



# HERITAGE HERALD

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Periodical of the Heritage League of the Second Air Division (USAAF)



Meeting of the mayors. Norwich Lord Mayor Vaughan Thomas and Heritage League Vice President Jim Birmingham (458<sup>th</sup> son, and Mayor of Greendale, WI) compare attire following the Remembrance Day Service at Norwich Cathedral. Photo: Beverly Tomb.

## HERITAGE LEAGUE REMEMBERS— 2<sup>nd</sup> AD Americans Revisit Norwich For Remembrance Ceremonies

by Beverly Baynes Tomb and Marybeth Dyer

Last November, a “Friendly Invasion” of eight Americans visiting Norwich and London took place for events in conjunction with Remembrance Day (Veterans Day as we call it). Our group: WWII veteran Allan Hallett (389<sup>th</sup> BG) with his daughter Martha Testagrossa, his two grand-daughters, Kristina Testagrossa and Danielle Trombley, Heritage League President Marybeth Dyer, HL Executive Vice-President Jim Birmingham, and Past President and current Memorial Trust Governor Beverly Baynes Tomb and her husband, Doug.

On Friday, November 8<sup>th</sup>, after arriving at the Maids Head Hotel in Norwich, we had a lovely welcome visit from Trust Chairman Richard Middleton.

On Saturday, several Trust Governors joined us and many local people for a Remembrance Ceremony at Hethel where Allan Hallett placed a wreath for his 389<sup>th</sup> BG. Beverly Tomb joined local Cathy Thomson to place one for the 466<sup>th</sup> BG. Several local men (continued on page 2)

## Jimmy Stewart: Refusing Celebrity Status & Privilege

by Tom Eisele

In today’s world, it is difficult to recall the patriotic enthusiasm in 1940 and 1941 that drove men and women to volunteer, to be an active part of the war effort in World War II. It may be time to remind ourselves of that long-ago spirit, when people sacrificed their self-interests for the greater good.

Here’s one example of such self-sacrifice, and it relates to someone famous, someone who could have used his celebrity status and privilege to stay out of the fight.

Jimmy Stewart was an actor and Hollywood star at the height of his fame in 1940 and 1941, just having won an Oscar



Major Stewart after receiving the Distinguished Flying Cross for heroism/extraordinary achievement in an aerial flight. He was awarded two Distinguished Flying Crosses and four Air Medals, as well as the French Croix de Guerre with bronze palm. Photo via American Air Museum (IWM, Duxford).

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**HAPPY BIRTHDAY  
LIBERATOR TURNS 80 !**



(Story begins on page 13)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

—Marybeth Dyer



Last November was our time to always remember and be grateful. We started with Veteran's Day, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday in November in the US, honoring all of our Veterans present and past, and we also thank them for their service; especially of the approximate 7,000 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division troops who did not come home. We are so grateful beyond words for their sacrifice.

Remembrance Day, observed in the UK on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of November, commemorates British service members who have died in all wars and other military conflicts since the onset of World War I. By tradition, a two-minute period of silence is observed throughout the country at 11 am. Church services and other ceremonial gatherings take place during the day. Groups lay poppy wreaths to remember. You might ask where the poppy representation comes from? The red poppy became associated with World War I memorials after scores of the flowers bloomed in the former battlefields of Belgium and northern France.

This year, eight Americans traveled to the UK to attend Remembrance Day and attend the 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division Memorial Trust Annual Governors Meeting in Norwich. Beverly Tomb has a wonderful article on our visit.

Going back to the UK at this time always makes me wonder what it was like for our B24 airmen when they were there. How they must have missed their families? How cold was it for them and how uncertain the times were? But I know for sure, they had each other, they were honorable, brave and loved their country so much. I am so grateful for each and every one of them. Most of them came home, some did not. We will never forget their stories and what they contributed for our freedom. In one of the services we attended, this verse spoke to all of us:

***When you go home, tell them of us and say:  
for your tomorrow we gave our today.***

This is the time we all renew our annual League membership. Look for renewal information in the mail and in this Herald. We would appreciate it, if you would join our mission and share the brochure with your family and friends. We are so thankful for your support. There are other ways you can provide support with our volunteer opportunities. Please consider volunteering by clicking on the volunteer form on our website: <https://heritageleague.org/volunteer/>. You can also follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Heritage-League2AD/>.

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

(continued from page 1)

brought their military vehicles to add to the ambiance, and we explored the displays of memorabilia at the new nissen huts and WWII artwork in the chapel. Lunch at The Worlds End Pub followed, including a birthday

celebration for Martha. In the evening, the Americans gathered in the Yard Arm room at Maids Head to watch (on TV) the impressive Royal British Legion Service at the Royal Albert Hall in the presence of Her Majesty, The Queen.

In England, Remembrance Sunday is a very special day. They remember and will never forget all who have died defending their country. Wreaths of poppies are placed on the war memorial in front of Norwich City Hall. WWII Veteran and Heritage League Honorary Life Member Allan Hallett laid a wreath on behalf of the almost 7,000 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division men and women lost in WWII. His daughter Martha Testagrossa assisted him. As the clock struck 11 am, a lone bugle played "Last Post" (the British equivalent of US "Taps"). All the flags dipped and everyone observed two minutes of silence thinking about lives lost in war. Then, the bu-



Hethel Remembrance Day procession. Fred Squires, nearest camera, is key volunteer in ceremonies and museum operation. Photo: Marybeth Dyer.



gle sounded “Reveille,” and the flags came up again.

The Salvation Army Band paraded to Norwich Cathedral followed by many military cadets and veterans groups for a Remembrance Service led by the Very Reverend Jane Hedges, Dean of Norwich Cathedral.

***When you go home, tell them of us and say: for your tomorrow we gave our today.***

The group enjoyed lunch and fellowship in the Cathedral Refectory after the service. On that evening we gathered in the Yard Arm room for dinner and viewing the Remembrance Day ceremony at the Cenotaph in London.

Monday, we attended the Annual General Meeting of the Memorial Trust Governors at the Norfolk County Council Building's Archives Section. Trust Governor Beverly Tomb presented a report on the Heritage League and we heard about a number of changes to the library coming in early 2020. Both Allan Hallett and the Heritage League presented checks to Chairman Middleton for the Memorial Library. Thank you to all the wonderful Governors and library staff for making us feel so welcome.

Tuesday, some of us went to visit Attlebridge, home of the 466<sup>th</sup> BG, a very special experience. First stop was the All Saints' Parish Church in Weston Longville, where there is a corner dedicated to the 466<sup>th</sup> BG. Beverly and Doug treated Americans, along with Paul Hindle and his volunteers, to lunch across the street at The Parson Woodforde Restaurant/Pub. The pub was called Five Ringers during WWII and there is a display of items from the 466<sup>th</sup> BG. We next stopped at the 466<sup>th</sup> BG Memorial for a small ceremony, then on to the actual base with original buildings, underground bomb shelter, and the original runway. Special thanks to Paul Hindle and all of his volunteers for putting so much work into preserving the legacy of the 466<sup>th</sup>.

On Wednesday, we took the train to London and rode on the London Eye together. Thanks to Allan, we all got special priority in the line and had a great view of the city, including Big Ben under scaffolding.

Thursday, the final day in London for most of us, was a special Remembrance Service in the American Chapel at St. Paul's Cathedral, organized by former Lay Cannon Peter Chapman, MBE, and led by the Very Reverend David Ison, Dean of the Cathedral. In addition to the Trust Governors, Memorial Library staff, and our American



Gathered in front of the Roll of Honor after the special Remembrance Service held just for us in the American Chapel are (L-R) Stephanie Chapman, Jim Birmingham, Orla Kennelly, Tom Fullam, Andrew Hawker, Danielle Prostrullo (hidden), Marybeth Dyer, Ballieu grand-daughter, Danielle Trombley, The Very Reverend David Ison, Peter Chapman, Allan Hallett, Kristina Testagrossa, Douglas Tomb, Rev. Robert Coupland, Ballieu grand-son (hidden), Beverly Tomb, Elizabeth Hitchcock, Ballieu grand-son, Jonathan Powell, Martha Testagrossa, Anthony Harmer, Meg Horvath (hidden), Stephanie Harmer, Ballieu grandson, Chris Williams, Richard Middleton. Photo: via Doug Tomb.

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group; we met the grandchildren of the late Clive Latham Baillieu or 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Baillieu, KBE, CMG. Lord Baillieu was instrumental in the creation of the American Chapel which was created in memory of all the Americans who died helping Britain in WWII. The beautifully inscribed Roll of Honor is housed there and names them alphabetically. Each day a new page is turned. We ended our night with a wonderful dinner at Cote Brasserie with our British friends. Many thanks to everyone who made our visit so memorable.



Outside one of the buildings being restored on the 466<sup>th</sup> Attlebridge Air Base, grateful Yanks mix with characteristically helpful Brits. Lisa Savory-Mansfield, Paul Mansfield, Ann and Mark Eames, Jim Birmingham, Peter Woodcock, Doug & Beverly Tomb, Allan Hallett, Barry Beck. Photo: Paul Hindle.



Enjoying the traditional pizza lunch after the AGM, clockwise from front: Trust Governor Matthew Martin, Trust Librarian Orla Kennelly, Trust Vice-Chair Andrew Hawker (hidden), Trust Governor David Sisson, Trust Governor Jacqueline Fear-Segal, Trust Governor for US Embassy Scott Reidman, Trust Chairman Richard Middleton, Doug Tomb (466<sup>th</sup> BG spouse), Allan Hallett (389<sup>th</sup> BG veteran), Jim Birmingham (458<sup>th</sup> BG and Heritage League Executive VP), Trust Governor for Heritage League Beverly Baynes Tomb (466<sup>th</sup> BG.). Photo: via Beverly Tomb.



The steps of the Norwich War Memorial is well decorated with poppy wreaths during the Remembrance Day ceremony. The war memorial faces Norwich City Hall completed in 1938. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/City\\_Hall,\\_Norwich](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/City_Hall,_Norwich). Photo: Beverly Tomb.



2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division Memorial Trust Chairman Richard Middleton accepts Heritage League contribution for the Memorial Library from Beverly Baynes Tomb, Trust Governor for Heritage League and past Heritage League President; Marybeth Dyer, Heritage League President; and Jim Birmingham, Heritage League Vice President, during the annual general meeting in Norwich November 2019. Photo: Doug Tomb.

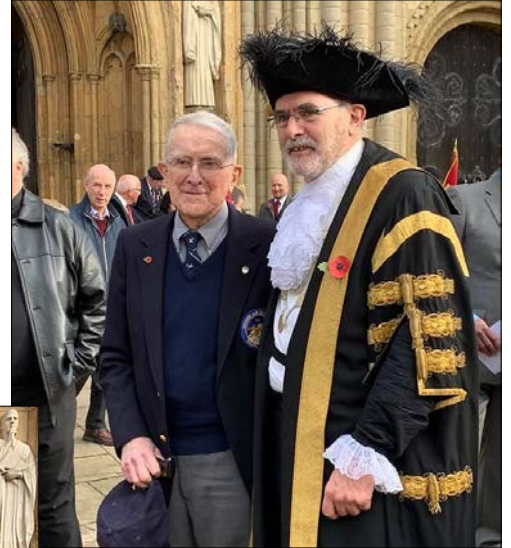


Light moment. Heritage League Executive VP Jim Birmingham (458<sup>th</sup> BG) being regaled in Hethel Museum by Alex and Colin Mann, our ever-helpful and fun 'man-on-the ground' in and around Norwich. Photo: Marybeth Dyer.





