



8TH AF NEWS

Volume 10 Number 3 Voice of "The Mighty Eighth"

Pima Air Museum - Bone Yard

What's Inside This Issue?

- 36th Annual 8th AFHS Reunion Photo Album
Tucson, Arizona - pages 6-12
- The Last Great Gathering of Fortresses
and Legends Detroit, Michigan - pages 38-44



The Last Great Gathering of Fortresses and Legends



AF News

September 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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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Presidents Message	3
Board of Directors	3
Behind the Scenes	4
From the 8th AFHS Office	5
Chapter/Unit/Group Liaison Report	5
36th 8th AF Annual Reunions	
Photo Album	6-12
Mail Call	18-21
Next Generation.....	24
Bomb Group Reunions	26
Chapter News.....	27-29
Book Reviews	30-32
Taps	34-37
The Last Great Gathering of Fortresses and Legends Photo Album.....	38-44
Bulletin Board	45
8th AFHS PX Store	46
How About It?	47

PRESIDENTS ADDRESS – Sept. 2010

In 2003 Lorene and I attended our first 8th Air Force Historical Society Reunion in Colorado Springs as invited guests. We did not have any affiliation with a crew or group nor any family history with the Society. We simply had a collection of World War II memorabilia which reflected our respect and admiration of the men and women who served in the air war and our determination to preserve their legacy. After that reunion, however, we were hooked! We had met so many interesting people and heard so many fascinating stories. We were thrilled with the invitation to return the following year to Kansas City.

It's hard for me to believe that seven years have passed since my first reunion. I've continued to meet "new" vets and re-connect with "old" friends each year. Sadly I've also had to bid farewell to many good friends. However, the one constant thread I've noticed these years is the passion to preserve the legacy of the 8th Air Force. This seems stronger now than ever before.

I've had the pleasure to serve the Society in past years as Secretary and Vice-President. I was honored in July to be named as the new President. Never did I imagine seven years ago that I would hold this position. Am I a little anxious? You bet I am! But, I know I have the support of a knowledgeable and diverse Board of Directors (Bob Moses, Dave Nowack, Darrel Lowell, Earl Wassom, George Hoidra, Nancy Toombs, Pat Keeley, Mike Faley, and Bruce Sundlun) who are committed to the Society.

"Tucson in July" --- we did it! I've received many compliments on our 2010 summer reunion. Over 200 brave souls journeyed to the Southwest to enjoy Arizona's sun and landscape. Tours provided glimpses of life from the desolate desert to the glamour of Hollywood movies. One of the highlights was the

Pima Air Museum (also home of the 390th Bomb Group) and Boneyard Tour. This will certainly be a reunion to remember.

To those who were fortunate to attend the Willow Run Air Show in Detroit --- what can I say? It was a once in a lifetime experience! This 8th AFHS sponsored special event was billed as "The Last Great Gathering of Fortresses and Legends." I think that pretty much sums it up. Many vets said they had never seen eight B-17's and a B-24 in the air at the same time since the end of World War II. I saw many proud men stand a little taller that day. I also saw lots of smiles and hugs and tears.

The Board of Directors will soon finalize plans for the 2011 Reunion to be held in Omaha, NB. The dates will be announced in the December issue of the magazine. Interest has been expressed among members to reconsider Fall dates for the reunion. I also want to encourage your support for the City of Savannah B-17 Project at the Museum.

As I begin my term as President of the Historical Society, I want to encourage communication between you and me. I am always accessible to you through my home phone, cell phone, mail, or e-mail (all of these are listed on the inside cover). I want to represent you to the best of my ability, but I can only do this with your support and communication with me. God Bless the "Mighty Eighth."



Harry Tanner
President

Sincerely, Harry Tanner – President 8th AFHS

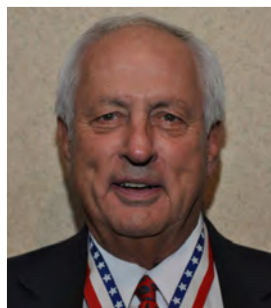
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Michael P. Faley
September 2010 (10-4)



Joseph P. Keeley



Bruce Sundlun



Dr. Nancy J. Toombs



Earl E. Wassom

BEHIND THE SCENES



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

What a great 36th Annual Tucson Reunion and a once in a lifetime Airshow Event "The last Great Gatherings of Fortresses and Legends".

I think we need a repeat for 2011!!!

Our request for snapshots has been overflowing with response.

Thank you Cindy and Earl Wassom, for taking some great Tucson scenery photos that you will see through-out

the reunion photo album, along with many other activity photos from both events. Ralph Lynn as always took some great photographs of all the activities in Tucson. Jim Gintner took some spectacular shots of the airshow in Detroit. Our back cover photos are also compliments of Jim Gintner. Thank you also goes to Steven Riddling, Michael Faley, Pat Keeley, Cindy Goodman, Frank Youngquist, Christopher Doud and Nancy Toombs for sending photos that are featured in this September reunion issue. It's a good feeling to get such a great response.

Please note that my email address has changed

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

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

JIMMY STEWART



**Above - Studio portrait photo of 8th
Air Force B-24 Liberator pilot, James M.
Stewart.**

Right - Major Stewart returning from a mission over Germany. Stewart flew twenty missions against the enemy over Europe. He began his tenure with the 8th Air Force with the 445th Bomb Group at Tibenham. He eventually moved to the 453rd Bomb Group at Old Buckenham. By the end of the hostilities, Stewart was promoted to Commander of the 2nd Bomb Wing.





From the 8th Air Force Historical Society Office



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Catherine Rice

"Hello Everyone!!"

Thank you for a wonderful Reunion and Air show to all those that participated! I am trying to catch up on everything in the office as quickly as I can.

It's dues time again!

Please take note to the Dues Insert in the middle of this 2010 September 8th AF News issue.

On a personal note, my husband will be returning

from Iraq in the middle of October. By the December issue a replacement will be selected. My husband and I will be moving early next year to our new duty station near Tacoma, Washington.

If you might be interested in working for the 8th AFHS on a part-time basis and have advanced computer skills, (Excel, Microsoft Word, Outlook, and QuickBooks) please contact our membership office via email (membershipmanager@8thafhs.org) or telephone - (912) 748-8884. Our office is currently based at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Pooler, Georgia.

**Catherine Rice
Membership Records Manager
8th Air Force Historical Society**

CHAPTER/UNIT/GROUP LIAISON REPORT

The 36th Annual 8th AFHS Reunion was held this past July in Tucson AZ and despite the concerns of Tucson in July it was more humid and hot on the east coast. Although I could not attend the Willow Run Air Show held outside of Detroit in early August, I was told, that it was a once in a lifetime experience.

I would like to thank Tom Gagnon and Ken Sweet from the Florida Chapter for attending the Chapter/Unit Advisory meeting held in Tucson. One of the subjects discussed was how the Chapters are to continue when it is difficult, if not impossible, to find anyone to assume Board of Director's positions. I have inquired with other Chapters & Groups and this, along with the main issue of membership, is something we need to confront. In order for us to continue as individual associations but yet affiliated with the National Society we must promote ourselves. I know this is the problem though. The Florida Chapter, with others, attempted newspaper and television spots and other media with less than favorable results. I will start posting

more individual state related activities, with your help contacting me with this state info, along with your Newsletters, which I post some of the contents, on the Society's website under the Events tab. Also, thanks to new Board Member Mike Faley, the 8th Air Force Historical Society is now on Facebook.

Please let me hear your ideas on how we can move forward on these issues as we must find some kind of resolutions to continue.

Also discussed at the Reunion with Jim Haseman, 466th BGA editor of the Attlebridge Notes, and Debi Robinson of the 94th BG was an "Editors Forum" where newsletter editors can be in contact with each other. This Forum can be posted on the Society's website and also in the 8th News Magazine. This is a great way of also promoting membership and ideas. If interested in this please contact me or Jim or Debi. Contact info for Jim and Debi can be found on the Society's website under the About Us tab..Contacts..Group Contacts. If you do not have a computer please contact me.



Pat Keeley

My address is posted on the back of the front cover page, along with my email address.

Other exciting online ideas are being discussed regarding the Society's website.

The NY State Southern Wing Chapter will be celebrating its 20th Anniversary on October 16.

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



Friends gather in the 447th BG / 466th BG Hospitality Suite.



Members enjoy the impressive displays in the Memorabilia Room.



Post WWII 8th A.F. veterans, Darrel Lowell and Robert Moses.



466th BG Pilot, Elmo Maiden and his family.



Felice Stelljes & Peggy Hardin from the Mighty Eighth AF Museum PX Store.



Our amazing volunteer staff working at the Registration Desk.



8th AFHS Board Member, Earl Wassom and his wife Cindy.



Group Dinner at Tucson



8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY 36TH ANNUAL REUNION - PHOTO ALBUM



During the week of July 20th to July 25th, over 250 8th Air Force Historical members gathered for our annual reunion in Tucson, Arizona. Our reunion attendees were based at the beautiful Holiday Inn – Palo Verde and enjoyed such popular local attractions as the amazing Pima Air Museum, the Davis-Monthan AFB “Bone Yard,” the Sonora Desert Museum and Old Tucson.

Several 8th AFHS activities were planned during the course of the week. The NEXT-GEN meeting, Chapter and Unit Advisory meeting and the General Membership meeting were all well attended. Three new Board members were elected during the Saturday morning General Membership meeting. We welcome new members, Michael P. Faley, Joseph P. Keeley and Dr. Nancy J. Toombs, along with re-elected member Darrel Lowell, to the Board of Directors staff.

The 2010 Roger A. Freeman Memorial Symposium, “Valor in the Heavens” proved to be a moving and emotional afternoon featuring the fascinating combat accounts from four WWII 8th Air Force veterans.

A stirring and inspirational speech was given by keynote speaker, Brigadier General Mark MacCarley, son of 379th Bomb Group veteran John MacCarley, at the annual Saturday Banquet Gala. Also during the evening, Board Member and Public Relations Manager George Hoidra was presented the President’s Award for his outstanding contributions and dedicated service to the 8th Air Force Historical Society.

As with any of our annual reunions, old friendships were reacquainted and new friendships were made. The 2010 Tucson reunion will forever go down in our Society’s history as one of our best ever!

A big thank you goes to our Membership Secretary, Catherine Rice and to Reunion Coordinator, George Hoidra and his entire staff for all their efforts on making our gathering a complete success.



**Board of Directors seated for
General Membership Meeting**



**Nick Plackis
(390th BG) &
Pat Keeley**



**B/Gen Mark MacCarley, Mark Copeland & John MacCarley.
(Emily Copeland peeking out in Background)**



**Lorene & our new
8th AFHS president,
Harry Tanner**

8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Lionel LeBlanc (381st BG), a member of the 447th AEG, Russell Chase (447th BG) and Robert Moses (Board Member) play good sports during a "tryout" for local dance troop, the "Tucson Prunes."



Membership Secretary – Catherine Rice.



Rhoda Leopold, Beverly Tomb & Cindy Wassom



A little while later, the group steals the show! All in good fun!



Monica, Emily & past president, Mark Copeland



Pat Keeley & Frank Perez

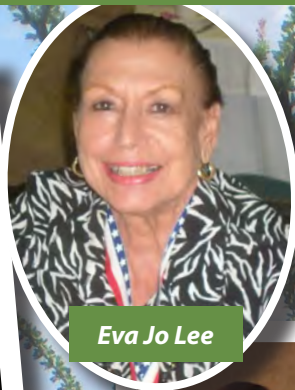


Darrel Lowell & Lowell Williamson



36TH ANNUAL REUNION - PHOTO ALBUM

Reunion Chairman -
George Hoidra



Eva Jo Lee



Gifted filmmaker – Julie
Gerisch - 447th BG



Dorothy (McGuire)
Williamson



Wilbur Richardson
& "Frankie"

2010 "Valor in the Heavens" - Symposium panelists



Norm Bussel



Russ Chase



Paul Schull



Earl Wassom

David Nowack & MSgt Liza Clark

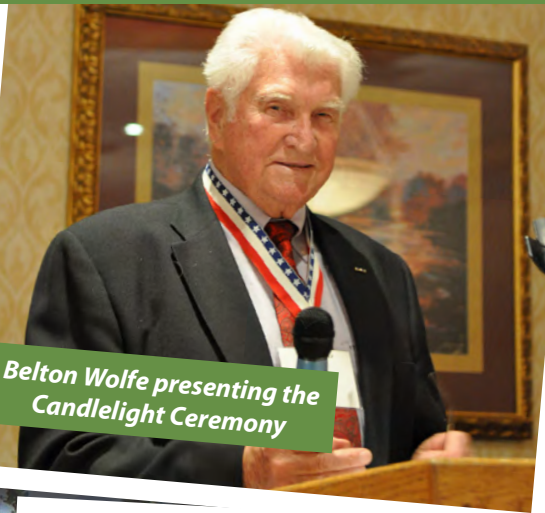


Re-enactor George Bruckert assists in the traditional
Symposium candlelight ceremony.

8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY



B/Gen Mark MacCarley receiving Roger Freeman's book, signed by 8th AF Vets attending this years reunion. Presented by past president, Mark Copeland.



Belton Wolfe presenting the Candlelight Ceremony



Cindy Wassom, George Hoidra and Catherine Rice

Lowell Williamson and his granddaughter enjoying a memorable dance together.



Past President Ivan McKinney and wife Mary

Our home base – Holiday Inn – Palo Verde



36TH ANNUAL REUNION - PHOTO ALBUM

Members gather for the annual Society business meeting.



Photo of Molly and Lou Loevisky inside the 466th BG hospitality suite. With us in spirit!!

