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Son Missing for 60 Years

-by Paulette Gooch

Last Winter, driving the 300 miles home from a wonderful party for my mother's 101st birthday, I



Marie Kelley at 102, proudly wearing the MAACRT badge she was given by Enrico Schwartz. Remains of her son John P. Bonnassiolle and his nine crewmates are being positively identified by the Army.

reminisced about a sister who had passed away much too early and my brother, John Bonnassiolle, that I had lost when I was a young child. Fortunately my sister Vicky left a family that I can enjoy and she is with me through them. I thought

about all the years my brother and I could have shared and the family he might have had. Yes, there were definitely missing plates at the festive table the night before.

Through the years my mother was reluctant to talk about my brother's death (we called him Jack). I respected that though I wondered if there were papers somewhere that would give me some information. I only knew that he died in World War Two, somewhere in Germany.

I decided to try the Internet to see if I could find out anything about him and his crew. I really wasn't very hopeful about it. His short life seemed like a blip on the family screen and he was fading away so fast. My hope was that I could leave a history for the rest of the family and a place for him in their memories.

The first interesting site that I found was that of the U.S. Military Cemetery in the Netherlands. I discovered that there is a place in the cemetery with the names of men missing in action on a memorial wall. My brother's name was there and the names of most of his crew. Wow, what a rush that was—but I

had no idea of what was to come. I had the airplane's identification number and the unit description from the cemetery site, so I posted a note on a B-24 site asking for more information. Soon, I received a virtual avalanche of responses from wonderful people eager to help. Annette Tison, who is compiling a history of the events of April 29, 1944, Bud Guillot who witnessed

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A Short Memoir of a Ground Crew Member

by Bill Woods

I thought that the air crews would like to read about the daily routine of an aircraft mechanic and his responsibilities in keeping the air crew's plane in A-1 flying condition.

I was attached to the 453rd Bomb Group, 735th Bomb Squadron and assigned to crew chief Joe Miele's crew which consisted of assistant crew chief Lee Quesnel, Frank Mitchell and me. The four of us serviced and

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Editor's Notes

This edition debuts *two* of my relatives, a brother and sister act. Erin, youngest of my oldest brother Jerry's four, replaces Lindy Galbraith as our Associate Communications VP and 'layoutist.' (Lindy's professional obligations virtually tripled in the short time that she oversaw the production of *Heralds* #32 and 33, and we are extremely appreciative of her substantial contributions. When her work load gets 'sane' again, we may see her helping again.) Erin is a rising multi-talented non-profit organizational wiz-kid. Erin's brother Tom is a gifted art student whose cartoons and caricatures have been prized presents within our family for years. His interest in 'storyboarding' actual 2nd Air Division historical episodes will extend our audience reach—and membership 'pull'—to the 'third gens.' His inaugural subject matter was called to our attention by Bob Books, who posted on the 392nd webpage an excellent researched article by Annette Tison, who graciously allowed our representation of the material in this format in this *Herald*.

Speaking of the 'third gen,' we are excited to bring back the Essay Contest, and hope that all readers will commend it to eligible youngsters. Note, consonant with our mission, we have dropped the restriction to descendants of the 2nd Air Division. The legacy of the 2nd Air Division is the inheritance of school children throughout the free world.

Thank you to writer Kelsey McMillan (and to 392nd Newsletter Editor Gene Hartley) for allowing us to reprint another gem of clearly presented research, in the article *Atlantic Air Routes of WW II*. We are excited by the new wave of accessible scholarship coming forth within our ranks and hope to be a forum for much more of same.

-Brian H. Mahoney

More Closure

Researcher and new HL member Annette Tison lost her uncle, a ball turret gunner with the 392nd BG, on April 29, 1944. (A 'storyboard' depiction of that fatal mission, based upon an article Annette has published on that group's website, appears elsewhere in this edition. -Ed.)

As this arrives in your mailbox, Annette, her father, and her son Daniel should be back from the dedication of a dignified marker in the Burgwald, or municipal forest, of Dinkelage, 30 km south of Bremen. It is here that the stricken Liberator came to rest. The Marker bears this inscription (in German) by Annette's father, the surviving brother of stricken 2nd Lt. Douglas Franke:

"On 29 April 1944, a Liberator bomber from the 392nd Bomb Group named El Lobo crashed in the Castle Forest near this location. All ten crew members died and were buried in individual graves in the Forest Cemetery at Vechta, as follows: 2Lt Bert Wyatt, 2Lt Aubert Tufts, 2Lt Douglas Franke, T/ Sgt Byron Hassett, S/Sgt William Womer, S/Sgt Robert Monroe, Sgt John Sorrells, Sgt Robert Thompson, S/Sgt David Harbaugh, and Sgt Alfred Archambeau.

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Corrections

In the item "WW II Heritage Festival," Bill Beasley, Sr, should have been identified as the 2ADA Group VP for the 492nd BG.

While we warmly regard Teddy Egan of the 392nd BGA as a longtime and original supporter, she has not served as a Heritage League officer.

The HERALD staff regret these errors and continue to solicit corrections from our readers.

Memoir *(continued from page 1)*

maintained four Liberators in the year and a half that we were at Old Buckingham. The first two planes were lost to battle damage, one of which the crew was able to fly safely to Sweden.

Our most notable aircraft was a B-24J named “Hattiebelle” after the wife of a pilot from Mississippi. The flight crews that flew her never once had to abort a mission because of mechanical failure. It flew 116 missions and way over 1,000 hours of flight time before being retired from active service. Because of this record, our crew chief, Joe Miele, who passed away a few years ago, was awarded the bronze star. He was a top-notch crew chief. The three of us admired him and worked hard for him. When “Hattiebelle” was retired, we received as our next and last plane, a brand new B-24M that would never see combat.

Previous to “Hattiebelle” we had a B-24D with name and a green and yellow parrot painted on the copilot’s side. Our crew had to work like the devil to avoid any embarrassing “gigs” that the inspectors would find, but “Inspector Squawks” flew its missions until it was downed over the continent.

Generally, one of us was always available to the airplane. The evening before a possible mission for the next day one of us would pull the “alert,” rotating our turns in order. Before I would go out to the airplane for the night alert, I liked to hit the mess hall for a second dinner. If there was “army” stew that evening my night watch was complete! I loved that meal and always ‘pigged out’ with it.

After checking the plane visually the first thing on the agenda was to preflight the engines. I can remember what a thrill it was the

first time I sat in the pilot’s seat and started up the engines.

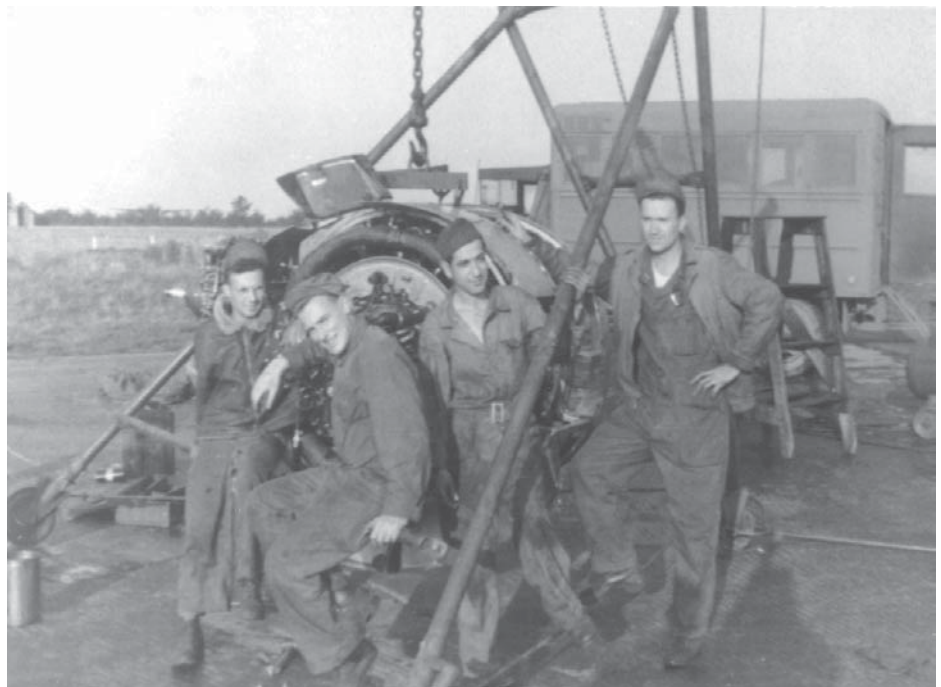
After finishing basic training with the army engineers at Ft. Belvoir, VA, I had applied for Air Force Cadets and was accepted for what I had hoped would be pilot training. They assigned me to the 60th College Training Detachment, Air Crew, at the University of Pittsburgh. At least I got in 10 hours of flight time before it was discovered that I had astigmatism in both eyes and was ‘washed out.’ It was a big disappointment in my young life, but here I was sitting in the pilot’s seat with the aircraft in my control.

After that first time it became routine to run the engines through their paces. You could never be careless knowing you had ten men depending on you and your team to get them in the air and back home safely.

