

306th Echoes



306th Bombardment Group Association

LTC RALPH E BORDNER
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Omaha Ready for 306th in September



Group Plans Own Reunion Sept. 22-24

One wonders if Omaha is prepared!

From all indications many men of the 306th are ready for the Nebraska capitol, and will be there Sept. 22, 23 and 24.

That will be the occasion of the first national 306th reunion without the benefit of other organizations. There have been some small 306th reunions in years past, but they were of a regional nature only.

Prior to this year, the 306th has held seven reunions in conjunction with the 8th AF Association, but those attending at Cincinnati last year were of one mind—a 306th only reunion in 1983.

Donald R. Ross, U.S. District judge in Omaha, is heading up the effort and working with him are William M. Collins, Jr., Ralph Bordner and Russell A. Strong. Ross was a 368th squadron bombardier and the last group bombardier; Collins was a 369th armament officer; Bordner was a 368th squadron bombardier, and Strong was a 367th navigator.

The Marriott Hotel in Omaha has initially set aside 200 rooms for the 306th; arrangements have been made to attend the Ak-Sar-Ben barbecue and rodeo; a day at the Strategic Air Command headquarters at Offutt Field is scheduled, and there will be a gala banquet Saturday night to wind up the event.

After a planning meeting Jan. 8 at O'Hare Field, Chicago, Ross was returning to Omaha to make sure that sufficient rooms will be available to house everyone.

Each year until 1982, the 206th had the largest attendance at the 8th Air Force reunion. It fell off in the last event because of an almost concurrent reunion in Bedford and the dedication of the

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306th Memorial Unveiled, Dedicated at Thurleigh

By George G. Roberts

Nearly 40 years to the day after the B-17Fs of the 306th Bomb Group first lifted off the runways at Thurleigh for combat against Fortress Europe, the 306th returned to the site for the dedication of a suitable memorial — honoring those who served in any capacity between 1942 and 1945 and especially those who made the supreme sacrifice for their country and mankind.

On Tuesday, Oct. 5, 130 former members of the 306th, their wives and friends gathered under appropriately cloudy skies to witness the unveiling of a great gray granite monument to which was affixed a bronze plaque commemorating the deeds of another day and another war.

Erected adjacent to the Royal Aircraft Establishment's Officer Mess (formerly the site of the 40th Combat Wing headquarters), the marker is placed where American and British visitors can easily see it, rather than inside the RAE-Thurleigh base which is not open to the public.

1st Lt. Paul Reitz of RAF-Chicksands (lying to the southwest

of Bedford) was master of ceremonies for the occasion. After the singing of "God Save the Queen" and the "Star Spangled Banner", Connie Richards read a brief communication from Elizabeth R, the Queen Mother, who had been a visitor at Thurleigh 6 July 1944 at the dedication of "The Rose of York":

"I am very pleased to learn of the Memorial which is to be unveiled today in memory of those who served in the 306th Bomb Group at Thurleigh during the second World War. Some forty years have passed but their deeds of heroism are not forgotten.

"I send my greetings and sincere good wishes to all who are assembled today for the unveiling and dedication ceremony."

The invocation was given by three chaplains: Maj. Robert Leeds, Protestant; LTC Richard Fetherson, Roman Catholic, and Capt. Irvin Ehrlich, Jewish.

Unveiling of the handsome memorial was done by Darren Galloway, son of a USAF sergeant at Mildenhall, and Sara Thorne, a young student at the Thurleigh

school.

In addition to the 306th veterans, a large throng of American and British visitors were on hand, including all residents of the nearby hamlet of Thurleigh, closest habitation to the onetime American base.

New York Beginnings

For many of the Americans the reunion and dedication had actually begun when they gathered in the Pan American terminal at JFK airport in New York, Sunday, Oct. 3. A cocktail party was enjoyed as old friends and new got acquainted, donned their new 306th caps and prepared for the late evening departure.

At New York they were joined by a crew from CBS Television who went with them to England and later presented a show on the Sunday Morning presentation of CBS news. (NBC TV carried a story Oct. 5.) Among this party was Andy Rooney, no stranger to the 306th, who had early chronicled its successes and heartbreaks as a reporter for STARS AND STRIPES. Rooney even could claim the distinction of having flown

Omaha (From page 1)

OMAHA IN '83

memorial at Thurleigh. Totalling the attendance at the two reunions would give us the largest crowd ever gathered for 306th events. Predictions are that that total will be topped in 1983.

Registration will begin at noon on Thursday, Sept. 22. Special meeting rooms will be provided on the main floor of the Marriott for each of the four squadrons, and a cash bar will be immediately adjacent. The group headquarters will also be convenient to these meeting rooms.

Thursday night those so inclined can attend the Ak-Sar-Ben barbecue and rodeo, with buses going from the Marriott to the event, and returning.

Friday afternoon and evening will be the session at SAC headquarters, which is detailed further in the calendar appearing in this issue of *Echoes*. Buses will be provided.

Saturday morning will feature a business meeting, and during the afternoon an accumulation of films, video tapes and slides of 306th life at Thurleigh, the dedication at Thurleigh, and other activities will be shown.

The banquet Saturday night in the Marriott ballroom will feature ranking officers of the group and squadrons, and Dr. Thurman Shuller, the group surgeon for the first year in combat, will be the speaker.

Because it is necessary to get advance planning moving, a pre-registration form is being provided in this issue, and will also appear in the next two issues of *Echoes*. It will assist the planning committee greatly if you will return this at your earliest convenience. Later in the spring you will then receive detailed information on program opportunities, which will be on a first come, first served basis, as well as hotel registration materials. At that later time it will be necessary to declare your intentions regarding the three evening events and to put down some money in advance on them. Hotel reservations will be handled by each individual using the special materials provided.

With the pre-registration form there is needed a \$20 fee which will provide for the postage, favors, and other amenities of the reunion. All other charges will be at the net rate. Any money remaining will be used to provide a continuing flow of *Echoes*. (No individuals will profit from this in any way.)

Questions concerning the event should be addressed to any of the committee members:

Donald R. Ross, 9936 Essex St., Omaha, NE 68114.

William M. Collins, Jr., 2973 Heatherbrae Dr., Poland, OH 44514.

Ralph Bordner, 131 E. Autumn Ln., East Peoria, IL 60611.

Russell A. Strong, 2041 Hillsdale, Kalamazoo, MI 49007.

I expect to attend the 8th reunion of the 306th Bomb Group Sept. 22-24, 1983 in Omaha. I enclose the \$20.00 registration fee and understand that further reservation and hotel information will be forthcoming.

Name _____

Home Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Home Telephone _____

Business Telephone _____

306th Unit _____

Mail to Donald R. Ross
9936 Essex St.
Omaha, NE 68114

Tentative Reunion Schedule

Thursday, Sept. 22

- 1 p.m. Registration opens in the Marriott Hotel.
Squadron meeting rooms open. Cash Bar.
- 6 p.m. Buses leave for Ak-Sar-Ben barbecue and rodeo
- 9:30 Buses return. *Party*

Friday, Sept. 23

- 1:30 Buses leave for SAC, Offutt Field
At SAC:
Welcome by SAC general officer
Soviet Military Capabilities briefing
SAC Command Control briefing
B-1B Bomber
Question and Answer session with SAC general officer
Memorial chapel service
Cocktail party
Dinner at Officers' Club
Entertainment by SAC band
Dancing
- 9:30 Buses return to Marriott

Saturday, Sept. 23

- 10 a.m. 306th Business meeting *3 PM*
- 12 Lunch optional
- 2 Movies, video tapes and slides
- 6 Cash bar
- 7 Banquet at Marriott
Dr. Thurman Shuller, speaker *Pub*



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Each issue is prepared and printed at Kalamazoo, MI, and editorial contributions are welcomed and should be sent to the editor. Mailing is from Poland, OH, and new addresses, changes and deletions should be sent to the contact man.

