



# Heritage Herald



Issue 15

October 1994

## Message to the Membership of the Heritage League from Willis (Bill) Beasley, 2ADA Liaison

On behalf of the 2ADA, it is with pride and admiration that I announce the appointment of Mary Beth Barnard, League Vice President, Communications as Director of History and Archives at the Eighth Air Force Heritage Center in Savannah, GA. Mary Beth is sure to be an asset to the Center just as she is to the Heritage League. In addition, I wish to commend the League for showing an increase in membership and the reorganization of their membership records.

The Heritage Center in Savannah publishes a newsletter which gives progress reports of the Center from the standpoint of where they are and where they're going. Dedication of the Center is scheduled for April, 1996. A membership application can be found in this newsletter. (Page 8)

The 2ADA Executive Committee has asked me to make a concerted effort to keep President Billy Sheely Johnson informed of all 2ADA activities. Hopefully she will be able to attend the Executive Committee meetings in order to pass on pertinent information to League members.

Many of you have already heard the news of the tragic fire at the Norwich Central Library which included the total loss of the Memorial Room. The only memorabilia of any significance that was salvageable is the work of Dr. Martin Levitt which was stored in the record section of the library at a lower level. A quote from the Eastern Daily Press "We have lost a priceless part of Norfolk's History. City dignitaries and library staff wept openly as they watched the library –

home to 369,000 lending books, a remarkable collection of American literature, land county records dating back to the eleventh century – perish in the 1,000° heat." The Roll of Honor was completely destroyed. Jordan Uttal has been appointed to investigate replacement.

E. Bud Koorndyk, American Representative on the Board of Governors, Memorial Trust, has been appointed by Charles Walker, President of the 2ADA, to chair the 2ADA Memorial Library Emergency Committee. There are subcommittees at work under his direction. Mr. Koorndyk asks that any recommendation, information or any other data received privately from interested parties in Norwich should not be encouraged unless this data has been previously shared with Tom Eaton or Hillary Hammond. All reports on the activities of the individual sub-committees shall be channeled to the chairman E. Bud Koorndyk and Co-Chairman Richard Kennedy for proper disposition. In no case shall these activities be shared with our Norwich counterparts except through the above stated channels.

**Do Not Send Donations, Memorabilia, Books, Etc. until further notice.** Early assessment of a time-frame for rebuilding the Library is between 3 to 5 years. A site for rebuilding has not yet been determined. *If any of you have questions or concerns, please contact me at (303) 756-4766, 1525 South Garfield Street, Denver, CO 80210-3022.*



Photo from Eastern Daily Press



## The Mighty Eighth Heritage Center Starts Building Construction

Savannah, GA - The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Center started construction of its new 95,000 square foot building on July 1, 1994 during a ceremony at the Center's construction site along Interstate 95 west of Savannah.

"This is the day that all of us have looked forward to for a long time," retired Lt. General E.G. Shuler, the Center's Chairman and CEO, told the crowd of government and community leaders and Eighth Air Force veterans. It's the day on which we start construction of a unique memorial honoring all who have served in The Mighty Eighth in peace and war. We have a lot of work to do between now and April 1996 when we plan to open your Heritage Center."



The Eighth Air Force was created as a part of the U.S. Army Air Forces in Savannah in January 1942 and soon moved to England where it ultimately grew to be the largest air armada in history. It became known as The Mighty Eighth as crews and aircraft dropped thousands of tons of bombs on Nazi targets and played a major role in the Allied victory in World War II.

Many veterans of that World War were present at the ceremony including retired Major General Lewis E. Lyle. Lyle was a wartime combat leader who commanded both the 303rd and the 379th Bombardment Groups and flew more than 75 combat missions in B-17s. To officially start the construction, Lyle climbed aboard a bulldozer and began leveling dirt over a small area of the thirteen acre tract where the Heritage Center is being built.

Wayne Corbett

Sign at the Site

Corbett photo



Art Howe photo

Lt. Gen. E. G. Shuler, Jr., Mary Beth Barnard and Richard Kennedy at the July ceremony

## Address to the 466th Reunion

23 June 1993

On July 12 of last year, on a sunny English afternoon, I knew virtually nothing about the 466th Bomb Group, its men and the B-24 Liberators they had flown. I knew that my father had been a navigator stationed in England and that he and his crew had bailed out once over Holland somewhere. Beyond that, I knew nothing. Yet there I stood, at the Attlebridge Airfield. Not knowing when or if I would ever return to England, I had decided to make the three hour trip from south London to see the place where my father had served his country. As I stood there looking at the runways and fields, reflecting on what had taken place there, I began to realize, as John Woolnough had said "that I was standing on hallowed ground." I then went to the 466th Memorial which, unknown to me, had been dedicated exactly 30 days before on June 12. The designers of the memorial got it exactly right. It is elegant in its simplicity, dignified, and the setting is perfect. As I gazed at the inscription, I could almost hear the roaring engines of *The Flying Deck* as the 466th formed up to engage in yet another fierce battle with the enemy — I was hooked — I had to know more.

After returning to the States, my first order of business was to find a starting point to begin my search. I wrote to the 8th Air Force Historical Society who put me in touch with Louis Loevisky. Lou got me started and since then I have spent every chance I could researching my father's crew, the 466th

Bomb Group, the 2nd Air Division and the Consolidated B-24 Liberator.

