

December 2020



TH AF NEWS

Volume 20 Number 4 Voice of "The Mighty Eighth"



"Moonlight Serenade"

Wishing you love, peace, and joy now, and always!



8th AF News

Voice of "The Mighty Eighth"

December 2020

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Front cover: "*Moonlight Serenade*" by artist, Roger Stuch, depicts a scene fondly remembered by airmen: dancing away the hours between missions with a beautiful local girl.

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THE 8TH A F 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 in 1975, and Editor of the "News" for sixteen years. It is published quarterly and is the official news magazine of the Society, a 501(c)3. The 8th A F News is distributed to members of the Society and is not for public sale.

Home offices are located at:

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EDITOR'S NOTES



When Franklin Delano Roosevelt first became president in 1933, he delivered what was to become one of the most famous speeches in history. His words continue to resonate even today, with both comfort and power as he said, "...So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is...fear itself — nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance. In every dark hour of our national life a leadership of frankness and of vigor has met with that understanding and support of the people themselves which is essential to victory. And I am convinced that you will again give that support to leadership in these critical days..."

Fear. Having had the privilege of getting to know—and love—so many WWII veterans over the years, the one thing

I have found they all have in common, was a shared experience of fear. The immortal John Wayne paraphrased FDR when he remarked, "Courage is saddling up anyway." In my opinion, that is what makes the Greatest Generation, truly great. The attack on Pearl Harbor ignited a spark of patriotism in our country—even among a population still healing from economic recession and unemployment. Young boys—many lying about their age—hurried to enlist in the war effort. These were not young men—they were teenagers leaving football fields and corn fields for East Anglian farms turned air bases. These were children who had never ventured away from home, and they were suddenly half a world away. They were determined to save the world. And they did. They climbed into bombers and

fighters. They worked non-stop fixing battle-damaged planes and kept them in the air. They watched their best friends die and prayed they would make it home. And they did it day, after day, after day... Those who made it home never forgot any of what they experienced, yet most have never said a word. I've never known a veteran who wanted to be referred to as a 'hero'. They will quickly remind you, the "...real heroes are the ones who never made it back." But there is something to be said about the ones who "...saddled up anyway."

My love and prayers to all of you!

Deb



Please JOIN the Eighth Air Force Historical Society TODAY!!!



First Name: _____ Middle Initial: _____ Last Name: _____

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Membership Annual Dues: \$40 or £30 GBP

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PayPal: ManagingDirector@8thAFHS.org

By renewing or requesting membership in the 8th Air Force Historical Society, I hereby grant permission for the Society to hold and maintain my information as contained herein, indefinitely, with the stipulation that my information not be shared nor be made public to any other entity without my expressed written permission.

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JOIN ONLINE: www.8thAFHS.org

PRESIDENT'S BRIEFING

Anne Marek
President & Treasurer



Greetings everyone!
The 8th Air Force Historical Society's first "Virtual" 46th Annual Reunion on October 24, 2020, was an extremely successful webinar. I hope most of you were able to tune in on Zoom for many of our speakers, programs and WWII veterans' panel. We were also able to stream live on Facebook. It was a global event with people watching in England, Europe, and Hawaii. Facebook reported that 13,800 viewed our webinar and 8,200 engaged by asking questions or in some way posting a message. All in all, a very successful program hosted by Debra, our Managing Director. If you missed it, you can go to our Facebook page, click on Media then Videos and watch it in its entirety. It will also be uploaded to our website. You'll enjoy it. Take a look.

During these difficult times, your Board of Directors is still remaining active and communicating through Skype. Our last meeting was in late October after our virtual reunion. We have created an Ad Hoc Advisory Committee comprised of Steve Snyder and Paul Tibbets IV. They are actively working on membership recruitment and retention and communicating with our bomb groups and chapters. Look for more to come in the next several months. Please reach out to me, Debra, or any of the other Board members should you have any matter you

wish us to address. Our contact information appears on page 2 of AF News. Our lines of communication are always open, and our motto is "transparency" in all our activities.

Thank you all for your support of our Officers, Directors and Advisors. It is greatly appreciated.

I am also including the Financial Statements ending October, 2020, for your information. This includes the Society's Profit and Loss Statement and Statement of Financial Position. In examining these reports, you will notice that our investment

portfolio is still growing since my last report to you in September. This is very encouraging, and I am pleased to be able to report this to all of you. Our investment portfolio and the income it generates continues not be used to fund the Society's administrative expenses and daily operating costs.

Our financial advisor, Mr. Gavin Natelli, calls me with monthly updates on our financial position. He continues to make sound decisions as to what equities we should purchase to continually grow our account.

As a member you can personally help bring revenue into the Society by registering with Amazon Smiles when shopping on line. It's quick and easy to do. So far this year, Amazon Smiles has generated \$114.03. While this is not a large amount, it does help. Thank you all for your participation. You can find the link on page 6 of the Magazine.

*Virtual:
occurring or existing
online*

TREASURER'S LEDGER

**The Eighth Air Force Historical Society
Profit & Loss
January through October 2020**

	Jan - Oct 20
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
4000 - Income/Miscellaneous	
4001 - Amazon Smiles	114.03
4010 - Member Dues Annual	44,773.37
4019 - Member Contributions/Donations	14,353.88
Total 4000 - Income/Miscellaneous	59,241.28
4050 - Investment Income	
4058 - Portfolio Dividends & Interest	3,855.53
4059 - Realized Gain/(Loss) on Invest	0.00
4060 - Unrealized Gain/(Loss) on Invest	41,033.45
4061 - Investment Management Fees	0.00
Total 4050 - Investment Income	44,888.98
Total Income	104,130.26
Expense	
5100 - National Administration Expense	
5111 - Corporation Charges	70.00
5121 - 8AF History Projects	141.28
Total 5100 - National Administration Expense	211.28
5200 - Magazine Expenses	
5210 - Printing Expenses	6,990.00
5220 - Postage Expenses	7,261.21
Total 5200 - Magazine Expenses	14,251.21
5300 - National Office Expenses	
5303 - Telephone/DSL	512.97
5304 - Supplies	424.07
5305 - Abila Software/ Computer Exps	1,547.46
5307 - Office Rent	1,000.00
5308 - Insurance	317.00
5312 - FICA-8AFHS portion	2,773.07
5313 - Payroll/ Office Management	36,677.14
5315 - Postage & Shipping	612.11
5316 - Bank Charges/ Returned checks	100.00
5320 - Annual Fees	30.00
5323 - Merchant Account Usage Fees	1,245.46
5325 - Miscellaneous Expense	201.24
5326 - Payroll processing fees	2,186.66
Total 5300 - National Office Expenses	47,627.18
Total Expense	62,089.65
Net Ordinary Income	42,040.61
Other Income/Expense	
Other Income	
6550 - Annual Meeting Revenue	
6551 - Event Registration	12,680.74
6555 - Tours	5,162.32
Total 6550 - Annual Meeting Revenue	17,843.06
Total Other Income	17,843.06
Other Expense	
7000 - Other Expense	0.00
7100 - Annual Meeting Expenses	
7103 - Hotel Expense/Catering	5,000.00
7104 - Tours/Transportation	5,512.32
7106 - Reimbursements	11,429.54
7107 - Entertainment	194.99
Total 7100 - Annual Meeting Expenses	22,136.85
Total Other Expense	22,136.85
Net Other Income	-4,293.79
Net Income	37,746.82

Respectfully submitted,
Anne A. Marek
President and Treasurer, 8th AFHS

If any of you have any questions regarding any of our financial statements, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. My contact information is on p. 2 of every issue of the 8th A F News magazine.

Remember,

*“Our focus is on our veterans,
preserving their legacy,
and keeping the memories alive!”*

Anne

**The Eighth Air Force Historical Society
Statement of Financial Position
As of October 31, 2020**

	Oct 31, 20
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
1017 - Oppenheimer & Co	225,999.03
1040 - Bank of America Checking Acct.	8,884.34
1042 - Bank of America Savings Acct.	1,325.70
Total Checking/Savings	236,209.07
Total Current Assets	236,209.07
TOTAL ASSETS	236,209.07
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
2050 - Payroll & Taxes Payable	
2051 - Payroll payable	2,896.57
2052 - FICA & withhold taxes payable	2,936.22
Total 2050 - Payroll & Taxes Payable	5,832.79
Total Other Current Liabilities	5,832.79
Total Current Liabilities	5,832.79
Total Liabilities	5,832.79
Equity	
3200 - *Unrestricted Net Assets	192,618.57
Net Income	37,757.71
Total Equity	230,376.28
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	236,209.07

NOTEWORTHY

8TH AFHS 47TH ANNUAL REUNION

SAVANNAH, GA OCTOBER 27-31, 2021

REUNION HOTEL: SAVANNAH RIVERFRONT MARRIOTT
DETAILS WILL BE IN THE MARCH 2021 ~ 8TH AF NEWS

EXCITING NEW INITIATIVES IN EDUCATION COMING!

WATCH FOR DUES RENEWAL NOTICES IN THE MAIL...
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MORE IMPORTANT!

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**DON'T FORGET:
MEMBERSHIP INTO
THE SOCIETY MAKES A
GREAT GIFT FOR ANY
OCCASION!**

*Please submit ALL articles, etc. at least 45 days PRIOR to the date of the next issue of the 8th AF News to reserve space; content must be received 30 days prior to publishing date! Remember: submission does NOT guarantee publication. Due to size constraints of the magazine, I am very limited in publishing non-solicited material, however, I will review for consideration. Please submit materials via email [preferred] with hi-res photos attached in jpg format. NEVER send originals--they may not be returned. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me. I appreciate your help immensely. DDK

‘SIGHTED SINKERS...SANK SAME’

by **Suzie Harrison**

American Battle Monuments Commission
Cambridge American Cemetery and Memorial

‘The Red Cross, with its clubs for recreation, its coffee and doughnuts in the forward areas, its readiness to meet the needs of the well and to help minister to the wounded has often seemed the friendly hand of this nation, reaching across the sea to sustain its fighting men.’

