

The Price of Freedom



Drear Memorial Day at Henri-Chapelle American Cemetery in Belgium, final resting place for many 2nd Air Division dead. Many others are listed on the Wall of the Missing there.

As we did last year, the League arranged for placement of memorial decorations at five of the American Battle Monuments Commission overseas cemeteries. We were once again aided by the efforts of friends at two of the ceremonies, putting familiar faces on important commemorations.

Henri-Chapelle, in Belgium, where our friend and son of a still-living resistance fighter Luc Dewez attended for us, there are 86 fighter and bomber crewmen buried or memorialized on the Wall of the Missing. In the Maddingly Cambridge Cemetery, where Pearl and David Neal and Colin Mann were our surrogates, the combined total is 1,482. At Ardennes (also in Belgium) the 2 AD combatant total is 695; at

Margraten (Netherlands) the number is 597. A floral arrangement bearing our name was placed on D-Day at the Normandy American Cemetery, where 'our' combined tally is 116.

Other 2AD dead are found (or remembered as missing) at Brittany (France, 62), Epinal (France, 106), Florence (Italy, 41), Lorraine (France, 247), Luxemburg (31), North Africa (91), Rhone (France, 19) and Sicily/Rome (Italy, 19). Of our nearly 7,000 fallen, 3,592 are buried (or listed as Missing) in these AMBC cemeteries.

These 1999 statistics have shifted incrementally, with the positive identification of missing remains of 19 men

from the 492nd. Similar efforts are underway with a 392nd crew. The ongoing work of Enrico Schwartz's Missing Allied Air Crew Research Team (MAACRT), Army Mortuary Affairs, and others, leads to profound closure for surviving friends and relatives, and the placement of copper stars following names on Walls of the Missing. (See Herald #33, page 9. Our thanks to Norma Beasley for sharing the research data by Ferdinand M. Dessente. -Ed)

President's Message

- Brian Mahoney

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Your officers have embraced a bit of new technology, recommended by Ed Zobac about two years back: we use a free, cross-platform audio chat for productive meetings, about 6 times a year now, as opposed to our one or two face-to-face meetings before. We are a dispersed organization, with no building, and only ceremonial objects for our physical trappings. But the internet—and Skype (see a description in Webpages We Wike)—allow us to come together 'virtually,' and get real work done.

The web has imparted new shadings and currency to old words like site, page, access, and even mouse. The new sense of 'virtual' seems to inform a timely way to regard our enterprise. Can anyone point at what the Heritage League is, or stands for? Perhaps by pointing at their heart, or powerfully symbolic objects like a Wall of the Missing, in a pristinely gorgeous and serene piece of Dutch countryside, or a book or collection of military records that has uncommon power to evoke struggle, purpose and virtue as living players in vivid history.

The things which make our organization 'real' are in the realm of ideas, concepts and values. Even our manifest products—a newsletter or a website—are rather ephemeral, unless, of course, you "get it."

Across our various classes of membership, in three generations, we number about 600 souls, people who get it, for whom the League, and what it stands for, are enduring and real in every sense. While we have our problems as an all-volunteer outfit

spread over 3500 miles, we do not have to do much explaining when we find people who know about the service and sacrifice of members of the 2nd Air Division in WW II. But this leads to a paradox, a challenge. To find these people, and to succeed in our perpetual mission, we need to make the 'virtual' real.

All of us have a warm place in our heart for 'our veterans.' Ask yourself: what practical things am I willing to do, starting today, to help keep alive the history and lessons of my heroes in the Second Air Division? The League needs your vision and energy, as much as your dues.

From the Editor's Desk

- Brian Mahoney

For a few numbers, I have been 'acting editor,' with considerable help from Communications VP Reed Hammans, from contributors, and a handful of our eagle-eyed proofing volunteers. We continue to have the invaluable benefit of my niece Erin's professional and artistic abilities as our 'layoutist.' But our need for a lead content editor is now urgent, as I cannot do this while attending graduate school. You need not be all of the following things—computer expert, writing editor, photo editor, and serious student of WW II history, but if you can perform some of these roles and are willing to coordinate the work of others to get the result, NOW is the time to identify yourself!

Looking Forward: Saving the Fulbright Librarian Program

a white paper proposing a renovation of the arrangements

-by Brian Mahoney, with all Executive Committee members concurring

7/14/07

OVERVIEW

Original parties to the 1996 Agreement which established the program were the 2ADA and the Fulbright Foundation for Education and Cultural Exchange (UK), both extant US-recognized non-profit entities. (The second party is a part of the Fulbright Foundation, which in turn is controlled by the US State Department.)

The initial purpose has been wonderfully achieved for nearly a dozen years. In recent years, however, it has become apparent that Fulbright UK staff have felt ill-equipped for some of the roles in which the original agreement has cast them. Problems have arisen—non reinvestment of a large part of the corpus, overall investment in decent yield instruments, confusion about the applicability of UK charity law regarding US vs. UK investing, to name a few—which still seek resolution. The program is in suspension for the coming academic year at least.

Principal stakeholders in the present and future operation of this program, or a similar one, are on record as consistently and enthusiastically supportive. Professional, high-calibre and high-energy American librarian professionals have put a vivid and engaging US presence in 'the unique living memorial,' and made invaluable direct outreach to library patrons, school children, civic groups, military groups, and the media in East Anglia. They have effectively fomented continuing interest in the bond between their people and ours, specifically in the context of the crucial role played by the Second Air Division in England in WW II. Their activity and success speak directly to the vision and goals of the Heritage League, and effectively perpetuate the memory and stories of the service and sacrifices of the Second Air Division in defense of our shared freedoms, prosperity and peace.

THE PRESENT CRITICAL MOMENT

The practical problems that have arisen are all solvable, and saving the program will certainly be worth the manageable effort needed to rework the arrangement. The Heritage League stands ready to participate in a trustee and oversight role in perpetuity.

The Heritage League stands ready, starting right now, in July, 2007, to participate in working discussions with the 2ADA, the Fulbright Commission, and the Memorial Trust, to develop a practical new arrangement.

The Heritage League leadership calls on the Second Air Division Association leadership to immediately undertake a productive and forward-looking discussion, intent on restoring the Fulbright program to healthy operation by the fall of 2008, under a re-cast agreement which is designed to address the practical issues of stakeholders and principal parties to the agreement.

CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS

The following points are offered in advance of the proposed discussion, and of course should be reconsidered and improved in such discussion. They are offered here to encourage, not direct, a healthy discussion. They are offered as examples of ways that the identified issues lend themselves to practical solutions if we think in terms

of suitable roles for interested parties, but these specific examples are not 'holy cows' at the outset.

