

HERITAGE HERALD



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Periodical of the Heritage League of the 2nd Air Division

June 2005

Strong Support in San Antonio

In what has become a rather uplifting routine, we were rewarded for shifting to a larger room: over one hundred full and associate members attended our General Business Meeting during the Second Air Division Association's 58th Convention at the Hyatt on the Riverwalk.

At 2 PM on Friday, May 27th, Jim Lorenz, our continuing Representative from the 2ADA, offered an invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

After welcoming remarks, Ray Bohuslav, the 14 year old grandson of Alan Senior (446th) received an inscribed 'scroll of learning' neck pendant, acknowledging his First Place in last year's Essay Contest. (See *Herald* #35, page 6.) Alan and Joyce Senior beamed on in understandable pride.

Continuing officers and one new one offered reports of the Executive Committee meeting of the previous week (see following story) and announced the commitment to hold a Heritage League reunion in Savannah in 2006. (See story, p. 11)



Joyce and Alan Senior (446th) on either side of grandson Ray Bohuslav. His medalion for winning Essay Contest resonates with the 'Rededication Trip' one sported by Alan and many others throughout the weekend. Alan was instrumental in designing and donating these prized keepsakes.

- Brian Mahoney

Treasurer Ed Zobac outlined our sound financial standing with his customary clarity, while deputized recording secretaries Rose Biel Lighty and Gretchen Hurner spotted Margaret Heckmann. Past President Irene Hurner acted informally as guide and parliamentarian to outgoing Communications VP Brian Mahoney, who chaired the meeting by request of outgoing President Billy Sheely Johnson, who sent her greetings but was unable to attend.

Brian reported that clever work by webmaster Bob Books (392nd) in foiling spammers, and diligent handling of queries to the Guestbook feature by Chris Clark (44th) had resulted in a substantial increase in traffic on our website. Bob was present and gave the great news that we are up to 1500 hits a month now.

The grand news of the day was delivered by Sue Risley, as the acting Member-

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Heritage Execs Hosted by Happy Warriors

In keeping with their conscious efforts to get as much exposure to our cherished vets of the Second Air Division, your Executive Committee accepted the gracious invitation of 492nd BG hosts Bill and Norma Beasley. Business and pleasure were combined in the beauty—and record setting heat—of Tucson, May 18-22.

The 'hard luck' group of the Eighth has an understandable tight bond and gave us a warm welcome, matching its strong representation within past and present Heritage League officer ranks. Their second 'stand alone' reunion included Sabino Canyon, Pima Air Museum, and Davis-Monthan AFB tours, moving reflections on the 61st anniversary of the mission on which several of the vets present became POWs, a posthumous decoration ceremony, and a banquet for 127.

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President's Update

-Brian Mahoney

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In stepping up to this position, I am mindful of both the 'weight' of our broad charge to 'honor and remember,' and the press of time. One of my favorite old hymns instructs: "*Time, like an ever rolling stream, bears all its sons away; they fly forgotten as a dream dies at the op'ning day.*" We do not have a lot of time left with our remaining veterans, survivors of the pivotal and costly air war which helped save civilization just six decades ago. We want others in the second and third generations to enjoy this contact. Then, inspired just as we have been, they will help us preserve the timeless inspiring legacy of the citizen-soldiers (and airmen!) of the 'greatest generation.'

The Second Air Division Association has set an amazing record of achievement, and founded The Heritage League of the Second Air Division (USAAF) 18 years ago to perpetuate memories and lessons long after the last of their members are gone. We are beginning to take more active and practical steps to demonstrate our commitment and competence, and be visible to all who should be among our number. We must broaden our base and deepen our efforts. While this has some intimidating aspects to it, your present board is comprised of people who also find this *exciting*.

We want to 'lever' our own passion more effectively now, and will engage more of you in more work, more dreaming, more planning, more leading. I would like to establish a 'volunteer coordinator' soon. (I am seriously soliciting here for nominations.) I want the officers to be able to form teams of helpers as they take on more responsibilities in their areas.

Your executives have a responsibility to lead, so that the effort is not limited to the work that they themselves can do. We have the challenge to continually cultivate more leaders, too, so that successions are smooth and our good work uninterrupted.

I would start my term with a major request: I ask each of you to think of the ways you are suited to serve, and ways in which the

League can improve. Please communicate these to me without hesitation. My goal is to help the League undertake substantial and orderly growth, while keeping to its stated mission. The most significant part of my responsibility will be to expand and tap our membership for all the resources this will require.

Our by-laws provide Executive Committee voting seats for up to three past HL presidents. In the short time I have been on the scene, these seats have always been full, with Jeane Stites, Craig Beasley, Billy Sheely Johnson, and Irene Hurner all serving capably. As the first of these now finally cycles out of this pool, I want to express our deep gratitude for the sage counsel Jeane offered us in her post-presidency. The last two especially have been crucial to my personal growth in service to this board and remain as talented, accessible advisors and friends, with important assignments. Irene has agreed to remain as Chair of the Transition Committee. (We thank Ed for his year of service with her as the initial Co-Chair.) I am delighted that Billy asked me to task her with our wreath laying program.

The continuing informal access to recent colleagues Linda Wittig and Carol Kendrick are comforting to this 'newbie' and of great value to the board. Vicki Brooks Warning's grace, sound judgment and clear vision are celebrated in two sides of the Atlantic in her role as liaison from 'us' to the Governors of the Memorial Trust.

The continuing energy and very modern counsel of Jim and Mary Lorenz will be of great value to me now as it has been to my colleagues for years.

Articles just in this single edition of the *Herald* showcase the voluntary efforts of Clair Biel, Beth Ertz, Bera Dordoni, Bob Books, Chris Clark, Gretchen Hurner and Rose Lighty. Caron Veynar is *always* there when asked to handle a detail, and Annette Tison and Kelsey McMillan are on tap for researched articles. This is a small sampling of the wealth of goodwill and practical service available; I offer it in gratitude and hopes that it will inspire all readers as it does me.

My fellow officers are all imbued with a passion to

serve, powerfully informed in every case by a revered veteran. As our most substantial volunteers, the officers bring to our table a well rounded set of professional competencies and a shared enthusiasm for work together in growing and solidifying the League. As of this moment, I want a good number of you readers to be thinking seriously about 'joining us at the table' right now in some capacity, stepping into formal roles as you become prepared and these come open, not holding back.

Honorary Lifetime Membership Offered to *Every* 2AD Veteran

The Executive Committee, by unanimous electronic vote on May 8th, 2005 (the 60th Anniversary of VE Day), approved this MOTION:

"The Heritage League shall extend free Honorary Lifetime Membership to every living veteran of the 2nd Air Division (USAAF) during WW II, who served in of any of its units, British or American, attached or assigned. Honorary Lifetime membership is not to include voting or office holding privileges, although voting service within a Heritage League committee is possible and encouraged. Heritage League leaders will assist the Membership VP in making this special offer known to qualified veterans by all practical means. Outreach efforts should include finding veterans who may not have current or past membership in the Second Air Division Association, such as fighter pilots and ground support personnel.

Heritage League officers and committee chairs charged with the data, mailing, and membership aspects of this initiative shall have all due discretion in implementing this motion, to solicit help and funds, and to phase in subscriptions at a pace which will not imperil the League's human and fiscal assets, but shall expand the membership rolls in this category as rapidly as practicable."

Officers Ed Zobac (as our Database Manger) and



True to our inclusive mission. Joe Dallan, a crew chief in the 492nd and 467th BGs, was the first 'ground punder' veteran awarded Honorary Lifetime Membership by the Heritage League. At same Tucson convention, Ruth Christianson Register Coleman, the warmly remembered 'Red Cross Girl' at North Pickenham, spry and lovely mother of our VP Tina Coleman, became first woman so honored. We are actively looking for veterans (and descendants) of ALL units "attached and assigned."

Sue Risley (Membership VP) are keeping up with the initial round of new enrollments, first made among our 'hosts' in the 492nd BG at Tucson, then a week later at the 2ADA Convention in San Antonio. This edition of the *Herald* will go to 53 such members, along with a similar number of newly recruited Regular (paying!) members. Special thanks to Billy Sheely Johnson and Irene Hurner for very effective enrollment of veterans and 'youngsters' in each category!