During the course of my literary search, one fact kept coming to the forefront — "that uncommon valor was a common virtue." I was intrigued. I wanted to talk to my father and to the men on his crew and hear their words, their thoughts and how they perceived their roles in the war. This reunion gave me the perfect reason to write them letters and to call them on the phone, and I took every opportunity to do so.

In doing my research, I also managed to locate four members of the Charles A. Felts crew who had been out of touch for many years. One or two of these men are here with us today. I also struck up friendships with men who I would otherwise never have known existed and with whom I have had numerous phone conversations and written correspondence. Today, I have met some of these men for the first time.

Although you, the men of the 466th Bomb Group, may have thought of yourselves as ordinary men doing your job — a job that had to be done, you were in fact heroes in the truest sense. My generation of Americans, and all those who follow, owe you a debt of gratitude that we cannot ever entirely repay. To you and your B-24 Liberators, we owe our freedom and our way of life.

For those who recognize this fact, and even for those who don't, I thank you.

Richard B. Dondes





Union-Tribune / SEAN M. HAFEEY

## On B-24 flight, she recalls heroic dad

Sharon Kiernan flew with history yesterday, riding with the memory of her father and the day nearly 50 years ago when he risked his life to save the crew of a B-24 Liberator bomber.

"I still miss him," Kiernan said as she stepped out of the bomb bay of the world's only fully restored B-24.

A rare B-17 Flying Fortress bomber had accompanied the B-24 *All American* to Gillespie Field in El Cajon.

Kiernan's flight here from Pomona was in honor of her father, Lt. Col. Leon R. Vance, a Medal of Honor recipient. Although Vance survived the June 5, 1944, downing of a fellow pilot's B-24, he died on a flight home several months later.

Kiernan, who lives in Poway, said the flight "didn't change the way I feel about my father."

"I'm still at peace (with his death), but I'm still not - and I don't know why," she said.

During the flight, she imagined how her 6-foot-3-inch father must have stood on the B-24 flight deck and how ominous a curtain of flak must have looked from the pilot's seat. An accomplished pilot in her own right, Kiernan was allowed to take the controls for part of the flight.

"I'm just honored that the United States of America remembers my father," she said as she looked at the B-24. "My father's still flying in a big, big way."

Vance, a native of Enid, Oklahoma and a West Point graduate, was an air commander with the 489th Bomb Group. He was on a bombing run along the coast of France, flying in

*Missouri Sue*, when flak tore through one wing. The pilot was killed, and five crew members injured. All four engines were knocked out.

Although his right foot was nearly severed, Vance ordered the surviving crew members to parachute from the crippled plane while he kept it on course. Vance, believing a turret gunner was trapped inside the plane, brought the gliding Liberator to the English coast and ditched it in the sea.

An explosion blew Vance free of the cockpit, and he was picked up in the water an hour later. Two months later, he was being brought home in a C-54 when that aircraft went down without a trace off Newfoundland.

"I was just two years old at the time, and he named his plane *Sharon D* after his little girl," said Kiernan, who is a legal secretary with the U.S. Attorney's Office in San Diego.

The D is for Drury, a family name.

"Mom told him when he came back from the war they'd have more kids, but there was just me," Kiernan said.

"I look at his contemporaries, and they all have three or four stars. That's where he was headed."

The *Sharon D* survived the war, but, like almost all of the thousands of B-24s that flew during the war, it was broken up for scrap in New Mexico. The B-24 *All American*, once used by the government in India, was purchased several years ago and restored down to the rivets.

by Ed Jahn, Staff Writer  
reprinted from San Diego Union-Tribune, May 6, 1993



## Bruce Barker is a man with a mission

*He is out to see that the B-24 Liberator gets a fair deal*

"The B-17 Flying Fortress has been getting all the glory," Barker said. "But the B-24 flew more missions and dropped more bombs than any other aircraft in World War II. It could fly further and faster and carry a bigger bomb load than the B-17. It is about time that the Liberator got its share of the glory," Barker said.

He is preparing a major exhibit telling the B-24 story for display in the Air Museum at Pearson Air Park, which is closed for renovation. The tribute will feature a large photograph or artist's color painting of a Liberator, surrounded by pictures of Clark County men who flew combat missions with the Liberator.

Barker, an intense, hard-driving man of 43, with a neatly trimmed gray mustache, thus far has interviewed about a dozen men from Clark County who have served in B-24s. Most of them have hairy stories to tell of being shot down in flames, parachuting at the last minute, or serving years in German prisons.

Barker, an amateur historian, always wanted to fly. "I grew up on *Sky King*, *The Memphis Belle* and *Twelve O'clock High*," he confessed. He used to hang around the flight line at Evergreen Airport, washing and waxing airplanes, until Wally Olson finally taught him to fly in 1969. He logged about 200 hours. "Then I ran out of money," he said with a shrug of regret.

He contracted Liberator fever when Carl Stutz and Ed Thompson of Vancouver invited him to go with them to see the Liberator *All American* when it landed at Troutdale two years ago. He joined the International B-24 Liberator Club and reads their newsletter avidly.

Stutz and Thompson were major contributors to the restoration of *All American*, the only flying Liberator left in the world out of the over 18,000 built during World War II. Both Stutz and Thompson had survived flak and enemy fighters in B-24s during World War II.

