



306th patch

306th Echoes

Educating and communicating



B-17 Flying Fortress

Remodeled American Air Museum Features 306th Veterans



The American Air Museum in Duxford, England re-opened on 19 March after a 12-month major revamping and redevelopment of the facility's displays. The new museum tells the story of two nations united through war, loss, love, and duty from the First World War to the present day. Personal stories are linked to the aircraft and objects on display, giving visitors not only insight into the air war picture, but a glimpse into the smaller, more human stories. The museum's curators sought to collect individual accounts that would bring the story of aviation and war to life.

The museum's collection tells the unique and inspirational stories, in very human terms, of 85 men and women whose lives have been shaped by war. In June 2015, a cadre of 306th Bomb Group Historical Association (BGHA) members travelled to England and visited the site of the Duxford museum complex. Jenny Cousins, historian and museum project director, shared with the 306th group that the focus of the redevelopment of the museum was to enhance the chronicling of the Second World War and the relationship between England and the United States on a very personal level.



Philip Mandell (b.1923)
Ball turret gunner

Damn Yankee. He is prominently featured in the B-17 exhibit.



Hardin Field McChesney (b.1921)
Radio operator

H. Field McChesney, 369th radio operator assigned to the Boylston B. "BB" Lewis Jr. crew, was interviewed from his home in Kentucky in 2014. He was contacted by the museum after they acquired his "personalized" headset that was retrieved from the wreckage of his plane. Field's initials penciled on the leather strap led the museum staff to track down this veteran.

Partially government-funded, but in need of sponsorship and donations to sustain the museum's programs, the American Air Museum 501(c) charity, raises funding in the United States to support the work of the museum. ■

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The 306th Bomb Group Historical Association was determined by the IRS to be a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) as a public charity, effective 24 July 2015.

**From the Editor****Aviation Education:
Where It All Began**

In an article by Jonathan Tracy entitled, "Why Study World War II?" he characterizes the war as the defining tragedy and pivotal period of the 20th century. He points out that the war saw the introduction of radar and electronic warfare, sonar, hand-held antitank weapons, the jet engine, the cruise missile, and the smart bomb. The war also saw the first wide-spread use of antibiotics, blood plasma, synthetic insecticides, and two-way radios. In addition, World War II saw the creating of the V-2 rocket, the first vehicle capable of reaching outer space, and when coupled with nuclear weapons, can have a decisive impact on the human race.

As the 306th Bomb Group Historical Association (BGHA) further embraces the mission to educate the generations to come, one focus shall be on helping students explore the history and lessons of World War II. Thanks to our veterans and their families, the organization's collection of artifacts is growing, the on-line archives are developing, and the oral history holdings are becoming available, all of which help curious students understand the human drama that cannot be available from reading a textbook.

The 2016 reunion will be held in Dayton, Ohio, the birthplace of flight, providing those in attendance with an opportunity to enhance their knowledge and to explore the historic area where Orville and Wilbur Wright perfected their invention of powered flight. Their significant contributions to human history made the airplane a practical creation, and, of course, changed the way the world looked at travel and defense.

As a precursor to visiting the Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park, consideration might be given to reading David McCullough's book, *The Wright Brothers*. The author/master historian draws on the immense collection of Wright Brothers' memorabilia to tell the dramatic story-behind-the-story about the courageous brothers who taught the world how to fly. Reading this national best seller will certainly enhance the experience of visiting the hometown of these aviation pioneers. ■



A Message from 306th BGHA 2015-2017 President Steve Snyder

Greetings! I hope everyone is looking forward to our 2016

Reunion this September. I know I sure am! Reunions enable us to see old friends and make new ones with like-minded people who want to honor the men of the 306th Bomb Group who served, fought, and died to preserve freedom. We are so very fortunate to have some of those 306th veterans still attending the reunions to tell us first-hand what life was like at Thurleigh, in the skies over occupied Europe, and in the German stalags. Their stories are a treasure to be cherished.

Once again we will be visiting some excellent museums: the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force and the Champaign Aviation Museum, both of which house some wonderful warbirds, especially those beloved B-17s. The B-17G *Shoo Shoo Baby* is on display at the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force. In addition, the famous B-17F *Memphis Belle* is being restored there. The Champaign Aviation Museum is working on restoring the B-17F bomber known as *Champaign Lady*.

We are so very fortunate to have so many fabulous air museums located around the United States where warbirds are on display, and in particular, B-17s. If you live or travel near them, do yourself a big favor and stop in.

As the newly elected president of the 306th Bomb Group Historical Association, I am blessed with a very talented group of fellow Board members. I'd like to welcome our newest Board Member and Officer, Jennifer Mindala, who is our recently-elected Treasurer. Judith Hermley, our former Treasurer, wonderfully served the 306th BGHA in various capacities for many years. I cannot thank Judy enough for all that she has done, and continues to do, for the Association and for its veterans.

As time has passed, the makeup of the Board has transitioned from one comprised completely of

306th veterans to one which is almost all second generation relatives of 306th vets. However, I can assure you that Board's commitment to preserving the legacy of the 306th Bomb Group has never been stronger. We are dedicated to honoring and remembering the sacrifice of a special group of men and members of The Greatest Generation.

The Board desires to strengthen and grow the Association. To help accomplish this, the Board is considering the implementation of a formal membership structure. The Association by-laws state that we have members so we need to define membership and establish criteria. Like any organization, we need to know who our members are and to have the ability to track membership. This will improve communication tremendously.

Speaking of communication, please feel free to contact me at palmsny@gmail.com with any comments, questions, or suggestions you may have. We are always looking for more help so let me know if you would like to become more involved whether it be as a board member, reunion helper, or in some other capacity.

It is our duty to remember. *Steve*



306th Member Hosts Website

Susan O'Konski, 306th BGHA member and historian has created a website that honors individuals, families, and communities throughout the United States that, during World War II, supported the war effort and wanted to "do their bit."

