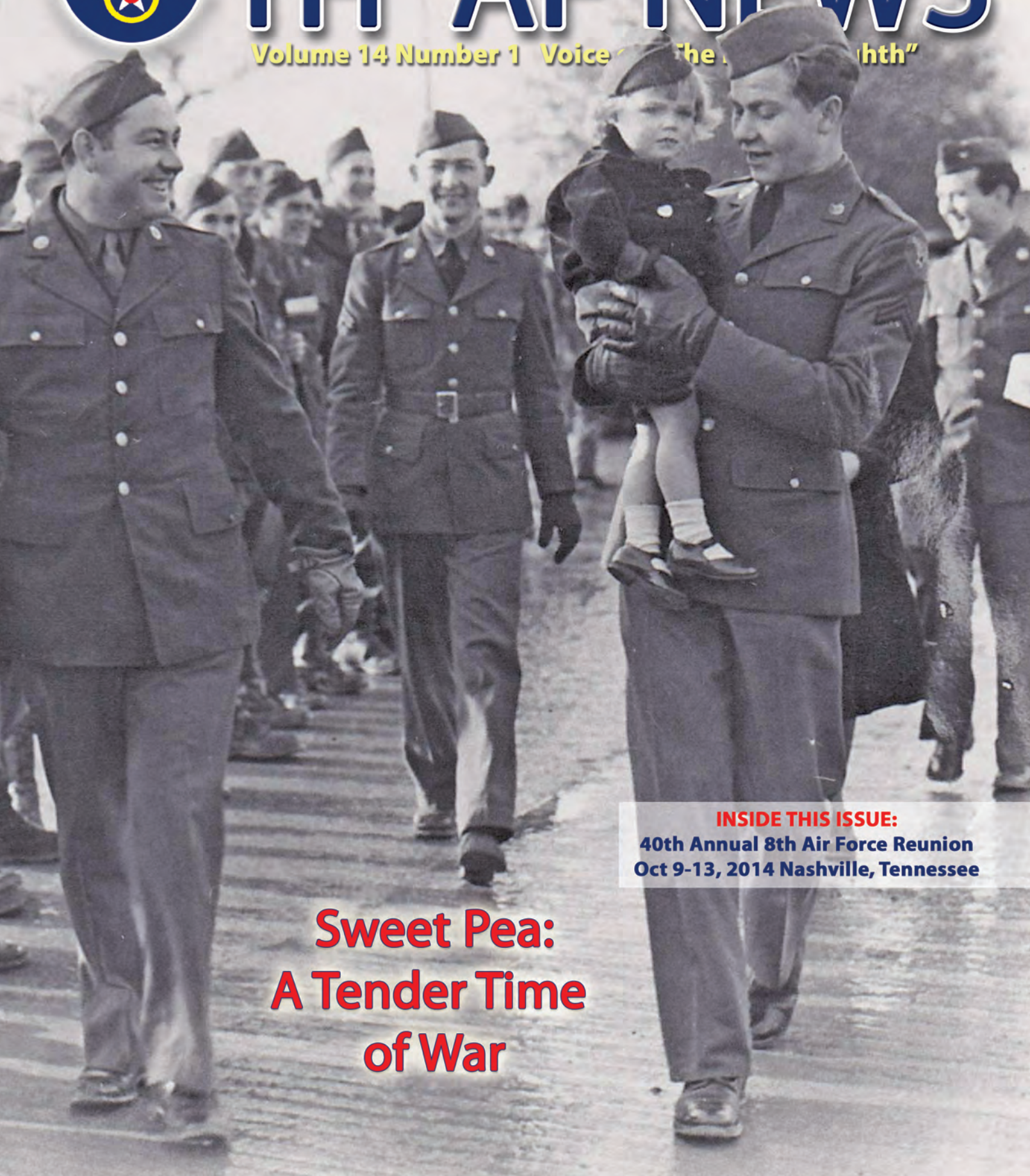


March 2014



TH AF NEWS

Volume 14 Number 1 Voice of the "8th"



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

40th Annual 8th Air Force Reunion
Oct 9-13, 2014 Nashville, Tennessee

**Sweet Pea:
A Tender Time
of War**



March 2014

TH AF NEWS

Voice of "The Mighty Eighth"

OFFICERS

President

Darrel Lowell (Becky) 2014
39 Peregrine Crossing
Savannah, GA 31411
Tel. (912) 598-7334
ddl333@bellsouth.net

Vice President

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

Secretary

Joe Garber (Joan) 2015
46 Coquina Ridge Way
Ormond Beach, FL 32174
Tel: (386) 672-5359.
paljoe2@aol.com

Treasurer

David Nowack (Lois) 2017
4878 College View Court
Schnecksville, PA 18078
Tel. (610) 799-4640
DLNowack@ptd.net

8TH AFHS NATIONAL OFFICE

Membership Manager Debra Kujawa

PO Box 956
Pooler, GA 31322
(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

MIGHTY EIGHTH AF MUSEUM STORE

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Donald E. Casey (Alice) 2016
5555 N. Sheridan Road #811
Chicago, IL 60640
(773) 878-0870
ARCDEC@aol.com

Robert "Bob" Moses 2015
413 North Washington Street
Brownsville, TN 38012-2064
(731) 772-3333
bobcheryl87@yahoo.com

COL Edward "Ed" Wexler 2017
8 E Back St.
Savannah, GA 31419-3343
912-308-2940
EWexler06@comcast.net

CHAPTER/UNIT LIAISON

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

DIRECTORS EMERITUS

Earl WassomJohn Pearson
Ivan McKinney

EDITOR

Debra Kujawa (Joseph)
29 Posey Street
Savannah, GA 31406
912-748-8884
News@8thAFHS.org

BEHIND THE SCENES

Donna Neely & Telisha Gaines
2090 Cairo Bend Road
Lebanon, TN 37087
615-418-1200
News@8thAFHS.org

Inside this issue

Presidents Message	3
Editor	4
Membership Minute.....	5
Behind the Scenes	5
All's Well That Ends Well	6-8
Arsty and the Crew	11
Chapter & Bomb Group News	14-19
Continuing 8th AF Legacy	20
40th Annual 8th AF Reunion. .	21-26
News Fron Across the Pond	27
Sweet Pea.....	28-29
Arc Light	30-32
Long After Giving Up	33-36
National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force	37-38
8th AFHS State Chapter Contacts .	40
Taps	41-43
Mail Call	44-45
Reunions & Chapter Meetings ...	46
How About It?	47



Darrel D. Lowell
President

Notes From the President's Pen



Well, another year has passed us by as 2013 slips into the history books. The years seem to go faster the older we get. Now, 2014 is well under way and we can only hope this year will be filled with both challenges and opportunities. What an exciting year this has been thus far. Here a few of my personal observations:

- ❑ Whatever side of the Global Warming issue you happen to be on, I think it is fair to say that the warming theory has taken a beating thus far in 2014 as the eastern half of our country has been in the grip of one of the coldest periods in many years.
- ❑ The Super Bowl, a day many of us look forward to was, unless you were a Seahawks' fan, one of the biggest disappointments for actual football play we have seen in many years.
- ❑ Finally, governing in our Nations' Capital appears to have become more dysfunctional by the hour. So what to do? What we Americans always do: buck it up, move on, and look forward to better days. They will come.

On a positive note...there is always good news if we look hard enough. A prime example was an event held in Savannah on February 1st. Members of American Legion Post 135 hosted a 100th Birthday Reception for the Savannah Artillery Armory Facility held at this Historic site. This Landmark, built in 1914, has been involved in military matters for over a century. Several Society members were invited to attend this gathering, enjoy great fellowship, musical entertainment, and hear fascinating military stories. The Armory was completed the same year as the seeds were being sown in Europe marking the beginning of WWI. As you know, this war lasted about 5 years and at its conclusion, The League of Nations was founded. This organization was charged with the responsibility to insure that WWI would be "the war to end all wars." Ironically, less than 20 years later, the world saw the beginnings of WWII.

As our country was forced to enter this engagement on December 7, 1941, yet another date would become a milestone: January 28, 1942. On this date, at this very location, the 8th Air Force Bomber Command was activated. Many of the crew members assigned to this elite organization completed their final training here, in Savannah, and were assigned to their crews at Hunter Army Air Field.

Over 350,000 people served in the 8th Air Force during WWII: 25,000 lost their lives and another 28,000 were POWs. Many of the POWs and other combat veterans suffered the rest of their lives with emotional and physiological problems due directly to the war. In recognition of these individuals, the theme adopted by the Society for our 40th Annual Reunion in Nashville is POWs and Escape and Evasion. Our reunion program chairs: Dr. Nancy Toombs and Debra Kujawa, have put together a very powerful Symposium for this reunion: Behind the Mask and Wire. Please plan to join your fellow Society members, bring friends and relatives, and help honor and recognize these patriotic men and women.

Our Society has been busy since our last report in December

2013 working on the programs and objectives I listed in my last message to you. Meetings have been held with the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force with regards to designing a strategic program as to how we, as a team, would be more effective in efficiently coordinating our efforts toward accomplishing our common goals; honoring the memories of all our service personnel.

We, as in the past, will promote an annual fund raiser for the Museum through the 8th AF News magazine to support and help accomplish projects which will expand and improve the Museum facility and its exhibits. We agreed in principal to several other items which will hopefully expand and improve this undertaking. One important step will be moving the Society offices into the Museum facility; allowing us to interact directly with visitors at the Museum to better serve the many inquiries from our Membership.

Our efforts to sell advertizing space on a limited basis to large corporations such as military and aircraft industries, is under way. We are confident that the success of this venture will help cover some of the expense of publishing our magazine. We are also working on ways to expand and broaden our membership base, and design ways to improve interaction with our Chapters, Wings, and other affiliations. We have updated and improved our ability to more effectively handle the many research requests we receive on a daily basis from our membership. We have also initiated a new data base system that will make the Membership Manager's job more efficient and cost effective.

Just like the Mighty 8th, we will continue to move forward as a Society to preserve and honor the memories and legacies of the men and women of the 8th Air Force, from its humble origins in 1942 and far into the future. Born in war, still making history: the Mighty 8th Air Force!

See you in Nashville!

Darrel D. Lowell
President 8th AFHS

Our Cover



"Sweet Pea"

Maureen Eason became a household name all over the country back in the 1940s as "Sweet Pea," Read her story & view more photos on page 28 & 29

Editor's Message

The 8th Air Force—Still Making History

The great American author, Louis L'Amour, was quoted as saying, "No memory is ever alone; it's at the end of a trail of memories, a dozen trails that each have their own associations." It was a little over 72 years ago when the Japanese attacked the United States at Pearl Harbor. That catastrophic event set the wheels in motion that led to the formation of the 8th Air Force on January 28, 1942 in downtown Savannah, GA. It also meant that boys who were driving tractors on family farms or working after school at the corner garage were suddenly thrust into the cockpits of fighters and bombers—thousands of miles from home—tasked with saving the world from unbelievable evil.

I am continually amazed by the stories that so many of you share with us—here in the pages of the *8th A F News* or in letters or phone calls—stories which illustrate remarkable courage, phenomenal strength, and unavoidable pain...but you've chosen to remember and allow us to become part of those memories. And we are so much the richer for the experience.

In this issue we will share the story of a young man's search for the father he could never know; a crewman recalling a special friendship forged over multiple missions together; and, if you're like me, you'll be moved to tears—often sorrow mixed with joy—and you'll embrace these memories, these remarkable treasures from the past, and want to hear more.

Also in this issue, we begin the first of a four-part series of articles on the 8th Air Force following WWII with Arc Light—missions in Vietnam. The fighters and bombers have evolved over the years from B-17s and 24s into B-47s and 52s; from Mustangs and Thunderbolts to Phantoms. The weapons of war and peace may have changed, but one thing has not: the heart and soul of our military.

Whether that young, still wet-behind-the-ears farm boy from Kansas was entrusted to guide a lumbering bomber

through enemy skies filled with flak and fighters en route to a ball bearing plant in Germany, or today, strapped into a state-of-the-art stealth aircraft to neutralize a target no larger than a city block on the other side of the globe; our military continues to possess that same courage and sense of duty demonstrated not only by members of "The Greatest Generation," but by successive generations as well.

Many of you have asked for help in trying to research and discover the military history of a friend or loved one, so our June 2014 issue of the *8th A F News* will be full of information and resources to help you on your journey. We truly understand and share your frustration when information is not forthcoming or easy to find. We will offer some suggestions and even a tutorial on how to best utilize our own website to locate information. So, stay tuned!

With the passing of each minute, of each day, we lose hundreds of memories we will never know; stories we will never hear...unless you take a moment to help preserve them for us.

"What are we, if not an accumulation of our memories?"
~ S.J. Watson

Hope all of you are making plans to attend our 40th Annual 8th AFHS Reunion in Nashville! This year's theme is on POWs and Escape and Evasion. We have great activities planned for the entire family as well as a jammed packed Symposium: Behind the Wire and Mask.

All the reunion information is inside this issue!

Debra D. Kujawa
Editor



Debra Kujawa



8TH AF NEWS

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, a 501(c)3. The 8th AF NEWS is distributed to members of the Society and is not for public sale.

The home office is located at:
29 Posey Street, Savannah, GA 31406 or P O Box 956, Pooler, GA 31322-0956

Membership Minute

Wow. I am swimming in a sea of blue... ENVELOPES, that is!
At press time, we have received renewals from about 25% of our members. Now, I realize that's not overwhelming, but it means that many of you have responded not only by sending in a payment for your dues, but by also sending in that "little something extra" that supports us in so many ways so that we can continue to be here for you and for those members who are struggling on fixed incomes as well. Thank you once again for your incredible generosity.

If you haven't had an opportunity to send in your renewal membership for 2014, just use the **BLUE** envelope that was inserted in your December 2013 issue of the magazine. You can drop a check inside, seal it up—please don't forget the stamp—and it will be on its way. If you prefer to charge your renewal, simply fill in the information on the envelope, seal and send. You can also renew online at our website and save your stamp! Of course, if you prefer to call, I will be happy to

assist you over the phone.

As you are reading in this March issue, you will notice a white envelope. This envelope is for those of you wishing to make a financial contribution to the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force—it is NOT your dues renewal envelope! [See pp. 37-38 for more info]

Sadly, not a day goes by that I don't receive notification on the death of another veteran—member of the Society. My heart aches from the loss, but I am so grateful to be part of an organization which celebrates the memories, lives, and accomplishments of such an amazing group of people. Know that you are forever a part of who I am and I am definitely the richer for it.

Until next time...

Thank you!

Debra D. Kujawa

Membership Manager

8th Air Force Historical Society



Debra Kujawa

• 29 Posey Street • Savannah, GA 31406 • 912.748.8884 •
• membershipmanager@8thafhs.org • News@8thAFHS.org •

Behind the Scenes



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

Nashville, Tennessee should be your fall destination on October 22- 29, 2014!!

You will be sure to enjoy the crisp clear autumn air and beautiful Fall Foliage in Music City - you might even catch

a glimpse at some of our local country music stars!!

Did you know that Nashville was named one of the Best Places to Travel in 2014 by Travel + Leisure!

Opry Mills has been named "Top Shopping Destination in the Southern Region" by Groups Today Magazine and this is just a few miles down the road from your Music City Sheraton Hotel

I am very proud to say that I have been born and raised in Nashville and would like to welcome each of you to my hometown.

Check out the agenda for our 40th Annual 2014 Eighth Air Force Reunion activities in Nashville, on pages 21-26.

Music City is ready to welcome each and every one of you to some good southern hospitality.

Thank you for contributing and sharing your memories
Bring on SPRING & SUNSHINE!
Donna Neely & Telisha Gaines
donnajneely@gmail.com

PLEASE NOTE:

We welcome all of your stories!!!

Please include photos
& more photos!!!

ALL file formats are excepted

We encourage you to send
digital images WHEN possible.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Editor, Debra Kujawa

29 Posey Street
Savannah, GA 31406
912-748-8884

News@8thAFHS.org

and/or

Donna Neely & Telisha Gaines

2090 Cairo Bend Road
Lebanon, TN 37087

donnajneely@gmail.com

MATERIAL DEADLINE

April 15th, 2014

**for the upcoming June 2014
8th AF News magazine**

ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL

By Eddie Deerfield



I enlisted as a Private in July of 1942, just before I turned 19, and was called up by the Army Air Corps in September. I went by Greyhound bus from my home in Chicago to Jefferson Barracks, Missouri near St. Louis for basic training. Personnel had to decide what I would do in the Air Corps. They must have figured "He comes from Chicago, the gangster city -- Al Capone, John Dillinger, the Mafia" --

so they sent me to aerial gunnery school in Las Vegas, Nevada. They were sure I could learn to shoot a 50-caliber machine gun in no time at all. Las Vegas was not a gambling town then--just desert stretching to the horizon.

Then, on to Salt Lake City, Utah for radio operator training in January and February 1943. We lived in converted stables on the Fair Grounds. First time this city boy ever used an outhouse--it was cold! Next, Blythe, California for crew training on a B-17 Flying Fortress bomber in blistering desert heat. We lived in tents, with rattlesnakes for company. Then, Pyote, Texas for more crew training. Nice barracks, but as we

stepped off the train the dust was so thick it reminded me of fogs coming in off Lake Michigan on humid summer mornings.

Finally, May of 1943, we flew across the Atlantic in a B-17. Before we left the States, our crew was asked to come up with a name for the bomber.

