



September 2011

TH AF NEWS

Volume 11 Number 2 Voice of "The Mighty Eighth"

MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS!

**Don't Miss
OUR
BIG EVENT!!!**

**St. Louis, MO - 8th AFHS Annual Reunion
October 11-16, 2011**





AF News

September 2011

Magazine of

The Eighth Air Force Historical Society

The Eighth Air Force News is dedicated to the memory of 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.

Officers and Board of Directors below are Eighth Air Force Historical Society Officers and Board Members.

OFFICERS

President

Harry Tanner (Lorene) 2012
2923 Roy Bunch Road
Sulphur, LA 70663
Tel. (337) 527-0322
Cell: (337)-302-6239
hdtanner@netcommander.com

Vice President

Robert "Bob" Moses 2011
413 North Washington Street
Brownsville, TN 38012-2064
Tel. (731) 772-3333
bobcheryl@bellsouth.net

Secretary

David Nowack (Lois) 2013
4878 College View Court
Schnecksville, PA 18078
Tel. (610) 799-4640
DLNowack@ptd.net

Treasurer

Darrel Lowell (Becky) 2014
39 Peregrine Crossing
Savannah, GA 31411
Tel. (912) 598-7334
darrelowell@bellsouth.net

Public Relations

George Hoidra (Betsy) 2013
6504 Old Sandy Springs Road
Laurel, MD 20707-2954
Tel. (301) 953-2813
ghoidra@yahoo.com

8TH AFHS NATIONAL OFFICE

Membership Manager Samantha Reid

PO Box 956
Pooler, GA 31322
Tel. (912) 748-8884

Email address:

membershipmanager@8thafhs.org

Website address: www.8thafhs.org

8TH AFHS UNITED KINGDOM CONTACTS

Gordon Richards - U.K. Office
The Croft 26
Chapelwent Rd. Haverhill, Suffolk
CB9 9SD, England
011 44 1440 704014

8TH AFHS PX

Felice Stelljes, **Director PX**
175 Bourne St. Pooler, GA 31328
or
P.O. Box 1992
Savannah, GA 31402
912-748-8888
store@mightyeighth.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michael P. Faley 2014
12400 Ventura Blvd. #113
Studio City, CA 91604
Tel. (818) 980-9349
mpfaley@aol.com

Chapter/Unit Liaison

Joseph P. Keeley (Andrea) 2014
1335 Belmont Ave.
North Haledon, NJ 07508
Tel. (973) 423-4854
fxe84@optonline.net

Dr. Nancy J. Toombs 2014
5213 North Cedar Street
North Little Rock, AR 72116
Tel. (501) 681-3126
chase221@swbell.net

Earl E. Wassom (Cynthia) 2011
Chaplain 8TH AFHS
548 Brentmoor Drive
Bowling Green KY 42101-3772
Tel. and Fax: (270) 842-0412
earlewassom@insightbb.com

DIRECTORS EMERITUS

Aida Kaye.....Sherman Small
Richard Baynes.....Walter E. Brown, MD
Thomas S. Parsons.....John Greenwood
John Pearson.....Ivan McKinney

HISTORIAN 8TH AF NEWS EDITOR

Mark Copeland (Monica)
20681 Hazelwood Trail
Lakeville, MN 55044
Tel. (952) 469-2633
moke388@isd.net

BEHIND THE SCENES 8TH AF NEWS ASST. EDITORS

Donna Neely & Telisha Gaines
2090 Cairo Bend Road
Lebanon, TN 37087
Tel: 615-418-1200
Fax: 615-453-2343
donnajneely@gmail.com

Inside this issue

<i>Presidents Message</i>	3
<i>From the Editor</i>	4
<i>Behind the Scenes</i>	4
<i>From the 8th AFHS Office</i>	5
<i>Chapter/Unit/Group Liaison Report</i>	5
<i>37th Annual 8th AFHS Reunion</i>	6-11
<i>Mighty Eighth AF Museum</i>	14-15
<i>Book Reviews</i>	17
<i>Rare Color Photos - 357th FG</i>	24-25
<i>Next Generation</i>	27
<i>Mail Call</i>	31-35
<i>Chapter News</i>	36-37
<i>Sentimental Journey</i>	38-39
<i>Reunions</i>	40
<i>Taps</i>	42-44
<i>8th AFHS PX Store</i>	46
<i>How About It?</i>	47

President's Address



Harry Tanner
President

The long hot days of Summer are quickly drawing to a close. Thoughts now are turning to Fall, cooler days, and **REUNIONS!!!**

Remember the 1944 Judy Garland musical, **Meet Me in St. Louis?** Well, that phrase is the theme of this issue as I encourage you to make plans to attend the 37th annual **8th Air Force Historical Society Reunion** in St. Louis, Missouri. After

four years of summer gatherings, the Board has heeded the call to return to Fall reunion dates. **Donna Lee (Armed Forces Reunions)** and the Board are making final preparations to offer you six October days of celebration, information, and entertainment in beautiful settings along the "Mighty Mississippi." I hope to see you there.

When making plans to attend the

reunion (registration, selecting meal plans, choosing exciting tours, etc.), don't forget to renew your membership in the Society. This is also a perfect time to recruit new members and invite them to join everyone for the reunion.

Remember that donations are still being accepted for the B-17 "City of Savannah" at the Museum in Pooler. An update on this and other Museum projects will be presented in St. Louis.

I regret to inform you that former Board Member, Bruce Sundlun from Rhode Island passed away. Bruce served on the Board two years before resigning last Fall due to health reasons. His passing, just as others we lose daily, serves as a reminder of our determination to preserve the memories and legacy of the 8th Air Force.

Lorene and I hope to see all of you in St. Louis in just a few weeks. God Bless the "Mighty Eighth."

Sincerely, Harry Tanner
President 8th AFHS

Books signing and selling of any 8th Air Force Memorabilia

If you are interested in having a book signing or selling of ANY 8th Air Force Memorabilia during the 2011 Annual reunion, please contact President Harry Tanner for book signing space, guidelines and approval.



Board of Directors Candidates for the Eighth Air Force Historical Society



Frank Youngquist

Frank is the brother-in-law of a B-24 pilot, Lt. Al Reynolds (466th Bomb Group). Frank has been a member of the **Eighth Air Force Historical Society** for several years. He has supported the **Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum** as well as other aviation museums. An active NextGen, Frank has given presentations on the 8th Air Force to schools, clubs, and community organizations. His jeep, which is marked for the 8th Air Force, has been featured in several parades, air shows, and other events. He and his wife are actively involved in the **Honor Flights** for WW2 veterans and also support the **Wounded Warriors** organization. As a retired teacher, he would assist the 8AFHS Board of Directors to develop study guides, informational DVDs, and other ways to educate the public about the service and sacrifices of the 8th Air Force.

Nominated by David Nowack
Membership number 34895

Robert Moses

Robert Moses is running for a second term as a Director of the **Eighth Air Force Historical Society**. He is currently serving as the Society's Vice President, and is very passionate about preserving the legacy of the *Mighty Eighth*. He feels he is prouder of his membership in the **8AFHS** than any other group. During the Korean War, Bob served with the 8th Air Force for three years. Visiting old 8th Air Force bases is one of his key interests having traveled to Britain 51 times, and has organized three Roger Freeman tours with WWII veterans. Bob is a founding member of the **American Air Museum** at RAF Duxford, England. He has served as a President of the Society's Tennessee Chapter and has represented the Society at various Bomb Group reunions.

Self-nominated
Membership number: 13223

From the Editor



Mark Copeland
Historian
8th AF News Editor

After all, this is 'your' magazine publishing 'your' stories.

I have been volunteering for the Society for over twenty

Hello everyone! We hope you had a wonderful summer! As you can see by the front cover, our 2011 Reunion will be held in the fine city of St. Louis, Missouri. We welcome you to join our 8th AFHS family for this special and memorable occasion. It is going to be a very exciting week!

As Donna and Telisha mentioned below in their "Behind the Scenes" column, we have a myriad of great articles in our September issue for your enjoyment. We hope you find the selection of articles entertaining, educational and inspiring.

Please continue to submit your articles, photographs and stories to me.

years now. Sometimes I get the question, "Why are you still doing all of this, how do you find the time? Don't you ever get tired it?" My answer is simple. If I could serve this organization and the veterans of the "Mighty Eighth" for a million years, it would never come close to paying for the debt I owe to all of them. How could I ever pay back what they have given to me, my family and this Nation? How can one put a price or make measure on freedom and liberty? Those rights are priceless.

Your stories need to be preserved, or they will be lost to the ages. I believe God has given me the blessing to work as your Editor and make your stories a part of history. Please sit back and enjoy this issue of your Eighth Air Force News! God bless you. We are proud to have you as a member! Until next time!

Mark S. Copeland
Editor - Eighth Air Force News

Behind the Scenes



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

Our September issue is full of short stories that I hope you can relate & enjoy. Below is a sneak peek of what you will find in the next few pages

- ★ New fiscal year **"Dues Plan"** change, has been approved. Details on page 5.
- ★ Two different short stories about two 447th crewmen from **Gus Neals Crew** on page 12-13. Marvin Silbersher of the Blithe Spirit, has published his book of Poems **"Bells of Hell"** and Ivan Holland gets a surprise from his grandson.
- ★ **"City Of Savannah"** restoration update on page 14.
- ★ Lt. Col. Herb Schaaf's Historical DVD

collection will be available to purchase during the 37th Annual Reunion in St. Louis. Information on page 16.

★ Great story about **"Food Drops"** during **"Operation Manna Chowhound"** on page 18-20.

★ Lt. Col. Ivan McKinney, former 8th AFHS President, had an **Ethical Dilemma**. Story to share on page 28-30. Anyone need a good Manhattan recipe??

★ Sit back and follow the friendly email remarks about the qualification to become a **"Pilot Ace"** between "One Ancient Fighter Pilot To Another" through Robert "Punchy" Powell & Richard M. Baughn on pages 32-34.

★ **Centerspread** - Rare Color Photographs from the 357th Fighter Group

★ A special **"Headstone Tribute"** to Connie Richards from her husband, Gordon on page 45.

★ **How About It?** Last but not least .. MUST READ!!! **"Foregiveness"** on page 47. Chaplain of our 8th AFHS, Earl Wasom, 466th BG, is so kind to always contribute his words of wisdom and share God's word. Thank you Earl for sending us over 50 HAI articles to publish in this **8th AF News Magazine!!** Keep the **"Good Word"** coming our way Earl!

Editor

Mark Copeland
20681 Hazelwood Trail
Lakeville, MN 55044
Tel: (952) 469-2633
moke388@isd.net

Assistant Editors

Donna Neely
Telisha Gaines
2090 Cairo Bend Road
Lebanon, TN 37087
Tel: (615) 418-1200
Fax: (615) 453-2343

donnajneely@gmail.com

★ **Send all mail & email to:** ★
Mark, Donna or Telisha before

★ **November 15th, 2011 for the** ★
upcoming December 8th AF News

Looking forward to seeing you ALL next month!!

*Meet Me In St. Louis!!!!
as Judy Garland would sing!!*

Sincerely,
Behind the Scenes Team
Donna Neely & Telisha Gaines

From the 8th Air Force Historical Society Office



Samantha Reid • 8th AFHS • Box 956 • Pooler, GA 31322

Call: 912.748.8884

Email: membershipmanager@8thafhs.org



NEW

2012

DUES

PLAN

This September *8th Air Force News* magazine usually marks time for dues payments for 2011 (September & August) & 2012 (January & March). However, this year the Board of Directors voted to change from a fiscal year (September 1 – August 31) to a calendar year (January 1 – December 31).

This means that things change a bit for you. The Dues insert envelope will now be placed in the December issue of 2011 for the dues payment of 2012. We will still have the same printing scheduled issues for 2012 March/June/September/December. The good news is that you will be receiving 6 issues for your 2012 dues payment because of the remaining 2 unpaid issues in 2011 with the change to fiscal year.

Read below for a few optional payments.

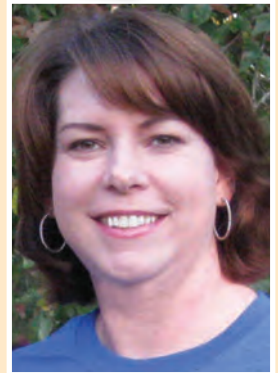
1. Mail a check or money order payable to the 8th Air Force Historical Society in the December insert as before.

2. Go to our website at www.8thafhs.org, then click on the **JOIN TAB**. Fill out this form and mark as renewal and make your payment with a credit/debit card.

3. Call me at the National Office 912-748-8884 and pay over the phone also with a credit/debit card. Please do not leave a credit card number on the voicemail for security reasons.

Note that we accept Visa and MasterCard only.

In November, I will celebrate my one year anniversary of being your **Membership Manager**. I must say that I've enjoyed getting to know some of you and helping any way that I can. I'm learning so much from each of you every day and I really love the stories from our veterans. These make my job more fun. Thank you and here's to another year.



Samantha Litton Reid

Samantha Reid
Membership Records Manager
8th Air Force Historical Society

Chapter/Unit/Group Liaison Report



Pat Keeley

Greetings my fellow **Eighth Air Force Historical Society** members. I hope everyone had a good summer. Our 37th Annual Reunion is practically here!

This year we are heading to the *Gateway City to the West*, St. Louis with a great and active program starting Wednesday morning. Please refer to the detailed Reunion Program inside this edition and also in the June edition.

This year we have pulled an early **Unit Advisory/Chapter & Unit Dev. Meeting** scheduled on Thursday, October 13 from 8:30 – 10:00 am. As the Society progresses, we need to utilize these "not held enough" Chapter & Group meetings to discuss our common issues and strategies in moving forward in the future. I believe without the **Chapter/Units/Groups** and their frequent get together meetings and luncheons, we stand to lose our youth and others from hearing about the history of the 8th Air Force history of WWII. That being said,

the Society also honors post WWII 8th AF veterans which I have noticed coming on board with their membership of late. I thank and welcome you to your Society.

I also want to thank the NexGen, members who are not WWII 8th or 8th veterans, who are a strong asset in this endeavor to "Keep the Memories Alive".

I have seen quite a few new NexGen and renewed members continuing to come onboard and compel them to also join their local Chapters and their Fathers/Uncles, etc. Bomb/Fighter Group Associations. If anyone has not heard from the Society regarding your inquires or membership please contact us.

Upcoming Reunions are posted inside.

The 8th Air Force will never be forgotten.

If you have any comments or ideas on how we can move forward, my address and email is posted on the back of the front cover page.

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

8th Air Force Historical Society Reunion October 11-16, 2011 Sheraton Westport Lakeside Chalet - St. Louis, MO

Although you may get your **8th Air Force News** magazine after the official reunion cut-off date has passed, it's still important to pre-register. Online registration will close on September 9, 2011, but registrations received in the mail with payment by check will still be accepted on a space available basis.

Donna P. Lee
Senior Event Planner Armed
Forces Reunions, Inc.
Phone: 706-356-1905



MEALS / EVENTS CHOICES

CHOICE #1 TOTAL PACKAGE \$189

Package includes 7 hotel food functions starting with breakfast on Thursday. Tours are separate.

CHOICE # 2 PARTIAL PACKAGE \$134

Package includes 5 hotel food functions starting with breakfast on Friday. Tours are separate.

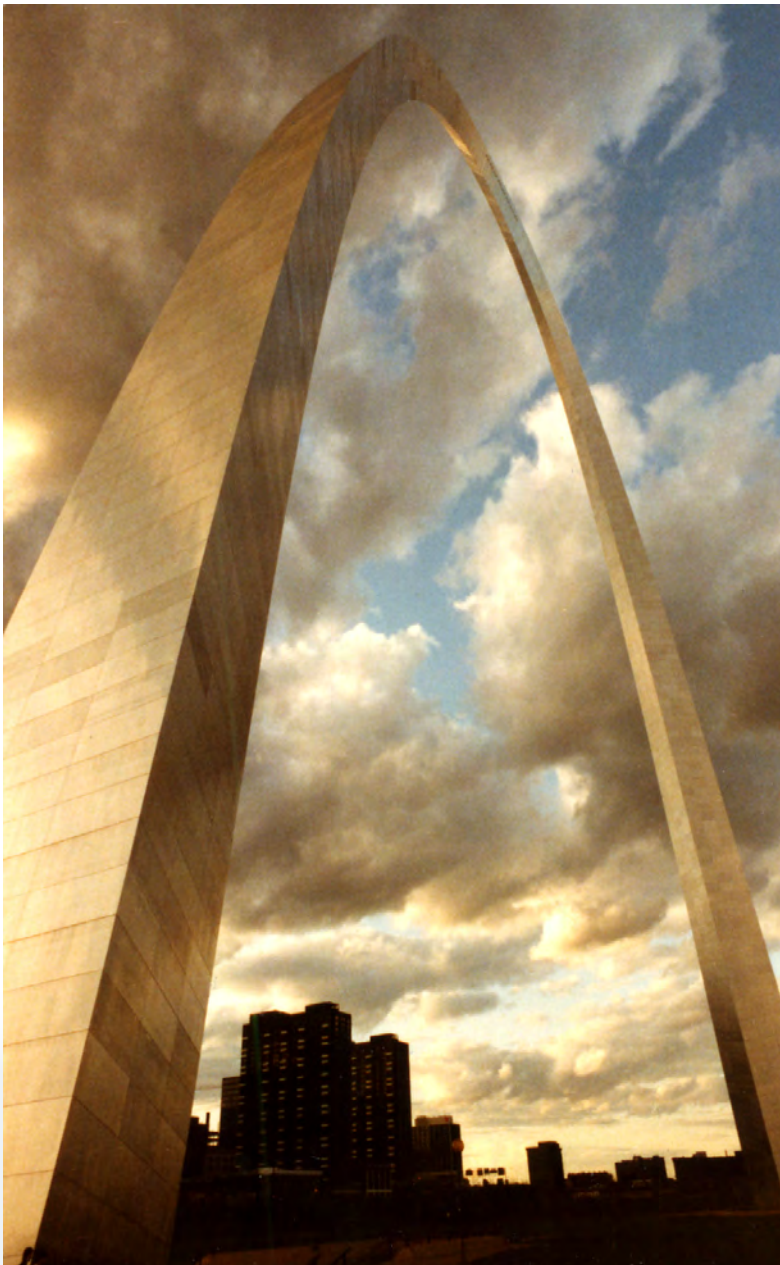
CHOICE #3 INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

Friday Rendezvous Dinner at \$39 and Saturday Banquet at \$44 can be purchased separately, but are included in both packages above.