Barker listened in awe to the tales they told. These unsung heroes and their almost unknown bomber ought to be properly honored, Barker thought. He went back to the Air Museum on Pearson Air Park, of which he is a member, and took another look. "I realized we don't have a single picture of a B-24 or a B-24 pilot," he said. "So I decided to do something about it."

Barker is appealing to anyone who served on the ground or air crew of B-24s to contact him. He is also seeking individual or crew pictures as well as pictures of Liberators in flight or on the ground.

Barker can be reached at 23634 N.E. 72nd Ave., Battle Ground, WA 98604.

*by Leverett Richards, Special writer,  
The Oregonian, January 4, 1994*

## Time Heals War Wounds

On February 23, 1945, 1st Lt. Gilbert Burns flew his P-47 fighter armed with rockets out of Nancy, France, headed for a mission over Landou, Germany, near the Rhine River.

On the way he saw crates of what might have been munitions stacked by a railroad line in Hinterweidenthal. He peeled off from his formation to make a low pass through the valley in line with the crates.

Flying at 300 feet, he had the crates in his sights and his thumb on the trigger when he heard a noise—pop-pop—that sounded like he'd just fired the rockets, only he hadn't.

It was flak from anti-aircraft guns hitting the plane in a dozen places, disabling the pedals and joy stick that controlled it.

As the cockpit filled with smoke, he jettisoned the canopy and prepared to bail out, but as he looked down all he could see was evergreen trees, and they were very close. He couldn't jump. The plane was too low.

He was stuck in an aircraft without controls that was doing about 260 mph at full throttle and flying straight—

deeper and deeper into enemy territory.

Then his left wing began to dip, the start of a rollover that would end in a crash. His left hand moved to a knob in the cockpit that controlled the trim tabs—small wing flaps that could be adjusted to keep the plane level. They still worked.



*Flohr album*

He continually readjusted the tabs as the plane flew on, rolling side to side, but not over. With each roll he let the plane dip more to the right than the left,

which let the plane make a slow, broad turn toward home.

On the way, he experimented and discovered that the plane started to shudder at 255 mph. From that, he estimated it would stall out at 250 mph.

He devised a plan for landing: line the plane up with the airstrip, slowly ease off on the throttle to lose altitude without stalling and crash land alongside the runway to avoid damaging the runway itself.

That's what he did. He walked away from the crash without a scratch. Two days later, he was back in the air.

The day before the crash landing, Burns had flown a similar mission, and blown up a pile of munitions crates stacked by the same railroad line in Hinterweidenthal.

He theorizes the Germans set up a second crate pile on the day he was shot down as a decoy. The second time they had anti-aircraft guns in place and ready to fire.

Now, almost 50 years later, Burns is looking for the German soldier who set up the ambush.

*continued on page 7*



## So Proudly We Hail

Even though you're enrolled in the Heritage League, read our articles in the *2ADA Journal* and *Heritage Herald* and briefly had contact with some 2ADA veterans during conventions, many of you are not too familiar with the Heritage League, especially if you were initially enrolled by someone else.

To acquaint you with your Heritage League: We are descended from the Second Air Division Association. The Heritage League, incorporated in 1987, is an organization composed of descendants, relatives and friends of former Second Air Division personnel. The Heritage League subscribes to the belief that only as we perpetuate the respect for, and memory of, those who served in the Second Air Division during World War II, and by instilling such respect in subsequent generations, will their contributions be valued into perpetuity.

In 1987 a group of 2ADA members and spouses formed the Heritage League for the above referenced purpose. During 1988-1991 the Executive Committee of the League was composed primarily of spouses of former 2AD personnel. In 1992, the "torch passed" from these dedicated spouses to an Executive Committee made up of first generation descendants with two spouses continuing to serve on the Board of Directors. We are greatly indebted to our predecessors who envisioned this League, its purposes and have been its custodians.

The current Executive Committee has moved forward with goals and strategies which will enable us to fulfill the League's purposes:

- ❑ We began by publicizing the League's existence in numerous military and aviation related periodicals.
- ❑ A brochure was designed and distributed to various military and aviation related museums.
- ❑ An annual essay contest (grades 4-12) is established so that descendants can pursue academic accomplishment while learning of 2AD contributions during WWII and the impact this participation had on post-war life.
- ❑ Continued support is pledged to the Memorial Room, not only monetary, but with fostering the bonds of friendship between the Heritage League and the English Friends of the 2ADA Memorial by exchanging newsletters, pen pals and reciprocity of associate membership status between the two organizations.
- ❑ We have diligently pursued the establishment of a facility wherein tribute could be paid to the 2AD within the United States, similar to the "living memorial" created in the Norwich Public Library. We are convinced that only as American youth have access to such a facility where they are able to readily visit and search for what tenure in the Second Air Division really represented, will they have the kind of respect for veterans' contributions we see reflected in English youth. A recent article in an educational journal was entitled *Too Young To Remember, But Not Too Young To Learn* reflects current society's knowledge level of

WWII. The article further states that "only 2 Americans in 5 have personal knowledge of the WWII era."