Paul Hindle, Jim Birmingham, Beverly Tomb and Marybeth Dyer pose at the end of the 466<sup>th</sup> BG (Atlebridge) runway. We see the view the pilots would have seen as they began takeoff on a mission during WWII. Windmill, turkey sheds, power lines are modern additions. Photo: Doug Tomb.



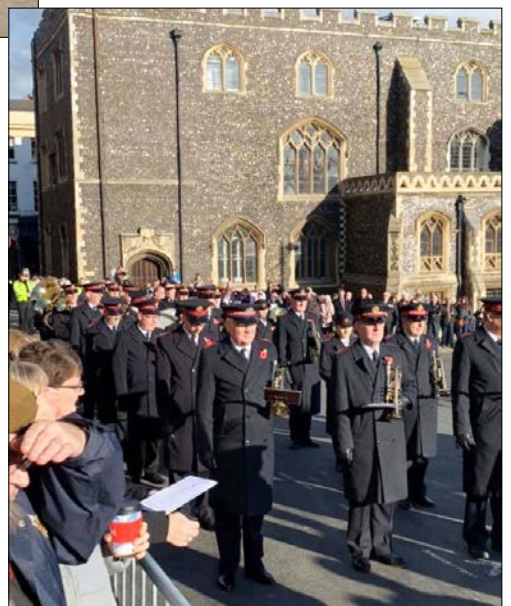
WWII veteran Allan Hallett sports a 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division patch on his jacket and a B-24 tie, but it's hard to compete with the regalia worn by Norwich Lord Mayor Vaughn Thomas. Photo: Beverly Tomb.

Three generations! 389<sup>th</sup> BG veteran Allan Hallett poses in front of Norwich Cathedral with his daughter Martha Hallett Testagrossa (sunglasses), and his two grand-daughters, Kristina Testagrossa (left) and Danielle Trombley. Photo: Marybeth Dyer.



Peter Chapman, MBE (first Lay Cannon of St. Paul's Cathedral) who organized the service and dinner following, reads part of Remembrance Service. Photo: Beverly Tomb.

Sobering words on poppy wreath presented by Allan Hallett at the Norwich War Memorial in front of City Hall on Remembrance Sunday 2019. Photo: Kristina Testagrossa.

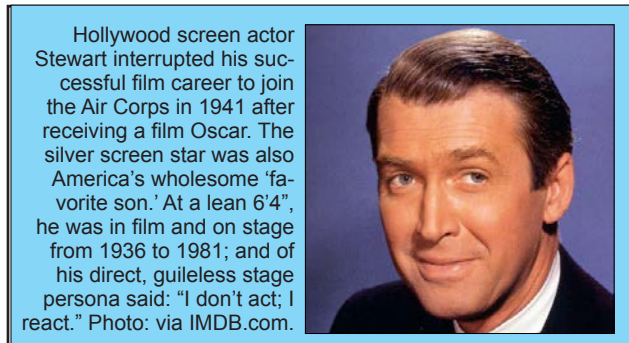


Salvation Army near Guild Hall during Remembrance Ceremony and wreath-laying at the Norwich War Memorial. Photo: Marybeth Dyer.

(continued from page 1)

for “The Philadelphia Story,” and having deserved another Oscar for his portrayal in “Mr. Smith Goes to Washington.”

He could have stayed out of the fray, and he had many reasons—financial as well as personal reasons—to avoid serving. Louis B. Mayer, head of MGM, offered Stewart several attractive inducements to avoid the fray. Yet Stewart would not bend to persuasion or influence. He wanted to play a part in fighting the totalitarian states.



Hollywood screen actor Stewart interrupted his successful film career to join the Air Corps in 1941 after receiving a film Oscar. The silver screen star was also America's wholesome 'favorite son.' At a lean 6'4", he was in film and on stage from 1936 to 1981; and of his direct, guileless stage persona said: "I don't act; I react." Photo: via IMDB.com.

### Getting into the Service...

In 1940, Jimmy Stewart was drafted. When late in 1940, he went for his physical examination, the gangly actor flunked the exam. Doctors said he was too thin and too lightweight for his height. Louis B. Mayer asked Stewart to leave it there—Jimmy had been willing to serve, but the Army wouldn't take him. Stewart refused Mayer's request. Instead, he appealed the decision of the doctors at his physical examination. And the second time around, he won his appeal and made the weight requirements. In March 22, 1941, Stewart reported for induction at Fort MacArthur in California.

*The simple fact is that, although he did not have to go and others in Hollywood were seeking to avoid service, Stewart defied his own boss and took every possible step to get into uniform. And he finally made it. [Starr Smith, Jimmy Stewart: Bomber Pilot (2005), p. 30]*

This was only the initial impediment to active service that was put in Stewart's way; other hurdles remained in front of him.

Jimmy Stewart, prior to his induction, already was an enthusiastic flyer. For years, he had been taking flying lessons and, once he got his license, he flew frequently whenever he could fit it in between acting roles. By the time of his induction in early 1941, Jimmy

had both a private and a commercial flying license, he owned his own plane, and he had accumulated more than 300 hours in his flying logbook.

Stewart was a natural for the US Army Air Corps, which is where the Army assigned him.

### Getting assigned to Combat Overseas...

Stewart had been born in May of 1908, so in the spring of 1941, he was 32 (going on 33) years old. This was more than a decade older than most inductees were at that time. Despite this age-gap, Stewart was enrolled in the pilot training school of the USAAF.

On January 19, 1942, Jimmy Stewart was commissioned a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant; he had his pilot's wings. But would he get his wish to fly overseas in combat? No, not at that time.

Instead, Jimmy started his training at Moffett Field in California, receiving instruction in instrument, night, and formation flying. Then he was switched to the instructor's class at the advanced flying school at Mather Field, still in California. When Jimmy finished at Mather, he became an instructor in twin-engine planes. He soon moved once again, this time to Kirtland Field in New Mexico, where he flew bombardier students in their training sessions with the Norden bombsight.

All of this experience as an instructor gave Stewart a great deal of advanced training in flying bombers; and it gave him a promotion to 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant. Still, it did not get him a combat flying assignment overseas, which is what he wanted.

Despite his frustration, Stewart did not protest and he did not try to use his social standing or celebrity status to his advantage. As a team player (as one must be as a military aviator), he pitched in wherever he was assigned, and he did his job faithfully and well.

Eventually, late in 1942, Jimmy was assigned to the B-17 transition school for four-engine pilots at Hobbs Field, still in New Mexico. He did very well at the transition school and graduated near the top of his class in February, 1943 (also gaining promotion to Captain).

Here, though, Stewart hit another roadblock. There had been 30 students in Jimmy's class at Hobbs Field. When the thirty graduated, 29 of them went on to their 3-month combat crew training and then to their overseas assignments. One student—Jimmy—went instead to Gowen Field, Boise, Idaho.



*At Gowen, he was classified as 'static personnel' with a hold order in his file, which meant that he was not to be transferred from Boise. His job: B-17 instructor pilot in first-phase training for combat crews headed overseas [Starr Smith, *ibid*, p. 36].*

Jimmy was stuck at home, while others flew and fought overseas.

Captain Stewart did his duty. Patiently, carefully, astutely, he trained others to do what he wanted to do—fly combat missions over Nazi Germany. From February to August, 1943, Jimmy taught others what they would need to know and do in order to fly in combat. All the reports and records indicate that he was conscientious in his teaching role. But he was not happy, and not fulfilled.

His commanding officer, Colonel “Pop” Arnold, learned that Col. Robert Terrill had a new bomber group of B-24 Liberators, the 445<sup>th</sup> BG, forming and going through third-phase training in Sioux City, Iowa. At that time, Col. Terrill needed a squadron operations officer to fill out his administrative team for the new Bomb Group. As Col. Arnold said later:

*I knew Stewart well, promoted him to captain and squadron commander. I knew he was mature, experienced, and dependable. He was an excellent pilot and instructor, extremely capable. I felt he would be an asset to any group commander. Of course, I knew he wanted to get overseas. And, I felt that if he wanted combat duty, to fight the war that badly, I'd help him. [Starr Smith, *ibid*, p. 51]*

August 3, 1943, saw Jimmy Stewart finally assigned to a bomber group that was headed to combat in Europe.

Capt. Stewart hitched a ride on a B-17, which took him to Sioux City. Very quickly, Jimmy was checked out on the B-24, a very different bomber, harder to handle and yet able to carry a heavier bomb load than the sweet-flying B-17. Stewart came on board as the operations officer for the 703<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Squadron in the 445<sup>th</sup> BG. Within the month, however, Jimmy was moved up to squadron commander. He had arrived. But his new-found position meant that he had plenty of hard work ahead. Getting the 703<sup>rd</sup> Squadron ready for combat flying was a chore—men had to be trained; crews had to be formed, and be allowed to settle and bond; planes had to be shaken down; formations of planes had to be flown with tight flying patterns in difficult flying conditions.

None of this work came easily, but Captain Stewart plugged away at it and helped his air-men transform themselves into a squadron capable of intricate formation flying. (The details of these last-minute struggles are discussed more fully in Robert Matzen, *Mission: Jimmy Stewart and the Fight for Europe* [2016], pp. 104-115.)

By October, 1943, and into November, the squadron achieved a state of readiness. And in early November, the 445<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group shipped out for England, its destination being Station 124, the village of Tibenham, south of Norwich in East Anglia. Jimmy Stewart was over there, finally in the fight.

### Combat Record—20 Missions and counting...

Having noted some of the obstacles that Jimmy Stewart had to overcome to get his wish to fly combat missions in Europe, we now ask: “How did he fare when he finally got his chance?”

What follows is an abbreviated account of the missions flown by Jimmy Stewart; my account selectively summarizes the wealth of details contained in Robert Matzen's carefully documented book, *Mission: Jimmy Stewart and the Fight for Europe* [2016]. Stewart's combat record divides into two parts: first, his time as

Captain Stewart soon after his arrival to England. A fancy setting—perhaps an officer's club at Ketteringham Hall (2AD Hqs.), or High Wycombe (8<sup>th</sup> AF Hqs.). Photo: USAAF via Freeman Collection, American Air Museum (IWM Duxford).



squadron commander with the 703<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Squadron, 445<sup>th</sup> BG, based at Station 124 in Tibenham; and then, second, when he transferred and became the group operations officer for the 453<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group, located at Station 144 in Old Buckenham.

After the 445<sup>th</sup> BG arrived in East Anglia in November, 1943, and underwent several shakedown and training flights, the bomb group began flying actual missions. Captain Stewart flew on many, but certainly not all of the group's missions. Mission numbers given below represent Stewart's 21 flights:

**Dec. 13, 1943**—Mission # 1—Kiel. Stewart flew right-seat in Gremlins Roost against submarine pens. The group experienced plenty of flak, but no opposing fighters.

**Dec. 20, 1943**—Mission #2—Bremen. Stewart flew right-seat in Lady Shamrock against port facilities. They faced plenty of flak again, and fighter opposition.

**Dec. 30, 1943**—Mission #3—Mannheim. Stewart flew right-seat in Tenovus, the deputy group lead plane, against marshalling yards. Over the English Channel, the engineer in Tenovus noticed an oil leak in #3 engine, and the pilot aborted, returning to base. The rest of the group flew on, as they should, and the B-24 that replaced Tenovus in the deputy lead position was shot down by fighters over the target. (This “mission” seems not to be counted in the list of Jimmy Stewart’s missions, since it was not completed; yet he and the crew ran all the risks involved in taking off, climbing into formation, reaching the coast of Europe, and then returning to base with a malfunctioning engine.)