In practice, we want to extend this offer in person to veterans as we meet with them at their gatherings, but if you are or know of a qualifying veteran, please send their name, full address, and name/number of their unit within the 2AD during the war, to Sue Risley, whose address can be found on the back panel. Note that there is no requirement for a qualifying veteran to have ever been a member of our 'parent organization.'

From Your 2ADA Fullbright Librarian

-Alexis K. Ciurczak

[Ed.: Alexis produced two timely reports in the time your previous editor was supposed to produce two newsletters... her messages are combined in this one overdue edition of *The Heritage Herald*.]

While writing this, I am reflecting on the whirlwind of activities completed last November for the Remembrance Day celebrations. Nine U.S. Veterans and other members of the Second Air Division Association and Heritage League came back to Norwich for the Annual Governor's Meeting, and it was indeed a pleasure to meet and have a chance to spend some time with all of them. I'm sure others will be reporting in these pages on the activities, but for me it was a wonderful and moving experience to be on the balcony of Norwich City Hall on November 14th, in the crisp morning air, and watch the wreath-laying ceremony, which was then followed by a beautiful service in the Cathedral.

As for the Library, things are going at a fast pace. We have unveiled a new donor "Tree of Life," dedicated the reading room to Bernard Matthews and hosted a tea party, given tours to a number of visiting groups and students, put up a Thanksgiving display which attracted a large number of children (maybe it was the free jelly beans!) and continued to answer reference questions and assist visitors with their information needs. I have been spending a good deal of time preparing new book orders and have been enjoying adding new titles to the library's collection. We have installed new shelving and therefore will be able to increase our holdings by another 700 volumes.

I was also fortunate to be the Library's representative at a regional conference, sponsored by the BBC, for the People's War Project, held in Bury St. Edmunds. The Athenaeum, in the historical town where the Magna Carta was born, was a great venue for the event. The 2nd ADA Memorial Library received one of the few awards presented, for outstanding achievement by "making a valuable contribution to the People's War Project, by helping to gather and record stories from local communities ensuring that people's memories are captured for future generations." For more information on the People's War Project, check out the web pages at www.bbc.co.uk/ww2

During the Christmas season, I was very pleased to have my dad, Alexander, come to Norwich to visit me, as well as see the wonderful library and its collection. He was quite impressed! Dad is also a retired USAF

Captain who flew in B-24s in the Aleutian Islands with the 11th Air Force during WW II. He founded the Distinguished Flying Cross Society about 10 years ago (www.dfcsociety.org) and presented the Memorial Library with a book detailing the history of the DFC. (See photo.)

Looking forward to the New Year, I will be continuing outreach with school visits, speaking engagements, participating in other activities, and generally representing the 2nd ADA Memorial Library to the community. Although time does seem to be going fast, there is a lot more to do before my Fulbright year is over, so with that I will close and get back to work!

Please feel free to contact me (alexis.ciurczak@norfolk.gov.uk) with any comments or questions.

[Ed.: This second part was written for June 2005 publication.]

It is hard to believe that this is my final article for the Herald. It seems like only yesterday that I was writ-



Trust Librarian Derek Hill receives copy of **DFC book** from Alexander Ciurczak, founder of the Distinguished Flying Cross Society. Portion of Memorial Library mural behind shows Jimmy Stewart receiving the French Croix de Guerre.

-Alexis Ciurczak

ing my first article, back in September 2004. The time has truly flown!

First, I would like to take this opportunity to thank

everyone for a wonderful year as the 2nd ADA Fulbright Librarian at the 2AD Memorial Library. The permanent staff of the library, Derek Hills, (Trust Librarian), Jenny Christian and Lesley Fleetwood, (Library and Information Assistants), are amazing to work with. Their knowledge is extraordinary and they have provided excellent support throughout the year. There are also some fine part-time employees (Anne Goodhew, Eileen Watson, Jean Pelling-Smith and Jim Rawlings) who are invaluable in the services they provide to the Memorial Library.

Second, I would like to thank the Governors, the Fulbright Commission and the 2nd Air Division Association for choosing me as the 2nd ADA Fulbright Librarian. It has given me both a personal and professional experience, which cannot be equaled. I have enjoyed attending the meetings and appreciate the support received from Matthew Martin, Chairman and all the other Governors. And third, Susie Whitehouse, Fulbright Advisor, deserves special thanks for making the transition to life in Norwich practically seamless.

We have been especially busy in promoting the Memorial Library and its services to the wider community. Many aviation enthusiasts know of our existence, but we have made big strides in encouraging the general public to come into the facility and in spreading the word about our collection.

In the first instance, we hosted an 'open Sunday,' on May 8, 2005. This event was held in conjunction with the Imperial War Museum's WW II travelling exhibition, "Their Past, Your Future" which was situated practically right outside our door, in the Forum foyer, for eight weeks. The BBC People's War Project (www.bbc.co.uk/ww2) also ran concurrent events that weekend.

As for our part, both Lesley Fleetwood and myself, dressed in costumes of World War II Red Cross nurses, handed out 450 doughnuts, 150 cookies and bottomless cups of tea and coffee. We were ably assisted by Lesley's husband John, who came to see the exhibit but was recruited to make two doughnut runs and a milk run, when it looked like we would run out of both. The

Memorial Library provided all the main Sunday newspapers and showed videos from our collection continuously. We sold 34 of the new library brochures and gave away 2000 2nd AD Memorial logo stickers. The media covered our event as well, and we had a quick spot on "Look East" BBC1 television local news. We were interviewed briefly on BBC Radio Norfolk during the event and were also listed in the Eastern Daily Press calendar of events.

The Memorial Library had over 1000 visitors that Sunday and many of them commented that they had



Mrs. Michael Bailey, Alexis Curiczak, Bernard Matthews at Tea Party and dedication of Reading Room in Memorial Library.

-Alexis Cuirczak

not known about the Library, but would be sure to make a return visit. Many checked out books from our collection as well. Our expenses for food, decorations and stickers were covered by a £500 grant received from the EEMLAC (East of England Museums, Libraries, Archives Council), which also included postage for a mail-out to U.S. veterans, encouraging them to submit stories for the People's War

project.

Later on in the same month, Lesley and I attended the Antiques Roadshow event, held on May 19, 2005, in the cloister lawn of Norwich Cathedral. I had previously written to their offices and explained about the Memorial Library and our special collection of memorabilia. Needless to say, the producers were very interested and made an appointment for us to see one of the experts and possibly be filmed. Derek and Jenny helped us choose which memorabilia to bring and Jenny provided an excellent listing of all the particulars of each item. We brought a varied collection of items and the experts chose to feature three of the Negrelli photograph collection, the two "short snorters" and the aviator soaps. While on camera, one of the Eisenhower jackets and two of the Lund watercolors (framed copies) were in the background. Lesley and I were glad we had an appointment at 9:00 AM or we might have had to wait in the queue with the other 1200 people who came along! The producers cannot promise that the footage will be used, but if it is included on the show they will notify us. We will be checking the Antiques Roadshow website (http://www.bbc.co.uk/antiques/tv_and_radio/)

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San Antonio

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Johnson. Sue shared that your Executives, in a unanimous action taken symbolically on the 60th anniversary of VE Day (May 8th, 2005) established Honorary Lifetime free membership to all veterans of the 2nd Air Division, and *any* units, British *or* American, *attached or assigned*, in England during WW II. (See story.)

David Hastings, 'Friend' (as in 'Friends of the Second Air Division Memorial'), and *friend* (as in long serving Liaison to the HL from the Governors of the Memorial Trust) gave a wonderful report of their meetings and standing of the Fulbright and general endowments. Remarkably, this was the 25th 2ADA Convention that he and Jean have graced. His fellow governors present were recognized—Andrew Hawker and Chair Matthew Martin.

Present and past 2ADA leadership was well represented; Honorary Lifetime President Jordan Uttal, recovering solidly from recent health challenges, and half a dozen Presidents were all recognized

Anglo-American Tribute to Ramsay Potts

-Brian Mahoney

The American Museum at Duxford, the Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum in Savannah, a large international law firm he helped found after the war, and the United States Air Force have all been well served by a most gracious and likeable 'natural,' Ramsay Potts.