General Dwight D Eisenhower, 18 June 1945



ARC created postcards for the troops to mail home. One GI wrote on the back, ‘... Mom ... This is a picture of the Red Cross Clubmobile that visits our camp about every week ... It is operated by our own American girls. They certainly are a swell bunch.’ IWM: FRE 748

When we think of women in wartime, we think of them waving to columns of men heading overseas. However, some women went to war too. That’s where the American Red Cross comes in.

The International Red Cross was founded in 1864 to aid the casualties of war without regard to nationality. The American Red Cross (ARC) was formed in 1881, and the United States joined the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) in 1882. During WWI, ARC mobilized twice; once in 1914, under ICRC auspices; then again in 1917, when the United States entered the fray, to support medical services for the American

Expeditionary Force - sadly over 400 ARC workers lost their lives.

After Pearl Harbor, Marshall declared that ARC would be ‘...the sole non-military organization to operate with an expeditionary force...’. However, the focus of the organization during WWII was somewhat different. While ARC still maintained its traditional role of providing nurses for medical facilities in all theatres, such as the 125-bed Harvard Hospital, on the outskirts of Salisbury, England (which after the war became The Common Cold Research Institute), there was new emphasis.

The US Government and Army realized that flooding Britain with military personnel created a problem – what would they do in their spare time? They turned to the ARC. The then ranking commander in Britain, Gen. Chaney like to claim that ARC would become ‘...the largest hotel chain in the world.’

‘Angie’ Petesch, 36; Chicago Art Institute, Chicago Tribune feature writer; arrived in Britain May 1943.

Fitje Pitts, 26; Secretarial College, Rhode Island Department of Social Services; arrived in Britain June 1944.

Emily Harper Rea, 32, Hanover College, Indiana, PA to two state governors; arrived in Britain January 1943.

‘Liz’ Richardson, 26, Downer College, Milwaukee, Marketing at Schuster’s Department Store; arrived in Britain July 1944.

What made these mature, college educated, career women, so determined to help with the war effort overseas that they volunteered for the American Red Cross? Newsreels flashed the words, ‘Now more than ever, your Red Cross is at his side’; the voiceover began:



News from Across the Pond...

'Our Red Cross Clubmobile girls must be single, college graduates, and over the age of 25. They are hand-picked for their looks, education and personality. They are hardy physically and have a sociable, friendly manner.'



Pictured right: Elizabeth Richardson – moved on from Britain to France, but died in a plane crash - Normandy American Cemetery A-21-5

The smart ARC uniform, featured in the films, was of light blue skirts and jackets with heeled shoes. The shirt was modestly buttoned to the neck and closed with a red cross pin. The army worried about sending delicately nurtured young ladies to a war zone, lest they become masculine - WACs and WAVES were rarely posted overseas. Mothers worried too, about who they might be mixing with – all of the ARC staff used the army officer facilities.

Their basic training had begun at Hurst Hall, American University, Washington, and lasted four weeks. Lectures included history, procedures and policy of the Red Cross and the American military, leadership and group management, table games, crafts, dancing and sports. Depending on their proposed posting the women received extra, specialist training. Angie particularly enjoyed her session at the FBI shooting range – it wasn't every girl who got to fire a Thompson submachine gun. She also got to shake the hand of Eleanor Roosevelt and hear her inspiring speech, rousing them to do *'...the thing you think you cannot do'*?

Right: RSM Queen Mary in New York Harbor. In peacetime she carried 3,000 passengers, but with re-designed interiors could carry 15,000 troops. Hitler called her 'Grey Ghost' and put a bounty on her – he would award the Iron Cross to whosoever could sink her. NARA, NAID 521011



The two liners, Queens Elizabeth and Mary, were too fast to join the Atlantic Convoys and could out-run enemy U-boats. This ensured the ladies had the safest and fastest crossings possible – five days to Britain. Their

maidenly virtue was upheld by the MPs who patrolled their corridors!

After disembarking in Glasgow, they took trains for London, where they were given their assignments, some to the ARC Clubs - the recreation centers in towns and cities but with rooms like a hotel (there were eight in London including Rainbow Corner); some to permanent Aero Clubs on air bases with games rooms and libraries, and where they would deliver coffee and sandwiches to air crews undergoing post-mission interrogation; others to Clubmobiles (converted Green Line buses) which served coffee and doughnuts to the troops at their camps, accompanied with music (provided by *Victrola* phonographs), dancing and singing. As Fitje put it, *'... I couldn't be nearer the war ...'*



Left: Liz Richardson hauling a coffee urn in the bitter winter of 1944 at Camp Dane Ghyell (Barrow-in-Furness, England). Her more utilitarian uniform consisted of RAF WAAF slacks (ARC issue), GI shirt, RAF Battledress top, Combat jacket, a German-style cap, and paratrooper boots, with as many clothes as possible layered underneath.

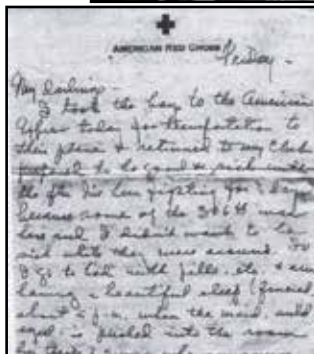
Once in the field they became, 'the girls', and the troops, air crew and officers, 'the boys'. Many of the staff, like Angie posted to Aero Clubs, found they had to set the facilities up from scratch, decorating and then managing the clubs; doing jobs that might have been handled by 'the help' back home, but they proved their mettle. In order to give the boys a taste of home, staff were expected to navigate the British rationing system and keep an inventory to provide cakes and hamburgers for teas, dances and celebrations. They shared many of the same privations as the men, including cold, wet and mud, a 'biffy' dug for them, all with smiles on their faces and a dash of lipstick. For the Clubmobile girls - Liz and Fitje - gone were the smart uniforms. ARC girl, Gretchen Schulyer pondered, *'Whoever thought that my MA degree would prepare me for this?'* Liz wondered the same, *'Damn glad I have my degree – it helps so much with making doughnuts.'*

Photos at top of next page: Emily Harper Rea – loved by all as mother; kid-sister; girlfriend - seen second left with Queen Elizabeth, was senior staff assistant at the Bedford ARC Club. Glenn Miller was based in Bedford, and we understand that Emily presented him with his Major oak leaves and he gave her his captains bars as a keepsake. (Incidentally, Liz saw Glenn Miller and

News from Across the Pond...



his orchestra with the 82nd Airborne in Leicester.) When Emily was killed in a plane crash, the story goes that those bars were found in her purse, and subsequently buried with her (Cambridge American Cemetery E-6-69).



The detail that we have is due to the fact that the girls were all letter writers and diary keepers. Liz is an example of the different writing formats. She wrote pieces for the Red Cross Clubmobile newsletter, 'The Sinker'. To her parents, her enchanting, chatty letters were very upbeat - full of *joie de vivre*. To her Marine brother, she wrote of military matters, mindful of the censors. However, her diary entries were more realistic and darker.

After 'sweating out' (apparently an English phrase) a mission, Fitje wrote in her diary of the air crews, 'They are all our friends and we are here to be their friends ... everyone is at their worst and also at their best.' In another entry, '...it is usually raining in England and often it is welcome as it hides the tears that you try to keep back as you listen to the fears and troubles...', and '...we are glad that their mothers don't know what they go through...'. In similar vein, Liz wrote, '... to hear these kids tell of their experiences and to see their faces which are oddly old'; and as the 82nd Airborne departed for Holland, 'The boys still laughed and joked, but their faces streamed perspiration'; to brother John, 'I've seen our fellows in full gear just before they hopped off for Holland and I've seen the fear in their eyes - not for the unknown - but because they know what's in front of them.' The girls knew it would not be over by Christmas.

One of their boys said of the women volunteers,

'I don't know why, because you are as far away from America as we are, but your being here is like holding hands with someone back home'.

Photo right: 'Flak House' Knighthayes Court, Devon, in April 1945 IWM: FRE 10811



The ARC also staffed 16 country houses or 'flak homes'. For USAAF combat air crews in the UK, home leave was impossible. 'So, the doctors responsible for their well-being believed the next best thing would be Rest Homes, using the tranquility, comfort and freedom from military routine achievable at English country houses or hotels. Run by the ARC, each serviceman was entitled to at least one rest period away from the horrors of war, during their 25-30 mission tour.' The girl's role was to supervise recreation and dining - and to listen.

None of these were easy jobs, but they were vital.

During WWII, ARC operated 2,000 recreational service facilities overseas. These were staffed by 5,000 Red Cross personnel with around 140,000 local volunteers. 86 Red Cross workers lost their lives; 52 women and 36 men. Including Emily Harper Rea, six are buried at Cambridge American Cemetery:

Virginia Frances Montgomery, 45:
5 July 1945 D-2-72



(left) Dorothy A Stretch:
18 September 1943 C-4-33

Hugh H Foster:
18 November 1944 D-3-82

John S Disosway:
25 May 1943 E-2-56

(right) Margaret Jeffery:
3 September 1945 D-5-68



News from Across the Pond...

MEANWHILE, IN SWITZLERLAND...



Editor's note: The following is a "virtual" interview with Rolf Zuagg who, happens to own and manage his own very unique museum. I hope you enjoy! ddk

Why don't you tell us a bit about yourself...