- ❑ We have received confirmation from Lt. Gen. E.G. Shuler, Jr., CEO of The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Center in Savannah, GA, that the League can specify funds be used in the establishment of the library/archives portion of the Center. We have voted to support The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Center in conjunction with the 2ADA monetary contribution.
- ❑ A member of the Heritage League Executive Committee, Mary Beth Barnard, has become employed as Director, History and Archives of the Heritage Center. She will surely serve as a valuable link between the 2ADA, 2ADA Heritage League and The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Center.
- ❑ Additional future plans of the League include more visible publicity of the existence of the 2ADA Heritage League in more widely read publications. With 1995 representing the 50th anniversary of the end of WWII, we feel the League has a fine opportunity to be published, thus gaining recognition for both organizations.

Long term future planning includes our hope to plan and organize a mini-convention with the target date being no later than 1999.

The Heritage League's Executive Committee is very grateful for 2ADA general membership for having responded to John Conrad's November 1993 appeal to enroll their descendants. We are growing and our membership records are becoming more accurately maintained. Follow-through of all inquiries has become prompt and with personal response of the Membership Vice President's office. The League's records are by nature of the organization different than those of the 2ADA due to the need to associate lineage to membership and thus, they have a dual purpose and serve as valuable historical records.

Well, you might say the above referenced progress report and future plan sounds well and good, but "Who is going to fly this mission?" "Who is going to get the job done?" Now that you've become more aware of your Heritage League's purpose, goals, strategies and future plans; let's get acquainted with the kinds of persons who make up the League's membership. There are essentially six different kinds of persons who become members of 2ADA Heritage League; their reasons for membership are also varied. The composition of the League's Executive Committee represents well the kinds of persons who become members of the League. As mentioned previously, the Executive Committee continues to have two spouses of former Second Air Division personnel who represent that segment of the League's membership. These kinds of persons serve because they have first-hand knowledge of how tenure with the 2AD has had an impact upon the whole of their lives. They want the 2AD personnel never to be forgotten!

*continued on next page*



**So Proudly... cont. from page 5**

The Executive Committee consists of three members who are fortunate in having the privilege of their 2AD relative still physically present and are able to share in their lives. They serve because they, too, know how serving in the 2AD during WWII greatly effected their relatives' lives during the past 50 years. These persons represent another segment of the League's membership; they want the 2AD personnel never to be forgotten!

Three other members of the Executive Committee had an opportunity to know and share a portion of their 2AD relative's life, but they no longer have the relative physically present with them. In some cases 2AD experiences and the relative's thoughts and feelings were shared prior to their death. In other cases, as relatives were going through personal effects, discoveries were made which led a relative to search for more information about their deceased relative, thus they searched out the 2ADA for answers, learned of the 2ADA Heritage League's existence and joined the League. These members have reflected that while they knew their fathers, they realized posthumously that there was so much they didn't know and/or took for granted. The void created by their loss has caused them to pursue finding out all they can about every aspect of their relative's life, no matter how insignificant it may appear on the surface; everything becomes extremely important. How did he react in certain situations, where did he go on leave, etc. These members still need to "reach out and touch". How do they do that? Certainly by sharing with veterans and fellow League members during conventions, exchanging letters, phone calls, etc. They miss their relative's presence very keenly. They want 2AD

personnel and their deceased comrades never too be forgotten!

There are the "Gold Star Sons and Daughters" who are represented by one member of the Executive Committee. War Orphans we are called, never having been able to share life with our 2AD relative. Why do such people get involved with the League? The reasons are varied and the feelings certainly are complex, but I can share some thoughts and feelings which are common among us. Throughout our lives we have wondered and searched for glimpses of our 2AD relatives in many aspects of life. As youngsters while viewing a beautiful sunset, we've wondered as the old familiar hymn relates, if our dads were "beyond the sunset"; or while gazing up into white billowy clouds, we've searched for images which resemble the image in the picture hanging on the wall in our grandparents home; we've heard voices and wondered if our dad's voice might have had that quality - strong, yet gently soothing. We all agree that there have been days when we thought, "Today is the day! Someone made a mistake; he'll come up the driveway today!" but, of course, that day never came. As adults we now see our 2AD relative's image, hear his voice, feel his touch in every contact we have with each of you veterans! We serve because we want 2AD personnel and their deceased comrades never to be forgotten!

Grandchildren, nieces, nephews seek out the League weekly because, though they are not first generation descendants, they respect their 2AD relative and want them never to be forgotten!

Finally, there are many friends who have joined 2ADA Heritage League because of what sharing life with a 2AD veteran has meant to them. They want their friends never to be forgotten!

Others like those cited herein will serve this organization, therefore serving 2ADA, in subsequent years. The League's membership will continue to be drawn from these same categories of persons. The bonding evidenced in 2ADA is a result of veterans having served in the Second Air Division and having been forged together by the "common danger of war" 50 plus years ago. Nelson Legette says, "I left on my first mission a 19 year old boy; I returned a 19 year old man." Many of you readily identify with that statement, I'm sure. Dick Kennedy always says "Keep Us Flying". The current 2ADA Heritage League Committee is committed to doing just that. We feel we are equal to the task as 2AD personnel were equal to the task 50 years ago. After all we are descended from "hardy stock"; 2ADA veterans and their comrades were and are the BEST!

Having become more acquainted with 2ADA Heritage League's purpose, goals, strategies, future plans and WHO WE ARE, we sincerely hope that more Second Air Division descendants will decide to join us in our effort to "Keep 'Em Flying"!