On this past May 11th, a black-tie dinner "to celebrate the British American Partnership At the American Museum in Britain" honored his long service to several causes and especially his pivotal role in the campaign which resulted in the most complete museum of American

from the dias.

The Nomination Committee (Irene Hurner, Chair) proposed the following slate for 2005-06, which was unanimously approved: President Brian Mahoney (492nd/467th); Executive Vice President Christine C. Woods (American Red Cross attached to 492nd); Secretary Margaret Heckmann (492nd); Treasurer Ed Zobac (445th); Communications VP Erin Mahoney (492nd/467th) and Membership VP Sue Risley (446th).

As 'old business,' Brian was able to thank Billy and Ed for this year's Memorial Day wreath placement program (see p. 9) and note gifts collected during the last membership renewal for the Mighty Eighth AF Heritage Museum (\$280), the Memorial Library (\$387), and Friends of the 2AD Memorial (\$80).

Under 'new business' Ed reported the donations set in Tucson for the current year (see "Heritage Execs Hosted..." p.1). Brian gave a brief look ahead

and put all on notice that as we 'power up' our mission, we will be tapping on many of you as volunteers for specific tasks.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:45 PM.

Dear Heritage League,

I am deeply honored to have received this award from such an honorable organization as the Heritage League. Writing my essay gave me the opportunity to use the knowledge and sense of respect for the men who defended our nation in world war II which was instilled in me by my grandfather, veteran Alan Senior. My goal was to honor these men the best I could, and hopefully my essay did them justice.

Again, thank you all very much.

Ray Bohuslav



Well wishers. Ramsay enjoying greetings of old friends and admirers (like Craig Harris) after all the speeches. -Brian Mahoney

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Coincidence on Canvas

-Vicki Brooks Warning

[*Ed.:* Vicki has been attending 2ADA reunions since 1973. Her father was President of the 2ADA in 1975. He died in 1975 after the reunion trip to Norwich. Vicki continued attending reunions and Kurt joined Vicki after they were married in 1977. They have been to Norwich reunions several times. They were both in attendance when Bernard Matthews invited those from the 466th in attendance at the Norwich reunion in 2001 to Great Witchingham Hall.]

My father was a navigator on the M.O. Dike crew in the 466th Bomb Group at Attlebridge from March to July, 1944. This is the story of how I came to be the proud owner of a painting of my father's plane, commissioned from Mike Bailey.

Many of you may not know that at the end of the war Attlebridge and several other airfields found other lives. Enter Bernard Matthews, who decided to raise turkeys. He saw that the airfields with their strong straight runways were an excellent place to put turkey sheds. So he bought several airfields to use for his ever growing worldwide turkey business.

The headquarters for his business is actually located in Great Witchingham Hall, a Tudor mansion in the Norfolk countryside which served as a military headquarters in WWII.

Now fast forward to 2004 when Bernard Matthews generously donated \$180,000 to the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library. As the Heritage League observer to the Board of Governors of the Memorial Trust I was in England in November 2004 for their Annual General meeting. One of the events we attended was a tea honoring Bernard Matthews at the Library and naming a section of the Library as the Bernard Matthews reading room.

The gift presented by the Board of Governors to Bernard was a painting with three planes flying over the Attlebridge airfield. Imagine my surprise when I saw that one of the planes in the painting was "Snark," my Dad's airplane.

While at the dedication I had a chance to speak with Bernard and with Mike Bailey, the artist. When speaking with Mike I discovered that he had known my Dad from his association with the 2ADA. I learned that Mike does paintings of the 2AD planes and other aircraft by commission. He can be reached at: 91 Waterworks Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR2 4DB, England.

You cannot imagine the feelings I was having. When I returned to the US I showed the pictures to my husband Kurt. He then had the idea to commission a painting from Mike. After several verbal and written discussions we commissioned Mike to do the painting with the Attlebridge airfield, the Snark as the prominent plane in the picture with the other two planes being the 466th assembly ship and the "Splash."



Vicki with Matthews presentation. This first Bailey painting included her late father's plane over Attlebridge, and now hangs in the office of 2 AD friend and Memorial Library benefactor Bernard Matthews.



Kurt Warnig with commissioned Bailey painting. "Snark" in foreground of formation over Attlebridge.
-Vicki Brooks Warning

Annual General Meeting —Norwich

-Vicki Brooks Warning (466th)

As the Heritage League Representative to the Board of Governors of the Memorial Trust I try to attend the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Board of Governors each year. The AGM is held in November and is one of the quarterly meetings that are held each year.

Representation from the US was quite large for 2005. 2ADA members attending included President Geoff Gregory and his wife Terry, Secretary David Patterson and his wife Joan, Bud Koorndyk, 2ADA Representative and Governor of the Memorial Trust Chuck Walker and his grandson Andrew Horlock, fellow '2nd generation' American Governor of the Memorial Trust Joe Dzenowagis, Jr. and myself. I was able to lengthen my stay this year and attend the full slate of activities arranged by our hosts Matthew Martin, Chairman of the Board of Governors and his wife Patsy, David Hastings former Chairman of the Board of Governors and his wife Jean, Andrew Hawker a current Governor and his wife and far too many others that I have no space to mention and would ask their forgiveness. They know who they are.

Our schedule was full. It began on Saturday night with a dinner hosted by Bud Koorndyk at Dunston Hall. I was able to see many long time friends including Tom and Robin Eaton. For those of you that do not know me, I began coming to the 2ADA reunions in 1973 with my father, Bill Brooks and met Tom and his son at that first reunion. I was also able to meet Alexis Ciurczak our Fulbright Scholar at the Memorial Library.

On Sunday—Remembrance Sunday in England—we were invited to attend coffee with the Lord Mayor at City Hall and then view what was a very moving ceremony at City Hall which included Geoff Gregory laying a wreath on behalf of the Second Air Division. We then made our way to the exquisitely grand Norwich Cathedral where we attended a Memorial Service. After the service I was honored to meet John Gilbert. He had laid wreaths for the Heritage League on the continent at memorial services earlier in the year. The service was followed by lunch at David and Jean Hastings'.

The AGM was on Monday at County Hall. At this meeting a number of reports are presented including the Auditors report, the Stockbrokers report and sub-committee reports on the Library, Education and Fi-

nance The Trust continues to be in good financial standing but they are ever aware of the need for continued support by the members and friends of the Second Air Division. The report on the Appeal which began No-



Kneeling, Vicki Brooks Warning. Standing in front row: Matthew and Patsy Martin, Terry Gregory, Joan Patterson, Fulbright Librarian Alexis Ciurczak, Andrew Hawker. Back row: Andrew Walker (grandson of Chuck), Chuck Walker, Geoff Gregory, Andrea Hawker, Dave Patterson, Bud Koorndyk.

-Vicki Brooks Warning

vember 25th 2003 listed many significant gifts from benefactors in the UK and England.

Reports were also given by the Trust Librarians, the Friends and the Heritage League. During my report I presented the Trust with a check for \$1,500.

Following lunch we were honored to attend a tree planting ceremony at Sir Timothy Colman's estate. Three American species trees had been given to Sir Timothy to mark his retirement from the post of Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk in appreciation of all his work for the Trust. Sir Timothy gave us a walking tour of part of the privately owned Framingham Arboretum. On a clear day you can see Great Yarmouth and the sea. This was followed by tea with Sir Timothy and his wife at their home, Bixley Manor. And yes, this is the Colman of Colman's mustard fame. Dinner followed at David and Jean's. They have hosted a dinner for their US friends each year we have visited.

Tuesday was a "free" day. Some people visited with friends and went to their former airbases and others enjoyed visiting the city of Norwich. Dinner was hosted by Matthew and his wife Patsy at their home—Dairy Farmhouse. And if you hadn't noticed, everyone names their home in England. Addresses do not seem to enter

in to the equation.

