



8th AF NEWS

July 2009

VOLUME 09 NUMBER 2
Voice of "The Mighty Eighth"

Silhouette



1st LT. BREWSTER MORGAN
QP-U P-47 42-8644
334th Fighter Squadron
4th Fighter Group

© DON ALLEN '94

ILL WIND?



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CAPT. NICHOLAS MEGURA
QP-N P-51C 43-6636
334th Fighter Squadron
4th Fighter Group

LT. MARVIN ARTHUR
QP-U P-51D 44-73304
334th Fighter Squadron
4th Fighter Group

Blondie



© DON ALLEN '94

MY Achin' Back



© DON ALLEN '94

LT. PILOT UNKNOWN
QP-? P51D 43-73175
334th Fighter Squadron
4th Fighter Group



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CAPT. VICTOR J. FRANCE
QP-K P51-B 43-6832
334th Fighter Squadron
4th Fighter Group



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CAPT. WILLIAM B. SMITH
QP-Y P-47 41-6410
334th Fighter Squadron
4th Fighter Group

"Little Butch"



AF News

July 2009

Magazine of The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

The Eighth Air Force News is dedicated to Lt. Col. John H. Woolnough, founder of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society and editor for sixteen years. It is published quarterly and is the official newsmagazine of the Society. The 8th AF NEWS is sent to members of the Society and is not for public sale. The home office is at 175 Bourne St., Pooler GA. 31322 - P.O. Box 956, Pooler, GA. 31322. Officers and Board of Directors below are Eighth Air Force Historical Society Officers and Board Members.

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Presidents Message	3
Behind the Scenes	6
From Catherine @ 8th AFHS Office	7
Reunions	18
Mail Call	19-24
Chapter News.....	28-30
NexGen	31
Taps	32-34
Book Reviews	35-37
Debriefing	38
Tannoy	39
Bulletin Board	40-41
PX Store.....	45
Museum News	46
How About It?	47

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Happy Summer Everyone! Wonderful things are happening with our Society! I am pleased to report your Board has been working very diligently on several different projects.

First, our fantastic Membership Manager, Catherine Mayne has been working very hard to update our 8th AFHS membership roster. Along with the help of our Treasurer, Darrel Lowell, she is close to completing an up to date membership list for the Society which is in a constant state of change.

If you are a Life Member and have not returned your confirmation postcard to Catherine, please do so right away. This will ensure you will continue to receive the 8th Air Force News as an entitlement of your Life Member status. If you have any questions concerning your membership, please contact Catherine at our Savannah Membership Office at 1-912-748-8884. If you are paying a visit to the Museum please stop in and say hello to Catherine. Our new office is located on the second floor inside the Roger A. Freeman Library.

Bob Books, our Society Webmaster, has created an easy and secure way to pay your dues online. Check our terrific website at www.8thafhs.org.

Our annual Reunion is set for the week of August 18-23, 2009 in

Cincinnati, Ohio. Our previous issue of the 8th Air Force News has all the details concerning all our activities. You can also find all the information online at our aforementioned website.

I am very pleased to announce internationally acclaimed aviation artist, Gil Cohen has agreed to be our guest speaker for our Saturday Night Gala Banquet. Gil is recognized throughout the world as one of the most skilled and talented aviation artists. We are also very excited to announce the premiere of Gil's new book – *Gil Cohen – Aviation Artist*. Gil has worked on this incredible book for several years and will have his inaugural book launch at our Cincinnati Reunion. Gil has a deep passion for the Eighth Air Force and has created many wonderful paintings throughout the years pertaining to the history of the "Mighty Eighth." We are very excited to have Gil and his lovely wife, Alice, join us in Cincinnati!

During the Reunion, we have scheduled two separate tours to see the Museum of the United States Air Force (formally known as the USAF Museum). If you have never been to the Museum or if it has been a while, make sure you put this on your Reunion itinerary. We have some other very special plans in store for the Reunion as well. Please



**Mark Copeland
President**

join us in Cincinnati and bring your family and celebrate with us! I assure you this Reunion is going to be one of the best the Society has ever had!

To close, I want to thank you all for your continued support. It is an honor to hold this office and serve this wonderful organization we all love so much. We are proud to have you as a member!

Respectfully in your service,
**Mark Copeland
President – Eighth Air Force
Historical Society**

On Our Front Cover

WRIGHT PATTERSON AFB MUSEUM GETS REPLICAS OF WARTIME ART

**Artist painted fuselages of WWII fighter planes
by David Baird**

Dayton, Ohio - Wartime artist Donald E. Allen, 4th FG

Created some of the best work of its kind 50 years ago, but none of them lasted long.

Take *Miss Dallas*, depicting a lusty cowgirl on a map of Texas. It went down in the North Sea early in 1943, along with the P-47 Thunderbolt that it adorned.

Allen created his cowgirl again, and she was destroyed again, this time with a P-51 Mustang.

And so it went. Allen was a war-time artist; his "canvas" was the aluminum fuselage of whatever type of fighter plane equipped his World War II outfit in England.

"Most all of them had a very short life span," he said. "They didn't age gracefully."



Most pilots wanted a painting of a girl on their planes. "Most of them wanted plain nudes, period, but I reneged on it," Allen said.

"I wanted something sexy, but I didn't want it blatant."

Allen made his work permanent by donating a collection of his aircraft "nose art" creations to the Wright Patterson Air Force Museum.

His gift consists of 26 separate panels, each bearing a half-size reproduction of fighter plane nose art created during World War II by Allen for



Donald E. Allen arranges replicas of his wartime art at Wright Patterson Air Force Museum

the 4th Fighter Group of the 8th Fighter Group.

The presentation coincides with a reunion in Dayton for members of the 4th Fighter Group. Allen said he intends his collection to be a lasting memorial to the 117 men of his own 334th Fighter Squadron who died in the war.

"I think they're magnificent," then museum Director Richard L. Uppstrom said at an acceptance ceremony.

"We appreciate the talent of a man like this. Fifty years hasn't diminished his keen brush."

Pilots usually sought out the members of their ground crews with the most artistic talent, paid them in cash or liquor and told them the type of painting they wanted on their planes.

Few found squadron artists that measured up to Allen, and few created as many paintings.

Twenty-five of his panels will be on display at the museum. Allen is working on a 26th panel to be added later. Then the collection will be worked into the museum's regular rotating exhibit of aviation art in Kettering Hall.

"I don't think there was a better

practitioner in this particular field than (Allen)," said Judge Richard J. Rinebolt, 75, of Findlay, Ohio, president of the 4th Fighter Group. "A lot of these are probably a lot brighter than the originals."

Allen trained at the Cleveland Institute of Art before World War II, but the Army made him an aircraft mechanic. He

headed a maintenance crew in charge of a fighter airplane.

His reputation as an artist spread after a pilot asked him to paint a panther on a P-47.

"After that, I got

numerous requests so I had a backlog," Allen said.

He estimates that he did 40 to 50 paintings during the war. The pilots paid him in British pounds, equivalent to about \$35, for a painting that usually required four or five hours.

Allen never copied pinups - the females in his paintings are from his own imagination. So are most of the cartoon characters.

Allen did not have models. "Everybody asks me that," he said. "I wish I had."

The females in his Air Force Museum collection of nose art are not only as



good as his World War II creations, he said, "They're better. They have prettier faces."

As I read the March 8th Air Force News, I was very interested in Bill Polley's photograph from the Eiffel Tower in 1945. The Mustang in the lower left corner was painted with the last "nose art" I would put on a fighter plane.

I am Donald E. Allen, former Staff Sergeant in the 334th Fighter Squadron, 4th Fighter Group stationed at Debden Airfield, England for three years during World War II. While doing my assignment job as crew chief at that time, I also had this "sideline" job painting nose art or lettering on many of my squadron's fighters. First, Thunderbolts, then later Mustangs. The first one was a black panther silhouette on



the engine cowlings of my first P-47. That opened the door for over 60 more, ending in July 1945 when I was told to paint a symbolic 4th Fighter Group emblem on Major Glover's "Cleaned Up" Mustang.

Two pilots of the 4th Fighter Group stationed at Debden Airfield during World War II were original RAF Eagle Squadron pilots that had made their way to England to fight the Nazis before entrance of the United States into the conflict. They both became part of the U.S. Air Corps, 8th Air Force Sept. 1942. These pilots were Col. Don Blakeslee and Capt. Victor France. In January 1944, Col. Blakeslee took command of 4th Fighter Group and Capt. Vic France was flight leader in 334th Fighter Squadron. I was assigned as crew chief for Vic France, and soon had painted nose art - "Miss Dallas" on our P-47. I painted "Miss Dallas" again when we changed over to P-51 Mustangs. Vic France was killed in combat in that

plane, Apr. 18, 1944. Col. Blakeslee survived the war, and a Korean Command to retire. Don Blakeslee lived in Florida, died Sept. 3, 2008 age 90.

In 1999 while visiting the Memorial Garden of the U.S. Air Force at Dayton, Ohio I realized that my World War II Fourth Fighter Group had no representative memorial for our groups pilots that had died during the war. Other bomber and fighter groups had much earlier erected some very impressive marble, granite or bronze monuments to their fallen comrades. That started my quest to produce a significant memorial for the Fourth Fighter Group. It all began with my scribble that would culminate in 2002 with this seven foot tall ediface with 128 pilots names etched into the two wings of the monument.

My small cardboard model with message brought in the necessary monies and Rebichini Studios of Chicago skillfully interpreted my working drawings in fabricating a quality gem. A most satisfying outcome for a military draftee inducted into the U.S. Army



Air Force at Fort Hayes over sixty years ago.

**Cheers,
Donald E. Allen, 4th FG
Rocky River, OH**



Capt. Victor France and Col. Don Blakeslee

BEHIND THE SCENES

The *July 8th AF News* magazine has finally arrived!

Please except my apology for the later than normal delivery of this Summer's *June/July Eighth Air Force News* magazine. Along with production delays, I have also endured personal family health issues with my Dad that have occurred in the last 8 weeks. I will make an extra special effort to get the September 8th AF News magazine back on schedule.

Our 35th Annual Eighth Air Force Reunion is set for the week of August 18-23, 2009 in Cincinnati, Ohio. Look on page 10 of this issue for a schedule of reunion activities. You can also find more reunion information online at www.8thafhs.org.

September's magazine will be

packed full of your 8th Air Force Annual Reunion photos. Please email or mail your favorite photos to be included in the next issue to my

address and/or email listed below.

**Looking forward to a great reunion in Cincinnati,
Donna and Telisha**



One of many meetings to discuss the contents of the July 09 8th AF News Magazine at Starbucks in Franklin, Tennessee with Bob Moses (Secretary), Donna Neely (Behind the Scenes) & Dr. Walt Brown (Editor).

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CHAPTER/UNIT/GROUP LIAISON REPORT



Greetings my fellow Mighty Eighth Air Force Historical Society members. The Society's 35th Annual Reunion is quickly approaching on August 18 – 23 and I

would like to remind you all to please register now. Our Chapter/Unit/Group Development Meeting is scheduled for Thursday morning August 20 and I am hoping to have the meeting time changed from 9 a.m. start time to run from 10 – 11:30. Please refer to the program when checking in at the hotel for the exact Meeting time.

I have recently watched the documentary called 'Paper Clips' (2004) which I would recommend to all. The reason

for mentioning this is it involves the students at Whitwell Middle School in rural Tennessee and how these young students set out to understand the Holocaust and the international acclaim they received. Again the reason for mentioning this is the 'Students' of our wonderful country and the need for us to ask them for their help and also to educate them, since our education policy falls short of this, as to what the Mighty Eighth Air Force did in WWII. I also have received an inspirational email from a young man in Holland who has adopted the grave of a fallen 8th Air Force 306th BG Staff Sergeant asking for information regarding the fallen hero so he can know more about the man. These are only 2 examples of many of what is going on regarding the young folks and like I mentioned to a WWII veteran the other day while chatting that there are many that are making sure that our Country & World do not forget the sacrifices that his generation incurred and to 'Keep the

Memories Alive'. He smiled and shook my hand with a tear in his right eye and thanked me.

The New York State Southern Wing Chapter of the 8th AFHS held a May 30th Luncheon at West Point NY at the Thayer Hotel. There were over 90 in attendance and for each 8th AF Veteran member of the Chapter a commemorative medal was presented by General Verle L. Johnson to honor them for their service to this Country. Family members of those of either fallen heroes and those that could not attend also received the medal. It is encouraging to hear of this and perhaps a recommendation to all 8th organizations to follow. If you have any comments or idea's on how we can move forward my address is posted on the back of the front cover page and my email address.

**'Keep Their Memories Alive'
Pat Keeley
Please support the USO.**



From the 8th Air Force Historical Society Office



Catherine Mayne • 8th AFHS • Box 956 • Pooler, GA 31322

Call: 912.748.8884

Email: membershipmanager@8thafhs.org



Thank you members for sending in your dues and donations, as well as helping us update our database. The membership office has relocated to the second floor of the Mighty Eighth Museum in Pooler, GA. We are located within the John H. Woolnough Library.

On another note, I am working part-time. I will generally be in the office Monday, Wednesday and Friday. We are all excited about the upcoming Reunion in Cincinnati, Ohio. I hope to see some of you there.

Have a wonderful summer!

Sincerely, Catherine Mayne

FAMOUS WWII RELIC DONATED TO MUSEUM

8th Air Force Historical Member Lowell Williamson, Radio Operator, Top Turret gunner on the B-17 crew of the *Piccadilly Lily* 32nd Squadron, 94th Bomb Group, has recently made a generous donation to the 8th Air Force Museum of the original Pilot's Instrument Panel factory installed in the B-17 *Memphis Belle*. Lowell became the caretaker of panel when the "Father of the B-17" Claire Egtvedt passed the panel to him for safe keeping when Claire's health started to fail. We will report the full story in the September edition of the *8th AF News*. Plans are underway to have this panel on display at our annual reunion held in Cincinnati August 18-22. Hope to see you in Cincinnati.

submitted by Darrel Lowell



NOMINEES FOR THE 8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**David J. Nowack,
Member #36652**

David has a MBA in Accounting and Finance from University of Chicago; currently Controller of the Lehigh County Historical Society, Schnecksville, PA; 20 years of financial management experience for not-for-profit entities; member of the Next Generation initiative, Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum, National World War II Museum, Yankee Air Museum, and Mid-Atlantic Air Museum; interests include history of World War II, especially 8th Air Force; presents programs to students and community groups on the life of a B17 pilot. Self nominated.

**George Hoidra,
Member #30257**

George has been a Life Member of the 8th Air Force Historical Society since 1994 and has served faithfully on the Board of Directors since 2005.

He is currently on the Board of the 447th Bomb Group (his father's group); is an associate member of 17 other Bomb Groups; as well as the Heritage League, the SSMA, and the Mighty 8th Museum.

George has been instrumental in planning our annual reunions and has our 8th AFHS reunions scheduled through 2011. It is his intentions to continue with his efforts.

I Mark Copeland recommend that you support him and for George to be re-elected to the Board.

New Reapers Give a Bigger Picture

The wide-area airborne sensor pod the U.S. Air Force plans to install on its 10 MQ-9 Reapers starting in 2010 are designed to view the battlefield from more angles over a greater area and improve the ability of U.S. forces to spot insurgents escaping from buildings, Air Force officials said.

Gorgon Stare, as the pod is called, is part of the equipment the U.S. is rushing toward the field under its ISR surge. It is named for the mythical Greek beings whose gaze could turn enemies to stone. Each \$15 million sensor will view a 4-kilometer radius area, and multiple users will be able to choose from 12 angles broadcasted simultaneously, said

Robert Marlin, technical adviser for Air Force intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities.

A previously developed sensor, called *Angel Fire*, allows multiple users to view its imagery but can broadcast back only one view at a time. *Angel Fire* is also limited to day operations. *Gorgon Stare*

will allow a combat controller on the ground, a commander at headquarters and an intelligence officer back in the U.S. each to choose a different angle from the same Reaper, said Air Force Maj. William Bower, deputy program manager for the MQ-9 Reaper.



General Ira Eaker's staff airplane with the crew taken in Bucharest, Romania. Submitted by 98 year old William Dean of Huntsville, Alabama. William recalls that the crew accused him of being "The Feather Duster".



Time-out from Battle . . .



**8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL REUNION
THE MILLENNIUM HOTEL – CINCINNATI, OHIO
AUGUST 18-23, 2009**

Tuesday, August 18

2:00pm - 6:00pm Early Bird Registration open

Wednesday, August 19

8:00am - 10:00am Reunion Registration open
9:00am Memorabilia/Gathering Room & PX opens
10:45am - 2:30pm LUNCH CRUISE
1:00pm - 8AFHS Board Meeting
2:00pm - 6:00pm Reunion Registration open

Thursday, August 20

7:00am - 8:30am Continental Breakfast
8:00am - 10:00am Reunion Registration open
9:00am - 10:30am Unit Advisory and Chapter & Unit Development Meeting
12:30pm - 10:30pm U.S. AIR FORCE MUSEUM & DINNER
3:00pm - 6:00pm Reunion Registration open

Friday, August 21

7:00am - 8:30am Continental Breakfast
8:00am - 9:30am Reunion Registration open
8:00am - 9:30am Individual Group Meetings
9:45am - 3:45pm WRIGHT PATTERSON / U.S. AIR FORCE MUSEUM
10:15am - 3:15pm MUSEUM CENTER / NEWPORT ON THE LEVEE
1:00pm - 3:30pm WWII POW Roundtable
3:00pm - 6:00pm Reunion Registration open
4:00pm - 5:30pm Next Generation Meeting
6:00pm - 7:00pm 8AFHS Cash Bar Reception
7:00pm - Rendezvous Dinners and 'Hangar Flying'

Saturday, August 22

7:00am - 8:30am Full Breakfast Buffet
9:00am - 11:00am General Membership Meeting
11:15am - 12:00pm Medical Advisory Seminar: *Pearls*, by Dr. Walt Brown
1:00pm - 4:00pm CITY TOUR
1:00pm - 3:30pm Roger A. Freeman Symposium: "COURAGE OVER FORTRESS EUROPE"
5:30pm - 6:00pm Reunion Registration open
6:00pm - 7:00pm 8AFHS Cash Bar Reception
7:00pm - 8AFHS Gala Banquet

Sunday, August 23

7:00am - 8:30am Continental Breakfast
8:00am - 8:45am Worship Service
9:00am - 8AFHS Annual Board Meeting

Gil Cohen – Aviation Artist



The Eighth Air Force Historical Society is very pleased to announce that famed aviation artist Gil Cohen will be featured as our keynote speaker for the Saturday Night Gala Banquet at our Cincinnati Reunion.

