



8TH AF NEWS

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**MERRY CHRISTMAS
TO THE MIGHTY EIGHTH!**



AF News

Magazine of
The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

DECEMBER 2008

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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Happy Holidays!!!

Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah to all!!! I hope your Holiday Season has been one of joy and wonderful memories for your family.

With the dawning of a new year, our Society faces numerous challenges for 2009. Your Board of Directors has been hard at work solving the problems we face. The biggest problem of course is trying to keep our costs within budget. Our superb Editor - Walt Brown and Alpha Graphics have done a great job in reducing costs on the 8th Air Force News.

With the significant drop in dues paying members over the past few years, we have really tried to pay close attention on how we produce the magazine. Our goal, is to give the membership the best product we can while monitoring our costs and issue production.

I think you will agree, the Eighth Air Force Historical Society 8th Air Force News is the best publication of its kind. Our ultimate goal is to keep the quality of the News to the standard we all enjoy.

Plans are rolling along with our 2009 Reunion in Cincinnati, Ohio – August 18-23, 2009. We are currently planning an itinerary that includes several excellent historical programs and exciting tours. Our base will be the stunning Millennium Hotel in the center

of Cincinnati. There are many options for dining outside the Hotel and the chance to explore the downtown area. The highlight of our Reunion will be a visit to the National Museum of the United States Air Force in Dayton, Ohio (about a 60 minute drive).

I have had the good fortune of traveling throughout the world and seeing several world class aviation museums. The Museum of the United States Air Force is, without question, one of the finest. Their inventory of aircraft is second to none and their displays are first rate. We are hoping to have some of the significant 8th Air Force aircraft open for tours and a possible private viewing of the Restoration Facility. This "behind the scenes" view of the Museum will also give us the opportunity to see the famed Boeing B-17F, the "Memphis Belle," which is in the process of a tedious ten-year restoration.

We are very excited about this special event. If you have ever had thoughts of attending an 8th AFHS Reunion with us, this would be the one! We encourage you to make this a family affair! Please bring your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren! It will be a memory all of you will cherish!!

Also, there is another special event currently being planned for the Washington D.C. area for the Spring of 2009. Please see our new "Special Events" column in this issue or visit the



**Mark Copeland
President**

website at www.8thafhs.org and reference the EVENTS section for further details.

In closing, I would like to express my appreciation for your continued support and encouragement. 2009 is going to be a fantastic and exciting year for the Society. We are proud to have you as a member and wish you and your family all the best for the coming year!

Respectfully in your service,

**Mark Copeland
President – Eighth Air Force
Historical Society**

On Our Front Cover

Hanging on the Christmas tree of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum is a brand new (to the 8th) B-17 Flying Fortress. After 14 years of "hanging in there", a B-17 is on the way! It's arrival will not be in Santa's pack, but it will appear on four low-boy trailers from the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum to the Mighty Eighth Museum Combat Gallery in Pooler, Georgia.

After its arrival the second week of January 2009, restoration will begin to convert the bomber from its present flyable firefighter configuration to its original WWII appearance and internal structural wartime features. Several Bomb Groups have already jumped in with their support of this long-awaited museum acquisition. This is an exciting Holiday treat for many patient 8th AFers who have waited a long time for their Museum to have a B-17 centerpiece.

On Our Back Cover

B-17 PARKED UNDER EIFFEL TOWER

This plane's serial number is 42-107180. It was assigned to the 410th BS, 94th BG on April 11, 1944 and on that date known as the *Lucky Rebel*. It was salvaged by the 9th AF in Germany on December 29, 1945. Its final name in Roger Freeman's *The B-17 Flying Fortress* is *The Eagle's Wrath*. The Flying Fortress was part of the Victory Exposition in Paris during the summer, 1945.



MISSION BRIEFING



Walter Brown, Editor
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It has been the most frequently asked question that I have received over the last eleven years as your editor. Not "When is the next 8th AF News gonna be out?" and not even "When are you gonna print the article I sent you?" The question has been, "When is the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum going to get a B-17 in their exhibits?" Here is the answer: the second week of January 2009.

The members of the Historical Society in 1987 budgeted seed money in the amount of \$120,000 in

order to establish a museum to preserve and present their legacy. The Museum opened its doors in 1996, but B-17s were hard to come by. The Museum remained stuck at fifth on the US Air Force acquisition list. Earlier this year things changed. A B-17 resting in the Smithsonian hangar at Dulles Airport in Washington became available and our staff

jumped at the opportunity. The Museum's team will leave on January 4th to disassemble it, load it, transport it, and reassemble the aircraft in the museum. It will play a vital part in our education program for younger generations.

Over the years a number of Society members have individually and, through their state Chapters, have supported projects, such as the unique Memorial Chapel, at the Museum. They are now indicating that they want to be part of the restoration of the newly-acquired Flying Fortress. Several Bomb and Fighter groups have also donated funds to help offset the expenses of moving and restoration. This is a team effort of the Historical Society, the Museum Board and staff, and the Unit Associations. Your contributions are needed and are appreciated.

We are now looking to obtain other 8th Warbirds such as 8th AF fighters and also – in answer to the question, "When are you gonna get a B-24?" – a B-24 Liberator. There is one up north that we have been eyeing for some time now.

This will truly be a Merry Christmas and notably, a very Happy New Year!

Cheers and Good Luck,
Sincerely,
Walter Brown, Editor

When I was growing up, I learned in Sunday school the parable of Jesus feeding the multitudes with two fish and five loaves of bread. That's my favorite story from the Bible because I always have like loafing and fishing.

Clyde White, 390th Bomb Group

BEHIND THE SCENES

HO! HO! HO! MERRY CHRISTMAS

December 31st is around the corner!! Don't forget to purchase your 2009 Eighth Air Force Calendar.

The Museum store is selling them for BOGO (buy 1 get 1 free). Shipping is \$5 for 2 calendars, \$9 for 4 calendars and \$11 for anything over 4 calendars.

Thank you to everyone that has submitted articles and pictures in this December issue. Keep the articles and pictures coming to us through email or mail.

We want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a safe holiday season!

FYI - New mommy (for the 4th time) Telisha, has been busy with the new arrival of "Neely Grace Gaines" born Oct 21st.



Telisha Gaines



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Dear Members,

Thanks to our members who have sent in their **Dues**. Most of you utilized the inserted envelope contained in the September issue of the *8th AF News*. This insert appears to have been a very efficient method of collection dues. We will fine tune the system and will continue this practice next year. For those members who have not taken advantage of the **Dues** notice please respond as soon as possible as we need the funds to

continue a smooth operation of the membership office. Your loyal support of The Eighth Air Force Historical Society is

appreciated and your **Dues/contributions** are vital in helping the Society produce such a great magazine.

Our Society family continues to grow as we have added over 80 NEXTGEN members since September 1, 2009. You can become apart of future magazines by sending any stories/comments you have pertaining to the Mighty Eighth Air Force for consideration in the *8th AF News Magazine*.

Office hours will vary over the holiday season. I am still substitute teaching in the local area twice a week. Please leave detailed messages and we will get back to you in a timely manner.

**Seasons Greetings from the Officers,
Directors and the Membership Manager
of the 8th Air Force Historical Society!**

CHAPTER/UNIT/GROUP LIAISON REPORT

I would like to wish all a 'Very Happy Holiday Season' It has been brought to my attention recently that the Society's Chapters/Units/Groups register needs updating. Please contact me or Catherine Mayne at the National Office with updated contact information.

You can view the current listings on the Society's website, www.8thafhs.org, under the 'About Us..Contacts' tabs. This listing can also be obtained by contacting Catherine at **912.748.8884 or membershipmanager@8thafhs.org**

I would like to salute the 452nd Bomb Group Association and Hank North for an outstanding September Newsletter and the New York State Southern Wing Chapter and its President Gus Nathan for their beyond the call efforts in 'Keeping Their Memories Alive'. I would also like to salute the Birthplace Chapter in Savannah GA for their November 2008

'Contrails' Newsletter and tip our hats to Chapter President Gene Buttle for doing such a great job. Also I would like to welcome the 34th Bomb Group to the Society. If you have any comments or ideas on how we can move forward my address and email is posted on the inside front cover of this magazine.

**'Keep Their Memories Alive'
Pat Keeley**



**Back from a 458th BG mission to the Bulge area,
Christmas Eve, 1944**

CITY DESTRUCTION IN THE AIR WAR - GERMANY

St. Lo



Hamburg



Kaiserslautern



Hitzacker



V-2 site
at Watton
France



Bernburg Airfield



Ludwigshafen



Lauremburg



Frankfurt



FROM THE EDITOR . . .

Over the years, the 8th AF News has published articles with original source material abstracted from the J. Wayne Fredericks Collection at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum. These Straight From Jake entries are from the wartime files of Jacob Wayne Fredericks, 303rd Bomb Group pilot who served as officer of Planning and Targeting at Elveden Hall, 3rd Air Division, after completing 25 missions with the 303rd early in the war. Jake was the Allied Forces officer assigned to personally open and document the Nazi atrocities at the concentration camp at Mauthausen – perhaps the most notorious of the numerous German death camps. He interviewed the Nazi Generals and industrial leaders immediately after VE Day and wrote portions of the official United States Strategic Bombing Surveys, both of Germany and after the war's end, of Japan. Jake Fredericks led a six-man contingent to investigate the enemy's extensive underground war-making industries hidden in the mountains of Japan shortly after the Japanese leaders surrendered in August 1945, ending World War II.

This article is presented based on original materials from Jake's personal files.

THE AIR WAR ON GERMANY AND JAPAN AND THE END OF WORLD WAR II

BY WALTER BROWN, EDITOR 8TH AF NEWS

The 8th Air Force was the primary American unit taking the war to the German homeland until the ground forces crossed the Rhine river in 1945. Other U.S. units such as the 9th Air Force with its vital tactical low-level combat missions and the 15th AF bombing petroleum and industrial targets in southern Austria and in the occupied countries east of Austria, played an important part in defeating the German war machine. The 8th flew missions daily from mid-1942 until

the war's end. A number of 8th AF units were scheduled and had been trained to serve in the Pacific theater, primarily

Japan. The economic situation in Japan was far different than that of Germany in the early war years. Japan depended

**CONTROL OF THE AIR DURING THE WAR
WAS ESSENTIAL TO THE SUCCESS OF
EVERY MAJOR MILITARY OPERATION,
BOTH IN JAPAN AND IN GERMANY**

on imports of raw materials for both domestic and military use. America had years earlier placed embargos on shipping of certain materials to Japan. Germany was more self-sufficient regarding raw material supplies.

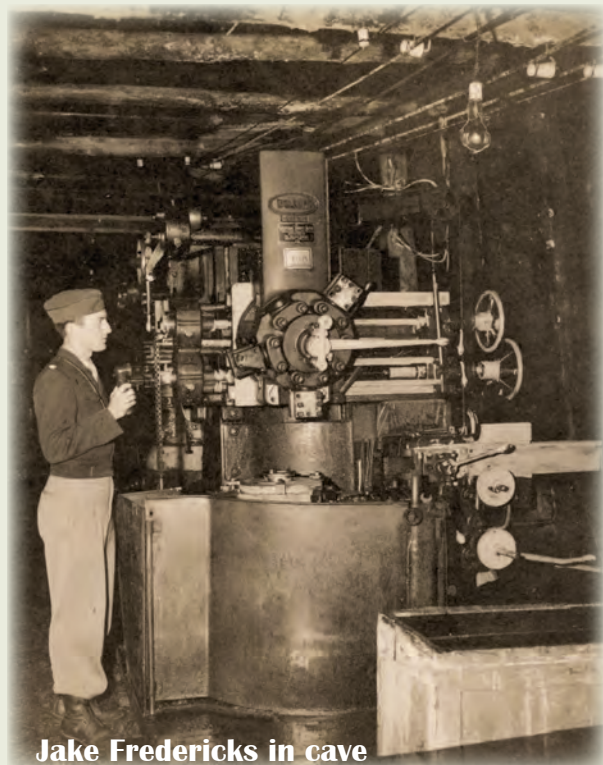
Control of the air during the war was essential to the success of every major military operation, both in Japan and in Germany. The United States did not have the capability to effectively bomb Japanese home islands until they could establish close-in airbases on islands taken by Navy and marine landing forces. Control of the air was not easy to achieve in the Pacific Theater. After intense island battles against dug-in Japanese forces and after suffering significant losses to our attacking troops, the airfields were established allowing our fighters and bombers to attack Japanese homeland targets. The 20th Air Force B-29 bombers flew from new bases built by American SeaBees on Iwo Jima, New Guinea, Kwajalein, Okinawa, and the Marianas. The 5th Air Force flew B-24 Heavy bombers relatively low-level missions to vital targets while attacks on the Japanese homeland were underway. Concurrently, 10th Air Force tactical support occurred in Burma and the 11th Air Force flew in the Aleutians.

Big Week for the 8th Air Force in the European Theater took place the last of February 1944 with the first week of

with the 20th Bomber Command flying B-29 Superfortresses.

Japanese targets presented different strategic considerations than those in the European Theater.

Before America entered the war, Japanese armies had invaded Manchuria, west of Korea, and in the 1930s had also established themselves in Northern China, a country depleted by years of a Civil war. Manchuria offered Japan a base from which to operate against Burma and China and they supplied much-needed high-coke coal to the homeland from their bases in northern China. Japanese presence in Manchuria also enabled them to keep a close track on Russia, even though Russia at that time was not interested in entering a war against



Jake Fredericks in cave



Underground Production Entrance at Matsuyama

March focusing on daily attacks on Berlin itself. This was in preparation for the upcoming land invasion of the continent in June 1944. Big Week in the Pacific Theater took place the last week of May 1945. With Japanese bombs having been released in balloons on the northwest United States on May 22nd, the heaviest raid of B-29 bombers on Japan took place the following day. On May 23rd, 550 Superfortresses rained 4500 tons of fire-bombs on Tokyo, followed up by 500 bombers visiting Tokyo again the next day. Japan reported that Tokyo was burned to the ground. On May 26th, the 8th Air Force commander General Jimmy Doolittle was ordered to take the 8th Air Force from Europe to the Pacific war. As closure to the week, on June 1st, President Harry Truman warned Japan that the U. S. would hurl 3,500,000 troops against Nippon.



20th Bomb Wing B-29's at Central Field on Iwo Jima

GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF UNDERGROUND PLANTS



Geographical location of Japanese underground industrial plants

The Japanese cities presented a different type of target than those faced in Germany, although both countries presented an eventual spectacle of destruction. U. S. Air Forces began effective bombing in the summer of 1944. Attacks were made on 66 Japanese cities before the end of the war, although the largest numbers were bombed in the final three months of the war. On the average, forty percent of these targets were destroyed. Strikes by naval fighters from aircraft carriers began in early 1945, hitting operational aircraft, airfields, and naval vessels already hindered by a scarcity of oil.

Although destruction was more extensive in German cities, overall destruction in both countries was comparable. Only 160,800 tons of bombs were dropped on Japan's home islands compared with 1,360,000 tons dropped within German borders. Of these tonnages, 2/3 fell on Japanese cities compared to just 1/3 dropped on German cities. In the German raids, targets were the industries and trans-



Kukuri Plant Entrance



Ki 115 Suicide plane

portation facilities that were frequently located away from the towns. The experience of the Pacific war supports the findings of the Bombing Survey in Europe that heavy, sustained and accurate attacks against carefully selected targets are required to produce decisive results when attacking an enemy's sustaining resources. Further, it was proved that no nation can long survive the free ex-

ploitation of air weapons over its homeland. Enemy airplanes controlling the air over one's head can be as disastrous to a country as occupation by physical invasion. This premise precluded the necessity of future invasion of Japan by Allied ground forces, a fact well known to both the Japanese military and political leadership.