On Wednesday we attended the Tea Party at the Memorial Library. This was to honor Bernard Matthews for his generous gift during the Appeal with the dedication of a Reading Area within the Memorial Library that will carry his name. During the dedication an original painting by Mike Bailey was presented to Bernard. It was a painting of B-24s flying over the Attlebridge airfield, home of the 466th Bomb Group. This was my father's BG and this airfield and others were purchased after the war by Bernard Matthews for use in his expanding turkey farming business. The picture took on additional meaning when I saw that my Dad's plane, the Snark, was in the picture. As a side note I should tell you that subsequent to my Norwich visit my husband engaged Mike Bailey to paint a picture with my Dad's plane and it now hangs proudly in our house. [Ed.: See story and photos, p. 7.]

After the tea I took the train to London to return the next morning to the States. In reading the above I recognize that it may sound like a travelogue, but we were engaged in activities with friends old and young, new and long term, that I believe foster the relationship between our two countries and especially bind us with our English friends and our mutual desire to honor those who served in World War II. It is an honor to be the Heritage League Representative to the Board of Governors of the Memorial Trust.



Remembrance Sunday, Millenium Plain. Norwich City Hall behind, red poppy wreaths in front of memorial. Years of First and Second World Wars bracket inscriptions "Our Glorious Dead" and "Their Name Liveth For Ever More."
-Alexis Cuirczak

We Will Never Forget: Six Wreaths This Year

On May 22nd, the small private memorial service for David Patterson (445th BG), long serving 2ADA Secretary, was attended by Irene Hurner, representing the League. By family request, we were allowed to offer the sole floral tribute, a wreath inscribed simply "We will never forget." The Collings Foundation Liberator 'Witchcraft' overflowed the service at the family's 'Ardenwood' (California) estate several times.

Remains of American dead who served in the Second Air Division USAAF can be found in marked graves, and memorialized on Walls of the Missing, at fully seven of the American Battle Monuments Cemeteries. As part of our program of 'honoring and remembering' the ultimate sacrifices of these nearly 7,000, we have traditionally arranged for memorial wreaths to be presented in Memorial Day ceremonies at the Cambridge American Cemetery, with the kind help of "Friends" David and Pearl Neale. In the last two years, with the

help of S/Sgt. John Gilbert, we have also been represented at Normandy commemorations on D-Day. The letter from John to Irene describing last year's ceremony follows.

In Kalamazoo, it was decided to expand our program, so that this Memorial Day the Cemeteries in Belgium (Henri-Chapelle and Ardennes) and the Netherlands (Margraten) would be added. Past President Billy Sheely Johnson, who annually sees to the laying of a wreath at her father's gravesite at Ardennes, has asked for and been given appointment to this poignant duty for the Heritage League.

Dear Irene,

I have just arrived back home from Omaha Beach, Colleville Sur-Mer, France. I had received a special pass for my car to get through the auto route of Caen and Bayeux area as security was extremely high. In fact

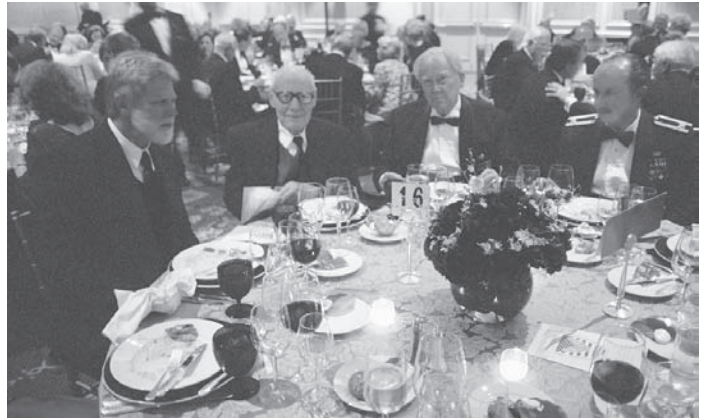
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Ramsay Potts & American Air Museum Gala

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military aircraft outside the US, part of the Imperial War Museum just south of Cambridge, England. (See Herald #31, page 11, where Irene Hurner reported on the rededication of that facility by HRH Prince Charles and Former President George H. W. Bush, after the restoration of the B-24 'Dugan'.)

The gracious Craig Harris, a B-17 pilot, former president of the 8th AF Historical Society, and Hap Chandler (491st BG) his fellow board member at Savannah and strong supporter of the drive there to prominently dis-



Toasting General Potts. Tablemates David and his father Al Asch (93rd BG), Hap Chandler (491st BG) and Jerry Mahoney (a 492nd/467th BGs son) enjoy excellent food, even finer company.



Open bar. Jerry and Erin Mahoney, Craig Harris, Nick Kehoe III. Nick's and Jerry's fathers served together in original cadre of 492nd BG, they were baptized together in 1943, and each had full USAF careers. -Brian Mahoney photos

play the 2nd Air Division (See "Second to None" story, p.21), kindly offered to 'comp' this writer and then HL President Billy Sheely Johnson as guests at the table they co-captained. In the event, Billy was getting over a very bad cold and nominated my niece Erin in her stead. As you will note, our new Communications VP 'cleans up nicely.'

At our table were also two other '492nd sons,' Lt. Gen. Nick B. Kehoe III and Col. Jerry Mahoney, They and Brig. Gen. Reg Rider are recently retired Air Force, but all still working. I finally got to meet one of the sons of the affable Al Asch (David), recent 93rd BG Group VP. George Holdra, another 'second gen' in the Capital Region, heads a B-17 bomb group association and is an active member of the local chapter of the 8th AF Historical Society, of which Reg is president. We hope to see them again in September in Arlington, VA, as the national organization holds their annual Reunion, and the Heritage executives hold a working meeting.

Liberator Stamp

A tip of the hat to 2ADA *Journal* Editor Ray Pytel, who scooped this important item in their Spring Edition. The Post Office will release, July 29th, a 20-stamp booklet with two images each of ten innovative American aircraft, civilian and military, from the 1930s through 50s. Besides the Lib, you will be interested in the P-47 Thunderbolt ('Jug') as operated by a handful or our 'Little Friend' outfits in the 2nd Air Division.

Go to http://shop.usps.com/cgi-bin/vsbv/postal_store_non_ssl/home.jsp and under the 'Collector's Corner' click on 'release schedule.'

Readers will recall that we joined ranks with the *Journal* two years ago (*Herald* #32, page 9) in soliciting appeal letters to the Chair of the Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee. While we did not get a full sheet issue of 'our plane,' this attractive release does take the heat off of Washington, while making it expensive to collect LOTS of them. Maybe we should combine forces with F6F Hellcat, P-80 Shooting Star, Catalina Flying Boat, and B-29 Superfortress fans, so we each get more of the one we want- like trading baseball cards, but in reverse!



HL Execs hosted by 492nd in Tucson

-continued from page 1

Under outgoing President Billy Sheely Johnson, your executives had a very productive meeting in which the plan was set to hold a 'widley welcoming' reunion next summer in Savannah. Donations for the present year were agreed—\$750 to the Memorial Library, an additional \$500 for the 'Fighting

Class of 2005. New recruits to Heritage League join HL oldtimers at 492nd Reunion in Tucson. Murtaugh and Arnett clans make up half of the 38 seen here! -Brian Mahoney



Active Listening. Tina C. Woods (492nd/ARC) takes in stories of original cadre officers of 492nd. Her warm reception by vets reflected the critical morale effect of mother Ruth C. Recister's hospitality on returning fliers, remebered as yesterday by many preant in Tucson. -Brian Mahoney

Sam' exhibit (see story p. 21), and confirmation of our prior arrangement to be listed on a plaque at the B-24 Memorial in San Diego for having donated \$500 to that effort after last fall's meeting in Kalamazoo.

It was also agreed that the next working Executive Committee meeting would happen alongside the annual convention of the 8th AF Historical Society. They are set to be in Arlington, VA, September 27-October 2, 2005. If you are interested in joining us there, go to the website for info, and ask that your badge reflect your Heritage League affiliation as well as that of 'your group.' And do let us know, so we can look for you and include you in our activities.

The Tucson meeting was marked by exhilaration and anticipation; all are ready to get on with the fun but important work of showing our cherished veterans that we are gearing up to host them at reunions and to institute appropriate programs of 'honoring and remembering' as their organizations make their downsizing or dissolution plans.