Regarded as one of the finest aviation artists in the world, Gil will speak about his lifelong career as a professional artist. Many of his more recent subjects have featured several Eighth Air Force subjects including "Rosie's Crew," "Mighty Eighth - Russian Shuttle," "Almost Home" and "The Crewman."

Gil will also premiere his new book *Gil Cohen – Aviation Artist* at our 2009 Reunion. Two book signings will be scheduled during the weekend in Cincinnati to give our attendees a chance to meet Gil and purchase his wonderful new book.



CINCINNATI REUNION BOOK LAUNCH

Some of the most costly raids that the Eighth Air Force flew during World War II were the best missions to Berlin, Germany in March of 1944. One of the groups that was the hardest hit was the 100th Bomb Group.

High Noon over Haseluenne - The 100th Bomb Group over Berlin - March 6th, 1944 is a new book chronicling these famous missions when the 100th BG suffered some of their most devastating losses.

Author Mike Faley will be premiering this fantastic new book at our Cincinnati reunion. He will also be joined by veterans of the 100th Bomb Group that actually flew these historic missions in March of 1944.

A special book signing will take place at our Cincinnati reunion, with a date and time to be announced.

Contact information:

Michael P. Faley
100th Bomb Group Historian
Author: *High Noon Over Haseluenne*
12400 Ventura Blvd #113
Studio City, CA 91604
email: MPFaley@aol.com





Dear Dr. Brown,

I am a 77 year old man and at the age of 11 I lost my oldest brother in an Army Air Corps training flight in Montana on August 24, 1943. He was 20 years of age at the time and to this day I have very vivid memories of him. The plane was a B-17F Flying Fortress.

In the early 80's I started to research

the accident and was able to get enough information that allowed me to begin the quest of finding families of my brother Ed's 10 crewmates. I finally completed this mission late last year.

Lewistown is where my brother and his crew were based and, from what I'm told by manager Jerry Moline, it's the only WWII Army Air Corps training base left

intact including the original hangar.

Member Michael Prestia has encouraged to submit my story to you. He and I worked together for years as engineers at Dravo Corp. in Pittsburgh, PA.

Fred Gregorich Oakdale, PA
email: frgrip@aol.com

The scene of the accident is approximately 58 miles southwest of the Glasgow Bombing Range and approximately 83 miles northeast of AAB, Lewistown, Montana. The ground where the plane crashed is an estimated 3,000 feet above sea level, slightly down-slope with reference to the path of the plane, is used for grazing and is almost bare of trees. There are numerous small trees surrounding the clearing where the plane first came down in contact with the ground, as is evidenced by the accompanying pictures. However, none of these trees were struck by the plane in its descent, which indicates that the plane came in a very steep angle. Approximately 3 acres of grazing land were burned from the resulting explosion and fire.

A few minutes prior to the accident the ship was apparently "on course" enroute from Glasgow Bombing Range to Lewistown when it ran into severe electrical storms.

I, Fred Gibson, residing at Sand Springs, Garfield County, Montana, do hereby declare as follows:

On August 25th, 1943, at approximately 11 o'clock p.m. I saw a funny light south of my ranch. It seemed to resemble a northern light in the south. My wife first noticed the light when she got out of bed to the close the window. She pointed it out to me and I got out of bed and disconnected my radio since there was a severe electrical storm in the vicinity of my ranch. I then went back to bed. In about 10

minutes my father-in-law, Fred Garfield, who lives about 1 1/2 miles southwest of my place, came to my house and said there was a funny looking fire with flames high in the air a few miles northwest of my place. He said he was afraid it was a plane fire.

At the time there was a stiff-wind blowing from the north-east and there were low black clouds in the vicinity of the fire. There was a light rain and a considerable amount of thunder and lightning. At the time my father-in-law came to my house the sky to the northwest was clear and you could see the stars.

My son, Robert H. Gibson, age 26, who resides with me, my father-in-law and I then proceeded directly to where the fire was in my pick-up truck. We located the fire about 3 miles northwest of my house. When we reached the fire we saw a big plane burning with its tail visible. Grass west of the plane for approximately 300 yards in depth and about 100 yards in width was smoldering. The light rain which had evidently come up after the plane crashed had put out the grass fire but the dead trees, stumps and the like were still burning. Neither my son, my wife nor myself heard any explosions from the time we first noticed the flames at about 11 o'clock p.m. until we reached the fire or thereafter.

When we first reached the fire we walked around the scene of the accident looking for live bodies but were unable to locate any bodies.



Frank LaBlotier, 84, carries a hefty souvenir - a disabled machine gun from a B-17's turret, which he hauled home after WWII.

WWII VET HAS STORIES FEW ARE LEFT TO TELL

Frank LaBlotier

World War II souvenirs fill his west Denver home. He still keeps one of the first-aid kits he carried when he filled in for sick gunners on bombing runs.

On one wall is a disabled machine gun from a B-17's turret. He has another one in his garage, along with a belt of ammunition.

In later 1942, the 91st Bomb Group's half-dozen bombers began making daylight runs, inherently risky operations.

"When we first got there, we had 13 bombers and lost six on our first day," LaBlotier said. "We couldn't go on any more bombing raids till we got more planes."

In early 1943, replacement crews, aircraft and others arrived at Bassingbourn. Morale increased along with the new machines, and with the institution of a wry, facetious medal called the Rigid Digit. It was awarded to servicemen and officers who magnificently screwed up - for example, the brigadier general who landed 100 yards short of the runway.

Among LaBlotier's fondest memories

are the notes tucked in by female factory workers building and repairing the planes back in the U.S.

"You know who really won this war?" LaBlotier asked. "The American women, that's who. They built those planes and used to put notes in 'em. Ask, 'How you doing,' put their name and address, 'Please write.' Women'd fly planes over, cause the military couldn't spare the men, and used to get us corned-beef sandwiches from New York, when it was available."

STILL KICKIN'

Please keep sending the magazine. Still Hanging in there and kicking. Photo taken Pearl Harbor Day - Dec. 7, 2008.

Still active in the Colorado branch of the 8th. Keep up the great work. The magazine is right up there with the best. Best wishes and regards,

Frank LaBlotier 91st BG

P.S. I was at Bassingbourne Station 121 - from 1942-1945 - got home 4th July 1945. I still can get in my uniform.



PHEASANT HUNT

Dear Walter:

I thought that our 8th AFHS members out there would enjoy this poem written by a good friend of mine living in Colorado Springs, CO. This note indicates that he composed it in a few minutes in Dec. 1943. Col. Mac was with the 96/482nd Bomb Groups. As a lead pilot/pathfinder one of his many stories he related to me while on a pheasant hunt, that while leading a mission he had an engine fail, he ordered his bombardier to salvo "half" the bomb load and continued leading the mission to the target, so as the poem goes, "I offer thanks to my Creator or that I don't fly a Liberator."



Myself and daughter Pam holding a replica of a section of our A/C B-17 #237804, *Pride of the Yanks*, which I did the original nose art, Oct. 1943, while with the 94th BG - 333 Sqdn. We flew all of our missions but one on this A/C, finishing 8 March 44 to Berlin.



My co-workers at Lowry, Wings Over the Rockies Air & Space Museum, had this produced for my birthday #85, (Lt to Rt. Matt H., Pam, Me, Steve G., John C., Tom T. at the local pub on the old Lowry AFB). "*Pride of the Yanks*" was assigned to the Thomas L. Bond crew after we finished. While on a mission, 9 May 1944, it was hit by friendly fire from another crew while testing firing guns. "*Pride of the Yanks*" crashed at Dieppe, France. Seven of the crew were hidden by the French underground and later freed by the Polish troops when they captured the town where they were hiding. Three others became P.O.W's.

For info on how to obtain your own nose art "on A/C sheet metal, rivets and all" go to www.fightingcolors.com.

**E.E. "Mitch" Mischler, 94th BG
Centennial, CO**

Hey Mitch,

I finally got the poem, as promised. It took me about 20 minutes to write it in Dec. 1943 - and longer to get it to you! You will appreciate the wording, since "you been there - done that." You might also get a charge from the enclosed story. We survived 25 missions, finished Feb 44, with not one purple heart. I had a great crew.

How about another Pheasant Hunt?
Good Luck, Mac

TO MY BOOMERANG

From the placid fields of green you rise,
Thrust armored nose into the skies.
Your legs tucked into each nacelle
Thus transformed, a queen from hell.
With throttles set and turbos turning,
Synchronized propellers churning.
Higher still I've watched you soar,
Marvelled at your muffled roar.

Around you now come kindred tribe,
As mounting arcs your wings inscribe.
Element, squadron tucking tight,
Your groups are formed in early light.
Wing control points, division too
are mere routine for me, or you
Departure point and zero hour
Demanding more of your great power.

Channel crossed, we're on our way;
"Fortresses hit the Hun today."
"Bandits high at nine o'clock."
Fifties roar and turrets rock.
Through flak and fighters lumbering on,
Staccato bursts and steady drone,
Nothing stops the steady stream
of Boeing's Baby, Airman's dream.

Oh, I have seen you loop and roll,
Silken 'chutes from you unfold.
I've watched you dive and spin in flames,
Seen the mounting list of names.
Ah, but others have returned,
Feathered props and engines burned.
Full of flak holes, rudder shorn.
Not the sleek war-queen of morn.

Red flares pop Chaplains pray,
bring them safely home today.
Miracles, or flying skill
Call it anything you will,
I offer thanks to my Creator
That I don't fly a Liberator.

By Capt. Roland L. McRae
Pilot of the Flying Fortress, "*CAROLINA BOOMERANG*"
Alconbury, England; December 1943

B-32 DOMINATOR

Late in the war, Consolidated restructured the company and changed the name to Convair. The Convair B-32 was to become the last American bomber designed during WWII to go into action. The bomber began its short career in May, 1945.

The development of the B-32 Dominator and the B-29 Superfortress began at the same time. The B-32 was designed and engineered as an alternative to the pressurized Boeing B-29 in the event it did not perform to standards, and was to be able to carry the atomic bomb. When the B-29 did in fact exceed expectations, the B-32 was re-engineered as a non-pressurized aircraft. However, the Consolidated Aircraft plants were involved with production of the B-24 Liberator (18,188) and PB4Y2 Privateer (739), and the PBY Catalina (4,000), causing the work on the B-32 to take a low priority.

By the time the B-32 was ready for combat testing, it was late in the war and the outcome appeared inevitable. Only the intervention by Army Air Force Chief, General Hap Arnold prevented the project from being scrapped altogether. The operative career of this aircraft began in the Philippines in May 1945. After several test missions the aircraft were moved to Okinawa, Japan for further testing and evaluation.

After a ceasefire was declared on August 13, 1945, the B-32s



were assigned to photo reconnaissance duty to ensure the Japanese were complying with the cease-fire agreement. These missions were by no means without danger; on the night of August 17th, a flight of three B-32s was attacked by no less than 14 Japanese fighters. As one can imagine, not all the Japanese military favored the ceasefire and many preferred to die in battle rather than surrender. These fanatics were usually high-ranking military officers with great experience. One of these officers was Saburo Sakai, Japan's highest scoring ace to survive the war, in one of his last combat actions. The B-32 crews were flying aircraft that they had not previously proven in battle. During the battle, one B-32 was damaged and three Japanese fighters were shot down.

This one engagement showed the great potential of this aircraft. However, it was potential that was gone more quickly than it arrived. All 118 B-32s built were destroyed after the end of World War II. Today no B-32s exist except as model airplanes.

Source: <http://www.consolidatedmodels.com/B32.htm>



Photo to left is of the B-32 production assembly line taken at Consolidated Vultee Aircraft (CONVAIR), most likely around mid to late 1944. Only 118 of these were built and most delivered during 1945 just prior to the end of the war.

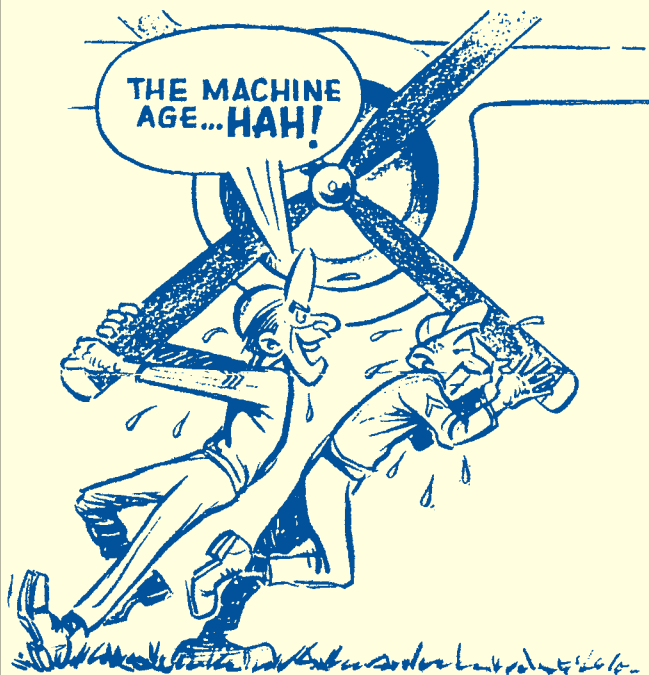
G-8 and His Battle Aces

Hi, Dr. Brown!

I hope you are fine, everything ok here. Thanks again for the nice review of my book, *Lord Have Mercy*, in the 8th AF News. I really appreciated that. During the 1930's the pre-teenage boys all read air-war pulp magazines. This gave them the inspiration to join the Air Force when WWII came along. The most popular pulp was "*G-8 and His Battle Aces*." This series ran from 1933 to 1944. There were 110 issues in the full set, all with wonderful, exciting covers. I have a full set which I am planning to sell. Before I do, I wanted to check with you to see if the 8th AF Museum would want to buy them for display. I would like to donate them, but I need the money. I've had the set appraised at \$7,275.00. I would sell for \$5000.00. Actually they are worth more than this appraised price because it is a full set and full sets are very rare. Each pulp is in an acid-free plastic sleeve. They would make an awesome museum display, a delight for young and old. Anyway, Dr. Brown, just thought I would check with you before I let them go.

God Bless and Keep up the good work!

Gil Burns
Framingham, MA



THE CREW CHIEF

The pilot was everyone's hero
He was brave, he was bold, he was grand
As he stood by his battered airplane
With his goggles and helmet in hand.

But for each of these flying heroes
There were thousands little renowned
And these the men who worked on the planes
But kept their feet on the ground.

We all know the name of Lindbergh
And we've read of his flight of fame
But think if you can of his maintenance man
Can you remember his name?

And think of the wartime heroes
And the acclaim that they all got
Can you tell me the names of their Crew Chiefs?
A thousand to one you cannot.

Now pilots are highly trained people
And wings are not easily won
But without the work of the maintenance men
Our pilots would march with a gun.

So when you see a powerful airplane
As it makes its way through the air,
Remember the grease-stained man
With the wrench in his hand
For he's the one who put it there.

THE DAY MY BROTHER DIED

by Sam Stone, M.D.

The crew of a heavy bomber in the Eighth Air Force, during WWII, was made up of ten men. There were four officers and six enlisted men. The officers were the pilot, co-pilot, navigator and bombardier. All of the enlisted men were trained as aerial gunners. However, in addition, all of them had had special training in some other aspect required by a bomber crew. I was trained as a radio operator and that was my function when we were not fighting off enemy aircraft. Most of the others were aircraft mechanics trained in various aspects of aircraft maintenance. Don, our tail gunner, was the only one trained as an armorer. His knowledge encompassed bombs, bomb fusing, bomb racks and such matters. He was the youngest of the enlisted men beating me by one or two months. He was the only one of the enlisted men who was married, having married just before going into the Army. His wife, Eleanor, was a lovely girl whom I met just before we went overseas.

By the time we started flying combat missions in May, 1944, our crew had been together for about five or six months. Operational Training in the U.S. took three months and there was additional training and orientation after we arrived in England. The officers had separate quarters so we, the enlisted men, did not develop the close relationships with them that we did with one another. We lived together, ate together, went on leave together and raised hell together. We knew where each of us came from in the States and something about each other's background. We really became a "Band of Brothers." However, true fusion occurred in the cauldron of combat where our lives depended on each man functioning at his job to the best of his ability.