Breakfast menus: The continental breakfasts on Thursday and Sunday include juice, breakfast breads, cereal, yogurt, fruit, coffee, and tea. The breakfast buffets on Friday and Saturday includes juice, fruit, assorted breakfast breads, eggs, bacon, sausage, potatoes, coffee, and tea.

TOUR OPTIONS

Tours and trips are described on the Reunion Highlights Pages. Prices are listed on the registration form. Driver and Guide gratuities are not included in the tour prices.



8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

37th ANNUAL REUNION

OCTOBER 11 - 16, 2011

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 11

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

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12

8:00am - 10:00am *Reunion Registration open at 9:00am*
9:00am *Memorabilia/Gathering Room open for duration of reunion*
PX opens for duration of reunion
9:00am - 2:30pm *CITY TOUR*
1:00pm - *8AFHS Board Meeting*
2:00pm - 6:00pm *Reunion Registration open*

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 13

7:00am - 8:30am *Continental Breakfast*
8:30am - 10:00am *Unit Advisory and Chapter & Unit Dev. Meeting*
9:00am - 10:00am *Reunion Registration open*
10:30am - 3:30pm *KIMMSWICK HISTORIC TOUR*
3:00pm - 6:00pm *Reunion Registration open*
5:30pm - 6:30pm *Cash Bar Reception*
6:30pm - 9:00pm *Dinner buffet*

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14

7:00am - 8:30am *Full Breakfast*
9:00am - 10:00am *Reunion Registration open*
9:00am - 10:30am *Individual Group Meetings*
10:45am - 2:00pm *LUNCH CRUISE*
2:30pm - 4:00pm *Next Generation Meeting*
3:00pm - 6:00pm *Reunion Registration open*
5:30pm - 6:30pm *8AFHS Cash Bar Reception*
6:30pm - 9:00pm *Rendezvous Dinners and 'Hangar Flying'*

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15

7:00am - 8:30am *Full Breakfast Buffet*
9:00am - 10:30am *General Membership Meeting*
11:30am - 4:00pm *ST. CHARLES HISTORIC TOUR*
12:00pm - 5:00pm *8AFHS Board Meeting*
5:00pm - 5:30pm *Reunion Registration open*
5:30pm - 6:30pm *8AFHS Cash Bar Reception*
6:30pm - *8AFHS Gala Banquet*

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16

7:00am - 8:30am *Continental Breakfast*

- Air Force related presentations may be added to the program as plans continue to be made.
- Driver and guide gratuities are not included in the tour prices.
- Please be at the bus boarding area at least five minutes prior to the scheduled time.
- All tours must have a minimum of thirty people, unless otherwise stated.



ST. LOUIS CITY TOUR Wednesday, October 12

Enjoy a guided tour of St. Louis. Drive through Forest Park, home of the 1904 World's fair and stop at the Cathedral Basilica to see one of the largest collections of mosaic art. Pass by St. Louis University, Fabulous Fox Theatre, and St. Francis Xavier College Cathedral. You'll stop at Soldier's Memorial, a tribute to the men and women who lost their lives in this country's wars. From there, you'll head to Kiener Plaza, in the very heart of downtown St. Louis with a fabulous view of the Old Court House and the Gateway Arch. Enjoy lunch on your own at one of many eateries. Following lunch, continue past the waterfront and the Gateway Arch, the tallest national monument in the United States. Take in Laclede's Landing, a revitalized 19th century warehouse district with cobblestone streets and cast-iron street lamps as well as the diverse historic com-

munity of Soulard. It is one of the oldest neighborhoods in the city with homes dating from the mid to late 1800s. Note: The Cathedral Basilica Tour will not be available in the event of a wedding or other church event.

**9:00am board bus,
2:30pm back at hotel
\$39/Person includes bus, guide,
and admission.
Lunch on your own.**



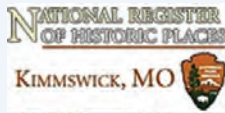
Blue Owl's famous,
Levee High Carmel Apple Pecan Pie



KIMMSWICK HISTORIC TOUR Thursday, October 13

Near St. Louis, yet far away from the hustle and bustle of the big city, is the delightful village of Kimmswick. This small town located near the Mississippi River offers a chance to step back into the less hurried days of the 1800s. Enjoy lunch at the popular **Blue Owl**. The restaurant prepares home-cooked meals and fabulous desserts served on Old English china in a charming atmosphere. You'll be able to select an entrée

from six choices along with a yummy dessert. Following lunch you'll head to the home of Mabel-Ruth and her husband, the late Frederick Straub Anheuser. Enjoy the views of the 23-acre grounds from their river-front estate. See a collection of Brewery artifacts and Anheuser family heirlooms including Mrs. Anheuser's Westward Ho Crystal collection and two 1904 hand-carved World's Fair beds. Time will be allowed to browse through the many shops downtown, as well.



**10:30am board bus,
3:30pm back at hotel
\$60/Person includes bus, guide,
lunch, and admission.**

**PADDLEWHEELER CRUISE
Friday, October 14**



Enjoy a one-hour cruise with a box lunch on Gateway Riverboats' Becky Thatcher or Tom Sawyer paddlewheelers, reminiscent of a time past when the river was the highway to the next port city. Your Captain will narrate and take you back to recapture the vibrant life on the river during the peak of the steamboat era.

**10:45am board bus, 2:00pm back at hotel
\$48/Person includes bus, escort, cruise, and box lunch.**

**RENDEZVOUS DINNERS
Friday, October 14**

Units (Bomber and Fighter groups, etc.) with approximately fifty or more people in attendance will have a private room. Smaller groups will be combined with others. Think of this as your "reunion within the reunion." Dinner features

Chicken Capri.

**5:30pm Cash Bar Reception, 6:30pm Dinner.
Cost is included in both meal packages or \$39 separately.**

**ST. CHARLES
HISTORIC TOUR
Saturday, October 15**

Go back in time in the beautiful town of St. Charles. Walk around the nine-block National Register Historic District, complete with brick streets, gas-lights, and charming restored buildings. Browse through one-of-a-kind antique, craft, gift shops, and a variety of quaint restaurants. Consider a tour of the Old Capitol building, dating back to 1821 (small admission fee). Enjoy lunch on your own in one of the many restaurants nearby.

**11:30am board bus, 4:00pm back at hotel
\$33/Person includes bus and guide.
Lunch on your own.**

**8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
ANNUAL BANQUET
Saturday, October 15**

Assemble in the ballroom for the Posting of the Colors and Memorial Service. Dinner will be a choice of Cajun Tilapia or Beef Tenderloin and the usual accompaniments. After dinner, we'll proceed with the festivities.

**5:30pm Cash Bar Reception, 6:30pm Banquet.
Cost is included in both meal packages or \$44 separately.**



8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

37th ANNUAL REUNION

Activity Registration Form

Listed below are all registration, tour, and meal costs for the reunion. Please enter how many people will be participating in each event and total the amount. Send that amount payable to ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC. in the form of check or money order. Your cancelled check will serve as your confirmation. You may also register online and pay by credit card at www.afr-reg.com/8afhs. All registration forms and payments must be received on or before September 9, 2011. After that date, reservations will be accepted on a space available basis. We suggest you make a copy of this form before mailing. Please do not staple or tape your payment to this form. Returned checks will be charged a \$20 fee.

Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.
322 Madison Mews
Norfolk, VA 23510
ATTN: 8th AFHS

OFFICE USE ONLY

Check # _____ Date Received _____
 Inputted _____ Nametag Completed _____

CUT-OFF DATE IS 9/9/11

	Price Per	# of People	Total
REGISTRATION FEE			
Includes meeting expenses, Eaker Award expenses, and other reunion expenses.	\$45		
Reg. Fee for children ages 8-16 attending more than 1 function & staying at hotel	\$30		
DUES			
The principal attendee must be a member of the 8AFHS to register for this reunion. If you are not a member, please pay your yearly dues here.	\$30		\$
MEAL PACKAGES			
<i>Choice #1 includes 7 hotel meals beginning with breakfast on Thursday.</i>			
<i>Choice #2 includes 5 hotel meals beginning with breakfast on Friday.</i>			
Choice #1	\$189		\$
Choice #2	\$134		\$
Please select your entrée choice(s) for the Banquet:			
Beef Tenderloin		#	
Cajun Tilapia		#	
SEPARATELY PRICED MEALS (if not purchasing a package)			
Friday: Rendezvous Dinner (Chicken Capri)	\$39		\$
Saturday: Banquet (please select your entrée)			
Beef Tenderloin	\$44		\$
Cajun Tilapia	\$44		\$
TOURS			
Wednesday: City Tour	\$39		\$
Thursday: Kimmswick Historic Tour	\$60		\$
Friday: Paddlewheeler Cruise	\$48		\$
Saturday: St. Charles Historic Tour	\$33		\$
Total Amount Payable to Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.			\$

MEMBER NAME (for nametag) _____ VETERAN NEXT GEN OTHER

8AFHS MEMBER # _____ WWII GROUP (for seating purposes) _____
 You must be a member of 8AFHS in order to register. If not a member, please pay your dues above.

SPOUSE/GUEST NAMES _____ NEXT GEN OTHER

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

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ ST _____ ZIP _____

DISABILITY/DIETARY RESTRICTIONS _____

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

EMERGENCY CONTACT _____ PH. NUMBER (____) _____ - _____

Register and pay online at www.afr-reg.com/8afhs

SHERATON WESTPORT HOTEL LAKESIDE CHALET - ST LOUIS, MO

888-627-7066 314-434-5010

(Please reference the 8th Air Force Historical Society Reunion to obtain the special reunion room rate)

The Sheraton Westport Hotel Lakeside Chalet is conveniently located at 191 Westport Plaza, St Louis, MO 63146, approximately 25 minutes from downtown. The hotel is an all pedestrian village with many different restaurants, night clubs, comedy club, and a live playhouse. The hotel is approximately nine miles from the Lambert-St. Louis International Airport. If you are driving, call the hotel directly for accurate driving instructions. Each room features a coffee/tea maker, iron/ironing board, hairdryer, and high speed internet access (for a fee). The Sheraton Westport Hotel is a non-smoking hotel. The hotel also offers an indoor heated pool, fitness facility and golf courses nearby. Seven handicapped-accessible rooms are subject to availability. Please request these special accommodations when making your hotel reservations. Suites are extremely limited at this hotel, so meeting space will also be used for hospitality rooms. Rental for hospitality rooms will be \$100 per day. Please contact Donna Lee at DonnaLee@afri.com to make arrangements.

The hotel provides complimentary parking for its guests. Check-in time is 3:00pm; check-out time is 12:00pm. Lucerne Restaurant offers a traditional American cuisine for breakfast, lunch or dinner. Lucerne Lounge is a relaxing place to meet with friends for drinks. Room service is also available.

The Sheraton Westport offers complimentary airport shuttle service to and from the Lambert-St. Louis International Airport. The shuttle runs every ½ hour, from 6:30 am-11:00 pm. The van arrives at the airport on the ½ hour, but there is also a courtesy phone located at the baggage claim area of the airport if needed. Space is limited on complimentary services, so you may want to make other arrangements.

The hotel offers complimentary parking for RVs. Should you need full hook-ups contact the St Louis RV Park at either 800-878-3330 or directly at 314-241-3330. They are located at 900 North Jefferson Ave, St Louis, MO 63106, about 20 miles from the hotel. Make your reservations as soon as possible due to limited space and availability.

Should you need to rent a wheelchair for the reunion, ScootAround rents both manual and power wheelchairs by the day and week. Please call their toll free number at (888) 441-7575 for details.

Vendors, Schedules, and Information are subject to change.

-----CUT HERE AND MAIL TO THE HOTEL-----

8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY REUNION - HOTEL RESERVATION FORM REUNION DATES: OCTOBER 11-OCTOBER 16, 2011

NAME _____ SHARING ROOM W/ _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

TEL. NUMBER (_____) _____ STARWOOD PREFERRED GUEST # _____

ARRIVAL DATE _____ APPROX. TIME _____ DEP. DATE _____

____ # OF ROOMS NEEDED ____ # OF PEOPLE IN ROOM HANDICAP ACCESS KING BED 2 DOUBLE BEDS
In the event room type requested is not available, nearest room type will be assigned.

RATE: \$104 + tax (currently 15.175%)

CUT OFF DATE: 09/9/11. Late reservations will be processed based on space availability at a higher rate.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Deposit is refundable if reservation is canceled by 6:00 pm on date of arrival. Adjustments to departure date after check-in, resulting in a shortened length of stay, will result in a 50% of one night's room and tax early-departure fee unless departure is due to illness or family emergency.

All reservations must be guaranteed by credit card or first night's deposit, enclosed.

AMEX DINERS VISA MASTER CARD DISCOVER

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE (regardless of payment method) _____

MAIL TO: SHERATON WESTPORT HOTEL * 191 WESTPORT PLAZA * ST LOUIS, MO 63146 *

FAX TO: 314-434-0140 ATTN: RESERVATIONS or

visit the online reservation website <http://www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/8thairforce>



**Marvin Silbersher - 447th BG
Crew #80 ("Blithe Spirit")
Radio-Operator/711th Bomb Squadron**

Theater was Marvin's first love at the **Paper Mill Playhouse** in Millburn, New Jersey, where he is from. Radio was the next venue, joining repertory group of teenage actors performing adaptations of novels, plays and movies, broadcast happily for years on the network.

When England was attacked by Germany a radio series called "*Sky Over Britain*" was broadcast on the networks with an all-star cast of famous British actors. Marvin had a gift for doing English accents. He was invited to join the cast, and had the great honor of performing alongside many of his movie idols. On one episode, he was the nephew of Basil Rathbone and another the grandson of C. Aubrey Smith, Peggy Wood's son and so on. Marvin said he remembers especially being part of the duo, romancing Dorothy McGuire, playing a British fighter pilot, who lost out to Tyrone Power in "*A Yank In The RAF*".

When he joined the Air Force, Marvin went to radio school at Sioux Falls, South Dakota and then aerial gunnery school at Las Vegas. At MacDill Field, Florida, he joined the B-17 crew, piloted by Lt. Gus Neal. On the mission

to Merseburg, Nov. 2, 1944 they barely survived, counting a 110 flak holes in "Round-Trip".

The cast of Noel Coward's Play, "*Blithe Spirit*" was touring the bomber bases, and Marvin's crew was summoned to a hard-stand where a brand-new B-17G was parked with the name: "*Blithe Spirit*" painted on the nose (it was Marvin's plane). As the camera crew and the cast of the play shook hands with them, Peggy Wood stopped when she reached Marvin, "Young man," she said, "don't I know you?" "Yes," I replied. "How do I know you?" she continued. "I played your son on *Sky Over Britain* in New York". "Oh my God....Marvin!" she exclaimed. Given permission to tour the plane she and Claire Luce paused at the waist-guns and were allowed to write a note in bright, bold lipstick on the armor-plate below the waist guns,

"WE LOVE YOU ALL.....FOREVER!"

After they finished thirty-five missions intact, "*Blithe Spirit*" went to a sister-crew, Lt. Harluf Jessen. They were two missions away from finishing, when they were shot down over Oranienburg, on March 15, 1945.

Marvin frequently contributes poetry to our **8th Air Force News** magazine. Marvin states, "an honor" and regards that the 8th AF journal as the indispensable link to the narrative of the achievement of the 8th Air Force in winning the war in Europe.

Marvin has often visited the people in Rattlesden who were so dear to him and remember all that happened and paid his respects, to all of the fallen comrades in Madingley.

The Crew We Never Knew

At six o'clock when they came in the door
(Chalk-white as ghosts)...we gathered around them
At the coal-stove.....asking a million questions:
"The 109's?..."The FW-190's?..."The Me-262's?..."

