



HERITAGE HERALD

Issue Number 43, October 2009
Periodical of the Heritage League of the Second Air Division

A CREW REMEMBERED - PART ONE

In 1943, the 389th BG's Sack-Time Sally crashed near the Dutch town of Opeinde, leaving a lasting impression on the witnesses and succeeding generations...

—By Siebe Overwijk

November 26th 1943. The US is reaching the mid-point of its part in World War II, and the USAAF is beginning to flex its muscle all over the world. The 14th Air Force is attacking targets in Kiangling, China; the 9th Air Force is bombing enemy airfields in France; the 15th Air Force is active in Italy; on the Solomon Islands the 13th Air Force is destroying enemy airfields.

The ever more Mighty Eighth is attacking targets in France and Germany, with 440 B-17 and B-24's ruining the Germans' lunch in an attack on the docks of Bremen between 1145 and 1228 hours.

One of the 565thBS's bombers however, that took off from the 389th BG's home at Hethel earlier that day, would never reach Bremen. The B-24D "Sack-Time Sally," serial 42-40749, with its crew of 10 headed by pilot 1st Lt. Roy E. Braly, would find its final destination in a small Dutch town called Opeinde.

Formation and Early History

The 389th Bomb Group was activated on November 30, 1942, as the 385th BG. Existing only on paper that day, a mere eight months before its low-level



As the flames and smoke from Sack-Time Sally begin to subside, Kees Van der Meulen strides across his field, trying to determine if there is anything he can do. Six of the crew had perished, and four were just beginning their ultimately unsuccessful attempts at evading. (Photo from Siebe Overwijk via Johan Kuiper.)

raid on Ploesti, the group would not receive its first aircraft until January 3rd, 1943, to do some practice flights. These practice flights were held at Biggs Field, Texas where the crews were put together.

The crew of the Sack-Time Sally met at Biggs Field. One of the crew, Andrew Toth, was engaged to Miss Bertha Belle Hutches, who preferred to call herself Sally. The crew gathered at the house of Bombardier Merlin Verberg the day before they had to leave for Biggs. Sally met the whole crew and was told they would name their Lib after her: Sack-Time Sally.

On April 18th the Group moved

to Lowry Field, Colorado for final practices. Besides 'flying members,' a bomb group also had a lot of ground crew members. On June 11, 1943, while the ground crew gathered in New York, an advance party of 389th officers arrived in Hethel to receive the base from the RAF. Practice was still going on after they arrived in England. In the following weeks more and more Libs arrived from overseas at Hethel.

On July 1st, the Group received the news they had to leave for North Africa right away. Only one day earlier, unaware of this change in plan, the ground crew members of the 389th stepped aboard the Queen Elizabeth in

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CONVENTION 2009

—by Irene Hurner



Trust Governor Andrew Hawker, among a sizable contingent of Brits, reads a response from Friends charter member Patricia Everson, recipient of the Distinguished Service Award. Parallel purposes and strong personal ties connect Heritage League and Friends, many of whom like Andrew are full members in both. Ed. Note: See inset below for the text of Patricia's letter. See also her story in Herald issue #42. Photo: Brian Mahoney.

This past Labor Day weekend I traveled with my parents, Albert (453rd BG) and Claire Biel, and my sister Rose Biel Lighty to Rosemont (near Chicago), Illinois. Each year many members of The Heritage League look forward to attending the annual convention which

is generally held alongside the Second Air Division Association. This year was no exception. We Heritage League members recognize that our veterans are aging and that travel is getting more difficult, so our goal is to spend as much time as possible with them, to develop

new friendships, renew old ones, and to remember those who were not able to attend. For me, one of the best ways to do that is to spend time with the veterans in their bomb group hospitality rooms just listening as the vets visit with one another telling their stories. In their quiet way, each vet is a hero with a tale to be told.

During the convention, we were reminded that there are projects connected with museums like the 8th Air Force.

Historical Museums, libraries including our library in Norwich and the Library of Congress, and various colleges and universities are gathering recordings of the veterans for their respective collections. It is suggested that a thirty-minute interview be recorded and then sent to the various institutions.

The League worked with the 2ADA convention committee (Betty Lee, Maxine and Oak Mackey) to make this a successful event. Examples include:

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My thanks to the President and Officers of the Second Air Division Association for this honor, I will treasure it; sadly I cannot be with you in person to accept your award and enjoy your company, but you will all be in my thoughts at this time.

I would also like to thank all the members of the 2nd Air Division Association past and present for the friendship and help given during the last 25 years I have been involved in trying to ensure that 'my' 448th boys are not forgotten, and also those of the Second Air Division through the Memorial Library, especially in the early years.

Through the years the 'Special Relationship' between our two countries has often been discussed but I have been blessed to experience it at first hand and to be able to share these last golden years with so many of you.

My special thanks to those of you who came to our rescue in the 1940's also remembering those who never made it back home.

The impact you made on those of us who were children during the 'Friendly Invasion' has remained vivid in our hearts and minds over 66 years later.

THANK YOU.

Patricia Everson

MOS 5400

This issue's cover story represents something of a milestone for the Herald: the publication of a story by our first Continental writer. The Netherlands' Siebe Overwijk, drawing on a story he wrote several years ago, graciously responded to our request to translate his original writings from Dutch to English and to allow us to publish it.

Part One of the Sack-Time Sally story covers crash of the aircraft near the Dutch village of Opeinde. In the next issue, Part Two will relate how we first learned of the plane's story and its aftermath, when we were contacted by Johan Kuiper, a native of Opeinde who had heard the story from his parents growing up. Johan's renewed interest led him back to the crash site for photos and eventually to contact with former crew members and families. His diligence in putting people together, including bringing Siebe to our attention, has earned the affectionate title of our Friesland Correspondent.

In addition to Siebe, we are introducing two new regular contributors. Richard Flagg, an "unflagging" chronicler of airfields and memorials in the UK, was featured in Issue 42 in Websites We Wike. Steven Puhl makes his debut in the Herald, with the first installment of the new feature on the Ford Willow Run plant, legendary for production of our beloved B-24.

Collaboration was also the word in Ira Weinstein's article. Drawing upon an interview by Aaron Elson and additional information from Carol Holliday, Lisa Niehoff compiled and edited Ira's story, published here in recognition of the 65th anniversary of the Kassel Mission.

We also welcome 389th BG Kelsy McMillan back to our pages. Pete got pitched a question about the Waller Trainer and, knowing nothing about it himself, used an excerpt from Kelsey's comprehensive story on training aerial gunners that appeared in "Bomber Legends" magazine.

Preserving history is the common thread if the Veterans History Project, The Arnett Institute and Evan Thomas' 448th BG project.

And finally, the Heritage League's *raison d'être*, the Second Air Division and our veterans. Irene Hurner provides an overview of the recently concluded 2009 annual convention, as well as Libby Morgan's report on an incredibly successful year at the Memorial Library.

We will close with the words of Johan Kuiper, expressing a sentiment well-known to the veterans: "Let's hope that this Sack-time-Sally event makes people realize that Freedom is not for free, it was and still is paid with lives of human beings."

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From pg. 1, A Crew Remembered

the harbor of New York for their overseas journey to England. Big was their surprise to find the base nearly abandoned when they arrived on July 6th.

The homebase of the 389th in North Africa was Benghazi, an airfield in the middle of the desert of Libya. The crew of the Sack-Time Sally was also here and

would fly their first mission on July 12th. They flew 6 missions from North Africa, including the aforementioned Operation Tidal Wave, only their 4th mission. On August 25th 1943, the 389th headed back to England, but on September 16th they would return to North Africa, to Tunis this time. Finally, on October 7th they departed for England again, this time permanently.

Final Flight

November 26th, 1943 began as a day always began for Braly and his crew when they awakened early for a mission; got dressed, had breakfast, and then off to the briefing. Here, the pilots, bombardiers and navigators were told all details about the upcoming mission, from take-off to landing, where they could expect flak, where to expect enemy fighters, the weather, and the myriad of details that could lead to a successful mission. Meanwhile, the groundcrews were working hard to get the Libs ready.

After take-off and forming up, everything was going normal for Braly and his crew. Above the Channel, the gunners fired test rounds to make sure all machineguns were working perfectly. When they reached Germany, Braly announced they had lost a small amount of power in one engine and said it might be better to return to England. The crew was listening to the conversation Braly had with navigator James McGahee; they didn't want to turn back because they all wanted the credit for this mission. Braly then made the decision to continue.

As the Group neared the Initial Point of the bomb run, there were many clouds at their altitude, so the formation started to climb. But then the troubled engine stopped completely, and with only 3 engines left, Sack-Time Sally fell out of the formation. The bombs were dropped, and Braly



An aerial view of the town of Opeinde today. B-24 superimposed in the upper left center shows the site of Sack-Time Sally's crash. Minze Van der Meulen, grandson of Kees, still owns the meadow and granted Johan Kuiper free access for photos and other research. (Photo provided by Johan Kuiper)

asked for a straight route back home.

Soon there were no clouds in the sky for cover, so the Sack-Time Sally became a sitting duck. They were about 20 miles into Holland when the tailgunner spotted 3 enemy fighters. The Messerschmitts came in for the kill from different positions. In spite of the heavy fight, the tailgunner, John Filegar, shot down one of the fighters, the Me109-G-6 flown by *Uffz.* Otto Monska, member of 6./JG 27. He bailed out and landed on the roof of the farm of the Lindeboom family. Monska was furious about being shot down and was screaming and yelling to everybody in the neighbourhood. He had been wounded in his leg and was transported to a hospital in Leeuwarden.

Immediately after Sack-Time Sally was hit by another burst of cannon and machinegun fire, a fire arose in the bomb bay. Braly conferred with 2nd pilot Dean Dalton (who had replaced Norbert Gebhard) regarding whether they should give the order to the crew for bail out.

The rest of the crew was doing everything they could to save Sally, or at least buy some time for escape. Top turret gunner Virgil Hoffman tried to put out the fire in the bomb bay, while Radio Operator Essman Matthews took over his guns. Unfortunately Hoffman didn't succeed. After that everything went very fast. Braly was pushed through the escape hatch by Dalton. He lost consciousness while falling, but when he regained consciousness he opened his chute and landed safely on the ground. The helpful Dalton didn't manage to get out of the plane.

James McGahee, John Filegar and Merlin Verberg all managed to bail out and land safely on the ground.



Ritterkreuz holder Oberleutnant Heinrich Kloepper, *Staffelkapitan* of 7./JG 1 "Oesau", was credited with the destruction of Sack-Time Sally. A mere 33 days later, Kloepper and two members of his *kette* died when they crashed their Me 109's into the ground after evading P-38's by diving into low cloud. (Photo provided by Johan Kuiper)

Waistgunner Walter Wince was hit by enemy bullets and was bleeding badly. In spite of this, he managed to put on his chute and bail out. Eyewitnesses on the ground later stated they saw him falling down with his chute on fire.

The other waist gunner, Edward Goodall, tried to reach the rear escape hatch but was killed by enemy fire. John Filegar had to push past him to get out.

Ball turret gunner George Scott tried very hard to put on his chute but he didn't suc-

ceed. He was one of the 6 that didn't make it.

Virgil Hoffman was still in the bomb bay area. While he put on his chute, Matthews did the same on the flight deck. Unfortunately it was too late: Sack-Time Sally exploded in the air and broke into two pieces. Witnesses report that for a split second, it looked like Sally was standing still, then slowly the nose went down, and with screaming engines the plane hit the ground behind the farm of M. van der Meulen. The tail section came down 'like a leaf from a tree,' as an eyewitness later said and hit the ground a few miles from the plane.

Only 4 of the crew survived. The 6 men that were KIA were buried in Opeinde, 4 on November 30; 1 on December 2nd and 1 on December 4th. After the war, in 1946, their remains were taken to Margraten, where 2 remain.

The Survivors

Braly and Filegar were caught almost immediately by the Germans.

James McGahee bailed out and opened his chute at 9000 feet. One of the German fighters circled him, probably to see where he would land. McGahee landed in a tree very close to water, and only a moment later, a young man came out of a house nearby and pushed a long stick towards him. McGahee grabbed the stick and was pulled over the water.

Safely on the ground, he released the parachute harness and started running, because the Germans would find his chute very soon. He found a patch of bushes covered with leaves and made this his hiding place. The Germans were in his neighbourhood all afternoon but didn't find him.