I suggested "Heavenly Daze"--and it was painted on the nose of the aircraft. We gave up the plane in Prestwick, Scotland and took a train to Molesworth in East Anglia, England, to join the 303rd Bomb Group. I was now Technical Sergeant--a five-striper in the old Army Air Corps.

On our 6th mission, July 30th of 1943, flying on a B-17 named "Upstairs Maid," we crashed in the North Sea about 30 miles off the British coast and an equal distance from Nazi-occupied Belgium. We had been hit hard by German Messerschmidt 109's and Folke-Wulf 190's on the way in and coming back from a raid on aircraft factories in Kassel, Germany. There was also damage to our bomber from heavy flak over the target.

Bob Cogswell of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania was our pilot. He told the crew to prepare for ditching and ordered

ROBERT W. COGSWELL CREW 303rd Bomb Group 36th Squadron

This photo was made on 17 August 1943 before take-off on the mission to Schweinfurt, Germany on B-17 "Iza Vailable"

Standing L-R: Co-Pilot - Robert DeWall, Pilot - Robert Cogswell, Waist Gunner - Alvin Etheredge, Waist Gunner - Augustus V. Brundage and Togglier - William B. Stamper.

Kneeling L-R: Ball Turret Gunner - Paul J. Davis, Radio Operator - Eddie Deerfield, Navigator/Bombardier - John Dwight Kennedy, Tail Gunner - Harold R. "Red" Timm and Engineer - Gilbert E. Bengston



me to start sending S-O-S messages so British Air Sea rescue could get a position fix on our plane. By the time we reached the North Sea, we had run out of fuel and were gliding in. When we hit the water, Bob managed to pancake the B-17, using the tail section as a brake. There were eight of us crammed into the radio room, and we all managed to climb out into dinghies before the plane sank in little more than a minute. The pilot and co-pilot went out through the front of the plane.

Only the navigator was seriously hurt. As radio operator, I was also the crew's medic. I remember taking a hypodermic needle from my first aid kit while we were in the raft which was bobbing around in the water, cutting open the navigator's trouser leg, and giving him a shot of morphine in his thigh.

The pilot of an American P-47 "Thunderbolt" fighter plane had seen us hit the water, and circled overhead until a British Air Sea rescue boat picked us up.

We flew the infamous August 17, 1943 mission to Schweinfurt, Germany, to hit ball bearing factories. We were in a B-17 with a lovely lady painted on the nose. She wasn't wearing very much, and her name was "Iza Vailable." An enemy fighter's 20-mm rocket exploded in our right wing. There were 30-calibre bullet holes in an engine cowl and flak holes in the right wing.

The attack force of the Eighth Air Force numbered 315 bombers, with 188 headed for Schweinfurt and 127 for Regensburg. We bombed and managed to make it back to Molesworth, but 36 bombers were shot down on Schweinfurt and 24 were lost on Regensburg. Sixty bombers never came back—600 men gone in one day.

We had empty bunks again in our Nissan hut that night. Seeing those empty bunks and feeling the shock of knowing that men I had lived with were now either dead or prisoners of war was one of the worst nightmares of flying combat.

Just 10 days later, "Iza Vailable" was so badly shot up over Watten, France—a Nazi rocket installation—that we made a crash landing at the Manston Royal Air Force base. On the ground, we counted more than 200



Eddie Deerfield poses in front of his bomber.

Technical Sergeant Eddie Deerfield completed 30 missions as a radio operator with the 360th Squadron, 303rd Bomb Group. After World War II, he was a reporter and bylined columnist for the Chicago Times and a news editor for WGN-TV in Chicago. He was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the U. S. Army Reserve in 1949 and recalled to duty during the Korean conflict as a psy-ops detachment commander in Pusan, Korea. He joined the U. S. diplomatic service in 1966 as a Public Affairs Officer and for the next 22 years served in six countries overseas. He retired as a U. S. Army Lieutenant Colonel.



Eddie Deerfield



flak holes in the fuselage. Yet, none of us on the crew was wounded. In the RAF non-commissioned officer's mess that evening, a chamber music quartet played. Very dignified and relaxing. That's a fringe benefit for sergeants that the US Army Air Corps should have borrowed from the British.

Then, on September 26th of 1943, our target was the submarine pens at Nantes, France. About halfway there, the mission was recalled because of heavy cloud cover over the target.

After we turned for home and were off the south coast of England an engine on our B-17 "Lady Luck" began vibrating out of control and pouring smoke. We were at about 8,000 feet over Southampton when pilot Cogswell ordered us to bail out.

I was in radio contact with the pilot as five of us stood at the waist section door preparing to jump. I said to the pilot on intercom that we were sure that he could get us home, and asked if we could stay with the plane.

I'll never forget his response. He said, "You can stay with the plane. I'm going to bail out." I gave the crew a "thumbs down" signal and, one after another, we jumped.

We landed in trees, on rooftops and on farmers' fields near the towns of Alresford and Winchester. I came down backward, and couldn't time my fall. I was stunned when I hit the ground,

and when I opened my eyes there was a farmer standing over me with a pitchfork pressed against my chest. He had seen all those men jumping in rapid succession from a four-engine plane and thought we were German paratroopers invading England.

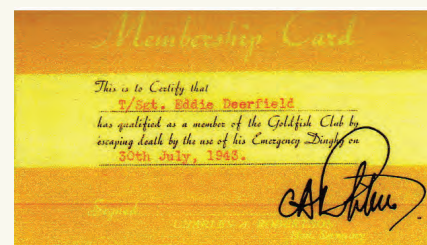
Bob Cogswell was the last to jump from the burning B-17. He had stayed with the plane until he was sure it wouldn't crash into a British town. We were still carrying a load of ten 500-pound demolition bombs. When his chute opened it tore ligaments in his back. Bob was unable to finish his combat tour with the 303rd, but after his back healed he returned to the States to train on B-29's. Many years later, I learned that his B-29 had been shot down by MIG fighters over the Yellow Sea during the Korean War. His body was never recovered.



When the Cogswell crew ditched in the North Sea on 30 July 1943, they became members of the Goldfish Club.

When they bailed out of a distressed B-17 on 26 September 1943 they became members of the Caterpillar Club. Membership cards for T/Sgt Eddie Deerfield are shown above; the Goldfish Patch, Caterpillar Pin and Aerial Gunner Wings.

My original crew had been badly battered in those earlier missions, and I flew my later missions as radio operator with several different crews. On the 30th and final mission of my combat tour, I was wounded in the face, just below the left eye, by flak over Saarbrücken, Germany. The wound was not very serious, and at the base hospital that night I stole a line from Shakespeare, telling the flight surgeon, "All's well that ends well."



WE ARE TAKING OUR SHOW ON THE ROAD

Dr. Nancy Toombs

I hope everyone had a very Merry Christmas and you are all looking forward to a New Year filled with good health, good cheer and good friends. I will spend part of my New Year building our “*Show on the Road*” and encouraging each of you to search your attics and storage buildings for WWII memorabilia. I belong to several historical organizations and in each newsletter I read or meeting I attend there is always a story of someone finding a uniform in a dumpster or in second hand store. Or someone finds a rare medal or award or pair of wings in a junk store. The point is, someone gave the item away because they did not know the value and the owner did not share with anyone the importance of the article.

PLEASE, don't let your history be
thrown into a dumpster.

- **Share** with your family and friends all your WWII memorabilia, no matter how insignificant you may believe it to be.
- **Locate** all your stored uniforms, hats, etc.; let your family know what you have and share with them this precious history. If the decision is made **not** to keep the items--**CALL ME**--and I will help you find the appropriate home for them. The only way we can keep your history alive is to keep these priceless treasures safe and secure making them available for generations to come.

I am in search of the holy grail of WWII memorabilia: The “**Winged Boot**” worn by aviators who were shot down and evaded. I recently secured the tunic of Lt. Harold Kilmer,



bombardier with the 305th BG, shot down on his first mission, evaded until the end of the war. His tunic was missing the Winged Boot, but I could tell where it had been sewn on. If anyone knows the whereabouts of Lt Kilmer or his family, I would really like to speak with them.

Also, looking for the “**Guppy**” a patch sewn directly onto the uniform of those who were shot down over water. Someone out there has these items and what you have is a true treasure. If the plan

is for it to be placed for public exhibition and education, please allow us to have that honor.

I would like to thank the following people for their generous donations to our traveling display:

Mr. Earnest Snyder of Sequim, WA 305th BG, 422nd BS donation of uniform, hats and military papers.

John Pallansch of Veblen, SD, donation of wings and air corps patch.

Mr. David Spyker of Delray Beach, FL 15th AF, 97th BG 341st BS donation of a navigators' sextant and navigators equipment.

Mr. Harold Hansen of Seattle, WA, 493rd BG donation of photographs and military papers.

Mr. Michael Ghidiu of Bridgeton, NJ, donation of a B-14 flight jacket.

A huge **THANK YOU** goes out to each of these angels! Without you, we would have no show to take on the road!

Until next time...Cheers and Blue Skies!

Nancy

ITEMS NEEDED:

- Bombardier Wings
- Caterpillar Pin--the black or gold
- Any A-2 jacket in any condition
- any items made of bullion
- Officers dress hats
- NCO dress hats
- any item related to Cadet training
- **ANYTHING YOU HAVE FROM WW2**



Winged
Boot



Order
of the
Guppy



Sea Squatters Pin



Caterpillar Club Pins

Any and all items will be appreciated. Call Nancy Toombs: 501-681-3126 to discuss details and answer questions.

BELLY LANDING

By Andreas Kuoni

These photos were taken by my uncle in the spring of 1944 in the north east region of Switzerland where he grew up. He was only 21 and was living with his parents at the time. This area is very close to the German/Austrian border and to the



According to this information and checking the combat chronology of the 8. USAAF I would suppose this B-17 (above) was part of the raid to Augsburg (Mission 262), see also below:

1. 401 of 501 B-17s hit Augsburg, 46 bomb Gessertshausen and 18 hit Ulm; 18 B-17s are lost; casualties are 1 KIA, 10 WIA and 171 MIA. It must be one of these 18 lost B-17's

Bodensee (Lake Constance).

My uncle, who recently celebrated his 90th birthday, remembers taking the photos, but cannot recall the details anymore. As you can see in the photos, there are several members of the Swiss Army in front of the belly landed B-17, and several spectators around. This was quite the sensation in the area. I believe the mountains in the background are the Austrian Alps.

*Am Donnerstag, den 16 März 1944
landete ein amerikanischer Bomber
ab Widnau auf einer Wiese
Die 10 köpfige Besatzung wurde nicht
verletzt*

The big advantage of the backside of the photo, (see above) is that my uncle wrote down some details of what was happening.

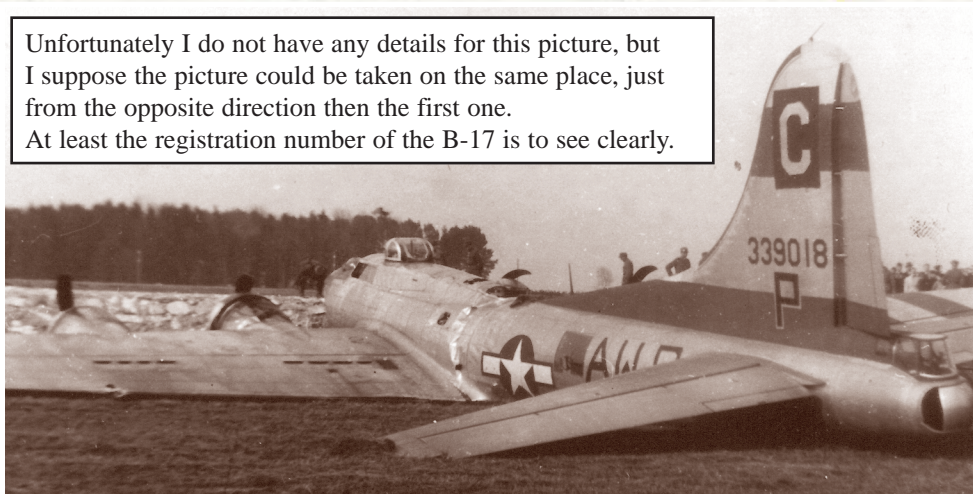
Here is the English translation from the German above:
*On Thursday the 16. March 1944 an American Bomber has
landed In the meadow close to the village Widnau.
No casualties under the 10 crew members.*

I remember seeing these pictures as a child a few times but forgot them completely over the years until a few weeks ago when I was looking through some family photos.

I am hoping that maybe a few crew members may still be alive--I know most will be in their 90's--but, as my uncle is still alive, why not some of the airmen! In our days with the Internet, I found the Society's home page, here we go!

So, if anyone can help locate some of the original crew members, I'm sure it would be a pleasure for them to see the pictures.

Unfortunately I do not have any details for this picture, but I suppose the picture could be taken on the same place, just from the opposite direction then the first one.
At least the registration number of the B-17 is to see clearly.



If they have passed away, perhaps it would be interesting for their relatives to see where their father or grandfather was in March 1944. I hope to hear from anyone with information.

Andreas Kuoni
Andreas.Kuoni@weytec.com

Editors Note: Please help us identify the plane and pinpoint the date and fate of this crew?

ARSTY AND THE CREW OF "THE SAINT"

by Stan Peterson

In recent years I have been thinking about my missions during WWII and friend and B-17 pilot Robert Arstingstall. I wanted to share a story from our days in 1943-1944. I contacted his family and they sent me copies of his journal and letters he sent home, along with some photos. In this story I included facts from Robert's notes and letters. I also included information from the newspaper clippings I sent home, each labeled with the mission number. I did not keep a journal; I became superstitious that those who were writing journals did not return from missions.

The Ingram Crew, to which I was assigned, arrived at Station 131 in mid November 1943. We must have been very quiet because the Snetterton Falcons (our history book) reported five full crews reporting in November. By January 31 all 5 crews were either killed or missing in action. In reviewing letters written by Robert Arstingstall to his family in Ohio, he noted a new crew just arrived and the four officers were assigned to his Nissen hut. Little did he realize the events we would experience together in the next four months. For purposes of this story, he will be known as "Arsty," which he seemed to like. Like the writer, we were both farm boys, Arsty from Ohio and I from Minnesota. Arsty by this time had completed four missions since his crew had reported in September. Arsty was the kind of fellow who was easy to meet. One of his early acquaintances was a Major who invited him to skeet shooting, which was available to station officers with some rank. What the Major saw after some instruction was a shooter with great calmness and ability.

Arsty's first mission as co-pilot was to Emden and he makes no mention of the pilot's name, but since he notes they are flying lead that would indicate a person of rank in the left seat, perhaps the Major! On their arrival at Emden there is complete cloud cover. He makes no mention of German fighters and very little flak. It was what experienced crews would call "A Milk Run!"

Mission 2 was on October 8 to Bre-



men. Arsty notes, "We are flying Major Kenny's ship leading the group. I rode as tail gunner to observe formation discipline for the Major, who rides in the co-pilot seat as groups' observer of formation." Arsty notes the flak is so thick he wondered how they could get through it. "Going into the target we were hit by FW 190's one of which hit a B-17 in the high squadron. The last I saw was an engine on fire and he pulled out of the group. After that I was busy putting lead into JU 88's and ME 110's." In his letter he estimates he fired 1200 rounds. I checked our history book and found the 96 B.G. lost three B-17s that day. To quote Arsty, "Talk about being scared, I have never been so scared in my life."

On October 12, Arsty got a call from the Major who asked that the dirty guns on his ship be cleaned, and then he stated, "by the way, our two week leave has started." The Major showed Arsty a great time in London and then on to a resort on the coast. He didn't mention who made the trip, but I'm certain it was the Major's crew. (This was known as "flak leave," something Ingram's crew never saw.)

After returning from the Major's

vacation break, Arsty had missions on November 3 and 19, which never are routine but were apparently uneventful. Here is where it all changed. On November 29, mission 5 to Bremen Arsty notes, "Today was an eventful day, in fact my roughest mission. My first fighter brought more trouble than we ever had. These FW

190s showed up and looked like a wolf pack. Then we hit the target area- flak, fighters, oxygen trouble, all at once. The bombs were dropped and the bomb bay doors wouldn't close. The oxygen problem was severe since we were above 20,000 feet. The crew members received wounds and others were affected by lack of oxygen. We had 75 lbs of oxygen and were 30 minutes from the Dutch coast." Fortunately, they made it safely back to England.

Arsty received credit for shooting down a FW190 on that day over Bremen and the 96th B.G. lost four crews, including the Hendrickson crew, of which Arsty arrived as Co-pilot. Our Nissen hut had 4 empty bunks and silence hung heavy over all. None of us ever heard Arsty say a word that day about the FW kill. (By the way, the War Department policy was to never write home about the loss of friends.)

Mission 6 Arsty reports that the Nissen hut boys were up at 3 A.M. He razed the boys who were going. "The Boys" included Ingram's crew and the writer. At 3:30 another order came which

told Arsty he too, was going. The target was an airfield in Bordeaux. We made the long trip over the Bay of Biscay to the target, only to find solid cloud cover. Since it was France, we carried our bombs back part way and dropped them in the bay. That mission was number one for Ingram's crew.

Mission 7 Arsty, being such a steady shooter, was back in the tail gunner position. Ingram's crew also flew the mission to Kiel, Germany. It was our first experience with flak and fighters and the group lost two to fighters. Mission #8 Arsty's crew went to Munster and had good fighter protection and returned.

