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# 306th Echoes



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MC ALESTER, OK 74501

## 306th Bombardment Group Association

### Collins Says 306th Funds Now O.K.

A report from the treasurer shows that at the end of January our General Fund balance is \$4,299.28.

"We are in good shape to handle our on-going and current projects," reports William M. Collins, Jr., "but there is a continuing need to replenish funds to keep the 306th rolling."

Unlike many bomb group organizations, in nearly 10 years of operation the 306th has not gone to annual dues, saving the heavy costs of collection and thereby limiting its mailing list. Instead, those of means have been able to keep *Echoes* going to the entire mailing list, which is now about 1,750 persons.

Income has come primarily from donations and from the sale of patches, hats, jackets and the like.

"The continued generosity of a great number of 306th men attests to their real worth," says Collins.

The Friends of the Eighth Fund, originated through the efforts of Hollis H. Baker to being English friends of the 306th to reunions, now stands at \$1,020.

"If all of us will get behind this a little," writes Baker, "we will have no difficulty in bringing several of these valued friends from the Bedford area to our reunions. They work so hard on our behalf in England that we ought to make sure they have a chance to know us better.

"Anyone who has ventured into the Bedford area in recent years has found these people to be interested in anything connected with the 306th, and their efforts to carry on our work over there are just tremendous," he continues.

The 306th Museum Fund stands currently at just \$50, this money dedicated to helping develop a Bedford/Thurleigh museum of the 306th.



2nd Lt. Overacker, an enlargement taken from the March 1926 graduation picture.

### Recollections of Charles Overacker

(Pages 3, 4, 5)

### Fort Worth Beckons for Fall Fete

It's not time for another reunion just yet, but the committee in the Fort Worth/Dallas area has been hard at work for several months, as attested by the accompanying tentative schedule of events.

Reginald Robinson, 368th, heads up the effort, and reports that the Green Oaks Inn on the southwest side of Fort Worth is ready for us to arrive on schedule Thursday, Oct. 25.

The committee has put together a program that opens Thursday and runs through Saturday night, with a visit to Billy Bob's, tours of Carswell AFB and General Dynamics, and time enough for intense reunioning. The ladies will also find Saturday an important day for them, as well.

John Buie, 423rd, is in charge of getting people who fly from D/FW to Green Oaks and back. Robert P. Riordan, 369th, is working with Robinson on general arrangements and programming.

Elmer (Chris) Christianson is in charge of investigating the possible appearance of a B-17; Malcolm

Phillips is developing the movie schedule and is public relations chairman, and Graford Jennings will handle all displays.

Those large pictures and other display materials were taken back to Texas by Jennings at the close of Omaha festivities and will again be on hand.

The SAC Band, enjoyed by everyone during the Offutt tour last fall, will come from Omaha to play for us on Friday and Saturday nights.

Both Carswell AFB and the General Dynamics plant will be open to us for tours that should help update us on the latest in aircraft developments. An opportunity to look under the skin of the F-16 fighter should place it in sharp contrast to the relatively uncluttered interior of the B-17.

A speaker for the Saturday night banquet has still to be arranged for, but the committee has aimed its sights high and should come up with an excellent program.

Larry Emeigh, of Thurleigh musical fame, will repeat and expand his late night Omaha performances at the keyboard, and will provide the leadership for scheduled and impromptu sing-a-longs.

As the program develops, other Fort Worth/Dallas 306th veterans will be brought into the work of the committee to insure our "best ever" reunion.

"We learned at Omaha that we would have to set our goals very high to surpass the excellent program put together by Don Ross," says Robinson. "But we have an advantage of numbers of 306th men living in this immediate area, and we hope this will enable us to make this an unforgettable three days of reminiscing and entertainment."

An early enrollment form is included in this issue, and the Texas committee hopes to begin hearing from people shortly so that a proper picture of the venture will begin to shape up by early summer.

### Fort Worth in '84

I expect to attend the 9th reunion of the 306th Bomb Group Oct. 25-26-27, 1984 in Fort Worth. I enclose \$25.00 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 \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to 306th Reunion Fund and mail to:  
REGINALD L. ROBINSON  
Box 16917  
Fort Worth, TX 76162

## Directory Now In the Works; Mailing Soon

Using the mailing list that was prepared for this edition of **Echoes**, a directory of all known 306th members will be prepared and should be in your hands within a month of your receipt of this copy.

The list has fluctuated so much in the last several years that it is rather discouraging to contemplate such a project—but such a directory is long overdue.

Our mailing list now numbers well in excess of 1,700 people, most of them 306th veterans.

It is our plan to mail the directory to all on the mailing list. Included in the package will be a reply envelope so that those desiring to reimburse the group exchequer can easily do so.

At this writing we expect that the cost will be \$5 per directory.