**Jan. 01, 1944**—Mission #4—Ludwigshafen and the chemical plants of I.G. Farben (which produced, among other commodities, poison gas for use in the Nazi death camps). Stewart flew right-seat in Lady Shamrock against



Old Buckenham today highlights Major Stewart's tenure at USAAF Station #144 with a cafe bearing his name. Volunteers preserve the memory of those airmen who were stationed there. Major Stewart was Group Operations Officer of the 453<sup>rd</sup> BG starting in March 1944 [after being reassigned from 703<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Squadron Commander [445<sup>th</sup> BG] where he had served from November 1943]. Photo: Doug Dovey.

the complex of Farben chemical plants. There was plenty of flak, and the group bombed through overcast by way of pathfinder radar. After dropping their payloads, the lead bomb group flew an incorrect return course, which took the bombers near Paris. On that mission, the 389<sup>th</sup> BG was wing lead. Captain Stewart and others in the 445<sup>th</sup> BG noticed the incorrect heading and radioed that fact to the lead plane. They were told, in response, to maintain radio silence. Stewart made the decision to maintain group cohesion and follow the leader (safety in numbers). So, the trailing groups (445<sup>th</sup> BG and 93<sup>rd</sup> BG) followed the 389<sup>th</sup> BG for the purpose of ensuring group cohesion and mutual support. But Stewart was livid about the reckless disregard and negligence displayed by the lead plane and its navigator, and he reported the incident upon returning to base.

**Jan. 14, 1944**—Mission #5—Pas de Calais. Stewart flew right-seat in Lady Shamrock against V-1 cruise missile sites. Ran into some flak, but no fighters. Pretty much a milk-run.

**Jan. 21, 1944**—Mission #6—Bonnières, again hitting some of the V-1 launch sites in France. Stewart flew right-seat in Lady Shamrock. Another milk-run.

### **Captain Stewart promoted to Major on January 27<sup>th</sup>.**

**Jan. 29, 1944**—Mission #7—Frankfurt. Stewart flew group lead and right-seat in Nine Yanks and a Jerk against aircraft assembly facilities. Lots of flak and fighters throwing everything against the bomber stream, including rockets and even dropping chains into the path of the heavy bombers' propellers.

**Feb. 04, 1944**—Mission #8—The GM-Opel Russelsheim facility is located in the city of Russelsheim. Major Stewart flew right-seat in Nine Yanks and a Jerk against an Opel auto plant converted to aircraft manufacturing. Their formation was diverted, first due to weather, and then subsequently due to interference with a formation of B-17s. Not a huge success.

**Feb. 10, 1944**—Mission #9—to a Holland airdrome used by the Luftwaffe. Major Stewart actually flew from Hardwick, the station for the 93<sup>rd</sup> BG, where Stewart flew right-seat in a new B-24H Pathfinder equipped with H2X radar. Their formation attacked the Gilze-Rijen Airdrome, encountering little flak and no fighters; yet overcast skies and frozen electrical circuits sabotaged their best efforts. Very little effective bombing was done.

**Feb. 20, 1944**—Mission #10—Brunswick. This was the first day of the American operation, code-named “Operation Argument,” also called “Big Week.” It was a maximum effort, amassing more than 1,000 American bombers heading for multiple targets. Major Stewart flew right-seat in Tenovus against the Muhlenbau Industries under very difficult and demanding circumstances. This stressful mission was reasonably successful, and later Stewart was awarded the DFC for his command and control activities.

**Feb. 25, 1944**—Mission #11, Bachmann—Furth—Nuremberg. Yet another mission during the “Big Week” actions, and Stewart flew right-seat in Dixie Flyer against aircraft factories near Nuremberg. His flight encountered



heavy flak and fighters, and it was a terrible flight over-all, with heavy casualties being absorbed by fliers on both sides.

**This was Major Stewart's 10<sup>th</sup> completed mission, for which he received an Oak leaf cluster on his Air Medal.**

**Mar. 15, 1944**—Mission #12—Brunswick, again visiting the Muhlenbau Industries. Stewart flew right-seat in an unnamed ship, number 634, a Pathfinder B-24, and it was not a particularly successful or productive mission.

**Mar. 22, 1944**—Mission #13—Oranienburg and Basdorf. Stewart flew wing lead in the left-seat in a Pathfinder B-24 against aircraft manufacturers, but overcast conditions caused his flight to divert to Berlin, the secondary target for that day, and targets of opportunity were chosen. There was plenty of flak, generally difficult bombing conditions, with only mildly positive results.

**At this point, Stewart had flown on 13 missions and had completed a dozen.**

On March 30, 1944, Major James Stewart moved to become the 453<sup>rd</sup> BG's group operations officer, based at Station 144 in Old Buckenham. This transfer and promotion placed him in a more administrative position, with less opportunity to fly bombing missions. Now, more often than not, he was briefing men on the missions they were about to fly, not leading them in those missions. Still, he performed with his usual care and concern.

*He was meticulous, precise, painstaking, exacting in his briefings. It was obvious that he knew what he was doing. [Starr Smith, op. cit., p. 122].*

**Apr. 14, 1944**—Mission #14—Wessling—Munich. Major Stewart flew as an observer in ship 210, Heavenly Body, against the Dornier-Werke aircraft parts plant. They encountered plenty of flak, and many FW-190 fighters. Their bombing results were reasonably good under tough battle conditions.

**May 15, 1944**—Mission #15—Siracourt, France, against some V-1 launch sites. Stewart led 11 ships on this mission, but there are few available details describing it.

**May 25, 1944**—Mission #16—Troyes, again in France, against marshalling yards, in preparation for the D-Day landings. The planes mistakenly bombed near Tonnerre, France, and some civilian areas were hit.



Major Stewart, Operations Officer of the 453<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Group at Old Buckenham base, meets members of the crew of Male Call on April 10, 1944. At this point Stewart had completed twelve raids over enemy territory, including one over Berlin when he led the group. Shown are S/Sgt Keith M. Dibble of Rixford, PA, Gunner, Lt Roger Counselman of Meadville, PA, pilot, Major James M. Stewart of Indiana, PA, S/Sgt Joseph T. Fiorentino of Philadelphia, PA, gunner, and 2/Lt AE Wilensky of Monessen, PA, navigator. Photo: Associated Press photo courtesy of American Air Museum (IWM Duxford).



Newly promoted Major, Squadron Commander Stewart with Air Medal soon after his arrival in England. Photo: USAAF via Freeman Collection, American Air Museum (IWM Duxford).

## Stewart promoted from Major to Lt. Colonel. June 3, 1944.

June 6, 1944. Stewart briefed the bombing missions by the heavies to support Omaha Beach landings on D-Day, but he did not fly. Overcast skies and poor weather conditions led to dreadfully ineffective targeting by the heavy bombers; they dropped late and plastered areas too far behind the beaches to help the soldiers landing under withering German fire on Omaha Beach. This was a black eye for the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force and those in command of the operation.

## Stewart was promoted to operations officer for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Combat Wing, headquartered at Hethel on July 2, 1944.

**July 19, 1944**—Mission #17—Southern Germany. This was a maximum effort of 1200 heavies against 10 targets. Lt. Col. Stewart flew against Luftwaffe bases near Laupheim, meeting much flak, but few fighters.

**Oct. 15, 1944**—Mission #18—Reisholz—Cologne. Stewart led 73 Liberators against synthetic oil plants and power station targets. They encountered some flak, but no fighters, and still achieved only fair bombing results.

**Nov. 30, 1944**—Mission #19—Homburg. Lt. Col. Stewart flew in a Pathfinder B-24 with the 389<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, leading 66 ships against rail yards. There was “meager” flak, and no fighters.

## In December, 1944, James Stewart was promoted to full Colonel.

**Feb. 27, 1945**—Mission #20—Halle. Col. Stewart flew in a Pathfinder B-24, leading more than 80 ships against marshalling yards. They saw little flak, and no fighters.

**Mar. 21, 1945**—Mission #21 against ten airfields. Col. Stewart flew as Second Wing air commander, with the 389<sup>th</sup> BG, out of Hethel, leading almost 1,400

heavies against various airfields. But a snafu in formation flying and subsequent disarray led to disappointing bombing results.

We can see from this summary that the war in Europe was winding down. After D-Day, the

bulk of Jimmy Stewart's work was administrative, not combat flying itself. He kept his hand in, to be sure, and ended up completing 20 combat missions over the European continent. His was an admirable service record.

## Getting Home

The war in Europe ended on May 8, 1945. But it was not until August 27, 1945, that James Stewart boarded the ocean liner Queen Elizabeth for the voyage back to America. On August 31<sup>st</sup>, their ship steamed into New York harbor past the Statue of Liberty. After arriving home, the first movie that Jimmy Stewart made was *It's a Wonderful Life*. How things had changed. As Jimmy Stewart lived, his was not a life of celebrity and privilege; but rather, one of sober responsibility and dedication, serving a common cause larger than personal gratification.

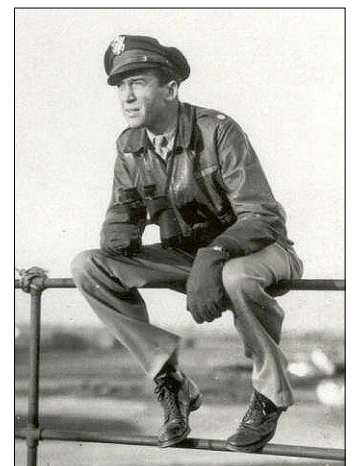
Colonel Stewart receives the Croix de Guerre with bronze palm from French Lt. Gen. Martial Valin, chief of staff for the French Air Force, for “exceptional services” in the liberation of France. Stewart at that time was chief of staff of 8<sup>th</sup> AF Second Combat Wing. He had already received the D.F.C with bronze oak leaf cluster and Air Medal with two clusters. Photo via American Air Museum (IWM, Duxford)



Aware of publicity value for the war effort, the US authorities tried to stifle Stewart's desire to fly combat missions and assigned him to a series of quiet postings. Stewart, however, persisted: by late 1943 he was commander of the 703<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Squadron, 445<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group at Tibenham, flying B-24 Liberators. Photo: USAAF via 2AD Memorial Library.



Sweating it out. Lt. Col. Stewart waits at the control tower for safe return of planes on the day's mission. Photo: USAAF via Freeman Collection, American Air Museum (IWM Duxford).





## Happy Birthday VETS!

In addition to the birthday of the B-24, we want to acknowledge birthdays of some of our veterans who have recently, or are about to celebrate their 'special day.' While in St. Louis for the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Historical Soci-

ety Reunion, we saw 11 Vets associated with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division. Seven of them are highlighted here, with two of them recently over the 100-year-old mark. Harvey Naber (waist gunner) just turned 101 and Elmo Maiden (command pilot) passed the century mark this past summer.



392<sup>nd</sup> BG waist gunner Harvey Naber is still going strong and looking great, having turned 101 last November 14<sup>th</sup>. Photo: Doug Dovey.

466<sup>th</sup> BG Pilot Elmo Maiden celebrated his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday last July 27! Photo: Doug Dovey.



Fighter pilot Charles Screws turned 98 on December 7<sup>th</sup>. His legendary 361<sup>st</sup> Fighter Group, part of the 65<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing, was in 2AD. Then and now, bomber crew are always glad to see their 'Little Friends' (vital escorts through enemy skies). Photo: Doug Dovey.

453<sup>rd</sup> BG co pilot Russel Neatrou turned 97 last October 19<sup>th</sup>. Photo: Doug Dovey.



We will acknowledge more Veteran birthdays in future Heralds and we can use your help in gathering digital photos and birth dates. Please Email with "2AD VET Birthday" in the subject line to [ddovey@hotmail.com](mailto:ddovey@hotmail.com).

row, all because it was shaped by legends like you all who risked your lives every day in support of our nation. **HAPPY BIRTHDAY** we honor your lives and thank you for our freedom!