According to Susan, "World War II is probably the best documented event in world history. There are countless stories of individuals, communities, and countries around the world that experienced those times. It is the intent of this website to tell the personal, the lesser known, and the sometimes untold stories of that war." As an oral historian for the National Museum of the Pacific War located in Fredericksburg, TX, Susan has had an opportunity to draw on those resources for the wonderful stories she shares on her website. To read the stories, go to <http://www.ww2history.org> ■



Secretary's Column

By Barbara Neal
(Secretary's contact information on page 2)

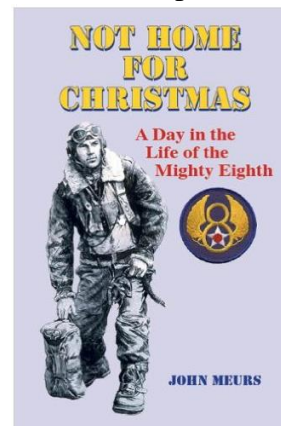
Veterans' birthdays: If YOU are a living 306th veteran willing to have me list (1) your birthdate and (2) your mailing address in my monthly email update to our 306th followers so they can send you Birthday greetings, please contact me or have a family member/good friend contact me on your behalf. Some of your fellow veterans, as well as some of us younger 306th followers, appreciate being able to tell you **Happy 90th Birthday** [or whatever number is YOUR appropriate year].

Reminder to our living vets for French Legion of Honor Medal: Last July 15th, another 306th vet, Richard 'Dick' J Kennedy (423rd tail gunner, Jack O'Brien crew) was one of 15 vets awarded the French Legion of Honor Medal, presented by the Consul General of France at the New York Seaport. Dick asked that I remind you: **living** vets who flew missions to targets in France can receive the award. The missions must have occurred **during 1944-45**. If that fits YOU, check with any locally-listed Consulate of France in your phone book, **OR** contact the **Embassy of France Defense Mission, 4101 Reservoir Rd NW, Washington, DC 20007** for current application requirements, which in the past have included a copy of your Enlisted Record and Report of Separation; a copy of your Honorable Discharge; and a written account of your "campaigns, war deeds, and medals earned."

Regarding your missions over France, please know that our great volunteer Historian Cliff Deets can likely help point you, or your family member willing to help you with the application, to the appropriate Mission Reports for your missions over France, and/or your Squadron's Combat Diary pages, that could assist you in your application for the French Legion of Honor Medal. (See *Echoes page 2, to contact the Historian.*) If you already have received the French Legion of Honor Medal, and you have not already alerted us, PLEASE contact Historian Cliff Deets or me; we appreciate knowing of the date you received the award, and

receiving a copy of a photo taken at the award presentation if you have one.

Were you downed 24 April 1944 (Oberpfaffenhofen mission)? Input is sought from vets and relatives of those vets: Dutch author John Meurs (who is fluent in English, having worked for decades for the American GTE in the export department of their European HQ in Geneva), is conducting research for a book about 8th USAAF crews downed that day – including ten 306th crews. Meurs' interest in honoring downed 8th AF crews began at age 9, when an 8th AF heavy bomber crashed directly behind his family's house in Nazi-occupied Holland on Sunday, 26 November



1944. His first book, *Not Home for Christmas – A Day in the Life of the Mighty Eighth*, published 2009 by Quail Ridge Press in Brandon, MS, covered that Misburg mission. His second book, *One Way Ticket to Berlin*, [29 April 44 mission] will be published soon by the same publisher. He is now

researching the Oberpfaffenhofen mission of 24 April 1944 for a third book. His books on the 8th USAAF are not history books in the sense of tonnage of bombs dropped or rounds fired. He highlights the human stories of the men who flew the missions and failed to return because they were killed, taken prisoner, or evaded capture – where they came from, what they did before joining the Air Corps, their last flight in WW II and – in case they survived – what they did after returning to the States. [I purchased his first book which just arrived; this 541-page book, dedicated to all the brave young men of the 8th who lost their lives over Europe in WWII, is written in English and I look forward to reading it.] John Meurs would greatly appreciate hearing from you veterans and/or family members of veterans who were downed 24 April 1944 – and I would even add: if your best buddy was downed then, likely your input could help Meurs locate helpful information about him. You are welcome to contact him directly in Switzerland by email at meurs.john@bluewin.ch [Note: "ch" at the end of his email address is the standard European abbreviation used for Switzerland on

license tags] **OR any of you who prefer, can please contact me and I will relay to him whatever is your preferred way for him to contact you.**

I look forward to seeing many of you in Dayton at our September Reunion. See the Registration form and scheduled events in this issue. To reserve your hotel room and to ensure you get our special 306th rate, use the direct phone number to the Holiday Inn Fairborn found at the top of the registration form. ■

They Also Served: Gold and Blue Star Mothers



The Gold Star Mothers had their inception during World War I after the wife of First Lieutenant George Vaughn Seibold, a “battling aviator,” lost his life in a fight over France. Recognizing that self-contained grief is self-destructive, Grace Darling Seibold devoted her time and efforts not only working in hospitals, but also extending the hand of friendship and support to other mothers and wives whose sons and husbands had lost their lives in military service. She organized a group of mothers, the purpose of which was to not only comfort each other, but to reach out and give loving care to hospitalized veterans confined in government medical facilities far from their homes and families.

The organization became known as the Gold Star Mothers and was named after the symbol families hung in their windows in honor of deceased veterans.



The American Gold Star Mothers became a national organization in 1928 and continues to date with a continuing commitment on a national basis. American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. is registered in the United States Patent Office, Legislative Branch of the United States Congressional Library. On 12 June 1984, the Ninety-Eighth Congress of the United States granted the American Gold Star Mothers, Inc. a charter that stipulated the objective and purposes of the organization as

- Keep alive and develop the spirit that promoted world services
- Maintain the ties of fellowship born of that service, and to assist and further all patriotic work
- Inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, State, and Nation
- Assist veterans of World War I, World War II, the Korean Conflict, Vietnam, and other strategic areas and their dependents in the presentations of claims to the Veterans Administration, and to aid in any way in their power the men and women who served and died or were wounded or incapacitated during hostilities
- Perpetuate the memory of those whose lives were sacrificed in our wars
- Maintain true allegiance to the United States of America
- Inculcate lessons of patriotism and love of country in the communities in which we live
- Inspire respect for the Stars and Stripes in the youth of America
- Extend needful assistance to all Gold Star Mothers and, when possible, to their descendants
- To promote peace and good will for the United States and all other Nations

In the early days of World War I, a blue star was used to represent each person, man or woman, serving in the United States Military. The blue star flag was patented by World War I Army Captain Robert Queissner who had 2 sons serving on the front lines. The flag quickly became the unofficial symbol of children in service. Known as a Service Flag, the banner featured a Blue Star for each living

family member in the military. As the war progressed, those who had lost their lives in combat, or were wounded and then later died of their wounds or disease, were represented by a Gold Star. The idea of the Gold Star was that the honor and glory accorded the person for his supreme sacrifice in the service of his country be the last full measure of devotion and pride of the family in this sacrifice, rather than the sense of personal loss that would be represented by mourning symbols.



