

June 2022



# 8TH AF NEWS

Volume 22 Number 2 Voice of "The Mighty Eighth"



**48th Annual 8th Air Force Historical Society Reunion**  
**Washington, D.C. ~ Arlington, VA**  
**October 19-23, 2022**  
**~INSIDE THIS ISSUE!~**



# 8th AF News

June 2022

## Voice of "The Mighty Eighth"

### OFFICERS

#### President

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

#### Vice President

**Eleesa Faulkner** 2022  
58 Drake St  
Pueblo, CO 81005  
(719) 252-9170  
ekf58@aol.com

#### Treasurer

**Paul W Tibbets, IV** (Angelle) 2025  
5422 Cypress Point Lane  
Gonzalez, LA 70737  
(225) 773-1983 cell  
P2A2Tibbets@gmail.com

#### Secretary

**L Travis Chapin** (Ginny) 2023  
17303 Euler Road  
Bowling Green, OH 43402  
(419) 575-4337  
tchapin@bgsu.edu

#### 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

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

### Chapter/Unit Liaison

**Joseph P Keeley** (Andrea)  
1335 Belmont Ave  
North Haledon, NJ 07508-2842  
(973) 495-3404 cell  
(973) 423-4854 home  
fxe84@optonline.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

**Jeff Hawley**  
C/O Building 1008  
Alconbury Airfield  
Huntingdon, PE28 4WX  
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

**John P Gilbert**  
Glen Ann  
42 Chapel Street, Cawston  
Norwich, Norfolk NR10 4BG  
United Kingdom  
011 4416038 71124  
johngilbert392bg8th@gmail.com

#### BELGIUM

**Edouard Renière**  
Avenue Henry Dunant 5--Bte 25  
1140 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  
jbey2008@aol.com

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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 not for profit corporation..

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

*Create your legacy and pass the baton.  
~ Billie Jean King*

In 1942, during the early days of WWII, the US 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force began handing out “batons” (in the form of military orders) to young men and women, who had eagerly signed up to do their part in fighting the evils of the Third Reich and Adolph Hitler. By the end of the war in 1945, over 250,000 individuals had taken part in the Herculean effort to secure global freedom.

But it didn't end there.

Many of those who fought in WWII went on to serve in both Korea and Vietnam. While some were too young to enlist during the 40s, the 50s and 60s saw a steady stream of men and women eager to serve their country. Often, these were the brothers, sisters, sons, and daughters of WWII veterans—all ready to offer their lives in the name of freedom.

In today's 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force, many young men and women are serving because their grandfathers took that baton that was handed them the day they enlisted, and in turn, they passed it along to their children and grandchildren.

It is this legacy—this incredible heritage of birth-

right—which continues to this day. For the Eighth Air Force Historical Society, THIS is our baton. And it is time to pass it on.

Most of our WWII veterans who are still with us, are nearly 100 years old and older! They have passed their batons, their legacies, to us—not to be shelved in a library or museum—but to be shared with everyone. Our veterans who have served since WWII and who continue to serve today—THEY are passing their batons, too.

Please. OPEN your hands and get a firm grasp. We cannot allow these legacies to fade into silence.

With love always,

*Deb*

*Note: This issue has information on our upcoming 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion which is absolutely family focused! If you have any questions or need help in filling out the registration information, please contact me.*



**Please JOIN 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: \$40 or £30 GBP**

Payment: Check /Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**PayPal: [ManagingDirector@8thAFHS.org](mailto: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:  
Jeff Hawley, C/O Building 1008, Alconbury Airfield,  
Huntingdon, PE29 2JF  
477623 28575

**JOIN ONLINE: [www.8thAFHS.org](http://www.8thAFHS.org)**

# PRESIDENT'S BRIEFING

Anne Marek  
President



Greetings everyone! I am delighted to report to you that your Board of Directors continues to meet regularly via Skype and has recently approved the modernization of our website and database during an open forum with our consultants, Flint and Flux. They have done a very thorough job, and I'd like all of you to have a look at it at 8thAFHS.org. There is a "Links" area in which all our Bomb Groups are listed. Please check out yours to see what your bomb group has included.

Our 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion in Arlington is rapidly approaching. Hotel rooms are going fast, and I encourage all to make your reservations as soon as possible. The issue issue of AF News included all the details of the tours being offered. They will fill up fast so make your reservation now. This Reunion is very "family friendly" so bring your grand and great grandchildren to enjoy our Nation's capital. Remember, it's about honoring the legacy of your family's veteran.

I wish to reinforce to all of you not to forget to remember the Society in your estate plan and

to "shop" at Amazon Smile (more info on page 6) when purchasing from them on-line. This will help to contribute to our financial stability and future "down the road".

Thank you all for your support of our Officers and Directors. It is greatly appreciated. If you have anything you wish the Board to address, please reach out to us. Our contact information is on page 2 in each issue.

Remember:

**"our focus is on all our veterans,  
preserving their legacy,  
and keeping the memories alive!"**

Respectfully submitted,

*Anne*

Anne A. Marek  
President, 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS

*WWII veterans pictured below, Savannah Reunion, 2021*



# TREASURER'S LEDGER

## Paul W. Tibbets, IV Treasurer

For this issue of *8th Air Force News*, we are reporting the Financial Statements for the first quarter of calendar year 2022 ending March 31, 2022. As you can see from our Profit and Loss statement, the income for this quarter was -\$5,624.24. A negative income is clearly not desirable, but the cause of this was primarily the market downturn in January and February, and therefore not a red flag for our organization. Please allow me to provide some clarifying details.

The Dow Jones Industrials and S&P 500 ended February with a loss, and March with a gain, but were not yet fully recovered from the loss earlier in the year. At the end of March, the Dow was -4.57% YTD and the S&P -4.95%. Mr. Gavin Natelli at Oppenheimer has done a great job managing our portfolio, and as a result we saw a loss better than the market of -3.8% as of March 31<sup>st</sup>.

Additionally, to secure the tours for our 2022 reunion in Washington, D.C., we made an advance payment of \$7887.60. Our other large expense for this quarter (\$5150) was a payment for our new website, which includes a completely rebuilt and secure database, requiring hundreds of hours of work by Garrett Jaxon and his team. They did a fantastic job, and the site is now live at <https://www.8thafhs.org>. Please check it out and provide us feedback!

You, our members, continue to be generous towards the

financial health of our Society. Our dues and donations are up 8% from this same period last year. Many thanks!

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

Respectfully,

*Paul*

Paul Tibbets

Treasurer, 8 AFHS



### 8th Air Force Historical Society Profit and Loss January - March, 2022

	Total
<b>Income</b>	
4000 Income/Miscellaneous	
4001 Amazon Smile	63.60
4005 BOA Rewards	6.85
4010 Member Dues Annual	27,628.42
4019 Member Contributions/Donations	11,084.88
Total 4000 Income/Miscellaneous	38,783.75
4050 Investment Income	
4058 Portfolio Dividends & Interest	1,540.01
4059 Realized Gain/(Loss) on Invest	0.00
4060 Unrealized Gain/(Loss) on Invest	-12,722.10
4061 Investment Management Fees	0.00
Total 4050 Investment Income	-11,182.09
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>27,601.66</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	
	27,601.66
<b>Expenses</b>	
5100 National Administration Expense	
5102 Officers/Directors Gen Expense	147.00
5108 Web Site Expense	5,150.00
5111 Corporation Charges	70.00
Total 5100 National Administration Expense	5,367.00
5200 Magazine Expenses	
5210 Printing Expenses	3,171.00
5220 Postage Expenses	2,440.76
Total 5200 Magazine Expenses	5,611.76
5300 National Office Expenses	
5303 Telephone/DSL	190.45
5304 Supplies	-153.91
5305 Abila Software/ Computer Exps	551.58
5307 Office Rent	300.00
5308 Insurance	883.89
5312 FICA-8AFHS portion	831.94
5313 Payroll/ Office Management	10,975.00
5315 Postage & Shipping	90.92
5323 Merchant Account Usage Fees	539.67
5326 Payroll processing fees	150.00
Total 5300 National Office Expenses	14,359.54
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>25,338.30</b>
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>2,263.36</b>
<b>Other Expenses</b>	
7100 Annual Meeting Expenses	
7104 Tours/Transportation	7,887.60
Total 7100 Annual Meeting Expenses	7,887.60
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>7,887.60</b>
<b>Net Other Income</b>	<b>-7,887.60</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>-5,624.24</b>

### 8th Air Force Historical Society Statement of Financial Position As of March 31, 2022

	Total
<b>ASSETS</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
Bank Accounts	
1017 Oppenheimer & Co	284,093.50
1040 Bank of America Checking Acct.	4,832.14
1042 Bank of America Savings Acct.	10,332.17
Total Bank Accounts	\$299,257.81
Total Current Assets	\$299,257.81
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$299,257.81</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>	
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	
Accounts Payable	
2000 Accounts Payable	150.00
Total Accounts Payable	\$150.00
Other Current Liabilities	
2050 Payroll & Taxes Payable	
2051 Payroll payable	2,896.57
2052 FICA & withhold taxes payable	9,230.97
Total 2050 Payroll & Taxes Payable	\$12,127.54
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$12,127.54
Total Current Liabilities	\$12,277.54
Total Liabilities	\$12,277.54
<b>Equity</b>	
3200 *Unrestricted Net Assets	292,604.51
Net Income	-5,624.24
Total Equity	\$286,980.27
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	<b>\$299,257.81</b>

# NOTEWORTHY

## HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY DAVID WOLMAN!



Many of our WWII veterans are now members of the prestigious “centenarian club.” Please help us wish Mr. David L. Wolman, of Centereach, New York, a Mighty 8<sup>th</sup> Happy 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday! Mr. Wolman turned triple digits on November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

David served with the 100<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, 412<sup>th</sup> Air Service Group, at Thorpe Abbots as an air traffic controller.