The League's membership is grateful for 2AD personnel having "been there" for us 50 years ago. We pledge to "be there" for their relatives when they most assuredly will need to search for and keep in touch with the spirit of their 2AD relative's life after they are no longer with them.

This ladies and gentlemen is YOUR 2ADA Heritage League.

**SO PROUDLY WE HAIL!**

*Billy Sheely Johnson*

## Too Close

After dodging Berlin flak and fighting two conked-out engines back into shape over Germany, the Liberator *Lonesome Polecat* was almost shot down by a group of Fortresses.

"Two engines cut out on the bomb run," said Lt. Robert Witzel, of Elmira, NY, "then the prop ran away on the fourth engine." as the *Polecat* lost altitude, two engines cut back in, and Witzel headed his ship for a passing Fortress formation.

As he neared the Forts, their lead ship blew up, and the other Fort's gunner, apparently figuring the Liberator was crewed by Germans, opened fire on it.

"I got out of range in a hurry," said Witzel.

*March 9, 1944 Stars & Stripes*

?

**Anyone know what group  
Lonesome Polecat flew with?**



## Minutes of the Eighth General Meeting of the Heritage League

The eighth general meeting of the Heritage League, in conjunction with the reunion of the Second Air Division, was held at 2 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Kansas City, Missouri, on Saturday, May 28th. President Billy Sheely Johnson, Executive Vice President Irene Hurner, Treasurer Ed Zobac and Membership Vice President Caron Veynar were present as was Jeane Stites, past president who was taking minutes in the absence of Secretary Janice Bates, and Bill Beasley, Liaison to the Second Air Division. Approximately thirty people were in attendance.

Billy opened the meeting by touching on the purpose of the organization and how the executive committee, once comprised of spouses of veterans, is now made up of children of veterans. Our evolution has been slow but sure and our goals have been set. Our accomplishments include distribution of Heritage League brochures in museums throughout the country, placement of ads in national military publications, establishment of an essay contest and the choosing of Savannah's Heritage Center to perpetuate, in this country, the memory of the 2ADA.

The Secretary's Report, having been published in the *Heritage Herald*, was approved. Caron reported that our present membership of 527 reflected an increase of 110 since the last meeting in November of 1993. The Treasurer's Report consisted of a 1993 income of approximately \$3,300 and expenses of \$4,000, leaving a year-end balance of \$3,082.75. Revenues and expenses during 1994 were approximately \$3,400 and \$2,300, respectively, with a balance of \$4,185.93 as of May 9th. Ed stated that he had detailed records if anyone wished to examine them.

In the absence of Mary Beth, Billy gave a brief communications report. She was proud to announce that Mary Beth has accepted the position of Director of History and Archives at Savannah's Eighth Air Force Heritage Center. The newsletter continues to receive favorable comments; 500 copies were printed in January and 700 in May. Two thousand brochures have been distributed.

Irene intends to prepare a news release for distribution to newspapers around the country. Plans are being made to secure the schedule of the *All American* and have a Heritage League member on-site to promote membership. Billy anticipates the 50th anniversary of the end of WWII will afford great opportunities for publication.

Bill Beasley was called upon to offer his comments and was thanked by Billy for his excellent representation on our behalf in the 2ADA executive committee.

In the President's Report, it was noted that the proposed changes in the by-laws will be voted upon in July of 1995 and that our main concern is membership. Evelyn Cohen was given credit for giving us good advice on membership files, and Hathy Veynar was presented with a gift in appreciation for helping bring them up-to-date. Billy encouraged 2ADA members to get their grandchildren to submit entries to the essay contest.

New business included concerns: improving our image and goals, promoting knowledge and awareness, continuing commitments to the Memorial Room in Norwich, and launching a funding program for the Heritage Center in Savannah. Jordan Uttal offered his services for exchanges we might want to make with the Friends in England, as he would be traveling there the following week. He reminded everyone that May 8, 1995 marks the 50th anniversary of VE Day, and that anyone planning on going to England should make reservations with Evelyn Cohen immediately. Jordan also mentioned that the next 2ADA reunion is to be held in Lexington, Kentucky on July 2nd through 4th of 1995, and that the 2ADA is considering holding all future reunions in May or June in the central part of the country.

First-time attendees were identified and welcomed by Billy, and Greg Zobac was thanked by Irene for helping out at the registration desk. Greg's daughter, Jessica, as an essay contest winner last year. The meeting was subsequently adjourned at about 3 p.m.

### War Wounds... cont. from page 4

"It would be interesting if I could find members of that flak crew that shot me down," Burns said.

"I was not the gunner," Arno Baroni wrote to Burns last year. "I'm glad that I was not."

Through an international magazine about airplanes, Burns met Baroni, a member of a Luftwaffe anti-aircraft crew defending the pontoon bridges the Germans were using to retreat over the Rhine.

Baroni was looking for the pilot of a lone P-47 that took out a pontoon bridge he was supposed to defend. The pilot flew low down the Rhine, defying the flak guns, hit the bridge and escaped.

Baroni wants to meet that pilot, whom he refers to as the lone dancer.

It wasn't Burns, but Burns responded, offering help. Their correspondence has turned up that Burns strafed Baroni's hometown, Pforzheim, on February 16, 1945.