(They'd come from Berlin.....it was two in a row)
It was our first day in the hut, never been in combat...

They answered everything we asked...
(Who prepared them for us?)...

When we came back from the messhall
They were sitting up playing cards,
Past eleven when
I remember falling asleep.

At three a.m....the lights suddenly went on.
The CQ...with a clipboard called out
Their names...they dressed silently...
One by one...they went out the door...

I remember....the last one....
Turned off the light
So we could sleep.

And...We never Saw them Again

By Marvin Silbersher



This book of poems and archival photographs is a small tribute to the memory of those who were part of the victory in Europe.

The Bells of Hell - Poems by Marvin Silbersher has over 100 pages of poems & photographs.

This 8 1/2 x 11 full color book is available to purchase for \$19.95 plus shipping and handling.

***Please contact Donna Neely for more information.
donna@neely.com
615.418.1200***

Tribute to 447th BG Grandfather - Ivan Holland

On Memorial Day of 2011, 18 year old Brent Baker surprised his grandfather, Ivan Holland with a unique and special tribute. During a family gathering, young Brent suddenly took off his shirt only to reveal a special B-17 Flying Fortress tattoo that he had recently acquired in tribute to his grandfather's service in the 8th Air Force.

Ivan Holland served as Tail Gunner of the Gus Neal Crew aboard "Blythe Spirit" of the 447th Bomb Group and completed a tour of 35 missions between 1944-1945.

Submitted by Kristie Baker, mother of Brent Baker



18-year old Brent Baker (left) with his proud Grandfather, 447th Bomb Group veteran, Ivan Holland.



Brent Baker's B-17 Flying Fortress tattoo on his upper back in tribute to his grandfather's service during World War II.



**GUS NEAL CREW – 447th Bomb Group
Ivan Holland can be found second from the left on the bottom row.**

351st Bomb Group Remembrance Ceremony Saturday, November 5, 2011 Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum

Veterans, family members and friends of the 351st Bomb Group will hold a special **Ceremony of Remembrance** at the **Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum - Memorial Garden** on Saturday, November 5th, 2011 at 12:00pm. All members of the 351st

Bomb Group and the 8th Air Force are invited to attend. A special wreath laying ceremony will held to honor the accomplishments of the 351st Bomb Group.



Further information can be obtained by contacting Bruce Nocera at (718) 721-0924 or at bnocera@nyc.rr.com.



"City of Savannah"

The Museum's B-17 project is now in its 32nd month of operation. The first 24 months was spent preparing the plane for restoration. The last eight months have seen the airplane begin to come to life as the restoration has progressed. .

After 25 years in storage at the National Air and Space Museum the airplane arrived in Savannah, at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum, in January of 2009. As of September 1, 2011, the airplane has been polished on the outside, painted on the inside, placed on permanent support stanchions, had its nose art painted by a WWII veteran nose artist, and had the entire radio room re-built to 1944 standards. The radio room team, consisting of members of the Coastal Area

Radio Society, broadcasts to other WWII and veterans related stations on days important to the history of the men who flew these bombers in World War II.

The next major steps in the restoration of "City of Savannah" include the rebuilding and mounting of a recently acquired tail turret that was salvaged from a B-17 crash site in Alaska, the mounting of a fully functional chin turret purchased with funds donated to the project, and the installation of a full set of wooden flooring for the entire airplane which was produced by the project's carpentry team.

The airplane is gradually assuming the look and personality of the fully war ready bomber that it was when

it came off of the assembly line. The challenge for the next several years is finding and purchasing the vintage equipment necessary to complete the restoration.

The project has been blessed from the beginning with an exceptional group of volunteers. Many local companies have donated their talent and resources to this project and the end result will be one of the finest and most complete B-17 restorations anywhere in the world. We invite your participation in this project with a donation to this historic restoration. You may donate online www.mightyeighth.org or by sending a check to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum at P.O. Box 1992, Savannah, GA 31402.





CHARACTER COUNTS!® AT THE MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE MUSEUM



The **Character Counts!®** program at the **Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum** was designed to answer a critical need in the community and the country.

The Museum is uniquely qualified to teach **Character Counts!®** by drawing on the thousands of lessons and examples that exist in our Museum archives, both oral and written. **Character Counts!®** is the nation's most widely implemented character education program, and through 4500 schools and other institutions it promotes universal, nonpartisan values called the *six pillars of character*: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and good citizenship. The Museum has taken the leadership role in partnering with the Savannah Chatham County Board of Education to implement this program in all the elementary and middle schools in the county. We will also touch the lives of kids from all over the region that visit us each year.

Some startling statistics have been released through the report "Juvenile Court Statistics 2005", published by National Center for Juvenile Justice, U.S. Department of Justice.

- ★ Since 1960, juvenile (ages 10 to 17) court delinquency caseloads increased more than 300 percent.
- ★ Cases involving "person on person" crimes more than doubled.
- ★ Children who were formally charged for truancy violations since 1995 increased steadily by 45 percent. Truancy has been called the "doorway to crime."
- ★ The number of children who were deemed "incorrigible" increased by 17 percent.
- ★ Approximately 785,000 gang members and 26,500 gangs are active in the United States and that number is growing!

At every turn, we see our young people modeling their lives after public figures only to find their personal icon involved in unacceptable, even criminal behavior. **The Josephson Institute for Ethics** reports in their 2008 Report Card on the Ethics of

American Youth, that young people are almost unanimous in saying that ethics and character are important on both a personal level and in business, but they express very cynical attitudes about whether a person can be ethical and succeed in today's culture.

- ★ Fifty-nine percent of those young people surveyed believe that "In the real world, successful people do what they have to do to win, even if others consider it cheating."
- ★ Forty-two percent believe that "a person has to lie or cheat sometimes in order to succeed."
- ★ More than one in five believes that "people who are willing to lie, cheat, or break the rules are more likely to succeed than people who do not."

This attitude reveals a deep need for our communities to unite under a common set of values, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, or political persuasion, to rescue our children from the destructive forces of poor role models where greed, gangs, dishonesty, disregard for human life, and irresponsible behavior have become the norm. A recent meeting with **Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum** administration and **Savannah-Chatham County** School officials brought to the forefront a tragic fact. As we discussed mandates from the **Georgia Department of Education** and the Federal **No Child Left Behind** initiatives for character education within the system, a local elementary school principal commented that we would need to start with the most basic communications lessons. In her words, "The word 'character' is not even in the children's vocabulary. They think more along the lines of 'survival'." Our program will begin to reverse this trend. We welcome your support and your ideas.





Dennis Spitz and Joe Lawrence viewing & editing one of the final DVD's.

LT. COLONEL HERB SCHAAF HISTORICAL DVD COLLECTION

The **8th Air Force Historical Society** is announcing the availability of several historical DVDs of the 8th AF assembled from The Herb Schaaf collection of over 85 DVD's. They cover everything from old Movie Tone releases along with film coverage of bombing missions to Berlin, Hamburg, Regensburg, and Schweinfurt. Also included in his collection are 8th Air Force Reunions and interviews with the likes of Roger Freeman, Curtis LeMay, "Gabby" Gabreski, Lew Lyle, Buck Shuler and many more.

8th Air Force Historical Society member Herb Schaaf was a true patriot and definitely a part of the Greatest Generation.



He was born in Wilksburg, PA in 1920 and graduated from High School in 1938. Like many young men following the outbreak of WW II, Herb enjoyed flying and set his goal of being an Air Force pilot. He joined the Army Air Force in 1942 and eleven months later received his pilot wings. After specialized training in four engine bombers, he was assigned to the 384th Bomb Group - 546th Squadron stationed in Grafton Underwood, England. At Grafton Underwood, Herb was designated aircraft commander of a B-17 named the "Buckeye Belle". On his 9th mission he was shot down over enemy territory, survived, and with the help of local citizens managed to evade the enemy. Eventually assisted by the Underground he found his way back to the 384th. After recovering from his wounds Herb returned to duty and completed his tour flying a total of 29 missions. For his service Herb was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medals with 5 Oak Leaf Clusters, Purple Heart, and the EAME Ribbon. Herb finished his distinguished military career retiring with the rank of Lt. Colonel.

During his business career Herb developed a strong interest in photography, sound systems and recording devices. This interest was so intense that he dedi-

cated one room in his Statesboro, GA home as a full time recording studio. There he spent many hours taping and recording important 8th Air Force during WWII.

Several years ago during a visit to Savannah, Herb gifted his collection to the Historical Society. The collection at that time amounted to 87 DVDs, a portable TV and a library storage cabinet to store the DVD's.

In February 2011, Earl Wassom and I had the pleasure of escorting a couple of enthusiastic 8th Air Force supporters from Kentucky through the Museum. At the end of the tour we introduced these two gentlemen, Joe Lawrence and Dennis Spitz to the Schaaf DVD Collection. We all agreed that this collection had tremendous historical value to the *Mighty 8th* and felt an effort should be made to format this information in a form that could be made available to our membership and the general public. To accomplish this task would require that all DVD's be re-edited, organized, copied and indexed into a professional format.

This undertaking obviously was no small task. However Joe and Dennis returned to Kentucky, collection in hand and have during the last six months spent many hours viewing the entire collection organizing, formatting and producing individual DVD's on a variety of subjects. The final product will amount to 30 DVD's covering the important missions flown by the 8th, interviews, reunions, lectures and many other subjects of great interest. It should be noted that all of this work was made on a "pro bono" basis, and on behalf of the Society we offer our appreciation to Joe and Dennis for making this project possible. Without their efforts the conversion of these historical records might never have happened.

We plan to have several of these DVDs in St Louis and will arrange a booth where we can show the finished product to interested attendees at the reunion. Plans are also underway to have the basic information added to our web page at 8thafhs.org.

Darrel Lowell, 8th AFHS Treasurer

Book Reviews

For God and Country – In That Order

By Samuel Mastrogiacommo

Atlantis Productions, 2011

Softbound – 137 pages - 8 ½” x 11”

ISBN 978-0-9820997

This is great tale of a true patriot and great American. This is the story of the journey of Sam Mastrogiacommo, WWII Eighth Air Force veteran of the 445th Bomb Group.

Sam came from a large Italian family of six children. He was raised by his immigrant parents in Philadelphia during the Great Depression. As a young teenager, he worked in the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps). When war broke out in 1941, Sam did what thousands of young men did; he enlisted in the Army Air Corps and went to war.

This softbound book tells the story of Sam's time in basic training and gunnery school; then follows his amazing journey as a crewmember with the 445th Bomb Group at Tibenham, England.

The reader will enjoy Sam's first person style of writing and his candid and honest

approach with his story-telling. The book is based upon small short stories and anecdotes that are filled with both sadness and humor. As I read the book, I really enjoyed the way the short stories

flowed together which gave my imagination a real feeling of insight into Sam's life. I found the book to be very compelling and gripping, while also being humorous and honest. This is a great testament to the courage, faith and patriotism of true hero of the "Mighty Eighth." I highly recommend this book to anyone who enjoys a great WWII memoir.

For more information or to obtain an autographed copy contact Sam Mastrogiacommo at:

Sam Mastrogiacommo
331 Mariners Gate Drive
Edgewater, Florida 32141
(386) 663-4095

Jomast1@yahoo.com

Join the Army Air Corps and Become a Flying Officer in the U.S. Army - A Memoir of My War Years

By Lt. Sidney Scheinberg (ret.)

Self Published, 2010

Softbound – 140 pages - 6” x 9”

ISBN: 978-1461009702

Sidney Scheinberg grew up in Borough Park section of Brooklyn, New York.

He, like millions of other young men, joined the Army Air Corps to fight and defend for our Nation's protection and the freedom of the peace loving world.

Sidney was assigned to the 96th Bomb Group – Third Air Division at Snetterton Heath, England. Sid became a Lead Navigator for the 96th Bomb Group and



was assigned to the Leland B. Appeson Crew. This "from the heart" memoir was completely written all by Mr. Scheinberg and is very honest and introspective.

My favorite chapter was the superb description Mr. Scheinberg has written regarding "OPERATION FRANTIC" or more commonly known as the "Russian Shuttle Mission." The plan was to

strike enemy targets deep into Eastern Germany then instead of returning to England, the bomber force continued east and landed in Russia. The airfields that were to be used were Poltava, Mirgorod and Piryatin. Once they had landed in Russia, the 96th Bomb Group was almost completely destroyed by a surprise German air attack. Sidney goes into lengthy detail regarding his eyewitness account of the fateful day of July 22, 1944.

I have had the pleasure the author for several years and am thrilled that Sidney took the time to write down his remembrances for not only his family, but for all of us! The book is as contagious as Sidney's warm and sincere smile and always positive and upbeat attitude.

This is just a great book, simple as that.

For further information and to purchase the book, contact the author directly at:

Mr. Sidney Scheinberg
7026 Ayrshire Lane
Boca Raton, Florida 33496-1416
(561) 479-4666



PLOESTI RAID SUMMIT

The 8th Air Force's 93rd Bomb Group Association (aka Ted's Travelling Circus) is sponsoring the "Ploesti Summit" on October 22nd and 23rd 2011. The location will be in Tucson AZ in the vicinity of the PIMA County Museum and Davis-Monthan Air Force Base. Tours of PIMA and the Air Base are scheduled as well as other fun events.

This will be a very special reunion of the 44th, 93rd, 98th, 376th and 389th Bomb Groups who flew the Low Level Mission. We will present the historical importance of this famous August 1, 1943 raid over Ploesti, Romania to bomb and destroy "Hitler's Gold". Rarely heard testimonies from the men who were there will make this a very unique event. Real time films of

the mission will be presented and in depth round table discussions about the mission, POW camps and the amazing 1944 1,000 man rescue which happened just before the Russians arrived in Budapest. Rare crash site artifacts and survivors'/POWs' memorabilia will also be displayed. Come and meet the VIPs. The event is open primarily to members of the participating bomb groups and their families. We would also like to hear from survivors who flew the 1944 high level missions and were interred in Romania or Turkey.

For more detailed information and registration forms, go to the 93rd Bomb Group web site or contact Jim Guddal at 763.694.9058; jguddal@yahoo.com

Operation Manna-Chowhound

By Raymond McCool

Eighth Air Force B-17s fly low over a Dutch village preparing to drop food parcels and supplies to starving civilians.



One of the most incredible yet least known rescue operations of World War II in Europe happened 66 years ago. It was dubbed Operation Manna/Chowhound and its mission was to save the nearly four million Dutch in the western part of Holland who were in danger of death by starvation. They would be saved by free-fall food drops from the US Army 8th Air Force and Great Britain's Royal Air Force.

By late 1944 the German situation in Holland was rapidly deteriorating. After the generally unsuccessful Allied campaign near Arnhem and Queen Wilhelmina's ordering of rail workers in Holland to strike to deny German troops reinforcements via rail, the German Reichskommissar for Holland, Arthur Seyss-Inquart, imposed an embargo on food supplies passing from the eastern part of the Netherlands to the urban areas in the western regions. In addition, some rail facilities were destroyed and some of the lowlands had been deliberately flooded, thereby making the land unusable for food production. It was rapidly becoming what would

be known as the "Hunger Winter" in Holland.

By the spring of 1945 the 1st Polish Armored Division and other units had liberated the entire eastern part of the Netherlands. In this operation the German army, numbering over 100,000 soldiers, were now isolated from other German units who were rapidly retreating toward Berlin. The food supplies in the West were rapidly dwindling. In this desperate situation Queen Wilhelmina, in exile in London representing the Dutch government, appealed to President Roosevelt and to the British for help. The lack of transportation and the fear that the Germans would blow

the dikes throughout the area causing further havoc only exacerbated the situation. In short, low food and fuel supplies, lack of sanitation, shortage of both electricity and water, and the presence of vermin made the situation untenable. The weak, the old, and the very young were beginning to die off in large numbers. The Germans, perhaps recognizing their own hopeless situation, finally agreed to cooperate with the Allies. They may have thought that cooperation would somehow make it easier on them when defeat finally came to Germany. In late April, 1945 they agreed to a series of meetings with the Allies. By April Seyss-Inquart



385th Bomb Group Co-Pilot, 2nd Lt. Wallace McCafferty examines the damaged wing of "Stork Club" upon returning to Great Ashfield, home of the 385th Bomb Group.

said he was willing to negotiate a food relief program. By April 23, General Eisenhower of Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces received permission to arrange for a temporary truce with the Germans in the Netherlands allowing food drops by American and British air personnel. Events moved rapidly thereafter. These included announcements from the BBC and Radio Netherlands as well as leaflet drops informing people that food was on the way via free-fall drops from heavy bombers. On April 30th the main meeting between staffs of both sides was held in Holland. Representing General Eisenhower was General Walter Bedell Smith, who was Eisenhower's Chief of Staff, and Seyess-Inquart the German governor of the occupied territory. Other representatives were also present, including Prince Bernhard, Commander of Netherland Forces who was consort of Princess Juliana, heiress to the Dutch throne. This meeting and some additional preliminary meetings worked out

the specific details of this operation. The Germans were adamant that only certain, limited corridors and drop zones be allowed for the food drops. Eventually eleven drop zones were agreed upon. Any straying from those areas would subject the relief planes to anti-aircraft attacks. Specific times during the day for the drops to occur were also designated. The centers of the drop zones would be marked with white crosses. Green flares on the ground circumscribed the proper drop areas; red flares indicated an incorrect area for the aircraft.