Later he left his hiding place and walked towards some trees. A man on a bicycle was approaching and McGahee decided to talk to him. The man told him he had to hide again, and that he would try to get some help. Thirty minutes later the man returned with the village policeman who told him escape was impossible and that it would be better if he turned himself in to the Germans.

McGahee got angry and called the man a German sympathizer. The policeman left but probably didn't alert the Germans, because 3 hours later the helpful Dutchman returned with another man who took McGahee to a church and asked him to wait there so he could contact the Dutch Resistance. Providing the evadee with food, water and blankets, he told him he would return the next night.

After 3 nights in the church, McGahee was met by a woman of the Resistance. Riding a bike, he followed her at a safe distance for 30 minutes. They then arrived at a farm, and McGahee was told to hide in a tunnel of haybales. In the following days he heard what had happened to the rest of the

crew, with only 3 other survivors. He found this news was almost unbearable.

On December 20th, dressed in civilian clothes and bearing fake ID papers, McGahee left the farm and was taken to the house of the young lady who brought him to the farm. He got instructions about the upcoming train trip. At the train station he met Verberg again and 2 other airmen and they departed toward Rotterdam. Once they reached Rotterdam they were picked up by another Resistance man and stayed the night in a nice house, with a good meal and wine.



Teen-aged Resistance heroine Tiny Mulder, bicycles off arm in arm with Merlin Verberg. (See text.) This illustration appears in a Dutch children's schoolbook and was provided by its artist Carla van der Heijde.

The next day they left for Amsterdam by train where they were picked up by a red-haired man who told them to get into a car. Unfortunately, this man took them to the Germans, and their escape to freedom had ended here. McGahee was taken to prison camp Stalag Luft 1 in Barth where he met Roy Braly again.

Bombardier Merlin Verberg landed with his chute close to the crash site and was spotted by a man called Geertsma. He took Verberg to the house of Sjoerd van der Meer. Tiny Mulder, a local woman from the Dutch Resistance was alerted that an Allied flier was safely on the ground. She grabbed some clothes from her brother, put them in a suitcase, and rode her bike to the house of van der Meer.

She saw Verberg standing there with his flight suit still on and instructed him to take off his uniform and put on the clothes she brought. Coincidentally, a pharmacy shop owner

from Drachten was at van der Meer's house. Verberg took his bike and together with Tiny Mulder, they rode hand in hand towards Drachten. On their way there they passed a lot of German soldiers, who never could have guessed that the man on the bike was the Allied flyer they were looking for.

Tiny took Merlin to the house of her parents. Merlin was in some kind of shock because he knew that some of his friends had died during the aerial fight and the crash. He stayed at the Mulder's place for some weeks. Together with Tiny, Merlin got on a train together with McGahee and the other 2 airmen. We all know now what happened next. Merlin was also taken to prison camp Stalag 1 in Barth where he stayed 'til the end of the war.

Tiny Mulder visited Merlin after the war, and Merlin came to Holland a few times to visit her. They kept in touch until Merlin's passing on July 23rd 1993.

Braly and Gebhard also kept in touch and remained good

friends after the war. During a reunion of the 389th BG in September 1999, they met James McGahee again after all those years.

November 26th 1943 was a day like any other during World War II for many people, but not for the crew of Sack-Time Sally and their families, nor for the people from Opeinde, who witnessed how a giant heavy bomber crashed in their hometown, nor for the ground crew of the Sack-Time Sally at Hethel, who waited for 'their' bomber to come home.

[Author's and Editor's Note: Excerpts from The Last Bomb Mission by James McGahee have been used in this story. The excellent timeline of the 389th, available on the group's web-site at <http://www.389thbombgroup.com/timeline01.php> was consulted to verify dates. Other eyewitness accounts of the incident are also on this site. The next issue will feature the tale of how this month's story came to appear in the Herald. We also hope to have an interview with Tiny Mulder by that time.]

From pg. 2, Convention 2009

members serving in back-up positions for 2ADA officers, assisting veterans wherever necessary, including the Sunday evening banquet when vets marched to the front of the room to receive a salute from attendees, and taking pictures for *The Journal* and the *Herald*.

Membership V.P. Marybeth Dyer and others manned our registration table. People had the opportunity to have questions answered regarding the Heritage League. A booklet entitled *Second Air Division Memorial, United States Eighth Air Force* telling the history of the Second Air Division and the Memorial Library was for sale with proceeds going to the library in Norwich.

Our members took advantage of several sightseeing tours that were offered. On Friday, the Chicago Architectural Cruise traveled along the river through the downtown area with a docent detailing a building's architecture, style, year of construction and any other interesting details. The tour on Saturday was to the Museum of Science and Industry. As a way of saying "Thank you," and because the time allowed between our annual business meeting and departure for the museum was limited, the Heritage League provided box lunches to those on the bus. Treasurer Sue Risley ordered the sandwiches and picked up other needed items. Membership VP Marybeth Dyer printed stickers, brought pens and brochures about the League, and HL members gathered in the morning to pack the lunches. All enjoyed the day. Sunday brought a city tour of Chicago by bus. The time spent on each tour was used for visiting and getting to know one another.

Our Saturday morning annual business meeting was well

attended. In the afternoon a roundtable was hosted by Marybeth Dyer and Bob Books. The discussion resulted in many ideas to be considered for future activities of The Heritage League. There will be more information as these suggestions are developed.

Many of us thought this year would be the last time the veterans would gather as a group, but they voted to meet again. With that in mind, your Executive Committee voted to hold our convention alongside the 2ADA tentatively set for September 10-13, 2010. Do watch the newsletters and our web site for additional information.

* * * * *

We would like to acknowledge and thank those who joined the Heritage League or renewed their memberships in Chicago: Steven Howard, Stephen Sills, Sue Christle, Craig Piskin, Jay Piskin, Scott Piskin, Andrew Di Fiore, Tara Brinkkoeter, Jonathan Bickel, Tony Bertatelle, and Myrtis Howell.

* * * * *

We just want to tell you the Heritage League made our Chicago reunion great. Our numbers are getting smaller every year. It looked wonderful to see such a large group.

Also, the box lunch was terrific on our trip to the Museum. See you in New Orleans.

Allan and Jean Hallett, 389th BG

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

—*Brian Mahoney*

Members and officers who attended our Annual Business Meeting in Chicago, within the 2ADA's convention, had the satisfaction of special acknowledgment for our work from many of our beloved individual veterans, which is really what keeps us coming back. But also from the organization itself, which bestowed its practical endorsement on an important future role for the League.

Our Past President Irene Hurner and our Secretary Carol Holliday supported the executive meeting of the 2ADA on Thursday, in the capacities of Acting Secretary and Assistant, respectively. I joined them on the invitation of outgoing 2ADA President John Lee, to officially represent the League in discussing with them a big idea; a dream we have recently shared with their members.

To our great pleasure, the 2ADA Executive Committee passed a resolution formally requesting that the Governors of the Second Air Division Memorial Trust (in England) consider converting the voting seat, long held by a 2ADA designate, into a Heritage League designated seat, "when the time comes." During the discussion, Trust Chair Matthew Martin was gracious enough to tell all that this request would be procedurally straightforward for them, and we are assured that he and his colleagues will do so. In turn, they made clear to us that when that time comes, it is expected that our delegated seat holder should be a true working participant in the business of the Trust. We take this future role seriously, as a meaningful way to actualize our mission and theirs.

Long serving 2ADA Trust Governor Chuck Walker (700th BS, 445th BG vet) has personally set an inspiring standard for

participation and representation of an American perspective and interest, just as the Second Air Division Association itself has continuously nurtured the growth of plant and program, keeping vivid in East Anglia the history of the "Yankee Invasion" in WWII and the enduring friendships between freedom loving Americans and Britons in three generations... and counting. The Trust is keen to seat someone who can also represent it and continue in America the work of fully endowing and sustaining our "unique living memorial."

This will be one visible and substantial way we 'actualize our mission,' a theme that got the attention of a small dedicated group of our members during the convention. We hope that you are inspired to lend your energy and special abilities to plan and carry out programs that honor and remember, perpetually. Are you looking for an opportunity to help in our broadening range of actual and possible activities? And do you know of someone, possibly with development experience, who you could comment to us for nomination to the Trust Governors in the close future?

I will be acting in the role of our volunteer coordinator until I find one. Meanwhile, please pass to me information on specific contributions you would like to offer, especially if you feel prepared to help coordinate volunteers!

The 2ADA, remarkably, has decided to go for at least another year, and hopes to have a mid-October 2010 convention in New Orleans. We will be there, again having our annual convention with them, and also bringing some engaging program. I hope that you can join us!

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK!

Thanks to our Secretary Carol Holliday's efforts, the Heritage League is now on Facebook. Search for Second Air Division Heritage League Group

Sign up and join us today for content not available in the Herald or on our website, including dozens of photos and videos, notices of upcoming events, and even two color schemes for new formation ships by the children who visited the Memorial Library. Better yet, put up your own content and help us grow the Heritage League.

Become fans and members of other interesting groups, like

"Liberator B-24 for Life," "Remembering Air Force Units in Britain in WWII," "Kassel Mission Historical Society," "The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum," and many, many more.

Meet distinguished people and hang out with photographers, artists, authors, and an amiable historian. Amaze your friends, then make more friends and amaze them! Go back in history and into the future, and collapse time, where 2 hours goes by in 20 minutes! Come on in and sit a spell.

But seriously... Well, no. Just for fun.

CONVENTION 2009



445th veteran Chuck Walker continues to represent the 2ADA, his fellow veterans, and his countrymen very well, as Representative to, and a Governor of, the 2AD Memorial Trust. Photo: Brian Mahoney



If it's pizza, it must be Chicago! Natives Kurt and Vicki Brooks Warning (466th), Californians Steve and Marybeth Birmingham Dyer (458th), Texan Jim McCrory (492nd), and natives Sue Risley (446th) and Dave Hart on way to a great welcoming meal near the host hotel. Photo: Brian Mahoney

Executive Committee member Irene Hurner, a 453rd daughter, serves as Acting Secretary in support of the elected 2ADA Secretary. Outgoing President John Lee listens intently to report from 2AD Memorial Trust Governors' Chair Matthew Martin's remarks. Photo: Brian Mahoney



Dzenowagis Family: Anastasia, Joe, Jr. and Joan standing, Helen and Joe, Sr. seated. Photo: Carol Holliday

Frank and Louise Bostwick twirling the night away. Photo: Carol Holliday



Long and continuing service. 2AD Annual Meeting audience heard reports from Matthew Martin, Memorial Trust Chair, Oak Mackey, 392nd veteran and former 2ADA President, Andrew Hawker, Trust Governor, and 2ADA Journal Editor Ray Pytel, a 455th veteran. Incoming President Dick Robert at the ready in second row. Photo: Brian Mahoney





Quick Wits! Herman Wittig and daughter Brenda Tudyck. Brenda, granddaughter of the late Moose Allen (453rd BG vet) was one of our first "third gen" officers, ably serving as Assistant Secretary five years ago. Photo: Brian Mahoney



Joan Patterson, Shirley Suckow and Erlyn Jenson. Photo: Carol Holliday

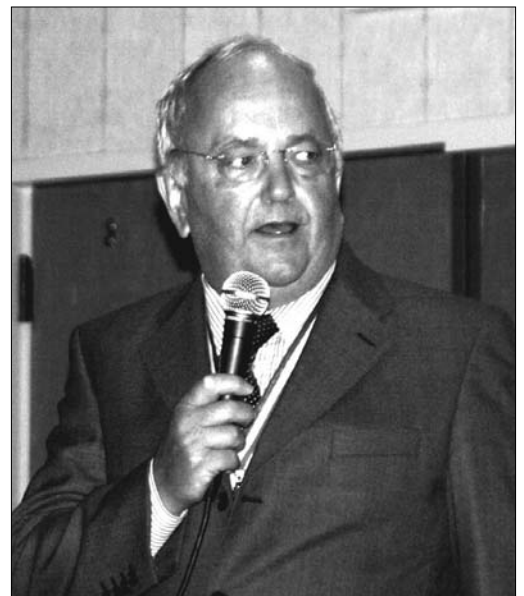


Close scrutiny! Vicki and Kurt caught in one of our few shared quiet moments. We had thick and thin crust pizzas and both were excellent. No room for dessert. Photo: Brian Mahoney



HL Executives 'present and voting' in Chicago: Membership VP Marybeth Dyer, Former President Irene Hurner, Treasurer Sue Risley, Representative to 2AD Memorial Trust Vicki Brooks Warning, President Brian Mahoney, Secretary Carol Holliday. All re-elected, owing to good looks as much as good service! Photo: Carol Holliday

467th vet Ray Bickel and son Jonathan take in Banquet remarks. See Jonathan's article in this issue on the Veteran's History Project, pg. 25. Photo: Brian Mahoney



A most cherished Memorial Trust Chairman Matthew Martin speaks in Chicago. Photo: Carol Holliday

D-BACK BASEBALL HONORS WWII FLYBOYS

—By Paul Arnett

Earlier this year (April 22, 2009) the Arizona Diamondbacks, the Arnett Institute and the Collings Foundation teamed up for a charity awareness game against the visiting Colorado Rockies to honor the Arizona Liberator Group, B-24 veterans living in Arizona. This date was chosen because the Collings Foundation was in town with their Wings of Freedom tour.