My name is Rolf Zuagg, and I live in a historic farmhouse in Utzenstorf, in the Canton of Bern, Switzerland.

How and/or why did you become involved in warbirds?

The first time that I came into contact with Warbirds (restored airplanes from WWII) was the beginning of the 1990s, when I traveled to England with a friend. The B-17 fascinated me, of course, because I knew that one of them had an emergency landing in Utzenstorf.

When our local historian, Barbara Kummer, invited American war veterans (Swiss Internees) to the 50-year anniversary of the B-17 bomber in 1993, I started speaking with them and met the president of the Swiss Internees Association, Robert (Bob) A. Long, who had been part of an emergency landing in Dübendorf.

The stories of those who had experienced emergency landings, and crew members who had been detained in Switzerland, interested me greatly; and I began to do the research. Thanks to Bob's help, I was able to find out the whereabouts of many of the former crew members; I was able to



locate other addresses using the crew list.

Initially, I took a chance and wrote letters. Sometimes I didn't hear anything, but sometimes an answer came suddenly, months later. At times there were even photographs, diary entry copies, or reports enclosed.

Over the course of time, a lot of nice relationships with war veterans (Swiss internees), their children, grandchildren, and by now even their great-grandchildren, developed—as well as with the American military, who consult with me from time to time as a specialist for WWII flights which terminated in Switzerland.

Do you have a favorite warbird?

The B-17 Flying Fortress. The B-17F Battle Queen did a forced landing in the town where I live on August 17th, 1943. Thanks to its shape, the B-17 is a beautiful airplane and very robust, consequently saving many of the crew members' lives.

The B-24 Liberator. It's the most frequently-built World War II airplane in the US and was used as a long-distance bomber, reconnaissance and transporter plane (multi-functional).

The P-51 Mustang. It's the Cadillac of the sky, with a lovely design and strong motor power, not to mention

News from Across the Pond...

the unmistakable engine sound.

What are some of the highlights you have experienced in being part of the warbird community?

- During the Swiss Internees' Reunions in Switzerland 1993/1996/1998, we visited the emergency landing sites and the places where they had been detained. I have also been privileged to welcome individual visitors as well. We go to the specific landing sites and see where they were detained. It can be very emotional for both of us.
- B-17 Flying Fortress debris recovery at the Greifen Lake in 2000, engine, propeller, gun-turret, parachute, radio frequency gauge, etc.
- B-17/B-24 parts recovery in the Swiss Alps
- Bomber exhibition 60-year Anniversary of the Bomber Landing in Utzenstorf in 2003, initiator and manager/organizer
- Attended the Swiss Internees' Reunion in Florida in 2004, decision for the petition to achieve POW status for Swiss Internees, bestowal of POW decorations at the Pentagon, USA, in 2015
- Accompanied test flights of the DC-3 and P-18
- Accompanied the C-47 ferry flight from England/Caen/ Zürich for the Convoy to Remember in 2016
- Various visits from relatives of Swiss Internees where we visited forced landing sites



and/or the places where their fathers, grandfathers, etc. had been detained.

- B-24 Commemoration in Bätterkinden, initiator, manager/organizer
- Movie *100 Years of Aviation in Switzerland*, filmed at my museum
- Movie *100 Years of Swiss Air Force*, filmed at my museum
- Movie *Emergency Landing*, filmed at my museum
- Provided numerous authors with articles, witness reports, and photographs over the years

Can you please tell everyone a bit more about your museum and how people can get in touch with you?

I own a unique B-17 museum, which shows the history of foreign aircraft in Switzerland from 1939 to 1945, especially the emergency landings and crash histories of the US Army Air Force in Switzerland during WWII. This includes the B-17 forced landing in Utzenstorf, the B-24 forced landing in Bätterkinden, and the B-24 crash in Jegenstorf, and much more.

All of the correspondence and material from the Second World War that I've gathered over the years is on display at my private B-17 museum in Utzenstorf.

If you would like to reach out to Rolf, please feel free to connect:

Rolf Zaugg
Ruttistrasse 7, CH-3427
Utzenstorf
Switzerland

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Email: Info@b17museum.ch

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/rolf.zaugg.921>

Website: <https://www.b17museum.ch>

HARDWORK, DETERMINATION, AND A LOT OF LUCK

BY JACK D. TOLLIVER, JR

As was typical of many young men in the 8th, my dad, 1st Lt. Jack Tolliver, grew up during the Great Depression in a small farm town in southern Illinois. His family, like many, struggled to get by. The family had a large garden and bee hives to help make ends meet. His mother—in her early years—rode a horse several hours a day to teach in a one room school-house.

Jack joined the army shortly out of high school. While in training he heard about an exam to join the Army Air Corp. He took the exam, passed, and he began training as a cadet bombardier. Just before Jack was to be sent overseas he had earned enough money and time to get home from



Dad far left.

training in Nevada. He decided en route to stop in Las Vegas. Not surprisingly it wasn't long before his money and his trip were almost gone. A pit boss who was watching saw a young soldier who was literally tapped out. He asked Jack where he was going. After he heard the story the pit boss relieved the dealer and started dealing the cards himself. Each time telling Jack to "double down". Jack quickly won his money back. The pit boss then told him "soldier cash those chips and go home" which he did and was forever grateful.

When Jack arrived at Thorpe-Abbott airbase as a bombardier for the 100th Bomb Group, his crew was directed to a barrack and told to take any bunk. Upon entering the barracks, the crew saw clothes hanging from beds which appeared to be occupied and were concerned they may be taking someone's bunk. They were informed that wasn't a



High school graduation.

problem...the crews that had occupied those bunks had not made it back from their last mission. A harsh and somber reality. During one mission a large chunk of flak pierced the top of his helmet without causing injury. Remarkably, on examination, the piece of



Crew member standing in the hole (from outside the plane) from battle damage.

metal had stamped the number of his bomb group. Jack made the Louisville newspapers after a reporter heard Jack stating he really didn't think the German guns were quite that good.

Another mission was not so lucky. A German fighter that

looked like it might have been hit dropped down and then came up under the aircraft. A two-foot hole was blasted in the belly and roof of the Flying Fortress by the German fighter. The blast caused the oxygen tanks on board



Home on leave with his younger brother who still considers him "my hero."

to explode wounding the gunner. Jack, as bombardier sitting in the nose of the plane, recalls the German fighter pilot came so close that they stared at each other. Despite the fact there was injured crew, no supplemental oxygen, two engines lost, and a third engine smoking, Jack and the crew completed the bomb run. They then began stripping



Dad's plane that was battle damaged.

the plane of ANY excess weight. That meant guns and ammo were

tossed out; in desperation, the gunner even threw out his watch.

Remarkably, they managed an emergency landing in England. Some of his missions were harder than others. All the missions—except two—were heavily defend-

ed, particularly Berlin, Hamburg, and the naval shipyards. One of the hardest parts of Jack's job as lead bombardier was the decision *not* to drop his bombs when he couldn't visualize the tar-

get. This meant his crew and 10 other bombers would be forced to make another pass over the target, allowing the German defenders to zero in on them.

After every mission, Jack would go behind the barracks to say a prayer of thanks and far too often, cry over a lost friend.

It was a hard reality to see a plane disappear carrying a friend. You were never told whether they had survived or died. He still remembers to this day the *real* heroes of the war. The ones who never came back.

Jack finally departed England at the ripe old age of twenty-two. You were considered an old man by "air" standards if you were over twenty-five. Most of the crew were Jack's age.

He had endured being mistakenly reported to his family as miss-

ing in action, surviving emergency landings, and 19 combat missions completed. He took with him numerous decorations for his service including the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Like many veterans, Jack did not discuss his experiences. It would be well over sixty years later that he would finally talk about the defining moments in his life, as well as the heartache. Jack, with his combat pay as well as the GI Bill, managed to study engineering at the University of Louisville where he met and married his college sweetheart.

He worked for two local companies for over 50 years.

He never took a sick day or missed a day of work.

He sent 5 kids to college. Jack was married for 67 years until his wonderful wife passed.

He will be marrying a remarkable lady, Dottie, his new love of the past few years.

If you ask, Jack will tell you the



Dad and Dottie--it's never too late!

secret to his success: hard work, determination, and a lot of luck.

Black Cat



the last mission

by Martha Curtis

“I will never forget the image of “Black Cat” being hit and going down”...William Proppe, pilot of Crew #588, 785th Bomb Squadron., 466th Bomb Group, Station 120, Attlebridge, England.

William Proppe shared his memory of the mission to Saltzburg, Germany, on April 21, 1945, in the book “Attlebridge Arsenal”- a history of the men and aircraft of the 466th Bomb Group by Earl Wassom and Chris Brassfield. In the years since that fateful day, countless veterans have echoed his comment and raised the same question about that mission when it was finally recalled because of weather over the target. “Why did the formation leaders choose to fly directly over Regensburg, Germany, when everyone knew the end of the war was at hand?” Perry Kerr, a tail gunner on the Richard Koch crew (#792) and witness to the crash of the Black Cat”, was still asking that question when he attended the last 8th AFHS reunion in St Louis. This was also Perry’s last of many reunions he attended, as he died last February. The B-24, “Black Cat”, had been flown by seven



Richard Farrington Crew # 769
 Standing Left to Right: John C. Murphy (RN), John A. Perella (N), John A. Regan (CP)
 Richard J. Farrington (P), George E. Noe (PN), Chris Manners (B)
 Kneeling Left to Right: Robert E. Peterson (TG), John C. Brennan (WG),
 Jerome Barrett (FE), Howard G. Goodner (R/O), Albert Seraydarian (G)

Last Bomber lost over Europe- April 21, 1945

“BlackCat” B-24J #42-95592
466th Bomb Group - 784th Bomber Squadron -
Attlebridge Station 120 - Weston-Longville, Norfolk

different lead crews in the 784th Squadron from Attlebridge, home of the 466th Bomb Group. In the historical record, it has the distinction of being the last B-24 to be lost during the war. In 2005 when

the Post Office issued a memorial B-24 postage stamp, the image of the “Black Cat” was the one appropriately chosen to be used.