An excellent example of problem solving occurred one early

morning as I was preflighting the engines. I revved them up and saw a noticeable drop in the tachometer reading for number four. It was not acceptable in my judgment and I had to make a decision as to how to solve the problem. I could replace the magneto if it was faulty, but more likely one or more spark plugs was bad. Time could be a factor so I decided to do the hardest first—to change all of the spark plugs in the engine. There would be plenty of time to replace the magneto if needed, because it was easily accessible. With only flash light illumination, I worked my head off over the next two hours, hoping and praying that none of the 14 plugs would be seized. Fortunately, I was able to replace all of them without any problem. Even our Engineering Officer stopped by in his jeep to find out what my problem was—I told him of the problem and he was satisfied with my actions. A second preflight of the engines proved

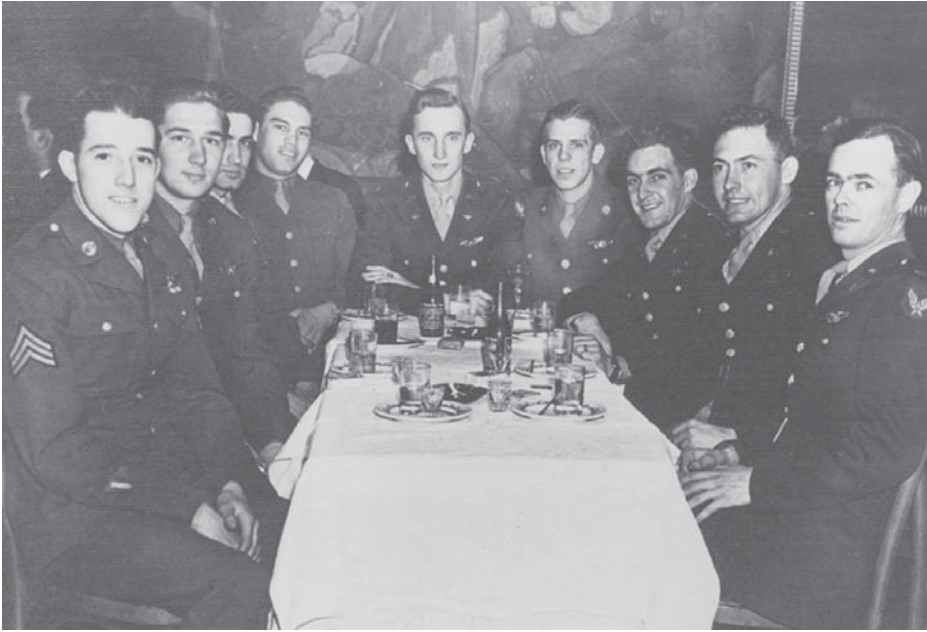
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Hattiebelle's ground crew. L-R: Lee Quesnel (MA), Bill Woods (IL), Crew Chief Joe Meile (NJ), Frank Michell (NC)

- Bill Woods

Later, in October, my son and I went to Germany to visit the crash site and to say goodbye to my brother before the U.S. Army took over the site and the excavation was filled in. We also were anxious to meet the MAACRT team who had brought this miracle about. On October 12, 2003 we reached the Gudehus farm in the little town of Meitze. Many of the



Bishop's Fated Crew. L-R Sgt. John Bonnassiole, ball turret, S/Sgt Joseph Karaso, radio operator, Sgt. Mike Chiodo, waist gunner, S/Sgt Orus Baxter, engineer who was replaced before 4/29/44 crash, 2Lt. Robert Bishop, pilot, Sgt. John Harringer, waist gunner, 2Lt. Thomas Digman, bombardier, 2Lt. Arthur Luce, co-pilot, 2Lt. Donald Hess, navigator. Not seen: S/Sgt Ralph McDonald, tail gunner, and Sgt. James T. Blong, engineer. All but Baxter were KIA 4/29/44.

-courtesy Blong Family

townspeople came to the crash site to be with us. A wonderful minister, Reverend Schnell, blessed the crew and the site and gave us much comfort. Following the ceremony the Gudehus family gave us a reception in their charming historic home. The present day Gudehus family is the sixth generation to occupy the home and farm the land. It is a blessing that the crew and their plane came to rest with this generous and caring family.



Prop from a/c 42-110105 on Gudehus farm in Germany.

-Paulette Gooch

nearby just where the plane landed, and there at his feet was a piece of the cowling, the only piece left of the airplane. I was put in charge of bringing it home. I packed it in my hand, I packed it in my purse—I changed its location a dozen times. With a sense of great relief I returned home with it and mailed it to Bud. How many miracles can there be? There's more.

Two days later Enrico and Svetlana took us to the Military Cemetery in the Netherlands. We placed a bouquet containing ten white flowers at the MIA wall, one for each member of the crew. The staff was warm and welcoming

and gave us quite a bit of useful information. That night before we left my son had the honor of helping to take down the American flag.

Both of us will always remember this trip. Since returning home, three more families have come forward out of the mist of 60 years, also searching for their family member on that plane. This can't be merely coincidence.

Now the Army has taken over control of the crash site and the objects found in the crash are in their keeping. A number of bones were discovered in the wreckage and there will be DNA testing. The Army DNA process can take as long as 5 years. We are hoping that the process can be shortened for the sake of our mother.

More Closure

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This memorial is placed here to honor those ten flyers and the many other Allied and German flyers, soldiers, and civilians who died in this area as a result of the air war over Germany 1939-1945."

Expected speakers include German Parliament Member Markus Graw (who helped the family a great deal with information about the crash), the mayor of Dinkelage, and a local priest to bless the marker. "Taps" and "Ich hat' einen Kameraden" will be played, followed by a reception with *Kaffee und Kuchen* in the Burghotel.



Answers to Your Technical Questions

Dear Pete,

I have seen reference to a 'Droop Snoot Lightning' used for tactical bombing. Where did the name come from; where did the concept go?

-Louis B. Tennant, II

Dear Second Lou Tennant,

Specially modified P-38 Lightning twin engined high performance fighters were fitted with a plexi nose that accommodated a bombardier and a Norden sight, while up to 3,000 lbs. of wing-shackled bombs were carried. The nickname followed naturally from the funny nose job.

As with heavy bomber practice, following Lightnings and P-47 Thunderbolts, flying in close formation, would 'toggle' their load upon the leader's drop. Most of these planes were transferred to the tactical 9th Air Force, but I have not found anything on their actual combat record in either air force.

Other modifications of this platform included the F-5A, -B and -C photo recon aircraft, which served the 13th and 7th Photo Groups well once serious engine and airframe problems were fixed. A small number of H2X 'L' model Lightnings were delivered to the 8th in the summer of 1944 but their angle of radar sweep, limited to 210°, kept them from displacing 'Mickey' equipped 'Pathfinder' Liberators and Flying Fortresses.

Wartime made for much experimentation and technical innovation on all sides; within the 'Mighty Eighth' there was non-stop Yankee ingenuity working on every problem, with many unapproved experiments, proven in the field, finding their way into production modifications.

-Pete

Dear Pete,

Why did USAAF pilots 'synch' the engines on their multi-engine ships, while the RAF only did by personal preference, and the Luftwaffe seem to have been under orders not to do so?

-Mr. Conrad Trail

Dear Con Trail,

On evidence, it would seem that the German concern that very close harmonic vibrations would have various parts of a plane resonating destructively, putting undue burden on stressed structures and connectors like rivets and bolts, seems disproved by the American practice. Most pilots considered it a matter of comfort and pride in a 'ship-shape' operation to have no droning beat from multiple radial engines nearly at the same speed, and when they did hear the pulse beat of Pratt and Whitneys going out of synchronization, it was another useful indication that one of the engine functions might be needing closer scrutiny and attention, especially if they had just been subject to flak or fighter attack.

Pilots and engineer had a lot to watch on those very complex engines in the days before electronic ignition, fuel injection and all sorts of automated engine monitoring 'black boxes'. Not to mention that from an operator standpoint, the modern jet engine is several orders less complex than the piston-driven props.

The 'how' of synching engines was a matter of some personal style, experience, and pilot bravado. Most old hands would synch the inboard two to one another by ear, then look through each near prop to the outboard one on its wing to finish off visually, reverting to use of a flashlight at night.

I have read of one account of a non-visual method for synching an outboard to its inboard neighbor, but cannot find it! Any old pilots want to ring in on this one?

-Pete

Dear Mr. O'Tube,

My father was a navigator. His diary, in talking about a bombing mission, mentions IP, AP, MPI and RP. Can you offer a layperson translation?

-Katherine Rashun

Dear Kay Rashun,

The entire path that a bomber was to take on a mission was described in terms of lines through the air, connecting navigational points specified in orders and divulged to relevant crewmen in their pre-mission briefings. The bomb run began at the 'initial point' (IP) and continued on a straight path and constant altitude to the 'aiming point' (AP) on which the lead bombardier tried his damndest to make his drop.' Allowing for the spread of the following formation of planes

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Short Memoir

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successful and the air crew made their mission for the day.

After an acceptable preflight I usually ended up in the squadron engineering office 'on the line,' but if the night was beautiful I'd just sit in the pilot's seat and sometimes turn on the radio to listen for anything interesting until the armament crews arrived to service their end of the airplane. Before long, we got word of the mission. The gas truck came and I topped off the auxiliary and main gas tanks. Then the quarter-ton truck arrived with the flight crew. As the time for the mission approached, Joe, Lee and Frank arrived and shared the excitement of watching the planes move out to the taxi strip and into position, then roar down the runway and lift off into the 'wild blue yonder.' Now I could go to breakfast and hit the sack—I'd be off duty for the remainder of the day.