Please let us know if you or your Veteran is celebrating a birthday or anniversary. We will do our best to recognize them--space permitting--in the magazine! ddk



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\*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].  
\*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

## OPERATION BOLERO

by Suzie Harrison  
American Battle Monuments Commission  
Cambridge American Cemetery and Memorial



*The President of the United States, Franklin D Roosevelt, and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Winston Churchill aboard HMS Prince of Wales, during the Atlantic Conference, 10 August 1941. Immediately behind them are Admiral E.J. King, USN and General George C. Marshall, US Army. The President's sons, Ensign Franklin Roosevelt Jr. USNR and Captain Elliot Roosevelt USAAF, along with General Arnold, USAAF, Air Chief Marshal Sir Wilfred Freeman RAF are conversing to the left of the image. IWM A 4815.*

**A**nglo-American relations in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries could best be characterized as cold and strained, which should come as no surprise based on the nature of America's revolutionary beginnings in 1776. Former British subjects, turned American citizens, brought the new country in an entirely different direction, so much so, that by the time American troops arrived in Britain during WWII, it was more akin to a *Friendly Invasion*. The fact that by 1946, nearly 3.5 million Americans had passed through the British Isles, was a profound shock to the local population, both culturally and physically. However, the

Americans were 'family', and room can always be found for special relations...

For many in the USA, it seemed obvious that America would be drawn inexorably into the conflict that was engulfing Europe. While not a combatant in 1940, nevertheless, the first US peacetime draft was established on 16 September. *The Selective Training and Service Act of 1940* required all men between the ages of 21 and 45 to register. A sleeping giant awakes!

In March 1941, a Lend-Lease policy was enacted, whereby America would send war-aid to Allied nations, eventually encompassing the United

# News from Across the Pond...

Kingdom, the Republic of China, Free France, and the Soviet Union. This *Act to Promote the Defense of the United States* would provide war materiel, oil and food in a ‘use now-pay later’ arrangement. Goods were transported by ship, across dangerous and icy northern seas. Travelling in convoys, they were easy prey for marauding enemy submarine wolf-packs. Allied nations provided escorts – including US Navy and Coastguard vessels - but many seamen lost their lives when their ships were sunk before the Allies gained supremacy of the Oceans.

Nazi dominance of mainland Europe left Britain as the only stronghold from which the Allies could attack the Northern Continent. She must be defended at all costs. President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill, during discussions in Canada, August 1941, saw Germany as the greatest of the Axis threats. They reached an agreement of “Germany First.” The operation to move men and supplies to the British Isles, became known as *Operation Bolero*.

The name, *Bolero*, eminently suited the concept of the Operation’s original four elements:

- SLEDGEHAMMER: establish a beachhead in north-western Europe by autumn 1942
- ROUNDUP: larger invasion of northern France in 1943
- TORCH: assault of North Africa, November 1942 – then onto HUSKY, Sicily; AVA-LANCHE, Italy
- QUADRANT: build-up of troops for Operation OVERLORD, May 1944

The Americans were keen to enter the fray in Europe, but Churchill was more hesitant – perhaps, with the debacle at Dunkirk still a recent memory – urging caution. There was no willingness to attack from a position of weakness. The original *Bolero* plans changed over time, as the overall Allied strategy reacted to immediate problems on the ground. Thus, it was instead, from a position of strength, that the Allies were able to launch the assault on the Normandy beaches, over two years later.

After the attack on Pearl Harbor, 7 December 1941, America was thrown into disarray. Over the New Year period, at the Arcadia conference held in Washington, DC, plans were modified. The decision was to send only four American Divisions to defend Northern Ireland, plus a few bomber squadrons to England for morale purposes. Then, amid worsening news from the Pacific Theatre, troop deployment to the United Kingdom was whittled down further, so that by late-May 1942 there were just under 37,000 soldiers in Britain. Preparations for Operation Torch had also caused troops to be diverted to North Africa. As David Reynolds put it, the “...*pulsating crescendo of men and supplies*,” didn’t happen, “... for most of 1942-43 the rhythm was erratic, the orchestra ever-changing, and no one seemed sure of the tune.”



The name, ‘Bolero’, was inspired by the music of Maurice Ravel, and his most famous composition, *Boléro*.



# News from Across the Pond...



Above left: Arriving 26 January 1942 - Private Milburn Henke, who was presented to the press as the "first" United States' soldier to step ashore, salutes as he lands at Dufferin Quay, Belfast, Northern Ireland. In reality, a whole contingent of GIs had come ashore without distinguished reception. IWMH 16847.

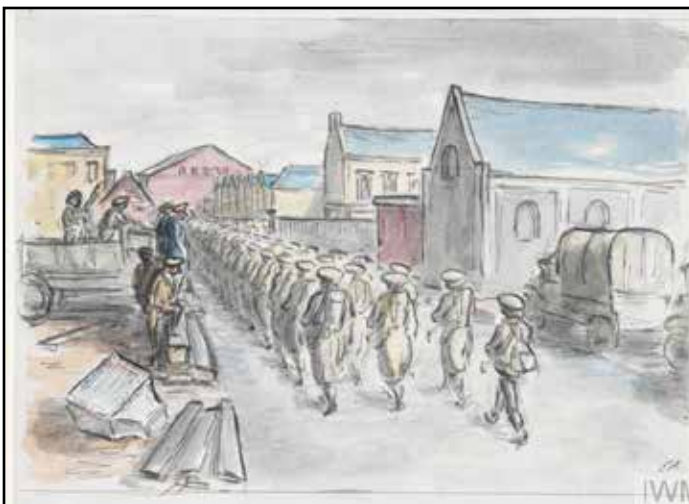
Above right: Refreshments for the troops on landing. IWMH 16849.

Yet, arrive they did! The first troops disembarked at Belfast, in January 1942, which makes 2022 the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Operation Bolero*.



to offer, and the Americans rapidly realized that they needed to become completely self-sufficient. Numbers started to ramp up through late 1942, and by December, there were close to 250,000 US Army Troops based in the United Kingdom.

Making room in a small country for thousands of troops – a *Friendly Invasion* indeed – called for some give and take on both sides. The introduction of a ‘foreign’ military force to a civilian population required gentle handling. All the arriving American troops were given a copy of a booklet – a serviceman’s guide to Great Britain – which was full of homilies such as, “*It is always impolite to criticize your hosts; it is militarily stupid to criticize your allies.*”



Arrival of American Troops in Northern Ireland, January 1942: The March from the Docks. 1942 Watercolor by Edward Jeffrey Irving Ardizzone (commissioned War Office Artist, 1940). IWM Art.IWM ART LD 1819

Without established supply lines, the first Americans to land relied on the British establishment for support. Unfortunately, after two-and-a-half years of war, Britain had really nothing left



Among the initial troops to arrive were men of the Services of Supply (SOS) units, staffed primarily by African American soldiers. In these early stages of the war, African Americans were not con-

# News from Across the Pond...

sidered for front-line, fighting roles, so the majority of them served in Support Units. They were the supplies men, the truck drivers, the ammunition handlers, and the engineers. Others were in more specialized Aviation Engineer Units and constructed the airfields, English weather not being conducive to maintaining grass fields! These men, doing dirty and dangerous work, often living in tented camps, throughout the British winter, did an amazing job. Years later, one engineer, when asked about his war service, said, *“Our task did not require us to engage with the enemy ... we felt a closeness to the combat men of the Air Corps and ... were playing a part in paving the way for victory.”*

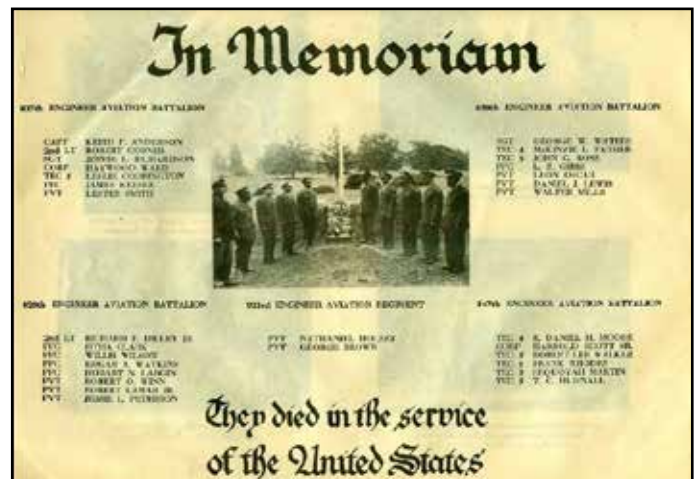


Members of an aviation engineer battalion construct a heavy bomber airfield near Eye, England, in 1943 (work commenced September 1942 – completed July 1943). US Air Force VIRIN: 130226-F-ZZ999-010

## Pvt Robert Lamar

One of those involved in the construction of Eye Airfield, Suffolk, was Robert Lamar of Pulaski County, Arkansas. Of the 130 African American servicemen buried at Cambridge American Cemetery, few images exist; certainly, our research has not produced one for Robert. He died in that first year of *Bolero*, on 18 November 1942. Robert never got to see Eye completed. Was he crushed by the heavy equipment? Did he look the wrong way when crossing the road? Did he become sick? We will probably never know anything more than ‘Died Non-Battle’. The legacy of the work of the Aviation

Engineers is still visible to this day. When there is a frost on the ground, in sunset’s low light, or drought conditions, the outlines of the American Air Stations are a silent tribute to the toil of the Black Units.