Maj. J. J. Taylor, last CO of 467th's 788th BS, posthumously awards late M/Sgt Robert Janton the **Bronze Star with Two Oak Leaf Clusters**, son Robin Janton accepting.

-Brian Mahoney via Robin Janton

Join Us In Savannah!

League plans for *REUNION 2006* now firming up

As this Herald goes to press, we have informally 'locked in' the dates of July 13-16, 2006 for a fun and affordable gathering which will accomodate school kids, working stiffs and veterans alike. Look for reservation info (in next *Herald* or a special mailing) before mid October, and please hold open these dates for a great time!

“You Are The Wind Beneath OUR Wings” and the 2ADA Southern California Brunch

-Irene Hurner

It has been my privilege and pleasure to attend the 2ADA Southern California Regional Reunion Brunch both February 2004 and February 2005. Our Heritage League members were welcomed with enthusiasm. A year ago the daughters of Julian Ertz were the masterminds behind a special event. Our Heritones (Heritage League members in attendance) came forward to sing backup while Bera Dordoni sang a special rendition of “You Are the Wind Beneath My Wings” and her sister, composer-arranger Beth Ertz, accompanied the group on the piano. “You Are The Wind Beneath *Our* Wings” is the adaptation by Bera and was sung to honor our veterans who were present. Not to leave any of the Ertz family out, brother Scott was part of The Heritones. The secret kept from us “hummers” was that we were being recorded. I am sure that there would not have been the wonderful group singing to the veterans, had we known about the recording. Bera then got in touch with the composer, requesting permission to record and sell a limited number of CDs with the profit to be used as a fundraiser for the 2ADA library in Norwich via our Heritage League.

To Bera and Beth’s delight, they received permission to make not more than one hundred copies with a note that said, “..I appreciate what you’re doing. My Dad, now deceased, was in 3rd Army and enjoyed a 3-year guided tour of North Africa, Italy and most of France under General Patton. He manned artillery pieces in support of armor and infantry.” The Bastis Foundation agreed to underwrite the production costs. We Heritage League members appreciate the time and effort that Beth, Bera and her foundation have given to the League. Do support this fundraiser by sending a check for \$25.00 to purchase one of the one hundred copies of “You Are The Wind Beneath Our Wings.” The Ertz family also recorded “God Bless America.” This is truly a unique opportunity. Make checks payable to

BASTIS Foundation and send them to Irene Hurner, 45415 San Antonio Valley Road, Livermore, CA 94550.

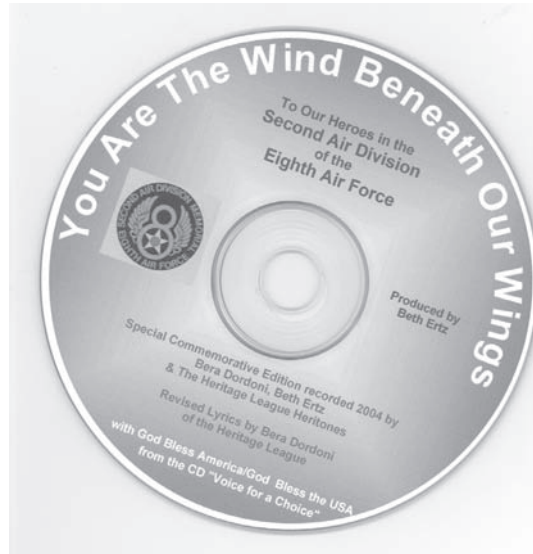
This past February, I was again able to attend the brunch. Chairman Dick Baynes and his committee had a wonderful program. Jane Russell attended, taking time to speak of the past and of the present. Everyone enjoyed her message. The main speaker was Violet Cowden, a teacher who became a member of the Women’s Auxiliary Ferrying (“WAF”) Squadron. Vi’s story was both educational and entertaining.

Of 25,000 applicants to the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) program, 1,830 were accepted and 1,074 graduated. These women were stationed at 106 air force bases in the USA. They transported military aircraft from factories to the points of debarkation and training fields. Other responsibilities included test piloting

problem aircraft, and towing targets for the training of ground-to-air gunners. The WASP flew 77 different types

of planes. Vi flew nineteen different kinds of aircraft. All of this was done to help our country at war. Because these women operated under the U.S. Civil Service Commission, there was no insurance or death benefits. The program was deactivated on December 20, 1944.

It was not until November 23, 1977 that the WASP were given veterans status. In addition to being trailblazers for aviation, they challenged the image of a typical woman and built a new foundation of courage, ability and self-esteem.



Special CD produced by Beth Ertz will raise funds for Heritage League while honoring our 'flyboys.' Her sister Bera Ertz Dordoni and 'The Heritones' also accompany.



Former WAF Vi Cowden regales attendees of this year's Southern California 2ADA Brunch. -Irene Hurner

The day was most enjoyable. I visited with many attendees, delivered a greeting from The Heritage League, met George and Michelle Welsh, editors of *Bomber Legends*, and had my picture taken with Jane Russell and several attendees. It was truly a day to remember.

[*Ed.*: Note links in “Webpagew We Wike” relating to this story, and review of “My War” in “the write stuff.”]



At 2ADA SoCal Brunch. Jane Russell, right of center, with Heritage League friends including Irene Hurner (left of center) and George and Michelle Welsh, publishers of *Bomber Legends*.

-via Welshes

A Salute to the Mechanics

-Reprinted from *Tall Tales*, newsletter of Georgia Chapter of the 8th AF Historical Society. Original author unknown.

Here's to the people with the greasy hands,
Who fuel the plane when the pilot lands.
Who fix the canopies and stop the leaks,
Change the tires and oil the squeaks.

Who smooth the scratches and rivet the panels,
Check “loud and clear” on the radio channels.
Who read the write-ups and make repairs,
Check wires and cables for chafing and tears.

Who pull the chocks and walk the wings,
And do a million maintenance things.
Who watch at the bird takes off and flies,
so here's a salute to the gals and guys,

From a group of fliers who seldom ponder
The ones who keep 'em in the wild blue yonder!

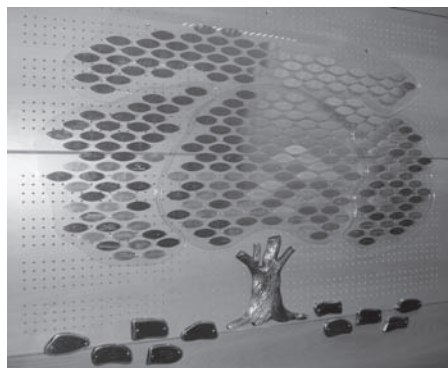
Fulbright Librarian...

-continued from page 5

antiques_roadshow/) to see when the Roadshow in Norwich will be broadcast. It may be turned into two programs, airing in January 2006, but the producers are not sure at this point.

In addition to these two main events, I have been teaching a class at the Wymondham Learning Center, entitled “Wymondham at War.” It is an on-line interactive class and aimed at adult learners, with the purpose of improving their Internet skills. The topic was chosen to fit in with the VE/VJ anniversaries and the People's War project, as well as attract local interest. The students are using our website (www.2ndair.org.uk) and others to research Wymondham, the 389th Bomb Group, Hethel and Ketteringham Hall, the 2AD Headquarters.

As for Fulbright events, a William J. Fulbright Centenary lecture was held at the Royal College of Physicians, in Regents Park, London, in late May. The keynote speaker was Senator John Kerry, whose youngest daughter Vanessa is currently a Fulbright Scholar here in England. I was pleased to be invited and enjoyed



Visible acknowledgment. Scheme graphically represents large contributions to the Memorial Library. As explained by Trust Governors Chair Matthew Martin in San Antonio, there are still 'rocks,' silver and gold 'leaves' to be funded, but one can see a large and healthy 'tree.'