1. A team effort. Form a working committee now of 'stakeholders,' to assess the issues to construct a new and improved agreement. Representatives of the 2ADA, the Fulbright Commission, the Memorial Trust, and the Heritage League should be tasked to work together to save a program which all parties value.
2. Overseeing a fund corpus. A new agreement would make clear that the trustee (possibly the Heritage League) does not own it, and is bound by US law to act as a steward charged with a specified mission. In practical terms...
 - a. Investment Management. A fund management concern (such as Fidelity) can work at a trustee's direction and mix investments in instruments and funds to achieve our investment goals, then adjust these as they evolve and market conditions change. Many of us have already served in this role with similar amounts and responsibilities for family or friends.

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Report from the Memorial Library

—Glenn Gray, Fulbright Scholar

Hello from Norwich,

As you read this I am probably packing my bags to return to the States. While I'm sad that my time here is coming to an end, this is a good opportunity for me to reflect on some of the highlights of the past six months or so. It's difficult to compress everything into a few paragraphs, but I'll try.

In my last article for the Herald I mentioned that I was working with Colin Mann on putting together a program at the Dereham Library, site of one of our "wing collections." I'm pleased to say this was a great success!

In November we were pleased to welcome a contingent from the States to our Annual General Meeting. This included Heritage League substitute representative Irene Hurner and our States-based governors Chuck Walker and Joe Dzenowagis, Jr. More recently, we were pleased to welcome members of the 93rd BG to a Norwich reunion. There were five veterans who made the trek over the Atlantic! We were honored by their presence.

In keeping with the Memorial Library's outreach mission, I've given another round of talks at Norwich City College, Downham Market High School, and Scarning Primary School near Dereham. This last came about at the invitation of Philip Brazier, a teacher at the school and supporter of ours with whom we have worked in the past. The children were studying environmental issues, and I talked to them about American wildlife and water conservation efforts in the American West. The children were bright and attentive, and we had a delightful time.

Another exciting event was held at the Archive Centre of the Norfolk Record Office in February. We partnered with Frank Meeres, the Education Officer there and author of *Norfolk in the Second World War*. Together, we hosted a group of about 30 schoolchildren between the ages of 6 and 12.

The purpose of this event was to help the children understand what life was like in Norfolk during WW2, and we used artifacts from the archives that the children could look at "up close and personal." This included items from the 2AD archives that are on deposit at the Archive Centre and that have been generously donated by veterans and others over the years. I was on hand to provide an American perspective and brought memora-

bilia from our Memorial Library collection that we keep at the ready for just such occasions.

There was limited space for this event, and we were oversubscribed and even had to turn people away! Because of the excellent response, and to ensure that everyone that is interested gets a chance to participate in this experience, we will be running this program again in June.

Our memorabilia was put to good use again at the Heritage Family Fun Day at the Attleborough Library, site of another one of our "wing collections." This event was organized by the Norfolk Archaeology unit, and brought together a variety of local history and heritage groups. I staffed a table of library promotional material and a memorabilia display. Again, there was a very positive response to this event and we will be doing some more of these around the county in the coming months.

I've also continued to give talks to local groups about the history of the 2AD in East Anglia and to promote the resources at the Memorial Library. I spoke to the Blackfriars Rotary Club, at a breakfast meeting held at the refectory at Norwich Cathedral, one of my favorite places in Norwich.

I hope to get the chance to do some more outreach in my final months here, but the main thing I'm going to be working on is the Memorial Library Web page. The consensus is that the Memorial Library page is in need of being redesigned, and at the same time we've been asked to transfer the essential components of our current Web page to a hosted server. While I will be making some changes, it is envisioned that a more major "redo" of the page will be a project for a future 2ADA/Fulbright librarian. As of this writing, we don't yet know whether we'll be keeping our old URL or not, but we'll get that information out to you as soon as we have it.

Finally, as this is likely the last chance I'll have to speak to you in this forum, I'd like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to everyone: to the members of the Heritage League, the Board of Governors, and my colleagues at the Memorial Library. But most of all, a great big thank you to the veterans of the 2nd Air Division Association, a truly remarkable group who made it all possible.

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Tidbits from “Over There”

- Brian Mahoney

Much news comes our way from our Friends Liaison, David Hastings. He has been appointed once again as honorary CO of the USAF 100th Refueling Squadron at Lackenheath, one of the many roles in which he serves as a most capable and gracious ambassador to Yanks. In his capacity as base liaison within Friends of the 2AD Memorial, David is a great friend of the 467th BG veterans, and continues to shepherd many wonderful preservation and memorial projects in the Rackheath environs.



The airfield site of Station #145 is still recognizable for what it was, as portions of the main runway still survive. Ruins of various living and mess sites dot the private properties that comprise the old base, while many of the old tech site buildings, including one of the T-2 hangars, remain in modern use in the ‘Rackheath Industrial Estate,’ including a trucking company operated by his son, Roger. The centrally located memorial marker, with illuminated Union Jack and Stars and Stripes, has long stood as a proud outward symbol of the reciprocal strong feelings between several East Anglians and hundreds of USAAF veterans and their descendants.

Until very recently, the tower there was deteriorating at an increasing rate, and a succession of owners resisted many serious offers and appeals to allow purchase or restoration or preservation steps. After all had given up hope, the new owner (Tilia Properties, under Director Nick Hove) has embraced the heritage and legacy of this special structure, and is doing a dignified remodeling. There are pictures of the remodeling at http://www.controltowers.co.uk/R/Rakheath_2007.htm. For now, remember the name of Perry Watts, who, with David, always ‘kept a candle lit’ for this wonderful outcome.

The ‘Rackheath Aggies’ had a single commanding officer for the entire time of their overseas deployment, unique among all the combat groups in the Eighth. The

late Col. Albert J. Shower cut a tall, handsome, respected, and sometimes feared figure in that day, and was lionized in the postwar era for the end result of his ‘West Point’ strict style—recognition for second best survival rates and for best bombing accuracy in the Eighth Air Force. His son Jay had a full career as a Navy aviator, and in retirement is a present day Charles Lindberg, thinking little of ferrying a single engine aircraft across the Atlantic, and even the Pacific.

In the middle of May, Jay and his friend Ann, arrived from the US in a Cessna 210, headed to a customer on the continent. By transiting Norwich, they were able to participate in some very nice ceremony. On Monday the 14, a Parish Council application of a few years ago came to fruition, as “Albert Shower Road” and “Witchcraft Way” were officially named. A few days later, Jay and Ann waggled wings to a crowd of well-wishers at the Norwich International Airport (wartime home of the 458th BG and HQ of the 96th Combat Wing) when weather cleared them to fly to Frankfurt. (We will try to catch up with Jay to determine whether a Shower has ever flown a plane from Norfolk to Germany without a bomb load. -Ed.)

The Hastings were participants, a few weeks before, in a remarkable event. He wrote: “...Jean and I were invited to attend a service in the beautiful church at Sotterly near Beccles to celebrate the 400th Anniversary of the Sotterly family sailing for the USA [sic!] to found Jamestown. We were deeply moved to realise that we were sitting in the same pews where the original settlers prayed the night before they sailed for the New World.”