It is hoped that we can produce a basic alphabetical listing of all persons, supplemented by a geographical listing and a listing by squadrons. These latter two groups will be by name only and one will have to return to the alpha listing for the full address.

## D-Day Came 40 Years Ago To Normandy

It doesn't take much imagination to realize that 1984 is the year of the big exodus from the States to Northern France, Paris and Germany. Tours can be found under almost any flag to provide an escorted experience into "our" history.

We have seen recently folders for two such excursions, one for about 10 days and costing \$2200, another deluxe edition for 22 days and costing \$3195, double occupancy.

Forty years after D-Day, June 6, is the time to be in France, although one of the above tours will not leave until June 16.

Where were you on that fateful day?

That was the day the 306th put up three missions. That was the day that early planners had feared the 8th might be decimated in the air. That was the day the 306th did not lose an airplane, and the 8th lost very few.

The world has repeatedly chronicled how the strategic air war, and the month-long tactical campaign suppressed the Luftwaffe, enabling the ground and naval forces cruising the Channel to do so almost unhindered, and cutting the opposition to the landing markedly.

If you want to relive a bit of your life experience, a tour to Europe in June may be just the thing.

## DAYS IN FORT WORTH!

### Thursday, Oct. 25

- 8:30 Registration opens—306th Office open
- 10:00 Squadron Rooms open—Coffee Bar open
- 12:30 Golf Tournament
- 1:00 Message Center open—Personnel Locator Map and Display Area open.
- 2:00 Squadron Rooms open
- 7:30 Buses leave for Billy Bob's
- 8:00 Dinner followed by dancing and entertainment
- 10:30 Buses return to hotel

### Friday, Oct. 26

#### GROUP A

- 9:00 Buses leave for Carswell AFB
- Briefing
- Flight Line Tour
- Training Simulator demonstration
- Memorial Service
- Cocktails and Luncheon at CAFB Officers Club
- 1:30 Buses return to hotel
- 2:30 Squadron Rooms open—Museum Tours—Shopping
- 3:30 Movies

#### GROUP B

- 9:30 Squadron Rooms open
- 10:30 Movies
- 12:45 Buses leave for Carswell AFB
- Briefing
- Memorial Service
- Flight Line Tour
- Training Simulator Demonstration
- Cocktails and Dinner at CAFB
- Recognition of Hosts and Introduction of Guests
- Golf Tournament Awards
- Dancing to SAC Band
- 23:30 Buses return to hotel

### Saturday, Oct. 27

#### GROUP A

- 9:00 Buses leave for General Dynamics Plant
- Briefing
- Tour of F-16 Production Line (one mile long walking tour)
- 11:00 Buses return to hotel

#### GROUP B

- 10:00 Buses leave for General Dynamics Plant
- Briefing
- Tour of F-16 Production Line (one mile long walking tour)
- 12:00 Buses return to hotel

#### LADIES

- 9:30 Depart for Neiman-Marcus Show in Ridgmar Mall
- 10:15 Brunch at Neiman-Marcus Tea Room followed by shopping
- 2:00 Museum Tours

#### 306th GROUP

- 1:30 Business Meeting
- 3:00 Movies
- 4:30 Photo Session
- 5:00 Sing-A-Long
- 6:30 Cash Bar
- 7:30 Banquet
- Announcements
- Introduction of guests
- Speaker
- 9:00 Dancing to SAC Band

### Sunday, Oct. 28

- 8:00 Buffet Breakfast available
- 10:00 Transportation available to D/FW Airport

## 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

Russell A. Strong  
2041 Hillsdale  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## TV to Confer Headlines on 306th, 8thAF

Memories of the 306th Bomb Group may shortly be flooding your living rooms, via your television sets.

Both CBS and NBC have projects underway on the 8th Air Force, and both have close ties to the 306th.

Alan King Productions became excited over the CBS film on the 1982 reunion at Thurleigh and is now working on a movie that is a fictional tale of the men who came back to Thurleigh after many years away, and what had happened in the intervening years. The title at the moment is **Reunion**.

NBC is planning a one-hour documentary on the 8th Air Force, to be aired 6 June 1984, the 40th anniversary of D-Day.

Both the King group and NBC have purchased copies of **First Over Germany**, providing factual background on combat missions. NBC also has requested names and addresses of veterans who could discuss specific missions, and these have been furnished to them.

As soon as more definite information is known about dates and times for screening the two shows, you will be notified.

## AF Registers Needed by Strong

If you have a copy or maybe several copies of **Air Force Register**, that official listing of men in the Air Force published since 1949, Russ Strong would like to get together with you. In connection with some work he is doing, he would very much like to be able to acquire any copies anyone of you may be willing to part with. Drop him a line.