Generally, we'd cat nap and you'd see all four of us out at the hardstand, watching for our plane as the group came back from its mission. Once our plane taxied to a stop at our hardstand and the wheels were chocked, we looked it over for damage and began servicing it. Joe checked over the flight log with the pilot and queried the flight engineer for any mechanical problems. The plane was ours now. If there were 25- 50- or 100-hour inspections due, we did them before the next mission, in addition to servicing the plane. We were an excellent maintenance crew who took our work seriously. We worked on the plane until it was ready for flight, no matter how long it took.

We mechanics did form a close attachment to the combat crews who flew our plane. A good example as far as our crew was concerned was Lt. Fignolio's crew. They made their first mission with "Hattiebelle" as well as their last, and there was nary a scratch on her. We were happy to see them group around "Hattiebelle" to have their picture taken after they came 'home' safely from their last mission. Shortly after, they returned to the States.

What did we sometimes do when the planes would be gone from four to eight hours or more at a stretch? I remember one beautiful summer day when four of us decided to take a walk down the country lanes off-base. We went through the hedgerows until we came to a paved road. We strolled up the road (in our fatigues, mind you) stopping to pick berries along the way and passing quaint little cottages with their flower gardens nestled behind a two- or three-foot tall picket fence or neatly trimmed hedges. It was like out of a movie, but it was real. Rural England was quaint and beautiful.

To protect us from the weather, we were always upgrading our shack at the hardstand with what ever we could scrounge up. To four walls and a roof made from wooden crates, we added a swinging latched door. Inside we built a long wooden bench along the wall and covered it with a pair of army blankets. About two feet above it we mounted a window—a scrapped plastic glass bubble that the navigators used to look through to 'shoot' the stars or sun to get their bearings. We used it to watch for our plane on the runway or taxi strip. Our shack was even heated. A can of oil and copper tubing with a spigot attached were strapped above a 5 gallon can. The oil slowly dripped into the can, which we lit on days that got quite cool and damp.

There were times that I took advantage of the day off and headed for Norwich to do the town and take in a movie or browse through the stores. I would queue up for hot fish and chips wrapped in newspaper before going back to the base on the 'liberty run.' A couple of times I



Lt. Fignolio and his combat crew finished their 35 mission tour on Hattiebelle. 106 of plane's eventual 116 missions are indicated in this March 1945 pose.

-Bill Woods

took the train back to Attleborough. It was fun to listen to all the GIs, Tommys, and a few WAAFs (British and American) singing the ever popular "Roll Me Over" and other ditties as they headed back to their base.

England was not a disappointment, if you had ever seen Basil Rathbone in a Sherlock Holmes movie. I can recall getting off at the Attleborough train station one fall evening and walking up the road toward the bases. Everything was so quiet. There were no lights from the homes, only starlight to guide my way, when up looms this little block house jutting out half way into the road just outside of town. If that wasn't enough to make me feel uneasy, I was passing a grove of trees when I heard

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All In a Name

-Brian Mahoney

A year ago, your Executive Committee generated a fresh restatement of our Purpose, Goals and Vision to make clear our lineage. We have been at pains to look ahead and adopt a perpetual mission of honoring and remembering our 2nd Air Division men and women. We do this now, as their ranks are decreasing. We also wanted to be clear that our 'honoring and remembering' is focused on WW II service and sacrifice, not on the post-war gatherings, comradeship and critical support of the Memorial in Norwich—remarkable, inspiring and worthy of support as we find them to be.

The decision to hold our Executive Committee meeting in Colorado Springs this past October, alongside The 8th Air Force Historical Society seems to have been wrongly taken by some as evidence that either we are contemplating a widening of our mission—to perpetuate the memory of all of the Mighty Eighth Air Force—or worse, that we are in some way pulling back from our historical, restated commitment to keep alive the memory of those who served in the Second Air Division. No discussion of any such 'widening' has been taken up by the Executive Committee, before, during, or after our wonderful midterm meeting in Colorado.

That meeting had several purposes. First, we held our necessary Executive Committee meeting.

Second, we could observe, for future reference, the convention planning services of the Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. (AFR). Third, we could reach out to potential new members of the Heritage League whose veterans served with the Second Air Division during WWII. Fourth, we could avail ourselves of the program and activities at the convention, the Air Force Academy and Colorado Springs.

Does this mean we would not consider embracing members whose WW II veteran lineage goes to the First or Third Division, or collaborate with any follow-on organizations that may develop to honor and remember all in the Eighth? No. Indeed, we see it as part of our present mission to be in contact with like-minded to the extent that it is consistent with our special 2nd Air Division charge. It was also in that spirit that we went to Colorado Springs. To restate, this organizational expansion idea has *not* been taken up by your Executive Committee.

The Heritage League has a number of things to do and prove in the near term within the realm of the

“...to perpetuate the memory of the Second Air Division of the 8th Air Force, USAAF, and honor the sacrifices of its members during World War II”

2nd Air Division, and we are determined to do them well. Not the least of these is substantially contributing to the complete endowment of both the American Fulbright Librarian program and the Second Air Division Memorial Trust.

President Hurner recently established an *ad hoc* Transition Committee, charged with making specific recommendations to the Executive Committee on ways we can assume those functions which 'sunsetting' 2AD veteran organizations would like perpetuated, such as wreath-laying or maintenance of memorial markers in England.

There are many other issues of appropriate continuity to be addressed in the Transition Committee's

proposals. For example, we delight in having representation among the Trust governors, and would be honored to additionally perpetuate the American seat that presently stands to dissolve when the 2nd Air Division Association does. As another example, the agreement between the Fulbright Foundation for Education and Cultural Exchange (UK) and the Second Air Division Association, USA, has long named us as successor to the Oversight Committee of the 2 ADA at such time as these “...cease to exist.”

In the course of its work, the Heritage League will collaborate with *many* institutions, individuals and organizations. All of these relationships will start and end with this clear understanding:

“The Heritage League's purpose is to perpetuate the memory of the Second Air Division of the 8th Air Force, USAAF, and honor the sacrifices of its members during World War II in behalf of freedom and peace.

Through the work of its members and other entities it supports, the League promotes educational, social, cultural and commemorative activities which compellingly present this rich history to succeeding generations.”

If that leaves any questions, we stand proudly ready to tell anyone the full meaning of our name:

“The Heritage League of the Second Air Division, USAAF.”

The Write Stuff

THE TWO SQUADRONS THAT WERE ONE;

the 859th and 788th Bombardment Squadrons, England, WW II

by Robin C. Janton, 2003.

Tribune Quality Printing, 544 pages

Robin is son of the late T/Sgt. Robert Janton, a very highly regarded

crew chief. He trained and then went overseas with the original complement of the 'hard luck' original 492nd BG, whose fiery three months in combat in early 1944 ended with them effectively 'stood down.' Personnel and equipment were reassigned to various outfits, the biggest 'intact' chunk being nominally its 859th BS. In early August, that squadron's staff and 29 of the group's crews with 15 or fewer mission became the 'new' 788th BS of the 467th BG, Col. Shower's 'Rackheath Aggies.' There they fared much better, in terms of loss rate.

This very substantial and attractive self-publish is in the 'scrapbook' format—in roughly chronological order, the reader is taken through sections describing early group history, crews, ground support, missions and other subjects. Janton makes rich use of memoirs, diaries and photos from the veterans he has clearly delighted in meeting, and who he has greatly honored with this labor of love.

Limited numbers of the book are available for \$70, post paid, directly from the author at 23573 Pole Ridge, Laurelville, OH 43135. Those who feel a familial connection to 'the Happy Warriors' must add this excellent collection of research to their libraries, and should set Robin up with suitable wording for personalized inscription of their copy.

Pitch it to Pete -continued from page 6

whose 'togglers' toggled out their load on the leader's drop, the 'mean point of impact' (MPI) was calculated to be somewhat before to substantially beyond the AP, depending on whether bombs were 'salvoed' (dropped essentially all at once in the densest concentration) or released at variable time intervals (a specification was given for programming the intervalometer in each plane). The bomb run concluded at the 'rallying point,' (RP) where the planes started homeward. (In the movies, this is where they always say, "Well we're on our own time now, boys, let's go home!")

Holding that bomb run course, taking no evasive maneuvers—flying straight on through flak—was essential for the prime purpose of the mission: hitting the target. The pilots set the plane up for the bombardier and the Norden sight to take over and control all the variables involved in accurate aiming of what we now would call 'dumb' bombs. Enemy fighters, harassing the formations before and after the bomb run, backed off while the anti-aircraft batteries refined their aim on the sitting ducks in this 'killing zone' over the valuable targets. Here, the courageous aircrew were at their most vulnerable, toughing it out but unable to do more than don their flak helmet and vest for defense.

-Pete O'Tube

[Special thanks to Kelsey McMillan for contributions to this column. -Ed.]

Friends of the Second Air Division Memorial

We are the "American Cousin" to this British organization, which supports the unique and wonderful living memorial. They include in their membership an impressive network of knowledgeable and helpful base contacts, who coordinate tours and orientations when we visit East Anglia. American subscribers receive the periodical "Second Thoughts". In unburdening Jordan Uttal of this bit of paperwork and currency exchange, we want to thank him for having 'passed the collection' for so many years. We agree with him about the importance of the bonds of friendships across the pond and into the younger generations on both sides. Show your support by sending your dues to our treasurer. Make checks out to The Heritage League, but please note "2004 'Friends' dues" on the *memo line*. Treasurer Zobac's address appears on the back panel of this Herald.

A Short Memoir

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the hooting of an owl. The hair on the back of my neck stood up and chills went through me as I quickened my pace back to the base. Your imagination can run away on you!