The tradition of displaying the Blue Star Service Flag had resurgence in World War II and became more widespread when Army Captain George Maines ran an article on 22 January 1942 in the *Flint News Advertiser* requesting information regarding sons and

daughters serving in the Armed Forces. More than 1000 mothers responded. In early February 1942, the first meeting of the Blue Star Mothers of America was held at the Durant Hotel in Flint, Michigan. Over 600 mothers were in attendance. On 6 February 1943, the organization was reported in the Congressional Record. Chapters formed across the United State and mothers volunteered throughout the tough times of World War II. There were an estimated 30,000 members during the war. In June 1960, the organization was chartered by Congress.

The Blue Star Mothers original goals were to bring their sons home, to ensure they received the benefits they deserved, to help service members' families, and to support the emotional and day-to-day needs of one another. Over the years the goals have broadened to include rehabilitation, hospital work, children's welfare, and civil defense.

During World War II, the Department of War issued specifications on manufacture of the Service Flag as well as guidelines indicating when it could be flown and by whom.

- The Service Flag shall be displayed from homes, places of business, churches, schools, etc., to indicate the number of

members of the family or organizations who are serving in the Armed Forces or have died from such service. Service flags shall have a deep Blue Star for each living member in the service and a Gold Star for each member who has died. If an individual symbolized by a blue star is killed or dies while serving his country, that individual's star shall have superimposed upon it a gold star of smaller size so that the blue forms a border.

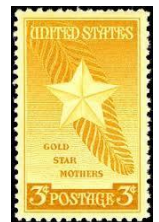
- The flag shall be a white rectangular field with a blue star or stars within a red border. The number of stars shall correspond to the number of individuals from the "immediate family" who are symbolized on the flag. The flag shall be vertically displayed with the stars arranged in a horizontal line. The stars shall be positioned in such a way that one point of the star shall be up.

The lesser known Silver Star banner honors service personnel who display exceptional valor while engaged in military combat operations against an enemy force.

Virtually every home and organization displayed banners to indicate the number of members of the family or organization serving in the Armed Forces.

Although rarely commemorated, the 74th Congress approved and President Franklin Roosevelt signed a proclamation on 23 June 1936 designating the last Sunday in September, be observed as Gold Star Mothers Day as an expression of love, sorrow, and reverence of the people of the United States for the mothers who have lost a son or daughter in the service of their country.

The United States Post Office issued a Gold Star Mothers postage stamp on 21 September 1948. The 3-cent stamp was gold in color and displayed a five-pointed star imposed on a palm leaf with the words "Gold Star Mothers" inscribed below.



Today, due to America's war against terrorism, the Blue Star Service Flags are being displayed, affirming support for our troops. ■

Caterpillar Club: “Life Depends on a Silken Thread”

Some exclusive clubs you get into by merit of your hard work, lavish wealth, academic achievements, or other factors. The Caterpillar Club is a rarer sort of club, however, and one you cannot work, buy, or study your way into; and frankly you will be happy to never join. It remains a club without charter, without membership fees, without meetings. Yet it is the most exclusive in aviation, for there is only one way to join. It is a way that appeals to few.

It is significant that the Caterpillar Club originated in Dayton, Ohio, near the location from which the Wright brothers flew and stored their power airplanes.

What later became known as the Caterpillar Club, had its inception in 1922 when a young army test pilot named Lieutenant Harold R. Harris, Chief of the McCook Field Flying Section, successfully bailed out of a disabled test aircraft after taking off from the test center at McCook Field (near the site of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base), encountered problems and was forced to bail out. He pulled the rip cord and the main chute opened about 500 feet above Dayton, then landed in a small backyard grape arbor. He was the first American known to be saved by a manually operated parachute in an emergency jump from a disabled aircraft.

The second Caterpillar jumper was Lieutenant Frank B. Tyndall.

Sometime between October 20 and November 11, 1922, a trio of friends and aviation devotees met in the Parachute Unit at McCook Field to discuss aerial life-saving. They were Verne Timmerman, photographer and Maurice Hutton, aviation editor of the *Dayton Herald*, and M. H. St. Clair, a Government parachute engineer. While discussing the amazing survival event, they suggested that since there would be more jumps with the chute, a club should be formed to embrace these intrepid airmen.

Another story suggests that one evening, during this timeframe, Mr. Leslie Irvin, inventor of the modern parachute system, sat talking at McCook Field with pilots Lieutenants Harris and Tyndall.

“You know, Leslie,” remarked one of the pilots, “we ought to start a club for guys like us. As time goes by, more and more fliers all over the world will owe their lives to your chutes; it should be quite a thing in years to come. . .”

Several names were considered for the organization, but Caterpillar Club was selected by simply making reference to the silk threads that made the original parachutes, thus recognizing the debt owed to the silk worm. Other people took the metaphor further by comparing the act of bailing out with that of the caterpillar letting itself descend gently to earth from extraordinary heights by a silken thread upon which to hang. Another metaphor is that caterpillars have to climb out of their cocoons to escape.

Leslie Irvin, an adventurous and athletic stuntman for the fledgling California film industry, invented the first really reliable parachute, which is attached only to the man who uses it and not in any way to the aircraft. The Airplane Parachute Type A incorporated the three key elements: a soft pack for storing the parachute and worn on the back; a ripcord for manually deploying the chute a safe distance from the airplane; and a pilot chute that draws the main canopy from the pack. Subsequently, this parachute was adopted by the Air Forces of Britain and America. In 1922, Irvin established the first parachute factory in Buffalo, New York. Later factories were established in Letchworth, England and in Belleville, Ontario, Canada.

During World War II, all flyers on the Allied side, and many on the Axis side, carried parachutes. Allied crews had available two types of parachutes: the seat chute, which was worn at all times and doubled as a cushion; and the chest type, which was stowed in a convenient place and in an emergency, was clipped onto a harness worn by the aircrew. This device saved countless lives on both sides. By the time of the Second World War, nylon had begun to replace silk as the main fabric of the parachute. However, shortly after the First Great War, Leslie Irvin of the Irvin Parachute Company, remembering the little creature that started it all, introduced the Caterpillar Club.

To promote his parachutes and highlight how valuable they were to the people who needed them most, Irvin gave a gold pin, shaped like a caterpillar, to every person who survived a jump

from a disabled plane while wearing one of his company's parachutes. During the height of World War II, production of the parachutes at the Irvin Airchute Company factory in Letchworth, England, reached a peak of nearly 1,500 parachutes per week. By the end of World War II (late 1945), Irvin had handed out over 34,000 pins.