A week later, the day Burns was shot down, Baroni was home on leave when the town was flattened by British bombers.

Today, Burns, a dental technician, buys wire for dental bridges that is made in Pforzheim. "You were strafing the marshalling yard at Pforzheim's railway station in 1944 and today you are a customer of Dentaurnum," Baroni wrote. "A small world indeed."

Tim Greene, *The State We're In*,  
*Middlesex News*



Past President Milt Veynar at work as usual during the KC reunion



## From Fifty Years Ago...

### Crazy ride in a pony trap

Someone who remembers the candy and goodies the American servicemen gave away is Mr. S.C. Wood, of Colchester, who as a boy of 12 lived with his family in Stebbing, where his parents ran the Unity Cafe, used by many Americans.

"One day an American asked my father if he could borrow our pony and trap. His brother was due to arrive at Saling airfield and he thought it would be fun to meet him from the plane in a pony and trap. My father agreed, as long as I accompanied him.

"We arrived at the airfield only to be stopped by the sentry on duty, who told us in no uncertain terms that 'we weren't taking that thing on the airfield'. Cross words were exchanged, and then to my surprise the airman gave the pony a quick slap and we were off on to the field, with the sentry shouting after us.

"At the control tower the airman trotted the pony and trap up and down to shouts of delight from the other servicemen, who threw candy and chewing gum into the back of the trap.

"Eventually he met his brother, and off they went together, leaving me to return on my own. I was terrified, as the planes were coming down on the runway by the side of me.

"When I arrived at the gate the sentry told me he would have shot the airman if I hadn't been in the trap, the floor of which, by this time was literally covered with candy and goodies.

"My mates were delighted, as my visit kept us supplied with sweets for about a month!"

### Too much candy to carry

Another who remembers the Yanks and their candy is Mrs. Maureen Rutherford, of Haughley, who was six or seven when the Americans arrived at Ellough aerodrome, just outside her home town of Beccles.

"The event I remember most is when I ended up being driven home in a jeep because I'd been given so much candy I couldn't carry it all," she recalls. "When my father found it I got a hiding, but as I was so young I can now understand his anxiety.

"Looking back, I realise how those Americans must have missed their wives and kids. They always made a fuss of us local children."

### Luxury of that special floating soap

It was not only gum and candies that Americans were able to contribute to East Anglian households in wartime. Mrs. P.J. Day, of Knodishall, remembers that as a girl of 12 with a baby brother, she was not allowed to waste soap by blowing bubbles.

"We had to economise on the soap (in the tin tub then)," she remembers.

"The Americans gave us soap. I'll never forget it as it floated on my small brother's bath and he always wanted the 'floating soap', a real luxury for my family."

*All from the May 18, 1992 Special Edition of the Evening Star*

### Membership Application The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Center P.O. Box 1992, Savannah, GA 31402 1-800-421-9428 (912) 748-8888

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ Home Tel. \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Work Tel. \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to 8AF \_\_\_\_\_

#### Membership Category (please check one)

##### Annual Memberships

- ☐ Individual \$20  
☐ Family \$30  
☐ Allies/Out of USA \$35

##### Life Memberships

- ☐ Commander's Club \$200-\$999  
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## 2ADA Film Library

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*Passage to Valhalla*  
*Ploesti! B-24s at War - Series I*  
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- |      |   |                |        |
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|      | <i>2ADA Memorial Dedication - Norwich 1963</i>  |                | \$3.00 |
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|      | <i>Night Bombers - RAF</i>  |                |        |
|      | <i>Schweinfurt &amp; Regensburg</i>   |                |        |
|      | <i>Memphis Belle</i>  |                | \$3.00 |
| V    | <i>Ploesti</i>  |                |        |
|      | <i>93rd BG in North Africa</i>  |                |        |
|      | <i>The Fight for the Sky</i>  |                |        |
|      | <i>2ADA Reunion Film Clip - Norwich 1983</i>  |                | \$3.00 |
| VI   | <i>The AF Story - Vol I - Chapters 1-8</i>  |                |        |
| VII  | <i>The AF Story - Vol I - Chapters 9-16</i>   |                |        |
| VIII | <i>The AF Story - Vol I - Chapters 17-24</i>  |                | \$9.00 |
| IX   | <i>The AF Story - Vol I - Chapters 25-26</i>  |                |        |
|      | <i>The AF Story - Vol.II - Chapters 1-6</i>   |                |        |
| X    | <i>Smashing of the Reich</i>  |                |        |
|      | <i>Medal of Honor - The Burning of Ploesti Oil</i>  |                | \$3.00 |
| XI   | <i>Some of Our Airmen Are No Longer Missing</i>   |                |        |
|      | <i>2ADA March AFB Memorial Service, 1984</i>  |                | \$3.00 |
|      | <i>The Superplane That Hitler Wasted - ME-262</i>   |                |        |
| XII  | <i>The Story of Willow Run</i>  |                |        |
|      | <i>Preflight Inspection of the B-24</i>   |                |        |
|      | <i>Flying the B-24</i>  |                | \$3.00 |
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|      | <i>The Last Bomb - B-29s and P-51 Documentary</i>   |                |        |
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## Barnard to Direct History and Archives

Mary Beth Barnard has been named Director of History and Archives for The Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Center.