The 306th Bombardment Group Historical Association: Ralph Bordner, president; John L. Ryan, vice president; Russell A. Strong, secretary; and William M. Collins, Jr., treasurer.

306th ECHOES is published four times annually: January, April, July and October, and is mailed free of charge to all known addresses of 306th personnel, 1942-45. Contributions may be remitted to the treasurer.

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8th AF CONTACT MAN: WILLIAM M. COLLINS, JR., 2973 Heatherbrae Drive, Poland, OH 44514. 216/757-3463.

Each issue is prepared and printed at Kalamazoo, MI. Editorial contributions are welcome, and should be addressed to the editor. Changes in address, and other matters concerning circulation of the 306th ECHOES should be sent to Poland, OH.

## Recollections of

# CHARLES B. OVERACKER

For a young man whose generation had grown up on World War I movies and balsa models of Spads, Nieuports, and Fokkers, my first meeting with Colonel Charles B. Overacker was fiction become reality. There he was: dapper as any ace straight out of the Dawn Patrol, wiry as a cavalry trooper, neatly mustachioed, soft-spoken and undaunted by the challenge of his new command. This was my initial impression of him. Only later did I begin to appreciate his fatherly bearing which could put a young officer at ease even in the presence of his DFC, colonel's eagles and command pilot's wings.

In March 1942 I had flown down to Wendover from the 34th Bomb Group at Pendleton, Oregon, on temporary duty as an instructor pilot to help check out the new pilots being assigned to the 306th, the great majority of them arriving directly from flying school. Within three weeks Colonel Overacker had effected a change in my status from TDY to Permanent Change of Station and I found myself assigned to the 367th Bomb Squadron where I was to remain until my fateful encounter with the flak over Lorient a year later.

I came to know the "old man" rather well during those early days at Wendover. When not flying, I ran a ground school of sorts for the group staff and the squadron commanders. I vividly remember one such class on the B-17 hydraulics system conducted out of doors in the shade of a wooden building (the best air conditioning available) where two of the "students" were Colonel Overacker and Lieutenant Colonel Curtis LeMay. Both these officers had considerable experience in the B-17. Colonel Overacker had participated in the first mass flight of B-17's from San Francisco to Hawaii in 1941 and Colonel LeMay had been on the first large-scale goodwill flight of B-17's to South America in 1938. Both were mercifully tolerant of my efforts as an instructor and were most helpful when questions began to get over my head. I am sure they both recognized my limited experience in the B-17 and realized that I, like many technical school instructors in those days, was simply one jump ahead of the class.

Colonel Overacker had already had a long service career by the time I met him in 1942. He was a native Californian born 22 February 1901 of, in his own words, "California pioneers." He attended the University of California where he was a member of Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity. He was graduated in 1925 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering and with a commission as a second lieutenant in the Army Air Corps. After acceptance for flying training in the class of 15 September 1925, he completed training at Brooks and Kelly Fields and in 1927 was rated an Airplane Pilot and tendered a commission in the Regular Army. The date of his original reserve commission is 1 March 1925 and his regular promotion list service date is 30 June 1927.

The peacetime years between 1927 and 1941 found him at a number of well-known Air Corps installations: Mitchel Field, New York; Dodd Field, Texas; Chanute Field, Illinois; France Field, Canal Zone and March Field, California. His forte throughout these years was bombardment aviation to which he added a continuing interest in airborne communications. His assignments were primarily to bomb groups which were already becoming famous for pioneering aviation achievements: 6th Bomb Group, 9th Bomb Group, 17th Bomb Group, and 19th Bomb Group. It was with the 19th Bomb Group in September 1941 that the "old man" won his first Distinguished Flying Cross for the B-17 mass flight to Hawaii on which he served as pilot and communications officer.