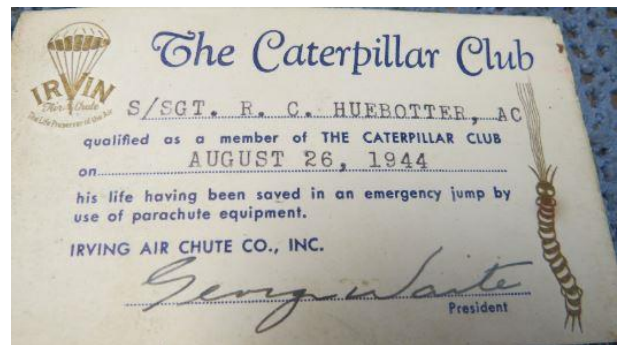
The Irvin Company was not alone in the manufacture of parachutes or in sponsoring the Caterpillar Club. For many years, until the end of the Vietnam War, the Switlik Parachute Company was making the products necessary to bring these flyers safely to the ground. They were actually the first to build a tower designed to train airmen to use their products, and the first person to use it, on June 2, 1935, was Amelia Earhart, the famous aviatrix. Switlik claims to have some 10,000 escape stories in its archives in Trenton, New Jersey.



Each member, on being accepted into the club, is presented with a membership certificate, and a gold pin in the shape of a caterpillar, on the back of which is engraved the name and rank of the member. Membership to the International Caterpillar Club honors the pledge that Leslie Irvin gave those two first fliers who saved their lives with his parachutes so many years ago.

Ever afterwards, these members were entitled to wear the small gold Caterpillar with the ruby eyes as a symbol of their accomplishment, and to call themselves "Caterpillars." Most applications were from service personnel during World War II with a large percentage from POWs. There are thousands

of personal stories of aircrews bailing out of a stricken aircraft.



Today the walls of an office of the Irvin Industries factory at Letchworth, Hertfordshire, England, are lined with steel filing cabinets containing carefully indexed records of tens of thousands of airmen of all nations who have escaped death by jumping with an Irvin parachute.

Since its founding, the Caterpillar Club has functioned solely as a name and an influence. Among airmen, the club is known about as well as any aeronautical society. Yet, in its 94 year history, the members have never met or appointed officers to administer its affairs.

In a semi-official capacity, the United States Government undertakes to authenticate the claims of candidates of the Caterpillar Club. Although the Army Air Corps has never issued a formal document affecting the welfare of the society, it has, however, undertaken to verify the right to membership, as well as maintain a complete roster of jumps.

Shortage of gold – and reasons of economy – made it necessary to substitute the gold Caterpillar pin with a gilt one, but no person who applied and could substantiate his or her claim to own one, was ever disappointed.

The official membership of the Caterpillar Club is only a fraction of the total number who are eligible. It does not include, for example, the thousands of Americans who parachuted safely in the Pacific War, nor, of course, the Luftwaffe airmen, most of whom carried an Irvin-designed parachute, made at a factory bought out by the Nazis in 1936. Officials at Letchworth often wondered what they would do if enemy fliers applied for the Caterpillar pin, as they were perfectly entitled to do. Fortunately the question never arose.

Countless individuals wrote Leslie Irvin, thanking him, attributing their future to his life-saving device:

God bless you Brother Leslie on behalf of my wife and children, as yet unknown.

Another letter shared a similar sentiment:

Dear Leslie,

I'd like to thank you for the sweetest moments in all my life, when my parachute opened and I realized I was not going to die. Your chutes are so good, I am going to name my son (when I have one) Irvin as it was due to one in particular that I am alive enough to woo, marry, and get me a son.

A poem found in Leland Potter's POW journal is an emotional verse:

*Little silk worm – so very small
You saved me from an awful fall.
Tho you're such an ugly thing,
I owe my life to your man made wing.*

Among the many Caterpillars who carried Caterpillar Club membership cards are former President George H. W. Bush, General James Doolittle, Colonel Charles Lindbergh, and Astronaut John Glenn.

The successor of the Irvin Airchute Company continues to this day to induct new members into the club and other major parachute manufacturers have adopted similar policies of acknowledging those who survived catastrophic airplane failures thanks to their parachutes.

Irvin's successor, Airborne Systems Canada, still provides pins to people who made their jump long ago and are just now applying for membership. Another of these is Switlik Parachute Company, which, though it no longer makes parachutes, still issues pins.

Today, in the 21st Century, the club boasts tens of thousands of Caterpillar Club members who have escaped death by jumping with an Irvin parachute. Files of American and Canadian members are kept at the Aerospace plant in Belleville, Ontario, Canada.

When inquiring about obtaining a replacement pin, it is suggested as much information on the incident as possible be provided, including the full name of the member, the date of the incident, the location of the incident, and the reason that a replacement pin is being sought. Also, any other

supporting documentation may be helpful in the tracking of the membership records.

Irvin Aerospace Ltd. has kept all the old records, so if you need a replacement Certificate of Caterpillar Pin, you may contact the following. Irvin Aerospace Ltd. handles requests for incidents that occurred in Europe.

Caterpillar Club
Irvin Aerospace Limited
Icknield Way
Letchworth, Hertfordshire
England SG6 1EU

Or

Caterpillar Club
Black Horse Road
Letchworth Garden City
Hertfordshire
England SG6 1HB

To obtain membership from the Switlik Parachute Company, a bonafide account of the bailout should be mailed to the following:

The Caterpillar Club
c/o Switlik Parachute Company, Inc.
P. O. Box 1328
Trenton, NJ 08607

Research indicates that very little has been published on this type of Caterpillar, outside of that issued by the clubs themselves. Libraries possess virtually nothing on the subject. The only way to get any real information is to ask the Caterpillars themselves.

John A. Neal, author of a book entitled, ***Bless You Brother Irvin***, declares that his reason for writing the story on an otherwise innocuous creature such as the caterpillar is historically meaningful. As a member of the club, the author has worn the pin on his lapel almost since the day he earned it over France. He is extremely proud of the symbol, and of course, thankful that his parachute worked, but he is disappointed that so few people know what it means.

It is a very rare occasion when a passerby is aware of the Caterpillar Club and its significance to the wearer of the pin. The author has been accused of collecting butterflies, or being a member of a club of entomologists, or some other meaning is ascribed to the pin unrelated to the saving of a life. The continual explanations of the meaning of the gold and ruby-eyed creature required more; it

required a book to describe the way it is earned, and why it is worn.