WWII veterans living in Arizona were given discount tickets up in the sky-box level which included an all-you-can-eat buffet, or I should say as much of baseball's finest junk food and soft drinks as they could put down. The D-Backs donated a portion of the ticket sales to the Arnett Institute.

Prior to the first pitch our local veterans were brought out on the field and honored. During the game some of them were interviewed by a roving reporter from the TV broadcast booth. Also during the game a drawing was held giving away a free ride on the B-24, compliments of the Collings Foundation.

Initially the Collings Foundation was going to do a flyover with their B-24 at the end of the National Anthem and had all their permits in place—or so we thought. At the last min-



A few of the veterans in front of the visitor's dugout for introductions. (L-R) Dale Lee (44th BG), O. P. Sullens, Gil Pagel, George Schmidt, Tom Hasham, Tom Hasham, Jr (Tom's son), Con Oniel, Erin Swartz, Warren Gorman (485th BG), Dick Trousdale - (93rd BG) was also on the field, but was somehow cut out of the photo. Besides our 2ADA guys, attendees also included veterans of the Big Red One and a group from the East Valley ex-POW's group. (Photo by Melanie Arnett)

ute the TSA nixed it, claiming they needed an extra five days notice to run a security check on all persons who would be onboard, which were the Collings people and DJs from three radio stations. Too bad, this would have been the first time for a B-24 to do a flyover at Major League Baseball game. So instead, the D-Backs ran video footage of the B-24 on their big screen. It was impressive! Maybe next year we can do both.

The Collings planes were in town for a week. There were times when the B-24 was running non-stop doing rides. It would land and with engines still running unload one bunch of passengers and load up another bunch and take off again. We (Arnett Institute) were informed later that the Wings of Freedom tour set a new Phoenix record for attendance and airplane rides. And for the first time ever, in Phoenix, the B-24 rides outsold the B-17. Why? They credit the baseball game.

The idea for this game event begins with the Arizona Liberator Group, which is an informal organization of B-24 veterans living in Arizona whose only goal was to meet once a year for lunch when the Collings planes were in town. These lunches were inspiring as every B-24 group, Army and Navy alike, were represented. After lunch everyone would go together to see the Collings planes.

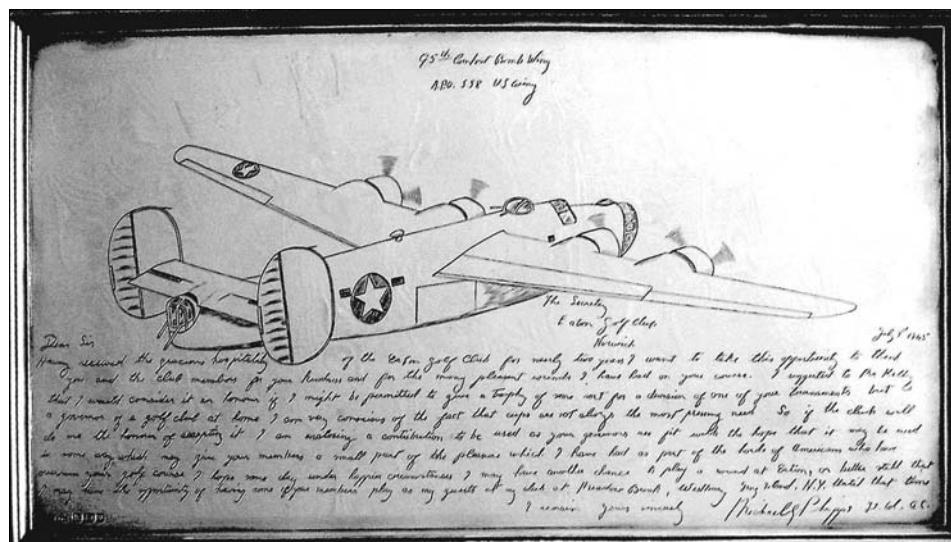
Warren Gorman, who had been running the Arizona Liberators for twenty years, announced his health was declining and if it were to continue someone healthier needed to take his place. Charles Arnett, founder of the Arnett Institute,



L-R: Anna Arnett, Dave Gorman and his father Warren Gorman. Warren is founder of the AZ Liberator Group. Anna's husband was the late Charles Arnett, pilot in the 492nd BG and a POW. (Photo by Melanie Arnett)

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THE LIBERATOR SALVER GOLF TOURNAMENT



95th Combat Wing, A.P.O. 558 US Army, July 4, 1945

To: The Secretary, Eaton Golf Club, Norwich

Dear Sir:

Having received the gracious hospitality of the Eaton Golf Club for nearly two years I want to take this opportunity to thank you and the club members for your kindness and for the many pleasant rounds I have had on your course. I suggested to Mr. Kelly that I would consider it an honor if I might be permitted to give a trophy of some sort for a division of one of your tournaments but as a governor of a golf club at home I am very conscious of the fact that cups are not always the most pressing need. So if the clerk will do me the honor of accepting it I am enclosing a contribution to be used as your governors see fit with the hope that it may be used in some way which may give your members a small part of the pleasure which I have had as part of the horde of Americans who have overrun your golf course. I hope some day under happier circumstances I may have another chance to play another round at Eaton, or better still that I may have the opportunity of having some of your members play as my guest at my club at Meadow Brook, Westbury Long Island N.Y. Until that time, I remain yours sincerely,

Michael Phipps, Lt. Col. A.C.

Earlier this year, we received an inquiry regarding the above letter from Mr. Mike Nicholls of the Eaton Golf Club. In 1945, a Lt. Col. Micheal Phipps had donated funds to be

used towards a trophy for a tournament, and thus the Liberator Salver Tournament was born.

Mr. Nicholls wrote that preparations were underway for the 65th annual competition, and he had been charged with, among other responsibilities, learning the identity of Lt. Col. Phipps. The only information they had were contained on the letter offering the donation, and a group picture of USAAF

Continued on pg. 13



2009 tournament winner, Graham Jinks, is a four-year member of the Eaton Golf Club. Lt. Col. Phipps' engraved thank-you to the club actually became the trophy of its namesake tournament. Photo: Maurice Gaston.



By Pete O'Tube, Expert

Dear Pete,

While looking through copies of my cousin's World War II letters, I noticed he mentioned how much he enjoyed his time on something called a Waller Trainer. From what little he said about it, it sounds more like he was watching movies than anything else. Have you heard of this contraption?

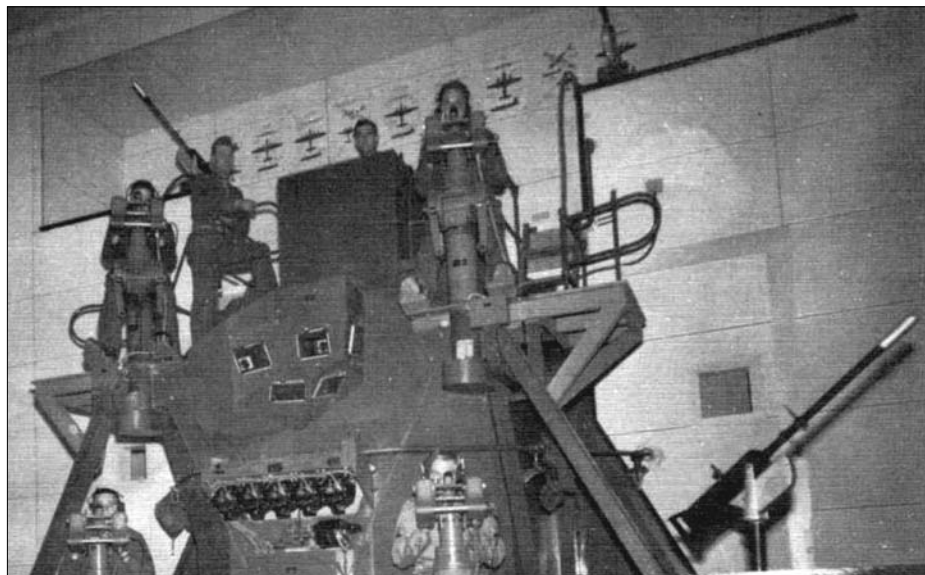
Wondering about the Waller in Walla Walla

Kay (Comp) Seitz

Dear Kay,

I'm willing to bet your cousin was a gunner. You're right about the movies. The Waller Trainer was one of the early "synthetic devices" used to train aerial gunners. For the complete answer, we turn to Kelsey McMillan's article on aerial gunnery training in "Bomber Legends" magazine. We can't improve on her description, so we'll quote it here:

The Waller Trainer was the most sophisticated of the synthetic devices, surpassing even the Jam Handy realism. [Pete: The Jam Handy was another trainer using two projectors.] The Waller required its own unique, spherical-shaped building and cost \$58,000



The Waller Trainer in use at Kingman Army Air Field. In this lower-level view, the gunners appear to be zeroing in on the photographer. Note the aircraft recognitions posters on the wall immediately behind the trainer. (Photo from "A trip through Kingman Army Airfield," available as a free, downloadable .pdf at Mike Voisin's Army Air Forces Collection, <http://aafcollection.info/>.)

each. Up to four gunners could be trained at the same time, either in turrets or single gun positions. Five movie projectors simultaneously showed aircraft diving at the gunners to simulate attacks from different angles on a large panoramic screen. The students aimed Mark IX Gunsights and fired dummy guns, sending electrical impulses to record their marksmanship. When the gunner scored a hit, he would hear a gunshot sound effect; but if he missed the sound was disappointingly different.

The Jam Handy and Waller were not only effective in teaching the students how to lead



Using shotguns mounted on a moving platform (a Dodge WC-3), students develop their skills at shooting at a moving target.

a moving target, the men found them a great deal of fun. One veteran remembered "the feeling of being a part of a Buck Rogers movie while training on the Waller." There was another favorable aspect to the Jam Handy and the Waller. The sensitive equipment required constant cool temperatures and were housed in air conditioned buildings—usually the only ones on the base. And since all of the schools were located in areas with equatorial climates, what a luxurious treat those training sessions must have been in summertime!

Kelsey also added a bit about the inventor:

Motion picture engineer Fred Waller was a prodigious inventor, holding patents on numerous inventions, including water skis, a wind direction and velocity indicator, and a still camera for taking 360 degree pictures. While working at the Paramount studios he discovered that a three-dimensional sense of realism could be achieved with



Shotguns mounted on moving (and bouncing) trucks helped students develop their skills shooting at moving targets.

a wide curved screen that included the viewer's peripheral vision. His experiments in projecting multiple images on the uniquely shaped screen led to the development of the Waller Gunnery Trainer. After the war, his process evolved

into the spectacular, giant-screen, Hollywood productions known as "Cinerama." For this invention, Waller received an Oscar in 1954.

Pete here:

Besides the two photos of the Waller Trainer, we are including two others.



The Waller trainer used five motion picture projectors operating together and helped teach gunnery students the correct aim point for a moving target. Photo: Kelsey McMillan

You may remember that in the last issue of the "Herald," veterans Charles Wheelwright and Russell Woinowski agree that their favorite part of gunnery training was zooming around a track shooting shotguns from the back of a vehicle. The accompanying photos, also from Kelsey's article, show two of these set-ups.

Until next time,

Pete

From pg. 11, Liberator Salver Tournament

officers. The club had framed the letter, actually engraved on a sheet of salver, but all other clues to Phipps' identity had been lost to the years.