USAF Today Compared to 8th of Old

In addition to speaking at the Wright-Patterson dedication, Lt. Gen. Robert T. Herres was also the Saturday evening banquet speaker in Cincinnati for the 8th AF reunion. We have taken the liberty of using selected quotes from his speech:

"Today there are about 50,000 people in the Eighth Air Force. We are organized into five air divisions which supervise 11 bombardment wings, three missile wings, two air refueling wings and three missile warning squadrons. Most of our bases span the eastern half of the United State and our activities extend eastward to operating locations in England, Spain, Germany, Greece and Turkey. We have 41 operational squadrons entrusted with 170 long range B-52's, 60 medium range FB-11 bombers, 370 tanker and reconnaissance aircraft and a growing squadron of KC-10s. This is our newest aircraft and is the tanker and cargo variant of the commercial DC-10."

"We also possess 34 Titan II missiles, which carry the largest warhead in the free world's military arsenal, and 150 Minuteman II intercontinental ballistic missiles."

"We sent our crews and support personnel to Southeast Asia on 'temporary' duty. In most cases, 'temporary' meant for 180 days at a time with a 30-day break between temporary tours. Many had already served a normal one-year tour in Southeast Asia in another assignment. For some of our men, 'temporary' would up being over 900 days in less than five years."

"In 1965 we began employing the B-52 in bombardment operations. The B-52 'Strato-Fortress', designed to carry nuclear weapons also had the capacity to accomodate non-nuclear, or 'iron' bombs. This fully loaded aircraft with its crew of six could get airborne weighing 244 tons. Powered by eight jet engines producing 168,000 pounds of thrust, it can fly above 40,000 feet for ranges in excess of 10,000 miles. With aerial refueling from the KC-135, its time aloft is limited only by the endurance of the crew."

"One B-52 could carry 108 bombs; 84 five hundred pounders internally in the bomb bay and 24 seven hundred and fifty pounders mounted on external wing racks... One B-52 can carry 60,000 pounds of bombs... half again more than the total payload (of the Eighth's first mission to Rouen-Sotteville rail yard in August 1942).

"You had taught us that there can be no defense against a determined air attack if the attacker is committed to the task, willing to accept losses, and unwilling to let enemy action turn him back."

"The commander of the Eighth Air Force then was Lt. Gen. Gerald W. Johnson. Some of you may recall his earlier affiliation with the Eighth

Col. Sutton, 5th Group C.O., Dies

Col. James S. Sutton, commanding officer of the 306th Bomb Group from 23 September 1944 to 15 April 1945, died October 26 in St. Mary's Hospital, Reno, NV, at the age of 75.

Col. Sutton was born in Pennsylvania and graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1930, ranked 102 in a class of 249. He was first commissioned in the Coast Artillery and later changed to the Air Corps.

A bomber pilot, Sutton was selected as the first commander of the 92nd Bomb Group. After forming that group he led it on a flight across the North Atlantic in which he did not lose an airplane. He remained as commander of the 92nd until 1 May 1943, when he was placed in command at Langford Lodge in Ireland.

Col. Sutton returned to the combat arena with the 306th, and upon completion of that duty returned to the United States. He retired from active duty in 1950, and from 1951 to 1970 was an agent of New York Life Insurance Co.

He had made his home in Novato, CA, since 1953, and Mrs. Sutton continues to make her home at 20 Sutton Lane, Novato. He is also survived by a son, a daughter, seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.



Col. James S. Sutton

DECEASED

Russell A. Graham, (369th navigator, Fisher's crew, 1945) is deceased.

Maj. Walter J. Gribb (Gribovicz), 369th co-pilot and pilot, died 28 Oct 82 in Great Falls, MT, where he had lived since retiring from the USAF. He flew a combat tour during mid-1944.

LTC Theodore A. Jankowski, 368th co-pilot (Regan's crew) and pilot, died 2 Sept 82. He had made his home in Melbourne Beach, FL, since retirement 30 Nov 64. Jankowski was an ill-fated pilot on 17 April 43 mission to Bremen when the 306th lost 10 planes.

Wilbur Brice O'Brien, 423rd pilot (MIA 15 June 44, Nantes, POW), died 23 Oct 82 in Allentown, PA. From 1963 until retirement in 1979 O'Brien was vice president for law and government relations, National Coal Association.

Dedication at Dayton Pays Tribute To the 'Mighty Eighth'

These are the remarks made at the Dayton 8th Air Force memorial dedication by Lt. Gen. Robert T. Herres, then commanding general of the Eighth Air Force, Barksdale AFB, LA. This occurred 9 Oct. 82 at Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, at the USAF Museum.

Ladies and gentlemen, friends, alumni and fellow airman of the Eighth Air; I am honored to join you in dedicating this memorial. It is fitting that you have chosen such a monument and such a place for it to reside.

Dayton was selected by the Air Force as the site of its official museum because not far from here was situated the Wright brothers' bicycle shop . . . where aviation was born in 1903.

This monument now memorializes the 47,000 men of the Eighth Air Force who gave their lives in the Second World War. They died in discharging their duty to our country and to free men everywhere.

Out of their deaths came victory in Europe.

Out of their lives came the birth of air power as we know it today.

Air Power

It was a grand idea, but with fragile substance in 1939. Yet six years later the men of the Eighth Air Force had forged the idea into an indisputable reality and built the solid foundation of our modern air force. It was not easy.

In 1939, with Europe on the brink of war, our country had trained just over one thousand pilots, and our industry built twenty-two hundred combat aircraft. When Hitler invaded Poland, the Army Air Corps had only 23 B-17s in its inventory.

We were clearly unprepared for war, but we put ourselves to the test, mobilized the country, and began to lean forward in the harness. In 1941, we trained 11,000 pilots and produced 26,000 combat aircraft.

The Air Force Grows

In 1944, 83,000 pilots and a quarter million ground crewmen were trained. In that same year 96,000 combat aircraft rolled off the assembly lines. The largest numbers of these men and equipment were dedicated to winning the war in Europe; so off many of them went to the Eighth Air Force.

Although they came from familiar sounding places all over the United States, they went to foreign sounding ones like Attlebridge, Polebrook, Kimbolton, Grafton Underwood and Bungay. (Not to mention, Thurleigh! Ed's note).

They came together in the United Kingdom to form the largest air armada ever assembled in the history of the world. By 1943, the Eighth Air Force was 200,000 strong. And strong they had to be.

The continent of Europe was a fortress fortified against them. Nearly 30 per cent of the enemy's total gun output, and 20 per cent of his ammunition output, was

dedicated to air defense. At the height of the war, the enemy had over one million men in its air force and over 20,000 fighter interceptors to oppose them. Key industrial installations, refineries, railheads and other economic targets were defended in depth by ring upon ring of anti-aircraft artillery. The defenses were so thick that our fellow airmen in the RAF could only attack at night, and still sustained heavy losses.

The 8th's Charge

The orders given to the Eighth Air Force were simply described: to destroy the enemy's war supporting industry; to gain air supremacy by depleting the enemy air force, particularly the fighter forces; and to pave the way for an Allied invasion of the continent.

The task was clear, but the manner in which we would go about it was left for General Spaatz, General Eaker and their colleagues to discover. We talk today of strategic bombing and air combat maneuvers, as if these had been with us always. They have not. They were discovered the hard way by men of the Mighty Eighth the hard way.

Bomber formation tactics, the bomber "box" or cell, fighter support tactics, the shuttle raid, target identification procedures, dropping off the leader . . . all still used today . . . were created by Eighth Air Force aviators. All evolved from their experience in the face of violent opposition.

At Ploesti we lost 52 out of 179 bombers; at Schweinfurt, 60 out of 291. On the first raid against Berlin 174 out of 730 aircraft were destroyed. (Ed's note: Where did these figures come from?) And these were only the large raids that history memorialized. But all should remember, that no sorties went unopposed and few formations ever returned wholly intact. By war's end, the Eighth Air Force accounted for one in every nine casualties in the second World War.

The Medals Flowed

The courage of the men of the Eighth Air Force is legendary. Seventeen won the Congressional Medal of Honor. Two hundred and twenty won the Distinguished Service Cross. Over 850 won the Silver Star for gallantry in action. The Eighth Air Force produced 261 fighter aces during the war, with 31 "aces" being credited with more than 15 aircraft apiece.