Finally, does anyone else recall when John Tangora talked the cook into making a hasenpfeffer stew if he bagged a rabbit? He shot one alright. The only problem was when he shot it with his carbine rifle there was nothing left to cook. No hasenpfeffer stew.

That was the typical daily life for a mechanic at Old Buckingham until VE day as I remember it.



Crew Chief Joe Miele receives the Bronze Star from squadron commander.


-Bill Woods

WWW.Web Pages We Wike

BY
SIWWY
WABBIT


The usual cautions against relying on things read on the web, unless the source there does a nice job of leading viewers all the way back to authoritative origins. As stewards of an exciting legacy, we know that the truth needs no embellishment. We all have a responsible part to play in keeping the stories and history of the 2nd Air Division alive—and accurate. If you publish to the web, let viewers know precisely where you got your material, and if you need to—‘qualify’ it’s reliability. Know that in doing that *clearly* you will have done a service to the truth, as well as the service and sacrifices we would honor.


The theme of this installment is the 60th anniversary of D-Day and Allied the hard won turn of tide for the Allies in all WW II theatres. What a fine summer to plan taking in one of the aviation museums on your vacation, visiting one of our memorials or cemeteries, or catching one of the traveling ‘warbird’ shows when it comes near your area.


 **Heritage League** Check for hot news between *Herald* mailings, and for ongoing things, such as our Essay Contest and guidance on documenting and sharing your veteran interviews. Missing a back issue of the *Herald*? From #31 forward, they can be viewed and downloaded in convenient .pdf format (requires free Adobe Acrobat software or its equivalent). Just click on the “Newsletters” tab. Continuing thanks to webmaster Bob Books! <http://www.heritageleague.org>


 **Second Air Division Memorial Library** Track the

evolution of General Kepner’s great idea at war’s end, and virtually tour the wonderful living memorial into which it has evolved. “Freedom Shrine” is a must-see primer in civics, even if you thought you knew all your stuff cold. <http://www.2ndair.org.uk/>


 **Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum** Viewing this site will whet your appetite to visit their collection just outside Savannah, GA. Exhibits, memorial garden, library, chapel and educational programs all designed to ‘connect’ with youngsters and older generation alike. <http://www.mightyeighth.org/>


 **American Battle Monument Commission** Official burial grounds around the globe of our war dead are presented in dignified and very accessible way, as is comprehensive cross referenced data on all who are interred in, or commemorated at, these moving memorial cemeteries. <http://www.ambc.gov/>


 **World War II Memorial** Recently revamped site gives current info on planned official dedication on May 29 and a summer-long celebration of the ‘greatest generation.’ Dedication will be crowded, and all VIP tickets are long gone, but telecast of the service may be seen at 2 PM on the History Channel and C-SPAN. <http://www.wwiimemorial.com/>


 **Berlin Mission 4/29/44** Compellingly told, beautifully researched story by Annette Tison, niece of one of the men lost that horrific day. On site known for

excellent presentation of groups flying the Liberator in England, especially the webmaster’s beloved 392nd at Wendling. Story is basis for Tom Mahoney’s ‘storyboard’ in this issue. <http://www.b24.net/stories/annette.htm>

 **Aviation History Online Museum** In case you *cannot* get to an actual warbird museum, or as a good cribbing up before you do... the old plane buff’s dream resource online. <http://www.aviation-history.com>

 **Collings Foundation / Wings of Freedom 2004** Very authentic B-24J Liberator tours the country each year; schedule subject to change at relatively short notice. Other flyable restorations travel with *The Dragon and His Tail*. <http://www.collingsfoundation.org/menu.htm>

 **Commemorative Air Force B-24/B-29 Sqn. Diamond Lil**, the ship David Hastings accompanied to England in 1991, tours the nation on a posted schedule; riders fees help support the maintenance of this Consolidated veteran, the oldest extant of the Liberator type. <http://www.cafb29b24.org/>

 **Imperial War Museum / American Air Museum, Duxford (UK)** *Dugan*, a B-24M with the 392nd, is commemorated in the recently unveiled restoration of the USAF’s last operated Liberator. Wonderful collection of British and American machines, many in flying condition and all meticulously restored, is a ‘must see’ on your England pilgrimage. Article on

Heritage League Essay Contest

Rededication of The American Museum with remarks by George H. W. Bush and Prince Charles a moving addition.

<http://www.iwm.org.uk/duxford/index.htm>



Kalamazoo Air Zoo

Interactive exhibits and displayed props, engines and aircraft are sure to engage all the family. Join your Heritage League buddies in our October visit! (See article and registration elsewhere in this *Herald*.) <http://www.airzoo.org>



USAF Museum / Wright-Patterson AFB, Dayton, OH

Even if your interest in WW II and military aviation were only passing, you would want to schedule most of a day for this attraction... and you *are* reading the *Herald*, aren't you? Great research resource online as well. <http://www.wpafb.af.mil/museum/index.htm>



Pima Air and Space

Museum Worth side-tripping to Tucson area; excellent collection is very nicely hosted by docents who in many cases flew or worked on the vintage planes. Neighboring Davis-Monthan AFB was (and remains) the 'boneyard' from which many 'choice picks' were thankfully salvaged to continue serving the public educationally. <http://www.pimaair.org>



National Air & Space

Museum World's most popular museum on 'the Mall' in DC is now complimented by the Udvar-Hazy Center near Dulles Airport. Each deserves a day, and comprehensive research resources on the websites make preplanning easy. <http://www.nasm.si.edu>

I. Goal

The purpose of the contest is to develop in today's youth an awareness of the contributions made by the Second Air Division, and to encourage and reward good historical research, persuasive expression, and excellence in the use of written language. The contestants' careful reflection on the courage and sacrifice of those who served in the Second Air Division during World War II will instill an appreciation of the freedom which it helped to secure, and of the value of the individual's service to one's society.

II. Qualifications for Contestants

The contest is open to all descendants of Second Air Division veterans and other interested persons in the grade levels specified below.

III. Contest Rules

1. The Heritage League Essay Contest has three levels of competition, each with its required essay length:
 - grades 4—6: 300 to 400 word
 - grades 7—9: 500-600 words
 - grades 10—12: 700-800 words

For these purposes, all words shall be counted regardless of length, including those appearing in any footnotes. Neither the information on the *cover sheet* nor the *title* are to be included in this word count.

2. Contestants must prepare their essays without any assistance beyond the cooperation of individuals as interview subjects.
3. *One* broad subject area *must* be chosen from this list:

A. "What is the significance of my Second Air Division

relative's military service during World War II?"

B. "The purpose of the Heritage League of the Second Air Division (USAAF)."

C. "A day in the life of a Second Air Division veteran during World War II."

D. "Life at _____ Airfield during World War II."

E. "Freedom: our most precious heritage" (as it relates to World War II).

F. "Why I would like to visit the old American bases in East Anglia."

G. "The B-24 Liberator" (May be specific about ground or air crewman's role, or the role of the B-24 in World War II.)

H. "Why I would like to ride in a restored B-24."

I. "What are the Ties That Bind the Americans and British since World War II?"

J. "What is the significance of the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich, England?"

4. Essays must be typed or neatly handwritten in ink. Each entry must have a *cover sheet* with the following information: broad subject area (chosen from rule 3, above), essay title, contestant's name, address and telephone number, e-mail address if applicable, contestant's grade level as

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Your Heritage League

-by Irene Hurner, President

During the past several years we have experienced many changes, both individually and as an organization. Whether these have been good or bad, they become part of our memories and a part of history.

When I first paid my dues to The Heritage League, I did so because I wanted a way to honor my father. I read the mission statement and purpose and felt that this was an honorable thing. I really did not know much of the history of World War II, the Second Air Division, or my father's role in the conflict. Like most children growing up in the three or four decades after the end of hostilities, I had not heard tales of the fight for a free Europe. History to me was Teddy Roosevelt and the Rough Riders, cowboys and Indians, or knights in shining armor. World Wars I and II were modern history, too recent to be interesting. I know that I am not any older, even though it is more difficult to bend to touch my toes. I feel almost as young as I did at twenty. I remember how I felt; at least I think that I do.

Since 1987, I have attended most reunions. I have come to know, love and respect the veterans. I have heard their stories. My father has begun telling his story. What was 'modern history' forty years ago is a little farther in the past (not too much father into the past as I am still that little girl). History has become interesting, exciting, worth studying and remembering. Part of the reason history has become what it has is the stories and information included in *The Journal*, the bomb group newsletters, in our *Heritage Herald* and in books written by the veterans themselves. The Heritage League is committed to honoring these veterans, aiding in preserving their stories and their memorials.

My mom and I belong to a book club of local women here in the California Hills. This month it is mom's turn to pick the book for us to read and discuss. She picked *The Greatest Generation* by Tom Brokaw. The choice, she said, was made because the book tells "the way it was." Brokaw says that he set the profiles to print to tell the story before it was too late. One of his points was that most of our "heroes" did not talk of the war much, if at all, until the recent past. I suspect many of their children felt like I did as a teenager, that modern history was not as exciting as tales of knights in shining armor, pioneers, or cowboys. As I have grown older, had children and grandchildren of my own, and have attended

many of the Second Air Division Association conventions, I have come to realize how important the stories are not only to me, but to my children and grandchildren. We want to hear the stories and read the books that are being published. Our veteran is our hero. We are not alone. There was a representative of each decade from teens to nineties in the room as the women of the San Antonio Valley Ladies book club discussed the current selection. Those old enough to remember relayed something of their experiences and the younger listened and asked questions.

