

March 2025



8TH AF NEWS

Volume 25 Number 1 Voice of "The Mighty Eighth"



51st Annual 8th AFHS REUNION
50th Anniversary of the Founding of the 8th AFHS
Colorado Springs, CO
October 1-5, 2025
INFO INSIDE! pp.16-21



8th AF News

Voice of "The Mighty Eighth"

OFFICERS

President

Paul W Tibbets IV (Angelle) 2025
5422 Cypress Point Lane
Gonzales, LA 70737
(225) 773-1983 cell
p2a2tibbets@gmail.com

Vice President

Eleesa Faulkner 2026
58 Drake St
Pueblo, CO 81005
(719) 252-9170
ekf58@aol.com

Treasurer

Anne A Marek (Rick) 2025
2 Logan Ct
Mendham, NJ 07945
(201) 960-1783 cell
(973) 543-8832 home
majorsoldsack@verizon.net

Secretary

Kevin E Wilson, PhD (Ellen) 2025
5937 Woodfield Dr
Kernersville, NC 27284
(336) 407-3290
kewilsonphd@aol.com

Directors:

Mark Klingensmith (Wanda) 2025
420 Glenmeade Rd
Greensburg, PA 15601-1138
(724) 787-3063 cell
mrkent54@comcast.net

Steve Snyder (Glenda) 2025
601 Seabreeze Dr
Seal Beach, CA 90740
(562) 355-0461 cell
palmsny@gmail.com

Chapter/Unit Liaison

Mark Klingensmith (Wanda) 2025
420 Glenmeade Rd
Greensburg, PA 15601-1138
(724) 787-3063 cell
mrkent54@comcast.net

8th AFHS National Office

Managing Director/Editor

Debra D Kujawa (Joe)
68 Kimberlys Way
Jasper, GA 30143-4769
(912) 748-8884
ManagingDirector@8thafhs.org

INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

UNITED KINGDOM

UK Representative/Curator AAM

Hattie Hearn
104 Barclay Road
Norwich, NFK
NR7 9QT
United Kingdom
011 4477623 28575
the8thafhsuk@yahoo.com

8th AFHS UK Historian

Paul Bellamy
6 Station Road
Holme, PTE PE7 3PH
United Kingdom
011 4477623 28575
the8thafhsuk@yahoo.com

Education & Outreach, UK

Sophie Green
10 Saxtead Rd
Framlingham
Woodbridge, SFK IP13 9HE
United Kingdom
011 4473932 08000
sophiegreen95th@gmail.com

BELGIUM

Edouard Renière

Chaussée de Roodebeek 305--Bte 5
1200 Brussels Belgium
Riiren.belsuo@skynet.be

FRANCE

Jean-Paul Favrais

La Haye-Ouisais N. 85
35310 Breal
France
Jeanpaulfavrais1@orange.fr

CHIEF OF VETERANS AFFAIRS & EDUCATION

Joan Garber

112 Birch Tree PL
Daytona Beach, FL 32117
(386) 679-1221
jbey3646@gmail.com

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Cover: Pilots of the 357th Fighter Group. (L-R) Lt Bill Overstreet, Lt Kayser, Bud Anderson and Lt Eddie Simpson discuss their quarter kill on the He-111K with 363rd FS Intel Officer Captain Ed DeNigris. Story on p.24.

Contacts.....	2
Editor's Notes	3
President's Briefing.....	4
Treasurer's Ledger	5
Keep 'em Flying	6
Across the Pond	7-13
National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force News.....	14-15
51st Annual Reunion Info	16-21
92nd Bomb Group News	22-23
Remembering Bud Anderson..	24-26
Man for All Seasons.....	27-29
Taps.....	30
How About It!	31-back cover

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 not for profit corporation. EIN: 59-1757631
The 8th A F News is distributed to members of the Society and is not for public sale.

National office is located at:

**68 Kimberlys Way
Jasper, GA 30143-4769**

EDITOR'S NOTES



This year marks the 81st anniversary of D-Day. As many of you know, plans are underway to bring WWII 8th Air Force vets back to Normandy for a special celebration and dedication. While this is a noble and amazing effort, in reality there are only a handful of ETO vets who have not crossed that 100+ year-old threshold. I worry that down-the-line, D-Day and other pivotal historic events connected with WWII will fade into obscurity.

Here in the US, history, especially about WWII, has been reduced to a few paragraphs in student's textbooks. They learn almost nothing about the horrors of the Holocaust...the death marches...or just how close Hitler came to conquering all of Europe and the UK. And the attack on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese is barely a date to memorize for a history test—if that.

I had a great education growing up. But until I first stepped foot in the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force back in 2000, I was immediately overwhelmed by how much history I didn't know. Having the privilege and honor of getting to know hundreds of WWII veterans, many of whom came directly from the pages of history, has changed my life forever.

For the past twenty-five years I have shared the stories,

the history of not only the men and women of the 8th Air Force, but of the helpers, those enduring the unimaginable hardship of the war in the UK and on the Continent, with hundreds if not a thousand people or more. But that's not enough.

This year the Historical Society celebrates 50 years! Fifty years of preserving this incredible history. But we cannot do it alone. Our members used to number over 20,000 WWII veterans. Sadly, time has drastically reduced those numbers. We don't WANT to continue as a Society, society NEEDS us to continue as an organization.

The Eighth was born in 1942 to stop the Nazi war machine in the ETO. It didn't end there. Today, the Eighth responds globally to protect freedom wherever the need.

Please help us continue to educate others on the history of the past so that it never becomes the history of our present. Teach your children, grandchildren, etc. Renew your membership. Tell others about us. We cannot grow without you. See you all in Colorado!

Deb



Please JOIN or RENEW with the Eighth Air Force Historical Society TODAY!!!



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

Address: _____ City: _____ State/County: _____

Zip/Postal Code: _____ Country: _____ Email: _____

Phone: _____ 8th Affiliation/Interest [optional]: _____

Membership Annual Dues: \$60 or £50 *outside US*

Includes digital copy of 8th A F News ONLY~ *Hard copies are \$25 US or £20 outside US (annually)*

Credit Card # _____ CVV: _____ Exp. Date: _____ Amount: _____

Visa, MasterCard, or American Express ONLY--A \$2.00 processing fee will be added to all credit card purchases!

Please make checks payable to 8th AFHS

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.

US Residents PLEASE mail to:
8th AFHS, 68 Kimberlys Way
Jasper, GA 30143-4769
(912) 748-8884

UK/European Residents PLEASE mail to:
Hattie Hearn, 104 Barclay Rd, Norwich, NFK
NR7 9QT
477623 28575

JOIN/RENEW ONLINE: www.8thAFHS.org

PRESIDENT'S BRIEFING

Paul W Tibbets IV President



Hello Society Members!

As we have shared in recent announcements and publications for 2024 and 2025, we are celebrating 50 years of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society, founded in 1975! During our fantastic reunion in New Orleans, we kicked off this celebration with our 50th Anniversary Reunion. Plans are in full swing, as you will see in this issue of AF News, for our gathering in Colorado Springs to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Founding of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society, October 1-5, 2025! This will be a reunion you don't want to miss:

- **Hotel:** we are staying at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Colorado Springs, just minutes from downtown Colorado Springs with a breathtaking view of Pikes Peak. Due to the anticipated turnout, we have also arranged two overflow hotels: Fairfield Inn & Suites and Courtyard, both in the Colorado Springs South area near the DoubleTree. Reservation information is on p19 (this issue) and on our website as well.
- **Tours:** we have some exciting tours available for you and your family! These include the Foothills & Garden of the Gods Jeep Tour, the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA), and the National Museum of WWII Aviation.
- **Speakers:** you are in for a special treat! Thursday night we will hear a fantastic presentation on NORAD from General Gregory Guillot, Commander, United States Northern Command and North American Aerospace Defense Command, Peterson Space Force Base, Colorado. At our Gala Saturday evening, General Stephen Whiting, Commander, U.S. Space Command, Peterson Space Force Base, Colorado will discuss today's Space Force. I am so proud of both of these gentlemen, who are classmates of mine from the USAFA Class of 1989 and now 4-star generals. They clearly did much better with their careers than I did!
- **Merchandise:** we are bringing back 8th Air Force Historical Society merchandise! For the reunion, we are pre-selling polo shirts and challenge coins. These will be pre-order ONLY. All the details are up on our website...keep an eye out! **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Reunion registration can now be done on our website. Check it out!

Your Board remains focused on our five Focus Areas for this year. I would like to highlight the ongoing work to Expand 8 AFHS relationship with the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force. I was invited to provide an update to the Museum leadership at their recent quarterly board meeting in

Pooler, which was very well received. What an honor! This collaboration between the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force and the 8th Air Force Historical Society seeks to preserve, promote, and educate the public about the rich history and enduring legacy of the 8th Air Force. By combining efforts, both organizations aim to ensure that the 8th Air Force's vital contributions during World War II—and beyond—remain relevant and accessible for future generations. In this vein, our goals include:

- Continue Museum participation in 8th Air Force reunions and feature Society articles in Museum publications.
- Expand interactive components in Society reunions at the Museum to increase participation.
- Develop a shared database system to enhance access to historical records.
- Increase the frequency of joint programs, such as educational workshops and veteran-led discussions, to engage younger audiences.

As a reminder, I encourage all of you to check out our 8th Air Force Historical Society website at <https://www.8thafhs.org>. As I previously reported, we have completely re-hosted the website and database, and added new functionality to both. Many thanks to our webmaster, Garrett Jaxon, Owner, Flint & Flux Creative Group, for all his dedicated hard work to our Society!

- Online Reunion Registration
- 8th Air Force Roll of Honor, fully searchable
- 8th Air Force Operations Research Database, fully searchable
- Chronology of Historical Highlights of Eighth Air Force Post-World War II
- Keep 'em Flying Active Donors List
- 8 AF News Magazine Archive, with Members-Only access for current issues
- Updated links on 8th Air Force Units and Partners
- Biographies on Society Board Members

Wishing everyone a wonderful 2025!

Respectfully,

Paul

Paul Tibbets
President, 8 AFHS

March 2025 (25-1)

TREASURER'S LEDGER

Anne Marek
Treasurer

Greetings everyone -

I'm including in this issue of AF News the financial position of the Society for the period ending December 31, 2024. Our year-end Profit and Loss Statement and the Statement of Financial Position are printed here. Our annual reunion is one of our greatest expenses each year. In 2024 our income was \$158K with expenses of \$163K, leaving a deficit of \$4K. AF News also represents a large expense for us totally approximately \$33K. Income from both the Keep 'em Flying Giving Campaign and the generous donations of our members enabled us to show a small profit at year's end of \$3.6K.



