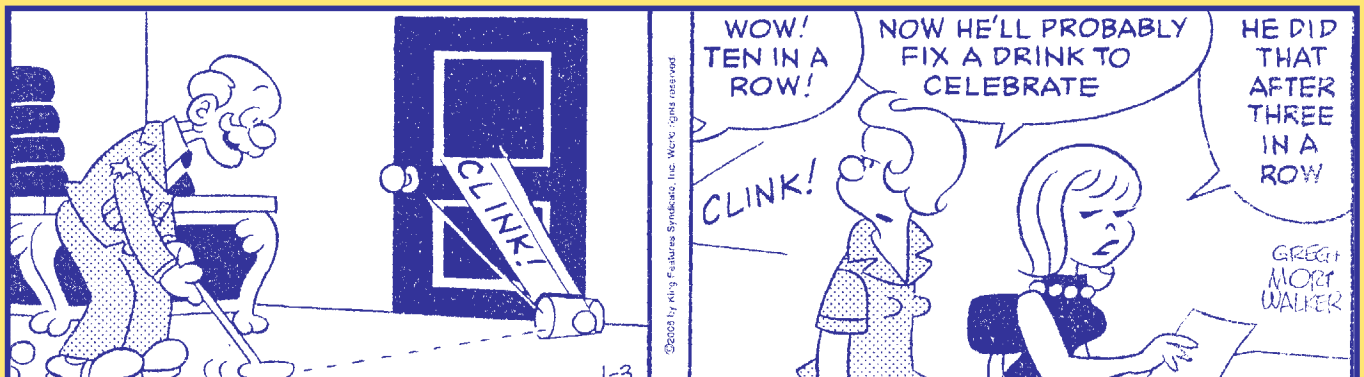
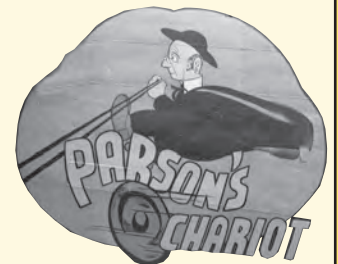
Many areas of loss and disappointments occur in a life time. Yet, it is up to us to find out how much music we can

still produce with what we have left. And, we are commanded to do so! No one is without talents and instructions are given how to use them..."From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked. (Jesus speaking in **Luke 12:48 NIV**) What is being asked of us? Not big things, just little things we can do for those in need such as befriending someone by being a tutor, a companion, a friend, a comforter, a confidant, an encourager. Organizations need do- cents, volunteers, lecturers, entertainers, those who can lead. Society needs storytellers, poets and writers. Humanity needs someone to pray. Henry J. Van Dyke expressed it well when he said, "Use the talents you possess, for the woods would be very silent if no birds sang except the best."



Earl Wassom

Earl Wassom, 466th BG  
Chaplain, 8th AFHS



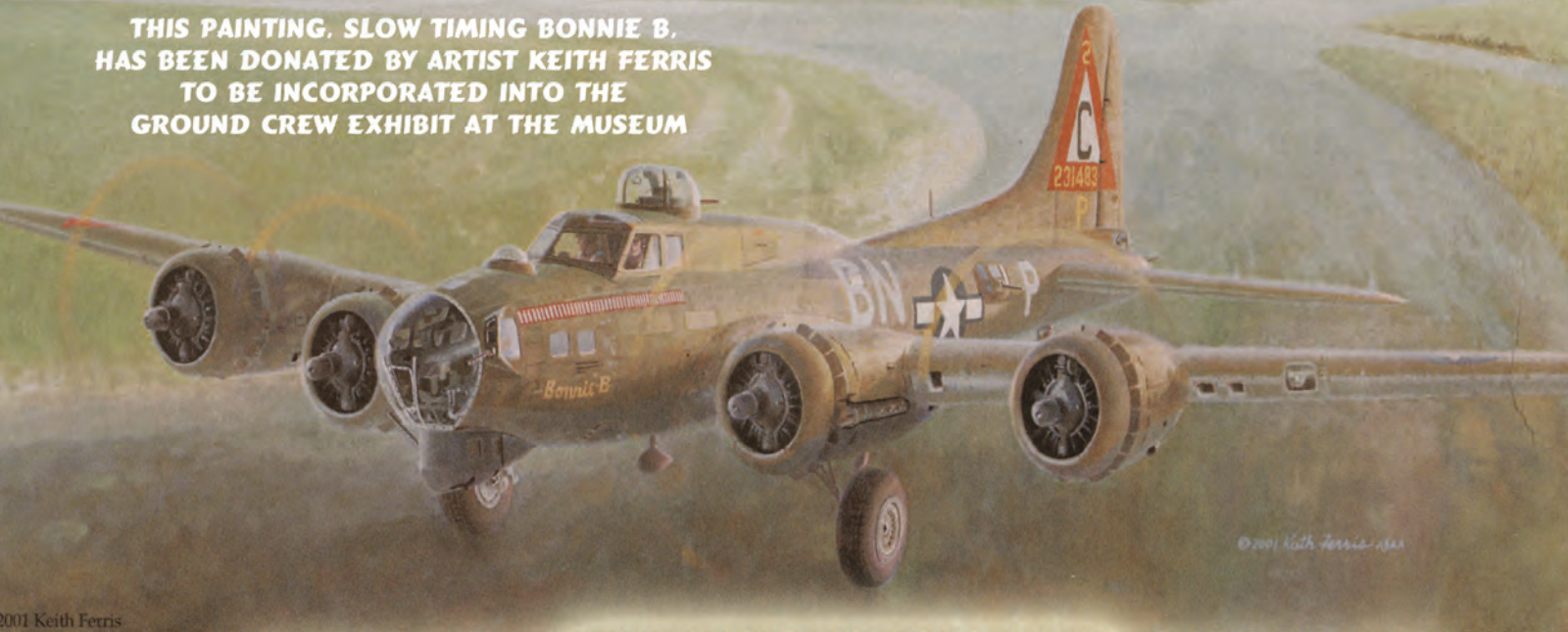




**8th AF News**  
**The Eighth Air Force Historical Society**  
**P.O. Box 956, Pooler, GA 31322**

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