When Crew #487 arrived at their plane, the “Black Cat”, on April 21, 1945, they all complained about the terrible weather. The other 28 crews that were scheduled to fly that day agreed that it was about the worst weather they had seen. The target was a railroad bridge at Saltzberg, which would be impossible to find in such weather or any other visual target for that manner. This late in the war it was dangerous to choose an alternate target, as the Allies were so far advanced into Germany, they would risk bombing their own troops. Despite the weather, the mission was a “go” for the “Black Cat” and the Richard Farrington crew of 12 men including, Louis Weiser, as their command pilot and riding in the co-pilot’s seat. He was leading the 96th Combat Wing on this mission, which had been divided into three groups. This positioned the Farrington crew and the “Black Cat” in the middle of the formation. Despite the meteorologist’s prediction, the weather actually worsened over the continent. When the 2nd Air Division’s scouting force reached the target area, they realized there was no other choice but to recall the mission. In the lead aircrafts throughout the formation, both navigators and mickey men made the same calculation: if they made a right turn as they aborted, it would bring the whole formation directly over Regensburg. They’d been there many times before. It was an area of heavy flak batteries because of the fighter aircraft production there. But when the navigator and pilot in the lead plane began to turn away to avoid Regensburg, the command pilot ordered them to remain on the same heading, bringing their group directly over the town. William Proppe records that when his navigator, Thomas Levens, even called the lead plane to warn them not to make that turn, he “caught hell for breaking radio silence.” According to Harold Read, Crew #690 pilot, who was flying off of the right wing of the Farrington crew, he saw the “Black Cat” take a direct hit between #1 and #2 engines. Flames began coming out of the bomb bay, the left wing then folded, the plane went nose up and then over on its back, exploding about 1000 feet below. Various witnesses saw either 2 or 4 chutes,

but only the bombardier and a gunner survived and were held as POW’s for a few weeks. The 10 other crewmen were killed, burned up in the plane or falling to the ground without parachutes.

The 466th Bomb Group flew only one more mission on April 25 before the war ended. Then in May, at the same time families back on the States were celebrating V-E day, the telegrams from the War Department began arriving at the homes of the families of the Farrington crew. At first it said "MIA", but by summer it was clear that all but two were never coming home and were “KIA”. Several of these family members later joined the 466th Bomb Group Association as a way of remembering their lost loved ones, sons, husbands, brothers, uncles. One of these family members is Thomas Childers, nephew of the radio operator, Howard Goodner. He is the author of the book about the “Black Cat”, “Wings of Morning: The Story of the Last American Bomber Shot Down Over Germany in World War II.” This is an excellent book, and essential reading for anyone who wants to study the air war over Europe and have it brought to life on a personal level.

The mission of the 466th Bomb Group Association is to honor and keep the memories alive of these 10 men of the Farrington Crew, along with the other 223 who served at Station 120, Attlebridge, and gave their lives in 1944 and 1945.

The Farrington Crew

Louis C Weiser 787th Squadron Operations KIA

Richard J Farrington Pilot KIA

John A Regan, Co-pilot KIA

John A Perella, Jr Navigator KIA

John D Murphy Mickey Navigator KIA

George E Noe Pilotage Navigator KIA

Jerome Barrett Engineer KIA

Howard G Goodner Radio Operator KIA

John C Brennan Waist Gunner KIA

Robert E Peterson Tail Gunner KIA

Chris Manners Bombardier POW

Albert Seraydarian Waist Gunner POW

Martha Curtis, 466th BGA daughter, Crew #633, Navigator, Lieut. William G Horney

CHAPTER NEWS



**8th Air Force Historical Society
Georgia Chapter
Atlanta, GA
Brent Bracewell
President**

The GA Chapter once again enjoyed a wonderful luncheon, gathering, and presentation at our usual location; The 57th Fighter Group Restaurant, which is not only an appropriate venue reminiscent of a WWII Airfield Officers Club, but a gracious host serving the best menu of delicious meals. If you are ever in Atlanta, you have to visit this restaurant. This month's program was courtesy of one of our newest, but most loyal members, Tony Briggs. Tony is an Army West Point Graduate, former Infantry officer, and just plain great American! Tony has

reached out to one of his fellow West Point classmates and graduates, Army Colonel (retired) Mike Rauhut and invited him to be our speaker!

Mike Rauhut

Executive Coach & Consultant
Senior Advisor to the CEO,
Spirit of America
Adjunct Faculty,
Naval War College
Fellow, Halftime Institute
Board Member, VetStarts
Author: *Solid Steps Through
Shifting Sand*

In mid-2019 Mike transitioned from 30+ years of uniformed service in the U.S. Army and began exploring his "second half" as a Fellow at the Halftime Institute. During one second half probe,

Mike began consulting and now supports Spirit of America as an executive coach through Solid Steps Strategies LLC. Prior to starting his LLC, Mike served in numerous leadership and senior advisory positions within the Departments of Defense and State. Mike transitioned from serving as the Director of the U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (Carlisle, PA) where he led the institute in promoting the collaborative development and integration of peace and stability capabilities across the U.S. government, international organizations, and the broader community of interest. Prior to his Carlisle assignment, Mike served as the Chief of Staff for the Military Staff Committee at the U.S. Mission to

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the United Nations (UN) in New York City. In this capacity, he was responsible for both U.S. representation to the UN Military Staff Committee and the provision of advice to both the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the U.S. Permanent Representative to the UN. Much of that counsel focused on UN peacekeeping and U.S. policy regarding its application on behalf of the Joint Staff and the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

A 1989 graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, Mike commissioned as an Infantry officer and subsequently commanded at the platoon, company, battalion, and brigade level. In addition to his command billets, Mike served as a Combat Analyst for the Army's Training and Doctrine Command, the Chief of Operations for an Army Division, a senior Observer/Trainer at the Joint Readiness Training Center, a Faculty Member at the Naval War College, and, more recently, the Assistant Chief of Staff for the International Security Assistance Force in Kabul. In these and other capacities, his assignments led him across the U.S. and to locales as varied as Germany, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Korea, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Immediately prior to his assignment to the U.S. Mission to the UN, he also served as a Chief of Staff of the Army Military Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York City. In addition to his military training and specialty courses, Mike obtained a Master of Science in Operations Research from the

Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California, and a Master of Arts in Strategic Studies from the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island.

Together with his wife Sandy, Mike has two children: Hannah (22) and Jacob (18).

Colonel Rauhut's presentation was a combination of highlighting he and his Fathers Book "*Solid Steps Through Shifting Sand*", which is the "...story of one immigrant family's journey from war-torn Europe to a land of promise and opportunity." (Also, please see below narrative on his book.) While Mike highlighted many aspects of the book, he focused most of his talk on his parents' liberation by the US Army. His presentation included a power point detailing his parents' stories (with an embedded video of his mother recalling her memories of that experience). No one loves our country like first generation Immigrants, and Mike's presentation both inspired us and made us all proud of our wonderful country. In addition to speaking on his book, Mike also regaled us with stories of his combat experiences in Tikrit, Iraq, as his battalion was an integral part in the capture of Saddam Hussein. As a side note, the forward of Mike and his dad's book is written by LTC (Retired) Steve Russel (also a former member of US Congress) who is author of the book, "*We Got Him!*" - *A Memoir of the Hunt and Capture of Saddam Hussein*. So, you can see that Mike was able to speak from first-hand knowledge of that very successful and high visibility

mission.

A theme that was apparent throughout Mike's book and presentation, is gratitude, faith, and inspiration of our Nation and the ideals/idea behind it. These being the same ideals as the ones our Mighty Eighth family members from the Greatest Generation lived out in their service: that our great country is worth living, fighting, and dying for.

Mike's presentation was a positive message worth hearing during these challenging times America is currently facing.

As if this luncheon could actually get better, in addition to inviting this great speaker for us, Tony Briggs, generously ***PRE-PURCHASED COPIES OF MIKE'S BOOK TO GRACIOUSLY GIVE TO THOSE ATTENDING THE LUNCHEON!*** We had approximately 30 in attendance not including the 57 Fighter Group Staff who also attended and were captivated by Mike's presentation.

Thank you, Tony, for your generosity and for inviting Mike. Thank you, Mike, for a motivating, entertaining, and informative presentation. Thank you Georgia Chapter Members who keep our Chapter active and thriving!

The GA Chapter meets monthly for a luncheon (second Saturday of the month) at the 57th Fighter Group Restaurant at Peachtree Dekalb Airport, Atlanta, GA.

If you are in the area, please reach out to me, **Brent Bracewell, 678-416-5749** and attend! You will be among family.

CHAPTER NEWS

**8th Air Force Historical Society
NY State Southern Wing Chapter
Joseph “Pat” Keeley
President
By David C. Levitt
Membership Manager**

Recently, Irving Goldstein, 99, a distinguished and decorated WWII veteran in our chapter was awarded the French Legion of Honor at his assisted living residence in Fresh Meadows, Queens, New York. Established by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802, the French Legion of Honor is the highest award France bestows. While there are thousands of WWII veterans who have documented missions in France—to be eligible, they must have participated in at least ONE of the four French campaigns: Normandy, Southern France, Northern France, or the Ardennes—Irving participated in all four. These veterans receive the FLOH at the rank of Chevalier (Knight) but, it cannot be awarded posthumously, so Irving’s ceremony was extremely special to all of us. Presenting the award on behalf of France, the Consul General of the French Embassy in Manhattan, Jérémie Robert, spoke with palpable emotion and gratitude, thanking Irving for his role in the liberation of France. Four Cold War era veterans from the Federation of French War Veterans of New York were on hand for the presentation of the award and rendered a well-deserved salute to Irving. The companion certificate which accompanies the French Legion of Honor and is signed by the president of France, Emmanuel Macron, reads, *“Warmest congratulations upon being awarded the Knight of the National Order of the Legion of Honor by the President of the French*



Republic. We express our deep appreciation and gratitude for your contribution. We will never forget the bravery of American WWII servicemen, of which you are, that France owes so much.”

