

# 306th Echoes

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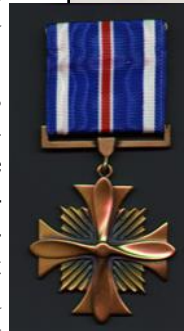
## A Journey Through the Twentieth Century and Beyond

By Vernon L. Williams

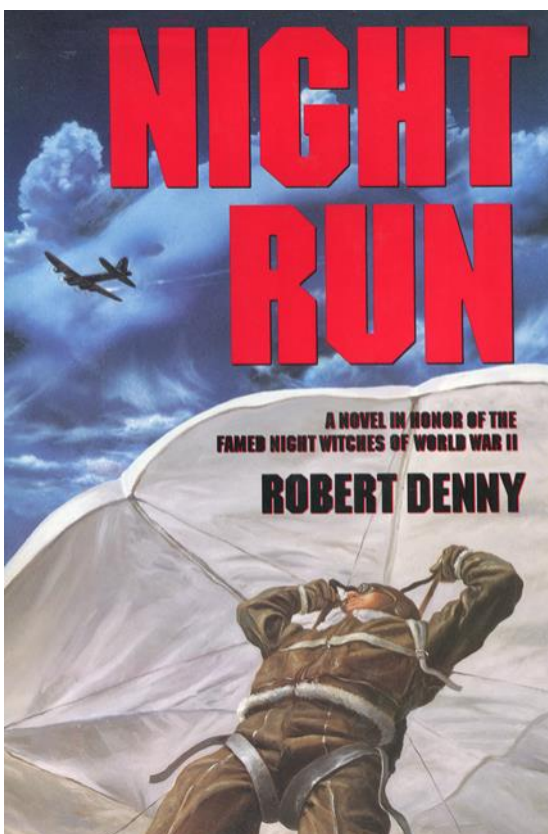
A few years ago I read a gripping air war novel by Robert Denny called *Night Run*. Much to my surprise, I learned that Denny had served in the 306th Bomb Group at Thurleigh. His postwar career was marked by a fascinating journey as journalist, author, and documentary producer. Early on he encountered Broadway star Susan Hight and convinced her to give it all up to marry him and raise a family. And that is just what they did.

Denny and his crew arrived at Thurleigh on 29 June 1944, finishing his tour on 19 January 1945. According to standard practice, on July 6, 1944 Denny flew his first mission as co-pilot with an experienced crew. Over the next few days, he flew three more missions as co-pilot with other crews before he led his crew on their first combat mission together. By that time, Denny had seen the reality of combat in the ETO. On July 8 he flew in the right seat with seasoned pilot D.H. Shawe. Later in debriefing the crew described two B-17s from a group to the right of their formation blow up near the coast

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*Robert R. Denny, 368 BS pilot and later novelist, journalist, & filmmaker.*



## Broadway Star Susan Hight Gives Up the Stage to Marry 306th Pilot

Susan Hight was born in Portland, Maine, but grew up in nearby Cape Elizabeth. As World War II came to a close, she graduated from Colby College in Maine in 1948 and was soon accepted by the prestigious New England Conservatory of Music in Boston where she completed her studies in 1950. She wasted no time in landing her first singing jobs with a number of the popular big bands in the Boston area. It was not long before she moved to New York City, hoping to break into Broadway and the emerging new entertainment venue—television.

*Continued on Page 8*



*Susan Hight (later Denny) played Sister Sarah Brown on Broadway and on tour in an early 1950s production of "Guys and Dolls."*

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*The 306th Bomb Group Historical Association  
is a Federally tax-exempt organization and as a  
veteran's group is classified as 501 © (19).*

# Obituaries

Please send obits as soon as possible after the death, to secretary (see contact information at left on this page below).

*The secretary has learned of the following deaths:*

*NOTE: Please send any further info re anyone listed with "No further info," via Secretary's contact info on p.2 of each issue.*

- **Clark, Joseph Randolph**, 423<sup>rd</sup> pilot, who was born in Handley, TX and spent his youth in Stephenville, TX, a resident of Bryan, TX since 06, died there 7 May 13 at St Joseph's Manor, at 90. Joe reported to Thurleigh 3 Feb 45 and departed 19 May 45. Initially in the Class of 44 at Texas A & M Univ, college was resumed post-war; he graduated in 47. Joe then went to Saudi Arabia, to work for AR-AMCO and the royal family, as a foreman and then general manager of extensive farming operations at the historic Wadi al-Kharj. Returning to Stephenville on his first home leave in 50, after a 28 day courtship, he married Wynon. After she graduated from Baylor, she joined him in Saudi in 51, where they lived several years, moving to Pecos, TX in 54 with their first child. For 40 years Joe farmed, ranched, and developed land and businesses far and wide, living mainly in Pecos, with a few years in Carlsbad, NM and Clarksville, TX. In 85, Joe and Wynon moved to Granbury, TX, where they enjoyed semi-retirement and continued world travels until 06, when they moved to Bryan to be closer to family.
- **Endicott, John J**, 423<sup>rd</sup> pilot, originally from Friend, NE died in Escondido, CA 30 Apr 13 at 90. Since John reported to Thurleigh 2 Apr 45, he would have also been in the Casey Jones mapping project. Before heading over, he married Gaynelle, his high school sweetheart, 23 Dec 43. Post-war in 46, they settled in San Diego, and he resumed his 38-year career with Pacific Telephone, where he retired as a manager in the engineering dept. He's remembered for his positive outlook and passion for life and people, enjoying socializing with friends and family, dancing, golfing, sailing, bicycling, and RV'ing. At 81, Gaynelle predeceased him from Alzheimer's 2 Dec 05. Just a couple of years ago he enjoyed again going aloft in a B-17 at Gillespie Field. Interred at El Camino Memorial Park, they're survived by 2c.
- **Fetsch, Joseph M**, 367<sup>th</sup> crew chief & waist-gunner, originally from Baltimore, died in Glen Burnie, MD, 28 Feb 2013 at 94 from complications from a stroke. He reported to the 306<sup>th</sup> on 3 Apr 42; initially he was a mechanic and then a crew chief. From his family we learn that apparently he was one of the many men who originally had ground jobs, and responded when the push was on early in the war for more gunners; he became a waist-gunner. Post-war S/Sgt Fetsch married Elva, who served as 1Sgt, and Joe worked as a painting contractor for over 50 years. He was a member of the VFW in Brooklyn, Baltimore Co, MD; was an avid golfer who had caddied at Rolling Road Golf Club in his youth; and was a Baltimore Orioles and Ravens fan. Elva predeceased him in 68, at 58; both are interred at Baltimore National Cemetery; survived by 4c, 3gs.
- **Fryer, Peter Jason**, 369<sup>th</sup> navigator (an original; initially on crew of Robert Riordan) & POW, who grew up in Tulsa, OK, died 18 May 13 at 91 at his home in Oklahoma City. He arrived at Thurleigh in mid-42. On his 5th mission (St