MORALE ISSUES

As in Germany, the air attacks against Japanese cities were not the cause of their defeat. In Germany, the defeat was ultimately based on the decimation of the German oil industry by 8th AF bombers. The underlying cause of Japan's defeat, assured before the urban attacks were launched, was the insufficiency of Japan's war

economy. All areas were depleted. Food was strictly rationed, clothing and daily supplies were restricted, and transportation throughout the country became non-existent. News of the naval defeat at the Battle of Leyte Gulf had a severe effect on the vulnerability of Japan's navy and thus of general morale. Loss of the Philippines and further loss of out-



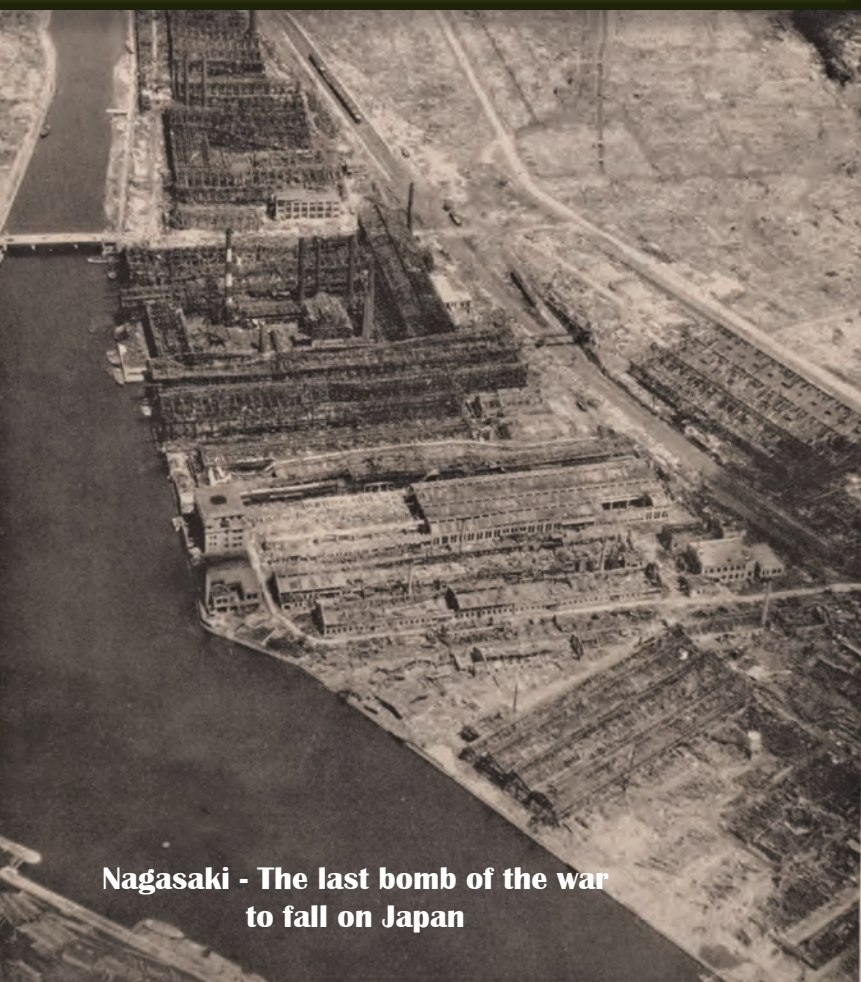
TOKYO AFTER FIRE BOMB RAID

TOKYO FIRE DAMAGE

CITY DESTRUCTION IN THE AIR WAR - JAPAN



Night Mission - Fire Bombing of Toyama



Nagasaki - The last bomb of the war to fall on Japan

lying islands compounded the effect on the population. The Japanese citizenry and civilian workers had been assured throughout the war by the military that there would be no bombing of the homeland. Morale lowered quickly when the bombing began. In German towns, although many Germans knew the war was futile and they suffered economically, their morale surprisingly was not significantly altered by the air attacks of the war. In Japan, morale faltered progressively with the events of the war.

Air raid protection methods for the people were run by government control and offered little in warning systems or protective air raid shelters. Fire control was essentially ineffective. Air Force bombers used incendiary bombs with great effect on the closely-built wooden structures prevalent throughout Japan. These bombs were not effective for instance, on electric plants that produced power by thermal (steam) and hydro methods. These electric plants were of steel construction, essentially resistant to fire-bombing. Incendiary bombs were devastating in the vulnerable cities, resulting in a mass exodus of the citizens into the surrounding countryside furthering their state of poverty. It is estimated that 8,500,000 citizens fled the cities in fear of the bombing raids. Far more Japanese lives were lost due to incendiary bombings than by the drop of the two atomic bombs that ended the war.

The metropolitan area of Tokyo, Yokohama, and Kawasaki was one of the largest and most important centers in the world. This tri-city area was of the utmost strategic importance to Japan being the center of all authority, both civil and military, and it was the seat of the country's administrative authorities

Yokosuka aircraft plant - assembly tunnel



Entrance to Hisai



as well. This was the heart of Japan's economic empire. Any disturbance in its functions would greatly affect the essential activities of the entire nation. Tokyo, Kawasaki, and Yokohama were Japan's "Big B" – Japan's Berlin. It was inevitable that this urban complex should become the first and main target in the air war against Japan.

The Doolittle Raid in B-25 bombers on Tokyo in 1942 was a morale-builder for a shocked America and it served as the first of morale-destroyers for the Japanese. Morale in the country's population grew steadily worse. After the war, an evaluation of Japanese attitudes towards the ruling class system as it affected them economically revealed that 44% were critical of their leader's conduct of the war and 72% were critical of their leader's conduct of the home front. Compounding this was the belief in 68%

of the population that Americans would be brutal captors with enslavement, starvation and annihilation being prominent in a post-war American occupation. Morale issues were in the forefront during the war years in Japan.

JAPAN'S WAR PLAN

The Japanese high command had initially predicted a quick end to the war in Europe, with the Germans defeating Russia and Great Britain. There existed however, a feeling of distrust of the Germans – that the Nazi regime would achieve a settlement with Great Britain at Japan's eventual expense. This outcome could be avoided if Japan would seize whatever neighboring territories it wished to annex as its share of future prizes of war. It would firmly establish its hold in Indochina. Washington's early strong reaction to the Japanese intent was not predicted by the Japanese military or the emperor. America's oil embargo on shipments to Japan dictated the end of

the Japanese navy within the following 18 months.

The emphasis on increased naval and aircraft production placed further significant restraints on the economy. Automobile production gave way to airplane and shipbuilding. Lack of steel supplies and tool manufacturing occurred as early as 1942, although combat airframe production reached its peak in 1944. Aircraft engine production continued until November 1944. After America entered the war, even though military supplies to American troops were limited in the beginning, Japanese industries began programs to ensure continued production of war machines, especially aircraft. Industrial manufacturers established extensive production facilities in huge caves in the homeland mountains. In late November 1944 the largest aircraft manufacturer,

the Nakajima Aircraft Company, along with others such as Mitsubishi and Kawasaki, dispersed their manufacturing facilities into underground locations, the largest being developed at Utsunomiya.

These three companies had obtained aircraft engine designs and specs from France before the war and quickly went into production. There were no attacks on these dispersed underground plants as the war continued, although internal problems such as dampness and fog were persistent. Post-war inspections in September 1945 revealed a wealth of assembled aircraft, tanks and other weapons of war in these underground locations. Kamikaze aircraft production prevailed in these underground production facilities at the end of the war. Twin-engine Japanese aircraft designed after the jet-engine German Me 262 were discovered by American inspection teams, although they had not entered the Pacific war. It is known that action against enemy war production is relevant to forcing a surrender only insofar as it is backed up by the threat of armed invasion. Airplanes, armament, tanks and military vehicles were at the ready in Japan, even though the Japanese leaders did not actually, against popular belief, predict a ground war on the homeland. It had been assumed that the threat of an invasion, if not the actual operation, was a requirement to induce an acceptance of the surrender terms. This "violation of the sacred homeland" actually raised few concerns, which expedited the final decision to surrender beforehand. Some military leaders viewed the anticipated landings by Allied troops as a means of inflicting casualties sufficiently high that they would improve chances of a negotiated peace, instead of an unconditional surrender.

The allies were prepared for such an invasion. Troops were expecting to land in the homeland islands and on the mainland in waves in operations such as Operation Chrysler, Operation Chevrolet, and a number of Americanized others. Without prior strategic bombing a landing on Japanese shores would have been unbearably costly. Japanese commanders in power read correctly the true situation and embraced surrender well before the expected invasion. The air offensive against Japan proper was the major factor in determining both the timing of the Japanese surrender and in negating the

necessity of invasion and battle by American ground forces.

THE WAR'S END

In August 1945, World War II ended. The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 were physically devastating. The B-29 Superfortress *Enola Gay* dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima on 6 August 1945. Its blast effect of the above-ground atomic explosions crushed buildings, with fire consuming everything. Radiation factors entered in afterwards. Both cities in the south of Japan had not been included in the 66 cities previously bombed. It was important to observe the exact damage caused by these two untested weapons. At this point, Russia finally declared war on Japan. The second atomic bomb, on Nagasaki, was dropped by a B-29, *Bock's Car* three days after the Hiroshima bombing and although dropping through clouds, the mission was successful in taking out Japanese naval industries, but the bomb missed the aiming point by a significant distance. History records that as many as 60,000 Japanese lives were saved by the Urakami valley walls surrounding the bomb explosion as a result – health and medical services, already depleted, were non-existent in the summer of 1945. It is recorded that the Japanese leaders interviewed a captured B-29 pilot who related to them that the next target for an atomic bomb drop would be Tokyo. The Japanese capitulated on August 14, 1945, accept-

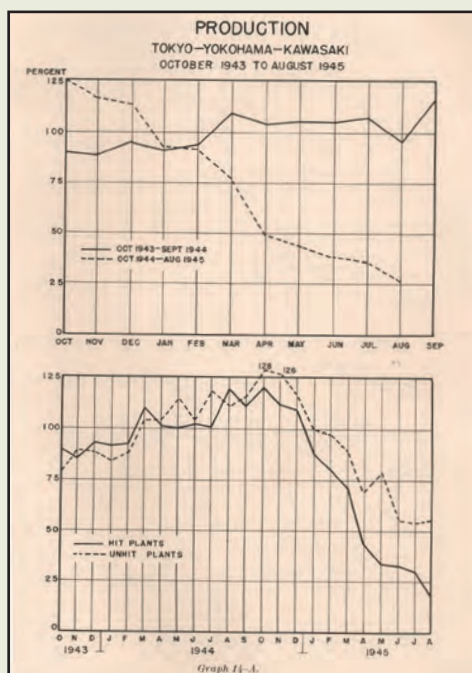
ing the surrender provisions demanded by the Potsdam Conference. The insufficiency of the Japanese war economy, bankrupt in August 1945, was the underlying cause of her defeat although it is difficult to define the time that the Japanese lost the war. It is known that the impact of the two atomic bomb drops brought an urgency to the process of achieving peace.

The Japanese surrender was another matter. Defeat in a war is a military event, but the recognition of defeat is a political act. These two fronts have differing outlooks on factors such as the international situation, the domestic balance of power, the interest of political groups, and the inner antagonisms of these groups. The centuries of tradition of Japanese independence, Japanese pride in their homeland and their complete dedication to it, entered into the decisions of those in power, in charge of the war. The Japanese government was an oligarchy, a coalition of diverse factions of the ruling class. The military structure was independent of the political arm and both were independent of the Emperor. The time interval between the military defeat and the political acceptance of defeat might have been shortened if the political structure that existed had permitted a more rapid formulation of Japan's national policies. In the end, the decision was relegated to Emperor Hirohito, the ruler of the people. He decisively made the decision in favor of its people. While a number of factions were favorable to a fight to the last man, a directive repeatedly professed by Adolph Hitler to his German armies, on August 11th the Japanese emperor himself made the decision of surrender, one that would ensure a future for young generations of Japanese.

EPILOGUE

The Strategic Bombing Survey concludes, based on an extensive investigation of all facts of the war and supported by surviving Japanese war leaders, that in all probability prior to 1 November 1945 and certainly by 31 December 1945, Japan would have surrendered even if the atomic bombs had not been dropped and even if Russia had not entered the war and even if no invasion had been planned or contemplated.

Walter Brown, Editor



PANCHO ROWE



J.C. "Pancho" Rowe returns from a mission to Chiran Japan on 12 August 1945, shortly after the Nagasaki bombing and subsequently the final day of World War II. Rowe was a B-25 pilot in the 820th Bomb Squadron, 41st BG, 7th Air Force.

Yet another heavily-armed Pancho Rowe-piloted bomber, the *Workin for the Yankee Dollar*, a popular and somewhat controversial Andrews Sisters song out on 78s. There are Twelve .50 caliber machine guns mounted in the nose of this airplane. Pancho meant business. He was a buddy of the 8th's Lew Lyle and he now resides peacefully in Hot Springs, Arkansas.



Pancho Rowe with the *Rose of San Antone*, – a tribute to the popular Bob Wills and his Western Playboys' song of the time. This photo taken at Makin Atoll in the Gilbert Islands, 1944. Note the 75 mm cannon in the nose. There were two of these big cannons, one on each side and according to Rowe, "the airplane would move backwards" every time he fired them. This B-25 has flown over 50 missions.

LICENSE PLATES OF THE MIGHTY EIGHTH



Bennie Duel of Longwood, Florida served with the 490th Bomb Group, 8th Air Force

MAUTHAUSEN

Perhaps the most notorious of Nazi Concentration Camps – The Holocaust



An entrance to Mauthausen Concentration Camp

Twelve miles from Linz, Austria stood the Nazi Death Camp at Mauthausen, liberated by the 11th Armoured Division, U. S. Army. In charge of the liberation was the 8th Air Force's Col. J. Wayne Fredericks, who was responsible for a large part of the official United States Strategic Bombing Survey post-war publications in the European Theater and afterwards in the Pacific Theater. It is estimated that from 1939 till May 1945 more than 210,000 people were killed violently in Mauthausen camp, with the total death toll exceeding 500,000. The Nazi guards and SS troops employed six methods of killing the prisoners, 56 known to be American or British captives who had been transferred there.

Death by starvation entailed putting a prisoner in a cell with no food or water until they died. Gassing was a second method, with up to 50 people being stripped of clothing and forced into a shower room, to be sprayed with toxic gas. Shooting occurred by lining victims up in front of what became known as the Blood Wall. The floor there is stained with the blood of thousands of murdered prisoners. A fourth method was death by exposure. After being given a hot shower, the victims would be placed naked outside against a stone wall to freeze to death. Some Americans died in this manner. The crematorium was yet another method of execution, the victims being injected first with gasoline and then burned, their bodies known to have burned better due to the petrol infusions. The final method used was to throw men into a dog-pit to hungry German Shepherds that had not been fed and that were trained to first attack the prisoner's genitalia.

When Jake Fredericks entered the camp, Mauthausen had 16,000 remaining occupants including Jews and others of all nationalities, being the center of a series of similar camps in the area run by the feared "Death's Head Units" of the SS and the Gestapo. When the end came, German guards changed

into blue and white striped prisoner's clothes in an effort to escape. Many were captured and turned in to authorities by the prisoners.

As World War II entered its final years, some Jewish organizations, being aware of the intolerable situations that existed in the numerous German concentration camps, petitioned Washington to send 8th Air Force bombers on missions to put an end to the cruelty by bombing the camps themselves. These proposals were not acceptable to the War Department, nor to the higher headquarters of the 8th Air Force. It was felt that flying missions still were dangerous and fighter and bomber crews were being lost on each raid. Aside from the premise that it was not acceptable to intentionally bomb non-combatants, 8th resources would be better employed to hit strategic targets and bring the war to an end as rapidly as possible.



The fate of the camp's German commandant at the hands of the newly-freed prisoners

**Prisoners who
died in a Nazi
forty-and-eight
boxcar**



**Jake Fredericks talk-
ing with captured
German guards in
front of the shooting
wall and the
crematorium**



**Bodies awaiting
burning in the
crematorium
at Mauthausen**



SPECIAL EVENT

8th AFHS Visit to the Andrews AF Base Airshow 2009

We are proud to announce that we will be inviting our National members to attend the 2009 Andrews Air Force Base Air Show, Friday, May 15, 2009. This undiscovered Air Show is, without a doubt, the largest and most spectacular military air show presentation in the world. While there are acres of static aircraft on display, most available for "walk thrus" including some vintage warbirds, there are several modern day aircraft exhibiting their extreme in-flight airpower all day long. And at the end of the day the stars of the show will be either the Air Force Thunderbirds or the Navy Blue Angels, providing an absolutely awesome climax to the day. Attendance numbers well in excess of 250,000 people each day.

Some will have access to the Distinguished Visitors Presentation on Friday. The DV Show is attended by about 12,000 people, and the crowd of 12,000 on the Andrews tarmac is the equivalent to a crowd of 120 people in a Wal-Mart.

Due to security restrictions, we will only be allowed to bring 55 national attendees onto the base in 2009, so please

know that this event is "an extremely limited participation." We hope to increase that number to 110 for 2010, as we expect this to become a recurring event. Local NCAC members will still have their usual access.

We expect this to book up very quickly, so:

For more information on the web, please visit our website:
www.8thafhs.org and click on "Special Event"

To guarantee your spot for our reunion, you can book your room at the Crowne Plaza by calling 703-842-1234; just say that you are booking with the 8th Air Force.

Additional info and further registration forms will be available on our web site, but if you don't have computer access, just call George Hoidra at 301-953-2813, and leave a message if no one answers.