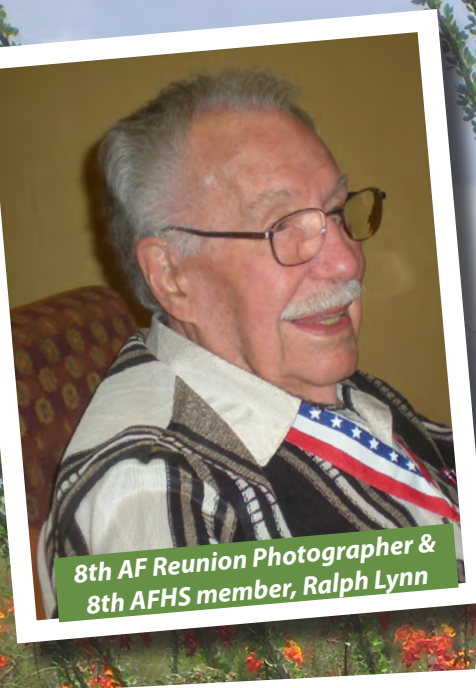


Dave, Spencer & Renee Greene



Symposium attendees rise for the playing of "Taps."

36TH ANNUAL REUNION - PHOTO ALBUM



8th AF Reunion Photographer &
8th AFHS member, Ralph Lynn



Betty Jean
Jackson



Jack & Marion Feller



George Hoidra being presented the
President's Award by Mark Copeland.



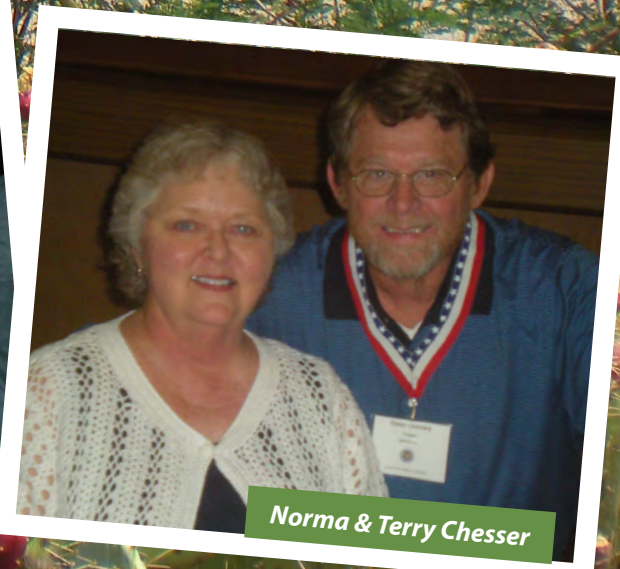
Frank and Louise
Bostwick



Lloyd Leblanc



The party is over and it's time to go back home!!



Norma & Terry Chesser

NUMBER 35: MISSION COMPLETED



Frank Buschmeier, once again, mans the gun at his waist position.



Sgt. Frank "Bud" Buschmeier and son Bill enjoying the ride of their lives.

In our last issue of the 8th Air Force News (June 2010), we told the miraculous story of the *"Miss Irish"* crew that flew with the 100th Bomb Group. Sgt. Frank "Bud" Buschmeier flew as a waist gunner aboard the airplane on March 19, 1944 on that fateful mission.

On July 29, 1944, Frank was part of a "pick-up crew" and was assigned to fly with the Fitzroy Crew aboard *"Randie Lou."* The target that day was Merseburg, Germany and it was Frank Buschmeier's final mission of his tour, number thirty-five.

Over the target, the 100th Bomb Group was savagely attacked by German fighters and flak. *"Randie Lou"* received heavy damage. Frank Buschmeier, along with the rest of the crew, were forced to bail out of their burning Fortress. He was subsequently captured and spent the rest of the war as a POW.

During the recent *"Thunder over Michigan"* air show, Frank Buschmeier climbed aboard the Confederate Air Force B-17G Flying Fortress, *"Texas Raiders,"* and went on his first B-17 ride since he bailed out over Germany in 1944. Joining "Bud" for the ride was his son, Bill Buschmeier.

We are happy to report that no flak was encountered and no enemy fighters were sighted and Sgt. Frank Buschmeier finally completed that thirty-fifth mission. Witnessing this impressive event were 14 of Frank's family members!

After 66 years, Sgt. Buschmeier, your tour is finally complete, sir.

Pooler, Ga. – On Saturday, May 22, 2010 the **Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum** held its first Atlanta fundraising event. Over two hundred and fifty people attended the *"Boots, Blue Jeans, Bomber Jackets & Barbecue"* event which was held at the beautiful **Chastain Horse Park** in Atlanta, Georgia.

The event's Honorary Chairman was World War II Veteran from the 491st Bomb Group, 8th Air Force, Lt. Col. (Ret.) F.C. "Hap" Chandler. The event was Co-Chaired by Mrs. Harriet Adams & Mr. Jeff Harvey, both of Atlanta. The evening contained a silent auction with over two hundred items, a "Barrel of Cheer" raffle, music by "Pappa Sol" and plenty of delicious barbecue. This successful fundraising event raised nearly thirty thousand dollars to benefit the **Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum**.



Silent Auction Items

TRIBUTE TO HARRIET HARVEY

A tribute to Harriet Adams Harvey for her outstanding **"BOOTS, BLUE JEANS & BOMBER JACKETS"** fund raiser for the **Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum**.

Growing up in the home town of an Eighth Air Force legend, Lt. Gen Frank Armstrong, Harriet was an early booster of the *Mighty Eighth*. After graduating from **University of North Carolina**, she came to Atlanta and founded a thriving physical therapy practice, *Integrated Theraphy LLC*. Harriet also became acquainted with 8th Air Force veterans and took an interest in the **Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum**.

A year ago she volunteered to lead a fund raiser for the museum in Atlanta, a vision of Atlanta's Eighth Air Force veterans that they had not been successful in organizing. Harriet went to work, ambly assisted by her husband Jeff, and a team of volunteers she recruited. The result was the **Boots, Blue Jeans, Bomber Jackets Ball** at the **Chastain Horse Park** barn facility, a popular Atlanta site for fund raising activities.

The hard work and complete support of the Museum staff, particularly the President Henry Skipper, resulted in a "sell-out" and enjoyable evening for all. Indeed so enthused were the participants, that another event is planned for 2011.

As of this report the proceeds from the effort are being finalized and determined. Indications are that the Museum will receive in excess of \$30,000.

I was honored to be the Honorary Chairman for the event. It was most encouraging to see the



Harriet Harvey, Hap Chandler and Carolyn Cook

younger generation (Nex Gen's) enthusiasm for our Museum and interest in the *Mighty Eighth*. In 1983 I became the founding President of the Georgia Chapter of the 8th AFHS, soon followed by the indestructible Henry Hughey. Henry brought a check from his bomb group (487th BG) to contribute to the effort.

It was a pleasant surprise to see the enthusiasm and interest of those who will follow us in supporting the Museum, regarded as the "crown jewel" of military Museums, in the years to come.

We want to thank Harriet and her crew for a wonderful evening and a very successful event.

Lt. Col. (Ret.) F.C. "Hap" Chandler.
491st Bomb Group, 8th Air Force,



MIGHTY 8TH AIR FORCE MUSEUM "BOOTS, BLUE JEANS, BOMBER JACKETS & BARBECUE"

By Colleen O'Neil, granddaughter of S/Sgt. John O'Neil - 482nd Bomb Group



Mighty 8th Air Force Museum fundraiser in Atlanta, GA

Adam Hall, Colleen & Meghan O'Neil and Heather Thies - the Museum's Education Director.

I'm a recent high school graduate, and I certainly did not expect my first Saturday of the summer to be spent parading around in a World War II pilot

uniform selling raffle tickets to the many guests who poured into the **Chastain Barn** door's that night in Atlanta, GA. I thought it would be a good time, dressing up as a WASP pilot, alongside my boyfriend, who also came in uniform and along with my sister looking the part of "Rosie the Riveter's" twin. I knew by doing this I would make my Dad proud and I knew my Grandfather was smiling down upon me that night. I proudly wore his hat and a replica of his A-2 bomber jacket with his 813th Bomb Squadron patch in remembrance of him.

The **Mighty 8th Air Force Museum** sponsored the "Boots, Blue Jeans, Bomber Jackets and Barbeque" event and they did an amazing job. As I walked through the doors, I was instantly greeted by members of the Museum and volunteers. The preparation for this event was time consuming and its outcome was entirely worth it. All the prizes set up in the main room for the silent auction showed the generosity of Georgia businesses and individuals to benefit the **Mighty 8th Air Force Museum**. My favorite table, by far, was the one

with all B-17 memorabilia and the autographed picture of my Grandfather's plane signed by every man in his crew. As I stood there and stared at the picture, a man to my right must have heard me tell someone that the picture was of my Grandfather's plane. He asked me, "Now, what did your Grandfather do?" I answered "He was the right waist gunner of the first U.S. plane to drop bombs on Berlin", I answered. His reply was short, but the emotion it gave me will never be forgotten. "He was a great American," he replied. With that, a smile came upon my face thinking of how proud I was to know my Grandfather and his amazing story. It was

an unexpected emotional night for me. When I saw my Grandmother in the actual military jacket that my grandfather had worn during the war, it hit me that the heroes of yesterday become even more important generation after generation. I'm an 18-year-old, soon to be college freshman, and I am a part of the next generation of young adults who will honor the veterans of World War II and especially those of the 8th Air Force for their courage, strength and loyalty to our nation. This event, put on by the **Mighty 8th Air Force Museum**, changed my perspective on the heroes and stories of WWII. No longer is it just something to listen to my Dad talk about at dinner or the collection of miniature model planes and memorabilia that my Dad takes such pride in. Instead, the 8th Air Force and its stories are something that my Grandfather shared with my Dad who will continue to share with me and I, in turn, will share with my children. The past, along with the heroes of the *Mighty 8th* will not be forgotten, but shall be remembered from generation to generation.



Staff Sgt. John J. O'Neil - My Grandfather 8th Army Air Force, 482nd Bomb Group, 813th Bomb Squadron Station # 102, Alconbury UK 1942-1945

THREE GENERATIONS OF SERVICE

With the recent commissioning of his grandson, Austin McKinney, the family of Ivan L. McKinney, Lt Col USAF (Ret.), now has three generations of Air Force Officers in the immediate family. Lt Col McKinney served on the 8AFHS National Board for nine years, five years as Treasurer and three years as President. He had an Air Force career spanning 27 years, receiving his commission via Air Force OCS. His son, Maj Blaine McKinney, USAF (Ret.), received his commission via AF ROTC. He served on active duty and in the Air Force reserve for more than 15 years; he was allowed to retire early when the aircraft he was flying (KC-10) was moved from Barksdale AFB, LA, to McGuire AFB, NJ. Maj. McKinney's eldest son, 2nd Lt Austin McKinney, received his commission on 26 May 2010, as he graduated #1 academically in his class of over 1,100 senior cadets at the Air Force Academy. Lt. McKinney also won the prestigious General George C. Marshall Scholarship, and he will be a guest of the Government of England for the



Maj Blaine, Sophomore Cadet Connor, 2nd Lt Austin and Lt Col Ivan McKinney

next three years, studying for a Doctorate. Also, moving toward an Air Force commission at the Air Force Academy is Lt. McKinney's brother, Connor. He will begin his sophomore year in the fall of 2010, academically rated in the upper 20% of his class.

Both Austin and Connor received scholarship offers from West Point and the Air Force Academy. Both students chose to attend the Air Force Academy and wear "Air Force blue" as their father and grandfather had worn many years before them.

– Form may be reproduced –



JOIN THE 8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY!



FIRST NAME _____ MIDDLE INITIAL _____ LAST _____

ADDRESS _____
CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

8th AF Unit _____ Not in 8th _____ Include me as a full Associate Member _____

In service _____ Branch _____ Dates _____ to _____

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

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SIGNATURE: _____

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\$30 MEMBERS DUES NOTICES ARE MAILED ANNUALLY

Website: www.8thafhs.org

Miss Irish

The story of the *Miss Irish* crew in the June issue was great. Being a WWII B-17 Radio Operator, I could visualize the inside of that bomber and feel the anguish and terror of the guys on that "No-Ball" mission. That mission is typical of the fate of many airmen in the *Mighty Eighth*.

I did 18 missions as a part of the Lt. William Templeton Crew of the 490th BG in 1944-45.

I am the author of two books "*Through These Eyes*" and "*Bombs Away*," published by Author House. (See at Authorhouse.com or Amazon or google my full name.) I also co-host a High School educational TV program to interview veterans that air's on a local cable channel.

At age 85, my mission (like yours) is to tell today's generation about the service and sacrifices of the men (boys) in the *Mighty Eighth*. I'm not making any money, but I get to tell my stories!

I would be honored to include the story of the *Miss Irish* crew in my next book and credit Mr. Copeland as the author. I also request permission to use the airman's painting on the cover of my book.

I have visited the Museum ---it's great!

James Lee Hutchinson

Return to Knettishall

Dear Donna and Telisha,

I liked the March issue of the 8th AF News. This letter, which is a rarity for me was brought about by two things - The News and the point in time April 29 was liberation time for thousands of POW's including myself. We were liberated on that date in 1945, 65 years ago. I am 86 - 87 August 11th, I am sending along a poem which I wrote many years ago - even before "Twelve O' Clock High" which uses my theme - Returning to old base. The Joe Ellis crew stationed at Knettishall England, Stn. 136 were shot down over Nuremberg, Germany, Feb. 20, 1945. Of that ten man crew five are alive today. Four for certain! One I do not hear from - the other three I do. Hope this means as much to you and the readers as it does to me.

Yours truly,

Walter "Boots" Mayberry Harrison, AR

The 8th Air Force, and to the gallant, unsung men who so proudly served in it to bring about final victory.

RETURN TO KNETTISHALL - STN 136, 388th BG 560 BS

Tonight, on the edge of this small English village,
I stand - looking over familiar scenes that flood my mind with memories
Of things long past.