*Obituaries continued on page 6*



## President's Column

I am writing this article while on a train leaving Warsaw Poland. My visit has been a moving experience. No country suffered more under the Nazis than Poland and Warsaw in particular. I happened to be here on the anniversary of the Warsaw uprising during WWII. If you are not familiar with it I recommend you educate yourself about it. There were flowers in many places and at 5:00 PM sirens sounded and everyone stopped for a moment of silence. Cars, people on bicycles, and pedestrians all stopped. Although France had the largest army in Europe outside of Germany it fell to the Nazis in days. The Poles with far fewer troops and supplies held out much longer, and later during occupation the Warsaw uprising almost beat the Germans holding the town. Hitler sent reinforcements and the Nazis prevailed. Hitler's wrath was such that he had engineers systematically dynamite the city, marking important buildings and landmarks to ensure they were destroyed first. In two of the now-rebuilt churches, were makeshift hospitals for resistance fighters, signs tell of the Nazis coming in and executing the medical staff then blowing up the building burying 500 people alive and killing over 1,000 in each church. There are other examples of massacring people that bring to mind the cruel acts inflicted on the Polish people and of course more Jews died in Poland than anywhere else.

The people of Poland and Germany as well have physical reminders all over, of the evil of the Nazi regime. It gives me an even more profound appreciation for our heroes who fought to rid the world of such an evil vicious regime with its powerful military machine. It also caused me to reflect that in the USA we do not have such powerful reminders surrounding us. WWII becomes less represented in history books as subsequent events become included.

I believe we who support the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association, have an obligation to not only support our remaining heroes and their spouses, but to embrace the goal of preserving the reminders we have and educating ourselves and future generations regarding the history our heroes lived. The world will never be rid of evil. We have enjoyed so much due to the sacrifices of our WWII heroes and we need to ensure we pass on their character and courage, so if called upon good people will do what needs to be done. One way of doing so is to support and expand the historical and educational goals of our association.

Our reunion meetings make wonderful opportunities for our treasured veterans to meet one another and for those of us in later generations to talk with them personally about their war-time experiences. Responding to input over recent years, we now provide more time for just relaxing and meeting with them and friends among the following generations. We have also added elements specifically designed to appeal to third and subsequent generations. We need your help and input to effectively continue these goals. It was great to see so many of you in New Orleans, and I look forward to our great opportunity in September 2014 to share our veterans' experiences with the US Air Force Academy cadets.



Warsaw under  
Nazi Occupation





## Secretary's Column

By Barbara Neal

(Secretary contact information on page 2)

**PLEASE SEND ADDRESS CHANGES and DEATH INFO** to me (Barbara). If you've moved, or know of one of our vets having died, please do not make a fugitive investigation necessary. All our vets earned the right to have an obit published for free so future generations and history lovers can learn about those who served our country.

**ECHOES:** Many have said how much you enjoy our new Echoes format for 2013. For any of you with internet capability, the new 8.5"x11" format is easy to print at home when viewing it at our website, 306bg.org. To do so, go to 306bg.org; click on the "Echoes" tab; select the issue (latest is near the top); wait a moment or two for it to load on your screen; you can then print it (and/or save it as a file on your computer). IF you want to "save a tree" (and save our association printing and First Class mailing expense on future issues), please let me know. After I'm assured you've successfully viewed it at the website, and are content to do so for future issues, I'll be glad to remove you from the mail list. I alert folk by email each time a new issue is posted, and I'll mention a reminder re how to find it and print it.

**REUNION REPORT '13 & PHOTOS** are planned to be in our next issue – a double-long issue to cover both the "Summer" and "Fall" issues of 2013. In the meantime, IF you have access to an email address and would like a copy of my Reunion Recap sent in October to all our emailing 306<sup>th</sup> family, just let me know your email address; I'll send it.

**REUNION – HOSPITALITY ROOM ADDITIONS:** In New Orleans, our Hospitality Room began some **new traditions:** Space for ALL attendees to place **framed photos of veterans from Thurleigh days**, in uniform when possible, 8"x10" or smaller, with a label identifying him. We're glad our great Vets were not bashful and brought photos so we all enjoyed seeing how handsome you were as young men! **Computer access to 306<sup>th</sup> records of vets of attendees** helped many looking for their vets. Folk who brought a thumb-drive could make digital copies to take home. For all who register in advance for a reunion, we can be sure to have info available for each pertinent vet. Other computers had **B-17 flight simulators** which were enjoyed by young and old alike. Cliff Deets also had available for purchase at the Reunion in October, **306<sup>th</sup> memorabilia items**, sales of which help furnish operating expenses to keep the association going. These were

so popular, that on a trial basis, Cliff will make them available for purchase by mail:

- 306<sup>th</sup> (baseball-type) Hats, Army-olive color with yellow embroidery of "306<sup>TH</sup> BOMBARDMENT GROUP (H) FIRST OVER GERMANY" and a black & white embroidered B-17 flying toward the viewer - \$15;
- 306<sup>th</sup> BG Coffee Mugs with the color circled-triangle H insignia, in which is "306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group (H) Thurleigh, England" on one side; on the mug's other side is a black & white B-17 flying toward the viewer and "*First Over Germany Reick Wreckers*" - \$10;
- Squadron Coffee Mugs for each Squadron, with its color insignia on one side; on the mug's other side is a black & white B-17 flying toward the viewer with the Squadron's motto - \$10;
- Embroidered Squadron Patches (identical to the originals, in color, 5" diameter) - \$6.