In addition, our investment portfolio at Oppenheimer & Co increased from an opening balance of \$192K to a closing balance of \$217K, an increase of \$24K, or approximately 12%. Mr. Gavin Natelli, our account executive, continues to recommend no changes at this time.

The Keep 'em Flying Giving Campaign was created in March, 2023, in order to stabilize the Society's resources. In 2024, our very generous members donated a total of \$18K across the various membership levels. Details of the program appear in AF News, and the individuals and their donation amounts are printed on our website, 8thAFHS.org. I will continue to report on the progress of this initiative.

If any of you have any questions regarding our financial position, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. My contact information can be found on page 2. Respectfully submitted,

Anne
Anne A. Marek,
Treasurer, 8thAFHS

Profit and Loss	
January - December 2024	
	Total
Income	
4000 Income/Miscellaneous	
4006 Account Processing Fees	481.00
4010 Member Dues Annual	21,551.20
4012 Magazine Subscriptions	6,750.00
4013 Magazine Income	255.00
4014 Chapter Closings	3,687.40
4015 Keep 'em Flying	18,000.00
4019 Member Contributions/Donations	25,248.28
4022 Merchandise	6,041.00
Total 4000 Income/Miscellaneous	\$ 85,011.88
4050 Investment Income	
4058 Portfolio Dividends & Interest	1,689.00
4060 Unrealized Gain(Loss) on Invest	21,192.20
Total 4050 Investment Income	\$ 22,881.20
Total Income	\$ 107,893.68
Gross Profit	\$ 107,893.68
Expenses	
5100 National Administration Expense	
5103 Officers/Directors Meeting Exp.	159.90
5108 Web Site Expense	1,899.00
5111 Corporation Charges	200.00
5121 8AF History Projects	334.10
5122 8AF Museum Support	100.00
Total 5100 National Administration Expense	\$ 2,683.00
5200 Magazine Expenses	
5210 Printing Expenses	24,904.82
5220 Postage Expenses	7,262.51
5240 Layout/Design	675.75
Total 5200 Magazine Expenses	\$ 32,843.08
5300 National Office Expenses	
5303 Telephone/DOL	729.21
5304 Supplies	2,726.34
5305 Abila Software/ Computer Exps	2,861.26
5306 Accounting Support	1,138.50
5307 Office Rent	1,200.00
5308 Insurance	306.00
5312 FICA-8AFHS portion	3,327.86
5313 Payroll/ Office Management	43,600.00
5315 Postage & Shipping	1,343.22
5316 Bank Charges/ Returned checks	0.03
5323 Merchant Account Usage Fees	6,395.03
5326 Payroll processing fees	986.00
Total 5300 National Office Expenses	\$ 64,512.45
Total Expenses	\$ 100,648.53
Net Operating Income	\$ 7,845.15
Other Income	
6550 Annual Meeting Revenue	10,895.34
6551 Event Registration	145,412.28
6552 Other Charges/Rebates	1,452.52
6555 Tours	82.00
Total 6550 Annual Meeting Revenue	\$ 157,782.14
Total Other Income	\$ 157,782.14
Other Expenses	
7100 Annual Meeting Expenses	
7101 Supplies & Items for Sale	7,171.70
7103 Hotel Expense/Catering	120,237.13
7104 Tours/Transportation	31,838.00
7106 Reimbursements	1,789.00
7109 Guest Expenses	1,000.00
Total 7100 Annual Meeting Expenses	\$ 162,035.83
Total Other Expenses	\$ 162,035.83
Net Other Income	-\$ 4,243.69
Net Income	\$ 3,601.46

Statement of Financial Position	
As of December 31, 2024	
	Total
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
1017 Oppenheimer & Co	201,403.27
1040 Bank of America Checking Acct.	11,402.12
1041 B of A Deposits in Transit	0.00
1042 Bank of America Savings Acct.	43.83
Total Bank Accounts	\$ 212,849.22
Accounts Receivable	
1100 Accounts Receivable	0.00
Total Accounts Receivable	\$ 0.00
Other Current Assets	
1200 Prepaid Expenses	0.00
1201 Undeposited Funds	0.00
Total Other Current Assets	\$ 0.00
Total Current Assets	\$ 212,849.22
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 212,849.22
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
2000 Accounts Payable	0.00
Total Accounts Payable	\$ 0.00
Credit Cards	
Card Assets - Everywhere Card	0.00
Total Credit Cards	\$ 0.00
Other Current Liabilities	
2050 Payroll & Taxes Payable	-34,022.23
2051 Payroll payable	2,896.57
2052 FICA & withhold taxes payable	41,765.06
Total 2050 Payroll & Taxes Payable	\$ 10,639.40
2500 Accrued Expenses	0.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$ 10,639.40
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 10,639.40
Total Liabilities	\$ 10,639.40
Equity	
3100 Unrestricted Net Assets	0.00
3200 *Unrestricted Net Assets	198,008.36
Net Income	3,601.46
Total Equity	\$ 202,209.82
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$ 212,849.22



“Keep ‘em Flying” Giving Campaign
Honor your veteran or loved one!



The Board of Directors of the 8th Air Force Historical Society is continuing its on-going Giving Campaign. Our mission is to keep our administrative functions operational. Historically they run on a \$12-15,000 yearly deficit which has been partially covered by member donations when they send in their annual membership dues. We need the Society to have a more defined and reliable source of income.

We can accomplish our mission by establishing a group of members who are committed to keeping the Society financially solvent. This investment is renewable annually. In this way, the Society will continue to preserve the legacy of our family members and loved ones who continually put their lives in danger and in some cases made the ultimate sacrifice. You are still able to join our “Keep ‘em Flying” Giving Campaign in just your name, but **you now have the opportunity to honor a veteran or loved one as well.** Their name will appear after yours on our “Keep ‘em Flying” online leaderboard. By joining, you will provide critical financial support for the continuation of the Society. In addition you will be recognized on our website and on your Annual Reunion nametag. So please join our “Keep ‘em Flying” Giving Campaign by becoming a Member in 2025.

All participating Leaders will receive the premier benefits of their annual membership dues of \$60 being covered, and they will receive a hard copy of AF News which is a \$25 value. Below are the different levels of membership as a part of the “Keep ‘em Flying” Giving Campaign.

Level 1 – Crew Chief Leader with an annual donation of \$250 will receive both premier benefits.

Level 2 – Flight Leader with an annual donation of \$500 will receive both premier benefits plus the registration fee of \$45 to attend the Annual Reunion.

Level 3 – Group Leader with an annual donation of \$1,000 will receive both premier benefits plus the registration fee of \$45 to attend the Annual Reunion and your Rendezvous Dinner ticket.

Level 4 – Wing Leader with an annual donation of \$1,500 you will receive both premier benefits plus the registration fee of \$45 to attend the Annual Reunion, your Rendezvous Dinner ticket and your Gala Banquet ticket.

Your Board of Directors invites you to join with them *today* in participating in our “Keep ‘em Flying” Giving Campaign supporting our Society. Please use the form below to enroll or simply click the link:

<https://www.8thafhs.org/keep-em-flying-giving-campaign/> (or copy and paste into your browser).

We *thank you* for your continued support and generosity.

.....
“Keep ‘em Flying” Giving Campaign

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

Street: _____ City: _____ State: _____

Zip code: _____ Email: _____

In honor of (veteran, etc.): _____ Group, etc.: _____

Level 1 – Crew Chief Leader at \$250 _____ Level 2 – Flight Leader at \$500 _____

Level 3 – Group Leader at \$1,000 _____ Level 4 – Wing Leader at \$1,500 _____

Please check which level you are choosing above and mail with your check or credit card information to:

8th Air Force Historical Society, 68 Kimberlys Way, Jasper, GA 30143-4769.

Visa, MasterCard, or American Express credit cards only.

Credit Card # _____ Exp. Date _____ CVV: _____ Amount \$ _____

By joining the 8th AFHS “Keep ‘em Flying” Giving Campaign and sending in this form, I hereby authorize the Society to process this application without my expressed written permission.

News from Across the Pond...

I just want to fly, and
do my bit...

*The beginning of air
ferry services*

by Suzie Harrison

American Battle
Monuments Commission
Cambridge American Cemetery
and Memorial

UK: With great foresight, in October 1938, the British launched the Civil Air Guard. If war came the RAF would need every pilot. Both men and women were invited to volunteer. Spearheaded by Gerard d'Erlanger, Director of British Airways, it would utilize excellent pilots who were found unfit for military duty - too old, one-armed, short-sighted – but they could fly, and fly well. Under the authority of British Airways/British Overseas Airways Corporation, when Britain entered the war, September 3, 1939, 26 pilots had been recruited to fly in support roles. The Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA) became active February 15, 1940.



Initially set up to carry mail, medical supplies, and personnel, the ATA role expanded to work alongside the RAF ferry pools transporting aircraft. Pilots were sent to Central Flying School to be checked out on Service aircraft. Separate and civilian, they did all ferrying

from May 1, 1940. As demand increased, ATA recruited pilots and flight engineers from further afield in the Commonwealth and USA.



Flight Officer Maureen Dunlop, Picture Post 16 September 1942. PP1944.

The first women, or 'ATA-girls', arrived three months after the outbreak of hostilities and eventually constituted 16% of pilots. Although, like Mary de Bunsen, they sometimes frightened themselves, they boasted lower

News from Across the Pond...

accident and casualty rates, and many of them received the highest commendation and medals.

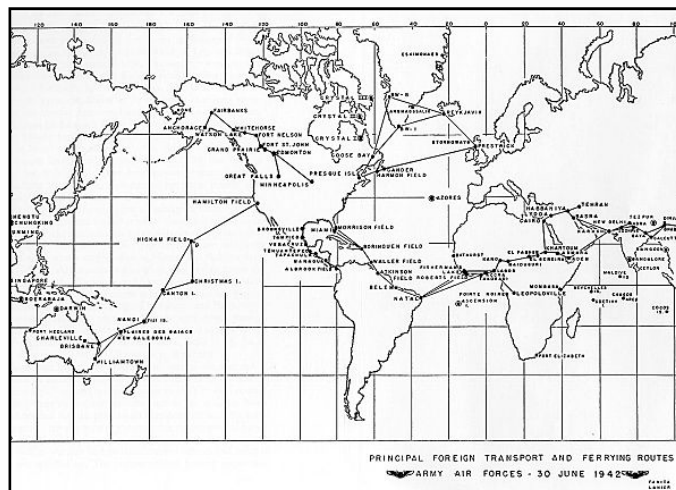
"The undertaker with whom I was billeted made us a beautiful miniature padded coffin with a slot into which we dropped money when we had given ourselves a fright, and the Red Cross made about three pounds a month out of this. I frightened myself up to half a crown's worth now and then, but one day another pilot came home and quietly put in a pound note."