George Hoidra

2009 8th Air Force Historical Society Annual Reunion

August 18th - August 22nd.
Cincinnati, Ohio

The 8th Air Force veteran lay ill, preparing to make his "final flight," his devoted wife at his side.

In his weakening voice he said, "Dear, you have always been with me. Soon after we met and got married, I got drafted out of college to go into the army. You went to nursing school and followed me to my assignments.

When I got badly wounded in combat, you were there to nurse me back to health. After the war, we started up four businesses, all of which failed. You were always there through thick and thin.

Now in my old age, I have contracted a terminal illness and you are again at my bedside.

I have finally come to realize that - you are bad luck."

Lou Holtz

ONE WHO GAVE US OUR FREEDOM

I was a member of Co. K-3rd Inf. 424th Division, which arrived in Dietersheim, Germany in May 1945 as a guard unit to 150,000 German war prisoners. Just outside of Dietersheim, in the Rhine Valley, was a beautiful poppy field. As I walked among the flowers I came upon a lone grave of an American soldier. It was so beautiful I came back to it each day.

I was curious to know more of this boy who rested alone in the quiet of the hills, and I learned he was buried by the Townspeople of Dietersheim with full church services. They made him a large crude cross from the deep forest close by and each day they came to water the potted plants which they placed upon his grave.

I wondered about his parents, and how pleased they would be if they could only see this final resting place of their boy. As I had no camera, I de-

cided to make a sketch, perhaps locate his family and give it to them. I had only an old German map, on the back of which I made a drawing. I have also a few poppies which I picked from the grave when we were ready to leave.

It's been a long time ago, but I still keep thinking of A MASSA, his grave, the good people of Dietersheim, and his family. I should like to go back someday and visit that grave again.

B. Kruczek, Cleveland, OH

GOXHILL

Hello Walt: Kathrine Henderson works with me in Virginia Beach. We operate a museum located at the Virginia Beach airport (<http://www.airnav.com/airport/42va>), which we own. A few years ago, we had the Goxhill brick control tower disassembled and moved to Virginia, where we have it in storage. We would like to have any photos that anyone might have that were taken at the airfield during World War Two and especially ones that might include the control tower in the background.

Gerald Yagen
Aviation Institute of Maintenance
4455 South Boulevard
Virginia Beach, Virginia 23452 - USA



B-17 Flying Fortress Going Down

8TH AFHS SUPPORTS RECOVERY AND RESTORATION AT THE LONE STAR FLIGHT MUSEUM

Norma Chesser of the 8th Air Force Historical presenting a check to Larry Gregory, President of the Lone Star Flight Museum in Galveston, TX (www.lsfm.org) to assist in the museum's recovery and restoration effort following the devastation to the museum caused by Hurricane IKE that made landfall on September 13, 2008.

Efforts are being made to reopen the museum around Thanksgiving.

Additional information about Lone Star Flight Museum can be found on our website.
<http://www.303rdbg.com/thunderbird/lsfm-visit>.

submitted by Roger Wright
Pelican Photography, Ingleside, Texas.

Norma Chesser from the 8th Air Force Historical Society presents a check to Larry Gregory, President of Lone Star Flight Museum to help with the recovery following Hurricane IKE.



**The 448th Bomb Group
B-24 *Shady Lady*
on the hardstand**



ELECTION NOTICE

Nominations of candidates for election to the Board of Directors of the Eighth Air Force Historical must be in the hands of the Secretary no later than May 15, 2009. The following information must be included.



- Full name and address of person being nominated.
- Nominee's 8th AFHS membership number.
- 8th Air Force unit in which nominee served, if applicable.
- Brief resume of nominee.
- Nominating member's full name and address.
- Nominator's 8th AFHS membership number and, if applicable, his unit.

The Secretary will relay all nominations to the Nominating committee. Nominations received by the Secretary after May 15, 2008, or any nomination without complete information will not be considered.

Send all nominations to:

Robert Moses • 413 W. Washington Ave. • Brownsville, TN 38012-2064

THE PATRIOT GUARD HONORS VETERANS

by Bob Books, Patriot Guard Rider

The Patriot Guard Riders is a national diverse amalgamation of volunteer motorcycle riders from across the nation that honors current KIAs and veterans at their funerals. They have one thing in common besides motorcycles - an unwavering respect for those who have risked their very lives for America's freedom and security.

The main mission of the Patriot Guard riders is to attend the funeral services of KIAs and veterans as *invited guests of the family*. Each mission undertaking has basic objectives:

1. Show our sincere respect for our fallen heroes and veterans, their families, and their communities.
2. Attend the funerals of KIAs and veterans honoring them with flag lines and family support.
3. Provide motorcycle escort to the burial site and honor them there.



4. Shield the mourning family and their friends from interruptions created by any protestor or group of protestors.

The Patriot Guard began back in early August of 2005 with the American Legion Riders from Kansas. They were appalled to hear that a fallen hero's memory was being tarnished by misguided religious zealots who were protesting the war at funerals. They decided to do something about it.

On the 18th of October 2005 the Patriot Guard name was established and the growth since then has been phenomenal. Today their membership included thousands of individual riders with over 75 various ride groups represented.

Patriot Guard members only show up at funerals if invited by family. If you know a family that would like to honor a KIA or veteran in this way, contact the Patriot Guard at: www.patriotguard.org



Bill Barnes served in the U.S. Marines and now serves in The Volunteer Corps at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum.

Shown here with his historical U.S. service awards collections.

Bill's collections consists of every medal given to the Navy and Marines and all medals awarded to those who served in the U.S. Air Force.



Chowhound

Dr. Brown ,

In the last two Issues there have been Letters regarding the loss of a 95th BG B-17 on the Chowhound Mission. If I may, I would like to add more specific information.

On May 7 , 1945 , the Lt. Scurman Crew was flying B-17 # 44 - 8640 BG D on this Mission. There were 13 Men on board including a photographer and several ground crewmen that had received permission to ride along. After successfully completing the food drop, their B - 17 was over the North Sea when suddenly the # 2 engine caught fire. Unable to extinguish the fire , The Pilot ordered the men to bail out. A British Lancaster crew spotted the B-17 floating in the sea and managed to lead a nearby boat to the scene while calling Air - Sea Rescue. The tail gunner managed to drop a Life Vest to a crewman spotted several miles away. A PBV and Walrus arrived on the scene and picked up three surviving crewman. One of the survivors died soon after.

Out of 13 Men , only two survived the ordeal, the co- Pilot , Lt. Schwarz and Toggleer S/Sgt. David Condon. Both men later returned to duty.

A tragic end to a Mission of Mercy.
Respectfully ,
Michael Howell

PRISONER OF WAR - MOOSBURG

My cousin Sgt. Fred Oswald from Long Island signed the German flag lowered from Moosburg, Rathaus on Liberation Day, Stalag VII A1945. Fred passed away two years ago. However, before he died he received a phone call from Germany. A man who saw him bail out of his B24 over Czechoslovakia was able to track him down. Being an old-time New Yorker, he could not believe the call was legit.

The caller reminded Fred of how he and his father hid out Fred and another crew member for awhile before they were captured. Fred then asked the caller how he ever was able to trace him. The caller scavenged parts off the crashed bomber when he was a young boy. The caller used a serial number to refer back to the plane manufacturer

and eventually got the crew listing.

After many years the Czech was able to contact Fred and his buddy. I have the newspaper article written when they met 52 years later.

Another amazing story from World War III!

Cousin Lou

AMERICAN CHAPEL

Dr. Walter Brown,
Hi Doc!

I have another little tidbit you might want to use. I read every issue of the 8th AF News from cover to cover. However, sometimes I miss an item. On pg. 55 in the Mar. '08 Issue there is an item re: St. Paul's Cathedral. It jogged my memory back to 1951 when I was stationed at Marham RAF base.

It was a real honor to be selected to represent our outfit at the July 4 dedication of The American Chapel at St. Paul's, it was a historical event that most people were not aware of but it was very meaningful to the troops in England.

I am very proud of my participation.
Sincerely,
Robert Morin
4th AAA Battalion - Hershey PA



Robert Morin

TWIRLY BIRDS

Dear Walt,
Amplifying on Howard Richardson's

comments in Sept. 08 8th News about there being no vintage/classic helicopter fly-ins, proof they are not safe, he's both right and wrong. The vintage model is the R-44. To my belief we had twenty plus aircraft, two surviving, one at the Smithsonian, the other bearing the yellow number 16, which I flew, is displayed at Wright-Patterson AFB. There may be 10 or less surviving members, those who flew before VJ Day being at best several hundred. They were called founder members of Twirly Birds.

To the question of safety, so we thought, until the main rotor shaft parted from metal fatigue at 400 hours creating an unanticipated consequence. To Howard I say, never was a grandiose fly-in possible for another reason. You'd have to drag along 12 mechanics per a/c. One hour up required two hours servicing. Too, learning the egg beater's characteristic was scary. In turn, max speed being 85 mph, terror could overtake you if you were conditioned to the stalling speed of a B-24. I swore my instructor was suicidal.

Sincerely,
Ray Ward
Author, *Those Brave Crews*
Ray Ward's book is reviewed in this Issue 8th AF News Book Reviews. -Editor

MEMORIALS

Dear Veterans and Friends!

I was delighted and honored to have had the opportunity to visit this magnificent museum, just prior to flying out of Savannah on Friday 10 October 2008. I only wish that Delta to Boston could have been delayed, allowing me more time to soak in everything you have on display indoors and outside.

As a "Briton" born not far away from High Wycombe at a time when your B-17s etc were roaring overhead, I've always maintained an interest in USAAF and USAF activities in far off England. It was a shame that so many of your airfields were torn up, desecrated or rebuilt without anyone thinking too carefully about their role



in American and Great Britain's history. After the War, most people just wanted to forget it all and did not see its artifacts as being of equal importance to our castles and other treasured remains. Thank goodness for such things as the success of Duxford, the growing number of small control tower museums and the "After The Battle - Then & Now" histories. It was also a touching experience to read the memorials to many USAAF Stations and their Squadrons, in the Memorial Gardens of the Museum in Savannah.

Bravo for presenting, in a factual way, "Life in Britain" and that a world war was ongoing well over two years before Pearl Harbor. Many American museums need to be reminded that there a lot of countries allied to USA and doing their bit to bring victory. I heard a middle age gentleman viewing your Blitz display express surprise that the RAF actually retaliated in 1940 and bombed Berlin. Some folk believe that this action by Churchill actually provoked Hitler into unleashing the Blitz upon UK History will be the judge of that.

My only "grumble" concerns the Museum's constant references made to England's foul weather. Was it always so bad? Where does our weather come from...!

Keep up the good work.

Sincerely,

Alan Baker

RAF Association, Swiss Branch
Grens, Switzerland

REUNION PHOTOS

Dear Sir:

First thing I want to say is I enjoyed the Sept 2008 8th AF News very much. The photos of all the people who were there were very good. But I was a little disappointed to not be able to read the names on each photo.

What your magazine could have done was have a page or two with all the names in each photo. If they did not have room then make up a page or two with the names on but number each photo.

My friend was at the reunion with his two daughters.

He was posed with "Fightin Sam" B-24; he was the chief engineer on this



John Petrocelli

plane. He was on the Ploesti Mission on the Rumania Oil Fields. He was awarded a Bronze Star for his work on The "Fightin Sam". His plane was never shot down and never aborted a mission.

His name was John Petrocelli.

Thank you for printing my story of Kilroy. Keep up the good work on the 8th Air Force News.

Thank Donna Neely for a great job.

Yours truly,

John J. Manocchio

Altoona, PA

John - a good suggestion. Our problem is that many Society members sent us their reunion pictures - with no idents! -Editor

DRESDEN ESTIMATES

Hello Dr. Brown:

While in London recently my wife clipped an article from The Daily Telegraph of Oct. 3, p. 17 by Bojan Pancevski describing the findings of a German Commission, headed by a prominent German military historian to be published next year. The key finding is that casualty figures of Dresden that we are used to hearing were grossly inflated to serve the purposes of Nazi propaganda. These bogus estimates reached into the hundreds of thousands. In its extensive research "the Commission has so far identified around 18,000 victims" and estimates that "a maximum of 25,000 people lost their lives in the February attacks."

While, of course, this is still a tragically large number, to put it into perspective it is still far less than the losses at

Hamburg and from the fire bombing of Tokyo. As a veteran of one of the missions that bombed Dresden as requested by the advancing Russians, I was glad to receive this new and more accurate estimate.

Sincerely,

Robert L. Steiner, Navigator, 34th BG

B-17 Stupefier

I appreciate your efforts in publishing the Stupefier photos in the September issue. In the "Mission Scrubbed" photo, the officers names are (L to R) Lt. Robert Haughey co-pilot, Lt. Martin Hooper, pilot & Lt. William Condon, navigator, 379th B.G.

A few weeks ago, one of my co-workers & I went to the Wright Brothers, (south Dayton Airport) when the Collings Foundation's B-17 "Nine-O-Nine" & their B-24 "Audrey" flew in during their summer tour schedule. They were late arriving - having trouble finding enough 100 octane gasoline in Michigan for the flight to Dayton.

So my co-worker & I went to a nearby Wendy's for a quick lunch. As we were finishing, we heard the unmistakable sound of a low flying bomber on final approach & just then a large shadow of a B-17 tail slowly passed by on the parking lot. We imagined how a bomber stream 100 miles long would look & sound - Fantastic !

Thanks again.

Henry G. Wulbeck

MISSION SCRUBBED



PINK LADY

Request that you put this in the next 8th AF News magazine: Attention: Can we save aircraft #448846? It is the only B-17 that has flown continually since WWII. To insure that it will continue to fly-all dedicated 8th AF personnel can contribute to the organization below. George A Patterson - 351 BG.

Our association can make flying a B17-G number 448846 season from April to October each year. These flights are air shows that allow people to see the ground and in flight one of the airplanes in the second bombing war Europe to freedom.

This aircraft built in the U.S. 64 years ago came to end the conflict European allies against the Nazis. This B17G No. 448846 belonging to 351BG 511b based POLEBROOK (England) has completed six missions of war in April 1945 and is the only fortresses maintained flight that has made real war missions (six bombinettes on the fuselage symbolize this reality). For us it is an air of legend: the legend bomber has always attracted admirers but it is also the witness on the ground of the conflict that took place there that more than sixty years.

This entity on our soil with a redeployment in Europe has great value for Europeans but also for Americans because it carries the symbol of this atrocious war that only a giant could reduce to nothing. It is the ambassador of the USA but of freedom.

Financial assistance paying the insurance would be welcome. The price of this insurance is 35000euros (or 50,000 U.S. dollars) for a season and it is still preparing the aircraft.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my dedication and my thanks in advance.

Jean Paul ANDRE Technical framework Air France (I worked 35 years on Boeing airplanes) engineer on B17
178 rue PETIT Le ROY
Pavillion n degree 41
94550 CHEVILLY LARUE France

DRESDEN MISSION

Dear Walter Brown,

To begin with, I was a ball turret gunner on the B-17 "Extra Special," 91st Bomb Group, 322nd Squadron. Your article on Dresden in the Sept. 8th AF News was very interesting to me. I've enclosed copies from my mission diary that relate to the topic.

First, I'm surprised to learn at this very late date the Dresden mission on Feb. 14th was cancelled by the 8th. I had not heard this information at the time. Our group, along with a number of others went to Prague (this after a morning briefing on Dresden). During the mission I thought we were bombing Dresden, and only found out the next day we had gone to Prague. To me, the two targets were very similar in appearance from high altitude.

As you can see in my diary, the next day we did go to the Dresden area.

The crap we hear about how bad it was to bomb Dresden, really bugs me. The city area was filled with production of wartime weapons and systems. My best,
Jack Gibson 91st BG
Hendersonville, NC

34TH BOMB GROUP

Dear Dr. Brown:

Last month I attended the final reunion of the 34th Bomb Group in Washington, D.C. We had 243 persons present which I thought was a good turnout to be called a final reunion.

While there I learned that a lot of our members do not belong to the 8th AF Historical Society. I got the word around about groups with good attendance at 8th reunions having the separate mini-banquets. There seemed to be considerable interest. We have one final issue of our bulletin coming out in December and I sent a copy of the 8th membership form to our editor and ask to reproduce it.

I'm hoping that quite a few of our members will join and continue our association through the 8th AF Historical Society. I told them about the 8th AF News which you do so well.

Mission FIFTEEN

Thursday, February 15

Dresden was our target today- we missed it yesterday- bombing Prague, Czechoslovakia by mistake! It was 10/10 clouds all the way to the target - there was no flak to speak of over the target. On the return we saw a barrage of flak way out at 30000. We crossed over the Rhine River visually - it's really a "good sized" river. We left the continent through France. There was good fighter support.