Before me, now distorted shapes in the gathering darkness,
Stands a row of barracks, quiet and deserted.
Shelters that once knew the voices of many men, walls that know their dark
and lonely hours, and shared their happiness and their sorrows;
That once listened to tales of home, or war. Once friendly places
Now empty, deathly still and stark in the misty night.

Underfoot I tread the paths that felt the step of G.I. shoe, and heavy
flying boot. Paths that seem to sense the feeling of footsteps known long ago,
Now overgrown and reclaimed by the creeping grass.

Before me I see long ribbons of white stretching off through fields
Of English countryside.
Seemingly endless strips that once felt the weight of a thousand war planes,
Heavily laden with men, and death for those who waited below.
Strips now deserted and like the paths, slowly being reclaimed
By the foraging weeds.

The quietness now presses in on me in violent waves,
As if it would suddenly burst forth in an eruption of all the familiar
Sounds I knew.
There, suddenly in front of me, out of the darkness
I hear the noise of a hundred giant engines thundering in the morning air.
I hear the quiet voices of men talking, soon to go off into the dawn
In the gigantic metal birds.
Out of the strip, I see a thousand khaki clad warriors in endless rows,
Marching to the heart stirring strains of martial music,
Their guidons and colors whipping in the breeze.

As I stand there transfixed, all of it is gone as suddenly as it appeared,
And I am alone again with the quiet and darkness.
I breathe a lonely sigh, for all these things are gone, never to return,
Only to live in dark recesses of the mind, brought forth again
In moments of wakefulness.
As I turn for a last look at the darkened spot, I see again
For a fleeting instant those silver giants taking to the air for the last time
In the darkness of dawn.
I hear the vibrant sound of their roaring engines straining to raise them air-
borne.
I hear the low murmur of voices saying last minute "Good Lucks",
And the thunderous roll call of men long gone before.
I hear music and the sound of their marching feet mingled with the engines
roar, echoing down the dark corridors of time.

As these shapes disappear into the dusk of years,
I feel a great sorrow, the sting of tears, and lift a heavy hand
In final salute.

**Walter Mayberry - Armorer Gunner
388th BG - Joe Ellis Crew POW 2-20-45**



Piet Brouwer & Harry Iwema

Demise of the Lady Jane

Dear Donna,

This picture came to me from Harry Iwema in Dronten, Netherlands. He is the one in the *Demise of the Lady Jane* article in 8th AF NEWS June issue. Harry was pictured handing me the gyro compass out of the *Lady Jane*, (page 29 - June 8th AF News 2010) when we visited their farm in April 1988. Since then Harry has moved the blade of a *Lady Jane* propeller from the front yard of their farm home, to his garden in Dronten. In this picture, Piet Brouwer, who helped dig up the *Lady Jane*, is pictured with Harry Iwema, easy to pick out in a crowd since he is 6' 7". I sent copies of your June issue to both Piet and Harry.

Thank you, Fred Campbell

The Kite Flyers

To Publisher of 8th AF News:

My daughter, Margaret Price Swim, wrote this poem after watching her father, Charles Price, and his friend, Rusty Hembree, both former Air Corps pilots, fly kites one summer afternoon.

Today, their service during the 2nd World War, is often brought to their minds and this causes much conversation between the two and their families.

Perhaps your magazine would be interested in sharing this poem with your readers.

Thank you,

Margaret K. Price

Wife of Charles Price and friend of Rusty Hembree

THE KITE-FLYERS

Like warriors from a distant battlefield,
The two old pilots stand - side-by-side
Surveying the wind. Weighing the way the current lifts the string
And the way the hill rises up, then shoulders down.

"Nawh, too much wind."

Rusty observes; he's bald, with freckles and a catching grin.
His friend, Charlie, whose eyes are keen, whose hands are steady
Shouts back "Rusty, stay out of this." - Rusty grins.

With practiced skill, Charlie unwinds the slender slip of rope
Slowly, steadily easily

Like flying a B-17, like steering through black clouds
And dropping chocolate bars to orphans in France. . .

He lets the string slip through his fingers.
They are worn, and calloused. But his eyes don't miss a trick.

"There's not enough wind."

Rusty, in his navy wind-breaker, taunts his tennis foe.
And Charlie, ever-steady, ignores him.

He waits, then gives the string a tug.
And almost as if once again he was navigating that old B-17,
The Pilot feels the Wind.

The Invisible Source of Power that gives the ragged kite its flight.

Up and up, tossed, fluttering
About to fall. . . and yet, saved from a sudden dive. The Kite rises.
High above the solitary tree where Rusty stands, now cheering on his friend.
High above the hillside

By Margaret Price Swim

Donations for 8th AFHS

Dear Ms. Neely,

My late husband William F. Smatlak was called to active service for his country, February 1943.

He became a togglier, later a bombardier in the 8th Air Force, 306th Bomb Group, 368th Bomb SQ (H), flying 35 missions out of Thurleigh, England.

My husband never tired of talking of his experiences in the 8th. He enjoyed the Eighth Air Force Historical Society Magazine, as well as the 306th Echos Newspaper.

Upon receiving the magazine shortly before he died, he asked me to send pictures from WWII of his crew and himself hoping they might someday appear in your magazine, and eventually placed in the Eighth Air Force Historical Society.

I have enclosed the original photos as well as copies, none of which needs to be returned. I have also included the

names of the crew written on the back of the original photos, as well as some "Headquarters Orders." In addition, a copy of a letter which we believe he sent to a Colonel in 1977, explaining,



**William Smatlak and Steve Schultz
togglier/flight engineer**

MAIL CALL



Smatlak's Crew



**Tail Gunner
Richard Pekofske**



**Steve Schultz flight
engineer**



**Navigator Ray LeKash-
man Thurleigh, England**

"due to family illness" he could not attend their reunion.

My husband passed away June 2007 at the age of 85. He was the beloved father of three children.

I am enclosing a check in the amount of \$500.00 as a donation to the Eighth Air Force Historical Society.

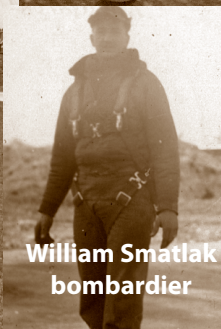
Sincerely yours,

Julia Smatlak

Brightwaters, NY



**Radio man,
William Moss
from Tennessee.**



**William Smatlak
bombardier**



**Pilot Bruce
Swango, Chicago, IL
B17G 306th BG
8th AF, Southport
England WWII**

Aviation Hall of Fame

Dear Mark, Officers and Board:

We would like to thank you sincerely for the full page article given to my Dad's induction into the MN Aviation Hall of Fame.

As you know, my father was totally dedicated to the 8th Air Force history. Over the years, visitors to our offices included such famous people as Woolnough, Greenwood, Goldwater, Gabretski, Doolittle, German Ace Adolf Gallaud and many others.

Thanks for keeping the 8th Air Force of WWII flying!

Best Personal Regards,

Timothy Scanlan and Family

8th AF Casualties?

BOURNEMOUTH, ENGLAND

On September May 23rd, 1943 at lunchtime, 26 Fw 190 fighter bombers from Schnellkampgeschwader 10 attacked the town of Bournemouth on England's south coast. They attacked with heavy and light bombs and cannon fire, approaching low over the sea

at high speed and departing the same way. One was shot by anti-aircraft fire and a second is believed to have been damaged and to have crashed on landing in France, both pilots were killed.

Sadly many more British civilian and service personnel died that lunchtime, as did many men of the Commonwealth Air Forces of Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Bournemouth as (and still is) a holiday and convention town with many hotels and these were used for military reception and training centres. There is still some confusion over the number of those killed but certainly 122 died that day and there were other bodies that were "unrecoverable". The majority of those killed were in two hotels, the Metropole and the Central.

The USAAF and the American Red Cross also used Bournemouth as a rest and recuperation centre for Eighth Air Force crews. Numerous hotels were used for this task, one of which was the Central Hotel, which unusually is not recorded as having been requisitioned - it apparently remained a hotel open to the general public too. Despite there being no

official record of USAAF casualties that day, there is plenty of anecdotal evidence that American airmen died in the raid. Some claims suggest over 80, modern research suggests possibly about ten, typical of a B-17 or B-24 crew on R & R together. Photos exist of USAAF jeeps and trucks on site the same day by a bomb site, and the location seems to be that of the Central Hotel which, together with a department store across the road, was totally destroyed. Anecdotal evidence again records the removal of an unspecified number of bodies by the USAAF.

The Bournemouth authorities are planning to raise a memorial to those who died or were injured that day. It will be in an area known as the Landsowne, across from the site of the Metropole Hotel where the majority of the deaths occurred. The organisers wish to adequately commemorate all those who died or were injured, not an easy task however in respect of the American victims whose numbers or names are not known. We are therefore appealing through the Eight Air Force Historical Society for any information any of you

MAIL CALL

can provide to help with the project.

John Levesley

**Friends of the New Forest
Airfield**

Two Poems

Dear Donna,

Hi I am a Life member of the Historical Society #22746 and a cover to cover reader. I have marched in our Memorial Day parade for 50 plus years in uniform and read the ROLL CALL of Deceased Veterans also at the Services.

Recently we found some WWII photos. My wife worked in Grumman Aircraft during much of WWII while I served in the AF. She decided that there were two poems she needed to write.

My wife Florence Baker Karpin, a published writer, poet and illustrator has written two poems that might be interesting to readers of the 8th AF News.

Her "War Hero" is for all 8th Air Force crew members even if she reflects on bombardiers. Her "Veterans Day" poem was the result of a lunch we had at a Legion Hall once in NH.

Best Regards, Jay H. Karpin

WAR HERO

It's no ordinary baseball cap he wears--
not with the emblem of the 8th Air Force,
WWII, above the brim
and, pinned round the sides, replicas
of hard-won medals--
the symbols of grueling missions
over war time Nazi Germany,
bombing factories for rockets or planes,
tanks or amunitions,
taking out railways and bridges--
the enemy's routes to the front line,
and the D-Day assault, under low skies,
to wipe out Hitler's big guns...

He was only 18 in 1942, fresh out of school,
ready to do his part,
cramped in the nose of a B-17,
puffs of flaks exploding all around,
his hands in deep freeze
as he focused the bomb-sight on the target...
the perils of war--
winning him the four
battle stars, the Air Medal, five times over,
and the Distinguished Flying Cross.
He wears a cap, not to show off,
but to have others come to him
and shake his hand, saying
their grandfather flew in the same bomb group
and was shot down over France,
or died when his plane blew up and crashed,
and they thank him for helping
to end the Great War.

It was all so long ago in the past,
people forget to remember.

Florence Baker Karpin

VETERANS DAY

Old soldiers do not speak of war;
they lean at the long vinyl tables,
spread, this day, with sprigs of flags
and red, white and blue streamers,
eating the noonday,
free-of-charge meal
the American Legion provides for those
who were once young soldier boys...
the ones who did not die.

They talk of the weather
and bones that ache when it rains.
The wives sit quietly by their side,
knowing it is his special day--
a day to wear the faded ribbons
and bring to mind
the buddies who gave their lives,
and the way they died--visions
still haunting his sleep...
the horrors he keeps deep inside.

Old soldiers do not speak of war;
they eat potato salad
and the processed ham
the legion brought from the store,
while in the back corner, near the door,
an old victrola begins to blare
a scratchy "Star Spangled Banner."

Slowly, stiffly, the old men stand
and, pushing back their chairs,
salute, with trembling hand, their flag.

Florence Baker Karpin

License Plate

**Clifford
Fontaine,
427th Bomb
Squadron,
303rd BG**



You love a lot of things
if you live around them,
but there isn't any woman
and there isn't any horse,
nor any before, nor any
after, that is as lovely
as a great airplane.

Ernest Hemingway

REGENSBURG, FRESH FRUIT AND CURTIS LeMay

By Mark S. Copeland and William M. Thorns (96th BG)



General Curtis E. LeMay

It was one of the most pivotal raids the Eighth Air Force flew during World War II. On August 17, 1943, the *Mighty Eighth* dispatched 376 heavy bombers on the famed "Double Strike" mission to Schweinfurt and Regensburg, Germany; a raid that would prove to be extremely costly. Sixty heavy bombers were lost on that day.

This was a new concept never before attempted by Eighth Air Force Bomber Command, a simultaneous strike of two German industrial targets during the same mission. One of the principle proponents and architects of the concept was none other than General Curtis E. LeMay.

Colonel LeMay, his given rank at the time of the mission, developed the idea of a "double target" to confuse the German ground controllers and to separate and spread out the opposing Luftwaffe fighters towards two respective forces. The plan was to send 230 bombers to strike the ball bearing installations in and around Schweinfurt, Germany and almost simultaneously send yet another force of an additional 146 bombers to strike the Messerschmitt aircraft manufacturing factories at Wiener-Neustadt near the city of Regensburg.

The Fourth Combat Bomb Wing was tasked with leading the bomber force to Regensburg the morning of August 17, 1943. In the lead, the 96th Bomb Group based at Snetterton Heath. New extended range fuel tanks or "Tokyo tanks" were installed in the wings of their Boeing B-17F Flying Fortresses, therefore giving them a farther range.

The plan was to depart England and strike the target at Regensburg. Then, instead of returning back to their British bases, the Groups would fly a southerly course over the Alps, the Mediterranean Sea and land on makeshift airfields in North Africa.

Sgt. William M. Thorns was a Flight Engineer / Top Turret Gunner in the 338th Bomb Squadron / 96th Bomb Group. That morning Sgt. Thorns was assigned to the Captain Tom Kenny Crew. The 96th Bomb Group Commander was Colonel Archie Old. Old had selected to fly as Mission Commander with the Kenny Crew that morning aboard their B-17F, "Fertile Myrtle III."



Boeing B-17F Flying Fortress "Fertile Myrtle III."