We were not optimistic; for a variety of reasons, the Wing level is difficult to research, and the letter was dated post-war. However, in the end, we were able to learn a great deal about Mr. Phipps. (The first break came from the letter's reference to his own club on Long Island.) Further, upon receipt of the group officers photo, Kelsey McMillan was able to identify the

units in which the Lt. Colonel served. In the next issue of the Herald, we will tell the story of the remarkable Mr. Phipps.

Mike Nicholls reports that this year's tournament was a success. The field was full, to the point that Mike had to cancel his own round to make room for one more person. Next year's celebration, corresponding to the Club's centennial, is shaping up equally well, with several airmen from a nearby US base committed to participating.

Hats off to the Eaton Golf Club for continuing this tradition.

REPORT OF THE TRUST LIBRARIAN FOR THE 2ADA CONVENTION CHICAGO

Saturday 5th, September 2009

[Editor's note: The following report was presented by Trust Librarian, Libby Morgan, at this year's convention. The number of visitors has shown a steady increase over the previous year (to an average of 161 per day). With all the activities and outreach provided by the staff, it's no small wonder!]

Recent Library Visitors

We continue to welcome a steady stream of visitors from the USA. This year our visitor's book records visitors to the Memorial Library traveling from Canada, Italy, Spain, Netherlands, France, all areas of the UK, and much nearer to home—from Norwich. Reading their comments it is good to know that our library is appreciated by all those that visit.

What a wonderful place for remembering and appreciating!

*Thanks very much America
Grandpa would be proud!
We relived our childhood.
I learned more about my father's war.
Thanks for keeping the memories alive!
Wonderful! Special and enlightening!
Thank you!*

Staffing Matters

This past year we have been blessed by the presence of two Americans working with us in the Memorial Library. Meghan Purvis, our first "American Scholar" from the University of East Anglia in Norwich, and Sarah-Beth Nelson, a visiting children's librarian from the USA. Meghan's year as our first American Scholar ended in July, and we will be joined later on this month by our new 2009 scholars—Stephanie Leal and Lucien Giordano. Sarah-Beth returned to the USA at the beginning of June—and I'd like to acknowledge how very much we valued her contribution to our children's activities and outreach work this year.

Maintaining Local Links

We endeavour to maintain our local links with the 2AD Memorial Friends, local airbase museums and other partner organisations in Norwich and Norfolk.

12th Nov Tom McKeown, Eileen Wallace and Libby visited Ketteringham Hall with Bob Dance

27th Nov Library staff team attended the 2AD Memorial Friends Thanksgiving Dinner
5th Feb Jenn. Christian met with Kate Thaxton (Norfolk Regimental Museum)
24th Mar Jenn. Christian met with Colin Stott (NMA) re Norfolk War Project
7th Apr Libby attended talk about City of Norwich Aviation Museum
9th Apr Libby visited David Bedford, superintendent at American Cemetery Madingley
25th May Leslie Fleetwood attended the Memorial Day service at Madingley
11th Jun Libby attended launch of Norfolk War Project (museums and local schools)
16th Jun Libby attended 2AD Friends Committee Meeting with Andrew Hawker
21st Jun Jenn. Christian attended special Father's Day event at Hethel
11th Jul Leslie Fleetwood attended Steve and Penny's wedding blessing at Hethel Chapel

Library Promotion



2AD Memorial Trust Librarian Libby Morgan delivered informative reports to three different meetings on successful programs and activities of the unique "living memorial" in England.

The new edition of the library's promotional leaflet was produced in March, in time for the annual distribution to local libraries, tourist information centres, hotels, museums and other visitor attractions. We've started making use of the Millennium Library's plasma screens to promote the Memorial Library to all their library patrons, and we've arranged to have regular book displays on the first floor of the Millennium Library to promote our American book stock. We do of course

continue to have our own monthly themed book displays at the entrance to the Memorial Library:

Jan	The American Presidency
Feb	Abraham Lincoln Bicentenary
Mar	Travel and Travel Writing
Apr	Poetry
May	Natural History and the Environment
Jun	D-Day Anniversary
Jul	American Independence/ 40 th Anniversary of Moon Landing
Aug	Music
Sep	USAAF in Norfolk

Children and Young People

We have enjoyed welcoming various school groups and students to the library during the year, particularly the 15th Norwich Air Scouts, who so enjoyed their visit to the Memorial Library back in February that their leaders are planning a weekend camp in October around the theme of the USAAF in our region during WWII. The scouts will be returning to the library the weekend before they go away to find out all they can about the B-24 Liberator aircraft.

Sarah-Beth, our visiting children's librarian, achieved a great deal during the short time she was with us, developing a collection of children's story books by American authors, and producing a PowerPoint presentation to use with primary school aged children about "Americans in Norwich."

She also organised various events and activities at the library including:

- A story and activity session in January to tie in with Barack Obama's Presidential Inauguration "So you want to be the President?"
- An aviation activities and crafts session called "Flights of Fancy." The children came up with some wonderful ideas for assembly ship paintwork designs, and enjoyed making model B24-Liberators.
- A joint event with the Millennium Library for National Families Week, which included her "Americans in Norwich during WWII" presentation, a tour of the Memorial Library, followed by a related craft activity in the Children's Library next door.

Sarah-Beth has also worked with our Wing Collection libraries at Long Stratton and Dereham, and their local community schools.

Events and Activities

Meghan started the year for us in great style by launching her new book group "Reading Across the Pond." The group

continues to thrive with a very enthusiastic readership, who are currently exploring William Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom*.

Local people continue to be fascinated to hear about the exploits of the 2nd Air Division airmen during WWII. I've given a number of talks and film presentations to local organisations this year, including the Norwich Royal Signals Association, Dereham Library, Belton and District Historical Society, Age Concern in Diss, Friends of Diss Museum, Swanton Morley Church (as part of their Abraham Lincoln Bicentenary celebrations), the Vauxhall Centre in Norwich, and Long Stratton Library.

In April Dereham Library (one of our Wing Collections) hosted a week of American-themed activities. We supported this by purchasing a special collection of adult and children's American fiction, and by loaning them a collection of new books from our non-fiction stock. Sarah-Beth gave an American storytelling session, and I presented the Vernon Williams film "Liberators Over East Anglia."

In May Meghan ran a creative writing workshop for beginners "Remembering the Past, Writing the Future" as part of Adult Learners Week, using items from the library's memorabilia collection to inspire a piece of creative writing.

In June Swanton Morley Church launched their exhibition about Abraham Lincoln, and the links the village has with America. We provided a display "The Friendly Invasion—The American Air Force in Norfolk during WWII," and I was one of the speakers at an evening event along with Stephen Pope the historian of Swanton Morley Airbase. The first official bombing raid by the 8th Air Force took place on American Independence Day, 4th July 1942, when six American crews joined No. 226 Squadron flying from RAF Swanton Morley in a low-level attack on four Luftwaffe airfields in the Netherlands.

Also in June Jarrolds Department Store presented "an evening with Martin Bowman" in the Memorial Library, to launch his new book "The Air War in East Anglia." This was a "sell-out" event which was attended by 60 people.

I hope this has given you some idea of the work and activities that your Memorial Library is engaged in throughout the year. Of course, in addition to organising and supporting all these activities and events, the main task of delivering an excellent library service to our patrons continues, under the good management of your Trust Library Manager, Jenny Christian, and our small dedicated band of library staff. Our visitors and regular library patrons are always ensured of a very warm welcome by a team of friendly and knowledgeable staff who are second to none.

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

From time to time, we need to publish business-oriented communications to our membership. Following is a delegate committee report, with tax information for business meeting attendees. Following this report are minutes that were approved in Chicago this year and attendees from the 2008 Annual Business Meeting in Grapevine. The next issue of the Herald will contain draft minutes and the attendees list from Chicago.

Heritage League Delegate Committee Report

Report of the Delegate Committee:

Those members of record who attended the annual meeting will be declared official delegates with a list to be published in the Herald.

"The Heritage League of the Second Air Division (USAAF) is a non-profit, non-political veterans organization and is registered with the Internal Revenue Service under Tax Code Section 501 (c) (19). It's TIN (Tax Identification Number) is 36-3590698. As such, certain Income Tax considerations apply to us in the performance of official Heritage League duties.

The participation of regular, voting members of the League in today's annual business meeting of the Heritage League as an official delegate is such a duty. The reasonable cost of attendance is construed to be a charitable contribution, and, may be deductible as such for those who itemize deductions on their annual income tax returns. All voting members present are official delegates.

The Heritage League cannot provide advice on these matters. Members are advised to seek their own professional advice as may be needed."

The Convention Chairperson will make a finalized list of all regular members of the League attending the annual meeting.

The Heritage League of the Second Air Division (USAAF) 21st Annual Business Meeting Minutes October 18, 2008 Gaylord Texan Resort, Grapevine Texas

Approved 9/5/09 at the 22nd HL Annual Business Meeting in Chicago.

The General Business Meeting of the Heritage League of the Second Air Division was called to order by President

Brian Mahoney (492nd/467th BG son) on October 18, 2008 at 3:00 p.m. at the Gaylord Texan Resort in Grapevine Texas.

The Invocation was given by Past President, Irene Hurner (453rd BG daughter). Kelsey McMillan (389th BG daughter) led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

President Mahoney welcomed all guests, and introduced the distinguished Trust Governors from The Memorial Library in Norwich, England, Ben DuBrow, Chairman Matthew Martin, Andrew Hawker and Vice Chairman, David Gurney. Libby Morgan, Trust Librarian was also introduced.

President Mahoney reports he just came from the 2nd ADA meeting of the newly elected 2ADA officers. He invited all 2nd ADA members to any future Heritage League Conventions.

- **Memorial Wreaths:** We continue to lay wreaths at 5 American cemeteries that contain 2AD dead or commemorate their missing. We strive to have a 'Gold Star' son or daughter whose veteran didn't come home, was either KIA or MIA, present at the wreath laying on Memorial Day. We are looking into the possibility of laying wreaths in North Africa and Italy.
- **Transitions:** We want to anticipate the 2nd ADA requests and honor their needs as we play a role in helping continue the legacy of the Second Air Division Association.
- **By-Laws:** The HL passed new by-laws in 2007. We now hold biennial election of officers and this is a non-election year. We continue to search for apt individuals interested in serving in leadership positions for the Heritage League.
- **Minutes:** Vicki Brooks Warning (466th BG daughter) motioned to dispense with reading of the 2007 Annual Business Meeting Minutes and accept as is. Irene Hurner seconded the motion, and the motion was passed unanimously.
- **Treasurer's Report:** The Heritage League Treasurer's Report, submitted by Sue Risley, (446th BG daughter) and HL Treasurer, was reviewed. Sue Risley could not attend this convention. As of 10/15/08 there is \$13,444 in the HL bank account. Her report covered the period from 1/1/06 to 10/15/08.
- **Membership Report:** Marybeth Dyer (458th BG daughter) reported we recently revamped our HL brochures and we are striving to increase membership. Irene Hurner thanked Marybeth for all of her hard work, and President Mahoney thanked all of the HL members for their support.

- **HL Representative to the Memorial Library:** Vicki Warning deferred her report to the new Memorial Trust Librarian, Libby Morgan. Libby reported that as a new team of library staff, there have been challenges to work together. They are trying to get new things catalogued, including photos. Their current agenda is how to promote the library with the general public and school children in Norwich and surrounding areas. Visitors have been averaging 150-200 people per day.
- **Communications Report:** Reed Hammans, (492nd/466th BG grand-nephew) reported this has been a year of transitions. Historically, the Heritage Herald has been a 2-person operation by Brian Mahoney, and his niece, Erin Mahoney. Erin is no longer able to help as a layout artist. The HL Board of Directors recently decided to seek outside help and found professional layout artist, Tom Chang, who offered very reasonable prices to help produce our newsletter. Once all the data was transferred to Mr. Chang, the Heritage Herald was produced and mailed within 10 days. Reed stated one of our goals in the future is to find new research, broaden authorship and contributors—even in the non-membership category.

The Heritage League's website is doing well, with Bob Books (392nd BG Gold Star son) as web master. Mr. Books was unable to attend this convention. We are upgrading our "links" to the website. We are now #1 in web traffic hits for the term "Heritage League." Spam remains a huge challenge for Bob Books. President Mahoney stated Reed Hammans has brought good energy to our group and thanked him for his service.