Altitude: 26,000 ft
Temperature: -38°C
Length of mission: 8 hrs.

Dresden Mission, from Jack Gibson's diary.

At our gala banquet in Washington we were fortunate to have a 4 Star General address our group, General Norton A. Schwartz, U.S. Air Force Commander and member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He was very genial and came early in order to speak personally with all 34thers.

My best wishes,
Bill Street 34th BG
Lakeland FL



Bill Street with General Norton A. Schwartz

CHOWHOUND MISSION

Dr. Brown,

In the last two issues there have been letters regarding the loss of a 95th BG B-17 on the Chowhound Mission. If I may, I would like to add more specific information.

On May 7, 1945, the Lt. Scurman Crew was flying B-17 #44-8640 BG D on this Mission. There were 13 men aboard including a photographer and several ground crewmen that had received permission to ride along.

After successfully completing the Food Drop, their B-17 was over the North Sea when suddenly the #2 Engine caught fire. Unable to extinguish the fire, the pilot ordered the men to bail out.

A British Lancaster crew spotted the B-17 floating in the sea and managed to lead a nearby boat to the scene while calling Air-Sea Rescue. The tail gunner managed to drop a life vest to a crewman spotted several miles away. A PBV and Walrus arrived on the scene and picked up three surviving crewmen. One of the survivors died soon after.

Out of 13 men, only two survived the ordeal. The co-pilot, Lt. Schwarz and toggler S/Sgt. David Condon. Both men later returned to duty.

A tragic end to a Mission of Mercy. Respectfully,
Michael Howell

HALF PINT aka Pink Lady

Dear Walt,

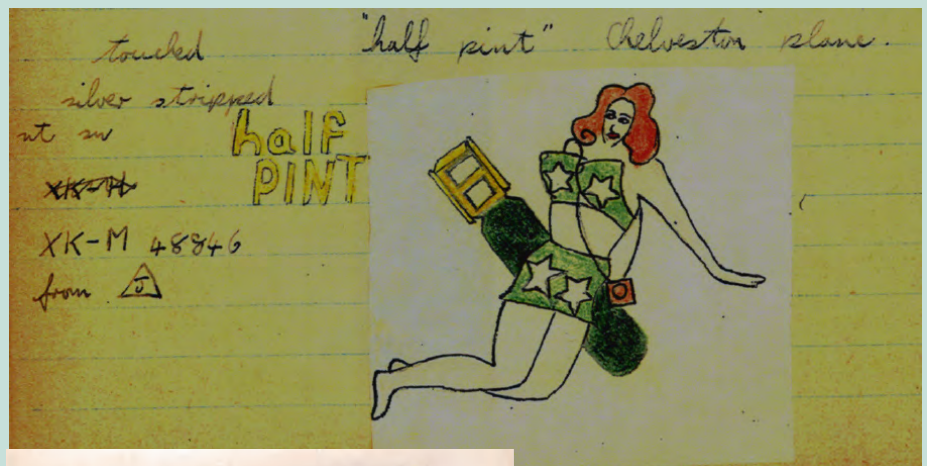
To answer letter from Jim Crow in latest edition of 8th AFHS magazine; there were definitely two aircraft carrying the name HALF PINT. He quoted 43-38192, and this was an original 305th BG aircraft, issued to group as new 28th June '44. She flew combat with the 366th Sqn, coding letters KY-A, till the end of WW2. Her main crew were that of Lt. William 'Bill' Cook. During the weeks after hostilities, she and a number of war weary 17's of the 305th were transferred, exchanged with neighbouring 1st AD groups. #192 was passed to the 351st BG at Polebrook on 23rd May 1945. This exchange aircraft from Polebrook, 44-8846, is the very

same one which flies today in civilian hands in France, at many air shows and public displays. The latest news on this air show performer is that its owners are considering grounding her at the end of this year. As I explained before, she carries the fictional and historically inaccurate name of PINK LADY. A sketch made in May of 1945 at Chelveston, reveals the colours of the original artwork, a Vargas girl in a two piece green coloured bathing suit, carrying white stars.

It is now thought that Lt. Cook had a hand in the nose art on #846, as the original ship he flew in combat carried the same name, his sweetheart back home, and he is certainly recorded both in words and pictures as having flown #846 post-war on the CASEY JONES project during late 1945.

Also Walt: The piece from Thomas

Thompson regarding the 406th BS at Cheddington. Most of the B-17's flying under the command of Colonel Earl J. Aber Jr, had originated as 422nd Sqn-305th BG 17's, when Col. Aber and a handpicked group of 422nd Sqn men had transferred out from Chelveston in July of 1944. Their orders were to create the whole new outfit, known early on as the 858th, later the 406th. Those B-17's which the 406th flew were true veterans, many having clocked up high mission tally's even before starting operations at the new base of Cheddington. I can think of two right away, MISS MICKEY FINN who I believe reached the dizzy heights of 148 missions by the end of WW2. Another was PISTOL PACKIN' MAMA, again reaching three figures flying night operations. Aber's own preferred ship and one he flew many times, TONDELAYO, was another



Half Pint original artwork



HALF PINT 44-8846

Lt William 'Bill' Cook beneath nose of HALF PINT taken in St Trond Belgium, summer of 1945

veteran of many months service, and one of those B-17's originally with the 422nd Sqn when Aber was its Squadron Commander prior to being promoted and given his own group command at Cheddington. Much of the work started at Chelveston, September 1943 till July 1944, was aimed at the propaganda against Nazi-occupied Europe, the paper war and dropping of leaflets, newspapers etc. This valuable but little known work, along with other unique 'Black Op's', continued and became more developed still from the Cheddington base till the end of WW2. Continued success to you at the 8th AFHS.

Ian White
305th BGMA UK Contact

"Half Pint" & Project Casey Jones

Dear Dr. Brown:

I just read the note in "Mail Call" from Jim Crow in the Sept. issue of 8th AF News about the plane with the picture of the girl and the name "Half Pint." I might be able to help.

I believe there were probably two planes with this name. I was a pilot in the 365th Bomb Squadron of the 305th Bomb Group. The 305th and one other group were switched after VE day to photo mapping western Europe and

the coastline of Africa. In the summer of 1945 we were moved from England to Belgium. It was here that the crew chief had the bathing beauty painted on the nose and it was our intention to name it *Photo Jeannie* since we were now doing photo mapping. Our Squadron C.O. saw the nose art, thought it looked like his wife and had us name the plane "Half Pint" which was what he called his wife. He occasionally flew with us.

We had been told that we would go home if we finished up early but would be home at the latest by Christmas, 1945. So naturally, we moved to Lechfeld, Germany on Dec. 20th. It did look like Christmas, though. I think I continued to fly that plane out of Lechfeld but I flew it as courier plane between Lechfeld and part of the 365th that was in Tripoli, Libya.

I do not recall our *Half Pint* girl holding a bomb so I think there may have been another plane with the same name. Possibly, our C.O., Maj. William J. Cook, when he was Ops. Officer during combat had flown the plane shown in the Sept. issue or some other pilot in a different group had.

Hope this helps.

Sincerely,
Lyle Vincent Wade

88s

Dear sir:

I am a WW II Army Air Force veteran with 15 missions over Germany to my military record. During those missions we were told of the ack ack (flak) we would probably encounter. That cities like Hamburg were protected by 88's by the famous 88 mm cannon which could reach us at our operating altitude.

Berlin was protected by 600 guns and so with other large cities, etc. It is my understanding that this gun was very versatile and used as field artillery by the ground troops. I've never seen the gun but understand it was probably the best cannon used during WW II.

I find that former Air Force veterans are as curious as I am about the gun and would appreciate some information about its history, development, versatility, durability and its destructive power. Since it caused a great deal of damage to our bombers, AF vets should find it very interesting.

Albert Mendoza
Auburn, CA

Albert - you are on target. Most 8th AF Heavy bomber losses were due to German anti-aircraft fire. Resulting stragglers were pounced upon by Luftwaffe fighters. We will have an article on the 88s in an upcoming issue. -Editor

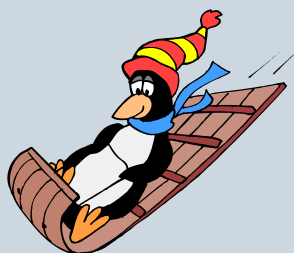




Dan Blakeslee with the depiction of his
4th Fighter Group painting by Gil Cohen
Displayed in the Colonial Oil Art Gallery
Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum

Deck The Halls

Three Master Sergeants and
one First Sergeant in front
of a Christmas tree. First
Sergeant on the extreme
right appears to be Henry
Ramm of the 362nd BG.



NEW YORK SOUTHERN WING CHAPTER

On September 27, 2008 the New York State Southern Wing Chapter had its semi-annual meeting/luncheon at the Holiday Inn, Corona, Queens NY. President Nathan presided over the affair with Vice-President David Greene.

The Chapter honored POWs and despite the fact that the weather in the New York City area was not good keeping the turnout not our best, this luncheon/meeting with the many members sharing and discussing their memories, whether being in the Pathfinders as Thomas Nasta or in the 15th AAF like Sonny Fassoulis or Norman Bussel from the 447th BG or Michael Colomonico of the 92nd or Si Spiegel of the 490th BG and John O'Connor of the 8th AAF, was priceless.

The Chapter's next BOD meeting is scheduled for December 20, 2008 and next luncheon/meeting April 25, 2009.

The Chapter will be holding a commemorative award luncheon honoring and saluting the WWII Air Corps Groups and a tribute to those members that have final Taps. Air Force Brass will be



present and the WWII Memorial in Washington DC will be asked to highlight this event. For further upcoming Chapter news check website, www.ny8thswcaphs.org

Please 'Support Our Troops' especially at this time of year.

Pat Keeley

OREGON CHAPTER

by Clint Gruber (93rd BG)

The Oregon Chapter of the 8AFHS was scheduled for its November '08 quarterly meeting a couple of weeks early so as not to conflict with members plans for observance of Veterans Day and had a total of 51 attendees for our luncheon meeting at the Beaverton Elk Lodge. This number included our 8th USAAF vets, non-vet members, and guests.

After the call to meeting by President Tom Davis and the Pledge of Allegiance, Chaplain Roland Stewart (466th BG) announced the names of members who had gone west over the past year. It was a long list, and each name was announced with a service history and obituary. It was a solemn recital as the names were read.

This meeting was the last one to be led by two-term President Tom Davis. He thanked the membership for the support offered over his tenure, and was rewarded by a big round of applause for his effective leadership.

Tom introduced Joe Conroy, chairman of the nominating committee, to offer recommendations for officers for '09. The committee's offerings were accepted, and the new officers and board members will be: President, Burt Campbell, Vice President, Clint Gruber, Secretary, Tom Philo, Treasurer, Sharon Campbell. New Directors: Warren Caldwell, Bob Dean, and Charles Gallagher.

Following lunch, we welcomed our program presenters, Lts JG Stephen Miros and Ryan Harry of the Portland Sector, United States Coast Guard.

Although Portlanders have long been aware of the presence of the Coast Guard at this major Pacific Coast port, most of the news stories we hear about their work has to do with rescue operations in the ocean or for

search and rescue missions for hikers in trouble in the mountains. While these are more visible services, the mission of the Portland Sector, US Coast Guard, spans a long list of duties over a huge expanse of territory in Oregon and Southern Washington.

To name just a few, the Commander of Sector Portland is also Commander of the Port and thus responsible for port safety and security for all vessels, harbors, and waterfront facilities in the Sector which includes Southern Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. This includes overall management of the Columbia River from Portland to Lewiston, Idaho, a distance of 365 miles. Each year, tugs and barges, carrying 10 million tons of cargo, move up and down the Columbia, carrying exports of grain and agricultural products, lumber, wood, and paper products from Portland, the West Coast's number one port for these commodities.

Today's US Coast Guard began life in 1790 as "Revenue Marine". In 1863, it was established as the Coast Guard "Revenue Cutter Service" in the Treasury Department, moved to the Department of Transportation in 1967 and, became a service in the Department of Homeland Security in 2003. In line with that move, a critical task of the Coast Guard is the inspection of some 2000 foreign and domestic ships, boarding them at sea before entering Portland Sector harbors.

Although the Coast Guard is not regularly a part of the Department of Defense, it does come under the Navy's jurisdiction in time of war. In WW2, the Coast Guard played heroic and distinguished roles in battles in the Pacific and in the ETO, especially in manning landing craft for island invasions in the Pacific, and on D-Day in France. Also, early in the war, while on convoy escort duty to the UK, the Coast Guard cutter Spencer depth-charged and fired on the German U boat U-175, forced it to the surface, and rescued many of the crew before it sank!

Many thanks to the Coast Guard for this informative meeting. We are looking forward to an equally interesting program for our next quarterly gathering in February '09.

NEW MEXICO CHAPTER

The New Mexico Chapter of the 8th AFHS held its annual Fall general membership meeting and luncheon at the Rio Grande Inn, Saturday Sept. 20, 2008. There were 64 members and guests in attendance.

President Larry Stebleton opened the meeting with an invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Entertainment Committee Chairman Bill Petynia introduced the guest speaker, Maj. Gen. Edward Giller USAF (Ret.), who spoke of his WWII experience as a P-38 and P-51 combat pilot.

Gen. Edward Giller, entered the US Army Air Corps in 1941. After training he was assigned to the 55th Fighter Group in the Pacific Northwest. The Group moved to England in late summer of 1943, becoming the first long range escort for the Mighty Eighth Bombers using P-38s. In the summer of



Major General Edward Giller

1944 the 55th Fighter Group changed to P-51s. As a fighter pilot Gen. Giller completed 115 combat missions, two tours, accumulated 460 combat flight hours and destroyed 3 enemy aircraft, including one ME-262 jet aircraft. He is credited with 6 aircraft destroyed on the ground.

He was wounded in April 1945 while strafing. The 55th Fighter Group is credited with being the first American fighter group over Berlin, Germany.

Gen. Giller's most interesting speech was followed with a question and answer session.

The next 8th AFHS, New Mexico Chapter general membership meeting will be held at the Rio Grande Inn, Albuquerque, NM. on Sat. Jan. 17th, 2009. Al Schwery Secretary

OHIO CHAPTER

The Fall meeting Of the Ohio Chapter was held in Columbus with business meetings of the Chapter Board taking place. The general membership meeting was held amidst prior and post meeting visits to the Chapter Hospitality Room for members to take part in camaraderie and food and drink. These visits continued throughout the three-day meeting. A Split-the-Pot raffle was held, a dollar a ticket, with proceeds going to the Chapter.

A special feature of the reunion was an address by speaker Bill Woodall who offered his thoughts and opinions about his lifelong love of airplanes. He builds them. The real thing. In his stable is a Sopwith Triplane, which now resides in the MAPS Air Museum in Green, Ohio. In addition, the Hangar Flying subject included "Memories of the War."

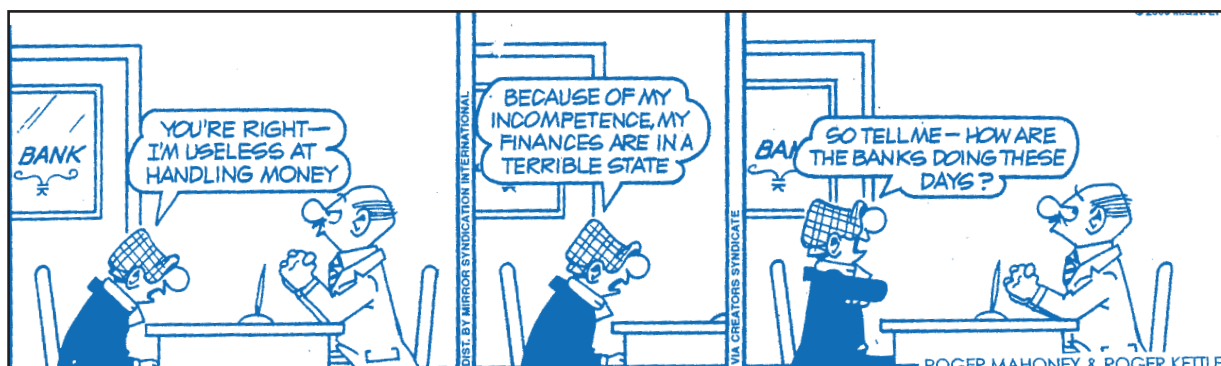
GENERAL JAMES H. DOOLITTLE CHAPTER

The General James H. Doolittle Chapter of the 8AFHS held their annual membership on Saturday April 19, 2008 at the Oakland Aviation Museum at the north field of the Oakland Airport in Oakland, CA. Acting president Paul Wallace presided over the business meeting prior to the luncheon because Larry Goldstein our president has moved to North Carolina Board Members present were Dan Freitas, Belton Wolf and Gale Moore. Pledge of Allegiance was given by Paul Wallace, Invocation and Moment of Silence was given by Belton Wolf, introduction of guest's speakers Willen Ridder author of "Countdown to Freedom" and Jonna Doolittle Hoppes author of "Calculated Risk". Dan Freitas, minutes of last BOD meeting was given to the membership and the treasurer's report was orally given.