In one instance I was hospitalized with a severe upper respiratory infection. A replacement radio operator flew in my place. I nearly went out of my mind worrying about my crew. A recurrent horrible thought kept running around in my head that some goof-up by my replacement would cause the loss of our crew. Finally, I heard the engine sounds of the returning aircraft but was not relieved of my anxiety until one of my crew members came to the hospital to tell me everyone was O.K. The thought of going



Sam & Don

through another day like that was unacceptable. I decided to get out of the hospital as soon as possible and return to my crew. Since the hospital was a one story building I was able to open a window and climb out as soon as it became dark. I flew the next several missions with a Benzidrex Inhaler which I used to keep my nasal passages clear. I was not going to let my crew fly without me.

In May 1944, a new combat crew could expect to complete a tour of twenty-five missions and be rotated back to the U.S. in two or three months. That didn't happen to us. After our eleventh mission we were made a "Lead Crew" which meant we flew only on missions where our squadron or group lead a large formation. This resulted in intervals between missions as long as two weeks. The strain of being awakened with the other crews in the barracks only to learn we were not scheduled to fly that day was, after a while, almost unbearable. Moreover, with the passage of time the number of missions required to complete a combat tour was increased from twenty-five to thirty and, when we flew our last mission on December 30, 1944, it had been increased again to thirty-five missions.

Don and I became particularly close. Although he used to infuriate me when he took my clean socks and left his dirty ones in my foot locker we got along very well. Something we shared was coming from California though he came from

northern California and I was from the southern part of the state. Just imagine, our friendship was such that when his wife, Eleanor, came to the little town near our airbase to see him before we were to fly overseas and he was unable to get leave, he asked me to take her out. We went dancing and then to a carnival where we had a good time. She never forgot the cotton candy I bought her.

After the war we continued our close relationship. Don and Eleanor lived in northern California and we lived in southern California. We managed to visit relatively frequently. He and Eleanor got to know my wife and children and we got to know theirs. Whenever we drove north, for any reason, we would stop off to see them and have dinner together. We were invited, and attended, their fiftieth wedding anniversary. Don didn't like southern California so he came down to see us only once or twice.

Several years ago Eleanor called to tell me Don had cancer. She asked me to call his doctor since she felt I could better understand what was going on. After my discussion with the doctor he decided to have Don go to a large medical center in northern California for treatment. In spite of the treatment the disease progressed.

One day I received a call from Eleanor telling me Don was in the hospital and doing badly. I took a flight north and was in the hospital that evening. In the morning Eleanor, their daughter Cindy, and I met with the Don's doctor. When we were told that there was nothing further to be done and that Don's death was imminent, I broke down crying and had to be comforted by Eleanor and Cindy. When I finally regained my composure I returned to Don's room.

When I entered the room I saw a fellow I had never seen before. Don introduced me to his half brother who was eight years or ten years younger than Don. Then he said to his half-brother, "I want you to meet my brother Sam." Don died shortly after that.

I shall always miss my brother Don.

Sam H. Stone, M.D.
Woodland Hills, CA
shstone@sbcglobal.net

REUNIONS

306th Bomb Group

October 8-12, 2009 Fort Worth, Texas
Dallas/Ft. Worth Marriott South Hotel
Contact: Dr. Vernon L. Williams
Phone: (325) 280-3399
Email: vwilliams@acu.edu

100th Bomb Group

September 10-13, 2009
Albuquerque, New Mexico
Albuquerque Marriott
Contact: Dante Martin
Email: abq2009@yahoo.com

BURTONWOOD

September 15th-19th
Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza,
Cincinnati, OH
Contact: 1-800-HILTONS (445-8667)
Or Contact: George Loomis, 359 Bittle-
wood Ave, Braddock Preserve, Berlin NJ
08009-9491

351st Bomb Group

Branson, Missouri
July 23-26, 2009
Lodge of the Ozarks
Contact: Gatherings Plus
417-338-4048
Email: pamb@bransonmilitaryreunions.
com or www.reunionproregistration.
com/351stbombgroup.htm

361st Fighter Group

September 13-16, 2009
Frances Marion Hotel, Charleston, SC., ?
Submitted by: B. J. Redden, Secretary/
Editor

STALAG LUFT 3

July 19-26, 2009
Cruise to Alaska
Contact: AFR Inc. POB 11327
Norfolk VA 23517

92nd BOMB GROUP Memorial Association

Sept 17-20, 2009
Kansas City MO Embassy Suites
Contact: Wayne Reece, POB 1109, Car-
lton OR 97111

398th BG/55th FG Combined Reunion

Sept 9-12, 2009
Radisson North Hotel Austin TX
Contact: Sharon Krause
11690 Paciocco Ct.
Plymouth MI 48170-2870

**8th AIR FORCE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
ANNUAL REUNION
THE MILLENNIUM HOTEL
CINCINNATI, OHIO
AUGUST 18-23, 2009**

WAR FACTS

There were 4361 crewmen that ditched in the North Sea during the war. Only 1538 (35%) were rescued. The crews from a B-17 had a better chance of being rescued than the crewmen from a B-24 since the B-24 tended to break into two pieces upon hitting the water. The majority of those who were rescued went down during the summer months when the water was warmest.

from Illinois Chapter Newsletter

FROM EAST ANGLIA TO HAWAII TO THE MIDDLE EAST

World War II Air Force B-17 bombardier/navigator, John MacCarley, Palm Desert CA, is shown here with son Brigadier General Mark MacCarley, at his recent "Change of Command" ceremonies in Hawaii.

They are standing on the exact spot where Japanese planes buzzed the field below the tops of the palm trees and strafed the Scofield Army Barracks back in December 7, 1941. The ceremony was honoring Brigadier General MacCarley's reassignment to Iraq for the second time, - now as the Commanding General of the 8th Theater Sustainment Command, US ARMY. His mission - to carry out The President's directive specifying the removal of all combat troops from Iraq by August 2010.

Upon departing he wished that all of us would take time to say a prayer each night, for the thousands of men and women in harm's way that will be needed to accomplish this monumental task.

John MacCarley



John MacCarley with son Mark MacCarley

LOVE'S LABOUR LOST

Dear Editor Friend,

I viewed the cover of my latest issue with a mixture of joy and sadness. Once again I/we drove right past the Museum on the way back from Florida and I thought of the "17" inside. Each year on our 1,000 miles trip down to the Gulf Coast town where we stay, I toy with trying to talk Ellie into making it a three day instead of two day 500 mile affair. After all, I have arranged for some of the artifacts in the AFEES section and I'd like to see the remodeled section.

This year, on the way back north, we began having car trouble (okay now but disconcerting as hell a thousand miles from home). That ended my "new" idea of trying for a "spur of the moment" short museum visit. Car okay now, fuel filter dirt and flak was the apparent cause.

Marilyn Walton's magnificent story is powerful and impressive.

Is there perhaps a reason to send it on to WW-II Magazine or Military History or Military Heritage? I have been published in those in the past but I don't know their policy on pre-published articles. However, it just seems that her article deserves a wider readership in addition to the 8th AF guys. Beautifully done!

I have sent query letters to four editors re: a story of mine I just finished. It's a different angle explored of the V1 and V2 attacks on London. If I get a "bite" I'll let you know.

Maybe next year will be MY year for the Museum if I can orchestrate the logistics... Ellie has long dreamed of visiting Savannah and that may be my hook.

Once again, congratulations on a marvelous issue.

Adam Lynch
Historian & Author

LOVE'S LABOUR LOST AUTHOR'S RESPONSE

This is so nice. It warms my heart to know that someone I know I would have so much respect for if I'd met him would be touched by my humble words. Please thank Mr. Lynch sincerely for me and tell him I am honored by his

kind words.

Speaking of the V1 and V2 rockets, there is an interesting story that comes out of Stalag Luft III in this regard. One of the German guards struck up a friendship with one of the POWs. The guard was from Peenemunde where the V2 rocket facility was. The guard said he was going home for the weekend. Then he began to brag to the POW about the rocket facility there. Later, the POW notified the senior officers in the camp what had been said. They, through coded messages and some means that still have not been revealed, notified their contacts in London, and then by some "coincidence" Peenemunde was bombed that weekend. The guard came back to the camp later in disbelief to relay his tale of woe to his POW friend whom I can imagine just smiled.

One more interesting item for you. A friend of mine who met her WWII airman father one time when she was 11 months old has been searching for the wreckage of his plane off the coast of Holland for probably ten years now. Just recently a Dutch Naval officer found one of the guns from the B17, identified by serial number. She was ecstatic. They will send the gun to her, and she will probably donate it to a museum. I don't know if you remember Adrian Caldwell. She spoke at the 8th AFHS meeting in LA, so you may already know her. I was thrilled when she told me her news today.

Marilyn Walton
Author of *The Road to Sagan*

THE MARCHES

Dear Editor,

Thank you for "The Road To Sagan."

As one of many in South Compound that night, I appreciated author Marilyn Walton's story of the "Kriegie Kids." My daughter has heard the story but unfortu-

nately hasn't walked the walk with me. However, she has heard and helped me prepare the presentation I've titled "The European Marches" of WWII.

I discovered many years ago that almost no one had ever heard of the "other" marches, especially from Stalag Luft IV and Stalag Luft III. I could give an personal account of our march from Sagan and was able to get much information from some of my B-17 enlisted crew who were in Luft IV. The AM X-POW Organization has a wealth of information on the March from their camp in Pomerania.

The first effort of my presentation was for our local ANA (Association of Naval Aviation) they accept dues from anybody in another ANA group, a ROTC unit in Texas where my daughter instructs and a local community group that had standing room only audience.

My March 2009 8th AF News is going to my daughter for my two grandchildren in Alvarado, Texas.

One comment you probably have been appraised of already is on page 26, I believe it should be Lt. Col. Mel McNickle. Then Lt. Col. A.P. Clark and I were two of the 68 authors in "Through The Eye The Needle." Edited by Joe Con-solmagno.

Thank you again for "News" and all your efforts at the Museum.

Lt. Col Russell F. Reed (Ret)
Port Ludlow, WA

THE FLYING HORSEMEN

Hello Dr. Brown:

A good friend of mine passed away not to long ago. His name was Walter Gates and he flew B-24's with the 449th Bomb Group, the 716th Bomb Squad-



ron. If I recall correctly he and I were shot down the same day, May 24th, 1944. After some bad experiences we became roommates in Stalag Luft IV.

His son Jeff, while recently sorting through some of his dad's belongings, came across my name in much of his dad's correspondence. So Jeff contacted me to see if I would be interested in receiving what papers, photos, cards, etc. the family did not wish to keep. Wow. Of course I said yes. I've heard stories of veteran's belongings being thrown in the trash because no one in the family was interested in keeping them.

Now that I have received a packet from Jeff, I wish to share some of these items, mostly photos and cards, especially with anyone that was in the 449th Bomb Group. If the group has a historian, that may be the person to contact. Dr. Brown can you supply a name and address?

I know that in our 8th AF NEWS magazine you sometimes run photos of veteran's license plates. I will enclose a photo of Walter's fishing boat which he so proudly decorated with the insignia of his group. I'm sure the historian or anyone else in this group would like a copy. And I hope I can soon get a large group of negatives printed to see what may be of interest to others.

Keep our great magazine coming, despite rising costs, etc.

Sincerely,

John E. Legg

100th Bomb Group

45 Anthony Wayne Drive

Wayne, PA 19087-1425

TRIBUTE TO THE GROUNDPOUNDERS

Dear Sir:

I have recently received a postal card regarding mailing addresses of life members, which I am returning under separate cover as directed on the card. I wish to provide some information about my husband, Larman Heath, a life member who served over three years in the ETO 1942-1945, and who passed away October 27, 2008. My husband enjoyed the News and read it faithfully. He never, to my knowledge, wrote to the News, I believe because

he thought his service would not be of interest since he was neither a flyer nor a member of a ground crew. But I think the anonymous others who provided support for those brave heroes deserve a mention.

Larman Heath took ROTC at the University of Oklahoma, had summer training at Fort Sill and was commissioned in the Field Artillery in the spring of 1939. We were married in 1941. He was called up in July, 1942, reporting to Lowery Field to be a member of the 8th Army Air Force Composite Command.

Six weeks later he was on the Queen Mary 1, which had been outfitted as a troop ship, and, with over 21,000 others, 8 hours each to the bunk, sailed from Fort Dix, running without escort through rough seas to a port in Scotland and thence to Ireland. No accommodations being available for them, his outfit bivouacked with the RAF until housing could be set up.

The Composite Command was made up of personnel from any place in the army that they could be found. Their job was to prepare the way with supply and service for the thousands to follow. His location was Long Kesh (maybe "Long Cash") in County Antrim. After seventeen months he was transferred to England then to

France and Luxembourg. He was among a group that was to be sent to the Pacific when VJ day freed them of this necessity. In late 1945 he sailed from Marseille on the Santa Rosa, which he described as a converted banana boat that required a couple of weeks for what the Queen Mary did in four days. He served in the active reserve, transferring to the Army Engineers, until he reached compulsory retirement age.

As a civilian he was a petroleum engineer. We had been married over sixty-seven years.

Thank you for your service to this

publication, and thank you to all those whose lives were used in the worthy service to our country.

Sincerely,

Mary Ruth Heath

Oklahoma City, OK

Chattanooga Choo Choo

Dear Sir:

This is the way my aircraft was painted shortly after arriving in England. Chattanooga, Tennessee was my home city and my radio operator painted this. Soon after VE Day, I flew home by way of Africa, Ascension Island, Brazil, British Guinna, Puerto Rico and turned the aircraft in at Hunter Air Field, Georgia.

I participated in D-Day, Battle of the Bulge, Market Garden where we evacuated dozens of seriously wounded, many other missions including the invasion of Southern France, without any combat damage. This is not my real aircraft as AFLC could not find my aircraft but this is a replica.

Signed William Clark



THE 34TH BOMB GROUP MENDELSHAM

Dear Mr. Brown,

I have a friend whose father was a pilot in the 34th Bomb Group - 18 Squadron stationed in Mendelsham, England during 1944-45. His dad flew 35 combat missions in a B-17 known as *The Baudry L.* (The spelling might be wrong). His name was Capt. Edward (Scotty) O'Brien. Unfortunately, he passed away in 1994 at the age of 69.

His son is trying to put together an album of his father's exploits to pass on to his family. Needless to say, he

has not had much success. Since I am a member of the Mighty Eighth Historical Society, I wondered if one of your readers might recall Captain O'Brien and offer some valuable information he could include in his album.

Respectfully,

Leo LaFleur

72 Dudley Street

Fall River, MA. 02720

PATCHES

Dear Dr. Brown,

My Father is a WWII vet of the 493rd BG and last year at the Savannah reunion I had reproduction patches made for all 493rd veterans of the 493rd BG. It was a real success and everyone was so appreciative and many had not seen the patch since the end of the war.

What I would like to do is to make the same offer to all the Bomb Groups of the 8th AAF. If any BG would like a reproduction of their BG patch I would be more than willing to assist them in having the patch made. I have a vendor that does first rate work and reasonable prices. This is not for profit and no one makes any money except the vendor.

All the BG needs to do is provide me with a good copy of the patch - if they have no copy I have a excellent reference book. I would need to know the number of patches they wanted and I will provide them with a quote. I will



have them made and will bring them to the Cincinnati reunion, and see that they are distributed.

I feel like some groups would be interested.

Dr. Nancy J. Toombs

cell: 501-681-3126

email: chase221@swbell.net

8TH AF NEWS - NOT OUTDATED

Subject: March '08 8th News

Upon seeing the cover on the March 08 issue, I promptly set it aside to go through at my leisure.

The leisure came a year later. It was as good as it gets, as are all the issues. Thank you.

Jake Simonitsch

MARCH ISSUE



Dear Dr. Brown,

The March issue was as always - Great!

• Earl Wassom, Chaplain - 8AFHS article - Right on!

• "The Road From Sagan" by Marilyn Walton, brought back many memories of our "Forced Marches" in the winter of early 1945 until end of war. I recommend the book "The Last Escape", written by John Nichol and Tony Rennell. The untold story of Allied Prisoners of War in Europe 1944-45. (Allied air crews.)

• I and my crew were shot down on Feb.10, 1944, became POWs interned in Stalag Luft VI - Stalag Luft IV and Stalag Luft I at Barth.

Sent on forced March from Stalag Luft IV on Feb. 6, 1945 in snowstorm.

Marched from Poland, across Northern Germany, a distance of 500+ miles. Liberated by British 6th airborne on May 3, 1945. Returned to allied control on May 7, 1945.

• Back cover - B-17 shown on display is from the 94th BG square A on tail. See attached 94th BG history and our last mission.

Sincerely yours,

Don Kremper, 94th BG
Lexington, KY

CRASH SITES

Dear Sir,

I have made a software programme called "World War II Allied Aircraft Crashes in The Netherlands" which can be downloaded via the website <http://ww2.texlaweb.nl/>. The purpose of the programme is to search for information about Allied aircraft crashes in Holland in the Second World War.

Please note that the software is absolutely FREE-OF-CHARGE and may be used by anyone interested....The software does NOT contain any spyware or adware and has been checked thoroughly for viruses!

Any comments/remarks (good or bad) about the programme...and/or input to the database...are highly appreciated! Greetings from Texel island - Holland,

Jan Nieuwenhuis

Webmaster/Editor & Archive/Database Management: Aeronautical & War Museum Texel
<http://www.lomt.nl/>

HIGH NOON OVER HASELUENNE

Dear Boyhood Heroes, dear Friends,

On March 6, 1944, the 8th AF hit Berlin full force in daylight. This 65th anniversary of the day the Eagle fully spread his wings over the capital of the Third Reich is an appropriate time to tell you that "High Noon over Haseluenne: The 100th Bombardment Group over Berlin, March 6, 1944" is now ready to hit your bookshelves.