Eighth Air Force had been so effective in its mission, that on D-Day the enemy could only muster 300 aircraft to repel the Allied invasion. These aircraft, along with their reinforcements, were shot out of the skies in less than 10 hours.

The unsung heroes of the air war, the ground crewmen, were so dedicated and skilled that aircraft serviceability rates exceeded 80 per

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Newly-Found

- Anderson, Fred W., Rt. 1, Radcliffe, IA 50230 367.
- Bloom, Hyman, 6 Alexander Ave., Spring Valley, NY 10977 367.
- Busch, Cyril, 3076 Woodhills Dr., Memphis, TN 38128 369.
- Buttorff, Richard D., 10425 Little John Ct., Edmond, WA 98020 369.
- Costello, Carl, 3330 Minnesota Ave., Duluth, MN 55802.
- Cournoyer, Armand, 231 Hill St., Whitinsville, MA 01588 369.
- Ferris, James, 981 Gardiner Dr., New York, NY 11706 369.
- Gailey, Blaine, 370 E. Truman, Salt Lake City, UT 84115 369.
- Halliday, Clarence C., PO Box 121, Port Mansfield, TX 78598 368.
- Hapner, Francis S., 925 Twin Oaks Dr., Dayton, OH 45431.
- Hickman, Louis, 5620 154th Ct., Lowell, IN 46356.
- Huf, Robert C., 107 Farmdale Rd., Mount Holly, NJ 08060 369.
- Johnson, Gustav, 164 Gough Ave., Coventry, RI 02816.
- Keuer, Victor, Rt. 2, Box 5, Brillion, WI 54110 369.
- Loes, Mel, 915 Kelly Ln., Dubuque, IA 52001 369.
- Lord, Lester L., 315 Burnett Dr., Baytown, TX 77520 423.
- Mathews, Joseph, Rt. 1, Box 154, Marietta, SC 29661 369.
- Michaels, Lowell, Boonville, AR 72927 369.
- Morley, Mahlon C., Valley State Bank, Belle Plaine, KS 67013 368.
- Morris, William H., Box 233, Rt. 1, Aurora, IN 47001 369.
- Myers, Jerry L., 5 Summit Ct., Fenton, MO 63026 369.
- Radnofsky, Dr. Matthew, 138 Driftwood Dr., Seabrook, TX 77586 423.
- Rawlings, B/Gen. G. Barney, 2617 Mason Av., Las Vegas, NV 89102 367.
- Raymond, Richard L., 1801 Eugene Ct., Wilmington, DE 18910 423.
- Ringvall, Neal, Quarry Hts., White Plains, NY 10604 367.
- Stocker, Orville, Orville Z., Jr., 35 Terrace Ct., Tiburon, CA 94920 369.
- Swartz, Robert, 219 Marshall St., Litchfield, MI 49252 367.
- Ukele, Clyde, 210 W. Crane St., Norton, KS 67654 369.
- Walters, Eugene D., 127 Carol Dr., Terre Haute, IN 47805 423.
- Wetherhead, Jim B., Box 581, Crowell, TX 79227.
- White, Donald H., 312 Lookout Mountain Dr., Ellensburg, WA 98926 369.
- Winslow, William B., 520 Paso Robles Dr., Santa Barbara, CA 93100 367.

Memorial Dedication at Thurleigh (from page 1)

one mission with the 306th, its first to Germany on 27 Jan 43, when the 306th and its commander, Col. Frank M. Armstrong, Jr., led the Eighth Air Force on the first American assault on Germany itself.

The group enlarged on landing at London as later arrivals from other flights joined with their former Thurleigh mates, and boarded buses for the trip to the Moat Hotel in Bedford. There all were greeted by members of the 306th Bombardment Group Association of Great Britain.

Once rested a bit and fed an evening meal at the Moat, the 306th veterans began to see the results of the hard work put in by the English friends of the 306th. An elaborate folder revealed programs, decals and items of interest to the visitors. Gordon and Connie Richards outlined the events, timetables and bus schedules to insure that everyone could participate. Many turned in then, but it was learned the next morning that the hardiest of the group made their way to the Silver Grill (now Silver Tavern) for a 40 year inspection.

Tuesday, Oct. 5, the day for which everyone had come, dawned cold and wet, which must have stirred vivid memories for those who had come to Thurleigh just 40 years before. Boarding buses, everyone went to the RAE Officers Mess at Thurleigh where Wing Cmdr. R. Beasley and his staff were waiting to greet them, and to provide coffee, tea and snacks. The invasion continued, as dignitaries, TV crews, photographers and local celebrants began to arrive.

As ordered (!), at 10:50 the rain stopped, the sky brightened and the throng made its way to the new 306th Monument, now swathed in plastic.

There were tears on many cheeks as the memorial wreaths were placed at the memorial: George Antous, representing the 306th; George Senior, mayor of Bedford; Maj. Gen. Carl Cathey, Third Air Force; Col. Leland Martin, commander, RAF-Chicksands; Cmdr. Beasley and the Rt. Hon. Trevor Skeet, member of Parliament for Thurleigh.

Following a light lunch served by the RAE, the group toured the air base, once an American property and now the research center for the RAF. Veterans paused to gaze at the old Red Cross club and the Enlisted Men's Mess, both still standing and in everyday use. Flying such as never seen at Thurleigh in 1942-45 was demonstrated for the visitors by the RAF Harrier jet. There were also displayed vintage aircraft and WW II jeeps. Vehicles were manned by members of the Friends of the Eighth, dressed in authentic WW II uniforms.

Late in the day the Americans returned to the Moat, and other hostilities, to prepare for the memorial banquet. First came messages of congratulation from Lt. Gen. Robert T. Herres, then

commanding general of the Eighth Air Force, and Warren Borges, 423rd pilot and immediate past president of the 8th Air Force Historical Society.

Brief remarks were made by Mr. Senior; Anona Moeser, Red Cross program director in Bedford during the war; Gordon Richards, for the 306th Historical Association, and George G. Roberts, for the 306th U.S. committee.

Honorary Members

Triangle H hats were presented to five new "honorary" members of the 306th: Andy Rooney; Gen. Cathey; Col. Martin; Cmdr. Beasley and Col. Richard Hedge, now commander of the 306th Strategic Wing at RAF Mildenhall.

William Flanagan, Bert Perlmutter and Roberts presented plaques to members of the 306th Historical Association in England, as well as to Rooney, for their contributions to furthering the goals of the 306th Historical Association.

A leather bound memorial album was presented to Cmdr. Beasley, listing all of those who had contributed to the memorial, and with signatures of all of those who attended the dedication. Also presented were copies of the two books, *FIRST OVER GERMANY*, by Arthur Bove, in 1946, and Russell A. Strong, in 1982. The memorial album will remain in the RAE mess for signing by other 306th veterans who make pilgrimages to Thurleigh in the future.

Each person attending the banquet received a miniature of the monument, in granite, with a Triangle H affixed.

On Wednesday the American tourists went back to Thurleigh village and to Keysoe, where those residents with long memories led the local celebrations of the return of the 306th. Banners, streamers, posters and flowers were everywhere, as this was indeed a holiday for everyone. At Keysoe a large sign stretched across Keysoe Road, "Welcome Back 306th". A wreath was laid at the British Memorial, and a brief service was held at the church. Then lunch was served in the village hall. Both the Church of England and the Baptist chapel were adorned with flowers.

More Reminders

There were numerous exhibits, and some of them were marked in honor of such planes as "Paper Doll", "Sweet Pea", "Fightin' Bitin'" and "Rose of York".

At the Jackal, the village pub, a 306th picture was presented to Mr. and Mrs. Sam Hill, proprietors, one of the efforts fostered by the Friends of the Eighth at the urging of the 8th AF Memorial Museum Foundation.

Veterans visited the Thurleigh School where children were drawing Triangle H B-17's and it was difficult to determine whether the veterans or the children were impressed the most. Many friendships were generated and more than



one tear was shed as the group departed for Keysoe. Artists displayed their pottery, paintings, needlepoint and model aircraft filled the Keysoe church. Before departure, the vicar was presented a framed picture of the church as seen from the air. More than one pilot used the church spire to line up on the Thurleigh runway upon returning from a mission.