**All memorabilia items will require adding shipping costs.**

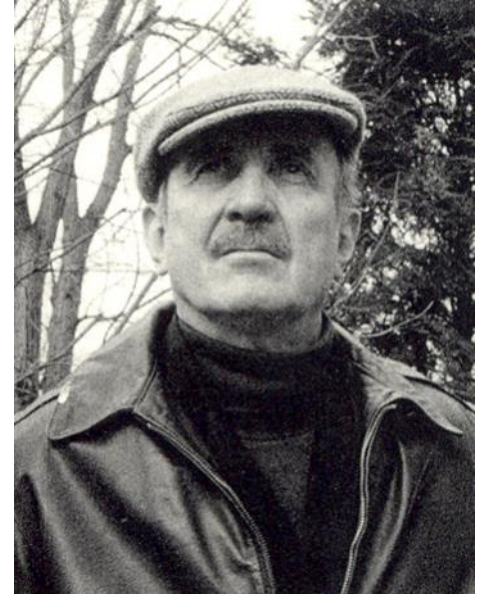
To order any item, contact Cliff either by email at [cldeets@att.net](mailto:cldeets@att.net) OR leave a message on his cell phone (1-619-405-7132) so he can call you back whether he is in the Pacific or Mountain West time zone. Please remember that Cliff is not Amazon.com; it will take him awhile to turn items around and get them shipped through the US Post Office. All purchases will require payment in advance.



*The scene above is Site 6 at Thurleigh. Pilot Robert Dodge snapped this photograph one dreary day, capturing the wartime life there. Notice the bicycles littering the sidewalks and the sprinkling of snow. Does anyone remember what these buildings were at Site 6?*



## Robert R. Denny Pilot, Journalist, Novelist, Filmmaker



RESTRICTED

GENERAL ORDERS )  
NUMBER 611 ) Hq 1st Bombardment Division,  
EXTRACT APO 557, 11 December 1944,

I. Under the provisions of Army Regulations 600-45, 22 September 1943, as amended, and pursuant to authority contained in letter, Hq Eighth Air Force, File 200.6, 23 September 1944, subject, "Awards and Decorations", the DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS is awarded to the following-named Officers and Enlisted Men.

**ROBERT R. DENNY**, O-813867, 1st Lieutenant, 368th Bombardment Squadron, 306th Bombardment Group (H), Army Air Forces, United States Army. For extraordinary achievement while serving as Pilot of a B-17 airplane on a number of combat bombardment missions over Germany and German occupied countries from 6 July 1944 to 6 December 1944. The courage, coolness and skill displayed by Lieutenant Denny on all these occasions reflect the highest credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of the United States. Home address: 1624 Underwood, North West, Washington, D.C.

By command of Brigadier General TURNER:  
BARTLETT BEAMAN,  
Brigadier General, U. S. Army,  
Chief of Staff.

OFFICIAL:  
ROBERT E. JOHNSON, JR.,  
Lieut. Colonel, A.G.D.,  
Adjutant General.

RESTRICTED

Continued from Page 1

on the way into target. One aircraft disintegrated and the other went into a spin. They saw three chutes, all on fire (see mission report at right). It was a prelude of what was to come for the Denny crew.

2nd Lieutenant Robert R. Denny and his crew arrived at Thurlleigh on 29 June 1944, finishing his tour on 19 January 1945. Over his thirty-five missions, Denny was awarded the Air Medal with six oak leaf clusters and the Distinguished Flying Cross (see citation above). As the war closed, Denny was poised to take his wartime experiences into the post-war years.

Denny drew on his World War II experiences for his postwar career writing for newspapers, novels, and developing documentary films for public television.

*(Denny continued on page 16)*

### Future Reunion Locations

Where would you like to go for future reunions? If you did not attend this year in New Orleans, LA and you would like to propose a future location for the Group to consider: email or call our 306<sup>th</sup> Secretary Barbara Neal (see page 2 for contact information) and say why you think your proposed location would be a good one for the association.

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Squadron 306 A/C Number 836 Letter P Date 8 July, 1944

Bomb Load 2 X2000 H.E. \*\*\*\*\* Position in Formation: Low

Time Took Off 0407 Landed \_\_\_\_\_

1. HOT-NEES to be phoned in? Yes No  Yes  No  
 Details: 2 B17s from 99 to right. Down up over target on way in. Last chute disintegrated. 1 chute in spin. 1st chute, all on fire.  
 Give back and initials

Friendly A/C in any kind of distress: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Give position, time, altitude, full details): \_\_\_\_\_

1st Lt. D.H. Shaw	✓	Pilot
2nd Lt. R.R. Denny	✓	Co-P
2nd Lt. T. Ches	✓	Nav.
1st Lt. J.J. Polich	✓	Bomb
T/Sgt. J. Mitterman	✓	Radi.
T/Sgt. W.M. Gentile	✓	Top
S/Sgt. D.J. Galvin	✓	Ball
S/Sgt. E.E. Ottosen	✓	R/W
S/Sgt. W.A. Davis	✓	Tail

2. TARGET ATTACHED:  
 Primary Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Alternate Height: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Last Resort Heading: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (circle)  
 Duration Bomb Run: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Number of BOMBS dropped on target: Jettisoned: Returned: 2 X2000 Active: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Observed RESULTS OF BOMBING: (For this plane or others)

Own Bombs: \_\_\_\_\_ Any Nickels: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
 Number bombs dropped: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Number bombs returned: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Any PHOTOGRAPHS taken: Yes? No? \_\_\_\_\_

6. GROUND TARGETS ATTACKED BY GUNFIRE: RESULTS: \_\_\_\_\_

7. ROUTE: (If different than ordered) (If ADVERSE give time, place, height of turn; reason for returning early, and Disposition of bombs.) \_\_\_\_\_

8. WEATHER: (If it affected mission) 10/10, 10, 10, 10

9. FLAK: Encountered on way out, at target and on way home.

Time	Place	height of A/C	Type (light or heavy, intense, moderate or slight)	Color of Bursts	Location Bursts in relation to A/C	accuracy
<u>1st chute: east. 1st chute.</u>						

*Continued from page 2*

Nazaire sub pens) 23 Nov 42, with Clay Isbell, downed and immediately captured; Fryer and bombardier Abraham Burden were the only two of crew to survive the downing. In early Feb 43, Fryer was in photo received at Thurleigh, taken inside Stalag Luft 3 of 8 people, which photo greatly encouraged all at Thurleigh that their friends were indeed alive. First recorded as being sent to Stalag 1, he went eventually to Stalag 3, scene of the "Great Escape." Peter spent the duration of the war there until the camp was marched to Moosburg; liberated 29 months by a high school friend in Patton's 3rd Army, 29 Apr 45. Peter returned to Tulsa, OK, where he married Mary, his high school sweetheart who graduated Univ of KS in 44. They moved to OK City in 46 and began the family business, Triangle Blueprint & Supply (today Triangle A&E, Inc), which they grew by working hard, hiring local employees, and investing in the latest equipment to ensure they were always the first in town with the latest technology. Peter was a member of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Twin Hills Country Club, and a charter member of Quail Creek Country Club; he was an avid golfer, tennis player, sports fan, gin- and bridge-player, who traveled the world until his death. Mary was a member of Junior Hospitality; Quail Creek Ladies Golf Association; and a 65-year member of Kappa Alpha Theta. For many years she volunteered her time as a 'pink lady' at Presbyterian Hospital; she was a life-member of Westminster Presbyterian Church. They wintered in Palm Springs with friends for 43 years. After 59 years, Mary predeceased him 9 Apr 05 at 82; they are survived by 3c, 7gc, 10ggc..