My friend Mike Faley, the 100th Bomb Group Historian, has done a great job in not only updating my original account of that mission but in turning it into a book covering the first US missions in March over Big B.

When I started the story a long time ago, "The 100th BG over Berlin" was not even a written account, but a slideshow. It was my way to show people over here (Belgium) what it was like to fly with the 8th AF in WWII.

March 6, 1944, the bloodiest day for the Eighth, was more than appropriate to open their eyes about the losses that could occur.

In May 1995, I went to London to find more books about the 8th AF. By coincidence that was my first meeting ever with my Boyhood Heroes, namely the American Airmen of the 8th AF who happened to be visiting England for the 50th anniversary of VE day. It was also the start of what I like to call "my Quest." Shortly after that, I sent letters to the various AF Bomb Group Associations.

After sending out seventy-five copies of my questionnaire about the mission to 100th BG veterans, I expanded the outline of the slideshow to an account titled "The 100th BG over Berlin."

The icing on the cake for me was that I also got to meet Bob Shoens, pilot of "Our Gal Sal," at the 100th BG convention in Salt Lake City in 1997 (where I gave copies of the story to many other 100th BG Veterans). And after many years had passed when I was thinking to just let this account be a "sleeping but unfinished beauty" posted on the 100th BG website, Mike Faley took it over, improved it and got it published. So here it is, my friends. You can order it now at:

http://www.schifferbooks.com/newschiffer/book_template.php?isbn=9780764332371
<http://www.amazon.com/High-Noon-over-Haseluenne-Bombardment/dp/0764332376>

I wish you good reading, with a hope of eternal remembrance of the fight for Freedom.

Your friend from Belgium,

Luc Dewez

HITZACKER MISSIONS

Dear Dr. Brown,

You very kindly passed on my inquiry about the mission papers to Mr. Samuel W. Smith, who has a copy of one of the two Hitzacker missions and will have them copied for our Hitzacker museum.

Thank you so much! We are very much looking forward to that material.

Thanks to your good offices this will help to document in greater detail what happened then towards the end of the war.

With best wishes,

**Margret Schuchard
Heidelberg, Germany**

Margret.Schuchard@as.uni-heidelberg.de

ESCAPE AND EVASION HELPER FAMILIES

Dear Sir,

My name is Jean-Paul Valles. During WWII my father, Dr. Jacques Valles and my mother, Mme Simone Valles, lived in Saint Saens in Normandy. They were both heroes of WWII and both received the highest decoration of WWII. They saved countless American, British and Canadian flyers that were shot down. They also hid in their house two wounded flyers of the Eighth Air Force. Both my mother and father, now deceased, were made honorary life members of the Eighth Air Force and they were thanked by, among many others, President Eisenhower.

A few facts may be interesting for you to note. First, one of the two American flyers of the Eighth Air Force that were hidden in my house is still alive and happily retired in Florida. Second, the street where my house was is now the Simone Valles Street. My mother was the first female elected mayor in France just after WWII. Three, in 2006 the public library of the town was named "The Simone and Jacques Valles Public Library." I was there with my family and it was quite an emotional ceremony. Speeches about what my parents did during WWII and after WWII were made and I was almost brought to tears when the little school children sung the "Chant des Partisans."

The fourth fact I want to mention and it is the reason for this letter, is the very recent publication of a little book entitled "Nom de Guerre Ange Gardien" by Jean-Claude Meresse. It is the story of a couple that also lived in Saint Saens in WWII. They were heroes. They were also good friends of my parents. In the book there is a picture

of an old French banknote that was modified to show Hitler being hung. My parents, my brother and I signed that banknote that I made. It was also signed by the American flyers that were hidden in town when we were liberated. I gave that banknote to Harley Jones. He is the Eighth Air Force flyer that I mentioned earlier. He recently wrote me a letter saying that I gave him the bank note when he left to come back to America and he wanted me to have it back before he died! I framed that bank note!

It is important for the generations to come to understand the past so they can build a better future. Your Museum is a part of that process.

**Jean-Paul Valles
Bedford, NY**

B-24's?

Dear Sir,

Doesn't anybody write anything about B24? In the last issue is showed 2 - B24s? And all the rest was B17. After all the B-24 carried more gas so it could fly more miles, and carried 1/3 more bombs and fly faster. It gets pretty old, just seeing B17.

Otis Patterson

Editors Note While it is true that we try to include something for everyone, we promote actual contributions from our "Original guys" send up some stuff, B-24 guys!

WINTER/SUMMER ADDRESSES

Dear Sir,

As I am about to make my annual migration North I thought I had better give you my summer address. I probably will be there until sometime in November.

I look forward to receiving each issue of the 8th AF News as I am an 8th AF Veteran. I flew 27 combat missions with the 95th BG.

Sincerely,

Alan E. Cawrse

Editor's note: Remember, all of our 'Snowbirds,' to send your winter address to Catherine Mayne - main 8th AFHS office; address inside front cover of this magazine.



2008 8th AF float in the Veteran's Day parade in Tulsa, Oklahoma last November.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Dear Mr. Walt E. Brown MD,

Please allow me to introduce myself.

My name is Jake Minton and I'm owner/operator of Ground Radar Solutions based in Brisbane, Australia. I am also a WW2 historian with a large interest in where the USAAF operated in Australia.

I have been given your contact details by a Mr. Edward Giller. He suggested that you would be the person to speak to on this matter.

Currently, I am working on a site in New South Wales (NSW) where it is alleged that the 8th Air Force flew from. It is known to have a large heavy bomber base with the site taking up 25 square miles. Today, the site is broken up into private allotments with the main airstrip still in use by several air related businesses.

This particular site I have located with my Ground Penetrating Radar is rumoured to be a burial dump of surplus stores from when the base was in full operation. Allegedly one of many sites in the area I plan to survey.

What I am after is information that may assist me in knowing what could be buried there prior to digging.

Were there disposal registers of burial dumps and what was put in them? Are there historic photographs available of when the 8th was in Australia?

I am also curious as to what happened to the *Enola Gay* after the conclusion of the Second World War? Any information you have would be greatly received.

Your assistance in this matter is greatly appreciated. However, if you are unable to assist me then I ask if you could forward this message to someone who may be able to help me?

I'll leave it there and look forward to your reply.

Should you have any questions regarding this matter then please do not hesitate to contact me on the details below.

Thank you in advance.

Jake Minton

Cell: +61 415 130 543

Email: gndradar@gmail.com

VETERANS DAY - OKLAHOMA STYLE

Dear Dr. Brown:

The two parade pictures are the 2008 8th AF floats in the Veteran's Day parade in Tulsa last November.

This is the 13th year for this float in the parade and the first time for any real good pictures. Thanks to our Nex-gen driver this year.

I spent most of yesterday reading the March issue of 8th AF News and I would like to compliment you on the best magazine I have ever read.

I would like to also mention the letter about the Micek Brothers (page 23) and Julius who was a tail gunner in the 381st Bomb Group. I also was a tail gunner in the same group and flew in "Los Angeles City Limits" on the mission to Dresden 2-15-45 which was my 19th birthday. Julius must have arrived one year ahead of me.

Thank you again for a wonderful magazine.

Sincerely,

Roland Kinzer, 381st BG Jenks, OK



Veteran's Day parade
in Tulsa, Oklahoma

The Nissen Huts and Control Tower at the USAF Museum

by Mack Parkhill



If you plan to attend the up-coming 8th AF reunion in Cincinnati and Dayton, you'll want to include a visit to the Control Tower and the two Nissen huts located adjacent to the outside static display area. The tower was funded by contributions from the 8th AF Historical Society and dedicated in April, 1995. The weather detachment re-creation is located on the first floor while the control room and accompanying base layout diorama reside above it. Most of you never had an opportunity to enter the tower at your duty station. You'll have that opportunity when you come to the Museum.

Next door you will find two Nissen Huts which were originally located at Debden, the UK home of the 4th FG (originally the Eagle Squadrons). One is staged as a pre-briefing setting for the 56th FG as they are about to depart on Feb. 3, 1945 to serve as cover protection for Mission #218 to Berlin and Magdeburg. This was one of the larger missions of the war with nearly 2300 aircraft involved. Some of you may have made the trip.

The other hut houses the original Belly Tank Bar that came to the Museum intact when the huts were surplus by the RAF in the sixties and sent to their present location. The bar was originally the enlisted men's facility and named for the large P-47 belly tank hanging over the beer spigots. You will recall time spent in this or similar base facilities, writing letters, reading, throwing darts, playing cards or just knocking back a couple of pints. Music was often coming from the 78 RPM record player proving some familiar sounds from back home. As was the case for the entire base, the black out curtains were pulled when the sun set, but that didn't dampen the atmosphere for those wanting a change of scenery from their barracks or the flight line.

These facilities are quite unique in the U.S. and should bring back some good memories when you join your fellow reunion attendees in August.

Mack Parkhill, Associate Member 8th AFHS & 13-year docent of the National Museum of the USAF.

Lt. Col. Bob Brandt, a Life Member of the 8th AFHS and docent at the museum is in front of the Belly Tank Bar. Bob was a B-17 co-pilot at Deopham Green, flying 35 missions with the 452nd BG & 730th BS from Sept. '44 to Mar. '45.



GIANT AIRSHIP IN THE WORKS FOR USAF

The next Air Force spy craft is likely to be a giant, unmanned dirigible that can remain aloft at high altitudes, keeping an unblinking watch on vehicles, planes and even people.

The dirigible is the brainchild of the U.S. Air Force and the Pentagon's research arm, which together will spend \$400 million to develop a prototype that could pave the way for a fleet of spy airships, military officials said Thursday.

The plans represent the final stage of work to develop a giant airborne radar system capable of providing ground operators with intricate detail over vast expanses, even if the dirigible is hundreds of miles from its target.

The project reflects a recent shift in Pentagon planning and spending priorities under Defense Secretary Robert Gates, who has urged the military services to improve intelligence and surveillance operations, while cutting high-tech weaponry costs.

However, it marks the return to a form of flight that has stirred anxiety and doubt since the deadly 1937 disaster involving the Hindenburg. In Iraq, the military has used less-sophisticated tethered blimps called aerostats to conduct surveillance around military bases. Unlike other surveillance platforms, the proposed airship will stay aloft for 10 years and provide a constant watch over an area, Air Force officials said.

"It is absolutely revolutionary," said Werner Dahm, chief scientist for the Air Force. "It is a cross between a satellite and a Global Hawk (spy plane)." The airship will fly at 65,000 feet, or 12 miles, beyond the range of any handheld missile, and safe from most fighter planes. At that height, it would be nearly impossible to see. But the dirigible could be vulnerable to some surface-to-air missiles, and would be unable to maneuver out of the way. Nonetheless, the airship's range will allow it to operate at distant edges of any military theater, likely out of the range of many missiles.

The airship would provide the military a much better understanding of an adversary's movements, habits and tactics, officials said. The ability to constantly monitor small movements in a wide area - like the Afghanistan-Pakistan border, for example - will dramatically improve military intelligence, officials said.

"It is a constant surveillance, uninterrupted," Dahm said. "To be able to observe over a long period of time, you get a much better understanding of how an adversary operates. When you only have a short-time view - whether it is a few hours or a few days - that is not enough to put the picture together."

The dirigible will be filled with helium and powered by an innovative system that uses solar panels to recharge hydrogen fuel cells. Military officials said those underlying technologies, including a very light hull and low power transmitters, were critical to making the project work.

What have we learned in 2,064 years?

"The budget should be balanced, the Treasury should be refilled, public debt should be reduced, the arrogance of officialdom should be tempered and controlled, and the assistance to foreign lands should be curtailed lest Rome become bankrupt. People must again learn to work, instead of living on public assistance."

Cicero - 55 BC
submitted by
Bill Heller, 303rd BG



Playing cards were a staple . . .



ENGLAND 1944

14th Photo Recon Squadron 7th Photo Reconnaissance Group - Mount Farm - submitted by Walter Mysliwczyk



EIGHTH AIR FORCE BOMBS JAPAN

On 16 July 1945, Lt. General Jimmy Doolittle, who commanded the 8th Air Force in Europe, arrived in Okinawa to lead 8th air crews in B-29 Superfortress mission over Japan. That date also signaled the inactivation of the XX Bomber Command and the assignment of its personnel to the 8th Air Force. The 20th had been created in 1944 to fly combat missions targeting Japan's industrial and naval sites. The 8th was to stand down from the war in Europe after VE Day and wear the 8th shoulder patch on its missions in the Pacific Theater.

Ten tactical B-29s were assigned to the Eighth and were to fly a Shakedown mission on 23 August. All 90 airplanes of the 333rd and 346th Bomb Groups

were also scheduled to take part. If needed on those missions, long-range fighter escort was to be supplied by P-47 Thunderbolts of the 301st Fighter Wing.

Notably, three 8th Air Force B-29 crews temporarily assigned to the 20th Air Force flew 26 combat missions from Guam starting on 24 July, including raids on Tsu, Omuta, Ogaki, Mito, Nishinomiya, Tokyo, and Kumgayo. These crews were temporarily assigned to the 19th, 39th, and 330th bomb Groups and flew their missions with them. The 8th's 1st Photo Recon Squadron and a few thousand others landed on Okinawa on the *Liberty Ship SS Brule*.

After the dropping of the atomic

bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, missions slowed dramatically, but it is recorded that a good number of original 8th AF airmen flew missions wearing the proud shoulder patch of the 20th Air Force.

These Pacific War missions saw a large number of combat-experienced aircrews and ground crews with a desire to "finish the job" and end the war, volunteer to take the 8th's war to Japan after leaving their bases in England.

Information submitted by Albert Plueddemann of Lavallette, New Jersey, Armament Sgt., B-29s, 8th AF 1944-1946, forwarded by Albert "Bud" Porter, 385th BG ball turret gunner.

REMEMBERING "V-E DAY"

Along with thousands of World War II veterans, how well we remember V-E Day, Victory in Europe, May 8, 1945. That was 64 years ago, and we commemorate this day every year because half of WWII was finally brought to an end.

I was 20 years old at that time flying with a B-17 bomber crew attached to the 486th Bomb Group of the 8th Air Force. We were based in Sudbury, England, flying missions over Germany and France. On V-E Day we witnessed the English people dancing in the streets - they would no longer have to tolerate the wrath of German Luftwaffe bombers bombing their cities. What a great and joyous day this was!

American service men and women from all branches of

service paid a very high price to attain victory over Germany. V-E Day signified that no longer would thousands of Americans be killed or maimed in places such as: Omaha Beach, Battle of the Bulge, a sinking ship, a bomber going down in flames, or some other nasty quagmire. Many of our veterans who were killed are buried in American cemeteries in Europe and England.

V-E Day was a blessing and meant that most of us veterans that were living could return home. The war was still raging in the South Pacific, but Japan capitulated the following August after President Truman authorized the use of the atomic bomb. This proved to be one of the great decisions in our country's history.

**Jack Keller, Ball Turret Gunner
Sam Vance Crew, 486th BG**

MISSISSIPPI CHAPTER

The Mississippi Chapter, 8th AFHS held their 19th annual spring reunion at Lake Tiak O'Khata near Louisville, MS 24-26th of April 2009. Chapter President, Bert Hill welcomed forty members and guests who came to meet and greet old friends, enjoy good food and reminisce of times gone by.

Featured speaker at our reunion banquet was Colonel Roger Watkins, Commander, 14th Flying Training Wing at Columbus Air Force Base. Col. Watkins gave an informative presentation on the offensive and defensive posture of the US Air Force since 9/11. He described some of the new weapons systems and how they are used in protecting our nation from terrorists at home and abroad. One of the major improvements in recent years has been the significant reduction of response time of our air evacuation teams in getting injured personnel from the battle areas to the proper treatment centers. He also stated that the Air Force was still making good use of several older planes that still play an important part in carrying out the objectives of the Air Force and cited the B52 bomber as one example.

Following the banquet, the Chapter conducted an impressive candle lighting ceremony in memory of those who served in the Mighty Eighth Air Force in WWII. Eight veterans of former bomb groups paid homage to air, ground and support personnel who contributed to the overall efforts of the Mighty Eighth. The Chapter voted to support 8th Air Force memorials in the cities of Oxford and Tupelo, Mississippi. While both memorials pay tribute to Mississippians who were a part of the Mighty Eighth, the memorial in Oxford will also honor the late Bettye Duke Jackson who was the heart and soul of the Chapter and worked tirelessly to make it one of the most active 8th AF Chapters. The memorial at Tupelo will be located in the Veteran's Memorial Park currently under construction.

The fall meeting is tentatively set for Gulfport, MS in later September or early October.

Submitted by George G. Roberts



Mississippi Chapter
Col. Roger Watkins & President Bert Hill

OREGON CHAPTER

Spring has finally sprung this 9th of May in the Pacific Northwest, and even though it was a beautiful sunny day, 60 plus Chapter members and guests took the day off from garden chores to attend our quarterly meeting. There was a lot to talk about and time to catch up on our friend's doings since the last meeting. Joe Conroy, our "organization memory", was all smiles while reporting the good news that there were no folded wings to report over the past quarter.