At the outbreak of hostilities he was at McCord Field, Washington,



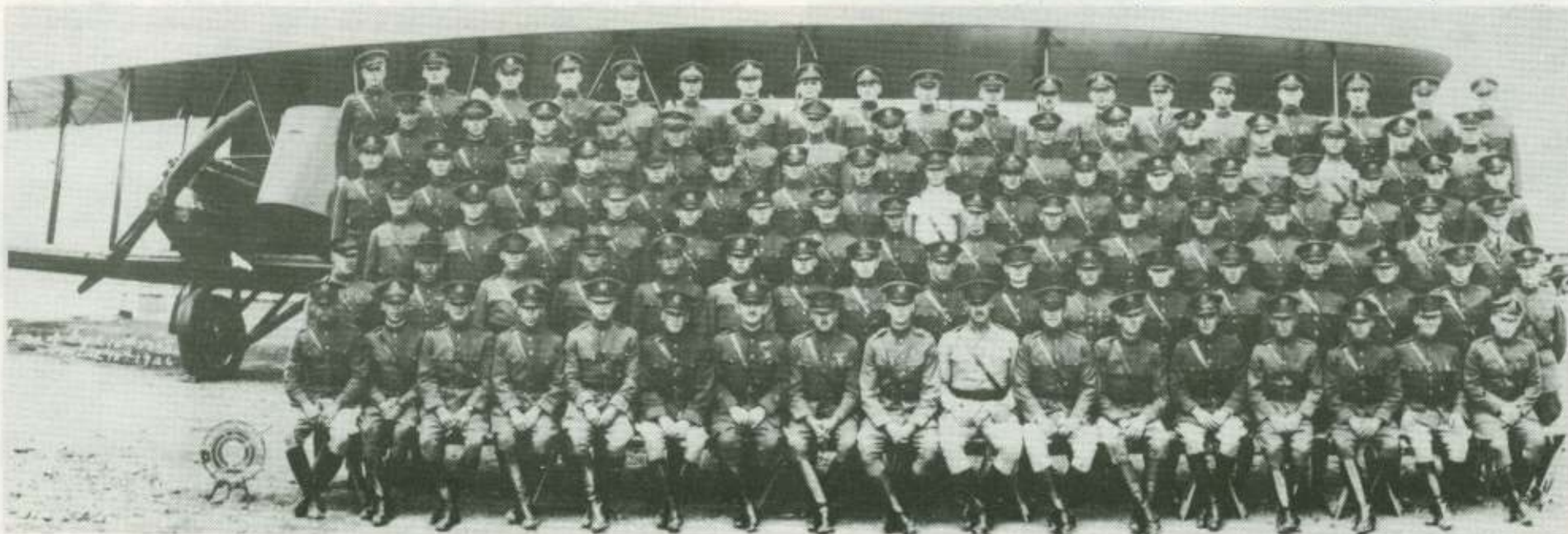
Describing a fighter attack with his hands, Col. Overacker talks to B/Gen. Newton Longfellow, King George VI, and Lt. Col. Delmar Wilson, 306th deputy commander.

in command of the 39th Bomb Group which was already engaged in off-shore and anti-submarine patrol. In February 1942 he was selected to command the 306th Bomb Group and, after pinning on his eagles on 1 March 1942, he proceeded to Salt Lake City municipal airport and very shortly thereafter to Wendover Field. The organizational and training tasks ahead of him were formidable and called upon all the know-how he had accumulated in his fifteen years of experience in the Air Corps. The details of the trials and tribulations of those few training months at Wendover are well covered in the early chapters of *First Over Germany* and need no repetition here.

There was much camaraderie at Wendover, a good part of which was engendered by the old table of organization under which the group was organized. Squadron identity was emphasized, the theory being that squadrons could be deployed and fought as individual combat units. One element of the old TO&E which contributed so much to a feeling of togetherness and a sense of belonging was the individual squadron mess at which both officers and enlisted men ate, got to know each other and solved mutual problems. Another cohesive factor was the State Line Hotel which took the place of our non-existent Officer and NCO Clubs. Much elbow rubbing and elbow bending took place in that hallowed establishment, now with the passage of time little more than a gaudy, raucous and noisy gambling joint. Most of the high level of morale and good-fellowship which existed at Wendover was in large part due to the "old man" who made it his business to be everywhere on the field and to know every last man in his command.

In those days a one dollar bill, duly inscribed, dated and signed by a bonafide member, made one a Short-snorter, a brother of an informal fraternity of hard-flying aviation enthusiasts not averse to a short snort of the spirits. I have one of those well-worn bills issued to me by C. B. Overacker, no doubt at the State Line bar. These small symbols promoted a great deal of good-fellowship and often came to be six feet long

It was a proud class of newly-graduated pilots at Brooks Field, San Antonio, in March of 1926. Lt. Charles B. Overacker, Jr., is second from the left in the front row. Of interest to plane buffs will be the giant in the background: "A Curtiss 'Condor' powered by two Liberty engines of 400 HP each; span: 38 feet; length: 27 feet; height: 10 feet; normal bomb load, 2,000 pounds; maximum speed: 152 mph; landing speed: 63 mph."





Part of the original headquarters group: front row, left to right, Major John B. Wright, intelligence; Maj. Douglas Coleman, executive officer; Lt. Col. Delmar Wilson, deputy commander; Col. Overacker; Lt. Col. Docker, British local defense officer, and Lt. Col. William H. Cleveland, group operations. Standing behind: Maj. Harry Holt, 367th CO; Maj. Ralph Oliver, 369th CO, and Maj. William Lanford, 368th CO.



1st Lt. Robert Riordan, left, explains to King George VI and Col. Overacker conditions under which he returned his plane from combat.



Col. Overacker at about the time of his retirement.



King George VI talks with Capt. John Brady, while Col. Overacker looks on.