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Membership and Renewal Application

We regret failing to remind readers in the last *Herald*, but you dues are ANNUAL, and most of us who forgot to sent them in are in arrears right now! Please use the form provided to either *renew* your membership, or reproduce it and recruit others to our ranks.

Note that the form is 'front and back' and laid out so that half the page stays with you. Retain the half with your copy of our *Purpose, Goal and Vision* statements.

We are a volunteer organization with a mighty legacy and the big ambitions needed to serve it well. The form asks you to introduce yourself and let us know ways you are suited and willing to help. We want to get this information from renewing and new members alike!

Your mailing label indicates either an expiration date or says 'COMP' if you receive it compliments of the Heritage League. We still allow payment of up to three years ahead to help the treasury, to give you a little hedge against any dues increase in that period, and for our mutual convenience.

Please, please, please:
use the form on the following
page to renew your membership

about The HERITAGE LEAGUE of the Second Air Division (USAAF)

The Heritage League (or 'HL') was established in 1987 by its parent organization, the Second Air Division Association (or '2ADA'). HL is a follow-on organization. In the not too distant future, the 2ADA will wrap up operations forever. HL thus takes up the ongoing challenge of educating following generations about the sacrifices of our forbears in WW II, and the continues in the honor of commemorating the veterans and presenting their legacy. We do this through periodic essay competitions, informative publications, presentations and a host of other social and educational programs. We actively support related efforts such as the 'living legacy' Second Air Division USAAF Memorial Library, in Norwich, England, The 8th AF Historical Society, and the Mighty Eighty Air Force Heritage Museum near Savannah. Our mission is big, challenging, and exciting. We want your energy, vision and talent.

You are eligible to be a voting **regular member** if your parent, grandparent, sibling or spouse (civilian or military, British or American) served at any time with the HQ or any of the bomb groups or other units assigned or attached to the 2nd Bomb Wing (later called the 2nd Bomb Division, then 2nd Air Division) of the 8th Air Force of the US Army Air Forces. \$15 per calendar year.

You are eligible to be a non-voting **associate member** if you make literary, artistic, historical or other valuable contributions to the 2ADA, the HL, or the Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division. To include **your spouse/partner as an associate member**, please double your check amount and put "(A)" after their name below. \$15 per calendar year.

If you are not yet 18 years old, you are eligible to be a **junior member** for \$8 per calendar year.

Visit us on the web at <http://www.heritageleague.org/> Questions or changes in your contact information can be directed to: membership@heritageleague.org or mailed to the Membership VP (below).

Send **completed form** (below) and your check made out to "Heritage League" to: Ann M. Long, Membership VP, 3701 Chiswell Court, Greensboro, NC 27410.

(Please keep this upper portion for your records)

Application form / Heritage League of the Second Air Division (USAAF)

I wish to become a member of the Heritage League of the Second Air Division (USAAF) and to support its activities. I certify that I am eligible for membership in the category indicated.

NAME _____ SPOUSE _____

STREET ADDRESS _____ Work phone (____) _____

CITY/STATE _____ ZIP _____ Home phone (____) _____

E-MAIL _____ Check if this is a membership *renewal* ☐

Check correct **membership category** (see instructions above): *Regular* ☐ *Associate* ☐ *Junior* ☐

NAME of related qualifying veteran *or* HL/2ADA contact _____

Their BG or Unit No. _____ Their **RELATIONSHIP** to you _____

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

Check if you are willing to receive the Heritage League 'Herald' *electronically* via e-mail at your e-dress given above, saving the League postage and printing: ☐ (The 'Herald' will arrive as an attached .pdf file, which can be viewed and printed using free Adobe Acrobat Reader software. No 'hard copy' will be mailed to you. We do not recommend this option if you connect to the internet is via dial-up.)

I am willing to **volunteer** to the Heritage League: ☐ (We put out a *newsletter*, run a *website*, hold *conventions*, regional *get-togethers and outings*, encourage historical *research*, etc.) Please list your areas of skill and interest:

New Heritage League Statements - Approved by Executive Committee May 2003**Purpose**

The Heritage League's purpose is to perpetuate the memory of the Second Air Division of the 8th Air Force, USAAF, and honor the efforts and sacrifices of its members during World War II in behalf of freedom and peace. Through the work of its members and other entities it supports, the League promotes educational, social, cultural and commemorative activities which compellingly present this rich history to succeeding generations.

Goals

In order to accomplish its unique purpose, The Heritage League embraces the following goals:

1. to offer information about the 2nd Air Division, directly or through collaborations, to descendants, students and interested others, young and old;
2. to coordinate and support efforts to preserve the stories, artifacts and various memorials to the 2nd Air Division and its component units, assigned or attached;
3. to continue the work of the 2nd Air Division Association in fully endowing the 2nd Air Division Memorial Trust;
4. to assume from the 2nd Air Division Association the roles of financially supporting the work of the American Fulbright Librarian at the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library (Norwich, England);
5. to encourage strong friendships and meaningful exchanges between our members and like-minded people around the United States and the world, especially in East Anglia (England); and
6. to provide League members with meaningful social, cultural and educational interactions and experiences as they help to achieve all of these goals.

Vision

The Heritage League shall be the honored steward of the legacy of the Second Air Division, which was earned by the service of nearly 100,000 combat and ground support personnel, 7,000 of whom made the ultimate sacrifice during World War II. Early in the new millennium this heritage will be entrusted to the League by the Second Air Division's surviving veterans.

The League will welcome all who wish to contribute to this stewardship.

(Please keep this upper portion for your records)

Welcome! We want to introduce you to our membership!

Would you allow us to introduce you in our *Heritage Herald* newsletter? If so, just tell us a bit about your interest in the Second Air Division and WW II and/or the activities of the Heritage League. *Thank you!*

We are interested in stories of our veterans' experience in WW II, as well as the things that their friends and relatives have learned about researching this history. Do you have a 'story' which might be of interest to fellow *Herald* subscribers? Please circle one: YES NO

What kinds of articles would you like to see in the *Herald* ? We welcome your specific and general suggestions. _____

What ideas do you have for Heritage League activities? _____

We thank you for your membership and any additional information.

From Your 2ADA Fulbright Librarian

-Tahitia Orr

It's another spring here in Norfolk and the bluebells are just peeping their heads out and watching the daffodils fade away. We've been having lots of typical spring showers including hail and heavy rain but the sun always comes out just when I give up hope!

My educational outreach work has been a lot of fun lately. I've been to Notre Dame High School a few times this spring, just around the corner from the Library. The American Literature teacher there is originally from California and it's been fun to be in a classroom with a fellow American. I spoke to her students regarding the civil rights movement and the abolition of slavery one day, then went back a few weeks later to cover 20th century American history in an hour. I made it right up to the Vietnam War and the bell went, very frustrating! Reminded me of my high school history classes which always seemed to get just past World War Two when we'd run out of time.

I've also been to talk to a class at the Norwich City College, which is a bit like a U.S. community college. They asked me to come in and talk about the Memorial Library and our collections. The students are asked to write two research projects, both to do with American history or culture, for which our book collection can be quite helpful. One of the books they are reading is Willa Cather's *My Antonia*, so I think our collection on immigrants and the American West will be very popular! We've had one student from the class come in already to check out the

Library and take notes and I'm hoping for many more.

I've been designing a leaflet in conjunction with the marketing person for Norfolk County Library Services to promote the Library's educational outreach work. They will be sent to schools around the county and should be able to be used for several years. The hope is that larger numbers of schools will either come to the Library or invite the Fulbright into their classrooms. The marketing officer for the Forum has also approached me about adding the Memorial Library to 'away days' that she markets to local schools. All in all, I have high hopes that we'll get more schools using the Library's resources.

A corner of our space has been taken over by the fictional bomb group (the 439th) centered at Scarning Primary School. The 44th, 392nd and 492nd Bomb Groups surrounded Scarning Village during the war. Like last year, I've been working with Philip Brazier, the teacher of one of their Year-4 classes, in doing a creative writing piece involving memories of the 2nd Air Division and what the war was like for children here in Britain. Mr. Brazier had the students break up into bomber crews and write a mission report covering a (fictional) mission to the Gens Hagen Aero Engine Works at Brandenburg, Germany. The reports are great and include much detail such as what the landscape looked like from the air and what it might have felt like to be on your 25th and final mission. I had the children write poems on the

aircraft, which Mr. Brazier corralled into a short series called "Liberators and Their Little Friends," this includes such gems as this one by Victoria Cole:

American Bomber

*The B-24 bomber,
Big, bulky and
beautiful.
It silently waits in its
hangar,
Like a tiger ready to
pounce.
Its engines roar into
life,
I shiver when I see it
move.
So glad I'm not its
startled prey.*

Currently, we've got these poems, mission reports, and highly colorful representations of assembly ships on display in the Library. Over Easter break several of the children have brought in their families to show their work off and I've loved seeing the parents' reactions. Shortly it will all come down and we will revert to our usual display of new and interesting books and our video collection.

Our work with the BBC *People's War* project continues and we have several upcoming open days planned. As you probably know, Norwich was bombed during the 'Baedeker Raids' of April 27/29, 1942 and we have invited a local Blue Badge guide to give a talk on these raids on the 29th of April. She was a child in Norwich during the

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Your Heritage League

(continued from page 12)

The afternoon ended all too quickly. It is too bad that we didn't get our discussion on tape.

