



HERITAGE HERALD

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2019 HERITAGE LEAGUE TRIP TO NORWICH, ENGLAND

June 9-14, 2019 *Registration package pages 11-14*

Registration Deadline March 30, 2019

2018 Convention Was All About Aviation Home of the Wright Brothers & USAF Museum

by Sue Risley

Dayton Ohio...home of the Wright Brothers, Air Force Institute of Technology, National Museum of the US Air Force, and the Packard Motor Company Museum...was home to our convention and reunion with the 8th Air Force Historical Society. We were in awe of the huge airpower display at the museum and especially pleased that several veterans were able to join us during the week. It is always so good to see the vets; the stories they shared are well worth the trip. Your Heritage League board was also gratified about the record attendance at our annual membership meeting.

Air Force Museum and Memorial Park

The highlight of our experience was the visit to the National Museum of the US Air Force at Wright Patterson Air Force base where we discovered and uncovered many essential facets of Air Force history. That day at the Museum was so worth the trip to Dayton. There was so much to see and hard to absorb all in one day. The museum, billed as the world's largest military aviation museum, was a remarkable sight. For those of you that use a Fitbit—I walked over 12,000 steps at the museum. That will tell you just how big it

is. We started with the 'early year's gallery' where we found a lot of information about the Wright Brothers and WWI.

From there we moved to the World War II gallery, which houses one of the world's top collections of WWII aircraft. There were many engaging exhibits tell-



The 'Strawberry Bitch.' Last USAF 'inventoried flight' of a B-24. This bird has been in the USAF Museum collection since legendary 467th BG CO Col. Albert Shower flew it there from Davis-Monthan AFB in 1959, 6 decades before Dayton acquired a B-17 for their collection. Photo: courtesy USAF Museum.

ing the proud story of the US Army Air Forces during the war. We found the *Strawberry Bitch*, the B-24 Liberator in this gallery. The *Strawberry Bitch* flew combat missions from North Africa in 1943-44 with the 512th Bomb Squadron. She was flown to the museum in May 1959. This beauty only cost \$336,000. I bet many of your houses cost more than that. I could picture my

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

—Marybeth Dyer

Hi Heritage League Members,



I am writing this on Veterans Day for a very special reason. I want to thank all Veterans, but especially each and every 2nd Air Division Veteran for their courage and service. You are truly the “Greatest Generation” and it is the Heritage League’s honor and privilege to continue your legacy. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

We are just coming off of a really successful convention in Dayton. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend but all reports came back that everyone had a great time, which is what these conventions should be all about. Here are some fun facts from the convention.

We had 51 people attend our annual meeting. That is a really good turn out and we thank everyone who attended. Most important we had 11 Veterans attend our meeting.

That is so impressive and we are honored they attended. I want to personally thank all of my friends on the Executive Committee, Sue Risley, Colleen Mersman, Brian Mahoney, Beverly Tomb, Irene Hurner, Jim Birmingham and Doug Dovey, who worked hard on the hospitality suite and Annual Meeting.

By now you should have received by mail, your annual membership renewal form along with registration information for our 2019 trip to Norwich. It provides the same basic information and registration form which is expanded on in this Herald edition.

Can I ask you for a favor? If you are planning to go to Norwich or are at all interested in going, please send your registration form as soon as possible. Our 2019 Convention committee is working hard to make this a memorable event but it would be helpful to know how many people we can expect. For those of us who went in 2014, it was an occasion we will never forget. We promise a good time and hope you will join us in 2019.

As you can see there is a lot going on and I would encourage all of our readers to consider being a volunteer for the Heritage League. We have a form on our website with information about areas where we could use some help: <http://heritageleague.org/volunteers.html>.

Our lives are filled with busy moments and events. Take some to remember a Veteran and thank them for their service. It will mean the world to them.

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dad, Lt. Col. J. Audley Risley, 446th BG, 705th Squadron, in his plane—*Mama's Li'l Angel*—getting ready for combat. He was very proud of his service and would have loved to see this beauty in all her glory at the museum.

Also looming large in the WWII gallery was the newly restored *Memphis Belle* B-17, the celebrated first bomber to complete 25 European combat missions. *Memphis Belle* was restored and recently placed on public display this past May. Of particular interest was another small display next to the *Memphis Belle* about the first bomber to achieve 25 European combat missions. And guess what? It was a B-24 named *Hot Stuff*

[See article ‘Who Was Really First?’ pg. 28.] There are also extensive displays of the European theatre as well as the Pacific. We could have stayed here all day reading just about WWII aviation. Nevertheless, there was a lot more to see.

The other galleries include the Korean War, Southeast Asia War, Cold War, and the Missile and Space eras. The fourth building has just recently opened to the public. It includes a research and development gallery, global research gallery and the William E. Boeing Presidential Gallery. We were able to walk through four of the aircraft, which were used by Presidents Roosevelt,

Truman, Eisenhower and SAM—Special Air Mission 26000, which was used by eight presidents—Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, George H.W. Bush and Clinton. What I found was that these planes were not as fancy as I was expecting. I thought the Presidents all traveled in style.

After we exited the museum, we took a walking tour of the Memorial Park next to the museum. It honors Air Force-associated units and people for their courageous service and sacrifice in the cause of freedom. There are over 500 memorials, including statues, plaques, trees and benches in the park. One of the memorials, which I found especially moving, is pictured. Engraved at the base is:

*We who came home must never forget
those who could not.*

It brought tears to my eyes thinking of Gold Star son, Ralph Winter (392nd BG). We got a bonus treat as we were walking through the Memorial Park; three planes—I did not know what kind they were but they reminded me of the Blue Angels—took off from the base. I love the sound and sight of these magnificent flying machines.

Packard Museum

Dayton, where the Wright brothers went from bicycle makers to powered flight inventors and aircraft makers, is also the home of Packard Motor Museum located at the site of its first dealership. It was very enjoyable and provided a special highlight of the day as Heritage League members viewed the museum's vintage classic automobiles.

Reunion Activities

We had a wonderful reunion dinner on Friday night together with the 392nd Bomb Group Association.



453rd BG veterans Russell Neatrour and 'Mo' Morris sharing a light moment. Photo: Brian Mahoney.

Brian Mahoney (467th & 492nd BG son), past-president of the Heritage League and current VP of Volunteers, wrote a beautiful candle lighting ceremony. We were pleased to have veterans Russell Neatrour

(453rd) and Robert Hall, (489th) assist in the ceremony. Robert's great-grand daughter, Olivia Koester, accompanied him. Also lighting candles were Ben Jones, 389th

and President of the 8th Air Force Historical Society, Mary Lord-Betz (458th BG), Doug Dovey, (392nd & 44th BGs) Laurie Huntley (389th BG), Jim Birmingham, (458th BG), Colleen Mersman (491st & 44th BGs). It is always great to have our British friend, John Gilbert, with us to light a candle. We look forward to seeing John next summer in Norwich. Brian led us in the pledge and Ben Jones led us in the National Anthem. It was a great evening and wonderful to be with so many friends and family.

We had a great time in the Heritage League hospitality suite—as usual. I would say that the biggest hit in the suite were the jigsaw puzzles. Larue Carpenter, daughter of Bud Morris (453rd BG) and Deborah Simms-Watson, daughter of Burton Madison (453rd BG), were named the Puzzle Queens. They did have help from others, especially Russel Neatrour (453rd BG). Those 453rd people sure know how to stick together. Bob Birmingham (358th BG) would say that watching his beloved Milwaukee Brewers was a highlight. There were many lively conversations in the Hospitality Suite and we solved the world's problems, night after night. Do you think the single malt scotch helped? Maybe we should send a bottle to our 'friends' in DC.

Heritage League Membership Meeting

Our meeting, chaired by past president Beverly Baynes Tomb (466th BG), convened following the 8th Air Force Historical Society general meeting and board election. We were elated with the large number in attendance interested in Heritage League activities. We have 422 active members this past year, a slight increase! Honorary Life Members, veterans who were formerly members of the 2nd Air Division Assoc. (2ADA), comprise 47% of the total, an increase over last year. Legacy and Regular members, i.e., family and friends of 2AD veterans make up 53%, with a number of complimentary memberships not included.

We highlighted League programs aimed at preserving memories of 2nd Air Division during the meeting. They included our new program utilizing social media to highlight Heritage League to younger adults. We welcome Paige Hurner volunteering her time to this project. Our Heritage League Flower Program placing flowers on Memorial Day has expanded. With the help of two overseas friends and the American Battle Monuments Commission, our placements now total 13 overseas cemeteries holding 2nd Air Division dead or commemorating them as MIA. For those interested in

(photos and story continued on page 20)

Precious Letter Helps Crewmate's Son Understand His Father's Tough Mission

by Dan Vukelich

[Editor's Note: Upon learning of the passing of Dan Vukelich's father, John Pool, ball turret gunner, writes Heritage League member Dan a narrative of their training, combat and POW experiences. Dan transcribed the handwritten letter about his father Dush. [Bracketed] words are Dan's commentary and spellings are those of the writer.—Eds.]