Irving was moved to tears upon receiving his award surrounded only by close family, friends, staff, and guests. Due to COVID restrictions, the ceremony was quite intimate, but extremely moving.

Just over a year ago, on September 17, 2019, Irving was honored by the New York Yankees for his 90+ years as a Yankee’s fan, as 40,000+ fans cheered.

[Read the story in the December 2019 issue, 8th A F News]

During D-Day, the June 6th, 1944, invasion of German-held continental Europe, Irving flew as assistant crew chief on a C-47 cargo plane—he was actually a volunteer replacement for a crew chief who refused to fly on this dangerous first combat mission. C-47 crew chiefs were airplane mechanics who also functioned as a flight engineer while keeping their crew chief title. They were responsible for the maintenance and repairs on the ground for the plane to which they were assigned. Their assistants helped with work on the ground and only flew combat missions as a crew chief replacement. The crew chiefs were required members of the five-man flight crew that flew combat missions. During flights they monitored the aircraft’s mechanical systems and performed any emergency repairs needed

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while in flight. *As an aside, my own father was an airplane mechanic during WWII as well. Irving and I have had many interesting conversations!*

In the post-midnight skies over the Normandy coast, Irving's 439th Troop Carrier Group led other C-47 groups. Irving remembers, *"I heard the 'ping ping ping' as German bullets tore through my aircraft cabin."* Flying over the drop zone for paratroopers at 110 mph, Irving quickly and proficiently—ignoring the danger—kicked a 100+ lb machine gun and its parachute out of the cargo door, then released supplies. Next, Irving assisted the 101st Airborne paratroopers exit the plane—being careful not to fall out himself. As a side note, prior to an Airborne mission, the cargo door of the C-47 is removed so that paratroopers can safely jump unimpeded.

Irving also recalled that upon leaving the drop zone, German machine gun fire had severed the rudder controls on his C-47, rendering the plane difficult to steer. However, the skilled pilot made it back to base safely. The 439th TCG earned a Presidential Unit Citation for their superb performance during D-Day. For his skill and courage under fire, Irving was awarded an Air Medal and promoted to crew chief sergeant, then afterwards to staff sergeant.

Remembers Irving, *"Daily we airlifted thousands of gallons of gasoline to the front line so General Patton's tanks could keep up their rapid advance during the northern France campaign. On return flights, we carried wounded soldiers and just-liberated Americans and other Allied POWs."*

Two months after D-Day, Irving's troop carrier unit was one of the few that served in southern France. Irving's crew—along with several other crews—helped save the day during the Battle of the Bulge. According to Irving, *"We had to fly several missions through heavy anti-aircraft fire to airdrop urgently needed ammunition, supplies, and food to the beleaguered American troops surrounded by Germans in the key Belgian town of Bastogne."*

Once, while flying in a mission over the Netherlands during Operation Market Garden in September 1944, Irving's unit flew so low that the air crews could see the muzzle flashes from the anti-aircraft guns the Germans were firing. Irving was awarded a second Air Medal for actions he took when his C-47 suffered

major battle damage during the crossing of the Rhine River campaign through Belgium in March 1945.

During the closing months of the war in Europe—April into May 1945—Irving and the troop carrier groups continued airlifting gasoline to Patton's tanks as they advanced through Germany. Now, on return flights, in addition to carrying wounded troops and released POWs, their C-47s also carried ill concentration camp survivors to hospitals in Paris. Speaking Yiddish, Irving had a touching encounter with one of the survivors.

The war for Irving was very personal. Many of his close relatives perished in the Holocaust. Also, during combat missions he saw several C-47s get shot down with men whom he knew on board.

Before being discharged from the military, Irving received the French Croix de Guerre. During the past few years, Irving has continued to receive additional medals and honors including the French Jubilee of Liberty medal from the 8th Air Force Historical Society, two medals from New York State recognizing his military service, as well as a medal from our own local chapter.

With all these awards and honors bestowed upon him, Irving still retains his humility. *"I feel very honored. Many Americans and other Allied soldiers were lost in liberating France during WWII. I am deeply grateful that the French President, the Consul General, and others still remember what we did."*

Please check our website for current information which could change subject to our pandemic situation:

blogs.ny8thswcafhs.org

We meet from 11am to 3pm if you will be in the area and are interested in attending, please contact Pat Keeley [info on p.2].

Hope to see you there!

Photos previous page. Top: Irving Goldstein, center of the photo surrounded by family, friends, and staff immediately following his ceremony. Bottom: Irving relaxing during another great conversation!

46TH ANNUAL "VIRTUAL" REUNION

OCTOBER 24, 2020

Every year since the founding of the Historical Society in 1975, the Board of Directors has hosted an annual reunion. Sadly, the “physical” reunion which was planned for Memphis, TN, October 21-25, 2020, had to be canceled due to the ongoing pandemic caused by COVID-19.

However, by combining current communications technology with social media, the Society was able to hold a “virtual” reunion using ZOOM and live streaming via Facebook! The following is an overview along with screenshots (courtesy of long-time reunion photographer, Craig Dubishar) and a brief summary of our first ever, virtual reunion!



Anne Aubry Marek, president and treasurer of the Society, kicked off the reunion. Her father was a pilot with the 493rd BG stationed at Debach. After flying his 35 missions, he was able to come home. Anne, like many of us “next gens” in the Society, feel that by honoring one veteran, we honor ALL who served—including our dads.



Major General Mark Weatherington is the Commander, Eighth Air Force, and Commander, Joint-Global Strike Operations Center, Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana. “The Mighty Eighth” is responsible for the service’s bomber force and airborne nuclear command and control assets. The Joint Global Strike Operations Center serves as the central command and control node for all operations within Air Force Global Strike Command, orchestrating warfighting and readiness activities for the Commander, Air Forces Strategic.

General Weatherington has a very personal connection to the 8th Air Force. He and his team created a special video for our virtual reunion that focuses on the unique and enduring legacy the 8th Air Force.

Mick Hanou and **Jeff Duford** gave an incredibly eye-opening presentation on Delta Rebel 2, the plane they determined was actually the first to complete 25 missions in the ETO.



Mick Hanou has been interested in WWII aviation since childhood and spent much of his life helping at air shows here and “across the pond”.

He has developed a breadth of knowledge of the air war in Europe, has edited books and a TV documentary, and is respected by other historians for his attention to detail.

Mick is President of the 91st BG, loves to help out the WWII veterans, hear their stories and, most critically, keep their history alive.



Jeff Duford was the lead curator and project manager for the Memphis Belle Project. He has been a curator and historian at the National Museum of the US Air Force since 1998. In that time, he curated numerous exhibits across the Museum, worked closely with the Museum’s

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Restoration Division on more than 60 aircraft projects, interviewed for national and international television productions, and helped develop a rationalized aircraft layout and storyline for the Museum's exhibit galleries.

We were extremely fortunate to have three, top-notch authors as presenters during our virtual reunion.



Yvonne Caputo is a former teacher who taught in the Erie Pennsylvania Public Schools for 18 years. She has also been the head of human resources at a retirement community, a corporate trainer and consultant, and a psychotherapist. She has a masters degree in education and in clinical psychology. Her book, *Flying with Dad*, is the story of the relationship with her father through his telling of World War II stories.

Yvonne has always been a storyteller. She has used stories to widen the eyes of students, and to soften the pain of clients. It's her stories that garner her rave reviews as a presenter and speak-

er.

Yvonne lives in Pennsylvania with her best friend (who is also her husband). Together they have three children, three grandchildren, and a labradoodle.



Carole Webb Slater is an educator and community speaker. An author of several books including *Letters from the Heart 1943-1946* as well as published articles in national magazines and newspaper publications. Professionally, Carole worked as a program director for a statewide disability program at Vanderbilt Kennedy Center of Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN.

Since retirement, Carole has given numerous book presentations and currently teaches a popular five-week workshop on *How to Write a Memoir* at various locations in the middle Tennessee area including Vanderbilt Osher Learning Institute.

She lives with her husband in Thompson's Station, Tennessee, and is grateful to have an adult

son, daughter (son-in-law) and precious grandson living in the area.



A graduate of UCLA, **Steve Snyder** lives in Seal Beach, California.

In 2009, he retired from Vision Service Plan (VSP) after a 36 year career working in sales and sales management. He then began his quest to learn more about the World War II experiences of his father, pilot Howard Snyder, and the crew of the B-17 Susan Ruth. It became his passion, and after 4 ½ years of dedicated research, resulted in his book, *SHOT DOWN*, which has received 25 book awards.

A member of numerous World War II organizations, Steve is past president of the 306th Bomb Group Historical Association. He keeps very busy making PowerPoint presentations to all types of organizations and attending air shows around the country signing copies of his book. His 13 minute documentary, "Shot Down", was a powerful addition to his presentation.

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Lynn David is the son of Lt Clayton David who, at age 24, was co-pilot of a B-17. When returning from a bombing mission over Germany, Clayton bailed-out of his severely damaged plane over Holland on January 11, 1944. He evaded capture through Holland, Belgium and France and crossed the Pyrenees on April 15, 1944. Clayton retired as a Lt Col after over 20 years in the Air Force Reserves.