*In the region of 8-10 per cent of US service personnel were in black units. That equates to roughly 240,000 men in Britain, over the duration of the war.*

The African Americans were welcomed by the British villagers – most of whom had never seen a person from a different ethnic background before - and many friendships were formed. GIs soon took to visiting the nearby towns, where locals enjoyed the jazz and ‘jitterbugging’! It may be that the reception that they received had some influence on the burgeoning Civil Rights Movement– as they say, travel broadens the mind.

# News from Across the Pond...



Above: Famous British cartoonist, Carl Giles, jammin' with African-American musicians at The Fountain in Tuddenham, Ipswich, Suffolk. The original cartoon of 'Ike' can be seen hanging on the wall, to the left. Lee Miller Archives. Courtesy of the Carl Giles Collection, British Cartoon Archive. University of Kent.



Meanwhile, some Bomb Groups had already arrived in Britain, and were to be found as 'lodgers' at British RAF airfields. This was part of a reverse lend-lease agreement. Many of the aircraft had battled their way to the UK in atrocious conditions, by puddle-jumping around the North Atlantic – Newfoundland, Greenland, Iceland, Scotland. The weather situations that they encountered were certainly not the same as in the stable air of Arizona and California, where the pilots and crew had learned to fly.

The dubious honor of leading the first mission went to the 97BG. The target was a railroad marshalling yard near Rouen and considered a 'milk run'. This was something of a PR exercise, taking place as it did, on 4 July 1942. It was also close enough to Britain to benefit from Spitfire fighter escort. All twelve aircraft made it back to Grafton Underwood, and were met by a relieved Maj Gen Carl 'Tooey' Spaatz. Airman, Walt Kelley, of B-17 *Heidi Ho*, christened it, "a cake walk".

Unfortunately, as the aircraft penetrated further into Europe, the new targets were beyond the range of fighter escort. The euphoria of that first mission was short-lived. Until developments in

fighter aircraft allowed the addition of long-range fuel tanks, the bombers and crews were on their own, suffering appalling attrition rates. However, the lessons learned, shaped changes, that shaped the war to come, and the eventual allied dominance of the skies.

Inscribed on the Cambridge Wall of the Missing are the names of two men who were part of *Bolero* right from the start – Asa North Duncan and Townsend Griffiss.

## Lt Col Townsend Griffiss



Townsend 'Tim' Griffiss was born, 4 April 1900, in Buffalo, New York. Later, his mother and

# News from Across the Pond...

affluent stepfather lived in San Diego, California, moving in high society circles, rubbing shoulders with the likes of Wallis Spencer (later Wallis Simpson), and meeting the Prince of Wales.

'Tim' graduated from West Point in 1922, then trained as a fighter pilot with the US Army Air Corps. He spent 1925-1928 flying in Hawaii and was a member of the military polo team led by Major George S Patton. After seeing service in California and Texas, 'Tim' moved to Bolling Field, Washington, DC, where he was able to put old connections to good use and acquire new ones. These eventually led to postings to Paris and Berlin as an air attaché. After deployment as an observer during the Spanish Civil War, he returned to the Air Corps Tactical School in 1938. More time spent in government positions earned him promotion, so that Major Griffiss was returned to Europe in 1941, before the United States entered the war. His role at the US Embassy London was pertinent to preparing American diplomacy for war.

As part of General James E Chaney's staff, Griffiss was involved with the coordination of US/UK strategy within the North Atlantic Sphere, including organizing the US forces tasked with protecting Iceland. Then, in November 1941, he was released from Chaney's team, and sent to Moscow by General George Marshall. Newly promoted Lieutenant Colonel Griffiss was tasked with negotiations to open a direct Siberian Route to send American lend-lease aircraft to the Soviets. Griffiss spent two months being given the run-around by the Russian diplomats. As the Nazi's moved closer to Moscow, Griffiss relocated to Kuibyshev.

Nothing gained, he planned a return to Britain. This was no simple task in the extreme cold of early 1942, so he flew to Tehran, and on to Cairo. It was there he joined a British Overseas Airways Corporation flight. This unmarked, civilian-crewed B-24 aircraft, set an unusual course for the UK. The flight path was approved by the Air Ministry in London, but due to a breakdown in communication, not all services were aware that the BOAC would not be following the traditional south-west-

erly approach to the English coast. Flying in from the south-east, overhead St Malo, the aircraft was initially identified as 'hostile'. While, eventually updated to 'friendly', not everyone got the message. Two Polish Air Squadron Spitfires were sent up from Exeter to investigate. Unfortunately, they mistakenly opened fire, hitting the B-24s right engine. The aircraft disappeared into cloud, and subsequently crashed into the English Channel. Debris later collected was identified as belonging to the ill-fated occupants.

Lt Col Townsend Griffiss became the first American aviator fatality in the European Theatre of WWII. The 8th Air Force base at Bushy Park, Teddington, London, was named Camp Griffiss in his honor. He was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service medal for his efforts.

## Brig Gen Asa North Duncan



Born on 30 March 1892, at Leighton, Alabama, Asa North Duncan initially served with the Alabama Infantry. After a number of reassignments, he graduated from the School for Aerial Observers in time to see service with the American Expeditionary Forces in Europe.

Upon arrival in France - summer 1918 - Duncan was sent to the front, where he served as an air gunner and photographic observer. There is a description of one mission over enemy lines, when he fought until his guns were hopelessly jammed. His adversary had managed to put shots through

# News from Across the Pond...

both of his magazine drums. He was twice knocked down by the impact of shots against his gun mount – what bravery – truly the stuff of boy’s own comics. It was not until after WWI that he was finally awarded his pilot’s wings.

The creation of the United States Army Air Corps provided many opportunities for people with experience to show leadership skills. In 1941 he became Commanding Officer of the 17th Bombardment Wing based in Savannah, Georgia. Further promotion followed and in 1942 he became the Commanding Officer, later Commanding General of the Eighth Air Force, at Savannah.

Shortly after being promoted to Brigadier General, Asa Duncan was posted to Britain as Chief of Staff under Major General Carl Spaatz, Eighth Air Force. He was based first in London, and later at their headquarters at Bushey Hall, Watford, England.

On 17th November 1942 Gen Duncan left Predannak airfield in Cornwall aboard a B-17 en-route for Gibraltar and the 12th Air Force. The

plane was reported to have come down in the Bay of Biscay near to St Nazaire, France. Two bodies were recovered from the water but eleven others, including Gen Duncan were unaccounted for. The plane was the first Douglas-built B-17 lost in the ETO.

Build-up of logistics continued – waxed and waned – *Operation Bolero* lived up to its name. Troops and aircrew were diverted to the North Africa and Italy campaigns. Some returned to British shores, others carried on in Europe. The USAAF gradually increased its missions over mainland Europe, as its numbers steadily swelled. Indeed, a few Bomb Groups and Fighter Groups spent the entirety of the War based on British soil. Britain became known as America’s aircraft-carrier! By May 1944, there were around 1.5 million Americans in Britain, ready and eager for the assault on Normandy. It may have been a stuttering start, but *Operation Bolero* was a success, which is why ABMC commemorates that achievement in the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year.



**Cambridge American Cemetery and Memorial**

# CHAPTER NEWS

**8th Air Force Historical Society  
Oregon Chapter  
Photo by Joan Hamilton**

**The 388th Bomb Group in  
World War II:  
Fortress for Freedom  
By Lt. Col. Terrence G.  
Popravak, Jr., USAF (Ret.)**

*On Feb 12, 2022, Lt Col Terrence G. Popravak, Jr. USAF (Ret) presented "Fortress for Freedom" a history of the 388th Bomb Group in WWII. His association with the 388th began back in 1985, and he later served on active duty with the 388th Fighter Wing in the 1990s. This is his excellent article based on his presentation.*  
JH

The 388th BG, one of 26 B-17 Groups in 8th AF, activated at Gowen Field, ID, on Christmas Eve, 1942. By Feb 1943, it moved to Wendover Field, UT, for operational training, then in May to Sioux City AAB, IA, where brand-new B-17Fs were issued. In late May, 35 B-17s flew to McChord Field, WA, to fly three training missions and show the group was ready. The air echelon went to Salina, KS, in June for final checks, while the

ground echelon went to Cp. Kilmer, NJ, to ship out.

Overseas Movement by 41 B-17s was in Jun/Jul, and most personnel by RMS Queen Elizabeth, arriving in Britain in July 1943. The group settled in at Stn. 136, Knetishall. The 388th's first combat mission was against an aircraft factory in Amsterdam, Holland, on July 17, 1943.

A week after the 388th's BG's first mission it joined in Blitz Week. By the end of the week it lost 11 aircraft and was exhausted. After two weeks to recuperate and receive replacement aircraft and crews, the group flew the 17 Aug Regensburg part of the Double Strike raid; for this action, it received its first Distinguished Unit Citation. A second DUC soon followed for a mission to Hannover on Jun 26.

On Sep 6 the 388th went to Stuttgart; 11 Forts including the entire 563rd BS didn't come home. In Oct the group went to Schweinfurt - a non-combat take-off crash was the only loss that day.



As part of the effort to defeat the Luftwaffe for the Allied air offensive to succeed, as well as for the landings in occupied Europe, the

group participated in Big Week in Feb 1944. USAAF heavies dropped 10,000 tons of bombs on German aviation industry - more ordnance in one week than the 8th had delivered in 1943, and destroyed 75% of the structures in facilities that accounted for 90% of aircraft production. A deeper result came from Luftwaffe fighter pilot losses in intense air combat against the bombers and escorting fighters.

The 388th struck Berlin with the bulk of 8th AF on Mar 6; it cost 69 bombers, 7 from the 388th. This is considered the highest number of aircraft 8AF lost in a single mission. The Luftwaffe defended its capital, and Mustang escorts added to enemy fighter losses. German fighter pilot attrition peaked at 16% in 1943. In the first five months of 1944 it was 25%.