Suddenly, just prior to takeoff, a Command staff car from Elvedon Hall drove up to their hardstand at Snetterton Heath. The rear door flew open and an officer climbed out wearing full flight gear. It was none other than Fourth Bomb Wing Commander, Colonel Curtis E. LeMay. LeMay instructed Colonel Old to fly along in another ship. He was going to ride as Co-Pilot and Mission Commander with the Kenny Crew. Thus, Colonel Old flew with Iverson Crew that day. William Thorns recalls, "LeMay suddenly hopped out of the staff car, bumped Colonel Old and joined our crew."

On the morning of August 17th, 1943, England was covered in fog. Scheduled takeoff time for the Fourth Combat Bomb Wing (CBW) was 0630, but due to the heavy fog, it was delayed until almost 8:00am. The First Air Division, which was tasked to strike Schweinfurt, was delayed even later.

As the Fourth CBW striking force approached the enemy coast they were savagely met by attacking Luftwaffe fighters around 10:00am. The force continued towards Regensburg as the German fighter attacks intensified. Enemy flak was accurate and concentrated around the target area. Despite the thwarting attacks made by



Colonel Archie J. Old

the opposing German fighters and flak, the 96th Bomb Group and Fourth CBW, along with the entire Third Air Division, accurately bombed the Messerschmitt factories at Regensburg much to General LeMay's delight.

William Thorns remembered, "The Luftwaffe fighter attacks were intense and very fierce and the flak was accurate. After we headed south towards North Africa and we descended down to 10,000 feet and went off our oxygen, Colonel LeMay got out of his Co-Pilot seat and came back through the airplane." Colonel LeMay had a reputation in the Eighth Air Force as being a hard-nosed, no nonsense Commander. The "Iron Eagle," as he was commonly referred to, demanded results and expected his men to give him nothing less.

However, during the flight to North Africa, LeMay did something very uncharacteristic for his intimi-

dating reputation. William Thorns recalled, "LeMay came back through our airplane carrying a big flour sack. He opened it up and gave it to us. Inside of it we found fresh fruit! There were fresh pineapples, oranges, apples, bananas, etc. He wanted to show his appreciation to all of us, I guess. We all thought it was pretty shocking considering his reputation. It was something that I never forget."

Many years later, while at an **8th Air Force Historical Society** Reunion, William Thorns attended a panel Symposium moderated by noted historian, Roger A. Freeman, featuring General Curtis LeMay. After the program had concluded, William Thorns approached General LeMay and asked him if he recalled the incident. LeMay replied, "I sure remember the mission.....but I don't remember the fruit."



Sgt. William Thorns while training at Pocatello, Idaho, 1942



The Kenny Crew after returning from the Second Schweinfurt Mission on October 14, 1943. L-R (Standing) 96th BG Commander Colonel Archie J. Old Jr., Captain Tom Kenny, William Jones, Lt. Dunlop. L-R (Kneeling) H. Hoover, A. Korolchuck, A. Livengood, William Thorns and H. Rayford. Not shown are - J. Latham and Otis Haslop.

NEXT GENERATION

"NEXGENS IN ACTION, PRESERVING THE HISTORY" - by Norma Chesser

What Makes a NextGen? by David Nowack - Reenactor



What makes a NextGen? To some the answer seems obvious; a NextGen is the descendant of a World War II 8th Air Force veteran. That definition, though, is not sufficient, as my own case illustrates.

I am not the son of an 8th Air Force veteran. Despite this, I probably have as much passion for preserving the legacy and honoring the sacrifices made by those brave men who filled the skies over Germany as those who are relatives of the veterans.

How did this happen? From a young age I have been interested in World War II history, both the European and Pacific theatres. It was about ten years ago, however, that I started to focus on the air war over Europe. A friend, and fellow World War II buff (to whom I am eternally grateful,) told me about a World War II Weekend sponsored by the Mid Atlantic Air Museum in Reading, PA. I went that year and was enthralled.

The highlights of that day's visit were an air show of authentic World War II aircraft, and the opportunity to meet and listen to several veterans talk about their experiences. The air show was spectacular and included a gleaming silver B-17. Hearing those engines start up, taxi, take off, and do fly-bys was an eye-opener to someone who had read about the B-17 but had never seen one. The thrill was enhanced by meeting one of the pilots of those planes, Robert Morgan, the pilot of the *Memphis Belle*.

I returned to the show the next couple of years and then decided to become involved with the show. I wanted to look the part and also do my own reenacting. The decision I had to make was what to reenact. The memories came back to me of seeing that B-17 and meeting Bob Morgan, and I thought about portraying a B-17 pilot. The final decision came after having the chance to fly in a B-17, and doing extensive research about the air war over Germany.

It was then that I realized the history of that conflict needed to be treasured and told to others so that future generations would not forget the heroism and stark terror that those men experienced. There were also the ground crews, without whose sometimes seemingly impossible efforts the missions could not have been flown.

I immediately started investing in uniforms and equipment. More research followed to develop a speech about the life of a B-17 pilot and crew, and I have given that talk to several high school and college classes. Then I heard about the 8th Air Force Historical Society and joined it so I could learn more and improve my educational efforts. When the NextGen program began, I signed up so that I could join with others to spread the word about the Mighty Eighth Air Force.

One does not have to be descended from an 8th Air Force veteran to be a NextGen. People like me who desire to preserve the legacy are joining the veterans' descendants to make it happen. Are you one of these? Welcome aboard!

Harry Tanner – Memorabilia Collection

I grew up on a farm-ranch in central Louisiana. My father came home from World War II, having served as a Captain in the U.S. Army. He began farming, and then went into the business of raising and training quarter horses. In 1957 He sold a quarter horse to actor Dale Robertson, which we delivered to him while he was attending a horse show in Louisiana. We spent several hours visiting with Mr. Robertson, and his was the first autograph that I got from anyone.

Many years later, I started collecting sports autographs, including all fields of sports, with several from Mickey Mantle, Yogi Berra, and DeMaggio. The local newspaper did several articles on my collection.

In 1998 I was put in contact with a man living in Florida who sold address lists of many sports people and others. One was entitled '*Men and Women of Distinction*'. Included in this list of many different categories was '*Fighter Aces From all Over the World*'. I always had a fascination with airplanes, and started taking flying lesson when I was seventeen years old.

I decided I would send an index card to the ones listed as '*Fighter Aces*' living in Louisiana to autograph for me. There were about twelve. I mailed each a form letter, enclosing the card for them to sign, and a return address stamped envelope. About four days went by and I got two back in the mail the same day. Both were Navy Aces. They not only signed the card, but put a snapshot picture of themselves sitting in the cockpit of their plane. I was off and running so to say.

Over a period of time I collected over 450 signed cards from Fighter Aces from around the world from World War II through Vietnam. Many also enclosed personal letters, original pictures, documents, etc. All items were put in a large binder album, and today that album has over 600 items in it.

I began to try and find men who flew on Bombers during World War II, and eventually joined the 9th and 15th Air Force Associations. I have a large collection today from these two Air Forces that flew in WWII.

Then I made contact with Mr. James Lorenz, a pilot who flew in the Eighth Air Force 466th B.G. He told me about the Eighth Air Force Historical Society which I had never heard of. I joined and started making contact with 8th Air Force Fighter and Bomber groups. My collection grew very rapidly.

In 2003 I was invited by the 8th AFHS to bring my collection to their reunion in Colorado Springs. My Airmen collection today has over forty thousand items. I have been a board member since 2004 and bring about a third of my collection to most of the reunions. I've attended every reunion since then.



Lavern Peters Remembers 389th Bomb Group on the 65th Anniversary of "Operation Varsity"

Submitted by Lavern Peters



**Donald Frank is standing second from left.
Lavern Peters is lower right wearing a helmet**

March 24th, 2010 marks the 65th Anniversary of the largest ever airborne operation.

"Operation Varsity" on March 24th, 1945 was coordinated with a large scale crossing of Germany's Rhine River by Allied Forces under command of General Omar Bradley.

The 389th command selected 26 B-24 crews with at least 15 missions to fly a supply drop mission.

These crews were briefed on March 23rd. "This is it. Tomorrow will be the most important mission you have flown. At 0400, US paratroopers and our brave infantry will go over the top. Your part in this assault is the dropping of vital equipment and supplies to the boys who have already crossed. The accurate dropping of these supplies is absolutely essential for the success of the boys on the ground."

The following is an article by 389th B-24 pilot Donald Frank on his mission that day.

We were briefed to fly at 300 feet with full RPM until after dropping the supplies. Then we were to go full throttle and "hit the deck." There were to be no

second runs. An instrument landing-system transmitter was to have been set up on the west bank of the Rhine to guide us to the target field to drop the supplies. This was because of the smoke screen that had been in effect for several days as the Allies were building up prior to the crossing of the river.

There were seven planes in our squadron in the air. My plane was on the extreme left end of the formation which was very flat with no conventional high-right or low-left elements, and no bucket element at all—just a flat V formation. Bloore was flying in #2 position off the left wing of the squadron leader. The waist guns had been removed and the floor of the waist was lined with flak suits as protection from ground fire. All crews had at least 15 missions behind them.

Well, we missed the drop zone on the first run. I think we went north of the field, which was just north of the village of Wesel. After we got west of the Rhine, the leader took us in for a second run. We had been briefed that if we missed the target on the first run, we were to dump all the supplies on

the east side of the river and make no second runs. We must have gone over the eastern edge of Wesel as I saw what looked like a farmhouse in front as we nosed down to hit the deck. In front of the house were some soldiers waving at us until they must have thought we were going to hit the house, and then they strammed in all directions.

Later my gunner, Lavern Peters, said he looked out of the right waist window and what must have been the main street. He also saw a body falling to the ground and saw many gliders and parachutes covering the countryside as we made our run. He told me that he remembered me cautioning the crew to be sure not get tangled up in the straps that were fastened to the bundles of supplies that were to be pushed out the floor door in the waist, but I didn't remember saying that. The bomb bays were also full of bundles of supplies, and he and another gunner went into the bomb bay and released it, as it was hung up and did not drop with the other supplies.

As we leveled off above the house and were turning to the right, the air speed had really picked up, I think it was over 200 mph, possibly 220 (we usually flew at 160 mph). We were heading toward the smoke screen from which penetrated four tall chimneys, presumably from a power plant on the west bank of the Rhine. The nose of the plane was very heavy and I must have cranked in a lot of trim as the nose shot up, and I held it there with the artificial horizon as high as it would go until the air speed dropped to about 150. We were then at about five or six thousand feet, in the clear, and only two other planes were in sight. We did not know what happened to the other four planes in our squadron.

When we went to the debriefing, the room was quiet. As one after another of the planes returned or was accounted for, it was marked on the formation chart on the chalk board. We had three squadrons in the formation that day, I

believe. After what seemed like a very long wait the debriefing officer went to the board and pointed at each missing plane and asked if anyone had seen what had happened to them. That took quite a while to cover the entire formation.

I don't remember getting the usual shot of 100-proof spirits or if I ate dinner before returning to our squadron area. I spent as little time as possible in our room for many days. It was an eerie feeling. The war finally hit home that day. As usual, my plane had no battle damage.

I talked to Perry Sessoms about "Varsity" at a reunion and that's when I learned he had been shot down that day; 400 holes in the plane and three direct hits from heavier stuff. He landed in an open field which was surrounded by a field full of land mines. When I asked him who gave the order for the second run at Wesel he said he did not know - he was downed on the first run.

'Operation Varsity' was the roughest day of the war for me.

Five 389th BG crews were shot down that day and 13 more aircraft sustained battle damage.

Twenty-two crew members were killed and eight were wounded during this mission.

The 389th Bomb Group also participated in the famed Ploesti low level bombing of German-controlled Romania oil refineries; and was awarded a Presidential Unit Citation by President Roosevelt.

Only two members of the ten man Frank crew are still living; Donald Frank of Tulsa, Oklahoma and Lavern "Pete" Peters of Bedford, Iowa.

submitted by Lavern Peters

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

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

96TH BOMB GROUP

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

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 Fredirick
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

385TH BOMB GROUP

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

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
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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

351ST BOMB GROUP

The annual Wreath Laying Ceremony in the 8th Air Force Memorial Garden at Savannah, Georgia will take place this year at 12:00 pm on November 6, 2010. As before, the theme will involve and honor the accomplishments of the 351st Bomb Group, 8th Air Force during World War II. However, all veterans, family members and friends are welcome to attend this service. For information, contact: Bruce Nocera phone: (718)721-0924, email: bnocera@it.com.

CHAPTER NEWS

Oregon Chapter



Tom Kielbowicz courtesy of Tom Philo

The speaker for our August meeting was Tom Kielbowicz who was born and raised in Oil City, Pennsylvania, the hometown of Col. Francis Gabreski. In 1962, he joined the Army and was stationed in Grafenwoehr [Grafenwöhr], Germany when he volunteered to fly medivac missions as a medical specialist with the 421st Air Ambulance Co., 3rd Platoon which was said to be the busiest air ambulance platoon in the USAREUR. Grafenwoehr was the U.S. and NATO arms training center as well as the nearest base to the Fulda Gap. [Modified from Oregon Chapter, 8th AFHS Flight Lines Newsletter speaker details written by Editor, Jerry Ritter.]

"I come from a small, Polish community in Oil City, Pennsylvania. My grandfather's house backyard was right backing up to a guy you probably know, [Col.] Francis Gabreski. Some of them hated him. Other people said he's our Polish hero back in Oil City. The Gabreskis were a controversial family to be sure, but my dad, and my Uncle Butch who was a WWII Veteran who went all the way from North Africa, Sicily, Italy; they always spoke well of the Gabreskis. In 1962, when you graduated from high school, you had two choices: you went into the military or you went to college.

