

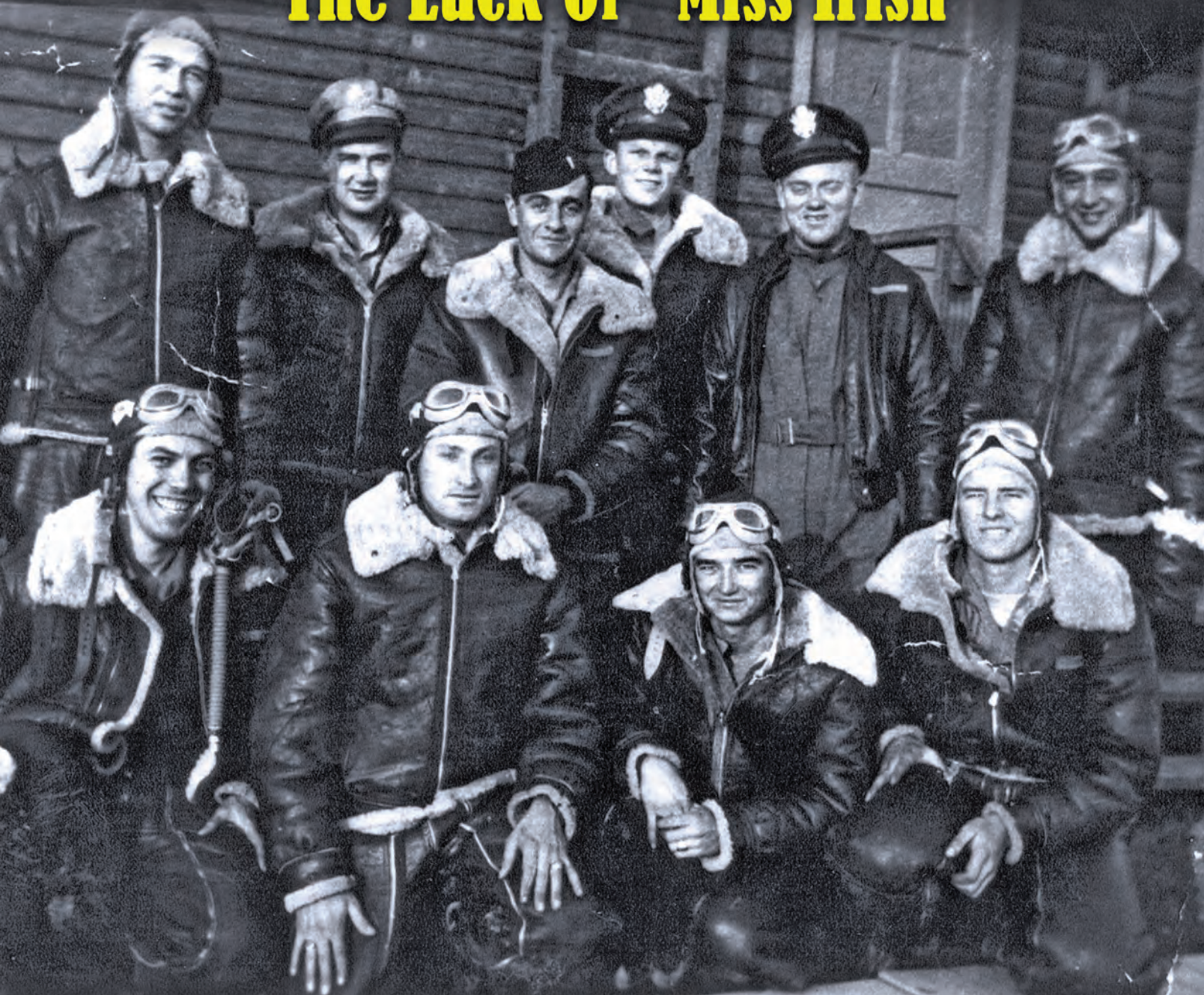
JUNE 2010



TH AF NEWS

Volume 10 Number 2 Voice of "The Mighty Eighth"

The Luck of "Miss Irish"





AF News

June 2010

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 news magazine of the Society. The 8th AF NEWS is sent to members of the Society and is not for public sale. The home office is at 175 Bourne St., Pooler GA. 31322 - P.O. Box 956, Pooler, GA. 31322.

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PRESIDENTS ADDRESS – June 2010

Greetings Fellow Members!! This summer is going to be a very special one!! Our annual 8th AFHS Reunion is scheduled for July 21st to July 25th in Tucson, Arizona. Our Society family is finally "coming west" this year. We have a very special weekend planned so please check in this issue for all the details. We look forward to seeing you in Arizona!!

We also are excited to once again announce a very special event happening in Detroit. The Eighth Air Force Historical Society will be the VIP special guests for the "Gathering of Fortresses and Legends – Thunder over Michigan Air Show" from August 5th -8th. As of now, there are eight flyable B-17 Flying Fortresses and one flyable B-24 Liberator scheduled to be at the Willow Run Airport for the air show.

In addition to the "heavies," several fighter aircraft will be in attendance including a flyable reproduction Messerschmitt Me-262 and a combat veteran Messerschmitt Bf-109E and Hawker Hurricane.

This has never been attempted before and probably will never be seen again. Join us for this once in a lifetime experience. It is going to be a terrific party and the 8th AFHS will have the best seats in the house, so don't miss it!! Further information can be found in this issue.

This is my last address as your President. I wanted to take the opportunity to thank all of you for your confidence and support for the last two years. I have served this organization for almost 20 years. First, as the prodigy of Ed Kueppers in the early 1990s, manning the "Mighty Eighth Theater" at our annual Reunions. In 1996, my wife Monica and I took over the 8th AFHS PX until 2002. Then, I was elected to the 8th Air Force Historical Society Board of Directors where I have served for the last eight years, com-

pleting two full terms. For the last two years it has been my honor to serve as your President. Due to by-law limitations, I have now reached the end of my term.

Some strange things can happen in one's life. When I first joined this organization, I never thought in a million years I would be the President of the Society someday. For the past twenty years I have met so many wonderful people and shared so many wonderful experiences. Serving the Eighth Air Force Historical has been one of the most important and satisfying accomplishments of my life. Thank you for believing in my abilities and for all the kindnesses you have shown, not only to me, but most of all, to my family.

Lastly, I would like to publically thank my beautiful wife, Monica and my wonderful eight year old daughter Emily, for allowing "Mark to be Mark." I know sometimes I have let the Society come first in our lives and I want you to know how much I appreciate your patience with me. I thank both of you from the bottom of my heart.

God Bless and we look forward to seeing you this summer! Be proud you are one of the "Mighty Eighth." We are glad to have you as a member!!!

Respectfully in your service,
Mark S. Copeland – President



**Mark Copeland
President**

"City of Savannah"

Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum

Boeing B-17G Flying Fortress Restoration Fundraising Project



Over 300 of our Eighth Air Force Historical Society members have graciously donated to our fundraising effort for the "City Of Savannah" Boeing B-17G Flying Fortress Restoration Project. As of June 1st, 2010, our membership has raised over \$16,500.00

Thank you to all who have donated to this worthy cause. Your donations go directly towards the restoration of the airplane. Your generosity will ensure that this airplane will tell the story of the Eighth Air Force for future generations.

If you have not made your donation, it is not too late!!

Please send your tax-deductable contribution to the following address:

City Of Savannah Fundraiser

Eighth Air Force Historical Society • P. O. BOX 956 • Pooler, Georgia • 31322

BEHIND THE SCENES



**Mother/Daughter - 8th AF News Team
Telisha Gaines & Donna Neely**

The 36th Annual Reunion is July 20-25 in Tucson, Arizona. Keep in mind that *September 2010 8th AF News* will be our Annual Reunion issue, packed full of memories from the Tucson Reunion and the Detroit Willow Run Air Show, August 5-9. Please mail or email your favorite

snapshots to the address listed on this page.

Don't forget to include the names to identify all the smiling faces in your snapshots!

We are very pleased and want to thank everyone for sending articles, pictures, etc., for this June issue. If your articles are not in this issue, please be patient, we will use them in future *8th AF News magazines*.

If you have articles typed and have access to a digital file document, email or mail that as well.

Deadline for the September 2010 issue is August 15th.

Happy 4th of July!!!

Enjoy your summer with family and friends!

**Sincerely, Behind the Scenes Team
Donna Neely & Telisha Gaines**

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**Send all mail & email to:
Mark, Donna or Telisha before
August 15th, 2010 for the upcoming
September 8th AF News magazine**

Memorial Day 2010 - Madingley Cemetery



It is with deep regret, that we report recent the passing of one of our 8th Air Force Historical Society - United Kingdom liaison representatives. Connie Richards passed away peacefully a few weeks ago. One of her final wishes was for her husband, Gordon to keep volunteering for the Eighth Air Force Historical Society.

One of the annual tasks the Richards have done for many years was to place a wreath of remembrance on behalf of our Society at the annual Memorial Day observance ceremony at the American Cemetery at Madingley near Cambridge.

Our entire Eighth Air Force Historical Society family is very pleased and happy to see that Connie's wishes are being carried out. God bless you Michelle and Gordon. Thank you for what you do for our Society.



Pictured here are Connie's husband Gordon and daughter Michelle at the recent ceremony held on May 31st, 2010.



From the 8th Air Force Historical Society Office



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

Call: 912.748.8884

Email: membershipmanager@8thafhs.org

Dear Members,

Thank you all for sending your membership dues in. We have approximately 80% of annual dues paid for 2010. That is fantastic.

On a personal note, I will be out of the office in June for two weeks. I'm not precisely sure of the dates because my husband is coming home for vacation from Iraq.

The B-17 Restoration Project in conclusion has acquired over \$16,500 from over 300 members. Thank you for your generous donations.

For those wishing to attend our Tucson Reunion and/or the Willow Run Air Show please submit your form(s) before the established cut-off dates. The cut-off date for the Reunion is 7/1/2010 and the cut-off date for the Air Show is 7/15/2010.

Membership Manager
Catherine Rice



WILLOW RUN AIRPORT



Above Left: Willow Run Airport virtually turned into a city. Every convenience was provided to the workers, including a place of worship. Here we see a new B-24 flying over the Willow Run chapel. The church still exists today!!

Above right: Dozens of new Consolidated B-24Ds Liberators on the final assembly line.

As many of you know, the Eighth Air Force Historical Society is participating in the 2010 "Thunder Over Michigan" air show at the Willow Run Airport in Ypsilanti, Michigan on August 7th and 8th, 2010 (see more details in this issue).

The airport was built during World War II and was the manufacturing site for the Ford Motor Company producing 8,685 Consolidated B-24 Liberators. In 1943, the plant employed 41,750 workers; about 43% were women. Workers made \$1.50 per hour, plus overtime. At the peak of production, the Willow Run Ford plant produced a new B-24 Liberator every 57 minutes!

After the war, Ford turned the airport over to the federal government which later sold it to the University of Michigan for \$1.00. Today, much of the facility is still there and is still operated by General Motors as a transmission assembly factory.



2010

BOARD OF DIRECTORS CANDIDATES



The Eighth Air Force Historical Society will hold annual Board of Directors election at the 2010 Reunion in Tucson, Arizona on Saturday, July 24, 2010 at the General Membership meeting at 10:00am. We will be electing three Directors at the 2010 meeting. Each Director will serve a four year term.

Joseph Patrick Keely

Associate Member #38105 President /Webmaster (ny8thsqcafh.org) – 8th Air Force Historical Society – New York State – Southern Wing Chapter President. Webmaster Assistant – National 8th Air Force Historical Society. Served one term on National 8th Air Force Historical Society Board of Directors from 2005 to 2009. Belongs to numerous WWII veteran organizations and currently works as an executive in the auto parts business. This would be his second term on the Board of Directors.

Nominated by George Hoidra

Darrel Lowell

Associate Member #33567 – Currently serving on the National 8th Air Force Historical Society Board of Directors. Current Treasurer – National 8th Air Force Historical Society. Darrel Lowell served as a B-47 pilot in the Strategic Air Command. He currently resides in Savannah, Georgia and serves as a liaison to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum and the 8th Air Force Historical Society membership Office. This would be his second term on the Board of Directors.

Nominated by Earl E. Wassom

Nancy J. Toombs

Associate Member #762550 – Daughter of William C. Toombs of the 493rd Bomb Group. Earned Baccalaureate and Graduate degrees from Mississippi State University and further post graduate clinical training at the Osteopathic Medical College of Tulsa, Oklahoma – Department of Behavioral Medicine. Practiced for over 30 years in the Behavioral Medicine and Forensic Psychology field, mainly working with troubled young adults. Active in the 493rd Bomb Group Memorial Association and the 8th Air Force Historical Society "Next Gen" initiative.

Nominated by Harry Tanner

Brigadier General G. Dennis Leadbetter

Life Member #25733 – Graduate of the University of Oklahoma. Served in the United States Air Force for 35 years. He served as Commander of several USAF Groups and Wings and as Vice Commander of two numbered Air Forces. General Leadbetter currently resides in Savannah, Georgia and is very active in the community. He

has served as President of the Rotary Club of Savannah, Porsche Club of America – Coastal Empire Region and the Board of Directors of the 8th Air Force Historical Society – Birthplace Chapter. He also has volunteered for many years as a Docent at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum and was a founding member of the American Air Museum at Duxford, England.

Nominated by Darrel Lowell

Mike Faley

Associate Member #34345 – Leading record executive for a major recording label in Studio City, California. 100th Bomb Group Association – Photo / Memorabilia Archivist and Historian. Currently serves on the 100th Bomb Group Association Board of Directors. Mike has been involved with the development of many 100th Bomb Group and Eighth Air Force related displays for dozens of museums throughout the United States and England. Regarded as one of the top Eighth Air Force historians in the world, he is the author of the recent book, "High Noon Over Haseluenne – The 100th Bomb Group over Berlin, March 6, 1944."

Nominated by Mark S. Copeland



This is turning out to be a very popular reunion destination and our room block is beginning to get filled up, so please book your room directly with the hotel today!



8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY 36TH ANNUAL REUNION

**THE HOLIDAY INN AND SUITES
PALO VERDE (Airport North) TUCSON, ARIZONA**



July 20 - July 25, 2010

Reservations can be made directly with the Hotel by calling 1-520-746-1161. We have a room rate of \$88 per night (plus taxes) for a traditional room and \$108 per night for a 2 room parlor Suite. Be sure to mention that you are with the Group 8th Air Force to receive this preferred room rate.

Please complete the following registration form indicating your choice of meals and tours, along with the other member information. Mail your registration form, along with your check or money order, to 8th AFHS by **July 1, 2010**. Or you may also securely register on line and pay with a credit card at www.8thafhs.org. just click on "2010 Reunion".

Hotel reservations should also be made directly with the hotel no later than **July 1, 2010** by calling 520-746-1161. Just say that you are with the Group - 8th Air Force.

CANCELLATION POLICY

You may cancel your reunion plans with the Society and receive a full refund prior to the cut-off date. There will be a \$25 charge for each reservation cancelled after the cut-off date.

Cancellations can be made Monday thru Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm Eastern time, by calling 912-748-8884.

PLEASE NOTE: Canceling your Reunion reservations does not cancel your Hotel reservations. You must do that separately, or expect to be charged for at least one room night per room reserved.



**8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY 36TH ANNUAL REUNION
PALO VERDE (Airport North) TUCSON, ARIZONA**



July 20 - July 25, 2010

TUESDAY – JULY 20TH

3:00pm Hospitality Rooms Available
3:00pm-6:00pm Early Bird Registration open

WEDNESDAY – JULY 21ST

9:00am-12:00pm Reunion Registration open
9:00am-4:30pm Memorabilia room & PX open Wed. thru Sat.
9:00am-2:30pm PIMA AIR MUSEUM & BONEYARD TOUR
1:00pm-5:00pm 8th AFHS Board Meeting
3:00pm-6:00pm Reunion Registration open

THURSDAY – JULY 22ND

8:00am-11:00am Reunion Registration open
8:00am-9:30am Group Board Meetings
9:00am-2:30pm PIMA AIR MUSEUM & BONEYARD TOUR
9:30am-2:30pm OLD TUCSON-LUNCH
3:30pm-4:30pm Group General meetings
3:00pm-6:00pm Reunion Registration open
3:15pm-4:30pm Unit Advisory and Chapter and Unit Development Meeting
5:30pm-6:30pm Cash Bar Reception
6:30pm-8:30pm Dinner & Entertainment

FRIDAY – JULY 23RD

7:00am-8:30am Full Buffet Breakfast
8:00am-11:00am Reunion Registration open
8:30am-2:30pm SONORA DESERT MUSEUM
9:00am-2:30pm PIMA AIR MUSEUM & BONEYARD TOUR
3:00pm-6:00pm Reunion Registration Open
3:30pm-5:00pm NextGen Meeting
5:30pm-6:30pm 8AFHS Cash Bar Reception
6:30pm-9:00pm Group Dinners

SATURDAY – JULY 24TH

7:00am-9:30am Full Buffet Breakfast
10:00am-11:30am General Membership Meeting
11:30am-1:00pm Reunion Registration Open
12:00pm-1:00pm Lunch on your own
1:30pm-4:00pm **Roger A. Freeman Memorial Symposium – “Valor in the Heavens”** – Combat Flying Over Fortress Europe - 1942-1945.
5:30pm-6:30pm 8AFHS Cash Bar Reception
6:30pm- 8AFHS Gala Banquet

SUNDAY – JULY 25TH

7:00am-9:30am Full Buffet Breakfast
9:30am-4:00pm 8th AFHS Annual Board Meeting

SUGGESTED TOURS TUCSON, JULY 20-25, 2010



PIMA AIR MUSEUM

We will begin our tour with a driving visit through the DMAFB "bone yard," home to more than 4000 "mothballed" military aircraft. This massive facility covers hundreds of acres and is often referred to as the world's third largest air force. We will meet our "ride along" tour guide just prior to this fascinating one hour tour.

The rest of our time will be spent at the world famous Pima Air Museum. Established in 1967, it is now ranked as the third largest aviation museum in the United States. View models, uniforms, insignias, a WWII mock-up airman's quarters. Dozens of aircraft are included in the Museum's inventory including a B-29 Superfortress, Douglas C-124 Globemaster, F-84 Thunderstreak, F-100 Super Sabre, Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird, John F. Kennedy's Boeing 707 "Air Force One," and a pristinely restored B-17G Flying Fortress and Consolidated B-24J Liberator.

An absolute "MUST SEE" venue at the Museum grounds is the amazing 390th Bomb Group Memorial Museum, located just across from the Administration Building. This is one of the finest individual Bomb Group museums in the world.

The 390th Museum houses a one of a kind collection of color 390th nose art pictures and several fascinating memorabilia items relating to the famed 390th Bomb Group. The Museum also has a special display area for the 95th Bomb Group (sister Group to the 390th BG in the 13th CBW). The highlight of the 390th facility is seeing their Boeing B-17G Flying Fortress, "*I'll Be Around*." This beautifully restored aircraft is simply stunning and will certainly be a memorable part of your visit.

Another fabulous display not to be missed is the memorabilia collection and historical display dedicated to the 446th Bomb Group in Hanger #3. This professional display is highlighted with their beautiful Consolidated B-24J Liberator, "*Bungay Buckaroo*."

For a nominal fee take advantage of the convenience of a tram ride throughout this outdoor museum after visiting the 390th BG Museum.

SONORA DESERT MUSEUM

The Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum was selected by the New York Times as one of the ten best zoos in the world and described as "probably the most distinctive zoo in the



United States.” Being a living museum it features animals, plants, and fish native to the Sonora Desert - a 120,000 square mile region of Arizona, the Mexican State of Sonora, and the Gulf of California. Enjoy lunch on your own at Ironwood Terrace. This is a fully narrated walking tour for groups of about 15.