Our country is filled with much promise for tomor-

Whatever you guys are doing, keep it up!



445<sup>th</sup> navigator Joe Reus's 703<sup>rd</sup> squadron commander was Jimmy Stewart. He was shot down twice and on his second mission became a POW. He went on to serve in Korea and Vietnam. Major Reus turned 97 on November 2<sup>nd</sup>. Photo: Curt Reus.

Don O'Reilly served as an MP for 305<sup>th</sup> BG (B-17 group based at Grafton Underwood) then in the 491<sup>st</sup> and 44<sup>th</sup> BGs of the Second Air Division. On the 16<sup>th</sup> of November, he turned 98. Photo: Doug Dovey.



466<sup>th</sup> BG veteran Earl Wassom, always beaming and inspiring when pressed into Chaplain duties by his group, Heritage League, or 8AFHS. He celebrated his 96<sup>th</sup> on September 20<sup>th</sup>. Photo: Doug Dovey.

Lewis Huisman flight engineer in the 453<sup>rd</sup> BG, flying out of Bungay, marked his 96<sup>th</sup> on January 18<sup>th</sup>. Photo: Doug Dovey.





# Heritage Leaguers in St. Louis with 8AFHS Reunion, October 18-21, 2019

Although many Heritage League members attended the Heritage League Convention in Norwich, England last June 2019, there was an impressive turnout of 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division attendees at the 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS reunion last October. Second Air Division affiliates from the 466<sup>th</sup>, 392<sup>nd</sup>, 489<sup>th</sup>, 389<sup>th</sup>, and 453<sup>rd</sup> Bomb Groups comprised over 40 attendees! Largest grouping was the 466<sup>th</sup> BG, Attlebridge, with over 20 in their group.

As is the standard for these events: shared experiences, 'accurate' War stories, great memories with great camaraderie is the norm. Our servicemen didn't just train together, they all shared in the sacrifices. And to this very day we'll continue to honor those who are still with us and those who gave their lives for our freedom. We look forward to seeing many more again this fall as the Heritage League will join the 8AFHS reunion in Memphis on October 21-25, 2020.



Deborah Simms-Watson and her veteran father Burt Madison (453<sup>rd</sup> BG) are all smiles as they arrive at the reunion in St. Louis. Photo: Beverly Tomb.



Hale and hearty. 466<sup>th</sup> veterans Elmo Maiden, Perry Kerr and Earl Wassom with BG family and friend. Photo: © W. Craig Dubishar.

Elmo Maiden (466<sup>th</sup>) on the right with son Tom Maiden and daughter Nancy Maiden Shattuck. Elmo turned 100 last July! Photo: © W. Craig Dubishar.



453<sup>rd</sup> originals, Burton Madison and Oliver 'Mo' Morris bring good times to any party. Photo: Beverly Tomb.



Three HL members on the left: Sharon & Chuck Sullivan (453<sup>rd</sup> son) and L. Travis Chapin (389<sup>th</sup> son, and newly elected member of 8AFHS Board of Directors) with wife Ginny, enjoy the evening with friends. Photo: © W. Craig Dubishar.





Ready for dinner together with families are Heritage Leaguers Oliver 'Mo' Morris (453<sup>rd</sup>) with son-in-law Bud Carpenter and daughter La Rue Morris Carpenter and Deborah Madison Simms-Watson with her dad, Burton Madison (453<sup>rd</sup>). Photo: © W. Craig Dubishar.

Two veterans of the 453<sup>rd</sup> BG dine together: Oliver 'Mo' Morris and Russell Neatrou. Photo: Doug Dovey.



Heritage League Communications VP and Air Force veteran, Doug Dovey (a 392<sup>nd</sup> and 44<sup>th</sup> BG son) lights candle at the 8 AFHS banquet commemorating veterans of all services. Photo: © W. Craig Dubishar.

Cindy and Earl Wassom (466<sup>th</sup>) still having fun after 70+ years of marriage and many 8AFHS reunions. Photo: © W. Craig Dubishar.



## Happy Birthday Liberator! The B-24 turns 80

by Brian Mahoney

On December 29<sup>th</sup>, 1939, the first prototype Liberator took to the air from Lindbergh field, San Diego. The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Consolidated B-24 was marked with great ceremony in multiple locations in 1989 with many who flew in, worked on, or built it, still around. A smaller circle—many fewer vets but more aviation and war historians—noted the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2014. This article is our quiet celebration of the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday of the workhorse of the Second Air Division and numbered US Army Air Forces in every theatre of WWII.

In the 1930s run-up to US involvement in WWII, the Army Air Corps needed, in very large numbers and fast, multi-engine heavy bombers that could deliver lots of hurt to the enemy while defending itself. The Boeing B-17 became production-ready in 1935, but war planners were hoping to scale up both range and lethal payload if possible.

When Consolidated Aircraft was asked in 1938 to take on a large production contract for the 'Flying Fortress,' a little bit of corporate pride and competitiveness stirred CEO Rubin Fleet to counter-propose something newer of their own design, consciously designed to deliver more and further, than the already proven but increasingly dated B-17.



Liberator was designed to be manufactured in modules such as this, just ahead of the tail turret, that allowed rapid, intense fabrication detail and complexity by dispersing it. Work shown would have been much constrained if it were mated to neighboring fuselage segment any earlier than necessary. Photo: Howard Hollem/US Office of War Information, via Library of Congress.





All business. The Lib presents widely different aesthetics and traits from different angles. From forward, above and to the side it seems athletic and impressively aerodynamic, but this D-type, seen head-on, it is at once both handsome and ugly; undeniably very brutish. Photo: Courtesy National Museum of USAF.

As fate would have it, maverick aeronautical engineer/inventor David R. Davis was trying to find a buyer for his revolutionary high speed wing, the one that has borne his name all these years. The marriage of a larger unconventional fuselage with a remarkable wing earned Consolidated an order. Rapid prototype manufacture presaged the necessary rapid rate of production. Similarly, an intense period of tweaking during acceptance continually refined the original design for the evolving variants needed for other than high altitude daylight strategic bombing; such as transport, long over-water anti-submarine patrol for the Navy, and even cargo and fuel transports. It is appropriate to review and celebrate this game-changing design of the B-24.

While the 'narrow chord' wing—it's much shorter front-to-back proportion than anything seen before—was the single feature that, for both good and bad characteristics, made the B-24 truly unique, and a vital part of the Allied victory. In terms of toughness against battle damage, it's substantially smaller wing silhouette presented a proportionately smaller



Oh, to be a fly on the wall...enigmatic original caption reads: "Ambassador to Japan Joseph Grew (left), and Edsel Ford stand beside a new B-24E (Liberator) bomber after an inspection trip through Ford's big Willow Run plant." Depending on whether this was before or after Pearl Harbor, they could have been discussing possible deterrent value of the bomber as indications of increasing Japanese military ambitions were a looming issue, or how the bomber would perform in the Pacific theater. Henry Ford's son Edsel was effectively running the company during WWII. Ford Senior was difficult character, openly anti-Semitic and, up until hostilities with the US, a Hitler apologist if not admirer. Photo: Howard Hollem/US Office of War Information, via Library of Congress.



target. In return, it required substantially less aluminum, a critically limited essential war material, weighed less, lifted substantially more, and carried it a lot further on the same amount of fuel. However, it also meant that the amount of damage—whether from cannon and gun fire of enemy planes or dreaded anti-aircraft guns—which only would have wounded the conventional B-17 was, too often, enough to destroy the B-24. This was and remains a matter of pride for those who flew it, despite its measurably higher casualty rate in men and machines.

What it could do on its strengths made a critical difference wherever it was deployed, but at a cost. It helped win the war and do it faster. Deployment of the new type was also an immediate, unmistakable game-changer in the Battle of the Atlantic. Only in April of 1943 did the trans-Atlantic shipping loss rate suddenly drop below 50% for the first time. This coincides exactly in time with the substantial closure of gaps in protective air cover of huge convoys against packs of German subs as British and US Liberators came to the fight from bases on the East Coast of the US and Canada, Greenland, Iceland, and the British Isles. However, for all the lives this ultimately saved on all sides, it entailed stoic, brave acceptance of its undeniable faster rate of loss.

9<sup>th</sup> AF Liberators operating from North Africa in early 1943, including detachments from England of the 44<sup>th</sup>, 93<sup>rd</sup> and 392<sup>nd</sup> BGs, famously struck the Reich's vital petroleum production in Ploesti, Rumania, at the extreme limit of the B-24's operational range on August 1, 1943. They also controlled the Mediterranean airspace allowing critical shipping and pre-invasion bombing of Sicily and southern Italy. As 15<sup>th</sup> AF Liberators began operating in late 1943 from improvised airfields in regions of Italy, whose liberation they substantially supported, targets in Eastern Europe and the Balkans, which were too far from England, came under their debilitating attack.

When the Liberator began augmenting B-17 groups of the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force in England in mid 1943, deeper penetrations, beyond Berlin to Munich, Peenemunde and Poland, substantially ramped up the strategic bombing campaign. The need for longer range fighter escort was also apparent and another critical game-changer, the P-51 Mustang, fitted with increased internal tankage and external drop tanks, was just the ticket.

In the Pacific, after displacing the comparatively limited range B-17, but before the long-awaited B-29, the rangy Liberator was modified for even longer distance and usefully supported the island-hopping campaign, while the single-tailed the Naval variant, the PB4Y-2 Privateer allowed greater interdiction of Japanese shipping and more effective suppression of submarine attack. In the China-Burma-India theater, Liberator capabilities allowed strategic and tactical missions that could not have been considered before.

B-24 production, most spectacularly at Ford's Ypsilanti and purpose-built huge Willow Run plant, but also In San Diego and Fort Worth—both Consolidated plants, and assembly by Douglas of Ford-supplied kits in Tulsa, totaled over 18,000 planes. This stands as a stunning example of the spectacular mobilization and ingenious industrial coordination that supported all of the Allies with weaponry and supplies, effectively rendering our safe continental US 'factory' the front of which, arguably, the war was won. In every way but shooting, 'home front' was not just a stirring euphemism.



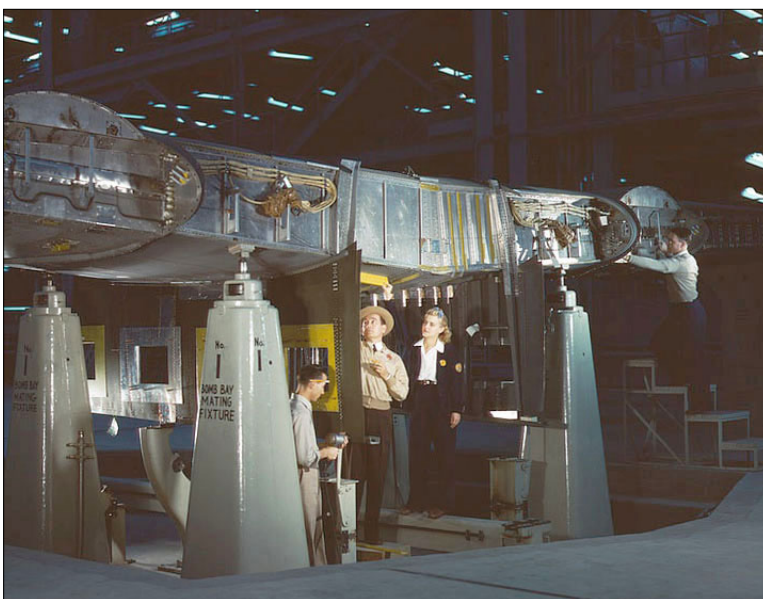
466<sup>th</sup> BG veteran pilot John Horan waves from the cockpit of the B-24 "Witchcraft" (owned by the Collings Foundation) at a 2005 air show at Palwaukee Airport near Chicago. Earlier that day, John had enjoyed flying in the plane as a passenger, his first flight in a B-24 since the end of WWII. Photo: Art Peterson.