- **Hill, Thomas 'Rudy' R**, 367<sup>th</sup> ball-turret gunner (crews including Clyde Cosper), originally from AR, died 16 Apr 13 at home in Union City, OH, at 91. When he was enlisted at Little Rock 22 Jul 42 as a Pvt, he was a married farmer. He apparently arrived at Thurleigh 11 Sep 43 with Cosper, whose crew photo-label erroneously lists him as "John" Hill; he flew missions at least into Jul 44. He retired in 83, having worked as an electrician for Hernly Brothers Construction for 20 years. He was a member of Farmland American Legion and Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association. Predeceased by his wife Minnie and 1s; survived by 6c, 24gc, many ggc and gggc, he is buried at Lisbon Cemetery in Union City, IN.
- **Hudson, Frederick M**, 369<sup>th</sup> navigator (Ned Erne crew) & 306<sup>th</sup> Director in '99-02, of IA, died 13 Oct 12, at 89 at Mill-Pond Retirement Community, Ankeny, IA. He reported to Thurleigh 25 Oct 44 and completed a tour of 35 missions 19 Mar 45. Post-war he resumed his college studies, earning his PA in 48 at U of IA, and LLB in 51 at Westminster Law, Denver. Fred began his career as a self-

employed practicing attorney in Denver, and sold real estate there for three years. He returned to IA, set up his law practice in Rolfe, and was elected Pocahontas County Attorney 61-66. He also held positions in the Trust Dept for IA Dept of Revenue; was a Hearing Compliance Officer for IA Dept of Transportation; and an Administrative Law Judge with the IA Dept of Inspections and Appeals. In Jun 59 he had married Samantha; in 69 they made their home on a farm near Alleman and reared their family before moving to Elkhart in 77. Fred was a member of Ankeny First United Methodist, Sigma Nu, American Legion in Pocahontas, and served as Director of the 306th Bomb Group Association for 3 years 99-02 during the presidencies of Wallace Boring and Paul Reiox. He enjoyed traveling, attending our reunions, pheasant hunting, IA Hawkeye football, and family activities. Survived by his wife of 53 years, Samantha, 3c, 3gc, many step-gc, he is buried at Elkhart Cemetery. His wife and children have honored him at the WWII Memorial Registry online, and his obit suggested memorials be directed to The U of IA Foundation or to Central Iowa Honor Flight.

- **Kate, Hendrick Jr**, 423<sup>rd</sup> radio operator & top-turret gunner (Frank Kackstetter crew), who was born in Amsterdam, Holland, and grew up in Manchester, NH, died 15 Sep 12 at the NH Veterans Home in Tilton at 96 after a period of declining health. He arrived at Thurleigh 4 Apr 43 with the crew of 'Flying Circus' and was immediately reassigned to fly with the crew of 'Dearly Beloved.' On his fifth mission, 21 May 43 (Wilhelmshaven), with Robert H Smith, the crew was credited with downing eleven enemy fighters before they were forced to ditch in the English Channel where they drifted in rafts for two days before being picked up by a British ship. After three months in a hospital for wounds received in the raid, he was reassigned as a radio operator instructor in Northern Ireland. Post-war, Kate married Irene and was a route salesman for NH Dairy in Manchester. He was a life member of the Disabled American Veterans; member of the Hooksett Men's Club; lieutenant with the Hooksett Volunteer Fire Dept; and an avid sports fan. His wife of 65 years, Irene, predeceased him 20 Jan 12. Survived by 2c, 6gc, 3ggs; buried in Mount Calvary Cemetery.
- **Maddox, William "Billy" Claude**, 367<sup>th</sup> waist-gunner (crew of C Oliver 'Ollie' Smith), originally from Clanton, AL, died 15 May 13 in Alexander City, AL, where he had been at the Bill Nichols Veterans Home, at 91. He arrived at Thurleigh with Smith 18 Nov 43. His name appeared in the war-time address book of barracks friends of our past VP and Director (367<sup>th</sup> tail-gunner & evadee) Robert Starzynski. Post-war, he owned and operated The Sports



Shop in Clanton. He is survived by his wife, Lois, 3c, 6gc, 5ggc. The USVA marker for S/Sgt Maddox is in Clanton City Cemetery.

- **Smith, Charles ‘Ollie’ Oliver**, 367 pilot, of Lowville, NY, who had been a resident of Brookside Senior Living Community for the past 4 years, died 11 Apr 13 at 96 after a short illness. He arrived at Thurleigh 18 Nov 43 and completed his tour, flying 26 missions, in Mar 44; he was also a squadron leader. He’d been a pre-med student at OH State U when he enlisted in the Air Corps at the beginning of the war; he was commissioned at Columbus, MS; in Lima, OH, he married Vivian 6 Jun 43. Post-war he continued in the AF Reserves, achieving 35 years and rank of LTC. In Lowville, they reared their family; Ollie worked in his father-in-law’s hardware store, Fowler & Green, for years before becoming a traveling salesman for the Storyhouse Book Corporation, visiting schools and libraries selling new books and refurbishing old ones. He served as Boy Scout troop leader; Big Brother to Marine Cpl Kelly Cannan (who was killed in Iraq); and at First Presbyterian Church, as Deacon, Elder and Sunday School Superintendent; at 95 he still drove himself to church each Sunday to occupy his front row seat. He was an avid gardener and active sportsman, playing tennis into his 80’s; in 90, he placed first in the age 70-74 doubles at the NY Senior Games. He enjoyed downhill and cross country skiing, golf, snowmobiling, and swimming in his indoor pool. In retirement, they enjoyed travel in their camper and on many cruises around the world. He was known for his wry sense of humor, competitive pursuit of the family dominoes game, and his ability to find a ‘fourth’ for the bi-weekly bridge games at Brookside. Predeceased by 1gs, and by his dear Vivian in Oct 08, Ollie is survived by 3c, 4gc, 4ggc; memorial donations were suggested to First Presbyterian in Lowville, NY.
- **Wilson, Wymond B**, 369<sup>th</sup> tail-gunner (crew of Wallace ‘Jack’ or ‘Wally’ W Young), originally from Mentone, IN, died 2 Jun 13 at 92 at Peabody Retirement Community of North Manchester, IN. With the crew, he reported 23 Dec 44; he departed 11 Nov 45 having flown 33 missions. Post-war, at Indiana Univ, he earned his Bachelor’s in 49 and his M.D. in 53. On 27 Jun 53, he married Arleda ‘Leda’ who worked in his office as Dr Wilson served the Mentone community at General Practitioner for 37 years, to 91. He also worked with Woodlawn Hospital to 62; Murphy Medical Center to 76; Kosciusko County Board of Health; served on Kosciusko Co Medical Society Board of Directors; on staff at Kosciusko Community Hospital; Medical Director at Miller’s Merry Manor of Warsaw; and on the Board of Directors of Mentone Farmers State Bank.