Finally, before the snow flies again we will have seen a new title by Marjorie Stegman Parker about the wartime friendships between British youngsters and their families,

and the 2nd Air Division, centering on the experience of a certain 14 year old who was famously chased off the same Rackheath base by Colonel Shower in 1944. But we will not give it all away just yet!



Recent progress in restoration of the tower at station #145 by new corporate owner.

League Represented in Norwich in November

- Irene Hurner

Last November Vicki Brooks Warning, our Heritage League Representative to the Board of Governors, was unable to attend the annual general meeting of the governors of the Memorial Trust in Norwich. I was privileged to represent the Heritage League in her place. Our Secretary, Carol Holliday, and her mother Joan Patterson were part of the group of Heritage League members who traveled to Norwich for the meeting. Other Americans who were there included Andrew Horlock, and Governors Chuck Walker and Joe Dzenowagis, Jr.

I still feel the whirlwind of activities that kept us busy from the day I arrived on Saturday November 11th, until I returned home on Friday the 15th was a fairy tale. The hospitality of the governors and others kept me busy from morning until night. Each day's activities were unique.

On Remembrance Sunday, November 12th our group joined other civic officials and dignitaries in the Parlour of City Hall at a reception to meet the Lord Mayor, Councillor Felicity Hartley, and then watched a memorial service from the balcony. The Reverend Peter Nokes, Vicar, St. Peter Mancroft Church gave the introduction. Music was played by the Norwich Citadel Salvation Army Band. Major Ray Bedley, Salvation Army Norwich Citadel did a reading and Father James Walsh Dean, The Catholic Cathedral St. John the Baptist offered a prayer. Chuck Walker and David Hastings joined the Lord Mayor, members of the military and other participants in laying wreaths during the Act of Remembrance. We then traveled to Norwich Cathedral for a service conducted by The Very Reverend Graham Smith, Dean of Norwich. David and Jean Hastings hosted lunch and Ben and Jane DuBrow invited us all for dinner at their home.

Monday, November 13th, we attended the Trust AGM at County Hall. I read a report prepared by Vicki Brooks Warning regarding Heritage League activities during the past year. Among other reports were: Tom Eaton and three other past governors donated copies to all attendees of a poem entitled "The Sky Was Never Still—tribute by a Governor who was there," written by the late Roger A. Freeman. A framed copy hangs in the library. Glen Gray, Fulbright Librarian, reported on outreach work and that it has been well received. John Gilbert and Colin Mann have helped with presentations. Chairman Matthew Martin noted that this work is extremely important in building interest in the library. Derek Hills reported on the various activities including Banned Books

Week. This display drew attention to written material whose presence on library shelves has been challenged both historically and over the past year. Themed badges, bookmarks and T-shirts supported this display. Hills felt that this particular endeavor was one of the most positive things that had been done at the library. A plasma screen will be procured for the library to better show films. David Neale, Chairman of the Friends stated that a donation would be coming to help with the purchase. Joe Dzenowagis stated that Joan Patterson has found films that have valuable historical footage including some actual bombing missions. They will be converted from 8mm and preserved for the future. Governor Chuck Walker gave a report on the 2ADA activities.

Monday evening David and Jacqui Gurney invited our group to dinner at Bawdeswell Hall, built in 1683. It was a wonderful evening with David and Jacqui giving a tour of their home and David sharing some of its rich English history.

Tuesday and Wednesday we had free time during the day to visit. Tuesday Fred Squires and Kevin Water-



Party of Memorial Trust Governors and guests at St. Pauls American Chapel in November. Joe Dzenowagis, Jr (467th) 2nd from left, is an American Governor; Joan Patterson, widow of the late 2ADA Secretary David Patterson (445th) is mother of our Secretary Carol Holliday. Irene Hurner (453rd) represented us at Annual General Meeting.

-Joanna Heywood

field took me out to visit the museum and chapel at Hethel (<http://www.wymondham-norfolk.co.uk/history/usaafhethel.htm>). The Old Chapel stands on Potash Farm. During the last ten years, a group of volunteers has worked to restore the once derelict building to its now useful state. Anne Howlett, owner of the farm, gave me a wonderful tour. Steve Mendham spent time with us as well. The "Sky Scorpions" of Hethel Air Field were the third of fourteen Second Air Division groups to be stationed in East Anglia and famous for their participation in the Ploesti raid. On the way back, the fellows stopped by the library so that I could visit for a while with Derek Hills and staff. It was a wonderful day. Tuesday evening we Americans were guests for dinner at the home of Matthew and Patsy Martin.



HL Secretary Carol Holliday and Past President Irene Hurner with Trust Chair Matthew Martin at the Roll of Honor.

-Joanna Heywood

On Wednesday morning Agnes Ramm picked me up at the hotel for another busy day. Pat met us at Old Buckenham air field where we visited the 453rd memorial, toured the airport, and then went to lunch where we met Carol, Joan, Chuck and Andrew. During the day we also visited the grammar school where the 453rd donated money for a book fund. On the way back to the hotel, Aggie and I stopped by the library to visit with Glen Gray. That evening Ben DuBrow escorted Carol and me to the regional Charity Premier of the new James Bond movie, *Casino Royale*. For the first, and probably only, time in my life, I saw a movie before my grandchildren.

Thursday morning, November 16th, Andrew Hawker kindly drove Carol and me to London to meet the rest of our party for a special service at St. Paul's Cathedral. We met for tea in the Refectory in the Crypt where we met Canon Edmund Newell, Chancellor and Lay Canon Peter Chapman. The service was held at 4:30 p.m. in the American Chapel. (There is a wonderful story about the chapel in the Fall 2006 issue of "The Journal"). Evensong and drinks in the Chapter House followed the service. Later that evening our group went to dinner and said our good-byes as we were all bound for home on Friday.

It was a privilege and an honor to represent the Heritage League during a wonderful week with many special happenings. Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity.

Report from the Memorial Library *continued from page 4*

And finally, a big thank you as well to John Gilbert who is active in visiting local schools and taking his memorabilia collection with him. It will be especially important that he continues to do this work in the absence of a Fulbright librarian.

The Memorial Library is a great resource, and I will forever cherish the time I was able to spend here and the small part I was able to play in this worthy venture.