Here's the slightly dated original caption verbiage that ran with this photo when first released: "A girl team working on a center wing section of a B-24E (Liberator) bomber in Ford's big Willow Run plant. The Liberator is capable of operation at high altitudes and over great ranges on precision bombing missions. It has proved itself an excellent performer in the Pacific, in Northern Africa, Europe and the Aleutians. Ford's Willow Run Plant, Michigan." Photo: Howard Hollem/US Office of War Information, via Library of Congress.

Depending on how much of a stickler you are for detail; only three B-24s remain, with one or two flyable. The tragic lethal September crash of one of the remaining air-worthy B-17s makes the specialness of the Collings Foundation's air-worthy B-24 all the more profound. By knowing and sharing the story of 'our' very special Liberator bomber, we can take some of the burden off of *Witchcraft* in preserving the rich and inspiring story for many more birthdays to come. Photo: Brian Mahoney.

B-24 and P-51 Parade. When the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Victory in WWII was celebrated in 2015, one theme, inspired by the 1-Aug-1943 Ploiesti Raid made good use of 'Diamond Lil,' the 2<sup>nd</sup> prototype aircraft of the 18,000+ run of Liberator types. Only other flying exemplar of most-produced multiengine plane in history is operated by The Collings Foundation. 'Witchcraft' is modeled after 467<sup>th</sup> BG record-setting plane that went 130 missions without an abort. When P-51 Mustangs entered service relatively late in the war, they allowed long range strategic bombing with reduced loss rates. Photo: Brian Mahoney.



Where wing meets fuselage. This view reveals the all-important wing spar where 30 tons of total load mates to 60,000 pounds of lift. Note relative thickness of Davis wing, with engine nacelles and anti-icing leading edges not yet installed. Within 12 feet of this center of gravity lay almost every hazard but the enemy: Bombs, oxygen bottles, fuel tanks with 100 octane gasoline and fumes, all fuel transfer control valves and pumps, hydraulic fluid swirl-tank and pressure accumulator. Photo: Howard Hollem/US Office of War Information, via Library of Congress.



Production. B-24E (Liberator) bombers at Ford's Willow Run Plant, Michigan. Henry Ford, innovator of true mass production, lent his genius to developing the Willow Run facility and production line, which at one point produced a Liberator every 59 minutes and ultimately outran the military need. Photo: Howard Hollem/US Office of War Information, via Library of Congress.



A Fifteenth Air Force Liberator, flying out of an Italian base, dropping 250# GP (general purpose) bombs. Plexiglas waist window 'cover' was not used in the 8<sup>th</sup> AF, and retention of ball turret beyond late summer '44 would have further distinguished this Lib from its English based cousins. Photo: USAAF via Google.

View of Liberator cockpit with intimidating number of gauges and instruments. Starting and operation of air cooled radial piston driven engines was an entire order more complex than with the jet engines that followed. While today's cockpit looks just as 'busy,' much more of it is about communications and navigation; much less of it about monitoring engines. Photo: Courtesy National Museum of USAF.



## B-24 Versus B-17 in Europe—A Practical Perspective

by Lt. Col. James J. Mahoney, command pilot

The Eighth Air Force used only two types of heavy bombers, the B-17 “Flying Fortress” and the B-24 “Liberator.” Of the Eighth’s three Air Divisions, the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> flew 17s and the 2<sup>nd</sup> flew 24s. Each division had about a thousand airplanes.

Most pilots felt strongly that the type of plane to which they had been assigned was the better of the two. Only the very few who had flown both types could be objective in making that assessment. I had too few hours in the 17 to qualify as one of those few, but I’ll make some general observations anyway.

As indicated by its lower numerical designation, the B-17 was considerably older in date of design and original manufacture than the B-24. Its conventional wing and semimonocoque type fuselage construction made it a stable and sturdy aircraft. The B-24’s modified Davis Wing and boxy fuselage made it faster, but less stable and less sturdy. In Europe, where the premium was on altitude to distance yourself as far as possible from anti-aircraft fire, the 17 could fly significantly higher than the 24. This was a major advantage even though the 17 flew slightly slower and carried a smaller bomb load. Also, because of its greater stability at altitude it made for a better bombing platform. In theaters of war where bombing altitude was not a critical factor, the 24’s greater load capacity and superior speed were real pluses.

Both planes had roughly equal firepower to defend themselves, and fuel capacities to remain aloft for about the same length of time. The 17 was powered by four Wright engines and the 24 by four Pratt & Whitneys. My personal experience with engines of both manufacturers favored the latter.

The basic construction of the wing and airframe of the 17 were unquestionably superior for the

types of trouble we generally got into. When hit by fighters and flak the 24s, because of the fuel system layout, burned and blew up more readily than the 17s. When power was lost, the 17 was a pretty good glider, whereas the 24, due to its type of wing and higher wing loading (ratio of weight to square feet of wing lifting surface) went down more like an elevator, giving rise to some cracks about the manufacturer being Otis. Most importantly, the 17 could crash-land relatively safely on land or water. The 24, because of its flimsy underside, collapsed very readily when crashed on any surface. Many fewer crew members walked away safely from 24 crashes than 17s.

Because it was less stable than the 17, the 24 required more control attention to keep it in a desired attitude or position. To achieve optimum performance, you had to get the wing “on the step,” like a power boat in water. The slightest jockeying of flight controls or even rough air, could throw you “off the step” at a cost of 8 to 10 mph of flying speed without changing power settings. While formation leaders could get their planes on the step and maintain them there, wing men, constantly maneuvering to stay in formation, could not. Consequently, they had to use higher power settings and, use more fuel than the leaders—a major consideration for command pilots, particularly on long missions. They had to consider that their wing men had less flying time left in their tanks than the leaders did.

Despite a strong sentimental attachment to the B-24, and gratitude for its getting me home in one piece, I’ll have to go with the judgment of those with many hours in both types: the B-17 was the better and safer vehicle for the job we had to do in Europe.

Reprinted from “*Reluctant Witness: Memoirs of the Last Year of the European Airwar 1944-45*”





# Heritage League of the Second Air Division

## Annual Business Meeting (unapproved minutes)

### Norwich, England, June 10, 2019

Acting President Marybeth Birmingham Dyer called the meeting to order at 10:12.

-Sue Risley gave the invocation.

-Beverly Baynes Tomb led the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### President's Report

-Marybeth introduced the Executive committee.

-Marybeth went on to explain what the Heritage League's mission is.

-Marybeth also explained our new protégé program.

-Marybeth then introduced our new social media director Paige Hurner.

#### Secretary's Report

-Marybeth Dyer reviewed the May minutes. Those minutes were submitted for approval by Marybeth. Sue Risley seconded the motion. Minutes were approved.

-Irene Hurner made a motion to accept the Annual Business Meeting minutes from 2018. Brian Mahoney seconded the motion. Minutes were approved.

#### Treasurer's Report

-Sue Risley reported that we had collected \$5,200 dollars from Smile.Amazon.com.

-Sue also reported that donations to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division Memorial Library can be made thru us to take advantage of our charitable 501 (c) status.

#### Volunteer Report

Brian Mahoney asked everyone to check out the volunteer form online and fill it out.

#### Membership Report

-Marybeth Dyer reported that the league has 319 active members. 103 are Honorary Life Members.

#### Memorial Library Trust Governors Update

-Richard Middleton reported on the current condition of the Memorial Library. The report has been entered into Dropbox in its entirety.

-Beverly Tomb then made a presentation to Richard Middleton of 7,000 dollars from the heritage league.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division Memorial Library Report

-Orla Kennelly reported that the library had 50,000 visitors last year. She also reported that there have been various lecture series presented at the Library which have been well attended.

-Orla also reported that digitizing should be completed by this time next year.

#### 2019 Election of Executive Board

Brian Mahoney, Colleen Mersman and Chris Clark were the election committee. Here is the slate as offered by the Board:

Marybeth Dyer	President
Jim Birmingham	Vice-President
Sue Risley	Treasurer
Colleen Mersman	Secretary
Doug Dovey	Communications VP
Brian Mahoney	Volunteer VP
Marybeth Dyer	Membership VP

Meeting adjourned at 11:15

#### Heritage League Members in Attendance

Cormia, Karen	Hodges, James
Cormia, Matt	Hurner, Irene
DeHart, Susan	Holdaway, Emma
Dovey, Doug	Lord, Mary Betz
Dluginski, Steven	Mahoney, Brian
Dyer, Steven	Marcander, Sharon
Dyer, Marybeth	Melnyk, Marcia
Meier, Hailey	Mersman, Colleen
Eisele, Mike	O'Reilly, Donald
Eisele, Tim	Palmer, Judi
Eisele, Tom	Risley, Sue
Fleck, Joel	Tomb, Beverly
Hallett, Allan	Winter, Ralph
Long, David	

# From the Memorial Library

by Orla Kennelly

## Heritage League Members Visit

Last November we welcomed American visitors to Norwich during our Remembrance Day/Veterans Day events. Veteran of the 389<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group at Hethel, Allan Hallett, was joined by family members from Massachusetts on his second trip this year. Allan was a top turret gunner who flew 3 missions, having arrived in England at the young age of just 17. Allan participated in the Remembrance Sunday services and joined us at our Memorial Trust annual meeting on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> November, Armistice Day, or Veterans Day to those of you based in the US. Memorial Trust Governor (and former Heritage League President) Beverly Baynes-Tomb visited, along with her husband, Doug. Beverly is the daughter of Richard Baynes who was based with the 466<sup>th</sup> at Attlebridge. Heritage League President, MaryBeth Dyer, also joined us with her cousin Jim Birmingham. They are the children of Frank and Robert Birmingham of the 458<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group at Horsham St Faith.

## Memorial Trust Library Rebrands

The Second Air Division Memorial Trust Library in Norwich England announced a facility remodeling, plus a name change for the future. Memorial Trust Chairman Richard Middleton announced this project as an effort to maintain the Library's purpose in memorializing the 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division's accomplishments, all the while improving its relevance in capturing the interest of new generations.

## Revised Library Name

The Trust Governors worked with a consultant firm to study the Library's visual identity and brand, the memorial interpretation, design and layout. They set up a project group to make recommendations, and the responses reinforced the Governors' views that there was a need for change to attract a new and wider range of users. The project group unanimously recommended a new name and logo design. It will be:

**American Library, Memorial to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division, 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force, United States Army Air Forces**

This is likely to be shortened to "*American Li-*

*brary*" for day-to-day and informal use. The Governors are committed to ensuring that memorial element of the library is understood by younger generations, and the stories of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division personnel can be discovered and shared by more people on both sides of the Atlantic.

## Library Layout

Improvements to our entrance and facilities will make our Library more open, welcoming and accessible. We will also be able to increase and broaden our education and events with a new space for this purpose. The new layout will provide a larger meeting room to accommodate activities and events, revised office space, new library shelving, soft furnishings, carpets, etc. and opens up space in the library. Physical changes are planned for February 2020 with a 'soft' opening planned for March 2020. The full launch in April will be as close as possible to the date of the last 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division operational mission, which was April 25<sup>th</sup>. The project is funded entirely by the Memorial Trust of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division USAAF, a registered UK Charity no. 269047. To take advantage of US charitable tax deductions, donations to the Trust can be made through the Heritage League.