Governor Andrew Hawker requested more detail about the funds we've collected for the Friends and the library. Brian offered further clarification.

New Business

A special presentation, (The Kepner Award) was awarded to Vicki Brooks Warning for her 21 years of continuing support. Vicki gave a poignant acceptance speech in return and wished her father, Lieutenant William Brooks, his pilot and co-pilot were present at this convention.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Holliday, Secretary HL

List of Attendees at the 21st Annual Business Meeting, Grapevine, Texas, October 18, 2008

Name	Affiliation
John Lee	(93 rd BG Veteran) Incoming President, 2ADA
Oak Mackey	(392 nd BG Veteran) Past President, 2ADA
Walter Mundy	(467 th BG Veteran)
David Gurney	Vice-Chairman, Memorial Trust Governor
Ben DuBrow	British Trust Governor
Andrew Hawker	British Trust Governor
Libby Morgan	British Trust Librarian
Stephen Morgan	Husband of Memorial Library Librarian
Matthew Martin	British Chairman, Memorial Trust Governor
Brian Mahoney	492 nd /467 th
Vicki Brooks Warning	466 th
Kurt Warning	466 th
Irene Hurner	453 rd
Carol Holliday	445 th
Marybeth Dyer	458 th
Reed Hammans	492 nd /466 th
Ed. E. Roloff	(445 th BG Veteran)
John L. Eckert	445 th
K. Drake, (Dick Butler)	44 th daughter
Claire Biel	453 rd
Rose Biel Lighty	453 rd
Jeane Stites	453 rd
Karen Merrell	453 rd
Patrick Argentieri	453 rd
Andrew Argentieri	453 rd
Kelsey McMillan	389 th
Jim McClain	(389 th BG Veteran)

*Ed Zobac participated via internet using Skype

RICHARD FLAGG'S "AIRFIELDS AND AVIATION MEMORIALS"



The memorial of the 466th BG at Attlebridge. This base was first built and occupied by the RAF and was one of several inherited by the 8th AF, as the British did everything possible to assist in the USAAF build-up. This is but one of 83 well-identified photos in this album, including several other perspectives of the memorial and an array of the still-existing structures on the site. The entire album can be found at <http://www.airfields.fotopic.net/c1721880.html>.

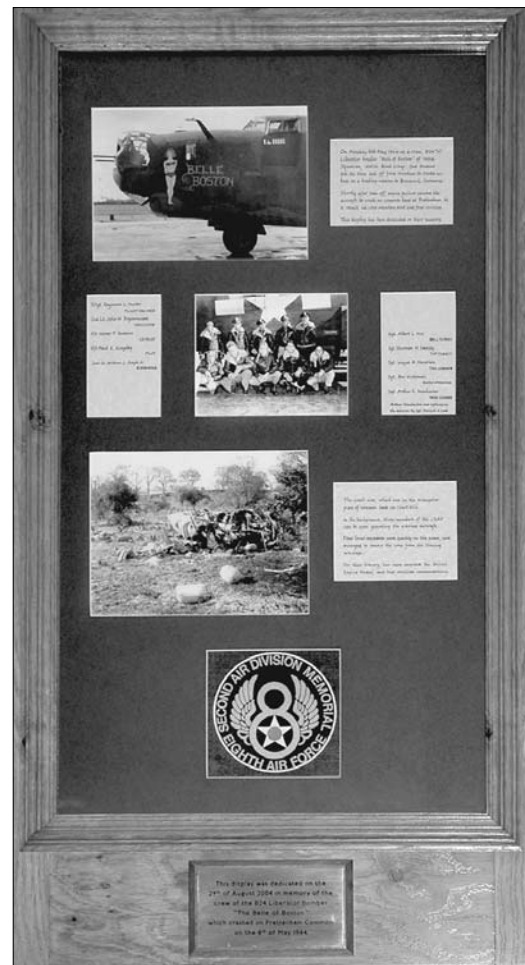
Last issue, we featured Richard Flagg's "Airfields and Aviation Memorials" website. Since then, he has graciously offered to supply us with photos to be used as a regular feature. We hope you enjoy this first installment. (Please note that these are just samples from particular albums, and there are more photos to place these in context available at the site. This issue's offerings can be found through the Norfolk link at <http://www.airfields.fotopic.net>.

All pictures were taken by Richard Flagg and may only be used with prior permission.

(If you would like to see photos from particular areas featured in the *Herald*, please e-mail your suggestions to Reed Hammans at rhammans@gmail.com.)

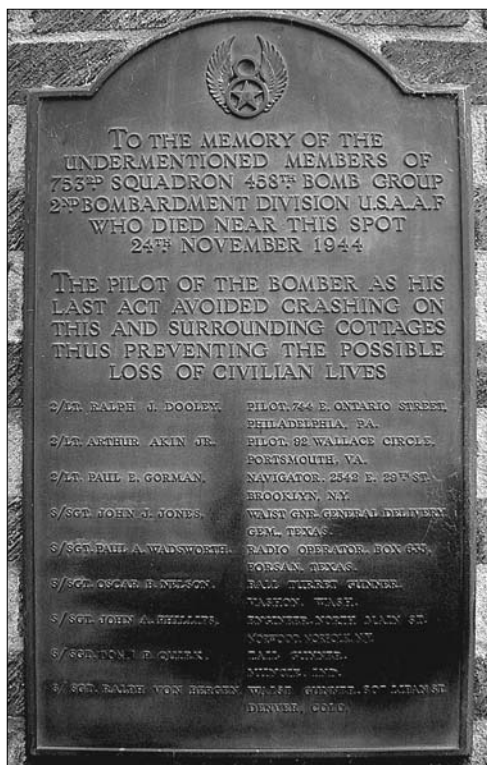


Flags of our fathers. The group banner display at the Second Air Division Memorial Library. Object in foreground is a hand-built, oak display containing a map of the East Anglia, with each base denoted by the characteristic fin flash of respective group. This and the Dooley crew memorial are two of 43 photos in the Norwich section at <http://airfields.fotopic.net/c1668974.html>.

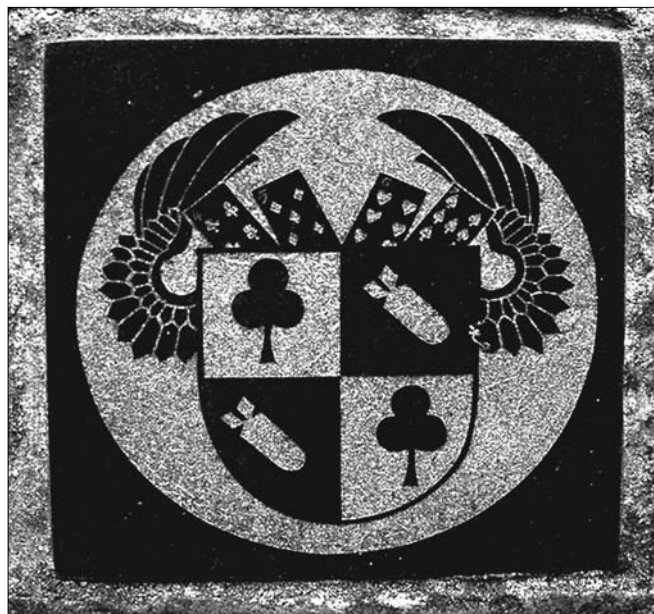


Part of the memorial to the Kingsley crew of the "The Belle of Boston," which crashed on take-off in heavy fog. The plaque at the bottom of the frame reads: "This display was dedicated on the 29th of August 2004 in memory of the crew of the B-24 Liberator bomber 'The Belle of Boston' which crashed on Frettenham Common on the 8th of May 1944." The story of this crew and crash can be found at the 458th BG's website, directly linked on Richard's site at <http://www.airfields.fotopic.net/c1721577.html>. There are six other photos of this memorial.

Richard's "Airfields and Aviation Memorials," is garnering well-deserved attention. At the time of this writing, the site has received nearly 631,000 hits, with almost 345,000 of those this year alone. He has also started a forum, The Airfield Information Exchange, which is gathering steam. Here visitors can post questions (and answers) about any airfield, one aspect on this well-organized site. Follow Richard on Facebook, where he has a page for both of these sites.



Beautifully carved insignia of the 784th BS, at the memorial to the 466th BG. The group was known as the "Flying Deck", with clubs being the "suit" of this particular squadron. The 785th, 786th, and 787th squadrons were diamonds, hearts, and spades, respectively. Note that upper part of this insignia contains all four suits, befitting 784th's role in providing lead crews for the group. Promising crews transferred in from the other three squadrons for evaluation and specialized training.



Heigham Street Memorial honoring the 458th BG, 753rd BS's Doolley crew. For the story of this aircraft's crash, with the loss of all crew, see the 458th's website, <http://www.458bg.com/crewba80-doolley.htm>.

LETTER FROM THE FRIENDS

From Trevor Bond, Friends of the Second Air Division Memorial Library

Dear Heritage League members and friends,

I am often asked how I became involved with "The Friends." A few years ago I traced my own late father's army career during WWII in the 6th Airborne and his landing on Sword beach with the assistance of a now late uncle on Dad's side of the family who was a member of the 9th Para which dropped on the Mer-ville Guns at midnight. My wife Jane and I have now been pilgrims making the trip out to France every year for the last 12 years and we are only now beginning to understand what these people went through for us.

It is with this background that on losing my mum a few years ago, when looking through her old family photos I came across some old photographs and press clippings of my Aunt Mary and memories of helping her scatter her husband (my uncle Bill's) ashes in Sexton Wood and at Hardwick where he was stationed in the war came back to me. It was at this time I decided that I, like Dad and Uncle Sid, would like to research

Uncle Bill's military history. So, together with the help of my cousin Robert (Bill and Mary's son) in Florida I am still piecing together details of Uncle Bill's time in England. If anybody has any information about Uncle Bill (aka Wilton Oliver.) I would be most happy to hear from them (email trevorbond@live.co.uk). I know he was a Quarter Master Sergeant. One story tells of him getting a flight on a mission as a tail gunner, not authorised! To let Aunt Mary know that he had got back safely, the plane passed very low over my grandfather's house at Bedingham; so low that it made the chimney pots and everything inside the house rattle, for which my grandfather gave him a ticking off on his next visit!

On arriving early one evening for a Friend's Committee Meeting which are held at Hardwick I decided to look around the walls at some of the memorabilia. I noticed one photograph of airmen standing on and below a plane at Hardwick and on closer inspection, low and behold there was Uncle Bill. A very proud feeling came over me and reminded me of the importance of the Friends in passing on the history and the sacrifices these brave men made.

WEDDING AT HETHEL

In the last issue of the Herald, Penny Daynes informed us of her upcoming wedding to fellow Hethel Museum volunteer Steve Mendham. On Saturday, July 11, Penny and Steve were wed in the museum chapel, in a scene reminiscent of the mid-1940's.

The couple arrived in style in a 1942 troop carrier, complete with anti-aircraft guns. The bride was dressed in a period white wedding dress and the groom in a USAAF colonel's uniform. Many guests followed suit, with clothing from the era.

The ceremony included the following prayer, written by Penny and Steve:

"Dear Lord, today we ask you for your blessing, not only for our marriage, and life together but for this sacred building that for many years has depicted your image. We want you to bless all the souls now in your care and send a blessing of our own 'God bless you, we will never forget you.' Now we ask you all to put your hands together and hold a thought for a moment for the ones who can no longer be with us in body,



Penny and Steven pose by a jeep, with friend and fellow Hethel volunteer, Steve Damm and his wife Agnes. These couples obviously have a future as re-enactors.

but are with us in spirit."

Among the readings, which it would behoove us all to remember at all times, was the following, from I Corinthians 13:4-7:

Love is patient, love is kind, it does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered,

It keeps no record of wrong.

Love does not delight in evil, but rejoices with the truth,

It always protects, always trusts,

always hopes and always perseveres.

The Heritage League wish Penny and Steve Mendham the greatest happiness going forward together.

[Photos were provided by Kelsey McMillan and Penny Mendham, and some of the material was drawn from the article appearing in the 389th Bomb Group Newsletter, Fall, 2009 issue. More photos appear there as well.]