Dear Dan,

Nov. 4, 1983

Received your letter today, happy to hear from you, but saddened to hear about the death of your father.

I had the pleasure and surprise to be able to talk to him by phone approximately three years ago. We must have talked two or more hours—he told me the things he had done and some of the happenings since he had returned home from the armed services. Your letter appears to be a replay of what he told me about himself. I received a letter later from him. He had enclosed a picture of himself and family, which led me to think he was a proud father.

Your father and I enjoyed each other very much during the 30 months we were together. Actually, we slept side by side all those months.

Our crew (#26) [actually #77] was assembled in Boise, Idaho. This is also when we started our flight training. From Boise we were stationed for a short period in Riverside, Calif., and for a short period also San Francisco, Ca. We had crew training at each of these places. San Francisco is where we received our orders for overseas duty. Our route overseas from here had stops in Midland, Texas, Memphis, Tenn., West Palm Beach and Key West in Florida, San Juan Puerto Rico, Georgetown, B.G., Natal and Belem, Brazil.

In South America I became ill, was taken to the hospital in Belem, Brazil for an appendix removal operation. The crew proceeded without me to Africa and then to England. I later joined the crew in Old Buckingham [Buckenham], England. This is where we were stationed until we were shot down and taken prisoner of war. The mission of which we were shot down was to Berlin, Germany. We were approximately 25 miles from Berlin when we had to abandon our airplane (B-24). We were captured (your dad and I) after parachuting to safety near (Jutterbog, Juterbog, spell-

ing?) Germany. From here we were taken to Berlin, Frankfurt, Wetzlar, then to Stag Luft #4. Approximately six months near the end of the war we were moved by rail to Nuremberg, Germany then by foot to Moosburg, Germany.

We were liberated here after 11 months of interment in POW camps. General Patton's outfit freed us. This is the last time I saw your father Dush.

Dan, Dush was on his 28th mission along with seven others on the crew. I was on my 29th mission, and our radio operator, C.B. Burton, was on his 30th mission. One person was wounded. This was C.B. Burton. He was hit on the head, leaving a bad wound and was unconscious. I had to put the parachute on him, attach it to a static line, and throw him from the airplane. Thank God he lived.

Your dad and J.P. Vigna were the first to bail out. Dan Reading and Leo Ryan were either 3rd or 4th. Robert Hagan 6th, Richard Briggs 5th, C.B. Burton 7th, J.V. Pool 8th, Melvin Williams 9th. Leroy Steingraber was last. He had problems getting out of his gun turret. Luckily, he freed himself and jumped just as the plane began to fall towards the ground.

We were shot down from the 20 mm gunfire from seven (7) JU88 German fighter planes. We were able to shoot down 5 of the 7 JU88s. Later in Berlin, we were able to meet and talk with all of the German pilots, which had shot us down. Dan, contrary to anything you may have heard about these German pilots, they were extremely nice to us. They talked very intelligently and very respectfully.

Dan, I do not know what to tell you about your father when he was a teenager. If you wish to know what your father was like as a teenager, pick out an average teenager today. This was your dad, as I knew him.

Dush and I were the youngest of the crew. Dush, a city boy from the north, I was a country boy from the south. There were a lot of differences but we still enjoyed each other. There was a great distance between the places we were raised, but our reasoning and thinking [were] very similar.

Dan, I believe our crew number was 26 [actually 77]. Our bomb squadron 735th. Bomb group 453, the 2nd Air Division, 8th Air Force. The 2nd Air Division consisted only of B-24s.

I do not remember how many crews there were in each squadron, but I understand that only one crew finished all their missions. The rest of our crews were either killed or taken POW.

I have forgotten many of our bombing missions. I remember flying to Brunswick twice, Frankfort twice, Bremen one and Frankfort (Mainz) once, Pau, France once, Berlin three times. Our last mission was to Berlin, Ger. This is when we were shot down June 21, 1944.

On June 6, D-Day and June 7, we flew several missions, probably 5 or 6 in 36 hours but got credit for only one mission. If you wish, I will try to think of others and let you know. Son, this being so long ago, it is hard for me to remember.



Dush Vukelich standing at left, just in front of tail gunner John Pool in this May 27, 1944. Photo, taken at Old Buckenham less than a month before they were shot down.

Dan, I have just realized how you may feel and why you asked me to write to you about your daddy. My daughter just read your letter. She expressed herself by asking for a copy of this letter so that she can read something of my past, which I told her very little about.

Dan, you spoke of [how] your father woke up during the night or even day, screaming. This came about during our captivity in Germany. I could never get Dush to tell me what he was dreaming about but I think it was definitely nightmares. I began to have nightmares while I was in prison camp. Today, I have the same nightmares or dreams as I did in the Prisoner of War Camp. These dreams are bad. After returning

home my mother and father noticed this problem and it was a continuous worry to them. My wife, children, and many of the people in my town wonder why I lay awake at odd hours of the night. When I awake from a bad dream I am unable to go back to sleep so I spend the rest of the night walking around town or maybe going for a ride. I have always had a complex about these dreams. I hope your father didn't.

Dan, your dad and I were kept in solitary confinement for several days while at Frankfort, Germany. I have never wanted to be alone or by myself since. Was your dad this way? I think he and I were the only ones of our crew that was confined this way.

After bailout, I was only in contact with NCOs, which were 6 of us. Burton being wounded was sent to a hospital this being the last [time] seeing him until 3 years ago. He has visited with me 3 times since, several days each time. All of the other 5 crew members were OK other than a few bruises and hurt knees and backs.

Dan, I hit the ground so hard I thought that every bone in my body was broken. It knocked my breath out and I felt as if I would die before I finally began to breathe again. I had a breathing problem for several days. I hurt both of my legs and still have a problem from one today.

I understand Leo Ryan 2nd Lt. broke one of his legs although I'm not sure of

this. I don't know how the rest fared.

The name of our plane was Jabberwock. Leroy Steingraber gave the plane this name. I don't [know] which language this name came from but it seems to [have] meant "Warring Eagle." I'm not sure.

Dan, the original B-24 Jabberwock we started with was not airworthy. For some unknown reason, it nearly crashed with us between Midland, Texas, and Memphis, Tenn. Another time it nearly fell from the sky over South America. This plane was junked after it reached our destination, Old [Buckenham], England.

(continued on page 27)

Annual Governors Meeting 2018 November

Trip Filled with Special Ceremonies

By Beverly Baynes Tomb

Photos by Beverly unless otherwise noted.

[Our Heritage League voting representative, Beverly Tomb, made her annual November trip to East Anglia, coinciding with several events: the special remembrance activities of the end of World War I, the annual 2nd Air Division Memorial Trust Governors meeting, and the special commemoration at St. Paul's Cathedral marking the 60th anniversary of the dedication of the American Chapel.

When the Heritage League 'invades' again this June for our annual visit and convention, we will be re-tracing many of these same steps.—Eds.]

By the end of the week, 389th Bomb Group veteran Allan Hallett, 92 years young, was telling people, "I'm a professional wreath-layer."

Allan Hallett's first trip to England, in 1945, was aboard a B-24 by way of Greenland with a crew of air-men. On November 8, 2018, he arrived at London Heathrow aboard a British Airways flight with his daughters Martha Testagrossa and Becky Bergeron and Becky's husband Al. They formed up for the Friendly Invasion with Doug and Beverly Baynes Tomb, heading to Madingley Hall, a former manor house, now a Cambridge University

conference center with rooms available to the public. We all got acquainted over dinner at Three Horseshoes, a lovely old pub within walking distance.

Remembrance Visits

The next morning, we piled into the Panther Taxi van and headed to Cambridge American Cemetery where Superintendent Rich Cobb treated us like VIPs, sharing the history of the cemetery and helping us organize our first wreath laying at the flagpole, Allan's for the 389th BG and Beverly's for the Heritage League. We explored the beautiful chapel at the far end of the reflecting pool and then the new Visitors' Center, focused on the stories of the people in the cemetery, while a rehearsal for the Monday Veterans Day ceremony was in progress. (Our wreaths did double-duty, also placed on Monday at the Wall of the Missing.)

Next, we traveled to the American Air Museum at Duxford; part of the Imperial War Museum, where Emily Charles, AAM Research Officer, Adrian Kerrison, curator of WWII



This year's Armistice Day Remembrance Service was part of Evensong, held under the Dome, with the Duchess of Gloucester and the American Ambassador attending, making her participation all the more special for Beverly Baynes Tomb, at the lectern. Photo: Doug Tomb.