**Note:** the Trust library will close beginning February 10<sup>th</sup> to April 5<sup>th</sup>. During this period, all 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division unit histories and some other specialist books will be available in the Norfolk Heritage Centre on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of the Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library. As usual, some of these will be for reference and some can be checked out. There will still be American library staff on site most days. We will be behind the scenes, so please ask at any public desk if you wish to speak to us. We will remain active on Facebook and Twitter and we can also be contacted by emailing [2ad-memorial.lib@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:2ad-memorial.lib@norfolk.gov.uk) or from February [americanlibrary@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:americanlibrary@norfolk.gov.uk) or by calling from the US: +44 1603 774747.

We will have small "wing" collections of American stock at libraries in Attleborough, Dereham, Sprowston and Long Stratton. These will remain unaffected by the closure of the home library. The digital archive, containing 30,000 original photographs, letters, memoirs and other documents, will be available as normal at <https://digitalarchive.2ndair.org.uk/>.



## Two New American Scholars

The library team has recently been bolstered by the arrival of the 2019/2020 American scholars who are currently registered in PhD programs at the University of East Anglia. Margaret Sessa-Hawkins is a native of Washington DC and currently in her final year of a PhD in creative writing. Danielle Prostrullo of South Dakota may be familiar to many of you as a former scholar. She returns to us in the final stages of her PhD in education.



American Scholar Margaret Sessa-Hawkins, a Nationals fan, even before the World Series. Photo: via 2AD Memorial Library.



American Scholar Danielle Prostrullo returns for a second tour. Photo: via 2AD Memorial Library.

## British Scholar

The family of Charles ‘Chuck’ Walker endows a scholarship to a student of American Studies at the University of East Anglia each year. This assists the student during their study abroad year in America. Lt. Col. Walker, who flew 35 missions over Europe, sadly passed away in 2014.

The Walker Scholar for 2019/2020 is Holly Walker (no relation) and she was awarded the scholarship by the Memorial Library on behalf on the Walker family. She is pursuing American Studies and is spending her year abroad at Clark University in Worcester, Massachusetts.

## British Book Unveiling about the Creator of the Library’s Special B-24 Model

All visitors no doubt remember the B-24 suspended from the library ceiling. On Wednesday May 8, 2020, the Library will sponsor a British Book Launch of *Flying with Dad*, by Yvonne Caputo. This book charts the journey of Mike Caputo, creator of that B-24.



Author Yvonne wanted a deep connection with her father and she found a way to make this happen as he told her his stories of World War II. Mike’s presidential deferment as an airplane repair mechanic would have kept him stateside, but he wanted to fly. As a B-24 navigator based out of the 467<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group at Rackheath, Mike’s experiences led to post-war nightmares and guilt over one particular bomb run. *Flying with Dad* launched November 28, 2019. Visit: <https://ingeniumbooks.com/yvonnecaputo>.

# Heritage League Gold Star Children Touched by the Roll of Honor at St. Paul's Cathedral, London

by Beverly Baynes Tomb

Two active members of the Heritage League are Gold Star Children, those whose parents were killed in Action (KIA) during WWII. During the Heritage League Convention in June 2019, we visited St. Paul's Cathedral and held a service in the American Chapel where the Roll of Honor is placed. The Roll of Honor commemorates all Americans who lost their lives in England during WWII. A page is turned each day to be sure all are remembered. Here is the story of how these two Gold Star HL members were touched during that visit.

Gold Star daughter, Billy Sheely Johnson's father William F. Sheely, was KIA on a mission to Bernberg, Germany on July 7, 1944 three months before Billy was born. After the Heritage League service in the American Chapel, Brian Mahoney noticed that the page displayed during our service included "Sheely, W. F." and he sent a photo to Billy. Here's her response:

*They have graciously turned the page for me each time I've visited, but having it turned to this page when you, my special friends, visited is wonderful!!! God knew both my Dad and I were with you all in spirit during the reunion!!!*



*Beverly may have told you that when she visited the Ardennes Cemetary a few years ago with Belgian Heritage League member, Luc Dewez, she unknowingly was there on my Dad's birthday, April 16th. She saw only one grave with flowers; walked over and discovered it to be my Dad. She sent a picture to me...what a special gift that was!!! All of our Dads are very proud of our efforts to "keep them flying" into perpetuity with much love and respect!!! I sincerely thank each of you for continuing to "carry the banner" especially since I'm no longer able to do so as in years long gone by. I plan to beat my recent health challenges and hopefully be on board in future years.*

*Take good care and thank you for sharing the visit to St. Paul's with me.*

Place of Honor. American Chapel is behind high altar at eastern end of St. Paul's. Inscribed on sarcophagus-like case for the Roll of Honor: "This chapel commemorates the common sacrifices of the British and

American peoples during the Second World War and especially those American service men whose names are recorded in its roll of Honor. This tablet was unveiled by H. M. Queen Elizabeth II on 26 November 1958 in the presence of Richard M. Nixon, the Vice President of the United States of America." Photo: Marybeth Dyer.



Gold Star son, Ralph Winter's father, 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Ralph Lamma, was a pilot with the 392<sup>nd</sup> BG and was KIA on 13 November 1943, going down with his plane during a mission to Bremen, Germany. Ralph Winter attended the Heritage League convention and was able to see the copy of the page in the Roll of Honor with his father's name, "Lamma, R. F." Oops! The middle initial should be an "E". All's well that ends well, and with a lot of help, the name is now correct.

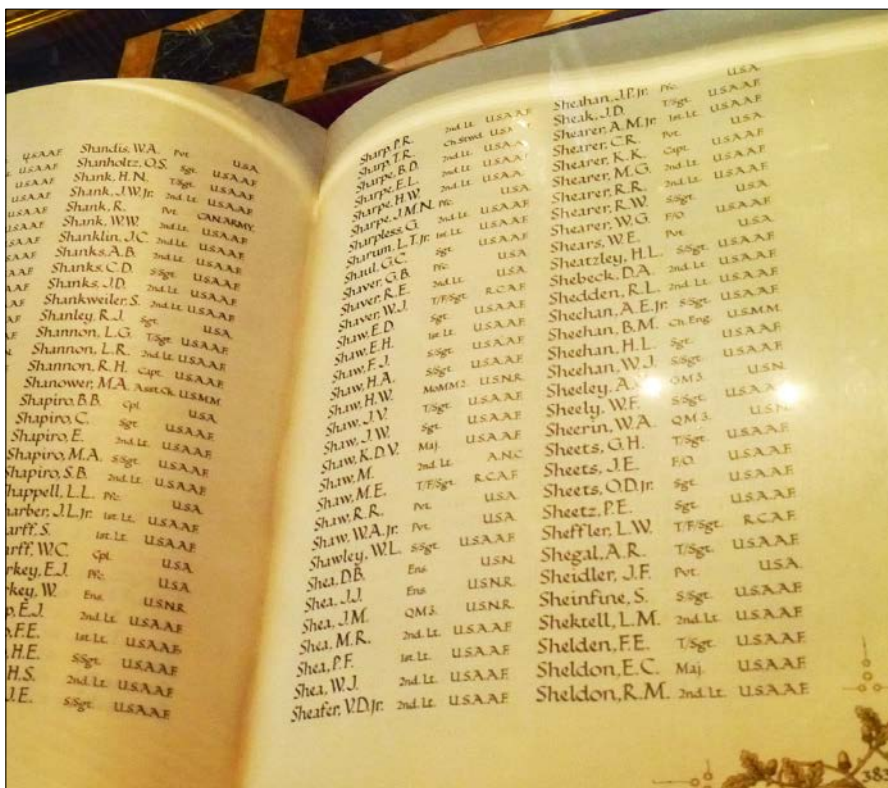
In the process of correcting the error, Ralph encountered many who helped along the way.

*While still at the cathedral, our wonderful contact at St. Paul's, Peter Chapman introduced me to Esther Anstice, Deputy Head Virger at St. Paul's. She is also the calligrapher. I showed her the misspelling in the duplicate book. We then went to the American Chapel, removed the glass covering of the actual book and checked the entry there. It too was incorrect. She informed me that she could change it easily (an F to an E) but needed authorization from the American Embassy.*

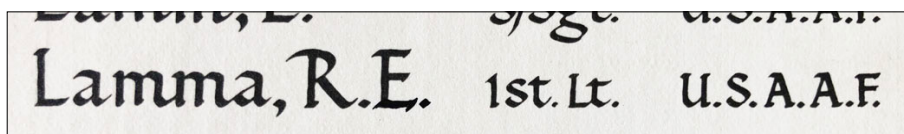
*Beverly Tomb put me in touch with Scott Riedmann at the American Embassy and I sent him documentation (the internment record for burial at Arlington) showing my father's name.*

*Scott authorized the change and forwarded it via the St. Paul's Reverend to the registrar, Emma Davis, and the correction was made.*

Deputy Head Virger Esther Anstice, confirmed the correction as shown in the bottom photo.



Most careful hands. The vellum Roll, with its elaborate binding, and beautiful calligraphy, lists 28,000 Americans KIA from bases in England. 'Sheely, W. F.', seen under the two lighting reflections, was father of League Past President and Gold Star Daughter, Billy Sheely Johnson. A page is turned every day; by chance, the 500 page volume was opened like this when Heritage League conventioners visited, June 2019. Photo: Brian Mahoney.



Flawless correction. Name of father of 392<sup>nd</sup> BG Gold Star Son and recent League Executive VP Ralph Winter, as recently corrected in St. Paul's Roll of Honor. Photo: St. Paul's Cathedral.

# SPRING 2020 HERITAGE CALENDAR

## Upcoming Events of 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division Interest

### April 2020

**Memorial to two B24 Crews.** Harleston & District Branch of the Royal British Legion service at the crash site memorial in Redenhall to honor the 22 brave men who perished 75 years ago. Saturday April 11, 2020, 11 o'clock. Contact Terry Pegg Email: [terry26uk@yahoo.com](mailto:terry26uk@yahoo.com).

### Easter Sunday, April 12

**2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division Trust Governors' mid-year meeting.** April 20, Norwich, England.

**Dedication of American Library**—Memorial to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division, 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force, USAAF. Dedication with special guests including the Bishop of Norwich who will bless the Roll of Honour. Wednesday April 22. 6 pm, RSVP by February 17<sup>th</sup> to [2admemorial.lib@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:2admemorial.lib@norfolk.gov.uk).

### May 2020

**American Library.** The Library will sponsor a British Book Launch of "Flying with Dad," by Yvonne Caputo. This book charts the WWII journey of Mike Caputo, creator of the model of the B-24 that hangs in the Library. Wednesday May 6, time to be announced.

**VE Day,** May 8, 2020, (Surrender of all German forces signed, May 7, 1945).

**American Library.** VE Family Day "Keep the memory Alive 75 years after VE Day." Hands on activities for families with kids of all ages. Some activities may require booking in advance. Saturday May 9<sup>th</sup> 2020, 11am-3pm. More information on our website after March 2020. [2admemorial.lib@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:2admemorial.lib@norfolk.gov.uk).

**467<sup>th</sup> BG Association.** More info at: [www.467BG.com](http://www.467BG.com).

- Joint Reunion, Norwich England (with 492<sup>nd</sup> BG Assoc) scheduled around VE 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, May 5-8, 2020.
- Launching a \$75,000 campaign (\$27,000 raised so far) to place a very accurate B-24 model (about 6 foot wingspan) in the restored officers club at Historic Wendover Airfield, Utah.

**Memorial Day Ceremonies** at American Battle Monuments Commission Cemeteries. More info at: [ABMC.gov](http://ABMC.gov) and at American Overseas Memorial Day Association: [Aomda.org](http://Aomda.org). Note, as of publication, not all cemeteries have announced their ceremony dates.