On Wednesday night, the group was hosted by Col. Martin for a dinner at the RAF Chicksands Officers Club. Following the meal, a 16-piece orchestra played music of the forties and dancing was in order. The evening ended with an old time song-fest reminiscent of Saturday nights at the Bedford Corn Exchange during the war.

Thursday veterans paid homage to our 306th comrades interred in the American Military Cemetery at Madingly. After a greeting by Joseph Cetola, superintendent, and a short memorial service and wreath laying, 306ers visited the grave sites of the fallen. The names of numerous 306th BG members are inscribed on the great wall of the missing. In the afternoon, the group divided up with some members going to the Imperial War Museum and others returning to Bedford for an afternoon of shopping.

Formal reunion activities concluded on Friday when the group was the guest of Co. Richard Hedge and the service people of the 306th Strategic Wing stationed at RAF Mildenhall. Now an important refueling element of SAC, the 306th Strat Wing returned to the fold as part of the 8th Air Force January 28, 1982. The group saw films of the first fortresses arriving at Thurleigh in 1942 and of a typical mission of the KC135 tankers employed by the unit today. The majority of the reunion group spent the last two days in London, staying at the Kensington Palace Hotel and seeing the sights of the city. On a sunny morning, October 10, veterans and wives bade each other a fond farewell amid general comments of "Why did we wait so long before returning?" and "Let's not wait another 40 years before getting the group together again."

'Red Cross Girl' Thrills Anew At Thurleigh

I am sure that every one of us who served with the American Red Cross during World War II had a favorite unit - a group we can never forget and one which we often, over the years, think about and with whom we dream of someday having a reunion. I was privileged this October to have that dream come true and words fail me as I try to express my delight and pride in representing the American Red Cross Club Activities in Bedford, England 1943-1945.

There was a village called Thurleigh nearby where the 306th Bomb Group was stationed in 1943 and the Bedford ARC was the recreation center away from that B17 base where thousands of young, eager pilots, copilots, bombardiers, waist gunners, tail gunners, ball turret gunners and ground crews came to get a change of scene, dance, play ping pong, sing and enjoy our coffee and donuts - the 306th was my favorite.

This past week found me as one of the guest speakers at the 40th Reunion and Memorial Dedication of the 306th and emotions ran high as 130 former "lads" who came from the USA, and Bedford and Thurleigh residents once more greeted each other. Flags and banners of welcome were in abundance and the RAF entertained the group on the site of the former B17 base. We were all 40 years older but memories helped to make us all feel young again. The unveiling of an attractive permanent monument in the village was preceded by a charming greeting from the Queen Mother who remembered Thurleigh and the Group from a visit she made to them in the cold and grim days of 1943.

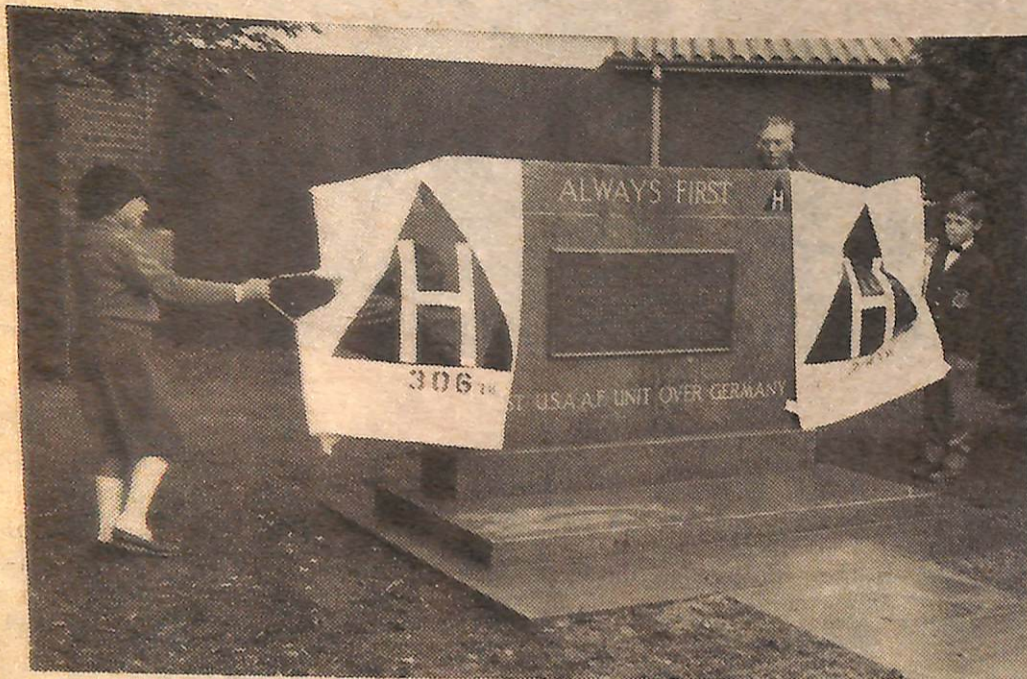
The banquet on October 5th at which the Mayor and Mayoress of Bedford were trumpeted in with all their colourful regalia carrying a historical mace from the 17th century was a very happy occasion to say the least. Old friendships were renewed and Bedford "covered" the return of the 306th Bomb Group from every angle.

How thrilling it was to grasp the hand of a long forgotten American flyer and have him say, "I remember you, Anona. You were a Red Cross girl in Bedford". I was proud and felt quite young again.

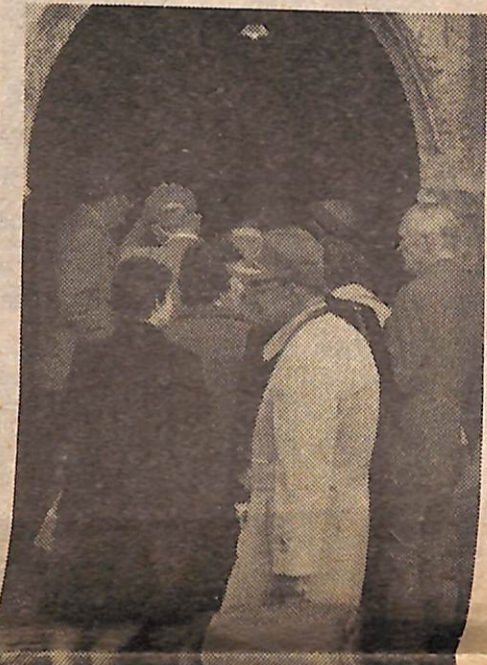
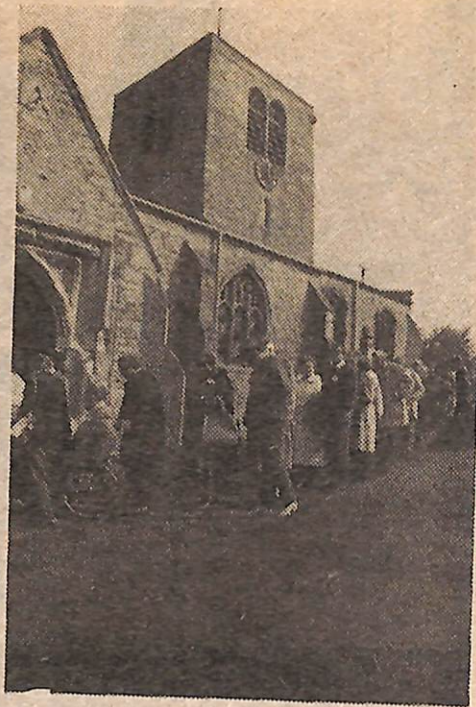
All four squadrons of the 306th Bomb Group were represented at the reunion and the names of those squadrons brought back a bit of the old competition felt in 1943. The Fightin' Bitin'. The Grim Reapers. The Eager Beavers. The Clay Pigeons were all back "home" for a brief meeting with old pals from Bedford and Thurleigh to dedicate a memorial to those who didn't come back from their missions many years ago and will always be remembered in Bedford and Thurleigh.