After the call to order by President Bert Campbell, the invocation was offered by Chaplain Roland Stewart. In his opening remarks, Stewart pointed out that the day before our meeting was VE Day, but the historic milestone had been almost ignored by local as well as national media. When asked, only two or three hands went up to signify that they had heard, read, or seen any mention of VE Day!

A very interesting display of Army Air Corps equipment and clothing was provided by

members of a local WW2 Air Corps reenactors group, including a rare original map of Europe, printed on silk, which many of us remember as being a part of our escape kit. Of most interest though were the three young guys who wore the uniforms we all remembered from our service days in England. Heard more than once was a somewhat wistful comment from a vet to a spouse or friend, "I looked like that....60 years ago!" One of the reenactors, Larry Jones, wore the patch of the 15th Air Force, and the captain's bars and wings of a friend who flew with the fabled Tuskegee Airman.

The program for the day was presented by Dr. Jim Boyle, an Air Force pilot who served in WW2, Korea, and Vietnam. In addition to his flying career, he also had many years of service as an educator in schools ranging from the Air Force Academy to the University of Portland. His talk was based on the thesis for his PhD earned at the AF Academy, titled "XX Bomber Command...Primary Factor in the Defeat of Japan." It was a well documented and well delivered presentation, emphasizing the fire bombing of Japanese cities which was so devastating to the Japanese war effort. In regard to that fact, a question raised in thesis is whether the dropping of the A Bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki was necessary. Dr. Boyle thought not. A spirited discussion of the question followed his talk.

Several of our members with ties to local aviation museums and activities, reported on the banner year Oregon is having for aviation museums and activities, reported on the banner year Or-



Reenactor Larry Jones relates a fighter jock's story to Clint Gruber

egon is having for aviation enthusiasts. Warbirds are flying over our area in numbers. This spring we have seen the Liberty Foundation's B17 "Liberty Belle" which flew into Hillsboro/Portland for a three day visit. The EAA (Experimental Aircraft Association) B17, the "Aluminum Overcast" also visited Hillsboro for three days in May. The Collings Foundation's annual tour comes to Corvallis, Oregon June 10 through 12, and to Hillsboro June 12 through 15. Their B24 "Witchcraft" and B17 "Nine O Nine" will be accompanied by their P51 "Betty Jane."

In addition to the warbirds visits, Oregon area airfields also offer a variety of activity. The Air Force Thunderbirds will headline the 20th annual Oregon International Air Show at Hillsboro August 29th and 30th. Also performing will be a number of internationally known aerobatic stars, headed by Patty Wagstaff, 3-time US Aerobatic Champion.

Many other aviation and related facilities are well worth a visit in Oregon, including the Western Antique Aircraft and Car Museum at Hood River, and the Tillamook Air Museum which has over 30 warbirds, including a PBY Catalina, SBD Dauntless, F4U Corsair, P38 Lightning, and a P51 Mustang. An interesting feature is the fact that the Museum is housed in a WW2 Coast patrol Navy Blimp, the largest wood construction building in the world.

Just across the Columbia River in Vancouver, Washington is the Pearson Airfield Museum, situated on one of the nation's oldest operating airfields and housed in a pre-WW2 Army Air Corps hangar. Also in Washington, at Paine Field in Everett, is the new Flying Heritage Museum, the "Home of the Flying Warbirds." A wonderful collection of aircraft, beginning with the "Jenny" of WW1, heads a list of planes made famous by pilots of England, Germany, Japan, Russia, and the United States in WW2.

Down in McMinnville, a short car trip from Portland, is the Evergreen

Aviation and Space Museum. A very large and expanding facility, the Museum is rapidly joining the list of favorite tourist attractions. In addition to a number of historic and wartime aircraft, the Museum is the home of Howard Hughes' famous "Spruce Goose". Also new are two recently added museum buildings, the Space Museum, and the IMAX Theater.

Yes, air-minded visitors to the Pacific Northwest will have a good variety of sights to see and activities to attend this summer. Bring your camera!
Clint Gruber, 93rd BG

NEW YORK STATE SOUTHERN WING CHAPTER

On May 30th the New York State Southern Wing Chapter had its semi-annual meeting/luncheon at the Thayer Hotel in West Point, NY. President Nathan presided over the affair with Vice-President David Greene and presented a great program. The Chapter honored it's WWII 8th AF Veterans by awarding each a Commemorative Medal with Certificate by General Verle Johnston. The weather was great at West Point and we had 92 in attendance.

The General was also our guest speaker and is the Wing Commander for the 105th Airlift Wing, Stewart Air National Guard Base, Newburgh, New York. The General educated us via a slide show how our National Guard uses the C-5 airplane and their duties.

The Chapter conducted an election for two openings on the Board of Directors and from the floor Susan Newmark and Laurie Harrar were nominated and elected to the Board.

For further info on the Chapter Lun-



President Gustave Nathan accepting his Commemorative Medal & Certificate by General Verle Johnston

cheon check website, www.ny8thsw-cafhs.org

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

Pat Keeley

FLORIDA CHAPTER NEWS

The Florida Chapter of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Historical Society congregated in Bradenton, Florida in May.

One of the first orders of business was to recognize the efforts of the local Boy Scout Troops help at the picnic the day before. Bill Uphoff and Steve Perri had given a talk to them about the history of the Mighty Eighth and shared their experiences as a pilot and a gunner with the scouts. Tom Gagnon, our chapter president, facilitated the meet-

ing. Tom mentioned that the newsletter had not been going out as it should and that would be corrected. Since finding material for four issues a year is difficult, he encouraged the membership to submit articles, and stories and such, for the newsletter. All submissions would be most welcome.

We also considered providing funds for a mark-

NEW YORK STATE SOUTHERN WING CHAPTER MEETING



er in the new Sarasota, Florida, National Cemetery, similar to the ones we have at Savannah and in Bushnell, Florida. The reaction was very favorable. Jarl Linden spoke up in favor of us doing it, and President Gagnon indicated, that in his opinion, this was part of our function as a historical society. Bill Uphoff also mentioned the National Cemetery in Lake Worth would be another location that would be good for an Eighth marker. Several members spoke up about various oral history programs, like the one at the Mighty Eighth Air Force museum in Savannah, and members were urged to participate in those projects when asked. We also entertained ideas for future sites for reunions in the very central portion of the state like Wildwood, or Ocala, Florida. After that, the rest of the afternoon was spent on our own with a few of the members taking in the sites on Anna Maria Island and lunching there. The gala banquet was Monday evening.

The banquet began with a presentation of the colors by an honor guard from the Sarasota Military Academy. They stepped off smartly in their crisp uniforms topped with red berets. The Pledge of Allegiance was followed by an Invocation by our Chaplain and then a rousing rendition of the Army Air Corps song and a heartfelt version of God Bless America. A member of the City Council read a proclamation from the Mayor welcoming the Chapter to Bradenton. Following an excellent dinner and dessert, President Tom Gagnon introduced Enid Stewart, a self-professed "gum chum kid" who was a child of six when the war started in England. Enid noted that English school children were being taught German phrases in school in the event the unthinkable happened and the Germans invaded their island fortress. "And then," she said, "you Yanks showed up and saved our bacon!" After WW II, Enid met her own Yank at Burtonwood Air Base in England and came to the states as a war bride during the Korean War. She said she had always wanted to personally thank the Americans who came to England to help fight WW II. And she did so to those assembled at our banquet. Our after dinner speaker was

retired Air Force Colonel Larry Bustle. A 1958 graduate of the Naval Academy, he received his pilot wings in 1958 and enjoyed a distinguished career that included service as a fighter pilot and test pilot with over 3300 flying hours. He flew 130 missions in the F-4D Phantom II during the Vietnam War and gave an interesting presentation wherein he compared and contrasted combat flying across the two war eras, WW II and Vietnam. Following the banquet, we adjourned to the hospitality suite to continue an evening of socializing and hanger flying.

Tuesday morning saw the attendees gather for candlelight Memorial Service for those who had recently "flown their last mission." The Pledge of Allegiance and a benediction from our Chaplain were followed by a reading from Senator Robert Kennedy about service and a poem of remembrance. Candles were lighted for seven departed members and TAPS was played.

Our next reunion is planned for the historic Clewiston Inn in Clewiston, Florida in early November. If you plan on being in the area around that time and would like to join us, please do. Contact Tom Gagnon at teg00@aol.com, or Ken Sweet at ksotown@earthlink.net, or call him at 407-869-6693. By Ken Sweet and Tom Gagnon

NEW MEXICO CHAPTER

The New Mexico Chapter of the 8th AFHS held its annual Spring General Membership Luncheon and Meeting at the Sheraton Albuquerque Uptown, May 16, 2009. There were 53 members in attendance.

President Larry Stebleton opened the meeting with a period of silence in memory of departed members.

President Stebleton introduced the guest speaker, T/Sgt. Kevin Norman who is attached to Special Operations at Kirkland AFB. Having spent 17 years in the Air Force, the majority of which has been with the Special Search and Rescue Operation, which was the topic of Sgt. Norman's speech followed by a question and answer session.

Submitted by Al Schwery, Secretary



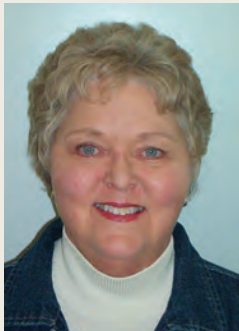
Guest speaker, T/Sgt. Kevin Norman



North Alabama Chapter
Memorial Day 2009

Maple Hill Cemetery (Huntsville, AL) on Memorial Day 2009. Bill Varnedoe, Louise Varnedoe and Harold McMurren show the wreath that the North Alabama Chapter placed during a moving ceremony by the Coalition of North Alabama Military Organizations.

NEXGEN CONTINUING THE 8TH AF LEGACY by Norma Chesser



Norma Chesser

In this article I'm writing for the first time for this section, I'd like to review briefly where we've been over the past four years, and some specific plans at work for 'moving forward'.

As we approach

the fifth annual meeting of Next Generation at the 8th AFHS annual reunion in Cincinnati in August, the current focus of the Next Generation Initiative will be to actively involve people who are not yet involved and want to be.

Many who have filled out NexGen Registry Forms at the reunions or online also checked off interest areas they are willing to help with. These include education, communications, membership & recruitment, reunions, research & publishing.

A couple of these interest-area groups of people were contacted recently to participate in some activities. More will be contacted in the near future, to help carry out the duties of the 8th AFHS and its Chapters & Units, to preserve the history and legacy of the Mighty Eighth, honoring the men who served.

Almost four hundred people have signed up for the 'Initiative' in the past

four years. Countless other second and third generation descendants and history buffs were already involved before the NexGen Initiative.

Their interests and involvement include: websites; video & photography; collecting war memorabilia; research; writing, publishing; newsletters; coordinating/presenting WWII seminars; reunion planning; veteran oral histories; air shows; and coordinating trips to airfields & memorials in England. Many are involved in their Unit or Chapter gatherings as well.

Each year NexGens are attending the 8th Air Force Historical Society reunions in growing numbers and enjoy meeting and visiting with the veterans. About 90 people were at each of the last two years' Next Generation meetings in Kalamazoo and Savannah, and attended by both NexGens and Veterans.

At this year's meeting in Cincinnati, our format will be similar to that of last year: a panel presentation followed by an open forum. The meeting will be on Friday, August 21, 4:00-5:30 pm.

The open forum last year generated a lot of enthusiasm and some good ideas which we now need to put into action.

The mailing lists for each of the interest-area groups, on the NexGen Registry Forms, will be used to contact people with opportunities to become involved in activities or projects. As membership chairman, I'll be coordinating some of the initial efforts on this.

If you're not on the NexGen Registry, and would like to sign up for one or more of the interest areas, visit the 8th website at <http://www.8thafhs.org> for a form. If you're already a member of the Society, just mention that under "comments". If you're not yet a member of 8th AFHS yet, you can join and sign up for the Registry in one step.

Some ideas are already 'on the board' for 'moving forward' in this effort. More ideas for involvement in activities or projects are needed. Many of these can be performed among the general membership without attending the reunions,

although the reunions are a great way to meet others and get into the network of ideas, communications and support.

A good list of ideas in time for the August reunion could be a good starting point for some of our discussions. Please email me at npchesser@yahoo.com.

Eventually people will also be needed to head up some of the ideas and projects presented. Please indicate if you would be willing to head up an activity some time in the future.

As plans unfold, more specific details will be given in future articles.

If you have photos of any of the previous mentioned activities that you are already involved in, please also send those along to be included in future 'NexGen' articles in the 8th AF NEWS. My contact info is on the inside front cover of the magazine.

Norma Peace Chesser
NexGen Coordinator and
Membership Chairman



NexGen Fred Preller, is webmaster for two 384th Bomb Group websites, with gallery and a 'Memories' website, and the mighty8thaf.preller.us website, a cross reference. He supports several other sites. Here he points to the 384th home page, surrounded by 8th AF items that include some of Roger Freeman's books and a small bottle of sand taken from the Normandy beaches.



NexGen Bill Curtis videotapes and edits the national reunions and individual 8th Air Force Veterans for the Mighty Eighth Air Force Library Collection.



Rifle Honor Guard present arms before start of service at Memorial Chapel - Madingley.

Tom "Chip" Rogers, Madera, CA., waist gunner for 95th BG, reported by Richard Farias, 493rd BG.

Oliver K. Larison, Oxon Hill, MD., tech Sergeant who installed bombing radar on B-17s.

Bill Roche, 303rd BG, passed away on May 7 after suffering a fall which led to a subdural hematoma. His daughter, Patricia Brady, informed me that he rapidly became non-responsive, and passed away about 36 hours later.

Victor T. Gorecki, Kamuela, HI., 303rd Bomb Group, reported by his daughter, Paula Beamer.

Vivian Vanderhei, Henderson, NV., co-pilot 303rd BG on 427th BS Emil Grob crew.



Dale Dykins with 'Raggedy Ann'

Roy Brockman, Rochester, NY., 96th BG.

George T. Duncan, B-17 all turret gunner on a B17 303rd BG, Flew 8 missions over Germany and was shot down April 24, 1944. Interned in Switzerland for 9 months. He escaped dressed as a woman and made his way to England with the help of the French Underground.

Paul A. Tognetti, San Francisco, CA., Lead Radio Operator, 303rd Bomb Group.

Eugene Dulik, South Haven, MI., ground crew and ball turret gunner on "Betty Jane", 303rd BG.

Glenn Aschbrenner, Weston, WI., pilot with the 361st FG, 374 FS.

Richard Portmann Allyn, Lakewood, OH., B-17 navigator, 95th BG.

John (Jack) F. Hamm Sr., Fort Wayne, IN., B-17 pilot, 303rd BG, stationed in Molesworth, England.

Milbury C. Charlton, 95, Mount Dora, FL., Crew Chief with the 427th Bomb Squadron 303rd Bomb Group.

Gale Cornyn, Robstown, TX., mother of US Senator John Cornyn and wife of John Cornyn, 303rd BG B-17 crewman and prisoner of war.

Fred Boswell, Ozark, AL., 66th Service Squadron attached to the 361st FG.

Robert Winston Bennett, Boise, ID, bombardier on the John McConnell crew, 303rd BG, 358th BS.

James Ray Durfee, Mountain Home, ID, ball turret gunner, 360th BS, Fontana Crew

Dale Dykins, Seattle, WA., bombardier with the 551st Sq., 385th Bomb Group.



Dale Dykins



Paul A. Tognetti

George E. Hiebeler, Jr. Brenham, TX., navigator, 303rd BG, 360th BS.

William "Bill" Joseph Milligan, Harwood, MD., 303rd BG.

Robert L.

Gelsleichter, Rockville, MD., top turret gunner on the B-17 "Buck Shot with the 351st BG, 509th BS.

Pat Iodice, Escondido, CA., armorer with the 361 FG, 375th FS.

Joseph T. Ogurchak, engineer with the 303rd BG, 359th BS.

Joe B. Arwood, Memphis, TN., pilot, 303rd BG, 360th BS.

John R. Gehrig, Jacksonville, FL., P-51 Mustang pilot in the 55th FG. Received the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Earl E. Ashworth, Dayton, OH., fighter pilot with the Flying Tigers, 528th FS in China. Served as Fighter Aircraft Attack SPO Director at Wright-Patterson AFB.

Lawrence Gaylord Gilbert, Orlando, FL., flew submarine patrols in Douglas B-18s and served as instructor pilot in B-17s. In 1943 he helped establish the 392nd BG at

a B-24 airbase at Wendling, England, initially serving as Operations Officer and Group Commander.

Robert

J. Scales,

Boynton Beach, FL., B-17 pilot. After taking enemy fire over Germany, made it back across the English Channel, where he crash-landed. Survived the crash with extensive injuries requiring him to be in a full body cast for a year. When finally transported back to the US aboard the *Queen Mary*, he said the scariest part of his service was that the *Queen Mary* was top-heavy because of the anti-aircraft guns mounted on the deck. The ship would sway from side to side and he was more afraid of the ship capsizing and sinking. He could not swim encased in the body cast.

Robert F. Eaglehouse, Blairsville, PA., 303rd BG, POW.

Carl "Dick" Deidrich Petit, James Island, SC., radioman in the 493rd BG, 860th BS, and author of the book, *A View From Above*.

Gordon E. Hoeft, Oshkosh, WI., ammunition supply technician, 303rd BG, 427th BS.

Dale A. Peterson, Burnsville, MN.,



Lawrence Gaylord Gilbert

pilot who was captured as a POW in Germany during WWII. Active member of the Minnesota Chapter of the American Ex-POW's, serving one year as commander.