Ingram's crew was busy the month of December flying 9 missions. Ingram's Crew was two behind Arsty's, so Munster was our mission 6; mission 7 on Christmas Eve was called the "No Ball" target to Pas de Calais, where the Germans were quietly building rocket launchers to launch rockets at London. The German bomber losses were at prohibitive figures and bomber pilots were no longer eager to fly to London. For our crew it was a genuine "Milk Run." Our Mission 8 was to Ludwigshafen and since there was heavy cloud cover, we saw no German fighters and were successful at dropping our bombs on the city. At this point, we caught Arsty in missions flown.

On New Year's Day 1944, General Jimmy Doolittle was named the new commander of the 8th Air Force. At 1 A.M. on January 3, the orderly entered our Nissen hut and announced, "Maximum effort today." Every one to the mess hall as breakfast will be served." After we were dressed, we joined Arsty and headed to breakfast. By the time we arrived, we were all of the same mind, "It is BIG B today." As I remember it, by the time the briefing got under way it was 5 A.M. and all the top brass were in attendance. The curtain was removed and there it was: BIG B.

After the briefing and getting our flying equipment and clothes out of the lockers, we headed for our bomber stand, where we quickly learned two of our gunners had refused to go on the mission and we met their replacements. This development really affected all of us, but particularly Ingram. The hours went by without any

order to start the engines, the reason being very low and heavy clouds. Finally at 11 A.M. the mission was cancelled, much to our relief.

On January 4 the mission was to Munster and Arsty was on mission #9. For Ingram and crew it was mission 10. Arsty described the mission in his letters as pretty routine. On the other hand, Ingram got our ship in line only to collapse. Co-pilot Kurt Mosier called the tower and received permission to return to our stand. Up to that point, Ingram had performed everything he was asked to do, but he was slowly wearing himself out without admitting it. During this time, there was a point when everyone needed a "Flak Leave."

Arsty completed mission 9 to Munster and our crew flew several missions during January. On an idle day, our crew bombardier and I told Arsty to get busy and qualify as a first pilot. We told him to tell the Major he had a ready made crew who wanted him as their aircraft commander. Well, the Major quickly arranged for him to make several take off and landings over three or four days and his flying ability proved him ready. At this point he had flown 7 missions as co-pilot and 7 as tail gunner. Our crew had credit for 13 missions, when on February 3, 1944 the crew which was to become known as "The Saint" crew prepared for a mission to Wilhelmshaven with aircraft commander Robert Lawrence Arstingstall, The Saint Crew were to be flying in a brand new B-17 to be called "The Saint."



Now, I want to identify the crew who eventually became known as "The Saint Crew," B-17G 985: That ship took its crew consisting of Robert Lawrence Arstingstall, Pilot; Curt Mosier, Co-Pilot; Stan Peterson, Navigator; Howard Jordon, Bombardier; Clyde Hopkins, Flight Engineer; Andy Melechinsky, Radio Operator; Henry Bentz, Waist Gunner; and Joe Parilla, Ball Turret Gunner. This group completed 10 missions in February and March of 1944.

"The Saint" crew flew missions to Ludwigshafen, Brunswick, and France (twice) and joined Arsty to Wilhelmshaven of February 3. Arsty had a habit of saying "forget Brunswick", "forget Wilhelmshaven". The only trouble was that we got orders to return! Anyway, Arsty was usually optimistic! We received our new B-17 G for the Wilhelmshaven trip only to see the Kurtzburg crew lose it on the Romilly mission three days later.

On February 20 we made the longest trip of our tour, to Tutow, northeast of Berlin, ten hours and 25 minutes. Upon return "THE SAINT" crew received a brand new 985 V (for victor) B-17 G. Upon which we had the ground crew paint "THE SAINT", a name chosen by Co-Pilot Mosier, and which our crew didn't think fit Mosier, however, it brought smiles to all.

On February 24 Arsty's mission 18, we made a ten hour mission to Rostock, also east of Berlin and we received good position as deputy lead. The route, coming and going took us well north of Berlin.

The very next day the mission was Regensburg and we were flying #2 position in the high squadron with Frank

Berry in the lead when we were hit head on by several fighters. Frank Berry and Robert Arstingstall were combat veterans on this 19th mission for Arsty and for what the Falcons story notes, he had a relatively new crew who happened to be flying mission 18!

About the time we were over Saarbrücken I heard an awful thud crashing the right side of the cockpit and a scent of cordite. Arsty calmly asked me to come up to the cockpit where I quickly saw a dead co-pilot and a smoking shell laying on the floor behind the pilot

and the main oxygen line was severed as the shell fell to the floor.

The good cool pilot Arsty told me where to find the emergency oxygen tanks, but first he wanted me to pull Mosier out of his seat and put him down on the runway to the bomb bay. After a big effort to move Mosier I turned to the top turret gunner who also served as flight engineer, to give me a hand and we got Mosier down on the gangway. Arsty placed Hopkins in the vacated seat, where he could read the instruments and keep Arsty informed. I headed back through the bomb bay and informed the four boys in the back of our loss of oxygen and told them to use as little energy as possible as the spare oxygen cans were for Arsty. They understood and I headed back with two cans to be used by the pilot and bombardier. Once we reached the target we had to get rid of those bombs!

Well, it was a long journey to Regensburg on a crystal clear day which would make our target very vulnerable. Off to the right the snow covered French and Swiss Alps stood out in the clear bright sunshine. I would guess I've thought about that scene a thousand times since the February day which would put a period at the end of what is now called "The Big Week".

One of Arsty's letters home gave me the reason I survived without oxygen for the mission. "We flew at 17,000 feet and had a good bomb run and the strike photos show our bombs walked right across a building of the target." After leaving the area, Arsty in his own thoughtful way called the mission leader to please come down to 14,000 feet and here is the reason why and it was done! Arsty in his own way wrote "...forget Regensburg."

As we left the target, I made another trip to get oxygen containers and found semi-conscious gunners in the back with the tail gunner, not responding to intercom calls. By this time, I was experiencing the headache of my life and I had long given up trying to complete the navigator's log. Upon reaching our bomber base, Arsty received early clearance to land and the medics were ready to receive the dead body of the co-pilot and get the unconscious gunners to the hospital. The rest of the crew of "The Saint" went directly to interrogation, where we reviewed the mission. Arsty, in his own style remained quiet while the rest of us made certain his

cool actions under extreme circumstances were understood by all.

Well, "The Big Week" was over and the Generals were feeling pretty good about it. Unfortunately, February 1944 had 29 days. On February 29th an early morning call sends "The Saint" to mission 20 and the target is a familiar one, Brunswick. Arsty notes that we have great fighter protection and the bombing, in spite of the flak, was good.

There is this brief mention that "The Saint" 985 wasn't available. We didn't know what the damage was. More than one bullet hit 985. The serious damage was really hidden in the wing where a shell hit the main right wing strut and lodged up against the fuel tank without exploding! "The Saint" 985 gets a new right wing for our next mission.

By the dawn of March 4, Arsty had completed 21 missions and the next 4 were all to Berlin. Most of the crew of "The Saint" had 20 missions. I will not attempt to review the "Big B" story in this written effort, but Arsty took it all in stride, in his own stoic way. The crew accepted and followed the example of their aircraft commander.

Years have a way of flying by and there were frequent thoughts of those boys with whom I shared so many wartime experiences. I often wondered where they were and how life was treating them. A friend of mine sent me information of an 8th Air Force reunion to be held in Cincinnati, Ohio. I quickly got the information and enrolled in the 8th Air Force Historical Society. Lois and I made plans to go to Cincinnati that fall. By this time we were living in southern Florida and the year was 1982. Arriving at the hotel in Cincinnati, I quickly registered for the reunion and received a list of those who were registered. There was the name of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Arstingstall from Midwest City, Oklahoma. It was a very special reunion and as the years went by, we were able to be at many different locations, around the USA for many memorable reunions.

Robert retired after 37 years of civil service with a branch of the Air Force, which used his mechanical ability. He was a life member of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church for 55 years. He served as president for a term. Robert Lawrence Arstingstall, after spending several

months at the VA Hospital in Oklahoma City, passed away on June 20, 2007. As Lucille, his wife, writes, "...we had a busy life and I loved being a homemaker and taking care of my family." Speaking of the family, there were 2 sons and 4 daughters, 10 grand children and 12 great grandchildren. Grandpa was their "idol." She writes that she will be 90 years young on Sept 23 and I sent her greetings. I had received great invitations to attend the birthday party. What a wonderful gathering that must have been!

One last thought:

For years I have occasionally written experiences of my service in the Army Air Corps 1941-45. Somehow at age 94 I wanted to put it all together and here it is. The age group, of which I am a happy member, has written a good page in the history of George Washington's AMERICA.

Epilogue

During the month of June 1944 the commanding officer at McDill Air Force Base in Tampa, summoned the troops for an award ceremony. There were a good number of awards issued, but the one single highest award was the Silver Star, awarded to 1st Lt. Robert Lawrence Arstingstall, for his achievement which was referred to here.



Stan Peterson

FLORIDA CHAPTER

The Florida Chapter of the Mighty Eighth Air Force Historical Society met the first weekend in November in Stuart, Florida. We have enjoyed meeting in the fall at the same time as the big Stuart Air Show that takes place around Veterans Day. We usually have a good turnout of the membership for this meeting and they are very kind to us at the air show at Witham Field, the Martin County Airport. The Air Show benefits the Road to Victory Military Museum in Stuart.

Again this year, we had a good number of members for the weekend. Our headquarters for the three-day meeting was the Courtyard by Marriott, right off I-95, which has been a favorite for us due to the great rates we get, and the extras they make complementary. Our first order of business was the officers and board of directors meeting Friday afternoon. President Bill Uphoff called the meeting to order. In attendance were Vice President Jim Hart, Secretary Esther Cheriff, Treasurer Alex Acuti, and board members Ken Sweet, Warren Klein, Sid Katz, Bernie Silverblatt, and Nic Apostol. Topics of the meeting included recruiting new members, good communication on new members and members who have passed between the Secretary, Treasurer, and Ken Sweet, who keeps the master roster. In addition, the dues that were raised to \$15 dollars per year, and making sure the yearly members are taken off the roster in a timely manner that do not renew, so as not to waste postage on newsletters. It was agreed that getting new members on the roster quickly, as well as a welcome letter and membership card, which the Secretary will be responsible for, is critical to them receiving their newsletters so they feel a part of the organization and appreciated. After the meeting, the hospitality room was converted from meeting to social mode and remained open, except for the dinner hour, until later in the evening. With a popular family restaurant right next door, many opted for dinner there.

After Saturday morning's complimentary breakfast the general membership meeting was held in one of the hotel's conference rooms. The mem-



bership in attendance was informed of the Board's deliberations from the afternoon before and asked to make suggestions and comments. After the meeting, there were two options for the attendees: A Sunshine Wildlife Tour on a 40' Pontoon Boat had been laid on at the local State Park or ride sharing with other members out to the airport for the Air Show. Once there, we were welcomed to a tent we shared with a local business. We are billed as "Living Legends" and the air show attendees are invited to come by and visit with the veterans that fought the air war over Europe in WWII. Debra Kujawa of the national membership office had sent along back issues of the 8th AF News to hand out to people at the air show, requested by Warren Klein. These were very popular, and we were able to pass out the magazines with the membership applications inside as well as membership applications for the Florida Chapter. The military did not have the strong presence at the air show that it usually does due to the recent government spending limits. However, there were many Warbirds on hand, including two B-25's, C-47's, C-46's, and many AT-6's, historic airliners, and stunt planes and experimental planes galore. The military museum sponsors a mock WWII land battle, too. The reanactors include US Army troops, German troops, and weapons of both forces. There are weapons demonstrations with narration and then the battle itself, including a WWII era tank.

Saturday night's banquet was followed by a presentation by one of our newer members, Levy Zur. Levy served with the Israeli Air Force during the Six Day War. Units under his command flew first strike missions against Israel's enemies the first morning of the war, led by Levy himself. Low-level missions by the bombers struck in two different directions after a return to base to re-fuel and re-arm, and caught the enemy's planes on the ground. After dinner, members adjourned to the hospitality room for some hanger flying and the end of meeting auction of left over snacks and beverages, as well as any items brought by the members to boost our treasury.

Sunday morning's memorial service

found us in a section of the hotel lobby that faces an outdoor fountain for the service. Hotel guests who were near-by gave us a round of applause when we finished singing the Air Force Song. Chapter Chaplain Jim Hart led the memorial service as we said good-bye to Chapter members who had flown their last mission since our last meeting. We said our goodbyes after the service and look forward to our Spring Meeting in Clewiston, Florida at the historic Clewiston Inn. Clewiston is at the southern end of Lake Okeechobee, and is known as the "Sweetest City in America" due to all the sugar that is grown near there and processed in Clewiston. The meeting will be sometime in May and for more information as we get closer to the date; you can contact Jim Hart at hartklamking@aol.com, or Ken Sweet at ksotown@gmail.com, or call 407-869-6693.

WISCONSIN CHAPTER

Our December 2013 quarterly meeting featured speaker Paul Tutas, US Army, 369 Engineer Amphibious Support Regiment, spoke on participating in nuclear bomb tests state-side, "Operation Tumbler Snapper", 4/1/52/-6/5/52. Tutas participated in four tests, the most memorable being Charlie on 4/22/52. After being marched through Ground

Zero prior to the bomb drop to check the area, he and his troop were taken to fox holes located three (3) miles from Ground Zero. Paul states: "While waiting for count down we were told to 'stay down and cover the back of your neck and close your eyes'. The only clothing on our bodies was fatigues. No protective gear!" Fifty members thoroughly enjoyed this informative and eye-opening presentation.

Our March 2014 quarterly meeting will feature Janine Rozina-Sijan, sister of Captain Lance P. Sijan. As many of you know we hold our 8th Air Force Historical Society quarterly meetings in the Sijan Building at the 128th Refueling Wing Milwaukee, which is named in honor of Captain Lance Peter Sijan who gave his life in the Vietnam War. March 4 1976 Captain Lance P Sijan received posthumously the Congressional Medal of Honor which read as follows: "The President of the United States in the name of the Congress of the United States takes pride in presenting the MEDAL OF HONOR posthumously to LANCE PETER SIJAN Captain United States Air Force for service as set forth in the following" CITATION: While on a flight over North Vietnam, Captain Sijan ejected from his disabled aircraft and successfully evaded capture for more than 6 weeks. During this time, he was seriously injured and suffered from



shock and extreme weight loss due to lack of food. After being captured by North Vietnamese soldiers, Captain Sijan was taken to a holding point for subsequent transfer to a prisoner of war camp. In his emaciated and crippled condition, he overpowered one of his guards and crawled into the jungle, only to be recaptured after several hours. He was then transferred to another prison camp where he was kept in solitary confinement and interrogated at length. During interrogation, he was severely tortured; however, he did not divulge any information to his captors. Captain Sijan lapsed into delirium and was placed in the care of another prisoner. During his intermittent periods of consciousness until his death, he never complained of his physical condition and, on several occasions, spoke of future escape attempts. Captain Sijan's extraordinary heroism and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty at the cost of his life are in keeping with the highest traditions of the U.S. Air Force and reflect great credit upon himself and the U.S. Armed Forces." Janine Sijan-Rozina grew up in Bay View, Wisconsin. The youngest of three children, her loving family included her big brother, Captain Lance P. Sijan, Medal of Honor Recipient and graduate of the USAFA. Their special brother-sister bond has lasted over the decades, not marred by time or death. She travels extensively speaking about his accomplishments and the hope it gives to many others. Combining this experience and knowledge with her personal story, she is actively working on the development of a feature film about her brother Lance. Janine looks forward to sharing her fond memories of Lance growing up in an exceptional time as well as becoming the hero that is remembered today.

A Big Thank You to the members of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society-Wisconsin Chapter for nominating me (Cindy Drehmel) for an

Americanism Award for my service to the group. The award was presented at the War Memorial during their annual event. Harvin Abrahamson, Wisconsin Chapter Chaplain presented the award in the company of members Ralph Anderson and Hugo Niemi (all 8th Air Force WWII veterans). The award was given to Drehmel for coordinating the statewide Fly for Freedom events including a trip to the Wisconsin State Veterans Museum and presentation of 30 flight manuals of WWII history and honorary dinner in Madison in 2012 and the coordination of B24 and B17 interstate flights for the WWII members from Racine, Wisconsin to Chicago business airpark and a bus trip for all members to the War Bird Museum in Illinois and honorary dinner and dance with 22 piece big band in Racine Wisconsin in 2013. The award is given to military and non military individuals who devote exemplary time and effort to the veterans of the state of Wisconsin. All branches of military and many military organizations attend this annual event.

OREGON CHAPTER

Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Formation of 8th AFHS, Oregon Chapter.

Our November speaker, Staff Sergeant Bob Schuberg, was a B-17 tail gunner with the 306th Bomb Group, 368th Bomb Squadron, 8th Army Air Force and also served with the 9th Army Air Force.