Please wear comfortable shoes.

8:30am board bus, 2:30pm back at hotel

\$45/Person includes bus, guide, admission

OLD TUCSON

Spend the day in Hollywood; “Hollywood in the Desert” that is, the nickname for Old Tucson Studios. This 1860’s Old West Town was built up from the accumulation of movie sets and props which provide a unique background for family fun. Shops, restaurants, gunfights, and musical revues await guests daily, all surrounded by Sonoran Desert scenery. Upon arrival you will be given a meal coupon for lunch and a show schedule for that day. Enjoy a BBQ lunch at Big Jake’s at your leisure. Your show schedule will tell you when to start making your way to the Grand Palace Hotel and Saloon for a western show.

9:30am board bus, 2:30pm back at hotel

\$45/Person includes bus, guide, admission, and lunch.

Driver and guide gratuities are not included in the tour prices. Please plan to be at the bus boarding area at least five minutes prior to the scheduled departure time. All buses will leave on time!!

All trips require a minimum of thirty people, unless otherwise stated.

MEALS/TOUR SELECTIONS

CHOICE #1

TOTAL PACKAGE \$163

Package includes 6 hotel group meals starting with dinner and entertainment Thursday, Friday Group dinner, Saturday Banquet, and a full breakfast buffet Friday thru Sunday. Tours are separate.

CHOICE #2

PARTIAL PACKAGE \$128

Package includes 5 hotel group meals starting with full buffet breakfast Friday thru Sunday, Friday Group dinners, and the Saturday Banquet. Tours are separate.

Daily breakfast buffet includes bacon, eggs, sausage, potatoes, assorted juices and breads, cereal, fruit, yogurt, coffee and tea.

CHOICE #3

INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

Friday and Saturday dinners can be purchased separately. Thursday Rendezvous Dinner cost is \$35
Saturday Banquet cost is \$42

TOUR OPTIONS

Tours are described on the Reunion Highlights Pages. Driver and guide gratuities are not included in the tour prices.





8TH AFHS REUNION REGISTRATION FORM



Please complete the registration form below for all your attendees, make a copy of it for your records and return it along with your full payment in the form of check or money order payable to 8th AFHS (see address below).

Your cancelled check will be your confirmation.

You may also register online and pay by credit card at www.8thafhs.org, click on "2010 Reunion."

Registration forms and payment must be received by **July 1, 2010**, after which time reservations will be accepted on a space available basis only.

8TH AFHS • P.O. BOX 956 • POOLER, GA 31322

CUT-OFF DATE IS 7/1/10	Price Per	# of People	Total
<u>REGISTRATION FEE</u>			
Includes meeting expenses. Eaker Award expenses and other expenses.	\$45		\$
Reg. Fee for children ages 8-16 attending more than 1 function & staying at hotel	\$25		\$
<u>DUES</u>			
The principal attendee must be a member of the 8AFHS to register for this reunion. If you are not a member, please pay your yearly dues here.	\$30		\$
<u>MEAL PACKAGES</u>			
Choice #1 includes 6 hotel meals beginning with dinner on Thursday.	\$163		\$
Choice #2 includes 5 hotel meals beginning with breakfast on Friday	\$128		\$
Please select your entrée choice(s) for the Banquet			
London Broil		#	
Salmon		#	
<u>SEPARATELY PRICED MEALS (if not purchasing a package)</u>			
Friday: Rendezvous Dinner (chicken)	\$35		\$
Saturday: Banquet (please select your entrée)			
London Broil	\$42		\$
Salmon	\$42		\$
<u>TOURS</u>			
Wednesday: Pima Air Museum and Bone Yard	\$39		\$
Please choose one of the following two tours:			
Thursday: Old Town Tucson	\$45		\$
Thursday: Pima Air Museum and Bone Yard	\$39		\$
Please choose one of the following two tours:			
Friday: Sonora Desert Museum	\$45		\$
Friday: Pima Air Museum and Bone Yard	\$39		\$
Total Amount Payable to 8th AFHS			\$

Member Name (for nametag) _____ Veteran ☐ NextGen ☐ Other ☐

8AFHS Member# _____ WWII Group (for seating purposes) _____

You must be a member of the 8th AFHS in order to register. If you are not a member, please pay your dues above.

Spouse/Guest Names _____ NextGen ☐ Other ☐

Phone # (____) _____ - _____ Email Address _____ @ _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

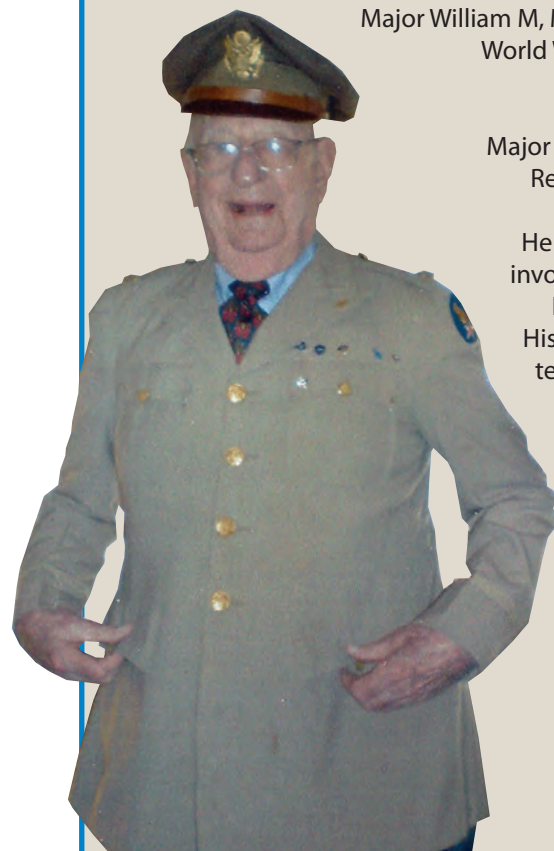
Disability/Dietary Restrictions _____

Must be lifted hydraulically onto the bus while seated in your wheelchair in order to participate in the bus trips? Yes ☐ No ☐

(Please note that we cannot guarantee availability)

Emergency Contact _____ Phone # (____) _____ - _____

Major "Jig" Miller's 93rd birthday



Major William M, Miller, better known as "Jig," recently celebrated his 93rd birthday by donning his World War II summer uniform. The front view is terrific, however from the rear, the seam has been cut to allow for "resizing" over the years.

Major William M. Miller was the lead Bombardier of the 96th BG on the historic Regensburg mission 17 August 1943. He flew 25 missions in the rough days of 1943 and returned to a Pentagon assignment.

He later transferred to 20th Bomber Command and was involved in the planning of the atomic bombing of Japan.

He also flew B-29 missions against Japanese targets. His story of their trip to North Africa where they were quarantined in French Foreign Legion barracks before returning to England is hilarious - everybody caught scabies. They had a very itchy trip back bombing French target enroute.

"Jig" was head of the International Banking Dept of a major Birmingham, Alabama bank before his retirement.

A snappy salute to "Jig" on his 93rd birthday.

**Submitted by, HAP CHANDLER
Sandy Springs, GA**



CHAPTER/UNIT/GROUP LIAISON REPORT



Greetings my fellow Mighty Eighth Air Force Historical Society members. It is hard to believe that summer is just around the bend and the Tucson Reunion

approaching in July quickly. I want to commend and thank the Chapters, Fighter & Bomb Groups that have been sending me your Newsletters which I post some of the contents on the Society's website under the Events tab. It is encouraging to read how many of the Chapters/Groups are moving forward and how they are accomplishing this endeavor. I find these to be of great significance to our survival.

I was in Portland Ore. recently and spent sometime with Tom Davis, past President, and Tom Philo, Secretary, Historian and webmaster of the Oregon Chapter website, www.8thafhsoregon.com. Tom also puts out the Chapter's outstanding "Milk Run" News Update. Amongst our conversation was membership and ideas of how to promote it. The N.Y. Southern Wing Chapter held its Luncheon/Meeting on April 17 at the 56th FG Restaurant.

An election was held and a new President was elected replacing Gus Nathan. I was elected President. For further info on the luncheon check Chapter News.

Last edition I posted an inquiry from Ramstein AFB in Germany regarding the 406th BS NLS (Night Leaflet Squadron). I did receive a letter from Walt Longanecker, Jr. Major General USAF retired, thank you Walt, stating he was in the 406th BS and would like

to hear from the person with the injury from Ramstein, AFB. I did not have his contact info but he does read this magazine.

Please take a moment and either mail or email me your current Chapter/Unit/BG contact information or if the organization has been disbanded so I have an updated listing for our database. A current listing can be accessed either by contacting Catherine Rice at the National Office or on the Society's website under the 'About Us' - 'Contacts' tab. We need to pull together so we can continue to move forward. If you have any comments or ideas 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**

The Luck of “Miss Irish”

The Miraculous Story of the Second Lt. John P. Gibbons Crew - March 19, 1944

By Mark S. Copeland

In February of 1944, the Second Lt. John P. Gibbons Crew reported for duty at Thorpe Abbots, England, home of the 100th Bomb Group. Joining the 350th Bomb Squadron, 1st Pilot John Gibbons flew his first mission on February 25, 1944 as co-pilot with the Launtenschlager Crew, while the rest of his crew stood down. Target: Regensburg, Germany. It was Gibbons' 'baptism of fire' and his introduction to war. In the following days, the Gibbons Crew would be involved in some of the most costly raids for the 100th Bomb Group and the Eighth Air Force. This is the story of the crew of “Miss Irish”.



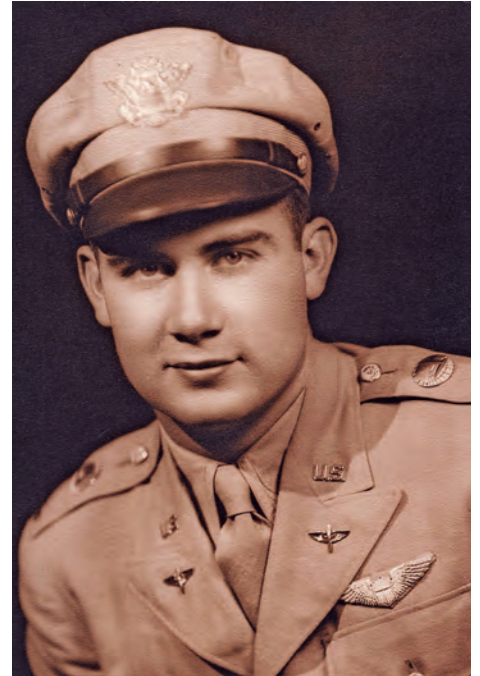
The Gibbons Crew – Kneeling L-R – Sgt Edward Walker, Jr. (ROG) KIA 3/19/1944, Sgt. Bernard “Bernie” L. Spragg (BTG), Sgt. Archie W. “Bugs” Bunting (TG), Sgt. Frank W. Buschmeier (LWG). Standing L-R Sgt. Ira Arnold (TTG / FE), 2nd Lt. John P. Gibbons (P), 2nd Lt. Robert Dykeman (CP), 2nd Lt. Sterling Blakeman (B), 2nd Lt. Everett Max Johnson (N), Sgt. Myron J. “Ty” Ettus (WG).

The Gibbons Crew was assigned to Boeing B-17G Flying Fortress; 42-31968, LN-D, affectionately named “Miss Irish,” in honor of crew chief, Sergeant Chandler's girlfriend.

Second Lt. John P. Gibbons hailed from St. Marys, Kansas. He was an excellent pilot and his crew completely trusted his flying abilities. His co-pilot was Second Lt. Robert Dykeman of Canoga Park, California. Second Lt. Sterling “Red” Blakeman from Pelebata, New York was the crew's bombardier. Blakeman's father was a dentist back in New York. His grandfather was an artist

and actually instructed the great American painter, Norman Rockwell, early in his career. The navigator position was occupied by Second Lt. Edward Max Johnson, nicknamed “E-Max” by the crew. Johnson was a small town, Midwestern boy from Iowa Falls, Iowa.

Sgt. Ira Arnold was a strapping 6' 3" young man from Devine, Texas. Arnold manned the top turret and was also the Flight Engineer. In the radio room was Sgt. Edward Walker, Jr. Walker was 20 years old and was newly married. His wife Lucille was expecting the couple's first child back in the United



John P. Gibbons. Shown here in his post-war Air Transport Command uniform, Gibbons became a legend in the 100th Bomb Group, flying an astonishing 49 total missions through his two tours of duty.

States. Sgt. Bernard “Bernie” Spragg, from Pennsylvania, manned the ball turret on “Miss Irish.” In the waist gun positions were Sgt. Myron “Ty” Ettus from New York and Sgt. Frank Buschmeier of Ohio. Sgt. Archie W. “Bugs” Bunting from Texas was assigned as the crew's tail gunner.

The complete crew of “Miss Irish” flew their first mission, on March 3, 1944. For months, Eighth Air Force Bomber Command desperately wanted to plan a “first strike” on the German capital of Berlin. March 3rd was selected as the date



The Enlisted Crew of "Miss Irish" – Kneeling L-R - Sgt. Bernard "Bernie" L. Spragg (BTG) / Sgt. Archie "Bugs" Bunting (TG) / Sgt. Frank W. Buschmeier (LWG). Standing L-R – Sgt. Ira L. Arnold (TTG/FE) / Sgt. Myron J. Ettus (RWG) / Sgt. Edward Walker, Jr. (ROG).

for this monumental and historic mission; however, upon reaching the European continent, the bomber force encountered poor weather conditions and target obscuration. The mission was recalled. All aircraft were ordered to return to their respective bases in England and the crews were not credited for the mission.

The following day, March 4, 1944, Berlin was once again selected as the primary target for the Eighth Air Force. Once again, due to deteriorating weather conditions the mission was recalled. However, the 95th Bomb Group and the 350th Bomb Squadron from the 100th Bomb Group and one pathfinder aircraft from the 482nd Bomb Group pressed on and successfully bombed the German capital for the first time. The Gibbons Crew was part of the striking force and was officially credited for the mission.

On March 6, 1944, two days later, the Eighth Air Force once again targeted Berlin. Now, with an adequate striking force and favorable weather, Berlin was attacked. Unfortunately, the cost

to the Eighth Air Force on that day was catastrophic: 69 heavy bombers and 14 fighters were lost on the mission, resulting in the worst one-day loss of the entire war. For the 100th Bomb Group, March 6th 1944 was devastating as well, with the loss of 15 of their Flying Fortresses.

Mercifully, the 100th Bomb Group stood down because of weather on March 7th, but once again hit Berlin on March 8th. For the rookie crew of "Miss Irish," it was their third trip to Berlin in less than a week. In a recent interview, 1st Pilot John Gibbons stated, "No other crew had received that kind of indoctrination."

The events of that costly period introduced the crew of "Miss Irish" to the savagery of the aerial campaign over Fortress Europe.

What they had witnessed thus far, would pale in comparison to what occurred on their next mission on March 19, 1944. It would be a day they would never forget.

The Third Air Division, which included the 100th Bomb Group, was given the

mission of striking the "No-Ball" targets (V-weapons launching sites) around the Marquis-Mimoyecques area on the French coast. The crews were briefed to expect heavy flak around the target area; however, they were only going to be over enemy territory for 18 minutes. In the eyes of the crews that flew that day, it was going to be a "milk run."

The Gibbons Crew once again boarded "Miss Irish" and took off from their base at Thorpe Abbots. As the 100th Bomb Group approached the French coast and established their course on the I.P. (Initial Point), the very experienced German flak gunners opened up on the formation. John Gibbons remembers, "We were at about 21,000 ft. on the bomb run when they started shooting at us." Sgt. Frank Buschmeier, the left waist gunner on "Miss Irish" recalls, "There was a burst that exploded in front of us, then another one in back of us and I thought to myself, the next one is going to hit us dead center." Frank Buschmeier was unfortunately right.



Radio Operator / Gunner – Staff Sgt. Edward Walker Jr. – Killed in Action – March 19, 1944.

Suddenly, a direct hit of German 88mm flak shell scored a direct hit and ripped through the radio room of “Miss Irish.” Frank Buschmeier recalls the horror, “I was sitting on an ammo box, like I normally did, when all of a sudden there was a terrific blast. The plane lurched upward and it completely blew out the bulkhead between the radio room and the

tail section.” The force of the blast was so great the bulkhead door blew off its hinges and landed between Frank Buschmeier’s legs!

“It blew the whole radio room apart! The floor was gone, the whole right side was gone,” Buschmeier vividly recalls. “Miss Irish” had taken a devastating hit that should have completely destroyed the airplane, but it kept flying.

Frank Buschmeier remembers, “I saw Walker (Radio Operator) slumped over his desk. He looked like he had been hit by three or four shotgun blasts. I was sure he was dead. I always wore my parachute harness, but never my chest chute because it interfered with firing my gun (waist), and I instinctively turned around to get it. By the time I turned around, Walker was gone.”

The lifeless body of Sgt. Walker had helplessly fallen out of the gaping 7’ x 12’ hole in the fuselage of “Miss Irish.” He was gone.

On the flight deck, Gibbons called over the interphone for a damage assessment. Buschmeier answered back, “The radio room is gone, sir.” Gibbons sent Flight Engineer Sgt. Ira Arnold to investigate the damage.

Lt. Gibbons knew he couldn’t stay with the formation. The airplane was vibrating badly and he had to reduce his

airspeed or the aircraft would surely break in two. The blast severed the control cables to the elevators and the rudder. Gibbons had no vertical control of the airplane. He pulled back on the power, dropped out of formation, and started to “mush” the airplane down to 10,000 feet because the oxygen system had been knocked out.

Down in the ball turret, the side windows were smashed and the front window gone; but, miraculously, the crew got Bernie Spragg out, visibly shaken but alive. Instinctively and without any provocation from the flight deck, Frank Buschmeier, “Ty” Ettus and “Bernie” Spragg did the best they could to splice the control cables back together. They knew it was vital to their survival to get the cables back in operation. Soon, Gibbons felt the controls respond. Their gallant efforts saved the ship.

There were more problems for the “Miss Irish” crew. Second Lt. “Red” Blakemann had already released the bombs, but there were still two bombs still hanging in the bomb bay. Blakemann and Arnold were tasked with releasing them. They had to get the two 500 lb. explosives out of the ship. It would be far too dangerous to attempt to ditch in the Channel or land the airplane with any bombs aboard. After several attempts, they finally got the

<p>CLASS OF SERVICE</p> <p>This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.</p>	<h1 style="margin: 0;">WESTERN UNION</h1> <p style="font-size: 0.8em;">1204 36 Govt</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">R. B. WHITE NEWCOMB CARLTON J. C. WILLEVER PRESIDENT CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT</p>	<p>SYMBOLS</p> <p>DL=Day Letter</p> <p>NT=Overnight Telegram</p> <p>LC=Deferred Cable</p> <p>NLT=Cable Night Letter</p> <p>Ship Radiogram</p>
<p><small>The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination</small></p>		
<p>Washington, D.C. 208PM 4th</p> <p>Ed Walker,</p> <p style="padding-left: 100px;">Clayton, Okla.</p> <p style="margin-top: 20px;">The secretary of war desires me to express his deep regrets that your son Staff Sergeant Edward Walker Jr was killed in action in defense of his country nineteenth March over France. Letter follows.</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">Dunlop Acting The Adjutant General.</p> <p style="text-align: right; margin-top: 10px;">155p</p>		
<p>A copy of the Western Union telegram that was sent to family of Sgt. Edward Walker Jr. – killed in action</p>		

bombs to fall off their shackles into the sea.

Gibbons turned the airplane westward and ordered the crew to lighten up the airplane by throwing everything they could out of the crippled Fortress.