Edgar J. Allen, Seattle, WA., member of 8th AFHS, reported by Mrs. Allen.

Marvin Lubinsky, Dunedin, FL., B-17 pilot in the 447th Bomb Group.

Dr. Paul T. Leonard, Niles, MI., 448th Bomb Group.

Jack W. Edwards., Raeford, NC., 452nd Bomb Group.

Joseph E. Hafer, Swissvale, PA., B-17 radio operator, 100th BG, 418th BS. POW for final 18 months of the war.

Charles Webster, Sr., Two Rivers, WI., 913th Signal Corp, Watton air Force Base, East Anglia, England.

Harry D. Crandall, Hope Mills, NC., reported by his step-daughter.

Earnest Clifton Smartt, Huntsville, AL., member of 8th AFHS, Alabama Chapter. Listed on the Madison County Military Hall of Heroes.

Joseph D. Ulmer, Port Heuneme, CA., crew chief, 361st Fighter Group, 376th Fighter Squadron.

Edward Jing Chu, Edinburg, NY., B-24 tail gunner in the 448th BG, Seething, England.

George E. Hiebeler, Jr., Brenham, TX., navigator with the 303rd BG., 360th BS.

Philip A. Patrinostro, Ybor City, FL., B-17 flight engineer and gunner.

James D. Tricoglou, Albuquerque, NM., tail gunner on a B-17. He also served in Korea and Vietnam. He played semi-pro ball with the Brooklyn Dodgers' farm team in the late 1930's.

Merle Gerling, Fremont, CA., Stationed with the Mighty Eighth in Goxhill, England. Reported by his wife.

Russell J. Willer, Hamilton, OH., pilot of the B-24 *Pub Hound* 466th BG, 786th BS



Dale A. Peterson

stationed at Attlebridge, England.

Pasquale J. Pagano, 486th BG, 833rd BS, Life Member in both the 8AFHS and 486th BGA.

Leonard A. Wood, Oakton, VA., 361st Fighter Group. Reported by Annie Ott Wood.



Color Guard RAF Mildenham

Ed Freeman



**Medal of Honor Recipient
Ed W. Freeman**

You're a 19 year old kid. You're critically wounded, and dying in the jungle in the La Drang Valley, 11-14-1965, LZ X-ray, Vietnam. Your infantry unit is outnumbered 8-1, and the enemy fire is so intense, from 100 or 200 yards away, that your own Infantry Commander has ordered the MediVac helicopters to stop coming in.

You're lying there, listening to the enemy machine guns, and you know you're not getting out. Your family is 1/2 way around the world, 12,000 miles away, and you'll never see them again. As the world starts to fade in and out, you know this is the day.

Then, over the machine gun noise, you faintly hear that sound of a helicopter, and you look up to see an unarmed Huey, but it doesn't seem real, because no Medi-Vac markings are on it.

Ed Freeman is coming for you. He's not Medi-Vac, so it's not his job, but he's flying his Huey down into the machine gun fire, after the Medi-Vacs were ordered not to come. He's coming anyway. And he drops it in and sits there in the machine gun fire, as they load 2 or 3 of you on board. Then he flies you up and out through the gunfire, to the Doctors and Nurses. And, he kept coming back - 13 more times - and took about 30 of you and your buddies out, who would never have gotten out.



Medal of Honor Recipient, Ed Freeman, died at the age of 80, in Boise, Idaho.

May God rest his soul.

**submitted by
Richard Shandor
AFES**

**President George Bush
presents the award
to Ed W. Freeman**

JAMES GOOD BROWN

The only Chaplain assigned to 8th Air Force airbase duty and who served the entire war with one bomb group was Chaplain James Good Brown who was the base Chaplain at Ridgewell, home of the 381st BG. He was a close friend of the airmen he served and wrote a fine book *The Mighty Men of the 381st – Heroes* all documenting his experiences during the war.

After training in the States, he arrived in England with the 381st in May 1943, and soon thereafter became involved with the combat stories of his men as they returned from bombing missions. He realized that he needed to quell the fears and concerns of combat and was able to complete five missions in the air with them as the war went on.



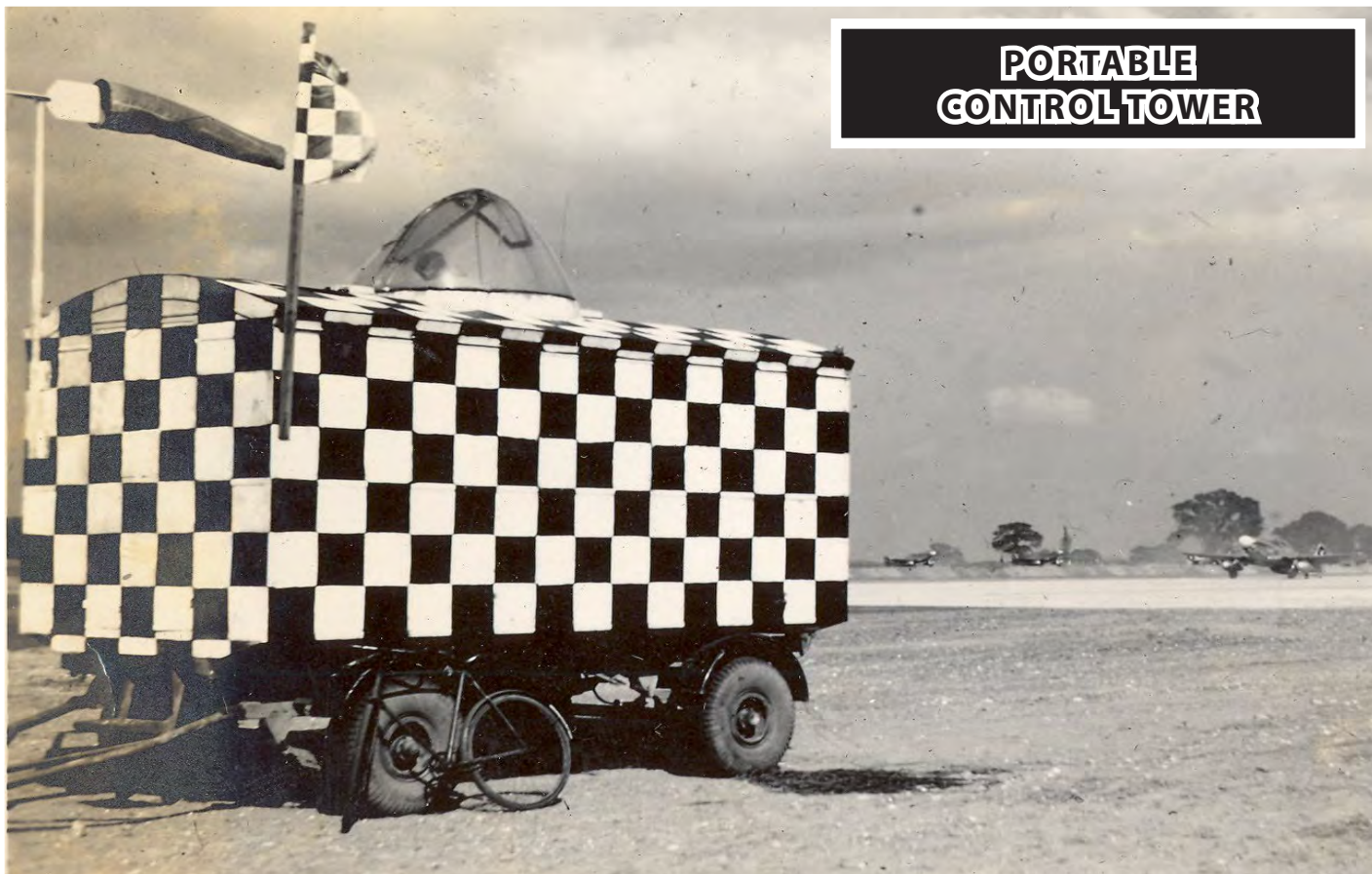
DR. WILLIAM H. "BILL" FLETCHER

Nicholson, GA., B-17 pilot of *Fletcher's Castoria*, 100th BG, 350th BS. Prisoner of War at Stalag Luft, I, Barth, Germany. The first *Fletcher's Castoria* was destroyed in a non-fatal landing accident with another pilot at the controls. His second aircraft, also named "Fletcher's Castoria," was down for repairs when his crew flew an unnamed spare aircraft that developed engine problems causing Fletcher to crashland near Spaarandam, Holland. The crew was uninjured, but all were taken as POWs.



Dr. William H. "Bill" Fletcher and his wife

PORTABLE CONTROL TOWER



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.

THE CORPORAL WAS A PITCHER

The Courage of Lou Brissie
by Ira Berkow

I met Leland "Lou" Brissie one spring evening at Grayson stadium in Savannah, some sixty-two years after I sat in the grandstand watching this young American serviceman pitch for the local professional baseball team. He was amazing then, packing the stands with fans that came to watch him set pitching records that still stand in the Sally League these many decades later. The team was retiring his uniform number – 23 – and the distinguished personable Lou Brissie was signing autographs.

His story is remarkable, as he was a true war hero. It was known in 1947, when he won 23 games for Savannah, that he had undergone many surgical procedures over a two-year period on his shattered legs and that he wore a heavy leg brace on his still-healing left leg. Lou had grown up in Ware Shoals SC and as a teenager was a tall strong pitcher and hitter for the local textile mill team. He joined the army after Pearl Harbor and went up the Italian boot in the worst of wartime conditions, fighting a formidable German ground force. In one wintry attack, his squad was hit by enemy mortars. Brissie was blown into a ditch with severe leg injuries and was left for dead until a medic noted he still showed signs of life. Taken back to a hospital,

doctors wanted to amputate his severely shattered left leg, but Brissie insisted that they try to save it as he had plans to become a major league pitcher for the Philadelphia Athletics. Before the war, he had been scouted by the venerable Athletics manager and owner, Connie Mack.

This book tells a story of the courage and persistence of a young WWII serviceman whose dream came true in spite of all odds of that never happening. The dedication is to his orthopedic surgeons and military medical personnel, past and present. Brissie's career is related with some fascinating details of his successful career in the Major Leagues and of the ongoing pain of the persistent open wounds of his left leg that was always in leg braces. Ira Berkow, a Pulitzer Prize author, has put together an unforgettable tale of a courageous young man and his family, pursuing a dream with injuries that would have defeated many men.

Lou Brissie played in the majors with other baseball professionals whose careers were altered when they left to serve their country in the war. Slugger Ted Williams was a Navy fighter pilot in the Pacific and later during the Korean War, as was pilot Joe Coleman. Braves pitcher Warren Spahn served as did Phil Marchildon, who was shot down over Germany and spent nine months as a POW in Stalag Luft III. Lou, like many who saw the worst events during the war, even today doesn't like to relive those events of injuries to and death of his friends in his army unit. Lou does recall, however, 15th Air Force B-24s and B-17s filling the skies, heading out from their airbases in Italy and then returning from their combat missions with noticeable damage, engines out, and smoke trailing from the aircraft.

After retiring from the game, Lou Brissie has spent his years encouraging pa-

tients in Veterans Hospitals, working with youth groups, and staying involved with charitable organizations.

This Unique book is hard back, 255pp, and has a b&w photograph section.

This most enjoyable and inspiring volume now rests on my desk alongside an autographed baseball and a souvenir replica Brissie shirt autographed to my baseball fanatic sister Sharon, who well remembers the Summer of '47 baseball games and "Brissie nights" – watching the "strikeout king" pitch out at the ballpark in Savannah. Lou Brissie's story has always been and is still, unforgettable.

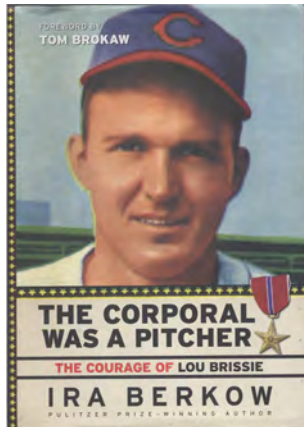
For information on obtaining copies, contact: Triumph Books, 542 South Dearborn street, Suite 750, Chicago IL 60605. tel # 312-939-3330 fax 312-663-3557. Also the usual book supply sources in bookstores and online. There are special discounts available for groups and organizations.

DOWN IN FLAMES

by Ray Parker

Down In Flames is a very well-written 8th Air force combat crewman true story as told by an experienced author. Flying with the 445th Bomb Group out of Tibenham airbase, his B24 was shot down on a mission to Friedrichshafen, Germany in early 1944. His tale relates in a most personable, and very knowledgeable, manner his experiences in pre-combat training and as a Prisoner of War in Stalag I at Barth for 14 months.

During his captivity, Ray Parker edited the Underground prisoner news, the POW-POW, which contained the latest news of the war from radio airwaves and newly captured prisoners, eventually reaching over 9,000 prisoners in the camps. The POW-POW was typed out on a hidden typewriter and clandestinely passed throughout the camp compounds. Often it was en-



BOOK REVIEWS

closed in a tin can and "air mailed" over the fences to the various barracks when the German guards weren't looking. There are other fascinating and generally unknown incidents included in the book. Especially notable is the author's description of the camp's liberation and his return home, flying in a B17 and passing through Camp Lucky Strike – a designated liberation camp for American POWs.

A personal tragedy of war hit Ray Parker, as it did so many of the men who flew in the 8th. For a time he was a patient in the base hospital and word came that his original crew he had flown his missions with had been lost on the Gotha Raid. His grief and determination to continue flying missions are a poignant part of his story.

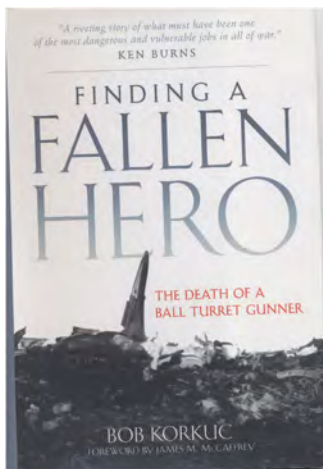
Parker's post war career in writing and publishing is notable. Following his POW-POW career as a prisoner, he became a writer for the famed Art Linkletter Show on radio and television. A documentary featuring his story has won several national awards (see www.intimesofwar.us). He has spoken to the New Mexico Chapter 8th AF Historical Society and closes this volume with his personal Thoughts About War. There are b&w photographs among the soft-back 160 pages of his book. For info contact: Mill City Press, Inc., 212 3rd Avenue North, Ste 290, Minneapolis MN 55401 tel # 612-455-2294 www.millcitypublishing.com

FINDING A FALLEN HERO

by Bob Korkuc

This book is the story of one of tens of thousands of 8th Air Force airmen who sacrificed their lives for freedom, but is written after extensive research into the final months of the author's uncle, Anthony Joseph Korkuc, and of his death in the war and burial in Germany. Tony Korkuc now rests in the peaceful national cemetery at Arlington.

Tony Korkuc flew as a B-17 ball turret gunner in the 381st Bomb Group based at Ridgewell. His final mission to bomb Messerschmitt airplane plants in Augsburg is described in detail by the author



who journeyed to the crash site of his uncle's aircraft and relates his extensive eye witness interviews with townspeople of ancient Willmandingen, Germany.

Author Korkuc has spent extensive efforts in contacting surviving crewmembers of the plane and in visiting with members of the 381st Bomb Group Association, both in their homes and at their reunions. This volume includes many of their reminisces and of their life on the base.

The story is very personal as regards the family of a serviceman Killed In Action and can be appreciated by other families and friends who have undergone similar sacrifices of their loved one. It ensures that this airman, Tony Korkuc, will be remembered as one who served his country well, giving his life for our future generations.

The volume is hard back, 258 pp, and includes related photographs. With a foreword by James McCaffrey, it is available from the University of Oklahoma Press, Norman OK, Publishing Division of the University and at usual booksales outlets.

The thanks of the 8th AF News goes out to Bob Lyskowski, New Boston NH, for bringing this fine book to our attention.

FACES OF WAR

The Untold Story of Edward Steichen's WWII Photographers

by Mark D. Faram with Lou Reda

Hot off the press is a beautiful edition of famed photographer Edward Steichen's service photographing the Pacific War. At age 62, after closing his studio, Steichen volunteered to chronicle the war's events of the U. S. Navy and the men who served. Author Faram's book is fascinating in the personal depiction of the naval war as seen through Ste-

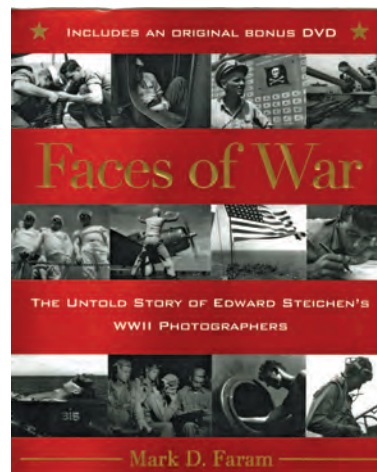
ichen's camera and is accompanied by a well-written text. The story unfolds with extensive research and an in-depth personal telling of Steichen's life and career and includes interviews and meetings in which he took part as the war progressed.

Replete with Steichen photographs of servicemen of all ranks and station, individual tales flesh out the photos in a most effective manner. He worked alongside other noted wartime photographers such as Horace Bristol, and closely with the editors of U. S. Camera and founded The Aviation Photographic Unit, a unique military unit. The photographers of this unit spent time on ships at war, island airbases, and recorded the naval aircraft raids and the Japanese surrender.