There were 100 members who signed up for the luncheon. The luncheon was catered by Miraglia Catering and the menu was Chicken Rosemary buffet, fresh mixed vegetables, fruit salad, carrot cake and beverage. A raffle was held.

Members were able to visit the many display rooms of the museum including the James H. Doolittle room and the 8th AF room which tells the story of the 8th AF in WWII.

Daniel Freitas, Scty



RE-FLY THE NORTH ATLANTIC?

**In a 64 year old Boeing Flying Fortress?
Unheated, non-pressurized, no Stewardess?
Are you kidding?**

by Kenneth Hoddinott, 487th BG, Augusta, GA

Last May 2008, I received a telephone call from Ray Fowler, Chief Pilot for The Liberty Foundation. This foundation was created by Don Brooks, Chairman & CEO of Brooks Auto Parts - NAPA. Mr. Brooks owns and restored a 1944 B-17G, "The Liberty Belle". The *Liberty Belle* had been invited to fly in the Flying Legends air show at Duxford, UK in July. Would I like to be part of the crew? It would add some historic flavor to the event. (I was a B-17G command pilot in WWII and flew this route in early 1945.)

I quickly accepted the invitation, saw the FAA medical examiner and packed my val-pak, even tho I would be 87 years of age in August. My wife and younger friends thought I had completely lost it.

Don Brooks flew up to Augusta - I believe to determine if indeed I could walk through a B-17 without a cane or walker. After lunch, he welcomed me aboard.

Sunday June 29 I flew US AIRWAYS up to Bangor, Maine.

June 30 the gang and I boarded the *Liberty Belle* and took off for Goose Bay, Labrador. After about 5 hours of below freezing cold, my hand was shaking so much that I couldn't read my writing in my diary. We got there. I remember 20

degrees below zero at 25,000 during WWII but don't recall being this cold. We RON'd here in Happy Valley.

Tuesday July 1 we flew to Narsarsuaq (Blue West during WWII), refueled - \$17 American per gallon, and had lunch. The RAF Red Arrows, all 11 came roaring in displaying a beautiful pass before peeling off for an air show landing. Beautiful.

Wednesday July 2 we flew to Prestwick, Scotland. Enroute to Scotland at 5000 feet I was in the pilots seat and phoned one of my sons in Augusta... R555...! A satellite phone system that was loud and clear! During the war I had a hard time hearing my tail gunner! We buzzed the field at Prestwick and upon landing we were greeted by dozens of happy Scots. A very warm reception for the very beautiful B-17G.

The next day July 3 we hedge-hopped at 300 feet to Isla...home of several single malt scotch distillers. Passed around many "wind-props" - energy fields. We were royally entertained by Mr. & Mrs. Bruno Shroder in their magnificent castle like mansion on 16000 acres. We spent the night at the Inn of Marchie Golf Links.

July 4th flew at 500 feet over inlets to Duxford, then to Biggin Hill, a WWII RAF "Battle of Britain" airbase in 1940.

Toured fields and visited bunkers and shelters used during WWII. Left 'Belle' there and took train to London. RON at The Tower Hotel at north end of the Tower Bridge. Fabulous view. Some went to Picadilly Circus. Old timers will recall that the evening of May 8th 1945 the gals ran up and down the steps of the statue naked. This was the hot spot during the War, Churchill's Britain At War Room Museum, and some took sightseeing riverboat cruises along the Thames!

July 8th - back to Madingley to shoot photos for the documentary and to plan *Liberty Belle* flyover.

Wednesday July 9 was a big day for me. Several of us at my request drove to Lavenham and had lunch - fish & chips of course at the SWAN, the pub that we of the 487th BG used during the war. Our names were still preserved on the wall next to the bar. The Swan is now a hotel and restaurant and is 5 Star-Beautiful. One wall is decorated with our names from the 487th BG and its 4 squadrons. A photograph of General Fred Castle who was killed on December 24, 1944 and awarded "The Medal of Honor", has a prominent place on one wall. We left the Swan and found the Tower on



the old airfield. It is used as a classified government office today. The airfield has reverted back to farmland. Some of the original Nissen huts remain.

On Thursday July 10 I got to sit at the controls in the left seat and buzz the former field at Lavenham - at 300 feet! WOW! I couldn't help recall as I pulled up and banked left, how few WWII B-17 pilots remain. We lost 70-plus mission Lew Lyle last June 2008, Hiroshima Paul Tibbets, 52-Mission Rosie Rosenthal, *Memphis Belle* Bob

Morgan, coach Tom Landry, and so many more.

Saturday July 12, day of the airshow, had the Belle flying formation with the PINK LADY from France, and several Mustangs and Spitfires. The *Sally B* was missing engine No. 1 and did not leave the ramp.

Monday July 14...Having made 3 trips via Iceland, (we returned from the ETO in June 1945 in our B-17G), and the wife feeling puny, I decided to give Delta the business. I departed Heath-

row on Monday July 14 for an 8 hour non-stop trip to Atlanta. During WWII it took me 22 1/2 hours via Iceland to Bradley Field, Conn.

Ken Hoddinott was a volunteer at the Mighty 8th Air Force Museum for many years. He may represent the case for the B-17 pilots to return to England via the Northern Route once again.

- Editor



On the wall is a large bulletin board with the number of missions flown by the 452nd BG. Next to the board is a large map of the Pacific. The sign above the map reads "Pacific Front". In the corner next to the map is a Christmas tree.

RUSSIAN RHUMBA

8th Air Force Dances to Wrong Tune

by Frank Cassidy, 95th BG - Lexington, Kentucky



Frank Cassidy - May 1944

Like a lot of men of my age, 1941 brought about a complete change in our dance style. From high school proms, to college jitterbugging - to the two-step march in Army Air Corp basic training - many of us went from being very unrestricted college boys to very restricted privates in the service.

For me, it all started when I noticed the constant drag on male attendance in my freshman classes at the University of Kentucky. Quite aware of the Army's draft requirements, I made the timely decision to apply for the Army Air Corps, and - without my mother's best wishes - I became a member in January 1943. After completing a number of Air Corps schools, including a "wash out" at piloting, I found myself positioned as far as possible from the pilot's cockpit - as a tail gunner on a B-17. Little did I know that my services in the 8th Air Force would include bombing major German factories, oil fields and the beaches

of France during the invasion forces of D-Day.

None of the aforementioned targets will ever remain in my mind as much as our shuttle bombing raids over Germany, including our landing at Poltava and Mirograd in the Ukraine section of Russia. Very little news of these missions reached the American public at that time.

While the initial missions flown from 8th Air Force bases in England in early 1943 had been somewhat successful, our intelligence believed that bases in Russia would extend our coverage of targets in eastern Germany. As our number of missions increased, it became much more evident that these Russian bases were sorely needed, not only for tactical purposes but also for political reasons - to ameliorate the wishes of Joseph Stalin for a "second front." Perhaps these missions could even cement our relationship with the U.S.S.R.

From the get-go our proposal on this endeavor had fallen on the deaf ears of Stalin. His demands for cooperation were subject to constant confrontation. This political boondoggling by our communist ally should have served as a warning of further plans of WWII.

Whatever the case, it was not until 1944, when I was a tail gunner on a B-17



Frank Cassidy - 2003

with the 95th bomb group, 8th Air Force, that my small part of this well discussed operation began. Noble but naive, our crew was awakened June 21st for our usual breakfast and briefing. From our side of the briefing room the large map that was covered by a curtain was pulled back to reveal a tape that pinpointed our target, Ruhland, but extended our mission into Russia, terminating in Poltova. Bases had also been established in Mirograd and Piyatin. In addition to the usual briefing about our target, flight plan, I.P.

(initial point), flack expected and Luftwaffe dangers, we were told what our personal conduct was expected to be and the relations with our ally Russia. We were also given identity cards in both English and Russian to be used in case we were shot down and were over Russian territory.

As a small town kid who had traveled little from



Yes - that's the accordion player who can't play "Ochi Chronye"

Kentucky, I was amazed. This mission would be the longest and perhaps one of the most dangerous in which I had participated. I learned that it would take eleven hours to fly from England to Mirograd. For comparison, it took nine hours to fly to Berlin and back.

Our mission to Russia was to bomb a refinery at Ruhland, just south of Berlin, which we did with good accuracy. Thanks to our P-51 (little friends) fighter escort, which shot down 14 enemy planes en route, we made the trip in good condition with little gas left in the tank. It was puzzling to me that we were greeted by Russian Yak fighter planes, which flew a little too close to us for comfort.

Landing in Mirograd as opposed to landing in Poltova chanced to be a lucky decision. After the usual hand shaking and back pounding by the U.S. ground forces, we were fed and went to sleep in one of the few existing structures in Mirograd. Sucking on oxygen for nearly 11 hours, we were exhausted. While we were sacked out, the German Luftwaffe was not. Their reconnaissance revealed a pack of B-17s parked in Poltova and Mirograd. That night they bombed both bases destroying approximately 60 B-17s at Poltova. Mirograd was lucky; they only used anti-personnel bombs on us with a minimum of damage. It seems impossible that the Commie Ruskis did little to prevent this attack or to allow our fighter planes to ward off this uncontested bombing. You don't have to have a Ph.D. in foreign affairs from Harvard to see the outrageous deception of our Russian allies.

Since Poltova got plastered so bad, the bases at Mirograd decided that we should move a little farther east to be out of a range of Luftwaffe bombers. Kharkov was the best choice so off we flew into the further reaches of the USSR. This time we spent several days enjoying the hospitality of our suspicious ally. The first days we had no limitations on moving about the bombed out city. However, in the subsequent days our mobility was restricted. So much for hospitality afforded by the K.G.B. While there we managed to bomb a couple of targets in Drohebycz, Poland and Arad, Romania.

In Kharkov we escaped further attacks,

The 8th AF meets flack over Ruhland, Germany



and found the Russian military in the lower ranks to be quite hospitable. On one memorable occasion, we attended a large banquet and attempted to rhumba with Russian female soldiers. Perhaps we would have had better luck with the waltz. The Soviet uniforms offered little freedom of movement.

The attached pictures will confirm our fraternization policy while in Russia. Oh yes, that accordion player wouldn't play "Ochi Chronye" ("Dark Eyes"). "It's bourgeois," he spat when I requested the song.

Like us, the Russian soldiers wanted souvenirs of our encounter. In fact, one wanted to swap firearms with me. I was wearing a GI 45 and he was wearing a Russian issue. Needless to say, I had to say "nyet" to this proposal. We resolved our bargaining efforts by swapping insignia on our uniforms. I still have the insignia of this soldier in my possession.

Among other souvenirs of this mission is a small ceramic salt container that I requisitioned from our big banquet. Rumor had it that other proposals were made but romantic intrigue was never proven, despite the fact that several female soldiers caught our eye. G.I.'s will be G.I.'s.

To complete the balance of shuttle bombing we flew across

Yugoslavia and landed in Foggia, Italy. After delousing our bodies of the lice we picked up in Russia, we flew back to dear old England, stopping off to unload a few bombs on Beziers, France.

This shuttle bombing raid took about two weeks and proved to be a complete and unadulterated flop. There was a second shuttle mission later in WWII.

This story did not end until June 21, 1995, when I, along with all other 8th Air Force crew members who participated in this mission, received from Yuli M. Vorontsov, Russian ambassador to the U.S., a letter of thanks and a commemorative medal, "The 50th Anniversary of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War" (WW II).

So, my dear reader, remember, "All good things come to those who wait" - except rhumba lessons!



The "Ladies Aide Society" of Kharkov getting ready for a night on the town. Hubba-Hubba!



Brown, Andrew, Jr., founding member of the Oregon Chapter, 8th AFHS, 457th BG navigator.

Mullen, Edgar, J., Oregon Chapter, 8th AFHS, armament section of the 491st BG.

Knight, Virginia, widow of Marvin Knight, 493rd BG, Oregon Chapter, 8th AFHS.

Postma, Albert, Steenbergen, The Netherlands, Escape and Evasion helper and notable supporter of the 8th AFHS.

Noble, Wiley S., Lottie, LA., 25th BG, 8th AF during WWII and Korea, founder of 3rd Strategic Air Depot Association, co-founder of 25th BG Association.

Harris, Dr. Elbert Neal, Atlanta, GA., P-51 Mustang pilot, 479th FG, POW in Stalag VII Mooseburg, Germany

Bech, George Neil, Jr., Scottsdale, AZ., pilot of the *Bonnie-B*, 359th BS, 303rd BG.

Martin, Howard J., 34th BG bombardier/navigator, "The thing he loved most after his family was his experience helping keep the world free with the 8th AF."

Manifold, Donovan B. "Papa", Camarillo, CA., B17 pilot, 303rd BG, shot down

over Malicorne, France on July 4, 1943. Became a POW.

Bauman, Ernest G., San Antonio, TX., B17 pilot. Logged over 6000 hours in the air during his Air Force career that ended with retirement in 1964.

Dicks, Mason, Keewatin, MN., 398th BG, B17 navigator, POW.

Genotti, George Joseph, Woodbridge, VA., 91st BG, mechanic for the B17 named *The Careful*. Retired from the Smithsonian's Air and Space Museum as an aircraft specialist at the age of 75 in 1993.

Dickson, Carl Albert, South Houston, TX., 323rd BS. Top turret gunner and flight engineer on the *Ramblin' Rebel* and *Outhouse Mouse*.

Asch, Naomi, Brentwood, TN., wife of Al Asch, 93rd BG and Tennessee Chapter, 8th AFHS.

Denbeck, Donald E., O'Neill, NE., tail gunner, 487th BG, 838th BS.

Downes, Emmett, Savannah, GA., served in the US Army in China, Burma, India front 1946 – 1948. Faithful volunteer at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum, Pooler, GA.

Johnson, Thomas Edward, Leesville, SC., 8th Army Air Corps and employed with Burlington Industries for over 40 years.

Stilwell, Joe Ross, Marietta, GA., B17 waist gunner, 96th BG at Snetterton Heath. Shot down and parachuted into Germany, where he became a POW until the war ended.

Rowan, Harry E., Oklahoma City, OK., B24

Earthquake McGoon pilot. Flew 106 missions on the Berlin Airlift from September 1948 through September 1949 flying a C54.

Richardson, Clyde C., Summerhill, PA., 388th BG, member of Armed Forces Escape and Evasion Society. Evaded for 49 days after being shot down in occupied France.

Rooks, Ned, Brownsville, TN., 379th BG, B17 crewman. Founder of the Tennessee Chapter, 8th AFHS.

Hagman, Willard, Aitkin, MN., 385th BG, B17 bombardier flew out of Great Ashfield, England.

Reilly, Thomas J., Wilderville, OR., 8th AF Historical Society, Oregon Chapter.

Christensen,

Elmer D., Newport, NE., crew chief on the *Sis and Willie*, with the 7th Photo Recon stationed at Mt. Farm, England 1943 to 1945.

Hemphill, Donald R., Lincoln, NE., crew chief on P-51 Mustangs with the 38th Squadron, 55th FG.

Mills, Carl Reuben, Brentwood, MO., P-38 pilot over Africa, Italy, and England. Received the Distinguished Flying Cross for acts of heroism over Africa.

Walshe, Maurice R., 55th FS, 59th Station Complement Squadron.



Harry Rowan



Emmett Downes



Dr. Elbert Harris



Howard Martin



Willard Hagman

Shepard, Bert R., Hesperia, CA., 55th FG P38 pilot. On his 34th mission was hit by enemy fire, taken as POW by the Germans who amputated his right leg below the knee. Even with amputated leg, played minor league baseball for the Chicago White Sox, but went on to pitch southpaw for the Washington Senators.

Jensen, Robert Nels, Racine, WI., P38 pilot.

Shaffer, Warren E., Columbia Heights, MN., flew 27 combat missions over Europe.

Chandler, John Derwin., Spring Park, MN., member of the U.S. Army Air Corps and the RAF, flying supplies over the Himalayas and earning an Air Medal and the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Conrad, Edwin Mitchell, Stillwater, MN., served with the 8th Army Air Force and was a Norden Bomb Sight specialist.

Funari, John, St. Paul, MN., crew chief logging over 60 combat missions over Europe.

Holland, James E., Warroad, MN., B17 crewman, 8th AF.

Jordan, James C., Naples, FL., P51 Mustang pilot with 85 missions with the 109th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron. Received the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Karlson, Kenneth L., Plymouth, MA., shot down over Schweinfurt, Germany and was a POW at Stalag XVII for 20 months.