So I decided to go into the Army." After going through seven weeks of basic medical training at Fort Sam Houston, Tom was stationed in Germany at the 4th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital [MASH] Unit where he became an orthopedic specialist. The specialty was not needed there, so as a medic, he joined the 3rd Platoon, 421st Medical Company, Air Ambulance, in Grafenwoehr, Germany in 1964. This "Aerial Ambulance" unit was featured in the Stars and Stripes 21 Oct 1964 edition

Tom would become an "early pioneers as probably one of the first fifty helicopter medics" flying on the Bell Huey UH1B. On his first day, he learned he would have no further training and received the following advice from the crew chief, "Look, the big thing is don't get the stretcher caught in the props." His medical bag consisted of "a bunch of 4 by 4 bandages, some tape, a pharyngeal airway, tourniquets, no splints, and no morphine." And he was told, "You don't start any IVs. You don't give any shots." Because of the underpowered Huey, "There was only a pilot, myself, and patients. We had no co-pilot, no crew chief. It was primitive. We never put a brace neck on or strapped the patient down to the stretcher. We just put them on the stretcher, threw them in the helicopter, and went on our way."

Tom Kielbowicz flew for six months going on "as many as eight one-hour missions" in one day and racked up about 500 hours of flight time. Flights were made more exciting by the antics of pilot Joe Fulghum such as the time he request a ground-control approach. As he was nearing the tower, Tom says, "Fulghum dropped pitch and we just sank like a rock. Now the airport itself is on a little hill and we're coming down below the hill and the tower is going nuts, 'Where are you? We can't find you. You're not on radar anymore.'

Fulghum's just laughing. We're just flying real low to the ground. He pulls up and we go right past the tower. I mean Top Gun type stuff. He went full speed. He wasn't throttling back or anything. He was going as fast as he could, as low as he could, as close as he could. Then we landed on our helipad." Of course,

he was chewed out by a major and Tom just "happened to walk behind Fulghum who had his fingers crossed as he swore, 'No, sir. That was stupid.

Sadly, Joe Fulghum was KIA on his second tour in Vietnam 2-2-67.

Of his service in the military Tom said, "It was an adventure. Would I do it again? I think you guys that were pilots of WWII know how I feel. You probably remember the excitement of the engines turning over, rushing out to the field, the sounds. Then comes reality. But there was a lot of adventure to it. I don't regret that I did it."

Next Meeting is on November 7.

Submitted by Joan E. Hamilton

New York State Southern Wing Chapter

On Saturday October 16, 2010 the New York State Southern Wing Chapter will celebrate its 20th Anniversary with a luncheon being held at the Thayer Hotel located in West Point NY. The Chapter will be honoring its past two Presidents, Larry Goldstein and Gus Nathan, plus much more.

For more information please contact the Chapter President Joseph Pat Keeley whose contact info is found on the back of the front cover page of this edition or the Chapters website, <http://blogs.ny-8thswcaphs.org/>.

Please 'Support Our Troops' & the USO
Pat Keeley

Minnesota Chapter

A meeting of the Board of Directors was called to order July 2010, at the Knights of Columbus Hall, Bloomington, Minnesota. President Al Anderson presided and Bob Clemens, secretary, was present. Members attending were Al Anderson, Larry Bachman, Gary Bircham, Walter Bohrn, Robert Clemens, Dick Hill, Earl Joswick, Dick Kaminski, Vince Parker, and Ray Rau.

Suggestion to include membership form with book sales. Letter for voluntary donation for newsletters to life members was approved by the Board.

Program for Christmas Party on December 5, 2010 was discussed.

CHAPTER NEWS

Virginia Chapter

June 26, we met at the very nice **Stonehenge Country Club**. This meeting was somewhat unique in one way. All the veterans present seemed more willing to recount some incidents in their wartime service. Speaking of those present let me include their names. Besides myself, Lew Burke and my wife Lillie there were the following: Maurice Miller, Gorgon Caulkins, Alex Allen, Abe Firestone, Jimmy Boehling, Jimmy Harvell, John Pearson, Ken Rowe, *Ernostine Firestone, Bill Smithdeag (guest), Ron Marchand, Neil November, Frank Carlo-magno. *We can consider Ernostine an honorary Vet since she was a nurse during WWII.

I always hope to see more come out but realize some of us don't "travel as well" as we used to and in many cases since retirement we don't have time to do these type things. (How did we get so busy since we retired?)

After attending to some agenda requirement for the meeting a DVD was shown. This DVD portrayed a skit that was put on at one of my 398th Bomb Group meetings a few years ago. A pilot, Paul Roderick and Co-Pilot Roger Harvey, who flew together on a crew, enacted a very un-typical scene from the time they climbed into their B-17 for a mission until landing. The same two plus their ball turret gunner, then went on in a second chapter of the DVD to recount some incidents that actually did take place during their missions. This too brought back memories of some similar happenings experienced by us veterans. We have now shown similar "recordings" at our last two meetings. Abe Firestone entertained us with one of his made on a return reunion in England. Bob Noziglia replayed a recording of the film from 1984 Titled "All The Fine Young Men." It appears Jim Pearson will have a filming of his latest return for a reunion back in England ready for our next meeting. I believe that maybe this would be a good format to include in



**Missouri Chapter 45 8AFHS luncheon and meeting at Wine Country Gardens, Defiance, MO.
Photo taken next to Pavilion.**

most if not all our future luncheons.

Once again Jimmy Harvell set up our meeting. Jimmy is always available when called upon. Thanks Jimmy

Washington State Chapter

Robert Tyson Henry was a Lifetime member of our chapter; a pilot with the 1Div, 41CW, 384th BG who flew 29 missions out of Grafton Underwood. Bob, a resident of Port Orchard and more recently, the WA State Veterans home at Retsil/Port Orchard, died May 18, 2010. Bob was born in Seattle on June 14, 1923; he graduated from North Kitsap High and in 1941 entered the ROTC at Stamford. Afterwards Bob returned to Stamford to complete his studies. After many adventures, he returned to Kitsap County and met the love of his life, Wanda. Their real-life love story lasted 35 years. A Military service was held May 26, 2010 at Retsil Cemetery. Donations in Bob's memory may be sent to the Retsil Veterans Home.

Remember our dues continue to be only \$10 yearly. Please send your local dues of \$10 yearly to:

WA Chapter 8th AFHS
6542-46th Ave. N.E.
Seattle, WA 98115

**Sincerely,
J.W. Roundhill, Treasurer**

Missouri Chapter St. Louis Wing

June 17, 2010 the 8th AFHS (St. Louis Wing) held their 45th meeting and luncheon on a gorgeous sunny day at the 42 acre **Wine Country Gardens** in their beautiful pavilion overlooking the Missouri River Valley. Located in the heart of Missouri Wine Country, Defiance, MO.

Clarence Cherry opened the meeting with the invocation followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. After a delightful luncheon on their pavilion, our President Ralph Covinsky presided over the meeting. During the meeting Ralph requested that any wife who had a story to tell about her husband and how

they met during the war, to please come up to the podium, and tell their story! Several did, which brought back many memories of those seated, and much laughter.

During the meeting, photos were taken by Al Villagran of the members. Their photo will be mailed to each member in the announcement of our next meeting! As usual, a good time was held by all!

Ohio Chapter

The Ohio Chapter met in May at the **Ramada Plaza Hotel** in Columbus, Ohio. The guest speaker was Manfred Schnetzer. Mr. Schnetzer provided an interesting experience of living on the ground during World War II near Stuttgart, Germany. He was nine years old during the Battle of the Bulge. Being so young at the time, you don't understand the seriousness of war.

He said neighbors worked together to dig an air raid shelter in the hillside. There were air raids day and night, the Americans during the day, and the British at night. The planes flew so high that

CHAPTER NEWS

only their contrails could be seen. One time the town was accidentally bombed when the British mistook the target area.

After the war, the family lived in the American Zone of Germany. Two rooms of the house were commandeered by NCOs and became a NCO club and the family helped run it. Relatives in the United States were able to send CARE packages which were most appreciated.

In 1952, the family immigrated to the United States. Schnetzer served in the U.S. Army in 1958 for two years after which he married his German sweetheart and graduated from the University of Cincinnati, College of Engineering in 1966. By 1972, he and his wife had six children and living in suburban Cincinnati.

The Chapter will meet in again in November in Columbus.

Chris Weber, Secretary

Florida Chapter

The Florida Chapter gathered in Kissimmee the second weekend in April. Our headquarters was the beautiful **Radisson Resort Hotel - Disney World**. On Saturday afternoon, we gathered in the spacious hospitality 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. And for just a bit more, you can have a custom DVD recording of your flight experience mixed from three different camera angles. Who could resist such a deal? Chapter president Tom Gagnon took advantage of the opportunity and even got some "stick time" while they

were up. 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. We joined that group for a barbeque lunch and some remarks from a P-47 pilot, Col. Van Etten, currently 96 years old, who had flown with the Ninth Air Force in Europe, F-86s in Korea and F-105's in Viet Nam. He told of the time he was having a great run strafing trucks when he realized that a German Tiger Tank had lined him up for a shot. Before he could react, the tank shot off the bottom of his engine cowling. The Colonel smiled and said if he ever had the chance, he would have bought that gunner a drink! 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 suggestions 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 ksotown@earthlink.net

By Ken Sweet

New Mexico Chapter

The New Mexico Chapter of the 8th AFHS held their annual Spring General Membership Meeting and Luncheon at the **Sheraton Uptown Hotel**.

President, Larry Stebleton (8th AF) opened the meeting with a moment of silence in remembrance of departed members, followed by the Pledge Of Allegiance.

The entertainment was provided by our speaker, Dr. Paul Wagner. Dr. Wagner is a member of the New Mexico Chapter of the 8th AFHS, who flew 35 missions as a B-17 pilot with the 398th BG.

The very accomplished Dr. Paul Wagner received his degree of Doctor of Philosophy from University of Rochester, New York, he spent three years as a scientist working on advanced jet engine fuels for the NACA in Cleveland, Ohio. He then went to the Los Alamos National Laboratory, Los Alamos, NM., where he lived and was employed for 35 years. In that time he worked on the nuclear rocket program and received the 1989 International Thermal Conductivity Award for his research on high temperature thermophysics. Dr. Wagner is the author of the book "The Youngest Crew", a wonderful read about his crew during their time with the Mighty Eighth (389th BG.)

Submitted by:

Al Schwery, Secretary



New Mexico Chapter speaker Dr. Paul Wagner

BOOK REVIEWS

LOSSES of the U.S. 8TH AND 9TH AIR FORCES VOLUME III ETO AREA – APRIL 1944 – JUNE 1944 **By Stan D. Bishop and John A. Hey MBE**

Hardcover 728 pages – 8½" x 12"
2009 – ISBN 978-0-9547685-3-9

Researching the Eighth Air Force during World War II is fascinating, but at times can be frustrating due to the lack of informational documents or good solid records. One relies on several cornerstone books to turn to when trying to accurately verify a fact from 65+ years ago. Paul Andrews' – *Bits and Pieces* and *Combat and Heavy Bomber Chronologies* series and several of Roger Freeman's works, including his greatest masterpiece, *The Mighty Eighth*, are a few such examples. These aforementioned authors painstakingly researched the subject to complete and produce these 8th Air Force classics. Stan Bishop and John A. Hey have certainly earned the right to join these first class 8th Air Force historians with the release of their third volume of this amazing series, *Losses of the U.S. 8th and 9th Air Forces – Volume 3 – ETO Area – April 1944 to June 1944*.

This massive, six pound hardcover book is masterfully researched and gives a day by day chronology of losses suffered by both the 8th Air Force and the 9th Air Force during the spring and early summer of 1944. Each loss is recorded in a professional and easy to read format by Mr. Bishop and Mr. Hey. Individual losses are identified with a short synopsis of the event, including aircraft serial numbers, crew names, MACR numbers (Missing Air Crew Reports) and the respective fate of each member. Astonishing, the authors list where each KIA was originally interned, if the remains were exhumed, and if so, the location of reburial.

Like anything in life, you get what you pay for. A warning to any prospective buyer, these books are not cheap. If you want to own the most definitive and informative research books for 8th and 9th Air Force losses during World

War II, you need not look any further than these phenomenal studies.

Mr. Bishop and Mr. Hey should be congratulated for their brilliant research but even more so, for their preservation of 8th and 9th Air Force history for generations to come. It is truly an honor to give this book, as well as Volume I & II of the series, my highest recommendation.

Signed copies of Volume III (or Volume I & II) and further information can be obtained by contacting the author at the following address:

Stan Bishop
East Anglia Books
Station Road
Elsenham, Bishops Stortford
Hertsfordshire CM22 6LG
England
011-44-1-279-813791
Website: www.eastangliabooks.com
Email: sales@www.eastangliabooks.com

BOMBER COUNTRY

The Poetry of a Lost Pilot's War

By Daniel Swift

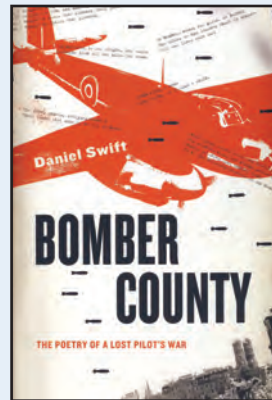
Farrar, Straus and Giroux Publishers

Hardcover 269 pages - 6" x 9"

2010 – ISBN 978-0-374-27311

Perhaps the relationship of the air war in World War II and poetry might seem rather farfetched or odd. However, from the beginning of conflict, poetry has always been an outward expression of the soul and of the human spirit.

Daniel Swift, a prominent independent writer, has written for several leading publications, magazines and newspapers. The author's grandfather, Squadron Leader James Eric Swift, was an Avro Lancaster pilot with 83 Squadron during World War II. In early June of 1943, Squadron Leader Swift was shot down and killed on a raid to Munster, Germany. *Bomber*



County is an intoxicating story about Daniel Swift's personal quest to gain information regarding his grandfather's life, in particular James Swift's service with Royal Air Force Bomber Command. During that journey, he became fascinated with the connections between the air war and poetry.