Uniforms and museum volunteer Phil Jackson showed us around the newly updated exhibits. A case with mementos and stories of men representing all ten positions on the heavy bombers was wonderful, but the photo highlight was Allan going behind the ropes around the B-24 *Dugan*, to point to his Top Turret Gunner position.

On Saturday, Allan's WWII base in Hethel hosted a lovely and sunny Remembrance Day ceremony. The seven Americans, transported by Andrew Hawker, and Colin Mann, met new Trust Governor Kathy Watt, and her husband Charles, High Sheriff of Norfolk, and renewed warm ties with Fred Squires, Anne Howlett, Paul Hindle, Cathy Thomson, and many others. Allan placed a wreath for the 389th BG, and Beverly placed a wreath with Cathy Thomson for the 466th Bomb Group.

Allan's daughter, Martha Testagrossa, said, "I loved every minute of our trip but a highlight would be the wreath laying at Hethel. Seeing dad in what was once his base so many years ago and the outpouring of people and friends who supported them brought me to tears. It certainly brings a whole new meaning to the word 'respect' for the many who fought in that war. I hope to bring my family back there someday and share that with them."

Cathy and Charles Watt very kindly sponsored a lovely lunch, at World's End pub in Mulbarton. That evening, Joe's sister, Joan Dzenowagis joined the Friendly Invasion group, and David and Jean Hastings came to the Maids Head for dinner with all of us. Allan and David had a jolly toast of healthy water.

Remembrance Sunday, which this year also fell on Veterans Day, was another sunny day! Allan placed his third wreath in three days, with Beverly providing a steadying hand up and down the steps of the Norwich War Memorial across from City Hall. Sadly, the group of special observers is no longer allowed to view from the balcony, so there are no good photos, but the TV film of Remembrance Day around Norfolk led off with Allan placing the 2nd Air Division wreath.

A lovely Service at Norwich Cathedral followed, where Allan was mentioned and thanked by name by the Bishop of Norwich, Graham James, who chatted with Allan after the service.

2nd Air Division Memorial Trust

Friday, we met up with fellow American and 2AD Memorial Trust Governor Joe Dzenowagis at Maids Head Hotel where Richard Middleton, Chairman of the 2nd Air Division Memorial Trust welcomed us.

Monday was the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Memorial Trust Governors, held at the Norfolk County Council building. This day, instead of placing a wreath, Allan placed a check of his in Trust Chairman Middleton's hand. Beverly also presented the Chairman with the Heritage League check and he asked us to thank all who so generously contributed. We also met the new American Scholars, Francis Agnoli and Michael Strinden, who help in the Library.

After the AGM, there was a chance to visit the Memorial Library in the Forum, before zipping off to the Charles Walker Memorial Lecture at University of East Anglia, given by Professor Scott Lucas (Professor of American Studies and International Politics, University of Birmingham). Supper with the professor at Loch Fyne Restaurant ended the evening.

British Friends of the Heritage League

On Tuesday, the Hallett family with Beverly and Doug visited Salle Farm and Salle Church, and enjoyed lunch with Sir John White. Allan, Beverly, Doug and Sir John then visited the former 466th BG base at Attlebridge to see the progress being made by Paul

Hindle and his hard-working helpers to create a Visitors' Centre. Richard Middleton joined us for dinner near the Maid's Head before we left Wednesday for London.

American Chapel at St Paul's Cathedral

Thursday was a very wonderful and unique "grand finale" to the trip, with a special Choral Evensong Remembrance Service at St Paul's Cathedral, London. Held under the Dome, the service celebrated the 60th anniversary of the dedication of the American Chapel.

Very special attendees, who laid wreaths in the American Chapel, were Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Gloucester, on behalf of Her Majesty The



US Marines and Allan were drawn to each other in dramatic hall of US embassy in London.



Americans attending Annual General Meeting (AGM) of 2AD Memorial Trust Governors. L to R: American Scholar Francis Agnoli, Governor Joe Dzenowagis, DAR member Laurie Atkins, Governor from US Embassy Scott Riedmann, 2AD veteran Allan Hallett, American Scholar Michael Strinden, Governor from Heritage League Beverly Tomb, Joan Dzenowagis, new Governor Kathy Watt, Douglas Tomb. Photo: via Beverly Tomb.

Queen; the Honorable Robert Johnson, Ambassador of the United States of America, on behalf of the United States Government; Mr. Allan Hallett, US Army Air Force veteran, on behalf of the comrades of those who lost their lives; Air Vice Marshall Ian Duguid, representing the RAF, on behalf of UK forces past and present; and Viscount Hugh Trenchard, Deputy Chair of the RAF Benevolent Fund, on behalf of RAF veterans.

Beverly Baynes Tomb was deeply honored to read the Second Lesson (John 15. 9-17) during the service. A reception followed in the St. Paul's Cathedral Chapter House, and then Peter and Stephanie Chapman, the group of Trust Governors, Library staff, several from a London chapter of Daughters of the American Revolution, and

our Friendly Invasion group had a farewell dinner at Cote Brasserie.

Allan's daughter Becky Bergeron summed up the trip: "This was a vacation I will remember forever. We met a lot of wonderful and interesting people. Every day was a history lesson."



Photo shows meaningful location of the American Chapel at east end of the main axis of the cathedral, beyond the high altar, a reverent tribute to the Roll of Honor. Photo: Courtesy of St Paul's Cathedral.



USAF airman at ease look east to chapel at end of Reflecting Pool; Wall of Missing to right at Cambridge American Cemetery. Photo: Courtesy of Imperial War Museum, Duxford.



Fred Squires, "keeper" of the 389th BG Museum chats with Allan Hallett (back left). Owner of the property where the 389th BG base is located, chats with Becky Bergeron (back right) while a collector of WWII memorabilia (front left) shows his finds to Al Bergeron (right). Photo: Beverly Tomb.



American 2AD Trust Governor Beverly Tomb reading the Second Lesson during special Evensong Service celebrating 60th Anniversary of the Dedication of the American Chapel at St. Paul's Cathedral, London. Photo via Beverly Tomb.



Familiar view. Joe Dzenowagis carries on documenting 2AD members and friends, as he and his family did for the Second Air Division Association over more than two decades, looking through the lens of his camera, to shoot photos and video. Governors Beverly Tomb, Matthew Martin and Tony Harmer with 2AD veteran Allan Hallett are in front of the camera inside 2AD Memorial Library. Photo: Doug Tomb.



Beverly with the boy choristers who sang at Evensong for the 60th Anniversary of the American Chapel, following the Chapter House reception. Photo: Doug Tomb.

389th BG Veteran Allan Hallett and David Hastings, former Memorial Trust Governor, whose lifelong interest in 2AD began with growing up near Allan's base at Hethel.



Heritage League Executive Committee member and American Governor of the 2AD Memorial Trust, Beverly Baynes Tomb (466th BG) presents Heritage League contribution to Trust Chair Richard Middleton. Photo: Doug Tomb.



Forever friends. Joe Dzenowagis, Jr. and his sister Joan, hug David and Jean Hastings. Joseph D., Sr., besides being a 467th BG veteran started all of these people in documenting the 2ADA.



Solemn annual Remembrance Day ceremony at Hethel is made more special for having 389th BG WW II veteran Allan Hallet present a wreath. This is the very base at which he served. Photo: Doug Tomb.



Spry 389th veteran Allan Hallet presents a gift of his own to Trust Chair Richard Middleton.



Beverly Baynes Tomb with Paul Hindle, who has been escorting 466th BG veterans and families visiting base in Attlebridge since 2012. Photo: Paul Hindle Facebook page.

At reception in St Paul's Chapter House following Evensong, Beverly was honored to pose with Peter Chapman and Viscount Trenchard. Peter gave the Address during Evensong, and has organized Remembrance Services in the American Chapel for many years. Viscount Trenchard is Deputy Chair of the RAF Benevolent Fund and grandson of "the founder of the Royal Air Force." Photo: Doug Tomb.



L to R: Doug Tomb, Allan Hallett (389th BG veteran), past HL Representative and Trust Governor David Hastings, Jean Hastings, current HL Representative and Trust Governor Beverly Baynes Tomb (466th BG), Joan Dzenowagis (467th BG) Becky Hallett Bergeron, Al Bergeron, Martha Hallett Testagrossa. Photo: Joe Dzenowagis, Jr.