The 388th attacked the

# CHAPTER NEWS

German synthetic oil industry, hitting Brux in western Czechoslovakia in May as part of 8th AF's first concerted attack against oil targets. The group launched 43 aircraft and achieved excellent results, losing one aircraft to fighters. The group received its third DUC.

In preparation for the Allied landings in France, the 388th BG attacked transportation targets and forward airfields on the Continent. The group took after enemy V-weapons sites too. When D-Day came, the 388th led all of 8th AF on the first mission that morning. The heavies of the group later aided the St. Lo breakout (Jul 25). In Op. Cadillac, the unit flew three resupply missions for French resistance/Maquis forces in Jun/Jul/Aug. Later battlefield support missions helped airborne ops in Holland (Sep) and ground forces in the Battle of the Bulge (Dec 44).

On Jun 21, the 388th flew in Op. Frantic versus a synthetic fuel plant at Ruhland, SE of Berlin, continued on to landed at Poltava Airfield in Ukraine in 8th AF's first shuttle mission to the Soviet Union. That night the Germans attacked and destroyed 47 B-17s on the ground, 11 from the 388th. Counting other 8th AF losses in attacks around Berlin that day, 45 heavy bombers, adding 47 at Poltava make it a loss of 91 heavies, much higher than the recorded 69 at Berlin on Mar 6. But it all depends on how you count it. Award of a fourth DUC

came for this mission.

The 388th's 560th BS played a prime role in Project Aphrodite, the radio-controlled flying bomb. It wasn't very successful, but was a predecessor of today's precision guided munitions.

In the Battle of the Bulge, bad weather prevented much air support. But on Christmas Eve, skies cleared and 8th AF with daytime help from the RAF put on the largest show of the war, altogether over 3,300 combat aircraft. The 388th put up everything that flew, 71 B-17s, including five bombers from other groups which happened to be at Knetishall at the time.

As 1945 began, Nazi Germany was on the ropes. The 388th flew its last combat mission on Apr 21. The Mighty Eighth finished its strategic bombing campaign on Apr 25.

As the war in Europe wound down in May, 1945, the 388th flew "Angel of Mercy" missions, including 5 Chowhound missions to drop relief supplies to starving Dutch citizens still under Nazi occupation. After the war in Europe ended, the Group flew three Op. Revival missions, transporting nearly 2,000 French and Belgian soldiers back to their native lands from Austria.

With the war still on in the Pacific, it wasn't long before Op. Lucky Strike saw the group's flying echelon depart for the US in waves starting on Jun 9 - by Jul 5 all 72 B-17s had left. In late

Jul the ground echelon departed and boarded the Queen Elizabeth, arriving Stateside on Aug 11.

After leaves and furloughs, group personnel reported in at Sioux Falls AAB, SD, to prepare for Pacific operations. But with the Pacific War's end, the 388th BG inactivated on Aug 28, 1945.

In two years of combat, the group flew 333 total missions: 306 in combat, 19 Aphrodite, 5 Chowhound, 3 Revival. It flew over 8,000 sorties, dropped over 18,000 tons of bombs and was credited with some 222 enemy aircraft destroyed (plus 80 probable, 116 damaged). The 388th BG received credit for six campaigns in the ETO and received four DUCs.

The cost of victory was significant. Somewhat over 500 combat crews were assigned to the 388th during the war. Many survived to complete 25, 30 or 35 missions. But 135 Combat Crews were lost. In 2012, figures indicated 524 KIA, 801 POW, 2 MIA, a total of 1,327 casualties.

Altogether 142 B-17s of the 388th BG were MIA or ditched at sea in combat ops. Another 81 were lost to other causes (3 AOC, 18 war weary and retired from frontline duty, 34 lost to operational reasons and 26 non-operational losses) for a total of 223 B-17s lost, or about 1 out of every 57 B-17s built (12,731), or 1 out of every 54 built if counting only F/G-models.

# 48TH ANNUAL 8TH AFHS REUNION WASHINGTON, D.C. ~ ARLINGTON, VA OCTOBER 19-23, 2022

Washington, D.C. has been our nation's capital since July 16, 1790. Be prepared for an incredible reunion experience the entire family will enjoy every single day!

## **Our Thursday morning tour:**

### **Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center**



Opened in 2003, the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center serves as a partner facility to the National Air and Space Museum. The two locations together attract more than 8 million visits per year, making the National Air and Space complex the most popular museum in the United States.

For aviation enthusiasts young and old, the Udvar-Hazy Center is just plain cool. The expansive museum consists of two hangars—the Boeing Aviation Hangar and the James S. McDonnell Space Hangar—which house dozens of aircraft and spacecraft. Some of the most notable include the Lockheed SR-71 Blackbird, a Concorde, and the space shuttle Discovery. The Mary Baker Engen Restoration Hangar has

an observation overlook, allowing visitors to see the preservation and restoration work underway by the Museum's collections staff.

The aircraft and spacecraft hanging overhead would be impressive enough, but the Udvar-Hazy Center also offers thousands of additional artifacts to view and many interactive, family friendly exhibits and activities. Prepare to take off and explore Sport Aviation, World War II Aviation, Space Science, and more. Before departure, browse the museum store and take home unique aviation and space themed souvenirs.

## **Our Thursday afternoon tour includes:**

### **Arlington National Cemetery Tour**



Experience a narrated trolley tour of the Arlington National Cemetery. Our private tour of Arlington National Cemetery includes stops near the Ord & Weitzel walking gate to see President John F. Kennedy's gravesite, U.S. Coast Guard Memorial, U.S. Army Gen. John J. Pershing's gravesite, the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier—including chang-

ing of the guard—and the Arlington House (The Robert E. Lee Memorial).

## **Air Force Memorial**

The Air Force Memorial honors the service and heritage of the men and women of the United States Air Force. The three stainless steel spires reach a height of 402 feet above sea-level. It is adjacent to the Arlington National Cemetery and overlooks the Pentagon.

## **US Marine Corps War Memorial (Iwo Jima Memorial)**



The U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial's world-famous statue, which is based on the iconic photograph taken by Associated Press photographer Joe Rosenthal, depicts the six soldiers who raised the second American flag at Iwo Jima in the Japanese Volcano Islands on February 23, 1945, signifying the conclusion of the American campaign in the Pacific during World War II.

## **Friday afternoon we will tour the Washington Mall.**







**Some of the highlights include:**

**Vietnam Veterans Memorial**

This memorial honors member of the U.S. armed forces who fought, died in service or were listed MIA during the Vietnam War. It is divided into three separate parts; the Three Soldiers statue, the Vietnam Women’s Memorial, and the well-known Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall. Controversy



surrounded the memorial’s unconventional design for its dark color and lack of decoration, but it quickly became a place of grieving, pilgrimage and healing. Today it stands as one of the most visited and moving memorials on the National Mall, as visitors have made a tradition of leaving mementos, letters and photographs of loved ones lost in the war.

**Korean War Veterans Memorial**

The Korean War Veterans Memorial was dedicated in 1995, on the 42nd anniversary of the armistice that ended the conflict. The memorial consists of 19 statues of soldiers representing a squad on patrol, drawn from each branch of the Armed Forces. The 19 figures create a reflection on the wall, symbolizing the border between North and South Korea: the 38th parallel. Alongside the soldiers stands the Mural Wall

with more than 2,400 photographs of men, women, and dogs who served in Korea.

**Pershing Park/World War I Memorial**

The American flag was raised over the World War I Memorial for the first time on Friday, April 16, 2021, at the formal unveiling of the memorial that honors the 4.7 million Americans who served their nation in World War I, including 116,516 who made the supreme sacrifice. Built by the United States World War I Centennial Commission and designed by architect Joseph Weishaar, the new memorial incorporates the existing memorial to Gen. John J. Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Forces during the war.



**World War II Memorial**

The National World War II Memorial, which honors the spirit and sacrifice of the 16 million men and women who served overseas and the more than 400,000 who perished, opened to the public in April 2004. The memorial built to celebrate the the heroes of the Greatest Generation remains one of the most visited sites on the National Mall, with more than 4.2 million visits in 2014. Each year, more than 300 Honor Flights bring World War II veterans, as well as those who served in the Korean and Vietnam wars, to the memorials dedicated to their service.

**For a change of pace, on Saturday our tour will take you to:**

**Old Town Alexandria**

On the Potomac River within eye-sight of Washington, D.C., Alexandria, VA, is nationally recognized for its rich history and beautifully preserved 18th and 19th century architecture. Named a Top 3 Best Small City in the U.S. 2021 by the Condé Nast Traveler Readers’ Choice Awards and one of the South’s Best Cities 2020 by Southern Living, Alexandria hums with a cosmopolitan feel and a walkable lifestyle—a welcoming weekend escape next to our nation’s capital. A nationally designated historic district founded in 1749, Old Town Alexandria is home to more than 200 independent restaurants and boutiques alongside

intimate historic museums and new happenings at the waterfront, making it the perfect home base for your D.C. vacation and an unforgettable get-away of its own.

Explore. Relax. Regroup. Have lunch at any of the

numerous restaurants or bistros.

Busses will return you to the hotel in plenty of time to get ready for our evening Gala!





# 48th Annual 8th AFHS REUNION

Crystal Gateway Marriott, Arlington, VA

October 19-23, 2022

## REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

### STOP!

#### ◇ 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 48 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.

*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. 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. Breakfast/Brunch Buffet will be served beginning on Thursday, October 20, thru Sunday, October 23. Be sure and select your choice of entrée if you plan on attending the Saturday evening gala.
- ⇒ There are four [4] 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.