I cannot convey how impressed I was with this beautifully written book. The author has written a brilliant tribute to his grandfather and a wonderful testament to the men of RAF Bomber Command. It might seem like a trite cliché, but I honestly could not put this book down once I began to read it. It was not only an interesting and informative book, but an inspiring story of the air war presented in an intriguing, honorable and thought provoking manner. The author should be sincerely congratulated.

Further information can be obtained through the publisher's website at:
Farrar, Straus, Giroux
18 West 18th Street
New York, New York 10011
www.fsgbooks.com

GENE PERSON STORY

Horse & Buggy Days, Great Depression, WWII and Technology

By - Eugene D. Person

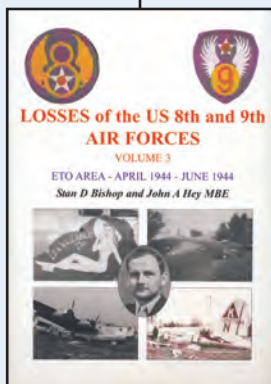
131 pages – Softbound - Photos

ISBN 978-1-4839-0685-0

Publisher: Author House - 2008

Many of you will remember the author, Gene Person as a past member of the Board of Directors for the 8th Air Force Historical Society and Commander of the NW Iowa Chapter.

Eugene D. Person was born in a small rural community of Burnsville, Iowa. Like the majority of all WWII veterans, Mr. Person was a child during the difficult times of the Great Depression. Once of age, he answered the call to serve his country when he joined the U.S. Army Air Corps, eventually being assigned as a Flight Engineer / Top Turret Gunner in the 787th Bomb Squadron – 466th



Bomb Group at Attlebridge, England.

This attractive 131 page softbound book is the story of Mr. Person's fascinating life. From the humble beginnings of his rural childhood, an early passion for the great outdoors, to his service with the 466th Bomb Group and beyond. The book is very readable due the author's keen use of short, detailed and concise chapters. There is no "over-storytelling" which makes the book a very enjoyable reading experience.

Each of Mr. Person's mission experiences are chronologically told with very detailed accounts, giving the reader a vivid sense of what the author went through during his tenure with the "Attlebridge Boys."

To add "full circle" to this WWII service, Mr. Person tells about his satisfying return and subsequent involvement with the Eighth Air Force Historical Society. Not only did Mr. Person serve in a national capacity, but even more so, on a state and local level.

This fascinating book tells the story of this WWII 8th Air Force veteran, Eugene Person. Yet it resonates in so many ways of being commonplace with those of that generation. A young lad born into simple and humble beginnings; that grew up to accomplish the impossible and successfully defending this Nation from the worst tyranny humankind has ever known.

I highly recommend this book for all who enjoy inspirational, first person wartime accounts.

More information can be found at www.authorhouse.com or, order an autographed copy directly from the author.
Eugene D. Person
2644 3rd Avenue North
Fort Dodge, Iowa 50501
(515) 576-3459



RUNWAYS IN THE SAND

The History of Blythe Army Air Base in World War II

By Art Wilson
Hardcover

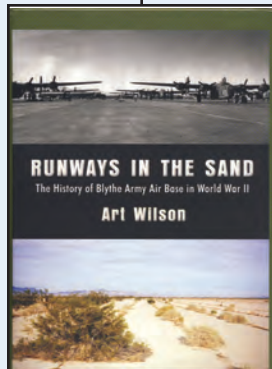
128 pages - 8 1/2" x 11"
2008 - ISBN 978-0-615-21889-2

Located on the border of California and Arizona, Blythe Army Air Base played a significant role in WWII Eighth Air Force history. It was the training home of the 34th Bomb Group and the 390th Bomb Group prior to their respective departures to combat assignment in England.

Author, Art Wilson, has done a masterful job in researching this beautifully printed, hardcover book. *Runways in the Sand* is most certainly a significant and important historical document. However, it proves to be much more than that. Mr. Wilson has skillfully written a fascinating story of the men who trained at Blythe Field. The human side of serving at this famous training base is brilliantly told with the use of anecdotes and first hand experiences.

There is also a very interesting chapter pertaining to the 90 mishaps, crashes and losses that occurred at Blythe Field during the war.

This very reasonably priced book is a must read for anyone who served in the 34th Bomb Group and the 390th Bomb Group. It also is a wonderful testament to what this country had to do in order to quickly train air crews during the early stages of World War II. I found the book very fascinating and intriguing and recommend it to anyone with an interest in the aforementioned Bomb Groups or in World War II Air Corps training history.



Further information and an autographed copy of the book can be obtained by contacting the author directly:

Art Wilson
590 Seville Lane
Blythe, California 92225
(760) 922-4744
ole6nic@verizon.net

TWO GOLD COINS AND A PRAYER

The Epic Journey of a World War II Bomber Pilot and POW

By James H. Keeffe III
Appell Publishing

Softcover 475 pages - 7" x 9"
2010 - ISBN 978-0-9843600-0-0

James H. Keefe was a B-24 pilot in the 389th Bomb Group in the Second Air Division. On March 8, 1944 he was forced to bail out of his crippled Liberator over Papendrecht, Holland. With the help of the Dutch Resistance, Mr. Keeffe managed to evade capture by the Germans for five months, until he was finally betrayed and sent to Stalag Luft III to spend the remainder of the war as a POW.

Mr. Keeffe's son, James H. Keeffe III is the author of this first class publication. *Two Coins and a Prayer* is the amazing story of one airman's journey with the Dutch Underground and his subsequent survival as a prisoner of the Germans.

Impeccably researched and skillfully written, this superb account of Mr. Keeffe's experience will leave the reader not only amazed, but emotionally moved.

This is far and away, one of the best 8th Air Force evasion and POW accounts that has ever been written. It was a joy and a pleasure to read and give it my highest recommendation.



For more information or to order an autographed copy of *Two Gold Coins and a Prayer* contact the author directly at the following address:
James H. Keeffe III
Appell Publishing Inc.

BOOK REVIEWS

P.O. Box 1209
Fall City, Washington 98024
(425) 445-2021
www.appellpublishing.com
block43@appellpublishing

MY PRIVATE WAR

**Liberated Body, Captive Mind:
A World War II POW's Journey
By Norman Bussel**
Pegasus Books

**Softcover 320 pages - 7" x 9"
2008 - ISBN 978-1-60598-067-6**

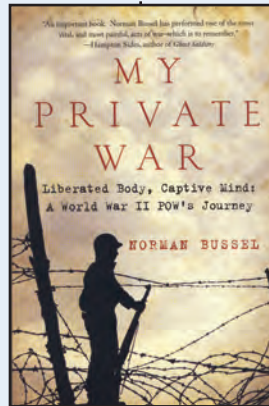
Thousands of brave young American men flew in the Eighth Air Force during World War II. Each witnessed extraordinary events and for many they saw first hand, the horrors of war. All returning veterans experienced a period of adjustment back to civilian life. Each had their own individual emotional struggles. Today, these struggles may be coined as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Norman Bussel was a twenty year old B-17 crewman in the 447th Bomb Group. On April 29th, 1944, Mr. Bussel and his crew were shot down over Ber-

lin, Germany. Landing in a farm field, Norman was immediately captured by German civilians. The angry group of German farmhands were going to make the young airmen pay with his life for the terrible destruction the American Air Force had caused. While in the process of lynching Norman Bussel, a passing German soldier saw what was happening and quickly stopped it. Mr. Bussel spent the remainder of the war as a prisoner of war.

Upon returning to the United States after the hostilities had ended, Mr. Bussel had a difficult time adjusting to civilian life. He went through a series of personal struggles vividly told in this riveting book.

His training and combat stories are fascinating, his bail out and POW experiences are terrifying and simply extraordinary. After the war, Mr. Bussel had bouts with alcoholism, a broken marriage and the demons that just wouldn't leave his



soul, which he honestly and openly conveys to the reader.

My Private War is a story of one man's struggle to adjust from the horrors of war and of the mistreatment he experienced as a POW. It goes without saying, the reader will find the story inspirational and uplifting. Even more so, the reader will certainly be moved by the author's

continued volunteer work with present day veterans from all conflicts to help them adjust from the painful realities of war.

For additional information or to order an autographed copy of the book, please contact the author directly at:
Mr. Norman Bussel
1739 Horton Road
Mohegan Lake, New York 10547
(914) 528-7147
bussel@verizon.net

Individual Awards Ceremony - May 24, 2010

The Most Valuable Track and Field Competitor Award (Men) is sponsored by the 8th Air Force Historical Society in memory of Mr. Arne U. Arnesen. The award was presented by the society's former President, Lieutenant Colonel Ivan L. McKinney, USAF, Retired, to Justin W. Tyner, Class of 2011, Squadron 32.





**Front row: L to R - Don Miller (bombardier), Andy Uhrain (navigator), Skip Devlin (co-pilot), Fred Boddin (pilot).
Back row: L to R - Jack Irwin (tail gunner), Ted Langham (left waist gunner), Joe Nunley (right waist gunner), Ryan Kornegay (radio operator gunner), Pat Richardson (engineer - upper turret gunner), Chester C. Nohle (lower turret gunner).**

I am an 84 year old veteran of the Eighth Air Force, 401st Bomb Group, 612th Bomb Squadron. I enlisted on December 27, 1943, and after completing nine months of basic training and flight school, my crew and I left Savannah, Georgia on a new B-17 bomber to fly overseas to England. Our base, Deenethorpe, was about eighty miles northwest of London near the town of Kettering. I was stationed in England for seven months. During this time, I completed 30 missions as a tail and ball turret gunner and participated in 16 deputy leads. Our first mission was Metz, France and the other 29 were over Germany. We lost our tail gunner

on our second mission over Merseburg, Germany. Almost all of our missions were 8-10 hours duration and deep in Germany. Our altitude varied from 18,000' to 30,000' - one mission only 10,000'. We received flak holes on most missions but managed to return safely to our base.

On December 24, 1944, we bombed Koblenz, Germany, and due to inclement weather were forced to land at an RAF Base in Northern England. As the next day was Christmas, our commanding officer had the traditional turkey dinner with all the trimmings flown in to us at the RAF Base.

I returned to the states in 1945 on the

ship SS Uruguay with 3,000 wounded servicemen. This trip took 16 days and after landing in New Jersey I was able to return home shortly afterward.

As an 18 year old country boy from lower Alabama, I was the youngest of the crew and now, possibly the only surviving member. Thanks for the memories guys and a special thanks to all who now serve our great nation.

P.S. I had the privilege of seeing Glenn Miller's final performance at the Palladium in London the night before his plane was lost.

**Submitted by Chester C. Noble
Jackson, AL**

Harry Dana Gobrecht, 85, passed away August 10, 2010 in San Clemente, California. Harry was born on September 25, 1924 in Waukegan, Illinois. He married the love of his life, Barbara Jean Goertz, on June 13, 1948 in Fontana, California. They were married for 62 years.

Harry D. Gobrecht enlisted as an Army Air Force Flying Cadet, was classified at the Santa Ana AAB, California, had pilot flight training at King City and Chico, California and Ft. Sumner, New Mexico and graduated as a 2Lt in March 1944 with Class 44-C. His combat crew was obtained at Dyersburg, Tennessee. Shortly after he had completed the B-17 Pilot Training School at Hobbs, New Mexico. The Gobrecht crew was assigned to the 358th BS(H)/303 BG(H). Their first combat mission was in The Floose, on November 26, 1944. Thirty-Five additional missions were flown, twenty in Neva-The Silver Lady. The crew's last mission was completed on March 12, 1945.

He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross in March 1999 for a mission flown on January 22, 1945, on mission #306 to Sterkrade, Germany. The target was one of the most heavily defended in Germany. The #2 engine was hit and feathered and the electrical system was knocked out. The plane could not keep up with formation and they flew back to England, in and out of clouds, to avoid enemy fighters. The Navigator, Lt. McDonald, located our position, through a break in clouds, over Holland. They made a successful three engine landing, at Molesworth. The Crew Chief counted over 100 holes in his B-17 after landing.

Harry and Barbara returned to California following his 1987 retirement, after 40 years service with USG Corporation, and settled in San Clemente, CA. Harry was an avid gardener and a member of the Camellia Society. Harry is a Past President of the 303rd Bomb Group Association, Inc. (1998-1999) and served as Group Historian and Unit Contact (1991-2003) and developed the 303rd BG(H) Archive collection. He was author of the 926 page 303rd BG(H) history book *Might in Flight* (1993 & 1997 Editions) that was acclaimed as the most complete and "best" of all 8th AF Group histories and has contributed to the development of the 303rdbg.com website which is now the "best" of any military organization. Became Chairman of Past President's Committee on 11 October 1998 followed by three years as a member of the Past President's Committee. Named the 303rd BGA "Historian Emeritus" - September 2004.

Harry also is a member of the following military related organizations: The 8th Air Force Museum at Pooler, GA (Member of the Board of Trustees since 1994 and contributor to its development); The Military Order of the World Wars (San Clemente Chapter Commander 2000, 2001 & 2002); Eighth Air Force Historical Society (Active member); San Diego Flight Order of Daedalians; National Fraternity of Military Pilots; The Military Officers Association of America; Reserve Officers Association; Veterans of Foreign Wars; Distinguished Flying Cross Society; Presented with the annual Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum "Lt Gen. E.G. Shuler, Jr. Award" for outstanding accomplishments, primarily in the field of aviation and in support of aviation activities - 9 October 2004. On 20 January 2005, the Mighty 8th AF Museum named and dedicated its Research Center the "Lt. Col. Harry D. Gobrecht Family, 303rd Bombardment Group (H) Research Center." He will be interred in the Columbarium, at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum, located in Pooler, Georgia, with full Military Honors, at a date to be determined.