Glenn Gray
2ADA/Fulbright Librarian

Web Pages We Wike - by Siwwy Wabbit

File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Help

http://WebpagesWeWike.htm/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’ 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. In addition to our 2007 convention information (linked to the site below) you can now renew membership and make donations to the League here via Pay-Pal. 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 Reed Hammans with ‘eHerald’ as the subject.) at rhammans@netins.net. Add to the excitement and traffic in our Guestbook feature, and help us if you have the expertise to tackle a question there. All are invited to join in! Continuing thanks to webmaster Bob Books! <http://www.heritageleague.org>

➤ **Eighth Air Force Historical Society** A leading organization that has embraced ‘honoring and remembering.’ We are having our convention within theirs in Kalamazoo, July 17-22. We hope to see many of you there for the rich program and our annual meeting. <http://www.8thafhs.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. the ‘educational Services’ tab features select bibliographies on American society and history that will be as interesting to US as UK readers. <http://www.2ndair.org.uk/>

➤ **Poets in Uniform** The verse and photography of a present day Air Force chief master sergeant grace this issue... and more of the stirring work of Mark Brother-

ton and others can be found at <http://iwvpa.net/brother-tonme/index.php#bio>

➤ **445th Bomb Group** Another of the ‘labor of love’ sites, recently reworked and worth your repeated visits, built and maintained by our member and ‘proud son’ Mike Simpson. (See related article this issue.) <http://www.445th-bomb-group.com/>

➤ **Kalamazoo Air Zoo** Heritage League Reunioneers and their 8thAF Historical Society friends are sure to thoroughly enjoy this collection and its knowledgeable docent staff. Veterans arriving early enough could even get a free ride in a vintage open-cockpit Navy trainer... go to <http://www.airzoo.org/>

➤ **Yankee Air Force** Impressive non-profit warbird restoration and display outfit took a bad hit with severe hangar fire a few years back; a worthy side-trip from the upcoming 2ADA meeting in Grand Rapids. Located near Ford’s famous Willow Run production line, but they do not have a Liberator. <http://www.yankeeamuseum.org/>

➤ **Mighty Eighth Air Force** Heritage Museum 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. Volunteer opportunities might round out your convention participation; look for the tab explaining that fulfilling option. <http://www.mightyeighth.org/>

➤ **Heavy Bombers / USAAF Forum** A monumental website for those interested in our subjects... if you know the number of the outfit this granddaddy of 'boards' is perfect for watching vets and other 'experts' battle out very fine points of equipment, practice and organization, and to lacerate or try out the apocryphal war story. You will recognize a handful of your fellow 'Leaguers' among the ranked members. <http://www.armyairforces.com/>

➤ **Mighty Eighth Air Force Cross Reference** This site sets out a logical and ambitious organizational scheme for directing researchers to various sites based on airfields and organizations. While it does not have the flesh on its bones that Heavy Bombers does, it compensates for their missing organizational hierarchy. If you know a squadron number, for example, you can readily find that it as in **this** group, in **this** wing, **this** division, **this** numbered air force, and where it was stationed. It gets better: the linked mapping service lets you see aerial photography of 'your' airfield and you can order quality prints as well. The webmaster, a newbie to 'airfield trespass and traipsing' offers good commonsense travel suggestions endorsed by this old hand. <http://mighty8thaf.preller.us/>

➤ **American Battle Monument Commission** Official burial grounds around the globe of our war dead are presented in a dignified and very accessible way, as is compre-

hensive 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** Make it a springtime habit to check their evolving schedule, to see when their wonderful flying warbirds, including the most representative Liberator type still flying, come to your area. Their "Lib" now sports the markings of a distinguished 2AD bird, the 467th's Witchcraft. <http://www.collingsfoundation.org/menu.htm/>

➤ **Aviation Enthusiast Corner** While it shows signs of not being updated in years, this site has an interesting collection of tidbits, including a global listing of air museums. <http://www.aero-web.org/>

➤ **Skype Internet Audio Chat** those who have broadband internet access can chat across town or over the oceans, free, and in groups of up to ten at a time. The software is pretty reliable, and often the connections are too! The price is right, and this wonderful tool lets your League officers 'meet virtually' throughout the year and get tons more done than we used to. <http://www.skype.com/products/>

Looking Forward *continued from page 3*

- b. Growth. The League would continue, on a larger scale, its activity of increasing the working funds to keep the program healthy and the stipend competitive.
3. Administering the income. It is possible that the Fulbright Commission (UK) would be fine continuing in the role of dispenser of stipend and other authorized operation monies, if relieved of investment management and oversight. It is also possible that some reasonable administrative overhead amount can be paid to the appropriate Norwich-Norfolk-Millennium Library staff in this role. At present, the all-volunteer nature of the Heritage League makes it a poor candidate for this role. (The trustee could arrange for electronic funds transfer from the managed fund to the administrative agent.)
4. Administering the program. The present process of Library permanent staff working with the Fulbright Librarians to design and operate their program, seems to be working very well; it isn't broke, so don't fix it. But it should be described and codified in the new agreement.
5. Overseeing the program. This area, too, seems 'not broken,' but should be codified. The League may be able to join the Governors (or specifically their Library Subcommittee) in an agreement-specified role. It would be centrally consistent with our published mission.

THE WATCH TOWERS



Visiting vet walks remnant of 44thBG's shipdam tower.
-CMSgt Mark Brotherton, USAF



-CMSgt Mark Brotherton, USAF

Suddenly on an English morning the question is asked.
Asked by the innocent.
'Who were they, why were they here?'

The structures stand silent guard over the fading memory.
Hoping history will be well represented.
The question has been asked often in a hurried modern world.
An innocent English school child may question.
But history will tell itself.
If not betrayed -

The walls are hollow but they hold everything.
The windows shattered but they see clearly the freedom we now
take for granted.
The old outdated worries covered by the flat roof now long
dispelled.

Time has no use for her now.
She's an eyesore;
An inconvenience revered only by the remaining few.
She is deemed unsafe even though once she held our guard.

Waiting now only to be torn down and spill completely into
the past.
For her meaning, we in today's world can't even begin to grasp.

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Late Breaker!

-Brian Mahoney for the HL ExComm

Your Executive Committee heard right back from both 2 ADA President Oak Mackey and 2 AD Memorial Trust Chair Matthew Martin, when we sent them the 'White Paper' *Looking Forward: Saving the Fulbright Librarian Program* (on 7/14/07) stating our concerns and interest for the Fulbright Librarian Program. Both leaders graciously accepted our paper and thanked us for our thoughtful expression of willingness to be 'part of the solution.'

We appreciate that the issues are complex, and now also understand that Oak and Matthew and their boards are pressing for a positive outcome, although both now seem

resigned that a reworked agreement with Fulbright is unlikely.

Oak has briefed us on correspondence with the legal counsel for the Fulbright Commission, following their retraction of the agreement and return of the endowment to the 2ADA. There may be the possibility of re-engaging Fulbright, who tacitly agree with the excellent argument Oak made for its continuance, and we will be discussing the implications of this with the 2ADA Executives in the coming months.

the write stuff

book notices
& reviews

Battle Colors—Insignia and Aircraft Markings of the Eighth Air Force in World War II

by Robert A. Watkins

Volume I: (VIII) Bomber Command, 2004, ISBN: 0-7643-1987-6

Volume II: (VIII) Fighter Command, 2006, ISBN: 0-7643-2535-3

Schiffer Military History, Atglen, Pennsylvania

Price: \$40.00--\$45.00 per volume

-reviewed by Reed Hammans

When I first saw Volume I of this set in a catalog, I thought, "I really don't need another one of these." Then my wife bought it for me as a gift, and once I got a good look at it, I realized I was correct. I really didn't need it, but, boy, did I want it! I spent the next eighteen months prowling the web, looking for Volume II, and bought it once it was released.