Both the 8th Air Force and the RAF participated in these missions. Several heavy bomber units of the RAF were used, primarily Lancaster Bombers. Ten American bomber units, all B-17 groups from the 3rd Air Division of the Eighth Air Force took part in **Operation Manna/Chowhound**.

The actual food drops were begun on April 29th by the British even before final arrangements had been confirmed at the April 30th meeting. The danger of the British Lancasters

being shot down for leaving prematurely was evident but it was deemed a risk worth taking in view of the desperate situation in Holland. The British called their part of this relief effort **Operation Manna**, and the Americans called it **Operation Chowhound**, hence the dual name **Manna/Chowhound**.

The flights of the bombers came in low, some as low as fifty feet above the drop zones and rarely flew more than a couple of hundred feet above the ground. Bill Varnedoe, a navigator aboard a B-17 and Ppast President of the **385th Bomb Group Association** relates several instances of barely skimming tree tops as they dropped their food supplies. Since these were free falls of goods, some damage was expected to occur with their cargo. In fact, many parcels were damaged but still usable. The kinds of goods dropped included the basics such as: powdered milk and eggs, dried yeast, cheese, luncheon and dehydrated meat, sugar, salt, coffee,

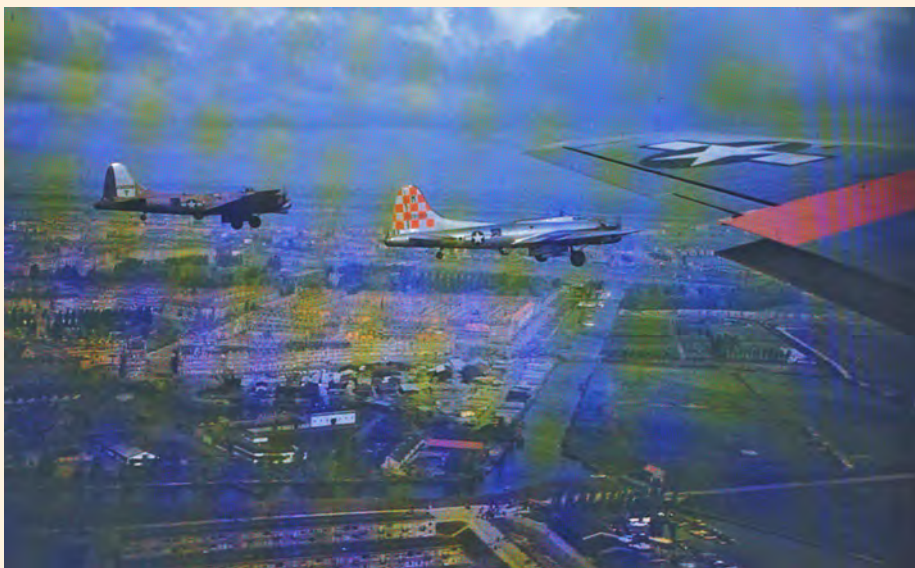
chocolate, spices, and margarine as well as military C and K rations.

In order to maximize the cargo space in the bomb bays and other parts of the aircraft, the air crews were generally, but not always, limited to four crew members rather than the usual nine or ten. One aspect

of the food drops that was of great concern was how to get the food, once dropped, to

distribution centers. A system of transportation to these centers had to be worked out as well as a proper assortment of goods. In addition, food theft was apparent in some locations. The Dutch, after all, were starving, and it is understandable that desperate people would do desperate things. To address these problems the **Netherlands Food Distribution Service** was in charge of collection and distribution. First, large central kitchens were set up in several areas to make for a more economical use of the food and fuel. Second, to get the food to these centralized areas required transportation. Push carts, horse-drawn wagons, and hand carrying of the goods were the most common means of transportation.

When the food deliveries commenced there was also the danger of accidents not only with the aircraft flying in low over populated areas, but also the danger of civilians being hit by the dropping of parcels. Despite repeated warnings to stay inside while the drops were occurring, people, in both desperation and fascination, watched from the roof tops, streets, and fields as the heavy bombers came in low with the supplies. Unfortunately, a



With their landing gear down, flaps extended and bomb bay doors open to reduce airspeed, Fortresses of the 385th Bomb Group prepare to drop food containers near Utrecht, Holland in May of 1945.

number of civilians were injured or killed by the falling parcels. Yet, in total, these drops were exceedingly successful.

As might be expected, incidents with the German Army did occur. Several planes were fired upon in the operation. One of the most notable examples was that of a B-17 of the 385th Bomb Group flying out of Great Ashfield on May 2nd, 1945. Bob Valliere was on the B-17 named, "Stork Club". When flying over one of the drop zones near Hilversum the plane was hit with 20mm flak guns. A letter from Valliere relates that, although no injuries were incurred, the crew got credit for a combat mission. It is believed this was the last Eighth Air Force bomber to be hit by flak in the European Theater during WW II. In another incident, a plane of the 95th Bomb Group was hit and crashed into the North Sea with only two members of the crew surviving.

The food drops took place from April 29th to May 7th. Before it was all over approximately

20,000 civilians starved to death in Holland during those last months of the war in Europe. Yet there is little doubt that Operation Manna/Chowhound was worthwhile. Everywhere throughout the western part of Holland citizens were thankful for these efforts and expressed their gratitude in many ways. They placed all manner of "thank you"

symbols on rooftops and elsewhere. Perhaps the most memorable expression was related by Bob Reeve and Gib Munro, Flight Engineer and Copilot respectively of the B-17 piloted by the author's late brother. It was May, the tulips were in bloom, and the men noted as they were flying in low to discharge their precious cargo a message carved out of a field of tulips:

"THANKS YANKS"



One of the many heartfelt messages from the Dutch people to the crewmembers of the RAF and 8th Air Force. "MANY THANKS" spelled out using colorful spring tulips.



B-17G “Liberty Belle” Destroyed in Fire After Farm Field Landing

On the morning of June 13, 2011 the beautifully restored Boeing B-17G Flying Fortress, “Liberty Belle” was destroyed in a fire after making an emergency landing in a farm field

shortly after leaving the Aurora Municipal Airport outside of Aurora, Illinois.

The Fortress was owned and operated by the **Liberty Belle Foundation** and has toured the United States and Canada since 2005.

Shortly after takeoff, the pilot of an AT-6 “chase plane” reported a fire had developed under the left wing and advised the crew to get on the ground immediately. The two pilots did a remarkable job landing the bomber safely in a freshly planted Illinois cornfield. The seven people aboard were able to evacuate the aircraft safely, but the fire was too great and it spread quickly until it totally engulfed the aircraft.



The **Liberty Belle Foundation** plans on using the remaining components to re-build the aircraft to once again fly in tribute to those who served in the 390th Bomb Group, the Eighth Air Force and all who served in World War II.

Those who wish to contribute to this worthy cause can go to the **Liberty Belle Foundation's** website at www.libertyfoundation.org.



Flying in the Boeing YB-40 Flying Fortress

By Robert H. Doolan
92nd Bomb Group / 327th Bomb Squadron
POW 2555 – Stalag Luft III



Emblem of the 327th Bomb Squadron - The 327th was the first to operate the YB-40 in combat.

Awesome gun platform of the experimental Boeing YB-40. While intimidating and daunting, the experimental YB-40 modification made the aircraft far too heavy for practical combat use.

Early in the European Air War, we had no long range fighter aircraft to take us into the target. British Spitfires couldn't go much farther than the Dutch coast. One of the early Boeing B-17F models, #41-24341; was modified with the addition of a Bendix "chin turret" in the nose, with twin .50 caliber machine guns mounted on each side of the waist and a Martin B-26 turret installed in the radio room. All of these guns had power assist and the "chin" and upper turrets had automatic tracking. More armor was added and large ammo bins and tracks were also installed into the aircraft, for it would only carry ammunition and no bombs. This was the Boeing modified Fortress called the XB-40.

20 of these heavily modified B-17F models were produced at the Lockheed Vega factory and were designated as the YB-40. The

respective block serial numbers were Boeing B-17Fs - 42-5725 to 42-5745.

We picked up twelve of these aircraft at Biggs Field near El Paso, Texas in March of 1943 as the 327th Bomb Squadron of the 92nd Bomb Group.

We flew the twelve modified Fortresses to Orlando, Florida then on to Montbrook Field near Williston, Florida. Lockheed Vega had not worked out any load lists, nor had they tested the aircraft will a full load. We started with partial loads, gradually increasing the loads by adding more ammunition. The ship was obviously dangerously tail heavy and a good 8000 lbs. heavier than conventional Fortresses. Getting it off the ground was a real task and it did not look as if we could ever operate on three engines.

Someone in Washington D.C. was getting rather impatient with the delays with the project. They sent Major Paul Tibbets to help with the project. He came to our base (Alconbury) to "witness" the first airborne test of a fully loaded aircraft. With a full load, the center of gravity was too far aft and the plane never got off the ground, but plowed through a fence at the end of a 5000' foot runway. Major Tibbets got off the plane, never to board it again, saying that he didn't think anyone should have to fly it!

We continued our tests and moved the ammo boxes and cartridge transports towards the front of the aircraft. We also secretly removed some of the armor plate.

In May of 1943 we arrived in England and began flying missions with one or two of the YB-40s sent to escort another Group. I personally flew seven missions aboard YB-40 - 42-5738. We were heavier than the other B-17s and after they had dropped their bombs and were working for themselves, we had difficulty in keeping up with them. On landing we overloaded the brakes.

We only lost one YB-40 in combat and for a while they scared the German fighter pilots, particularly with the nose turret. Eventually, they were used to train gunners with the new "chin turret" that later would be a permanent addition

all of the new Boeing B-17G models. In all, 8680 Boeing B-17Gs were built. 4035 were produced by Boeing and the rest were produced by Douglas and Vega.

I feel that the development of the YB-40 project greatly contributed to the development of the B-17G model.

I later went back to fly on conventional Boeing B-17Fs and was shot down on August 12, 1943.

Editor's Note: We also wanted to include Mr. Doolan's recollection of August 12, 1943 when his B-17F was shot down over Germany.

August 12, 1943

Robert H. Doolen

After bombing near Gelsenkirchen, Germany near the Ruhr, we were hit by flak and fighters. We lost our number four engine and the right wing fuel tank. The back of the aircraft was badly shot up and four of my crewmembers had already jumped. We couldn't keep up with the formation and we gradually fell back.

I was wounded slightly by fragments in my spine and in my leg. We went down to treetop

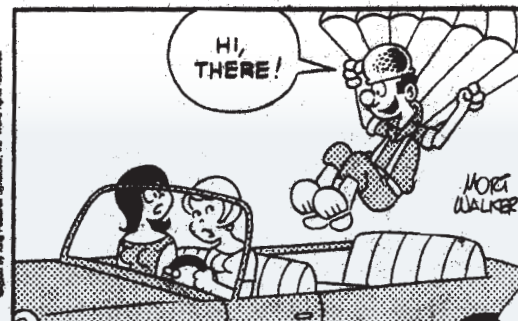
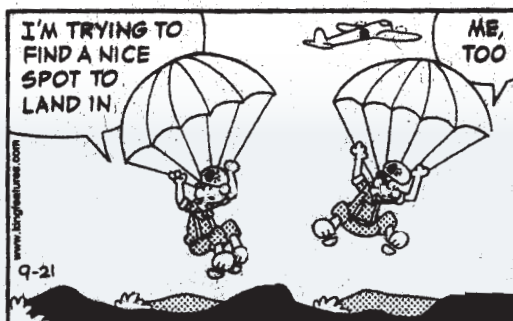
level and tried to make it back. Two (Messerschmitt) Me-109 fighters flew on our wings and tried to force us back. Finally, it was decided that we had to crash land while we still had enough fuel for control. Johnson found the only level spot and greased it in. At the crash, I left the Radio Operator (Gunner) because he was going into shock. We were just inside Holland. We took our escape kits and I pointed towards the south and said Spain was that way. Johnson, Weir and I took off to the one side and Dickenson and Broyles also headed south; a little to our right. In five minutes we were in a thick forest and we stayed in it for a mile or so. Then we decided that we would make better time on a path. That evening we happened to join up with the (Dutch) Underground forces. We got civilian clothing and started on our way again. The two gunners were captured in Belgium and Johnson was captured in Paris. My Co-Pilot and I were on the loose for twenty-one days. We got to the Belgian border and decided that our next guide was compromised, so we headed back north towards The Hague and a boat was to us over the next morning. That afternoon we walked into a Gestapo

trap and were captured. We then were interned in a Federal Prison in Scheveningen. We found out that all the prisoners were Jews on their way to Auschwitz. After about ten days in solitary and daily interrogation we were taken to Stalag Luft III southeast of Berlin.

FAST FORWARD FIFTY NINE YEARS

Unknown to all of us, a German had taken a picture of our plane. In 2002, the photograph was found in a box, then emailed to our War Department. They eventually got in touch with the 92nd Bomb Group. They got a hold of me and provided me with a copy of the photo. The German fighter pilots are standing in the picture.

Boeing B-17F 42-29884 JW-D of the 327th Bomb Squadron - 92nd Bomb Group. Pilot: Hans C. Johnson. On August 12, 1943 Lt. Johnson bellied in near the Dutch border after receiving lethal combat damage. All ten crewmembers were captured and spent the remainder of the conflict as POWs.



Rare Color Photographs from



Lt. Black with crew chief T/Sgt. Stan Bronowski standing in front of his beautiful Mustang.

On the back cover of the June issue of the 8th Air Force "The 357th Fighter Group: A Rare Color Photo Taken of the 357th Fighter Group's "Count" which was flown by 1st. Lt. Carroll Ofst. Squadron. We received several compliments regarding the thought that we would show some other rare color photographs of the famed 357th Fighter Group which was based at L



Lt. Joseph Black in his "wartime office."

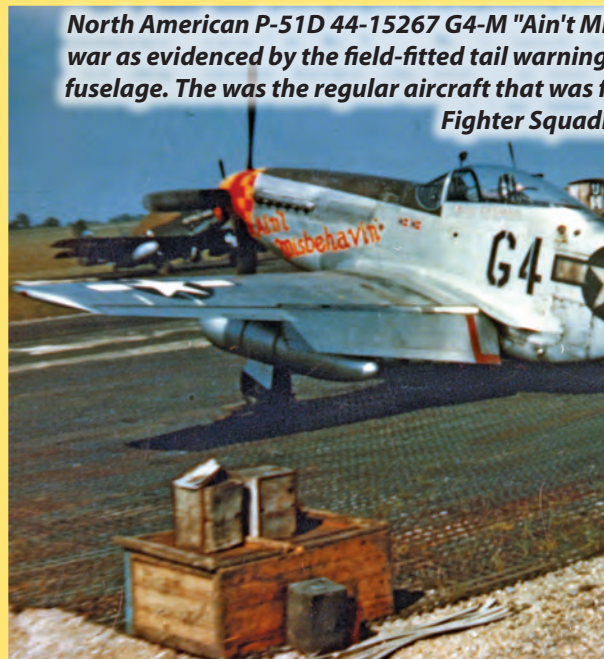


Rare color detail of Charles Weaver's nose art.

A beautiful photograph of Lt. Joseph Black of Philadelphia, PA. Lt. Black flew with the 362nd Fighter Squadron. This is his North American P-51D 44-63880 G4-N "Mary's Li'l Lamb".



North American P-51D 44-15267 G4-M "Ain't No More Business in Us" war as evidenced by the field-fitted tail warning fuselage. The was the regular aircraft that was used by the 357th Fighter Squadron.



om the 357th Fighter Group

Force News we featured up P-51D Mustang, "The Sun of the 363rd Fighter Squadron" regarding the photo, so we or photographs from the Weston, England.



Rare shot of North American P-51B 43-24823 B6-K "Berlin Express" in flight. The pilot was Lt. William H Fricker of Stamford, CT who flew with the 363rd Fighter Squadron. This aircraft was originally assigned to Captain William Overstreet and wore the code B6-O. It was then assigned to Frickler and the codes were changed, however, the inspiring nose art was retained.



Capt. Harvey Mace of Los Angeles, CA flew in the 362nd Fighter Squadron. This is his North American P-51D 44-13558 G4-B "Sweet Helen II" named in honor of his future wife.

isbehavin". Photographed late in the radar on fin and formation lights on flown by Lt. Jessie R Frey of the 362nd Squadron.



Capt. Charles E "Chuck" Weaver of Detroit, Michigan flew with the 362nd Fighter Squadron. This beautiful shot is of his P-51D 44-72199 G4-A. Like many low-hour P-51s this a/c was put into storage after hostilities and was subsequently sold to Switzerland where it became J-2019.