Anona Maeser - Retired AOA

A MEMORIAL AT THURLEIGH







The following poem was written for this happy meeting by Connie Richards, a member of the 306th Bomb Group Historical Association in England.

A PEACEFUL MISSION

The welcome coast of England
 You have seen before
 On a wartime mission
 Coming home once more.
 Thank God you made it this time
 "What next" you tiredly say
 Get some sleep before the dawn
 But that's another day.
 Forty years have gone since then
 And you are still alive
 Alive to sounds and life itself
 But memories survive.
 This time your journey is happy
 And you are very proud
 The shores of England loom again
 From far below the cloud.
 Now a peaceful mission
 Back to that friendly shore
 To remember all your buddies
 You're coming home once more.

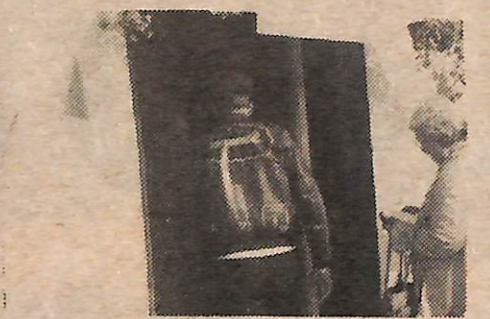
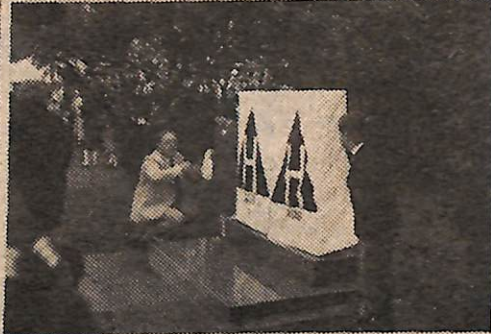
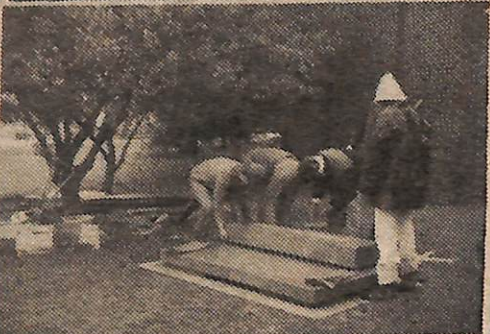
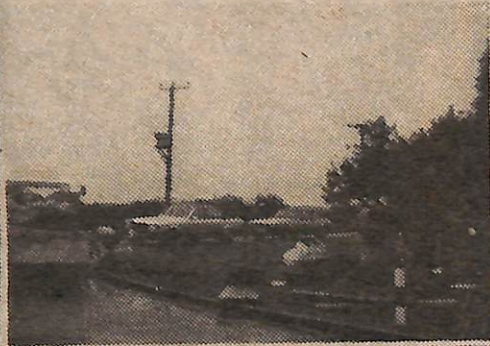
One Man's Prayer

By George Gransie

I could feel the warm tears softly sliding down my face on this cold, grey morning. The lump in my throat swelled as if it was going to burst. A small, aging man who had once been strong and quick was laying a wreath to the men who did not come home at the memorial with such gentleness and poise. These men had died so that I might live. I have lived and I would gladly give my life that these men could share my experiences.

As I look up I can see on the maturing faces of magnificent old warriors around me the common tears flowing down their weathered cheeks. "Oh, God, please help me to understand more clearly why my brothers were stilled. It must be that they are in eternal life now, in a new world of peace forever."
 God bless the friends of the 306th Bomb Group.





Faint, illegible text on the right side of the page, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side.

Editor Suggests 8th AF reading List for the Cold Winter Months

Winter evenings are here, and if you are not too addicted to watching moving objects on the TV screen, you may want to indulge in a bit of reading. The editor does a bit of that and would like to share some of his impressions of current books with you.

At the same time he'd like to suggest a variety of reading on WW II subjects that may be to your liking.

If you are curious about what may have gone on at higher levels of the conflict, we think some of the most interesting reading you can get are the letters of various leaders. The letters of Gen. of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower have been published and will be available in many larger public libraries as well as college and university libraries.

These letters give fascinating detail of what was going on in the minds of top ranking officers as they considered the total effort.

Now appearing are the letters of General of the Army George C. Marshall. One volume is out, taking him into 1939, and you will find fascinating reading here, not only about the peacetime Army but about World War I, as well, in which he played a significant role.

It is understood that the letters of Gen. of the Air Force Henry H. Arnold are now being prepared for publication.

All of these letters reveal background for actions which you may have been a party to, and reveal much about the man who wrote them.

We recommend the Eisenhower and Marshall letters for interesting browsing. Many of the letters have been annotated so that you will have a better understanding of the context out of which they came.

If you haven't read it, try Gen. Curtis LeMay's autobiography, ghosted by MacKinlay Kantor.

There are several books of detailed accountings of specific missions or targets.

Most libraries today have a fairly sizeable collection of materials on World War II, with the air war books generally grouped together. Browse through the stacks, or the card catalog, and pick out a few for your enjoyment.

We hope that you have already read, **FIRST OVER GERMANY**. If not, it should be a "must" on your list.

Now we would like to introduce you to several books we have read more recently:

A Bombing Survey

FORTRESS WITHOUT A ROOF, THE ALLIED BOMBING OF THE THIRD REICH, by Wilbur H. Morrison. St. Martin's Press, New York, 1982. \$16.95

This is a book for a person who wants a reasonably casual approach to the Combined Bomber Offensive, the effort of the RAF and the 8th AF to combine their talents in devastating attacks on Fortress Europe.

It is a multi-faceted and difficult story to tell at best. Morrison brings together much of the essential and basic information, but then tries to "spice" up the story with brief interludes of combat, built principally around Medal of Honor winners. Often these talks appear to have been inserted to liven up the tale, rather than having a germane place in the narrative of the Combined Bomber Offensive.

Morrison has written earlier about the 305th Bomb Group, and continues to use this material through much of the book. There is little about any of the other groups other than the 91st and 100th.

Also throughout the book are to be found several mistatements of fact that may rankle more knowledgeable readers. This reviewer would also be critical in that much material has been based on interviews only with Gen. Haywood Hansell, Jr., and Col. Henry G. MacDonald, which tends to limit the scope of the study.

'Hap' Arnold

HAP, THE STORY OF THE U.S. AIR FORCE AND THE MAN WHO BUILT IT, GENERAL HENRY H. "HAP" ARNOLD, by Thomas M. Coffey, The Viking Press, New York, 1982.

This is one of the more interesting books this reviewer has read in some months, and he highly recommends it to anyone who wants an inside look at the direction of the air war in 1942-45.

It also provides an extremely candid picture of Hap Arnold, members of his family, and those who were close to him during the wartime period. Coffey's book helps to explain a great many things that transpired during the war, and gives a very clear picture of the pressures that the Air Force commanders were under in trying to meet the exacting demands of the "chief".

Hap Arnold was a man with a tremendous personal dedication to seeing that the United States won the war. He literally gave his own life in the effort. One wonders if any other person at that time could have successfully carried the burdens he did.

Arnold is pictured clearly as a man of action, a man disliked by his own children at times, though they later came to understand him better and ultimately to appreciate him.

One is also amazed that Ira Eaker, Jimmy Doolittle and the other Air Force commanders around the world survived the onslaught of critical messages that came constantly from Washington.

One puts down the book with the distinct impression that it was the genius of Hap Arnold that created the U.S. Army Air Forces of World War II and USAF of today. He overrode his critics, out thought and out performed those around him. He lived a tumultuous life and gave his country everything that he had.

Thomas Coffey, the author, is to be praised for writing a lengthy, detailed and exciting biography. It is a very different book from his **DECISION OVER SCHWEINFURT**, and this reviewer thinks it is a much better book.

V-1s and V-2s

The Battle of the V-Weapons, 1944-45, by Basil Collier, New York, Morrow, 1965, 192 pages.

If you are curious about the "No-Ball" missions you flew in 1944, Collier has put together a lot of the answers.

In this brief study he details the history of the development of V-1 and V-2 "secret" weapons, including the work at Peenemunde, which was a target several times for the 306th; as well as the building of the original V-1 launch sites in France that elicited so much interest.