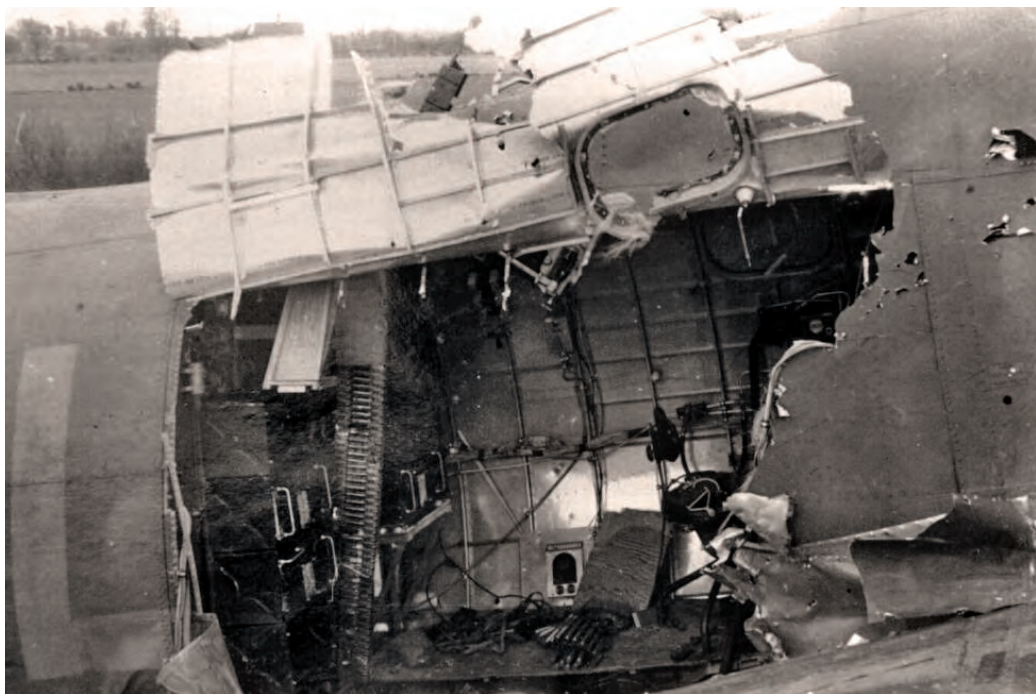
As the crew began to throw out their weapons and ammunition, Sgt. Arnold, the Top Turret Gunner / Flight Engineer, accidentally caught his ripcord which deployed his parachute. The silk billowed out of the aircraft and hung itself on the jagged metal skin of the fuselage. Arnold miraculously released himself from his chest chute as it blossomed in the slip stream. The chute was causing an unnecessary drag on the crippled bomber. Ball turret gunner "Bernie" Spragg instinctively reached out the waist window and gathered the chute. For the rest of the journey, Spragg and Buschmeier took turns holding the flapping parachute against the side of the fuselage.

Sgt. Arnold was now in a sheer state of panic. He had lost his parachute and his chance to safely bail out. To calm down the frightened airman, Gibbons reached down behind his seat and gave Sgt. Arnold his own chute.

With only one bulkhead holding the airplane together, "*Miss Irish*" limped closer to the English coastline. Besides the 7' x 12' hole in the side of her fuselage, the aircraft had sustained an additional 450 holes. Gibbons recalls, "I guess we were half way across the Channel and I turned to my co-pilot Bob Dykeman and told him to take over. I wanted to go back and look at the damage." Frank Buschmeier remembers, "He (Gibbons) came back on the catwalk through the bomb bay and his eyes got awfully big!"

Gibbons couldn't believe what he was looking at. He recalls seeing the damage for the first time, "I looked out that hole and I looked down at the at that ocean. Being from St Marys, Kansas, I couldn't swim. I could only dog paddle and there was no reason that I was going let that airplane go in the water, because I knew I couldn't dog paddle all the way to the white cliffs of Dover!"

Gibbons returned to the flight deck and called "E-Max" (Edward Johnson), the navigator to ask him how far they were from the 100th Bomb Group base at Thorpe Abbots. "About 15 minutes, sir," Johnson responded. At that point, Gibbons made the decision to go to the



Another sobering view of the crippling damage that "Miss Irish" suffered on March 19, 1944.

first field he could find.

As soon as they reached the coastline, Gibbons ordered the crew to bail out, but the crew refused to jump.

Gibbons soon saw an airfield. It was Raydon, home of the 353rd Fighter Group. John Gibbons recalls, "I didn't want to take the risk and selected to go

to Raydon. I was confident it would stay in the air, the thing I wasn't sure of was would it hold together if I screwed up the landing." Gibbons knew that he had to make a perfect landing. He continues, "A 'power landing' was our only chance. I flew it about 20 kts. higher than normal landing speed and kept the tail high."

Close up photo of the battle damage to "Miss Irish." Radio Operator / Gunner Staff Sgt. Edward Walker Jr. was killed instantly by the direct hit of the German 88mm flak shell.



Frank Buschmeier remembers, "We had the utmost faith in him. I don't think there was anyone than could fly a B-17 better than John. Nothing rattled him."

Gibbons carefully lined up "Miss Irish" on final approach and gently nursed the Fortress toward the runway. Frank Buschmeier joyfully recalls, "It was a fantastic landing! I didn't even know we were on the ground! We floated down like we were on an oil bath!" Gibbons had made a perfect landing.

As "Miss Irish" rolled to a stop on the runway, the crew quickly jumped out in case of a fire. Once it was deemed safe to return, a large crowd gathered in amazement. "No one could believe it. They couldn't understand how the airplane stayed in the air. If this is what "milk runs" are like, I'd rather go back to Berlin again," recalled Frank Buschmeier.

"Miss Irish" never flew again.

The Gibbons Crew was taken to a room where they all spent the night together. John Gibbons recalls, "The base Flight Surgeon came to our room with a couple bottles of booze. I didn't drink and I told him that we didn't need that. He answered 'you will by the morning.' I was somewhat of a prohibitionist from Kansas; if it was whiskey, I didn't drink it, but I learned pretty rapidly. By the morning the two bottles had disappeared."

100th Bomb Group Commanding Officer, Lt. Colonel John M. Bennet, Jr., recognized the Gibbons Crew with a special commendation. It stated, "Probably few bomber pilots and crews have had such an epic introduction into battle, and your courage, resolution and effectiveness in the circumstances certainly warrant the highest praise."

Was it pure luck that saved the crew of "Miss Irish" that day? Perhaps luck had much to do with their survival. One variable was quite certain. The crew of "Miss Irish" would not have made it back if it wasn't for their faith in one another's abilities as a crew and the subsequent teamwork and resourcefulness they displayed. They also survived because of the skilled leadership, the undaunted courage, and

the superb airmanship of their pilot, John P. Gibbons.

The Gibbons Crew got a new airplane and continued to fly missions. John Gibbons completed his tour and returned to the United States. Most of the members of "Miss Irish" were assigned as a "pick up" crew on July 29, 1944. On their 34th mission that day, they were shot down over Merseburg, Germany.

Sgt. Buschmeier and Sgt. Spragg were captured and remained as Prisoners of War for the remainder of the war. 2nd Lt. Robert Dykeman and Sgt. Ira Arnold were captured by German civilians and promptly hanged. Twenty year-old Radio Operator/Gunner Sgt. Edward Walker Jr., who perished on the March 19th mission, never met his daughter, Sherrill Jean, who was born a few months later. His body was never found.

For pilot John P. Gibbons, March

19, 1944 was his sixth mission. Gibbons returned to England and signed up for a second tour. He finished the war having completed an incredible and unbelievable, 49 missions.

This article is dedicated to the memory of "Miss Irish" crew members, 2nd Lt. Robert Dykeman, Sgt. Ira Arnold and Sgt. Edward Walker, Jr. who never made it home; and to the memory of Elaine Buschmeier, wife of "Miss Irish" Waist Gunner Frank Buschmeier, who passed away on her 87th birthday, May 30, 2010. God bless you Elaine.

This author wishes to thank Michael P. Faley (100th Bomb Group Photo Archivist), John Gibbons, Myron "Ty" Ettus, Frank Buschmeier and their respective families for their assistance in writing this article.

The only known photograph of the nose art of "Miss Irish."



WHO IS THIS ENLISTED MAN?

I flew combat with the 486th B.G. in B-24s and in the later part of July 1944 the 493rd had suffered heavy losses so there were five crews from the 486th that were sent over to the 493rd to fly as lead crews. After completing my tour there I was sent down to London to the 27th Air Transport Group. There I flew liaison from a small field called Heston which was in the west part of London. In September after Paris was back in Allied hands, I was sent to Toussus Le Noble France a small airfield near Versailles to fly Air Taxi for vips from Gen Eisenhower and Gen Spaatz's Hqs. At this Field which we had bombed on 11 Aug 1944 was a badly damaged Hangar with a B-17 from the 100th BG. It looked like the Germans were restoring it and at the time when we bombed it they must have had the B-17 almost ready to fly as only one engine lacked a propellor and they had a crate laying there beside it with a brand new Hamilton Hydromatic prop in it. I took this picture, with unknown enlisted man in picture. I would like to find out who is in this picture?

Stanley L. Loftsgard.
b24stan@embarqmail.com

MYRTLE THE FERTILE TURTLE

I am a member and would like to know if I can get a copy of mission report of March 18, 1944 for my 93BG flight to Friedrichshaven, Germany. Is it possible to discover the final fate of my original B-24 Liberator named *Myrtle The Fertile Turtle*?

Kenneth R. Carlson
204 Bayview Street
Camden, Maine 04843
KCarlEagle@aol.com

MARCH PUBLICATION

I am a member of the 36th Bomb Squadron and was one of the men honored by the English at the Memorial Services for the men who died from the 36th Bomb Squadron during World War II and in particular the men who died from our crew



on the night of November 15th 1944. I was the Tailgunner on the plane. I can not tell you how gracious the English were to us. The Memorial was placed and held on the site of the farm (Fords End farm) where our plane crashed, 65 years ago, as we were on a mission to jam the German tanks and communications leading up to the Battle of the Bulge.

I am also a member of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the 8th AFHS.

George Eberwine
2231 Oakwyn Rd.
Lafayette Hill, PA. 19444

36TH SQUADRON CEREMONY

Hello Donna Neely, I've seen the latest copy of the March issue of the 8th AF News and pages 26 & 27 honoring the Gremlins of the 36th. It looks terrific! How very special and meaningful! The memorial is something we can always be proud as it is now a permanent part of the local British history. Chas Jellis and I along with squadron pilot Norman Landberg, his gunners George Eberwine and Lester Jones of the crew could not be more grateful. Thank you for your efforts.

Further on down the road it is my hope to put together one final memorial to remember those of Lt. Louis McCarthy's crew of the *Beast of Bourbon* who sacrificed their lives for

our freedom. I shall keep you posted on that one.

Allow me once again to also express my great appreciation for what you have done.

Most sincerely,
Stephen Hutton
8th Air Force Historical Society
Unit Contact 36th Bomb Squadron
Radar Counter Measure Unit
Author - Squadron of Deception

Editor's Note: It was an honor and pleasure to share your story Stephen. Your group did a great service to the men of the 36th Bomb Squadron! God Bless all your efforts sir!!

MISSION REGENSBURG

I am Frank Bernd (many years a member). First of all, the March publication was as usual, fantastic. As a Bombardier with the 457th HBG the outside back cover is frameable in my eyes. Do you know if any prints are available of the original picture? If not, could I get a copy of the last page you sent out last month? The back page of my March 2010 came damaged by the post office. Thank you both and your staff for producing a great product.

Frank Bernd
Ed Note: This painting is reproduced in Gil Cohen's new book: Gil Cohen, Aviation Artist. Published by the Boston Mills Press it is available from Firefly Books Inc., PO Box 1338, Ellicott Station, Buffalo NY 14025 tel # 416-499-8412 www.firefly-books.com



Mission Regensburg (March 2010 Back Cover)
Aviation Artist Gil Cohen

MAIL CALL



Rosie's Crew/Thorpe Abbotts, 1943
Aviation Artist Gil Cohen

"ROSIE'S CREW" PRINT, THORPE ABBOTTS, 1943

Jerry Ritter in Oregon suggested you might be able to help with the request I sent to him: My brother was a B-17 pilot out of Thorpe Abbotts on the infamous Munster raid on October 10, 1943. He did not return. I have been looking for a not-too-expensive Gil Cohen 30x21 print, "Rosie's Crew, Thorpe Abbotts, 1943", but haven't been able to secure one. Is there any way to make known to your membership that I would like to buy one, if it might be available? Also, that print is on the cover of a past 8th AF News magazine, apparently in June, but I cannot read the year from the web site. I would also be interested in buying a copy of that magazine. Any suggestions you might have would be appreciated.

Thanks.

Bern Beatty (Col., USAF, Ret.)

(brother of 2nd Lt. Maurice Beatty)
Bern.Beatty@mba.wfu.edu

Ed Note: Prints of Mission Regensburg and Rosie's Crew / Thorpe Abbotts are sold out. However, a special giclee edition of Rosie's Crew /Thorpe Abbotts printed on canvas with a larger dimensional size along with an original pencil drawing of his B-17, Rosie's Riveters is still available. For more information, contact Gil Cohen at gilcoat@verizon.net

EDDIE SIMPSON "THE FLYING PANTHER"

Your mailing arrived today. The story on Eddie is great. I will share his article with the Epinal cemetery. Good job!! Truly the last sentence in the article captures Eddie's spirit. No greater love hath a man than to lay down his life for his friends. This was wonderfully done.

Captain Jeffery W. Clemens
Chaplin

Editor's Note: Captain Jeffery Clemens is U.S. Army Chaplin. While Captain Clemens was stationed in Afghanistan, he made a trip to Epinal, France to visit the grave of Captain Edward Simpson.

Every Memorial Day and Veterans Day, Captain Clemens has flowers placed on Eddie Simpson's grave. This is a photo of Chaplin Clemens kneeling at Simpson's grave at Epinal, France.

A TRIP IN THE PAST

Dear Sir,

Receiving the "8th Air Force News" is like taking a trip into



Captain Jeffery W. Clemens
visits the gravesite of Captain Edward Simpson.

the past.

My husband and I are greatly interested in Planes. He served in the Navy during World War II. However, he spent all of his service years working on planes, in San Diego, California. We often watch programs on the Military and History Channels and I am then treated to a precise description of the functions and wonders of the great planes!

My own interest in planes developed along different lines. In 1939, I arrived in England as a 17 year-old refugee from Nazi oppression. I never saw my family again. In 1941, I joined the "Auxiliary Territorial Service," (British Army) and was posted to Bury St. Edmunds in East Anglia, right in the midst of the sprouting U.S. Air Bases there. Daily, we watched the skies darken as the Fortresses roared overhead, bound for missions over the Continent.

It was a long and bitter struggle, but in the end the Allies prevailed. Shortly after the end of the War, I briefly returned to Vienna, my old hometown. I crossed a continent in shambles, with displaced persons everywhere. I stood in front of the house where I was born and grew up. But everyone in it was gone.

We all owe so much to the grave young men who saved the World. My husband and I wish you much success in the very important work you are doing.

Sincerely, **Frances Nunnally**

Thank you for your kind and positive comments Frances. It is greatly appreciated! Thanks for being a member!



Major Leonard K. "Kit" Carson (L) and Captain "Eddie" Simpson (R) in front of the "Flying Panther."

WWII 8th AIR FORCE STARBUCKS?

Senior Master Sergeant Walter V. Kane (ret.) sent us an interesting photograph of a group of ground crewman lining up for a hot cup of coffee at Halesworth, England. Walter served with the 489th Bomb Group as part of the ground crew. I am sure that Caffè Lattes or Espresso Macchiatos were not on the menu back in 1944!!

Walter V. Kane 489th BG



Starbucks anyone? - Halesworth, England

WHAT VILLAGE WAS THIS?

Hear it is the year 2010 and something is bothering me as it has for the last 64 years. I was the ball turret gunner on Robert Parnell's crew number 5383. We had been flying our required number of bombing missions into Germany and on December 19th, 1944 we were briefed to bomb the railroad marshaling yards at Kall. We took off that morning in normal weather (for England), but the weather that moved in was so bad at our home base of Polebrook that all three squadrons of the 351st Bomb Group that flew that day were diverted to a deserted paratroop base near the city of Bath. We were so socked in that we camped there for four days. We then took as a group, so that we could load and prepare for another mission where we were desperately needed to help our beleaguered ground armies at the battle of Ardennes (Bulge). Again, the foul weather prevented us from reaching Polebrook but we were able to get to another American air base. We stayed there overnight and slept in our planes as the ground crews toiled through the night to load our thirty-six bombers with bombs, gasoline and all the rest of our needs to get us ready for take-off the next morning. On December 24th the home group

of at least 48 B-17's plus our 36 and some from other groups all took off to bomb everything the enemy could use to get supplies through.

Our three squadrons each had separate targets but all three squadrons flew over all three targets. One target was an enemy airfield but, the 508th Bomb Squadron target was a village built around the intersection of the railroad and the autobahn. We were flying at 9,000 feet on this bright cloudless day so from my position in the ball turret, I could see clearly even the individual houses. I'm sure that up to this time, the war had left that town untouched.

Normally when hitting a heavily defended target, as soon as all had bombs away, the whole group would bank sharply to get out of the ground fire as soon as possible. On this day the whole three squadrons flew straight ahead for the next target. As a result, I was almost directly above when our bombs hit that intersection with the village around it. I watched as that whole town was turned into a boiling cloud of yellow dust by our 48 tons of high explosives.

Time after time we heaped more explosives with greater destruction upon greater cities but visibility from 30,000 feet and through clouds, battle smoke and contrails I could see little detail. But what happened on that December 24, 1944 was such a vivid, stark scene that burned into my brain like a hot iron. For the next fifty years, I watched those houses turn into yellow dust many times each day and each night. Even sixty four years later, I can see that picture so vividly that I can almost count the houses.

At the conclusion of my combat tour of 35 missions we were each given a list of our missions, the targets and the dates. My list shows an airfield at Biblis, Germany. All that information is available on the internet that also gives the target for all three squadrons as that airfield. Even to this day, I would like to know the name of that village that I witnessed disappear into a cloud of yellow dust.

Sam Wyrouck, 351st BG 134 Grouse Dr., Hurricane, UT 84737

LT. GENERAL A.P. CLARK

It is with profound sadness that I note the passing of Lt. General A.P. Clark. I had hoped he would not only see the return of the remains of his friend and fellow POW, Lt. Ewart Sconiers, from Poland, but also would live to see the article I wrote about him and Lt. Sconiers that was published in the last issue of the Air Force News. We had talked on the phone about the article not long before the good general passed away. There was never a time I called him when he did not ask about the progress of the investigation into Sconiers' case. He was gleeful at the prospect of the return of Sconiers after over six decades. We had hoped that Gen. Clark would be there to welcome home his friend and give one last salute to a man he held in such high esteem. But tired wings do fold, and at age 96, General Clark could hold on no longer. As mentioned in the article, it was my desire to meet with Gen. Clark one more time and tell him the man he had buried so many years ago was finally coming home. That was not to be. But on the day the remains do come home, I feel in my heart that Gen. Clark will know.

I am reminded as I reflect on Gen. Clark's death of the passage in his wonderful book in which he describes his homecoming after the war. After 33 months as a POW, he finally made it home to Texas, and he joyfully ran through the lawn sprinkler to fall into the welcoming arms of his beloved wife, Carolyn, whom he had not seen for years. Carolyn preceded him in death, and it is that same visual image from the book and that welcoming home that gives me some peace at his death now. A true hero has left us, a good friend, a man of tremendous integrity and of remarkable leadership. I know that he got my father through the POW experience and for that I will be eternally grateful.