He was a member of Mentone United Methodist Church, where he served on the administrative board; and member of many Mentone organizations including the Masons, Lions Club, Flying Club, American Legion, Chamber of Commerce, Bell Aircraft Museum Committee, Warsaw Elks, and Tippecanoe Valley School Board. He attended Indiana U basketball and football games for many years and was a member of their Varsity Club; he also enjoyed golf. Leda predeceased him after 59 years of marriage in Jun 12. They are buried at Mentone Cemetery.

### 306<sup>th</sup> Family:

- **Goodwin, Virginia ‘Ginny’ L**, wife of Earle (air traffic control, 423<sup>rd</sup> Sq & 4<sup>th</sup> Station Complement), resident of Dover, NH since ‘39, died at Watson Fields of Dover, 24 Nov 12, at 89. At McIntosh Business College, she met her husband Earle; they married 10 Jan 46 and reared their six children on Arch Street. She worked in the family office products & printing businesses well into her 80s; was a founding member of Sherwood Tennis Club, who won many local, state and New England tennis titles; she coached St Thomas Aquinas High School boy’s tennis team for 10+ years. Survived by her husband of 66 years, Earle, 6c, 17gc, 6ggc; private burial at St Mary Cemetery; memorials suggested to American Diabetes Fndn, and/or Parkinson’s Disease Fndn.
- **Kappmeyer, LaMarr**, widow of John ‘Jack’ W (367 co-pilot, James Butler crew, & POW, who died 25 Feb 06), of Harper’s Ferry, IA, died 11 Apr 11 at Prairie du Chien Memorial Hospital, Prairie du Chien, WI, after a short illness, at 87. She used her accounting and bookkeeping skills for the Iowa State Gas Co, and local banks as she and Jack moved to several locations in IA, including Maynard, where Jack spent many years in the West Central School system as teacher and administrator. They made their retirement home in Harpers Ferry where they enjoyed fishing and the beauty of the Mississippi River. She loved reading, crossword puzzles, feeding neighborhood birds and cat, and her poodle. Inurnment was held a graveside memorial service at Woodlawn Cemetery, Oelwein, IA, for both LaMarr and Jack, both of whom had many friends across NE IA.
- **Kupferman, Dorothy Price**, widow of Saul (423<sup>rd</sup> waist gunner, Elmer Heap crew; Saul died 28 Dec 00, when it was noted he’d long been secretary of the 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS Atlanta chapter, 16 years editor of its quarterly, ‘Tall Tales,’ and a year as chapter president). Dorothy died 4 Jan 13 at Loganville, GA, at 88. She had continued to enjoy her Echoes in the nursing home where she lived her last years. No survivor info.
- **Morrison, Beverly**, widow of Carl A (369 co-pilot, Lloyd Johns crew, & pilot; Carl died 9 Apr 11), who was born in Los Angeles and grew up in WA, died 20 Mar 12, at 89. She was

*Continued on page 10*



Cast Members from the original Broadway production of *SOUTH PACIFIC* (1949-54) gather at Sardi's Restaurant in New York City for a 50th Anniversary Reunion on April 7 1999. From Left to right/Top Row: Tommy Gleason, Eugene Smith, Bill Thunhurst, Patricia Marand, Pat Finch, Steve Roland, **Susan Hight**, Pete Kelly. Row 3: Jackie Fisher, Dorothy Richards, Don Fellows, Bernice Saunders, Betty O'Neill, Merle Musical, Helena Schurgot, Melle Matthews, Phil Mathias, R&H President Ted Chapin. Row 2: Roz Lowe, Martha Wright, Mary Rodgers, William Hammerstein, Richard Eastham, Alan Gilbert, Leigh Allen. Front Row: Sidney Armus, Betta St. John, Irma Sandre, Chin Yu, Jose Perez, and Barbara Luna.

"Six weeks to the day after her arrival in town, she simultaneously received three job offers: as a singer with the Paul Whiteman band, as a nurse in the Broadway musical "South Pacific," and the one she initially accepted – as a "flapper" in the Broadway musical "Gentlemen Prefer Blondes," choreographed by Agnes de Mille. After stints in both of those musicals, a season as singer/soloist on the "Don Ameche Show" plus other television work including as a soloist on "The Colgate Comedy Hour" (where she sang with both Paul Whiteman and Sigmund Romberg), she went on to play lead roles in musicals "Kiss Me Kate" and "Showboat" at the Paper Mill Playhouse in Millburn, NJ.

She was then cast to sing her first featured duet in the Bette Davis revue, "Two's Company," choreographed by Jerome Robbins, followed by her landing the coveted romantic lead in Frank Loesser's Broadway production of "Guys & Dolls."

She met future husband Robert Denny, a reporter for the Washington Times-Herald (which later became the Washington Post), at a "Guys & Dolls" cast party.

After years away from musical theater following her marriage, she directed community theater productions in the 1970s in Washington, D.C. She then taught voice and musical theater performance for many years both at American U. and privately.



## Plan to Attend the Colorado Springs/ Air Force Academy Reunion in 2014

(For a sneak preview, see save-the-date information and photographs of our reunion site on page 16)

**Cliff Deets**  
Reunion Chairman





## Susan Hight Denny Returns to Broadway's Majestic Theater One More Time

(Excerpted from *Rogers and Hammerstein's Reunion report in 1999. Editor*)

They came from as far away as Australia and London, and from all over the United States, drawn to New York to mark an extraordinary milestone... Today they are husbands and wives, parents and grandparents, some still working, others retired; among them actors, real estate brokers, teachers and therapists...But fifty years ago they were Broadway performers, part of the original company of SOUTH PACIFIC.