When our Heritage League Executive Committee met in Colorado Springs last October, one of the things that was reviewed is the ongoing effort by many to record and, if possible, videotape the stories of the veterans. Sample guidelines have been published in *The Heritage Herald*, in *The Journal*, and in many other publications. Our Library in Norwich is very glad to receive copies, as is the Mighty 8th Heritage Museum at Savannah. The Dzenowagis family also sends a voice copy to a university in Michigan. Our Executive Committee feels that it is very important to encourage people to help identify those who have not recorded their stories and, if necessary, take time to visit, to ask questions, and record the answers ourselves.

I have long made this suggestion to others, but have not taken my own advice. Finally, I have a date with Mom and Dad to "do as I say." I am looking forward to our visit. It is supposed to rain this weekend and I can't think of anything better than sitting by the fire, drinking hot chocolate while listening to Mom and Dad tell their story.

The committee also decided to have an essay contest this year as a way of encouraging stories to be told. The guidelines and rules are presented in this issue of *The Heritage Herald*. Please encourage your grandchildren and great-grandchildren to enter. Not only will the winners receive a cash prize, but

everyone will gain from sharing together in a learning experience.

Heritage League members have a common bond: those veterans are our fathers, mothers, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and special friends. In addition to the 2ADA convention, members attend bomb group reunions and the regional get-togethers listening to stories and learning.

Last fall the 44th Bomb Group held its reunion in Washington, D.C. Our Communications Vice-President Brian Mahoney in conjunction with Beth Ertz and Bera Dordoni, daughters of Julian Ertz, came up with a unique idea. Heritage League members in attendance became the informal group "The Heritones" and sang background to a special version of "On Eagles Wings" sung by Bera accompanied on the piano by Beth. This idea was repeated at the 2ADA Southern California brunch held at the end of February.

Beth Ertz was the coordinator for us. A number of us gathered in the morning before the event to practice. When "The Heritones" were introduced, a wonderful group of members including Scott Ertz came forward to sing background for Bera. "The Heritones" consisted of approximately twenty-six children, spouses, grandchildren, friends and relatives of our veterans. This was an especially poignant tribute, an example to us all, as Jackie Bromm and Candace Calder traveled some distance from their California homes to sing with us. Their father, Fred Bromm (445th), had died just days before. Fred had been on the Brunch organizing committee with Dick Baynes (466th), Julian Ertz (44th), Jack Pelton (445th), Amador Espinosa

(445th), John Rowe (448th), Bud Chamberlain (489th), Delbert Mann (467th/491st), and Fred Thomas (392nd).

For me, another memorable part of the brunch was being given the privilege by Bud Chamberlain and the committee of joining in the candle-lighting ceremony. Thank you.

In March Heritage League members and officers Secretary Linda Wittig and Associate Secretary Brenda Tudyk were able to be in Dallas for the annual 2ADA Southwest Region Reunion Dinner. This event gave members time to visit and look at memorabilia with committee members Chuck Walker (445th), J. R. Lemons (445th), Bob Renn (458th), Jordan Uttal, (HQ), and Geoff Gregory (467th) and other veterans and families who were able to attend.

Our opportunities to share knowledge and develop friendships will be increased by one new event this year. Vice-President Lloyd Prang and the 453rd Bomb Group will be meeting in Kalamazoo, MI this fall. The Heritage League will have a fun *social* gathering October 8-11 alongside the 453rd BG. Information can be obtained elsewhere in this issue, on our website and from our officers.

I look forward to visiting with you at our annual business meeting Friday, May 28 at 2:00 p.m. at the Hyatt Regency Hotel at Penn's Landing, in Philadelphia, PA during the 2ADA convention May 27-30.

First Heritage Reunion set for October

Act Fast! The first 'non-business' meeting for Heritage League members is set for October 8-11 in Kalamazoo. (Please use cut out and mail registration form by July 15th.) We intend to socialize and have fun! Your Executive Committee held a mid-term business meeting in Colorado Springs this past fall to 'practice' the concept of having its midterm meeting alongside an already organized convention. Our sentiment is that we want to meet alongside veterans of the 2nd Air Division whenever practicable, whether 'the committee' or the membership are doing business or not. Our Kalamazoo meeting will be alongside the 453rd, who we all know 'have a good time.' For the near term, we want to compliment the traditional annual business meeting (for Heritage League elections and other business before the full membership, to be held as long as practicable alongside the 2 ADA annual convention), with a more intimate gathering, focused on fun and veteran contact.

453rd Bomb Group Association President Lloyd Prang has offered to count our attendees at their group rates and include us in all of their program. Heritage League President Hurner has worked with her committee to see that no separate additional registration monies will be required of Heritage Leaguers for the basic program—they are both to be thanked for arranging our attendance 'at convention cost.' Kalamazoo itself is accessible—see the airport website and the wide choice of carriers at <http://www.kalcounty.com/azo/index.htm>. Hotel amenities include pool health club three full service restaurants, high speed Internet access. Check it out and register at <http://raddison-hotels.lodging-reservation-net.com/mi-kalamazoo.shtml> Local attractions are well-gearred for the WW II and aviation buff: see <http://www.AirZoo.org>. If enough golfers can be identified, we will put together an outing for Friday morning. Inside word is that HL Treasurer 'Tiger' Zobac will allow mulligans at the rate of one per \$5 contribution to the League. Those interested can check with him (info on back panel) for details as time nears.

Hotel Accommodations Please make your reservations directly with the hotel. *Tell the clerk that you are with the 453rd BG.* Group rate is \$81.00 + 11% tax, single or double occupancy. Additional persons (up to 4 total in the room) \$10.00 each. Only 30 rooms being held at this rate until September 1st. We strongly recommend you do this immediately. This will provide time to request additional rooms and transportation if we should exceed the original estimate. Airport shuttle and parking are complimentary. Radisson Plaza Hotel, 100 W. Michigan Ave. Kalamazoo, MI. 49007. Toll free reservation number is (800) 333-3333. Direct hotel line is (269) 343-3333, fax: (269) 381-1560.

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Heritage League Members Coming to Kalamazoo October 8-11, 2004

Name _____

Names of others in party _____

Intended arrival date and time _____

Arriving via (car, train, plane) _____

Dietary Restrictions _____

Disability / Accomodation needs _____

Turn Form Over

Essay Contest

-continued from page 11

as of March 1, 2004, and accurate essay word count. All pages, including the cover page, should be stapled together in the upper left-hand corner.

5. Sources of any quotations or copyrighted material used must be identified properly. Failure to identify non-original material will result in disqualification.

6. The Heritage League shall have the right to edit, publish or otherwise duplicate any entry for use on its website, in the Heritage *Herald* or in the Second Air Division *Journal* without payment to the author.

7. Participants enter the contest by mailing one printed copy of their essay to *Essay Contest, c/o Ms. Billy Sheely Johnson, 1526 Mount Pleasant Drive, Colonial Heights, VA 23834*. Alternatively, they may e-mail it, as an attachment, using "HL Essay Contest" as the subject line, to *BSJ2adahl@aol.com*. Entries must be received *before* August 1, 2004.

IV. Contest procedures

So as to allow unbiased and

anonymous consideration by the three judges, the contest chairperson will remove each identifying *cover sheet* after uniquely keying it to its essay. Judges will individually rank the entries, then their combined ratings will determine the winners. In any disputes, the decision of the contest chairperson shall be final. Scoring in all levels of the contest will follow this schedule of points:

- Material Organization (Interpretation of the subject, adherence to theme and logic): 40 pts.
- Vocabulary and Style (word choice, phraseology and continuity): 30 pts.
- Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling: 20 pts
- Neatness: 5 pts
- Adherence to Contest Rules: 5 pts

V. Penalties

- Failure to identify the total number of words in the essay: deduct 5 pts.
- Overlength/under length essay: deduct 5 pts. for each 25 words beyond specified range.

•Self-identification within essay: deduct 5 pts.

•Failure to double space (if typed) or write in ink: deduct 5 pts.

VI. Awards

Within each level, first place winners will receive \$100, second place winners will receive \$50 and third place winners will receive \$25. Certificates will be presented to all place winners. The Heritage League reserves the right to withhold place awards if, in their determination, the quality of the entries is not adequate. Certificates and prize checks will be issued by September 30, 2004, and results published in the next Herald issue after that date.

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Heritage League Members Coming to Kalamazoo October 8-11, 2004

Number interested in golf on Friday _____

Number of golfers requiring carts _____

Number of Golfers needing to rent clubs _____

Total registration amount enclosed (\$225 per person, payable to 453rd BG Association) \$ _____

Mail before July 15 to: Lloyd W. Prang
2451 Willow Street
Greenwood, IN 46143
(317) 885-0224

Atlantic Air Routes of World War II

-by Kelsey McMillan – 389th BG Associate Member

The Luftwaffe onslaught against England in the summer of 1940 alarmed Americans who feared that England might fall, bringing the Nazis one step closer west to the United States. Americans continued to eschew direct involvement in the war, however. Not so for the Roosevelt Administration, which devised several creative and covert means for aiding our Allies and preparing the U.S. for war while maintaining a façade of neutrality. One step was to establish numerous defensive positions outside the Continental U.S and its territories, including the construction of airfields throughout the North and South Atlantic. After the U.S. joined the fight, these airfields formed the backbone of America's military air routes to theaters of operations in the western hemisphere. Most were in regions alien and exotic to Americans.