These two books provide a beautifully organized and presented overview, not only of the Eighth's markings, but also of its organization throughout the Second World War. Both volumes are laid out similarly, with dozens of photographs and color illustrations.

Volume I covers, as the title indicates, the bombers of the Eighth Air Force. The opening chapter gives a brief overview of national and tactical markings, as well as general information regarding bomber formations. This information is followed by several color pages showing tail markings of all groups, organized by division and wing, including the transition from the simple "circle/square/triangle" to the colorful high-visibility markings.

The author then moves into well laid-out tables of organization for the Eighth Air Force bomber (and fighter) units. Despite the title (VIII Bomber Command), these charts present the transitions from Bomber and Fighter Commands through to the ultimate WW II reorganization into air divisions.

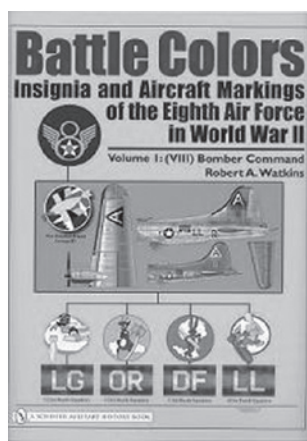
Next comes the heart of the book. Each group is given two well-illustrated pages containing a wealth of information, arranged from lowest group number to highest number.

Using simple boxes, one page shows the group's position in the overall organization. Illustrations include the group's unit crest, and profiles and top perspectives with the group's markings, both for OD (olive drab) and NMF (natural metal finish) planes. A brief text delineates changes in the markings. This page is rounded out with each squadron, including emblems and identifying squadron code.

The second page for each group contains a map showing the group's primary station, and other information including the group's motto or sobriquet, station number/name, and campaigns. Text provides commentary about the development and ephemera of the groups markings, often in the form of informative captions to the many period photographs. A number of short indexes recapitulate some of the text's information, and allowing for easy location of the information for each group.

Volume II, VIII Fighter Command, is laid out much the same as the first volume. It contains some additional information on the evolution of national markings from 1916 on, followed by more technical information regarding the placement of markings on P-51's, P-47's, P-38's, and Spitfires. This is followed by a group-by-group, color nose-marking index, before moving into the group pages.

In this volume, most groups receive four pages, some six. The first two pages are laid out much like those of Volume I, but include the often multiple stations of a group, as well as radio call signs. The text is again illustrated with multiple photographs, and material explaining changes and idiosyncrasies of the group and squadron markings.



Write Stuff *continued from page 12*

The final two pages trace the markings of the various types flown by the group, using color profiles, top perspectives, and highly informative text.

This volume does not confine itself to the fighter groups however. The author has expanded it to include other units that directly supported combat operations. Nine pages are devoted to the Scouting Forces, with another 11 pages reserved for reconnaissance units. The book is rounded out by what the author terms Special Operations Units, including the 5th Emergency Rescue Squadrons, radio countermeasures, and night and special operations by the 406th BS and the 801st BG (P)/492nd BG ("Carpetbaggers"). In all cases, there are color illustrations of all types used, as well as historical information of the development of these units.

Typical of Schiffer Publishing, both volumes are beautifully bound and printed. Their large size (12" x 9.3") and glossy paper allow these visually driven volumes to be viewed with the greatest effect. I do wish, however, that Schiffer's printing quality would be matched by editing. I own several of their books, and many have far too many typographical errors and other oddities. These two books are no exception. For example, on one page, there are two different versions of the possessive form of 'it'—and neither is correct. A very quick proof of two other pages shows numerous other errors, including using "course" for "coarse" and "revel" for "reveal". These are not isolated instances.

Proofing aside, the real "proof" of any book to me is what veterans think. At a gathering of Eighth Air

Force veterans I attended, the verdict was unanimously positive, if not outright enthusiastic. After viewing a display copy, several people remarked that they intended to go home and find out where they could buy one of their own. That's a high recommendation.

You get a lot of bang for buck with these two volumes: highly appealing color graphics and layout; high quality binding; and not only a study of the Eighth's markings, but an easily referenced guide to the organization of the bomber, fighter, and ancillary units.

Companion or substitute reading:

The Mighty Eighth: Warpaint and Heraldry, Roger A. Freeman, Arms and Armour Press, 1999

This book is by Roger Freeman, and that's about all we need to know. A highly detailed examination of the Eighth's markings, this book provides even more detail than Watkins' books. It contains a great deal of technical information concerning overall national markings, special markings, and group and squadron information, with a very large number of period color photographs. While, it doesn't pack the visual wallop of Watkins' two books or provide detail of the command structure, it is nonetheless as good a single volume treatment of the subject as can be found. It's a little hard to find, and will probably run in excess of \$50.00 from most sources (up from the original price of \$39.95). If you're a real fanatic, consider owning all three. If not, give the Watkins volumes close consideration.

'FLAK' Houses Then and Now—the story of American rest homes in England during WW II

By Keith Thomas

After the Battle Press, Old Harrow, Essex, England CM17 0NN

ISBN 1 870067 66 5 80pp., softcover. £14.95

US distributor: RZM Imports, Inc. <http://www.rzm.com> or (203) 653-2272

-reviewed by Brian Mahoney

Readers will recognize the author as one-time head of 'Friends of the 2AD Memorial' and a Memorial Trust Governor, now enjoying retirement in the south of France. This attractively designed, well-illustrated and well-written volume brings the reader right in close to the times, the important mission, and routine in the network of facilities which played an important role in maintaining mental health among US airmen who had seen especially tough combat.

Your reviewer's father spent a few needed days at "Mouldy Manor" (Moldsford Manor, Station #511) probably setting him—and me—up to be fans of John Cleese's "Fawlty Towers" series in the 1980s. On a more serious note, the

lethal antics of a fighter pilot hitting a chimneypot and then augering in at Knightshayes Court rang authentic; my father witnessed it and was tasked to make the official report, spoiling his last bit of R & R.

The foreword lays out the evolution of this unique American Red Cross operation. Chapters on each of the 17 formally operated Red Cross facilities are followed by ones on 4 privately run establishments. Thomas' love of the subject matter, and interest in his beloved Yank veteran friends, comes right through. This inviting and most readable treatment will remind fans of the presentation style of the late great Roger Freeman. We are treated to a medley of wonderful never-published photos, then-and-now comparisons, humorous anecdotes, bits of airman correspondence, and 'war stories.'

This is a fine addition to the library of 8th Air Force fans, students and descendants, and may help the occasional flak-shack veteran himself in reconstructing a short but important interlude of peace during his combat tour.



Rhapsody in Junk—a daughter's return to Germany to finish her father's story

by Marilyn Jeffers Walton

Printed by AuthorHouse, Bloomington, IN and Milton Keynes, UK

ISBN 978-1-4259-7486-2 486pp., softbound with photos.