#### ◇ MAIL IN YOUR REGISTRATION FORM

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

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

Or you may **SCAN** your registration form if paying by credit card  
*[a 3% convenience fee will be added]*

and then

**EMAIL to:  
ManagingDirector@8thAFHS.org**

**ALL** registration forms **MUST** be received by **September 16, 2022** 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***



# 48th Annual 8th AFHS REUNION

Crystal Gateway Marriott, Arlington, VA  
October 19-23, 2022

## HOTEL RESERVATION INFORMATION

(800) 393-3680

or **ONLINE** registration on our website: [8thafhs.org](http://8thafhs.org)

(Reference '8th AFHS' for group rate)

### Location

The Crystal Gateway Marriott is located at 1700 Richmond Highway, Arlington, VA, 22202, and provides the perfect home base for your visit to the Washington, D.C. area. Ideally located in Arlington, VA, the hotel is near Reagan National Airport (DCA) & Washington, D.C. The exciting new National Landing development is close by as are Pentagon City, downtown Washington D.C., and Old Town Alexandria. All are easily accessible via the nearby Crystal City Metro. Stylishly refreshed hotel accommodations showcase deluxe bedding, Smart TVs, walk-in showers and city views. Challenge yourself to a workout in the expansive fitness center before dining at *15th & Eads*, the sophisticated American restaurant. You will be dazzled by the comprehensively transformed Arlington Ballroom, which can seat up to 2,100 guests. This hotel has it all.

### Shuttle Service

For those of you flying into the Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, there is complimentary shuttle service to and from the airport to the hotel. To use the shuttle, go to the lower level, baggage claim. At this time the shuttle will pick up at door 4 and/or 7. Times are every 30 minutes at the quarter hour past and 15 minutes until the hour. The shuttle runs from 5am to midnight, daily. You do NOT need to call and/or reserve the shuttle.

### If You Drive

Self parking is \$39 per day in the underground garage, valet parking is \$45 per day.

#### RESERVATION INFORMATION

**Group Name:** *8th Air Force Historical Society*

**Reunion Dates:** October 19-23, 2022

**Rate:** \$198+14.25% Rates are offered 3 days prior and 3 days post reunion based on availability.

**Cut off Date:** 9/28/2022

**Cancellation Policy:** All reservations have a 48 hour cancellation policy, or attendee will be charged one night room rate plus tax.

#### WHEELCHAIR RENTALS

**ScoutAround:** (888) 441-7575 or [ScoutAround.com](http://ScoutAround.com)  
*Reserve chair rentals early!*

#### HOSPITALITY SUITES

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

The number of suites is limited, so we ask that you reserve your suite as soon as possible. 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 ME ASAP to reserve your suite!***

Call or email ASAP:

**Debra Kujawa**  
**Managing Director**  
**912-748-8884**

**[ManagingDirector@8thAFHS.org](mailto:ManagingDirector@8thAFHS.org)**



## REUNION SCHEDULE

### 48th Annual 8th AFHS REUNION

Crystal Gateway Marriott, Arlington, VA  
October 19-23, 2022

#### Wednesday, October 19

1:00pm — 6:00pm	Reunion Registration open
6:00pm — 7:00pm	Welcome Reception, followed by dinner on your own
7:00pm — 9:00pm	8th AFHS Board Meeting
7:00pm — until	Hospitality Suites remain open throughout reunion

#### Thursday, October 20

7:45am — 8:45am	Breakfast/Brunch Buffet
8:00am — 12:00pm	Reunion Registration open
9:00am — 12:00pm	<b>Steven F Udvar-Hazy Center Tour</b>
1:30pm — 4:30pm	<b>Arlington Cemetery &amp; Memorials Tour</b>
6:00pm — 9:00pm	Cash Bar Open
7:00pm — 9:00pm	Buffet dinner and program: <i>"Preserving a Legacy, the Footsteps of Bud Owens"</i>

#### Friday, October 21

7:45am — 8:45am	Breakfast/Brunch Buffet
8:00am — 12:00pm	Reunion Registration <b>TBD*</b>
9:30am — 11:00am	Group Meetings
12:30pm — 4:30pm	<b>Washington Mall, Memorials, &amp; Monuments Tour</b>
6:00pm — 9:00pm	Cash Bar Open
7:00pm — 9:00pm	Rendezvous Dinners

#### Saturday, October 22

7:45am — 8:45am	Breakfast/Brunch Buffet
8:00am — 12:00pm	Reunion Registration <b>TBD*</b>
8:45am — 10:15am	General Membership Meeting
12:00pm — 4:00pm	8th AFHS Board Meeting
11:00am — 3:30pm	<b>Exploring Old Town Arlington, VA Tour</b>
1:00pm — 6:00pm	Reunion Registration <b>TBD*</b>
6:00pm — 9:00pm	Cash Bar Open
7:00pm — 10:00pm	Gala Dinner and Program

#### Sunday, October 23

7:30am — 8:30am	Breakfast/Brunch Buffet
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**\* TBD Registration may be closed during the time scheduled for certain tours.  
Please pick up registration packets at your earliest convenience.**

**\*It is important that you be in the bus boarding area  
at least ten [10] minutes prior to the scheduled departure times.  
All tours require a minimum of 45 participants, unless otherwise stated.  
Driver and Staff gratuities ARE included in the tour prices.**



# REGISTRATION FORM

## 48th Annual 8th AFHS REUNION

Crystal Gateway Marriott, Arlington, VA  
October 19-23, 2022

REGISTRATION CUT-OFF DATE IS September 16, 2022 (NO refunds on cancellations past this date)	Price p/p	# of People	TOTAL
<b>DUES:</b> The principal attendee <i><b>MUST</b></i> be a CURRENT member of the 8th AFHS to register for this reunion. If you are NOT CURRENT, or a member, <b>please pay your yearly dues here:</b>	\$ 40	#	\$
<b>REGISTRATION FEE (non-refundable): EVERY attendee MUST pay registration fee</b>	\$ 45	#	\$
<b>BREAKFAST/BRUNCH BUFFET served 7:45am-8:45am, Thursday-Sunday</b> (Price is \$40 per person per day) Thursday: # _____ Friday: # _____ Saturday: # _____ Sunday: # _____	\$ 40	#	\$
<b><u>DINNERS</u></b>			
Thursday, Oct 20: Dinner Buffet	\$ 57	#	\$
Friday, Oct 21: Rendezvous Dinners—Roasted Free-Range Chicken & all the trimmings!	\$ 58	#	\$
Saturday, Oct 22: GALA Banquet (Please select one entrée per person)			
Grilled Marinated Flank Steak (beef)	\$ 58	#	\$
Pan Seared Herb Crusted Salmon	\$ 58	#	\$
Vegetarian, vegan, gluten free, etc—Please indicate type: Thurs _____ Fri _____ Sat _____	\$ 58	#	\$
<b>TOUR OPTIONS: ALL tours are LUNCH ON YOUR OWN each day</b>			
Thursday, Oct 20: 9am-12pm Steven F Udvar-Hazy Center	\$ 38	#	\$
Thursday, Oct 20: 1:30pm-4:30pm Arlington Cemetery & Monuments	\$ 25	#	\$
Friday, Oct 21: 12:30pm-4:30pm Washington Mall & Memorials	\$ 38	#	\$
Saturday, Oct 22: 11:00am-3:30pm Historic Old Town Alexandria, VA	\$ 38	#	\$
<b>Total amount payable to: 8th AFHS</b>			\$

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

MEMBER NAME (for name tag): \_\_\_\_\_ WWII VETERAN? \_\_\_\_\_

BG/FG Affiliation (for Rendezvous Dinner seating) \_\_\_\_\_ Post WWII Veteran: \_\_\_\_\_ (Branch of Military): \_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSE or GUEST #1: \_\_\_\_\_

GUEST #2: \_\_\_\_\_ GUEST #3: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

DAYTIME PH #: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

EMERGENCY CONTACT: \_\_\_\_\_ PH #: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE INDICATE IF YOU WILL BE USING A WHEELCHAIR ON TOURS: \_\_\_\_\_ NEED HYDRAULIC LIFT?: \_\_\_\_\_

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

CARD #: \_\_\_\_\_ 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 SCAN and email form to: [ManagingDirector@8thAFHS.org](mailto:ManagingDirector@8thAFHS.org)**

**STATEMENT BY 1ST LT. GOODRICK, GENE R,  
O-760823,  
LEADER OF HIGH ELEMENT OF  
LEAD SQUADRON OF 41ST "B" GROUP IN A/C #800**

*The document transcribed on the following pages reproduces the statement of 1st Lt. Gene R. Goodrick (pictured on next page), taken from Missing Air Crew Report #11111, describing the events occurring aboard his aircraft during a mission on 30 November 1944 to attack oil targets in the area of Zeitz, Germany. The aircraft was damaged by flak, and four crew members bailed out. Goodrick and the remaining crew continued the mission, bombing the target and returning the aircraft to Grafton Underwood airfield. For his role in this mission, Goodrick was awarded the Silver Star medal.*

*This is not a memoir dimmed by time. This statement captures the words of Lt. Goodrick on the day of the mission. It clearly has not been edited to put the facts in any order - it is just what he said (or wrote), as he said (or wrote) it. The transcription has reproduced the exact wording of the original document, including typographical errors. Insofar as possible, the original spacing has also been preserved.*