Those who perhaps saw V-1s over England, or heard their explosion; or those who witnessed the devastation wrought by the V-2s in heavily built up areas of London, may find interest here in the statistics as to just how many bombs struck England.

The batting average wasn't very good, but still a lot of people were killed by them and considerable property was devastated by the explosions.

These were forerunners of much

of the development which has gone on in America, Russia and elsewhere in the decades since WW II.

Winning in 1943!

1943 The Victory That Never Was, by John Grigg, New York, Hill and Wang, 1980, 254 pp.

John Grigg is an expert in hindsight, producing here a maddening book on how the Allies could have won the war in 1943 if they had only done a few things right.

If Roosevelt and Churchill had made the right decisions, if the invasion of Normandy had taken place in 1943, if a great many other things had fallen into place earlier, we could have won a year or more ahead of the actual happening.

This book is not recommended reading for those who may have a low boiling point.



Order your copy today of

FIRST OVER GERMANY, A History of the 306th Bomb Group

To: Russell A. Strong
2041 Hillsdale
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Please accept my order for _____ copies of First Over Germany at \$20 each, a total of \$_____.

name _____

mailing address _____

Make check payable to Russell A. Strong

Ground Component of Air Echelon Left Westover Aug. 11, 1942

Earlier in Echoes we had published the original crews who flew to England, and below we are listing the names appearing in the "Ground Component of Air Echelon" as published at Westover Field, Mass., Aug. 11, 1942. In future issues of Echoes we will pick up the Ground party that had gone from Wendover to Richmond, VA, by train, and from there overseas. From Wendover to Westover most of the 37 planes had carried 14 passengers, most of these men had made the first leg of the long journey by air. At Westover the 306th left the B-17Es of training days and picked up 35 new B-17Fs for combat.

NAME	GRADE	DUTY
Bairnsfather, John A.	Capt.	S-2
Glass, Wiley W.	Capt.	S-2
Munal, Harold L.	Capt.	Surgeon
O'Sullivan, Jeremiah	Capt.	S-2
Wright, John B.	Capt.	S-2
Baldwin, Fred C.	1st Lt.	S-2
Kahl, Russell G.	1st Lt.	S-3
Lambert, John L.	1st Lt.	S-3
Odle, Elbert G.	1st Lt.	S-3
Owen, Shubel J.	1st Lt.	S-2
Patterson, Edwin F.	1st Lt.	Asst S-3
Richardson, Allan B.	1st Lt.	S-2
Skalak, Rudolph, Jr.	1st Lt.	Adjutant
Vance, J. H.	1st Lt.	S-2
Artusy, Raymond L.	Asst S-2	
Artusy, Raymond L.	2nd Lt.	Asst S-2
Burgett, Quentin W.	2nd Lt.	Asst S-3
Fulton, Dyer	2nd Lt.	Pilot
Kenealy, Degland T.	2nd Lt.	Asst S-3
Maliszewski, Edward	2nd Lt.	Asst S-3
Sterling, Edwin L.	2nd Lt.	Asst S-3
Watson, Frank K.	2nd Lt.	Oxygen
Cavaness, William F.	M/Sgt.	Flight Chief
Crossland, B. F.	M/Sgt.	Flight Chief
Fahey, Bernard	M/Sgt.	Flight Chief
Harnois, Arthur J.	M/Sgt.	Acft. Insp.
Miller, Howard M.	M/Sgt.	Gp Tech. Insp.
Tonks, Elmo	M/Sgt.	Line Chief
Tyler, James F.	M/Sgt.	Line Chief
Bassett, John M.	T/Sgt.	Flight Chief
Beckerle, Robert F.	T/Sgt.	Asst. Flt. Chief
Bright, George M.	T/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Black, Ocel R.	T/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Capaldi, Michael P.	T/Sgt.	Line Chief
Collins, Richard F.	T/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Davis, Herman A.	T/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Dixon, Luther L.	T/Sgt.	S-4 Clerk
Drumm, William M.	T/Sgt.	Acft Mech.
McGary, Herbert G.	T/Sgt.	Acft Mech.
McGinnis, Robert E.	T/Sgt.	S-3 Clerk
Motley, Toode	T/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Rapier, Estill H.	T/Sgt.	Flight Chief
Terrana, Joseph S.	T/Sgt.	Asst Line Chief
Townsley, Waller J.	T/Sgt.	Acft. Mech.
Wech, Malcolm H.	T/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Ziarko, John P.	T/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Abernathy, Raymond E.	S/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Anderson, John W.	S/Sgt.	S-2 Clerk
Andress, John C.	S/Sgt.	Acft. Mech.
Baker, Marshall E.	S/Sgt.	Adm. Clerk
Balawajder, Henry S.	S/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Biele, Jack A.	S/Sgt.	Turret Spec.
Campbell, Bennie E.		
Campbell, Bennie E.	S/Sgt.	Acft. Mech.
Carson, Malcolm R.	S/Sgt.	Bomb Sight Maint.
Clark, Orval V.	S/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Clary, Dahn S.	S/Sgt.	Asst. Crew Chief
Cooley, Colvin M.	S/Sgt.	Asst. Crew Chief
Covey, Robert C.	S/Sgt.	S-3 Clerk
Cowley, Louis T.	S/Sgt.	Asst. Crew Chief
Desroches, Joseph A.A.	S/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Diebert, Earl R.	S/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Edney, James H.	S/Sgt.	Mechanic
Emigh, Clair L.	S/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Estes, Joel E.	S/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Freeburn, Robert S.	S/Sgt.	Elect. Spec.
Futchick, William E.	S/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Ganes, Clay	S/Sgt.	Asst Crew Chief
Goodwill, Forest W.	S/Sgt.	Acft Mech.
Griffin, Hamilton	S/Sgt.	Acft Mech.
Hankey, Richard E.	S/Sgt.	Acft Mech.
Hansen, Robert E.	S/Sgt.	Acft Mech.
Hartung, Harold J.	S/Sgt.	Acft Mech.
Hawthorne, William J.	S/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Higgins, Bernard	S/Sgt.	Eng. Clerk
Hoyte, Robert F.	S/Sgt.	Power Turret
Hukee, Vernon V.	S/Sgt.	Bomb Sight Maint.
Kazberovick, Thomas J.	S/Sgt.	Flight Chief
Lamonica, Russell J.	S/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Lovelady, George H.	S/Sgt.	Adm. Clerk
Mays, Paul A.	S/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Redifer, Burleigh W.	S/Sgt.	Turret Spec.
Renn, Walter E.	S/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Retcofsky, August Jr.	S/Sgt.	Acft Mech
Sampson, George J.	S/Sgt.	Communications
Straughn, Franklin D.	S/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Terry, Edgar A.	S/Sgt.	Line Chief
Trenary, Richard W.	S/Sgt.	Asst Crew Chief
Trombley, Wilford	S/Sgt.	Flight Chief
Tropeano, Francis J.	S/Sgt.	Medical
Turek, Franklyn A.	S/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Walker, Gilbert E.	S/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Watson, Richard F.	S/Sgt.	S-3 Clerk
Wentworth, Selden M.	S/Sgt.	Mechanic
Whittemore, Earle E.	S/Sgt.	Crew Chief
Albert, Milton	Sgt.	Asst Crew Chief
Aldrich, Kenneth G.	Sgt.	Acft Mech.
Ake, Nelson E.	Sgt.	Asst Crew Chief
Armstrong, Marvin L.	Sgt.	Asst Crew Chief
Atkinson, Earl D.	Sgt.	Acft Mech.
Barthe, Martin M.	Sgt.	Adm. Clerk
Bayless, Robert M.	Sgt.	Chief Armorer
Bergeron, Adelard E.	Sgt.	Asst Crew Chief
Bergeron, Walter H.	Sgt.	Mechanic
Betschart, Edwin Jr.	Sgt.	Turret Spec.
Bowker, Howard L.	Sgt.	Turret Spec.
Bowles, Max M.	Sgt.	Mechanic
Brehm, Paul L. Jr.	Sgt.	Inst. Spec.
Clayton, Harold E.	Sgt.	Asst Crew Chief
Clough, Robert M.	Sgt.	Adm. Clerk
Copelan, John T.	Sgt.	Engr. Clerk
Crossman, Gordon W.	Sgt.	Mechanic
Danna, John S.	Sgt.	S-3 Clerk
Dougan, Donald W.	Sgt.	Acft Mech.
Dougherty, William R.	Sgt.	Asst Crew Chief
DuFour, Jerome F.	Sgt.	Bomb Sight Maint.
Edwards, Clyde C.	Sgt.	Asst Crew Chief
Fehr, Charles F.	Sgt.	Radio Operator
Fisher, Marion R.	Sgt.	Mechanic
French, John N.	Sgt.	Prop. Spec.
Gabrish, Joe P.	Sgt.	Asst Crew Chief
Garrish, James J.	Sgt.	Asst Crew Chief
Gideon, Lewis M.	Sgt.	Crew Chief
Grimes, James E.	Sgt.	Asst Crew Chief
Groeber, George D.	Sgt.	S-2 Clerk
Haire, Joseph W.	Sgt.	Acft Mech.
Hansen, Leif H.	Sgt.	S-2 Clerk
Harkrider, Joe C.	Sgt.	Acft Mech.
Heins, Charles H. Jr.	Sgt.	Acft Mech.
Helper, Donald B.	Sgt.	Radio Operator
Hoberman, Morris	Sgt.	Tech Sup Clerk
Ilg, Russell	Sgt.	Radio Mech.
Jackson, Gerald M.	Sgt.	Bomb Sight Maint.
Lucas, Paul R.	Sgt.	Asst Crew Chief
Santoro, Anthony L.	Sgt.	Aerial Engr.
Shaffer, Elory J.	Sgt.	Acft Mech.
Stanley, Ernest E.	Sgt.	Asst Crew Chief
Thomas, Nelson E.	Sgt.	Inst. Insp.
Tompkins, Glenn	Sgt.	Crew Chief
Troutz, Robert J.	Sgt.	Inst. Spec.
Turner, Leslie	Sgt.	Crew Chief
Tzipowitz, Harry	Sgt.	Acft Mech.
Van Drew, Roy M.	Sgt.	Asst Crew Chief
Vincent, Joseph G.	Sgt.	Inst. Spec.
Visconti, Adolph A.	Sgt.	Crew Chief
Wallace, Richard	Sgt.	Asst Crew Chief
Wise, Kenneth D.	Sgt.	Asst Crew Chief
Witzke, Herbert J.	Sgt.	Asst Crew Chief
Woodmansee, Roderick L.	Sgt.	Mechanic
Wyly, Glen R.	Sgt.	Acft Mech.
Yarsky, Francis H.	Sgt.	Acft. Mech.
Baldwin, Harold R.	Cpl.	S-2 Clerk
Ceglarski, Walter J.	Cpl.	Acft Mech.