- Saturday May 23, Ardennes American Cemetery Belgium and Herri Chapelle American Cemetery Belgium
- Cambridge American Cemetery, (expected Monday May 25)

### June/July 2020

76<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day invasion. June 6.

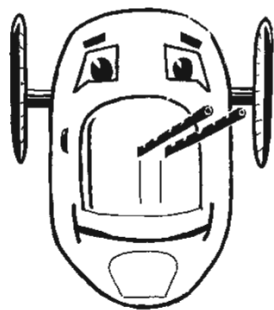
First day of Summer. June 20.

US Army Air Corps established. July 2, 1926.

### October 2020

**8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Historical Society Reunion and Heritage League Convention.** Memphis, TN. October 21-25. Info at: [www.8thAFHS.org](http://www.8thAFHS.org).





*Pitch  
it to  
PETE!*

*-by Pete O'Tube, Expert*

*Hello Pete,*

*In every WWII movie I can think of, it's always the Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress in the spotlight. The only cinematic depictions I have found of B-24 came out of private hands or the military, not Hollywood. At that, of the few images 'out there' that make it into the public imagination, are tragic ones, like the military's test water ditching of a war-weary D-type in the James River (it went badly) and the dramatic short clip of one bursting into flames as the left wing breaks off near the fuselage and some modern day documentaries. The B-17 steals all the Hollywood glamour. What gives?*

*Resentfully yours,  
Libby Ellen R. Ater*

Dear Lib E. R. Ater,

Let's start by paraphrasing Roger Schlueter, writing for the Bellville (IL) News-Democrat: "Like you, many find this exceedingly odd, considering that the B-24 still tops the list of the world's most-produced bombers of all time. Nearly 18,500 Liberators rolled off the production line at five plants. That's almost 50 percent more than the 12,741 B-17s produced. It seems to be the Rodney Dangerfield of warplanes—it don't get no respect." You would have thought that the famous August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1943 mission to Ploesti (which entailed awarding 5 Medals of Honor), would have attracted press riders. But everything was secret before the mission and with four dozen aircraft and 660 crewmen lost; it was one of the costliest missions of the war!

Pete has heard many a B-24 man say that prox-

imity to London—base for all of the principal war correspondents—is at the root of it all. As the crow flies, the closest 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division bomber base, Metfield, was 88.4 miles from St. Paul's dome, but no less than 24 of the B-17 bases were closer than that. This is likely why, when eight of them were trained to go on a combat mission, seven flew in B-17s and made it home, but the one who flew with the 44<sup>th</sup> BG, NY Times writer Robert Post, did not. Bad luck breeds low press riders and lower coverage.

While beauty is in the eye of the beholder, many argue that the B-17 is a sleeker-looking plane than the B-24 and globally, there are 46 intact Flying Fortresses but only a handful of Liberators in terms of displayed or flyable models. The irony is really strong when considering that the Lib's total bomb tonnage dropped surpassed that of the Forts, even though the B-17s were in England longer and stationed at twice as many bases!

Your resentmate,  
Pete

*Dear Pete,*

*I've come across two terms reading about prop-driven airplanes of WWI and WWII, that don't seem to relate to modern aircraft: 'glycol' and '100 octane.' Can you tell me what each means, and whether there are present-day equivalents for either?*

*Warmly,  
Sylvia Edson Byrd*

Dear Syl E. Byrd,

Before the jet age, piston-engined aircraft required cooling. Liquid-cooled engines had 'water jackets' containing a coolant that was circulated just outside of the hot parts of cylinders and the combustion chambers in the cylinder heads, then cooled in a radiator bathed in a flow of air. Air-cooled engines had fins around these same hot spots to conduct heat away. In turn, air directed over their extensive surface area took heat from fins. Internal combustion engines generate

mostly waste heat but also a mechanically useful pressure when ignited. The compressed fuel-air mixture is burned in the combustion chamber and forces the piston 'down.' Even if the metals used in pistons and cylinders could handle the high temperatures of an uncooled engine, the hotter the mixture is after being compressed, the lower the pressure of the expansion, hence the lower the mechanical power output. Whether internal combustion engines are rotary, radial, or in one or more 'banks' (or rows) of cylinders, one of the greatest engineering challenges is removing the considerable waste heat, and not taking too much of the useable mechanical power to do it.

With liquid cooled engines, one concern is freezing. Not only is coolant unable to circulate, but its freezing entails enough expansion to fracture engine blocks and burst pipes. Ethylene glycol—glycol for short, in Britspeak—is the active ingredient in anti-freeze used in liquid cooled engines.

Octane (CH<sub>2</sub> OH<sub>2</sub>) inhibits gasoline from igniting too soon, owing to the high heat and increasing pressure of the intake and compression strokes. The higher the octane rating, the more you can compress it without worry of damaging detonation while the piston is still going up, and the less critical is the cooling of the combustion chamber. The more you can compress the fuel-air mixture (or 'charge'), the more you can induce in each cycle. 'Avgas' is another term for 100+-octane gasoline. Higher octane blends are more expensive, but justifiable in aviation because they allow the extraction of higher power from a given volume of gasoline.

All of these principles of cooling and octane apply to the internal combustion engine in your classic air-cooled Beetle, in your modern-engined (liquid cooled) new Beetle, and even in your Prius.

Your cool-headed friend,  
Pete

**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:**

<b>IN HONOR OF...</b>	<i>Donors</i>
Allan Hallett (389 <sup>th</sup> )	Beverly Tomb
Perry Kerr (466 <sup>th</sup> )	Beverly Tomb
Elmo Maiden (466 <sup>th</sup> )	Beverly Tomb
Earl Wassom (466 <sup>th</sup> )	Beverly Tomb

<b>IN MEMORY OF...</b>	<i>Donors</i>
Richard C. Baynes (466 <sup>th</sup> )	Beverly Tomb
Albert Biel (453 <sup>rd</sup> )	Brian Mahoney
Claire Biel (453 <sup>rd</sup> wife and Mom)	Irene Hurner
Bill Campbell (466 <sup>th</sup> )	Beverly Tomb
Robert Davis (392 <sup>nd</sup> )	Beverly Tomb
Ralph Lynn (466 <sup>th</sup> )	Beverly Tomb

Oak Mackey (392 <sup>nd</sup> )	Beverly Tomb
Sam Mastrogiacomio (445 <sup>th</sup> )	Beverly Tomb
Lloyd Prang (453 <sup>rd</sup> BG Assoc)	Irene Hurner
Pat Ramm (453 <sup>rd</sup> British Friend)	Irene Hurner
William F. Sheeley (492 <sup>nd</sup> )	Billy Sheely Johnson

*Corrected from the last Herald*

Robert Chapin (389 <sup>th</sup> )	Travis Chapin
Leonard Rudy Howell (389 <sup>th</sup> )	Paul Howell

### **—Folded Wings—**

<i>Hubert Cripe</i>	2/20/18	453 <sup>rd</sup> BG
<i>George Snook</i>	9/28/19	445 <sup>th</sup> BG
<i>Roberto Ruiz</i>	10/4/19	389 <sup>th</sup> BG
<i>Albert Biel</i>	11/8/19	453 <sup>rd</sup> BG

## **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 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division—USAAF. Here is how it works: visit <https://smile.amazon.com/>. Log in with your Amazon account username and password.



If you don't have an account, create one. Select Heritage League of the Second Air Division as your designated charity.

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!



## history snapshot— this time-frame in 2<sup>nd</sup> air division's past

—compiled by Doug Dovey  
art credit: Ron Cole \*\*



### 29 December 1939

The Consolidated B-24 Liberator flew for the first time 80 years ago. Newer, more efficient and more versatile than the B-17 Flying Fortress, more Liberators were built (18,400) than any other military aircraft in American history. Source: Wikipedia.

### 7 December 1941

Pearl Harbor Hawaii is attacked by Japanese forces.

### 11 December 1941

Hitler and Mussolini declare war on the United States.

### 15 January 1942

The 44<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group, Flying Eightballs, was activated at McDill Field, Florida and equipped with B-24Cs. The Group then moved to Barksdale Field, Louisiana, acted as a training unit for the 90<sup>th</sup>, 93<sup>rd</sup> and 98<sup>th</sup> Bomb Groups, and flew anti-submarine patrols.\*

### 1 March 1942

The 93<sup>rd</sup> Bombardment Group (Heavy) was activated at Barksdale Field, Louisiana. On 15-May-1942 the Group moved to Ft. Myers, Florida to continue advanced flight training and also flew anti-submarine patrols over the Gulf of Mexico.\*

### 27 January 1943

USAAF bombers mount the first all-American mission against Germany, bombing Wilhelmshaven.\*

### 13 September 1943

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division came into being following the reorganization of the VIII Bomber Command as the Eighth Air Force. Existing as a separate entity the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bomb Wing started operations on 7

November 1942, was reorganized as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Bomb Division on 13 September 1943, and re-designated the 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division in January 1945. The division continued operations until the end of the war, flying the last combat sortie on 25 April 1945. The group completed 493 operational missions in Europe during World War II consisting of 95,948 individual aircraft sorties operating the Consolidated B-24 Liberator aircraft from airfields in Norfolk, England. Within the 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division, six groups received presidential citations for outstanding actions. Five airmen received the highest US award for bravery, the Medal of Honor, four of them posthumously. A total of 1,458 B-24 aircraft were lost in action and 6,700 men lost their lives. Source: Wikipedia.

### 20 February 1944

'Big Week' begins with an all-out 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force aerial offensive aimed at destroying the Luftwaffe prior to D-Day.\*

### 6 March 1944

Missions to Berlin—most costly 8<sup>th</sup> AF mission of the war. Courtesy of 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division *Journal*, Summer 2012.\*

### 6 June 1944

D-Day landing of occupied France takes place at Normandy.

### 16 December 1944

Germans launch the Battle of the Bulge in the Ardennes region of Belgium and Luxembourg.

### 8 May 1945

Victory in Europe (VE) day as Germany surrenders.

\* From American Air Museum in Britain database: [www.americanairmuseum.com](http://www.americanairmuseum.com).

# Members' Corner

*...where we hear from our readers*

## Greetings from the

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division Trust Chairman

Thank you all for your support during 2019. It was a busy year for the Trust and the Memorial Library which has been dominated by the Library renovation project.

The Trust ends the year in a financially sound position and while there was some turmoil on stock markets during the year, most of the major indices finished the year higher than they started it. One of the reasons that we have reached the end of the year in such a healthy financial position is that Matthew and his team of funding bid-writers have managed to raise almost £100,000 in grants for the renovation project, and there are still some bids in the pipeline; a tremendous effort, thank you. There may be turbulent times ahead in the markets but we look to our brokers CCLA to continue navigating us on a steady growth course.

Work on the Library renovation is reaching the critical stages. After all the planning, meetings and discussions during the year, the major contracts have been placed and we will begin the structural work in February to turn the ideas into reality, ready for the inauguration of the American Library on 22 April. Thank you all for your efforts to help get us to this stage but particularly thanks to Simon, Richard Hill and Librarian Orla Kennelly who have been immersed in the project since the beginning and gave us a good update at the annual meeting last November.

2020 will be an important year for the Library. Not only will we be marking a number of 75<sup>th</sup> anniversaries related to WWII, not least the departure of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division from East Anglia after their heroic exploits, but also we will be welcoming the US Ambassador, the Lord Lieutenant and the Bishop of Norwich to help inaugurate the American Library in April. I know I can count on your on-going support as Tom, Cathy and Orla put together the program for the launch ceremonies in April. The refurbishment will mark the start of a new and exciting chapter for the Trust and the Library as we do our best to meet the wishes of the veterans to create a living memorial.