Lynn's mother, Lenora or Scotty as she was known, took as her "Mission in Life" to locate hundreds of evaders and encourage them to join AFEES where they could be reunited with some of their crew members and helpers from Europe.

Lynn has been in banking for over 50 years, attended over 20 AFEES reunions and coordinated the final 10 AFEES reunions. Lynn's presentation gave an overview of what evasion from the Germans involved in the European Theatre during World War II.

At the conclusion of Lynn's pre-



sentation, **Mick Hanou** again joined in to speak briefly about his mother's role as a Dutch "helper" during the war. He stressed how grateful the Dutch were to the Americans for liberating Holland.

After the "formal" presentations were concluded, we were then joined by two, WWII 8th Air Force veterans: **Teddy Kirkpatrick** [379th BG] and



Ralph Goldsticker [452nd BG].



Both Teddy and Ralph shared amazing stories with everyone.



Joseph Haenn [467th BG] came to us via a short video interview by Yvonne Caputo. It was a perfect way to end the day.



I was honored (and somewhat terrified) to be the ZOOM host for this event. We had a couple of bumps here and there, but we are beyond grateful to everyone who was able to participate—in both the program and in the audience!



Craig Dubishar--without his camera!

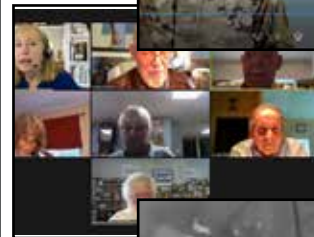
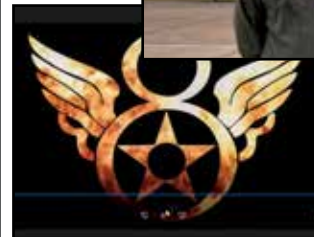
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Special thanks to:

- 8th AFHS Board members (Anne Marek, Eleesa Faulkner, L. Travis Chapin, and Dr. Vivian Rogers-Price) for all of their help and support.
- M/Gen Mark Weatherington, Justin Oakes, and William Lane Callaway william.callaway.1@us.af.mil for the phenomenal video they produced for us.
- Mick Hanou and Jeff Duford jeffrey.duford@us.af.mil, for their presentation on *Delta Rebel 2*.
- Yvonne Caputo yvonneauthor4@gmail.com
- Carole Webb Slater carolewebbslater@gmail.com
- Steve Snyder steve@stevesnyderauthor.com
- Lynn David LDavid@bankconsultants.com for sharing the incredible story of how his father evaded capture during his 3 month/1200+ mile journey.
- Teddy Kirkpatrick teddygkirkpatrick@gmail.com
- Ralph Goldsticker rgoldsticker@webtv.net
- Michael Faley, the creator and chief admin of our Facebook page, who made sure we could live stream our reunion to thousands of wonderful supporters!
- Craig Dubishar, who, sans camera this year, was still able to capture some unforgettable images of our "virtual" reunion via screenshots to share with all of us.



TAPS



Arlington National Cemetery.

Drache, Dr. Hiram M., 96, was born in Meriden, Minnesota, August 18, 1924, to Paul A. and Anna L. (Schulz) Drache.



He attended a two-room rural elementary school in Meriden, graduated from Owatonna High School in 1942, and enrolled at Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, Minn. World War II changed his educational plans, and on November 3, 1942, he joined 122 Gustavus male students who went to the Federal Building in Minneapolis to enlist. He enlisted as a cadet in the Army Air Corps November 6, 1942,

and served as a lead and squadron navigator with the 457th BG on B-17s on bombing raids over Germany. He was promoted to the rank of major on his discharge November 16, 1945. In 1947 he received his BA degree from Gustavus Adolphus and in 1948 a B. S. degree from Gustavus, his MA from the University of Minnesota in 1951, and his Ph.D. from the University of North Dakota in 1962.

On February 28, 1948, Hiram and Ada Marie Nelson were married at Lime Lake Lutheran Church in Avoca, Minnesota. The couple purchased a farm with Hiram's war-time savings, and they farmed near Owatonna while he taught high school at

Owatonna for two years and Ada worked as a secretary. In 1952, after earning his master's degree from the University of Minnesota, he was employed at Concordia College, Moorhead for one year. The couple moved back to Owatonna where he was employed as assistant to the treasurer at Federated Mutual Insurance company from 1953 to 1955. He realized he preferred teaching to corporate work, and in August 1955 he rejoined the faculty at Concordia and attended the University of North Dakota. Ada served as grammarian, typist and editor of his doctoral dissertation, which was published as his first book, *The Day of The Bonanza*. This was followed

by *The Challenge of The Prairie*, published in 1971; *Beyond The Furrow*, 1976; *Tomorrow's Harvest*, 1978; *Koochiching*, 1983; *Plowshares to Printouts* 1985; *Taming the Wilderness*, 1992; *History of U.S. Agriculture*, 1996; *Creating Abundance*, 2001; E.M. *Young Prairie Pioneer*, 2001; *A Century In The Park, a history of Oak Grove Lutheran School*, 2006; *Ministering to the needs of the least ... the last ... and the lost; a brief history of the Glad Tidings Mission, Fargo Union Mission and the New Life Center*, 2007; *Prairie Homestead to Wall Street*, a history of the Jones family, 2009; R.D. Offutt: *Success and Significance*, 2013; *Where's Meriden? The Demise of Small Town U.S.A.*, 2013; *Organics: It's All About the Money*, 2015; *Service Above Self, a History of the Lutheran Hospitals and Homes*, 2016.

He has one commissioned but unpublished book—*Window to The World, a Centennial History of Marvin Windows*. In 2019 he published *Innovators and Entrepreneurs of North Dakota and Northwest Minnesota*, and in 2020 his 19th and final book, *Retrospect and a Projection into the Future*. In addition, he was a contributing author to 8 other books, wrote 27 articles, 15 book reviews, 14 forewords and produced many audio and video cassettes.

In the 1960's he had a radio

program, "Tales of Bonanza Land," on station KFGO. He was a presenter at the symposium "Two Centuries of American Agriculture" sponsored by the USDA in Washington, D.C. in 1975. In 1976 he represented North Dakota on the NBC's *The Today Show* in its series on the Bicentennial. In 1980 he was a visiting scholar at the University of Arkansas. He was a presenter for several years at the famed International Stockmen's School. In 1981 he conducted a five-week speaking tour in New South Wales, Australia, sponsored by the Ministry of Agriculture and three agricultural businesses. For several years he was a guest lecturer at the American Graduate School of International Management at Glendale, Arizona. From 1958 to 2005 he gave 1089 speeches in 36 states, the District of Columbia, six provinces of Canada, Australia, Germany and Norway.

In 1977 he received the Award of Merit from Gamma Sigma Delta, University of Minnesota and the Distinguished Service Award from Gustavus Adolphus College. In 1978 *Cosmopolitan International* presented him with the Distinguished Service Award. In 2010 the Clay County Heritage award was followed in 2012 by the honorary degree Doctor of Letters from the University of North Dakota for being one of the premier interpreters of agriculture and entrepreneurship in

the region. As far as is known he is only one of three Concordia teaching faculty to be so honored. In 2015 he received the "Senior of the Year" award from Bethany Homes.

The Draches farmed at Baker, Minnesota, from 1950 to 1981 along with Hiram's teaching, writing, and speaking. The farming operation received nationwide publicity for its many innovations including a completely computerized record keeping system developed in 1966 for their feeding operation. In 1991 he retired from the classroom after having taught a total of 6,970 students who took two or more semesters from him. He served on various boards including the Agassiz Club, Clay County GOP, Clay County Farm Bureau, Oak Grove Lutheran School, Northwest Farm Managers Association, Minnesota Historical Society, Minnesota Humanities Commission, and the Minnesota Governor's Council on Employment and Training. He also served as finance director in ten campaigns for Minnesota Republican legislative candidates. He credits his wife Ada for her editing of his master's degree, Doctoral Papers and his first 15 books. His major avocational interests were reading and traveling which included five weeks in Australia and eight trips to Europe. He particularly enjoyed visiting with leading agricultural entrepreneurs about their ventures.

TAPS

He is survived by his wife, Ada; one daughter Kay (Loren Botner), St. Louis Park; two sons, David (Mary), Roseville; Paul (Lisa) Greeley, Colorado; seven grandchildren, 11 great grandchildren, one sister, Louise (Martin) Dorsey, of Roselle, Illinois, and several nieces and nephews.

Drapela, Joe, 96, passed away August 15, 2020, at Boone Ridge Senior Living Community in Salem, OR.



He was born in Milwaukee, WI, and as a youngster moved with his family to the Willamette Valley. While still attending high school, Joe volunteered for military service but was told to stay in school and finish high school. He was eventually drafted to fight in World War II. He was a staff sergeant with the 490th BG/850th BS. Joe was a tail gunner on a B-17 stationed at Eye Airfield (RAF Eye) located between Ipswich and Norwich, England. During his military service, he flew 31 bombing missions over Europe, including one over Berlin and received extra credit for flying lead position on several missions.

After attending business college on the GI Bill, Joe worked for many years at the State of Oregon Department of Revenue in Salem, OR. Joe enjoyed bowling, golfing, fishing, dancing, and hanging out in his hammock with his grand-

children. Survivors include wife of 68 years, Mary Jean; children, Debbie, Gary, Karen, and Scot; grandchildren, Nathan, Taylor, Nicole, and Danica, and; stepsister, Irene Pietrok and her children, Jim and Cecelia.

Kotora, Harold J., 97, passed away Wed. Aug. 12, 2020, in Aurora, CO. at the age of 97.