Faram, himself a Navy veteran and an award-winning photographer, has produced a long-awaited special volume of the works of one of America's premier photographic artists. *Faces of War* pays tribute to all combat photographers as well as presenting an important aspect of Edward Steichen's 75-year career. A fine addition to be enjoyed over and over by readers.

This large-format high-quality hardback book includes a CD disc. 240 pp with photographs throughout. Published by the Berkley Publish-

ing group contact information is at: kaitlyn.kennedy@us.penguinpubgroup.com tel # 212-366-2461 or: www.penguin.com



IMMIGRANTS OF WAR

Americans Serving With The Royal Air Force And Royal Canadian Air Force During World War II

by W. Peter Fydenchuk

Every so often the 8th AF News office receives a book that gets your attention because of its unique premise. This volume is one of those – unique in several ways but in particular that this 2009 printing is its fifth edition. The author has published updated editions as additional material has been uncovered – he has notably "hung in there" in his ongoing search for history making the book in-

valuable as a history of a little-known aspect of the air war of World War II. The book has indeed grown over the years with additional histories and photographs of American airmen who left for Canada to join the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1940-41, many to fly from airbases in England. The material is always fresh in the telling.

Author Wally Fydenchuk has done an admirable job of telling the stories of these airmen, many of whom are familiar to those of the Mighty Eighth. The presentations are the individual stories of these volunteers, with interviews and personal reminiscences of each one. Here you will see old friends who flew early in the war and became part of the Eagle Squadron and later the 4th Fighter Group. Photographs abound, as do stories of the fliers, not to be found in any other historical documentations of this unusual group of patriots. Here are Don Blakeslee, Don Gentile, Duane Beeson, John Godfrey, John Magee, Michael McPharlin (one of many who were turned down by the USAAC for technical reasons), and numbers of others. These men flew in the early years, tough missions often accompanied by significant sacrifices. They carried what they learned in combat into the 8th Air Force after its arrival in England in 1942 and imparted their knowledge to the fresh arrivals in American fighter outfits. A portion of these early fighter pilots flew tours in Heavy bombers later in the war.

In 1941, Canadian training bases were scattered across the country and were turning out pilots, bomb aimers, navigators and gunners, a total of more than 130,000 during the war. The Commonwealth Air Training Plan was the program that took in and trained these courageous Yanks. "These Americans are a fine lot," commented one of the staff training officers. Many of the men, such as Claude Grimm of Los Angeles, stated that they joined for patriotic reasons.

"So far as I'm concerned, the whole of North America is my country and in helping Canada and the Allies, I'm helping to protect North America. That's the way

most of us feel about the whole thing."



Immigrants of War has now expanded to 585 pages, complete with period photographs. The combat stories of missions are here, frequently told in the first-person tense by the airmen themselves. There are historical sections on the various theatres of the war and the circumstance and challenges of each. In all, an authentic exceptional volume for any lover of the war in the air; the fight for freedom; the

courage of America's young men.

Softback. For information regarding copies contact: WPF Publications, tel # 289-213-0396 or online at wpf13@hotmail.com

MEMPHIS BELLE – DISPELLING THE MYTHS

by Graham Simons and Harry Friedman

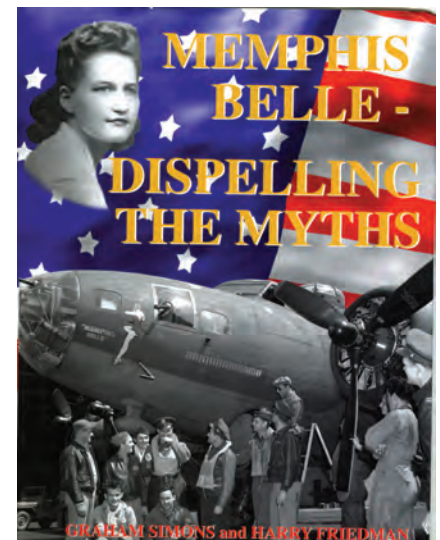
This book tells the story of one airplane of the 8th Air Force – the *Memphis Belle* – a B-17 Flying Fortress of the 91st Bomb Group. My first impression of the volume, displayed during a meeting in Nashville with Board Director Bob Moses and publisher Donna Neely, was: "How can a 538-page large format book be compiled about just a single airplane and its crew?" My first look at it lasted two hours.

This volume stands alone in the depth of its research and its extensive story of the crew and their experiences in the 91st BG at Bassingbourn in the early days of the war. In following the trail of the *Belle* the reader gets to see hundreds of photos and detailed depictions of the aircraft both in the States and in its subsequent combat missions flying from England to enemy-held targets. The photograph cutlines follow the fine British historical tradition of being well placed and standing by themselves in their subject presentation. The famous William Wyler film *The Memphis Belle* was released during the war and this aircraft became known across the nation, being some citizens' first real look at the airwar.

The authors delve into the fascinating personal diaries of the crew members as well as into the romantic alliance between Margaret Polk, for whom the plane was named, and pilot Bob Morgan. The airplane itself was the first 8th AF bomber to complete its 25 missions and then return to the US with its crew, to take part in a nation-wide War Bond Tour (This subject of which was the first a/c to finish its 25 missions – the *Memphis Belle* or the 303rd BG's *Hell's Angels* is discussed in Chapter 8, [appropriately enough]). It follows that the postwar history of the aircraft and the attempts to restore and display it in Memphis follows the trail of *Belle* right up to its present home at the National Museum of the US Air Force in Dayton, Ohio. This volume indeed has more than enough historical material and hundreds of photographs to more than fill its 538 pages. It does justice to the most famous bomber of WW II and its crew. The appendices alone could make up another book by themselves. The entire presentation stands as a tribute to the thousands of airmen who flew Heavy bombers into combat during the war.

Very hard to put down, you can pick up a copy of the book from GMS Enterprises, 67 Pyhill, Bretton, Peterborough, PE3 8QQ England or at customary US book outlets. Email: gmsimons@btconnect.com www.gmenterprises.net

A great book.



DEBRIEFING

Rosten DeFrates...

I was with the 8th AF Bomb Group from April 1944 - Sept. 1944 - ball turret gunner and nose turret gunner (together).

I was transferred to the 9th AF 322nd BG - 449th BS Oct. 1944 to Sept. 1945 - before being sent home, I only had five missions in the B-24. On my 4th mission June 1944 to Magdeburg, Germany everything that kept a B-24 flying seemed to be damaged by flak. Engineer C. Freeman killed over the target. #1 engine hit and was feathered so we had three engines running. Lost all our oxygen-hydraulic system - radio system destroyed - ruptured main gas tank poured 100 octane gas through bombay area - transferred what we could to other tanks. I had to warn the

guys in the waist area - NO SMOKING. We dropped to a much lower altitude and was by ourselves crossing Germany. Over Holland to cross the Channel hit again by one flak gun - wounding pilot Lt. Roy Miller hit in left hand by shrapnel. Lost #4 engine crossing the channel on two engines. Also, landing gear lost by flak - could not climb high enough to bail out. A very low level by 458 Bomb Group was warned by flares we were going to belly land at an emergency field. We had no radio contact. Pilot gave us the smoothest, quietest landing I ever had. The B-24 - 037 *Sally* was nothing but one good engine and some parts for recycling. I flew one more low level with a make-up crew to Holland - Montgomery's a bridge to far - dropping supplies to surrounded Air

Borne units trapped by Germans.

Incidentally, the 200th mission was to Magdeburg - my last B-24 mission with my original crew. When I found out where we were going I thought this could be my final mission and maybe Flak Bails. This time it was a milk run, so here I am writing you this letter.

Only to find out five months later while flying B-26s with the 9th Air Force that my only brother, Billy DeFrates, 7 years older than me, was injured and died from wounds from a German 88 shell that hit his heavy gun. Five were lost and one survivor.

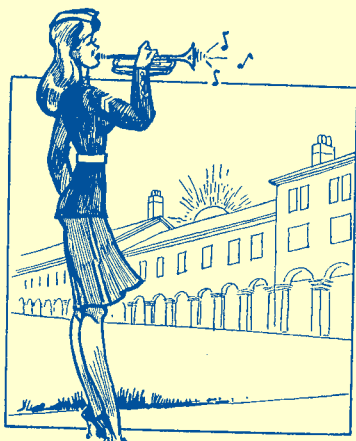
Rosten DeFrates, 392nd BG
Jacksonville, IL



Hard to find - WWII posters

Submitted by Pat Keeley - 8th AFHS Board of Director





Of interest comes a notice of word of a program that will consist of flag-flying in England using American flags presented to families of WWII veterans, flying them on the base until deteriorated. This in honor of those who served in the 8th Air Force. Laura Turner states her mother's husband, Robert Woodley, 303rd BG, is buried at the American Cemetery in Cambridge, killed on 14 May 1943 on a mission to Kiel. Her inquiry is one of interest to Society members – if anyone is aware of such a program, please let the 8th AF News know.

On 13 May, the Royal Air Force Museum celebrated Veteran's Day, honoring veterans of all three armed services. A featured event was a flypast of a wartime Dakota, flown by the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight. The Bomber Command Association supported the event.

The free day at the museum featured musical entertainment by The Jive Aces swing band. The museum shop website is www.rafmuseumshop.com

After the war, in 1946, the commercial airline Trans World Airlines obtained B-17 Flying Fortress 44 -85728 and used it for flying their executives around the country. It is unknown if they used the aircraft's ball turret on those flights. www.twaseniorsclub.org

Federal law last year provided that veterans and active duty service personnel may render the military hand

salute when the American flag passes or is raised and lowered whether or not they are in uniform. A later provision now has been included. Those veterans may now effect the hand salute upon the playing of the National anthem. Dr. James Peake, Secretary of Veterans Affairs states that "The military salute is a unique gesture of respect that marks those who have served in our nation's armed forces."

George Bruckert, U.S. Navy veteran, sends notice that the Queen Mary now permanently docked in California, has been targeted to sever all ties with the military and its remarkable military service in WWII, transporting allied troops across the northern Atlantic. The ship is now a floating hotel. Many of our 8th AF "original guys" well remember their time on the crowded wartime ship.

The Illinois Chapter reports that the Dept. of Veterans Affairs is offering a new online service, My Healthvet which is a gateway to veterans health benefits and services. Check www.myhealth.va.gov

The Army Distinguished Service Cross



Walter Holmes, 44th BG

was awarded, after a lapse of 65 years, to Walter Holmes, 44th Bomb Group, who, as Operations Officer volunteered to fly the B-24 "Wing and a Prayer" from his new base in Libya, 2 July 1943. Having already completed a 25-mission tour with the 44th BG in England, Holmes filled in for another pilot on a mission that commanding General Brereton termed as "worth it even if we lost every last airplane".

Holmes flew the 2,100-mile low-level mission to the oil fields of Ploesti Romania in mid-1943 and returned to his base with only ten minutes of fuel left in his airplane's gas tanks. His DSC, the military's second highest decoration, was presented to him by Maj. Gen. Floyd Carpenter, Vice commander of the 8th Air Force at ceremonies held at Barksdale AFB, Louisiana on 2 February 2009. Walter Holmes resides in Jasper, Texas.

Arnold Wright, Benton, Arkansas, is the recipient of the Air Force Scroll, the only one awarded to an Arkansas civilian. He was instrumental in preserving and publishing Ewell McCright's invaluable listing of POW's that he kept while a POW in German Stalags and is involved with community organizations in his hometown and surrounding communities.

It's not too late to get in touch with Sally and David Hatcher and inquire about their unique trip back to the 351st BG airbase at Polebrook, England July 1-15, 2009. The trip begins in Paris and proceeds to Normandy and the across the Channel to England. It is an educational endeavor for families and younger generations of the "original guys", who of course are always welcome to take part. Some of the children age 14-21 may be housed with local British families. The trip has been extremely successful and enjoyable in the past, and even if you didn't fly B-17s with the Triangle J outfit, give Sally a call for further info. ASAP. Tel # 707-829-5600 cell # 707-888-8070 email: sewald@lsaglobal.com

FLIGHT PROGRAM AT RANDOLPH MACON IS UNIQUE

Students grades 9-12 who attend Randolph-Macon Academy may participate in a program that is unique in this country. The program, in place since 1983 at the school, promotes Knowledge, Leadership and Character and has allowed hundreds of cadets to take to the skies according to 8th AFHS member David Moore.

Up to thirty cadets fly in Randolph-Macon Cessna aircraft, providing they meet grade and academic requirements. The flights take place at the nearby Front Royal-Warren County airport. Both female and male students have goals of eventually flying solo, experience flying, and learn more about aviation. There are several flight-related projects associated. Flight scholarship programs for certain students are always in need of funding support. Hangar and classroom improvements are ongoing, and flight equipment such as headsets, knee boards, and publications need funding as well.

The fund drive currently has a total goal of \$500,000 and tax-deductible gifts can be arranged by contacting: the school at tel # 540-636-5492 or online at labraham@rma.edu.

A number of these early aviation cadets at Randolph-Macon in Front Royal, Virginia, will eventually become air and ground crews of our country's future Armed Forces. Their slogan is Flying Towards the Next 25 Years.



T-BIRDS RELEASE 2009 SCHEDULE

The U.S. Air Force Air Demonstration Squadron, "Thunderbirds," has announced its 2009 air show schedule. In their 56th season, the Thunderbirds are scheduled to perform more than 73 shows in the United States, Puerto Rico, and the Far East.

THE 2009 SCHEDULE:

June

6-7 Hill AFB, UT
13-14 Ocean City, MD
20-21 Dover AFB, DE
27-28 Helena, MT

July

4-5 Battle Creek, MI
11-12 Peoria, IL
18-19 Dayton, OH
22 Cheyenne, WY
25-26 Milwaukee, WI

August

8-9 Vienna, OH (Youngstown ARB)
15-16 Chicago, IL
19 Atlantic City, NJ
22-23 Selfridge ANGB, MI
29-30 Hilsboro, OR

September

5-7 Cleveland, OH
12-13 Sacramento, CA
19-20 Hickam AFB, HI

A couple of publishing items of note

The Mississippi Chapter reports that they are re-publishing *The Superior Anthology Mississippians In The Mighty Eighth*, the excellent large volume relating personal tales and experiences of those 8th airmen who hailed from Mississippi. There will be 500 copies printed. Also, the Air force Association is publishing *Air Force Album: We Who Served* that will include recollections of airmen and their families, past and present. For info go to: www.afa.org/media/press/AFAAlbum.asp

BOMBER COMMAND TO HAVE MEMORIAL ESTABLISHED IN LONDON

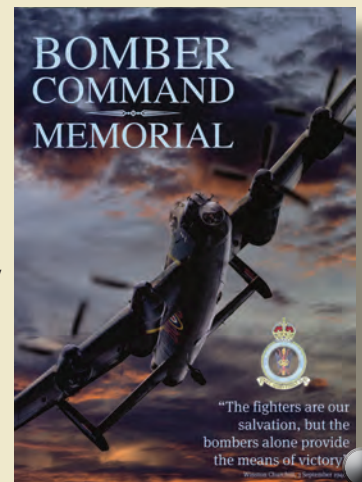
The Royal Air Force Bomber Command has had no permanent memorial in London to honor the 55,573 airmen who gave their lives for freedom in World War II. Another 10,000 RAF fliers were prisoners of war.

The Heritage Foundation, the Telegraph Media Group, and the Royal Air Force is preparing a site in a central London park and is commissioning a design for the long-overdue planned memorial.

Bomber Command had a total of 125,000 volunteers who fought the Germans for six years and was the only British fighting force taking the war directly to the German homeland from 1940-44.

Donations are requested and support for this significant project is needed. Checks may be made to the Bomber Command Memorial Fund and sent to: Bomber Command Association, RAF Museum, Grahame Park Way, Hendon, London NW9 5LL.

Donations are tax-deductible. For further information go online to: www.bmycharity.com



SENATE BILL TO HONOR WASP OF WORLD WAR II

On March 17, 2009 Maryland Senator Barbara Mikulski and Texas Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison introduced Senate Bill S.614 to honor the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) of World War II with the Congressional Gold Medal! Every female Senator in the U.S. Senate is now a co-sponsor of this bill. The Congressional Gold Medal is awarded by Congress and, along with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, is the highest and most distinguished honor a civilian may receive. The award is bestowed for exceptional acts of service to the United States or for lifetime achievement. We currently have 33 Senators as co-sponsors and we need 34 more! I urge you to please contact your senators and representatives too and ask them to co-sponsor Senate Bill S.614 to honor the WASP.

Warmest regards,

Amy Goodpaster Strebe

Author, *Flying for Her Country: The American and Soviet Women Military Pilots of World War II*

PINETREE

Sean Kelly, an American based in England, is looking for former people who served at Pinetree, the 8th Air Force Headquarters during WWII as well as anyone who served at the US Navy Headquarters in London.

Kelly who has written for various publications over the years, is developing a book about some of the US military bases near London and is looking to interview veterans. Kelly went to the Department of Defense Dependents School on the base in the 1970s and has written a book about that school entitled 'From the Faculty Lounge'. He reports that the site, which in latter years, was given to the US Navy, has now been turned back to Britain's Ministry of Defence (British spelling) and is likely to be redeveloped in the coming years.

He can be reached by email at: sean@us1uk.com or by regular post by writing to: Sean Kelly c/o PR4P, 23 The Avenue, Ickenham UB10 8NR, England. He is happy to try and call you if you send your phone number.