Heritage League to Norwich

June 9-14, 2019

Please respond by March 30, 2019
This is your last opportunity to register

The Heritage League is off 'across the pond' this June 2019 for our convention and heritage location visits. We have arranged a discounted block of rooms at The Maids Head Hotel, where we stayed in 2014, as well as the Grange Hotel in London. The many exciting things planned include:

- Evensong at The Norwich Cathedral followed by a Welcome Reception in the Weston Room at the Cathedral on Sunday June 9. The cathedral construction began in 1096 and completed in 1145 with the Norman tower still shining high above the city. The spire is 315 feet tall and the second tallest in England.
- On Monday, June 10, we will have our Annual Business Meeting in The Forum. After the meeting you can visit the 2nd Air Division Memorial Library. The Memorial Library is a living memorial to honor the casualties of those in the 2nd Air Division. We will also have a special film showing on life during WWII for you should you be interested.
- Monday evening we are invited to dinner to the Salle Park Estate as guests of Sir John White. The estate has a working farm and several beautiful gardens.
- The highlight of our trip will be our Base Day. On Tuesday, we will visit four of the WWII bases near Norwich. Our dear friend, Colin Mann from Norwich, is working hard to make sure that we make the most of this important day.
 - Old Buckenham 453rd Bomb Group
 - Hethel 389th Bomb Group
 - Hardwick 93rd Bomb Group
 - Seething 448th Bomb Group

If your bomb group is not listed above, we will be more than happy to put you in touch with the base contact. You can make the necessary arrangements with the base contact to visit your base on our free day, Thursday, June 13.

- Wednesday we will have one of our optional excursions. We will take a steam train between Holt and Sheringham. Holt is a small market town of 3,800. Sheringham is a seaside town with a motto of 'Mare Ditat Pinusque Decort,' Latin for "the sea enriches and the pine adorns." The town boasts a traditional high street with a wide variety of privately owned shops, coffee shops, restaurants and pubs.
- We have left Thursday, June 13 open with the exception of our annual banquet which will be held in the Minstrel Room at the Maids Head in the evening. There are many things to do in and around Norwich. You can tour Sandringham Estate, the Norfolk retreat of HM The Queen, tour The Norfolk Broads, a system of inland waterways in the historic county of Norfolk, shop in the Norwich Market, an outdoor market consisting of over 200 stalls, rest, relax, etc.
- Friday we have another excursion to St Paul's Cathedral in London. We will take the bus from Norwich to St. Paul's. We have arranged hotel rooms very near St Paul's should you choose to stay in London or you can return to Norwich on the bus. Tours of the Cathedral have been arranged followed by a service, just for us, in the American Memorial Chapel. At the heart of the chapel, you will find the 500 page, leather bound book—the roll of honor of the 28,000 Americans who were stationed in the UK who gave their lives throughout WWII. The book was unveiled in 1958 at a service to dedicate the Chapel.

Rooms will be available at the Maids Head Hotel, Tombland, Norwich, Norfolk, NR3 1LB, with a discounted rate,

beginning Saturday, June 8. Please contact the Maids Head directly to make your reservations. Your room reservation must be made no later than **APRIL 15, 2019**. Be sure to mention **Heritage League Group ID 2676** to get the discounted rate. Please note that breakfast is included with your room.

Call from US: 011-44-160-327-2007

Fax: 011-44-160-361-3688

Email: reservations@maidsheadhotel.co.uk.

If you choose to stay in London after the St Paul's trip, we have reserved rooms at The Grange Hotel, 10 Godli-man Street, London, EC4 5BD. This is nestled beside St Paul's Cathedral. Reservations should be made directly by MAY 15, 2019. Mention the **Heritage League Group ID 140619N** to receive the discounted group rate.

Call from US: 011-44-207-074-1000

Fax: 011-44-207-074-1110

Email: stpauls@grangehotels.com.

You will need to make your own travel arrangements to and from England. Amsterdam is a short connection to Norwich. From most major airports in the US, you can fly nonstop to Amsterdam. You can also fly to London and take the train, bus or hire a car to Norwich.

Please look for a separate mailing in the very near future. We hope this gives you good reason to join us in England in June. We are excited about this trip and would love to have you join us.

Please signup using the registration form provided in this Herald or in the mailing.



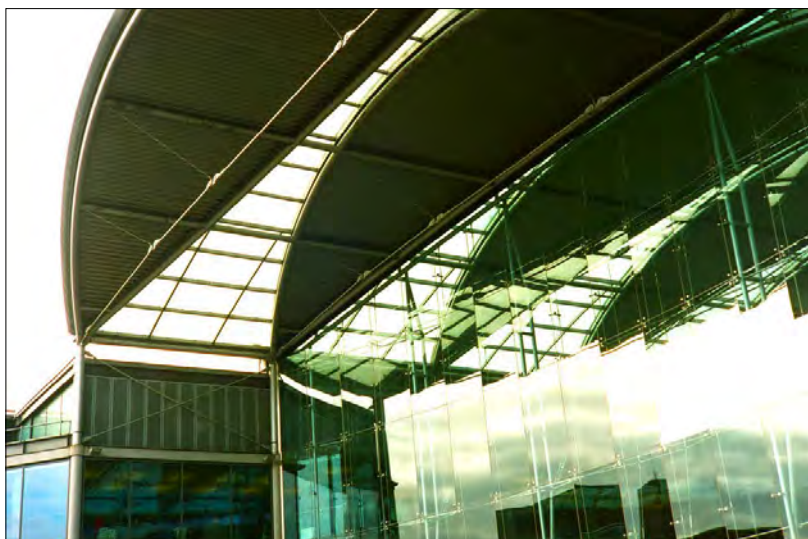
Ancient windy lane in Elm Hill neighborhood is a cobblestone's throw from our hotel. Photo: Brian Mahoney. 2019



Very well done, Doug! One's experience of St Paul's 'on the ground' is nothing like the common iconic images, made with architectural photographic equipment. It is so closely surrounded by other buildings, that it challenges even the best photographers to capture its drama and character without distortion. Photo: Doug Tomb



Among walk-able attractions from our London hotel, this replica of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre. Photo: Brian Mahoney. 2019



Post-modern portico. Welcoming sheltered entry to Millenium Library (which hosts 2AD Memorial Library) is an abstract sculpture and a beautiful, practical bit of design. Photo: Brian Mahoney. 2019.

2019 Norwich Reunion Registration Form*

June 9-14, 2019

Registration deadline March 30, 2019

Name 1- (for name tag) _____ BG(s) _____

Name 2- (for name tag) _____ BG(s) _____

Name 3- (for name tag) _____ BG(s) _____

Name 4- (for name tag) _____ BG(s) _____

**If more than 4 people is in your party, please email additional names and BG to Marybeth Dyer-
smbdyer@sbcglobal.net or add names to the back of the form.**

	Price per Person	Number Of People	Total
REGISTRATION FEE- Includes all below except as noted	\$250.00		\$
Sunday -----Cathedral reception			
Monday -----Annual business meeting, Memorial Library in the Forum.			
Monday -----Dinner at Sir John White's			
Tuesday -----Base Day--lunch included – menu options later			
Thursday ----Banquet – menu options later – included in registration fee			
Banquet ONLY – menu options later	\$75.00		
PACKAGES- Optional Tours			
Wednesday – Train ride to/from Sheringham and Holt	\$35.00		
Friday ----- London coach to St Paul's Cathedral – includes boxed lunch on coach	\$75.00		
SUBTOTAL			\$
Less prior trip deposit to Heritage League	\$-		\$-
Total Amount Payable to Heritage League- TOTAL	\$		\$
EMERGENCY CONTACT:			
<i>Name:</i>	<i>Phone:</i>		

***Mail this form to: Sue Risley, Heritage League Reunion; 682 Slade Ave; Eglin, IL 60120.**

Hotels: please make hotel reservations yourself.

Reservations at the Maids Head Hotel. Call: 011-44-160-327-2007 and request rooms for the Heritage League Convention [group ID 2676] or email reservations@maidsheadhotel.co.uk. Reservations must be made by April 15, 2019.

Reservations in London at the Grange St. Pauls' Hotel. To receive special price, call 011-44-207-074-1000, mention Heritage League group ID 140619N, or Email: stpauls@grangehotels.com. Reservations must be made by May 15, 2019.

Questions? Contact Marybeth Dyer – smbdyer@sbcglobal.net or Irene Hurner – ihurner@sbcglobal.net.

The Tombland neighborhood of Norwich is both inviting and walkable. The Edith Cavell pub was named after venerated WWI British nurse killed by the Germans on still-contested claim that she was acting as a combatant. Pub just obscures view of our Maid's Head Hotel and former 'Samson and Hercules' dance hall. Photo: Brian Mahoney.



London Eye is a must-see engineering marvel, perfectly located on the south bank of the Thames, overlooking the Houses of Parliament. Photo: Brian Mahoney. 2019



Stunning sunrise silhouettes Norwich Cathedral as seen from Maids Head Hotel. Photo: Beverly Tomb. 2019



The Dawn of American Airpower

By Rebecca Grant

Photos: Library of Congress; Bettman-Corbi, USAF, Air Force Assn.