Knife returned after 50 Years

This is a hunting knife....December 30th, 1943 over Ludwigshaven, Germany a B-17 of the 388th Bomb Group Piloted by Lt. Carlson was lost. Of the 10 crew members on board 4 survived and 6 were KIA. The B-17 was involved in a mid-air collision. The aircraft broke apart, the forward part continued flying while the tail section fell to the earth. Two German citizens, Erwin Folz and Richard Braun were researching the crash incident. Both were young boys in 1943, and when they retired they, began to investigate the incident. Many years after the end of WWII as part of their research into the history of their city, they found the area where the tail section and nose section crashed, destroying several homes in the area. Upon visiting the town they found sev-



eral German citizens that had recovered this knife in the wreckage near the upper turret. For a period of 50 years one of the citizens that had recovered this knife kept it in his possession. As part of their research in 1994, Irwin and Richard convinced the individual to turn the knife over to them so that they could present it to Robert Scalley of Cleveland USA the tail gunner of the B-17 who they had met on his visit to Germany. This knife was not GI issue and for a time could not be identified as belonging to a crew member. Finally Bob Scalley realized that the upper turret gunner was a farm boy and he remembered that he carried that knife in his flying boot to be used in case of an emergency. Today that knife is the possession of the Scalley family. Just another strange happening in the history of the 8th Air Force.

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 _____

ALL RENEWALS AND NEW MEMBERSHIP ANNUAL DUES \$30.00

PAYMENT: CHECK MASTERCARD VISA CARD # _____

SIGNATURE: _____

SEND APPLICATION AND PAYMENT TO 8TH AFHS P.O. BOX 956, POOLER, GA 31322 TEL: 912-748-8884

\$30 MEMBERS DUES NOTICES ARE MAILED ANNUALLY

Website: www.8thafhs.org

"Give the gift that shares the legacy"

"Give the gift that shares the legacy"

Next Generation

Continuing The 8th AF Legacy - by Michael P. Faley

I hope everyone had a great summer with family and friends. With the Fall coming up fast, it is time to prepare for the upcoming 8thAFHS Reunion in St Louis and catching up with old friends, making new acquaintances and sharing stories/ideas. Ideas are what make our part in the 8th AFHS challenging. There are so many talented people in our ranks, yet we don't get the opportunity to utilize your assets as much as we should. Retired Col. Russ Davis (Next Gen) sent Norma Chesser a letter asking for more coverage/involvement of post WWII activities of the 8th Air Force and his points are well taken. Some of you may have served in the 8th Air Force after

the War, tell us what it was like during the changeover from USAAF to the USAF, SAC, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, Iraqi Freedom, Afghanistan,? You see the **8th Air Force Historical Society** is focused on our whole history, not just WWII. We still honor the brave crews of the **Mighty Eighth** during this growing period from humble beginnings in 1942 to becoming part the most powerful air force in the world. There are many of you out there that can contribute to this. I know our Editor, Mark Copeland, would like to hear from you. Let us know your thoughts on this?

In August of 2010 we started our modest **Facebook** page. As of this writing, we have 774 members who are interested in the following the events and news of the **8th Air Force Historical Society**. We continue to push these people to join



the Society and join with us at our reunions. This is where many of our **Next Generation** and future members will be recruited from along with our brilliant website. Besides these outlets, we are still trying to maximize our **You Tube** channel which Pat Keeley continues to update with new videos. We are a "work in progress" and your ideas and help are always encouraged.

Our sad news for the summer was the loss of the B-17G "Liberty Belle". She developed an in flight fire behind engine # 2 and had to make an emergency landing in a recently plowed corn field. The pilot made spectacular wheels down landing, getting everyone to safety, only to

see the whole plane go up in flames. "Liberty Belle" was one of four Flying Fortresses helping the Society by handing out membership brochures at tour stops. Not only did we lose one of a few flyable B-17G's in the world, we also lost a great supporter of the 8th AFHS and our vets. We hope Don Brooks and his staff get another B-17 in the air soon.

As we look to the future of our Society, it is how our Society, Board of Directors and **Next Gen** handle the hurdles we face now that will keep our Society strong and moving forward this decade. Thanks for everyone's support and input. See you in St Louis!

Michael P. Faley
8th Air Force Historical Society Board of Director.

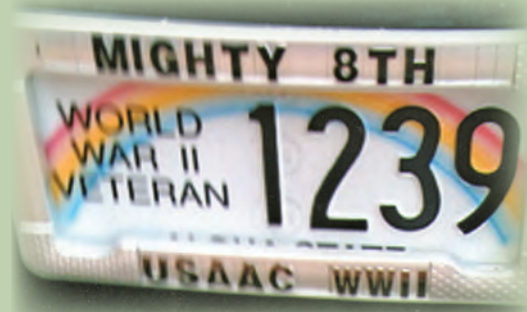
LICENSE PLATE

Life Member, former director,
Director Emeritus-Birthplace Chapter.
487thBG-839thBS-Pilot - CHEERS Ken Hoddinott.



Hawaiian veteran license plate. Lead Navigator on the Bereman Crew in the 486th Bomb Group. Completed 30 missions and awarded the DFC and Air Medal with 4 clusters and 2 battle stars.

Robert Mc Call



An Ethical Dilemma - Up North A True Story

By Ivan L. McKinney, Lt. Colonel (ret)

Former National President – 8th Air Force Historical Society



Ivan L. McKinney

I am honored to have been the first non-WWII Board Member and National President of the **Eighth Air Force Historical Society**. The only thing that kept me out of action over Germany during 1942-1945 was my age; I was four years too young. However, I did serve for 27 years in the United States Air Force during the Korean War, the Cold War and the Vietnam War. My last assignment was Chief of Plans, Headquarters – Eighth Air Force, Barksdale, LA.

In 1956, I was a RAPCON (Radar Approach Control) Shift Supervisor back again at Ernst Harmon AFB, Newfoundland and a First Lieutenant. This was essentially the same job I held at this same location as a Staff Sergeant, before I went to OCS (Officer's Candidate School). I was a "non-rated" officer and decided to apply for flight school while I was still young enough. I went to Navigator School in early 1957, six days before I was 27 years old, which was the age limit those days and spent

the next 20 years or so in Strategic Air Command (SAC) as a crew navigator, staff officer and commander. I was stationed, along with my family, at Goose Bay, Labrador in 1971 and held three positions. Wing Navigator, President of the Officer's Club – Board of Directors and Chief Officer – KC-135 Task Force. I was also in charge the force planning for both current and wartime operations. I mention these jobs because they all "feed into" the story that follows.

This is a saga about a U.S. Air Force Career Officer that seemed to keep "up north" for a great part of the time. I hope that I will not bore you to death, but I am secure in the feeling that many, if not most of you, have similar stories that you could tell. I am both embarrassed and proud of this mission. You might ask, "How can a Navigator be both proud of and em-

barrassed about the same mission?" After reading my story, I believe that you'll agree.

Approaching Christmas in 1971, I was in my quarters at Goose Bay one evening at about 2230 (10:30pm, for those of you that have forgotten). The quarters were quite good and my wife Mary and I had our six sons there with us...all teenagers, or approaching the "terrible teens." It was a Sunday night and all six boys were already in bed, since the following day was a "school day." Mary was in the living room reading a novel. The temperature outside was about -20 degrees below zero and there was a light snow falling and absolutely no wind. My twelve Boeing KC-145 tankers were on "SAC Alert" out near the Alert pad ("Mole Hole" is what we called the alert crew quarters), crews ready to respond in less than 15 minutes, around the clock. If launched, they were mated with nuclear-loaded Boeing B-52s. But, life was good! I thought that things were as they should be!

The McKinneys were going to host a house party in a week or so, and I was in the kitchen trying to satisfy myself in making the "perfect Manhattan." We usually had a pre-mixed container of Martinis and Manhattans at our parties for those who liked them, which also saved considerable time for the "host bartender" concerning refills. I thought that I had pretty well perfected my Martini recipe, however, I had tried and tried to perfect the Manhattan recipe and never was quite satisfied.

There was nothing going on, so on this Sunday night, I was mix-



Mary & Ivan McKinney on their first date.



ing Manhattans, one after the other, in an attempt to arrive at perfection. Of course, as the mixing went forward, you really wouldn't expect this Scotsman to throw away those which were less than perfect, would you? Of course not!

Two to one, two and one half to one, three to one (blended whiskey to sweet vermouth), some bitters, more bitters, some maraschino cherry juice, more cherry juice, etc. I kept experimenting, to the point that I had now consumed some five to seven of the less than perfect Manhattans, when suddenly the telephone rang. It was Colonel Jim Widney, the **Deputy Wing Commander for Operations**, who was also my boss.

Colonel Widney said, "Ivan, we need a navigator who is current in the (Boeing) C-97, as soon as possible. We have to fly to Thule, Greenland, as soon as we can take off. The purpose is to transport one of our surgeons up there to save the life of a Danish citizen who has a severe bleeding ulcer. They say that he will die in 24-36 hours if a surgeon is not found immediately and unfortunately they have allowed their regular surgeon to take Christmas leave back in Denmark. Our (USAF) surgeon at Thule, who could perform the operation, is on emergency leave back in the States. SAC, of course, will not downgrade one of

our KC-135 "alert lines" from the war plan to transport the surgeon, so we have been asked to use a C-97. I am going to fly it and Lt. Colonel Lew McGlohan (Wing Safety Officer) will ride as Co-Pilot, but we need a navigator. Who can you get to do it A.S.A.P.?

I was not so "far gone" that I couldn't remember names of all the Navigators that who flew the C-97, in the attempt of selecting one for the mission. We had only five Navigators on our staffs that were current on the C-97, and I wrote their names down. One was on Christmas leave back in the States, one was on a "Student Status" qualification in the airplane, one was DNIF (Duty Not Involving Flying) and one has departed the day before for the States on emergency leave. That left only **ONE** qualified Navigator.....**ME!**

I now had an ethical problem to face. Should I tell my boss that I was too inebriated to go, or should I trust my instincts that I wouldn't get into trouble. I had accumulated thousands of hours as a Navigator, so I thought. Surely, I could bring this off without anyone noticing! After all, someone's life was at stake. So, I told Colonel Widney that I would be the one to take the flight, since there was no one else available.

I quickly jumped into my "North

Country" flying gear, kissed my wife Mary and out the door I went! I didn't have the capability to make a flight plan in my condition, but I remembered that I had a KC-135 flight plan and map from Goose Bay to Thule in my "war plan vault" which was classified as "CONFIDENTIAL." When I took over as Chief of War Plans, my Administrative Sergeant wanted to get rid of all my "pack rat stuff" that was classified. But thankfully I had saved two of three copies "just in case" and boy was I ever glad that I did! I thought I was sober enough to "use the codes" with the Air Police in order to unlock my top-secret vault, obtain one of the flight plans and a map, then re-lock the vault. IT WORKED! I then had one other task that I hoped would work.



Lt. Colonel Ivan L. McKinney

I had to get the Canadian Air Traffic Control to clear us, a low altitude airplane, on a high-altitude clearance. I knew them pretty well from working with for many years. I called them and declared that this was a "life or death" emergency and asked them to approve this "illegitimate clearance." They agreed, and I was off to Base Operations.

I kept as far away from the pilots as possible, and said a little as possible. We quickly filed the flight plan, got our weather briefing and headed towards the airplane. When we arrived at the "bird," I saw the Doc – the surgeon – was already standing at the ladder entrance. We hastily loaded our flying gear and while we were accomplishing our various crew checklists, I was conscious of a person very close behind me, leaning over my head as I checked my radar. I looked back at the Doctor; he was absolutely enthralled with the radar picture in our dimly lit cabin. He had never seen the inside of an aircraft cabin crew before in his life, and I knew it. But I was afraid he would "smell my condition," so I ordered him to sit down in the main fuselage compartment, out of my way. The surgeon was a little Major, a person who had apparently never done anything in his life except

"Doctor Stuff." I'm not picking on Doctors, but he was a "nerdy little guy." He had been selected by his Hospital Commander to represent the hospital on my Officers' Club Board of Directors, and I knew him well. He acted, during our meetings, as though he was absolutely thrilled to be a member of the Board, amongst "real people." But even though we knew each other, I was keeping my distance from everybody. I couldn't afford to have him smell my breath!

We taxied out, got our "illegal clearance" from Canadian controllers and bounced off toward Thule. My immediate thought was to make sure that I knew where the airplane was, using radar, as we coasted over the sea on course towards Thule. Now, I had the opportunity to finally think about what I had done. I looked at the chart and saw grids, lines of latitude and longitude and something labeled "convergence values." In my state, I couldn't for the life of me remember how to "put the airplane on the grid," or what in the world "convergence" was! I obtained a good radar fix as we left the Labrador coast, but I knew SAC (Strategic Air Command) required its aircraft to change from magnetic to grid headings at the 70-degree latitude line. I couldn't remember how!

So I did the only thing I could think of. I called the pilots on the interphone and told them the "I'd always wanted to see if the N-1 compass would still be reliable on magnetic mode all the way to the 80-degree line. They seemed to agree that it was okay, and now I knew that radar was absolutely essential if the compass went haywire! So, needless to say, my eyes were glued to the radar, trying to pick out the Northern Greenland coast as early as possible. Not only pick it out, but to identify where on the coast we were heading.

Viola! I saw and identified the coastline! I now had the chance to finally relax, knowing that we were going to make it! Almost eight hours of flying, in December, at night, heading for the North Pole!

We landed and taxied up in front of a big black hanger. A staff car was waiting for the Doctor and he went down the stairs as soon as the props stopped spinning. They whisked him off to the hospital for immediate duty as the surgeon in his life-saving attempt. The rest of us went to a well deserved bed for some badly needed rest. They put our C-97 inside the heated black hanger, which was very much appreciated as we prepared to depart. Outside, it was -35 below zero! The "Doc" reported that the operation was a success and that it was a very good thing that we arrived at Thule when we did.

I have thought about all of this many times. Of course, this tale was never told while I was still on active duty, for obvious reasons. It is a true story of an ethical dilemma that really was a "Catch 22" situation. But we succeeded, and long time ago I was told, "Don't knock success."

By the way, several years later I concocted the recipe for the "perfect Manhattan." I have them, pre-mixed and in the freezer at all times now, ready for any guests who may arrive!



Ivan with two of his grandsons on a recent fishing trip to Alaska.

Mail Call



**Rhode Island Governor
Bruce G. Sundlun
Eighth Air Force Historical
Society – Member of the Board of
Directors - 2008-2010
Pilot – 384th Bomb Group**



**Governor, Bruce
G. Sundlum**

About four years ago the Board of Directors of the 8th Air Force Historical Society were privileged to have Governor Sundlun join us as a new Board member as elected by our membership.

Personally special to me, was how excited Bruce was when we found his personal military record in the Roger Freeman Library that day in the 8th Air Force Museum in Savannah.

He was a giant among men and we were so fortunate to be associated with him though far too briefly.

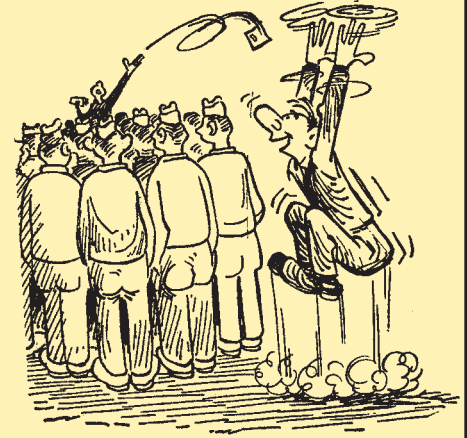
**Yours cordially,
Robert "Bob" Moses
Vice President of 8th AFHS**

Let me speak for this Board by telling you how we feel after hearing this unfortunate news of our late comrade. To us this man clearly enlightened us as to the exact purpose of why we are the 8th AFHS Board members in the first place. We pledged to keep the memories and the tradition alive of the 350,000 strong air armada of the 8th and their astonishingly heroic acts and also personally displayed by this great American. We all feel it was an honor to be in his company.

Coming from the Savannah airport to the convention hotel that day I believe in 2009 I was captured by stories of his experiences in the war, at Harvard Law School and his determined path to the governorship of Rhode Island.



**Bruce proudly displaying his
REAL 8th AF tattoo.**



Hí Donna,

As you can see I am a member from the U.K. I am so sorry to hear of the passing of Doctor Brown. My wife (Wendy) and myself came to the Museum from England in September 2007. During our time in the Museum that first morning we were introduced to Doctor Brown & Lt. Gen "Buck" Schuler by Alan Senior a veteran we had met at breakfast at the Best Western before coming to the Museum. During the course of conversation Wendy and myself got an invitation to the **Pinks, Greens and Silver Wings Gala Ball** that evening. What a night! We will never forget it and all thanks to wonderful "Doc" Brown. Even though after the interval being asked to stand and being introduced to around one hundred and fifty people and as Wendy and myself attempted to sit down Walt said, "not so quick John, come and say a few words if you will, please". So what could I do but just that. I think I must have made some sense because I got a round of applause afterwards.

The following day we had a tour behind the scenes by Kerry Brown of the on going projects at the Museum. Yes, Wendy and myself are two people from all these miles away who will never ever forget the warmth and friendship of Dr. Walter Brown.

Our thoughts are with Alice, Kerry and Kirk.