Harry Dana Gobrecht

Frederick Jack Norman passed away August 5, 2010, in Oklahoma City at the age of 86. He grew up in San Francisco, Hawaii and Seattle. On July 25, 1953, he married Gwinn Pattee Allenberg, and together they had seven children. Later in life he married Suzy Case.



Frederick Norman

At age 18 he became a naturalized American citizen and joined the US Army Air Corps. He navigated 35 missions in a B-17 in WWII. He also flew numerous search and rescue missions during the Korean conflict, was a chief meteorologist for the Strategic Air Command, and was awarded the Bronze Star and Purple Heart.

Ramiro (R.M.) M. Gonzalez, San Antonio, Texas, 92 years old, went home to be with the Lord on Sunday, August 1, 2010. As a member of the 360th Bomb Squadron, 303rd Bomb Group, Army Air Corp, he epitomized the spirit of the Greatest Generation.



Ramiro Gonzales

He married the girl of his dreams, "Nicky" on Feb 18, 1942.

Francis B. LaFramboise, 91, Canterbury Connecticut, passed away July 24, 2010. He was the loving husband of Pauline (LaVigne) LaFramboise. He was the son of the late Adelard and Angelina (Penelle) LaFramboise. He served for four years in World War II, and was stationed in England in the Army Air Corps as a bombardier.



Francis LaFramboise

Vincent W. "Bud" Hesler 86, Levittown, passed away June 18, 2010, at Aria Hospital



Vincent Hessler

Bucks Campus. Bud retired from Maguire Air Force Base in 1984 after 22 years of service, where he was employed as an aircraft mechanic.

Martin J. McGuire Jr. Passed away peacefully July 7, 2010, in Scottsdale, AZ. He was a Gunnery Sergeant with the 303rd BG **Hells Angels**. Marty is survived by his wife of 62 years, Ethel Erickson McGuire of Scottsdale, AZ.

Orphus "Smitty" Smith, Jr. 90, originally of Boonville, Indiana passed away October 7, 2009. He was a member of the "Greatest Generation" and a member of a B17 bomber crew in the Army Air Corps of World War II.

Kilburg, Donald F. - 89, of Scottsdale AZ died May 19, 2010. He was a Bombardier assigned to the 389th Squadron of the 487th Bomb Group--**Gentlemen from Hell**--flying out of Lavenham England. He successfully flew 30 missions over Europe, most as part of a lead crew. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross for his actions on 24 Dec 1944 when, as a member of John Hyatt Edwards crew, he became Lead Bombardier on the largest mission in the history of the 8th AF. Edwards crew re-organized the lead formation of that mission of over 2000 heavy bombers supporting the Battle of the Bulge after General Frederick Castle's plane and seven others from the 487th BG were shot down in a surprise attack just south of Liege Belgium. Kilburg was twice awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal (5), yet like many he returned to civilian life and didn't mention his wartime accomplishments. It took a probing question years later from a young grandson to awaken those memories. In later life Kilburg became active in the **487th Bomb Group Association** and wouldn't miss their annual gatherings. Kilburg's war experiences



William Banks



Donald Kilburg



Gerard "Chick" Coletta



Robert Shaw



William McKelvey

are preserved in the book "The Gentlemen from Hell" by Cindy Neal.

Robert M. Shaw, Montoursville, Pa. Bob passed away on March 12, 2010. He was a Lt. who served his beloved country as a B-17 pilot in the 8th AF, 447th BG stationed at Rattlesden in Suffolk, England. He was a member of both the state chapter and National 8th AFHS and the 447th Bomb Group Association.

Submitted by his son Joe Shaw

William Banks, B-24 Ploesti Raid Army Air Force Veteran, from the Dayton, Ohio Submitted by Henry Wulbeck

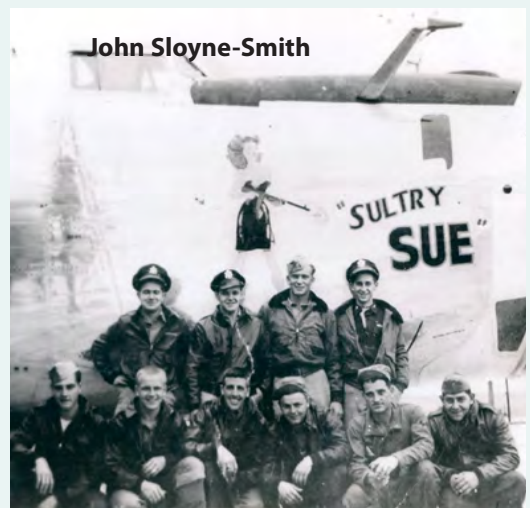
John Sloyne-Smith, McMurray, Pa, passed away May 2010, 18th Bombardment Group 34th Bomb Squadron flying both the B-17G and B-24. He was the Armorer Gunner and flew 35 missions. My dad is in front row 3rd from the left, with the big smile.

Submitted by his son Patrick S. Smith

Lt. Gerard "Chick" Coletta, - 487th BG, 838th Squadron. Many memories to remember during his tour of combat missions, especially trying to put out a nose turret fire after being hit with flak, and having to tear up the armor plate to put out the fire, with f/extinguisher.

William J. Cully - 100TH BG Co-Pilot - 351st Bomb Squadron - President of the 100th Bomb Group Foundation

Lt. Colonel Harry H. Crosby - Famed 100th Bomb Group Navigator and author of "A



Wing and a Prayer." Awarded the DFC, Bronze Star and Croix de Guerre.

William J. McKelvey, June 27, 2010 at his home in Lyons, Colorado. Bill was a navigator with the 748th Squadron, 457 BG. He recorded 30 combat mis-

sions in Europe and was recipient of the Distinguish Flying Cross Air Medal. His pilot was Robert Chapman.

Dee McKenzie, Pilot - 491st BG Earned the Distinguished Flying Cross and Five Air Medals. Also flew with the Northeast Air Command during the Korean War. Submitted by F.C "Hap" Chandler - 491st BG



Dee McKenzie

Lt. Colonel Marion "Curly" Havelaar, of Arlington, Texas Age 86. Flew a full combat tour as a Navigator/Bombardier with the 91st Bomb Group at Basingbourn. He spent a career as an Air Force pilot flying in Korea and Vietnam. His pride and joy was his beautiful Waco QEV which won "Best in Class" at an Oshkosh Airshow. Submitted by William Hess.

Marvin Greenbaum, Radio Operator on the Ed Saugee/Bruce Parker Crew 787th Bomb Squadron/466th BG Submitted by Marvin H. Greene

Floyd D. Reinken, Waist Gunner - Groening Crew 549th Bomb Squadron - 385th BG Completed 35 missions from June to October of 1944

Albert V. Howie, 8th AFHS 401st Bomb Group Longtime member of the North Texas Chapter - 8th AFHS

Ed Berg, Crew Chief - 350th Fighter Squadron / 353rd Fighter Group Awarded a Bronze Star for no mission aborts on the

P-47s or P-51s that he maintained.

Floyd D. Reinken, 385th BG, passed away May 31, 2010 (Memorial Day) at the age of 90. He flew 35 missions as a waist gunner for the Homer P. Groening crew 549th Bomb Squadron. Submitted by Bruce Oakley, son-in-law of Floyd D. Reinken

William Maidbrey passed away August 28, 2010. Bill served with the 8th at BAD1, Base Air Depot One, from September 1943 to 1946. Bill also served as the Treasurer of the NYS Southern Wing Chapter for many years. Bill will be missed.

Submitted by Pat Keeley

Charles Pruyn, of Columbus, Ohio., 447th BG, passed away Feb. 2010. He Served in Rattlesden as a tailgunner & togglier on a B-17 in the 709th Sq. where he earned his **Lucky Bastard** certificate. He loved getting this magazine as does the entire family!

Sincerely, Karen Roach (daughter)

Roger Stanley Johnson, M.D. - died on May 2, 2010. He served in the 351st Bomb Group, Polebrook, England during World War II. He flew 35 combat missions over enemy territory in Europe as a crew member (bombardier and navigator) of a B-17 Flying Fortress heavy bomber and attained the rank of 1st Lieutenant. He was awarded 6 Air Medals, 2 Battle Stars and a Presidential Unit Citation. Following his World War II service, he returned to the States and became a medical doctor.

submitted by Cheryl Johnson (wife)

Walter F. Carnal, Lecompte, La. 379th Bomb Group Pilot. Passed away on July 18, 2010. He received both the Purple Heart and the Silver Star. He was shot down over Germany on his 11th mission. Became a POW for 19 months before being liberated by the 3rd Army. He was discharged from the Army Air Corps in 1945 with

the rank of Major. He is survived by his wife of 65 years Evelyn Merrified Carnal of Lecompte, La and four children.

Submitted by Harry Tanner

Downs, Harvey - 88, of Roswell, GA, died July 12, 2010. Mr. Downs was an honored Veteran of WWII. As a member of the 8th Air Force, 452nd BG, he proudly served his country flying 25 missions over Europe. He was a member of the VFW Post #10822, Dunwoody, GA and a Life Member of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society, Pooler, GA.

Major General Frank H. Smoker Jr.,

- 85, of Lebanon, PA passed away July 16, 2010. Gen. Smoker was a veteran of World War II. He enlisted in the Army Air Corps in February 1943 and served in the 8th Air Force, where he was assigned to the 325th Bomb Squadron, 92nd Bomb Group, Podington Air Force Base, England. He flew 26 combat missions over Germany as a B-17 navigator, totaling 222 combat hours. He received numerous awards and decorations, foremost of which was the Air Force's highest peacetime decoration presented upon retirement, the Air Force Distinguished Service Medal.



Frank H. Smoker

Col. Robert Alponse Maloney, Sr. (Ret.) - 89, of Tampa, passed away June 10, 2010. He entered the Army Air Corps in March of 1943 to become a pilot. He was assigned to the 92nd Bomb Group in England. He retired as a Colonel with 26 years of service. He had over 5,000 hours of flying time and acquired the rating of Command Pilot. He was awarded the Air Medal and various other medals and ribbons.



Robert Maloney



Roger Stanley Johnson



Floyd D. Reinken

Harry J. Reddish Jr., - #19119, 389th BG. Crew member on B-24, Gunner and Engine Mechanic on B-17. Retired from AF as MSG and Strategic Air Command.

Guy Dority, - passed away on February 7, 2010. A decorated World War II combat veteran came to the War Eagles Air Museum every Sunday afternoon to regale visitors with stories of his wartime experiences as a combat airman. He enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps in 1941. He was on the crew of a B-17E of the 359th Bomb Squadron,



Guy E. Dority

303rd Heavy Bombardment Group. His aircraft, which its crew had christened "Jarrin' Jenny," was the very first American-manned *Flying Fortress* to arrive in the United Kingdom.

Guy flew 470 wartime missions, totaling 1,422 hours of flight time. In addition to B-17s, he flew in B-24 Liberators, B-25 Mitchells, C-46 Commandos, C-47 Skytrains and C-54 Skymasters. He earned a Purple Heart, an Air Medal with Silver Oak Leaf Cluster and four Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters, and a

Presidential Citation with Oak Leaf Cluster. In 2006, he was recommended for a Distinguished Flying Cross. If approved, it will unfortunately have to be awarded posthumously.

James E. O'Brien, - 83, died on January 1, 2010. He flew tail gunner on a B-17 with the 305th Bomb Group stationed in Chelveston 105, England. His first mission on February 6, 1945 was to Waltham; on February 15, the plane crashed on take-off with full load, killing five crewmen; on April 19, he flew his last mission to Berlin and Dresden. He was honorable discharged on January 10, 1946 at Fort Dix, NJ.

HONOR FLIGHT LETTER

The following letter was written by Tom Kelly, the son of Richard Kelly a WWII veteran from Austin, Minnesota. Richard Kelly took part in an Honor Flight to Washington D.C. to visit the National World War II Memorial on the National Mall. Tom wrote this letter to his Father on the condition that he open and read it aboard the airplane once he was in the air.

**Submitted by
Howard L. Croner
Estherville, IA**

May 10, 2010

Dear Dad:

When your reading this letter it is my hope that you are on the plane heading toward Washington, DC, to view the WWII Memorial. I know how much that would mean to you and all others on your plane.

You, Howard, Don and those on your plane were part of the "Greatest Generation" that said "no" to Hitler when he wanted to take over the world and answered your country's call when Japan bombed Pearl Harbor.

Dad, I am proud to say that you and your four brothers all served in WWII at the same time. You served in the Southwest Pacific. Claude served in North Africa. Kenny served in the China-Burma-India theater of war. "Lefty" served in France and arrived via the Normandy Landing. Jerry served on the North Sea. I am sure Grandpa and Grandma felt a sense of pride, but at the same time were worried and prayed for a safe return. Thankfully, their prayers were answered and you all made it back home.

I am also proud and thankful to Don, Howard and all other veterans on your plane and elsewhere who served our country and to those servicemen and servicewomen who continue to serve our country today. My father-in-law, Robert "Doc" Lommen, also served in WWII and my brother, Brian, served in the Air Force during the seventies.

As more and more war veterans pass away there are fewer and fewer left to carry the torch of remembrance. We must pick up that torch and help others learn, know and remember the true price of freedom!



Proud members of the "Mighty Eighth"





SPECIAL EVENT

The Last Great Gathering of Fortresses and Legends

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society gathered in force, with over 500 members in attendance, for a once in a lifetime experience in Detroit, Michigan during August 5th – 9th at the **2010 Thunder Over Michigan** air show. The theme this year was the "Gathering of Fortresses and Legends."