[As we observed the 100th anniversary ending WWI this Past Remembrance Day, it is important to note that it was the first global conflict that relied on aircraft and served as the foundation of our Army Air Forces of WWII. A brash Colonel Billy Mitchell persuaded General Pershing the value of airpower, and he organized a loose grouping of barely a dozen US Air Service squadrons, flying French and British aircraft, with a sizable force ‘borrowing’ other Allied squadrons, amassing the “most spectacular air armada of the war and in the hands of an upstart American” for one of the final engagements of the War at St. Mihiel. —Eds.]

A century ago, at St. Mihiel, American airpower came of age.

Col. William L. “Billy” Mitchell had a lot to prove at the Battle of St. Mihiel—fought between Sept. 12 and Sept. 15, 1918—and so did General John J. Pershing. It was the first attempt at a combined-arms ground and air operation and is viewed by historians as marking the dawn of modern airpower.

“The St. Mihiel attack was the first operation in the world war carried out by a complete American army under the independent control of its own commander,” according to the official American Battle Monuments Commission. After the battle, President Woodrow Wilson sent congratulations on the “brilliant achievement,” while Field Marshal Ferdinand Foch called it a “magnificent victory.”

These were generous words, for in the end, the

Battle of St. Mihiel wasn’t ranked as one of the major engagements of World War I. The four-day offensive, though, meant everything to the Americans.

By the summer of 1918, the US was still very much the junior partner among the Western allies, despite the 1.2 million American soldiers on the Western Front. The Americans were still firing French artillery, flying French planes and being schooled by French officers.

Marshal Petain summed up the prevailing view at a commanders’ conference when he said, “There is no American army as such, as its units are either in training or are amalgamated with the British and French.”

St. Mihiel was meant to change all that. There were 550,000 troops, 3,000 pieces of field artillery, and over 1,000 aircraft preparing to assault a residual bulge



The St. Mihiel sector after the infamous battle.



Then-Brig. Gen. Billy Mitchell (l) and Gen. John Pershing in France during World War I. Mitchell gained his first star for his actions at St. Mihiel.

in the German lines after German forces failed in their attempt to encircle Verdun in 1914. Pershing yearned to command American troops in combat and to teach the French and British a thing or two about modern warfare.

Pershing's army concentrated all energies on preparing for the battle. A brilliant lieutenant colonel named George Catlett Marshall, age 38, was pulled back from command of a regiment to take charge of the operational planning for the offensive. Tanks—including some led by Pershing's former aide, 32-year-old Col.

George S. Patton Jr.—also had a role in the plan.

Mitchell believed St. Mihiel could raise the profile of the Air Service in Pershing's eyes “if we delivered the goods.” The problem was, Mitchell had nowhere near enough aircraft to pull it off.

Command of the Air

A “bare dozen” squadrons; that's what his British friends figured Mitchell could muster in August 1918. They were right. The US Air Service had 226 pursuit aircraft, 219 observation planes, and 42 bombing aircraft available. Of those, the observation planes were pledged to corps and division commanders for artillery spotting. “This kind of air work has been done now for three years and is well-understood,” Mitchell said.

Mitchell had more in mind, though. His real ambitions hinged on the aviation units assigned only to First Army, which were directly under his command: pursuit, bombardment, and some balloon and observation units. Neither the corps nor the division generals—all of whom outranked him—had any claim on these air forces. With his own force, “I intend to change the ordinary procedure and employ massed air attacks against the vital points in the enemy's rear,” Mitchell wrote.

For this air campaign, Mitchell planned to concentrate 2,000 aircraft so he could “hit first from one side of the salient, then from the other, just as a boxer gives a right hook and a left hook successively to his op-

ponent.” With strafing and light bombs, Mitchell’s airmen were going to churn up the enemy troops caught in the salient and destroy as much as possible. It all depended on whether he could get the airplanes.

The answer? Charm. Mitchell borrowed 800 aircraft from the French and persuaded Britain to lend him half of British Air Marshal Maj. Gen. Hugh M. Trenchard’s independent bombing force to strike point targets such as rail junctions, airfields, and supply centers.

Mitchell managed to amass almost 1,500 airplanes for the St. Mihiel offensive. Of these, however, only about 1,100 to 1,200 were mission-capable. Never before had this many aircraft massed on the Western Front. The allies had created the most spectacular air armada of the war and placed it in the hands of an upstart American.

Trenchard’s massive Handley Pages and other bombers would attack the night before the battle. Mitchell had Pershing sign out a list of bombing targets, sending the British deep to strike railroad ammunition dumps, the airdromes at Mars-la-Tour, and the rail station at Metz.

At first light, the pursuit squadrons would destroy all hostile aviation in the salient to “insure the absolute liberty of action of our observation aviation and attack balloons throughout this zone,” as stated by Pershing in First Army’s official orders. Pursuit flights of five or six aircraft would set up a double tier, some operating at 7,000 to 11,000 feet, with another layer above 11,000 feet to as high as 20,000 feet to ensure air superiority.

Then, within a few hours, the pursuit aircraft would swing into armed reconnaissance and battlefield interdiction roles. As directed by Mitchell and spelled out in First Army’s official orders, the Air Service would “take every occasion to attack troops, trains, and important targets” on the ground. Low-flying pursuit patrols “should attack with bombs and machine guns” against enemy reinforcements “marching to the attack or enemy elements retreating.” The airmen would bomb enemy concentration points, command posts, and conduct “aerial bombing and fighting in close liaison with our own infantry.”

At the same time, daytime bombardment units—some American, many French, and even a few Italian—had a related mission to attack the rail and road junctions in the salient plus “all important objectives such as large gatherings of troops, material, airdromes, and command posts.”



Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker (at St. Mihiel a lieutenant) became the leading ace of World War I and a recipient of France’s Croix de Guerre and the US military’s Medal of Honor.

“Nothing like this had ever been tried before,” declared Mitchell. “It marked the beginning of the great strategical air operations away from the troops.”

That last remark was frequently misinterpreted (and got Mitchell in trouble for decades) but it is important to realize what Mitchell meant by it. “Strategical” in the fall of 1918 meant “air attack of enemy material of all kinds behind his lines,” not bombing Berlin.

Mitchell flew over the lines one last time on Sept. 10. It looked like the German forces were preparing to retreat. Back at First Army headquarters, staff counseled delaying the battle due to bad weather. Mitchell told Pershing flatly that “there was not going to be much of a battle at St. Mihiel anyway,” adding that “all we had to do was to jump on the Germans, and the quicker we did it, the better.”

On Sept. 12, the artillery barrage started at 1 a.m. The first observation balloon ascended at 4:40 in the morning, and the troops prepared to go over the hill at 5 a.m.

“It was the greatest Army ever assembled under the American flag,” marveled Mitchell.

Battle is Joined

The St. Mihiel salient was abuzz with air activity right from the start of the battle. Pilots compensated for morning fog and rain by flying at extremely low altitude. Pursuit planes from the 147th Aero Squadron reported visibility “good at 500 meters” so that was where they flew their mission from 9:15 am until just before 11

am. Some of the observation planes dipped down to between 50 and 100 meters.

Most of the pursuit patrols and ground attack sorties were flown within a relatively small area over the four American divisions advancing from the south. The “various layers of clouds did not prevent constant patrolling,” noted another airman.

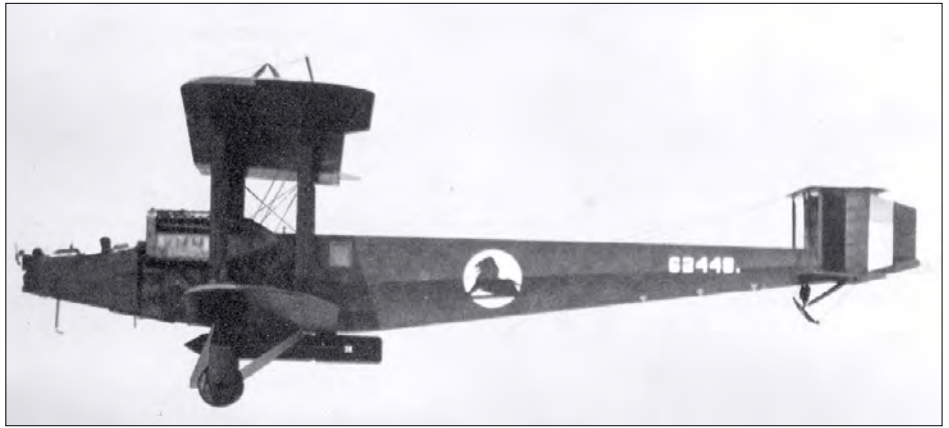
Future ace 2nd Lt. Frank Luke Jr. of the 27th Aero Squadron got his first balloon kill at nine minutes past eight that morning. In the 22nd Aero Squadron, a pursuit pilot glimpsed a German observation plane. Its crew saw the Spad and dove to get out of range, but to no avail. “Result—one Hannoveraner diving through a layer of mist to its crash,” the squadron recorded.