ATA Pilot First Officer Mary de Bunsen

All pilots were expected to fly in all weather often without navigation aids, through hostile skies, in unfamiliar aircraft to unknown airfields – all with no radio or means of defending themselves. Up to November 30, 1945, when it was disbanded, the ATA delivered 309,011 aircraft; 147 types; and flew 742,614 hrs - and all done without needing to relieve fit and healthy young men from combat duty.

USA: In America the expansion of air transport was much slower. There was not even a separate Air Force. Flight was the preserve of the Army and Navy, and in 1938 there was a grave shortage of pilots and aircraft. However, as America watched events in Europe, she woke up to the need for more pilots. Called the Civilian Pilot Training (CPT) Program, it created a pool of civilian pilots who could be called upon in time of war. Colleges and universities sponsored affordable training for male students. By August 1941 there was a cadre of 78,000 non-airline pilots.

The Battle of the Atlantic had been raging for nearly two years when the Lend Lease Act came into force on March 11, 1941. Goods, in even greater quantities, would need to be delivered to Britain, running the gauntlet of extreme weather in the Atlantic Ocean, and marauding U-boat wolf-packs whose sole purpose was to sink vulnerable merchantmen. *Principal Transport and Ferrying Routes: Army Air Forces - June 1942. (right)*



Britain and Canada pioneered a ferry route around the North Atlantic. Single and 2-engine, then ultimately 4-engine aircraft would island hop from North America to the UK – Newfoundland, Labrador, Greenland, Iceland, Prestwick (Scotland). This was the first of a network that eventually crisscrossed the world.

On May 29, 1941, Air Corps Ferrying Command was established by General Henry H Arnold to deliver Lend-Lease goods, including aircraft, to other countries. Pilots were released from Combat commands for temporary duty. Ferrying aircraft and goods, both domestically, then worldwide, expanded once the USA entered the war, December 7, 1941, becoming the fastest and safest method of dispersal. However, by Spring 1942 there was a backlog of goods needing to be moved. This was beyond Ferrying Command's capabilities, so a new source of pilots was required. The civil airlines had plenty of pilots with a wealth of experience, which was a resource to be tapped.



Effective July 1, 1942, the new Air Transport Command was given the following responsibilities:

- The ferrying of all aircraft within the United States and to destinations outside of the United States as directed by the Commanding General, Army Air Forces.
- The control, operation, and maintenance of establishments and facilities on air routes outside of the United States.
- The transportation by air of personnel, materiel, and mail for all War Department agencies, except those served by Troop Carrier units.

The success of the ATA women in Britain had prompted a suggestion to General Arnold for their

News from Across the Pond...

inclusion stateside. Over the previous couple of years, the number of pilot reserves had grown to 90,000. Plenty, he thought; no women required. He based his decision on a pre-1941 underestimation of the requirements for a country on a war footing. Now, with aircraft manufacturing going into over-drive, more ferry pilots were necessary. Arnold was also being lobbied by a rich and forceful celebrity pilot, Jacqueline Cochran. She wanted women pilots trained to USAAF standards. Soon all male pilots were absorbed into the Air Forces, leaving only those who could not pass the medical requirements as civilian pilots – just like in Britain. Then, General William Turner of Ferrying Command, along with professional pilot Nancy Harkness Love proposed using women pilots.

General Arnold capitulated in the face of growing demand for aviators. The Women's Auxiliary Ferry Squadron (WAFS) formed on September 10, 1942. When Cochran returned from a recruiting drive among US women fliers for the ATA, she found the WAFS had already been formed, and so set up the alternative Women's Flying Training Detachment (WFTD). On August 5, 1943, the WAFS and WFTD merged become the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP).

"A British woman officer or non-commissioned officer can--and often does--give orders to a man private...When you see a woman in Khaki or airforce blue with a bit of ribbon on her tunic--remember she didn't get it for knitting more socks than anyone else in Ipswich."

**Instruction for American Servicemen
in Britain, 1942**

Pilots and engineers worked successfully for ATA, ATC and WASP throughout the war. Yet, given their impressive experience and safety record, accidents still happened. Some remain buried, or are commemorated on the Wall of the Missing, here at Cambridge American Cemetery.

BOAC Return Ferry Service

By 1941 increasing numbers of aircraft were being flown to the UK as part of Lend-Lease arrangements. With planes being ferried from the USA and Canada, there is an obvious flaw. How do you get the pilots back? To keep up with the eastward flow of aircraft deliveries civilian crews from British Overseas Airways

Corporation (BOAC) were used to transport ferry aircrew back to North America. Between 17 July and 17 August 1941, 131 Hudson aircraft (light bomber; coastal reconnaissance) built by the American Lockheed Aircraft Corporation, had been recorded as arriving at Prestwick, Scotland. Hudsons generally had a three-man crew, with records listing 229 men who needed to return westwards over the same period.

Passenger manifests would be made up but constantly changed. Ferry crews would be 'bumped' to make way for VIPs such as Lord Beaverbrook; then some re-instated when criteria changed.

On August 10, 1941, Liberator AM261 took off from RAF Heathfield, Scotland. The five-man BOAC crew would have struggled in poor conditions, with few visual references, to head back to the USA. Difficulties which compounded the fact that incorrect heading coordinates had been dialed in to the instrumentation. Off-course and unable to see, the aircraft crashed on the Isle of Arran, killing five BOAC crew and seventeen Ferry Command, RAF, and Air Transport Auxiliary passengers. All were buried on Arran except for one who went to Brookwood American Cemetery.

Liberator AM 260 also took off from Heathfield/Prestwick, but on August 14, 1941. The aircraft veered off the runway smashed into a building, careered over an embankment, crashing onto a railway line. All twenty two BOAC crew and ferry passengers on board were killed. Because of the constant changing of crew lists and passenger manifests it took many years to confirm the exact lists of fatalities.



G Plot, Cambridge American Cemetery. S Harrison, ABMC.

Nine Americans from Liberator AM260 are buried at Cambridge American Cemetery. Six are in close proximity in G Plot; the other three a little further away.

News from Across the Pond...

F/O Elmer Edward Uhlich RAF (G-3-8)

Elmer Uhlich was born June 21, 1914, in Riverside, Berrien County, Michigan. He was one of the eldest of fourteen brothers, six of whom served, and four sisters. As a teenager he began building and racing planes. He was keen to join the US Air Corps but was rejected due to an old leg injury. Desperate fly, he joined the British Air Transport Auxiliary, with No 4 Ferry Pilots Pool, transporting military aircraft around the UK.



F/O Elmer Edward Uhlich.

On November 23, 1941, 'Dutch' Uhlich, took off from Prestwick on the Firth of Clyde, Scotland, in a B-24 Liberator, AL562, newly arrived from the USA. These aircraft were used by British Coastal Command against the U-boat threat. Flying as co-pilot to Capt Francis Bush, it should have been a routine ferry flight to RAF Hawarden. Just off the Welsh coast, there was an on-board fire resulting in the plane crashing into the sea near Burrow Head, Wigtownshire, killing the crew, fifteen days before the attack on Pearl Harbor.

The official accident report states, "Insufficient evidence to establish cause but thought to be through bad weather causing aircraft to catch fire in the air." However, 'Gen' Genovese (q.v.) wrote later that "the ship was one of the first Liberators in England, but ... through some grim blunder on someone's part the anti-aircraft crew had not been advised of its being a new addition to the British Air Force. Elmer Ulich (sic) was shot down and killed by British anti-aircraft fire."

F/O Uhlich, aged 27, was buried in Kirkiner Cemetery,

Wigtown, and came under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission until transfer to Cambridge American Cemetery.

FLT/O John Robert Runnells (F-3-100)



FLT/O John R Runnells, with his wife Virmadella Jester on their wedding day. Courtesy Runnells family.

You might remember this name, and the lovely photograph, as I previously told John's story in the September 2020 issue. Yet it bears a brief retelling, as we had found out some more information.

John Runnells enlisted in the US Army Air Corps in January 1940 and was assigned to 19th Transport Squadron at Molokai. Promotion took him to Hickam Field, where he joined the Tow Target Detachment, in which an aircraft would tow a banner or drone for artillery target practice. In the aftermath of the attack on Pearl Harbor, he was reported killed. That year his mother received the best Christmas present she could have hoped for – 'Bobby' ... had survived. According to the Chester Times, he, "came through without a scratch, although it was very close." He was re-assigned to a construction unit, working on outlying islands, but after a period of deliberation, decided his military career needed a different direction.

Runnells successfully applied for flight training and was sent to the Santa Ana Flight School for enlisted pilots. On completion he transferred to the Air Corps Advanced Flying School at Luke Field near Phoenix, graduating June 1943. Later he received additional training at Macon, Georgia. Fully qualified, he was attached to 310th Ferry SQN and sent to England, which was based

News from Across the Pond...

at Burtonwood, Lancashire. As a Flight Officer he was required to fly many different types of aircraft, from single to multi-engine configurations.

On the morning of February 6, 1944, two of Runnells' fellow Burtonwood ferry pilots had set off to fly aircraft to Bodney, Norfolk. They then transferred to East Wretham, Norfolk, to pick up two P-47 Thunderbolts, meeting up with FLT/O Runnells, who was to ferry a third. All three aircraft required modifications, which were to be done in workshops at 402nd Maintenance Depot, Warton, Lancashire, close to their Burtonwood home base. Taking off at 1450 hrs, when the February light must have been fading, Capt Charles Francis led the flight of three P-47s. Weather and light conditions deteriorated which did not suit close contact flying. By the time they approached the Liverpool area visibility was reduced to zero/zero. Francis tried to avoid the fog bank, but was unsuccessful, so all pilots changed to instrument flying, and carried on. At this point they probably lost contact with each other. Francis nearly made it, crashing just 500yds short of the Warton runway. John Runnells continued, and disoriented, crashed into the side of Pendle Hill, Blackburn, Lancashire.

Both men were buried at Brookwood American Cemetery for the duration of the war, but now rest at Cambridge American Cemetery.

TWA Crew

After the war, all of the Congressional Medal of Honor recipients in the UK were repatriated at the wishes of their families. Only one 'remains', by dint of being on the Wall of the Missing, Lt Col Leon R Vance. On June 5, 1944, he was on his second mission and acting group leader in a B-24, which was badly damaged. Seriously injured, he brought his wounded crew home, ditched in the English Channel, was rescued and sent to the hospital, where his foot was amputated – his war was over.

He was returning to the USA in a C-54 Skytrain with other wounded, tended by T/3 Frank W Sorrells, and the only woman on the Cambridge Wall of the Missing, nurse 2 Lt Catharine R Price, of the 817 and 816 Medical Evacuation Squadrons respectively.

The crew of this mercy flight were civilians. All worked for Trans World Airlines (TWA), which along with American Airlines were contracted to USAAF and ATC.