Our home base was the lovely Crown Plaza Hotel located near Detroit International Airport. The weather was perfect for an air show and our attendees were comfortably facilitated under a 40" x 80" marquis tent. The veterans, their family members and friends had the *best seats in the house* for all the flying activities. The highlight of the show was the awe inspiring and unprecedented flying display of eight Boeing B-17 Flying Fortresses and one Consolidated B-24J Liberator along with several P-51 Mustangs in escort. On Saturday night, a special 8th Air Force Symposium was held highlighting veterans of the first daylight missions on the German capitol of Berlin during the early days of

March of 1944. Five members from the 100th Bomb Group entertained the audience of almost 600 people with their stories and recollections. The night was very memorable and well received by the crowd. At the conclusion of the evening, the five 100th Bomb Group veterans were kind enough to autograph items for awaiting "fans" for more than an hour!

Our farewell banquet dinner was a superb evening with great food and fantastic entertainment. Members danced to the music of a very talented and enthusiastic '40s swing band.

For well over a year, the hard work of Reunion organizer, George Hoidra and his amazing group of volunteers certainly paid off in full. This event was nothing short of spectacular and shall probably never be repeated again. For all those in attendance, it was an experience that will inspire fond memories for a lifetime.

"Little Friends" join the show. The very rare North American P-51B Mustang, "Old Crow".



The Last Great Gathering of Fortresses and Legends

8th AFHS member, Frank Youngquist's beautifully restored 1945 Willy's Jeep.



Three future Nex Gen's listen intently to 445th BG Veteran, Ira Weinstein.

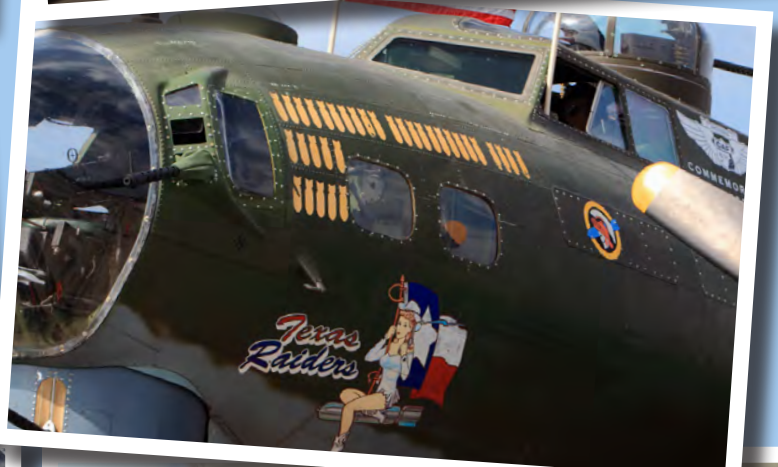


Boeing B-17G "Flying Fortress" "Sentimental Journey" gleaming in the sunshine.

Crowds gather around the beautiful Consolidated B-24J Liberator, "Witchcraft".



The Last Great Gathering of Fortresses and Legends



The Last Great Gathering of Fortresses and Legends

Eleven year old Marshall Weimer gives a final salute to our 8th Air Force veterans as they exit the DTW Air Show.
Photo Credit: Melissa Weimer.



Surviving members off 100th BG "Our Gal Sal" crew.
L-R: Don Hammond, Robert Shoens & Ed Stone.



L-R: Belton Wolfe, Frank Youngquist, David Nowack,
Earl Wassom and Earl's son, Reggie Wassom.



British visitor & photographer, Jim Gintner, proudly stands in front of the "Memphis Belle".
Thank you Jim, for the use of many of your photos in this issue!!



94th BG veteran Wilbur Richardson, still looks stunning in uniform.



The Last Great Gathering of Fortresses and Legends



*Our amazing volunteer staff.
Thank you for all your efforts!!!*



I am so glad that everyone enjoyed our weekend event at the Thunder Over Michigan Airshow.

It was indeed my personal pleasure to be a part of it's planning, and I want to thank all of my many associates that made it all happen so seamlessly in my absence.

To everyone who attended the Sunday Gala Banquet, I want to sincerely thank you all for your kindness and your generosity.

Cheers, George Hoidra
BOD - Event Organizer



The Last Great Gathering of Fortresses and Legends



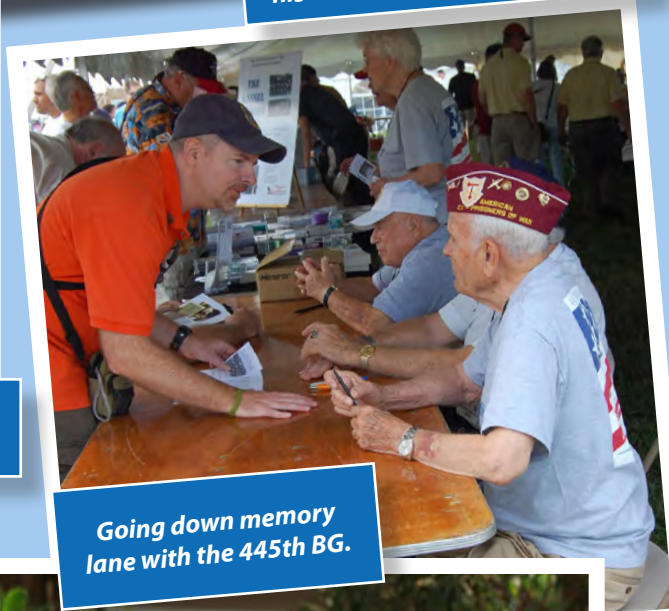
8th AF veteran signs the interior tail section of a B-17 "Champagne Lady".



Earl Wassom sits comfortably in his "office" even after 65 years.



A very rare F-100 "Super Sabre" thrills the crowd.



Going down memory lane with the 445th BG.



Joe Lawrence shows 493rd BG veteran Jack Rude, his "short snorter".



Smiles of WWII veterans after a terrific "Air Show" weekend.

BULLETIN BOARD

NexGen Cheryl Pula does a Powerpoint presentation called FLYING FORTRESS:

THE 8TH AIR FORCE IN WORLD WAR II ENGLAND, which includes background on the 8th, and what it was like going on a bombing mission. She has based the program on extensive reading, and interviews with bomber crew members.

She also has completed the first two of a proposed series of novels on bomber crews from the 91st BG(H) at Bassingbourn, which a publishing company is interested in. The series will probably be at least four books if not more.

Cheryl is a professional librarian and lives in upstate New York, near Utica and Syracuse. If anyone from NY is seeking someone to do a program on the 8th in England, she says she would be happy to oblige---and doesn't charge a fee. She can travel all over the state.

Cheryl Pula , michigangrad76@yahoo.com Ph: 315 736-1269

EXCERPT FROM WWII COMBAT DIARY OF LT. WOOLDRIDGE

He was the pilot of the B-17 and flew 25 bombing missions over Europe in 1943. He had enlisted at age 17 with barely a HS education and learned to fly the B17 in just over 100 hours of training when WWII broke out. He was 26 years old. My dad made a career of the Army and retired a Lt. Colonel.

I have attached his 5th raid which is one of the worst and also his cover page to his diary.

Frances Wooldridge Bekafigo (daughter of Kermit. D. Wooldridge, deceased).

(5)
7-28-43
4:55

Frankly I am very glad to be able to write this one down.

We took off with our bomb load of ten 500# G.B.S. Our target Kassel wick is deep in Germany. The weather was bad and we had to make an instrument take off and climb to 22000' before we broke out. We flew on top and as we approached the target area we had to climb to 28000'. The stuff was ~~st~~ still there at the tgt. so we turned around and headed home. There must have been a hole some place for here came about 25 E/A from someplace. We were in a very tight formation and as there were only a few

fighters, we didn't worry too much about it. However I was flying the low diamond position and that is the sad part of this story. All 25 of the little buggers started making passes at me and it didn't take long to find that they meant ~~business~~ business. They started throwing plenty of lead at me and a new type of rocket that would explode and scatter a bunch of high explosive missiles that would also explode. About this time another group of enemy planes appeared overhead and started dropping aerial bombs on us. And of course the ground batteries started throwing flak up through the overcast and in general the going was getting pretty rough. Soon a burst of flak

8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY PX AT THE MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE MUSEUM STORE



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Weight**



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Compass in a box



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QTY	8TH AFHS PX ORDER FORM DESCRIPTION	PRICE	OPTIONS	TOTAL
	Golf shirt w/8 th AFHS logo, Circle size and color choice	\$29.99	S, M, L, XL, 2X Red, White, Navy	
	8 th AFHS Embroidered Logo; Mesh Baseball Cap	\$6.00	Red, White, Blue	
	8 th AFHS 4" jacket Patch	\$3.95	NA	
	8 th AFHS 3/4" pin w/clutch back	\$3.50	N/A	
	8 th AFHS bumper sticker	\$.90	NA	
	8 th AFHS 4" round sticker	\$.75	NA	
	8 th AFHS plastic license plate	\$3.95	NA	
	8 th AF logo silk tie	\$27.99	Red	
	8 th AF 3" patch	\$3.98	NA	
	8 th AF 3/4" pin w/clutch back	\$3.50	NA	
	8 th AF logo grey T-shirt	\$12.99 \$14.99	S, M, L, XL 2X	
	8 th AF logo white T-shirt	\$10.99 \$12.99	S, M, L, XL 2X	
	"City of Savannah" B-17 T-Shirt	\$15.99	S, M, L, XL,	
	A-2 Jacket	\$299.99	40, 42, 44, 46, 48	
	Flyboys (Paper Back)	\$7.99	N/A	
	The Mighty 8 th (Paper Back)	\$7.99	N/A	
	Bomber Legends 2011, B-17 or B-24 Calendars	\$12.99	B-17, B-24	
	8 th Logo Tervis Tumbler Mug	\$11.99	N/A	
	Airplane Clock (Pictured)	\$59.99	N/A	
	Airplane Globe (Pictured)	\$74.99	N/A	
	Executive Compass (Pictured)	\$29.99	N/A	
	Military Dominoes (Pictured)	\$29.99	Air Force, Marine, Army	
	Globe Paper Weights (Pictured)	\$49.99	Lapis, Mother of Pearl, Onyx, Aqua Marine	
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HOW ABOUT IT?

WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?

The grandmother sat admiring her grandson, watching him as he sat at his little desk. He was engaged in deep thought and nothing, it seemed, would distract him. Usually, he was the typical three year old, making lots of noise and constantly on the move. Nana was alarmed at this unusual behavior. She spoke to him, "Reg, what are you thinking about?" He was quiet for a moment, then replied, "Nana, do you mean, what is my mind telling me?"

If we could poll everyone reading this essay right now, each person's minds would be telling them different things. What is on our mind depends on a lot of things, our age, the circumstances we are in at the moment, our feelings about successes or failures we have experienced, our aches and pains, our family, our friends, and the list goes on. Two people hearing or experiencing the same thing respond differently as their minds take different tracks. When Japan attacked Pearl Harbor in 1941, our President and the leadership of Japan were thinking different things about the same event. What Gerald Ford was thinking following the resignation of President Nixon and the scandal of Watergate and what Nixon was thinking as he left the office of the President of the United States were certainly different. The street rioters in the streets of America in 1968 were thinking about the war in Vietnam and the families of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Bobby Kennedy, who were assassinated by anti-war sympathizers, were thinking about the losses they had suffered.

We live in difficult times. There are no easy answers and we think in different ways about the dilemma of the world. Deflecting blame, finger pointing and lashing out at others is one school of thought. Others will think, 'I am a nobody in a very large world, what can I do? Epictetus in the first century BC was thinking correctly when he said, "Why worry about being

a nobody when what matters is being a somebody in those areas of your life over which you have control, in which you can make a difference!" He went on to say, "If you can fish, fish. If you can sing, sing. If you can fight, fight. Determine what you can do. And do that!"

A little over a hundred years after Epictetus, a scholar and an authority on religious matters thought himself to be the possessor of absolute truth and justice, had letters from authorities and went about killing people and imprisoning those who did not think like he did. While on a journey one day, he was struck down, blinded and had a divine encounter with God. In a moment, his original thought changed drastically. He took a hundred-eighty degree turn and the goal and purpose of his life changed radically. Even his name was changed from Saul to Paul. Saul thought he was on the right mission. When he became Paul, he was zealous in speaking this new truth. His change caused him, thirty years later, to end up in prison. He had been mobbed, beaten, stoned and ship-wrecked across the years and he writes a letter to those whom he is urging to change their thought life. In it he declares,

"Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable---think about such things." (Philippians 4:8 NIV)

One does not have to be old to think about truthfulness, honesty, justice, purity and beauty. To 'think about these things' will make us happy, make our life useful and cause us to live a fulfilled existence

I don't know if General Jimmy Doolittle, our war-time 8th Air Force Commander, even knew who Epictetus was or what he thought. Doolittle did fight, and did it well when called upon. But in later life, his thinking and activities were modified as was Paul's. Doolittle said: "One of the privileges of age is the opportunity to sit back and ponder what you've seen and done



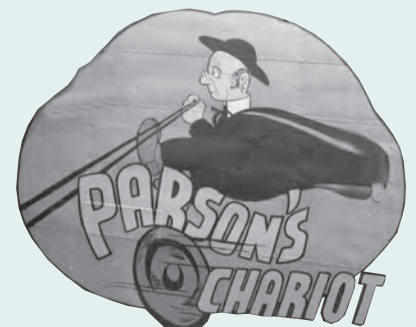
Earl Wassom

over the years. In my nine- plus decades, I've formed some views about life and living. I have concluded that we were all put on this earth for a purpose. That purpose is to make it, within our capabilities, a better place in which to live. We can do this by painting a picture, writing a poem, building a bridge, protecting the environment, combating prejudice and injustice, providing help to those in need, and in thousands of other ways. The criterion is this: If a man leaves the earth a better place than he found it, then his life has been worthwhile."

Let's think about 'these things' for...."As a man thinketh, so is he..." (Proverbs 23:7 KJV).

Allow your thoughts to make you who you really desire to be.

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



8th AF News
THE EIGHTH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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