-reviewed by Brian Mahoney



reminiscences of survivors, by the warmth of improbable and touching reunions, and even by the role of chance, in smiling on those who leave no stone unturned in their journey.

It is a delight to follow Walton's path of discovery, and see the marvelous opening of doors and alignment of coincidences. She took up as her own her late father's quest to find out what she could about Harold Falugher, a crewmate killed when they bailed out over Germany in June, 1944. In so doing, she has connected with 'siblings'—other sons and daughters of the crew of "Rhap-

sody in Junk." This book is about rich connections across families, one-time enemy countries, and time.

Journals, diaries, correspondence and interviews are cited freely and put the reader right into the perils of combat or tedium of 'Kriegie' (PoW) life. The context of the German civilian's experience of the war, especially after D-Day, is well told through several direct accounts that are related to specific episodes of the crew's 'arrival,' long stay, long march, and eventual liberation and repatriation.

The author must have winning ways... hearts, doors and painful memories are opened to her, and I am glad that she now shares it all with a wider audience than the originally intended ten families. "Rhapsody" is a valuable window to the time, the texture and mores of homefronts in the US, England and Germany, and a compelling read.

Sixty Years Later... Almost Picked a Fight!

-Reed Hammans



Top Row (L-R): Navigator, **Lee J. Woods**; Pilot, **Robert B. Grettum**; Bombardier, **Robert G. Schultz**; CoPilot, **Charles R Bastien**; Bottom Row (L-R): Tail Turret, **Cletus L Kennedy**, Engineer/Top Turret, **Robert N. Carter**; Ball Turret, **Robert E. Tracy**; Radio, **William J Conroy**; Nose Turret, **Alfred G. Kaiser**; Ground Crew Chief, **Matthias H. Schillen**. (Not pictured: Waist Gunner, **Donald E. Preston**, who came over by boat so Matt could accompany the crew on the flight to England.)

-USAAF via Matt Schillen

In 2004, the 492nd's newsletter "Happy Warrior" featured an article by one Matthias "Matt" Schillen. Matt had flown the southern route to England with the original detachment of the 492nd Bomb Group on a B-24 named B.T.O.

En route to Marrakech, B.T.O. developed engine trouble. Needed repairs delayed the departure from Marrakech, and when they did get back into the air, a loose fuel cap caused an immediate return to the field, with fuel flying out of the plane. With all their difficulties, B.T.O., crew, and passengers finally made it to England some days behind the Group.

B.T.O. (Big Time Operator) was a name familiar to me. I had run across it in Paul Perry's diary, the only plane he named or otherwise identified during his 30 missions with the 492nd and 466th. The plane had made quite an impression on him, as his diary entry from 6 August 1944 shows:

"This was mission number 13 but definitely. This morning we called it 12B, but after going through it we decided it was rough enough to be called #13. This was the fourth straight day we've flown a mission for a total of seven missions in nine days.

"Got us up at 03:00 for a 0430 briefing. After that, it was hell. We were assigned to 072 D bar name of B.T.O. We had already had two abortions in B.T.O. and I think we would have had another one if we had taken off in it this morning.

"When I got to the plane the crew chief wasn't around, the plane hadn't been pre-flighted, the nose guns weren't working right, the put-put ran out of fuel & no more around. The crew chief finally got there and pre-flighted it. No.1 engine didn't sound too good, but the chief finally said he thought it would be O.K. We got in & started engines on time, but #1 manifold pressure was too high and the R.P.M. would only go to 2,400 even with turbo boost. We decided that there was probably a dead cylinder & were afraid the engine might go out on take-off, so we called the tower and changed to a spare plane."

In 2002, I had met the sole surviving member of the Perry crew, one of the waist gunners, Bob Traeger. In an extended conversation, Bob had told me he remembered that morning very well. Apparently, there had been quite a discussion between the crew chief and Paul. In the end, he just flat refused to fly B.T.O. that day, and, as shown above, the crew moved on to another plane.

But that was not all I had learned about B.T.O. I ran across a picture of it in Roger Freeman's the Mighty Eighth War Manual, hauling gas in September 1944 for the 489th. It showed up again in the 466th's unit history, Attlebridge Diaries, in an appendix. There, it was listed on roster, but as having flown no missions with the Group, and being designated as "HR", which I took to be hangar reserve.

So I dutifully took all this information, including the quote from Paul's diary, and sent it all in an e-mail to Matt Schillen. Basically, I told him that it sounded like no one else had any better luck with B.T.O., seriously implying it was a lemon.

Then I received a mildly frosty reply. It turns out... he WAS the crew chief that day. And while he didn't say so directly, I don't think he appreciated my

characterization of B.T.O. So somehow, after 60 years, I had almost managed to continue Paul's fight on the flight line that day. I gave Matt a very nice reply, and we both sort of ignored my first e-mail.

Later that year, at the 492nd's reunion in Salt Lake City, I met Charles "Dick" Bastien, who had just published his memoirs, *32 Co-Pilots*. I bought a copy and later that night started reading it. In that book, there were numerous photos of B.T.O. and at least two of Matt Schillen. Dick was the regular co-pilot of B.T.O.! As I read the book, the tremendous trust and respect he had for both the plane and Matt showed very clearly. I hoped that Matt had not told him of my near slander of B.T.O.

I'm not sure what happened that August day some years ago. I strongly suspect that there was a miscommunication on B.T.O.'s flight status, and Matt didn't know they were scheduled. A few days later, the 492nd was disbanded, officially "transferred less planes and personnel" to the Carpetbaggers. Matt was trans-

ferred to the 490th Bomb Group at Eye, where he won the Bronze Star for his dedication and effectiveness in "keeping them flying"—51 mission without an abort.

Over the past 3 years, Matt and I have corresponded frequently, and Dick and I have also kept in touch. Matt, as it turns out, is very technologically savvy, scanning his over 400 photos and turning them into slide shows. (This far outstrips my own meager computer knowledge.)

Starting with the original, unlikely exchange with Matt, I learned a valuable lesson. Be careful what you joke about that you really don't *know* about. And, like every soldier is some mother's son, every B-24 was some crew chief's baby.

Keepsake Coin

A prized memento for the lucky 50-some souls who attended our first-ever stand alone convention in Savannah, this stout bronze keepsake, 1/8 inch thick and 1 3/4 inches across, is something you will want for yourself and family members who appreciate reminders of our Second Air Division veterans. Kelsey McMillan rendered graphics which list out the bomb, fighter and support groups of 'our division' along with the cloud-borne sentiment: "Honor their service, remember their sacrifice."

The raised familiar shape in the middle of the backside lends itself to customization... it has been proportioned exactly to the Liberator tailfin, ready to accept your bomb group's markings. Brian used modeler's enamels to depict red field with white diagonal, in upper left of the 'tailfin,' of the 467th



BG, and natural metal finish with black diagonal, lower right, of the 492nd BG. His father, the late Lt. Col. James J. Mahoney, served in both outfits.