(Left) 2 Lt Price, Courtesy Price family; and (below) Lt Col Vance US National Archives

They would have been among the most experienced flight crew available, with many more hours than the young bomber crews. The aircraft they flew would carry cargo in

one direction and take men, too badly injured to return to active duty, back to America. Because of this double function these aircraft did not have red cross insignia.



The C-47, with its precious cargo, was taking a multi-leg route around the North Atlantic. Without fully pressurized cabins, they would not fly above 10,000 ft, as the air would be too thin to breathe. It took off from Meeks Field, Iceland, bound for Stephenville, Newfoundland, on July 26, 1944. The aircraft, its crew and passengers simply disappeared. Even the collective experience of the TWA crew could not save the doomed aircraft.

You can see the names of the service personnel on the Wall of the Missing. With no unit designation, just Air Corps or Infantry, they were known as 'orphans'. The civilian crew is not listed. Their only markers are in the form of Cenotaph tablets in their family cemeteries.

PFC Emma Jane Burrows Windham

Emma Burrows studied Aeronautical Engineering at the University of California. Flying was her passion from the age of twelve, and the San Antonio native already had 350 air hours to her credit. After graduation she worked as Director of Flying Training at the New Mexico Wing of Women Flyers.

News from Across the Pond...



PFC Emma Jane "Windy" Burrows Windham.

Keen to travel overseas, Emma joined the WAC in 1943 and was assigned to the 7th Ferrying Group in Montana. As part of the Lend Lease program, she flew aircraft from Great Falls to Fairbanks, Alaska, prior to use by the Soviet Military. Her previous experience led to her training both male and female pilots. A pioneer, she was the US Army's first female Crew Chief and Flight Engineer.

Eventually, PFC Windham was transferred overseas, being assigned to the Air Inspector's Office in England. Military Police often stopped her in the streets, confused by her flight uniform, and not sure if she was entitled to wear the silver wings. Windham was well valued by her male colleagues for her proficiency and expertise but overlooked for promotion by USAAF.

On March 31, 1945, PFC Emma Jane Burrows Windham was at the controls of a B-17 Flying Fortress 'Boots IV' in what should have been a routine training flight. Also, in the Bovingdon circuit, having just taken off with local CFR Clearance was a C-47 piloted by 2 Lt Maurice E Thornburg. He was on a self-proficiency flight, using instruments, and was turning onto the downwind leg as part of his 'circuits and bumps' pattern. At 800 ft the two aircraft met, killing both pilots.

Windham and Thornburg were both temporarily buried in the Cambridge Military Cemetery. After the war 2 Lt Thornburg was buried in the permanent Cambridge

American Cemetery, F-1-139. PFC Windham was repatriated at the wishes of her family.

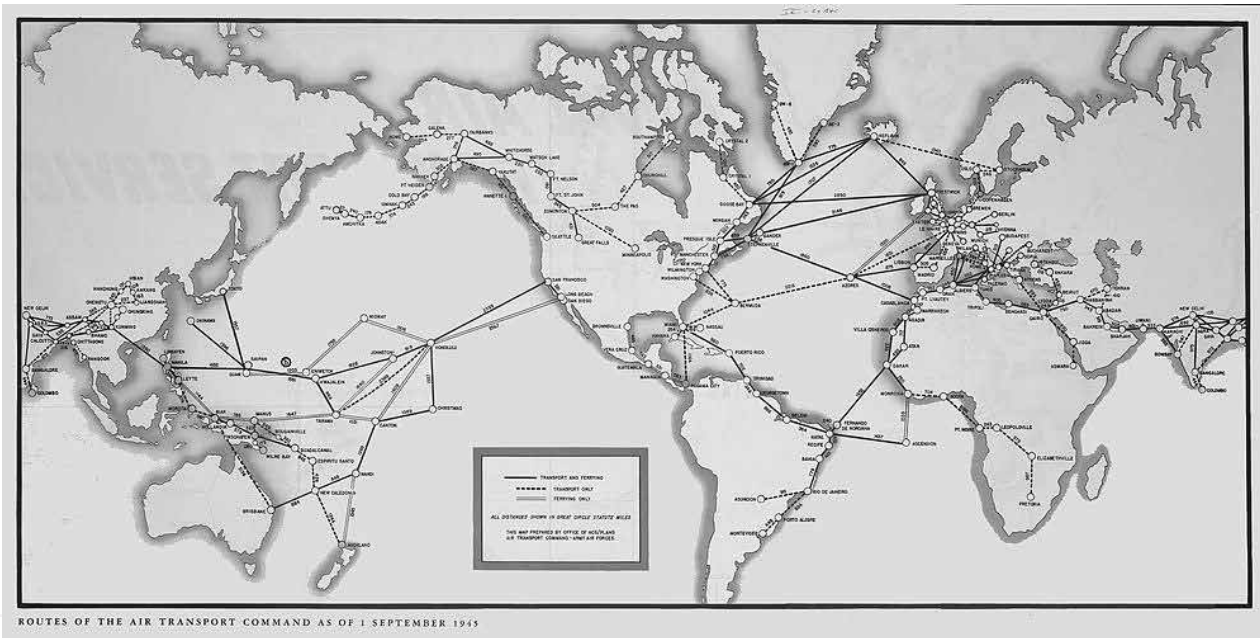
By the end of WWII, air ferry pilots had flown thousands of hours in many different aircraft types – a huge



News from Across the Pond...

contribution to the war effort. It meant that combat ready men were not pulled away from their main purpose. While many of the ATA-girls returned to hearth and home, they had earned equal status and pay among men and were honorably discharged. On the other hand,

the WASPs, rather than being seen as crucial to the war effort, were viewed as showy models. Always a thorn in the side of USAAF hierarchy, they were disbanded at the first opportunity - December 1944 - and sank into obscurity.



COME ONE, COME ALL!!

If you are planning a visit to England in 2025, be sure to include a tour of the

96th Bomb Group Museum!

Telling the stories of the service members from the ground to the air, you can learn the history of the 96th Bomb Group where it actually happened – situated on the site of what was the base hospital.

The 96th BG Museum will be open on the following dates in 2025 from 10AM until 4PM:

Sunday April 13, 2025

Sunday May 18, 2025

Sunday June 22, 2025

Sunday July 27, 2025

Sunday August 17, 2025 (*our main Open Day*)

Sunday September 14, 2025

Sunday October 19, 2025



Please note: Private tours can also be arranged for any Saturday or Sunday during the year if a veteran's family member is visiting the UK.

Prior to your visit, please contact Jill Tebble, the 96th BG Museum Curator, at 96thbombgroupmuseum@gmail.com.

Find the 96th BG Museum at Aurora Eccles School, Quidenham, Norfolk, NR16 2NZ

HONOR & REMEMBER

WE ALL DIE TWICE. FIRST, WHEN WE TAKE OUR LAST BREATH. SECOND, WHEN OUR NAME IS SPOKEN FOR THE LAST TIME. ~ ANCIENT EGYPTIAN PROVERB

by Dawn Brosnan
Director of Communications and Marketing
The National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force

During World War II, 26,000 brave, young Eighth Air Force airmen made the ultimate sacrifice in the fight for freedom. Their courage, determination, and sacrifice helped shape history, and it is our responsibility to ensure that their names and stories are not forgotten.

The National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force is committed to preserving their legacy through *Honor & Remember*, an initiative that supports the *Maximum Effort* Capital Campaign's capstone permanent exhibit, *Service Above Self*. This initiative offers a meaningful way for you to honor a fallen hero.

A Lasting Tribute

In addition to recognizing individual honorees, a dog tag representing each of the 26,000 fallen Eighth Air Force airmen will be displayed in the museum's upcoming exhibit, *Service Above Self*. This powerful installation will serve as a lasting tribute to their sacrifice, ensuring their memory lives on for generations to come.

How You Can Make a Difference

Whether you have a loved one who served in the Eighth Air Force or simply want to express gratitude for those who gave their lives in the line of duty, your support ensures that their bravery continues to inspire future generations.

With a \$100 gift, you will receive:

- ✓ Commemorative dog tag inscribed in honor of a fallen Eighth Air Force hero

- ✓ An 11x17 poster, suitable for framing
- ✓ A letter of appreciation from the museum

Every contribution ensures that the 26,000 fallen airmen of the Eighth Air Force are never forgotten.

Join Us in Honoring Their Memory

Stay tuned to the museum's website, www.mightyeighth.org for the launch of *Honor & Remember* in early April. Your gift helps us preserve these powerful stories, ensuring that the history of the Mighty Eighth continues to inspire generations to come.



"Sacrifice Above Self exhibit rendering displaying the 26,000 dog tags in honor of the fallen Eighth airmen"



2025 Tours | Now Booking

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE

Educational Travel

Roger A. Freeman
European Heritage Tours

- Luxurious Accommodations
- VIP Museum Admissions
- Guest Speakers
- Most Meals Provided
- Private Motorcoach



Payment Plans Available

For more information visit www.mightyeighth.org

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE MIGHTY EIGHTH AIR FORCE
PRESENTS

VICTORY

A Celebration 80 Years in the Making!

SATURDAY, MAY 3

*BG PAUL W. TIBBETS IV, USAF, RET. AND MRS. ANGELLE TIBBETS
HONORARY CHAIRMEN*

ENTERTAINMENT BY THE VOCALITAS
SPECIAL APPEARANCE BY SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL
WARBIRDS ON THE TARMAC
LIVE AND SILENT AUCTIONS
AND MORE!

SCAN QR CODE
TO REGISTER
TODAY!



51st Annual 8th AFHS REUNION

50th Anniversary of the Founding of the 8th AFHS

Colorado Springs, CO

October 1-5, 2025

In 1859, Colorado Springs history is marked with the founding of Colorado City, which became the first settlement in the Pikes Peak region. It was the territorial capital for a short period and served as a supply camp for miners traveling to the mining camps west of Denver.

In November 1806, American explorer Zebulon Pike traveled through the area and is credited for “discovering” Pikes Peak. He and his group attempted to reach the summit, but they were neither dressed nor equipped to climb the mountain that ultimately came to bear his name.

General William Jackson Palmer, a Civil War hero from Pennsylvania, ushered in a new era in Colorado Springs history in 1869. During his first visit to the area, he fell in love with its “most enticing scenery.” He predicted that there would soon be a great resort town at the base of Pikes Peak. One year later, he founded the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad and purchased land to create Colorado Springs along its route.



In 1871, the Victorian spa resort town Palmer envisioned became a reality. We invite you to enjoy the incredible beauty of the Rockies “close up and personal” with our first tour offering: **Foothills & Garden of the Gods Jeep Tour.**

Enjoy Cheyenne Canyon with Helen Hunt Falls, God Camp Road with the historic train tunnels, and the entire Garden of the Gods Park—all

while traveling in specially modified Jeeps with your personal driver/guide! Snacks and bottled water are included as well as an experi-



ence you will NEVER forget!