Marilyn Walton
Columbus, OH



**Lt. General
A.P. Clark**

COL WILLIAM E. EISENHART RETIRED AIR FORCE PILOT FLIES AGAIN!

Sixty-seven years after Bill Eisenhart flew his seventh combat bombing mission over Schweinfurt, Germany in the fall of 1943, he had the opportunity on his 90th birthday, this past January 25th, 2010, to fly again; just not a B-17 this time.

Bill Eisenhart flew a total of 84 missions in his nearly 35 year career as an Air Force pilot, including WWII and Vietnam. His last mission in WWII was on April 17th, 1945; his last mission was flown in Vietnam on April 2nd, 1973. He retired in 1977 with his wife, Mary, to St. Petersburg, Florida. But, he continued to fly, never wanting to give up his high-flying days. He and Mary owned a Piper 180, with several local business friends, and the two of them took off for place of fun and visiting family and friends here, there and just about everywhere as often as they could. They had a grand old time. In 1984 they sold their share in the plane and Bill settled to staying on the ground. Life moved on and a new sport took over; golf.



Mary passed in 2006 after over 61 years of marriage, leaving Bill alone and unsure of his future. In 2007 he remarried a woman that had been in the periphery of their family gatherings for years. One day last summer, Bill said longingly to Penny, his new bride, "Gee, I'd love to fly an airplane one more time." He said this just as a small boy would longingly look forward to having his first choo-choo train. Penny had an idea; it took over seven months to put it all together, but on Bill's 90th birthday, he got to fly a plane - yes, in the left seat - again, with nearly 60 people cheering him on!

Colonel Eisenhart flew with the 303rd Bomb Group at Molesworth, England. From all your friends in the 303rd Bomb Group Association and the Eighth Air Force Historical Society we want to wish you all the best on your 90th birthday!! Good for you Bill!!!

– Form may be reproduced –



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B-17 Flight Ignites WW II Memories

By Susan Gordanier The Hillsboro Argus June 16, 2009

For most, a B-17 is an historic curiosity, a popular attraction at airshows.



Allen Chapin is one of the few remaining who have a direct connection to the Flying Fortresses of World War II. Thanks to the Collings Foundation, Chapin had the opportunity to fly once again in a B-17, this time the relatively short - and safe - flight from Corvallis to Hillsboro's airport.

Chapin had been copilot in the 10-man crew of another B-17, but that one's final flight ended much differently. Ann Lukacs, a Colorado woman whose late uncle had been navigator on the same crew, had contacted Chapin while researching family history. Chapin, along with Joe Walters, his former ball turret gunner who now lives in Florida, are the only surviving crewman. Lukacs contacted the Collings Foundation and arranged Friday's flight.

Chapin had served with the 535th Squadron. In August 1943, they took off from their base in Ridgewell, England, to participate in the bombing of a ball-bearing factory in Schweinfurt, Germany. "Everything had to have ball-bearings," Chapin said, "so knocking it out would slow the war down."

The mission, though successful, resulted in the loss of Chapin's B-17. One of its four engines had been shot out by a German attack during the eastbound flight. Headed back, the squadron was attacked again, and the plane lost two more, Chapin recalled. With three engines on fire, the crew bailed out at an altitude of 20,000 feet, parachuting into Belgium just beyond the German border.

After landing in a farmer's field, they made contact with Resistance members. If ever trapped behind enemy lines, troops had been taught to remove anything that might identify them as American, Chapin said. Someone took his flight jacket, bars and the class ring he had earned for graduating from flight school. Incredibly, the ring came back to him, years later after the war's end. Someone in Belgium contacted the Pentagon searching for the name engraved within.

From Belgium, all of Chapin's crewmates tried to make their way through France and over the Pyrenees to Spain and then back to England. Although four, including Joe Walters, successfully evaded the Germans, Chapin himself was captured in Paris where he was imprisoned before being taken to Stalag Luft III, the prison camp that was the site of events



portrayed in the movie "The Great Escape."

Chapin testifies to the truth of that tale. "We were always digging tunnels," he said, though he credits the British for being more technologically innovative, putting together radios and communications devices.

In January 1945, the Germans "marched us out of there," Chapin said. After two weeks, in blizzard conditions, they were taken by train to Moosberg, in Bavaria. There the war ended for Chapin when "Gen. Patton came and shot the lock off the door on April 28, 1945," he said.

"One thing I learned during that experience was patience," Chapin said.

After the war, Chapin attended college under the GI Bill, but was called back to active duty with the Air Force in 1948. "I thought I might as well stay my 20 years," he said. He retired as a lieutenant colonel on Jan. 1, 1966.

Chapin worked for the State of Oregon as a management analyst, moved to Arizona and returned to Oregon where he served as chair of the board for the Eastern Oregon Chapter of the American Red Cross before moving to Hillsboro, where he now resides in the Rock Creek Retirement Residence. "I wanted to pay them back because the American and International Red Cross made sure we got food parcels in prisoner of war camp," he said.

Hunter Chaney, marketing director for the Collings Foundation, said the purpose of his organization's touring restored planes is to honor veterans such as Chapin, who always are admitted for free. "We're losing these fellows very quickly," he said of the aging war survivors. "In just a few years, the 'Greatest Generation' will be gone and a large part of our living history as well."

Submitted by, Andy Kopetzky & Ann Lukacs

Editor's Note: Many of you will remember our friend Al Chapin as a regular attendee at our annual reunions. Al has been a staunch supporter of the 8th AFHS for many years. We are glad to see you are doing well Al!

65TH ANNIVERSARY of V-E DAY

MEMORIES FROM MEMBERS OF THE "MIGHTY EIGHTH"

The following articles were published in the Washington D.C. – National Capital Chapter Newsletter. They have graciously given us permission to reproduce them for this V-E Day tribute article.

- May 8th, 2010 will mark the 65th Anniversary of V-E Day (Victory in Europe Day), the official end of World War II in Europe.
- The United States Army Air Corps – Eighth Air Force flew its first mission on August 17, 1942 when the 97th Bomb Group flew from Grafton Underwood with twelve Boeing B-17E Flying Fortresses attacked targets at Rouen, France.
- The air war over Fortress Europe lasted for over 33 months for the "Mighty Eighth," the largest air force ever committed to battle.
- The last bombs to be dropped on German targets in World War II by the Eighth Air Force happened on April 25, 1945. The First Air Division targeted Pilsen and the Second Air Division targeted rail yards in and around the Salzburg, Bad Reichenhall area. At 11:16am the last bomb was dropped by the 384th Bomb Group (H).
- We would like to commemorate the 65th anniversary of V-E Day by publishing some of the stories and memories of those who were there on the important day.
- Lastly, we would like to re-publish an article by the late Roger A. Freeman that summed up the accomplishments and the costs to win the ultimate victory.
- In a tribute to our friend Roger, this was the last article he contributed to the 8th Air Force News before he passed away on October 7, 2005.

Alexander F. "Stormy" Sadowski
Weather Officer – 56th Fighter Group
Boxted, England

The day before V-E Day, the 56th Fighter Group was told there would be

no missions on V-E Day. That meant I could sleep late. In my three years in the ETO, almost every day I was up at 3:00 A.M. to determine the weather over the routes of the planned missions over the Continent. Pilots were briefed about 5:00 A.M. for take off at 6:00 A.M. With the announced "no missions" for the 56th Fighter Group, I slept until 6:00 A.M. and enjoyed breakfast at 7:00 A.M. in the Officer's Mess. It was a treat!

V-E Day was a memorable event. In the morning, a B-17 landed at Atcham. It was loaded with cases of champagne from France. Each officer was given a bottle of champagne. At that time, I did not drink alcoholic beverages. However, because it was the great occasion of the end of the War in the European Theater, I drank the champagne. It went down easily with no apparent effect at first. I do not remember how much of the bottle I drank while celebrating in the Officer's Club.

Champagne is deceptive. When I drank it, I felt no unusual sensation. However, later that afternoon, the champagne hit me. I had a splitting headache that afternoon and evening and into the next morning. I really celebrated V-E Day. For years after that - as before V-E Day - I didn't drink any alcoholic beverages. I remembered the kick of the champagne!

V. Dennis Wrynn
Four year old child on V-E Day
Richmond Hill, New York

My most vivid memory of V-E Day is the excitement and enjoyment of a very special delight--ice cream. In an old-fashioned ice cream parlor in Richmond Hill, New York, my grandmother, mother, and I celebrated the victory with hot fudge sundaes. At that historic moment, I was just four years old, but I understood that this was an important and happy day. But the tears I witnessed all around me were disturbing. However, since ice cream sundaes did

not come very often in my young life, I was determined to enjoy the treat.

People were shouting in the streets and embracing each other. The "El" rumbled overhead and ear horns honked incessantly. Amidst the uproar, some faces reflected the spiritual serenity which came from the knowledge that their loved ones had survived a cataclysmic war, while other faces revealed the personal loss of friends and relatives.

But most of all, I remember the ice cream sundae.

Bill Wilson
95th Bomb Group – Horham, England
In Central London – May 8, 1945
(A dispatch sent to a U.S. newspaper from London on V-E Day.)

"CROWDS JOYOUS," SAYS MANOR (NY) SERGEANT. SEES KING AND QUEEN. OUR FLAG PROMINENT.

London, May 8 - Today I was a minute part of the vast multitude which welcomed joyously and thankfully "Victory in Europe." Today, after five years of suffering and sorrow, the people of the British Isles were celebrating the destruction of the border of evil and terror. Nothing could dismay or keep the throngs everywhere from writing this day into their long annals of history, as the greatest day thus far.

Faces were wreathed in smiles, a few tears swelled eyes of some, but they were tears of happiness, of which they were unashamed.

Crowds gathered early in many places, names familiar to the world - Piccadilly Circus, in which the statue of Eros in the center had been carefully encased during the war, at Trafalgar Square where stood the famous monument to Lord Nelson, and at Buckingham Palace, home of the King and Queen. The various parks - Hyde, Green, St. James - all these were main congregating points for crowds delirious with happiness and

VE Day, May 8 1945



Crowds outside Buckingham Palace

Cheers! A van load of beer passing through Piccadilly Circus

relief. By afternoon, solid masses of humans were packing various places with hopes of seeing their Prime Minister. This day, Churchill was their "Man of the Day."

While I stood opposite the Ministry of Health, I could see many flags--mostly British--but large flags of the United States and Russia flanked the Union Jack not far from my position. The crowd was patient and well behaved. An English soldier nonchalantly seated on a signpost for a better vantage point evoked laughter from the people.

Double decked buses were packed, conductors not paying attention to fares. Students paraded by. The crowd suddenly quieted. Then bells of Westminster rang. The chimes of Big Ben struck three. Through loud speakers in various parts of the city, Churchill's voice announced the surrender of Germany. After the playing of England's national anthem, the crowd turned elsewhere.

When I reached the area of Buckingham Palace, the chant of "We want the King" was echoing and re-echoing from the crowd which was packed outside the gates. In this throng were businessmen and their wives, soldiers and their sweethearts, young housewives, and young children in the best finery a strict rationing would permit. There were American soldiers, various other Allied servicemen and members of the many British women's services. Many of these people, both young and old, had felt the pangs of sorrow and the pains of the war. Countless numbers had lost relatives and friends and had

their homes destroyed or damaged by bombs, yet today, patiently, they waited with smiles on their faces for a glimpse of their King and Queen. A short spell after five, a door on the balcony of the palace opened. The King wearing a Naval uniform, the Queen in a pale blue coat and dress, Princess Elizabeth in the uniform of the A.T.S. (Army Territorial Service, or the British equivalent of our WACs), and the charming Princess Margaret, wearing a blue dress like her mother, appeared. Then out stepped Churchill, head slightly bowed, minus cigar, giving no V-sign. The King and Queen waved to the throng. The crowd howled and waved back, then sang, "For He's A Jolly Good Fellow."

Bonfires, lights, rockets, flares filled the night. The people of England were happy and many breathed a prayer of Thanksgiving.

George R. Linn 486th Bomb Group – Sudbury, England

I was in the hospital near Sudbury, England, after a crash landing. I had put in 30 missions and after coming out of the hospital after three months, I was transferred to the 313th Troop Carrier "Gray," 49th Squadron. We dropped on the Rhine and supplied General Patton.

Three days before V-E Day, we went to Nottingham and picked up an English army outfit. We took them to Norway and Denmark. After three hair-standing days, peace came.

We spent two days in Nottingham and did we ever drink! All the women kissed us and the men shook our hands.

It was scary as flying over Berlin.

Robert E. Gaustad 493rd Bomb Group – Debach, England

On V-E Day, May 8, 1945, I recall a neat and flower-bordered farmhouse not far from my hut. And in the front of this house a small American flag was on display along with a large sign which read: "THANK YOU AMERICA." I was moved to tears.

Forrest S. Clark 44th Bomb Group

When May 8, 1945 came, the day the war in Europe ended, I had finished my combat missions over Germany. My thoughts that day, upon hearing the news, were about my two lost comrades, killed in battle; Lt. David Edmonds, our bombardier killed in a crash landing, and Sgt. Abe Sofferman, killed by the German S.S. troops during an ambush in Belgium. Both were among my best friends in World War II.

My first thought on V-E Day was why I survived the war and why had they not. I remembered that we had talked about living to see the war end and we had planned a celebration. But as they were not there on May 8 to celebrate this historic day, my celebration was marred. Our Bomb Group had flown some of the bloodiest air war battles of the war in Europe, among them the Ploesti raid and the missions to Berlin, as well as support of the troops on D-Day in Normandy. I asked why had I survived and others had not.

THE END

by Roger Freeman

VE-Day, May 8th 1945. For those men and women of the Eighth Air Force it was a day when most were confined to their UK bases Command fearing celebrations might be a little too wild. Thoughts were of going home; it was all over. There was still Japan, but few who were in England on VE-Day ever got to that theatre of war. Peace was just around the corner.

Sixty years on, the media makes its usual superficial fuss over an anniversary. But somehow those who were not around in the Second World War never seem to grasp the reality of the situation and either glorify or chastise. Warfare has come a long way since three thousand aircraft and twenty thousand airmen, friend and enemy, were involved in a day's battles. So often contemporary comment fails to understand that era, using today's politics and morality in judgements.

The Second World War was a total war, involving whole nations as never before. Civilian populations sustain the military and due to airpower did not escape the conflict. The airpower of 1939-1945 was an imprecise weapon and may not have achieved the desired goals, but it was decisive in bringing victory.

In that, the Eighth Air Force was the supreme exponent of high altitude daylight precision bombing in destroying strategic targets and met its brief admirably. That the bombing was often not accurate was simply that the technology of those days was insufficiently advanced to meet the requirements, despite the valiant efforts of the airmen. The airmen of the Eighth gave their all and suffered a higher casualty rate, relative to their numbers, than any other formation of the United States military. In the heavy bomber units only 35 per cent of men completed the 25-mission tour during the first eighteen months

of operations. That figure hides the fact that in some squadrons only 10 per cent survived from the original air complement - one crew. There were examples of less. In October 1942 one squadron of the 44th Bomb Group commenced operations. Its attrition was such that following losses sustained on the Kiel mission in May 1943 only two men of the original 90 were still available for combat duty. The others had either been killed, made prisoner, or transferred. The survivors were the squadron com-

were frequent and there is not one of the forty heavy bomber airfields that did not experience a fatal take-off or landing crash. At many, several.

There is a general belief that fighter pilots had a better chance of survival. In fact their overall survival rate was little different from that of bomber crewmen. One only had to take a look at the complement of a typical 25-pilot squadron to see how few were still around when the war was over. A round trip of up to a thousand miles relying on one engine could always be a gamble. And the north-west European weather alone claimed many victims.

Sixty years on, survivors of that long gone conflict are sometimes viewed as ageing curiosities in the twenty-first century. The world has moved on to a point where Hitler is just another villain of history in young minds. But the US Eighth

Air Force has its undisputed place in history: achievements and sacrifice apart, in terms of men and machines, it stands as the largest air striking force ever committed to battle.

**Roger A. Freeman,
8th AF Historical Society Historian
Mays Barn, England**



With landing gear and bomb doors open to reduce speed, 385th BG B-17's prepare to unload food containers at Utrecht.

mander and Lt. William R. Cameron who had been on leave in London. In later years when asked if at that juncture he thought it was time to quit, Bill Cameron proclaimed that "I knew nothing was going to happen to me." When it was suggested that most of those lost might have believed the same, Bill's comment was "Well, sadly, they were wrong. I knew I was going to survive." This confidence took him through many more missions, including the infamous low-level mission to the Ploesti oil plants. There were many other airmen imbued with the spirit of survival who endured despite the odds. By the end of hostilities a bomber crewman had over an 80 per cent chance of surviving his 35 missions, but it remained a dangerous lottery. In addition to the enemy defences, flying was a dangerous occupation in those days. Accidents



This yellow nose 334th BS B-17 has opened its bomb bay doors more than 60 times to unload lethal cargo. On this occasion food containers are about to fall on a dropping zone near Utrecht, Netherlands.

NEXT GENERATION

CONTINUING THE 8TH AF LEGACY - by Norma Chesser

Two bomb groups have joined the 8th AFHS reunions within the last couple of years, as their own groups have had their last stand alone reunions. People from the Next Generation are leading the way, and building membership and interest within their own ranks.

Some opportunities planned during the reunions, to help ensure individual groups maintain their own group's unity, include group hospitality rooms; Friday night 'Rendezvous Dinner'; Saturday Night Banquet group seating; and scheduled time and space for group business meetings.

34th Bomb Group Jack Steffen (joined 2009)

For 25 years, the veterans of the 34th Bomb Group met annually for a reunion. Some veterans had maintained contact over the years since leaving military service. Others met face to face again for the first time at one of these reunions, many years after they parted company at the end of World War II. Old friendships were renewed, and new friendships were formed. Wives, sons, daughters – and eventually grandsons and granddaughters – got to know one another, and some enjoyed the opportunity to meet a veteran that they had heard about, but never met. Stories were told, experiences were shared, and occasionally, there were tears of both joy and sadness.

The 34th started having annual reunions after some of its veterans met at 8th Air Force reunions. Over the years, we visited many cities across the United States. We enjoyed the sights and activities of many towns, but most importantly, we enjoyed the strong bond of friendship.

Several years ago, the 34th Bomb Group decided to celebrate its final reunion in 2008. After that, reunions would be celebrated as participants at 8th Air Force reunions. Ironically, the 8th Air Force reunions were where the 34th Bomb Group reunions got their start, and it is now where the 34th Bomb Group returns. Over the years, various individual members had attended 8th Air Force reunions, but having the annual reunion of the 34th Bomb Group as a part of the 8th Air Force reunion was the logical next step.

The 2009 8th Air Force reunion in Cincinnati was the first that the 34th Bomb Group returned to. The 303rd Bomb Group offered to share their hospitality suite in Cincinnati with us, and we accepted. The 303rd had returned to 8th AF reunions the prior year, and helped us to integrate quickly. They gave us a place to “land”, and we really appreciated their hospitality.

We found the Cincinnati reunion to be very well organized. There were many well planned activities. Everyone at the reunion was warm and friendly. This reunion provided us the opportunity to convene with our old friends, and to make new friends. It was totally enjoyable.

The 8th Air Force reunions provide the 34th Bomb Group the opportunity to continue to meet annually. No doubt new friends will join old friends in looking forward to seeing each other at these special annual gatherings. Importantly, our veterans will have the opportunity to get together. In addition, our NexGen members will have the opportunity to meet and spend time with a wider circle of veterans and others interested in the history of the 8th Air Force, and the critical role that our veterans played in stepping up to do what needed to be done at a critical time in history. The living history that is such an important part of these gatherings will continue to be shared.