Here are portions of S/Sgt. Bob Schuberg's speech. "I'm here today to tell you of my experience as one of twelve WWII Veterans who had the opportunity to go to England for three days and then on to Normandy, an all-expense paid trip organized by the Greatest Generation Foundation, a philanthropic organization that raises money so that they can take Veterans back to their battlefields and to their air bases. We left from Seattle on American Airlines, part sponsor of this trip. When we landed in New York City at JFK Airport there was a room set aside for all of the twelve of us who would be going together. We met for the first time there, had a wonderful dinner, and met the twelve Air Force cadets, incoming seniors studying history, who were also going with us. This was a great opportunity for them to hear and relive our stories and to see the battlefields. On our way to our overseas flight as we headed down to the boarding gate we saw Boy Scouts leading the way followed by bagpipers and hundreds and hundreds of people applauding us.

I'd like to introduce you to the twelve Veterans. There were four 8th Air Force Veterans, three paratroopers from the 101st Division, a paramedic, a combat engineer, and a meteorologist. Lucky was a copilot in the 100th Bomb Group, "The Bloody 100th". He was one of four copilots who completed their 25 missions. Conrad was a flight engineer stationed in Bassingbourn. On one of his missions, he was in his turret and got word from the pilot that they

wanted him to come down and check the gas consumption which he did. As he started to get back into his turret, shrapnel hit the turret and shattered the Plexiglas. He realized that had he been up there he would've been dead. I [Bob Schuberg] was in the 306th Bomb Group and a tail gunner on a B-17. Peter was a ball turret gunner in the 384th Bomb Group. John was a paratrooper for the 101st Division.



S/Sgt. Bob Schuberg [far right] and Joan E. Hamilton with Reenactors Larry Jones and Christopher Miller
Photographs provided by Tom Philo - Oregon Chapter

He landed at 1:30 in the morning on D-Day. Leslie was also a paratrooper. He landed in a field in water up to his waist on the morning of D-Day. It was pitch black. He had no idea where he was or what might be around, but he had been trained to use a clicker in that situation. If you click once and somebody else responds with two clicks, then you knew it's an American paratrooper and that happened exactly to him and he was able to meet up with other paratroopers and start off down the road. Bill had probably the honor of being the youngest paratrooper to have landed on D-Day. He was sixteen years old. Harden was a paramedic who landed on D-Day and was taking care of the wounded. Joe was with the U.S. Navy and in charge of a landing craft bringing troops into the beaches at Omaha. We had another Joe who was also in the U.S. Navy and manned a much larger landing craft bringing tanks into the beach. Al was a combat engineer. His job was to clear the beaches so that the troops could get up onto the land. Lloyd was a meteorologist. He was stationed in London the whole time during the war. He had the distinction of being with the group that told General Eisenhower that the weather is going to be the best on June 6th and it was.

We visited the air bases at Basingbourn. Our next visit was to Thurleigh at the 306th where my bomb group was. I was disappointed because the runways were gone and only the building used for storing bombs remained. It had become a wonderful little museum with many photographs, memorabilia of the war, a lot of mannequins dressed in uniforms. Our next stop was to Thorpe Abbots. We skipped London because of the queen's 60th celebration that weekend and chose instead to go on to France. Our home for the next four days was the Châteaux de Creully which had been the headquarters of General Montgomery during the war. Next, we stopped at St.-Mère-Église for the big event: American and French paratroopers were celebrating the D-Day event with a parachute drop. The sky was just filled and it was exciting to watch. Afterwards, there was a parade

with American jeeps, U.S. tanks, and trucks and many people dressed up in American uniforms. They wanted to shake our hand, take our pictures, and give us flowers. It was a heart-warming experience. In St.-Mère-Église there is a dummy hanging from the church steeple today to remind the people of the paratrooper whose chute was caught on that steeple on the morning of D-Day and rescued when the town, which was the first to be liberated by the U.S., was secured at the end of the day. There was also a flag-raising ceremony and we visited Pointe du Hoc and Pegasus Bridge. 160,000 men landed on D-Day on all of the beaches plus 20,000 paratroopers.

We visited two American and one Canadian cemetery. The cemetery in Cambridge, England had a wall with all of the names of the U.S. military missing including Joe Kennedy. 3000 died on D-Day. The cemetery just above Omaha Beach had 100,000 crosses and Star of Davids including 375 crosses there for the unknown.

On our last day in Normandy, along with forty-two French students and their teacher, we visited the town of Graignes. The story of Graignes is that 180 paratroopers landed in and around this town on the morning of D-Day. Realizing that this was an important highway leading toward the beach, they decided to defend the town and keep the Germans from moving toward the coast which they did for six days before the heavy guns came in. The few Americans that were left were able to escape with the help of the local townspeople. When the Germans came in, the story is that they killed all those who were wounded and the townspeople who had supported the Americans.

After a brief trip to Paris where I visited the Louvre and the Eiffel Tower, we headed home. In conclusion, I would call this "a trip of a lifetime". It was a way of reliving old memories, but more important I came to understand the enormity of the D-Day invasion.

NORTH ALABAMA CHAPTER

Ann Vaughn opened the meeting. Chaplin George McGuinness gave the

invocation, and Harold McNMurrin led in the Pledge to the Flag. Ben Carroll led us in a sing-along of many old favorite songs.

We welcomed WW II veteran Greeley Moore and his wife Anne. Jerry Hundschild gave an interesting talk about the Nazi occupation of the low countries during the war. He was a young boy during the occupation of southern Holland. His uncle lived in the northern part of the Netherlands and he verified the story of their starvation prior to their liberation.

Reminder: Chapter dues of \$5.00 are now due. Give Bill any corrections of email or postal addresses.

The next Program will be stories of how you got overseas and/or returned? By ship, flew, incidents? Tell us... funny or harrowing!

367 Jeff Road, NW – Huntsville, AL 35806-1509

Also, to remind everyone that we exist as a Chapter of the 8th Air Force Historical Society. Their dues, of \$35/year, are also due. The *8th AF News* is a wonderful slick paper magazine with many interesting stories.

NEW YORK STATE SOUTHERN WING

The NYS Southern Wing Chapter will be holding its upstate luncheon on May 4th, FDR Library in Hyde Park, NY.

Another luncheon is also being planned for the late spring in the Long Island, NY area.

Further information regarding these upcoming events will be posted on the Chapter's site <http://blogs.ny8thsw-cafhs.org>

Please 'Support Our Troops' & the USO!

Joseph Pat Keeley
1335 Belmont Ave.
North Haledon, NJ 07508
(973) 423-4854
FXE84Optonline.net

BIRTHPLACE CHAPTER

Col. Ed Wexler, Birthplace Chapter member, and BOD of the 8th AFHS, arranged for a group of us from the

Chapter, staff members from the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force—including the Education Department, to attend a live training session at the 165th GA Air National Guard and the CRTC (Combat Readiness Training Center). What an event this was with F-22s, F-16s, F-18s and T-38s in combat training! The training included Air Force, Navy, Marines, and Air Guard Units, pilots as well as ground crews.

The training is done in a large area over the Atlantic Ocean off Savannah, GA, up to 60,000 feet, and includes 2 aircraft carriers in the area. Savannah offers a unique opportunity to include carriers in this training. The training center at Nellis AFB can't accommodate carriers in the desert! The F-22s were from Tyndall AFB, FL. The F-16s and T-38s were from Vermont Air Guard. Interestingly the VT Guard will be the first Guard Unit to get the F-35.

The training is for air-to-air combat with battles in the morning and again in the afternoon, each of about 2 hours duration, and, of course, with extensive debriefings and discussion after each. Training includes the "good guys" vs the "bad guys" or "good side" vs "bad side". This is an enhanced computer simulation. If a "bad guy" gets shot down, he can regroup and fight again. If a "good guy" is shot down he returns to base.

We had a briefing from the Commander of the Guard Training Center, and then a briefing from the Exercise Director, who was an F-15



Darrel Lowell, President of the 8th AFHS & Henry Skipper, President and CEO of the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force



F-35

pilot and now in an F-22.

Seeing 12 or so F-22s take off, and about the same number of F-16s, it was a thrill. But to see about 4 of the F-22s get gear-up, and then go straight up until they are out of sight, is truly a marvel. The F-22s offer a pilot 360 degrees of vision around his aircraft. What a surprise to us who flew multi-engine prop aircraft back in the day.

A critical item mentioned that with the current military budget cut, this training becomes extremely important as flying hours have been cut from 300, or so, to 100. That is tough for top proficiency. In the past, our fighter pilots got 300 plus hours while the Chinese got 100 or less. Now the Chinese get 300 plus to our 100. I know this is a problem in proficiency for tanker pilots as well, as my grandson flying a KC-135, has the same restriction.

Our sincere thanks to Col. Ed Wexler, and the entire staff of CRTC, for a thrilling and educational afternoon on the flight line.

On another subject and event, many of us from the Birthplace Chapter attended the 100th Celebration of the building purchased by the American Legion Post 135 following WWII. The building was dedicated in 1914 but was the location of the activation of the Mighty 8th on 28 January, 1942. The building is in Savannah, GA on Bull Street, with a prominent historical marker in front of the building. The event included brief talks by Henry Skipper, President and CEO of

the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force ; Darrel Lowell, President of the 8th AFHS; Col. Ed Wexler, BOD of the 8th AFHS; and others. Food and refreshments and a great singing trio, The Vintage Vocals, (Andrews Sisters style) were provided. Bob Buck, President

392ND BOMB GROUP MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

The tremendous reach of our website, www.b24.net, has been again realized. Through it, Tina Wall Spriggs, the daughter of Col James Wall, the commander of the 465th Sub Depot and later the 403rd Service Group, became acquainted with her father's service at Wendling. The members of our organization are scattered, we get together physically only once a year, and it's been 7 decades since we were at Wendling. So it occurred to me to conduct a sort of mini-roll call and get a report therefrom.

The results:

Joe Ortiz - A 576th ball turret gunner with Alamogordo credentials, he was shot down in November 1943 and spent the rest of the war as a POW. He's 91 and in good health.

George Michel - Keeps busy playing his horn and the piano and makes WWII presentations three or four times a month to schools, churches, service clubs, and other like organizations. He's 89.

Dennis Rogers - A second generation living in northern Idaho, he reported

sunny and cold at 15 degrees, but no snow yet. He says he's hanging in there at 70.

Greg Hatton - Another second generation. I was unable to reach Greg by phone. However, Bob Books got an e-mail that indicated that, although experiencing a serious illness, Greg is coping with it. He was expecting to host the family Thanksgiving and after Christmas to spend a week in Florida.

Jim Marsteller - I was blessed with Jim's charming wife Karen answering the phone. Jim, a second generation icon, reported an accident that left him on a cane and taking therapy. He also mentioned a surprise visit from Ben Jones, who we remember as the kid from Litcham.

Al Lester - A pilot on the 578th's original crew list, we knew him as Al Lishka. I spoke to a family member, who reported that Al passed away just the other day on November 12. My call, sadly, was too late.

Neely Young - I was held spellbound as this voluble Southern gentleman reminisced about his WWII career as a pilot in the 578th, first as one of the first replacements and later, having finished his tour, as the pilot of a war bond tour in the States. Admittedly, quite often he was at odds with his superior officers. In his exit interview he remarked to the interviewer, "You took me out of civilian life, but not the civilian out of me" and left. Without a salute. A sentiment quite probably felt by a lot of us.

Tom Perry - Now our Chaplain, Tom was in 576th Ordnance. He reported spending time in the local Senior

Citizen Center five days a week. He remarked that he has just learned that the incoming president of his college alma mater grew up in King's Lynn. He plans to contact him about it.

Oak Mackey - A co-pilot in the 578th, an airline pilot in civilian life and past president of the 2nd Air Division Ass'n, Oak reported "feeling good." The patriarch of a large family, he's expecting 20 at the family Thanksgiving gathering.

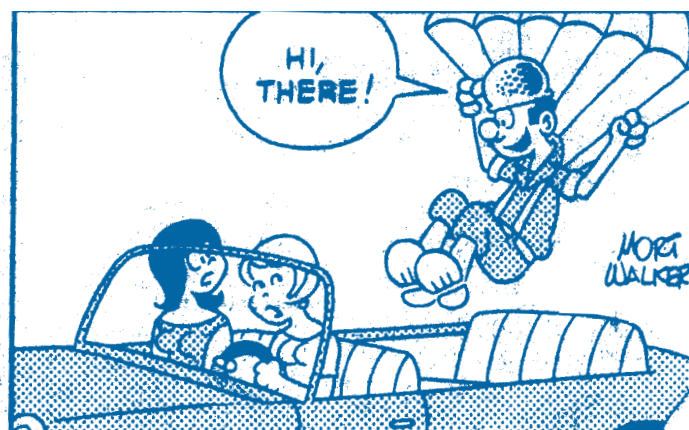
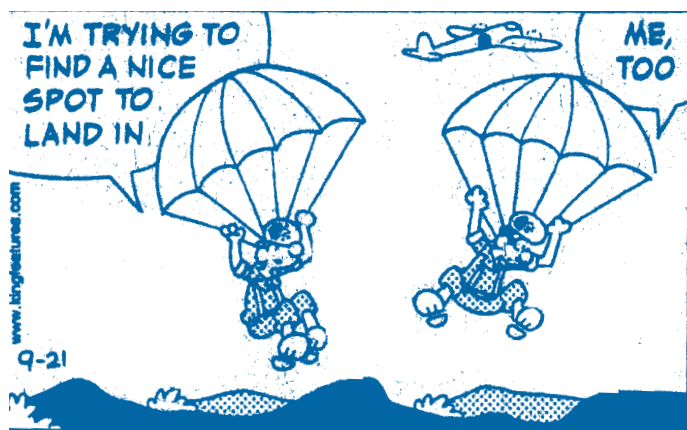
Bill Jurczyn - 578th and retired USAF colonel, Bill said when I called him, "It's my 91st birthday tomorrow." He also reported the first day of winter in San Antonio—45 degrees. **Bob Books** - 392BGMA vice-president and legacy second generation, Bob reported an upcoming 28th wedding anniversary Caribbean cruise followed by Christmas with family in Wisconsin.

Allen Duff - 578th pilot and Sqdn Operations Officer reported that he and Elizabeth have moved into a retirement home with the address of 1299 Briarwood, Apt. 328, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401. At 96, Allen may be one of our oldest. I didn't ask how old Elizabeth is. On my list were these members whom I was unable to reach:

Joe McNeil, 578th combat crewman; **Martha Bambauer**, widow of Gil, 10th Station Complement; **Olen Levell**, 576th commander; and **Charles Dye**, 1825th Ordnance and past president of 392BGMA and 8AF Historical Society. Remember December 7th.

It changed our lives.

Blue Skies, Jim Goar



CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Nominations for candidates for election to the Board of Directors of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society must be in the hands of the Secretary no later than May 15, 2014. The following information must be included.

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



Joe Garber
8th AFHS Secretary

The Secretary will relay all nominations to the Nominating Committee. Nominations received by the Secretary after May 15, 2014 or any nominations without complete information will not be considered.

SEND ALL NOMINATIONS TO:
Joe Garber – 46 Coquia Ridge Way,
Ormond Beach, FL 32174
PALJOE2@aol.com

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

Marvin Silbersher, 447th BG 711th Sqdn
Lake Hopatcong, NJ

Continuing the 8th AF Legacy

Greetings, my fellow 8th AFHS members!

In January, I went to a local town library here, in northern New Jersey, to hear my friend Herb Gold speak about his experiences in the 705th BS of the 446th BG. Herb had a week long exhibition at the



Pat Keeley

library and concluded the week with a two hour seminar recounting his experiences in the 8th A F during WWII. He spoke about his last mission when his B-24 was shot down; he became a POW and was part of the "Death March" during the winter of 1945. It was a powerful and moving presentation.

We were expecting a small group to attend but to our surprise there were 42 people there including Iraq and 82nd Airborne veterans as well as a strong NextGen turnout. Herb has been asked to speak at a local high school next.

Herb is not the only Veteran out there telling their 8th story and helping with Continuing the 8th Legacy. If any of you would like to share your stories as Herb did and need assistance, please contact me for material or locational help and support. I am happy to help you!

I have heard from the State Chapters but would like to hear from the Bomb Groups and Fighter Groups to update the Society's listings please.

In addition to the 8th A F News magazine, please check the Society's website, www.8thafhs.org, and Facebook for further information on upcoming events including this year's October Reunion to be held in Nashville, TN.

Remember to stop and thank a veteran for their service and support the USO.

Cheers,
Pat Keeley



8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

40TH ANNUAL REUNION

SHERATON MUSIC CITY

OCTOBER 9 – 13, 2014



REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

See choices below and complete the Registration Form noting your event choices and personal information. By "WWII GROUP," we're asking for the group or unit in which you served (specific Bomb Group, Fighter Group, PRG, HQ, etc.). We use this information for tallying totals for each group, nametags, and seating arrangements. If you prefer to sit with a different group, please give us that information too. We do not need your squadron. Remit by mail with check or money order payable to Armed Forces Reunions by September 8, 2014. You may also register and pay with credit card online at www.afr-reg.com/8afhs2014. A 3% convenience fee will be added to online credit card reservations. Forms received after September 8 will be accepted on a space available basis only. Hotel reservations should also be made by September 8, 2014.

ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC. CANCELLATION POLICY

For attendees canceling reunion activities prior to the cut-off date, Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. (AFR) shall process a full refund less a \$5 per person processing fee. Attendees canceling reunion activities after the cut-off date will be refunded to the fullest extent that AFR's vendor commitments and guarantees will allow, less a \$5 processing fee. Cancellations will only be taken Monday through Friday from 9:00am until 4:00pm Eastern Time, excluding holidays. Please call (757) 625-6401 to cancel reunion activities and obtain a cancellation code. Refunds processed 4-6 weeks after reunion. Canceling your hotel reservation doesn't cancel your reunion activities.