Note: This tour is offered either as a “morning tour” (Group A) or if you prefer, an “afternoon tour” (Group B). Seating is limited to the first 100 per tour departure time.

“Group A” Jeep Foothills and Garden of the Gods Tour Thursday, October 2, 2025 Jeeps load at 9:00am Arrive back at DoubleTree at 12:15pm

“Group B” Jeep Foothills and Garden of the Gods Tour Thursday, October 2, 2025 Jeeps load at 1:00pm Arrive back at DoubleTree at 4:15pm



Be sure to have your cameras ready for this incredible tour.

The United States Air Force Academy

The U.S Air Force Academy was established April 1, 1954, the culmination of an idea years in the making. Airpower leaders, long before the Air Force was a separate service, argued that they needed a school dedicated to war in the air, to train Airmen. After September 1947, when the Air Force was established as a separate service, this idea finally had the legitimacy of the new service behind it.

In 1948, the Air Force appointed a board, later named the Stearns-Eisenhower Board for its chairmen, to study existing military acad-

emies and the options for an Air Force academy. Their conclusions were strongly put: the Air Force needed its own school; they additionally recommended at least 40 percent of future officers be service academy graduates.



After Congress passed a bill establishing the Air Force Academy, the secretary of the Air Force appointed a commission to recommend a location.

After traveling 21,000 miles

and considering hundreds of sites, the commission recommended Colorado Springs as its first choice. The secretary agreed and the purchasing of the thousands of acres began. The state of Colorado contributed \$1 million to the purchase of the land.

On July 11, 1955, the same year construction on the Academy began in Colorado Springs, the first class of 306 men was sworn-in at a temporary site, Lowry Air Force Base in Denver. Lieutenant Gen. Hubert R. Harmon, a key figure in the development of early plans for an Academy, was recalled from retirement by President Dwight D. Eisenhower to become the first Academy superintendent.

Two years later, Maj. Gen. James Briggs took over as the Academy's second superintendent. On Aug. 29, 1958, 1,145 cadets moved to the Academy's permanent site from Denver. Less than a year later, the Academy received academic

accreditation and graduated its first class of 207 June 3, 1959. In 1964, the authorized strength of the Cadet Wing increased to 4,417. The present authorized strength is approximately 4,000.

Friday, October 3, 2025
Busses board at 9:30am
Arrive back at DoubleTree at 3:00pm

No visit to "The Springs" is complete unless it includes a tour of the United States Air Force Academy.

Our visit encompasses the splendor of the Chapel (*unfortunately, due to ongoing renovations, we will be unable to go inside*); the Barry Goldwater Visitor Center, B-52 display, Honor Court, Doolittle Hall, and more!

Lunch and a program at the Falcon Club is included in this package!



You won't want to miss this soul stirring experience.

National Museum of WWII Aviation

Opened to the public in 2012, the National Museum of World War II Aviation documents the role that

military aviation played in the emergence of our nation as a world power. The museum tells the story of the tremendous technological advancements in aviation during the War and the contributions and sacrifices of the men and women who won the air war.

The museum offers a balanced mix of artifacts, archival material, interpretive narratives, maps and audio-visual systems; all intertwined with the museum's collection of flying World War II-era aircraft.

Saturday, October 4, 2025
Busses board at 12:00pm
Arrive back at DoubleTree at 3:30pm

In the first section of the museum, visitors learn about the events leading up to America's involvement in

World War II and how those events affected an aviation industry in its infancy. Visitors then explore galleries that tell the story of America's early involvement in the European and Pacific theaters of war,

and the lessons learned by those fighting on the front lines. Finally, visitors discover how those costly but vital lessons guided the effort on the Homefront to design, develop and produce the aircraft that ultimately won the war.

While our tour is "self-guided", there will be numerous docents throughout the museum adding additional information as well as making our experience unique.

Note: You may want to eat lunch BEFORE this tour as the Museum does NOT have onsite food service.



51st Annual 8th AFHS REUNION

50th Anniversary ~ Founding of the 8th AFHS

DoubleTree by Hilton ~ Colorado Springs, CO

October 1-5, 2025

REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

STOP! WE'VE ADDED AN OPTION!!!

✓RESERVE YOUR HOTEL ROOM FIRST!

The reunion hotel has a liberal cancellation policy—in the event you are unable to attend the reunion, you will be able to cancel your reservation without penalty within 72 hours of your scheduled check-in time. However, if you wait until the last minute to book your room reservation, you may not receive the reunion rate or rooms may no longer be available at the reunion hotel or at our designated overflow hotels.

Canceling your hotel reservation does **NOT** cancel your reunion activities.

✓COMPLETE THE REGISTRATION FORM

Please fill out the registration form completely.

- ⇒ Fill out your name as you wish it to be on your name tag—and for up to 3 guests registering with you. ONE address per registration form, PLEASE! The principle attendee MUST be a current member of the Society to register for the reunion. You may JOIN and/or RENEW directly on the registration form. If you are a veteran, and/or affiliated with a bomb or fighter group, please indicate which group.
- ⇒ ALL meals are priced separately. Please note: Breakfast is on your own! Be sure and select your choice of entrée if you plan on attending the Saturday evening gala. Also, please note any dietary restrictions.
- ⇒ There are three [3] tour options available during the reunion. Please read the information [here in this issue] on each tour and then make your selection on the form. **Tours have limited seating and are filled on a first come, first available basis.**

Once you have completed your registration form, please total up the amount owed and include a check, money order, or credit card information on the form, payable to the **8th AFHS** and mail to:

✓MAIL IN YOUR REGISTRATION FORM

8th AFHS
68 Kimberlys Way
Jasper, GA 30143-4769

~OR~

✓NEW REGISTER DIRECTLY ON OUR WEBSITE!

[a 3% convenience fee will be added]

ALL registration forms **MUST** be **received** by **September 1, 2025**, in order to guarantee your place. If you have any questions or problems in completing your registration, please contact:

Debra Kujawa
Managing Director
8th AFHS
912-748-8884

ManagingDirector@8thAFHS.org

ALL reunion information and forms are available on our website: 8thAFHS.org



51st Annual 8th AFHS REUNION
50th Anniversary ~ Founding of the 8th AFHS
DoubleTree by Hilton ~ Colorado Springs, CO
October 1-5, 2025

DoubleTree Hotel
(Reunion Hotel)

Reservations: (719) 527-4693

Kaitlyn: Mon-Fri 8am – 4pm MST

Group rate code: AFH

Link below for DoubleTree reservations!

[DOUBLETREE Reservations](#)

Or on our website: www.8thafhs.org

—>OVERFLOW HOTELS<—

Fairfield Inn & Suites

(719) 576-1717

and/or

Courtyard Colorado Springs South

(719) 226-5006

Code: AF Historical Society

Link below for either hotel above!

[OVERFLOW RESERVATION LINK](#)

Or on our website: www.8thafhs.org

The **DoubleTree Hotel** is located at 1775 E Cheyenne Mountain Blvd, Colorado Springs, CO 80906. Just minutes from Downtown Colorado Springs, the hotel is a gateway to top attractions like the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Museum and the breathtaking vistas of Pikes Peak. Enjoy easy access to over 15 restaurants, a multi-plex movie theater, and shopping nearby. We offer 30,000 square feet of meeting space, on-site dining, and an indoor pool! **Airport shuttle: please call (719)576-8900 upon landing to check on availability.**

Because we are anticipating a large turnout for this reunion, we have arranged for two additional hotels as backup:

Fairfield Inn & Suites is located within easy walking distance of the DoubleTree, at 2725 Geyser Drive Colorado Springs, CO 80906. Offers easy access to Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, Broadmoor World Arena, Pikes Peak, Fort Carson, Garden of the Gods, and Cave of the Winds Mountain Park.

Courtyard Colorado Springs South, 2570 Tenderfoot Hill Street Colorado Springs, CO 80906. Also has easy access to Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, World Arena, Seven Falls, Fort Carson, Garden of the Gods, Cave of the Winds, and Peterson AFB.

ALL three (3) hotels offer complimentary parking and are within 15 minutes of the Colorado Springs Airport [COS].

RESERVATION INFORMATION

DoubleTree Hotel

Group Name: 8th Air Force Historical Society

Reunion Dates: October 1-5, 2025

Rate: \$189.00 + 10.27% = \$208.28 per night. Rates are offered 3 days prior and 3 days post reunion based on availability.

Fairfield Inn & Suites: \$139++ per night. Rates based on availability.

Courtyard Colorado Springs South: \$159++ per night. Rates based on availability.

Cut off Date: August 30, 2025

Cancellation Policy: All reservations have a 72 hour cancellation policy, or attendee will be charged one night room rate plus tax.

WHEELCHAIR/SCOOTERS/WALKERS RENTALS

ScootAround: (888) 441-7575 or ScootAround.com

Reserve chair rentals early!

HOSPITALITY SUITES

HOSPITALITY SUITES are *very limited* and will be offered to groups on a first come, first reserved basis.

We ask that you reserve your suite as soon as possible and consider sharing with another group! Suites are located throughout the hotel, but we will post location information at the registration desk as to where each group is located!

PLEASE contact Debra to reserve your suite!