303rd Bomb Group “NexGen” Initiative Carol Sage and J. Hardy (joined 2008)

The 303rd Bomb Group flew out of Molesworth England as part of the Eighth Air Force. Their 364 missions from 1942-1945 were the most flown by any B17 Bomb Group. Our motto “Might in Flight” and our nickname “Hell’s Angles” are a proud part of our heritage. In 1975 the 303rd Veterans formed the 303rd Bomb Group Association. While the greatest accomplishment of the 303rd Bomb Group Association is the preservation of our history, the annual reunions provided the veterans and their extended families the opportunity to share their experiences and reunite with old friends. Reunions were held annually from 1976 – 2007. One of the most memorable reunions was in 2000 when 75 veterans returned to Molesworth to dedicate the 303rd Memorial at the base. At the 2005 reunion, the 303rd Board announced the difficult decision to disband the 303rd Bomb Group Association after the 2007 reunion, in Washington, D. C. With our youngest veterans in their 80’s, it was time for the next generation to take over. Initially we had hoped to form a stand alone, 303rd NexGen Association and continue with our 303rd reunions. While we have not given up the hope of continuing as a stand alone association, teaming with the Eighth Air Force Historical Society provided many distinct advantages.

- By not forming a separate 303rd NexGen group, we avoid the paperwork and expense of chartering and maintaining a non-profit group.
- Reunions require major “financial commitments” up to a year in advance. It makes sound economic sense to join forces with the 8th AFHS.
- As many of the Bomb Groups’ Veterans become unable to attend reunions, planning reunions as part of the 8th AFHS facilitates better reunions with a larger gathering of interested participants.
- The 8th AFHS provides a forum for those “nexgeners” to join and become involved. We share the same goal: “Honoring the Past.....Preserving the Legacy.”
- Facilities are provided at the reunions where Bomb Groups can meet and still retain their bomb group identity.

The 2010 Reunion in Tucson will be the 303rd Bomb Group’s third reunion as part of the 8th AFHS. The 303rd veterans and family members in attendance agreed that teaming with the 8th AFHS is a great start for our NexGen initiative. As the Army Air Corp found on bombing missions during WWII, teaming with other Bomb Groups led to success. This too can be the case as we work to help preserve this major part of our heritage.

REUNIONS

91st Bomb Group

September 29th – October 3rd, 2010
Holiday Inn, Fairborn, Ohio,
Contact: Jim Shepard, 20670 Via Augusto, Yorba Linda, CA 92887.
714-970-5540
Email: jshep91@earthlink.net

93rd Bombardment Group (Heavy) WW II, Reunion

October 21st - 25th, 2010,
93rd Memorial Stained Glass Window at the Chapel of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Savannah, Georgia.
Contact the Embassy Suites Savannah Airport, 145 West Mulberry Boulevard, Savannah, GA 31322, (912) 330-8222. code is 93B
Contact: John Marx (412) 327-1909, or email: 109clearview@verizon.net

94th Bomb Group

Tucson, Arizona
July 21st to 25th, 2010
8th Air Force Historical Society Reunion

95th Bomb Group

Washington D.C.
September 2010
www.95thbg.org

96th Bomb Group

Charleston, SC
October 11th-15th
Sheraton North, Charleston
(843) 747-1900

100th Bomb Group

Detroit, Michigan
August 5th to 8th, 2010
"Thunder Over Michigan" Air Show
8th AFHS Sponsored Event

303rd Bomb Group

Tucson, Arizona
July 21st to 25th, 2010
8th Air Force Historical Society Reunion

305th Bomb Group

New Orleans, LA
September 22nd – 26th, 2010
Embassy Suites 315 Julia Street
New Orleans, LA 70130

306th Bomb Group

Washington, D.C.
October 6th – 9th, 2010
www.306thbw.org

352nd Fighter Group

Orlando, Florida
October 14-17, 2010
Contact: Andy Fredrick
6 Chinkapin Circle
Homosassa, FL 34446-5213
(352) 382-0422
moxie1942@tampabay.rr.com

355th Fighter Group

October 7th-11th, 2010
Crystal City, Virginia
Contact information:
Bill Barnhart 703-791-2197

381st Bomb Group

Nashville, Tennessee
August 11th – 15th, 2010
Holiday Inn Select Opryland
www.381st.org

384th Bomb Group

Branson, MO
September 9th – 12th, 2010
www.384thbombgroup.com

385th Bomb Group

Charleston, SC
October 11th-15th
Sheraton North, Charleston
(843) 747-1900

392nd Bomb Group

Detroit, Michigan
August 5th to 8th, 2010
"Thunder Over Michigan" Air Show
8th AFHS Sponsored Event

398th Bomb Group

Denver, Colorado
September 8th – 11th, 2010
www.398th.org
reunioncoordinator@398th.org

Stalag Luft III Association

Detroit, Michigan

August 5th to 8th, 2010
"Thunder Over Michigan" Air Show
8th AFHS Sponsored Event

Kassel Mission Historical Society

Detroit, Michigan
August 5th to 8th, 2010
"Thunder Over Michigan" Air Show
8th AFHS Sponsored Event

401st Bomb Group

Savannah, Georgia
August 25th – 29th, 2010
www.401bg.org

447th Bomb Group

Tucson, Arizona
July 21st to 25th, 2010
8th Air Force Historical Society Reunion

466th Bomb Group

Tucson, Arizona
July 21st to 25th, 2010
8th Air Force Historical Society Reunion

486th Bomb Group

Fort Myers, Florida
Embassy Suites Fort Myers - Estero
September 22nd – 28th, 2010
www.486th.org

487th Bomb Group

Fort Myers, Florida
Embassy Suites Fort Myers - Estero
September 22nd – 28th, 2010
www.487thbg.org

493rd Bomb Group

Tucson, Arizona
July 21st to 25th, 2010
8th Air Force Historical Society Reunion

801st/492nd BG Carpetbaggers

Shilo Inns Suites Hotel
Salt Lake City, Utah
September 22nd -- 26th--2010
Contact Bill Becker
Phone (619) 992-6228
Email beeb71@aol.com

THE DEMISE OF THE LADY JANE

She was one of the "pride and joys" of the 8th Air Force, the Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress. Sgt. "Tex" Kesterson was her Crew Chief. He saw that his team kept "Lady Jane" in exceptional working order, ready for another mission to Germany to bomb the hell out of Hitler's territory. In fact, "Tex" Kesterson received a citation for his excellent maintenance record. He kept "Lady Jane" from making an abort of any kind for more than 50 missions. "Tex" took great pride in his Crew Chief responsibilities and had special feelings for his "baby."

He had named her after his infant daughter, born in July of 1943.

"Lady Jane," Boeing B-17G Flying Fortress – 42-102009 – IN-P was assigned to the 613th Bomb Squadron, 401st Bomb Group at Deenethorpe, England. When our crew flew her, she already had 58 missions over Europe and had the scars to prove it. We flew "Lady Jane" on her last four missions, according to 613th Bomb Squadron records.

We were truly, an American crew representing ancestry several different countries. Pilot: Ray Hillestad (Nowegian), Co-pilot: John Emch (Swiss), Navigator: Fred Campbell (Scot-Irish), Bombardier: Chris Montoya (Spanish), Flight Engineer / Top Turret Gunner: James Dryden (English), Radio Operator: Ray Kriz (Czech), Ball Turret Gunner: Robert Ardren (born in Goteburg, Sweden) Waist Gunner: Patsy Carman DiCicco (Italian), Tail Gunner: Harold Fishbein (Russian).

The day was November 6, 1944. The Hillestad Crew was due to have a 48 hour leave after flying eight missions in 12 days. We were assigned as a "spare crew," which meant that if there were no aborts or vacancies in our Squadron formation, we could land and go on leave. It looked good, until the last echelon came along with one vacant slot. So much for the 48 hour pass, we were going to the target, Earburg/Hamburg, Germany. So long London!!

The 613th Squadron history describes the actions of

that day, "The flak over the target was moderate to intense and fairly accurate. Aircraft 42-102009 ("Lady Jane – IN-P), piloted by Lt. R.H. Hillestad, was evidently hit by flak over the target. It gradually lagged behind until last observed near Cuxhaven at about 21,000 feet. An SOS (distress signal) was later transmitted over the North Sea and he is thought to have attempted to ditch. No further word was received from him or his crew or Air Sea Rescue."

An extract from the diary of Dutch Resistance partisan, Jan vander Veer, dated November 6, 1944. "The BBC (British Broadcasting Company) Home & Forces Program said tonight that the Yanks attacked Hamburg-Harburg and other places in Western Germany today with some 1200 B-17s and B-24s and 600 long range fighters. Seven bombers did not return and 10 fighters were missing."

In a way casualties were light, however, it meant that 80 airmen became "missing in action" statistics. The "Lady Jane" was one of those seven that did not return.

On a February day in 1946, having enrolled at the University of Missouri in Columbia, Missouri, I was in a drug store when I felt a hand on my shoulder. It was fellow 613th Bomb Squadron airman, Jack Mayer. He said, "I thought you were dead!"

We had not ditched in the North Sea. Here is what actually happened to the "Lady Jane."

No significant fighter and anti-aircraft guns hit us until we approached Hamburg on the bomb run, at an altitude of 25,000 feet. Then German 88mm flak shells exploded leaving black puffs all around us. We had just dropped our bombs when the prop-governor on engine #2 was evidently hit. The propeller started wind-milling out of control and our pilots could not stop it. As the 401st Bomb Group headed homeward, we lagged behind and headed out over the North Sea, staying out of flak range around the Helgoland Islands.



Photo of the "Lady Jane" taken before the Hillestad Crew were assigned to the aircraft. Markings in this photo indicate 28 missions already credited with two German fighters claimed. The Hillestad crew flew an additional 21 missions, being shot down on our 21st; the total number of missions flown by Lady Jane was 59, an unusually high number for a B-17 bomber to last during the air war over Europe in World War II. The Lady Jane crash-landed on November 6, 1944, on the Iwema farm in WieringerMerr polder, about halfway between Medemblik and Wieringerwerf.



"Lady Jane crew", photo June 1944, Rattlesnake Bomber Base, Pyote, Texas, in crew training before going overseas. 1st row, l-r: Ray Hillestad, Pilot; John Emch, Co-pilot; Fred Campbell, Navigator; George Boe, Bombardier, who left crew for radar training. 2nd row, l-r: James Dryden, Engineer/Upper turret; Harold Rishbein/Fisher, Tail Gunner; Ray Kriz, Radio Operator; Chris Montoya, Togglier/Bombardier; Robert Andren, Ball Turret; Patsy DiCicco, Waist Gunner.

On the flight deck, John and Ray chopped the throttle and dropped the flaps to try and dislodge the #2 prop, to no avail. We were losing altitude and soon we were a lone B-17 trying to make it back to England.

It was a nice gesture as a P-51 Mustang joined us for a few minutes before he had to head home. Later, another P-51 rode shotgun with us for a short time before, he too, had to head west. Suddenly our #1 engine shut down, leaving with just the #3 and #4 engines. It was common for a wind milling prop to cause so much vibration that it pulled an engine out of the wing. By this time, oil covered much of pilot Ray Hillestad's side of the windshield. We were trying to get to Belgium where the Allied troops were, but knew that was impossible.

We were down to about 10,000 feet when we came over the Zuider Zee in the Netherlands. We decided to turn south and stay over the water as long as possible. We caught several rounds of small arms fire as we crossed the Frisian Islands. At about this time, our #3 engine quit.

About five minutes later, with just our #4 engine working, Ray and John brought the "Lady Jane" in for a wheels-up belly landing. We landed on the Iwema family farm in the middle a sugar beet field, nearly missing a farmer who was out plowing with his three horses.

Ray and John were great pilots and with the rest of the crew in crash positions, no one was hurt. A bundled-up Dutchman came out to us and said there were too many of us to hide and informed us that a German unit was

coming and they were just a half-kilometer away. He also asked, "Could we have your parachutes, please?"

Soon a German squad arrived. They fixed their machine guns on us and the Commander boldly ordered, "Hands up!! For you the war is over!!" So we all became prisoners of war.

My wife and I visited the Iwema farm in 1988. They were very gracious hosts, in fact they had a propeller blade from "Lady Jane" pointing skyward in their front yard in remembrance of what had happened on November 6, 1944. They told us that "Lady Jane" had suffered a tremendous amount of battle damage and the Germans blew her up and left her a mess in the field. Then Henry Iwema handed me the very heavy Pioneer gyro-compass out of the "Lady Jane" that he kept to give to a crewmember some day. Speechless emotion. Then six foot tall, Tineke said, "I was the Dutchman who came out to your plane." In his best English he tried to explain, "There was an 18 year old girl who was to be married and he was looking for wedding material!"

I was the first American airman to return to that area around the town of Medemblik in Northern Holland.

We were on our 21st and last mission that day. To this day, the "Lady Jane" still influences our life direction.

After all, we have her master compass.



Harry Iwema, (left), presenting Fred Campbell, (right), the "Lady Jane's" master Pioneer Gyrocompass. The Germans blew up the "Lady Jane", but a German soldier brought this to the family to keep as a keepsake, commemorating November 6, 1944, on the Iwema farm.

**Fred Campbell
Navigator of "Lady Jane"
3312 Chatterton Drive
San Angelo, Texas 76904**

CHAPTER NEWS

OREGON CHAPTER

Our Oregon Chapter meeting was held on the 65th anniversary of V-E Day and our 8th Army Air Force Veterans were given the opportunity to briefly describe WWII experiences. We were also fortunate that attendance included four WWII reenactors: Larry Jones, Manda Levie, Doug Butler, and Neal Maillet. Arriving in period uniforms, they brought a display of WWII items. In other news, Capt. Bill Seitz, a respected former B-24 pilot who attends our local 8th AFHS meetings, was treated to a special flight in honor of the 65th anniversary of his final mission of WWII, a raid on Ploesti on 8 Apr 1945. The organizer of the event was Scott Laney, president of the Portland, Oregon-based company, Hanna N. Ryan. Scott Laney provides a room where Veterans can discuss war stories and browse history books.



Capt. Bill Seitz in flight.



**WWII Reenactors
Larry Jones, Manda Levie,
Doug Butler, Neal Maillet**

The speaker for our May meeting was Lt. Col. Tom Lingle, Professor of Military Science, University of Oregon Army ROTC who related details of his program and the creative manner in which he uses the legacy of the 8th Air Army Force in his teaching of ROTC cadets such as showing the movie 12 O'Clock High to demonstrate leadership skills essential for the training of these future Army officers. In his program, Lt. Col. Lingle gives this younger generation an opportunity to "appreciate the message in the sacrifice" of 8th AAF Veterans.

Lt. Col. Lingle was deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom to Afghanistan September 2002 into 2003 as OIC of a Forward Support Medical Team responsible for theater air ambulance medical evacuation. They used the UH-60 Blackhawk to pick up wounded soldiers and civilians including children and transport them to a higher level medical care usually at a combat-support hospital. In route care was provided by highly-skilled flight medics. He gave praise to support personnel and ground crews as well. The environment they operated in was Hindu Kush at the foot of the Himalayas.

Submitted by, Joan E. Hamilton

NEW YORK STATE SOUTHERN WING

The April 17 was held at the 56th FG Restaurant Lounge at the Republic Airport in Farmingdale, NY near the renowned American Airpower Museum.

The Luncheon/Meeting was presided over by President Gus Nathan (486BG) and Vice-President David Greene (392BG)

There were 52 in attendance and a great menu was provided with a surprise 91st birthday cake for member Jack Lance.

A Board of Officers election was held were Board member Pat Keeley was elected President Elect and Antonio Capobianco as Treasurer. Colonel David Greene remained Vice-President and Nicholas Plackis as Secretary.

I must say we missed Bernie Mirotznik (452BG) who was recovering from heart surgery but am pleased to say Bernie is doing well.

The guest speaker was Congressman Timothy Bishop who spoke about interesting legislation being voted on one being funding for VFW and American



NY SWC President Gus Nathan passing the Presidency to Pat Keeley



**NY SWC Luncheon
Guest speaker Congressman Timothy Bishop with Vice-President David Greene and President Gus Nathan Taken at the 56th FG Restaurant in Farmingdale NY**

Legion Halls to help them fix the Halls regarding roofing, painting, etc. Many are in desperate need of this funding. To checkout pictures of the Luncheon please check the Chapter's website, <http://blogs.ny8thswcafhs.org>.

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

CHAPTER NEWS

OHIO CHAPTER

The Ohio Chapter met on November 6th - 8th at the Ramada Plaza Hotel in Columbus, Ohio. Saturday morning, members visited in the hospitality room while the board of directors meeting was held before the afternoon meeting, and on Sunday, members again could meet in the hospitality room if they wished before returning home.

The guest speaker was Fred MacCray, a volunteer with over 4,000 volunteer hours, from the Motts Military Museum (<http://www.mottsmilitarymuseum.org>) located in Groveport. It is a museum for those who have served the United States in war from the Civil War to the present. MacCray discussed how the museum started, a brief history of himself, his childhood during World War II and some experiences volunteering at the museum.

The Chapter will meet again in May in Columbus.

Chris Weber
Secretary, Ohio Chapter

FLORIDA CHAPTER

The Florida Chapter of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Historical Society gathered in Kissimmee the second weekend in April. On Saturday afternoon, we gathered in the spacious hospi-

ality suite for our business meeting. Declining attendance was discussed as the numbers for this meeting were disappointing, but the small group was an enthusiastic one. We have good membership renewals for the coming year, so the chapter is very healthy; we just wish more of our members could make the meetings.

On Sunday, after a complimentary breakfast at the hotel, we were off to the Kissimmee Warbirds experience at the Kissimmee airport. They have a small museum there, and are in the process of restoring an FW-190 that crashed landed in Russia during the war. The big attraction there is the chance to take a ride in an AT-6 Texan. Chapter president Tom Gagnon took advantage of the opportunity and even got some "stick time" while they were up. He got a hearty round of applause from the membership when he returned to the ramp. They also have a PT-13 trainer in the museum, and Shelly Greene and Bob Groen revealed that that was either the first or the second planes they had ever flown. Speaking of AT-6's, there were over two dozen there that day. They had flown in from the Sun'n Fun air show in Lakeland to update their certifications. One of the pilots shared that information with us. The FAA requires air show and formation flying certifica-

tions every year. We joined that group for a barbeque lunch and some remarks from a P-47 pilot who had flown with the Ninth Air Force in Europe. We had a great outing that was enjoyed by all.

On Monday morning, we held our general membership meeting facilitated by Tom. We had some great suggestion about posting our notices for meetings in various veterans' magazines. It seems the issue with that is that they require a great deal of lead-time. We then held our memorial services to remember those who have passed. This year we were sorry to see that Bob Nolan, Norman Protsman, William J. Roche, David Simpson, and Robert E. Woods had flown their last mission. Bob was our chapter president for many years, and Bill Roche served as an officer and on the board of directors for many years, as well.

Bill Uphoff had brought along his copy of "The Bombing of Germany" that was recently broadcast of PBS TV. A great program if you have not seen it yet. Bill is in the process of planning our November fall meeting in Stuart, Florida, in conjunction with an air show there. If you would like to join us, contact Tom Gagnon at 813-394-0338, or teg00@aol.com, or Ken Sweet at kso-town@earthlink.net or 407-869-6693.