With the sky full of allies the defending Germans were outmatched. “Many Allied planes, including bombers, going over lines all over sector,” reported 2nd Lt. Arthur H. Jones of the 147th. Now Mitchell waited for the roads to fill so he could unleash more pursuit planes and bombers. He kept several squadrons on alert. In the 3rd Pursuit Group, the 103rd Aero Squadron received orders that “all available planes, including those with bombracks installed, will be held on alert from 8 o’clock, ready to leave within 10 minutes.”

By noon, American ground forces were speeding ahead. Retreating Germans began to jam the roads. By afternoon, “roads leading out of the salient between the two attacks were filled with retreating enemy troops, with their trains and artillery,” said Pershing. He ordered the ground troops to accelerate their forward push.

Air attacks escalated. Shortly after 1 pm, aviators spotted 2,000-3,000 German troops on the roads into Dampvitoux, now only about six miles ahead of the advance line of the 42nd Division. At 4:15, Mitchell scrambled the 103rd and three other squadrons to bomb and attack retreating German troops. Striking so close to advancing lines of the US, 1st and 42nd Divisions posed a problem. They needed a bomb line to use as a marker. Commanders quickly designated roads between Vigneulles and St. Benoit to control this close air support.

Mitchell’s bombers were in the fight, too. At half past one, the 96th Aero Squadron launched nine bombing aircraft to fly at 2,500 feet to their targets at Dampvitoux. Eight made it there and dropped 248



A British Handley Page bomber in World War I. Mitchell amassed some 1,500 international aircraft for the St. Mihiel offensive. Photos: Library of Congress; Bettman-Corbi, USAF, Air Force Assn.

bombs, returning two hours later.

The Germans were losing men and supplies in the pell-mell flight. Mitchell was delighted with the air operations. “I was very much pleased with the fact that virtually no German airplanes got over our ground troops,” he said.

“The American fliers made themselves very disagreeable,” said the German commander at St. Mihiel, Gen. Max von Gallwitz. “I have experienced a good many things in the five years of war and have not been poor in successes, but I must count the 12th of September among my few black days.”

Battling on

Air activity and interdiction picked up on the second day, Sept. 13, as American troops pressed toward their second-day objectives.

Two pilots of the 94th Aero squadron flew three sorties each, hunting for targets. Just before 10 am, Lt. Edward Rickenbacker and Lt. Reed Chambers of the 94th Aero Squadron went up the lines toward Vigneulles in poor weather but saw only French and American wagons and German prisoners.

Unsatisfied, the pair returned to base, refueled, rearmed, and took off again at 12:26 pm. West of Vigneulles, just ahead of the 26th Division’s advance, they spotted eight German 155mm artillery pieces drawn by six horses each. Rickenbacker circled and the artillerymen fled as he “fired probably 20 or 25 shots” before the gun jammed. “Horses and wagons scattered everywhere,” recounted Rickenbacker. The physical damage was not great but the disruption worked. “Now let’s see you straighten up that mess,” Rickenbacker thought as he and Chambers departed.

Back at base, at 3:17 pm. Rickenbacker went up alone for a voluntary patrol over German positions north of the salient, nearly 10 miles *(continued on page 25)*

(continued from page 3)



Distinctive commemoration of 4th FG, assigned to 2nd AD escort. Legendary Eagle Squadron of US and Canadian volunteers during the Battle of Britain, were converted to proud 'Fourth but First' group after US entry into the war, much like the Flying Tigers aiding China in the same period. Photo: Brian Mahoney.



Two show-room condition classics of similar vintage. Look, but don't touch! Past President Beverly Tomb checking out a 1953 Packard Mayfair at America's Packard Museum. Photo: Irene Hurner.



Participants in his year's candle lighting ceremony, L-R: Ben Jones (392nd BG friend), 453rd BG veteran Russell Neatrou, John Gilbert (392nd BG friend), Mary Betz-Lord (458th BG daughter), 489th BG veteran Robert Hall, his great-granddaughter Olivia Koester, Doug Dovey (392nd & 44th BG son), Laurie Huntley (392nd BG great niece), Colleen Mersman (489th & 44th BG daughter) and Jim Birmingham (458th BG son and nephew). Photo: Sue Risley.



Distinctive marker for the 458th BG, in USAF Museum's extensive memorial garden. Photo: Brian Mahoney.



389th vet Allan Hallet and nephew David Long. Photo: via Irene Hurner.



Hospitality room tradition. Irene worked on jigsaw puzzle with many of our visitors. Did it get finished? Photo: Brian Mahoney.

Belong in a museum! Presence in USAF Museum of veterans Joe Mastrogiacomo (445th BG) and Earl Wassom (466th BG) made the experience more authentic for all lucky enough to know them as WWII veterans. Photo: Brian Mahoney.



League Executive Committee ('ExCom') recent and present. Back: Jim Birmingham (protege to Executive VP), Sue Risley (Treasurer), Colleen Mersman (Secretary), Brian Mahoney (VP for Volunteers). Seated: Vicki Brooks-Warning (Past President, past Representative to 2AD Memorial Trust), Beverly Tomb (Past President, current American Memorial Trust Governor), Irene Hurner (Past President). Photo: via Beverly Tomb.



Foxes guarding hen-house. Current VP for Volunteers Brian Mahoney with Ben Jones, first person to serve in that post (by Brian's appointment). Should these two be bartenders for the Heritage League's hospitality suite? Maybe not, but only they knew where the single-malt scotch was! Photo: Sue Risley.

Celebratory family with their B-17 veteran, enjoy newly acquired very famous Flying Fortress *Memphis Belle*, commonly and incorrectly called first 8th AF bomber and crew to complete a tour. (See 'Who Was Really First?' on page 28.) Photo: via Beverly Tomb.

The David Brubakers, long time League members and friends. The Wyoming, PA State Police building from which David retired, is named for First Lt. Frank L. Albert (KIA 3-18-44), who took leave from the troopers to serve as a pilot in the 44th BG. Photo: Irene Hurner





God and Country, in that order. Protocol puts benedictions before anthems. Following benediction and Candle Lighting Ceremony during group-night dinner the Pledge of Allegiance (Brian Mahoney behind Old Glory) preceded a rousing crowd rendition of the Star Spangled Banner. Photo: Sue Risley.



Timeless good looks. Past President Irene Hurner admiring a 1954 Packard Caribbean at America's Packard Museum. Photo: via Irene Hurner.



So much to share. From L: Larry Koester (son-in-law of 489th BG veteran Robert Hall), his son Scott, and Gold Star son Ralph Winter (392nd BG). Photo: Brian Mahoney.



Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASPs) commemorated among group memorials at USAF Museum. By taking on military aircraft ferrying and delivery roles, WASPs freed up hundreds of men for combat flying in WWII. Photo: Brian Mahoney.



Sculptural representation of Missing Man Formation in Memorial Garden. Photo: Sue Risley.



Richard Lord and Mary Betz-Lord, daughter of 458th airman Robert E. Betz, have become 'reunion regulars.' Photo: Irene Hurner.



Martha Pedersen (44th BG daughter) and Husband Jim dined with The League on group dinner night. Photo: Irene Hurner.

Great friend to League and 392nd, John Gilbert, and hospitality doyenne Sue Risley, kept our hospitality suite in stitches! Photo: Dave Hart.



viewing past editions of the 2AD Association Journals, we have digitized "paper-only" issues from 1950-2012 located on our website at: www.heritageleague.org.

Lastly, we agreed with the President of the 392nd BG Association, Bob Books, who suggested we incorporate past 2ADA Journal stories in our newsletters. Their web page also contains the digitized Journals at: www.B24.net.

Beverly, as our representative Governor of the 2AD Memorial Trust, announced she will travel to Norwich to participate in the annual governors meeting of the 2nd Air Division Trust in November. WWII Veteran Allan Hallett and family will accompany her and they will represent at the 60th Anniversary ceremony of the American Chapel in St Paul's Cathedral in London, seat of England's national church.

Finally, we have had a Facebook page since 2015 and encourage all to 'like us' at "Heritage League of the Second Air Division—USAAF" as a convenient way to keep in touch. We went over 500 'likes' during the meeting.

Gala Dinner

The reunion ended with the Gala Dinner on Saturday night. The Heritage League group sat at a few tables in the far back corner. Are we too rowdy to be seated in the front? It is always such a fun time to see people and reconnect. I would like to say how wonderful it was to see Sam and Joan Mastogiacomo. Who knew that it would be the last time we would see Sam. God bless you Joan and know that we will miss Sam. That is what makes reunions so sad to me sometimes. You never know when it is the last time you will see some of the people. Hopefully, we all will meet again at our next reunion in Norwich, England this coming June 2019.