-Alexis Cuirczak

speaking with Senator Kerry at the reception afterwards. In June, we Fulbrighters will be attending a final reception at the U.S. Ambassador's residence, also in London

Jenny Christian and I attended the Memorial Day services at the Cambridge American Cemetery and Memorial in Maddingly. We were fortunate to have as our driver Bob Dance, aviation enthusiast and former chief mechanic for Colin Chapman at Team Lotus. We were invited as a result of a visit some of us made last November, when we agreed to keep each of our staffs informed of educational activities and to reciprocally display our brochures. Although it rained for some of the ceremony, the sun did come out for the laying of the wreaths and we all enjoyed the reception in the marquee afterwards.

Thank you again for a great year!

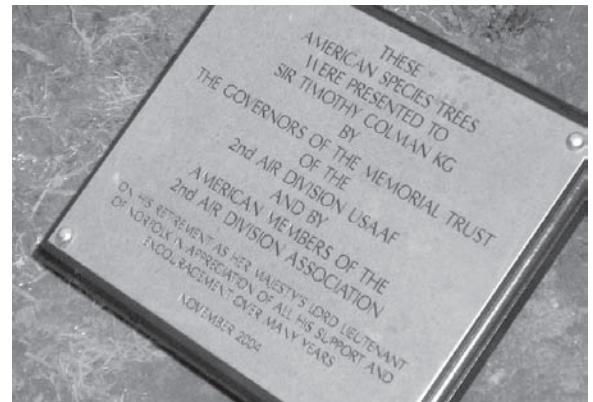


Double delight. Brian caught up with Irene on the San Antonio Riverwalk and presented her with gift from our 492nd hosts in Tucson. Irene was unable to attend Executive Meeting as she represented the League at the memorial service for David Patterson. -Brian Mahoney



Gold Star 'kids.' These four paid that ultimate price, losing their fathers in the 8th Air Force in WW II. Seated, Billy Sheely Johnson is namesake of Bill Sheely, and Kathy Jenson, daughter of Larry Nursall. Both fathes KIA on 492nd's catastrophic 7/7/44 Bernberg raid. Standing, Patrick Byrne, son of Austin 'Red' Byrne (492nd) KIA 8/6/44, and Steve Miller, son of big bandleader USAAF Capt. Glenn Miller, lost in light airplane disappearance 12/15/44. -Brian Mahoney

Arborea Americana. 2 AD Trust Governors presented Sir Timothy Coleman, upon retirement as HRH's Lord Lieutenant of Norfolk, with variety of American seedlings. All who attended 2001 Rededication will remember this stalwart supporter and friend of the Memorial Library. -Alexis Cuirczak



Museums fan. Hap Chandler (491st BG vet and board member of Mighty Eighty Air Forch Heritage Museum) tours Udvar-Hazy facility of National Air And Space Museum, prior to dinner in tribute to Ramsay Potts and the American Air Museum at Duxford. Luftwaffe twin-jet bomber behind. -Brian Mahoney

Red Cross Recognition. Northland (Duluth) ARC Chapter Director Bill Beasley Jr. presents appreciation certificate to Red Cross Girl and heroine of the 492nd, Ruth C. (Register) Coleman at 'Happy Warriors' Reunion which hosted HL Executive Committee Meeting in Tucson 5/18 to 5/22/05.

-Brian Mahoney



Plane fun. HL Treasurer Ed Zobac, a 445th son, captures 445th vet Maurice Bason in front of Pima Air And Space Museum's beautifully restored B-24, painted to represent a 446th BG Liberator.

-Brian Mahoney



England for VE + 60

-Brian Mahoney

While there was not enough response to justify a Heritage League excursion to Norfolk in early May to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of Victory in Europe (See "VE+60...?" in Herald #35), a strong and well organized cohort of 93rd BG veterans, friends and family made it and had such a wonderful time, that they are now planning to host Colin Mann in San Diego in November, for the dedication of the B-24 Memorial in Balboa Park.

Colin is on the board of the 'Friends of the Second Air Division Memorial,' a warm and gracious group, who we like to regard as somewhat analogous to the Heritage League. Colin made great strides to guarantee that all in the 'Traveling Circus' entourage had a most memorable time, which is in character for the 'Mann' who, along with Col. Bill Wuest, sees to the UK distribution of the *Herald*.

On the second of their four days, the organizers were interviewed by BBC, and the whole entourage were welcomed by Matthew Martin and David Hastings at the Library. On the third day, they visited the Madingley Cemetery at Cambridge where two 'Gold Star' sons (they lost their fathers in the war) laid a wreath for all of the group's fallen, then were granted free admission to the American Museum at Duxford and saw vintage warbirds practicing in fine weather for the season's air shows. Some of the vets were interviewed here by BBC Radio, with the B-24D 'Dugan' on display.

The village church at Topcroft was the sight of a memorial service which started their last day. They then toured the Hethel airfield remnants. After lunch, courtesy of 'The Friends,' they laid a wreath at their marker and, and toured the 93rd BG Museum as a P-51 Mustang circled overhead. Their fish & chips 'VE Day' supper was a gift of the British people via a 'good causes' program to distribute lottery funds.

One of the 13 returning vets, ground crew man John Fridell, decided to make up for not replying, right after the war, to a nice note written by then 11-year old Mable Fairhead. Now Mrs. Locke, she was found, surprised indeed, at the very farm where her mother used to take in laundry for the crews of the planes Johnny maintained.

Paul Steichen and his helpers are to be congratulated for such an excellent program, which 50 'Yanks' and a host of old and new 'Tommy' friends will not soon forget!

[Ed. Thanks to Paul for keeping us in the loop and letting us paraphrase his write-up here.]

Commemorative Pins

The wonderful pins designed by our own talented Caron Veynar continue to raise funds for the Memorial Library and are proudly worn on more and more lapels at reunions. Quality cloisonné stud-backed pins of bright brass and enameled red, white and blue feature our logo fittingly supported by 'wings of friendship' in the form of the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes.

We have a few remaining special edition pins commemorating the Rededication of the Memorial Room in November 2001, featuring a variant of the wing and flag motif. Like the new pin, it is about 1.5" (37 mm) across.

Either can be ordered. Make your check payable to the Heritage League, c/o Caron Veynar, 4919 Bristow Drive, Annandale, VA 22003-5457. \$5 for the Rededication pin, \$7 for the new pin. Include \$1.00 for shipping and handling up to three pins, \$1.50 S & H for 4-6 pins.



New pin, above, and limited edition commemorative pin from Norwich, below. Proceeds support the Memorial Library.



Another HL Sweetheart has us in stitches—again!

Irene's mom has come through for us once more. (See 'Warm Family Tradition' about donated lap throw, p. 22, *Herald* #34.)

Fellow 453rd BG wife Ludie Morris did something similar for our benefit at the group's New Orleans Reunion in 2003. (See 'Fundraising Sweetheart,' p. 11, *Herald* #33.) Both women enjoy craft work and both love supporting the League by creating items that make fun and effective fundraisers for the League.

This largesse is very nicely leveraged by the great salesmanship of 'people person' Irene, who has a contagious enthusiasm for the League.

The depth of League support by its members, as well as the range of their talents, is also indicated by Caron Veynar's pin designs (see above) and the fundraising CD by Julian Ertz's daughters (see page 12). Then there are those silly *hats*... (See p. 10, *Herald* #35.)

Crafty Calire! Claire Biel, wife of 453rd's Albert, mother of Past HL President Iren Hurner, seen with bag given to Heritage League for raffle at San Antonio; Dick Kennedy won drawing. Previous work was denim lap throw, won in raffle last year by Past HL President Billy Sheely Johnson. Claire and Irene even ran the raffle!

-Irene Hurner

Hethel 'Het Cats' very 'hep'

P/FC Bruce Helmer first was assigned with the 445th at Tibenham as an engineering clerk, but word of his musical talent reached the CO of the 389th at Hethel, so Bruce soon found himself a member of their 565th Squadron.

By war's end, the 'Het Cats' numbered 14, and some of these were combat crew members. Bruce played sax and clarinet, and was typically remunerated £1 per gig, then equivalent to approximately four US dollars. They were led by S/Sgt. Robert Cady, who hailed from LaCrosse, WI.