CREW IDENTIFICATION HELP

Laurence Feingold has asked our readers to help identify the members in the crew picture. Robert Welsh, a friend of Mr. Feingold, is trying to gain some additional information on his father's crew. The officer kneeling down, third from the left, is Robert Welsh's father, Joseph Bruce. Mr. Welsh is trying to find out more about the crewmembers in the photograph. If anyone can identify any of the gentlemen in the photograph, please contact Laurence Feingold at the following address:

Laurence Feingold • 407 Lincoln Road
#708 • Miami Beach, Florida 33139 •
aslanf@aol.com • (305)538-1686



BOOK REVIEWS

Eighty-One Aces of the Fourth Fighter Group

By Frank Speer

144 pages – Hardcover

ISBN 978-0-7643-3374-3

Schiffer Publishing Inc.

The Fourth Fighter Group was one of the most successful units in 8th Air Force Fighter Command during WWII. The Group evolved from the three RAF Eagle Squadrons (71, 121, 133 Squadrons). It was the longest serving fighter group in the 8th Air Force and accounted for over 1000 air and ground victories during its tenure in World War II.

One of the pilots who flew with the Group was Frank Speer. Mr. Speer flew with the 334th Fighter Squadron / 4th Fighter Group and was a POW. This impressive hardcover book is Mr. Speer's fourth piece to date documenting the legacy of the famed, Fourth Fighter Group. This book examines the 81 pilots of the Fourth Fighter Group who destroyed five or more enemy aircraft in the air or on the ground. Each respective pilot's biography has been researched and presented along with a good selection of photographs.

The reader will obviously recognize names such as Colonel Donald Blakeslee, James Goodson, Don Gentile, John Godfrey and Ralph "Kidd" Hofer. However, the lesser known pilot's biographies are what really make the book. Mr. Speer also adds some personal accounts and commentary to some of the biographies giving the reader a real perspective from someone who flew in the successful and famous fighting unit. There is also a terrific section of nose art reproductions by 334th Fighter Squadron ground crew / artist, Donald Allen.

There are over 150 excellent black and white and color photographs, many of them never before published. I found the book insightful and very interesting. I can recommend this book to any student of WWII 8th Air Force Fighter Command history.

This book can be found at any local or online book dealer or can be obtained directly at:

Schiffer Publishing Inc.
4880 Lower Valley Road
Atglen, PA 19310
610-593-1777
www.schifferbooks.com

The Story of Van's Valiants of the 8th Army Air Force. A History of the 385th Bomb Group in World War II.

By W.W. Varnedoe Jr.

149 pages – Softcover

Colonial Graphics Group

The 385th Bomb Group was one of the most successful heavy bombardment units that served in the United States Army Air Corps – Eighth Air Force. Flying from their base at Great Ashfield, the 385th Bomb Group began operations in July of 1943. They were awarded a Distinguished Unit Citation for their participation on the costly "Double Strike" mission on Schweinfurt-Regensburg, Germany on August 17, 1943.

Mr. Varnedoe served with the 385th Bomb Group. The author has painstakingly collected a wealth of information about the history of the 385th B.G. A complete chronological mission list, excellent crew photos and a wonderful selection of nose art really makes this book a must for any 8th Air Force enthusiast. This book is far and away the best reference source on the 385th Bomb Group to date. Mr. Varnedoe should be congratulated for his hard work and dedication to preserve the legacy of the "Three Trees" Group. This book will certainly serve as a permanent document to the courage and bravery of the airmen of the 385th Bomb Group.

Very highly recommended for 385th BG veteran or 8th Air Force enthusiast. Copies can be obtained directly from the author.

Bill Varnedoe
5000 Ketova Way SE
Huntsville, AL 35803
Email: billvar@comcast.net

Third in Line – The 3rd Air Division over Europe in World War II.

By Ron Mackay

360 pages – Hardcover

Over 300 B&W / Color photographs

ISBN 978-0-7643-3346-0

Schiffer Publishing Inc.

Author Ron Mackay has written several outstanding books about WWII Eighth Air Force history. Third in Line – The 3rd Air Division over Europe in World War II is another masterpiece from the highly respected Scottish author. This excellent study documents the history of the famed 3rd Air Division with stirring accounts of combat over Fortress Europe.

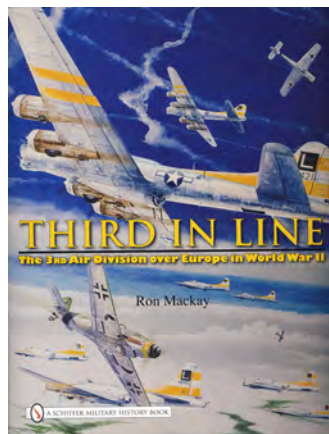
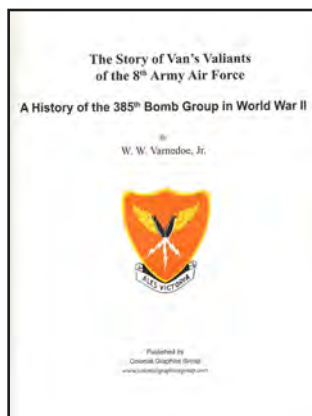
Initially under the command of General Curtis Lemay, the Third Air Division participated in some of the most fierce air battles of the entire European campaign. The book contains small historical stories giving the reader a real sense of the history and sacrifice of this famed fighting unit.

Mr. Mackay has also selected a superb collection of photographs to illustrate the book including a wonderful selection of rare color photographs (25 pages).

Third in Line is a great companion to Mackay's earlier study on the First Air Division, entitled, First in the Field (Schiffer Publishing - 2007). The reviewer wonders if a 2nd Air Division study will be forthcoming. This book is simply superb and is highly recommended to anyone who flew in the Third Air Division.

This book can be found at any local or online book dealer or can be obtained directly at:

Schiffer Publishing Inc.
4880 Lower Valley Road
Atglen, PA 19310
610-593-1777
www.schifferbooks.com



BOOK REVIEWS

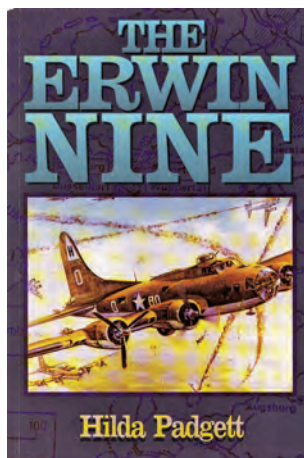
THE ERWIN NINE

By Hilda Padgett

ISBN 0-932807-97-6

1993 – The Overmountain Press –
Johnson City, Tennessee

At the beginning of World War II, tens of thousands of young men joined the military services to defend our nation's freedom. From every corner of the United States, these young men answered the call to serve.



Hilda Padgett tells the unique story of nine young men from Erwin, Tennessee (wartime population 3350) that all volunteered to join the U.S. Army Air Corps. Eight of the nine of men eventually flew in the Eighth Air Force and one flew in the 15th Air

Force. None of the Erwin airmen ever served with one another, however, all of them were shot down within a nine month period. Ironically, they all were imprisoned by the Germans and stationed at Stalag Luft IV where they spent the duration of the war as Prisoners of War.

The author skillfully tells the story of each individual nine airmen. The well researched biography of each of the nine brave fliers gives the reader a real sense of who they were as individuals, but also, what experiences they shared together.

The airmen involved were:

Clyde D. Tinker – 452nd BG/730th BS
James H. Hensley – 303rd BG/360th BS
Allen S. Alford – 445th BG/703rd BS
George D. Swingle – 447th BG/700th BS
George L. Hatcher Jr. – 457th BG/749th BS
J. Fred Miller – 456th BG/744th BS
Richard L. Franklin – 351st BG/510th BS
Homer Stanley Norris – 91st BG/322nd BS
Richard G. Edwards Jr. – 306th BG/369th BS

I really enjoyed this book. The author, Hilda Padgett has made a well researched testament to nine brave young Ameri-

cans all from this small Tennessee town. Highly recommended for the bookshelf of any 8th Air Force veteran or enthusiast. To obtain a copy please contact: The Overmountain Press, P.O. Box 1261, Johnson City, TN 37605 1-800-992-2691 (orders only) or www.overmtn.com

WOW!

Anthology of B-24 / 8th
Air Force / World War II Stories

By Ralph Welsh

440 pages – Softback

ISBN 978-0-692-00078-6

Welsh Products Inc.

It seems like my reading time becomes more limited each day and that is why books like "WOW! – Anthology of B-24 / 8th Air Force / World War II Stories" by author Ralph Welsh, are always appealing. This excellent collection spans many segments of the air war during WWII. Packed with well over 160 short stories, this anthology collection is also well illustrated and is an excellent value.

Ralph Welsh was a WWII 8th Air Force veteran that flew in B-24s with the 448th Bomb Group at Seething, England. Mr. Welsh has compiled a fantastic collection of veteran accounts making the reader both laugh and cry.

This book is a very entertaining read. It is one of the finest collections of first person veteran accounts this reviewer has ever seen. This book serves as an archival testament to the men who flew with the 8th Air Force during WWII. It is an outstanding work.

This reviewer congratulates Mr. Welsh for this fine effort, but even more so,

thanks him for keeping the stories of the "Mighty Eighth" alive for future generations. Very highly recommended.

Copies can be purchased by contacting the author directly.

Ralph Welsh
1525A Golden Gate Ave.
San Francisco, CA 94115
(415) 440-3808
randawelsh@yahoo.com

Online Orders can be purchased at:
www.wow-book.com

Five Years Under the Swastika Through a Child's Eye

By Frits Forrer

426 pages - Softback

During World War II, the continental United States of America was never occupied by its foreign enemies. Although America sacrificed through blackouts, gas limitations and food rationing, we never knew what it was like to be occupied by an enemy nation.

Frits Forrer, a Dutch citizen, was a child during World War II. His family struggled and suffered through five years of German occupation. The author has graphically recorded, through a first person account, what life was like in occupied Holland. The reader is led through numerous Allied bombing raids, the oppressiveness of the Germans and the final liberation of Europe.

The book is written in a first person style and the author uses numerous Dutch, German and French words which give a very international flavor to the book, however the entire work is written in English. Mercifully, there is an excellent glossary included. I found the book very entertaining and educational.

Written documents of life under German occupation are a very interesting read. Those of us who never experienced what life was like under those conditions can read books like "Five Years Under the Swastika" and gain a better understanding of those turbulent days.

Copies can be obtained by contacting the author directly.

Frits Forrer
P.O. Box 488
Gulf Breeze, Florida 32562
fforrer@bellsouth.net

Orders
online at:
www.frits-forrer.net



Connie Richards United Kingdom Contact 8th Air Force Historical Society

Longtime 8th Air Force Historical Society - United Kingdom Contact, Connie Richards, passed away peacefully after a courageous battle with cancer.

Along with her husband Gordon, Connie was in charge of the distribution of the 8th Air Force News to our U.K. members and gave her support to this organization with boundless determination and hard work.

Connie was also an enthusiastic advocate of telling the story of famed American big band leader, Glenn Miller. She actually met Major Miller during the war and was a lifelong fan of his music.

She was involved with many U.K. Eighth Air Force veteran memorials and dedications. Her annual participation in the Memorial Day commemoration at Maddingly Cemetery near Cambridge, England was steadfast, representing the Historical Society at the annual remembrance for many years.

Her wonderful positive attitude and tireless dedication to the Eighth Air Force Historical Society will be greatly missed by not only our membership, but by her many friends.

Rest peacefully, Connie, enjoy eternity listening to your favorite music.



southwest of Achen, close to the Belgian lines. All ten crewmen were captured and made POWs.

Wolford, Roy Vincent, 88, of Kearney, NE, passed away, April 12, 2010, at Good Samaritan Hospital. He trained as a B-17 pilot and was honorably discharged as a second lieutenant.

Collins, Harvie Lecil, 90, of Jonesboro, Arkansas, went to be with the Lord Sunday, March 21, 2010, at St. Bernard's Village. He served our country in the 8th Air Force from 1941-1962, retiring after 21 years as Chief Master Sergeant.

Ciglar, Joseph, passed away April 19, 2010 in San Diego, California. He flew 31 missions, most of them as a waist gunner on the 358th BS 1Lt Harlan J. Johnson Crew. submitted by Gary L. Moncur 303rd Bomb Group Historian

Sorenson, Neal Past president of the Second Air Division Association: ardent supporter of the Mighty 8th AF Heritage Museum: civic and religious leader in Medicine Lake, MN. 489th BG lead navigator. Neal, with Al Asch & Ray Pytel, organized the foundation that raised the funds and placed the massive B-24 sculpture on the Honor Court of the Air Force Academy. The "Golden Street Pub" in Heaven gets more crowded by the day!

Submitted by: Hap Chandler

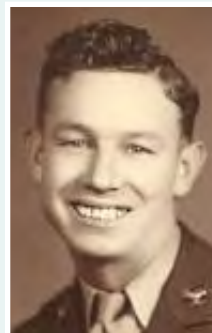
Miller, Donald A., passed away on April 25, 2010. He was a member of 8th AFHS and was a bombardier in the 401st, 612th Squadron on a crew led by F.R. Boddin.

submitted by his son, Mark Miller

Barraza, Apolonio "Hap", 87, of Goodyear, Arizona passed away December 22, 2009. He was a B-17 navigator and participated in 35 combat mis-



Roy Wolford



Harvie Collins



Joseph Ciglar

Zyborg, Stanley C., Top Turret Gunner/

Flight Engineer 577th BS & 392nd BG. POW. A fixture at the 8th AFHS Reunions. His kindness and enthusiasm will be missed by his many 8th AF friends.

Vogt, John W., - 56th FG/356th FG Eight victory P-47 ace and former Commander of U.S. Air Forces in Europe.

Terry, Charles Robert "Chuck", 88, Rapid City, SD, April 24, 2010. Chuck grew up in Dryden, N.Y. He was with 303rd BG in Molesworth, England, as a radio operator and gunner on a B-17. After 26 successful missions and a Distinguished Flying Cross, he returned to the States where he

was an instructor trainer at Ellsworth Air Force Base.

Skophammer, James "Duke", - 385th BG - Waist Gunner/Toggler - Completed 35 missions - most of them were with the Lamping Crew.

Bragen, Carlyle, passed away April 4, 2010. He was an armorer gunner on B-17s, 493rd BG and 860th BS. He completed 35 missions over Europe. Submitted by: Clifford H Rankin, a pilot on Carlyle's plane, who is 88 and going strong.

Daley, Russell M. Jr., 90, a native of Dublin, GA, passed away January 17, 2010. T/Sgt Daley was the Radio Operator on the 359th BS 1Lt Victor J. Loughnan Crew. On Mission #74, October 4, 1944, their B-17 was hit by anti-aircraft fire. It was last seen flying under control on three engines about 12 miles South of Achen. The crewmen had tossed out their guns and one had hit the #3 engine propeller. The crew parachuted from the damaged B-17

Jim "Duke" Skophammer



Stan Zyborg



John Vogt



Charles Terry

sions, 447th BG. After the war, Hap remained in the Air Force Reserves. During the Korean War, he was recalled to extended active duty and remained in the Air Force as a career officer. In 1958, while stationed at Eglin AFB, Florida, he obtained a B.S. Degree in Management from Florida State University. He held ratings as a Master Navigator and Electronics Warfare Officer ("Old Crow") and finished his military career as a Staff Intelligence Officer with the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD) in Colorado Springs, Colorado. His various decorations include the Air Medal with five oak leaf clusters and the Joint Services Commendation Medal.

Kritchman, Duane, - 85, Johnston, IA, passed away April, 2010. 327th BS 92nd BG - Duane initiated the Central Iowa Wing of the 8th Air Force Historical Society - Iowa Chapter. **Hosso, Harry V.**, of Phoenix, Arizona, passed away on March 28, 2010 at the age of 88. He was born in Florence, Ohio and grew up in Martins Ferry, Ohio. He spent 14 months as a prisoner of war in a German camp.

Smith, Donald "Smitty" S., 84, of Newport Road, Duncannon passed away April 11, 2010 in the VA Medical Center, Lebanon. 303rd BG *Hell's Angels*, Ball Turret Gunner. He had 33 bombing missions over Germany. He had a total of 35 missions and was hit twice with flak. He flew the 100th mission in the *Rosie O' Grady* plane.

Duncan, Ronald "Ron", 303rd BG, San Luis Obispo, passed away March 24, 2010. Ron was a B-17 pilot stationed in England and was shot down over Germany. He survived as a German POW for more than a year. He will most be remembered for his outgoing personality. He could turn a room full of strangers into a room full of good friends in short order.

Strange, Joseph B., 87, passed away February 25, 2010 at Owen Valley Health Care



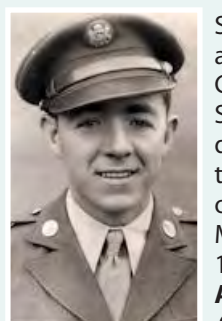
Duane Kritchman



Donald Smith



Ronald Duncan



Joseph Strange



George Turensky

Campus in Spencer, Indiana. Retiring from the Air Force in 1964. M/Sgt Strange was a Crew Chief in the 359th BS and was awarded the Bronze Star for his excellent service.

Turinsky, George, passed away February 19, 2010 in Auburn Calif. George graduated from pilot training and was assigned to the 303rd BG as a B-17 pilot. George flew thirty five missions against Nazi Germany. After the war he served in Alaska with the 72nd Recon Squadron. George's military career took him to Texas, Germany, Italy and finally to McClellan AFB, where he retired after 21 years of service. George was a member of BPOE #1691, a life member of the VFW, AF Sergeants Association, Patron member of the NRA, the 8th AFHS and the 303rd BG Association.

Gundy, Samuel C., - Co-Pilot 562nd BS/388 BG - Feeney Crew - 18 mission POW - February 10, 1944 - Brunswick Mission. Long time Biology and Botany teacher at Reading Senior High School and Kutztown State College, Reading, PA. Sam was assistant director in addition to serving as director of the Reading Public Museum from 1953 to 1967.

Allard, Charles Garland, 89, Austin Texas, passed away February 24, 2010. Garland was assigned to the 303rd BG "*Hell's Angels*" as the radio operator for his crew and flew over thirty B-17 bombing missions. One wartime experience Garland did love to talk about was the opportunity he had to play the piano for the Queen

and King of England during a visit they made to the Allied base where he was stationed.

O'Neal, Howard F., a highly decorated Air Force Officer and former Base Commander at Mather Air Force Base, has passed on at the age of 84 in Sacramento on February 27, 2010. 303rd BG - B-17 tail gunner - flew 35 combat missions in Europe. Following his discharge from the service in 1945, he attended the University of Tennessee and played on the football team and also served in the Naval Reserves and as a firefighter in the Pacific Northwest. In 1948 he entered the US Air Force as an aviation cadet and was commissioned as a second lieutenant.

During his years of service, Howard was an instructor for the Air Force ROTC at Penn State; Deputy Chief for Plans and Operations and Chief of the Inter-service Group at the Pentagon; Base Commander of Mather AFB in Sacramento, Utao AFB in Thailand, Hickam AFB, Wheeler AFB, Bellows Air Force Station (all in Hawaii), and Wake Island AFB.

Colonel O'Neal retired from the Air Force in 1978. His awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit, Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal with eight Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Force Commendation Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, and campaign medals from World War II and Vietnam. He twice refused the Purple Heart, feeling his injuries weren't severe enough to warrant it. Flying was his greatest joy, and he took pride in being one of the best air-refuelers in the Air Force. His sense of humor was legendary; he had an extensive repertoire of jokes and never missed an opportunity to tell one.

Borror, Norwood Dayton, 88, of Leesburg, Fla., and Keyser, WV, passed away December 17, 2009, Tavares, Fla. He was a waist gunner on the 360th BS Lt William T. Baker Crew.