They had come to New York for a reunion, and during their stay, R&H hosted a series of events for these remarkable men and women. Here is an overview of one of the most unforgettable days in April...

### Wednesday April 7

Fifty years ago today SOUTH PACIFIC opened on Broadway, prompting Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani to declare *SOUTH PACIFIC Day* in New York City. (The milestone also generated a proclamation of "SOUTH PACIFIC Day" from Mayor Jim Dailey in Nellie Forbush's hometown of Little Rock, Ark.)

At noon, the veterans piled into a chartered bus for a trip up to the Museum of the City of New York where a special SOUTH PACIFIC display had been installed within the Museum's popular and long-running exhibit,

"Broadway!" (Entitled "Younger Than Springtime," it is scheduled to remain on view for at least one year). All too soon, it was time for the bus to bring everyone back to the Warwick. For background music, Grayline Bus Tours had thoughtfully provided a tape of the original cast album. By the time "There is Nothin' Like a Dame" came over the speakers, the men began to sing along, first tentatively, then boisterously. Tenors, basses, baritones - punctuated by cries of "Hut two three four!" from a spirited ladies' chorus.

Next, it was on to Broadway and the Majestic Theatre, where SOUTH PACIFIC had opened exactly 50 years before.

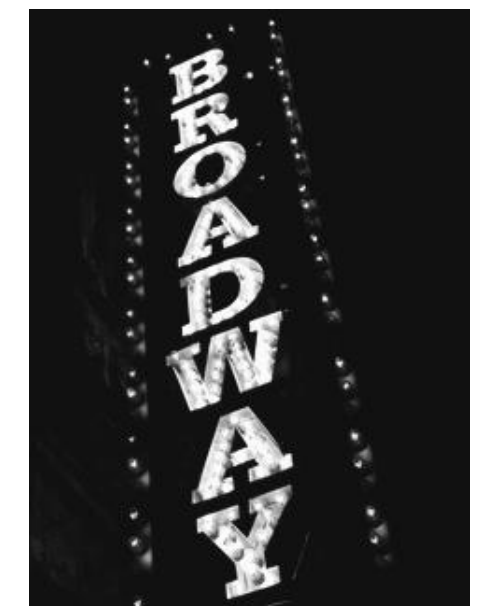
4:30PM. Matinee curtain call at THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA, the Majestic's current, long-running hit. With

applause still resounding, the reigning Phantom, Hugh Panaro, quieted the audience as he explained that "a great American musical opened here 50 years ago today." When he revealed the title, the audience broke into applause, and when he invited the SOUTH PACIFIC veterans to take "one more bow," the audience gasped.

As cheers and shouts of "Bravo!" filled the theatre, the SOUTH PACIFIC company emerged from the wings, welcomed onto the stage by PHANTOM cast members, who presented each with a long-stem rose. They took a bow, then another, as the audience leapt to their feet with a prolonged standing ovation. Time seemed to freeze: was it 1949, or 1999? For many on either side of the footlights, it was hard to be sure. "As I stood on the stage of the Majestic Theatre," wrote cast veteran Merle Reskin a few weeks later, "I felt 50 years fade away...We were all young again and involved in the musical of the century."

R&H President Ted Chapin read a letter sent by PHANTOM director Hal Prince. It too noted a significant milestone: "I was in the audience on the opening night of SOUTH PACIFIC," Prince's letter began. "[I was] a guest of the Richard Rodgers family. Steve Sondheim was there as well, a guest of the Oscar Hammersteins. It was on that night that Mary Rodgers introduced us for the first time."

After another bow, and another tidal wave of cheers from the audience, the opera curtains at PHANTOM closed in on the scene. Knowing they had just witnessed history, the audience seemed to depart reluctantly, as the voice of Mary Martin singing "I'm In Love with a Wonderful Guy" rang through the theatre. Backstage, a magical swirl of past and present spun together as the PACIFIC class of '49 was engulfed by the PHANTOM class of '99. Hugs, stories, the sense of one generation reaching across 50 years to another. That day, two of the Majestic Theatre's most famous tenants came together in a way one could never have imagined, and in a way those who were there will never forget.



*Continued from page 7*

an accomplished portrait artist, and loved music. After she and Carl moved to Ephrata, WA, following his 45 discharge from the service, she managed a record shop when Rock & Roll was just beginning. Later, she, Carl, and another couple, operated Sun Lakes Park Resort. They moved to Hawaii for a time, during which she studied art and worked in real estate in Honolulu, and later in the Burien, WA area, until retiring in Palm Desert, CA. Predeceased by Carl, 1s, 1gs, she is survived by 2c, many gc and ggc. Buried at Ephrata Cemetery, Ephrata, WA.

- **Thayer, 'Dossi' Dorothy**, widow of 'Reg' Reginald (368<sup>th</sup> Squadron bombardier, who died 8 Nov 04), long-time resident of Palisades, NY, died at Ramapo Manor Center 22 Mar 12 at 88. She was an independent, often outspoken, physically active woman who loved the great outdoors. Happiest gardening, swimming and sunbathing, she reluctantly gave up skiing at 79. In the 40s and 50s, she was a fashion stylist and location scout in San Francisco and New York, with magazine fashion photographers. In the 70s and 80s, she ran a popular antique consignment shop, The Bazaar, in Palisades. She and Reg, her husband of 54 years, were politically active in many civic activities, and preserved a large tract of Palisades land from development. Survived by 2d, 2gc, 1ggc.