Call or email ASAP:

Debra Kujawa

Managing Director

912-748-8884

ManagingDirector@8thAFHS.org



REUNION SCHEDULE

51st Annual 8th AFHS REUNION

50th Anniversary ~ Founding of the 8th AFHS

DoubleTree by Hilton ~ Colorado Springs, CO

October 1-5, 2025

Wednesday, October 1

10:00am — 5:00pm	Reunion Registration open***	Academy—Hallway adjacent
5:30pm — 7:00pm	Welcome Reception & Cash Bar	Colorado Springs Ballroom
7:00pm — 9:00pm	Board Meeting	Red Rocks Boardroom
7:00pm — until	Hospitality Suites	Locations TBD

Thursday, October 2

7:00am — 8:30am	Breakfast on your own**	
8:30am — 12:00pm	Reunion Registration***	Academy—Hallway adjacent
1:00pm — 5:00pm	Reunion Registration***	Academy—Hallway adjacent
9:15am — 12:15pm	Garden of the Gods "Jeep Tour" Group 'A' ~Assemble in hotel lobby	
1:15pm — 4:15pm	Garden of the Gods "Jeep Tour" Group 'B' ~Assemble in hotel lobby	
6:00pm — 10:00pm	Cash Bar Open	Colorado Springs Ballroom
7:00pm — 9:30pm	Dinner and program	Colorado Springs Ballroom
	Speaker ~ General Gregory M. Guillot, Commander, United States Northern Command and North American Aerospace Defense Command, Peterson Space Force Base, Colorado	

Friday, October 3

7:00am — 8:30am	Breakfast on your own**	
7:45am — 8:45am	Group Meetings	Locations vary by groups
8:30am — 12:00pm	Reunion Registration***	Academy—Hallway adjacent
1:30pm — 5:00pm	Reunion Registration***	Academy—Hallway adjacent
9:45am — 3:00pm	U S Air Force Academy Tour & Lunch ~Assemble in hotel lobby	
6:00pm — 10:00pm	Cash Bar Open	
7:00pm — 9:00pm	Rendezvous Dinners	Colorado Springs Ballroom (5 rooms)

Saturday, October 4

7:00am — 8:30am	Breakfast on your own**	
8:30am — 5:00pm	Reunion Registration Self-serve	Academy—Hallway adjacent
8:45am — 10:30am	General Membership Meeting	Colorado Springs Ballroom
10:30am — 1:30pm	8th AFHS Board Meeting	Red Rocks Boardroom
12:15pm — 3:30pm	National Museum of WWII Aviation* ~Assemble in hotel lobby	
6:00pm — 10:00pm	Cash Bar Open	
7:00pm — 10:00pm	Gala Dinner and Program	Colorado Springs Ballroom
	Speaker ~ General Stephen N. Whiting, Commander, US Space Command, Peterson Space Force Base, Colorado	

Sunday, October 5

7:00am — 8:30am	Breakfast on your own**	
-----------------	-------------------------	--

*The National Museum of WWII Aviation is self-guided!

**Breakfast is NOT included in our reunion package...please check times with hotel and/or surrounding restaurants.

***Registration may be closed during the time scheduled for certain tours and/or group meetings.



51st Annual 8th AFHS REUNION
50th Anniversary ~ Founding of the 8th AFHS
DoubleTree by Hilton ~ Colorado Springs, CO October 1-5, 2025

CUT-OFF DATE IS August 30, 2025	Price p/p	# of People	TOTAL
DUES: The principal attendee MUST be a member of the 8th AFHS to register for this reunion. If you are NOT CURRENT or a member, please pay your yearly dues here:	\$ 60	#	\$
REGISTRATION FEE (non-refundable): EVERY attendee MUST pay registration fee	\$ 45	#	\$
DINNERS			
Thursday, Oct 2 — 7:00 PM~EVENING DINNER: Tuscan Chicken with Creamy Sundried Tomatoes, Mushroom, and Parmesan Sauce	\$ 63	#	\$
Friday, Oct 3—7:00 PM~RENDEZVOUS DINNER: Garlic Herb Roasted Chicken with Wild Mushrooms, Rosemary, and Chicken Jus	\$ 63	#	\$
Saturday, Oct 4—7:00 PM~GALA BANQUET: (Please select ONE entrée per person)			
Grilled Ribeye with Crispy Shallots and Red Wine Aus Jus	\$ 75	#	\$
Almond Crusted Sole with Sauce Meuniere	\$ 75	#	\$
Vegetarian plate(s) Please indicate [how many]: Thurs # ____ Fri # ____ Sat # ____	\$ 63	#	\$
TOUR OPTIONS			
Thursday, Oct 2: 9:15 AM—12:15 PM: Foothills & Garden of the Gods Jeep Tour MORNING TOUR (Includes bottled water & snacks!) Limit: 100 passengers	\$ 113	#	\$
Thursday, Oct 2: 1:15 PM—4:15 PM: Foothills & Garden of the Gods Jeep Tour AFTERNOON TOUR (Includes bottled water & snacks!) Limit: 100 passengers	\$ 113	#	\$
Friday, Oct 3: 9:45 AM — 3:00 PM: US Air Force Academy (Includes lunch!)	\$ 60	#	\$
Saturday, Oct 4: 12:15 AM — 3:30 PM: National Museum of World War II Aviation (Self-guided — Lunch on your own!)	\$ 55	#	\$
Total amount payable to: 8th AFHS			\$

Please PRINT. If registering a WWII veteran here, please list their name first. **MAXIMUM of FOUR [4] persons per registration form!**

MEMBER NAME: _____ BG/FG (for name tag & seating): _____

VETERAN? If yes—> WWII: _____ Post WWII: _____ (Conflict or Era): _____ (Branch of Service): _____

Additional Attendee: _____ Military service: _____

Name #3: _____ Military service: _____

Name #4: _____ Military service: _____

ADDRESS: _____ CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

DAYTIME PH #: _____ EMAIL: _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT: _____ PH #: _____

ANY PHYSICAL (*Wheelchair or hydraulic lift needed for tours?*) OR DIETARY RESTRICTIONS: _____

IF PAYING BY CREDIT CARD —M/C; VISA; or AmEx (a 3% convenience fee will be added):

CARD #: _____ CVV: _____ EXP. DATE: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ *Your contact information will only be shared with attendees.*

MAIL completed form with check or credit card info to: 8th AFHS ~ 68 Kimberlys Way ~ Jasper, GA 30143-4769

If paying by credit card, you may [register DIRECTLY on our website](http://www.8thafhs.org)

News from the UK: The 92nd Bombardment Group has risen once again!

As many of you reading this will be aware, the long standing 92nd Bomb Group Memorial Association stood down in 2020 after decades of service honoring all of those who flew, fought and supported the 92nd Bomb Group “Fame’s Favored Few.” Since then, a small group of dedicated individuals on both sides of the Atlantic have been quietly carrying on the work supporting families of veterans who wish to learn more about their family members’ service.

During the fall of 2024, the team of researchers consisting of family members in the US and historians in the UK came together to form a new society: The 92nd Bomb Group Historical Society, with one mission: to preserve the memory and legacy of Fame’s Favored Few. Meetings were held, ideas floated and visits to the UK were accommodated. One of the huge agenda items was re-establishing contact with the landowners at former Station 109 and forging new relationships to aid future visits. Out of all of this came the tremendous news that the famous ‘Big Picture’ wall mural is no longer required by IWM Duxford for their continued



development plans and it was offered to be returned to Podington.

To coincide with this news, the parent company of Santa Pod, the world famous drag strip on the former runway, met with one of the UK representatives to discuss the planned heritage centre that is set to start construction in the fall of 2025. It is planned to be a unique function building, primarily as the heritage center for European drag racing, to host guests and visitors on drag racing days, be a unique venue for private events but also house a small museum dedicated to the 92nd. It was agreed that the society would assist TrakBak Racing with

acquiring, curating and developing 92nd displays.

There will also be various items from the 92nd and RAF Podington on display throughout the building, including the main bar being topped



with original laminated concrete runway sections that have been beautifully preserved prior to the new drag racing strip being laid.

The wall mural, one of the largest and best preserved in Eighth Air Force history, will be a huge

centerpiece and ensure that it is preserved indefinitely.

The proposals aren't for it to be a traditional open at weekends type of museum just for the 92nd, it is anticipated that the 92nd will hold dedicated open days and tours, whilst being able to open up for visiting families outside of major event days. It is hoped, however, that once the center is established and

functioning, the cafe area will be open every day, thus allowing visitors to see the 92nd Bomb Group Museum items.

As well as the planned building, the 92nd is set to launch an online store/PX to help raise funds for moving the wall and displaying exhibits in the new building, as well as assisting with the memorial maintenance on Airfield Road with the continued and incredibly generous support from the Whitbread family.

One of the very first jobs that was also undertaken was to organize and secure the huge digital archives that have been growing for over ten years. With a new host drive being used in conjunction with a backup host, a huge database of photographs, reports and archives have been preserved

and are used almost daily to help with inquiries.

As for the society itself, it's not a paid membership type of organization, rather the title of the group of everyone who helps to preserve the memory and legacy of the 92nd. Quarterly updates are available to download or view via the 92nd BG Facebook group, or via email upon request. As things move forward, it is anticipated that the web-

site will grow and expand to include updates, articles and link to the online store.

Its early days and while all funds donated to the 92nd Bomb Group Project are being prioritized for the wall move and museum displays, everything else is self-funded and organized within, thanks to a huge amount of effort from the dedicated group of individuals. A huge amount has been achieved in a very short period of time, and it is anticipated that 2025 will be the start

ON 1 MARCH 1942, THE 92ND BOMBARDMENT GROUP WAS ACTIVATED UNDER THE COMMAND OF COLONEL JAMES SUTTON AT BARKSDALE AFB, LA, TO FLY B-17S. THE GROUP BECAME KNOWN AS "FAMES FAVORED FEW" CONSISTING OF 4 BOMBARDMENT SQUADRONS – 325TH, 326TH, 327TH, AND 407TH AS PART OF THE 40TH COMBAT WING (ALONG WITH THE 305TH AND 306TH BOMBARDMENT GROUPS), 1ST AIR DIVISION.

THE 92ND BOMBARDMENT GROUP FLEW 308 MISSIONS, 274 FROM PODDINGTON AIRFIELD. EXACT LOSSES DURING THE WAR ARE UNCERTAIN, BUT NUMBERS ROUTINELY USED INCLUDE 154 AIRCRAFT LOST AND APPROXIMATELY 600 MEMBERS KILLED.

OLDEST GROUP IN THE 8TH AIR FORCE

ASSIGNED TO VARIOUS LOCATIONS DURING THE WAR, INCLUDING BOVINGDON, ALCONBURY, PODDINGTON (ALL IN ENGLAND) AND ISTRES, FRANCE

THE 92ND WAS THE FIRST HEAVY BOMBARDMENT GROUP TO FLY NON-STOP FROM GANDER NEWFOUNDLAND TO PRESTWICK SCOTLAND.

ONLY UNIT IN THE 8TH AIR FORCE TO FLY THE EXPERIMENTAL YB-40 IN COMBAT (327TH BS)

FLEW SECRET DISNEY ROCKET BOMB MISSIONS (EARLY 1945)

CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT F/O JOHN C MORGAN (JULY 26, 1943)

LED THE 8TH AIR FORCE IN ATTACK ON SCHWEINFURT, 14 OCTOBER 1943 (BLACK THURSDAY) LOST 6 B-17S/60 CREW MEMBERS

IN NOV 1942, STOPPED OPERATIONAL COMBAT MISSIONS TO ESTABLISH COMBAT CREW REPLACEMENT CENTER TO TRAIN NEW CREWS ARRIVING IN THEATER

RETURNED TO OPERATIONAL COMBAT MISSIONS IN MAY 1943

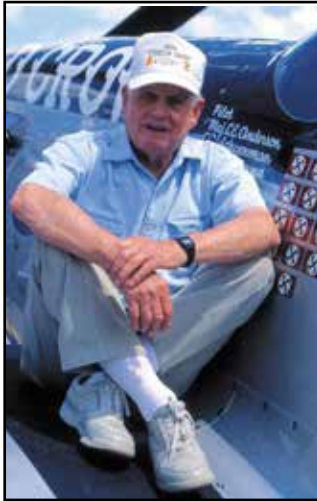
LED THE ENTIRE 8TH AIR FORCE ON 25 APRIL 1945 TO PILSEN, CZECHOSLOVAKIA—THE FINAL 8TH AIR FORCE MISSION IN THEATER.