Neal writes, “The bailout command is by no means the favorite words ever heard by an aviator. They mean that the plane in which the aviator is flying at the time is in trouble, and it is time to rejoin all the people on the ground. The only way to do this immediately is to strap on the trusty parachute and jump out of the plane. The distance separating the plane from the ground is normally anywhere from about 500 to 25,000 feet (anything under 500 feet, forget it – you could hit the ground before the chute even opened; and anything over 25,000 feet you will hardly remember).

If you are successful in getting the chute to open, then usually you will be treated to a nice, peaceful descent, provided the enemy fighters and the flak keep their distance – and it is the ground waiting for you, not the sea.

All of the aviators who answered the order to bailout, and walked away from their landing, became ‘Caterpillars.’ A unique breed indeed!

The Gift of Life

*Those fiery skies,
When the foe is near,
The friendly ‘chute,
When the end is clear,
As from our place we leap,
And to our God we pray,
So we can live and fight,
Another day.*

Did That Really Happen?

An entry from the 18 December 1944 **306th Group Diary** reads “S/Sgt. Maynard H. Smith, holder of the Congressional Medal of Honor, reduced to the grade of Private.” The next day he was transferred out of the Group.



A copilot in 1944/45 (to remain unnamed) was court martialed for trying to turn out the lights. On the back of the card from the **Card File** of 306th personnel, Russell Strong wrote: “Court martialed at Thurleigh for taking three shots at a light bulb in his barracks with a .45 cal. pistol. Cost \$25 per shot, and he missed on all three.”

Correction: Aircraft Markings Update

In the Winter/Spring issue of *Echoes* a story ran regarding markings on 306th Bomb Group aircraft. An error was made regarding the colored stripe at the tip of the vertical stabilizer (tail). The 367th and 368th Bomb Squadron colors were correctly listed as red for the 367th and white for the 368th. However, the colors for the 369th and 423rd were incorrect (reversed). The 369th should have been **green** while the 423rd should have been **blue**. Thanks to our resident control tower officer, Bill Carlile, for catching that mistake.

Bill also provided us with more detail about those tail markings. The iconic tail markings at the end of the war included the triangle H, the aircraft serial number, the aircraft call letter, a broad yellow horizontal stripe signifying the 306th as belonging to the 40th Combat Wing (CBW), and of course the different colored tips on the vertical stabilizer that individually identified the aircraft to one of the four squadrons. Bill points out that the broad yellow stripe designating the plane as belonging to the 40th CBW is also bordered above and below by a relatively thin black stripe. These black stripes were to further identify the 306th planes as coming from the home airfield of the 40th Combat Wing, which was also stationed at Thurleigh. And of course neither of the other two 40th CBW bombardment groups (92nd BG red stripe and 305th green stripe) had these black stripes as the 40th was not stationed at their airfields. ■



The black stripes above and below the broad yellow band on 367th aircraft 44-8676 (call letter S) are clearly seen designating 306th planes as belonging to the home airfield of the 40th CBW.

Mission: La Pallice – Hunting for Submarines

On November 18, 1942 the 306th flew its seventh mission of the war, targeting the submarine pens at La Pallice, France on the Bay of Biscay about 100 miles beyond another sub pen target, St. Nazaire. In this early stage of VIII Bomber Command's daylight bombing campaign, agreement had been reached between President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill that the Nazi submarine threat to England's ocean lifeline was to be priority targeting for the bombers. Four of the fledgling 306th's first six missions had been submarine pens with the three missions immediately previous to this one having been flown against St. Nazaire.

Those three previous encounters at St. Nazaire had already earned it a reputation as a tough target with plenty of very accurate flak batteries defending it. To get to any of the submarine targets on the southwestern coast of France you would also have to contend with the Luftwaffe fighters, and in particular one group that would become known as the "Abbeville Kids." But today the 306th would not have to face the flak batteries at St. Nazaire with the course to La Pallice laid well away from that area. But fate and a navigation error would intervene.

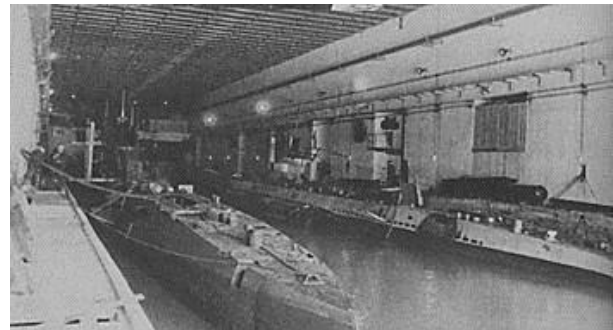
From Russell Strong's book, **First Over Germany**, "*Flying straight south from Lizard Point (editor's note: the southern most tip of England just to the east of Land's End Peninsula) the group suffered from erroneous navigation, finding itself over a break in the clouds above St. Nazaire. Flak damaged the group...*" Only one of the 306th planes was shot down over St. Nazaire that day, piloted by Lt. Ralph Gaston, but his bombardier, Lt. Kenneth Jones apparently bailed out and was KIA. T/Sgt. Lester Quandt, top turret gunner, was also wounded. The surviving crew would become POWs after the plane was ditched in the Bay of Biscay.

Having been subject to the flak batteries at St. Nazaire, the remaining aircraft from the 306th then faced the flak at La Pallice as well as an onslaught of Luftwaffe fighters. Two of the remaining airplanes were hit. In the plane of Lt. Robert Seelos, the navigator, Lt. Charles Grimes, was hit by flak and was killed while the copilot, Lt. John

King, was wounded. The 368th plane flown by Lt. James Ferguson was hit, critically wounding his copilot, Lt. Robert Dresp. Upon landing in England, he was immediately sent to the hospital where he would later die from his wounds. Over 200 flak holes were counted in Lt. Ferguson's plane.

This early mission, not nearly numerically devastating as many later missions, would resonate with all of the men of the 306th at Thurleigh. Again, from **First Over Germany**: "*Maj. Thurman Shuller, group surgeon, later pointed out that the entire group was always emotionally jarred by the return home of the bodies of good friends. This had a greater impact than did the loss of a plane and crew. It was difficult for both flyers and ground personnel to deal with the reality of a returned battered body and a funeral service to be held.*"

T/Sgt. Richard G. Hackworth was the radio operator on Lt. Ferguson's crew that day. Later he would be shot down with Lt. Ferguson on 3 January 1943 and would become a POW. While in the Stalag, on Christmas Eve 1943, over a year after the fateful mission to La Pallice, Richard "Dick" Hackworth penned the accompanying poem about that day. ■



U-Boat Bunker at St. Nazaire



Submarine Pen at LaPallice, France

AN AIRMAN'S DAY

By Dick Hackworth POW

T'was a clear November morn in Forty-two,
While silently sleeping, lay our combat crews,
The order came like a detonating roar,
As the C.Q. entered the barrack door.