#### **Obituaries Not Recent; Not Previously Published** (Arranged by Date of Death)

- **Hamilton, 'Ham' Orman Lee**, 423<sup>rd</sup> navigator (David A Steele crew), who long lived in Sylva, Jackson Co, NC, died 7 Jun 09, at 89; he had been in a nursing home with Alzheimer's. Hamilton reached Thurleigh 11 Dec 42 with Steele; Hamilton's departure date from injury is not known. He had enlisted 9 Dec 41 at Ft Screven, GA, as Aviation Cadet with 3 years of college. The Steele family recalls that post-war he was a very successful attorney. Hamilton was listed in 306<sup>th</sup> Directories from 94 through 06 in Sylva, NC, with his wife, Alberta. The Hamiltons and Steeles vacationed together for several years. In the latter half of the 90s, their crew gathered at the Steele home in TX for a party; the Hamiltons were the first to arrive in their 45-foot motor home, playing the Air Force song on its electronic synthesizer horn. In 08 his Echoes was no longer deliverable at his Sylva address; his wife Alberta had predeceased him in Sylva (SW of Asheville), on 23 Feb 08 at 89. USVA Grave Locator shows Capt Hamilton is buried at Hamilton Family Cemetery in Sylva. Survived by at least 1s; 3gc. No further info.
- **Aigner, Willis Kenneth**, 367<sup>th</sup> ball-turret gunner (Charles Wegener crew), originally of MN, died 30 Apr 2009, in Columbia, MO at 85. With Wegener, he reported to Thurleigh 4 Jun 44. Aigner completed his tour 25 Aug 44, having flown 28 missions, and departed 8 Oct 44. Post-war he was owner of a jewelry store and clothing store in MN. Willis and his wife Janet attended our Sep 89 Reunion in Little Rock, where he, Wegener, and 4 other crew members were 1 of 2 crews, each having 6 present for photos in the Jan 90 Echoes. At least by 94, he and Janet were living in Kailua-Kona, HI. When buried at the Missouri State Veterans Cemetery, Jacksonville, he was survived by his wife Janet, 3s, 4gc, 1ggc.
- **McCullum, John W**, 423<sup>rd</sup> engineer (John B Delapoe crew), then of Alexandria, VA, died 9 Apr 09, at 85. The crew arrived at Thurleigh 21 Jul 44, and completed the tour 23 Apr 45. McCullum appears to be the man of his name who enlisted at 19 at Geiger Field, Spokane, WA, 27 Nov 42 as Pvt in the Air Corps. For the Echoes Jan 86 issue, McCullum authored an article on wartime poet Randall Jarrell; in the intro, it was noted that post-war McCullum earned a degree at the U of WA and his doctorate in sociology at U of Chicago. In 86 he was then president of a Washington, DC-based consulting firm, Social, Educational Research & Development, Inc. At our 10 Reunion in DC, his widow, Leonila Francisco-McCollum said his death left Charles Capaldi as the only living crew member. No further info.
- **Chancey, Joseph L**, 369<sup>th</sup> co-pilot & pilot (Jack R Lewis crew), apparently a life-long resident of Jacksonville, FL died 14 Feb 09 at 84. He'd enlisted there in Aug 42 with 4 years of high school, as a Pvt in the Air Corps. He arrived at Thurleigh 6 Oct 44 and flew 35 missions before departing in May 45. Post-war he married Mary; they both attended Auburn University, graduating in Engineering and Business, respectively. Design and sales of semi-trailers was their career; in time they sold the operation to a large company. They actively worked with their son who founded Chancey Metal Products, Inc. Joseph was a member of the San Jose Country Club from 64, and of the Episcopal Church. He is survived by Mary, his wife of 63 years, 3c, 5gc.
- **Pfeifer, Frank A**, 368<sup>th</sup> waist gunner (crews of Fred A Puckett Jr & Rene Fix) and POW, originally from OH, died at 85 on 25 Feb 06 while a resident of Las Vegas, NV. When he was enlisted 18 Mar 43 at Columbus, OH, as Pvt, he was separated with dependents, had 3 years of college and civilian work experience in "unskilled occupations in building of aircraft." With Puckett, he arrived at Thurleigh 18 Mar 44. Downed in the LaRoche mission 27 Mar 44 (with Fix), they ditched over the Bay of Biscay, where a German amphibian found them about dark, and took them to Bordeaux where the entire crew was hospi-



talized for several days. POW at Dulag 12 Grosstychow. From 86 to 06, he was listed in 306<sup>th</sup> Directories in Woodland Hills, CA (Los Angeles area). No further info.

- **Ashley, Henry C**, 369<sup>th</sup> ball-turret gunner (Alvin G Schuering crew) & POW, a native of upstate SC, died 2 Sep 05, at his longtime home of Ware Shoals, SC, at 88. Schuering's crew arrived at Thurleigh 1 Dec 43, and was downed 29 Mar 44 (Brunswick mission), when Ashley was on his 23<sup>rd</sup> mission; POW at Stalag 17B. He retired from Metric Shirt Plant, in Belton. He was a member of the Ware Shoals Masonic Lodge and First Baptist Church. Predeceased by his wife Vera in 00 at 81 and, earlier, by 1s (who had served in the USAF) in 81 at 35; and 1gs. Henry was survived by 3c, 9gc, 3ggc.
- **Koser, Kenneth**, 367<sup>th</sup> co-pilot (Roy Hoffman crew), who was born in WI, died 21 Jan 05 while visiting family in Phoenix, AZ, at 81. With Hoffman's crew, he arrived at Thurleigh 28 Nov 44; he completed 25 missions. Post-war, he joined Eastern Airlines as a co-pilot on DC-3s, and flew a wide variety of aircraft before retiring after 32 years as captain of an A-300 Airbus. In 53 he married Doris, an Eastern flight attendant. During most of his career, he was based at O'Hare in Chicago. All their children were born in the Chicago area, and they had fond memories of their time in Arlington Heights. In 79 they moved to the Atlanta area, eventually settling in Roswell, where they loved playing golf. He was survived by his wife of 51 years, Doris, until 16 May 08 when she died at 80. Both their memorial Masses were at St. Peter Chanel Church in Roswell, GA; buried at Durham Cemetery, in Saline County, southern IL. Survived by 4c, 6gc.



Returning from a mission. Photograph by Francis L. Waugh (423rd BS Photo Section). *306th Bomb Group Historical Collection.*

- **Williams, Charlie Clifford Jr**, 368 waist gunner (Fred A Puckett Jr crew) and POW, died in his native Cherokee Co, TX on 16 Oct 04 at 82. Williams had enlisted in Houston 28 Oct 42 as Pvt in the Air Corps. With Puckett, he arrived at Thurleigh 18 Mar 44. Downed on the Ruhland mission of 12 Sep 44 in the high squadron lead plane of Maj Robert Farwell, he was POW at Stalag 4. Post-war he was self-employed (unknown nature), and a Methodist. He was predeceased in 95 by his wife, Mary Ruth, at 68. Survived by 1d, 3gc, he is buried at Resthaven Cemetery in Jacksonville, Cherokee Co, TX.
- **Bowles, Francis Douglas**, 367<sup>th</sup> radio operator / waist gunner / toggler, & POW (Clarence Eugene Fischer and other crews), originally of Boston, MA, died 14 Mar 04 in Santa Barbara, CA, at 80. Bowles' correspondence with Russ Strong (See our 306bg.org website, under Archives - Correspondence) has recently been helpful re Fischer's original crew and more. He arrived at Thurleigh 15 Feb 43 with Fischer; the crew was immediately split. On 5 Apr 43 (Erla Works mission; the same day Fischer was downed), Bowles was downed with Kelly Ross, and wounded at the base of his spine. Bowles and members of both those crews were POW at Stalags 7-A and 17-B, together, per his correspondence file. Post-war, in Jan 46 he married 'Marnie' (Madeleine); earned his BA from UNH in 49, MEd from Plymouth State in 52, EdD from the U of Rochester in 67, and post-doctoral study at U of Houston in 78. He was a Professor Emeritus at State U of NY, Oneonta. As a professional educator 35+ years, he was on the faculty of SUNY Oswego and Geneseo. He taught at the U of FL and Trent Polytechnical College in Nottingham, England, and had a number of publications in professional journals. During their years in Geneseo, NY, Marnie was Executive Secretary to the Latin American Project, a government agency that brought Latin American professors to NY yearly to share education information. She owned Bowles Stamps & Supplies in Oneonta and Mirror Lake. When he was on faculty at SUNY Oswego, NY, she was a sorority advisor; later in Oneonta she began to quilt, and organized a 4-H Club for neighborhood children. After he retired 1 Jun 85, she wrote the Mirror Lake Column in the Granite State News. Together, they co-edited and published "A Directory of NH Ex-POWs" in 97. In Apr 03 Marnie died of cancer at 76. Survived by 4c, 5gc.