Col. Overacker with his group operations officer, Lt. Col. William H. Cleveland.



King George VI meets another crew. B/Gen. Newton Longfellow and Col. Overacker look on at the left. Making the introductions is 1st Lt. Robert P. Riordan to Lt. Edward Maliszewski, Lt. George Spelman, Lt. Gerald Rotter and S/Sgt. Herman Albert.



Col. Overacker had a great love of boats, and this is one of many he owned during his lifetime.



Overacker the perilous



Col. Overacker at the opening of the 306th Bomb Group Restaurant in Sarasota, FL.



When King George VI toured American bases in November 1942, Thurleigh was one of those visited. The King meets Capt. Henry W. Terry's 367th crew, including Lt. John Dexter, navigator, and Lt. Hugh Toland, bombardier. Col. Overacker is at the right.



Thurleigh was the first American base turned over by the British to complete American control, and Col. Overacker was in command. At the ceremony 9 Dec 42, Col. Overacker receives the base from the British.

as notes of foreign currency were glued to the original greenback. The 306th took the Short-snorter idea to England and introduced it to the Royal Air Force units based near Thurleigh. Mine is loaded with quasi-legible RAF signatures acquired most probably at the Key Club in Bedford before "Time" was called.

Wendover was a hotbed of rumors in the summer of 1942. "Where and when are we going" was the question on everyone's mind. The colonel told me in later years that he knew we were programmed for England but that he had been warned in the late spring that the events in North Africa might cause our destination to be changed. When we packed up and set out for Westover Field the question was finally put to rest; Westover was no jumping-off point for North Africa.

Our first six months of combat operations were indeed trying. From a vantage point of forty years one can pinpoint our two major problems: Lack of combat experience at all levels of command and lack of a bombardment tactical doctrine. We faced a Luftwaffe blooded in the Spanish civil war and during three years of combat on two fronts. We had to learn as we fought against an enemy superior in numbers who had the advantage of his home court. The lessons from those early missions were learned at the cost of staggering losses. Later, as experience was gained and procedures standardized, performance began to improve and losses to decline. Though the force suffered from a lack of combat experience, there was no lack of combat leadership in the 306th. After vehemently protesting, but to no avail, the Bomber Command field order which laid on the low altitude bombing of heavily defended Saint-Nazaire, Colonel Overacker and all four squadron commanders flew on that disastrous but historic mission. Know-how had to be learned; guts were there in abundance.

Colonel Overacker left Thurleigh in January 1943 and was replaced by Colonel Frank Armstrong. The controversy over that hiring and firing may never subside. In the October 1980 issue of *Echoes* appeared an article which, though interesting, failed to clarify the issues surrounding the controversy. The reasons may never be known but the question will always remain why Armstrong remained as group commander for only six weeks and then bequeathed the job to his operations officer, Claude Putnam, both of whom were promoted in the process. To further complicate the situation, Putnam also left the group after a period of time to become the Operations Officer at First Division. Was it the honor of leading the first Eighth Bomber Command strike at the German heartland which was at stake? Did Armstrong have friends higher up than Overacker? Was someone up the chain of command looking for a scapegoat to blame for the B-17 losses of the fall of 1942? These questions, it would seem, have become academic with the passage of time. They are, perhaps, no longer relevant. What is pertinent to the issue and is indicative of real greatness is that in the forty-one years I knew Colonel Overacker, I never once heard him complain about his departure from the 306th or utter any derogatory remark about any of the other actors in the drama. The issue, as far as he was concerned, was closed. It was a hard pill for him to swallow and outwardly he took it stoically though down deep it hurt him terribly. It also hurt many of the old-timers in the 306th who thought the "old man" deserved better. But the principal players have now all passed from the scene. Best to leave things alone. De mortuis nil nisi bonum...

Our old boss came home from England shortly after leaving Thurleigh to the Proving Ground Command at Eglin Field as Commander



Capt. John Ryan gives a thumbs up from the cockpit. A friend of Col. Overacker's from May 1942 until the "Old Man's" death, now Col. John Ryan authored this tribute.

of Field 9, the Electronics Unit of the Command, and later became Director of Proof Test and Deputy Commander of the Proving Ground Command. In early 1944 I was assigned to Eglin Field initially as a test pilot and subsequently as Test Group operations officer. During the two years I spent at Eglin I worked very closely with Colonel Overacker and grew very close to him personally. As an engineer he was in his element as Director of the Proof Division. Every service test which came down to us from Wright Field was subjected to his personal scrutiny and every test program had to carry his approval. I had a variety of tests on the B-29 ranging from an aircraft configured to carry a 22,000 pound bomb to a model that was stripped for high altitude long range operations. It was not at all unusual for the colonel to show up at briefing and then climb aboard on the flight to see for himself how things were progressing.