Report to the briefing room at a quarter to five,
In combat uniform, ready to fly,
Orders were given, then adieus
To the members of eighteen Fortress crews.

We went to the planes and checked our guns,
Made everything ready for the deadly run,
Down the runway—into the air,
Uncle Sam's great Eagle, with destruction to bear.

The pilot—like commander of a nation,
Gave orders to take, each combat station,
We gained altitude, high into the blue,
Where oxygen's carried for men of the crew.

We headed for the channel and rendezvous,
Each man prepared for his job to do,
On we went o'er the coast of France,
Searching the sky with each casual glance.

Looking for enemy fighters coming our way,
To start the battle for the day,
Then our leader made a mistake,
Lives were being wasted like drifting snow flakes.

We continued on, our target to blast,
To hold our own to the very last,
We returned to England, a long grueling flight,
The co-pilot dying, the ship riddled, a sight.

The dead and injured were borne away,
Thus ending a long and weary day,
We went to our barracks, to get some sleep,
To forget the fact that life is cheap.

You'll agree that in our plight,
The duties actually aren't very light,
We leave you now with our thoughts to play,
For you have heard of "An Airman's Day."

2016 Reunion Plans Announced

Plans are coming together for the 2016 reunion scheduled for Thursday, 15 September thru Sunday, 18 September at the Holiday Inn Fairborn Hotel & Conference Center in Dayton, Ohio. The reunion site is located just down the road from what is recognized as the birthplace of American aviation and the grounds of Wright Patterson Field. Once again we will be joined this year by members of the SSMA (Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association). Reunion emphasis, as always, will be to once again honor and learn from our veteran heroes and their spouses through the various activities that take place. In addition to the displays available in the hospitality room and the panel discussions/roundtables with our vets, group tours to aviation-related sites in the Dayton area have been scheduled. First, on the schedule is a trip to the Champaign Aircraft Museum in Urbana followed the next day by a visit to the National United States Air Force Museum at Wright Patterson Field. For those who arrive early and are interested, an optional visit to the Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park is available. See below for more details about these visits and tours.

Champaign Aircraft Museum in Urbana, Ohio



On Thursday, we will make a bus trip to Urbana. The tour of the Champaign Aircraft Museum, facilitated by Red Ketcham, a 306th veteran and museum volunteer, who has planned an exceptionally informative tour. The visit will include a stop at the B17, *Champaign Lady*, which is currently undergoing a full restoration at the site. This project, which began in 2005, was the dream of Jerry Shiffer – a local business leader, private pilot, and generous supporter of community causes. Many hours of work by volunteers from around the region and even across the USA have gone into the restoration of the bomber.

National United States Air Force Museum in Dayton



Situated on the grounds of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, the National United States Air Force Museum is the central component of the National Aviation Heritage Area. The museum houses the world's largest and most complete collection of aircraft, starting with the Wright Brothers and culminating in our most modern air and spacecraft, including more than 360 aircraft and missiles. The museum is divided into galleries that cover broad historic trends in military aviation. The museum is further broken down into exhibits that detail specific historical periods and display aircraft in historical context. After taking a short shuttle trip to the museum on Friday, we will spend a full day viewing the exhibits. Wright-Patterson is the largest research field for testing new and experimental aircraft and equipment. Originally two separate airfields (McCook established in 1917, and Patterson founded that same year by the Signal Corps), they were merged in 1927. McCook was renamed in honor of the Wright Brothers. The hangar in which Orville and Wilbur stored their prototype aircraft remains at the site and is the second oldest in the world. Please remember to bring government issued photo identification (i.e., driver's license) if you plan to visit the *Memphis Belle*. Lunch will be provided. For those who may wish to stay a bit longer than the rest of the group, you can arrange your own return trip transportation to the hotel.



Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park

The Dayton area is filled with historical sites linked to the Wright brothers and their first flights. For those who arrive early on Wednesday, we are offering an optional visit to the Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park, an area often recognized as the birthplace of American aviation. At the park, visitors will experience the evolving story of two ingenious brothers. The sites and their displays reveal the legacies of Wilbur and Orville Wright. The bicycle and printing shop and Georgian Colonial style home are the only structures associated with the Wright family that remain in Dayton. However, the Aviation Center and the Visitor Center are replete with Wright Brothers exhibits.

306th BG and SSMA Veteran Panel Discussions and Round Tables

Scheduled panel discussions, a popular annual activity, will feature 2 or 3 veterans invited to share with us their experiences during World War II. Those in attendance will have the opportunity to ask questions of these gentlemen regarding their training experiences and to learn from them what it was like in the air over Nazi-held Europe. The panel discussions are always some of the most engaging and exciting events at our annual reunions. Early arrival to get a good seat is recommended. In addition to the panel discussions, it is always interesting to listen in when our vets congregate unofficially in the hospitality room each evening, following dinner, where they continue to reminisce, sharing stories of their war time experiences.

Silent Auction

For our second annual silent auction, we ask that any member who attends the reunion consider bringing an item relevant to our group to use as revenue-generating opportunities. These can be anything from books, pictures, memorabilia, or any item of interest to our 306th Bomb Group or to the war in Europe in general. We only ask that it be of some relevance to our mission to support what our veterans did. Our goal is to simply use the opportunity to generate funds to be used by our group to finance our various educational and historical activities, including our reunion, and publication of the news magazine *Echoes*.

SSMA (Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association) Presentation

Once again this year, we will have present the men and their relatives who actually flew on or supported the October 14, 1943 second mission over Schweinfurt (often referred to as Black Thursday), one of the most heavily defended and dangerous places to fly a mission in all of Germany.

Displays and Activities

Many personal and group artifacts that so eloquently portray the individual histories of those who heroically served in both the 306th Bomb Group and flew on the mission over Schweinfurt will be on display. A flight simulator where you can try your hand at actually flying a B-17 will be available, as well as a laptop where you can get some helpful hints for surfing our newly updated website and the internet for the research you may be conducting.