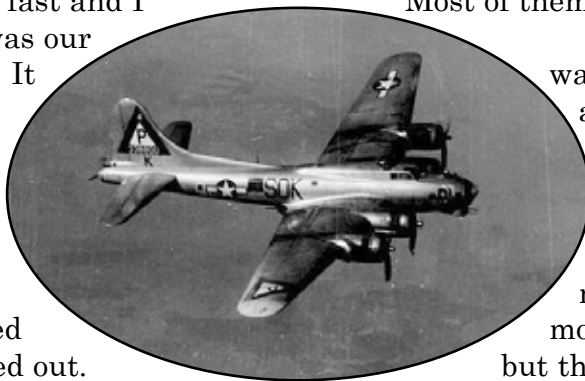
**W**e made the first bomb run and there were big contrails, and we caught a collision heading from another squadron coming in from the left. Major Koehne said he couldn't bomb so we did a right run and I figured we would go back and make another run. We did drop down about 3,000 feet to get out of the contrails and turned back on the bomb run, and were pretty well along on the bomb run when flak started getting accurate. About two minutes before bombs were away we got hit and a large explosion took place both inside and outside the ship. It bounced me right out of the seat. I got excited. I heard this hissing noise behind me and smoke started filling the cockpit. I looked back and there were sparks where the oxygen was burning. It was coming up along the wall in back of the cockpit. Flames were coming out from under the flight deck and the cockpit filled up with smoke. The engineer got out of the turret immediately upon the explosion and was making quite a bit of noise back there so I thought he was trying to put the fire out. The fire was on the pilot's left system. I kept yelling for the engineer to get the fire extinguisher but I later found out the fire extinguisher hadn't been used and I told the co-pilot to go back and help him out. I was trying to hold the ship in formation. We were flying close formation. The co-pilot went back and I continued to fly the ship. About this time I noticed the hatch below was opened, so

I figured the only reason for that was that they had bailed out. Therefore I salvoed the bombs myself. The bomb bay doors had been opened previously, before the bombardier went out. The bombs went away with the rest of the formation. After bombs away there was no particular need for me to stay with the rest of the formation. My right wingman was flying very close, so I dove down below so if the ship blew up and to keep from running into another ship. I then noticed both the engineer and co-pilot had gone. I didn't have any oxygen. My oxygen system was hit. It was the one that was burning. My system all burned out. They opened the escape hatch and I think that is what put the fire out. I got out of formation and I realized I didn't have any oxygen. I had been off of oxygen about four minutes. I looked down and checked and found I didn't have any oxygen so I tried to get a walk around bottle. I set the ship on AFCE and got out of the seat into the hatch trying to get a walk around bottle broken loose. I never did get one loose. I was getting very weak and I had told one of the gunners to come up and help me out, and I told him I didn't have any oxygen. The ball turret operator came up. I had not ordered him to get out of the ball turret all this time. He came up and put me on the co-pilot's oxygen and I put him up in the top turret. We had dropped to about 16,500 feet. About that time there were three fighters in the vicinity at 2 o'clock high. They were too far away to

be identified, so we kept calling them out and maneuvering around until we found out they were P51's. I then got him out of the top turret and I was trying to get back into formation with some group as we didn't have a navigator. We took a heading west and I saw this formation of bombers about five miles ahead and 7,000 feet higher so I started going towards it and ducked into a thin layer of stratus clouds. Stayed in there for about three or four minutes and came back and there were still fighters around the area. Somebody asked the group leader to fire some flares. About two minutes after I heard this over the V.H.F. I saw these flare trails and I knew they were up ahead so I called him and told him I was moving in formation. We were climbing very fast and I picked out what I thought was our formation and I was correct. It was our group. The hydraulic and electrical system had been shot out and the wheels were going up and down. Both landing gear motors had burned out. The right landing gear was locked down and the left was burned out. We joined the high element and came back to the base. We didn't have any flaps or lights. We lowered the wheels but didn't have any brakes when I hit the runway. I didn't know how I was going to stop the plane. I was going to ground loop it, but the ball turret gunner didn't know where the tail wheel lock release was so we just ran off the end of the runway. All the remaining crew did a wonderful job of sticking with me.

Right after we were hit somebody said, "Let's get out of this thing." I think it was either the co-pilot or the engineer. After that I noticed that everyone up front was gone, so I called back and they were all staying there. I told them we could make it back OK. None were injured.

The electrical system was destroyed by the burst underneath turrets, flaps, bomb doors, wheels and landing lights inoperative. I hit the ground around 125 or so. The only thing I was landing by was, the ship ahead of



me. My radio compass was inoperative. After I followed him all the way around I could then see the outline of the runway. The A/C number was 800. It will be out at least a week. Twenty-seven holes in the left wing alone. I don't know whether any main spars or tanks were hit or not.

There was a dent in either the Navigator or bombardier's helmet. This may have helped influence their jump. Also, we had just seen two bombers blow up right before the target. There was a lot of flame in the A/C. The hydraulic fluid was down in there burning with the oxygen. I think the blast from the open hatch was what blew the fire out. The men that bailed out were not my original crew. Most of them had many missions.

I don't think the engineer was the first man out. Within a matter of seconds after the oxygen explosion the navigator and bombardier definitely bailed out and then the engineer and co-pilot. I motioned to the fire and he motioned that he understood but then he bailed out.

I had four engines all the way. I had no trouble staying in formation. The elevator had several large holes torn in it. The ball turret gunner cranked the wheels up over Germany but when I got over the base the tail gunner let them down. The ball turret gunner helped in the landing. There is a hand pump on the co-pilot's side which comes right down out of the bottom of the hydraulic pump and he pumped this hand pump all the way down. It slowed the plane up very little however. He called off the air speed and helped me line up with the runway, and also pointed out the planes as we came around. I couldn't have gone around again after I had gotten on the runway because I might not have been able to locate the field again.

//signed//

GENE R. GOODRICK,  
1st Lt. Air Corps, Pilot, A/C 800

THIS IS A CERTIFIED TRUE COPY:

//signed// J. R. WYATT,  
Captain, Air Corps

# Memories Are Made of This

by  
2nd Lt. Gordon A. Glover  
94th Bomb Group

The war in Europe and the Pacific had been over for a couple of months or more, and the B17s on the ramp at the big air base near Burtonwood, England, were there to haul fighter pilots back to the States. As 15 of them clambered into one of the machines, a major with a handle-bar mustache squeezed up to the cockpit, scowling.

“You know anything about flying this contraption across the Atlantic?” he asked the pilot.

“Oh, brother,” I replied. “I sure do. What would you like to know?”

I, of course, had tales to tell, but this was not the time or the place. Maybe now it is.

It has been 40 years since our crew last saw Milton Smith, and we have no idea where he might be. This surprises none of us. We knew that he had lived in Missouri and New Mexico, but that was all we ever learned about the background of this very private man. We knew better than

to pry further.

Smitty was the only guy I ever met in the military who never showed up for mail call—not even once. He managed this



with good humor and with no attempt to be mysterious. Since he didn't write any letters, he didn't expect to receive any. It was as uncomplicated as that.

Smitty joined our crew as navigator when we first assembled in Lincoln, Nebraska, in the

summer of 1944. He and Bucky Meyers, our bombardier, were 28 or 29, and Ray Harriman, the radio operator, was close to that. The rest of us were in our early 20s, with three of us barely out of our teens.

Smitty was a first lieutenant, and the smear de guerre on his tunic included the DFC and the Air Medal with clusters, the result of his having completed 50 missions in Italy with the 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force. He had been stateside for only a few weeks when he pleaded to go back overseas. His tolerance for the Training Command was about zero.

“Here's where old Smith like to have busted his ass,” he would say, pointing on the map to such places as Foggia and Ploesti and Munich. We listened, wide-eyed and innocent.

Indeed, we were so wide-eyed and so innocent that Smitty couldn't believe the Air Force was seriously preparing the likes of us to do battle with the accursed Hun. Wars were to be



fought by men, not boys. It was a thought that never occurred to the rest of us, least of all to the two occupants of the cockpit, Bill Main, the pilot, and myself. We were fresh out of B17 pilot training schools—Roswell, New Mexico, in Bill’s case, and Hendricks Field, Sebring, Florida, in mine.

We figured that with nearly 300 flying hours apiece, including all that time in the Stearman, there wasn’t a whole lot left to be learned. (I was a flight officer, incidentally, and by 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Force regulation, couldn’t be a first pilot, even after Hendricks Field. I rankled over that one, but my time would come when we joined the 94<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group.)

Even Smitty failed to realize how hopeless things were until somebody from the adjutant’s office brought the crew together to discuss making out our wills. Bill Main and I, it developed, were ineligible because we were underage. We had just turned 20 a few weeks earlier. As we sheepishly left the room, Smitty watched in utter horror.

“Callow youth,” he would say. “The youth are in the cockpit and the brains are in the nose.”

We were soon to leave Lincoln for crew training in Ardmore, Oklahoma. It was a journey that I’ll remember, not because troop train rides are memorable for any but the worst of reason, but because this one

was a harbinger of screw-ups yet to come. Right in the middle of a poker game, with Smitty dealing, the train jumped the rails while being shunted onto a siding. As the car clattered along the roadbed and lurched into a crazy tilt to starboard, Smitty propped one foot against the sloping bulkhead and continued the deal. He didn’t even pause. He didn’t even



glance out the window.

“Looks like the ace is tall,” he said.

We survived crew training in Oklahoma, the odds being favored, I suppose, because we flew only in weather that was perfect. In no way did it resemble what we would encounter in England. It was easy to stay in formation, even when you were tail-end Charlie, because 15,000 feet passed for “high altitude,” and our maximum load never included a stacked bomb bay and fully topped Tokyo tanks. Things would be very different in England. We were in for some surprises.

But at least we got to

know each other in Oklahoma and Nebraska. We learned to work as a team, and, incredibly, none of the hangovers would prove to be terminal. L.D. Crabtre was our engineer; John Doyle our waist gunner and armaments man; Bill Herring our lower ball gunner, and Fred Englehardt our tail gunner. They called themselves “The Joy Boys of Radio,” and the chatter I remember on the intercom makes me groan to this day.

Bill Herring won the lower ball job after a toss of the coin with Fred Englehardt. Bill would rue this turn of fate. Never once did Bill Main or I remember to warn Herring to turn his turret around before we used the pilot’s relief tube.