Our new American Scholars, Danielle Prosser and Margaret Sessa-Hawkins have settled in and you will recall that from next year we intend to offer one of the scholarships for 3 years. The visit from the Heritage League Convention last June went well and they enjoyed their stay, despite the bad weather.

Once again thank you and I wish you and your families a happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Best wishes, Richard Middleton, Chairman,  
2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division Memorial Trust

## American Memorial Service

**The 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the USAAF World War II Aircraft Crash near Harleston, Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2020 11.00 am at Cooks Lane, Redenhall, Harleston, Norfolk IP20 9QR.**

One of the two planes in midair incident over Harleston. Photo via Harleston & District Royal British Legion.



The Royal British Legion Harleston and District Branch, Norfolk England, announces a memorial service on behalf of two B-24 crews assigned to the 446<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, Bungay Airbase.

**We request for any information from members of the Heritage League on any of the Aircrew.** If there are any surviving relatives, family members or friends of any of the aircrew that are listed that have any information, photographs, letters or personal memories that they are willing to share, please get in touch. I have further information regarding Army Serial Numbers if needed.

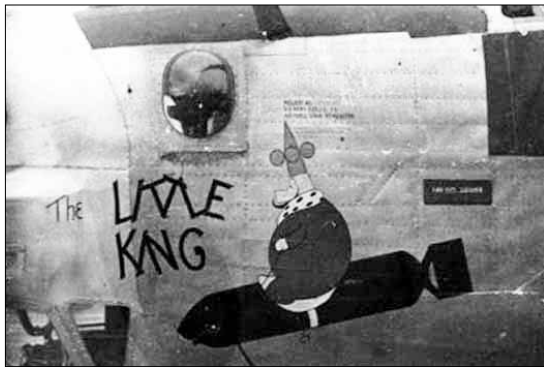
**On the 11<sup>th</sup> April 1945**, two B-24 Liberator bomber planes from 446<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group (706 Squadron), Bungay AB, collided in mid-air whilst preparing to land at their Flixton base after returning from a mission over Regensburg in Bavaria, South East



Germany. 22 American crewmen died as a result of the mid-air collision over Redenhall, near to Jays Green in Harleston, Norfolk. There were no survivors.

**On the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2020**, Harleston & District Branch of the Royal British Legion are planning a service at the crash site memorial in Redenhall to honour the ultimate sacrifice that these 22 brave men gave for our freedom that we enjoy today.

The service will start at 11am and will include UK and US National Anthems, Chaplin's message, an address by the 2AD Memorial Trust, reading of the crew names and personal messages from crew families.



Little King was other midair collision aircraft.  
Photo via Harleston & District Royal British Legion.

Dignified memorial at Harleston location of April 11, 1945 tragedy; 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary will be ceremonially remembered here. Photo via Harleston & District Royal British Legion.



The contact at Harleston & District Royal British Legion, Norfolk, England is Terry Pegg: Email: [terry26uk@yahoo.com](mailto:terry26uk@yahoo.com). The two aircraft involved were: B-24 Liberator 42-50790 (The Little King) and B-24 Liberator 42-51909.

## The American aircrew from the 446<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group who were killed on that fateful day—April 11, 1945

First Lieutenant John Randolph Barron (Pilot), 21, South Carolina

Technical Sergeant Anthony Stephen Birkbeck, 23, New Jersey

Second Lieutenant William Carlson, 22, New York

Staff Sergeant Raymond George Carnahan, 24, Pennsylvania

Staff Sergeant Rogers Edgar, 21, New Jersey

First Lieutenant Robert Joseph (Bobby Joe) Free (Pilot), 21, California

Staff Sergeant Wendell Eames Fuller, 22, Virginia

Sergeant Earl Graf, 24, New York

Sergeant August Haak, 19, Illinois

Sergeant Harold Granville Hackworth, 20, Kentucky

First Lieutenant James Haran, Jr., 22, New York

Technical Sergeant Donald Harris, 29, Illinois

Sergeant William Husted, 21, New Jersey

First Lieutenant Hulet Mack, 22, Texas

Sergeant Robert Edward Miller, 19, Indiana

Second Lieutenant Pasquale Pellicci, Not known, New York

Sergeant Richard Petrus, 19, Iowa

Flight Officer Martin Rubin, 20, New York

Sergeant Samuel Salat, 26, New York

Second Lieutenant Harvey Lawrence Sexton, 25, Kansas

Second Lieutenant Harold Smith, Jr, 21, California

Staff Sergeant Henry Thaddeus Wrzesinski, 25, Illinois

## Herald Correction

We incorrectly stated Mr. Woodrow's property at Hardwick Airbase (93<sup>rd</sup> BG ) was Hethel Airbase in our last Herald at the top of page 12. Thanks to Michael Sellers for pointing it out.



# HERITAGE LEAGUE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

## —MISSION BRIEFING—

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

This is a time of year to reflect on gifts, and giving. Chris and I have recently discussed that, as an all-volunteer effort, our association and its leaders need to thank those who make major contributions of time and talent, even while living on limited income, and often not in a position to contribute money. Much of what The League stands to be thankful for is truly priceless.

Having been involved with *the Herald* in a variety of roles over the years, I have come to appreciate that virtually everyone has something valuable to contribute, something that lets them claim their own satisfying part in fulfilling our noble and ambitious mission, honoring and remembering the service and sacrifice of those who served in the Second Air Division—and by implicit extension, in civilian and military roles at home and in all the theatres of that global struggle.

As a champion of volunteers and a volunteer program within the Heritage League, I have consistently failed to come up with ‘good metrics’—measurable indicators—of the extensive work of our editors of text and photos, or the uncounted hours that go into seamless treasury operations, into recruiting and retaining new and old members, and, yes, tapping and manage our volunteer resources. Since I can’t get anyone to log their hours, please accept Chris and my broad, overdue, inadequate tip-of-the-hat to the scores of you who have selflessly given of your time, behind the scenes, with or without a specific office or title. It is my continuing privilege to serve with you and take satisfaction that, collectively, we do honor to our WWII era veterans, and keep the light of their example burning bright, for following generations.

Because our mission is conceptually ambitious, we are unlikely to fully plumb the limits—if there are any—of practical ways to implement it. That is why it bears frequent repetition: the entire Board (not just the VP and Protégé VP for Volunteers) are always open to your implementable ideas to call attention to the awesome legacy we proudly share. Let us hear from you!

Meanwhile, we DO have enough great ideas and programs to keep us pretty busy, and even our ‘business as usual’ offers every interested Heritage League Member lots of ways to keep it going. Reunions, newsletters, robust and clear fiscal and membership programs, and stronger-than-ever formal and informal ties to our similarly grateful allies across the Pond, do not ‘just happen.’

The League is healthy because its mission speaks to people who are generous with their time or money or both. Here is a short listing of current tasks looking for suitably matched volunteers:

- managing Heritage League website
- checking/maintaining links on Heritage League website
- converting legacy graphic artwork from pre-digital, or bit-mapped forms, to modern vector-art graphics
- producing presentation-quality certificates of appreciation and commendations
- managing physical and virtual storage challenges for a healthy non-profit, that does not have a ‘bricks and mortar’ home
- research supporting our social media campaign, our factually accurate and visually strong Herald content, and upgrading articles at the heart of our website
- targeted outreach to vets, descendants, and associations of the five fighter groups of the 65<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing, assigned to the Second Air Division: 4<sup>th</sup> FG (Debden); 56<sup>th</sup> FG (Boxted); 355<sup>th</sup> FG (Steeple Morden); 361<sup>st</sup> FG (Bottisham); and the 479<sup>th</sup> FG (Wattisham)



## Membership Renewal/Application for Heritage League

*Please help us continue our work by encouraging all generations in your family to join in our mission.*



In case you missed the membership renewal in the mail. Please RENEW ONLINE and pay through PayPal. It is a safe and secure way for you to pay your membership and contributions. LOG ON to <https://heritageleague.org/membership/> OR return this page with your check, payable to the Heritage League Membership, 6410 Valley Oak Plaza, Martinez, CA 94553 [smbdye@sbcbglobal.net](mailto:smbdye@sbcbglobal.net)

**VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME AND TALENT.** We are very appreciative of the strong financial support you have shown for The League and related entities. Would you also be able to share your time and talent with us? At <https://heritageleague.org/volunteer/> -you can fill out a form that lets our expanded Volunteer Program pair you with work supporting our mission!

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)

NAME of related 2nd Air Division Veteran \_\_\_\_\_

Their Bomb Group 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 an 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 (We are a tax deductible 501(3) c organization)**

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 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Heritage League of  
the Second Air Division (USAAF)  
Marybeth Dyer (458<sup>th</sup> BG)  
6410 Valley Oak Plaza  
Martinez, CA 94553

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[www.heritageleague.org/](http://www.heritageleague.org/)



Past President  
Irene Hurner (453<sup>rd</sup> BG)  
46400 San Antonio Valley Road  
Livermore, CA 94550  
(408) 897-3029  
[ihurner@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ihurner@sbcglobal.net)

Past President  
Billy Sheely Johnson (492<sup>nd</sup> BG)  
1526 Mt. Pleasant Drive  
Colonial Heights, VA 23834  
(804) 526-1624  
[bcjohnson@comcast.net](mailto:bcjohnson@comcast.net)

Membership Protégé  
Barb Figueroa (458<sup>th</sup> BG)  
3225 Dayfield Avenue  
Milwaukee, WI 53207  
[barbfigueroa927@gmail.com](mailto:barbfigueroa927@gmail.com)

Herald Editor  
Lisa Niehoff  
(Friend & Supporter)  
PO Box 383  
Huxley, IA 50124  
(515) 597-3241  
[lisa@huxcomm.net](mailto:lisa@huxcomm.net)

Volunteers Protégé  
Chris Clark (489<sup>th</sup>/44<sup>th</sup> BGs)  
8427 Willow Glen Court  
Manassas, VA 20110  
(703) 392-9437  
[clarkhistory@aol.com](mailto:clarkhistory@aol.com)

## 2019-2021 Heritage League Executive Committee

President and Membership VP  
Marybeth Dyer (458<sup>th</sup> BG)  
6410 Valley Oak Plaza  
Martinez, CA 94553  
(925) 387-5283  
[smbdyer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:smbdyer@sbcglobal.net)

Executive Vice President  
Jim Birmingham (458<sup>th</sup> BG)  
7325 Edgehill Road  
Greendale, WI 53129  
[jbirmi@aol.com](mailto:jbirmi@aol.com)

Secretary  
Colleen Mersman (44<sup>th</sup>/491<sup>st</sup> BGs)  
3307 Cyclone Road  
Paw Paw, IL 61353  
[cpmers88@yahoo.com](mailto:cpmers88@yahoo.com)

Treasurer  
Sue Risley (446<sup>th</sup> BG)  
682 Slade Avenue  
Elgin, IL 60120  
(847) 571-4405  
[skrisley@aol.com](mailto:skrisley@aol.com)

Communications VP  
Doug Dovey (392<sup>nd</sup>/44<sup>th</sup> BGs)  
PO Box 821  
Yorktown, VA 23672  
[ddovey@hotmail.com](mailto:ddovey@hotmail.com)

VP for Volunteers  
Brian Mahoney (492<sup>nd</sup>/467<sup>th</sup> BGs)  
823 Whitelock Street  
Baltimore, MD 21217  
(202) 232-1423  
[archivist@brianhmahoney.com](mailto:archivist@brianhmahoney.com)

2AD Memorial Trust Governor  
and Past President  
Beverly Baynes Tomb (466<sup>th</sup> BG)  
2212 Grayson Place  
Falls Church, VA 22043  
(703) 241-4152  
[bntomb@gmail.com](mailto:bntomb@gmail.com)