(Airpower, continued from page 19)

ahead of the front lines. At 3:45, Chambers, with a new wingman, took off for his third armed reconnaissance patrol in front of the 26th, 1st, 42nd, and 89th Divisions, who were digging in on new phase lines.

This was just what Mitchell wanted. Conditions for harassing enemy ground forces were “ideal” in the salient since “the enemy’s withdrawal was limited to a minimum of well-defined and exposed routes.” He was especially satisfied that his air force had piled up the roads “with debris so that it was impossible for many of their troopers to get away quickly, resulting in their capture by our infantry.”

However, Mitchell’s concerns about holding on to air superiority had been correct. One patrol bumped into 20 Fokkers late in the afternoon on Sept. 13.

The concentration of allied airpower in the salient provided rich pickings for German aces. Lt. David E. Putnam, the top-ranked US ace to that point, got his thirteenth kill at 6:30 pm on the first day of the battle when he shot down a Fokker D.VII near Limey. An hour later, his luck ran out, as 20-year old German ace Georg von Hantelman shot Putnam down, killing him instantly. Hantelman shot down seven allied aircraft during the battle.

By the third day, Sept. 14, the Germans were rushing airpower to the St. Mihiel sector. “From an early hour, it became apparent that the enemy had very materially augmented his aerial forces,” noted the operations summary that evening. Clear weather brought the enemies in contact.

First Pursuit Wing now swung to a pure air superiority role. They could still strafe, but in contrast to the beginning of the battle, orders now stated, “No bombs will be placed on any pursuit aeroplanes.”

Mitchell described the terrifying ordeal of a French bombing squadron that failed to link up with its pursuit escorts on Sept. 14. Eighteen planes “huddled together as a flight of geese might when attacked by falcons” and pressed on to the rail junction target at Conflans. But the German aviators tore into them. Only five of 18 bombers returned.

Sorties flown that day surged to 1,140 as pursuit patrols drove the enemy air force to operate at least three to four miles back from the lines. Even as the Americans reached their final ground objectives, the aviators had to wage their toughest battles for air supe-

riority to protect the advance and let bombing aircraft continue their missions.

Fierce air activity continued on Sept. 15. The “enemy aerial activity was very pronounced in its aggressiveness” to the point that “practically every pursuit patrol which crossed the lines was engaged in combat with the enemy,” attested the operations summary.

The 94th Aero Squadron encountered tough resistance about three miles ahead of the 2nd, 5th, and 90th Divisions at the extreme right of the line. Rickenbacker was flying at about 13,000 feet just after 8 am when he spotted six enemy aircraft. He shot down one Fokker D.VII near the Bois de Warville. His squadron mate Lt. Joseph H. Eastman was jumped by four Fokkers barely a mile in front of French troops to the left.

Most of the leading aces scored kills during the last days of St. Mihiel. Eugene S. Coler—who always got his kills two at a time—brought down a pair of Fokker D.VIIs near Esnes. Oren J. Rose, August T. Iaccaci, Elliot W. Springs, and Frederick Libby also shot-down German planes in the salient on Sept. 15.

By Sept. 16, the salient was completely under American control and the German bulge had ceased to exist. The US First Army took 16,000 German prisoners.

In the five days from Sept. 12 through Sept. 16, observation aircraft flew just under a thousand sorties in support of First Army’s various divisions and corps. Aircraft under Mitchell’s operational control flew about 3,357 pursuit and bombardment sorties.

For Pershing, the battle had been his first opportunity to lead a full American army into battle. For Mitchell, he had successfully planned and commanded the single biggest air offensive of the war.

A strong believer in critiques, Mitchell pointed out the difficulties of the bad weather, deficiencies in liaison between pursuit, observation and the antiaircraft stations, and the increasingly heavy antiaircraft fire. His achievement, though, marked the true introduction of airpower into combined-arms warfare. Thanks to Mitchell, the First Army had seen up close how well wide-ranging air attacks worked in open warfare.

“I am proud of you all,” Pershing enthused.

For his achievements with airpower at St. Mihiel, Pershing promoted Mitchell to the rank of Brigadier General. At 38, he had made his mark at last.

[The Heritage Herald thanks Air Force Magazine for their kind permission in allowing us to reprint their article from September 2018. —Eds.]

Ace Tail Gunner Remembered

By Christopher Clark

We were saddened to hear about the passing of Ace gunner Sam Mastrogiacomo not long after he returned from the 8AF Historical Society reunion in Dayton last October. Sam was an active Heritage League member highly regarded as a top shooter with an historic five German shoot downs before he was interned in Sweden on his 30th mission.

One of our most memorable Heritage League highlights with Sam was our research of his mission records during our 2016 visit to the US National Archives as a part of our Washington DC reunion. I remember the phone ringing and Sam's voice on the other end asking about the National Archives trip we planned. The phone call is what we were hoping for, a VETERAN wanting help. Knowing how the Archives works, Brian Mahoney and I went two days early to pull the records to make his visit to the complex archives easier for him and our other members. I remember pulling the files out, referencing the dates Sam passed to me and there it was; mission reports from the WAR, the ORIGINAL papers! hI marked the pages for easy finding by Sam during our main group visit.

When the Archives visit day came,



Photo via American Air Museum

Sam reviewed the mission reports with then Heritage League President Beverly Baynes Tomb verifying his claim of FIVE German planes shot down by him. It was the highlight of the visit!

Sam also published his memoir in 2011, *For God and Country In That Order*, a 139-page account of Sam's training, combat missions, incarceration, and return after the war. I am very happy to have bought a copy and have Sam sign it for me. To obtain a copy, contact jomast1@yahoo.com.

On behalf of the Heritage League, we recognize and appreciate Sam's notable contributions to our Nation and our League. To his wife Joan, our highest respect and deepest sympathy to you. We miss you Sam...Rest in Peace. We will remember you!

On research trip to National Archives in College Park (during 2016 reunion), actual mission reports validated Sam's extraordinary claim of three enemy fighters shot down on a single mission! With his other two 'kills,' he is an exceedingly rare bomber-crew 'ace.' Beverly Baynes Tomb assisted in locating official USAAF proof. Photo: Doug Dovey.



(continued from page 5)

I'm not sure but I think we had two or three more planes, which we gave the same name. Each of these planes were shot up so bad they had to be junked also. For the life of me, I will never understand how so many holes could have been in each of these planes without someone getting badly hurt or killed. The day of our last mission we were flying a plane [Inspector's Squawks] belonging to another crew. Actually, this plane was in the worst condition. It really should not have been flown on this particular day. This being our last mission, eager to finish our combat duties of the war, we chose to continue. This was one mistake we definitely made. The plane did not have enough power to fly a close formation with the squadron. We actually were a sitting duck for our enemy. We were shot down by JU88 gunfire. In only a matter of seconds our plane looked as if it was a sifter because of the bullet holes in it. Again, because we were lucky not to have a fatality, although one wounded, unlucky that we earlier made the wrong decision not to turn back. Dan, it is impossible for me to sit with pen in

hand and write all the things, which we went through. Some are vague, some are vivid. Some of the happenings I may never recall. If you have questions, let me know. I'll do my best. I have never desired to write or talk about the war and the things I saw or that happened to [us] until today. I have always felt that really no one cares.

I know you are interested in the things involving your father. I will try to take more interest in the questions my children ask.

Dan, my wife and I live in the home which is [where I] was raised. We have three children. Two girls, one boy, he being the youngest. We have 6 grandchildren, 2 girls and 4 boys. They range in age from 2 years to 3 years.

Dan, I have a scrapbook that might contain some things of interest to you. If so, I will make copies and send them to you. I am so glad you took time to write. It shows there is a concern for daddies.

Sincerely,
John V. Pool

Rememberance Among Friends

Our report in Herald #64 omitted this picture of Heritage League friend Arie-Jan van Hees, who once again represented us in wreath laying at the Netherlands (Margraten) American Cemetery.

This small portion of the Wall of the Missing bears the names of six 2AD airmen killed in action: Richard C. Brown (44th BG); Edward L. Buchheit (392nd BG); Austin P. Byrne (492nd BG); Francis E. Callahan (453rd BG); George L. Campbell, Jr. (392nd BG), and John A. Carcietta (467th BG). ABMC photo via A-J van Hees.



Who Was Really First?

Courtesy Air Force Museum and Warbirds Digest

We know about the *Memphis Bell* celebrated as the first 25 mission heavy bomber but did you know a B-24 was first to attain that status?