He left Eglin in 1945 and was assigned to Langley Field, Virginia, as Deputy Commander, a position he held for a year until assuming command of the 1st Airways and Air Communications Service Wing. Two years later he left Langley and took over command of the 7th AACS Wing in Tokyo, Japan. I ran into the "old man" again in 1950 during the Korean War when I was with FEAF Bomber command at Yakota. I had learned of his presence in Japan when I complained to his unit about the failure of some communications equipment. When summer thunderstorms knocked out radio communications with the three B-29 groups on Okinawa, the only way to get an operations order to them was to fly it down there. Fortunately, FEAF Headquarters had placed an old B-17 at the disposal of Bomber Command and I was one of the few B-17 drivers at Yakota. Consequently, I occasionally got to deliver the mail to Kadena when radio communications failed. On one occasion, Colonel Overacker flew down to Okinawa with me to inspect one of his units and it gave me a lot of pleasure to move over into the right seat and let him have a go at the old bird. I had dinner with him in his Tokyo apartment on Thanksgiving 1950 and after that our paths never crossed again while he was on active duty.

He returned to the States in 1951 and was assigned as Deputy Chief of Staff, Operations, at Central Air Defense Force at Kansas City. He remained in that position until his reassignment in 1954 to the Crew Training Air Force at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas, as Chief of Staff and later as Deputy Commander. He was retired at Randolph on 30 June 1956 after thirty-one years of continuous service.

His decorations include the Legion of Merit with one Oak Leaf Cluster, the Distinguished Flying Cross with one Oak Leaf Cluster and the Air Force Commendation Medal.

After his retirement Colonel Overacker made his home in California. He had for years been a member of the Order of Daedalians and a Quiet Birdman and during 1963-1964 was Flight Captain of the Daedalian Golden Gate Flight. Here in this area he was able to enjoy his favorite sport, boating, on the waters of San Francisco Bay. He subsequently moved to Denver and when I moved to Colorado in 1977 we re-established contact. I would visit him in Denver on occasion, usually making a luncheon date out of the trip. One time both Walt Coons and I drove up to see him and the three of us had a great visit and luncheon at the Golden Ox. He suffered from emphysema and in recent years had used a portable oxygen system. Being tied, as it were, to that oxygen system never phased him anywhere he went; he simply packed the gear along with him. He enjoyed these visits from his old friends and loved to reminisce about his old bomb group at Thurleigh. He preferred to remember only the good things and the heroics of his crews; there never was a word about the events of January 1943.

I last saw Colonel Overacker in the hospital about ten days before he died. I had called his wife the previous week to find out how he was doing only to learn that he was much too ill to receive visitors. A few days after this I received a call from Mrs. Overacker saying the "boss" would like to see me. The following day I went to Denver, found his room in the hospital, knocked on the door and was greeted by a roaring "Come in" worthy of any first sergeant. There he was, sitting up in bed, phone at his bedside within reach, notebook and pen at hand and in complete command of the situation. We had a wonderful visit for an hour or more during which he wanted to know all about the Omaha reunion. I had brought him the handouts from the registration packet and a 306th hat which he immediately put on with the remark that "this ought to straighten up the nurses." He had received our "Get well" telegram from Omaha and was most appreciative. He told me about his condition and his prognosis. He had known for some time that his days were numbered after cancer was discovered in his left lung.

His last weeks were spent tidying up his affairs so that nothing would be left undone to become a burden after his death. His one unfinished piece of business he confided to me, to dispose of his guns so that "some shyster wouldn't steal his wife blind." The doctors who were attending him offered him two choices to prolong his life neither of which he felt he could accept. "These youngsters just don't understand my philosophy," he told me. "I'm eighty-two years old, I've lived a good life and I'm afraid of nothing. I certainly don't need to be subjected to a lingering death when there's no possibility of a cure." I said good-bye to him, he gave me a firm handshake and I drove home. I was shaken by the realization that an era was coming to an end and an old friend was leaving. I shall never cease to admire Colonel Overacker's quiet dignity and