Dedication

(From page 3)

cent, even at the height of combat. As a consequence, formations as large as 700 bombers and 700 fighter escorts could be reloaded, re-armed and launched in less than 36 hours after combat. (Ed's note: It was actually more bombers, more fighters and in a much shorter span of time!) At its peak strength, the Mighty Eighth could launch 2,000 bombers and 1,000 fighters on a single mission.

Our fighters ground away against the enemy fighter force so effectively that the enemy's monthly loss rate of fighters rose from 20 per cent in 1941 to 73 per cent in 1943. Eighth Air Force came to win the war in the air, and they did win it!

By war's end, "Air Power" was no longer merely a concept, the Eighth Air Force had made it a reality.

Just as two bicycle builders from Dayton had become the fathers of aviation, so had the 300,000 veterans of the Mighty Eighth become the fathers of air power.

Sacrifice for Victory

This monument, honoring the men who gave us air power, makes these grounds, which honor aviation, complete. Without their supreme sacrifice, there could have been no victory in the Second World War.

Out of the lessons they taught us have come the principles of strategic bombardment. Out of the reality of strategic bombardment arose the modern air force, built up around the Strategic Air Command.

'Thanks' for a Good Party!

Bill Flanagan, Bert Perlmutter and George Roberts wish to thank everyone for their assistance and cooperation in making the 306th Bombardment Group Memorial a reality. We owe so much to our 306th Historical Society friends in the UK; to the RAF, RAE, Geere Engineering, the town of Bedford, and the village of Thurleigh.

An especial thanks to all of those former residents of Station III who contributed so generously to the memorial project, making it all possible. A recap of the finances will be prepared by Flanagan for a subsequent issue of ECHOES.

Money remaining from the project will remain in the joint banking account pending progress toward a group museum at the present RAE site. Former members attending the reunion voted unanimously to keep any balance intact and to concentrate on seeking a suitable site for 306th BG WWII memorabilia. To this end, Ralph Franklin, a member of the UK contingent and an employee of RAE-Thurleigh, is investigating the possibility of obtaining suitable space on or near the present base.

GGR

You gave us the capability to deter aggression. You also gave us the standards of personal courage, airmanship and dedication by which our airmen, until the end of time, will be measured. Let this monument and the living tree memorials keep us mindful of our debt to you.

I am proud to be here today. Proud to have been entrusted with command of the Mighty Eighth. You have given us a glorious past and I re-dedicate the Eighth Air Force to return to you a glorious future.

Dana, Isaac D.	Cpl.....	Prop Specl.
Ellis, Jessie	Cpl.....	Asst Crew Chief
Fetch, Joseph M.	Cpl.....	Crew Chief
Funk, Stanley M.	Cpl.....	Asst Crew Chief
Gomez, John D.	Cpl.....	Elect. Specl.
Gilbertson, William H.	Cpl.....	Crew Chief
Hadie, Raymond G.	Cpl.....	Medic
Halye, Franklin J.	Cpl.....	Asst. Crew Chief
Horn, John T.	Cpl.....	Engr. Clerk
Hrycenko, Max	Cpl.....	Turret Specl.
Jenkins, Marven B.	Cpl.....	Adm. Clerk
Karpamn, Irving S.	Cpl.....	S-3 Clerk
Kelly, Thomas W.	Cpl.....	Mechanic
Kisling, Robert D.	Cpl.....	Crew Chief
Sackett, James L.	Cpl.....	Armorer
Schumpert, Wilfred O.	Cpl.....	Acft Mech.
Spelman, Thomas J.	Cpl.....	Radio Mech.
Starry, Cedric R.	Cpl.....	Armorer
Ward, Kenneth E.	Cpl.....	Prop Specl.
Weaver, James W.	Cpl.....	Radio Mech.
Werlin, Soloman	T5	Crew Chief
Bell, Robert S.	Pfc.....	Power Turret
Cwalinski, Dominic P.	Pfc.....	Medical
Feeser, William H.	Pfc.....	Asst Crew Chief
Klauk, Mathew M.	Pfc.....	Radio Mech.
Wissenback, Darwin H.	Pfc.....	Aerial Engr.
Albertson, Walter H.	Pvt.....	Mechanic

Dolinka, Daniel	Pvt.....	Para. Rigger
Eskew, John L.	Pvt.....	Asst Crew Chief
Evans, Clifford B.	Pvt.....	Asst. Crew Chief
Haidamenos, William G.	Pvt.....	Elect. Specl.
Kalb, John R.	Pvt.....	Inst. Specl.
Maretio, Joseph M.	Pvt.....	Crew Chief
Pederson, George W.	Pvt.....	Adm. Clerk
Ruddock, Robert C.	Pvt.....	Asst Crew Chief
Ryan, Clayton W.	Pvt.....	Armorer
Stevens, Edward J.	Pvt.....	Engr. Clerk
Weber, Elmer J.	Pvt.....	Asst Crew Chief
Weil, Mortimer L. Jr.	Pvt.....	S-3 Clerk

"One, just one, of our B-52s on alert carries the firepower equivalent to 308 fully loaded B-17s, a capability that can be extended by air to air refueling from a mated KC-135 tanker to any place on earth."