MEALS/EVENTS CHOICES

MEAL PACKAGE 1 \$212

Package includes 7 hotel food functions beginning with breakfast on Friday (4 breakfasts, 3 dinners).

MEAL PACKAGE 2 \$148

Package includes 5 hotel food functions beginning with breakfast on Saturday (3 breakfasts, 2 dinners).

The continental breakfast buffets include juice, fruit, cereals/milk, yogurt, breakfast breads, and coffee. The full breakfast buffets include juice,

fruit, eggs, meat, potatoes, pancakes or French toast, biscuits, and coffee.

CHOICE #3 INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

Saturday Rendezvous Dinner at \$45, and Sunday Banquet at \$45 can be purchased separately, but are included in both packages above.

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.

40TH 8TH AFHS ANNUAL REUNION

SHERATON MUSIC CITY – NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

October 9 - 13, 2014

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9

Memphis Belle & The Red Nose available for tours & rides

1:00pm	-	6:00pm	Reunion Registration open
2:00pm	-	6:00pm	8AFHS Board Meeting
6:00pm	-	7:00pm	Welcome Reception

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10

7:30am	-	8:30am	Full Breakfast for Meal Package #1 participants
Tbd	-	Tbd	Memorabilia / Gathering Room open throughout the reunion.
8:00am	-	10:00am	Reunion Registration open
9:00am	-	2:00pm	CITY TOUR
9:30am	-	12:00pm	MEMPHIS BELLE & THE RED NOSE
1:00pm	-	5:00pm	Reunion Registration open
2:30pm	-	3:30pm	Chapter/Unit Development AND Next Generation Meeting
4:00pm	-	5:30pm	Dinner Buffet (Pork BBQ and catfish as entrees) for Meal Package #1 participants. Laura Edge will speak during dinner of her father's experiences.
6:00pm	-	10:00pm	GRAND OLE OPRY

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11

7:30am	-	8:30am	Continental Breakfast for Meal Package participants
8:30am	-	10:00am	Reunion Registration open
8:30am	-	10:00am	Individual Group Meetings
10:30am	-	5:30pm	Symposium: Behind the Wire and Mask
2:00pm	-	6:00pm	Reunion Registration open
6:30pm	-	7:00pm	8AFHS Cash Bar Reception
7:00pm	-	9:30pm	Rendezvous Dinners

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12

7:30am	-	8:30am	Full Breakfast for Meal Package participants
8:30am	-	10:00am	General Membership Meeting
11:00am	-	4:00pm	8AFHS Board Meeting
11:00am	-	2:30pm	NASHVILLE NIGHTLIFE LUNCH AND MATINEE
5:00pm	-	5:30pm	Reunion Registration open
6:00pm	-	7:00pm	8AFHS Cash Bar Reception
7:00pm	-	10:00pm	Banquet Dinner, followed by guest speaker and dancing.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 13

7:00am	-	8:30am	Continental Breakfast Buffet for Meal Package participants
--------	---	--------	--

Please plan to be at the bus boarding area at least five minutes prior to the scheduled time.
All trips require a minimum of thirty-five people, unless otherwise stated.
Driver and Guide gratuities are not included in the tour prices.

2014 40th ANNUAL 8th AIR FORCE REUNION



CITY TOUR **FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10**

Begin a tour of Nashville with trained professional guides who will entertain your group with interesting facts, colorful legends, and amusing anecdotes of Nashville and her people. Drive through Centennial Park and view the Parthenon, a full-scale replica of the original in Greece. Visit the Ryman Auditorium, where the Grand Ole Opry got its start. Originally a church, the Ryman is now home to numerous musical productions. Stop on 2nd Avenue for lunch on your own at one of several different restaurants. Consider Market Street Brewery, Big River Grille, Hard Rock Cafe, or the Wild Horse Saloon.

9:00am board bus, 2:00pm back at hotel
\$55/Person includes bus, guide, and admission.

Lunch on your own.

**** or ****

MEMPHIS BELLE & THE RED NOSE

Friday, October 10

The Boeing B-17F Flying Fortress, Memphis Belle and the Red Nose, P-51 Mustang will be on location at a local Nashville airport during the reunion. Today's trip is scheduled for those without transportation or wanting to go as part of a group. The planes will be



2014 40th ANNUAL 8th AIR FORCE REUNION

available to view (and ride) at other times during the reunion as well. More details to come or elsewhere in the newsletter.

**9:30am board bus, 12:00pm back at hotel
\$26/Person includes bus and escort.**

GRAND OLE OPRY **Friday, October 10**

During any given Opry show, audiences can expect the best in country, bluegrass, comedy, gospel, and more by Country Music Hall of Famers, cast members



who helped establish the Opry as the home of country music, revered superstars, and young artists just starting to make names for themselves. It is the longest-running live radio show in the world. Sit back and enjoy an American Institution at its entertaining best.

**6:00pm board bus, 10:00pm back at hotel
\$63/Person includes bus, escort, and show.**

SYMPOSIUM: BEHIND THE WIRE AND MASK

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11

During WWII, airmen downed behind enemy lines had few options: if they survived the crash or bail out they faced almost certain capture and interment in a Stalag Luft as a POW; or they could try and get back to friendly territory with aid from the "Helpers" through an elaborate underground network of American

sympathizers—Escape and Evasion. Either way, the stories of hardship, courage, sacrifice, and patriotism have been carefully researched, collected, and will be presented in a powerfully dynamic and emotionally charged symposium by renowned researchers and veterans who will share their personal experiences with you. We invite YOU to share your experiences during this interactive forum as well.

10:30am Symposium starts, 5:30pm Adjourn

**There is no charge for the Symposium;
however, if you want a box lunch during the
short lunch break, cost is \$8.**

NASHVILLE NIGHTLIFE LUNCH AND MATINEE

Sunday, October 12

Come and experience a celebration of Country Music from both the past and present. Hear songs from many of the great artists of country music history. Enjoy the music from late-greats such as Patsy Cline and Hank Williams, Sr. to the superstars of today, Sara Evans and Toby Keith. But first – be sure to bring your appetite – there is a full lunch buffet with salads, vegetables, meats, pasta, rolls, beverages, and fruit cobblers for dessert! Note: A minimum of 70 people is required for this trip.

**11:00am board bus, 2:30pm back at hotel
\$65/Person includes bus, escort, and lunch
cruise.**

8th AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL BANQUET

Sunday, October 12

Assemble in the ballroom for the Posting of the Colors and Memorial Service. Dinner will be a choice of Steak or Tilapia with the usual accompaniments. The guest speaker, Yvonne Daley Brusselmans will follow, and then the music turns up a bit for some dancing if you'd like!

6:00pm Cash Bar Reception, 7:00pm Banquet.

**Cost is included in meal package or \$45
separately.**



2014 40th ANNUAL 8th AIR FORCE REUNION

8th AFHS Activity Registration Form October 9-13, 2014

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/8afhs2014 (3% will be added to total). All registration forms and payments must be received on or before September 8, 2014. 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 9/8/2014

	Price Per	# of People	Total
REGISTRATION FEE			
Includes meeting expenses and other reunion expenses.	\$40		\$
Reg. Fee for children ages 8-16 attending more than 1 function & staying at hotel	\$25		\$
MEAL PACKAGES			
Package #1 includes 7 hotel meals beginning with breakfast on Friday	\$212		\$
Package #2 includes 5 hotel meals beginning with breakfast on Saturday	\$148		\$
Please select your entrée choice(s) for the Banquet:			
Chef's Choice Steak with Cabernet Demi Glace		#	
Tilapia with Lemon Caper Sauce		#	
SEPARATELY PRICED MEALS (if not purchasing a package)			
Saturday, 10/11: Rendezvous Dinner (Chicken Marsala)	\$45		\$
Sunday, 10/12: Banquet (please select your entrée)			
Chef's Choice Steak with Cabernet Demi Glace	\$45		\$
Tilapia with Lemon Caper Sauce	\$45		\$
SYMPOSIUM BOX LUNCH			
The symposium is free to attendees. Because of the short lunch break, box lunches are available for purchase in advance.	\$8		\$
TOURS			
Friday, 10/10: City Tour	\$49		\$
Friday, 10/10: Grand Ole Opry	\$63		\$
Sunday, 10/12: Nashville NightLife Lunch & Matinee	\$65		\$
Total Amount Payable to Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.			\$

Please Print

MEMBER NAME (for nametag) _____

☐ VET ☐ NEXT GEN ☐ OTHER WWII GROUP (please list BG, not BS) _____

SPOUSE NAME (if attending) _____

GUEST NAMES _____ ☐ NEXT GEN

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 Online at www.afr-reg.com/8afhs2014

SHERATON MUSIC CITY HOTEL – NASHVILLE, TN

(615) 885-2200

777 McGavock Pike, Nashville, TN 37214

<https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/StarGroupsWeb/res?id=1402066861&key=30784Location>

Located within minutes of downtown Nashville, the Sheraton offers easy access to many of Nashville's attractions. Several restaurants and stores are within a couple miles of the hotel.

RESERVATION INFORMATION

Call the number above and reference the 8th Air Force Historical Society or you can use the link below to make reservations <https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/StarGroupsWeb/res?id=1402066861&key=30784> . You may also click on hotel link found on the AFR registration page at www.afr-reg.com/8afhs2014 .

Group Name: Eighth Air Force Historical Society

Reunion Dates: October 9-13, 2014

Rate: \$109 + tax (currently 15.25% + \$2.50 per night). Group rate is offered 3 days before and 3 days after the reunion dates, based on group-block availability.

Cut-off Date: 09/8/14. Late reservations will be processed based on space availability at a higher rate.

Cancellation Policy: Deposit is refundable if reservation is canceled 48 hours prior to the day of arrival. Call 615-885-2200 should you need to cancel your room reservation. All reservations must be guaranteed by credit card or first night's deposit, enclosed. There is an early departure fee of one night's room/tax if the reservation holder checks out of the hotel earlier than agreed upon date. If you must check out earlier than planned, please notify the front desk at the time of hotel check-in or before arrival. Family and medical emergencies are excused.

PARKING & SHUTTLE INFORMATION

Complimentary airport shuttle service is provided to and from the Nashville International Airport. The shuttle runs from 5:00am-11:00pm. From baggage claim, proceed to the phone bank and press button #46 to request pickup. Then proceed to the pickup area which is one level down at ground transportation. The hotel also offers complimentary parking for guests staying in the hotel.

HOSPITALITY SUITES

The hotel offers executive suites to be used for group hospitality rooms. They range in size from 450-600 square feet and each one has a terrace or balcony where people may socialize as well. Suites include restrooms and small (dorm size) refrigerators. The cost is \$125/night, payable directly to the Society. The hotel will deliver ice each day for a one-time charge of \$100 plus tax/service charge. Hospitality hosts will be pre-assigned to nearby rooms, but not necessarily connecting. **Please contact Donna with Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. at DonnaLee@afri.com to make arrangements.**

WHEELCHAIR RENTAL

ScotAround rents both manual and power wheelchairs by the day and week. Call (888) 441-7575 for details.



NEWS FROM *Across the Pond*

Welcome All to the first News from Across the Pond for 2014.

The year of 2014 started with a very sad and heart rending loss of life. This involved an air traffic accident involving a U.S.A.A.F. Pave Hawk helicopter from the 48th Fighter Wing R.A.F. Lakenheath U.K. The helicopter was on a night flying exercise approaching the Norfolk coast near the fishing village of Cley next the Sea. The crash claimed the lives of four U.S. Air Force personnel, Capt Christopher Stower, Capt Sean Ruane, T/Sg Dale Mathews & Sgt Alton Ponce. The local people, emergency services, military personnel also many of the British public gave & offered there help at the scene also their condolences to the families of the above and all concerned. The spirit of friendship and the feeling of loss was shown by many people during the time of this tragic accident. The old spirit still survives with the British people as it did in WWII when those brave warriors of the skies did not return from their raids over enemy occupied Europe. Gordon Richards forwarded a card of condolence to the Commanding Officer of the 48th FW on behalf of the 8th AFHS directors, all members, veterans & families.

PROPS TURN AGAIN ON OLD BOMBER BASE: Over the Christmas period the old 305th B.G. base at Chelveston was transformed into a wind turbine energy park. These wind turbines reach the height of St Paul's Cathedral in London. The new owners of the base have kept and refurbished the old fusing shed that was placed near the bomb stores, the buildings are used as classrooms and offices. Ironical in one way and that is the 8th fought for 3 years to keep the Germans away from the airfield but they arrived in the end because the engineers who came to install the turbines were from Germany. Well, at least we can look back to the past, then to the future, where once the ground developed boys

into men, men into warriors, warriors into liberators, liberators into freedom FOR [not of] us all--now the ground turns the free wind into power and energy. But the base, the fields, local Pubs and villages still hold the memories of those days of Wright Cyclones running up, G.I's on bicycles, and Old Glory flying in the breeze.



Sweet Pea' reunion

WAR 150th anniversary

IRWIN Combs came all the way from the USA for a grand reunion with a little girl who was a war-time mascot.

By PENNY BOWDEN

ADOPTED

The toddler was "adopted" from a London orphanage and brought to Thurliegh to christen one of the warplanes.

The airmen had a little uniform made for her and gave her a moneybox with a few coins in it as a memento of her visit.

SQUADRON

Maureen Eason was that child. She became a household name all over the country back in the 1940s as "Sweet Pea". The Thoroughbred American airmen's little sweetheart.

She was just three years old when a squadron of the 306 Bombardment Group, which was based at

No the next task was to find her 1940s "mascot" from Combs. The Squadron's records had a wartime address for him in Tennessee, and amazingly, he was still there.

Combs said the meeting of the pair brought a lump to everyone's throat.

"It was quite emotional the first time," she said. "His god was just to find her again. He said he had waited about her all the time."

But the pair won't be meeting again in America — because, amazingly, the girl who was the American airmen's symbol is scared of flying.

The biggest coincidence of the whole search for Sweet Pea was that she and Gordon Richards' cousin

had been friends for years. "All that time we were looking for her, and she was just a phone call away," said Combs.



Christening: Tiny for Maureen christens the plane 'Sweet Pea'. Irwin is next to her.



Sweet Pea — the Shirley Temple lookalike as the Americans remember her.

Sweet Pea, the GIs' little sweetheart turns up after 40 years

A SEARCH for a missing orphan girl by former GIs who adopted her during the war, ended happily this week.

The girl, nicknamed Sweet Pea by the American airmen at Thurliegh, was found following an appeal in a national newspaper. Maureen Eason, 43, of Wallington, Surrey, was a pert, three-year-old blue-eyed bombshell in the Shirley Temple mould when the airmen picked her up in London in 1942.

"It is so exciting," she said. "I have kept all the letters and things they gave me for all these years but thought that was the last I'd hear of it."

The airmen thought they would be adopting a boy and made a uniform for "him". Instead they were presented with Maureen and she still has the uniform they made for their adopted orphan.

The woman who started the search for Maureen is Mrs Connie Richards of Pavenham Road, Oakley. She is a member of the 306 Bombardment Group's historical association and has met many of the GIs when they came back to Bedfordshire.

"The men were always asking about her, wondering where she is now and asked if we could find her," she said. Sweet Pea's husband read the article in the paper on Monday morning and immediately rang them.

Mrs Richards was delighted when she heard the news. "I was over the moon. I am so excited. God knows what the Americans will be like! It's wonderful



Connie Richards, the Oakley woman who has found Sweet Pea.

believe it and the whole association is dying to find out what she looks like now." Dozens of former GIs are returning to Thurliegh this October for a special reunion and for the unveiling of a memorial in the village to 306 Bombardment Group. Sweet Pea will be a guest of honour.

"It has just been one of those nostalgic stories with a happy ending," said Mrs



Thank you Gordon and to your late wife Connie Richards, for this collection of "Sweet Pea" photos & newspaper clippings

Sweet Pea Reunion

By Penny Bowden

Editor's note: This is a reprint of an article which appeared in the Bedford and Kempston Citizen on October 12, 1989

Irwin Combs came all the way from the USA for a grand reunion with a little girl who was a wartime mascot.

They met up again after 46 years at the Oakley home of 306th Bomber Group historians Connie and Gordon Richards [8th AFHS U.K. contact].

Irwin had flown in from Memphis Tennessee to see again the girl he had once carried in his arms, as she christened a plane.

Maureen Eason was that child. She became a household name all over the country back in the 1940s as "Sweet Pea," the Thurleigh American airmen's little sweetheart.

She was just three years old when a squadron of the 306th Bomber Command, which was based at Thurleigh, made her their mascot. The toddler was "adopted" from a London orphanage and brought to Thurleigh to christen one of the warplanes.

The airmen had a little uniform made for her and gave her a moneybox with a few coins in it as a memento of her visit. She spent two days on the base, and for years afterwards the American veterans searched fruitlessly for her.

A nationwide search through the Fleet Street press found her and although Maureen was living in Surrey, came to Bedford in 1982, none of the lads who were with her back in the 40s were there. So the next step was to find her 1940s "escort" Irwin Combs.

The Society's records had a wartime address for him in Tennessee and amazingly, he was still there.

Connie said the meeting of the pair brought a lump to everyone's throat. "It was quite emotional for them," she said. "His goal was just to find her again. He said he had wondered about her all the time."