“Goddddammit!”

Herring would wail. “How can I use these guns when my windshield is frozen over!”

“I hear dissension among the troops,” said John Doyle.

John was later to win immortality of sorts for the logic of his thinking. He reasoned that if the Germans were going to put up a curtain of flak, he would put up a curtain of flak suits. He would wear one and stand on one and drape others around his gun position in the waist. John Doyle is alive and well to this day.

Our route to England was to take us from Lincoln to Grenier Field, Manchester, New Hampshire, and from there to Goose Bay, Labrador, to Iceland

and finally to Prestwick, Scotland (it turned out to be Valley, Wales, because Prestwick was socked in).

We were to take off at midnight, and as we rolled from the taxi strip onto the runway, with brakes squealing, Bill Main called for me to turn off the landing lights. I flipped the switches, and as I did so, there was loud POW! And the B17 seemed to drop to one knee. I thought: Good God, I pulled up the gear. I hit the wrong switch.

It was a blow-out, of course, and later, with beads of sweat still on my brow, I said, "I thought I really screwed up that time."

"So did I," said Smitty.

An icy wind blew off the Plains when we tried again a few nights later. We climbed to altitude on course, flying through squalls and over-cast on a moonless night. We began to pick up clear ice on our leading edges, and I periodically checked the accumulation with a flashlight. We'd had little if any experience with ice in Florida and New Mexico and Oklahoma. We remembered, though, that you were supposed to allow the ice to accumulate to permit the de-icer boots to work effectively. But how much accumulation? We guessed how much, and we

guessed wrong.

Bill Main turned the airplane over to me while he visited the relief tube back in the bomb bay. The B17 seemed to be wallowing. The controls were absolute mush. Suddenly, with the airspeed indicating 155 mph, the airplane stalled in level flight. The left wing dropped out from under us, and the bomber went into a sickening spin.

I shouted to L.D. Crabtree, "Quick, the de-icer boots!"



L.D. made a super-human dive over the pilot's seat and reached the de-icer control between the seat and the bulkhead. The B17 came out of its spin after two-and-a-half turns, responding to the controls just the way a Stearman would.

The guys on the crew were tossed around like sacks of grain, especially Bill Main back in the bomb bay. Smitty, the old pro, reacted quickly and instinc-

tively. He had the parachute snapped on and was kneeling at the escape hatch in the nose when we pulled out of the spin. He came within an ace of bailing out.

We leveled off at 7,000 feet, having lost about 3,000.

Our flight to Goose Bay was mercifully uneventful, but the Iceland leg would produce yet another hairy adventure. The coast of Greenland was nearly two hours behind us when we began sweating out our Number 3 engine. It was running rough,

with the oil pressure gauge flickering ominously. As dark as the night was, we could see the North Atlantic 9,000 feet below, its cold grey waters streaked with white caps. The crew speculated on how long we'd last if we had to ditch.

But as we nursed the gyrations of our right inboard engine, we got a

nasty surprise from an engine on our left. Number 2 conked out with no warning whatever. We struggled in vain to start it as we turned back to Greenland and got on the radio to broadcast our predicament.

Our destination was the Air Force base at Bluey West One, on the southern tip of Greenland. We flew over the Greenland ice cap, an awesome sight with its crevasses thou-

sands of feet deep. We decided it looked less hostile than the North Atlantic.

The base at Bluey West had one runway, running north-south and bowled in by mountains. Regardless of wind direction, aircraft took off to the south, over open water, and landed the other way. The landing program called for making your first one a good one. The mountains left little room for a go-around in case of overshooting--particularly in a B17.

We let down on the beam over the open sea, breaking through an overcast at 3,000 feet. The fjords were rimmed with mountains rising straight out of the sea and disappearing into the clouds. With a chart on his lap, Smitty sat in the bombardier's greenhouse and told us which fjord to follow. This was important. Several fjords were dead ends, surrounded so tightly by mountains that there was no room for a 180 degree turn. We were glad Smitty was aboard.

We ate steaks at Bluey West and figured anyone assigned to so bleak an outpost deserved steak and any other luxury that could be hauled in. We gazed in awe at the mountains and the canyons of snow that lined the streets and runway. Huge ravens hunched on the icy crags and watched for activity at the kitchen door of the mess hall.

"They're kee birds," Fred Englehardt explained. "They sit there and say, 'Keeeee-rist, it's cold up here.'"

The mechanics found nothing wrong with our engines. They turned over instantly in the

warm hangar and ran smoothly all the way to Wales. Ice, we figured. It had to have been ice that caused that engine to conk out. Sharp.

(After the war, in Los Angeles, Bill Main was to run into a pilot of one of the other B17 that flew across with us. The crews had monitored our indistinct radio message and got the idea that we had gone into the drink and were lost. He greeted Bill in astonishment.)



Soon after our arrival in Bury, Smitty was transferred from the 331<sup>st</sup> to the 333<sup>rd</sup> squadron, where he became a lead navigator. I flew 16 missions with the crew before becoming a first pilot. I seldom flew more than two or three missions with the same bunch each time, because guys were assigned to me only to finish whatever was left of their tours.

My crew chief for the whole time, though, was Carl Lose, and there was none finer. He and his men were so good at what they did that Mason Wye, our navigator, constantly reminded me that Carl had more to do

with our safe returns than either he or I did. I needed no reminder. Carl's professionalism kept us humble and mighty respectful.

I would think of Carl later when I was a cub reporter on The Knoxville News-Sentinel, writing obituaries. One of the morticians I dealt with was a former 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force crew chief. Sometimes when he called, he would have not one but two clients in his establishment—one on display, you might say, and the other being—ah—worked on.

"I got one on the ramp and one in the hangar," he would say.

Carl, in case anyone is wondering, is not a merry mortician. He is a prosperous manufacturer's rep, like John Doyle, and a valued contributor to the 94<sup>th</sup> BGMA, also like John.

I fly only sailplanes now. This is more fun than any flying I have ever done, including a couple of years as a Reservist flying F84 jet fighters at Niagara Falls Air Force Base. As a glider pilot, I pose a hazard only to myself. Smitty, wherever he is, would be pleased to hear that.

Bill Main, easily the finest pilot any of us ever flew with, will soon retire as an American Airlines captain, still looking like a callow youth. American doesn't promote co-pilots to captain until they've had 10 or 15 years' experience and at least 10,000 flying hours.

Smitty would approve of that, too.

*2Lt. Glover is pictured here, and on the preceding pages.*

**Bailey, Clayton Oliver, 94,**



passed peacefully on Saturday, March 19, 2022. A lifelong resident of East Aurora, New York, Clayton was the son of

(the late) Oliver and Mary Bailey, born in a house on Knox Road. He enlisted into the military in the mid 1940's where he trained as a Ball Turret Gunner on a B-24 Bomber. After his service he joined his father in the printing business and published a local town newspaper called "The Shopping Guide." The business evolved into a commercial print shop called S-G Press, with prestigious customers throughout Western New York.

Clayton married (the late) Virginia Griffin in September 1951 and had three children: (the late) Timothy Lynn Bailey, (the late) Darcy Reed, Wendelyn Bailey Werley (Luther) and Randall Lee Bailey (Lauren Reynolds). Clayton is survived by seven grandchildren: Timothy Mason Bailey (Katie), Jared McKnight Bailey, Joel Griffin Bailey, Clayton Charles Smith (Victoria), Vanessa Smith Nolan (Je), Bradford Oliver Bailey (Morgan), Brianna Bailey Anderson (Heath). He was also blessed with 11 Great Grandchildren: Emmarie Bailey, Avery Nolan, Everett Nolan,

Isla Nolan, Violet Nolan, Myles Nolan, Brooks Bailey, Grace Bailey, James Anderson, Stella Anderson, and Mason Anderson. After the passing of his wife Virginia, Clayton became a loving friend to (the late) Sandra Connors who became an integral part of the family. As well as a loving husband, father, grandparent and companion, Clayton loved to tinker with typewriters and even had a shop dedicated to fixing and selling that old thing called the typewriter. He was a private airplane pilot, and member of the American Legion Post 362 and a member of the First Baptist Church of East Aurora for over 85 years. He loved to make people smile with a joke or a kind gesture and will always be remembered as a true historian of East Aurora.

**Cooper, John Cobb III, 99,**



died peacefully September 7, 2021, in Portland, Oregon, just one week shy of his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. A playwright, author, artist,

attorney, World War II veteran, hockey and tennis enthusiast, devoted husband and father, dog whisperer (or rather, dogs were John whisperers, as he would have happily admitted) and an

ace harmonica player, John was the son of John C. Cooper Jr. and Martha Marvel Cooper. He was raised in Jacksonville, Florida, and Princeton, New Jersey, where he attended Princeton University. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, he left school to enlist in the 8th Air Force. He served as a navigator with the 94<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group in B-17s and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, and later served in the Air Transport Command. After the war, he graduated from Columbia University. John's experiences in World War II informed his first novel, "*The Gesture*," published in 1948. When it was reprinted 40 years later, a Publisher's Weekly review stated "...this novel touches nerves of military command competence and race that are as relevant today as four decades ago." In 1953, John married the love of his life, Joan, to whom he would be married for 68 years. In 1960, they and their first three children moved from Rockland County, New York, to Colorado Springs, Colorado, where their fourth child was born. By then a practicing attorney, John served for a time as a municipal judge and later as a house attorney with the Holly Sugar Corporation. During the Vietnam War, he donated legal counsel to draft resisters and absent-without-leave soldiers. Throughout, and into retirement, he wrote novels,

short stories, and plays, some of which were produced by independent theaters in the Colorado Springs-Denver region.