He was preceded in death by his wife, Eileen (Kalivoda)

Kotora and parents James and Agnes (Rabiega) Kotora. He is survived by: Daughter: Kim Criter, Son, Hal Kotora, Jr., brothers, James (wife Leona), Raymond, a sister Geraldine Gregory, grandsons, Kurt and Kip Criter and great granddaughters, Lilly and Kensley Criter. Harold was a WW II veteran having served in the Army Air Corp as a P-51 Mustang fighter pilot as a proud member of the 339th Fighter Group, stationed in England. The group received the Presidential Citation Award for their service. After the war he returned to Chicago where he married Eileen Kalivoda and start-



ed his lifelong career as a commercial artist.

Kramer, COL William W., 99, (USA retired)

passed away peacefully on August 21, 2020, at Falcons Landing in Potomac Falls, Virginia, a month shy of his 100th birthday. Born on September 23, 1920, in New York City, he was the proud and devoted son of immigrants Mollie and Samuel Kramer.

After graduating from Brooklyn College and starting law school, he joined the Army Air Corps during World War II as a navigator. Based in Debach, England, he flew 30 bombing missions as squadron navigator in the 493rd BG. A recipient of the Distinguished Flying Cross, he also received the French Legion of Honor for his service in the war.

After the war ended, he completed law school at George Washington University and rejoined the Army in the Judge Advocate General's Corps. He served as an Army lawyer, judge, and appellate judge. After retiring from the Army in 1970, Col. Kramer practiced law in Washington, D.C. for almost twenty years.

In the summer of 1948, Bill Kramer met Sylvia Steinberg of East Schodack, New York, at Camp Milford in Connecticut. After less than a year of a long-distance romance, they were married on July 10, 1949. Bill and Sylvia were deeply devoted to each other until she passed away in 2011.

Col. Kramer is survived by his loving family, his three children and their spouses, Jeff Kramer (Christina Kramer), Gilda Kramer

(Sam Adenbaum), and Mimi Kramer-Roberts (John Roberts), and six grandchildren, Josh Roberts, Jacob Adenbaum, Molly Roberts, Alex Kramer, Philip Kramer, and Ben Adenbaum.

Malarz, CPT Chester, 99, of Charlotte, NC, husband of the late Mary Culbreath Malarz, passed away on September 16, 2020. Captain Malarz was



born in Buffalo, NY, the only child of Anthony Casper Malarz and Mildred Eleanor Rodanski. He married Mary Elizabeth Culbreath of Tampa, FL on April 30, 1945. They lived in Charlotte from 1949-1965, and in Atlanta, GA before moving back to Charlotte in 2011. He served as a P-51 fighter pilot with the 8th Air Force, 339th FG in England during WWII. Captain Malarz flew as a pilot for Eastern Airlines for 34 years, retiring in 1980. He was a member of Quiet Birdmen, Retired Eastern Pilots Assoc., Silver Wings, 8th Air Force Historical Society, 339th Fighter Group Assoc., and Veterans of Foreign Wars. Chet is survived by sons Bob Malarz (Marsha) of Charlotte, Charlie Malarz (Rebecca) of Atlanta, daughter Jean Wood (Stacey) of Charlotte, grandchildren Steve Malarz, Carly Baucom (Ryan), Richard Wood and Andy Wood (Alison); great-grandchildren Lily

Baucom and Riley Baucom, all of Charlotte.

Martin, Clyde J., 97, of Mackinaw, passed away Aug. 18, 2020, at Hopedale Nursing Home. Clyde was born Feb. 21, 1923, in Danvers, to Orva



Clyde and Mary Alice Hargitt Martin. He married Ethelene I. Hasty Jan. 11, 1945. Clyde is survived by his wife of 75 years, Ethelene; one daughter, Susan (Dale) Zierten, Racine, Wisconsin; four sons, Larry (Patricia) Martin, Woodstock; Bob (Donna) Martin, Ballwin, Missouri; Dan (Janet) Martin, Morton; Tom (Colleen) Martin, Farmington; eight grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. Clyde graduated from Danvers High School in 1942. He participated in the U.S. Civilian Conservation Corps. The money he earned there, he sent home to financially help his mother. He completed his senior year of high school and enlisted in the Air Force. He became a second lieutenant and navigator in the 8th Air Force 452nd BG. During the war, his B17 was shot down over the Netherlands in 1944. He was MIA for six months, while the Dutch underground helped him return to England. Clyde continued his fond feelings for the Dutch people by always having a small windmill in his flower garden. He was

discharged in 1945. Using the GI bill, he graduated from University of Illinois and became a CPA. Clyde worked for Genoli and Co. CPA firm in Peoria. In 1987 he took a position as controller for Otto Baum Construction until he retired in 1995. During his working years he was secretary treasurer for Mackinaw Township Cemetery for 40 years, an elder and Sunday school teacher at Mackinaw Christian Church, a 70-year member and past commander of Mackinaw American Legion. He served two terms on the Deer Creek Mackinaw District 701 School Board. In 1954, Clyde, (along with Dallas and Don Embry) introduced Little League Baseball in Mackinaw.

Rankin, Dr. Clifford Hofstedt, 99, of Spokane, Washington, passed away peacefully on September 4, 2020. He is survived by his wife, Carol Phillips



Rankin of Spokane, WA; daughters Barbara Shaub of Snohomish WA, Diane (Dean) Sonnenberg of Spokane, WA; grandchildren Marci (Keane) Sweet of Woodinville, WA, Kiel (Christina) Shaub of Seattle, WA, Rane (Liza) Shaub of Seattle, WA, McCall Shaub of Snohomish, WA; and step-children Marcie (Jim) Paul, Jay (Kim) Phillips, Janet Phillips, and their children. Preceded in

death by his first wife, Helen Rankin of Spokane, WA; son Peter Rankin, of Missoula, MT; and grandson Benjamin Sonnenberg of Spokane, WA. Graduate of Lewis & Clark High School class of 1939, of Washington State University class of 1943, and received his Doctorate of Dentistry from the University of Oregon. Cliff served his country in WWII as a B-17 pilot with the 493rd BG, completing 33 missions over Germany. In addition to practicing dentistry for 37 years, he was an avid carpenter, cork pad maker, blacksmith, potter, and scuba diver during his lifetime. A lover of jokes, stories, and good conversation, Cliff brought his enthusiasm for life wherever he went. He enjoyed traveling the world with his friends and family, and working on home improvement projects with his children. But whether it was a trip to China, Hawaii, or Lake Pend Oreille, he was always happiest when Carol was by his side. We will miss him dearly, but will also be forever grateful to have shared part of our lives with such a wonderful man. A sincere thank you to Jim Allen of The Spokesman-Review for the article *"A War for the Right Reasons,"* (Sept. 2, 2020), and to all his wonderful caregivers at

Comfort Keepers, Family First, and Hospice of Spokane.

Storey, Wallace A., 97, of



Spartanburg, SC, passed away on September 4, 2020. Born November 19, 1922, he was the son of the late Paul Eugene and Ethel Cooley Storey of Greenville, SC. He was predeceased by his wife of 71 years, Martha Ray Lasseter Storey.

Mr. Storey was raised in Greenville, SC, graduated from Greenville High School in 1940, where he was Vice-President of his class and Business Manager of the Annual. He attended Clemson University and graduated with degrees in both Mechanical and Electrical Engineering in 1947. He was President of Tau Beta Pi, honorary Engineering Society and a member of Phi Kappa Phi, honorary Scholastic Society. He served in World War II as a B-17 Pilot in the 384th BG, completing thirty-five combat missions and being awarded 16 medals and combat ribbons. He remained in the US Air Force Reserve and retired as a Lieutenant Colonel in 1982. After graduation from Clemson, he worked with the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, (now NASA) before joining Milliken and Company. In 1948 he married Martha Ray Lasseter of Decatur, Georgia, and they became Spartanburg residents. He was Vice-president and Director of Engineering at Milliken, designing over 40 Milliken facilities before retiring in 1987. He continued as a Consultant to Milliken for many years. Mr. Storey was a Registered Professional Engineer,

a life member of the National Society of Professional Engineers, of which he was past President of the Spartanburg Chapter and "Engineer of the Year" in 1971. He was past president of the American Textile Managerial Engineers Society and recipient of their first "Outstanding Member" award. He was on the Advisory Board for Engineering at Clemson University, a Wofford Trustee, and recipient of a Distinguished Service Award from Wofford College. He was Chairman of the American Textile Industries "Environmental Preservation Committee" and was Project Coordinator for the Airport Commission on Design and Construction of the GSP Airport Expansion, and a member of the GSP Airport Commission from 1989 to 2012.

Mr. Storey was a long time member of Bethel United Methodist Church, serving as President of the Young Adult Department, Loyalty Class President and Teacher, General Program Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Building Committee member for the construction of the Education Building, Chairman of the Building Committee for the Activities Building, Chairman of the Administrative Board, Chairman of the Pastor-Parish Committee and Lay Leader. Mr. Storey was also active in community activities.

Mr. Storey was a founding member of the Carolina Country Club, being organizer and coordinator

of the Design Team. He was also Chairman of their Architectural Review Committee for many years. In 2008, Mr. Storey received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Spartanburg Clemson University Booster Club. To recognize the contributions Col. Storey made to the U.S. War Effort in World War II, the Warbirds of South Carolina, Inc., presented Col. Storey with the “Warbird of the Year” award in 2009. On October 15, 2016, he was honored by Clemson University as “Hero of the Game” at the Clemson/NC State game. He is survived by a son, Wallace A. Storey, Jr. (Catherine), a daughter, Susan Storey Simpson (Dwight), a brother, Paul Eugene Storey, Jr (Mary Louise), a granddaughter, Jennifer Delmarco (Danny), a grandson, James Storey (Heather), a granddaughter, Kristina Robbins (Slade), a granddaughter, Caroline Schell (David), and eight great-grandchildren.