**John Glenn.
Member 306th BG Association.
john.glenn1@tesco.net**

Mail Call



Robert "Punchy" Powell & Richard M. Baughn

One Ancient Fighter Pilot To Another - Continued from Mail Call - June 2011 - page 34

To: Richard "Dick" Baughn

From: Robert "Punchy" Powell

At 90, I have dropped most formalities. No disrespect intended. Appreciate your friendly response.

I certainly apologize for misunderstanding that you meant that ground credits counted toward *acedom*. My point was, that it did not. We were, of course, given credit for a/c destroyed on the ground and rightly so, since that was far more dangerous than air to air combat when you only had one enemy shooting at you. And, as I said, we lost more pilots and planes strafing than we did in air to air combat.

I cannot find my copy of the 8th AF Magazine (it's in my piles of stuff here somewhere) to read your story again to see why I thought you were saying that ground credits counted toward *acedom*, with which I took issue. I never questioned the fact that we were given credit for ground kills, only the fact that these did not count toward being an *ace*.

In your rebuttal letter (Par. 3), the point that you made that, 259 pilots who had

less than five aircraft destroyed in the air, but with enough aircraft destroyed on the ground to give them credit for five or more destroyed, implied (at least to me) that this qualified them to be *aces*. That is the way I read it. My apology for this misunderstanding.

Colonel Meyer was an outstanding leader. He was one of the high-scoring pilots who was not reluctant to make low-level strafing attacks on German airfields, as some were. He led us across many of them. We would follow him anywhere, anytime. Unfortunately, he has never received the media attention that many of the other top aces have had. He and Robin Olds were cut from the same cloth.

Wishing you Blue Skies and a long healthy lifetime,

Bob 'Punchy' Powell

bluenoserbob@352ndfightergroup.com

Apology accepted from One Ancient Fighter Pilot To Another

To: Robert "Punchy" Powell

From: Richard "Dick" Baughn

I would like to add just a couple of things before I end my discussion on this issue. One, I don't recall ever using the term "ace" in my article and con-

fining my remarks to aircraft destroyed. That wasn't an accident. Secondly, I'm curious about how you explain the fact that General Meyer saw fit to include both aircraft destroyed in the air and on the ground in his official biography. I might mention, that he was not the only one to do that. There were others, such as a friend of mine, B. Gen Robin Olds, who did the same thing. Robin's bio gave him credit for 12 aircraft destroyed in the air and 11.5 on the ground for a total of 23.5. I wonder where they got the authority for that. Incidentally, Gurney's list, which was prepared with the cooperation of Dr. Albert F. Simpson and other noted historians did include every pilot who had at least five aircraft destroyed on the ground. I was on the list with one Me-109 destroyed in the air, two JU-52's and an FW-190 on the ground, plus one ME-262 on the landing roll near Prague.

Warm regards from one ancient fighter pilot to another,

Dick Baughn

dickbaughn@austin.rr.com

To: Richard "Dick" Baughn

From: Robert "Punchy" Powell

In my response to your response to my response to your Big Week story (printed in the 2011 March 8th AF News on page 7). We may not totally agree on all points and you are undoubtedly right about the Arnold/Spaatz decision. My remarks were based on when we got the word.

I had no way of knowing about the prior discussions. So, my statement was true as far as my Group was concerned and I appreciate your correcting me on that point.

However, I must say that we never thought for a minute that we were *aces* if we combined our air victories with those aircraft destroyed while ground strafing. I have the histories of all the fighter groups in the 8th FC and none of them considered any of their pilots "aces" unless they had five aerial victories. As to when the rules were changed, your research is better than mine, but if it was not changed until after the war, none of us knew other-

Mail Call

wise. In practice, at least, we did not recognize any pilot as an ace unless he had five aerial kills.

Doolittle turned us loose that we were able to really operate as fighters are designed to operate. I would naturally assume that the other fighter groups in action at that time got the word when we did. So, from that perspective, my statement was at least half right and completely right for our Group. I have checked this with several of our still vertical pilots and they confirmed my statement.

With regard to the recognition of pilots as aces, I still disagree. This question first came to my attention when a book was published by Eric Friedheim in 1945 titled "Fighters Up" which erroneously listed me as an "Ace," which I was not. Since I was one of the fighter pilots in action in 1943, we were told that early pilots in combat in 1942, we were told that ground victories and air victories were both recognized toward "acedom." Within only a month of so, we were told that this was not correct, the policy had been changed to revert to the World War I standard of becoming an ace by scoring five aerial victories. However, we were still permitted to add swastikas or Iron Crosses to our planes to indicate the number of enemy aircraft we had destroyed, either air or ground, including fractional victories. General Baughn is correct in saying that pilots were "credited with both air and ground victories." We were, but not to qualify us as aces. My statement was that pilots who did not have five or more aerial victories were not recognized as "Aces." And they are not during WWII as the pilots of any of the combat Groups would confirm. A brief history of the 352nd, published by our PIO officer, Capt. Sheldon Berlow, listed all our aces and all of those listed had five or more aerial victories. That obviously means that we did not consider any pilot an ace who did not have five aerial victories.

General Baughn, in his rebuttal message, (Par. 3) is careful to not refer to the pilots who had five or more air/ground victories as "aces." Gurney's book, to which he refers, does not list

any pilots' names with fewer than ten (10) victories, so his list is far from accurate since it did not include all the aces with five victories in its list of WWII and Korean War aces. My FG, the 352nd had 29 aces, all with five or more aerial victories. We had four pilots who became "aces in a day" with five victories scored. One those, Major George Preddy scored six on one mission. One of our pilots, Al Rigby, has been trying to get the Air Force Board which approves "Ace Status" to confirm one of his victories on Jan. 1, 1945 when he was credited with only a half victory unclaimed by any other pilot, thus giving him "ace status" since no other pilot claimed that victory. The Board has not recognized Al as an ace although the "Ace's Association" has done so.

Instead of using Gurney's book as a reference, I would suggest that General Baughn use the USAF Historical Study No. 85 prepared by the Albert F. Simpson Historical Research Center at the Air University at Maxwell AFB in Montgomery, Alabama titled as "USAF Credits for the Destruction of Enemy Aircraft in WWII." In addition to this, the most comprehensive research on WWII aces was done by Frank Olynyk for his book, titled, "Stars and Bars," A Tribute to the American Fighter Aces, 1920 - 1973. This is a 686 page book which researched every claim by American fighter pilots. It is considered the best authority on our aces that has been published. Only those with five or more aerial victories are included. It includes the complete record of every ace. Gen. Baughn's statement that Gurney's book "contains the official listing of the 8th AF fighter pilots who were credited with



Robert "Punchy" Powell holding the cowling piece of his WWII P-51B.

the destruction of five or more German aircraft is not true. Therefore, based on these references, Gen. Baughn's statement that those with air and ground victories of five or more (combined) being recognized as aces in WWII is incorrect.

With reference to Col. John C. Meyer, with whom I flew many missions, he is ranked, in the historic section of each issue of the Air Force Magazine, as the seventh ranked American ace of all of our wars. And, Major George E. Preddy, who flew with the 487th Squadron and later commanded the 328th Squadron of the 352nd FG, is listed as the sixth ranked American Ace of all our wars. Major Preddy was also the leading Mustang ace of WWII with 26.83 aerial victories and several ground victories. He was killed on Christmas Day, 1944 by friendly fire. In my opinion, had he lived, he would have been WWII's highest scoring ace.

I commend General Baughn for his outstanding article, but respectfully

Mail Call



Baughn during P-40 training in Waycross, GA. Vince Gordon on the left in the cap and Robert Auguste on the right. Auguste was killed in combat flying P-51's and Gordon retired from the USAF.



**This one is for the Ladies back home.
Robert "Punchy" Powell**

disagree with him on the points herein mentioned as I have stated above and apologize for offending him.

**Blue Skies,
Bob 'Punchy' Powell
bluenoserbob@352ndfightergroup.com**

381st BG Reunion

I attended part of the 381st BG reunion in Colo Sprgs last week near where I live. I was treated to an amazing story from a Mr. Lewis (I hope I recall that name correctly) who was born in Canton, Chine, enlisted in the Army AC after stuffing himself with banana's (he is small) and then became a tail gunner on a B-17. His plane was shot down, he jumped out of the tail, passed out from lack of oxygen just before pulling the parachute ring, came to on the ground, was chased and captured by Gestapo w/ dogs and imprisoned in Stalag 17 A or B (I believe near Munich). His daughter said that they never heard this story before, just by me asking after ID'ing myself as a B-17 bombardier's son. I think this is quite amazing and worthy of an article. The 381st can find him, not many ethnic Chinese in 8th AF.

My father was bombardier on lead plane on Staargard mission to take out

German jet factory, over 2000 planes, commander of plane left as COL, landed as BG, believe this to be the largest mission in aviation history, he never really told me that he was the lead man, on lead plane on largest bombing mission in history. Most of these men are like this. Will we ever see the like again?

All the Best!

**Kenn Riordan, Jr.
Colorado Springs CO 80906
lordstrider@earthlink.net**

Class speaker

Heber H. Smith, of Walnut Creek, CA, has now spoken to approximately 150 high school classes about his WWII experiences as a bombardier in the 94th Bomb Group and enjoys every class! Still going strong at 86...

Submitted by Heber's daughterileurile,
Shelley Graham

Greetings from Kentucky:

Our Brit friend, Lanis Grant, of the 447th B.G. from Rattlesden gave me a 'ring' the other day and talked about an hour giving you guys some wonderful accolades about the last issue of the *8th Air Force News*. Donna, he was pleased that you included his letter in 'Mail Call'. Thanks so much.

**Earl Wassom
8th AFHS BOD**

German jet factory, over 2000 planes, commander of plane left

Vargas Club or the Viagra Club?

Just got the June 8th AF News.

Did Judge Ben Smith write that he had joined the Vargas Club or the Viagra Club? ... Isn't that the same thing?

According to a recent issue of the 379th Contrails News, while in his later years the 379th's first Commanding Officer, Col. Maurice (Mo.) Preston was questioned about the increased V. D. rates & pregnancies between the young 8th AF men & the local English girls during his tenure at Kimbolton.

Col. Preston's comment:
"we were virile to a fault !"

Best regards

**Henry G. Wulbeck,
Dayton, Ohio
Henry@ruetschle.com**

Hello To Two Fair Ladies, Donna and Telisha.

Candy is dandy and so are they.

I am now 95 and still enjoy sending misc 8th AF material to print in the *8th AF News magazine*. I'm heading for the last round-up. I have one foot in the grave and one on a banana peel. My doctor said that if I was a building I would be condemned. I want to be in that number when the roll is called up yonder. I have attached a short story below.

England 1943 - Mount Farm: GI

Our laundry used to be sent out to be done. One day I got this note in a shirt pocket: *To the owner of this shirt: I am a blond, 19 1/2 year old. At the moment*

Mail Call

have blue eyes but are changeable to sometimes green. 5ft 2in height, medium build. I am very fond of dancing and often go to the Merry Go Round at Neneham. So how about a dance? Signed Brenda B.

NOTE: To this day I regret that I did not go to the dance at the Merry Go Round at Neneham. And now dear ladies I'll say tffn (a.k.a. tata) for now as they used to say. Just like the song "I'm saying "sincerely",

Walter "Smitty" Mysliwcyk
Garfield Hts., OH
14th Sq. 7th Photo RCN GP

Two Books from Martin W. Bowman of Norwich England

I have enclosed the book covers of two books that were published in 2007/2008 by Martin W. Bowman of Norwich England. Martin is close personal friend of mine. Several U.S. publishing companies have listed on line the following statement: With the death of Roger Freeman, the leading 8th AF historian, Martin W. Bowman is now considered the number one WWII aviation historian. Mr. Bowman has written over 100 books, all aviation history and most are 8th AF history.

If you note, The forward in the B-17 book was written by Lew Lyle, Major Gen. RET. The forward in the B-24 book was written by Earl Wassom one of our own 8th AF veterans.

Copies of this book are on file in the Heritage Museum donated by me in care of Dr. Vivian Price. Anyone who flew either of these great airplanes will cherish these books. I believe that a review of these books should appear in the 8th AF News. Barnes and Noble and Amazon books are two sources that stock them.

Larry Goldstein
Arden, NC
lgoldie210@gmail.com

Editors Note: Thank you Larry for your submission. We hope Mr. Bowman will someday contribute a future article to this 8th Air Force News Magazine.



Chapter News



**Oregon Chapter speaker,
Chief Master Sergeant Jack Klein, ret.,
holding a radar pressure gauge**

OREGON CHAPTER

Chief Master Sergeant Jack Klein, our August speaker, served 32 years in the military. During WWII, he was trained in the Civilian Pilot Training program, CPT, at the Portland Air Base, flying for a year and five days in airplanes which included the side-by-side Taylorcraft, Traveaire open biplane, and UPF-7 WACO.

According to Jack Klein, along the Oregon-Washington-California coast during the war, no one was allowed to fly in the air space 90 miles inland from the coastline, except military or government aircraft or scheduled airlines. Civilian aircraft owners would lease their planes to the government and this allowed Jack Klein to fly Edgar Bergen's beautiful Fairchild 24 in CPT. After the program was scrubbed due to a decreased need for pilots, Jack attended Radio Mechanics School in Madison, Wisconsin where he trained on every type of Army Air Forces air and vehicle portable radio. Radar was considered highly secret. In Boca Raton, Florida, Jack completed radar school on the APS 15 radar and the ANAPQ 13 bombing/navigation radar known as "Mickey". Jack became an instructor and maintenance technician on the ANAPQ 13 which had three settings: 30 miles, 60 miles, and 110 miles and worked in conjunction with the Norden bomb-sight.

As an instructor at Boca Raton, Jack

was encouraged to motivate his future radar mechanic students to believe that the extremely accurate ANAPQ 13 was the best radar in the world. He'd teach them the block diagram with emphasis on the internal operation of the radar, but one day he had a chance to demonstrate the capability of the ANAPQ 13. The single-line radar sweep, a timeline that measured from the center out, would lighten up when it hit a target. It was a clear, spring day and Jack noticed a set of three blobs on the sweep and they were moving toward the center.

He told his students, "Fellas, we're going to have some rain in a little while." His students said, "Corporal, you're nuts." Ten minutes later, it poured making them all believers in the equipment.

Jack Klein also informed us, "There's a difference between airborne and ground radio and radar equipment. When you get up off the surface of the earth, as you go higher, the atmosphere is less dense tending toward a vacuum. In a vacuum, high voltage will easily jump across free space to ground as you go up. Therefore, the high-voltage radar equipment that would be flown at high altitude had to be pressurized before a plane took off from the ground. This is one thing the maintenance people had to contend with, keeping the equipment pressurized."

Submitted by: Joan E. Hamilton

OHIO CHAPTER

The Ohio Chapter met on May 13th - 15th at the Ramada Plaza Hotel in Columbus, Ohio.

The guest speaker was Don Cherry. Cherry served in the Army in the occupation of Japan, returned home and attended college. After graduation, he returned to the military being commissioned in July 1953 in the Air Force ROTC at Ohio State. During his time in the Air Force, he worked with the CIA, made combat parachute jumps in Vietnam and worked developing spy satellites.

Cherry served in the military from 1947-1976.

The Chapter will meet again in November in Columbus.

Chris Weber, Secretary, Ohio Chapter

NEW MEXICO CHAPTER

Harold (Hal) Goetsch, Past President of the NM Chapter, 8th AFHS passed away May 26, 2011. The following information was taken from his obituary.

Hal was a tail machine gunner on the B-17's with the 385BG of the Mighty Eighth in England. His last flight ended abruptly when his aircraft was crippled over Germany in 1944 forcing him to parachute out the side hatch from 8,000 feet and resulting in an eight month stay in Nazi Germany. Goetsch who entered the Army Air Corp at age 18, flew 16 bombing missions over Europe. Hal was President of the NM Chapter from 1998 to 2007.

Al Schwery

Secretary, New Mexico Chapter

NORTH ALABAMA CHAPTER

Chapter purpose is to perpetuate and preserve the story of the 8th Air Force during World War II.

The August meeting of the North Alabama Chapter, 8th AF Historical Society met August 5, 2011 at Ryan's Restaurant on University Drive, Huntsville, AL. Friend of the Chapter George McGuinness gave the Blessing followed by Harold McMurrin leading the Pledge.

Some of the regulars were absent for this meeting.

Ann Vaughn gave a brief review of George McGuinness' most recent book about the life of Adrienne La Marquise de La Fayette. She was married, in 1774 in an arranged marriage when she was fourteen and her husband was sixteen. In 1776 the young couple dined with the Duke of Gloucester, brother of the King of England. The subject of conversation during the dinner was the Declaration of Independence of America. The young officer was full of enthusiasm and resolved then and there to go to serve the cause of the Americans.

Member Rick Makowski gave us a

Chapter News

report his recent visit to the Memorial Museum in New Orleans. The damage done to the museum by Katrina has been repaired. There is good coverage of the Higgins landing crafts and of Rosie the Riveter. The movie *Beyond all Boundaries* is excellent and has memorable Special Effects. The exhibit on the Doolittle Raiders is being corrected and enlarged to include more of the aftermath. But although the museum gives a good overall view of WWII, this museum has very few actual items of the war, even our local Veterans Museum has many more items!! The Calvert family is going to both the Civil War Museum and the WWII Museum later this month and will have a lot to tell us in September.