Social Hours

"Social hours" will occur each day where we can just spend some peaceful time associating with old and new friends. It may be over coffee, over a drink, or at a table in the hospitality room; but wherever they may be don't let these opportunities slip by.

Annual 306th Business Meeting

A short 60 to 90 minute business meeting will be conducted Saturday morning where a "state of the organization" will be presented, a new board of directors will be selected, and the site for next year's reunion will be decided. The business meeting is open to all members of the group who attend the reunion (including SSMA members), so come let your suggestions be heard.

Friday First Over Germany Dinner and Saturday Night Banquet

Please note: Dinner meals on Wednesday and Thursday evenings are not included in the event activities. The Friday evening First Over Germany dinner will feature the presentation of awards. At the Saturday evening Banquet some of our most esteemed members will be recognized, new board leadership for the coming year will be introduced, and the location for next year's reunion will be announced.

Getting set up with the Hotel

Although you can register for your room online at the Holiday Inn Fairborn website, it is strongly recommend that you make your hotel reservation by calling directly at 937-426-7800. By phone you can inform them that you are part of the 306th Bomb Group Reunion in order to lock in the special room rate (\$105 for two double beds, king, or king with sofa bed) the breakfast buffet, and free WiFi. Since ADA compliant and rooms with 2 beds are at a premium, make your reservations by phone immediately. Finally, if you wish to have a wheelchair available for use, be sure to reserve it when you register.

Holiday Inn Fairborn Hotel & Conference Center Amenities

- Located only 2 miles from the grounds of Wright-Patterson Air Force Base
- 205 non-smoking guest rooms
- Check-in 3:00pm
- See below regarding airport shuttle information
- Free parking at the hotel
- Close proximity to the U.S. Air Force Museum
- A free hot breakfast buffet with your room reservation
- Free WIFI connection
- A business center with internet access
- A full service restaurant and bar
- Spacious lounging areas in which to read or visit
- ADA compliant wheel chair accessible rooms for those who need them
- Refrigerator, microwave, coffee maker, and iron in rooms
- Elevators to upper floors
- Fitness center, indoor swimming pool, outdoor patio
- Laundry service
- Around the clock front desk service
- On site ATM
- Check-out 12:00 noon

Miscellaneous Useful Information and Helpful Hints

- The hotel does have a shuttle to and from the airport provided by Charter Vans at a cost of \$40 for a single passenger and \$20 when traveling with a group. When ready to depart the airport, locate the transportation and hotel kiosk near the baggage claim and airport exit where you can use your cell phone to call the Holiday Inn Fairborn Hotel for a shuttle pick-up (937-426-7800).
- It will be fall in the upper Midwest during the 3rd week of September and while the weather might be sunny and warm, it is just as likely to be cool, cold, or rainy. Although the forecast is for mid-70s during the day and mid-50s at night, come prepared for any potential weather conditions.
- Even though your group room rate should be set by your reservation, it is always a good idea to remind the desk clerk when you check in that you are part of the 306th and SSMA group. This should ensure the correct room rate is charged to your bill. When reviewing your invoice at checkout, confirm you have not been charged for WiFi.
- Don't forget! WWII veterans attend the conference free of any registration fee. Fees are applied to Friday and Saturday dinner meals and tours.
- Remember: Children under 12 are not charged a registration fee and can attend the evening meals on Friday and Saturday at half price. Please note these on your registration forms.

- Bring your camera or smart phone ready to take as many pictures as possible to share with Webmaster, Charles Neal. Kevin Conant, the reunion's "official photographer," will be taking pictures throughout our reunion that will be posted to the 306th BGHA website.
- Have questions or concerns? Contact the information desk in our Hospitality Room or ask one of our board members.

A Final Note:

Download and fill out the Event Registration Form from our website [www.306bg.us] or use the one in this Echoes newsletter. Return it to Jennifer Mindala before August 12, 2016. Make your own hotel room arrangements directly with the Holiday Inn Fairborn Hotel.

For activity and event planning purposes, please submit your registration form with meal and tour selections as soon as possible. Mailing instructions are included on the event registration form. If notified of the need to cancel by August 12, 2016, all fees shall be refunded.

Thom Mindala

2016 Reunion Chairperson

Meet Me in Dayton
OH

September 15 thru 18

306th Bombardment Group (H)
1942 1945
H
Thurleigh ~ England

CHAMBERLAIN AVIATION MUSEUM
INDIANA OHIO
HOME OF THE B-17

USAF NATIONAL MUSEUM
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

Memphis Belle

Event Registration Form

306th Bomb Group Historical Association and SSMA Reunion

September 15 to 18: Holiday Inn Fairborn, Dayton, Ohio

Group room rates (pre-tax): \$105.00 per night/2 Double beds (sleeps 4); King with sofa bed (sleeps 4); King bed (sleeps 2)
 Contact Holiday Inn Fairborn Hotel directly at 937-426-7800.

To receive the group rate, mention you are part of the 306 Bomb Group.

DEADLINE FOR HOTEL RESERVATION IS AUGUST 12, 2016

306th or SSMA Veteran (No registration fee charged) # = \$

Registration Fee (All other participants – age 12 and older) \$40 x _____ = \$ _____

Wednesday, September 14: Early arrival – Evening Social – Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historic Park

- Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historic Park (bus fee) \$15 x _____ = \$ _____

Thursday, September 15: Arrival & check-in – Day One Activities – Champaign Museum Tour, Urbana

- Champaign Aviation Museum Tour (includes bus and lunch) \$30 x _____ = \$ _____

Friday, September 16: Day Two Activities – National Air Force Museum Tour – Evening Dinner – Social Hour

- National Museum of the U.S. Air Force Tour (includes bus and lunch) \$25 x _____ = \$ _____
- We will be attending the Friday evening First Over Germany Dinner \$45 x _____ = \$ _____
 (Children 12 or under) \$22.50 x _____ = \$ _____

Saturday, September 17: Day Three Activities – General Meeting – Panel Discussions – Evening Banquet

- Annual Business Meeting – Open to all meeting attendees
- We will be attending the Saturday night Banquet \$50 x _____ = \$ _____
 (Children 12 or under) \$25 x _____ = \$ _____

For each person in your party, include banquet meal selections:

_____ Beef _____ Chicken _____ Fish _____ Vegetarian

Sunday, September 18: Morning social hour, check-out and *So Long Until Next Year!*

TOTAL AMOUNT FOR ALL ATTENDEES ON THIS REGISTRATION FORM \$ _____

(Please make all checks payable to: 306th Bomb Group Historical Association - 2016 Reunion on memo line

Mail to 306th BGHA Treasurer Jennifer Mindala, 3244 S. Lamar Street, Denver, CO 80227)

Fees fully refundable if notified of cancellation by 12 August 2016.