Loegering, John Richard, Dallas, TX., P47 pilot with the 78th FG, 83rd FS. Shot down while in support of Operation Market Garden, held as POW in Stalag 6-J until liberated on April 29, 1945.

Mogush, John J., Hopkins, MN., navigator, 8th AF.

Mitsch, John F., Eagan, MN., B17 pilot, 8th AF.

Biglow, Robert R., Plymouth, MN., 365th FG, flew P47s and P51s. Awarded the Silver Star and the Bronze Star for efforts at the Battle of the Bulge.

Olund, William H., Mendota Heights, MN., B24 radio operator.

Pfaffinger, Richard., Blue Earth, MN., 8th Army Air Force crewman and POW in German for 13 months.

Thompson, Clyde W., Edina, MN., B17 pilot with 35 missions with the Mighty 8th.

Zupan, Don J., Shakopee, MN., 379th BG, 339th BS, POW.

LaBounta, John W., Bloomington, IL., member of the Photo Reconnaissance unit in Europe during WWII.

Knight, Virginia J., Portland, OR., long time member of the Oregon Chapter, 8th AFHS, following the death of her husband M. F. Knight, who was in the 493rd BG.

Lyskowski, Edwin., Valley, CT., B17 radio operator, 92nd BG, received a Purple Heart.

Wolf, Mary Anne., Los Gatos, CA., beloved wife of Belton Wolf, 305th BG.

Garvin, Archibald W., Abington, PA., B-17 pilot at Great Ashfield Station 155, 8th Air Force, 385th Bomb Group, 551st Squadron.

Saydek, John H., Southampton, PA., 8th AFHS, Pennsylvania Chapter.

Koepke, Dr. Howard, Zelenople, PA., B-17 pilot. In August 1944, his plane caught fire and he and the rest of his crew parachuted to safety. Caught by locals and turned over to German police and spent 10 months as a POW Stalag Luft III.

Montgomery, Edward C., Meadville, PA., 8th AFHS, Pennsylvania Chapter.

Parkhurst, Richard A., Bargersville, IN., served with the 8th AF, 357th FG, the 100th BG as a waist gunner, the 9th AF in Korea, 44th B/D in Vietnam.

Zuker, Naomi Clark, Knoxville, TN., wife of Ray Zuker, deceased B17 and B24 pilot, 486th BG and charter member of the Tennessee Chapter, 8th AFHS.

Farlow, Charles R., Sr., Milroy, IL., 452nd BG flight engineer and top turret gunner.

Stetser, Carl E., Blackwood, NJ., life member 8th AFHS and member of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum.

Jones, William Earl, Nashville, TN., B17 ball turret gunner.

Blough, Rev. William G., Jr., Oakmont, PA., 390th BG ball turret gunner.

Humphries, Loyd P., Fort Worth, TX., 388th BG pilot and later served as military aide-de-camp to Col. Roy Forrest, commander of the Aphrodite Project, the only secret airbase on the British Isles.

Brown, Raymond S., Lackland AFB, TX., B24 pilot with the 34th BG, 7th Squadron. After WWII, he commanded fighter squadrons in Germany and the US. Retired as Vice Commander of the Air Training Wing at Randolph AFB.

Harris, James E. (Squeak), Little Falls, MA., B17 tail gunner with the 306th BG, POW from October 1943 until May, 1945.

Bell, William M., Jamestown, IN., 440th Sub Depot airplane mechanic, instrument repairman at Alconbury, England.

Hillock, Nelson, Atlantis, FL., 91st BG, 322nd Sqdn., radio operator/gunner on the *Texas Chubby* and the *J'ville Jolter*.

Benner, Archie V., El Paso, TX., B17 pilot of the 549th BS

(The Bombing Devils), 385th BG, based at Great Ashfield, England. Flew in the Battle of Normandy.

Rogers, Lonnie P., 487th BG, 836th BS, tail gunner flew out of Lavenham Air Base, England.

Jaehne, Charles R., Fresno, CA., B17 ball turret gunner in the 303rd BG.

Richardson, June I., Beaverton, OR., wife of Stanley P. Richardson, Jr., pilot of the P38 Lightning, P51 Mustang, F80 Shooting Star and F86 Sabre Jet while in the 8th Air Force.

Kane, Walter V., Sun Lakes, AZ., 489th BG at Station 365, Halesworth, Suffolk.



Mary Anne Wolf



Walter Kane

Two Stories - Both True!

STORY NUMBER - ONE

Many years ago, Al Capone virtually owned Chicago. Capone wasn't famous for anything heroic. He was notorious for enmeshing the windy city in everything from bootlegged booze and prostitution to murder.

Capone had a lawyer nicknamed "Easy Eddie." He was Capone's lawyer for a good reason. Eddie was very good! In fact, Eddie's skill at legal maneuvering kept Big Al out of jail for a long time.

To show his appreciation, Capone paid him very well. Not only was the money big, but Eddie got special dividends, as well. For instance, he and his family occupied a fenced-in mansion with live-in help and all of the conveniences of the day. The estate was so large that it filled an entire Chicago City block. Eddie lived the high life of the Chicago mob and gave little consideration to the atrocity that went on around him.

Eddie did have one soft spot, however. He had a son that he loved dearly. Eddie saw to it that his young son had clothes, cars, and a good education. Nothing was withheld. Price was no object.

And, despite his involvement with organized crime, Eddie even tried to teach him right from wrong. Eddie wanted his son to be a better man than he was.

Yet, with all his wealth and influence, there were two things he couldn't give his son; he couldn't pass on a good name or a good example.

One day, Easy Eddie reached a difficult decision. Easy Eddie wanted to rectify wrongs he had done. He decided he would go to the authorities and tell the truth about Al "Scarface" Capone, clean up his tarnished name, and offer his son some semblance of integrity. To do this, he would have to testify against The Mob, and he knew that the cost would be great. So, he testified.

Within the year, Easy Eddie's life ended in a blaze of gunfire on a lonely Chicago Street. But in his eyes, he had given his son the greatest gift he had to offer, at the greatest price he could ever pay. Police removed from his pockets a rosary, a crucifix, a religious medalion, and a poem clipped from a magazine.

The poem read:

"The clock of life is wound but once,
and no man has the power to tell just
when the hands will stop, at late or early
hour. Now is the only time you own. Live,
love, toil with a will. Place no faith in time.
For the clock may soon be still."

STORY NUMBER - TWO

World War II produced many heroes. One such man was Lieutenant Commander Butch O'Hare. He was a fighter pilot assigned to the aircraft carrier Lexington in the South Pacific.

One day his entire squadron was sent on a mission. After he was airborne, he looked at his fuel gauge and realized that someone had forgotten to top off his fuel tank. He would not have enough fuel to complete his mission and get back to his ship.

His flight leader told him to return to the carrier. Reluctantly, he dropped out of formation and headed back to the fleet.

As he was returning to the mother ship, he saw something that turned his blood cold; a squadron of Japanese aircraft was speeding its way toward the American fleet.

The American fighters were gone on a sortie, and the fleet was all but defenseless. He couldn't reach his squadron and bring them back in time to save the fleet. Nor could he warn the fleet of the approaching danger. There was only one thing to do. He must somehow divert them from the fleet.

Laying aside all thoughts of personal safety, he dove into the formation of Japanese planes. Wing-mounted .50 calibers blazed as he charged in, attacking one surprised enemy plane and then another. Butch wove in and out of the now broken formation and fired at as many planes as possible until all his ammunition was finally spent.

Undaunted, he continued the assault. He dove at the planes, trying to clip a wing or tail in hopes of damaging as many enemy planes as possible, rendering them unfit to fly.

Finally, the exasperated Japanese squadron took off in another direction. Deeply relieved, Butch O'Hare and his tattered fighter limped back to the carrier.

Upon arrival, he reported in and related the event surrounding his return. The film from the gun-camera mounted on his plane told the tale. It showed the extent of Butch's daring attempt to protect his fleet. He had, in fact, destroyed five enemy aircraft. This took place on February 20, 1942, and for that action Butch became the Navy's first Ace of WWII, and the first Naval Aviator to win the Congressional Medal of Honor.

A year later Butch was killed in aerial combat at the age of 29. His home town would not allow the memory of this WWII hero to fade, and today, O'Hare Airport in Chicago is named in tribute to the courage of this great man.

So, the next time you find yourself at O'Hare International, give some thought to visiting Butch's memorial displaying his statue and his Medal of Honor. It's located between Terminals 1 and 2.

SO WHAT DO THESE TWO STORIES
HAVE TO DO WITH EACH OTHER?

Butch O'Hare was "Easy Eddie's" son.

Son provides B-17 "Yankee Lady" for Reunion of the 487th Bomb Group

William M. (Bill) Sheriff, son of 487th Bomb Group member Cyril Bert Sheriff, sponsored B-17 "Yankee Lady" at the 487th Bomb Group's annual reunion.

Bill Sheriff contacted the Yankee Air Museum and made arrangements for B-17 "Yankee Lady" to be available during the reunion, which was held in Kalamazoo, Michigan, on July 23-27, 2008. The flight crew flew the aircraft from the Yankee Air Museum at Willow Run Airport, Michigan, to the Air Zoo in Kalamazoo. Mr. Sheriff then provided rides for all veterans who wanted to fly. Upon landing, the flight crew presented the veterans with commemorative medals and certificates.

On the first day of the reunion the standard question directed to the veterans as they arrived was, "Are you going up?" Some said NO, or made comments about their "last time up." One said, "I haven't gone up since I went down!" With encouragement, many of these veterans changed their minds, and chose to fly one last time. It was physically difficult for most of them to board the aircraft, but they were determined. 27 veterans rode aboard "Yankee Lady" during the reunion. One veteran who flew thanked the air crew, and said that he was finally able to "put to sleep some ghosts." Some of the younger reunion attendees flew with the veterans, a unique experience indeed.

The 487th Bomb Group, part of the 8th Air Forces's 3rd Air Division, was stationed at Lavenham, England, and flew B-24s and B-17s. The first Group Commander, Lt Col Beirne Lay

Jr, was shot down and evaded capture. He wrote the books *Presumed Dead and I Wanted Wings*, and co-authored *Twelve O'Clock High* with Sy Bartlett. Two of Beirne Lay's nieces attended the reunion.

The 487th Bomb Group led the mission of December 24, 1944, taking heavy losses, including Brigadier General Frederick Castle, who was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for that mission.

**Ann Kulp, 2nd generation member
487th Bomb Group
www.487bg.org**



CHRISTMAS PARTIES 1944



EXCITING NEW EXHIBITS AND MEMORIALS IN THE WORKS AT THE MIGHTY EIGHTH



The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum is busy preparing for its latest acquisition, a B-17 Flying Fortress. The G-model was built at the Douglas plant in California in 1945 and afterwards served nobly with firefighting services in Canada. It most recently has resided, for several years, in the hangar at the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum in Washington. The airplane will need some restoration, but it flew into Washington – it has not flown since.

The Museum team along with professional aircraft movers, All Coast Movers,

Inc., will arrive at Dulles airport on 4 January 2009 and after several days of disassembling and loading will transport the B-17 to the Museum in Pooler. It will be re-assembled in the large Combat Gallery of the Museum. For our visitors and school tours, this will be a “restoration in progress”, educational in itself. The Museum plans to factor into our educational tours the opportunity for our visitors and younger generations to actually experience the feel of a Warbird by climbing through certain areas of the plane.

Several Bomb and Fighter Group Associations have indicated that they will take part in the expenses of the restoration and reconfiguration, as have members of the Historical Society Chapters. In addition, we have been in touch with some private owners of Flying Fortresses who also have previously restored B-17s. The move and restoration is expensive. For several years the Museum staff has received notices that our 8th Air Force supporters and units will help offset these costs.



Please consider sending the Museum your contributions ASAP. That address is Mighty Eighth AF Museum, P.O. Box 1992, Savannah GA 31402.

The entire project will receive extensive publicity through filming of the entire project and through media channels that have a strong interest in WWII aviation and in the Museum itself. It has been a long twelve-year run in initiatives to acquire this Heavy bomber. Our thanks go out to all who have made this achievement possible.

THE WARBIRDS BALL... “Are the Stars Out Tonight?”



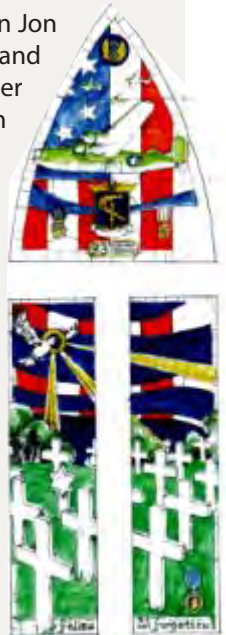
Veterans Day at the Mighty Eighth was a special four-day affair, beginning with the Saturday before November 11th. A special candlelighting memorial service was held in honor of all veterans in the Chapel of the Fallen Eagles. Army Chaplain Howard Cantrell performed the service with special music on the newly-acquired chapel organ, music presented by Museum CAO Brenda Elmgren. The morning of Veteran's Day a cadre of Museum veterans in our Volunteer ranks and also members of the Birthplace Chapter participated in the Savannah parade, several riding in a restored army Jeep and trailer. The Museum banner preceded them drawing cheers from the parade route crowd.



"Are the Stars Out Tonight?" was the theme and the question of the night for the Museum's annual fundraiser, The Warbirds Ball. Postponed from its September date due to Hurricane Hannah, the Museum was packed. Beginning with a VIP reception in the Pub a walk-through into the Art Gallery and Combat Gallery for a reception and unique silent auction, the entrance to the Rotunda was filled with the Big Band sound of the 20-piece Jeremy Davis Orchestra. The southern smells of shrimp and grits, red eye gravy, and Cajun Fried Turkey Breast from the hands of Chef Matt Cohen pervaded the area. A special feature was the attendance in full formal dress uniforms of young members of every branch of the military, most of who partied until the early hours, as did a number of our dedicated Museum staff members. Throughout the evening more than a dozen actors of the Tybee Actor's Association, dressed and made up as 1940's Hollywood celebrities, interacted with the guests at the Gala. Regarding the Fundraising aspect of the event, the entire evening produced a most successful and rewarding outcome.

The Museum is pleased to announce the new addition to the stained glass windows of the Memorial Chapel, a facility funded by members of the 8th AF Historical Society in 2001. The 93rd Bomb Group Association President, Fernley Smith, has approved a final design for the window and two door panels to be installed in the south door of the cha-

pel near the Altar. Artisan Jon Erickson, who designed and fabricated all of the other window presentations in the chapel, will have his work in its final stages in early 2009. The 93rd Bomb Group was one of the earliest units to fly combat with the 8th Air Force, flying missions in 1942 from England and North Africa. As members of the Second Air Division, they were one of that Division's premier combat outfits. Special dedication ceremonies will be scheduled upon completion of the windows.



In actions taken at its November Board meeting, the Museum is pleased to announce and recognize the addition of eleven new members to its Board of Trustees. In the planning for the past eighteen months, new members inducted are: Yvonne Brusselmans-Daley, Gene Buttle, Paul Grassey, Pat Ward, Bill Shira, Rose Cunningham, Joe Wilkinson, David Leslie, John Lewis, George Starks, and John Telgener. Their talents and enthusiasm will be most valuable in the Museum's mission and in the Museum's upcoming programs.

There are a number of new exhibits now underway at the Museum, several established and still under fabrication. The long-awaited 2nd Air Division expansion exhibit will be completed in the next four to six weeks. The Chronology exhibit is being drawn up, the POW exhibit expanded, the Ground Crew exhibit will be started as soon as the B-17 is in its final resting place, the huge Korean War monument will be installed, and various revisions to existing exhibits, adding new collection acquisitions to them, will be soon completed. These new looks await the return visit of the Society membership.

An impressive Pearl Harbor Day remembrance program was held in the Museum rotunda on December 7th. The Fleet Reserve Association J. J. Burke Branch 215 and the Savannah Council of the Navy League hosted the memorial ceremony. Featured was special music by the fine Effingham County High School Band along with presentation of the colors by the U.S. Marine Color Guard. Memorial speeches were given by several survivors of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. More 150 people were in attendance.

A DAYLIGHT TRAGEDY...

Returning to the squadron at Waddington RAAF, after a few months evading the Gerry assisted by French farmers and the Resistance who escorted me and an American Mustang pilot across the line, I was surprised to meet fellow bomb aimer Bill Dean W02, who had been on 'ops' at the time I had. He had recently returned from a period of prolonged sickness and then crewing-up. By this stage the squadron was operating night and day.