Several months ago we watched a short documentary about the MANNA/CHOWHOUND MISSIONS over Holland (should we say The Netherlands.) Bill Varnedoe worked for months combining photographs, bits of video, even some 8MM film he took during the mission, all re-recorded onto a CD. A few weeks ago a Dutchman contacted Bill asking for help in translating and publishing his book about a bombing mission to Amsterdam into English to sell here in the USA. During their conversations Bill mentioned the documentary. The man requested a copy and Bill sent it. First it was shown locally there and has now been moved to a government archive so more people can see it. Who could have known Bill's homemade (as he calls it) documentary would eventually be seen and appreciated by so many people! I've always thought this was an under-reported mission.

The next meeting will be, again at Ryans, 10:45 AM on September 2nd.

Ann Vaughn, Commanding

IOWA CHAPTER

On August 13, 2011, the Iowa Chapter



Iowa Chapters 28th Annual Reunion at the Galen Willey Airport in Boone, Iowa.

of The Mighty Eighth Air Force Historical Society held its 28th annual reunion at the Galen Willey Airport in Boone, Iowa. The theme for the second year in a row was to honor our Armed Service Forces; past, present, and future. It was again opened to the public from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Several hundred people came to view many of the WWII aircraft that were flown in for this occasion.

Planes in attendance were:

- One of the "Red Baron" bi-winged planes from Marshall, Mn.
- A 1941 twin engine AT11 named "Freedom Flight America".
- The Grumman TBM "The Avenger".
- A dive bomber that the first President George Bush flew that was actually shot down. The pilot showed us how the wings folded up.
- The P-51 named "The Big Beautiful Doll".
- Two AT-6 Texan Trainers.
- Marine Trainer aircraft.

In addition to all these magnificent planes from WWII, there was a lot of art displays by Charles Taylor and Ernie Mejia from Iowa. Also on hand were WWII vehicles, guns, nose art film, a Russian side car motorcycle, and a helicopter that was flown in Iraq. Ernie Ley from St. Cloud Minnesota displayed his collection of pictures and autographs of WWII military personnel.

At 10 a.m. we had a flag raising ceremony and the singing of "God Bless America" and our National Anthem. We had 55 people attend our memorial service and banquet at the Senior Center in downtown Boone, Iowa.

The highlight of the reunion for myself, Leon G. Mehring, was when my wife, Vera, surprised me by paying for me to take a ride in the PT-19. Retired Brigadier General Timothy Griffith of the Iowa Air National Guard was the pilot of my flight on the PT-19. For 30 minutes we flew over the Iowa cornfields, we followed the Des Moines River for several miles twisting and turning, then over the city of Boone, and then a fly-by at the airport 10 feet off the runway, with a climbing left

turn to go around again and land. My happiness at the ride I had just experienced was short lived. My joy turned to sorrow as I was the last person to fly as a passenger on that PT-19. The next day I learned that the two pilots on the PT-19; retired Brigadier General Timothy Griffith and pilot Kendall Belz crashed and died on the return flight to the Ankeny Iowa Airport. The FAA is still investigating the crash. What a devastating end to the 28th Reunion. We will remember and honor these men and keep them and their families in our prayers.

Sincerely,

Leon G. Mehring
Treasurer, Iowa Chapter

FLORIDA CHAPTER

Our next planned meeting will again be in conjunction with the Stuart, Florida Air Show the week-end of November 11-14, 2011.



Gonna Take a “Sentimental Journey.”



Boeing B-17G Flying Fortress - #44-85314 off the Douglas assembly line in late 1944. Manufactured too late to see service in Europe, the aircraft was assigned to the Pacific Theater for the duration of the war. After the war, the airplane served in many capacities from a radio-controlled drone to an air-sea rescue craft. It was acquired in the early 1960s by the **Aero Union Corporation** and for eighteen years it flew numerous sorties as a fire bomber dropping flame extinguishing materials for dozens of forest fires throughout the country.

In 1978, the **Arizona Wing of the Commemorative Air Force** acquired the aircraft through a generous donation. A promotional contest was held by the local media to name the Fortress, which

In the previous two issues of your **8th Air Force News**, we featured stories about two respective foundations currently helping to promote the **Eighth Air Force Historical Society** during their respective 2011 tours.

First, we featured an article about the **Liberty Belle Foundation** in our March 2011 issue. In our last issue (June 2011), we highlighted a feature about the **Collings Foundation** and their on-going commitment to promote the **Eighth Air Force Historical Society**.

In this issue, we would like to feature the **Arizona Wing of the Commemorative Air Force** and their beautiful flyable Boeing B-17G Flying Fortress, “*Sentimental Journey*.”





resulted in more than 800 entries. The ultimate selection was the name *"Sentimental Journey."* It was also decided to use the most famous "pin-up" photograph of World War II. With the permission of widower Harry James, the famous pose of Betty Grable was added as nose art.

It took the **Arizona Wing of the Commemorative Air Force** several years to acquire all the required components to complete a full restoration. Parts such as turrets and interior fixtures were slowly added to make the airframe complete and into a "real B-17."

After the restoration was completed in the early 1980s, the aircraft has been on tour making over 60 stops a year. Their mission, to provide a "living museum" that educates and inspires the general public about the courage and sacrifice of those fighting men and women who served our Nation during World War II.

During their current 2011 tour, *"Sentimental Journey"* is also carrying another special message, on behalf of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society. At each of their stops this summer and fall, the volunteers touring with *"Sentimental Journey,"* are distributing **Eighth Air Force Historical Society** membership applications. Several new members of our Society are the direct result of the kindness and dedication of the **Arizona Wing of the Commemorative Air Force.**

The members of the **Eighth Air Force Historical Society** applaud their efforts. If you have the opportunity to see this beautiful aircraft, please take the time to personally thank one of the volunteers.

"Sentimental Journey" and their North American B-25J, *"Made in the Shade"* are currently on tour with planned stops to the following cities. Further information can be found at their website: www.azcaf.org.

September 12-15	Twin Falls, Idaho	Joslin Field
September 15-19	Mountain Home, Idaho	Mountain Home AFB
September 19-26	Ogden, Utah	Ogden-Hinckley Airport
September 26-29	Vernal, Utah	Vernal Regional Airport
September 29-	Montrose, CO	Montrose Regional Airport
October 3		
October 3-6	Clovis, NM	Clovis Municipal Airpor
October 6-10	Midland TexasCAF AIRSHOW – Midland Intl. Airport	





Reunions



100TH Bomb Group Foundation

September 8-11
Cleveland, Ohio
Sheraton Cleveland Airport
www.100thbg.com

305th Bomb Group

September 14-18
Seattle, Washington
Doubletree Inn – Seattle Airport

490th Bomb Group

October 27th-30th, 2011
Marriott Hotel, Savannah, Georgia
Contact: Les Reekers, 762 Lynnmere Drive, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360
(805).493.1746
email-8thafnavigator@gmail.com

801st/492nd Bomb Group

CARPETBAGGERS
Holiday Inn Downtown Superdome
New Orleans, LA
October 10th ---14th, 2011
Contact Bill Becker
(619) 992-6228
beeb71@aol.com

486th and 487th Bomb Groups

October 26th-30th, 2011
Savannah, Georgia
Savannah Marriott Riverfront
100 General McIntosh Boulevard
Savannah, GA 31401
Host: Henry Hughey
Info available: www.486th.org and www.487thbg.org

95th Bomb Group

Seattle, Washington
Sea-Tac Marriott Hotel
October 12th-16th, 2011

44th Bomb Group

*** FINAL REUNION ***
October 13-16, 2011
Savannah, Georgia
Jackie Roberts
11910 South S.E. 44th Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73150
www.44thbombgroup.com

93rd Bomb Group

October 20-24, 2011
Tucson, Arizona
Radisson Suites Airport
www.93bombardmentgroup.com

95th Bomb Group

October 12 – 16, 2011
Seattle, Washington
Marriott SEA-TAC Airport
www.95thbg.com

306th Bomb Group

October 27-30
San Diego, California
Holiday Inn - Bayside
Contact: Joel LaBo
875 South Worth
Birmingham, Michigan 48009
www.306thbw.org

384th Bomb Group

October 6-9, 2011
Seattle, Washington
Doubletree Guest Suites Seattle
16500 Southcenter Parkway
Seattle, WA 98188
Contact: Carol Alfter
1306 Adams Way
Beavercreek, OH 45434

96th Bomb Group

St. Louis, Missouri
October 11th - 16th
Sheraton Westport Hotel - Lakeside Chalet
In conjunction with the 8th Air Force Historical Society

8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY 37th ANNUAL REUNION

October 11-16, 2011

Sheraton Westport Lakeside Chalet - St. Louis, MO

447th Bomb Group

October 11-16
St. Louis, Missouri
8th Air Force Historical Society Reunion
Sheraton Westport Plaza
St Louis, MO.

466th Bomb Group

October 11-16
St. Louis, Missouri
8th Air Force Historical Society Reunion
Sheraton Westport Plaza
St Louis, MO.

The Birthplace Chapter

Savannah, Georgia
Meets 3rd Tuesday at 5:30pm at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum
Pooler, Georgia
www.mighty8thbirthplace.org

Editor's Note: Is your Group or Association holding a 2011 or 2012 Reunion? If so, we would be delighted to post the information here in our Reunion section of the 8th A.F. News. Please forward the information on to the Editor.

A Short Story Of My Time With 487th Bomb Group

On Nov. 2, 1944 while stationed in England my B-17 crew was awakened at 2:00 AM and were instructed to fly to an airbase near Sudbury to exchange our B-17 for a modified B-17 that had radar. By gaining the radar system we had to sacrifice twin .50 cal machine guns which significantly reduced our firepower.

When we landed in Sudbury we went to an intelligence briefing and learned we were to be the lead ship assigned to bomb the key **Leuna Werke** synthetic oil refinery was essential to the German war machine and was deemed so important that the Allied Forces had attempted 13 prior missions to disable the refinery which had only limited success. To show how important the refinery was it had twice the number of anti-aircraft guns protecting it then Berlin had. We were informed to only use radar as a back up system if bad weather prevented us from bombing visually.

The lead crew had 3 pilots, of which one flew as a tail gunner, a bombardier and three navigators. Of the three navigators I was the pilotage (visual) navigator, there was a radar operator and the back up pilotage navigator who also kept the log. The enlisted crew was made up of the radio operator, flight crew chief and 2 waist gunners. We flew at 30,000 ft. until I notified the pilot to start the bomb run.

When he ordered the bomb bay doors open and I saw angry black clouds of exploding flack about 3000 ft. thick that we were about to fly into. I helped the bombardier locate the target and we were hit many times, the pilot was wounded and had to be replaced by the pilot manning the tail guns who then had to traverse the length of the ship with all his gear which made it a difficult task. Our crew was well trained and carried out their duties perfectly under adverse conditions.

When we reached our base the airplanes with injured fired flares so they



David Ruditz

could land first and receive medical attention. **Stars and Stripes** reported that we lost 60 bombers which turned out to be the costliest mission (#14) of a total of eighteen to **Leuna Werke**.

The Luftwaffe lost 130 fighters. The mission was a success as we reduced the oil production by approximately 80%. *This was a very rough mission.*

David Ruditz
487th Bomb Group
Flew 28 missions
Port St. Lucie, FL

Submitted by a dear friend
Fred Steeb of Jensen Beach, Florida



David Ruditz (back row- far right) and his crew

Taps

Bailey, George E., Sr. of Columbus passed away May 21, 2011. Mr. Bailey was born in Philadelphia, PA and grew up in Griffin, GA. After being trained as a ball turret gunner for the famous B-17 Flying Fortress, he was assigned to the 303rd Bomb Group of the Mighty Eighth Air Force stationed in England. He flew 24 combat missions over the hazardous skies of Germany. On his 24th mission over Berlin in March of 1945, his B-17 sustained multiple hits by German flak and was forced to make an emergency landing with three engines out. Mr. Bailey and his crew were found by the Russian Army and detained in a Russian hospital until after the war. Upon his return he was awarded the Purple Heart and the Air Medal.

Eich, Dolph, passed away May 1, 2011. Radio Maintenance, Blind Landing Equipment SCS 151 91 BG, 323 BS,

Cadden, John V. Radio Operator - Stanley Krivik Crew - 445th Bomb Group. Survivor of the Kassel Mission - 09/27/44
Dahlberg, David B., Flight Engineer / Top Turret Gunner 487th Bomb Group / 837th Bomb Squadron Member and Officer of Minnesota Chapter 8th AFHS

French, Lifford, Easley, 90, of Athens, Alabama. Mr. French passed away June 6, 2011. He was Limestone County's most highly decorated World War II veteran. A staff sergeant in the 8th Air Force, 381st Bomb Group as an Engineer/ Top Turret Gunner. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, America's second highest award for heroism, Purple Heart, Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal, Presidential Unit Badge, European African Middle East Medal with battle Bronze



George E. Bailey, Sr.



David B. Dahlberg



Henry John Eich, Jr.



David S. Fitterer Sr.,



Lifford Easley French

Stars. He was active, when he was able, in the North Alabama Chapter of the 8th Army Air Force Historical Society. Mr. French is survived by his wife of 40 years, Doris W. French

Eich, Henry John, Jr., 85, of Tampa passed away June 14, 2008. He is survived by his loving wife of 62 years, Ethel "Bobbie" Eich. Born in New York City, Henry has been a Tampa resident for 49 years. He was a retired Captain, serving 20 years of service in the United States Air Force. During WWII, Henry was a POW for 16 months in a German war camp.

Easley, David S., Sr., 90, of Barnegat, N.J., passed away, July 29, 2010. A U.S. Army Air Force veteran of World War II.

Friedman, Colonel Norman E., Retired Colonel Norman Friedman, 88, passed away, August 5, 2011. Norman was born August 7, 1922 in Rochester N.Y. He enlisted Sept. 18, 1942 in the U.S. Army Air Corps; 3rd Air Division, 93rd Bomb Wing, 493rd Bomb Group (H), 860th Bomb Squadron. He served until October 1945; served in the Air Force Reserves until 1974. Colonel Friedman flew B-24's and B-17's bombers over Europe in WWII. His first mission was on D-Day. His 24th and final mission was Oct. 7, 1944 over Germany.



Colonel Norman E. Friedman

He was hit with flak between the eyes and with the help of his Navigator, lived another 66 years. Norman was based in Niagara Falls during his reserve years. He became Deputy Group Commander before retiring from service in 1974. Norman leaves Rose his wife of 65 years Submitted by his son, Sandy.

Gesser, Jack T., Tail Gunner 385th Bomb Group / 549th Bomb Squadron "Ohio Air Force"

Gloydch, Boleslaw "Mike", Polish Fighter Ace 56th Fighter Group

Hathway, Colonel Randal B., Fighter Pilot - 83rd Fighter Squadron/78th Fighter Group 465th Fighter Squadron/507th Fighter Group - 7th Air Force - Flew 102 Combat Missions and logged 305 Combat Hours

Hicks, James C., 92, of Henderson, Kentucky passed away July 30, 2011. He served as a crew chief to a B-17 Bomber named "The Dutchess".

Hudson, Lt. Col. Charles S., passed away August 20, 2011, in Niles, Michigan. Charles "Combat" Hudson was born on September



Jack T. Gesser



Boleslaw "Mike" Gloydch



James C. Hicks

Taps

4, 1915, in Taft, CA. Charlie worked in the oil fields, was a pro-boxer, a W.W. II Bombardier, and a restaurant owner. He was the most highly decorated bombardier in the European theater, among his 17 medals he received The Distinguished Service Cross, 3 purple hearts, and was a member of The Legion of Valor. His experiences are well documented in the book he wrote called "Combat he Wrote! Our beloved Dad, Grandfather, will be missed dearly, and our nation has lost a war hero and a valued piece of history. The Lord has welcomed home his flyer.

Kissinger, Richard Bennewell, Lt. Col. USAF (retired), of Monument, Colorado, died May 30, 2011. Born Jan. 4, 1923 in Mill Hall, Pennsylvania, Richard graduated from Lock Haven High School in 1941. He had worked as a pug mill operator and built airplanes for Piper Aircraft in Lock Haven, before he enlisted as an aviation cadet in 1943. He completed a combat tour in WW II as a co-pilot (B-24) with the 8th Air Force.

In 1945 he married Johana Alexandra (Jennie) Syroid of Akron, Ohio and attended Ohio State University briefly before re-enlisting in the US Air Force.

Krieger, Charles Allen, 96th Bomb Group / 413th Bomb Squadron Tail Gunner POW - Stalag Luft 7A

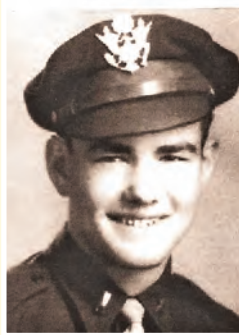
Laverty, Leo Elwood, 91, of Messiah Village, Mechanicsburg, was promoted to a higher realm Saturday, May 28, 2011. He was a proud veteran of World War II and the Korean War, and a member of the Mechanicsburg Church of

the Brethren, Eighth Air Force Historical Society, 303rd Bombardment Group (H).