From intriguing to boring, beautiful to dreary, freezing to broiling, heavenly to hellish, it is not surprising

that 60-year-old memories of these way stations have not faded, and are often vividly recounted in veterans' articles and letters. Their fascinating stories inspired this writer to learn more and share this article.

On the **Northern Route**, the stopovers in Canada were surrounded by coniferous forests, lakes and rocky terrain, or they skirted the Arctic Ocean within glacier-carved valleys and mountains. Airfields on the sub-arctic coasts of Greenland were secreted away within crooked, glacial fjords with dicey approaches. The mild, yet changeable climate of Iceland's coasts were a surprising contrast to the inland ice fields. Reykjavik (name of the capital of Iceland), means "Smoky Bay." It was so-named by the first settler in the 9th century because of steam rising from geothermal hot springs.

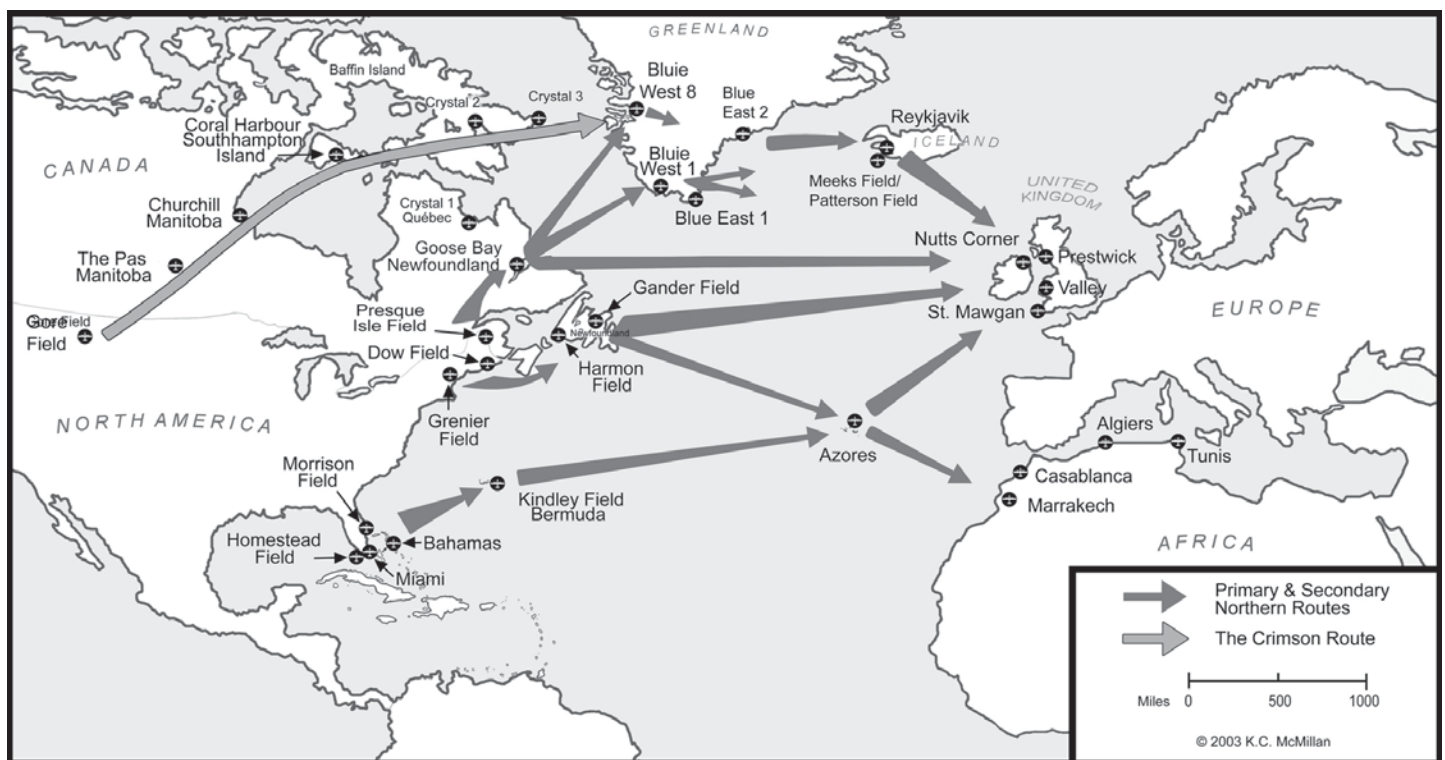
Stopovers on the **Southern Route** included tropical paradises of the Caribbean, and the steamy, exotic

mouth of the Amazon River. From bleak tiny volcanic islands in the middle of the Atlantic, to the primitive grasslands and deserts on the west African coast, and the exotic Casbahs of northwest African cities, this route offered infinite cultural variety. Many of the airfields also doubled as weather stations or bases for air squadrons assigned to hunt U-boats or to escort and protect Allied shipping convoys across the Atlantic.

Gaining a Foothold

In September 1940, President Roosevelt traded 50 aging destroyers for the right to establish American air and naval bases in seven British possessions in the western hemisphere. In November the War Department secretly contracted with Pan American Airways to build or expand commercial airfields in Central and South America and the Caribbean with the understanding they would be designed to accommodate future

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THE NORTH ATLANTIC AIR ROUTES OF WORLD WAR II

Atlantic Routes

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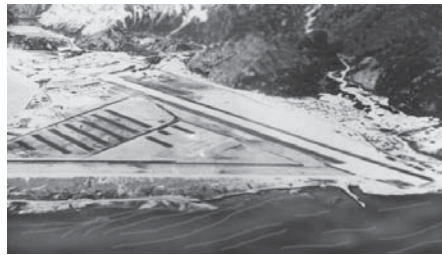
military conversion. The U.S. government fully funded all construction, but as far as the host nations knew, they were strictly commercial enterprises. This covert plan precluded any appearance of U.S. mobilization and obviated the need for any formal military accords with those countries. In cooperation with the Army Corps of Engineers, Pan Am built several of the Brazilian airfields on the Southern Route including Amapá, São Luís, Natal, Recife, and Belém. In April 1941, the U.S. entered an agreement with the Free Danish authorities whereby the U.S. would provide defense of Greenland in exchange for the right to construct air bases and other facilities on the subcontinent. The U.S. also took over defense of Iceland in July 1941 in a similar agreement with Britain, releasing His Majesty's forces there for more essential military operations elsewhere.

The Northern Route – Red, White and Blue

The U.S. War Department originally conceived a plan to build secret AAF bases on the subcontinent of Greenland as a forward defense, and from which a bombing campaign could be conducted against the Nazis in the event that Great Britain was conquered. Code named "Blueie" by Secretary of War Harry Stimson, there were eventually nine bases on the west side of Greenland commonly used on the ferry route: Blueie West 1 through 9, and five bases on the east side known as Blue East 1 through 5.

Blueie West 1, or BW-1, stands out in the memories of the many Air Transport Command pilots and combat replacement crews that landed there en route to the United Kingdom. It was primarily used by these ferrying groups in the events of emergency or bad weather on the leg from Newfoundland to Iceland. The landing strip, which was located inside an

inverted L-shaped fjord, was carved into the base of a mountain at sea level. A comparatively short runway ran uphill from the water's edge and ended at the foot of the mountain. Large chunks of ice floating in the azure blue waters were visible from the air. Not your typical landing approach! Most of the BW and BE air bases also included weather stations, artillery emplacements, rescue support



Blueie West 1 - Narsarsuaq, Greenland Uphill landings and downhill takeoffs wedged between a rocky mountain and an icy fjord.

-Courtesy of Narsarsuaq Airport

sites, and navigation aids. Weather fronts sweeping down from the arctic toward the European continent encountered Greenland first, enabling meteorologists at Blueie and other Greenland stations to provide fairly reliable forecasts to Headquarters 8th AF where bombing targets were selected each day.

The Crimson Route – Short-Lived

As deployments of AAF combat units to Great Britain were planned, it was anticipated the airfields in New England and Labrador would be unable to handle an ever-increasing volume of overseas movement and ferry traffic. Thus, an alternate route from the western states to the British Isles was devised. The AAF first began using this route in the summer of 1942; it included bases in Manitoba, Southampton Island, and Baffin Island, the Canadian jumping-off point to Greenland. Two of the bases, code-named Crystal 2 and Crystal 3, were also weather stations. The AAF's use of the Crimson Route tapered off and

eventually was discontinued in late 1943 as additional airfields built or enlarged in New England and Newfoundland proved capable of handling the increasing traffic.

Southern Route – The Looooong Way!

The Southern Atlantic Route covered roughly 10,000 miles. Despite being almost four times longer than the Northern Route at 2,700 miles, its superior weather made it generally safer, especially in the winter months. President Roosevelt used this route when traveling to and from the Casablanca and Teheran conferences in January and November 1943.

Fliers of this route likely hoped to fly direct from South America to Africa and bypass Wideawake Field. This dismal and isolated airfield was on Ascension Island, a 34-square mile volcanic rock about midway between Brazil and Africa. When the landing strip was first opened, huge flocks of birds on the island posed a serious danger to air traffic as they swarmed into the flight path during airplane takeoffs. The birds were finally persuaded to relocate to another part of the island with the assistance of an ornithologist from the American Museum of Natural History. Water was scarce, amenities nonexistent. Everything was in short supply except bird guano. Leave it to the Army Corps of Engineers to find a use for this resource...housing on the post was constructed of guano bricks. Lovely!