He described his first daylight. He said he flew in our normal manner, each aircraft navigating its own course, not in formation, but a gaggle. We of course were in five groups and therefore marked in the 'offset Cheshire' manner; whereby the target indicator was offset quite some distance clear of the target, a vectored wind, speed and direction being relayed by radio to the bomb-aimers. This avoided bombs extinguishing the markers.

All aircraft flew as high as they could and were therefore at about 20,000 ft. Each bomb aimer guiding his aircraft to the correct release point, as Bill's aircraft approached the release point there were two Lancs in close proximity in front, one below had just released its stick and one higher commenced its stick release. The stick consisted of No. 14 1,000 lbs. Bill was alarmed to see how close the bombs fell to the plane below, he counted as the bombs released, just missed the rear of the lower aircraft but directly in line. He counted thirteen and then the fourteenth hit the rear turret, one object hit the turret and two objects fell out! This was obviously quite shocking, but there was no time to contemplate, he then pressed his own teet, 'bombs gone'.

The procedures at the aiming point were no doubt changed after this

incident. This illustrates how the pilot and bomb aimer's minds are so concentrated at this time.

A W Matthews
in Bomber Command Association News Magazine

JOE ELLIOT...

"Our formation encountered considerable accurate flak at and after leaving the I.P. Just after leaving the I.P. we encountered a head-on attack by a mass of enemy aircraft. There were only two ships in the high squadron and they made a pass at us, hitting our #2 with a 20 mm shell. However, it continued running OK. We left the high squadron and filled in the lead. No. 4 engine started leaking oil and the prop ran away. We were unable to feather #4 engine so in an attempt to stay in formation, pulled 50" manifold pressure for one hour. We lost formation but were unable to stay trailing them."

"As soon as we were safely away from the fighters, we jettisoned the ball turret, had the tail and one waist gunner transfer to the nose. We also transferred gas. No. 2 prop had been hit by a 20 mm shell and the whole ship began to vibrate. We kept in trail at 20,000 feet until reaching the Dutch coast."

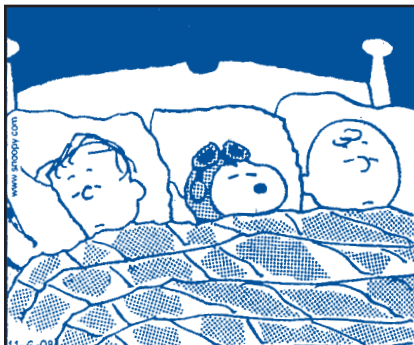
"About 100 miles from the coast of Holland, the radio operator obtained his first MF/DF fix. It was found to be quite accurate. Another fix was obtained at the Zuider Zee. It was also quite accurate. On crossing the coast of Holland we lost #3 engine; it started shooting oil and gas. We were pulling 2350 RPM with 40" manifold pressure. We transferred gas to #1 and #2 tanks evenly. Radio operator sent "C" signal into MF/DF section, turned on emergency IFF and pilot contacted "Colgate" on VHF. We gave position, speed, rate of descent, etc. At this time we were in doubt as to whether we should ditch but I finally notified them to "prepare to ditch." I kept contact with "Colgate" on

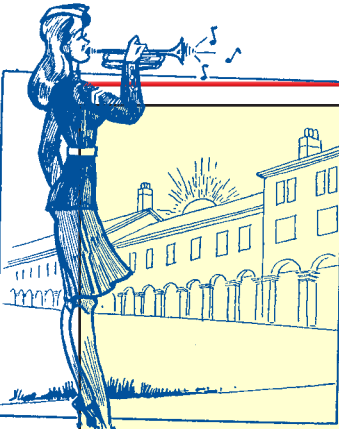
VHF giving fixes approximately every 5 minutes. We held the course given us by "Colgate" and flew approximately 45 minutes. We were losing 200-300 feet per minute with air speed at approximately 105 mph. The radio operator was sending in SOS and our gas had run down to the place that we could not reach the coast. "Colgate" told us that he could direct us over the Air/Sea Rescue boat. A few minutes later "Colgate" said we were over one of their boats. We were about 3,000 feet so made a 360 degree approach to left and came along side the boat. Radio key screwed down, pilot and co-pilot windows closed and checked at 2,000 feet. At 50 feet throttles cut and full flaps lowered. Switches were out after we broke our glide.

Ditching was made into the wind and there seemed to be about a 5-foot swell but this was difficult to tell from the air. First contact was with the tail as it was slightly low. On second impact ship was level. Pilot and co-pilot came through their windows using top turret guns to pull themselves out. Navigator found his leg broken when he tried to get out and the left waist gunner had a head injury due to the water smashing the floor in the radio room when it came through the camera wall. The rest of the crew went through the radio hatch and the rafts were released from outside. The Air/Sea Rescue boat pulled alongside on the left and we paddled away from the plane in our dinghies and were immediately picked up. The navigator was placed on a stretcher and made warm with blankets and the waist gunner was given first aid. The aircraft floated for 35 minutes."

The Flaming crew are now members of the Goldfish Club because they all knew their job and cooperated in doing it.

Joe Thomas Elliot
Memphis, TN





In Berlin, a new memorial has opened to honor those thousands of German citizens who risked their lives to save Jews from Nazi persecution.

The Silent Heroes memorial center tells the story of those who protected more than 5,000 Jews who were in hiding during the war. One well-known German industrialist was Oskar Schindler, whose activities were recorded in the 1993 Oscar-winning movie, *Schindler's List*.

The 357th Fighter Group will hold a Mini-reunion in Savannah, Georgia May 20-22, 2009 at the Marriott hotel. They will make a special visit to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum during the reunion days. After their successful reunion in conjunction with the Tennessee Chapter last spring, this meeting should be a success. The contact is John Bacon, 2910 Doone Circle, Palm Harbor FL 34684 -1809.

Another interesting reunion will take place on March 19 – 21, 2009. This is the 8th annual 390th Bomb Group Memorial Museum Members' Reunion at the 390th Museum in Tucson, Arizona. This impressive museum with its Square J B-17 *I'll Be Around* is located on the grounds of the Pima Air and Space Museum. Contact is: The390th@aol.com

Here's another award for Dick Baughn's great book, *The Hellish Vortex: Between Breakfast and Dinner* – his very authoritative novel about P-51 flyers in the 8th. The Writer' Digest 16th Annual International Self-published Book awards has been chosen, out of thousands of entries, as an Honorable Mention Award. This book has been reviewed last year in the 8th AF News Book Reviews section. Contact is: dick-baughn@austin.rr.com

The 65th Commemoration of D-Day will be held in Bedford, Virginia on June 4-7, 2009. This four-day conference featuring lectures, discussions and displays is sponsored by the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford. The Museum and 9-acre memorial site honors those 4,400 Allied servicemen Killed in Action on 6 June 1944. There are special plaques relating the role of the 8th Air Force in the months leading up to the invasion of the continent. Bedford is the town that lost the highest percentage of their men in one unit on that day. Contact is: www.dday.org or tel 1-800-351-3329.

The RAF Museum in London has launched the new "Lest We Forget" exhibition with a special ceremony held on October 30th. This exhibit is a poignant and unflinching exhibition that highlights the sacrifices made during human conflict. It emphasizes the impact that the death of one individual has on his family and loved ones and the support networks that have emerged in the last 90 years to comfort those RAF families in their grief. The museum is located on Grahame Park Way, London NW9 5LL and is open daily 10a-6p. Free admission and parking. Contact is: www.rafmuseum.org tel 020 8358 6410

In a special action taken by the national 8th Air Force Historical Society's Board of Directors, John Pearson has been designated as a permanent Board Emeritus member in honor of the years of dedication he has given to the Society, many of them serving as Secretary of the Board. John lives in Virginia and flew 8th Air Force missions with the 457th Bomb Group.

Donna Spigner has volunteered to be an active part of the Honor Flight of South Carolina, a national initiative whereby veterans are flown free of charge to Washington to visit their WWII Memorial. Willis Walling, coordinator of the 361st Fighter Group and Historical Society member, states that the inaugural Honor Flight was scheduled for this past November 5th. Interested veterans should contact: <http://www.honorflightsc.com/> or tel 803-434-4673.

The American Society of Aviation Artist will hold their International annual reunion in June 2009 at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Pooler, Georgia. This conference, headed up by ASAA founder and Museum Board member Keith Ferris will feature juried art shows and seminars on painting and drawing of all aviation themes. Local graduate art student classes will be invited to attend various aviation art programs during the week. Contact is: tel 912-748-8888 x 165 or admin@mightyeighth.org

The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum is expecting. The new arrival will be delivered under adequate sedation (champagne!) shortly after the New Year of 2009 appears. Weight: 36,135 lbs Length: 74 ft. 4 inches

Parents: Boeing and Douglas of Long Beach, California. Grandparents: US Army Air Force and National Air and Space Museum. The new arrival will make its home in the Combat Gallery of the Museum. Gifts may be sent to the Museum, P.O. B. 1992, Savannah GA, 31402. Visitations are encouraged.

Bettie Page, 85, wartime pin-up girl, has been hospitalized in California with a heart attack.



BULLETIN BOARD

8th AFHS PX AT THE MIGHTY EIGHTH

Don't forget that the PX is open every day for your Christmas Gift Shopping! There is a wide selection of books available on the 8th AF and the airwar.

**Check the website at:
www.mightyeighth.org
or call the Museum Store at
tel # 1-912-748-8888 ext.116**



WWII HERITAGE DAYS APRIL 2009

The Commemorative Air Force (CAF) Dixie Wing will host the 6th annual "WWII Heritage Days" April 18-19, 2009 at Peachtree City, Georgia. As in previous years, the weekend-long public history event pays tribute to the Greatest Generation by combining educational exhibits, vintage aircraft and vehicles, and demonstrations, including public battles in a recreated French village.

The program is designed for school-age families and has been added by 2,500-3,000 people each of the last three years.

Museums are cordially invited to provide an exhibit that highlights an aspect of the Second World War that reflects their mission.

contact: Chris Madrid at www.dixiewing.org
tel: 770-655-3315

CONFIDENTIAL

COMBAT REPORT

- A. Combat
- B. 30 March 1945 F.O. 1863A 8AF
- C. 376th Fighter Squadron
- D. 1346
- E. 10 mi W of Rendsburg, Germany
- F. 7/10 cumulus clouds at 8000 feet
- G. Me 262
- H. One Me 262 destroyed

I. I was Yorkshire Blue Leader on a fighter patrol over the Schleswig peninsula. We were flying 270 degrees just north of RENDSBURG at 12,000 feet when I saw a bluish contrail of a jet at eleven o'clock high, heading towards the squadron. He was diving at about a 45 degree angle on a course which would have taken him across the front of my flight, so I started a diving turn to the right to build up enough speed to catch him. I succeeded in cutting him off, and when I was about 60 degrees to him and 200 yards behind, the jet pulled up in a climbing turn to the right which gave me another chance to shorten the distance between us. I began firing from about a 10 degree deflection and 200 yards range. Just as strikes registered, all over the canopy and wing roots, the pilot stood up and bailed out. He went under me with his legs and arms spread-eagle fashion. The chute was not seen to open. I gave the Me 262 one more short burst after which it went into a stall, slid off on one wing and dove all the way to the ground where it exploded. I claim one Me 262 destroyed.

- J. A.C. Log P-51D-15 44-15252
- 325 rds expended (GSAR camera loaded with color film)

Kenneth J. Scott, Jr.
KENNETH J. SCOTT, Jr.,
1st Lt., Air Corps,
O-822205

OK - det.

CONFIDENTIAL

DECLASSIFIED

DOD Dir. 5200.9, Sept. 27, 1958
NMW by 71 date 11/16

Ken Scott, 376th Fighter Squadron, filed this Combat Report describing his shoot down of a German Me 262 jet fighter. Ken is a long-time Volunteer at the Mighty Eighth Museum.

2009 Air Shows Imperial War Museum

Spring Air Show - Sunday 17 May, 2009.

Flying Legends - Saturday & Sunday 11 & 12 July, 2009.

American Air Day - Friday 21 August, 2009.

The Duxford Air Show - Saturday & Sunday 5 & 6 September, 2009.

Autumn Air Show - Sunday 11 October 2009.

8th Air Force Historical Society PX at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum Store

QTY	8TH AFHS PX ORDER FORM DESCRIPTION	PRICE	OPTIONS	TOTAL
	Golf shirt w/8 th AFHS logo, Circle size and color choice	\$29.99	S, M, L, XL, 2X Red, White, Navy	
	Baseball Cap w/8 th AFHS logo embroidered	\$12.95	Red, White, Blue	
	8 th AFHS 4" jacket Patch	\$3.95	NA	
	8 th AFHS 3/4" pin w/clutch back	\$3.50	Member, Life Member	
	8 th AFHS bumper sticker	\$.90	NA	
	8 th AFHS 4" round sticker	\$.75	NA	
	8 th AFHS plastic license plate	\$3.95	NA	
	8 th AF logo silk tie	\$27.99	Red, Navy	
	8 th AF 3" patch	\$3.98	NA	
	8 th AF 3/4" pin w/clutch back	\$3.50	NA	
	8 th AF logo white T-shirt	\$10.99 \$12.99	S, M, L, XL 2X	
	8 th AF logo grey T-shirt	\$12.99 \$14.99	S, M, L, XL 2X	
	Mighty Eighth Fleece Charcoal, Blue	\$29.99	Zippered, Pull Over	
	8 th Logo Watch	\$79.99	Men, Ladies	
	4 Stars in the Window	\$24.95	N/A	
	Embroidered Baseball Caps	\$19.99	P38, P51, B17, B24	
	A-2 Jacket	\$299.99	40, 42, 44, 46, 48	
	Extreme Sports Mighty 8 th Jacket	\$49.99	M, L, XL, XXL	
	Military Wall Clock	\$29.99	Air Force, Marine, Army	
	Jimmy Stewart Bomber Pilot	\$21.95	NA	
	Masters of the Air	\$35.00	NA	
	Belgium Rendezvous	\$14.99	NA	
	Military Diamond Paper Weight	\$29.99	Air Force, Marine, Army	
	Stories And Recipes of The Great Depression. Choose Volumes 1, 2, or 3.	\$13.95	Vol. 1, 2, or 3	
SUBTOTAL				
7% SALES TAX-GEORGIA RESIDENTS ONLY				
SHIPPING FROM CHART BELOW				
TOTAL ORDER				
<p style="text-align: center;">Shipping and handling charges: \$5.00 for orders under \$20.00 \$9.00 for orders \$20.01-\$40.00 \$11.00 for orders \$40.01-\$100</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Alaska, Hawaii & International Orders Add \$15.00 to normal shipping charges</p> <p>Order by mail or phone at 912-748-8888 ext. 116. Shipping and handling is added to all orders.</p> <p>SHIP TO: Name _____ Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone Number (____) _____</p> <p>To pay with credit card - complete the following: VISA MasterCard Discover American Express</p> <p>Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____</p> <p>Signature _____</p> <p>Or, Pay by check made out to the Mighty Eighth Museum Store</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Send completed order and payment information to: Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum Store • Attn. Felice Stelljes • PO Box 1992 • Savannah, GA 31402</p>				



Crystal Diamond Marine Paper Weight

This hand-cut hand-polished diamond is roughly 4" round by 2.5" deep. This high quality diamond will make a handsome addition to your desk, study or den. The collectible comes with a Jewelry Gift Box!!

Mighty Eighth Fleece: 100% Cotton



Military Wall Clock:

Dimension 12" diameter Wall clock with U.S. Air Force logo.



Reviews presented in this section 8th AF News are authored by the magazine's editor and are presented for the enjoyment and information of Historical Society members. Books are aviation related topics, especially that of the 8th Air Force. They are in print and of recent publication.

FROM THE PAST...

THOSE BRAVE CREWS

The Epic Road to Destroy Hitler's Ploesti Fields

by Ray Ward

This unusual volume was first published in 1989. The reprint release is now available. In it author Ray Ward presents the story of the 1 August 1943 Ninth Air Force mission to bomb Germany's oil industries at Ploesti, Rumania. This tree-top level mission included three bomb groups of the 8th Air Force's Third Bombardment Wing (later Second Air Division); losses in all Groups were horrendous, occurring at a time early on in the war when Heavy Bombers and their aircrews were at a premium.

Author Ward's 146-page volume is unique in that it presents the researched stories of the individuals and aircraft of the mission in verse form – over 70 poem entries describing the experiences of the entire mission and of individual aircrews. Addressed are the facts of the mission, the shootdowns and losses, and the escapes and return of a portion of the airplanes to the airbases in North Africa. This mission resulted in the awarding of five Medals of Honor for courage and valor during the mission. Ploesti had been bombed by the Halverson Group – a few planes of the 367th Bomb Group flying at high altitude in June of 1942, with limited effectiveness. The first low-level mission targeted the industrial and oil storage areas of Ploesti.