John continued to write and to sketch the people and scenery around him well into his 90s, even as he and Joan relocated from Tucson, Arizona, to Portland. Ever more haunted by his war memories, he found fellowship in local veterans' groups, but he never lost his sense of humor. During the dinner for his 98th birthday, he pulled a harmonica out of his pocket and played a chorus of Dylan's "*The Times They Are A-Changin'*."

John was preceded in death by his sisters, Rachel Baker and Jane Cooper. He is survived by his wife, Joan; his children, John (Zaida), Katherine, Daniel, and Monte (Anne Boutin); his granddaughter, Sonrisa; and many members of his extended family and friends.

**Kinzer, Roland Carlyle, 95,** passed on from this life at the age of 95 years on Thursday, November 4, 2021, at his home in Jenks, Oklahoma. From his birth in Versailles, Kentucky, on February 15, 1926, until shortly before his death, Carlyle enjoyed a strong constitution and



a life full of work that he enjoyed, love and duty to his family, and service to his country and his Christian faith.

His parents were John Calvin Kinzer whose family was from Iowa and Kathlene Theodora Carlyle Kinzer whose father was from Calgary, Alberta, Canada, and whose mother was from upstate New York. World War II interrupted his education. Having completed high school early, he enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps just before his 18th birthday. He was assigned to the 381<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group, 8th Air Force, and was stationed at Duxford Airfield just outside Cambridge, England. From there he participated in 28 heavy bombardment sorties over enemy occupied continental Europe as a crewmember on a B-17 heavy bomber.

After the war, Carlyle earned a bachelor's degree in Animal Husbandry from Oklahoma A&M College (now Oklahoma State University) and went to work as a ranch hand on Honey Creek Ranch near Grove, Oklahoma. There he met Barbara Ann Babb who was a lifelong resident of Grove. They married on December 27, 1950, and remained so until Barbara's death on October 31, 2015. They purchased a ranch in 1955 and expanded it to 2,000 acres spread across Okmulgee and McIntosh Counties in Oklahoma. Carlyle continued his family tradition by

running registered Hereford cattle until they converted the ranch to a commercial prairie hay operation. They ran the ranch until their retirement and move to Jenks in 1993 to be near their children and grandchildren.

Carlyle is survived by three children, four grandchildren and one great-grandson. His son is Cal Kinzer who, with his wife Debi Kinzer, lives in Tulsa. His eldest daughter is Carol Kinzer, whose son is Alex Kinzer, both of Tulsa. His younger daughter is Cathy Woods, whose husband is Barry Woods and they live in Jenks. Their children are Leslie McCurry (husband Jarrod) of Wichita, Kansas; Shelby Hanna (husband Michael) who with their son Owen Hanna live in Donaghcloney, Northern Ireland; and Adam Woods who also lives in Jenks.

**Stoffer, Louis J., 97,** a longtime Centralia businessman, passed away peacefully March 16, 2022. He was born in Tacoma in 1924 and moved to Centralia with his parents Louis and Anna (Exner) Stoffer two years later. He graduated from Centralia High School in 1942 and was drafted into the Army Air Corps in 1943 where he was a flight engineer on B17s.



He was assigned the 398<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group based in Nuthampstead, England and flew 35 missions. After the war, he attended the University of Washington. During the summer of freshman year, he met his future wife, Betty Grimes, at a dance at the Centralia dance hall called Woody's Nook and never went back. They were happily married for over 68 years, having two children, four grandchildren, and five great-grand-

children. Louis joined his father's business Stoffer and Son Sheet Metal. He took over the business when his father died in 1954. He expanded the business by building the Harrison Street location next door to his home on Harrison Avenue near Fords Prairie Elementary School. He continued working with his son until just before his death.

Louis was active in the 8th Air Force Historical Society and the

398<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group. He remained lifelong friends with his flight crew and attended reunions all over the country.

He received the Purple Heart for a plane crash he survived in Belgium, however, two crew members perished. He helped with the Centralia Class of 1942 reunions and traveled with his wife extensively throughout Europe, Mexico, and China. He was active in the Boy Scouts for many years and was a lifetime member of the Elks and American Legion.

He was preceded in death by his wife Betty in 2014, and his sister Helen Bell in 2013. He is survived by daughter Patricia (Steve) Pennak; son Gary (Mary Anne) Stoffer; grandchildren Alexa (Ben) Betz, Jonathan (Mary) Stoffer, Joseph Stoffer, and Julie (Ronald) Welty; and five great-grandchildren.



*Flags of the Fallen at the National Museum of the Mighty 8th Air Force, Pooler, GA (2021)*

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# A MOMENT IN TIME

## Bottle Butts Buggy

### Part I ~ The Wolf's Lair

JM Pittman, Next Gen 466th BG



*Editor's note: John Pittman has written an amazing and riveting article which we are presenting here in three [3] consecutive installments. This is part one. The other two will be published in the September and December issues of the 8th A F News respectively. ddk*

The twentieth century had not been kind to the home of Johannes Brahms. During World War I, starvation and sacrifice had been the order of the day. When the guns fell silent, a generation of young men failed to return from the trenches of the western front. This war was even worse.

As the morning of August 6<sup>th</sup>, 1944, dawned bright and clear, the town held its collective breath. They had good reason to be afraid. The approaching bomber formation stretched nearly 15 miles behind the lead aircraft. Air raid sirens pierced the air as the bombers turned at the IP and started their run to the target. The ground began to reverberate as anti-aircraft batteries fired a curtain of steel at the approaching *Terra Fleigers*. Burnt and bombed, they wouldn't go down without a fight.

Twenty thousand feet in the air, Norden bombsights zeroed in on the target below. Glen Alexander remembered, "when we turned on the bomb run, Lt. Halls called out that the 'Flak was intense and accurate.' I saw a plane in the group ahead split up and go down in flames. As we neared the target, they began tracking us. Black puffs at

our level-first to our right and then to the left." Within minutes his bomber had been hit. Gas was pouring from fuel tanks and the number three engine trailed smoke. Two crew members were wounded, and the plane began falling behind the formation.

Future Hall of Fame Head Coach, Tom Landry, of the Dallas Cowboys, flying as a B17 co-pilot, later wrote: "I can still remember the angry black cloud of exploding flak filling the sky as we approached our target that day." Ben Smith remembered, "There was a pall of smoke as thick as a forest fire, trailing long



plumes of smoke, planes were falling, bombers and fighters alike." While the Mustang drivers could fend off the German fighters, there was no escaping the flak. Bombs, burning aircraft, spent shrapnel, and parachutes rained down on the city below. As the Americans turned for home, tail gunners watched Hamburg burn for nearly a hundred miles.

By the summer of 1944, Adolph Hitler was spending most of his time at the Wolf's Lair in East Prussia. There, in the Masurian Forest, his engineers had carved out a bunker complex to meet their Fuhrers' every need. Secluded from the ravages of war he ranted and raved as Generals filtered in and out on their way to the front.

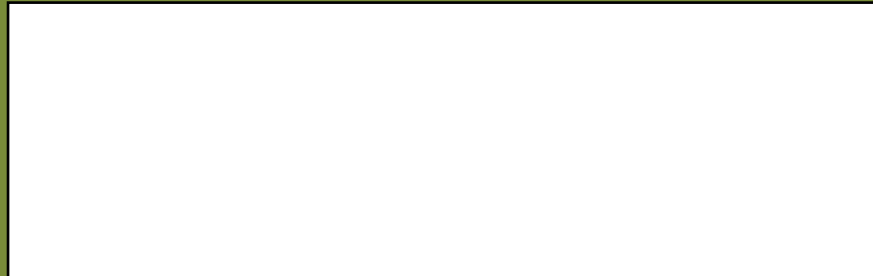
As the morning briefing on September 16<sup>th</sup> ended, Hitler summoned his top lieutenants to his  
*(continued on back cover)*



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inner chambers. Entering the room, his right arm was feeble and weak. Pressing his shaking hand close to his body, he shuffled to his chair. His eyes were a bit watery, and his skin had a reddish hue. Distant and disinterested, he motioned for the briefing to begin.

Jodl repeated the morning's statistics. Germany had suffered nearly 1.2 million casualties since June. In the west they were outnumbered nearly 2 to 1 and the Americans had complete command of the air. The good news was that Field Marshall Model had stopped the panic and grated a new backbone on his shattered troops. While Eisenhower reorganized and resupplied, the Germans were rebuilding the west wall defenses at a feverish pace.

Suddenly, Hitler motioned for Jodl to stop. A tense silence fell over the room as he rose to speak. Slowly moving his left hand over the map, his finger landed on a spot. "*Here,*" he said, "*I will attack them here, in the Ardennes. After we destroy the American army, we will push the British back into the sea!*"

As if possessed by Oden himself, Hitler obsessed over every detail of the plan. Convinced there were spies in his midst, he devised a ruse.

Calling on the German people to rise in defense of the fatherland, he announced that there could no longer be large-scale operations on their part. All they could do was to hold their positions and die. He demanded fanatical resistance to the bitter end. It was a message intended for Allied ears.

It was a message Allied leaders wanted to hear. Confident that the German Army was defeated, Eisenhower quietly boasted that the war would be over by Christmas. When Air Corp reconnaissance pilots began to report jammed highways and crowded rail lines in front of the 1<sup>st</sup> Army, General Eisenhower's G3 responded that there was nothing to report in the Ardennes sector.

At 0530 on December 16<sup>th</sup>, 1944, Hitler's obsession took form as massed artillery began the assault. Encased in fog, clouds, and snow, the largest land battle in US Army history was under way. Far to the west, the skies over East Anglia were encased in a blanket of fog. Day after day pilots were alerted for missions that would never take place. The biggest battle of the war was underway, and all they could do was wait and watch.

*(to be continued)*

**J M Pittman**