After about twenty gigs, Bruce started keeping notes of the remaining 83 engagements. The list reflects their local popularity; they were summoned to play for the 458th at Horsham-St. Faith, to the 489th at Halesworth twice, to the 44th at Shipdham twice, to the 448th at Seething, and to the 453rd at Old Buckenham. Nearby Wymondham High School was site for a handful of civilian and military dances, and Red Cross dances at a half dozen venues, including Blackfriar's Hall in Norwich, show that they were serenading enlisted and officer ranks alike. The Third Strategic Air Depot (Watton) and the Ordinance and Quartermaster Depot at Harland (twice) were important ground-support organizations that got to hear their music. Army hospitals and Anglo-American service clubs are well represented on the list of places where morale was boosted.

His #17 was an MP dance at the NCO club at Hethel on October 18, 1944. His note on that at the time: "An awfully rough party." Wouldn't it be great to have a recording of their November 20th "...jamb session at Hethel NCO club for club members"? For the Tea Dance at the Hethel NCO club on Sunday, December 3, 1944, he noted that WACS and their British equivalents of the ATS were invited. Helmer noted women support organizations as 'part of the audience' at several of the venues.

Bruce went back to school after the war, and following his ROTC program and a military career retired as a lieutenant colonel.


[Ed. : Thanks to Bruce Helmer and Irene Hurner, who were 'instrumental' in the presentation of this article.]





Contributor Bruce Helmer is the middle sax player in this shot of the group at less than its full size of 14. -USAAF via Helmer

<http://WebpagesWeWike/html/by.SiwwyWabbit>


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’ its 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.


 **Heritage League** Our ‘home’ page. Check for announcements between Herald mailings. Check out the new excitement and traffic in our Guestbook feature, thanks to efforts of 44th BG researcher-historian Chris Clark. Got expertise enough to answer a question there? All are invited to join in! 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. (If you have a broadband connection, try it out! Are you willing to receive your subscription by e-mail, saving the League some printing and postage costs? Please contact Communications VP Erin Mahoney at guinness4erin@yahoo.com with ‘eHerald’ as the subject.) 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 join us in July 2006 and 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. Renewed exposure for 2nd Air Division will take shape when “Fightin’ Sam” B-24 nose section is installed in the Combat Rotunda alongside interactive educational


elements. <http://www.mightyeighth.org/>


 **BBC’s “The People’s War”** Site which our Memorial Library has helped by collecting many wartime recollections of primarily British citizens. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/ww2>

 **Eighth Air Force Historical Society** Another organization that has embraced ‘honoring and remembering.’ Your HL executives will meet alongside these welcoming vets and ‘second gens’ of all the 8th AF, in Arlington, VA, Sept 27-Oct 2; click on ‘about us’ tab and select ‘reunions’ for info on how to register and see us there. <http://www.8thafhs.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.abmc.gov/>

 **Collings Foundation/Wings of Freedom Tour** See what HL members Clark & Mahoney report on in the last issue, and bookmark the site to plan your 2005 visit or ride in a restored Liberator (or that other plane) when they are in your area. Their ‘Lib’ now sports the markings of a distinguished 2AD bird, the 467th’s Witchcraft. <http://www.collingsfoundation.org/menu.htm>

 **Women In Military Service to America (WIMSA)** Within Arlington National Cemetery is house institution which commemorates servicewomen and advocates for ‘remilitarization’ of WASPS during WW II. <http://www.womensmemorial.org/>

 **492nd BG** Another sons’ effort—Paul and Dave Arnett honor their father, Charles, one of the pilots, who retired as a USAF Lt. Col. It is under construction and filling out nicely. <http://www.492ndbombgroup.com/>

 **Distinguished Flying Cross Society** Father of our departing Fulbright Librarian, himself a DFC recipient, founded this non-profit in 1994; history of the award (first given to Charles Lindbergh of

Six Wreaths This Year

-continued from page 9

we were the only car at the time on the autoroute except for the President Mr. Bush motorcade of about 20 vehicles with motor bike escort on the other side of the autoroute. With my pass we arrived at Omaha Beach, the Normandy American Cemetery at Colleville Sur-Mer. Ms. Elisabeth Chia was in charge for the arrangements at the memorial and sorted out the time and the laying of the wreaths. I was looked after by a very nice lady from the Pentagon, Lt. Col. McCloud, who spent two hours of her time showing me around the cemetery.

All the Flowers and Wreaths were two hours late due to the high security but eventually they arrived and Ms. Elisabeth Chia had the task of sorting everything out which to her credit she did. President Bush had layed his Floral Wreath earlier and now Ms. Elisabeth Chia was ready to take me to the cenotaph to lay the

floral Decoration. They played the National Anthem I then carried the floral Decoration to the cenotaph, I then laid the floral wreath along side that of President Bush.

I was very proud and honoured to have had the privilege of being there to lay the wreath on behalf of the Heritage League of the Second Air Division (USAAF). And there was no words to describe how I felt.

While I was there I paid my respects to S/Sgt. Stanley J. Prazak and 2nd Lt. Charles R. Statton Jr. both from the 577th BS, 392nd BG, Wendling, interred at Omaha Beach, Colleville Sur-Mer, Cemetery.

Yours Faithfully,

S/Sgt. John Gilbert (I was in uniform)

[Ed.: John, with the Neales, is on the board of The Friends of the Second Air Division Memorial, our 'English cousin' organization, which helps us distribute the Herald there. John as a boy remembers the wartime operations of the 392nd at Hethel and serves in the Royal Anglian Regiment.]



Medal of Honor, Portraits of Valor Beyond the Call of Duty.

Text by Peter Collier, photos by Nick Del Calzo.

Published by Artisan Books 2003. ISBN 1-57965-240-9 253 pp, hardbound. \$40.

-reviewed by Brian Mahoney

This very attractive coffee-table format book takes the reader on a visit to the 116 MOH recipients living at the time the interview and portrait project began in 1999. Through intimate visual and verbal windows we are put in the company of true heroes, all self effacing and quick to tell us that they hold the medal for their fallen comrades.

A paragraph on the jacket accurately promises what this wonderful volume delivers: "But a hero's action is always extraordinary because it is so contrary to the basic human instincts of self preservation and survival. A corpsman aboard a bomber picks up, carries and ejects a misfired phosphorous flare from the fuselage, while he watches his hands burn away in the process. A soldier falls on a grenade to save his buddies, knowing that if he survives at all, it will be with a shattered body. A Japanese American whose family was moved into a California interment camp is a member of the Nisei 442nd Regimental Combat Team, the most decorated unit in World War II."

Essays by Tom Brokaw and Senator John McCain augment the moving foreword by President George H. W. Bush. Supplemental reference matter greatly extends the value of the book as an educational reference for the general reader; explanations of medals, comparisons of military ranks across service branches, outlines of ground unit sizes, and a glossary of military terms make the warm and personal 'profiles of valor' even more accessible.

49 of the profiled are from WW II, the rest from Korea and Vietnam. The Medal of Honor has only been awarded twice since Vietnam.

This beautiful publication was produced in collaboration with the Medal Of Honor Foundation, which is succeeding financially and educationally in supporting the Congressional Medal of Honor Society. Their director is our friend and 492nd BG son, recently retired Lt. Gen. Nick Kehoe III.

My War, from Bismark to Britain and Back

Letters of Ruth Register and Diary of Edith Christianson, edited by Christine C. Woods
 Printed By Trafford Printing, 2005 ISBN 1-4120-4435-9 357 pp. softbound. \$26.99
 Available from www.trafford.com or on (888) 232-4444.

-reviewed by Brian Mahoney

Photos, present day interviews, and chronologically ordered correspondence between a Red Cross Girl and her mother, are artfully woven together with minimal but helpful commentary by the third generation representative in this work, our Heritage League Executive Vice President.

The color and flavor of a smart young widow wanting to do her share in the war effort, and period wisdom and sensibility of her strong and even politically astute mother, come through in this most warm personal and engaging book.

Ruth Christianson married a Naval aviator, soon to become North Dakota's first ace Francis "Cash" Register, lost off the Aleutians in the spring of 1943. Being of the strong stock readers will meet and admire, Ruth wanted to serve, preferably in the Pacific, but as happenstance would arrange it, in England and later liberated France.