Stoullil, Donald W., 99, passed away September 1, 2020.



Born January 4, 1921 in Olivia, MN to William & Frances Stoullil, he was preceded in death by wife,

Shirley, brothers Arthur, Larry and Gordon, sisters Marcella and Margaret. Survived by son John (Jack) and daughters Mary, Therese and Barbara, her husband Timothy Carolan and grandson

Nicholas (wife Veronica great grandkids Fabian and Blake) granddaughter Katie (great grandkids Madison and Parker). Don graduated from Olivia High School in 1938 and went on to the College of St. Thomas. In 1941 as a member of the MN National Guard he was called into service and spent over four years in active duty. He served as a B-17 Bomber Pilot in the 303rd BG. He took part in the historic D-Day invasion and flew a total of 31 missions in WWII. Don also served in the Korean War. As a “weekend warrior” he served twenty years in the Minnesota Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve. Don was a long-time devoted member of Sacred Heart Parish with over sixty years of faithful service. He loved the Vikings, the Twins and the Golden Gopher Football team. Don was a devoted husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather who loved to garden and always had a joke to tell.

Thorns, William M., 96, of Santa



Rosa Beach, FL, entered eternity to be with his Lord and Savior on May 10, 2020. He was born in Pittsburgh, PA, to Walter

William Thorns and Helen Lenore Matthews. Those who knew Bill (Dad or Pop) will always remember his love for God, his devotion to his family and his patriotism for our country.

Bill served in the United States Army Air Corps from 1941-1945. While stationed in England SSgt William Thorns flew 25 missions in a B17 as Flight Engineer and Top Turret Gunner with the 96th BG. His medals include: Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal, Presidential Unit Citation for the Regensburg, Germany mission and the French Legion of Honor for his participation in liberating France. After his 25 missions overseas Bill completed his military service by instructing new recruits back in the States on the B17.

Bill then attended the University of Pittsburgh and graduated with a BS degree in Chemical Engineering. It was during this time that he met the love of his life, Dorothy May.

He and Dorothy raised their five children in Hickory Hills, Illinois. During those years Bill worked for Stepan Chemical, was busy volunteering at church, was on the local School Board, attended his children’s activities when he could and played more than a few games of golf!

Bill remained active during his retirement years. He served as President of the 96th BG for fifteen years and later became Chaplain. Bill and Dorothy traveled all over the United States and Europe attending 96th Bomb Group/Mighty Eighth Air Force reunions. They also enjoyed time with family at their cottage near South Haven, Michigan, where he would spend hours fishing on the

lake. He wrote two books and his hobbies included building and flying remote control planes and of course...golf!

Bill and Dorothy moved to Santa Rosa Beach in April 2016 where they resided at Somerby Assisted Living. Bill especially enjoyed two Bible studies he attended every week, concerts on Sundays and many other activities.

William (Bill) was preceded in death by his parents Walter W. Thorns and Helen L. Matthews, wife Dorothy A. Thorns, son James F. Thorns, brothers Harry T. Thorns and Robert C. Thorns. He is survived by his daughters, Cathy Susan (Kenneth) Stam, Sarah Ann (Charles) Conroy, sons William John (Tracy) Thorns and Daniel Joseph (Michele) Thorns, daughter-in-law Sonya Thorns, eleven grandchildren, fifteen great grandchildren and one great-great grandchild.

Thurston, Merton Charles, 95,



went to be with his Lord, on June 11, 2020, in Peoria, Arizona. He was born in Washington, MI, on September 28, 1924, to Ammon and Ellen (Gustafson) Thurston. After graduating from Romeo High School, class of 1942, he joined the US Army Air Corps December 5, 1942. In March, 1944, Merton became a crew member on a B-17 bomber with the 96th BG/338th BS, located in Snetterton Heath, England.

Mert was a radio operator and gunner. The nine-member crew flew 35 missions over Germany, Poland, France, Holland and Belgium. Merton was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal with a Presidential Citation.

On one of the training mission breaks, he married his high school sweetheart, Elaine June Perkins January 8, 1944, in Dalhart, TX. After the war ended, he and Elaine lived in Romeo, Michigan. In 1949, Merton decided to return to the Air Force, to utilize experience and skills gained during the war. The majority of time he was responsible for radar repair and maintenance. He and his family moved frequently within the states and a few overseas stations for isolated tours of duty. He served in WWII, Korean conflict, and the Vietnam War. Merton retired from the Air Force in 1968 as Senior Master Sergeant after serving over 21 years. From 1968 to 1985 he worked for the United States Civil Service.

Merton and Elaine moved to Sun City, Arizona, to spend retirement in warm weather. He stayed in touch with friends made while in the Air Force, especially the WWII flight crew. He usually attended the annual 8th Air Force Reunion, maintaining friendships made throughout the years. Merton enjoyed sending cards, notes and gifts to others to let them know how much he cared about them. He will be missed by many including special friend,

Frances Palsma, from Springfield, South Dakota.

Merton left behind daughter Carol Thurston Tucker, son-in-law Lester Thomas Tucker, son, James Thurston, daughter-in-law Patricia Rowden Thurston and grandchildren Michele Tucker Wolf, Michael Tucker, Matthew Thurston and Laura Thurston, two siblings, Marcia Thurston Stephens and John Thurston and many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents Ammon and Ellen Thurston, wife Elaine Perkins Thurston, and siblings Jean Thurston Evans, James Thurston, and Barbara Thurston Perkins Revitzer.

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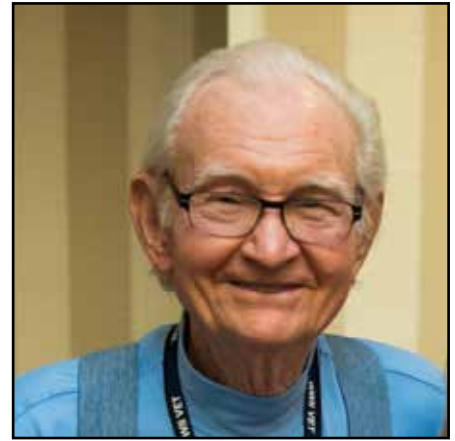
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HOW ABOUT IT!

Hang In There!

Earl Wassom 466th BG, Chaplain 8th AFHS



It was late afternoon. A little 7 year old boy was running as fast as he could towards his house at the end of a dusty trail. He did this every school day. His school was a one-room, eight-grade facility with 25 students and over two miles away from his prairie home. Walking home on that lonely stretch of country road was very routine and boring day-in and day-out. But today was different. He rushed up the road, turned to the lane leading to his house, leaped up on the porch, slammed the screen door open and shouted to his astonished mother who was preparing the evening meal for the family. “*Mama, Mama, guess what...President Hoover offered me a ride home.*” “*What???????*” she exclaimed. “*Yes mama, I was walking along when this big black shiny car pulled up to me and stopped. A nice man wearing a suit and hat rolled down the window and asked me if he could take me home. I thanked him for the offer but my Mama and Daddy told me to never get in a car with anyone I didn’t know without their permission. He smiled and drove away. Just think, The President of the United States talked to me and offered me a ride!!!!!!!!!!*”

That experience had a profound effect on me.

First, I found out that the nice man in the shining black car was **not** Herbert Hoover, President of the United States, but I did know that we had a President over the country in which I lived whose name was Herbert Hoover. Being a seven-year-old student in a one-room school, we had no curriculum

called Political Science or Civics. I suppose I learned it from my ‘dirt farmer’ dad or my mother who was born in England. Both were very patriotic, loved America and we had a flag which we proudly flew in our yard.

I knew the name of our state capital, Governor, and Senator.

We had a radio, phone and a weekly newspaper and with these we kept up with the news of the world.

I learned that Franklin D. Roosevelt was our next President of the United States. He did not inherit a very easy job. It started with a drought followed by strong winds which created the ‘dust bowl’. This condition in the southwestern part of the country created water shortages, loss of crops, and death of livestock. Also, joblessness, homelessness, poverty, crime, and a financial crash that was called the ‘great depression’. Just as financial recovery was underway, the U.S. was suddenly drawn into an unwanted world war when attacked by Germany and Japan. This conflict lasting 5 years caused untold suffering and death, but peace followed.

Demobilization of over seven million soldiers and their return to civilian life was accomplished. This transition to normalcy involved the entire population. They desired to get back to their home town, get an education, start a career, find a wife, buy a home, start a family, and to pursue the American Dream. During the years from 1950 forward, they faced yet more war and the Cold War with Communism, but

were always ready to move forward. When there was an opportunity available, they took advantage of it. If there was not one, they created one.

Look around you. These people probably had something to do with what you are seeing. They invented instruments to examine the innermost details of matter and to also explore the universe. They tamed the atom and introduced the digital age. Their accomplishments included modes of travel, agriculture, medicine, education, law, construction, energy, human behavior, and much more. One journalist even called them “*the greatest generation.*” They were great and when they retired from their jobs they did not stop. They volunteered for worthy causes. They were entrepreneurs. Many are not still alive!

A veteran of WWII in our town recently celebrated his 100th birthday. When he was asked, he declared: “*...the secret, don’t give up, keep on doing something. Don’t get cantankerous because you are old or mad because you’re not going to live too long!*” This is an attitude worth cultivating. Another that is worthy, is to seek peace. We find peace not in the world but rather in ourselves through Christ who promised, “*My peace I give to you...not as the world gives.*” All of this is worth the wait, so.....**HANG IN THERE!**



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