## Newly-Found

Artusy, Ray, 250 Fair Pl., Boulder, CO 80302  
Baker, Cary B., 6369 Bayard St., Long Beach, CA 90815  
Barr, Leonard R., 5210 88th St., Lubbock, TX 79424 367  
Brecher, Mel, 35 Rittenhouse Rd., Borough Hall, PA 19008 367  
Breslin, William H., 104 Loyola Dr., Ormond Beach, FL 32074 368  
Brown, Ralph D., 3229 Pelham, Dearborn, MI 48124 449  
Burden, Donald F., 3403 E. Main St., SP, Mesa, AZ 85203 423  
Bush, David, Box 296, Altus, OK 73521  
Casey, Larry, 616 W. Blucher St., Falfurrias, TX 78355 367  
Cournoyer, Armand, 231 Hill St., Whitinsville, MA 01558 369  
Crow, Charles R., PO Box 211, Sun City, CA 92381 367  
Ebert, Dale, 806 Bel Air Ct., Lodi, CA 95240 423  
Flood, Harold, Rt. 3, Quaker City, OH 43773 449  
Gallagher, Andrew F., 143 Worrall Dr., Newark, DE 19711 369  
Gehrlein, E. F., 956 W. 8th St., Erie, PA 16502 423  
Golder, Edward, 51 Melrose St., Apt. 4A, Melrose, MA 02176 369  
Higham, Ernest, 2744 Upper Valley Pike, Springfield, OH 44504 369  
Janssen, Carl, 1509 Wayne St., Bellville, NE 68005 369  
Johns, Lloyd, 3116D Via Serena, Laguna Hills, CA 92653 369  
Jordon, Charles E., Jr., 848 Brickell Ave., Suite 11, Miami, FL 33131 423  
Kenzel, Kenneth, 718 W. Blaine, Monticello, IL 61856 423  
Krische, John, 64-08 74th Ave., Glendale, NY 11385 369  
Leigh, Bryan F., 3223 N. 100 W., Cedar City, UT 84720 423  
Livingston, Roy, 17 Intervale St., Quincy, MA 02269 367  
Lord, Lester L., 315 Burnett Dr., Baytown, TX 77520 423  
Mathes, Stan, 1030 Alta St., Medford, OR 97501 368  
Mathews, Joseph A., PO Box 311, Marietta, SC 29661 369  
McGonigle, William, 301 N. Manor Dr., Media, PA 19063 423  
McKnight, Douglas K., 2130 Camino Dr., Escondido, CA 92026 423  
Milner, James E., 2200 qst St., #303, Moline, IL 61265 368  
Murphy, William R., 1009 E. Willoughby Rd., Lansing, MI 48910 369  
Nelson, Harold E., 1602 W. 29th St., Sioux City, IA 51103 367  
Reilly, John J., 7807 Del Monte Dr., Houston, TX 77063 368  
Sandberg, Elmer A., 1941 Flen Ave., San Bruno, CA 94066 369  
Schaeffer, William, 234 W. 79th St., Burr Ridge, IL 60521 369  
Smythe, E. F., 10900 Lakewood, El Paso, TX 79935 367  
Tricoglou, James D., 5019 Justin Dr., NW, Albuquerque, NM 87124 367  
Trombley, Wilford, 1126 Cuba St., Toledo, OH 43615 367  
Weston, Robert S., 980 126th Ave., E #106, Treasure Island, FL 33706  
White, Robert W., 1449 W. Fourth Ave., Oshkosh, WI 54901 GP

## 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

boundless courage as he faced the end. Perhaps over the years this last meeting may become my best memory of him. He took care of everything, even to dictating his own obituary a few days before he died. He requested that he be cremated and that there be no services. On the afternoon of 26 October I called his home to inquire about his condition only to learn that he had died peacefully early that morning.

Toward the end of November I visited Mrs. Overacker in Denver. She had saved for us all of the colonel's medals, insignia and memorabilia which he had kept over the years. All these items will eventually be housed in the 306th museum being planned for Thurleigh. I intend to make a walnut case to display his medals in the museum where his memory will be kept alive. We have lost an old comrade but he will never be forgotten by those who served under him or were part of that magnificent organization which he created.

Sic transit gloria mundi.

John L. Ryan

## The 306th at Houston



## WWII Arenas Covered in Three Books

**GOODBYE, MICKEY MOUSE**, by Len Deighton. (Available in both hard cover and paperback)

This reviewer was not overwhelmed by this book, and believes that it is not as good a story as that told by Nevil Shute in *Pastoral*, which was more bomber oriented, or *The Silver Lady* by James Facos.

One of its failures was on the part of the author to understand 8th Air Force organization or historical perspective for the time. He constantly referred to Air Division, and that change in nomenclature did not take place until long after the time of the book.

The story line is entertaining but a bit hokey as well. There seems lacking a believable flow of events on which the story can ride. It is basically a boy-meets-girl story, and there is very little combat action involved.

What is really needed today is a flow of WW II stories, either short stories or novels, by American writers who have a better understanding of American military lore and American men. Perhaps in the two decades of life remaining to many veterans some who have writing talents will come forth. Probably it is really the sons and daughters of those who flew, who having absorbed much of the lore over the dinner table and in bedtime stories, can bring the Eighth back to life.

Len Deighton really lost me with the trumped up story of the brigadier general who was the long lost father of one of the heroes; who appointed the new fighter group commander when the original was lost on a mission. I can't believe that Gen. Bill Kepner would have ever stood for such an intrusion on his privilege.