# Two Photograph Collections Added to the 306th Bomb Group Historical Archives

We recently lost Dr. Thurman Shuller (Group and later Division Surgeon) and Robert Dodge (pilot). They leave behind photographs that give us a window back in time to their war-time days. These images freeze time and allow both of these brave men to live forever in the hearts and minds of those who will come later.

To the immediate right and below on this page, Robert Dodge shares with us a time when he was young and serving our nation in his quest to make a difference. And he did.

On page 13 Thurman Shuller's photographs take us along as he begins his service as a young officer, to Thurleigh, and eventually to the First Air Division as Surgeon.



1) Robert Dodge 2) Robert Dodge (left) and Sam Hatton 3) Thanksgiving Day 1944, Robert Dodge and George T. DeVack (Ops Officer 368th BS) , local Bedford girls unknown 4) Dodge crew, back row, Darwin Smith, Leonard Anderson, Dick Mills, Bob Haden, Robert Dodge. Front row, Sam Hatton, Bill Wagoner, Lucius Smitherman, Bob Peatross 5) Darwin Smith 6) Unknown Red Cross girl, Lt. Colonel William S. Raper (later Rader, Group Air Exec) and Lt. Colonel Robert C. Williams, (Group Operations Officer).







1) Thurman Shuller, First Lieutenant, 1941 2) Hq., 1st Bomb Division Medical Section, 1944 Christmas Party, Thurman Shuller, commanding. Dr. Shuller received promotion and moved from the 306th to command the 1st Division Medical Section for the remainder of the war 3) Shuller attending the Children's Revue in Bedford where he presented a silver cup to the community. 4) Shuller with one of the medical household pets at Thurleigh 5) bomb group surgeons in the 1st Air Division, Dr. Shuller, front center, commanding 6) General Howard M. Turner, CG, 1st Air Division, presenting Dr. Shuller with the Legion of Merit, September 1945





# Museum Notes

Thurleigh Airfield 306th Bomb Group Museum



## Through the Years . . . .

Ralph Franklin's connection to the 306th Bomb Group dates back to the Group's first day at Thurleigh. Since then he and Daphne have been a fixture at Group reunions. Here are some glimpses of the past leading up to 2013.



Officers and Directors in 1997: Robert Houser, treasurer; Sheldon Beigel, director; John Hickey, director; Wallace Peckham, director; Ralph Franklin, British Representative; M/GEN James S. Cheney, past president, director and 1997 reunion co-chairman; Robert W. Seelos, president; Russell A. Strong, secretary; Donald N. Snook, outgoing director and Russell Houghton, director.

Toode Motley (367th Crew Chief) and Ralph Franklin at the 1992 Reunion in England

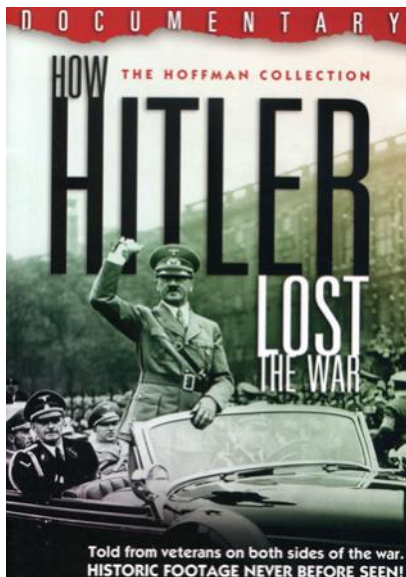


## Plan to Attend the Colorado Springs/Air Force Academy Reunion Set for September 11-14 2014

Reserve the dates. The Embassy Suites Hotel has been secured with room rates at \$95 per night for a suite with one king bed and \$102 for a suite with two queen beds. Contact with the U.S. Air Force Academy and the 306th Flying Training Group (the Academy's flight training group and the 306th Bomb Group's legacy) has been established and this should be a special reunion for our organization. Look for more information in the next issues of Echoes and online at 306bg.org.

**Cliff Deets, Reunion Chairman**

*Denny Continued from page 5*



“Flying a B-17 in formation at 25,000 feet, being shot at, trying to land in fog with your heart in your mouth, sitting in a café in London during a buzz-bomb attack, kicking off your dancing shoes and pulling on flight boots after a night on the town—all of us share these memories.

There are others, too: the very different America we lived in during the ‘30s and ‘40s, the values and claustrophobia of small-town life, the caste and class system we took for granted, and, finally, the destruction of that system by the biggest war in history.

As a documentary film producer and writer, I spent years writing about other people’s experiences. And then the day came when I wanted to write about my own and those of the people I knew in that other life.” And that is just what Robert Denny did. You can read his interesting behind-the-scenes account of writing his war novels and the documentary film on Hitler and the lost war. See Echoes back issues online at [www.306bg.org](http://www.306bg.org) for several stories, remarks and reviews on/or by Denny and his work.

October 1990, Volume 15, No. 4, page 5

January 1991, Volume 16, No. 1, page 1

October 1991, Volume 16, No. 4, page 1

October 1992, Volume 17, No. 4, page 11

January 1993, Volume 18, No. 1, page 13



*2014 Reunion site photographs at right, top to bottom: Cadet Chapel, Entrance to the Air Force Academy, and Embassy Suites—Colorado Springs (our reunion hotel).*