But the pair won't be meeting again in America—because, amazingly, the girl who was the American airmen's symbol is scared of flying!

The biggest coincidence of the whole search for Sweet Pea was that she and Gordon Richards' cousin had been friends for years.

"All that time we were looking for her, and she was just a phone call away," said Connie.

Clay pigeons fly back to Sweet Pea



ARC LIGHT

The Beginning of B-52 Involvement in Vietnam

By Yancy Mailes

Director, History & Museum Program Air Force Global Strike Command

Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of articles highlighting the B-52's involvement in the Vietnam Conflict up to Operation Linebacker II. The 42nd Anniversary of Linebacker II takes place Dec. 18-29.

By 1972, the war in Vietnam had persisted for more than eight years, characterized by a gradual, but massive buildup of U.S. forces. That massive buildup began in April 1965, with the highly-publicized event of U.S. Marines wading out of the sea and onto the beaches of Da Nang, South Vietnam. Concurrent to this, and to support those ground forces, the Air Force deployed a portion of its tactical fighter-bombers to air bases located in South Vietnam and later Thailand. However, prior to this and in a less publicized move, Strategic Air Command (SAC) deployed its first contingent of B-52s to the tiny island of Guam in support of what became known as Operation Arc Light.

Strategic Air Command had always harbored a residual conventional capability with its bombers, but it was not until the early 1960s that its leaders began planning for limited war capabilities, a capability that called for conventional weapons rather than nuclear. After several tests in the spring of 1964, SAC declared a small portion of its B-52F fleet ready for conventional combat and in February 1965, deployed 30 of the conventionally-laden bombers



to Andersen Air Base, Guam. The crews, who hailed from Mather and Barksdale Air Force Bases, planned to strike targets located in North Vietnam.

Despite preparation, after arrival, SAC quickly relegated the crews to six-hour alert commitments

rather than sending them into combat. For the next few months, those crews continued to study contingency strike folders that contained both Phuc Yen airfield and Haiphong harbor as targets. But, as the United States delayed using the B-52, the North Vietnamese improved air defense systems. With the addition of sophisticated Russian-made surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) the probability of using the B-52 against targets in North Vietnam diminished. In the meantime, the 2d Bomb Wing rotated home replaced by the 7th Bomb Wing.

However, Gen. William C. Westmoreland, Commander of U.S. Forces in South Vietnam,





was convinced that the B-52 could fill a void that the tiny, tactical fighter-bombers could not. In the same month that the B-52s arrived at Andersen, he began lobbying for the big bombers to pattern-bomb the Viet Cong who had been operating in South Vietnam. After much debate, that included strong hesitation on SAC's part, on June 18, 1965, the B-52 entered combat as part of Operation Arc Light.

On that day, 30 bombers (15 from the 7 BW and 15 from the 320 BW) took off from Andersen headed for a target located in South Vietnam and measuring about one mile by two miles square. Earlier, weapons technicians had loaded twenty four of the B-52s with 51 750-pound general purpose bombs while the remaining six carried 27 1,000-pound semi-armor piercing bombs internally and the normal 24 750-pounders externally. In all, the 30 bombers carried 1,530 bombs into combat.

Unfortunately, that first mission was fraught with difficulty. It

began with tragedy when two of the B-52s collided, killing eight of the crew while another was declared as missing-in-action. Next, another bomber with mechanical malfunctions could not receive fuel from an orbiting KC-135 and had to return to Guam. Lastly, prior to arriving at the target, several aircrews realized they would not be able to release their weapons due to mechanical malfunctions. Nonetheless, the remaining B-52 crews entered the target area and released 1,299 bombs.

A quick survey by allied recon teams found little to no damage in the target area and few dead. The press immediately focused on the unorthodox use of a strategic bomber drawing the analogy of "using a sledge hammer to kill gnats." But, while the criticism tended to focus on the costly B-52 air-to-air collision, the military considered the mission a success. Historians later wrote, "...that the B-52's mission was to harass the VC, to disrupt his normal

activities, to permit him no respite from danger even in his jungle redoubts, and to wear him down psychologically."

However, in the months that followed, while B-52 crews continued to harass the Viet Cong, they eventually accepted a new mission, a mission to directly support the allied ground forces. This began in November 1965 during the Battle of the Ia Drang Valley, the first major encounter of the war between U.S. Troops and the North Vietnamese Army. But later in December, B-52 crews also supported the Marines during Operation Harvest Moon.

By the end of 1965, SAC's 30 bomber force had increased its monthly sortie rate to roughly 300 and by the end of 1966 more than half the B-52 strike requests came from field commanders. The Air Force had convinced ground commanders that the Cold War nuclear bomber could be used as a conventional juggernaut. So it came as no surprise when General

Continued on page 32



Westmoreland requested that the Air Force produce 800 B-52 sorties per month and to reduce the time it took to get to the target.

Of course the immediate answer to producing more sorties was to expand Andersen and increase the number of bombers to 70. However, the bombers would still be 2,500 miles away from the targets in Vietnam. In November 1966, SAC increased the B-52s at Guam to 50 and began producing 650 sorties per month.

However, SAC later deployed an additional 11 B-52Ds and met the 800 sorties per month. This did not immediately solve the time on target issue, but eventually, the United States built a second Arc Light base at Thai Navy airfield at U-Tapao on the Gulf of Siam. It began initially as a shuttle bombing base where B-52 crews would take off from Andersen, fly their missions, recover and rearm at U-Tapao, and then fly another mission and return to Andersen.

In 1969, the Air Force upgraded U-Tapao to a main operating base. It was closer to the targets reducing the mission times by two thirds as

those launched from Guam, and therefore reducing the time to get to the target. In addition to Andersen and U-Tapao, in February 1968 as North Vietnamese launched its Tet Offensive, SAC began staging bombers at Kadena Air Base, Okinawa.

During the Tet Offensive, two North Vietnamese divisions of about 20,000 men cut access to Khe Sanh and trapped 6,000 US Marines and South Vietnamese rangers. To support the besieged ground troops, SAC increased its monthly sortie rate to 1,800 and on an average day,

sent 60 B-52s to pound the enemy carpetbombing a 1.2-mile strip, which created havoc among the besiegers. Westmoreland later stated that "The thing that broke their backs was basically the fire of the B-52s".

In a short amount of time during the war in Vietnam B-52 crews transformed the airplane from a Cold War nuclear bomber to a close-air-support juggernaut. B-52 crews provided support to ground forces, harassed the Viet Cong, and wrote a new chapter in the bomber's history.



Family of Lost WWII Gunner Learns Organization with Answers Had Been Seeking Them

By Linda Alice Dewey

The Kassel Mission of September 27, 1944 resulted in the greatest loss for a group in a single day—ever. For whatever reason—and this remains a mystery—the 445th Bomb Group deviated away from the rest of the bomber stream, making it a tasty target for approximately 120 Luftwaffe planes—Me 109s and Fw 190s—including three groups of heavily armed Sturmgruppen. Three minutes into the deadly battle, the 4th FG and 361st FG arrived on the scene, pulling off the Germans, but not before they had decimated the Liberators. Of 35 B-24s involved, only four made it safely back to the base. Of the 336 men of the 445th Bomb Group in the battle, roughly 1/3 were killed and 1/3 became POWs; the final third eventually made it back to the base. The 361st FG racked up a record number of wins that day—a record that would not last—with one fighter pilot becoming an ace-in-a-day, with 5 victories.

In an era when families losing their WWII veteran fathers and uncles wonder anew about what happened to them in the War, or discover surprising war memorabilia in dusty attics, consider this testament. Answers may be available today that were not possible decades ago.

Until Father's Day, 2013 John Elliott, knew only two things about his father's death—that S/Sgt. John Tarbert died in the air over Germany, and the date—September 27, 1944.

This past Father's Day, Elliott's son, his daughter-in-law, and grandson decided to do a little online checking. Since then, Elliott has learned not only how his father died, but that his father is currently classified as an MIA and is buried as an "Unknown." Elliott discovered that the probability is strong that DNA testing will prove that these remains belong to his father. If positive identification occurs, Elliott can bring his father's remains home.

John Elliott was born on the day his mother found out that her husband had been killed 16 days before. "My birth was highly impacted [by the news]," he explains, "and I was born very sickly due to drugs given to Mom prior to the day of birth—I expect some may have been given to her to help deal with the trauma of learning of his death late in her pregnancy."

Afterwards, Elliott explains, "Mom became angry and bitter. In the beginning, she fantasized about other various possibilities, some of

March 2014 (14-1)



John Elliott and his mother

them not very realistic. I remember the family concluding that he was killed parachuting from the plane or killed in the moments immediately after landing. From age 7 or 8 on, Mom was silent on the issue, and I was of the opinion all my life that he was killed while parachuting or shortly after he hit the ground.

"Mom remarried when I was eight years of age and my stepfather was a wonderful father. He has been the dad in my life and I love him. (He died in 2003.) He adopted me when I was nine or ten and my blood father was far from any thoughts or conversation. Very occasionally, Dad came to mind... As a freshman at a college near Chicago, I remember marching in the Veterans

Day parade. I was moved to tears at the memory of Dad's death in the service of his country.

"When I was twenty-four, I moved to upstate New York and because of being near the various Tarbert families, I became acquainted with my grandfather Tarbert, aunts and several cousins. Conversation about my Dad was pretty much limited to, 'He was a great guy and we loved him dearly. His death was such a tragedy.' I don't recall any discussion of details of Dad's death and I was given no memorabilia. Grandfather Tarbert died in the mid-70's and, as time passed, contact with the Tarberts ceased.

"Not inclined to sentimentality, I do remember visiting the aircraft museum near Dayton, Ohio and the emotions that welled up regarding Dad as I stood beside the WWII Bomber on display. My mother gave me Dad's memorabilia a number of years ago but I did not spend much time looking at it or trying to find any more information. Regarding finding information about Dad, the hopelessness of my youth carried forward to my adult years."

John had given up on learning more about how his father died.

In the meantime, an organization had sprung up that was very interested in how John Tarbert, and 1/3 of the men of the 445th Bomb Group, died on September 27, 1944.

By 1989, veterans of the Kassel Mission had begun to find one another

Continued on page 34



with the help of many, including John Woolnough, editor of the 8th AF News. Over the past few years, Woolnough had noticed an increasing number of queries from other veterans of the mission. Finally, he put out a call for articles. Woolnough was inundated and would later call it the largest response to a call for articles he ever received, at least to that point.

Woolnough dedicated the January 1989 edition to the Kassel Mission, with overflow articles showing up in the next few issues and into the 90s. The veterans of the mission organized the Kassel Mission Memorial Association (KMMA). Their president, Bill Dewey, a pilot on the mission, suggested that Woolnough compile the articles into a booklet.

"Why don't you do it," replied Woolnough, and sent everything to Dewey. *The Kassel Mission Reports*, a small 43-page booklet, resulted and helped fund a memorial the organization erected along with the Germans at the crash site of the lead 445th BG aircraft. The memorial was dedicated in 1990. *The Kassel Mission Reports* is available today in pdf format at www.kasselmission.com/px for \$10.

Yet the mission to this point was hardly known at the time and not recognized afterwards by historians. By the early Eighties, it received bare

mention in a single history book on the air war in the ETO. Even the 445th Bomb Group at the end of the war had no clear idea of how many had been lost. Hence, the inquiries to Woolnough by its veterans.

John Tarbert entered the Army in 1939 at age 18. His mother had died when he was 14, and his father was a steel worker. By the time of Pearl Harbor, he was a radio operator. He met his future wife, a telephone operator, at a Baptist church, and the two were married in November, 1943. Tarbert entered the Army Air Force, and by the following May was on base at Tibenham, England, ensconced with the 445th BG.

Tarbert was one of two waist gunners in a B-24 flying with the lead 445th BG squadron on September 27, 1944. Flying the right position of the three-plane slot element,

"Mairzy Doats" was hit in the tail on the initial enemy pass. In his account, copilot 2nd Lt. Carrol Snidow relates in his account, "Then I looked at our number four engine. The whole prop and engine was coming out of the wing. What a sight. The propeller, whirling in its full velocity, made a 90° turn and come [*sic*] toward me. I thought that I had "bought the farm then." The prop (No. 4) came over into the number three prop and knocked it out of the wing. Prop and pieces of props were going everywhere."

With two engines out on one side, a shot out tail turret, and one of the rudders gone, Snidow and his pilot, 1st Lt. Edward Hautman, somehow kept her level—a Herculean task. The crew threw out everything they could. Two P-38s showed up and escorted them, one on each side. For long 40 minutes or so, the two pilots strong-armed the big Lib to keep her airborne. She steadily lost altitude at the rate of 300 feet per minute near the end.. They were almost to the French border when they came down out of the clouds at 7,000 feet. Flying at about 120 mph at 1,200 ft., the crippled B-24 made an easy target for anti-aircraft railroad flak that blew out the waist windows. As the plane went down, the other waist gunner bailed out. Tarbert may have been injured. The rest of the crew bailed and watched the plane bank to the right, then crash into smithereens.

Hautman hailed Snidow and waved



John and Paul Elliott



B-24 - Mairzy Doats

as they came down in their chutes. Snidow landed first and lost sight of his pilot. "I never saw him again," he wrote one week later. As he and the others were being rounded up, they heard gunshots.

It is believed that Hautman may have been murdered by angry civilians. Tarbert and the tail gunner never made it.

John Elliott never thought of looking on the Web to learn more about his dad. But Elliott's son, thinking of his father and his grandfather on Father's Day of 2013, decided to try. He plugged in a search for "gunner John Tarbert" of the "445th Bomb Group," and got hits right away. He contacted his dad with the results.

"On June 16, 2013, my son... gave me the name of the mission. I immediately started searching in earnest for information about the mission, and the first hit was the Kassel Mission Historical Society, www.kasselmission.com.

Elliott quickly learned that his father had been a waist gunner aboard a B-24 named "Mairzy Doats" which crashed in Germany after the Kassel Mission battle of September 27, 1944.

Elliott had never heard of it. Neither have many others.

Over the years, KMMA had become a historical society, KMHS. Next gens had taken over where their fathers left off, and today it is run by several veterans, next gens, historians and friends. Five years ago, KMHS formed a Search and Contact Team (SACT) and successfully located several more veterans of the mission or their families using the many resources that are now available on the Internet. But they

couldn't find John Tarbert's family. They had found the name "Tarbert" in New York, but couldn't find the family. Finally, they had to put the information up on their website and hope that the families would find them, which is exactly what happened.

"In the days thereafter, I found quite a number of other hits and developed a completely new scenario of the circumstances surrounding Dad's death. I became very interested in the mission and did quite a bit of searching. I came to the conclusion that KMHS might be able to help me. On June, 20, I emailed KMHS providing the basic information about me, and Linda Dewey immediately replied with a friendly welcome."

Dewey knew exactly who Tarbert was and put Elliott in touch with Duane Giesler, who headed the SACT. Because Elliott's name was different than his father's, they had come to a dead end.

"Within hours," continues Elliott's email to Giesler, "your reply came with the promise of more information about Dad. It is somewhat serendipitous that your dad," he noted to Giesler, "was on the same crew as my Dad. A flood of information began to flow my way." Giesler's father was the radio operator on Hautman's crew.

KMHS connected Elliott with someone who also did MIA research and had found "the highly probable location where Dad's remains are truly buried. This," says Elliott, "led to the possibility that his remains might be brought back to the States for burial. This has been very exciting... an emotional roller coaster-like journey searching for an eligible mDNA donor. By June 27, the eligible,

willing donor was identified and a recommendation was submitted to the proper governmental agency to start the process of bringing his remains home.

"As a side benefit of the search for the mDNA donor, my relationship with some of the cousins in the Tarbert family has been renewed.

"I have been saddened because I started searching so late. All the key players have died. I can't share the discovery with Mom, who died in 2000, all of Dad's sisters have died and I can't meet any crewmen who might have known Dad. Most veterans did not talk much about the war and I don't expect much information from relatives of surviving crewmen of the Kassel Mission, Sept 27, 1944. Even so, I have learned far more than I ever dreamed possible. And there's the possibility (however remote it may be) of Dad's remains coming home.

"I became a member of KMHS a couple of weeks ago," he wrote on July 5. "I look forward to whatever will come my way and to whatever I can give." Elliott was elected to the organization's board the following November.

Regarding his father's MIA status, this process may take years. If the mDNA from Elliott's family is a match, Elliott will have the option of moving his father to another cemetery overseas, or he can bring John Tarbert home to a final resting place at no charge.

Giesler feels that this is "a simple illustration that KMHS, merely by its presence, has the ability to touch lives. This should also reinforce our belief...[that] the website remains a vital part of our existence."

"I am hoping," says Elliott, "to bring

Continued on page 36

his remains home to the Gerald B. H. Solomon Saratoga National Cemetery, near the Saratoga Battlefield.”

It is important to support such organizations as KMHS, which become vital to rounding out the history of our families and our country.

© 2014 Linda Alice Dewey, All Rights Reserved
Used with permission.

More information on the Kassel Mission and KMHS can be found at their website, www.kasselmission.com.

Status of Kassel Mission MIAs

Of the 118 Americans (117 from the 445th Bomb Group and 1 from the 361st bomb group) who died in the Kassel Mission battle, eight 445th men are still classified MIA. All are listed on the Tablets of the Missing at American cemeteries overseas. Following is the status of each missing man as we know it.