Following Aviation Cadet Training he was sent to Molesworth, England and assigned to the 427th Squadron of the 303rd Bombardment Group (AKA "Hell's Angels"). He survived 35 combat missions into Germany aboard the B-17 "Flying Fortress" bombers during World War II serving as a navigator. He re-enlisted for the Korean War in March 1952 and flew 60 missions in B-26 bombers with the 17th Bomb Group. He married Elizabeth Ann Lear of Mechanicsburg in January 1959.

Lindstrom, Robert D. "Lindy", Pilot - 96th Bomb Group / 339th Bomb Squadron On his 13th mission, February 25, 1944, he participated in a raid to Regensburg, Germany. On the return trip three of the four engines failed. He ordered the crew to bail out. He was the last to exit the crippled airplane and evaded capture for three months. He finally was picked up by the Germans and spent the next year as a POW at Stalag Luft I. **Laverty, Guy Elthris "Trice"**, passed away on Thursday, July 14, 2011 in Fort Worth. 303rd BG427th Squadron. He was born on April 29, 1922, in Gustine, Texas. He was united in marriage to Ada Lorene Hill in Carlsbad, New Mexico. Mr. Moore was a retired farmer and rancher and was a member of the Gustine Morning Coffee Club.

Moore, Gale, 493rd Bomb Group passed away August 19, 2011. Past President - 493rd Bomb Group Association



Robert D. "Lindy" Lindstrom



Leo Elwood Laverty



Guy Elthris "Trice" Moore



Charles Allen Krieger

Oelrich, Charles F.,

Board Member - 8th AFHS Ohio Chapter
Caption for photo: Charles F. Oelrich and his wife Ruth

Pyles, Max, (15 June 2011)
M/Sgt. Flt. Ch./ Crew Chief
20 FG 79 FS
Ramulis, Albert G., Ball Turret Gunner 91st Bomb Group 30 missions Credited for shooting down two enemy fighters on January 29, 1944 over Frankfurt, Germany

Richmond, John B.,

passed away April 13, 2011. Capt. Richmond was a B-24 Co-Pilot in the 714th Bomb Squadron of the 448th Bomb Group. Richmond was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters.
Robins, Dr. Gerald B. "Gerry", Navigator - 381st Bomb Group Former President of Texas A&I University (now Texas A&M University)

Rasmussen, Marvin, at age 86 (May 27, 2011)

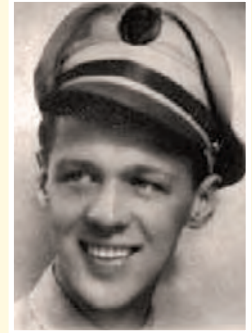
Co-Pilot, 381 BG 533 BS

Seacord, James E Jr., Pilot, 801st Bomb Squadron/492nd Bomb Group Awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal

Smith, Alan D.,

Radio Operator/Gunner 569th Bomb Squadron / 390th Bomb Group 35 Missions

Stiffler, James P. (Jim), 388th Bomb Group 1943-1945. He was a mechanic



Albert G. Ramulis



Dr. Gerald B. "Gerry" Robins



James E Seacord Jr.

Taps

and replaced engines , etc.. I know that my Dad was only wrench turner, but without people like him the others could not fly. Submitted by his son, John Stiffler.

Swauger, Capt Frederick, July 2010 78th FG 82nd Squadron (P-51s)

Tenbrook, Forbes Leroy,



Forbes Leroy Tenbrook

385th Bomb Group - 548th Bomb Squadron Engineering Officer

Thompson, Clyde W., Pilot - 490th Bomb Group - 35 Missions Past President - 8th AFHS - Minnesota Chapter

Van Pelt, Warren Wright "Van", Navigator - 392nd Bomb Group Member of the Virginia

Chapter - 8th AFHS

Thank you Gary L. Moncur (303rd Bomb Group "Hell's Angels" Historian & "The Molesworth Pilot" Editor) for submitting some of the Obits for the Taps in this 8th Air Force News Magazine



Governor Bruce Sundlun in 2009

**Rhode Island Governor
Bruce G. Sundlun
Eighth Air Force Historical
Society – Member of the Board of
Directors - 2008-2010
Pilot – 384th Bomb Group**

Former Rhode Island Governor Bruce G. Sundlun quietly passed away at his home in Jamestown, Rhode Island on July 21, 2011 at the age of 91.

During World War II, Governor Sundlun flew with the 384th Bomb Group at Grafton Underwood, England. On December 1, 1943 over Jabbeke, Belgium. After six months time cooperating with the French Resistance under the code name Salamander, he made several attempts to enter Spain near Biarritz, and later near Foix. But after a deciding that there was too much danger of capture or loss in the snowy

Pyrenees, he made his way on stolen bicycles north-eastward across France and escaped into Switzerland on 5 May 1944 near Fêche-l'Église. Before escaping into Switzerland, he was engaged with the Maquis in acts of sabotage near Belfort against German Army units under the command of Russian defector General Andrey Vlasov. Later, he was recruited by Allen Dulles working out of the U.S. Embassy in Bern to reenter France under the auspices of the Office of Strategic Services to act as a bombardment spotter for the Allied invasion of Marseilles in August 1944. After a brief service as a pilot of C-54 Skymaster cargo planes into Karachi, and over "The Hump" to Kunming after VE Day, he ferried bombers (B-24 Liberators and B-29 Superfortresses) from the U.S. mainland to Tinian in the Mariana Islands and into other bases in the Pacific Theater of Operations.

In August 1945, Sundlun attained the rank of Captain, and left active service at the end of the war. He received the Purple Heart, Distinguished Flying Cross, and Air Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters from the U.S. military, and in 1977 he received the Chevalier of the Légion d'honneur from the French government.

After the war, Bruce Sundlun went on to have a very successful political career. Sundlun served as a co-chairman of the inaugural parade committee for President John F. Kennedy in 1960 and 1961, and was appointed by President Kennedy in October, 1962 as an incorporating member of the Communications Satellite Corporation (COMSAT), where he served for 30 years as a director. In 1978, President Jimmy Carter appointed

him as a member of the Board of Visitors of the United States Air Force Academy where he served two four-year terms, and that same year, he was appointed by Governor J. Joseph Garrahy as a Rhode Island Commodore. He served a four-year term as a director of the National Security Education Board, appointed by President Bill Clinton in 1993. Sundlun was a delegate to Democratic National Convention in 1964, 1968, 1980, 1988, and 2000, as well as to the Rhode Island Constitutional Convention of 1985. He was a member of the Providence School Board from 1984 to 1990.

Sundlun served two terms as Governor of the State of Rhode Island from 1990 to 1994. From 1995 until his death, Sundlun had been teaching political science and Rhode Island history at the University of Rhode Island as Governor in Residence. Governor Sundlun served as a member of the National Eighth Air Force Historical Society – Board of Directors from 2008 to 2010.



Bruce Sundlun during World War II

A Tribute to Connie Richards

8th Air Force Historical Society U.K. Contact, Mr. Gordon Richards, and his family recently placed this special headstone at the grave of his late wife, Connie Richards, who for many years, assisted



Gordon with distributing issues of the 8th Air Force News to our U.K. and European members.

In tribute to her selfless dedication to the 8th Air Force, the Richards Family engraved a symbol in tribute to Connie's loyalty to the "Mighty Eighth." The joining of the "Union Jack" and the "Stars and Stripes" speaks volumes in tribute to her devotion to the 8th Air Force.

"LETTER TO SAINT PETER"

By Elma Dean

Let them in, Peter, they are very tired
Give them the couches where the Angels sleep
Let them wake whole again to new dawns fired
With sun, not war, and may their peace be deep.

Remember where the broken bodies lie
And give them things they like. Let them make noise.

God knows how young they were to have to die!
Give swing bands, not gold harps, to these our boys.

Let them love, Peter...They have had no time...
They should have trees and bird songs, hills to climb.

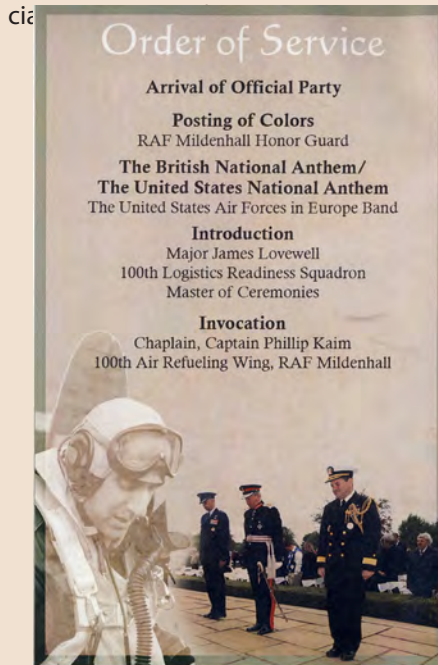
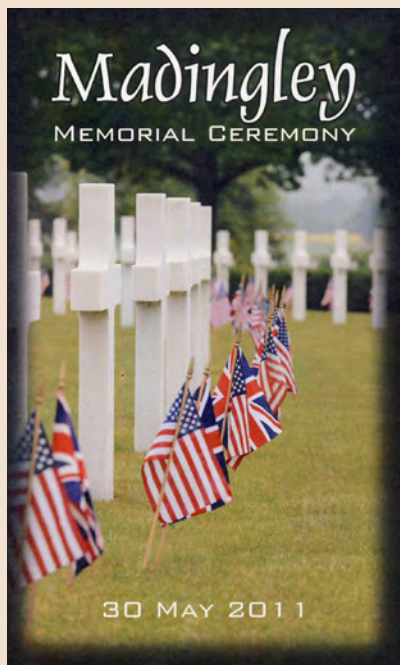
The taste of summer in a ripened pear; tell them
How they are missed, say not to fear; It's going
To be all right with us down here.

US Military Cemetery (Maddingly) Cambridge



Memorial Day Service at Cambridge American Cemetery near Maddingly, England

On May 30, 2011 the traditional Memorial Day Ceremony was held at the Cambridge American Cemetery near Maddingly, England. Gordon Richards forwarded a copy of the program from this special



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



NAVY



AIR FORCE



ARMY



MARINE

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 Baseball Cap	\$14.99	Red, Blue	
	8 th AFHS 4" jacket Patch	\$3.95	NA	
	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	\$349.99	40, 42, 44, 46, 48	
	Flyboys (Paper Back)	\$7.99	N/A	
	The Mighty 8 th (Paper Back)	\$7.99	N/A	
	Military Vintage Logo B/B Caps	\$11.99	Army Air Corp, 8 th A.F. Vintage, U.S. Army Air Force	
	8 th Logo Tervis Tumbler Mug	\$19.99	N/A	
	Honoring the American Past Teachers Guide	\$1.00	N/A	
	Air Force Challenge Coin	\$14.99	N/A	
	Spotter Card Mugs	\$9.99	B-17, P-40, F-4U, P-51, P-38, B-29, B-24, B-52	
	Military Wind Chimes	\$14.99	Army, Air Force, Marine, Navy	
	U.S. Military Travel Mugs	\$14.99	Army, Air Force, Marine, Navy	
	U.S. Military Uniformed Scrapbooks <i>(12x12 post bound album comes with 15 top loading sheet protectors and 15 white paper inserts)</i>	\$34.99	Army, Air Force, Navy (Cracker Jack), Navy (Khaki)	
SUBTOTAL				
7% SALES TAX-GEORGIA RESIDENTS ONLY				
SHIPPING FROM CHART BELOW				
TOTAL ORDER				

Shipping and handling charges:
 \$3.00 for orders under \$5.00
 \$8.00 for orders \$5.01-\$30.00
 \$10.00 for orders \$30.01-\$50.00
 \$12.00 for orders \$50.01-\$100

Alaska, Hawaii & International Orders Add \$20.00 to normal shipping charges

Order by mail or phone at 912-748-8888 ext. 116. Shipping and handling is added to all orders.

SHIP TO:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number (_____) _____

To pay with credit card - complete the following:

VISA MasterCard Discover American Express

Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____

Signature _____ Security Code _____

Or, Pay by check made out to the Mighty Eighth Museum Store

Send completed order and payment information to:

Mighty Eighth Museum Store ATTN: Felice Stelljes PO BOX 1992 • Savannah, GA 31402

Shop online: <http://shop.mightyeighth.org>

How About It?

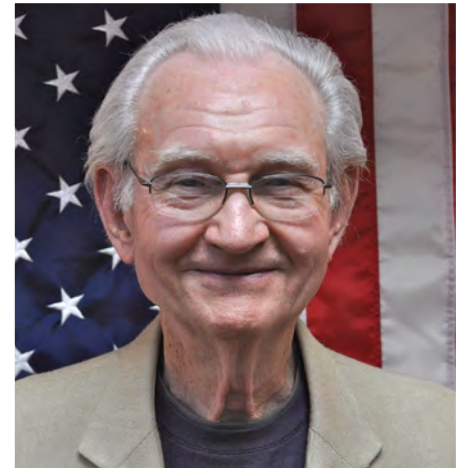
FORGIVENESS

The Colonel had been recently reassigned from the Training Command in the states to a combat unit in the European Theater of Operations. In terms of combat experience, he was a neophyte, this was his first mission as a division lead commander. The target was of the highest priority. This mission involved several hundred aircraft and thousands of airmen. An experienced first pilot would be seated on his left acting as aircraft commander and he would have at his disposal three experienced navigators to get his command to the target and a 'crack' bombardier to hit the target when they arrived. It was a 'heady' experience for him to step in the briefing room with all of these seasoned crews and have them 'pop to attention' when he entered. What was going on in his mind? Did the look of arrogance and cockiness on his face represent superiority or insecurity? What was his body language telling these crews? Those questions had not been answered when the aircraft took to the air and dozens of crews followed him to battle. The weather was worse than predicted. Massive formations of German fighters met them. Flak was heavy and accurate. Clouds below hid the target from the eyes of the bombardier. Enemy action was taking its toll. Bombers were going down. Stragglers were falling behind the formations and aircraft were being shot out of the sky by fighters. Arriving at the initial point, they turned towards their primary target. The clouds below them formed a complete blanket and obscured their intended target. The bombardier reported, "No visual contact, the target is totally obscured." The Commander wanted to be successful. "Hold the bombs! Let's make another run!" Then another bomb run was executed. The same results, a complete blanket of clouds again obscured the target. The bomb bay doors on all of the aircraft were still open. While this armada of four engine heavy bomb-

ers was still circling over enemy territory trying to find the target, the bomb release on the lead ship was accidentally hit. The bombs fell from the lead plane. The entire formation toggled their load of bombs, following the action of the lead ship as they had been instructed. None hit the target. The entire mission was a complete failure and the cost was great in human lives and in aircraft destroyed.

The survivors of this mission spoke up during the debriefing and the hanger flying which followed called the Commander an ogre, arrogant, cocky, uncaring, cold, insensitive, intimidating. In retrospect, these alleged attitudes may have come from an attempt of the Commander to cover up his own inadequacies. Who knows? This episode is now a piece of history and is behind us. What can we learn from this experience? There are two attitudes and we can choose which we will accept. When something bad happens to us, it is hard to take. Nothing will bring our friends back to life or change the outcome. But some will never forgive, they will harbor this unfortunate mission as a total fiasco and carry a hatred for this commander throughout their lives. Then there is forgiveness. When we forgive the person who has done us wrong, we don't pretend it never happened or that it wasn't evil or hurtful. This would be untrue. When we forgive someone for what they have done, it releases us of our desire to get revenge and we are freed from bitterness and anger. We must come to a realization of just how much these things are hurting us.

Two of the men who went through this ordeal described above share their responses. One in later life saw this Commander as an old man with feelings and emotions as the rest of us have. The Commander was quiet, remorseful, and had carried the guilt for years of the results of what happened decades ago on that Winter day over Germany. The first man felt a peace in his spirit as he



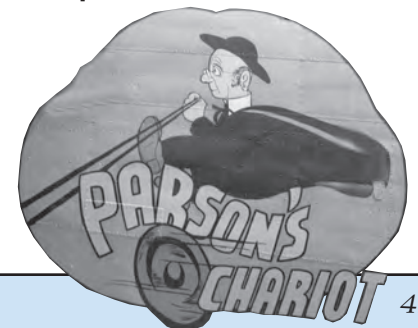
Earl Wassom

forgave and reached out to his former Commander, The second man has across the years held on to his resentment and bitterness and he still cradles this hatred toward his former Commander. His attitude still controls him and this anger is like poison to him. He is still under the control of an unpleasant and mindless act. This mind-set is a killer. The writer of the book of Hebrews describes the remedy for this man very clearly,

***"See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many."
(Hebrews 12:15 NIV)***

God has a better plan. Ask Him to forgive you for your bad attitudes and sins, open your heart and life to Him and ask forgiveness regarding this person or any situation and begin looking to the future instead of the past. The greatest motivator to forgiveness is to recognize our own mistakes and find peace with ourselves and others.

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





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

**Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Nashville, TN
Permit 485**