For \$10 plus \$3 shipping one can be yours! Send checks payable to the Heritage League to Brian at address on back page. Indicate if you would like informal instructions on painting your own. Or, for an additional \$10, Brian will hand paint for you, using the field and stripe indication of the BG you specify. (He is not sure that he can do call signs or tail numbers at this small size, but will work on it!) All proceeds go to the League.

The clear-coated coin makes a wonderful presentation either FROM the vet, or TO the vet.

A Son's Journey—how Mike Simpson became a Web Master!

(This is adapted from Mike's self introduction on the 445th website. -Ed.)

The journey to today began almost 50 years ago. My father was a successful businessman in Odessa, Texas, having started a photo finishing business with his wife, Jeanne (Mom). Since he had flown during World War II, his love of flying led to the purchase of a Piper Tripacer in 1954. On weekends, Dad and I would go flying around the Midland-Odessa area in West Texas. We would take off from Midland Air Field (then called Midland Army Air Field). He showed me the bombing training ranges with outlines of ships and other targets on the desert floor. We flew over to Pecos to see Pyote Army Air Field (deserted) which they called Rattlesnake Bomber Base. Dad never talked much about his time in service. I saw a few pictures of him in uniform and that was it. All I knew was that he flew in B-24s and was in the same outfit as the actor James Stewart. Dad passed away Jan. 15, 1967 in Medical Center Hospital, watching a TV set that was sent to his room by the local RCA dealer who was a family friend. Dad, being an avid football fan, wanted to watch the first Super Bowl football game. He died early that morning with Mom there with him.

Now fast-forward to the start of the 21st Century. It's March, 2000 and I'm returning from El Paso where I was on a recruiting trip for Lockheed Martin at the University of Texas at El Paso (where I graduated). I stopped in Odessa to take a walk down memory lane; go by the photo finishing plant (now a deserted building); and go out to the Midland Airport where the Confederate (now Commemorative) Air Force (CAF) has it's headquarters. I toured the museum and talked to some of the volunteers working there. I told them that I thought my dad had been an instructor there some time during the war. I was informed that the American Airpower Heritage Museum had records dating back to before the war started. I asked the museum staff if I could look at some of their records to see if I could find my Dad's name and maybe a picture or two (late on a Friday afternoon). I was told to come back in the morning and check with the staff.

I went back to my hotel room and tried to recall as much as I could of what my mother and father had told me of dad's service time. A quick call back to Grand Prairie, Texas to my wife Deborah to let her know I would be a day late getting back. She knew immediately how important this would be to me and said to take what time I needed. What a wonderful woman!

Saturday morning I arrived about 30 minutes before the museum opened, so I went over and joined the CAF and got a junior membership for my son. I waited and waited and finally it came time for the museum to open. I talked with the staff and explained what I wanted to do and they were extremely helpful. Not having an exact date when I thought dad was there, we started towards the late war years, but didn't have any luck. Evidently the word went out about what I was trying to do as more volunteers came in and helped in my search.

We didn't find what I was looking for, but a couple of folks suggested checking on the internet. Little did they know what that suggestion would result in. When I got back to Grand Prairie that evening, I immediately went online and started searching for anything related to B-24s. I found a site called the Best B-24 Web and posted a message looking for information on what units Jimmy Stewart served with, thinking that might be a quicker search. A reply came in and listed the 445th and 453rd Bomb Groups. Then the bomb dropped! I got a reply from Richard Gelvin of Mesa, Arizona who said he had my dad's name on the overseas movement orders of the 445th Bomb Group as the Group Bombardier. I was ecstatic, to say the least. Dick offered to put together a personal mission history of my dad for a nominal fee and I said to please do so. About a week later I got a package in the mail. Inside was a white, 3-ring binder with a cover sheet marked with my dad's name, 703rd Bomb Squadron. Inside was the data that Dick had prepared; an introductory letter, a map of the airfield and a short history; crew listing by position with my dad's name highlighted; and a summary of the 10 missions he had flown.

It was the 10 missions that really got me interested because of the time gaps in between each mission. So, with a lot of questioning on my part and a lot of digging on Dick's part, we started going through his data. Since dad was part of the headquarters staff, he didn't fly with a particular crew. Since I worked with computers, it made sense for me to work with Dick and see about restructuring his 'database'. Me being in Texas and him in Arizona made things a little difficult. I started looking for a way to move out to Arizona. An invitation to interview with Raytheon Missile System in Tucson came at an opportune moment. While waiting to hear back from Raytheon, I got an invitation to interview in San Jose, California with

another defense contractor. The offer from Raytheon came in and Deb and I prepared for the move out West.

My work schedule with Raytheon allowed me to have every other Friday off, so those were the days when I drove up to Mesa and work with Dick and meet his lovely wife Jane. Very soon they became like a second family for me and we are still close today. We started finding more and more missions that dad flew. We found him flying with lead crews or with the Air Commander of a particular mission. While in Tucson, I met Elvin 'Buddy' Cook, a ball turret gunner with the 703rd. I was introduced to him via John H. (Robbie) Robinson who authored the book *A Reason to Live* which he was autographing for me. When I gave Robbie my address, he told me about Buddy. A phone call, short drive and I'm meeting with a man who had one of the most dangerous jobs in combat. When I was about to leave, Buddy gave me an extra copy he had of Rudy Birsic amendment to his book on the 445th's history. That book, and many more that I've purchased, are now treasured possessions.

By November 2000, dad's mission total was up to 35, and the idea was forming to put together a web site to pay tribute to the men of the 445th. I came up with a preliminary design and started putting things together. I thought I had things pretty well organized, but as I started getting more and more data, I suddenly realized that to put everything out there that I wanted to was going to take a couple of lifetimes. People like Chuck Walker, Robbie Robinson, Dee Bourne, Dick Gelvin, Tom Brittan (from France), Bill Dewey and a host of others all dug into their personal albums, photo collections, memoirs, and personal papers and provided material. They gave a lot back during the war and still continue to provide new insights today.

New Years Day of 2001, the web site made its first appearance. Almost immediately I started getting hits as more and more viewers started logging in. Since that date, the web site has undergone numerous trials and tribulations.

One unexpected turn of events: in the summer of 2001, I received an e-mail message from a young lady who was researching her grandfather and found his picture on this web site. It turned out to be my Dad! Imagine the shock I went through finding out that I was not an 'only child' after all. It seems that Dad was stationed in Puerto Rico back before WW2 started. In doing some research, I found that he had been stationed at Langley Field, Vir-

ginia back in 1939. I remember Dad mentioning that in a conversation with BG Phillip Greasley at Randolph Air Force Base in the spring of 1966. He also mentioned flying in B-18's (known as Bolos) and then B-24s. He married a local girl who was an English teacher there. They had three children (1 son and 2 daughters). Mary, the eldest, was born in Denver and baptized in Tucson.