"We are very pleased to have Mary Beth join us at The Heritage Center," said Lt. Gen. E.G. Shuler, Jr. "She has a wealth of experience and will be a valuable addition to our staff."

Barnard, a native of Sewanee, TN, who resides in Sherborn, MA, is expected to join The Heritage Center Staff in May. She is a graduate of Virginia Commonwealth University.



Peter Allen

From 1971 to 1994 Mary Beth worked for Northrop Corporation as a graphic designer/technical illustrator/publications specialist.

For many years, Mary Beth attended Second Air Division Association conventions and reunions in the United States and England seeking information about her late father, Harold Kennedy, a waist gunner in the 445th BG. As a result, she has served in numerous World War II related organizations.

Since 1983 Barnard has served as historian and archivist for the 445th BG. She is a longtime associate member of the Second Air Division Association, vice president of Communications of the Division's Heritage League, one of the American directors of the Kassel Mission Memorial, and an associate member of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society.

Welcome aboard, Mary Beth. Great to have you with us!

*From The Mighty Eighth Heritage,  
 Wayne Corbett, Editor*



## Oral History: Tell Me 'Bout the Good Old Days

There's a song by the Judds called *Grandpa, Tell Me 'Bout the Good Old Days*. That's essentially what oral history is about. Hearing the stories and memories of older relatives will put emotions alongside names and facts. You'll hear clues, secrets, and some mighty tall tales. It's your job to sort the fact from fiction.

When I was fairly new to genealogy, my dad and I went on a research trip to Iowa. I was to search the libraries and courthouses. Dad showed me the "old haunts" and made phone calls to relatives he hadn't seen in years, which prompted their invitations to visit and reminisce. I remember interviewing Cora, my first cousin twice removed, who was in her eighties. It was my job to find out about "the good old days."

Actually, I made every mistake in the book. I should have gone to Iowa much earlier. Cora, who, according to dad, knew all the information, now lived in a nursing home and suffered from Alzheimer's Disease. I had never contacted Cora before, so she didn't know me from Adam, but she warmly welcomed me anyway. There were several people talking at once. I had brought a tape recorder, but Cora wasn't inclined to let me use it. Small wonder - it was actually a large "boom box" stereo and cassette.

Cora kept stressing that she "didn't know anything" about the family, then proceeded to give me several pieces of information that I had not had before. She and her daughter collaborated to identify the people pictured in a family reunion photo (another cousin had loaned it to us for copying). All the while, I attempted to take notes.

Now I know what I should have done, what I shouldn't have done, and what I'd do differently. But we can't turn back time, and Cora has since died. So here's some advice for conducting your own successful oral history interviews.

### Hints on Technique and Equipment

**Do Not Procrastinate** in conducting the interview. Relatives may die, or they may become mentally, verbally, physically, or visually impaired, affecting their memory, their speech, their ability to tolerate an extended interview, and their accuracy in identifying old photos or mementos.

**Bring Visual Aids.** Filled-out ancestor and family charts will clarify what information you need. Photos and keepsakes will prompt identifications, stories, and details which have long been forgotten.

**Take a Tape Recorder,** extra tapes and batteries, and an AC adapter and cord. Do not take a "boom box"! The less conspicuous the equipment, the more at ease you and the interviewee will be.

Make sure you know **How To Use** the equipment and that it works. It will make your subject nervous if you constantly fiddle with the controls. Use caution if using a long-playing tape; the batteries may drain and the thinner tape could jam in your machine.

With the advent of **Portable Video Cameras**, recording an interview is easier than ever. Use a tripod to eliminate camera jiggle. Position the camera (or tape cassette) so that it is not intimidating to the interviewee yet is close enough to pick up all conversations clearly. You will be dismayed, later, if you clearly hear the questions but not the responses.

**Speak Distinctly.** The recording may not sound as clear as your conversation in person. Eliminate distractions and background noise.

**Label The Tape** before you use it, especially if you are conducting several different interviews. While recording, give your name, the date, the location, and with whom you are speaking. Each person who speaks can give his or her name; you will then be able to identify the voices on your tape.

Try to **Interview Your Subject Alone** - it will be easier to know who is speaking. The presence of more than one person will result in a group discussion, with one collaborative answer being given. This answer may or may not be the same answer that the interviewee would have given if he or she had been alone.

If, during the interview, unfamiliar names or places are mentioned, ask the interviewee to **Spell These Words**. If you misinterpret what you hear when you play back the tape, you could get the name wrong and begin a wild goose chase.

**Respect Other People's Feelings** There are taboo topics that some people simply will not discuss. If you encounter these, back off. If you establish

a good rapport with the interviewee, he or she may answer your questions later on. Don't contradict what the interviewee tells you, but phrase the question in such a way that it incorporates the information you already have: "Mom told me you had five brothers and sisters. Wasn't there a stillborn brother?" This may elicit the response "Oh, that's right, I had almost forgotten. I thought you meant how many brothers and sisters I grew up with."

Keep the interview to a **Reasonable Length** - about an hour or so. If the interviewee is ill or infirm, he or she may tire easily. Don't wear out your welcome, as you may need to conduct a second interview in the future.