The mission itself is a part of the storied legacy of the 8th Air Force in

a war where the eventual depletion of German oil production shortened the war by at least one year. The three 8th-based Bomb Groups that were part of this mission – the 44th, 389th, and 93rd – include this early mission as a proud part of their histories.

The book is available once again in limited supplies. Contact: Weldon Publication, 432 Pennsylvania Ave., Waverly NY 14892. tel # 607-565-2477 or online at www.thosebravecrews.com

WORLD WAR II

FIGHTER-BOMBER PILOT

Valiant Multi-Mission Air War What It Was Like

by Colonel William B. Colgan, USAF (Ret.)

This book presents a comprehensive and personal depiction of the role of the tactical missions flown by fighter-bomber pilots, whose history begins with the pursuit fighters of World War I. Their role in World War II was vital and has, on the whole, been under-reported and not fully recognized by mainstream war historians. Fighter-bomber pilots performed more varied tasks and flew a more diverse range of combat situations than other allied pilots. These pilots were aware of the dangers from flak and fighter attacks incurred by

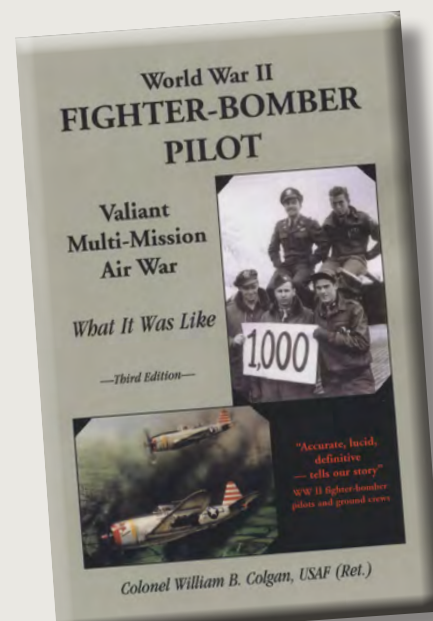
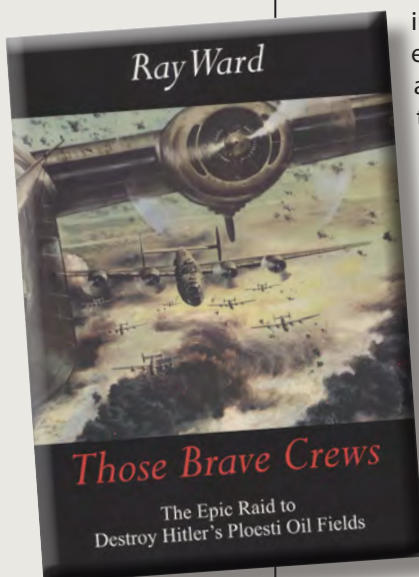
bomber crews on missions into enemy territory, but on every mission, encountered a set of formidable obstacles to their success.

Most of their missions involved low-level attacks on specific targets, many heavily defended. Most target defenses were unpredictable. Frequently dangerous night missions were flown in order to attack sites that would hinder daylight ground movements on a day-to-day basis. Thousands of transportation sites and supply trains were

hit throughout the war in the Italian Campaign and on the continent as well. Destruction abounded. After the D-Day invasion and invasion of southern France, fighter-bombers took the war to targets in the German homeland. Fighters followed retreating German armies, attacking innumerable targets of all kinds, many targets of opportunity occurring as the face of the war rapidly changed.

The author relates the details of this select group of pilots and their ground crews. Colgan's experiences of his two years in combat flying the P-40 and P-47 Thunderbolt are related in personal detail and cover a large portion of the geography of the air war, covering the Mediterranean and European theaters of operation. He flew the Po River Valley missions and has a fascinating chapter discussing the objectives and dangers of the fighter pilot as forward air controllers.

Author Colgan has updated this third edition of his volume, this published in 2008. The book is softback with b&w photographs, 216 pp. For information contact: Heritage Books, Inc, 100 Railroad Ave., Westminister MD 21157-4826. tel #1-800-876-6103 online at www.HeritageBooks.com



THE INNOCENT CADET Becoming a World War II Bombardier by Charles N. Stevens

Okay. This is the book we have been waiting for – a combat crewman's story that is not about combat.

Charles Stevens (call him Norm) wrote a very fine book, *An Innocent at Polebrook: A Memoir of an 8th Air Force Bombardier*, reviewed in 8th AF News in 2004. There was lots of combat in that volume, based on Norm's experience in B-17s with the 351st Bomb Group. This latest is about his training career, the time he spent learning to fly and about learning the heretofore unwritten Rules of the Road of a young fresh cadet during the training experiences at a multitude of airbases in CONUS before transferring to East Anglia, and combat. This story is very well-written and gives the reader a close first-hand authentic look at the training most of the flyers in the Mighty Eighth went through after enlisting in the Army Air Force, wartime. Many will relive very familiar stories from their own past. The entire book, all 398 pages, describes in detail the personal and the sometimes very personal experiences of the author and for that matter, all who went through similar training. There is no other volume like it.

The tale begins with the ride from California and his first night, of many, sleeping in an austere army barracks. From then on, the story leads the reader through the personal feelings and events that make up the life of an aviation cadet on his way to war and to an abrupt introduction to life, and death, in war torn skies. The author talks his way along familiar pathways – at least to every 8th AF airman – of training. There are drills, weapons breakdowns, classes, run-ins with instructors and

so-called upper classmen, bombing practice, check rides, and practice missions.

On his first experience with the Bug (training derrick on wheels) and the Bombsight:

"In erasing the distance between officer and cadet, he helps me learn, but at the same time, I become careless about showing him proper respect for his rank. I often slip, forgetting to call him Sir. While ignoring some of my lapses, he occasionally reminds me that I must be careful.

'Stevens, you better not forget to address me as Sir,' he warns. 'You better get in the habit or some chicken shit officer is liable to really rack you for it.'"

And of course as with all healthy young Yanks, time off and away from the training base; Saturday nights. Using hundreds of letters written to his family during the war as primary source material, his stories

are immensely personable and convincing. It's enlightening to see the author's philosophy at age 83 in light of his depiction of his life and memories at age 19.

This is one that's hard to put down and leads directly into author Steven's previously published combat work. Softback, 398pp, a few training photos b&w, 80 chapters varied topics; contact: Author-House, 1663 Liberty Drive, Suite 200, Bloomington IN 47403 www.authorhouse.com tel # 1-800-839-8640.



THEN HE SAID by Howard Scott

Author Howard Scott flew 35 missions as a ball turret gunner completing 35 raids with the McCutchan crew in the 303rd Bomb Group. The book covers as wide of a range of subjects as any we have read recently. He writes in a concise format with many of his chapter entries being written in the style and format of a stage play. Not all are war oriented subjects, but each has certainly been influenced by Scott's experiences of his younger years serving in the Eighth Air Force.

Of course there are some entries of his war experiences:

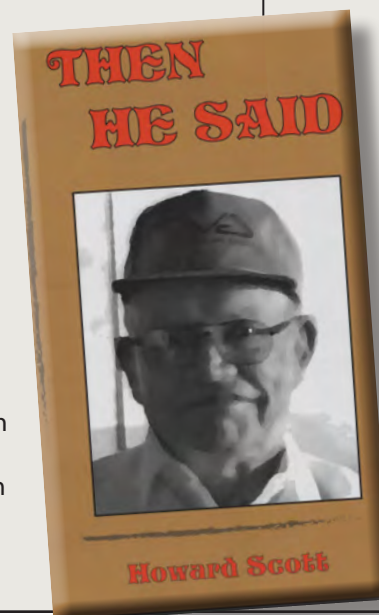
"Every plane had a navigator, an officer of course, they were supposed to know where we were. The pilot and crew now in the lead damn well didn't know. Oh, a rough idea. Anyone could tell we were over Germany because we kept flying into flak, even managed a turn over a nice bed of 88 mm anti-aircraft guns. Finally we kicked out the bombs – on what? Don't ask me. Don't ask the lead ship, but, bombs gone, we headed home. Not all that hard to find England from Germany. I knew where we were but then I was the short guy down in the ball turret so no one asked.

With all the meandering, fuel became a problem but our lead plane managed to get us down on a fighter base in England."

For those who like short plays that

have a point to make, this book will keep you entertained. There are some chapters of prose as well. The author doesn't waste a word and he remarks that the reader should turn the pages slowly to absorb fully the interactions of the characters depicted in the lines.

Softback, 240pp, published by Lonesome Doubters Publishing, Bluwaters Press, Deming NM 88030. Contact the author at 1570 Arrowhead Dr. Lot 4, Deming NM 88030.



CONTINUING THE 8TH AF LEGACY #17

Greetings fellow members of the Mighty Eighth.

In October I met in NYC with Joop van Weele Secretary of the "Stichtung Wings to Victory" foundation located in Krabbendijke, The Netherlands. Joop was on a U.S. tour interviewing WWII 8th AF vets for the foundation.

The foundation's website is, www.wingstovictory.nl, the site is in Dutch, but I was told this will change in time, and gives one an idea of what they are doing. There were hundreds of planes that crashed in Holland during the war and this foundation dedicates itself

to documenting these sites and also shares our theme "Keep Their Memories Alive". Joop explained they are creating a database regarding aircraft downed with locations and crew information etc. The foundation has provided assistance for veterans finding locations and other information of downed sites. The Museum is comprised of pieces of planes/engines and related WWII local artifacts and is in the process of creating a museum park with all authentic buildings as on the British airfields during the war as per director Martien van Dijk. I mention 'Wings to Victory'

because it is encouraging to know that the "Continuing the 8th AF Legacy" is doing well in The Netherlands as it is in other countries like the UK and Belgium.

If you have any comments or idea's regarding the Society's NexGen Initiatives my address is posted on the back of the front cover page and my email address.

Please remember to

"Support Our Troops"

Pat Keeley

Board of Directors 8AFHS

**357th FG
Servicemen
celebrating
Christmas
with a decorated
tree - 1944**



THOSE WHO FALL by John Muirhead

The truck rattled on and the flight line came into view. I saw the tail-low profile of my plane. She seemed poised, thrusting forward, leaning breathless toward the sky. She was waiting with the grace of a good creature to do my will. One who could not understand her divinity might say she was only dirt out of the ground. Except for the mind of man, that she was a machine and not a valiant steed; that life would never touch her; that she was as indifferent to her creation as she would be to her death; that she was without soul or spirit. But there was something else, a mystery pilot knew of her great beating heart, and a sacred vow she made to me: that she would put her strength in my hands; that she would bear me to the end; that she would give herself to my mad purpose with perfect courage and beyond all human love. And so I approached her, my noble friend, to do this day's work.

Flak on the Bomb Run



AMERICAN MEMORIAL CHAPEL AT ST. PAUL CATHEDRAL 50TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATED

On Thursday, November 13, 2008 a very special service was held at St. Paul's Cathedral in London. The American Memorial Chapel was dedicated in 1958 to honor those who fought for Great Britain's freedom and for that of the world. A feature of the Chapel is the Memorial Book originally placed by President Eisenhower in 1951 containing the names of 28,000 American servicemen lost during the war. That volume is in place in the American Chapel and a new page is turned in it each day.

In attendance at the ceremony were the Ambassador of the United States and our United Kingdom Historical Society representatives, Connie and Gordon Richards. A special guest was Belton Wolf who attended in honor of his wife Mary Anne, recently deceased. The Lord Mayor of London was also in attendance.

**American Ambassador laying
a wreath at the
Memorial Book at the
American Chapel**



Gordon and Connie Richards with Belton Wolf, 305th Bomb Group



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DON'T DESPAIR

Across the years, I have been an avid sports enthusiast. Hardly ever have I been a participant but rather an enthusiastic observer. Through many years of watching, I have been fascinated by how the game plan is executed. From the sideline or the dugout, the coaches do what they are called upon to do. They call plays. Across the years, their methods of communicating their instructions to the players on the field have changed. Coaching from the sidelines, the coaches use verbal instructions, body language, signs and signals, and more recently, electronic means to the players on the field telling them what the next play should be. All of these play calling activities are, of course, done in secret to keep the opposition in the dark. This has been fascinating to me, watching as the game plan is executed. But, there is one activity I have never understood. Whenever time-out is called in a baseball game, the catcher and pitcher have a huddle. What do they talk about? The game stops, the fans look on expectantly waiting for the outcome of this conversation. I know this is a mystery to a lot of people. It was answered recently in one of the daily newspaper columns by a popular favorite philosopher, Charles Shultz.

Linus, with his oversized cap on backwards and catchers padding weighing him down, determinedly approaches the pitcher's mound and tosses the ball to the pitcher and says, "The bases are loaded again, and there's still nobody out." Charlie Brown catches the ball with his oversize baseball glove and looks directly into the eyes of his catcher, Linus. In a desperate response to an obvious problem, he asks a simple question, "So, what do you think?" Linus turns away, thoughtfully looking into space. Charlie Brown waits and listens expectantly for advice. Then, Linus speaks, "We live in difficult times."

Now, this is one side of the story. Think a moment about the other team. The bases loaded a second time. No one is out! The score is at least 4 to 0. I can visualize the winning team on the bench and in the dug-out smiling, cheering and giving high fives. There is no cheering by Charlie Brown and his team. Why? This is life! You win some, you lose some. Sometimes, you win and lose at the same time. Life is a series of problems: either you are facing a problem now or you are just coming out of one or you are just getting ready to go into another one. Does this happen all of the time? YES! Everyone? YES! Can we ever be free from these ups and downs? NO! Is it easy? NO! Why does this happen?

I am convinced that life is preparation for eternity. We were not made to last forever. The warranty period will expire, one day our heart will stop beating...that will be the end of our body but that is not the end of us. While here, we can be reasonably happy but that is not the goal of life. Our goal is to grow in character, in the likeness of God, our creator. These experiences make us into what our goal in

life really should be. Running parallel in our lives, side by side, something good and something bad is going on. No matter how good we have had it, there is always something bad that needs to be worked on. Paul the Apostle lived out this principle: "I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through Him who gives me strength."

(Philippians 4:12-13 NIV) Paul prefaced this statement by saying, "...I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances." (Philippians 4:11 NIV) As Linus said, "we live in difficult times". We do, but we must focus on our purposes and not on our problems. Be satisfied where you are right now! I have travelled many miles and not all of the roads were paved.

I once attended the concert performed by a Christian woman whose reputation was that of an outstanding vocalist. When I heard her perform, the quality of her voice was not up to what I had expected. Though she struggled throughout the performance, she had a radiance on her face. For her final number, she sang:

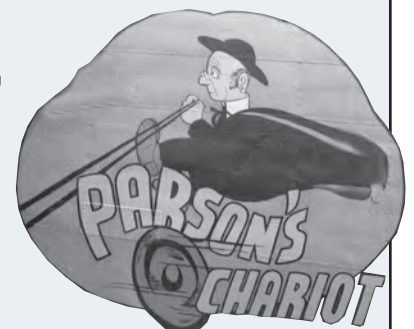
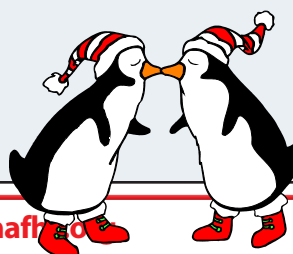
God hath not promised skies always blue,
Flower strewn pathways all our life through.
He hath not promised We should not know
Ever a sorrow ever a woe.
But God hath promised strength for the day,
Rest from your labor, light all the way.
Grace for each trial, help from above,
Unfailing sympathy, undying love.

After the performance, I learned that this was indeed her final number, in fact it was her final concert. She had terminal cancer of the throat. This last number she sang was her final testimony. Our God has promised and He does keep His promises. Do we know what they are? Have we made ourselves available for his blessings? He is willing and more than able!



Earl Wassom

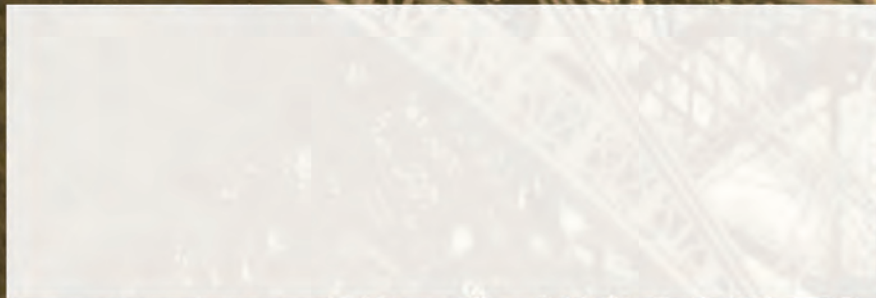
Earl Wassom, 466th BG
Chaplain, 8th AFHS





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