Here is the official word (from the USAF Museum) that the claim really goes to a Liberator and its crew. (Photo at right is on display in Dayton.)

In February 1943, the 93rd BG B-24 *Hot Stuff* became the first Eighth Air Force heavy bomber to complete 25 combat missions over Europe, completing this feat more than three months before the crew of the now far more famous *Memphis Bell*. Totaling 31 missions, it flew other combat missions in Africa and patrol missions over the Mediterranean.

However, on May 1, while en route to the US for a war bond tour, *Hot Stuff* crashed in Iceland in bad weather. The impact killed 13 of the 14 on board including Lt. Gen. Frank Andrews. General Andrews had been returning to the USA to receive his fourth star and unbeknownst to him at the time, promotion to Allied Commander Europe in charge of the upcoming invasion of Axis Europe. Interestingly, when he and his staff arranged to go home on *Hot Stuff*, they bumped five of

the bomber's original crew members, thus sparing their lives. The aircraft's tail gunner, George Eisel, was the only crash survivor.

Hot Stuff B-24

In February 1943, the 93rd BG B-24 *Hot Stuff* became the first Eighth Air Force heavy bomber to complete 25 combat missions. It flew about half of its approximately 30 combat missions over Europe, with the remainder being strikes in Africa and patrol missions over the Mediterranean.



Hot Stuff crew: (standing, l to r) Lt Robert Jacobson, Capt Robert Shannon, Lt James Gott, Lt John Lentz; (kneeling, l to r) Sgt Grant Rondeau, Sgt Joseph Craighead, Sgt L.F. Durham, Sgt Paul McQueen, Sgt Kenneth Jeffers, Sgt George Farley.

Photo: USAF Museum via Doug Dovey..

Shopping Alert

The Heritage League is participating in the Amazon Smile program. The idea is simple: you shop AmazonSmile and they donate a portion of the proceeds to the Heritage League of the 2nd Air Division—USAAF.



Here is how it works: visit <http://smile.amazon.com>. Log in with your Amazon account username and password. If you don't have an account, create one.

Select the (charity) Heritage League of the 2nd Air Division—USAAF.

In the future, whenever you shop Amazon, shop smile.amazon.com, the Heritage League (name) will be on the top.

Best part—every eligible purchase is a donation. It's easy and we all win. Thanks for the support and KEEP SHOPPING!



MISSION BRIEFING

Heritage League Volunteer Program

by Chris Clark, Program Protégé &
Brian Mahoney, VP for Volunteers

Thanks to the handful of readers who have filled in the online volunteer form at <http://www.heritageleague.org/volunteers.html>. Not only are we registering the width and depth of volunteer talents and work-styles available to do ‘mission related’ projects, but we have already made two recent ‘matches.’ (Thank you to Paige Hurner, great-granddaughter of 453rd legend Albert Biel, and Joan Mastrogiacommo. Respectively, they are our Social Media Director and ‘Sunshine Person.’)

As mentioned before, your Executive Committee is open to your ideas for volunteer projects under League auspices that meaningfully honor and remember the services and sacrifices of the 2nd Air Division during WWII.

Here are a few specific roles ready for one or more key volunteers:

For the Heritage Herald Production Team:

- *Text editors* (1 -3) to refine grammar and expression in submitted articles
- *Photo editors* (1-3) to tweak photos for publication
- *Regular column writers* (1-6) for ‘write stuff’ (book reviews), for ‘Pitch it to Pete’ (WWII technology explained), for ‘Webpages We Wike’ (presenting current relevant web recommendations to our readership). Editors are open to other regular columns; let us know one you are willing to produce once or twice a year.

In other work areas:

- *Webmaster protégé* to continually update and refine our website
- *Data Manager protégé* to maintain and QC our member data, and serve data needs of Volunteer, Membership, and other VPs
- *Graphic artist(s)* to refine and extend League’s collection of signage, logos, etc., and to convert raster art to vector art
- *Digital records assistant* to Secretary, Data Manager, others needing ‘in-house’ support collecting, organizing, supporting our growing collection of working and historical content
- *Mailings helpers* (1-3) for envelope stuffing parties supporting membership renewal and other campaigns

Feel free to contact the relevant officer directly or us (Brian and Chris) for more info. Thanks!

We appreciate the generous gifts from members inspired by an individual to whom we are all connected. We wish to thank members who have given the Heritage League recent contributions as follows:

IN MEMORY OF

<i>the Bryson Crew of</i>	
<i>the Gypsy Queen (453rd)</i>	by Tara Mitchell
<i>Maurice Earl Chapman</i>	by Louanna Burch
<i>J. Audley Risley (466th)</i>	by David Hart

—Folded Wings—

<i>Ernie Haar</i>	02/08/18	492 nd /467 th
<i>Col. Chester Hackett</i>	09/23/18	448 th
<i>Sam Mastrogiacommo</i>	11/02/18	445 th

**Happy Holidays
From Your
Heritage League
Executive Committee 2018**

2019 Annual Membership Renewal Has Begun

We are so very grateful for your membership and support. We are extremely indebted to all the 2nd Air Division Veterans past and present. We will always be so thankful for their missions and service. Please help us continue our work by encouraging all generations in your family to join us in our mission. I especially hope you will join me in perpetuating the great legacy of the Second Air Division! The Heritage League affords you a practical way to show how much you value the memory and lessons of our esteemed veterans, as a member or even a volunteer.

Our 2019 Annual Membership has begun. We want to thank you for your ongoing membership and hope you will consider renewing your commitment to the Heritage League. If you have not renewed in awhile, we hope you will come back. We have missed you.

If you are looking for a year-end tax-deductible donation, please consider the Heritage League. We are a 501(c) (3) organization and would appreciate the support. We can also facilitate donations to the Memorial Library in Norwich England.

2nd Air Division Veterans—Your membership is free and you are considered an Honorary Lifetime Member. (HLM). You will be receiving the Herald by email. In the event you want a printed copy of our newsletter, we ask for \$30 donation per year. If the cost of the printed newsletter causes a hardship, please let us know. We will make sure to accommodate you.

Please complete the membership form NOW and mail your check to the address on the form, If you wish to use PayPal, visit our website at www.heritageleague.org. You are welcome to sponsor a member. Please feel free to copy our membership form.

We are excited to announce that we will be going back to Norwich for our 2019 Heritage League Convention. Information and registration are included in this Herald. Please join us!!!

The Heritage League is always looking for volunteers. In the coming year, we will use new ways to ask you how you might volunteer with us in fulfilling our exciting mission. We will be asking for volunteers for convention support, planning regional get-togethers and outings, support with the publication of “The Herald” among other ‘opportunities.’ We encourage everyone to get involved. Any contribution is greatly appreciated.

You can also find more information on our website, www.heritageleague.org.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. We value your membership and participation.

Sincerely,

Marybeth Dyer (458th BG)
VP—Membership and Acting President
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RENEWAL / APPLICATION FOR HERITAGE LEAGUE OF THE 2ND AIR DIVISION (USAAF)



We strongly encourage you to pay through PayPal. It is safe and secure way for you to pay your membership and contributions. LOG ON TO <http://www.heritageleague.org/> Otherwise

**Please return this page with your check, payable to the
Heritage League
Membership- VP
6410 Valley Oak Plaza
Martinez, CA 94553
smbdye@sbcglobal.net**

NAME _____ SPOUSE _____

ADDRESS _____ TELEPHONE () _____

CITY, STATE _____ ZIP _____

E-MAIL _____ @ _____

(If you are receiving the newsletter by email, please make sure you provide your email address above)

NAME of related 2nd Air Division Veteran _____

Their BG or Unit No. _____ Their relationship to you _____

Dues for friends and relatives of 2nd Air Division Veterans , check one:

☐ PDF Newsletter via Email -*provide email address above*- \$20

☐ Printed Newsletter sent by US mail \$30

2nd Air Division Veterans are eligible to be a Honorary Lifetime Member; check one:

☐ PDF Newsletter, via Email -*provide email address above*- \$0 (free)

☐ printed Newsletter via regular mail - \$30

(If the cost of the printed newsletter causes a hardship, please let us know)

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Contribution to the Heritage League operations \$ _____

Contribution to 2nd Air Division Memorial Library(Norwich,UK) \$ _____

Contribution to Flower Fund for Cemeteries \$ _____

If you like, we would be pleased to note your contribution as...

In Memory of (deceased) _____

OR

In Honor of (living person) _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

VOLUNTEERING YOUR TIME AND TALENT

We are very appreciative of the strong fiscal support you have shown for The League and related entities. Would you also be able to share your time and talent with us?

At <http://www.heritageleague.org/volunteers.html> you can fill out a form that lets our expanded Volunteer Program pair you with work that supports our mission!

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the Second Air Division (USAAF)
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NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
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