PARTICIPATED IN THE GREEN PROJECT – THE 92ND BG FLEW SOLDIERS ON THE FIRST LEG OF THEIR JOURNEY HOME AFTER THE WAR. THE UNIT TRANSPORTED 19,935 SOLDIERS FROM ISTRES, FRANCE, TO CASABLANCA, MOROCCO, AND RETURNED 5,672 FRENCH CITIZENS BACK TO THEIR HOMELAND



of a very special chapter in the history of *Fame's Favored Few*.

For more information please contact the society at famesfavoredfew@gmail.com and visit <https://gofund.me/b2b1f853> to learn more and donate to the project.



Remembering Bud Anderson

and His Fallen Comrades of the 357th Fighter Group

By Jeffrey Clemens

Time flies.

On May 17th, 2024, Brigadier General C. E. “Bud” Anderson flew West. He lived a remarkable life that spanned over one hundred and two years. This cool and capable Californian would prove his mettle during World War II and later in Vietnam.

Bud’s combat flying skills are the stuff of legend. He distinguished himself as one of the greatest American fighter pilots from his era. As a P-51 pilot he is officially credited with 16 ¼ kills. In the fog of war Bud most likely shot down far more probable than we will ever know.

I was fortunate to know Bud as both an author and a friend. His book *To Fly and Fight* opened horizons in my life. Through this memoir I became interested and familiar with other pilots from the 357th Fighter Group.

It would be Bud’s manuscript that led me to the door of the late Bill Overstreet of Roanoke,

Virginia. For 13 years, Bill and I were close personal friends. As a fellow fighter pilot in the famed 363rd Fighter Squadron, Bill saw it all.

Through Bill’s eyes and memories, I was able to gain a greater appreciation of Bud. Bill once



shared the following words with me. “I thought him the greatest then, I still think of him as the greatest now. I watched him shoot down fifty planes.” Needless to say, my jaw almost hit the floor on that reminiscence. Bill’s integrity was beyond reproach. He told it like it was.

Bill also told me to not trust the government to count. To Bill war was about flying and not killing. The lives of your friends were in your hands. They would save your life in one mission; you would save their life on the next.

Bill’s role was to protect Bud’s

tail and give him the precious seconds to dispatch the enemy. Bud was always so smart and on top of every situation. The men who flew with him would fly over the gates of hell knowing they would make it back. Such was the confidence that Bud Anderson inspired in his men.

Unbeknownst to the military fliers of World War II, the paint schemes that adorned their aircraft would years later be captured by prominent artists. Bud’s famous P-51 was named “*Old Crow*.” His Mustangs have since been featured in thousands of wartime prints documenting his prowess in the air.

Bud would tell his Baptist friends that he named his aircraft after the American crow, the smartest of birds. To his hard drinking fighter pilot buddies, the inspiration for “*Old Crow*” came from a lower shelf Kentucky bourbon that would knock your flight boots off.

The moniker of *Old Crow* would identify Bud Anderson. He personified the quintessential *Old Crow*. His wit and wisdom as a professional pilot made every conversation with Bud memorable. It was always pleasant and fun to hang around with Bud. I relished his friendship. Though slight in build, this man was a rugged outdoorsman. Until his seventies, Bud would routinely hike, camp, and fish in the Sierra Mountains. He was an expert shot, who had 20-10 eagle vision as a youth. Bud’s amazing eyesight gave him the ability to detect enemy aircraft an astonishing fifty miles away!

Bud would serve with the finest men of his generation in World War II. The war-torn skies which they flew over Nazi occupied Europe were especially hazardous. Allied pilots had to contend with a determined resistance by the Luftwaffe, accurate flak guns, and atrocious weather to survive.

Consequently, the casualties in the 357th Fighter Group were high. Death took no holidays. Frequently pilots were lost on their last missions never to be seen again. Essentially fifty percent of their pilots were killed or captured in operational service.

Bill Overstreet and Bud were fortunate survivors of the deadly duels that took place over Fortress

Europe. To them war was both personal and tragic. Bud would first lose his best childhood friend Jack Stacker in combat. Jack would perish on his fifth mission as a P-38 pilot. Bud kept the memory of Jack alive in his heart throughout his long life.

Despite the perceived glory of being a fighter pilot, most people do not understand the pain of losing your buddies. The empty bunks left



after missions were hard to take. Such losses were mind-numbing and of course heartbreaking. The memories of friends killed in action would be reverently carried throughout a lifetime.

As Bud wrote in his memoir “*A time of mourning would have to come later if at all.*” Six decades later this grief was addressed through a missing man aviation print project for the 357th Fighter Group. The theme of which was reflectively chosen by Bill Overstreet.

This story starts with a humble request made to me by Bill

Overstreet. “All I want is Eddie Simpson remembered.” These were the first words that Bill spoke to me. As our friendship grew, so did my interest in the Eddie Simpson story.

I soon learned how special Captain Simpson was. In 2002, I met Obee O’Brien. Obee was a hell-raiser and ace in the 357th Fighter Group. This scrappy soul was Napoleon-like in stature. In 2002 he told me that “Eddie Simpson was the most handsome man you could meet in life; and the Germans murdered him.” This tough guy then broke down and wept for Eddie, fifty-eight years after his death.

Eddie Simpson would be lost on his last mission over France. A squadron mate made a fatal mistake in executing a turn and rammed Eddie’s borrowed Mustang. This fiery crash cost Don Ferron his life.

Eddie survived this mid-air collision and parachuted behind German lines. It was 10 August of 1944. Eddie had the good fortune to then be reached by the French Resistance who gave him aid. Tragically, four days

later on 14 August, Eddie would die in ground combat defending the Free French. His friends did not learn of the circumstances of his death until a Stars and Stripes article broke the story on 25 November 1959.

It was later learned that Eddie perished in a rearguard action that gave 200 to 300 French Maquis the ability to escape a German attack. He manned a captured German machine gun in a hasty organized ambush that delayed the pursuing Nazis. He died for people he barely knew in the cause of liberty. Eddie would be murdered by the

Germans after he surrendered. Captain Simpson was shot twice. He was hit on one hand and died from a gunshot to his head in the Orleans Forest.

In his memory, Bill Overstreet generously established the Eddie Simpson scholarship fund for Southwest Virginia. Bud would grant his son James Anderson the middle name of Edward to also keep his name alive. Such were the bonds of friendship that these men shared with Eddie.

In 2005, I had the opportunity to answer Bill's request regarding the memorialization of Eddie Simpson. I was then an Army chaplain at the Defense Language Institute (DLI) in Monterey, California. During this period, I became familiar with the work of the nationally acclaimed artist Stan Stokes.

At this time there was a local business in Pacific Grove called The Stokes Collection. This shop became one of my haunts. The Army money facet was on as a Captain. I commissioned Stan to paint a missing man formation of four Mustangs that became known as the Fallen Comrades of the 357th FG (Fighter Group).

In this image Bud Anderson is leading his flight flying "Old Crow." James Browning, in "Gentleman Jim", is positioned off Bud's left wing. Eddie Simpson's Flying Panther is in the missing man slot heading towards the heavens. Last but not far from least is Captain Overstreet. I placed Bill Overstreet

in his Berlin Express as the *tail end Charlie* to defend his friends.

It was an amazing experience to work with such distinguished pilots from World War II. Bud and Bill were consulted and very much involved in this endeavor. It was of their time and speaks of the sorrows they suffered in service.



The Stokes Collection was a patriotic outfit. They went the extra mile by listing all the men killed in action at the bottom of the print. This thoughtful detail brought the cost of the war into a proper focus.

There are many stories behind the names of the deceased listed on each print. It was because of Bud and Bill's memories that these men would also be remembered. That is what makes this Stan Stokes' painted tribute so unique.

I was present with Randy Frey from the Stokes Collection when we did the print signing in Bud's home in Auburn, California. He greeted us at the door and told us to "Bring the junk inside." I was by his side placing the prints before him for signa-

tures. They were made in graphite pencil which will last forever. In three and a half hours Bud patiently signed 500 prints.

When our print signing was done, Bud walked me to his door. I shared with him how the time of mourning he had written about had finally been answered by this project. The *Old Crow* then put his hand on my shoulder. We made that connection. The highlight of my 30-month tour at DLI was completed in Bud's presence in his home. This was one of the greatest honors in my life.

I spoke with Bud three days before he died on the telephone. The focus of our conversation was about friendship. Bud was very adamant about the bonds that joined

him to others in life. He perked up when he said, "You never forget your friends." Shortly after we bid each other "Good-bye."

Such were the memories he kept throughout his long life. One which we captured with historically detailed lithographs of the 357th Fighter Group. Each print depicting the wartime losses of a legendary unit by a skilled artist. All because Bud Anderson and Bill Overstreet remembered Eddie Simpson.

Photos: p.24 Museum Director George Welsh, Curator Renee, Jim Anderson and Jimmy Doolittle III. Edwards AFB Museum; p.25 Bud in the cockpit of Old Crow; p.26 "Fallen Comrades"; iconic print by Stan Stokes, recognizing all KIA from 357FG and signed by Bud Anderson and Bill Overstreet.

John Peter Gilbert

Man for All Seasons

The following is from an introduction given by Bob Books for John Gilbert upon his being presented with the Roger Freeman Award during the annual 8th Air Force Historical Society Reunion in Nashville, TN in October, 2014.



November 27, 1937 ~ January 6, 2025

of the 8th Air Force alive during his many presentations at schools and events in England.

He is doing what the Society was commissioned to do: preserve the history and perpetuate the legacy of

the Mighty Eighth.

Bob Books speaking:

“John literally grew up near Station 118, site of the 392nd Bomb Group. During an air raid, his home in Norwich was destroyed by a German bomb and the family was relocated to Wendling. His father worked on the base, his mother did laundry for the airmen, and he visited the Americans whenever he could. When the bomb group left Wendling in June 1945, he says he cried for days.

He devotes hundreds of hours each year to perpetuating the legacy of the 8th Air Force and has worked tirelessly for decades to keep the history

He has provided 8AF veterans and their loved ones with comprehensive tours of the bases where they served in World War II. He normally devotes an entire day to driving the visitors around and letting them walk the same ground their relatives walked. A stop at the Memorial, which is dedicated to airmen who lost their lives in the conflict, is always included. He takes them to the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich. At the end of the tour, he brings them to his home to see his extensive 8AF memorabilia collection. Then, while they enjoy a wonderful dinner provided by his wife, Doris, he answers their questions.