What's really weird is that for many years I had a picture of my Mom and Dad taken shortly after WW2 and the table reservation card was labeled for Capt and Mrs. Leland Simpson Sr. As I was not named after Dad, why would there be a 'Senior' as part of his name? My half-brother is Leland Stanford Spike Simpson - named after our father. It was his daughter that contacted me. Glorimar and I met later that summer when she and her husband came to Scottsdale on a business trip. She stayed over and drove down to Tucson (I was working for Raytheon Missile Systems there) to meet me. As I was giving her directions to where we lived, I went outside to meet her. I hear this shriek over the phone and the following words: "Oh my God, you look just like my Dad!" Needless to say she saw me first. We spent two wonderful hours together and even called her Dad in Puerto Rico. Glorimar had to act as an interpreter as her Dad doesn't speak English and my Spanish is very limited.

Over the course of these past few years, as I worked on the web site, I began to form a bond with the men of the 445th. Dick Gelvin and I have attended 3 reunions together—one in Los Angeles, one in Dallas, and one in Baltimore. Several have stopped by on vacations; others have written and provided pictures and copies of keepsakes from their time with the 445th. I especially enjoy going to the reunions, to see the friendships renewed and to share in the honoring of all those who didn't make it home after the war.

Another web master sent me a link to his web site and I marveled at the opening sequence to his site. Set to very moving music, it set a tone of reverence that I wish I could invoke. He talked about having a 'calling' - a driving need to create his web site. As I looked through the various pages, I realized that I had gone through the same exact experience. I didn't really understand why I had the need to put this site together, other than to try and stay in touch with my Dad. I found that in doing so, I got closer to Dad, and not only him, but a host of others who, with shared experiences, became part of my



By Pete O'Tube, Expert

Dear Pete,

In a relative's war diary, for a mission on 19 November 1944, he wrote: "My SCS-51 set was working swell, the line of friendly flak showed up very good... There was danger of hitting our own troops if a mistake were made but S-2 said today that only one of our own boys was killed." At the time, he was flying with the 466th.

Pete, what the heck is an SCS-51? And "only ONE of our boys was killed"?

*Feeling 'off target,'
Melvin U. Stange*

Dear M. U. Stange,

The SCS-51 was a variation on the English Standard Beam Approach, instrument landing system (ILS). Comprised of several components, the SCS-51 provided pilots with information on how far the plane was from the field and helped them line up on the center of the runway. The pilots could essentially ride a radio beam directly to the field. Original plans called for all airfields to be equipped with the equipment, but by the end of 1944, only 10 fields were so equipped.

So, the SCS-51 was designed as a landing aid. However, this is not the use your relative was referring to.

Shortly after D-Day, the invasion bogged down against stiffening German resistance. Allied commanders developed the St. Lo breakout plan dubbed Operation Cobra. A major part of the plan called for what is now seen at the first use of "carpet bombing". U.S. heavy bombers, including major elements of the

Second Air Division, were to saturate the German defenses just beyond Allied lines. Ground forces were to follow the bombing immediately, overrunning the "shocked and awed" German troops before they had time to recover.

There was one hitch in the plan: B-24's were not designed as close support aircraft.

AAF commanders requested that Allied troops be kept back at least 3,000 yards from the areas to be bombed. Ground commanders, wanting to make the quickest possible exploitation of the air attacks, insisted that the distance be shorter, from 1,200 to 1,450 yards, a distance covered by a B-24 in about 15 seconds. Hence, targeting and bomb release had to be precise. Further, there was always some confusion regarding exactly where the Allied lines were, as bombs fell and troops moved. As a result, accidental bombings of our own troops occurred with some regularity.

On 24 July 1944, the day Cobra was scheduled to kick off, there were three instances of friendly casualties. The worst of these occurred when mediums of the 9th AF dropped seven miles off target, killing 25 and wounding 131 soldiers of the 30th Infantry Division. The next day, B-24's accounted for an additional three incidents. Casualties included Lt. Gen. Leslie J. McNair, the highest ranking U.S. officer to be killed during the war.

All told, about 100 U.S. soldiers were killed and another 500 wounded by friendly fire during Operation Cobra. Despite this, General Eisenhower recognized the immense contribution that the airstrikes made to the successful breakout. The value of saturation, or carpet, bombing in support of infantry operations was firmly established. But how to overcome the obvious danger to our own troops? Enter the SCS-51.

Someone got the life-saving idea of moving components of the SCS-51 system to the Continent and setting up an electronic bomb line, ultimately

from Holland to Switzerland. This line marked our advancing troops. A mobile SCS-51 team from each Air Division was dispatched to the continent.

When used as a landing aid, the pilot kept a cross-pointer centered on one of the instruments. If he drifted one way or the other, the cross-pointer shifted to the left or right. He made adjustments in his flight path to re-center the pointer, bringing him in on the center of the 'runway.'

When used as an offensive aid, the bomber approached the front perpendicularly. Air Division Mobile SCS-51 Teams set up the relevant components to run the beam parallel to the front. On the friendly side of the line, the cross-pointer, reading a 90-cycle signal, pointed to the left. As the bomber crossed the electronic line, it entered a 150-cycle field, and the pointer pegged immediately to the right. At that point, bomb release could be effected. Thus, the crew had a virtually foolproof way of telling exactly where it was safe to drop.

So you can see why your relative would have remarked that only one of our boys was killed. While we can't be certain that was due to "friendly fire", we can be certain that the losses were far less than during the St. Lo breakout. The ingenuity of using a landing system to mark the front-line enabled close support as needed for the remainder of the war.

Yours on target,
Pete

P.S. A tip of the hat to my sources:

"The Word on SCS-51", Tim Bland, "8th Air Force News", Volume 5, Number 1, p.7.

The Mighty Eighth War Manual, Roger Freeman, Cassell, London, 2001, p.238

<http://www.aero-web.org/history/wwii/d-day/11.htm>

Webmaster *continued from pg. 17*

extended family. As word comes in of the loss of another member of the 445th, it's like losing my Dad all over again. The sense of loss that is felt is no less than what I felt at age 18 when Dad passed away. That's what keeps me going and working on this site—to honor their memory. In July '05 I lost my 'second' Dad, when Dick Gelvin passed away after a fall and the resulting complications.

On March 25th, 2007, we lost William R. 'Bill' Dewey, founder of the Kassel Mission Memorial Association. Bill, his daughter Linda and myself, along with others, were planning a trip back to England in 2008. I will still make the trip, but now have a new purpose: to deliver an upscale version of Bill's personal mission history to the new museum set up at the Tibenham air field the 445th Bomb Group flew out of and to deliver another copy to the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich. A third copy will be presented to Linda as a keepsake.

If I got a little too maudlin in my explanation, I apologize. This too is part of the calling that needed to be expressed. Thank you for bearing with me and may I express my profound thanks for each and every visitor to this web site. Please come back often and this 'calling' will be going on for quite a while!

Sincerely,
Michael Simpson
Web master and Unit Historian

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