Dog tags belonging to **Charles J. Palmer, Jr.** of Wichita Falls, KS (Hansen) were found near skeletal remains at the Hansen plane’s crash site. KMHS does not believe an official statement was ever made. We are in the process of digging deeper into this.

The four remaining from Hansen’s crew are probably not going to be found. This includes **Robert Hansen** of Portland, OR; **Ralph H. Bode** of Racine, WI; **Porter M. Pile** of Alice, TX; and **James M. Triplett** of Seattle, WA. Their bodies were more than likely decimated by the explosion. What remains of the small skeletal parts have probably broken down with time. However, KMHS believes that at least two organizations, one of them being JPAC, are considering a dig of the Hansen crash site in late Summer/early Fall of 2014.

Edward F. Hautman (pilot) of Cincinnati, OH is a different story. His remains are likely “Unknown X-2367.” KMHS is awaiting a DNA sample for testing. The same is true of **John A. Tarbert** of Denver, CO of the Hautman crew. His likely remains are labeled “Unknown X-9048.” Both the Tarbert and Hautman families are eager to assist however they can in the identification process, which may take years.

Finally, there is the case of **Raymond E. Ische** of Milwaukee, WI-- the lead navigator for the 445th BG (Chilton crew). His remains were exhumed from their temporary burial site at a Richelsdorfand POW cemetery and positively identified, but were lost on their way to Berlin and then to a permanent American cemetery site. They have yet to be found. *Thanks to KMHS member Duane Giesler for furnishing information for this update.*

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE

INVITE YOU TO ATTEND THE

2014 LEGACY BALL

A SALUTE TO MASTERS OF THE AIR

SATURDAY, MAY 10, 2014

6:30PM–11:00PM

COCKTAILS, DINNER, DANCING
SILENT AUCTION
BLACK TIE OPTIONAL

TICKETS \$100
TABLE OF 10 \$900

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE
MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE
175 BOURNE AVENUE
POOLER, GA 31322

RSVP BY APRIL 25, 2014
912-748-8888





NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE

"ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL MUSEUM EXPERIENCES"

As members of the 8th Air Force Historical Society, you understand the importance of preserving the history of the Mighty Eighth Air Force from World War II to the present. After all, we can only learn from the "greatest generation" if their stories are properly recorded and carefully stored for future generations.

That is why we are reaching out to you today. We are excited to work together to provide an opportunity for members of the Historical Society to help the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force preserve these precious stories.

The Museum is the home to the Roger A. Freeman 8th Air Force Research Center, a world-renowned destination for veterans, descendants and historians alike and the "story keeper" for tens of thousands of items relating to the history of the 8th Air Force.

Each of these items has a story all its own. Among the collection are over 9,000 volumes on 8th Air Force history, over 50,000 unpublished photos, over 80 hand-painted leather flight jackets, over 500 pieces of art, 2 Medals of Honor, and thousands of other artifacts, manuscripts, oral histories and personal accounts. Items continue to be donated every day at a rate that is unprecedented in the history of the Museum.

As you can understand, the staff of the Research Center treats these donated items with the greatest care. However, the current rate of donations exceeds the space available in the Research Center's archives to properly store them.

Today, we are asking the members of the Historical Society, who share our dedication to the history and stories of the 8th Air Force, to donate to this special appeal to support the Research Center. Your gift today will be directed toward this urgent need to provide adequate space to store and care for these invaluable artifacts and make them accessible to researchers and future generations.

Additionally, more archival storage space will clear enough room to provide an office at the Museum for the 8th Air Force Historical Society. Maintaining offices in the same facility will allow for higher visibility between our two organizations and facilitate a more fluid relationship. Considering that both organizations' primary mission is to preserve the stories of the 8th Air Force, it only makes sense that they are housed together.

Thanks to previous support from the Historical Society members for our B-17 Restoration Project, the "City of Savannah" is in its final year of restoration and will soon be the finest static-displayed B-17 in the world. Your generosity is very much appreciated and we hope that we can count on you again for another important project at the Museum that will benefit us all.

No matter what size of your gift, be assured that it will be an important part of what is needed to properly store treasured archives while at the same time forging a stronger relationship between our two organizations.

Sincerely,

Darrel Lowell, President
8th Air Force Historical Society

Henry Skipper, President and CEO
National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE

"ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL MUSEUM EXPERIENCES"



☐ **YES**, I want to help raise the necessary funds to support the Roger A. Freeman Research Center at the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

☐ \$25 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250 ☐ **Other:** _____

☐ Enclosed is a check made payable to the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force.

☐ Please charge my gift on my:

☐ Visa

☐ MasterCard

☐ AMEX

☐ Discover

Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Signature of Cardholder: _____

Please return this form with your generous gift in the envelope provided to:

National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force

PO Box 1992

Savannah, GA 31402

www.mightyeighth.org

Order your CD or DVD's today!

Make checks payable to:

Bill Curtis Productions
515 West Ariel Ave.
Foley, AL 36535
bcurtis419@juno.com
(785) 766-3351

*ALL prices include shipping and handling. Credit card and PayPal available for phone orders.

"Coming Home!" \$25

The 39th Annual Reunion held in Savannah, GA July 22nd--26th, 2013 is now available on DVD! If you weren't able to attend, or even if you were, you'll want to enjoy the memories time and time again.



Start Engines ~ 50 Years Later [\$20]*

Vivid and dramatic testimony of dozens of 8th Air Force veterans who share their insight and recollections of some of the most significant experiences of their lives. Vintage photography and film footage.

Behind the Wire [\$20]*

Soul stirring accounts of life as a prisoner of war during WWII from 8th Air Force vets who survived harrowing times--some, for months on end..

Make checks payable to:

Bill Curtis Productions
515 West Ariel Ave., Foley, AL 36535
bcurtis419@juno.com
(785) 766-3351

*ALL prices include shipping and handling. Credit card and PayPal available for phone orders.



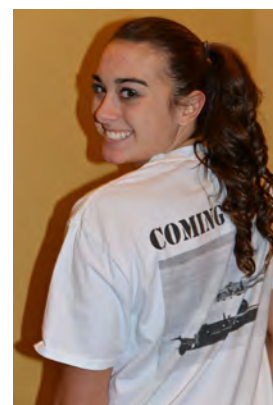
2009 8th AFHS Reunion DVD's
2 DVD Set including 2009 Gala Keynote by GIL COHEN
plus the POW SYMPOSIUM hosted by Greg Hutton
2 DVD set \$20 including Shipping

COMING HOME T-shirts AVAILABLE

Coming Home t-shirt \$20 each

• 29 Posey Street • Savannah,
GA 31406 •
912.748.8884 •

Small Medium Large





8TH AIR FORCE HISTORICAL SOCIETY STATE CHAPTERS



Alabama:

Chuck Bowman
1903 Blackjack Road, Trussville, AL
35173 205-467-6517 Michael Mitchell
e-mail: msmith@uab.edu

North Alabama:

Ann F. Vaughn
367 Jeff Road Huntsville, AL 35806
(256)837-0289 e-mail: Vaughnfarm@
knology.net

Arizona:

DISBANDED

Arkansas:

DISBANDED

California-North (Doolittle):

DISBANDED

California-South (LeMay):

DISBANDED

Colorado:

Jay Meshko
1255 Carr St. Lakewood,
Colorado 80214
720-274-1302 jaymeshko@comcast.net

Connecticut:

DISBANDED

Florida:

President Bill Uphoff 3386 Cove Rd.
Tequesta FL. 33469 561-747-4295

Georgia:

President Travis Reynolds

Idaho:

Karen Sayko
P. O. Box 65, Atlanta, ID 83601

Illinois:

DISBANDED

Iowa:

Charles D. Taylor P.O. Box 847,
Montezuma, IA 50171- 0847

Kentucky:

President Frank D. Cassidy
1256 Colonial Drive, Lexington, KY
40504 859-253-0163

Louisiana:

DISBANDED

Massachusetts:

Alfred E. Dusey 18 Algonquin Ave.

Andover, MA 01810

(978)475-8832

Michigan:

DISBANDED

Minnesota:

Steve Marks
5121 Gorgas Ave., Edina, MN 55424
email: stever.61@gmail.com

Mississippi:

Dalton Miller 662-773-4722 email:
dmiller@ra.msstate.edu

Missouri:

DISBANDED

Nebraska:

DISBANDED

New Jersey:

DISBANDED

New Mexico:

Lawrence Stebleton,
8903 Rio Grande Blvd. NW, Albuquer-
que, NM 87114 505-898-5437
e-mail: larrysteb@msn.com

New York (Central):

Louis Lupi
2343 Curry Road, Schenectady, NY
12303 518-229-5613

New York (South):

Joseph Patrick Keeley 1335 Belmont
Ave. North Haledon, NJ 07508
973-495-3404 fxe84@optonline.net

New York (West):

Rick Devita 180 Audubon Dr. Amherst,
NY 14226 716-839-3040

North Carolina Metrolina Wing:

Cliff Presley
email: cpresley5@juno.com

North Carolina Western Wing:

Larry Goldstein
email: larr914@gmail.com

Ohio:

Richard Gustke 940 Great View Circle
Dayton, Ohio 45459
937-356-2564
e-mail: mrtimely8641@hotmail.com

Oregon:

Bert Campbell
e-mail: anorak@bctonline.com

Pennsylvania:

John C. Raiser 140 East Linn St. Belle-
fonte, PA 16823 814-574-9622 email:
jcrper@engr.psu.edu

Rhode Island:

DISBANDED

Savannah (Birthplace):

Chapter President Bob Buck, www.
mighty8thbirthplace.org

The Southern Ontario Wing:

Commander Jonathan Levin – Turner
35 Lionshead Lookout, Brampton,
Ontario, Canada L6S3X2
416-568-3780
email: USAF6680@gmail.com

Tennessee:

DISBANDED

Texas (Central):

DISBANDED

Texas (Rio Grande):

DISBANDED

Texas (North):

Dick Atkins
1304 Cochise Drive,
Arlington, TX 76012
817-261-3007
email: dick8af@flash.net

Utah:

TBA

Virginia:

Lewis E. Burke
5287 Ellicott Drive,
Centreville, VA 20120
(703)631-0510

Washington:

TBA

West Virginia:

James Allen (AL)
Davidson 2638 Lakeview Drive, St.
Albans, WV 25177 304-727-7724

Wisconsin:

Cindy Drehmel
PO Box 370765 Milwaukee, WI 53237
(414)573-8520

*If you are interested in forming a chap-
ter in your area, please let us know!*

Asch, Colonel Alfred, Retired USAF, 93 of Brentwood, TN, December 8, 2013. Preceded in death by wife, Naomi.

Betker, George L., Captain U.S. Army Air Force, Bombardier on B-17, 708th Squadron, 447th BG. He flew 35 Missions, Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal with 4 Oak Leaf Clusters.

Betker, George L. Born April 21, 1916, passed Dec. 5, 2013, blessed with the Sacraments of the Church. Loving husband of Rita M. Betker (nee Mueller); 447th BG.

Blecha, Milo K., of Clarkson, Nebraska passed away November 11, 2013. He served as a B-17 pilot in the 447th BG, 711 Squadron and flew more than 35 missions over Europe. He is survived by his wife of 68 years, Evelyn.



Milo Blecha

Bullard, William

L., 89, passed away July 1, 2013. He served as Engineer on a B-24 Bomber during WWII. He was a member of the 8th Air Force, the 448th Bomb Group.

Clark, John, 91 of Selma, Alabama, died on October 18, 2013. He joined the Royal Air Force in 1940. He served as an Instructor Pilot both in Montgomery, AL and in England leaving the service as a Flight Left Lieutenant. He is preceded in death by his wife of 69 years, Jean H. Clark.

DuKarm, Harold Albert "Hal", 90, of Deltona, passed away peacefully Nov. 7, 2013 in Orange City. Born April 23, 1923 in Buffalo, New York. He was a Master Sergeant in the Air Force and was stationed in England during World War II.

Dustin, Richard M. June 25, 1922 - Dec 24, 2013 Preceded in death by his wife, Dorothy Jane Devereux Dustin. He was a Radio Operator and Gunner on a B-17 Flying Fortress. Dick's plane was shot down near the German-Belgium border. The entire crew survived the crash, managed to return to England, and resumed missions over Germany. Dick received numerous decorations and citations.

Folmer, William H. Jr., October 8, 1925 - January 10, 2014, 88, of Bedford passed from this world in Bedford, Indiana. He married Lois R. Schwartz on July 27, 1946 and she preceded him in death on April 20, 2006. Bill was an Army Air Corp. Staff Sergeant in the 601st BS and the 398th BG. He was a B-17 Gunner with the Hell's Angels. He flew 31 missions and was shot down three times. His military career was highly decorated, receiving 2 Presidential Citations, 6 Bronze Stars, and several other medals.

Gallagher, T/Sgt. Charles E., "Charlie" was born November 5, 1921 in Parsons, Kansas and passed away on January 22, 2014 near Portland, Oregon. Charlie always said that no one had a better life than he did and those who knew him valued his compassionate nature and long-lasting friendship. Charlie went to work for Lockheed in July of 1941 where he worked on the intercooler for the P-38 and honed his problem-solving & mechanical skills. He would continue a career with Lockheed after the war. On March 4, 1943,



Charles Gallagher

he was drafted into the Army Air Corps and sent to Shepherd Field, Texas for basic training followed by Aviation Mechanics School. At Tyndall Field, Florida he attended Gunnery School on the Martin Turret and was later assigned to the B-17 crew of Captain John "Jack" Cotner. Of course, the B-17 didn't have a Martin Turret to which Charlie remarked, "That's how really greatly planned the Air Corps was." In June of 1944, he was assigned to the 95th Bombardment Group (H) stationed at Horham midway between Ipswich and Norwich where he flew as engineer and top turret gunner. His first mission was July 8, 1944 and "the first time they ever put the guts in both weapons in the top turret." According to Charlie, "I've probably experienced greater temperature extremes than 99% of the people in the world. We wore

long johns and wool clothing plus a gabardine flying suit and over that an electric suit that was good to 65 below. This one day, going in to Hamburg, the crew started calling, 'Getting cold.' On practice missions, a guy would go to sleep and we'd turn the rheostat down. He'd wake up and turn it back up. About the third time we'd pull it so that it didn't have any power. We knew that wasn't happening that day. Got to checking and the fuse was all right. The navigator said, 'Well, our OAT—outside air temp—only goes down to 80 below—I've extrapolated to 100 below.' We were only there 20 minutes. When we got back to briefing, everybody reported that same thing. So, we knew it wasn't out imagination." The other extreme was after the war when he was working for Lockheed in engineering test flight on the P2V, the Neptune. "One of the tests was that you had to check out the heater system and they told us, 'We are going to go flying tonight.' It was summertime. I wore long johns and a wool suit. I had a bucket of water with me and a helmet. For 45 minutes, we were over 180 degrees. We got as high as 189. You know you don't touch things that are over 140 degrees. We had to be very careful that our arms didn't hit the parachute buckles otherwise they'd burn. That was another one of my experiences in life." Charlie said, "We didn't fly the same airplane all the time because we were a flak magnet. If anybody in the squadron got hit by flak, we did. People don't realize the fortitude and the conscientiousness and the necessity of the ground crews. One time we came back a little worse than usual. I started counting the holes from the nose to the trailing edge of the wing. We had 189 holes and that airplane was flying again within 2 or 3 days." After the war, Charlie rejoined Lockheed and was involved in the CAA Certification for the Constellation; in the F-90 and F-94 programs; armament development on the PV2 Neptune and F-104 Starfighter; the H-56 Cheyenne (helicopter); and testing the Martin Baker Ejection system on the high speed test track at Mesa, Utah. He also worked on the SR-71 Blackbird for 5 ½ years of which he said, "One day, we set 9

world records. Some of them still stand and they'll never be beaten. The SR-71 flew reconnaissance from about 1968 to 1995. We never lost an SR-71 to enemy action, but there were 4,000 missiles fired at it." Charlie Gallagher was an inspiration at our 8th AFHS, Oregon Chapter meetings and we will miss him dearly.

Gaskins, Malcolm B. 'Mack', 92, of Campbellsville, Ky, died July 6, 2013. He was an aircraft electrician and a staff sergeant in the European Theater of Operations and served the 329th service squadron specializing in B-17 and B-24 Bombers at Alconbury Airbase in England. He united married Elma Jane Tarter on Feb. 25, 1943.

Grandwilliams, Louis C., 89, N. Bellmore, NY, passed away on Dec. 21, 2013. Lou was a B-17 Pilot (*Old Black Magic*) stationed at Molesworth, assigned to the 303rd BG, Hell's Angels. Returning after one rough mission, the Ground Crew stopped counting holes in his plane after reaching 600. Lou said he couldn't stop shaking for 5 days. Completing 35 missions, he returned to the States on his 21st birthday.

Hall, Dean P., 91 of Plainfield, NJ, passed away April 12, 2013. He was a B-17 Flying Fortress top turret gunner/1st Engineer. He was assigned to a B-17 named "*Herky Jerky*" and went on to complete 25 bombing missions over France, Norway and Germany. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and was credited with shooting down a German ME-109 fighter during one of the missions. He is survived by wife Jean H. Hall.

Kiewit, Edson Lynn, Major, 88, of Indianapolis, IN, passed away on Nov. 12, 2013. Lynn served 351st BG on a "Flying Fortress," completing 24 missions. He remained in the Reserves, and was recalled to active duty in both the Korean War and The Cuban Crisis. He is survived by his wife, Neoma, with whom he spent 68 years.