389th BG vet and 2ADA Past-President Earl Zimmerman reads a selection from Corinthians. Earl brought a bracelet, made for his wife from gold sovereigns in his escape kit, for Penny to wear on the occasion.



Topped by sugar figures of the couple in their period dress, this impressive cake's layers were supported by pillars of .50 caliber shells. A B-24 nestles in the frosting of the second layer, and a sword stands at the ready for the command, "Cut the cake."

IRA WEINSTEIN

What Does Freedom Means To Me



Ira Then—1942

This is not my story in its entirety, but a few captured moments of my six months as a POW in Stalag Luft I. Freedom is the ability to remain true to yourself without fears of prejudice. Freedom was purchased with the blood of those who have gone before us.

On September 27, 1944, I was flying in a B-24 Liberator as a bombardier-navigator from Tibenham, England, the home of the 445th Bomb Group.

Our mission was to

bomb a target in Germany near the city of Kassel. The Kassel Mission became infamous as one of the most concentrated air battles ever, resulting in more than 200 planes crashing—the most in a single day. In total 118 American men died and 122 were taken prisoner. Only three of the ten men in my crew got out alive. My plane was one of 31 of 35 B-24s shot out of the sky by 150 Luftwaffe fighters within 3 minutes.

By the time I bailed out, I figure I was at the most maybe at 2,500 feet. I popped my chute and I was on the ground. That was it. I never had time enough to enjoy what it was really like being in the parachute.

I landed up in the hills, where a bunch of kids were picnicking. That night I hid under trees up in the forest. It was a pine forest. The pine needles under the trees were inches thick, so I buried myself under those pine needles, and then during the day I wouldn't move. I'd only move at night. I thought, 'I'll make my way to Switzerland.' Well, I don't swim, and every time I came to a body of water I couldn't get across. I hid out for a couple of days, but by that time I realized that they were shooting and looking for guys. I realized I'm never going to get out of this.

I was scared, but I wasn't hungry because at night I'd go down in the valley, I'd get some potatoes or whatever they're growing, and that's what I'd eat. I came to a little town, I think it was called Nesselrode [Nentershausen] or something, and there must have been 20 churches in that town. So I

thought, "If I'm ever going to get a fair shake, it'll be in a place where they had so many churches."

I walked down into the town, and I looked like Murder Incorporated. Because our plane was on fire, I was covered with soot, and I hadn't shaved for maybe a week. I'm walking through the center of town and a kid about 17 years old sidles up alongside of me and said, "You're one of the American fliers they're looking for, aren't you?" I said, "Yeah. How come you speak such good English?" "Oh..." he said, "I went to high school in Milwaukee." I said to him, "What's going to happen to me?" He said, "I'll take you to the burgomeister." Sure enough, he took me to the burgomeister's house, and the burgomeister's wife gave me a bowl of potato soup. And I remember that was the best thing I ever ate.

There was an SS battalion in that area, and the burgomeister said, "If I turn you over to them, you're going to be dead. So if you behave yourself, and you don't try and run away, I'll call the Luftwaffe and they can come and get you. There you'll be safe."

About two hours later, two guys in beautiful Luftwaffe uniforms showed up with a car, and they took me to a little garrison. It was walled in, and they threw me in this room. I think there were maybe 20 other guys in it. There were two badly wounded enlisted men, and I was the ranking officer. I looked around—these two guys had had no medical attention, they'd been there two or three days already, and don't ask me why I did this or how I did it, but I was always cocky. I got a hold of the guard, and I told him I want to see the commanding officer. It would have been a joke if I wasn't so scared. This commanding officer looked just like Erich Von Stroheim, remember him? First I saluted and I gave my name, my rank and my serial number, and I said, "Sir, according to the Geneva Convention, we have two very badly wounded men, they're entitled to some medical care." He came out from behind his desk with a riding crop, and he hit me across the cheek. He split my cheek open, and he said, "I'll tell you about the Geneva Convention. You're bombing our schools and our churches and you're killing our people." Then he told the guard to take me away. So I went back to the room, and about two hours later they came and took the two injured men away.

Before being shipped to the northernmost part of Germany, I was relieved of my warm flight suit and given a light overcoat furnished by the Red Cross. When we got to the railroad station which would take us to Stalag Luft I, they lined everybody up and they made us all stand at attention. Some SS guys took control then, and they were calling out the roll. When they

came to my name, Weinstein, they made me step up in front of the group. Then they put everybody else at rest, and they left me standing at attention. I think it was about two hours till that train came, I stood at attention, and finally we got on the train. I spent from October until March 1945 in this camp. It was the coldest of months and we all suffered greatly from the cold.

When we got to the interrogation center, they threw us all in cells, and first they'd run the temperature way up, then they'd turn it off, but I was only there two days as I remember, maybe overnight or two nights. And then they brought me in to a guy to interrogate me. We had seen a movie that showed just what to expect when you were going to be interrogated, and it would be laughable because it was just like that if you weren't so scared. They told us, you just give your name, rank and serial number. Don't try and outsmart them or get in a conversation with them.

I stood my ground. Finally, he brings in a guy, and he says to me, "Lieutenant, you don't have to tell me anything. I know all about you. Your mother is Lillian Seligman. She lives in Rochester, New York, with your sister. She lives at 47 Rutledge Drive. You were born and raised in Chicago. You worked for Goldblatt's." They had a dossier on me that was better than the Americans had; knew everything about me. "You were with the 445th Bomb Group. Your mission was to Kassel. You were the 702nd Squadron. Your squadron command was Lieutenant Colonel Jones." So I didn't have to answer anything, I just kept giving them my name. "Now, all you have to tell us is, where were you flying that mission and what was your target?" I'd say, "Name, Ira P. Weinstein, first lieutenant, 0694482." So finally he got pissed off. Then he says to me, "You are not an American. You're a German. Your name is Weinstein. You were my neighbor in Frankfurt. You're a shpy." If you're a shpy, you're gonna get shot. I didn't give in.

I could tell his patience was waning. Finally he calls in a guy, a guy comes about six feet tall, in a black body suit with a rubber hose. Then the interrogator's asking me questions and this guy's slapping that hose. But we saw that in the movie. I was plenty scared, believe me, I wasn't gonna laugh like I can now. And he finally says to me, "Well, if you don't want to tell us what we want to know I'm going to have to turn you over to this guy." I stuck with it, and finally he says to the guy, "Take him out of here," and I went back to my room.

The next day I was out of there. However, when I went back to my room, they sent in a German officer in a flying suit with a lot of ribbons, he came in and he said, "Cigarette, Lieutenant?" I said, "No, I don't smoke." So he sits down on the couch. He says, "You know, you're a flying officer. I'm a flying officer. I'd just like to talk to you about what it was like. Can we discuss it?" I said, "No." "Well, you know, we're compatriots." "Sorry." So he left.

Once I got on that train in Frankfurt and I knew I was on the way to the POW camp, we sort of felt that we were out of it to a point. The little town of Barth, where they emptied us out of the train, was maybe five kilometers from the camp. As we were all marching there, some kid about 12 years old pitch-forked me in the ass. So I have two Purple Hearts. One, I had been wounded prior to that, and I've got one that's on my ass. As we finally come up over a hill we heard a terrible sound. "Ohhhhhh, Water! Wa-a-ater!" We thought, what the hell are we getting into? What used to happen is, as soon as we'd hear the train in the camp pull into town, we knew it was more POWs. Every fellow would run out of the barracks, line up along the fence where the new guys had to come in, and we'd start wailing. So you'd come in and think, "What are we getting into?" That was a way of greeting the new POWs. Then they took all our clothes, and they gave us a shower and a delousing.

I don't know if anybody told you about the fact that all the Jews were segregated in the camp at some point. And when they moved all the Jews into a separate compound, they didn't take me out of my room. They just missed me. So I went to Zemke, who was the CO at that time, and I told him, "Listen, they didn't move me. I'm Jewish." He said, "Shut up. Go back to your room. You don't know how lucky you are." So I never was with all the rest of those guys all that time.

Our diet consisted of mainly cabbage, potatoes and rutabagas. Once in a while the guards would provide us with a dead horse, but I was never inclined for this kind of meat and never touched it. We slept on beds made of thin mattresses upon wooden slats and there were 20 men for a 12 x 20 foot room. Our physical treatment was not bad. The mental treatment was a lot worse. Our anguish was about whether we would survive at all. Would we get ever out of there? Would we be shot before the war would end? Since I am Jewish I had extra concerns. Heinrich Himmler, who was responsible for the coordination and extermination of 6 million Jewish people, once visited Stalag Luft I and instructed our commander to have all the Jews taken out and shot.



In order to give some chance of "lump-free" powdered eggs cooked in the POW camp, Ira fabricated this eggbeater from a slat from his bed and a sardine can, melting down the rivets to attach the handle. A great invention for Mother Necessity.

THOSE WHO MAKE EVERYTHING POSSIBLE

As another year draws to a rapid close, we wish to acknowledge the special contributions of a number of individuals.

I. An Honoring and Remembering

The following individuals who, in renewing their memberships in the Heritage League last year and this, made contributions “in memory of” and “in honor of” someone important to them:

Maria Bachman in Honor of Franklyn Bachman
 Susan Risley in Memory of J. Audley Risley
 Steven Risley in Memory of J. Audley Risley
 Paul Howell in Honor of Leonard R. Howell, Jr.
 John L. Chamberlain in Memory of Ann L. Chamberlain
 Janet Leavitt in Memory of Russell C. Philpott
 Margaret Heckmann in Honor of Howard Heckmann
 Milton Veynar in Memory of Gladys Veynar
 Jerry Gore in Memory of 2nd Lt. Marion E. Gore
 Karen O'Brien in Memory of Richard C. O'Brien
 Jacqueline Bromm in Memory of Frederick H. Bromm
 Roger Veitch in Memory of Max F. Veitch
 Barbara Coverdale in Memory of Dean Moyer
 Jean Marsteller in Honor of Glen Marsteller
 Norman Canfield in Memory of Norman J. Canfield
 Geraldine Suskind in Memory of Leo W. Ryan
 Patricia Merrifield in Honor of George W. Michel
 Derby Watkins in Memory of Maltby Watkins
 Mari Strombom-Johnson in Honor of Frederick Strombom
 Maxwell Johnson in Honor of Frederick Strombom
 Kirkland Johnson in Honor of Frederick Strombom
 Karen Cormia in Honor of Francis and Robert Birmingham
 Sally Duran, in Memory of Charles E Cupp, Jr.
 Patricia Botic in Memory of Alfred Brunner
 Paul Brunner in Memory of Maj. Alfred .F. Brunner
 Roger Estelle in Memory of Weems E. Estelle
 Shary Whalen in Honor of Robert Birmingham
 Barbara Burzenski in Memory of Stephen Burzenski
 Mark Arnett in Memory of Charles Arnett
 Reed Hammans in Memory of Willis “Bill” Beasley
 Katherine Hart in Memory of Dean H. Hart (Pilot)
 Billy Sheely Johnson in Memory of William F. (Bill) Sheely
 Brian Mahoney in Memory of James J. Mahoney
 Brian Mahoney in Honor of Irene Hurner
 Stephen Sills in Memory of William R. Sills (2010)
 Sue Christle in Memory of William R. Sills (2010)

II. An Appreciation

In the last 3 issues of the "Heritage Herald," our list of contributors has steadily grown. We wish to recognize the following individuals for the important role they play in the writing and production of the Herald. Some are stalwarts who have been involved for years and whose constancy is a source of inspiration. Others are people who may have no direct affiliation with the Heritage League, but who nonetheless were ready to lend a helping hand. Some having even volunteered to become regular feature writers, and almost all have ongoing projects of their own.

The following people have contributed written material and/or photos, have allowed us to use their materials, have agreed to be featured, or have responded to requests with that little bit of detail that enriches. A sincere thank you to you all. In alphabetical order:

Dave Arnett, Paul Arnett, Jonathan Bickel, Trevor Bond, Mark Brotherton, Linda Alice Dewey, Patricia Everson, Richard Flagg, David Hastings, Johan Kuiper, Colin Mann, Tim McCann, Kelsey McMillan, Alex Mena, Penny (Daynes) Mendham, Wade Meyers, Libby Morgan, Lloyd Morris, Elliott Mulhall, Mike Nicholls, Siebe Overwijk, Steven Puhl, Marjorie Shiers, Evan Thomas, Catherine Thomson, Carla van der Heijde, Mike Voisin, and Ira Weinstein.