Samuel Gundy



Charles Allard



Howard Oneil

Carney, Walter J., 90 of Suffield, passed away. He was a B-17 pilot and flew 36 combat missions in a Flying Fortress heavy bomber with the 303rd BG, also known as the "Hell's Angels", logging more than 288 hours. During a bomb run to Munich an anti-aircraft shell took out his #3 engine and with avenues of escape to Switzerland blocked, he turned toward Italy and miraculously landed his aircraft and crew safely in Rome, receiving citations from two Generals.



Walter Carney

Hall, Franklin Charle, passed away May 4, 2005. He was the co-pilot on the 359th BS 2Lt Ambrose G. Grant Crew. The crew was shot down on Mission 81, November 5th, 1943 to Gelsenkirchen, Germany. Hall spent the remainder of the war as a POW.



Franklin Hall

Trant, Wayne L., 303rd BG, passed away November 5, 2008 in an Aransas Pass nursing home at the age of 88. Wayne was a member of the Aransas Pass VFW Post.

Schuler, Frank Harold, passed away March 17, 2010, Loveland, Ohio. On June 22, 1944, Mission #188 to Wizernes, France: As the Lynch Crew was nearing the English coast the #2 engine exploded and the crew was ordered to bail out over the English Channel. The B-17 exploded shortly before it hit the water. Partly due to the clear weather with unlimited visibility, crewmen were in the water for only 45 minutes before being spotted and rescued. Schuler and others were rescued by two destroyers. Five crewmen drowned.



Frank Schuler

Albern, Lloyd L., passed away July 3, 2009. He was the ball turrett gunner on the 359th BS 2Lt Richard L. Clemensen Crew. The crew was shot down on Mission #241, September 12, 1944 to Brux, Czechoslovakia. Albern spent the rest of the war as a POW.



Robert Nolan

Peterson, Robert C., 86, of Evanston, IL, passed away March 7, 2010. 359th BS Pilot, completed 35 combat missions Submitted by: Gary L. Moncur 303rd Bomb Group Historian

Nolan, Robert H., 486th BG, of Clearwater, FL passed away March 5, 2010. Bob was the navigator for the Schmitz crew, 835th, reporting to Station 174 as a flight officer. He received a commission and continued to serve with the USAF for 24 years, retiring at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Hospers, William H. "Doc", Ft Worth, Texas, B-17G Chuckie passed away March 23, 2010.

Collins, Harvie L., 90, Jonesboro, AR, formerly of Huntsville, AL, passed away on March 21, 2010. Harvie served 21 years in the 8th Air Force. He was a waist gunner for the 303rd BG and completed 24 missions. He flew on the B-17 *Snap, Crackle, Pop*. Harvie retired in 1962 as a Chief Master Sergeant.

Hasart, Edwin G., Lodi, CA., passed away March 27, 2010. He was 1st Lt, AC, B-24 Pilot. A member of the Carpetbaggers, flew his missions at night and received the Distinguished Flying cross and other commendations.

Bright, John L. (Buddy), age 92, Brunswick, GA, passed away January 12, 2010. Buddy was a P-51 combat pilot, stationed 357th F.G. - Leiston. submitted by James B. F. Russell, 466th BG

Matthews, Edward E. "Coots", - 338th BS/96th BG - Gunner. Flew on October 14, 1943 - Second Schweinfurt Mission. Owner/Operator of "Boots & Coots" - Oil Well Firefighters. Submitted by, William Hess of Houston, TX

Sarafian, Robert (Bob) Sarkis, 90 of Riverdale in the Bronx passed away March 11, 2010. Bob served with the 97th BG. His Group was,

at different times, part of the 8th Air Force, the 12th Air Force, and the 15th Air Force and served in England, North Africa, and Italy. Bob always saw his military service as a proud and deeply meaningful accomplishment.

Minugh, Charles Jack, - Los Angeles, California. He served as a waist gunner,

92nd BG, 327th "Alley Oop" Squadron.

Veenschoten, John, - 85, Erie, PA, passed away February 20, 2010. John was sent overseas as a replacement to the 398th BG, 603rd Squadron of the First Air Wing of the 8th Air Force. He completed 30 combat missions over Europe, receiving six Air Medals and the Bronze Star among other awards.

Dye, Carl J., 88, 303rd BG, a resident of Bella Vista, Ark., died May, 2010. He began his career with the federal government in Washington, D.C., in the early 1940s. He joined the U.S. Army Air Corps and became a navigator for a lead crew of the 303rd BG. He was based in England and flew 30 missions in a B-17 bomber. He was awarded the Purple Heart, among many other medals of honor. He remained in the U.S. Air Force Reserves after the war and attained the rank of colonel; he also served as commander of the former Richards-Gebaur Air Force Base outside Kansas City.

Watson, Judson, "Fred" Jr., 85, of Leisure World of Virginia at Lansdowne since 2002, formerly of Charlotte, NC, died at home May 11th 2010. 303rd BG and ground support units at Molesworth, England. Mr. Watson flew 33 mis-



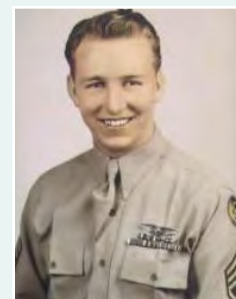
Robert Sarafian



Charles Minugh



John Veenschoten



Coots Mathews

sions including one on D-Day. **Doskocz, John J.**, 466th BG, Port Richey, FL, passed away on March 19, 2010. He was lead Crew Chief of B-24H Liberator "Slick Chick". John won the Bronze Star for his dedicated line work. "Slick Chick" flew an amazing 126 missions without a



John Doskocz - Slick Chick

John Doskoez



mechanical abort. Submitted by, Helen Doskocz

Cruikshank, Charles B. "Crankshaft", Original cadre pilot in the 418th BS/100th BG. He flew on the August 17, 1943 mission to Regensburg, Germany where he won the Distinguished Flying Cross. He was later shot down on October 10th, 1943 on the Munster mission, when the 100th BG was almost entirely wiped out.



Charles B. "Crankshaft" Cruikshank

Quinn, Thomas J., 359th BS Pilot, died peacefully in his sleep April 24, 2010 in Melbourne, Florida. Tom remained in the US Air Force after WWII and retired in 1963 as a Lieutenant Colonel.

Cooke, Charles T. "Chuck" - 94, Jackson, MS. A retired Air Force Lieutenant Colonel and decorated wars. He served as a B-17 Flying Fortress pilot and group leader in the Eighth Air Force, 388th Bomb Group, operating out of Knettishall, England. After the war, he resumed service as an officer in the U.S. Air Force, including a tour of duty in Vietnam from 1968-1969, flying 260 combat missions as a C-47 pilot in support of U.S. ground forces. Twice awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and awarded six Air Medals.

Hamilton, Joseph W. "Jiggs", - 88, Austin, TX. Radion Operator - 457th Bomb Group, completed 21 missions.



Jiggs Hamilton

Lewis, Frank Eugene - died Jan 30, 2009. Proud member of the 8th Air Force.

Perry, Frank Joseph - 84, Bar Harbor, ME. He went in the Army Air Corps during World War II, and he became a belly gunner on a B24J Liberator Bomber. He was with the 15th AF.

Singer, Robert "Bob" - 87, Wilmington, NC. Bob served his country in the 8th Air Force from 1943 to 1946 as Radio Operator on a B-17 and flew 29 missions. His 25th mission was a successful mission that earned his crew the Distinguished Flying Cross. submitted by: Betty Singer

Zabel, Walter - Old Lyme, CT. He was a ball turret gunner with the Ray Brymer crew flying B-17 Leading Lady 305th BG 364 Sqdn. He completed 25 missions from Chelveston by 6/13/44.

Smith, Basil E. - 87, Dyersburg, TN. He was retired as owner of Basil Smith Realty Co. He was also a staff sergeant in the Army Air Corps during World War II and tail gunner with the 562nd BS, 388th BG completing 26 missions.

Bowen Jr., Armour C. - passed on October 11, 2009. He served with the 381st Bomb Group stationed at Ridgewell AF Base in England. He was in England from Dec. 1943 - May 1944.

submitted by: Jeanne D. Bowen

Efird, Chad - 87, Albemarle, NC. A veteran of the U.S. Air Force, having served during WWII, Mr. Efird was an 8th Air Force B-17 Bomber Pilot who flew 35 missions in the European Theater and was awarded an Air Medal with 5 Oak Leaf Clusters, ETO medal and the Presidential citation. He was a member of the Caterpillar Club made up of men who were forced to bail out during a mission. He was with the 452nd BG. submitted by: Mary Wiley, 8th AFHS Associate

Miller, George "Fritz" - 84,

Shillington, PA. Miller was a navigator in the Air Force for 24 years, retiring as a major in 1967. While in the service, he served in World War II, navigating B-24s with the Eighth Army Air Force, 97th Bomb Wing SAC, flying out of England.

Merkel, Paul Earl - 88, Dover, DE.

Paul most recently retired from Dover Air Force Base Civil Service where he worked with Ground Power Equipment Services.

Borowy, Edward - Ball turret gunner, he rejoined his unit and now lives in Heaven and through his family and friends. submitted by: His proud son, John Borowy

Delguidice, Louis E. - North Haven, CT. He joined the U.S. Air Force and was a radio operator aboard a B-24. On January 7th, 1944 he was shot down over occupied France and was hidden by the French Underground and eventually ended up in a Spanish prison. He was released to the English Red Cross and finally made it back to the United States. He was a member of the Air Force Escape and evasion Society, The 2nd Air Division, The Mighty Eighth Historical Society, the 93rd BG and the Mighty Eighth Museum in Pooler, GA. He was cremated and at his request part of his ashes will be scattered over the airfield in Hardwick, England.

Heggen Jr., Theodore B. - 88, Las Cruces, N.M. - 35 missions with the 410th BS, 94th BG. He was a bombardier on the Claude L. "Larry" Thomas Crew and was honored with the ETO Ribbon and three Battle Stars, the Air Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters and the Distinguished Flying Cross. submitted by: Bill Lathrop "Top Turret"

Buschmeier, Elaine - wife of Frank Buschmeier - Waist Gunner of the John Gibbons Crew - "Miss Irish" - 100th BG.

Waddell, Emily - Loving companion of Robert Shoens - Pilot of "Our Gal Sal" 100th BG. Your gracious smile will be missed by your 100th BG family.

Mahurin, Colonel Walker M. "Bud" - WWII / Korea War Fighter Ace. Colonel Walker "Bud" Mahurin was the first fighter pilot to reach ten victories in the European Theater. He was also the only fighter pilot to shoot down an enemy aircraft in the European & Pacific Theaters and the Korean War. Colonel Mahurin flew with the famed 56th Fighter Group "Zemke's Wolfpack" in the 63rd Fighter Squadron. He later served the 3rd Air Commando Group where he claimed a Japanese bomber

destroyed.

During the Korean War, Colonel Mahurin flew the F-86 Sabre with the 4th Fighter – Interceptor Group. During his tenure with the 4th FIG he was credited a further 3.5 enemy aircraft destroyed. On May 13, 1952, while strafing ground targets, Colonel Mahurin's aircraft was hit by North Korean anti-aircraft fire. After crash-landing, Colonel Mahurin was subsequently captured and spent the next 16 months as a prisoner of war. He endured months of relentless torture that included intense questioning, solitary confinement, sleep deprivation, threats of execution, and brainwashing. He was finally released in September of 1953, months after the conclusion of the Korean War.

In later life, he became a chief executive in the aircraft industry. He was the author of two books, "Honest John" and "Hitler's Fall Guys." "Bud" also enjoyed participating as a speaker in several historical symposiums, aviation art print signings and veterans' events.

Very rarely did you ever catch him without a smile on his face. Colonel Walker M. "Bud" Mahurin was a skilled pilot and an American patriot, but most of all a true gentleman.

Harker, Lt. Colonel Chester V. 'Chet' – P-47 / P-51 pilot – 486th FS/352nd FG – Bodney, England. Flew two combat tours with the "Blue-Nosed Bastards of Bodney," including the first "Russian Shuttle" mission in the summer of 1944.



Lt. Colonel Chester V. 'Chet' Harker

Clark, Lt. Gen. Albert Patton, Albert died March 2010 and is buried at the Air Force Academy. He was born at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, son of Col.

A. P. Clark, United States Army Medical Corps and Mary Catherine Gannon Clark. Clark, whose lifelong nickname was "Bub," graduated from Main Avenue High School in San Antonio, Texas, in 1931 and entered West Point in 1932, with an appointment from the District of Columbia.

He deployed to England with the 31st Fighter Group as a lieutenant colonel and the Group's Executive Officer in June 1942. Flying a Spitfire with the RAF, the young pilot came under enemy fire and crash landed at Cape Gris Nez, France, in July 1942, making him the first USAAF fighter pilot taken prisoner of war in Germany. He was held at Stalag Luft III and, as one of the youngest lieutenant colonels in the camp, was designated "Big S," head of security for the tunnel builders in North Compound, assisting the men who later participated in the now famous "Great Escape." In that capacity, he masterminded much of the intelligence and covert work that kept the POWs well-informed on hostile German actions that threatened the prisoners' welfare on numerous occasions. He was moved to South Compound, eventually accompanying his fellow prisoners on the Forced Evacuation March to Spremberg, Germany, where most of the POWs boarded boxcars to continue to Stalag VIIA in Moosburg, Germany. They were liberated there on 29 April 1945. Bub proved to be a rock to his men throughout their ordeals and provided a role model for young men who

were tested to their limits. Loyal to his men, he stayed with them through each emotional trial and even sacrificed his own early return after liberation to "close the gate" at Stalag VIIA in Moosburg, after being assured each of his men was safely headed home. He completed a recent memoir of his experiences entitled, *"33 Months in Stalag Luft III: A WWII Airman Tells His Story."*

After the war, Bub graduated from the Armed Forces Staff College in 1947, and the National War College in 1951. Among key staff assignments were the Air Training Command, Air Defense Command, the Continental Air



Lt. Gen. Albert Patton Clark

Command, Headquarters United States Air Forces Europe as Chief of Staff, and Headquarters United States Air Forces at the Pentagon. Bub commanded the 48th Fighter Bomber Wing in France, the United States Military Training Mission for Saudi Arabia and the 313th Air Division in Okinawa. He also served as the Vice-Commander of the Tactical Air Command, Commander of the Air University and Superintendent of the Air Force Academy. During his tenure as superintendent from August 1970 until July 1974, he was involved with all aspects of cadet life and instruction. A Command Pilot, his decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, the Air Medal and various service medals. Retiring as a lieutenant general after thirty-eight years in service on 31 July 1974, he and Carolyn made their home in Colorado, where he served on the boards of the United States Olympic Committee, the Boy Scouts of America, Stalag Luft III Former POWs, as President of the Pikes Peak Council of the Boy Scouts, as Secretary of the Falcon Foundation and as President of the Friends of the Air Force Academy Library.

Bub's steadfast watchwords were ever: Duty, Honor, Country. He lived a rich rewarding life replete with honor and devotion. He was a man of striking integrity whose service and unyielding commitment earned him great admiration. Through his full and abundant life he maintained his ardent Catholic faith, which saw him through the tragedy of wars and the challenges of peace. He wished to be simply remembered as a man who served his God, his country and his family to the best of his ability.

Submitted by Marilyn Walton



HOTEL UPDATE: As of May 20, 2010, we only had 15 rooms with double beds remaining in our room block, so please book your room today. We still have plenty of King bed rooms remaining.

For those of you who are unable to secure rooms at the Crowne Plaza, we have secured several double bed rooms at the brand new Hampton Inn just next door at the same room rate.

SPECIAL EVENT

The Last Great Gathering of Fortresses and Legends

August 5 - 9, 2010

The 8th Air Force Historical Society is hosting veterans, family members, and their guests at the Willow Run Air Show, located just outside Detroit, August 5 thru 9, 2010. The Air Show organizers are expecting 8 to 10 B-17's to attend, 2 B-24's, 12 P-51's, the usual cadre of other WW-II aircraft, as well as a flying ME-262 and an ME-109. (NOTE: Detroit is also a Non-stop flight from several airports).

Attendees registered with the 8th AFHS and staying at our hotel **within our room block** will have preferential (back door) motor coach transportation to and from the event with delivery to a private tented seating and viewing area at center stage, as well as free access to several B-17's offering "walk thrus" to the general public who, will be paying \$5 to \$10 per person for access. Our admission will include lunch, transportation, center stage seating, as well as dinner Saturday, followed by a symposium Saturday night. Optional tours will be available Friday and Sunday for those who only want to attend the Air Show Saturday.

Our host hotel is the Crowne Plaza Detroit Metro Airport with complimentary airport shuttle, from Detroit Wayne County Airport (DTW), free parking for those driving in and a room rate of \$89 per night + tax.

A limited number of Group Gathering rooms (or Hospitality rooms, whichever you prefer) will also be available at a nominal cost to the seven largest Groups in attendance with 30 attendees or more.

There will also be a fully stocked 8th Air Force communal hospitality room welcoming all others who walk thru the door.

PLEASE NOTE: This is not an 8th Air Force Historical Society Reunion, but rather an 8th AFHS sponsored event, and you **do not** need to be a member of the Historical Society to attend. We were requested by the Air Show organizers to host the veterans and their guests in an "organized fashion," which we are happy to oblige.

We will have a large buffet "Welcome" dinner Friday evening, followed by lunch and dinner at the Air Show Saturday, with an interesting symposium to follow Saturday evening, and concluding with a Gala Banquet Sunday evening.

More information, instructions, and registration form can be found on the following pages and on our web site at www.8thafhs.org.



CANCELLATION POLICY

You may cancel your reunion plans with the Society and receive a full refund prior to the cut-off date. There will be a \$25 charge for each reservation cancelled after the cut-off date. Cancellations can be made thru July 31, Monday thru Friday from 9:00am to 5:00pm Eastern time, by calling 912-748-8884.

CANCELLATIONS AND REFUNDS CANNOT BE MADE AFTER JULY 31, 2010

PLEASE NOTE:

Canceling your Reunion reservations does not cancel your Hotel reservations. You must do that separately, or expect to be charged for at least one room night per room reserved.

Please complete the following registration form indicating your choice of meals and tours, along with the other member information. Mail your registration form, along with your check or money order, to 8th AFHS by July 15, 2010. Or you may also securely register on line and pay with a credit card at www.8thafhs.org. just click on "Special Event".

Hotel reservations should also be made directly with the hotel no later than July 15, 2010 by calling 1-734-729-2600 or 1-800-227-6963.

**Just say that you are with the Group
8th Air Force.**

THURSDAY (August 5)

9:30am-12:00pm	Early Bird Registration Open
1:30pm-3:30pm	Early Bird Registration Open

FRIDAY (August 6)

9:30am-12:00pm	Registration Open
10:30am-3:00	Ford Museum Tour (optional)
2:00pm-5:00pm	Registration Open
5:30pm-6:30pm	Cash Bar Reception
6:30pm-8:30pm	Buffet Dinner and entertainment (with Reserved seating for larger Groups)

SATURDAY (August 7)

7:00am-9:00am	Full Buffet Breakfast
10:00am-4:30pm	Air Show (with box Lunch)
5:15pm-8:00pm	Symposium and dinner (at Willow Run)
8:00pm	Return to Hotel & Hospitality Suites

SUNDAY (August 8)

7:00am-9:00am	Full Buffet Breakfast
8:30am-9:00am	Worship Service
10:00am-4:30pm	Air Show (Optional)
10:30am-3:00	Ford Museum Tour (Optional)
6:00pm-7:00pm	Cash Bar Reception
7:00pm-	Gala 8 th AFHS dinner with reserved Group seating

MONDAY (August 9)

7:00am-9:00am	Full Buffet Breakfast
	Hugs and Depart

THE CROWNE PLAZA DETROIT METRO AIRPORT

800-227-6963 Crowne Plaza Toll Free Reservation Line

734-729-2600 Crowne Plaza direct line (ask for reservations)

August 5 -9, 2010

The Crowne Plaza is located at 8000 Merriman Road, Romulus, MI 48174. Situated at the entrance to Detroit Metro Airport, its spectacular sun-drenched atrium lobby will welcome

you with a special warmth, and the cheerful, professional staff will pamper you with exceptional service.