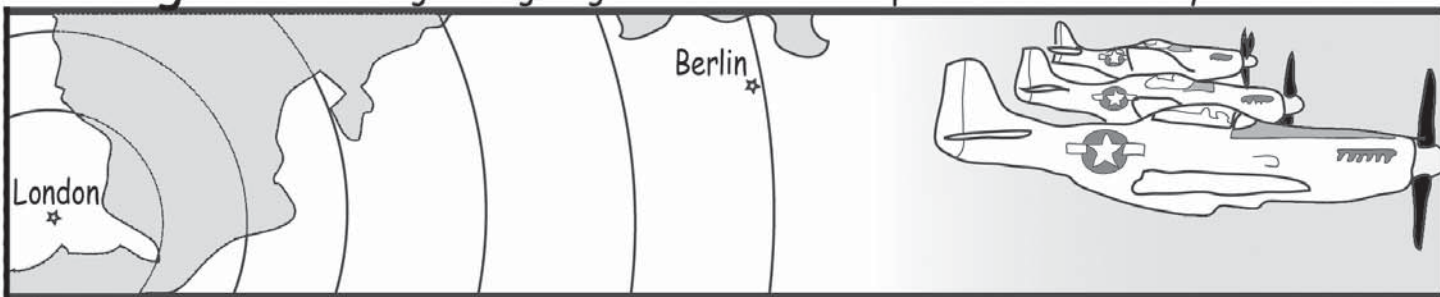


Comforts and diversions were few, fresh water and supplies strictly rationed at "Wideawake Field" on Ascension Island, over 1100 miles from the nearest continent

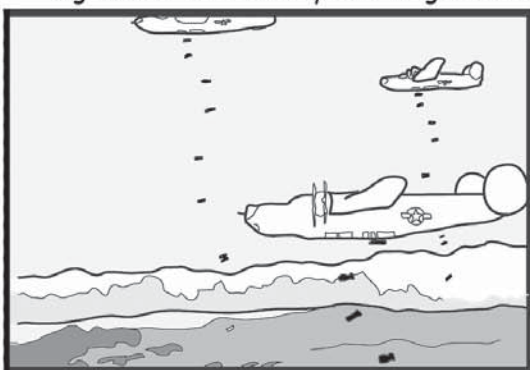
-Nat'l Archives, USAF Collection

A tough one...

Longer range daylight raids were possible in the Spring of 1944, and longer range fighter escorts could protect bombers beyond Berlin...

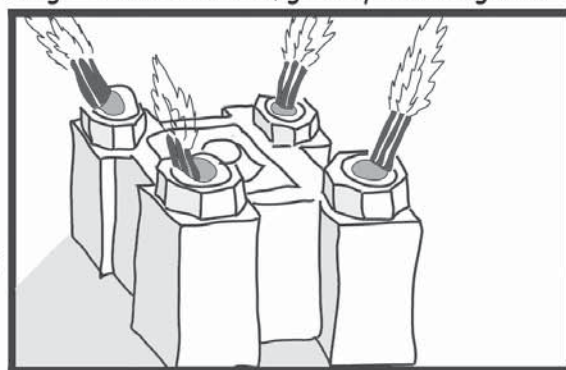


"Big Week" in February had targeted German aircraft production and fighter installations, greatly reducing that

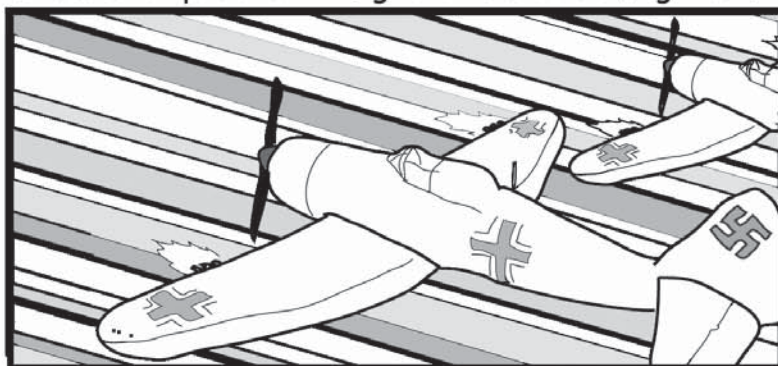


threat to allied bombers.

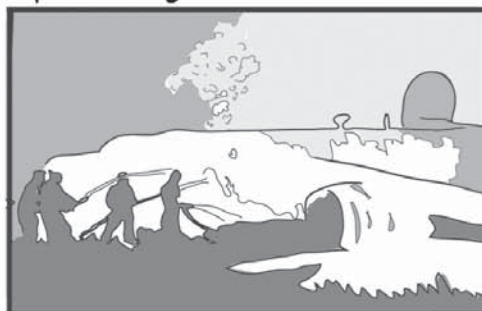
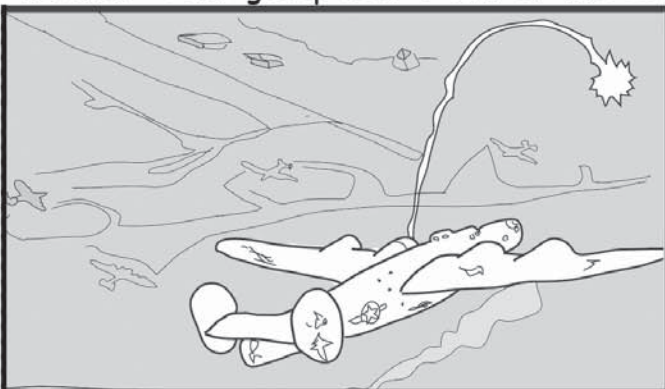
Enemy anti-aircraft artillery ('AAA' or 'flak') improved up to the end of the war, and overtook fighters as our biggest threat at about that time.



April 29th was a huge effort: 751 heavy bombers from all three divisions of the Mighty Eighth went to take out Berlin's busiest commuter rail hub, Friedrichstrasse Station, to disrupt armament production. Unpredicted winds above 20,000 ft. and poor visibility took many in the last force off course, and they didn't rendezvous with protective fighter escort coming back.



The 392nd's Jones crew fired red flares for priority landing at Wendling because of wounded aboard. That group lost 8 out of the 18 planes it sent that day. Battle damage didn't kill Fryman's crew until "Ready, Willing and Able" exploded right over their homefield.



Illustrated by
Tom Mahoney

Warm Family Tradition



Claire Biel seen with her beautiful handiwork

Claire Biel, wife of the 453rd's Albert Biel and mom to our own Irene Hurner, hand crafted this patchwork denim "lap throw" for an ongoing Heritage League benefit raffle. Claire's grandmother, Clara Wagoner, used to make large blankets from farm overalls worn by Irene's great-grandfather, and Claire has set up each of her children and grandchildren with their own throws. This very attractive one is about 48 x 56 inches and has calico backing, and trimming and appliques of a fabric with small red, white and blue flags.

As Irene has said, "Since these patched throws are made of denim, they are perfect to keep in your car, for that impromptu picnic, or to just snuggle with while sitting in a chair curled up with a good book."

Join Claire in her significant support of the League by "taking a chance" at winning, but please act FAST. Send your \$5 for one chance or \$20 for five chances, to Irene (address on back panel of this Herald) so that she receives it by Friday, May 21st. Checks payable to the Heritage League. Additional raffle ticket sales, *and the drawing*, will happen in Philadelphia during the 2ADA Convention.

Librarian -continued from page 15

war and is thoroughly enthralling on the subject. I learned so much detail in just 10 minutes of talking to her and am really looking forward to hearing her speak further on this subject. We are inviting people to come down to the Library after the talk for a tour and to enter their memories into the BBC website. If you are curious about this BBC project, please visit the site at: www.bbc.co.uk/dna/ww2/. Please encourage any veterans you know to contribute their wartime memories, as the BBC wants as complete a picture of the wartime years as possible. We will also be holding People's War open days around the 60th anniversary of D-Day and then further down the road into October.

With spring we are starting to see more Americans walk through the doors. Just in the past week, we've had three groups of visitors, both veterans and family groups. They've been joining the increasing numbers of Norfolk community groups touring the library as part of Forum-wide tours. Derek and I have given seven tours during March, talking to about 100 people in all. This has been a

good way to show off the Library and we've noticed several return visitors from these groups.

It is hard for me to believe that my time in Norwich is almost up and there will be a new 2 ADA Fulbright librarian coming over in August. Incoming librarian Alexis Ciurczak seems delightful, and I am looking forward to meeting her. I've got just tons to do both here at the Library and out in the greater world to keep myself busy over the next few months. My list ranges from redesigning the web page to visiting the Grimes Graves flint mine and volunteering at the gardens at Blickling Hall. Being here at the Library has been a wonderful experience and has changed my life forever. We are all truly blessed by this fabulous living memorial; my heartfelt thanks go out to all involved.

World War II Memorial Dedication Set for 5/29



Natural perspective view eastward from Lincoln Memorial puts lie to all concerns of disrupted sight-lines. Prominent white horizontal band is temporary fencing on grounds of Washington Monument, which are being landscaped for improved security.

-Brian Mahoney



Atlantic anchor looks across Mall axis to Pacific anchor; between them lies an ellipse of 58 markers representing the States and Territories. Note crowd restraints still in place.

- Brian Mahoney



Construction workers finalizing landscaping details on WW II Memorial site, ahead of schedule.

-Brian Mahoney

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