And to the Herald and website "staff." Introducing The Band (of Brothers and Sisters): Brian Mahoney, lead guitar and vocals; Carol Holliday, rhythm guitar and vocals; Marybeth Dyer, keyboard and vocals; Bob Books, bass guitar, background vocals, sound and lighting; Lisa Niehoff, drums and vocals; Irene Hurner, Equipment Manager and vocals; Sue Risley, Office of Business and Finance; Vicki Brooks Warning, Senior UK Correspondent and background vocals;

Eventually, as the Russian Army advanced closer, the Germans fled. Our camp was liberated and I was flown back to France, a free man. I know now how that experience changed my life and my understanding of what Freedom means. It is very simple: to appreciate being able to walk out in the open and see the sky, meant I was free. In surviving being a Jewish man in a prisoner of war camp in Nazi Germany, I was able to sort out what was important in my life...and to understand that the price of freedom is not free.

Ira Weinstein, served in the U.S. Army Air Corps during WWII as a bombardier-navigator. He flew 25 missions before being shot down during that fateful day, 27 September 1944. As a resident in the Chicago area, he celebrated his 90th birthday in 2009.

Ed Zobac, Fan Club coordinator and Yoda stand-in; Erin Mahoney, Intergalactic Tour arrangements and Emergency Responder; Tom Chang, Art Director; Miguel Dominguez, assistant to Mr. Chang, Reality Checker; Rick Sharpe, Technical Advisor and .ftp fairy; Reed Hammans, man behind the curtain.

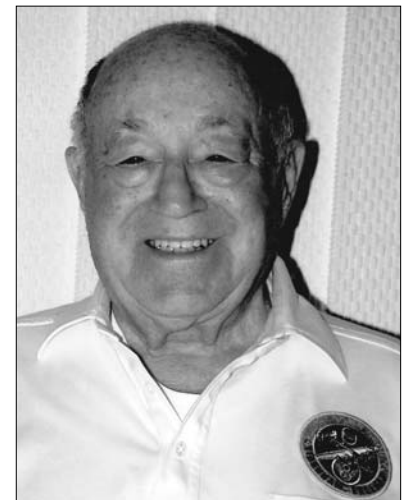
III. An Appeal

We are nearing the end of the year, and you will soon be receiving the annual membership renewal notice for 2010. We would encourage you to take advantage of the opportunity to not only re-up with us, but also to consider joining the Friends, to support the Library, or to buttress the operations of the Heritage League itself. Even small donations make a big difference to all three groups. And, as you can see from the list at the beginning of this article, all contributions can be designated in the name of someone you would like to see honored.

Our biggest need is new members. We would like you to consider something like a gift membership for your children or others you think might be interested. At \$15.00 per year for a full membership or \$8.00 per year for a youth membership, we are inexpensive (not to be confused with cheap). In addition, if you have friends who may be interested in the League's ongoing activities and our purpose of honoring and remembering, please feel free to forward an e-mail copy of the Herald to them. We can also send a limited number of hard copies of each issue to non-members who may find it of interest. Please send such requests to Reed Hammans. (Contact information is available on the back cover.)

Thanks for considering our request to raise the League's profile and increase our membership base.

Major parts of this article were from an interview of Ira by author Aaron Elson, appearing on the Kassel Mission Historical Society website. Editorial review and additional text courtesy of Carol Holliday. Ira Weinstein contributed all photographs. Compiled and edited by Lisa Niehoff. (To read the entire interview go to <http://kasselmission.com/index.htm>. Click on True Accounts, followed by Interviews.)



Ira Now—2009

THE VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT

—By *Jonathan Bickel*

Three years ago, my father Lt. Col. Jonathan Ray Bickel, Navigator in the 467th Bomb Group, 790th Squadron cracked several ribs and broke his pelvis in a snowmobile accident. While recovering several months later, he suffered a pulmonary embolism, which would have killed him if not for the miraculous TPA clot buster wonder drug. Needless to say, we were extremely fortunate to have a second chance to conduct his interview for the Veterans History Project. I would like to strongly encourage you not to wait because time is very precious, and you may not get a second chance.

A great way to preserve the legacy of the Second Air Division for future generations is to preserve the individual oral histories of the veterans who served. In 2000, the United States Congress created the Veterans History Project with Public Law 106-380. It passed with unanimous support and was signed into law by President Clinton. The project “collects, preserves, and makes accessible the personal accounts of American war veterans so that future generations may hear directly from veterans and better understand the realities of war.”

Before interviewing the Second Air Division veteran, it is



J. Ray Bickel, dashing young man destined to become a navigator in the 790th BS at Rackheath. Discharged in 1945 as a 1st Lt., he remained in the USAF Reserves, eventually retiring as a Lt. Col. (See father and son in the photos from the Chicago convention.)

extremely important to check out the requirements for the interview at <http://www.loc.gov/vets/about.html>. The veteran interview must be at least 30 minutes long. If it isn't, it will not be accepted. In addition, the interview may not be recorded on VHS tape. Only one veteran may be interviewed at a time. The requirements are clearly stated on the website, and they must be followed or else the project will not be accepted. (A good place to start is with the link to Frequently Asked Questions [FAQ's]. There, you will also be able to download a Field Kit, as well as the interview guidelines.)

If the Second Air Division veteran has passed away, his or her legacy can still be submitted to the project. There are requirements of a memoir of at least 20 pages, a photo

collection of at least 20 pictures, and/or letters in order for the history to be accepted. No three dimensional objects may be submitted. Many but not all of the submissions and photos will be uploaded to the Veterans History Project website and can be accessed anywhere with internet access. However, all of the projects will be stored at the Library of Congress or annex.

Last April, my English students interviewed several veterans from our local community. The students then took their interviews along with some of the veterans to Washington D.C. and hand-delivered them to the Director of the Project. I took the interview of my dad along with his autobiographical account of his wartime experience. I was extremely impressed with the dedication of the VHP staff in their mission to preserve the memories and legacies of those who served for future generations. Please feel free to contact me at jbickel@elcosd.org if you have any questions.



Still dashing, J. Ray stands with snowmobile at ready in front of his home in Richland, PA. Also at ready, his 240-pound English Mastiff “Lucky”.

Web Pages We Wike - by Siwwy Wabbit

File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Help

http://WebpagesWeWike.htm/Siwwy_Wabbit

In this issue we feature five new sites showing different approaches to preserving our history. The first is a 448th-related site that is the backbone of a major project. Two others chronicle individual 466th BG crews, and the remaining two are commercial sites that provide a lot of history as an integral part of what they do.

► **Happy Warriors - Life and Death with the 448th: <http://happywarriors.co.uk>**

This site is dedicated to the development of a short documentary on the 448th BG. The founder of the site, Evan Thomas, grew up listening to stories of his grandfather's service with the British 11th Armoured Division (The Black Bull), developing a fascination with World War II along the way. After he read an article on the US military in the UK today, he tells us, "I eventually found myself drawn to the origins of the Americans in Britain. Then he heard about Patricia Everson's work, and "I have been pestering her ever since!" (*For Patricia's story, see the Herald, issue 42.*)

Evan continues, "The film features interviews with 448th veterans recorded at their 2007 reunion, telephone interviews, archive film, photographs and more. The aim is to create a collage of memories and experiences from 1943 to today and to present it in an informative and poetic way. The film will be available as a free download and eventually as a DVD to buy with extra content."

Part of the project entails a request for veterans and their family members to create a DVD tribute, not limited to the 448th. Viewers are asked to submit a one-page



The photographer photographed. Evan Thomas videotaping for the "Happy Warriors" project at Madingley American Cemetery, November, 2008.

document with text and any images they would care to add. The resulting materials will be compiled and included in the DVD release. Additional information can be found on this part of the website: <http://happywarriors.co.uk/archives/339>.

You can keep up with the project on Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, and Twitter, through direct links on the site.

► **Arnold B. Dieterman - US Army Air Force: <http://www.deiterman.com>**

Nadene Dieterman Greni has put up a tribute to her father's wartime service with the 466th BG's Maxton crew. Conceived in the format of a scrapbook, the site is well-researched, visually gorgeous, and easy to navigate.

Individual pages are primarily composed of the scanned hand-written diary of Arnold B. Dieterman, contemporaneous letters and U.S. newspaper articles, and photos of memorabilia, people, and aircraft. The account starts with several pages devoted to Mr. Dieterman's earliest days and training in the USAAF, and ends with a type-written transcript of his diary. Along the way, the careful reader is also treated to bits and pieces of the family's history. After a brief introduction, the viewer can enter the site and choose to page forward or go to a table of contents with links to each page.

Don't visit this site unless you've got some time to spare. This compelling presentation may well lead you to, "Oh, just one more page," for an extended period. All in all, a well-conceived and executed addition to the history of one group of the Second Air Division.

► **466th Bomb Group 785th Bomb Squadron Crew #555: <http://555navigator.blogspot.com/>**

This site, actually the first blog featured in the Herald, was put up by another Next-Gen'er, the son of the Bridge-man crew's navigator, 2nd Lt. J.W. Smith. It appears that shortly after the blog went up in April this year, the son of one of the crew's gunners saw it, and the reunion was on. In July, the daughter of Mel Westbrook, another pilot for whom Lt. Smith served as navigator, was informed of the site's existence, and Westbrook and Smith, who had not seen each other since May 1945, were soon in touch.

Among the other entries are a description of celestial navigation, including some very nice photos of memorabilia, and photos from Sweden, where the Westbrook crew flew clandestine missions for ATC. We hope that the blogger continues to add to his site, which clearly shows how readily available and relatively easy-to-use technology is reuniting people and their families. This type of effort can only strengthen our ties across generations as we move forward in preserving this important history.

We now focus on two “dot com” sites:

[Note: As befits our organizational status, the following overviews are not intended to be advertisements or endorsements of the sites, but rather focus on the historical aspects of both that would be of interest to our readership.]

► **Wade Myers Studios:**
<http://wademeyersart.tripod.com>

Aviation artist Wade Myers has all but put his studio on-line, and the tour is interesting and fun. Of most immediate interest to our readers will be the pages on the Fourth Fighter group. One, in the “On-line Stories” link, contains the 1944 logbook of 4th FG ace Don Gentile, as well as several related photos and a “Crash Narrative,” written by Wade, concerning Gentile’s famous accidental wheels-up landing on April 13, 1944—not coincidentally his final mission.

A second can be found through the link “Raphael Collection.” This page contains nicely-captioned photos from Eagle Squadron member and 336th FS pilot Lt. Jack Raphael. (I almost missed it, thinking it was probably something about the painter.)

There are also some other 4th FG pages, including a 2001 reunion “debriefing” and 2002 trip to Debden, both well-illustrated with pictures from the events.

We asked Wade what sparked his interest in the 4th FG. It turns out that, as a high school student, he picked up a copy of Grover C. Hall’s *1000 Destroyed* at the Barksdale AFB base exchange. He liked P-51’s, and thought that since Hall was Public Relations Officer for the group, it would be a “good read.”

“Little did I know,” he says, “that Hall’s words would really open up a whole new world for me. The figures came to life within those pages. Since then through my art, I’ve met a fair number of the 4th’s veterans and I even made a special trip to England to walk the hallowed ground of Debden airdrome.”

As noted above, this is an artist’s site, and there are numerous pages illustrating this (so to speak). Of particular interest are two at the links “In progress” and “In Progress, Pt II.” There you will find working sketches of different paintings, showing the process of how the vision is turned into reality. For those of us completely lacking in artistic ability, this is fascinating. (And as intimated above, there actually IS a tour of the studio available.)

Wade told us, “I hope that my love of art and aviation history comes through the pages of my site.” It does.

You can also follow Wade on Facebook, through a link on his site, where additional content is available.

► **The Yellow Airplane:**
<http://yellowairplane.com>

This endearingly odd site is first and foremost a commercial site. However, it also contains a fair amount of history, not the least of which is a Willow Run “museum,” available directly at **http://yellowairplane.com/Book_Reviews/Warren_Benjamin_Kidder/WillowRun_Cover.html**.