Stylish accommodations and gracious hospitality are the cornerstones of the Crowne Plaza Detroit Metro Airport. This magnificent 11-story hotel has 364 spacious guest rooms, many with walk-out balconies overlooking the atrium and pool area. Balcony rooms are based upon availability at time of check in.

All rooms have lighted work desks, telephones with voice-mail, free high speed internet access and cable televisions with in room pay movies.



Relax and unwind in the heated indoor swimming pool and whirlpool or stay in shape in the complimentary on-site fitness center. Discover the delightful cuisine of Bistro 94-elegant, but by no means formal-offering your favorite American fare, exquisite wines and elegant deserts. Trophy's Sports Bar provides hearty food and drink to guests while they enjoy televised sporting events or friendly conversation. All restaurant and Lounge selections are also available through room service.

The Hotel is less than 5 minutes from the airport and has 2 airport courtesy shuttles. Shuttles

Service must be requested by going to the lower level of the terminal (where you pick up your luggage). There is a phone board with several Hotels listed. Simply ring the Crowne Plaza and ask to be picked up.

For those of you wishing faster service, airport shuttle vans are available at \$24 per shuttle, meaning that 1 person will pay \$24 for a ride to the hotel, however, a group of up to 8 people will pay a total of \$24 for the same ride, so "Buddy Up" if you can.

Parking is free for all our guests driving in, including those with RV's and trailers, however, no hook-ups are available on site. And for those of you who may start out with a full head of steam, but slow down for some unexpected reason, we will have 3 wheelchairs on site for your convenience.



MEALS/TOUR SELECTIONS

CHOICE #1

THE FUN PACKAGE \$225

(our most popular option)

The Fun Package is designed for those who prefer a “single priced” fairly inclusive event package. You may add extra events to your Fun Package as you wish by simply adding them to your registration form and paying the additional cost. The Fun Package allows you the option to add a Friday tour or Sunday tour, for those who only want to visit the Air Show on Saturday.

THE FUN PACKAGE INCLUDES:

Registration Fee
3 full buffet breakfasts, beginning with breakfast on Friday
3 Dinners (Fri, Sat, & Sun)
Saturday Air Show with Lunch
Saturday Evening Dinner & Symposium
Bus Transportation and Preferential Air Show
Seating on Saturday only

PLEASE NOTE:

Ford Museum Tour Friday or Sunday is an additional cost.

The Sunday Air Show is an additional cost.
See registration form for all additional costs.

Daily breakfast buffet includes bacon, eggs, sausage, potatoes, assorted juices and breads, cereal, fruit, yogurt, coffee, tea and milk..

CHOICE #2

INDIVIDUAL MEALS AND EVENTS

If you choose to purchase individual meals and event activity, you will be required to pay the Registration fee of \$35 **per attendee**.

INDIVIDUAL GROUP MEALS:

Friday: Welcome Buffet and Entertainment.....\$35
Sunday: Banquet Plated Dinner
(Filet Mignon or Salmon).....\$45

INDIVIDUAL EVENTS:

Saturday: Air Show 10:00am-5:00pm
(Includes admission, Box Lunch,
preferential transportation and seating).....\$55

Saturday: Buffet Dinner and Symposium
at Willow Run 5:15pm-8:00pm.....\$45

Sunday: Air Show 10:00am-5:00pm
(Includes admission, Box Lunch ,
preferential transportation and seating).....\$45

Henry Ford Museum Tour:

Friday.....\$37
Sunday.....\$37

•Guide gratuities are not included in the tour prices.

8th AFHS Willow Run Air Show General Registration Form

“The Last Great Gathering of Fortresses and Legends” August 5 – 9, 2010

Please complete the registration form below for all you attendees, make a copy of it for your records and return it along with your full payment in the form of check or money order payable to 8th AFHS (see address below). Your cancelled check will be your confirmation. You may also register online and pay by credit card at www.8thafhs.org just click on on the Home Page “SPECIAL EVENT.” Registration forms and payment must be received by July 15, 2010, after which time reservations will be accepted on a space available basis only.

8th AFHS
P.O. Box 956
Pooler, GA 31322

CUT-OFF DATE IS 7/15/10

	Price Per	# of People	Total
<u>EVENT PACKAGE</u>			
The FUN Package (see description elsewhere) Fun Package includes the Registration fee. Please select your meals, any additional tours and proceed to the bottom of the page.	\$225		\$
<u>REGISTRATION FEE</u>			
Required for all individuals purchasing separately priced meals and events (covers activity related overhead and expenses)	\$35		\$
Reg. Fee for children ages 8 - 15 Children 7 and under free	\$20		\$
Please select your entrée choice(s) for the Sunday Banquet			
Filet Mignon		#	
Salmon		#	
<u>SEPARATELY PRICED MEALS (if not purchasing a package)</u>			
Friday: Welcome Buffet and Entertainment	\$34		\$
Sunday: Banquet (please select your entrée)			
Filet Mignon	\$45		\$
Salmon	\$45		\$
<u>OPTIONAL EVENTS/TOURS</u>			
Friday: Henry Ford Museum Tour	\$37		\$
Saturday: Air Show 10:00am-4:30pm	\$55		\$
Saturday: Air Show Symposium and Dinner 5:15pm-8:00pm	\$35		\$
Sunday: Air Show 10:00am-4:30pm	\$45		\$
Sunday: Henry Ford Museum Tour	\$37		\$
Total Amount Payable to 8th AFHS			\$

MEMBER NAME (for nametag) _____ ☐ VETERAN ☐ NEXTGEN

WWII GROUP AFFILIATION (for seating purposes) _____

SPOUSE/GUEST NAMES _____ ☐ VETERAN ☐ NEXTGEN

PHONE # (_____) _____ - _____ EMAIL ADDRESS _____ @ _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ ST _____ ZIP _____

DISABILITY/DIETARY RESTRICTIONS _____

MUST BE LIFTED HYDRAULICALLY ONTO THE BUS WHILE SEATED IN YOUR WHEELCHAIR IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN BUS TRIPS? ☐ YES ☐ NO (PLEASE NOTE THAT WE CANNOT GUARANTEE AVAILABILITY).

EMERGENCY CONTACT _____ PHONE # (_____) _____ - _____

**REGISTRATION FORM FOR THE
NINETEENTH ANNUAL REUNION
--THE PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER--**

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

**June 20 - 22, 2010
Days Inn - Penn State, State College, PA.**

Contact: PA CHAP/8AFHS - Reunion 2010;
P.O. Box 58, Pine Grove, PA 17963-0058

**351st BOMB GROUP
ASSOCIATION**

The 351st Bomb Group, 8th Air Force, based in Polebrook, England during World War II, now The 351st Bomb Group Association will celebrate its Annual reunion June 17 through June 20 in Seattle, Washington. The headquarters hotel will be the Embassy Suites Hotel. Veterans of this Unit or friends, are invited to attend.

For information and reservations contact: Pam Brown at Gatherings Plus, P.O. Box 1023 Branson West, MO 65737. Telephone: (417) 338-4048.



Dear Ladies,

Enclosed please find pictures of WWII.

They kind of cover my small contribution to WWII.

I was a Pilot commander of a B-17 crew. 602 5Q, 398th BG 8th AF. We survived 25 missions.

My favorite picture is the one where I'm holding a copy of Stars & Stripes "Germany Quilts" - Why? - I made it, and half of the crews I went over with did not.

They were my heroes of WWII.

Sincerely,
Bill Markham



Dennis R. Scanlan Jr. Inducted into Minnesota Aviation Hall of Fame

St. Paul, Minnesota – Dennis R. Scanlan, Jr. was inducted into the Minnesota Aviation Hall of Fame on April 24, 2010. Denny Scanlan, father of nine, world renowned surgical instrument designer, manufacturer, inventor, and aviation pioneer was honored and recognized for his contribution to aviation.

"A lot of guys would say, 'Don't volunteer for anything in the service.' I'd volunteer for anything that would keep me learning about aircraft." That's the way Denny Scanlan felt about aviation.

He spent his life in and around airplanes. As a kid in the 1920s he spent afternoons watching the "Jennies" at the airfield near Larpenteur and Hamline in St. Paul. One winter, Denny's mother sent him to buy a winter hat. Instead, he bought a WWI aviation helmet. "It was an all leather helmet." He said, "It wasn't as warm as a regular hat, but I liked it." He had to wear it all winter.

When World War II began, Denny enlisted and was assigned to the 8th Air Force in Alconbury, England where he was Captain, acting as Senior Flying Control Officer with the 482nd Bomb group. The 482nd Bomb group became famous for their pioneering use of airborne radar which allowed bombing even through nearly complete cloud cover.

Scanlan's career after the war included Northwestern Aeronautical, which he operated out of the former Northwest Airlines Terminal in St Paul, and the Scanlan family surgical business, Scanlan International, where he worked shoulder to shoulder with heart surgeons the world over to design and manufacture specialized surgical instruments.

During the 1960s and 1970s, Scanlan had his fixed base operations at Holman Field in St Paul, leasing DC-3's, and selling Aero Commander Aircraft. Mr. Scanlan then focused on the preservation of the 8TH Air Force, by playing a leading role in developing the 8TH Air Force Historical Society. He was a steadfast promoter of aviation and its history. He was an instrumental figure in the 8th Air Force Historical Society, coordinating yearly gatherings and symposiums with such aviation luminaries as Jimmy Doolittle, Gabby Gabreski and German WWII Flying Ace Adolph Galland, along with other Aviation heroes in his life such as Ira Eaker, Sir Harold ("Mick")



Martin and Red Morgan, all of whom he called friends. His constant support of aviation history was exemplified through his membership and leadership of the Commemorative Air Force (formerly the Confederate Air Force) and the Minnesota Aviation Hall of Fame.



Scanlan's mentorship and continued contribution to the history of aviation was shown in his financial contributions to the sponsorship and construction of a WWII control Tower at Wright-Patterson AFB in Dayton Ohio, and establishing an 8TH Air Force Library at the University of St. Thomas, as well as donating his many papers and art to Penn State for the 8TH Air Force Archive.

Aviation was near and dear to Denny Scanlan's heart as were his country, God, his wife Peg, his nine children and his family business. In 1986 Dennis, along with his son Tim, helped establish the C. Walton and Richard C. Lillehei Surgical Society, endowing a chair in cardiothoracic surgery at the University of Minnesota, which continues today.

Thomas Schellinger, Chairman of the Minnesota Aviation Hall of Fame presented the Dennis R. Scanlan, Jr. induction plaque to Brigid Scanlan Eiynek and Timothy Scanlan at the Twenty First Annual Induction Ceremony.

For more information, please contact:
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THE FUTURE

On January 15, 2009, "Sully" Sullenberger sat in the left seat of an Airbus A 320-214 aircraft. He was the Captain on U.S. Airways Flight 1549 bound to Charlotte from New York City. As this huge aircraft pulled away from the gate, there were 150 passengers on board along with three flight attendants. They were settling down in their seats listening to the litany of instructions given to them by the flight attendants about safety, seat belts, flotation gear, emergency exit signs, oxygen masks. Most were looking out the window, some were reading, or just relaxing. This was all routine stuff...they had heard it before. The giant Airbus snaked its way along the maze of taxi-strips and runways of La Guardia to the take-off position. "Cactus fifteen forty nine, you are cleared for take-off." They moved to the center of the runway, full power, the throaty roar of the jet engines responded, they accelerated rapidly and at 3:26 they passed the end of the runway, quickly ascended to 1,000 feet and were still climbing. Everything was being performed on the check-list.....the routine "flaps up" and moments later "gear up." They were accelerating, 250 knots. Then suddenly in their path were birds they could not avoid, they began hearing the thuds against the plane, the disturbing final moans of the jet engines as they ingested these fowl. Smoke filled the cabin accompanied by a burning birds odor. The engines quit, all power was gone. Alternate landing fields were beyond their reach. They were over the New York skyline, thousands of people were in those buildings, only the Hudson River lay ahead. The only sound was the rushing wind, the water was coming closer, a message on the intercom broke the silence...., "this is the Captain, brace for impact!"

God alone knows what went through the minds of the passengers on Flight 1549. Some may have wished they had listened to the emergency procedures more carefully, others thought about their family, one couple was engaged to be married, they kissed one another and told each other "I love you" and accepted death together. The entire passenger list, the three attendants and both pilots faced death. The plane descended, the skyscrapers were clearly visible just outside the window, the water was coming up to meet them. It looked cold. The thousands of hours of flying experience helped the pilot do something never before accomplished, ditch a powerless airplane safely with 150 passengers. They hit, landed very hard on the belly of the plane and slid along the water and came to a stop. Water flooded the cabin, the emergency doors were opened, all passengers were soaked but able to deplane onto the wings waiting for help. The Captain counted and recounted heads making certain all 150 passengers were accounted for. They were safe, all were alive!!!! They had eluded a near death experience this time but later in life, everyone of them will again face certain death. How will they, and how should we, cope with this reality?

The Pilot up front in all of our lives gives us a "heads-up" announcement with plenty of warning to prepare and brace for the "landing that is coming." What do we do to prepare for this event?

- (1) Submit yourself into the hands of the Captain, He has been through this Himself.
- (2) Don't focus on negative things. They are beyond your control.
- (3) Stay optimistic, being pessimistic will kill you "early".
- (4) Have faith in that which cannot be seen by the eye or heard by the ear.

(5) Count your blessings. The sun came up this morning, enjoy it.

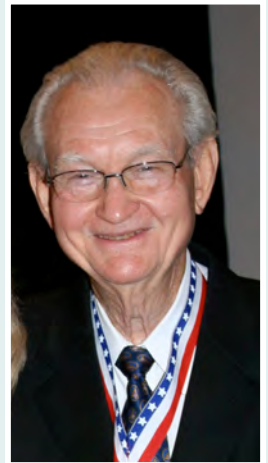
(6) Anticipate tomorrow but live today as if it were your last.

(7) You will encounter someone today, make it meaningful to them and yourself.

(8) Talk to God and He will talk back to you.

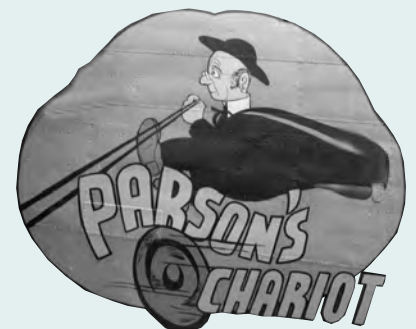
(9) Fasten your seat belts for the greatest trip anyone can make.

"Soak up the Sun" was a song sung by Sheryl Crow. One line goes like this: "It's not having what you want/It's wanting what you've got." A lot of precious moments fill our lifetime. Paul the Apostle had a perspective worthy for our consideration/. "I am convinced" he said, "that neither death nor life, neither angels or demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Roman s 8:38-39 NIV)



Earl Wassom

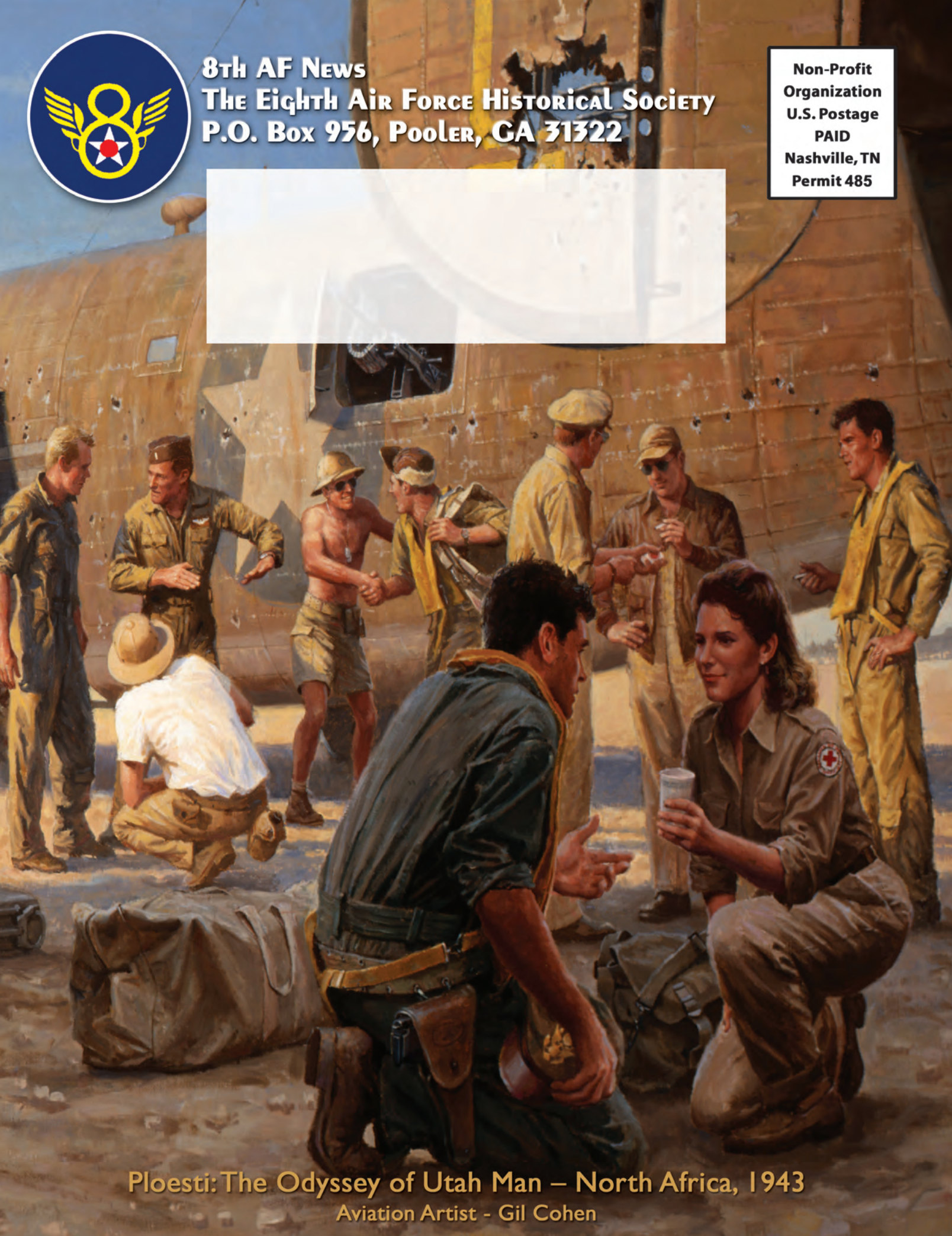
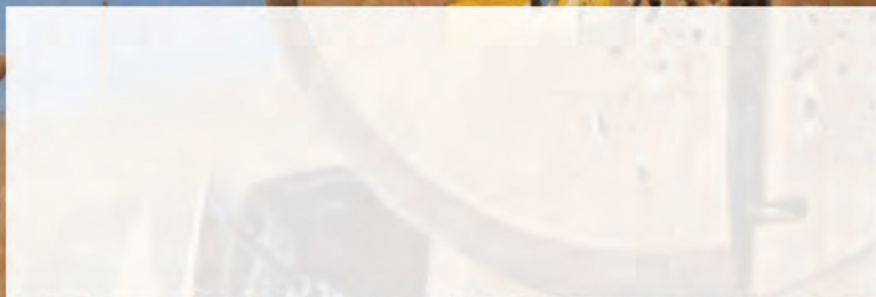
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