"And we're not just marking time. In December of this year the first SAC bomb wing to be armed with the air launched Cruise missile will be fully operational, with a second wing close behind it. Both are Eighth Air Force wings, the 416th and the 379th."

"A decade from now, or maybe two decades, the B-52 may be allowed to retire. Our average B-52 has been in service for over 23 years. Our newest model B-52 was delivered 20 years ago this month."

As I close this evening, I leave you with a message from today's Mighty Eighth: We are still around, still proud of you, and still doing a hell of a job. You brought us up right and we'll bring the next generation up right. As long as there's the slightest chance that airmen will be needed to show an enemy what air power means, we'll be there. We're the men and women of the Eighth Air Force; we're always ready.

USAF Today

(From page 1)

as a P-47 pilot in the 56th Group, with 18 kills to his credit. The commander in chief of Strategic Air Command then was the late Gen. John C. Meyer, and you may recall him as a member of the 352nd Fighter group, with 24 air kills and 13 strafing kills."

19-Year-Old Plays Colonel to Hilt

Colonels were often very young during World War II, but probably there was not one younger than 19-year-old Aram Nahabedian, 423 co-pilot.

Nobby chose a unique way to get his "eagles", first requiring an overnight soaking in the North Sea after a rough raid to Kothen in Eastern Germany. Flying with 1st Lt. Malcolm Frazee, their plane was ditched only eight miles off Ostend, Belgium, a plum ready for German air-sea rescue forces to pick up.

But the Grim Reaper crew floated all night in their rafts, and were picked up the following morning by a British ship. Needless to say, these men were overjoyed at their good fortune, and sought to repay the British for their good work.

Nobby contributed his A-2 leather jacket, several pound notes he had in his pocket, and other trinkets to a smiling seaman.

Upon returning to Thurleigh, Nobby was rewarded by Supply with a new A-2 jacket, complete with colonel's eagles on either shoulder, and a name tag that read "G. L. Robinson." Nobby had no use for the name tag, so he removed it; but the eagles remained intact.

At some later date a friend from another barracks rushed in one evening, and told Nobby to put on his colonel's jacket and indoctrinate a new crew that had just arrived next door.

Nobby snapped up his jacket, put on a well-crushed "50-mission" hat, stuck a large cigar in his face, and went forth to lecture the new men on just what combat was all about.

His act was so good that it was repeated on several occasions, and always with the same result — when the new men saw Nobby in his legit attire at the next briefing, they knew they'd been had!

The jacket came home with Nobby, but unfortunately for the cameraman he wore it out while completing his undergraduate studies at the University of Michigan — another good 19-year-old colonel gone to hell!

More Issues of 'Echoes'

Here's my help for future issues of Echoes!

I enclose \$_____ to support the production and mailing of the 306th Echoes. I also want to support continuing reunion activities for those who once served.

Name _____

Address _____

Mail to: Wm. M. Collins, Jr.
2973 Heatherbrae Drive
Poland, OH 44514

FIRST OF A SERIES

Photo Staff Joined 306th at Wendover, Served Continuously

This is the first of what we hope will be a long series of articles about various facets of Thurleigh, especially the ground support units that helped make the missions a reality. If you feel moved to explain what your unit did, please do so and send the resulting manuscript along to Russ Strong. We will also plan to use considerable photographic coverage, if photos are available in Strong's file or if you have those you can loan for use.

By F. L. "Fran" Waugh

Five of us in the photo section were in the original group at Wendover. We had no cameras, film or darkroom until we got to Thurleigh. Then we had the old Polish RAF lab that had only a glass plate view camera, English chemicals you had to weigh and mix and a passable darkroom with an old enlarger.

Other than that, we used our own personal cameras until we received some K-20 hand held oblique cameras and then some K-17 vertical cameras for bomb spotting. When we finally got a Speed Graphic we had to cut up aerial film and put it in plate holders since we had the cameras but no film packs. We performed both aerial and ground photography for the whole group. Our primary responsibility was aerial bomb spotting over the target. Every night before a mission we were out on the line installing cameras in the camera wells while they were loading bombs and ammo. We tried to pick the planes in each formation that had the best chance of returning from the mission.

As soon as photo planes landed we grabbed the film, rushed it to the lab and had wet prints finished for interrogation. Then, if we had some good shots we made up more prints for intelligence and/or public relations release. Some of our bomb spotting pictures were printed in *Life* magazine.

As to ground photos, we covered everything from public relations pictures to accident reports, etc. I got some good shots of Bob Hope and also the King, Queen, Princess Elizabeth and General Doolittle in front of the *Rose of York*. Also covered the Snuffy Smith Medal of Honor presentation, the 300th mission return, etc.

Toward the end of the war when we started bombing by radar we set up an English camera to cover the radar screen and a time clock to record the target and time of bomb release.

I flew the 25th mission with Mike Roskovitch. He and I were close friends and he hung around the photo lab a lot. In fact, in our coffee room we pinned up all the ties he cut off crew members (from generals to privates).

Rosky also used to take a K-20 camera with him on missions and got some rare pictures of enemy fighters attacking the formation. His crew sometimes became upset as he was busy snapping pictures when he should have been shooting his radio gun! He also used to take a

100-pound Blue Devil practice bomb along with him in the radio room and when bombs were away he would open the door to the bomb bay and throw out the Blue Devil — then chuckle about the German bomb experts sitting around trying to figure out what new kind of bomb we were using on them.

When I flew Rosky's 25th mission with him, besides friendship I was checking out use of the intervalometer to start the camera on the bomb run. We usually had the radio operator turn the camera off after the bomb run but frequently they didn't do it and wasted a lot of film. When I went to get on the plane for the mission to Antwerp, Capt. Pervis Youree, the pilot, told me that this was Rosky's last mission and I'd better not foul up on oxygen or anything else and cause an abort — even if I died as a result.

The Antwerp mission was rough. We got knocked out of formation and had to salvo our bombs. Fighters hit us and we picked up some 20mm damage before we could get back in place. The action was so furious that I forgot what I was there for and failed to shut the camera off. We came home with a perfect strip mosaic over Belgium on the way to the coast.

When we got back over Thurleigh Rosky borrowed my chute for an extra and was going to jump out over the field to celebrate his 25th mission. Capt. Youree talked him out of it because there were wounded in other planes that had to be landed first, and there were also planes in the air over Thurleigh from other groups. Rosky was really upset that he didn't get to jump and of course I was a little uncomfortable because our ship was damaged and Rosky had my chute on. In case we had to bail out I would have had to go down with the plane.

I took a lot of razzing from the photo crew when they developed the film and found I had forgotten to shut off the camera. Never again did I chew out a radio operator for leaving a camera on, because I learned what the problem was.

On top of the fighter attack, I had on one of the old type oxygen masks that had a bladder on the exhaust side. With my heavy, frightened breathing the bladder filled with moisture and froze. Until I came out of my trance and broke the ice up I darned near passed out from lack of oxygen. It was then I remembered Capt. Youree's warning that we were going to complete Rosky's 25th mission even if it killed me — and it



darned near did.

The sad finish to this tale is that after Rosky finished his tour he could have gone home a hero, but he took a commission as a gunnery officer and stayed on to fly more missions just for the fun of it. But I will never forget the day when I was called out of the sack and put on a flight to Scotland to photograph a crash of one of our planes. No one told me who was on the plane and I photographed the wreck and then went to the morgue to photograph the bodies of the crew for identification. It was then that someone told me that one of the victims was Rosky.

Had he hopped on the flight

because they needed a radio man? When they got ready to take off from the Scottish airfield they couldn't get one engine started. So they took off on three engines and hoped to start the fourth by letting it windmill in the air. The plane dipped a wing on takeoff and caught a fighter abutment wall. They crashed, killing the entire crew including my great friend, the "Mad Russian".

In my book Rosky deserved the Medal of Honor. His bravery was unquestioned and he flew 25 of the roughest missions ever flown out of Thurleigh. I could forget it all if I hadn't had to take that one picture in a morgue in Scotland.

Continuing 306th Research

Although the new history of the 306th is completed, there will be continuing research conducted on the group in attempting to bring together an even more complete picture. This involves the ongoing search for men who served. If you wish to assist in this effort, send your contributions to

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