This section contains a review of a book about Willow Run, and a statement from F.C. “Hap” Chandler, who has been so instrumental in the founding and development of the Mighty Eighth Museum. (The book reviewer’s mother built B-24’s at Consolidated’s San Diego plant.) The pages contain a brief bio of Charles E. Sorensen, designer of Ford’s Willow Run plant, and numerous other features about this most productive B-24 Liberator factory. There’s even a link to the script announcement about a proposed film project dramatizing the work there. Be sure to take the Willow Run Tour.

The site is a bit difficult—or perhaps “disorienting” is a better term—to navigate, so the viewer may want to use



“Illustrated” magazine photo from the Raphael Collection: “Don Patchen, Robert Hobert, Don Emerson, Jim Goodson and Bob Tussey admire the 336th scoreboard.”

the site map available on the homepage. In addition to the Willow Run pages, you will find a listing of air museums, as well as the occasional political statement. Of course, you may also find it fun just to poke around a bit.

HENRY FORD'S WILLOW RUN BOMBER PLANT - THE "TAX TURN"

—by *Steven Puhl, Willow Run Historian*



Our newest contributor is Steven Puhl. Photos in his office show Steven's passions: The Ford Willow Run plant and the B-24. Retiring after nearly 32 working for GM in the Powertrain division at Willow Run, Steven remains the Willow Run Historian and is a lifetime member of the Yankee Air Museum, home of the annual airshow "Thunder over Michigan." Steven is also a moderator on armyairforces.com, where he has made an incredible 1,362 posts since joining in late 2006. (His pre-GM career of 8 years as a high school teacher may have been good preparation for his moderator's role.) He has a number of active threads there, including an ongoing series on Ford Willow Run, and one simply headed "B-24 versus B-17." The latter, though started in June, 2007, not surprisingly still attracts new posts. If you have not yet visited armyairforces.com, this thread alone is worth the little effort it takes to register and contribute. There you will find that Steven has well-earned his site descriptor of "Amiable Historian."

When Henry Ford had his architects lay out the design of the mammoth FO WR Plant, he ensured that it would not be stretched out across two counties (Wayne and Washtenaw) for tax purposes.

While the plant itself was laid out in the form of an "L" to make the best use of the real estate, the plant's final assembly line(s) also took a "sharp right" (south) where the two assembly lines used turntables to rotate the A/C's 90 degrees, the famous "tax turns." Henry also had plans to use the Willow Run facility at war's end toward continued aviation endeavors so that the "tax turn" would have continued to profit him well.

In the photo of a scale model of Willow Run (right), the gentlemen are standing at what would be the north side of the plant facing the assembly area. The "stick" model used during pre-planning of the plant clearly shows the right turn. The architectural firm of

Kahn and Associates still retains some prints of that era, but many have been lost.

I thought I'd also share this aerial photograph looking "due EAST" across the massive FO WR plant with the WR Airport to the right. Looking closely at the photo, one can see the "L" shape of the plant, with the leg of the "L" in the foreground (administrative offices). The far east end of the plant is at the top of the photo and shows the right turn of the assembly area. The A/C's took a "hard right" 90 degrees because the end of the building was also the end of the county (Washtenaw)." Strange were the ways of Henry Ford, but it made great



Plant and Airport

business sense for the original plant.

Once the A/C's pivoted after stations 20/21 the remainder of the "assembly process" was comprised of applying S/Ns, ID's, USAAF insignia, inspections, fueling and miscellaneous button-up items. From there, the finished Liberators had their compass calibrated at the "Compass Rose" and had their .50 cal. machine guns checked out at the "gun butt."

The A/C's were then queued on the tarmac having been accepted by the AAF, and in the accompanying photo, they are actually sitting in another county (Wayne) awaiting their fly-away.



FO WR Scale Model



The last of many - June 28, 1945



FO WR Tax Turn



B-24s in queue

Continued from pg. 12, D-Back Baseball Honors

volunteered his organization (or I should say his sons) to take over. Unfortunately he passed away before seeing the first lunch run by his sons.

While planning the 2009 lunch, Dave Arnett, treasurer for the Arnett Institute, suggested we do a baseball game instead of lunch. We called the D-Backs and they were excited with the idea and since we are a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, they offered us a deal above and beyond our expectations. We invited the Collings Foundation to join us and everything fell into place. We extended our game seating to include all WWII veterans.

The game was a winner and one of the few times this year the D-Backs were able to beat the Rockies. Our veterans had a great time although one of them got hit in the head by a foul ball. "What? You weren't wearing your flak helmet?"

someone joked after he knew he wasn't seriously hurt. As great as it was, we missed the intimacy of the lunches so next year we will do both, an Arizona Liberator lunch in March and a WWII game in April.

The game did the Arnett Institute some good, too. About a week after the game Boeing called us and offered to help sponsor some of our future projects. I guess this means next year we'll have to push the B-17 rides.

[Ed. Note: The Arizona Liberator Group can be found at <http://arizonaliberatorgroup.org>. To learn more about the Arnett Institute and its projects, visit <http://arnettinstitute.org>]

From pg. 15, Report of the Trust Librarian

We are Proud of the Library We Work In!

Your Memorial Library was and continues to be a great gift to the people of Norwich and Norfolk, and I can't think of a better memorial for the airmen of the 2nd Air Division who lost their lives so that we might have the freedom we enjoy today.

If any of you have ever doubted the benefit or importance of libraries in our society you might be interested to hear these words by your new President, Barack Obama from his

address to the American Library Association in 2005. I leave you with his words...

"If you open up Scripture, the Gospel according to John, it starts: 'In the beginning was the Word.' Although this has a very particular meaning in Scripture, more broadly what it speaks to is the critical importance of language, of writing, of reading, of communication, of books as a means of transmitting culture and binding us together as a people. More than a building that houses books and data, the library represents a window to a larger world, the place where we've always come to discover big ideas and profound concepts that help move the human story forward."

the write stuff

book notices
& reviews

DONALD'S STORY

By: Sandra D. Merrill

Edition reviewed

Softcover, 225 pages

Tebidine Publishing, Berlin, Maryland, 1996

ISBN 0-9649541-4-1

Reviewed by Lisa Niehoff

Sandra D. Merrill has accomplished in *'Donald's Story'* what few authors have, the ability to capture the essence of memories past in this touching, bittersweet biographical memoir of her uncle, Captain Donald R. Emerson.

Embroidered like a tapestry, Merrill's book weaves us through the intimate details of this young fighter pilot, beginning with Donald's early years as a chubby-cheeked baby boy on the family farm in Joliet, North Dakota to his eventual assignment in the Eighth Air Force elite 4th Fighter Group "the spearhead of the world's mightiest air force" based out of England. Merrill delivers beautifully, three stories combined into one riveting narrative, through his letters back home, from those of his family, friends and squadron mates.

Known as a 'cocky little rooster' this young and ambitious 18-year-old yearns for independence and adventure away from the family farm. Donald originally wants to enlist in the Coast Guard, but abandons that idea, favoring air corps mechanics training. Due to the myriad of mechanics and a shortage of armorers in the air force, however, he is transferred to Lowry Field to begin schooling as an armorer. Because the American military academy could turn out only a fraction of the aviation cadets needed for combat flight training, and in order to recruit enough mentally and physically qualified candidates, the US Army lowered the minimum age from 21 to 19, and replaced the mandatory college education with a high school diploma. This enabled Donald to immediately file his application and he was soon classified as a cadet/pilot.

Merrill details the turn of events that set in motion the time and training needed for this country boy to begin the next phase as a fighter pilot in his P-51 Mustang. Classmates were scattered and friends parted company as assignments to the various fighter groups were handed out. Donald was honored to draw duty with the prestigious 4th FG and soon set sail for additional training with the 496th Fighter Group at Goxhill, and from there onto the 4th's base at Debden, under the command of Col. Donald J.M. Blakeslee.

It has been said that the fighter pilot is proud to serve and sacrifice, and Captain Donald R. Emerson did make the ultimate sacrifice. On December 25, 1944 while heading back from a mission during the Bulge, Donald had gotten separated from the Group and wound up taking on six FW 190's by himself. In spite of the odds, Donald shot down two of the German fighters before running out of ammunition and escaping under the clouds. Crossing into Allied territory, he was struck by flak from anti-aircraft fire, crashing near the Holland/Belgium border. His death was believed to have been instantaneous.

It was Merrill's own unique journey in search of inner peace that brings this story to life. I could feel Donald's presence with every turn of the page. It was well-written and easy to understand for young adults, WWII enthusiasts, and those old enough to remember. She interspersed details of the general history of the 4th fighter group along with typical WWII accounts and period photographs of family and squadron mates.

*That blood since spilt on battle fronts
Should not be spent in vain
But triumphs of a simple trust
Should calm this world again.*

C.F. Emerson

WINGS OF MORNING: The Story of the Last American Bomber Shot Down Over Germany in World War II

By: Thomas Childers

Edition reviewed:

Soft Cover, 273 pages

Perseus Books, Reading, Massachusetts, 1995

ISBN 0-201-40722-1

Reviewed by Lisa Niehoff

Wings of Morning offers a story within a story: the experiences of the 466th BG's Farrington crew, and the author's eventually successful research into what happened the day they were shot down. In the process, he brings us a personal tale, told with an historian's eye and a gifted writer's vivid imagery. Beginning with his grandmother's death, the author recalls his Uncle Howard and determines to find out what

happened to him and the rest of the men he flew with on a fateful day late in the war.

In the fall of 1942 Howard Goodner was eighteen years old and the world was at war. At the college movie theater he watched the newsreels of the events overseas. For weeks he waited, watching his classmates disappear. He knew he would get the call soon...and shortly Howard indeed received notice from the Selective Service. On March 23, 1943 he packed his bags and left his small hometown of Cleveland, Tennessee with 120 other young men to train and prepare for war.

After months of training, Howard finished radio operator's school at the top of his class and was offered the relatively safe job of being a communications instructor at Scott Field or one of the other radio schools around the country. However, for weeks Howard had gazed longingly at the silver bombers departing for Europe or the Pacific. He agonized over the decision for days, eventually entering combat duty. After some intensive training, Howard found himself in England with the 466th BG as part of the Farrington crew, waiting for his first bombing mission.

Chapter 3, "Wings of Morning" describing the crew's first mission, on the 5th of November, 1944, is perhaps the single best description of a mission in print. Starting with the distribution of orders and preparations on the bases, Childers follows the crew through briefing, the hazardous process of forming up, and the flight to and from the target. He accurately conveys the new crew's anxiety, and their reaction when, upon seeing what they thought was a very bad storm over the target, they discovered that the roiling, black cloud mass was flak they were about enter. Their astonishment only increased when all the planes of the squadron passed through the storm and emerged essentially unharmed.

But ultimately, this is not a book about combat, as such. It's a story of a crew and how they blended together in an effective team. To this end, the author spends time describing his uncle's life on the ground: hanging out with his flight

crew, touring England, dealing with the loss of fellow military mates, and writing endless letters home. While this would appear to be standard fare, Childers develops the story like an expert novelist, yielding flesh and blood humans whom we come to care about.

After successfully completing a number of missions, Howard's flight crew is offered the opportunity to become a lead crew. Accepting the position of lead brings extra danger and undoubtedly will lengthen their tour, since such crews fly infrequently. Farrington nearly turned the offer down, but ultimately decided he had no choice but to accept it.

This decision played out on April 21, 1945, when:

"B-24 going down!"

Henry Hiter, flying co-pilot in the element just ahead of Farrington, heard his tail gunner shout "Third squadron."

"Who is it?" The pilot asked.

"Lead plane, third squadron," the tail gunner said.

Hiter quickly studied his formation diagram. With a wrench in his stomach he saw that it was Farrington. They lived in the barracks together. He knew those guys. He had flown with them on the mission to Perleberg, had made the emergency landing with them in Brussels.

After a completely avoidable snafu, the B-24 "Black Cat", carrying the Farrington crew, has been hit by flak and is lost, with ten of the twelve crew killed. Such is the effectiveness of Childers's writing that, by this point in the story, the reader too may well feel Hiter's shock and the resulting devastation of the families who lost their loved ones.

Wings of Morning combines elements of solid, first-person history, a novel, a family's story, and a detective story. It is, in a sense, a classic memoir of World War II, written for 10 young men who could not write their own.

Chicago Postscript

Stunning reminder. Saturday's outing to the Museum of Science and Industry allowed many to get up-close and personal with a formidable captured German U-boat—a war secret at the time in 1944—and ponder anew what the Allies were up against with everything at stake and the relentless role of technology in warfare.



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