DAEDALIANS

102nd (Ben T. Epps) Flight
Atlanta, Georgia

During the course of our lives, we are sometimes granted an "opportunity of a lifetime." The Christmas meeting was simply one of those events. In a word: "WOW"! Major Ted "Dutch" Van Kirk, had nearly 100 of us on the edge of our seats and hanging onto his every word. Our guest speaker is a member of what has come to be called "The Greatest Generation." "Dutch" was the navigator aboard the *Enola Gay* on its historic mission to drop the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan. Dutch flew 58 8th Air Force missions over Europe in B-17s early in WWII, but only one mission in the B-29, a mission that helped to bring about an end to the war with Japan.

Dutch gave a very entertaining talk about what training for the mission was like, what he experienced on the flight, his personal feelings about the mission, and how history has looked at this event.



**Ted "Dutch" Van Kirk and
Bill Rail, Flight Captain**

OLD COMRADES UNVEIL TRIBUTE TO OLD FRIENDS

On Wednesday 13th May members of the 601 Squadron Old Comrades Association unveiled a memorial plaque at the RAF Museum (formerly RAF Hendon), to recognize the long standing association between the two units.

Prior to the Museum opening in 1972, the site was an active RAF station and home to amongst others, 601 (County of London) Squadron, for a total of fifteen years. The sculpture celebrates the historic association of RAF Hendon and 601 Squadron as well as the bravery of its personnel and their importance to London.

601 Squadron was RAF Hendon's longest serving squadron. It fought in many theatres, notably in North Africa and Italy. The squadron was also active in the Battle of Britain and the defence of London.

Aircraft flown by the squadron include Hawker Harts, Hurricanes and Spitfires. Nicknamed 'the Millionaire Squadron', its ranks include renowned pilots such as Roger Bushell (the driving force behind the Stalag Luft III 'Great Escape'), Max Aitken, Stanislaw Skalski (Polish veteran of the Battles of France and Britain) and the legendary American, Billy Fiske whose Bentley will also be on display during the day.

The sculpture was designed by Sam Bofey and is being installed in the grounds of the Museum. 1.5 metres in height, it represents the squadron's crest with a bronze cast sword and wings resplendent on a plinth of stainless steel.

- Royal Air Force Museum, Grahame Park Way, London, NW9 5 LL
- Open daily between 10am - 6pm (Last admission 5:30pm)
- Free admission and parking
- For further information and all media enquiries please contact Ajay Srivastava on 020 8358 4863 or ajay@rafmuseum.org

UNSUNG HEROES - BAUXITE MINERS

An estimated crowd of over three hundred attended the unveiling ceremony of the bronze, life-sized sculpture titled "UNSUNG HEROES - BAUXITE MINERS" held on the front lawn of the Bauxite Community House on Sunday, 19 October 2008. The statue was commissioned by the H. Tyndall Dickinson family and dedicated to the City of Bauxite, Saline County and Pulaski County mining families. in Arkansas.

The statue, sculpted by National Sculptor's Guild member Gary Alsum of Colorado, features a young miner with his wife and two children as he leaves for work in the bauxite mines. The small boy in the family is holding a toy airplane as a reminder of the major contribution bauxite miners and the aluminum industry made during the World War II efforts. Over three hundred thousand war planes were manufactured in the United States during the war, which required over three billion pounds of aluminum, ninety-five percent of which came from the mines in Bauxite, Arkansas.

Haskell Dickinson, president of the H. Tyndall Dickinson Foundation and McGeorge Contracting Company, said the statue was the family's way of giving back to the community. McGeorge Contracting is a fourth-generation family business that over the years has employed many Bauxite, Saline County and Pulaski County men. In honor of their many years of dedicated work in the mines, three former McGeorge employees, Joe Doughty, Jack Bush and Cecil Rickard, were given the honor of unveiling the statue.

Embedded in the foundation on which the statue is mounted is a piece of birdseye bauxite carved in the shape of the State of Arkansas. This was an extra added enhancement to the statue site made possible by Mr. Dickinson. Spotlights have been installed and add a special effect to the beauty of the statue at night.

BHAM and especially the people of Bauxite wish to express their heartfelt thanks and gratitude to Haskell Dickinson and the H. Tyndall Dickinson family for such an invaluable gift honoring bauxite miners.



LICENSE PLATES OF THE MIGHTY EIGHTH



This is a photo of my brother's Harley Davidson motorcycle that he had painted with his plane and a picture of our father. My brother is Kris Ingebritsen, he lives in Seaford, VA and my father is Otis Ingebritsen, 91, living in Yorktown, VA. My father was a B-17 pilot in the 388th.

submitted by Ann Morse, Chesapeake, VA

Alan Morton formerly with the Eighth Air Force, 457th Bomb Group, Station No.130, Glatton, England. The 457th BG was dubbed the "Fireball Outfit." I flew as Flight Engineer aboard the B-17 Flying Fortress Bomber.

I specifically designed this 8th Air Force, 457th Bomb Group - B17 Flying Fortress Automobile Decal.

submitted by Alan Morton



TARGET - BERLIN

The night was dark and starless; the wind was fresh and keen,
The bombers stood in readiness, silent and unseen,
The pilot waited tensely for the appointed hour,
Some were grave, some were gay, others quiet and dour.
A few were looking quite relaxed and laughing happy eyes
Others with a steadfast look, serious and wise.
Some were playing poker, others playing darts
Reading, writing, thinking, but with courage in their hearts.

'Damn you for a lucky swine! Some chaps have all the breaks'
'Could thrash you with my eyes shut pal - you ain't got what it takes.'
Whilst some were talking quietly about their folks at home
Other men they'd trained with and those with whom they'd flown
'Remember old Carruthers and how he'd loved a fight.
'Pity when he bought it - that night we all got tight.'
'And Jackson was a first class bloke, he didn't give a damn.
'He went down singing lustily the night we raided Hamm.'

And now the time to leave had come, they went out to the night
The Mess lay quiet and full of ghosts, untidy, filled with light.
When the engines leapt into life the very air vibrated
The crews were ready, tense and eager, silently the waited.
One by one they taxied out and disappeared from sight
Flying due northeast they went, speeding through the night.
The North Sea beneath them, distant, black and chill
Tossing in the darkness, restless never still.

Engines throbbing evenly, a dull and heavy roar
Cutting through the blackened air towards the distant shore.
The navigator speaks at last, 'crossing the German coast'
Each man silent yet eager, ready at his post
And it comes, the whistling shells, the thousands streaks of light
Searing, tearing upward, shattering the night.
Shaken but undaunted, deafened by the din
The pilot calmly forges on, on towards Berlin.

The city lies beneath them, bristling with guns
One by one the planes go in, and unleash their load of bombs.
Fighters whirling round them, crashing to their doom
Through that grim inferno, screaming through the fumes.
Blazing fires, roaring guns, a red and lurid hell
In that funeral pyre, many bombers fell.
Limping home to England, a sad and sorry sight
Wounded, tired and battle scarred, uncertain in their flight.
And many of those lads have gone, but up there in the sky
They've lit the fires of liberty; we shall not let them die.

Daphne Creer, 1943

Daphne served in the WAAF from 1942 to the end of the War. She was one of the first radar operators and had postings to Otterburn and Cambridge. She was inspired to write this poem as she sat in her bedroom in York, listening to the bombers pass overhead, probably from Linton-on-Ouse. Her friend, David Munro, submitted the poem.

from Bomber Command Association Newsletter



During the War years the Ministry of Information produced a series of accounts of the bombing campaign against the enemy. The first, *Bomber Command: The Air Ministry Account of Bomber Command's Offensive Against the Axis*, was published in 1941.

These publications were intended for public consumption and therefore had the objective of letting the British people know how we were (with Bomber Command) striking back at the enemy that was causing so much destruction to our cities. They were cautiously written; with little mention of the losses Bomber Command sustained and they contained nothing of use to German agents working covertly in Britain.

The first account covered events from September 1939 until July 1941. It is full of acts of heroism and successful raids against the enemy. It cost 1/6.

ON TO "BIG B"

3 February 1945 -

The first bombing mission to Hitler's War Ministries in Berlin proper took place on this date.

It was the 8th AF's largest air armada of the war utilizing a force of more than 2000 aircraft.

Original File photograph's of the lead group - 379th Bomb Group.



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	S, M, L, XL	
	8 th AF logo grey T-shirt	\$12.99	2X	
	"City of Savannah" B-17 T-Shirt	\$14.99	S, M, L, XL, 2X	
	8 th Logo Watch	\$15.99	S, M, L, XL, 2X	
	Not Home For Christmas	\$79.99	Men, Ladies	
	"City of Savannah" B-17 Shot Glass (Clear)	\$16.00	N/A	
	A-2 Jacket	\$3.99	N/A	
	"City of Savannah" B-17 Baseball Cap	\$299.99	40, 42, 44, 46, 48	
	Military Wall Clock	\$14.99	N/A	
	Jimmy Stewart Bomber Pilot	\$29.99	Air Force, Marine, Army	
	Masters of the Air	\$21.95	NA	
	Air Force Cookbook	\$35.00	NA	
	Military Garden Stones	\$16.95	NA	
	Stories And Recipes of The Great Depression. Choose Volumes 1, 2, or 3.	\$24.99	Air Force, Marine, Army	
		\$13.95	Vol. 1, 2, or 3	
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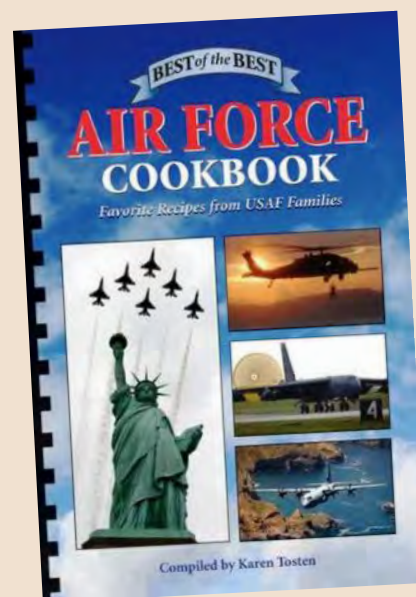
Or, Pay by check made out to the Mighty Eighth Museum Store

Send completed order and payment information to:

Mighty Eighth Museum Store, ATTN: Felice Stellies, P.O. Box 1992, Savannah, GA 31402



Military Garden Stones



Air Force Cookbook



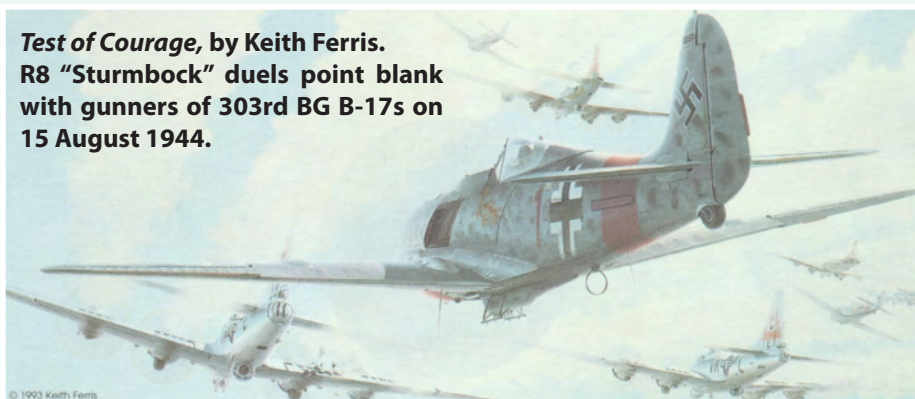
"City of Savannah" B-17 T-Shirt



The 2009 American Society of Aviation Artists Annual Forum will be held the week of June 22-27, hosted by the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum, Pooler, Ga. This exhibition features over

50 paintings by artists from around the world who specialize in aerospace subjects and illustrate the many ways aviation has impacted the lives of people world-wide. The artworks that will be displayed will tell riveting stories through the pictures by artists committed to historical accuracy as well as a technical mastery of the medium. Many of the artists also take their skills and stories into new directions with works that may move away from the traditional into the fanciful and abstract. Included in the week's activities will be the art show, lectures and seminars by various artists, and a class for aspiring students to receive first-hand mentoring by an artist from the ranks of the ASAA. The free youth

**Test of Courage, by Keith Ferris.
R8 "Sturmbock" duels point blank
with gunners of 303rd BG B-17s on
15 August 1944.**



drawing class will be held 10 am to 12 pm, with students providing their own materials such as sketch book, sharpened pencils & erasers. The drawing class is for students from 5th grade and beyond.

The ASAA was founded in 1986 and unites people who share a love of art and aviation in an organization that challenges itself to the creation of works that are unique to aviation and aerospace. The five founding members share an average of over 45 years' experience in the field of aviation art. Keith Ferris, Jo Kotula, Bob McCall, R.G. Smith and Ren Wicks have produced some of the most famous and award winning aviation and aerospace paintings in the world. Keith has produced 55 major paintings in the air Force

Art Collection and is probably best known for his two 75 foot murals, his B-17 "Fortresses Under Fire" and "The Evolution of Jet Aviation," both in the National Air and Space Museum of the Smithsonian Institution in Washing, D.C.

Last year's forum was held in Seattle, Washington, and in 2007, the Baltimore/Washington International Airport was the site of the forum and exhibition. Following this year's week-long gathering at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum, the artwork will continue on exhibition until January 3, 2010, in the Museum's Colonial Group Art Gallery. The forum and exhibition are being sponsored by Gulfstream Aerospace and the Pooler Crossroads Chamber of Commerce.



- Form may be reproduced -

JOIN THE 8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY!

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In service _____ Branch _____ Dates _____ to _____

Were you a former member? _____ Member # if available _____

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\$30 MEMBERS DUES NOTICES ARE MAILED ANNUALLY

Website: www.8thafhs.org

STAY FOCUSED

For me, life gets complicated once in awhile. I can't speak for everyone, but dilemmas in my life happen regularly. I like everything to work out with an answer that is black or white but this is not always what happens. Some folks seem to get their lives to conform to this principle but not me. Things which I encounter are not always right or wrong; they are gray. Life's opportunities often create unsettling situations and confirm the old proverb that says, "We find ourselves between a rock and a hard place". I read somewhere, and I have found it to be true, that we *Homo sapiens* have an innate need to know where we are, where we have been, and where we are going. We need to know how we fit into the scheme of life and to be connected to something bigger than we are. This raises the question, what have I done with my life and how has it fit into the scheme of events in my little world?

We must not lose track of our place in this world. If we do, we find ourselves slipping into a disarray of meaninglessness. We lose our energy and focus. Of prime importance, we must remember that we are Americans. I am proud that I am! There is a new slogan advocating CHANGE in America. Well, yes, but we must never forget the roots of our existence. There has to be a balance between our Attitude and our Action. Paul the Apostle gives us some sound advice:

"Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you can become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and deprived generation in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the Word of life—in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing."
(Philippians 2:14-16 NIV)

In the past century, conflicts in the world have been resolved by American blood, money and leadership. This has been demonstrated by her involvement in World Wars I and II, the Cold War and the wars in the Balkans. Our desire was to stay on our own continent and run our own business. However, we could not ignore the injustice and tyranny that existed in the world and our compassion and duty called us to action. Abroad, abusive monarchs repressed their own citizens and Americans rebelled at their behavior and overthrew them. When millions of impoverished and destitute souls sought a new beginning, Americans threw open the gates of their country and welcomed them

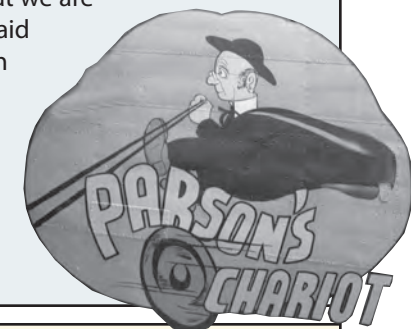
as citizens. When mentally ill and power hungry dictators and their gangster-like cohorts were on the march, Americans overwhelmingly volunteered their lives and the resources of a nation to stop them. Communist doctrine and practices threatened the world but Americans financed the effort to stop them and countless thousands of our own bled and died to accomplish this. When an entire continent was overwhelmed with poverty, famine, hunger and disease, Americans were there to give hope, encouragement and assistance for their recovery. Four commercial airliners were commandeered by terrorist radicals and slammed these aircraft and the innocent passengers on board into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and a fourth was thwarted in its mission of destruction. America stepped forward to stop them in their quest to create fear and oppression throughout the world.

Stay focused. You are a custodian of the Word of life. Hang tough! Refuse to give up regardless of what you see or hear or how difficult or demanding or disappointing the challenges may seem to be. **Stay focused** and you will have the greatest chance of winning. Life will be satisfying and exciting all of your days on earth. Henry David Thoreau described these years:

"If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours"

Stay focused. Our race is won by right objectives relentlessly pursued. Our fellowship of comrades hold us accountable and reminds us that we are not alone. Benjamin Franklin said at the signing of the Declaration of Independence: *"We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately."*

**Earl Wassom, 466th BG
Chaplain, 8th AFHS**



BOMBARDIER'S OATH

In the presence of Almighty God. I do solemnly swear and affirm, that I Will accept precious trust placed in my by my Commander in Chief, the President of the United States of America, by whose direction I have been chosen for Bombardier Training. I pledge myself to live and act according to the Code of Honor of the Bombardiers of the Army Air Forces. I solemnly swear that I will keep Inviolable the secrecy of any and all confidential information revealed to me, and in full knowledge that I am a guardian of one of my country's most Priceless Military assets, do further swear to protect the secrecy of the American Bombsight, if need be, with my life itself.



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