Deighton produces a veritable flood of printed material, and like any such prolific writer, has to throw in a number of pot boilers for every literary gem. This is no gem, but it will furnish you with an enjoyable evening or so.

**THE SCHWEINFURT-REGENSBURG MISSION**, by Martin Middlebrook, New York, Scribners, 1983. \$22.50.

This is a combat mission in which the 306th took part 17 August 1943. While it was a tragic effort for everyone else, the 306th came through unscathed—unlike the successor mission to Schweinfurt in October.

Middlebrook has well researched his effort, and has copious quotes from both American and German "participants" in the effort. While much old ground has been covered once again, it is a new approach to the subject, and

quite different from Thomas Coffey's work of several years ago.

Reginald Robinson, 368th pilot, and David Wheeler, 369th pilot, are the only 306th people quoted in the book.

Again, as a Britisher writing about Americans, he does not always get everything straight: Robert Williams did not remain as commander of the First Bomb Division until the end of the war, he was succeeded in October 1944 by Howard M. Turner; Curtis LeMay did not become a five-star general, the only one the Air Force has had was Henry H. Arnold. The only postwar appointment of a five-star was Omar N. Bradley.

But these are minor flaws and overall it is a book you can really get into and enjoy reliving those fascinating and terrible days.

**POINT OF NO RETURN, The Story of the 20th Air Force**, by Wilbur H. Morrison. New York, Times Books, 1979.

This reviewer believes this is Morrison's best book to date, certainly better than *Fortress Without a Roof*. Part of the reason may be the feeling that Morrison really gets into a subject he knows a lot about.

The story of the B-29's told in this intimate manner is first rate reading and will bring to the Europe-oriented WW II aviation buff a whole new glimpse of WW II air war.

Morrison was a B-29 bombardier, and his knowledge of the missions flown, targets, men and the aircraft, gives him an edge in his writing that shows. Perhaps, though, the most fascinating part of the book is the earlier portion in which he tells about those long, long distance raids flown from India and China, and the perils that the fliers faced, the logistics problems, and again, the tremendous pressure exerted from Washington to get planes over targets.

Much of it reads like the early days of the Eighth when the front line combat men were trying to do a job, and were constantly told that it was too little, too late!

This book is in part a story of the frustrations of "Possum" Hansell and the equally great frustrations but eventual satisfactions of Curt LeMay, both men veterans of the early days of hairy combat situations over the continent.

This book tastes of real combat, and of the total dedication of commanders, ground personnel and the fliers to the task at hand.

# Last Shots at Omaha



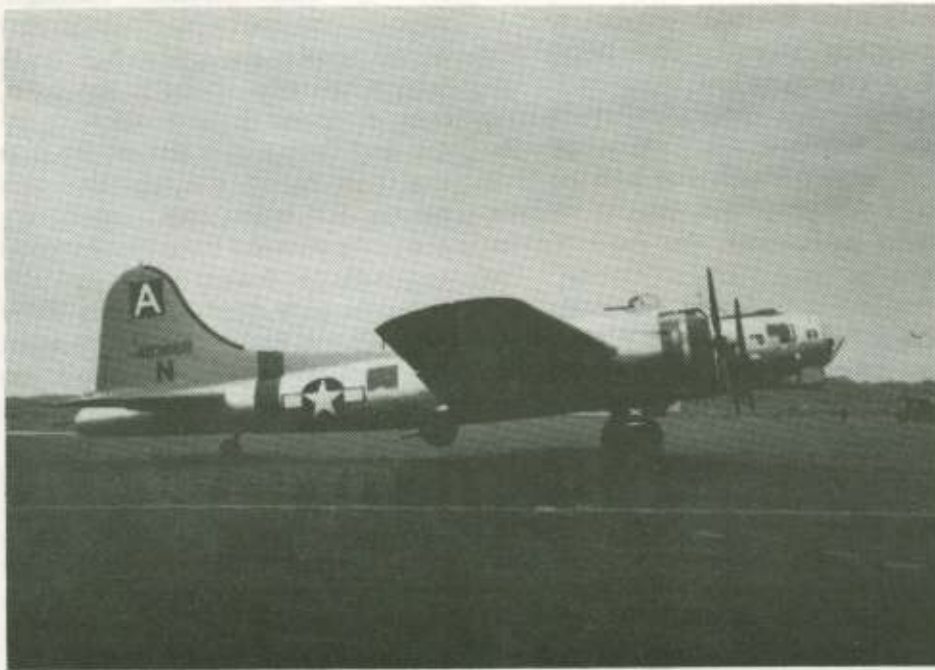
Dr. Thurman Shuller, Maj. Gen. James S. Cheney and Robert C. Williams.



Mr. and Mrs. Jack Grimm in front of the B-17 at SAC



Two original 369th pilots: John M. Howard and Robert P. Riordan.



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