Koerner, "Jack" Joseph F., passed away December 29, 2013. He joined the Army Air Corps, serving with the Eighth Air Force stationed with the 385th Bomb Group in England. He flew 35 missions as a B-17 bombardier and was awarded



Malcomb Gaskins

the Distinguished Flying Cross with four Oak Leaf Clusters. Jack will be missed by his wife of 67 years, Janet.

Law, John Maxwell, 91, of Land O' Lakes, Florida passed away on Oct.

17, 2013. Max was a waist gunner on a B-17 with the 94th BG stationed in Bury St. Edmunds. On his 12th mission with two engines out his plane made an emergency landing in Switzerland where the crew was interned for almost a year. He was a citrus grower and had worked for Tropicana Products. He is survived by his wife of 67 years, Betty.

Olson, Lloyd R., passed away March 22, 2013. He was in the 447th bomber group as a ball turret gunner in the 8th Air Force during WW II. His plane he flew on was called Gardners Pardners. He was born at Clay Center, KS, in 1925 and farmed at Morganville, KS. was 87 years old. After the war he farmed his whole life. He was always very patriotic and loved his country and God. He was the beloved husband of Alta for 62 years.

Overstreet, William ("Bill") B. Jr. on 12/29/13 in Roanoke, VA at the age of 92. He was a highly-decorated P-51 Ace. He donated a painting to the Eighth Air Force National Museum in Savannah several years ago. Bill was a member of the 363rd FS, 357th FG in Leiston England (the "Yoxford Boys"). He flew with C. E. ("bud") Anderson and Chuck Yeager. He was dedicated to education, and especially providing people with the story about Eddie



John "Max" Law



Nicholas Plackis

Simpson, a downed pilot who was killed in ground fighting in France.

Plackis, Nicholas G., of Queens, NY. As a S/Sgt. in the 390th BG, 571st SQ he completed his 30 missions as bombardier on the B-17 "*Kwitcherbitchin*" He was the last remaining member of the Sheridan crew. Among his 29 medals was the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air medal w/4 oak leaf clusters, and the Purple Heart. He was very active in attending many 390th BG and 8th AF reunions and was a great storyteller of his days in the Army Air Corps. Also a proud member of the 8th AF NY State Southern Wing. He leaves behind his wife of 52 years Evangelina. Dad is now flying his 31st and final mission with his fellow airmen of the 8th Air Force and all the others of "The Greatest Generation".

Poppel, Samuel B., of Longmeadow, MA died Monday evening at the Jewish Nursing Home. He was born on September 14, 1916 in Lowell, MA. He served with the 8th Air Force, 392 Bomb Group, as a bombardier, flying out of Wendling, England on B-24 Liberators. He participated in and returned safely from 19 missions, but on March 18, 1944, a day of heavy casualties for the 8th Air Force in missions deep into southeast Germany, his plane, "*The Late Date II*," was severely damaged and unable to return, but, fortunately, was guided by its co-pilot to a crash landing in a farm field just south of the Rhine in Switzerland. Sam, a 1st lieutenant, was hospitalized with several injuries from which he recovered, but was forced, along with combatants from all the nations involved in the European conflict, to remain interned in Switzerland until near the end of the war. During that time, he was able to mingle with the local population and ultimately met Ruth Jakubowitsch of Basel, Switzerland, and fell in love. Upon Sam's return to the States, he resumed his previous employment, but also corresponded with Ruth, and, in 1947, returned to Switzerland to ask her to marry him.

Powell, Clifton W., Raleigh, NC 09/06/18 - 05/26/12; Sgt. S-2, 571 BS, 390 BG. Sgt. Powell is survived by

Anne, his wife of 65 years.

Roper, S/Sgt. Curtis E., ball turret gunner with the 487th BG(H), 838th BS passed away in November of 2012.

Reeves, Robert C. "Bob", 90 of Landmark Commons, died November 20, 2013. He served with the 8th AF 91st BG on B-17, bombing missions in Germany.

Samford, Yetta G. Jr., 90 of Opelika, AL died on December 28, 2013. He was a B-17 pilot stationed in England in 1944 and 1945. He is survived by his wife, Mary Samford.

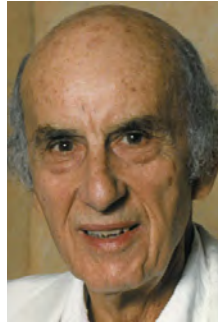
Schwab, Delbert, passed away January 2014, at 91 years of age. Delbert flew 23 missions with the 457th BG, 748th squadron. He was a member of the 8th AF. as well as the 457th BG.

Slaton, Lt Col James K. 88, passed away January 30, 2014 in Dallas, Texas. Following his service in World War II as a ball turret gunner, his second call to active military duty with the U.S. Air Force resulted in multiple tours, the most memorable of which was a three-year assignment to Madrid, Spain. Known among friends as "Doc," his commitment as flight surgeon, physician, and friend to his 613th Tactical Fighter Squadron and their families ranked high among the highlights of his life. His professionalism and dedication to his patients earned him numerous military accolades. At the time of his death he was a proud Mason of 59 years with Myrtle Lodge 145 in Oklahoma City, Okla., and a 32nd-degree Scottish Rite Mason. Wife of 49 years and nine months, Pat Talmage Slaton.

Shelton, Clarence Edwin, of Excelsior Springs, Mo who was a member of the 8th AFHS with 447th BG passed away on Dec 26, 2013 at the age of 91.

Smith, Eugene Townsley, passed away September 2013, 1 month before his 98th birthday. Gene enlisted in the Army Air Corps in 1943, he was a B-17 pilot and completed 30 missions, 20 as Captain. He was preceded in death by his wife, Georgy.

Steiner, Robert L., age 90, passed away October 26, 2013 in Washington, D.C., beloved husband of Christine Steiner. He is best-known for a flight under the Eiffel Tower in Paris, victorious over an ME-109. This action re-en-



Robert Steiner



Eugene Stewart



Clifton Powell



Eugene Smith



Robert Reeves



James Slaton



Yetta Samford

Force and was assigned to 305th BG where he was stationed in Chelveston, England. He flew thirty missions and received numerous awards and medals. Gene rose in ranks to First Lieutenant B-17 and later a pilot instructor. Upon his return home he married his high school sweetheart, Jean Mills. "Flyboy" missed his days of flying

and soon became a Captain Pilot and flew with Eastern Air Lines for thirty years. He was a member of the 8th AFHS. The "Pair of Jeans" (Gene & Jean Stewart) were married for 67 years.

Tostevin, Franklin B., of Westfield, N.J., was buried at Fort Logan Cemetery in December 2013. Tostevin was shot down on March 20, 1945 while piloting a converted P-51 Mustang over Cologne. Tostevin's remains were recovered in 2008. DNA testing only recently confirmed his identity.

Tuvman, Bernard (Bernie) M., passed away 09/23/13 at age 91. He was associated with the 388th BG. He flew 6 missions as left "waist" gunner on the ill fated B-17 "Shedowanna". POW at Stalag 17 for 20 months. Survived by wife Estelle.

IN MEMORIAM GOLD STAR MOTHER

Behind thousands of
shuttered doors
thousands of mothers weep.
And in thousands of shallow graves
thousands of heroes sleep.

To them we send our
heartfelt thanks,
A Nation's accolade,
For freedom's price is an awful price,
But a price they freely paid.

And now, between the crosses white,
In neatly ordered rows,
Engendered by such noble blood,
The rose of Freedom grows.

Thousands of mothers softly wept,
thousands of widows cried.

submitted by:
Sgt. Walter Mysliwczynk

*WWII England Oxfordshire
1943-45 - 8th Air Force
14th Photo Recon. Squadron - 7th Photo
Recon. Group - Ground Crew - Aircraft
Supply mechanics' helper
Our planes were P-38 Lightnings - Eng-
lish Spitfires - P-51 Mustangs.*

*General Elliott Roosevelt was our
Wing Commander.
He was President Roosevelt's son.*



Maureen Eason
A.K.A. Sweet Pea

I was so happy to receive my latest edition of the *8th AF News* and open it to find a picture of "Sweet Pea" on page 44 that I had never seen before. I administer the 306th BG Facebook page and have published Maureen's story with updates. Just this fall 306th BG friend Gary Bonsall and Maureen's neighbor in London, took a current photo of her wearing the hat that she has on in the page 44 photo. I also shared it on your Eighth AFHS Facebook page.

Robert Herman, whose father was on the A/c "Sweet Pea", is an active member of the 306th BG. It is such a wonderful Christmas story. I was wondering if you would be willing to share the photo with me to share with the 306th? This photo of Maureen was taken August 2013. There are also some write ups in the 306th BG ECHOES of Maureen returning to Thurleigh for a reunion.

Thanks,
Sue Fox Moyer
306thBG

Can You Identify & Tell Their Story?

Hello 8th AF Readers,

My friend Eric Musgrave's mother, who is heading to be 93, was known as Louisa Fitzpatrick during the war. She lived in London, and was a teacher for the US Gov at some of the old bases including at least two of the old USAAF

8th AF HQ bases here around London. I'm writing my second book about those places – but more of that another time.

Take a look at these pictures. I believe this may have been a USAAF unit based somewhere near Peterborough in England. Eric's mother - Louise, had met them and had these pictures all but of course, age and time has perhaps faded memories somewhat. Perhaps your readers could help identify the unit and there-in, be able to see if there were any of these people still left alive or family members who might be able to identify them in the pictures.

There are clues – or possible clues on some of them. **'You are now entering the city of Paris 20 MPH'** is one of the signs that may be one of those clues. There is also a bicycle in another picture with a serial number on it...perhaps **1920 on the back rim of the bike.**

"Then there is the aircraft shot: the **P-51B Stanna Henna** and the other plane photo with **"Miss Fire"** and what looks like the word **"Roxy"** behind it.

Perhaps the most interesting one with lots of faces is the mess hall (**USAF WWII NEAR PETERBOROUGH – MESS SHOT attached**) one as we have some names to go with. They seem to be:

Capt. J.D. Reddington
Lt. S.E. Root
T/Sgt. G R. Bowman
T/Sgt. C.R. McAyeal
S/Sgt. H. Bolson
SGT. M.R. Hawley
SGT. R. Gooden
T/S D.W. Humphrey
Cpl. W. J. Benoit
T/S. T.C. Montoya
T/S. MH. Balven
Pvt. E.J. Foy

And at the bottom it reads:

"S-3 Office Crew"

One of the pictures – a guy leaning against a lamp post – may have been of a **Peter P. Spuelich**. Not quite sure on the surname but believe he came from Pittsburgh, PA.

Thank you for putting this out there. It may reconnect



some people/families/survivors with pictures of their loved ones that they have never seen before. I believe Eric, on behalf of his mom, would like to know a little more about them.

Thank you again for your commitment to the recognition of the 8th and keeping the memories of those who were there alive. And thank you again for

your interest.

I also sent these photos and information to your 8th AF Rep here in the UK, Gordon Richards in Haverhill Suffolk.

Kind regards,
Sean Kelly
London
sean@us1uk.com
and

Eric Musgrave
eric@ericmusgrave.co.uk
+44 (0)7702 628848
www.ericmusgrave.co.uk
Blog: The Musgrave Manifesto

Mail Call





Reunions Chapter Meetings



**PLEASE SEND ALL REUNION UPDATES TO:
News@8thafhs.org and/or donnajneely@gmail.com**

Ohio Chapter

Spring meeting
Saturday May 3, 2014
Ramada Plaza Hotel
4900 Sinclair Road
Columbus, OH 43229
Time: 12:30 PM

RAF Burtonwood Association

Warrington England
May 12 - 18, 2014
Gulliver's Hotel, Camp
Road, Warrington
Contact: Aldon Ferguson
aldonpf@aol.com
<http://www.rafburtonwoodbase.org/>

91st Bomb Group

San Francisco, Ca
May 21-25, 2014
Crown Plaza Foster City
Contact: Mick Hanou
mhanou@comcast.net
925-200-8962
<http://www.91stbombgroup.com>

398th Bomb Group

Rapid City, S. Dakota
September 3-6, 2014
Grand Gateway Hotel
Contact: Ken Howard 309-742-8546
KenHoward@Hotmail.com

306th Bomb Group

September 11 - 14, 2014
Colorado Springs, CO
Embassy Suites Colorado Springs
Contact: Barbara Neal
435.655-1500 (leave message for return call)
barb306neal@gmail.com
website: 306bg.org

355th Fighter Group

April 30-May 4, 2014
Tucson, AZ
Hilton Tucson East
Contact: Bill Cook
330-541-2653
bigbill355fa@aol.com

2014 Stalag Luft III Reunion Air Force Academy

Colorado Springs, Colorado
August 26-29, 2014
Contact: Marilyn Walton or Mike Eberhardt
waltonk9@gmail.com
mikeceber@sbcglobal.net

384th Bomb Group

FINAL REUNION
Dayton, Ohio
October 16-19
Details on Website:
384thbombgroup.com



SAVE THE DATE FOR NASHVILLE!!!

40TH ANNUAL 8TH AFHS REUNION

SHERATON - MUSIC CITY NASHVILLE, TN

OCT. 9 - 13, 2014

REFLECTIONS

The activities ushering in a new year are behind us. The year 2014 has begun. I have listened to many who have celebrated new year's eve and have observed that their thoughts are quite similar. Folks tend to reflect on what happened last year and guess at what is going to happen next year. The so-called 'new year's resolutions' almost always specify lofty goals, 'do better,' 'lose weight,' 'get out of debt,' 'be a better spouse', and the like. Usually folks are futuristic, thinking about what is to come. But regardless of our age we tend to reflect on the past. The past is who we are, what we have experienced, the events, large or small, pleasant or unpleasant, are a part of us and we do reflect on them.

I had a great friend. We met in pilot's training, we received our wings and commission together, he went to combat as I did. We survived the air-war in Europe and enjoyed successful retirement careers. We also had something else in common, I was the 'best man' at his wedding where he introduced me to the girl who later became my wife. He was my 'best man' when I married her. We were separated by distance but we always kept in touch. We visited each-other and corresponded occasionally. I talked to him and he told me of some physical problems he had developed and gave me an occasional report on his health status. Then a letter came telling me that he had a condition which was terminal. The best medical teams could not reverse the diagnosis. In one of the last letters I received from him, he described his hospital room. He lay there helpless and on his back looking at the ceiling, tubes inserted, wires attached to his body. The hours and days slowly moved along. He passed these words in his last letter to me....."this experience is giving me plenty of time to reflect." What his reflections were, I do not know but they were sacred to him, not something to advertise. George was a man of faith, had a beautiful wife and four children. I am certain that they were included in his reflections.

A son accompanied his father to

France. They visited the crash-site where the father's aircraft went down 60 plus years ago. The son speculated what his father must have been thinking six decades earlier.....'He experienced real luck; first that he did not die in the plane and secondly that he had landed among friendly members of the French underground who protected him. I do not know if he believes in God, but I think he is saying prayers at the moment, giving thanks for the good luck with which his life has been endowed.' He relived the events of that sultry afternoon in October, 1944 with his son who was six months old when his father's plane crashed. Now they were sharing this moment together. This emotional moment was resurrected in his mind and conjured-up reflections buried deeply in his soul.

Recently Nelson Mandela died (1918-2013). Well known internationally, he was a South African anti-apartheid revolutionary, politician, and philanthropist. He served as President of South Africa, that country's first black chief executive. His government fought institutional racism, poverty, and inequality. He was awarded several international honors among which were the Order of Lenin, the Nobel Peace Prize and the Presidential Medal of Freedom. But he was a controversial figure much of his life and ended up in prison for his divisive beliefs, a sentence that lasted 27 years. He never wavered in his beliefs that God is the same for everyone. He had a long life, spent over a quarter of his life in jail and experienced many reflections of his past, both good and bad. Hardships were his and he had learned to deal with them. He declared: "Difficulties break some men but make others. No axe is sharp enough to cut the soul of a sinner who keeps on trying, one armed with the hope that he will rise even in the end."

No one is exempt from having reflective experiences. Generally, mankind has a propensity to remember and reflect primarily upon the 'bad' things that have, at one time or another, come into our lives. Living in a constant state of depression is both unhealthy and oppressive. Our reflections can be controlled. Paul, the great



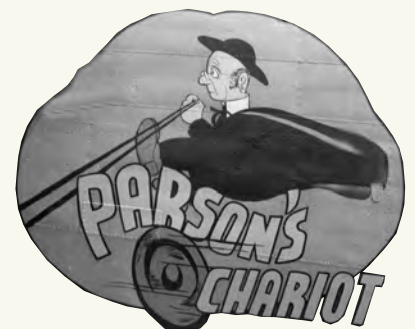
Earl Wassom

Apostle wrote a letter to the citizens of Philippi addressing the issue of defeatism. He was telling them to submit everything to the Savior and encouraged them to bring their lives under His control. He then goes on and urges them to present their requests to God. He follows up by submitting a model to follow for their personal reflections.

"Finally brethren, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy---think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me or seen in me--- put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you."
(Philippines 4:8-9 NIV)

With effort we can do as Paul the Apostle declared....put these things into practice in our personal reflective thought-life. This practice will lead into a life of joy and real liberty.

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





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

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Savannah, GA
Permit #1473