You are conducting a **Conversation**, not an inquisition. Phrase your questions so that you get more of an answer than just "yes" or "no." Rather than ask "Did your dad tell you your dog had died? Did you cry? Did you hold a funeral?" try asking "How did you feel? What did you do?"

Place your interviewee in **Historical Context**. Was his or her grandfather in the Civil War? Did the Great Depression affect the family? Does Uncle Billy remember the night Main Street burned to the ground? Be aware of answers that tie events together. If a relative died in 1918, was he a casualty of the Spanish Flu epidemic or of World War I? Grandma may remember Aunt Freda's high school graduation because Freda, in cap and gown, limped to the stage with her broken leg in a cast. Was there some such event to use as a "memory peg"?

**Bring Pencil and Paper.** Try to take notes to back up your tape in the event of an equipment failure. Also, you may wish to jot down certain words or ideas triggered by the subject's response so that you can follow up with another line of questioning later.

**Use Given Names** in the interview. When dad speaks about "Grandma," does he mean your grandmother or his grandmother? If the interviewee mentions relatives with the same name, clarify which person is being discussed. Cora's father was named Trevanian but was called "Van," as were the father's uncle and several of Cora's cousins.

*continued on next page*



**Oral History** *continued*

Send a **Note of Appreciation** or make some other gesture. After all, this person didn't have to talk with you. Your courtesy may prompt the interviewee to send you more information later. Cora sent me the wedding photo of my father's uncle and aunt.

**Hints On What To Ask**

**Biographical Information:** full name, including any maiden names, nicknames, or name changes; date and place of birth; names of siblings (including stillborns, those who died young, and those adopted into the family or placed for adoption); birth dates and birthplaces of siblings (which helps to trace migrations during certain time periods); names of parents (including mother's maiden name), aunts and uncles, and cousins.

**Places Of Residence:** birthplace (town and state; born at home, hospital, or at sea?), description of house(s), dates moved, names of neighbors (possibly relatives or friends migrating together from a certain country or town), types and names of pets, kinds of auto-

mobiles, relatives who may have lived with you.

**Schools:** location and name (city or rural; brick two-story, or wooden one-room?), distance traveled and means of transportation, length of school day and school year, subjects taught, teachers' names, friends' names, extra curricular activities, grades received.

**Jobs:** Types of occupations and dates, description of first job, special associations or labor unions, special schooling or training.

**Religion:** Name, denomination, and location of church; existence of a church cemetery where relatives may be buried; name of pastor; special events such as communion, baptisms, etc.

**Military Service:** Locations and dates served, branch, bases where stationed, unit name, rank, commendations or awards, comrades' names and hometowns, duties, discharge location and date.

**Marriage:** Name of spouse, date and place of marriage, details of first meeting, honeymoon location and stories, wedding attendants and guests, names of old beaux or previous spouses.

**Special Events:** Births, illnesses, humorous events, tragedies, acts of God (fires, floods, hurricanes), celebrations.

**Advice And Philosophy:** Advice to younger generation, mistakes made and what was learned, goals in life, family traditions, etc.

These hints should help you in doing an oral history and deciding what to ask. Check libraries, societies, and archives for oral history collections—maybe the person you want to interview has already been recorded! Even if the person interviewed is not your relative, his or her stories will give you a good idea of life in your ancestor's day. Perhaps the interviewee was a childhood friend of Grandpa and has mentioned him several times in the interview. Each of us will have "good old days" that we remember. I hope somebody years from now, will ask me about mine. But don't wait until it's too late to talk to your relative. And if nobody has asked you to record your stories, why not record your own? The information is too important to let slip away.

by Linda Herrick Swisher,  
reprinted from Jul/Aug 1994, *Ancestry*

**Heritage League Membership Application**

I wish to become a member of the Heritage League of the Second Air Division (USAAF) and to support its purposes. I certify that I am eligible for membership under one of the categories indicated.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ Home Tel. \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Work Tel. \_\_\_\_\_

2ADA Member (Sponsor) \_\_\_\_\_ Unit No. \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Category (please check) ☐ Regular ☐ Associate ☐ New ☐ Renewal

Annual Dues: Regular \$6.00, Associate \$4.00 Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Send Remittance To: Heritage League of the 2AD, Caron D. Veynar, 4915 Bristow Drive, Annandale, VA 22003

**Regular Members:** Spouses, brothers, sisters, children, grandchildren of former personnel, military and civilian, American and British, who, at any time served with the Headquarters organization of the 2nd Bomb Wing, 2nd Bomb Division or 2nd Air Division during WWII and any person who served with any bomb group or any other unit of the 2nd Air Division, USAAF, either assigned or attached. These shall be voting members.

**Associate Members:** Friends or associates of regular members who by their demonstrated interest in the League and who make literary, artistic, historical or other valuable contributions to the 2nd Air Division Association, The Heritage League of the 2nd Air Division (USAAF) and/or The Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division. These shall be non-voting members.



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## Thanks to All

I wish to thank you all for your patience and understanding during the changeover of the Membership Vice-Presidents. There seemed to be much confusion as to whether you were a Regular Member or an Associate.

The next dues statement will be more specific so there should be no confusion at all.

I welcome many of you back into the Heritage League.

If you have any questions regarding your membership, please do not hesitate to contact me. I would like to hear from you and get to know you.

**Caron D. Veynar**  
Membership Vice-President

*Keep  
Them  
Flying*



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