The realities of rationing, homesick 'boys,' air bases under enemy attack, and 'wolves' making awkward advances are among the authentic, humorous, popignant vignettes that allow us to go back in time and better appreciate the war generation and imagine ourselves among them.

This reviewer should end with a moment of 'disclosure.' I am an unabashed fan of Tina and her very remarkable mother, whose strong positive impact on the men of the hardest luck bomb group of the 8th was well known to me before some of us, working together, managed to rediscover Ruth in 2001. My own father's memoirs (contained in the book *Reluctant Witness: Memoirs of the last year of the European Airwar 1944-45*) as they described Ruth, and corroborations from some of his surviving comrades, set great expectations that have been exceeded in meeting this gracious, warm, frank lady and her capable daughter. Readers of "My War" are in for the same wonderful treat I have enjoyed.

Fighting for "Fightin' Sam," Second Air Division Exhibit at Savannah

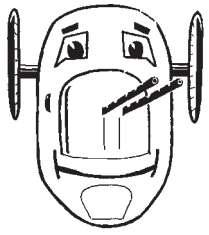
Even after we make allowances for the fact that two of the three wings of the 'Mighty Eighth' were flying the B-17, some have felt that the story of the 'Liberator Division' was not told forcefully enough at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum, whose Directors apparently agree. "Second to None: The Legendary Liberator" is to be an exhibit in the centrally located Combat Rotunda, with the nose section of "Fightin' Sam," a D model, presented as if coming out of a T-2 hangar, in which interactive touch-screen displays, photographs and representative artifacts will be presented. A big screen overhead will show a continuous loop of exciting period combat footage and tell part of the story of the most produced multi-engine plane, and the USAAF groups that flew it out of England in WW II.

The Heritage League 'got in early' on the \$125,000 campaign with a 1% gift, approved at the Kalamazoo ExCom meeting last October, and recently followed with another \$500 donation.

The Museum's Director of Development, Judy Walker, has recently announced that gifts in hand have reached the one-third point. It is hoped that the goal will be met by the year's end, and that reunions of various individual groups within this reunion season will 'complete the mission.'

The 2nd Air Division Association has endorsed the project and kicked in \$1000 to date. Energetic former 2ADA President and member of the High Right Society, Walt Mundy, has sent an appeal to 2ADA Group Vice Presidents and other members encouraging their own personal contributions. The 489th recently came through with \$3,000 and a Headquarters member donated \$500.

Won't you please consider making a tax-deductible contribution? Make your check payable to M8AFHM noting "Second to None Campaign" in the memo line and mail it to Ms. Judy Walker, 175 Bourne Avenue, Pooler, GA 31322. Judy may be phoned on (912) 748-8888, extension 123. Her email is development@mightyeighth.org Visit http://www.mightyeighth.org/capital_projects.asp and look for the downloadable brochure on the exhibit proposal.



Pitch
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PETE!

-by Pete O'Tube, expert

Hey, Mr. O'Tube Dude,

Being a typical 'gen X' kinda guy, I am often confused about what passed for 'state of the art' technology when Grandpa was flying his combat tour in the Second Air Division. One mission story, he talks about the 'Mickey navigator,' and I guess he is ragging on the guy's limited skills... in another of his war stories, it's the 'pilotage navigator.' When he really gets wound up, he talks about the awesome work of a guy who has the really bad sounding title of 'dead reckoning navigator.'

Me, I'da just grabbed my Global Positioning System unit, and maybe a backup since they are cheap, and be done with it.

Can you, like, you know, point me in the right direction?

-E. S. Jeep

Dear Jeep, E. S.,

Sometimes things are as they 'sound' to be... the code word 'Mickey' for a state-of-the-art radar technology, and its operators, probably had the connotation of "Mickey-Mousey," which is to say, bogus or cobbled together. It was anything but, although no doubt held in some low regard when its practical use did not live up to its promised capability. I dunno if the moniker threw the Germans off, or how long after the system went into service (in the spring of '44) the enemy had a working captured unit to study. I do know that the primitive round small green display, showing a 360° sweep, was best used when water bodies or heavily built-up areas made for needed contrast on the screen. It relied on 'x-band' (3 cm wavelength) and had settings for ranges of 2, 5, 50 or 90 miles. Also called H2X, it was an American offshoot of the British H2S, which relied on 10cm wavelength.

Typical installation on a Lib was a radome displacing the ball turret; on a Fort it was more like a double chin.

These sets allowed bombing of suitable targets (the docks or Hamburg or sub-pens at St. Nazaire were classic good uses) on overcast days. At first they were issued only to specialized PFF ('Path Finder Force') units at the wing level; by the end of the European war all the heavy bombing groups had a few trained crews and outfitted aircraft.

Pilotage navigation is done by recognition of ground points, normally requiring 'no tenths' undercast, or a clear view to the ground, not to mention a confident navigator who was really up on his homework. Our aircrews, trained in the clear American West, did lots of flying based on following a railroad or a highway to a known point... but weather over Northern Europe could precluded this method for weeks at a stretch—like December 16 to 25, 1944, the first ten days of the Battle of the Bulge. A case could be made for calling 'Mickey' a pilotage navigation aid.

Sometimes things are not as they sound. Dead reckoning is the very brainy stuff where one has to be calculating, in real time, where one is, based on indirect information—cumulative calculation of drift angle, true airspeed at all times, direction changes, and time from departing a known spot. With some navigational aids, such as radio beacons, gyro compass readings and celestial sightings, real-time data could be used to corroborate or improve cumulative calculations. One could argue that LORAN, OBOE and GEE were dead-reckoning navigational aids.

GPS makes all of this seem moot—no need for further calculation; it reports just where you are at all times and can be set to always be pointing you at a specified target. Hang the weather, and save another crewman from going in harm's way. It just came along 50 years too late to serve in 'the big one,' like you, dude.

*Way cool,
-Pete*

Cher Messr. O'Tube,

As a boy growing up in Normandy, I have vivid memories of that great day, June 6, 1944. One memory I have is of messy white stripes painted on all of the airplanes I saw for many months starting on that day. Were our liberators in a hurry to dress up for the occasion?

Merci beaucoup,
Leonhard DeGear

Dear Len DeGear,

Invasion stripes were quickly painted on EVERY British and American thing in England that flew, powered or towed, bomber, fighter, transport or observation, in the 36 hours before 'H-Hour, D-Day.' Simultaneously, word went out to EVERY American, British, Canadian or other Allied troop or Naval gunner NOT TO SHOOT at any a/c over the invasion area if it had three white stripes on each wing and three white rings around its fuselage.

Planners could not have known at the time that the combined bomber offensive, and especially operation 'Big Week' in February of '44, had been so effective in gaining us superiority in the airspace of coastal northwestern France. No account exists of more than FOUR German a/c sightings over Normandy on 6/6/44. (Most authorities suspect that no enemy combat a/c were engaged, but some observation missions were flown.)

The stripes, and the cautious withholding of the secret until the last moment the scheme could be widely implemented, really paid off... this writer is not aware of any instance where 'friendly

fire' cost us a plane that day, on which 11,000 sorties were made.

By the way... every single time you see a model or a restoration or a Hollywood presentation of D-Day action, where there are nice, neat, clean invasion stripes on a plane: they got it ALL wrong. The real things were done in the greatest hurry using wide whitewash brushes dipped in buckets, and anything but neat! It may be that many of these slap-dab paint jobs were gussied up later... but retention of the scheme long after the invasion did not prevent 'friendly fire' losses such as that of American Ace Maj. George Preddy (P-51 pilot of the 352nd FG, lost near Remagen Bridge on Christmas Day 1944).

*Votre ami,
Pierre*

[*Ed.:* Pete tips his hat once again to Roger Freeman, whose three original 'Mighty Eighth' books are the core of his library and highly recommended reading.]

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Third. Volunteer! Being completely volunteer, we can be as little or as big as our volunteer effort... and we choose to grow! Jot down your skills which could be of use to the League in its social, historical, fundraising, communicating and commemorative activities, and send to the President (contact info on back page.) In fact, we have immediate need of an motivated *Volunteer Coordinator!*

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