It is important to John that anyone interested in the 8th Air Force see where the men worked, where they lived, and in some cases, where they crashed. *“Taking a relative to the very paths where their loved ones walked is a tremendous feeling for all of us,”* he says.

The impact of what John does extends far and wide and he is equally committed to reminding Norfolk residents of the Americans who lived among them so long ago.

John has had his 8th AF display tables of memorabilia, BG Newsletters and WWII Photo albums at:

- * Many one, two and three day festivals of which North Elmham’s three day festival is attended by thousands.
- * Queen Diamond Jubilee
- * Theatre Royal in Norwich
- * Air Ambulance Service
- * The annual ceremony to honor Norfolk soldiers killed in the WWI battle of Gallipoli where Military representatives from the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and Turkey attend.
- * He has represented the 8AF at annual wreath-laying ceremonies and at dedication ceremonies for new memorials in England.

* Lectures and other events at the Second Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich.

* Not to mention the many schools he gives presentations to year after year and puts the 8thAF News into their reference section of their school library for use when the children study their history or give reports on the war.

These are but a few examples of what John Gilbert has been doing year after year for the 8th Air Force Historical Society. In my opinion, no one is more deserving of the Roger A. Freeman Award than John Gilbert.”

Bob Books, 392nd BG & 8th AFHS



Allow me (Debra Kujawa) to add a few personal memories here:

In May of 2019, I had the privilege of traveling to the UK where I was able to spend a whole day with John. He took me to the schools where he regularly volunteered—interacting with the students, telling them about the brave men and women in WWII who worked selflessly to save the UK and eventually end the war in Europe.

At every school we visited, the children swarmed

John with hugs and smiles. They loved and respected him so much. John made sure to add the latest issues of the 8th A F News magazine to their reference areas, too.

During my visit John also took me to see Wendling...where the base used to be, and where John spent so much of his childhood. There were no buildings left. Runways had all but disappeared under grass, shrubs, and trees. We made a stop alongside a small, barely noticeable bit of concrete. John explained that the hard stands (where the bombers were parked) had once occupied much of the area.

John would suddenly point at a field, and with his words coming rapidly with excitement, *“See where that small clump of trees is? That’s where the Officers’ Mess was. And when the bomb group left the base, they allowed our family to live there!”*

The one picture of John I used here, was taken that day. He wanted to show me a wonderful pub in the area where we had lunch.

His smile...I will always treasure that smile.

And his laugh.

And the stories.

He never bragged about anything he did. Even when he told me he enjoyed teaching Will and Harry to shoot—yes, THAT Will and Harry! He wasn’t showing off his relationship with the royal family, he was merely expressing his love for the shared experiences at Sandringham.

John was the epitome of someone who was totally dedicated to not just preserving the history of the past but also ensuring that the stories and lessons learned would be passed on for many generations to come.

So, if you happen to find yourself in the UK... at Wendling...at the site where the 392BG once stood; listen carefully and you might hear the sound of B24 engines revving up, preparing for take-off. And in the distance, you will hear the laughter of a

young boy exploring the woods and watching one of the most life altering moments in modern history unfold.

Photos: p27 John Gilbert; p28 top, watch office; bottom, control tower 1944; left, officer's mess; below, 392nd Memorial



Basener, Herbert, 103, of



Meservey, passed away on Tuesday, October 1, 2024, at the Sheffield Care Center.

Herbert was born February 2, 1921, to Ernest Eduard

and Vessa Verona (Young) Basener in Gilman, Wisconsin. As a small child he moved with his parents to Montana where he graduated from 8th grade. In 1935 the family moved near Ute in southern Iowa and in 1937 to a farm near Meservey where he graduated as valedictorian from Meservey High School in 1939. He helped his father farm and attended Iowa State College (now ISU) three winter quarters before registering for the WW II Army Air Force in 1942. He completed his basic training in Coffeyville, KS followed by training as a mechanic in Biloxi, MS; Ypsilanti, MI; Laredo, TX; Salt Lake City, UT; and Tucson, AZ. In March 1944 he traveled via the SS Saturnia to Sudbury, England where he served as crew chief working on B24's and B17's until his return to the US in July 1945, through Iceland via the last plane on which he had worked. He was a member of the 8th Air Force, 486th Bomb Group, 834th Squadron.

On June 6, 1946, Herbert married Frances Vivian Wendel at the Salem EUB church in Meservey. They farmed near Thornton for a short time and then by Meservey and were blessed with five children. In addition to growing crops, he raised cattle, hogs, and chickens. He continued to farm until later in his life. After Frances' death he married Voral Schluter. He later moved and

lived in Clarion and Belmond. Until he was no longer able, he continued to help with farming projects and cutting down trees. In December 2022 he moved to the Sheffield Care Center.

Herbert's faith was very important to him. He was baptized as a youth at the Church of Christ in 1935 in Ute, IA and continued living out his faith by serving in many capacities over the years at the Salem EUB/United Methodist Church in Meservey.

Herbert was preceded in death by his parents, an infant brother Ernest John Basener; his first wife in 1997; his second wife in 2003; his daughter Nancy Zink in 2023; his brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law Roland and Aileen Wendel and Warren and Mildred McFate; his sons-in-law Jerry Baughman, Al Durbin, Martin Kroeze, Tom Dailey.

His memory will continue in the hearts and minds of his family. He is survived by his son Lawrence (Wanda), their children Chris, Clint (Amy-Alexis Hurlburt), Cherie (Gornayl Beliard) and grandchildren Elle (Chao) Tang, John Harriss, Orienne, Solomon, Annasten, Drew; daughter Velma (Bob Lehman) Durbin, their children Robert Baughman, Nancy (Ronnie) Bohrn, Carolyn (Scott) Hall and grandchildren Angel, Ty, Hallie, Katie, Sydnie and great grandchildren Zaylie, Zane, Logan, Sterling, Luke; daughter Evelyn Dailey, her daughter Crystal (Heath) Wilken and granddaughters Lillian, Amelia; son David (Donna), their children Nicole (Larry) Gutman, Nathan (Shauna), David Daniel, Danielle (Jarod) Bailey and grandchildren Gabriel (Serenity), Ezekiel, Malachi, Jonathan, Stephen, Samantha,

Reuben, Georgia, Savannah, Waverly, Leyla, Camille, Camryn; son-in-law Tony Zink; several step children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren.

While it is truly our honor and privilege to print death notices here, please understand we are NOT automatically notified upon the death of our veterans or other members.

Please forward all TAPS to:

ManagingDirector@8thAFHS.org

912-748-8884

or mail to:

8th AFHS

68 Kimberlys Way

Jasper, GA 30143-4769

***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 unsolicited material, however, I will review for consideration.**

***Please submit materials via email [preferred].**

***Written text MUST be TYPED and sent as a WORD.doc, 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**

How About It!

CHARACTER

Earl Wassom

~from his column~

February 1998



Editor's note: All of us miss Earl so much. I thought you might like this column he wrote in February 1998. Enjoy!

Someone once said, “Character is what we are in the dark.” The writer who penned these words didn’t know the half of the story if he had never been on a dark, night-mission over war-time England with everything blacked out.

In a situation like this, the navigator is indispensable in directing the mission to the target and then, getting the crew and aircraft back to that almost invisible piece of English countryside that we called “home.”

The trip to the target was successful, so successful that Nazi night fighters came out in full force to intercept us. We eluded them. However, when they followed us home in the dark and began flying over English soil, our principal navigational aids, the Radio Bunchers and Splasher beacons were suddenly and deliberately turned off. There were no visible landmarks below, all lights on the ground were extinguished. There was an overcast sky which eliminated the possibility of celestial navigation, and all of our directional radios were silent. There were no clues! We droned on following the same heading for a while and then the navigator’s message on the intercom broke the silence.

“Chief,” he said, “we’re lost!”

This was indeed, very disturbing news. Then he came through again...he remembered hearing of an emergency system the R.A.F. used for helping “lost” and crippled bombers find their way home. It was known by the code name “Darkee.” But what was the frequency? As if by Divine inspiration it came, 4.200 kilocycles! The radio knobs were quickly turned to 4.200.



“Hello Darkee, Hello Darkee.”

We waited, then repeated our call, “Hello Darkee, Hello Darkee, this is Eglan B. Baker, ‘over. Silence... then a response, “Eglan B. Baker, this is Darkee... how may I help you?” The accent was distinctively British but sounded like the voice of an angel.

“Darkee, this is Eglan B. Baker, we are lost...please direct us to Station 120.” (This was our home base).

“Roger, this is Darkee. Circle and I will give you directions.”

In a few moments, this unseen subject of the King of England down on the ground came back on the radio, “Eglan B. Baker, this is Darkee, take up a heading of 345 degrees. We will be in touch.”

“Roger. Darkee and thank you.”

We settled down with our directional instructions, not knowing our exact location but feeling some assurance.

(continued on back cover)



8th AF News
8th Air Force Historical Society
68 Kimberlys Way
Jasper, GA 30143-4769

First Class Mail
US Postage
PAID
Nashville, TN
Permit 1

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Again, the English accent, “Hello Eglan B. Baker, this is Darkee. Keep your heading of 345 degrees and follow the lights.” We acknowledged but that phrase “follow the lights” was puzzling.

Then, as if by magic, two vertical shafts of light from flood lamps below appeared, then slowly they scanned downward towards our heading. Then once again, vertically sweeping downward toward our compass heading of 345 degrees. As we moved towards our base, repeatedly different shafts of lights came on, directing us homeward. Darkee informed us we were near and suddenly, a beautiful green flare burst into the sky from almost directly below.

Darkee reported, “Circle to the left, you are over the field,” the faint runway lights were turned on for us. We lowered our landing gear, dropped the flaps, and we found home in darkness.

Hundreds of years ago, David the King of Israel spoke these words, “Unto the upright,

there ariseth a light in the darkness.” Back in 1944 we were guided home because we asked. We followed the simple instructions of a subject of the King. He wasn’t a key military figure; he didn’t get his name in headlines; he just patiently waited, silent and alone at his station with the knowledge that he and his radio transmitter were the answer to someone’s survival. Today, if we ask, there is still light available for all of us to direct us away from the enemy and to point us toward home.

Editor's note: As many of you remember, Earl was a pilot with the 466 Bomb Group. He wrote a Chaplain's column for The Tennessee Flyover for several years along with his "How About It" column in the 8th A F News. I heard from so many of you that you always read his column before reading anything else. Earl had an incredible connection with his faith and the ability to communicate--often quite humorously--sharing wartime anecdotes wrapped in stories often from his childhood.