306TH OR SSMA VETERAN YOU ARE ATTENDING IN HONOR OF:

His Group and Squadron (if known) _____ World War II Duty (if known) _____

LIST OF ALL ATTENDEES IN YOUR GROUP (Please PRINT clearly)			
Full Name	Relationship to Veteran	1st Reunion?	Arrival Date

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____ City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Name to Appear on Badge: _____

Please note any special needs (wheel chair accessible room) and/or requests (special dietary needs at meals), etc.

Some Quick Instructions for filling out the Registration Form

- (01) Please **PRINT** all information as clearly as possible (information is used to make name tags and event tickets).
- (02) Hotel information, rates, and hotel telephone number are at the top of registration form.
- (03) In the first box on the right side of the form, enter the number of participants in your group for that activity.
- (04) In the second box on the right of the form, enter the total amount due for the activity for those participating.
- (05) Enter the information for all of the event activities in which you plan to participate.
- (06) Enter the total amount due in the box at the bottom of the page.
- (07) Mark your meal choices for the banquet in the appropriate box; include dinner selections for each member of your group.
- (08) Note the instructions on the registration form for writing and submitting your registration form and check.
- (09) Enter the name of the veteran in whose honor you are attending.
- (10) In the area provided, enter the name(s) of those in your group who are attending reunion activities.
- (11) Print your name, address, phone number, and email address at the bottom of the registration form.
- (12) Keep a copy of your registration form for your records. Send your original form and check to
Treasurer Jennifer Mindala, 3244 S. Lamar Street, Denver, CO 80227

More Helpful Hints

Hint #1

Per the agreed upon guaranteed \$105 rate (pre-tax), choose from Double Rooms (sleeps 4), King Rooms with a sofa (sleeps 4), or a King Room (sleeps 2). Suites are not available at the \$105 price. Use the telephone number for the front desk at the top of the form to make your reservation. Reserve early if you require a wheelchair accessible room. To ensure you receive the special guaranteed rate, mention you are with the 306th Bomb Group Historical Association.

Hint #2

Remember: The deadline for reserving your hotel room is August 12th. The special rate will be offered and made available by the hotel for 3 days prior to the reunion and 3 days following the official closure date of the reunion.

Your contact person for hotel room issues is Kimberly Peterson (937-431-4613).

Hint #3

As confirmation of your registration, save a copy of the completed form.

Hint #4

Send the original copy of your registration form and check to

306th BGHA Treasurer JENNIFER MINDALA, 3244 S. LAMAR STREET, DENVER, CO 80227

Hint #5

IMPORTANT: You must bring a government issued photo ID (driver's license, etc.) if you plan to participate in Friday's tour of the *Memphis Belle* at the U.S. Air Force Museum.

Hint #6

For the Saturday banquet, you must include meal selections on the registration form. Note the number of dinners for each choice. To ensure everyone receives his/her dinner choice, you must provide a selection for each group member.

Hint #7

September weather in Dayton is expected to be in the mid-70s during the day and mid-50s at night. A sweater or jacket for air conditioned museums and meeting rooms is recommended. As a word of advice – be prepared for anything!

Hint #8

Come early and join us on Wednesday afternoon for the optional visit to the Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historic Park. You can visit sites and learn about the legacy of the Wright Brothers and the beginning of aviation history.

Hint #9

To avoid accounting issues, ensure all totals on your registration form are correct before you write your check.

Hint #10

Come prepared to enjoy the camaraderie while learning about and honoring our World War II veterans.

The Power of Story: A View From the Other Side

[Editor's Note: The following is an account received by the 306th BGHA of a World War II event as experienced by Ruth M. Pung (nee Frett, 1938). The article, originally written in German and translated by her son, Olaf, in January 2016, is printed below. To preserve the integrity of the story, only minor editorial corrections have been made to the original composition.]



My name is Olaf Pung, I live in Thuer, Germany. I would like to tell you a story of my mother. She is 77 years old and she was asked by a local historian to write down her war memories. This is why I started an investigation about what happened on January the 5th, 1945, when the village Obermendig (now part of the town Mendig) was bombed by 8th US Air Force. The local people here, in fact, never found out why the village was bombed. They speculated for decades about a single flak emplacement (2cm) at the north peripheries of the village, but in fact this would have been too hard to hit and too unimportant for such a raid.

Thanks to your website [www.306bg.us], I had the opportunity to find out the details. The mission report of January 5, 1945 gives all the information that was inaccessible until now.

The target of mission 8AF781 was the Luftwaffe airfield at Niedermendig, attacked by the 367th/368th/369th/423rd bomb squadrons. Clouds are reported 10/10, the target was not visible for the aircraft crews. Aiming was by GeeH and H2X. They dropped 726 AN-M30 Gp-Bombs (100 lbs), plus propaganda leaflets and 2 smoke bombs. The commander of the bomb group protocolled [mission report]: "Gee-operator says good run [?] should

have hit it." I have also found the individual protocols [mission reports] of the squadron commanders on your page, they noted about the results: "The track obtained from plotted PFF scope photos show strikes about one mile NW of target, which was Niedermendig A/D." (368th squadron) The report of 369th squadron is similar: "Plotted scope photos show a good track with bombs probably a little short of the A/F."

I cannot imagine where all the 726 bombs have gone, but it seems that part of them fell on Obermendig, about 2.5 miles east-north-east of the intended target. As far as I heard from contemporary witnesses, the Niedermendig airfield was not hit that day.

In the protocols [mission reports] of the 306th, the "heading" in the moment of bombs away is given between 140 and 150°, which means between south-east and south-south-east. The conclusion for me is this: the bombs were released too early because of inaccuracy of the Gee-H equipment. The airfield still exists, the location of which can be reviewed by going to

<https://www.google.de/maps/@50.3692047,7.286471,14z?hl=en>

With the knowledge from your website, I would like to publish an article about the subject – the reason why the region was bombed that time is still not known to the people living here. The most common opinion is that this was the answer for "The Blitz" over Britain in 1940/41. The strategy of bombing military facilities, road junctions, railway lines, etc. during daylight is contrary to the British RAF night attacks against German cities and is not understood by many Germans, because of the victims among civilians like described below.

I was deeply impressed about the war diary of Vernon T. Blucher I found on your website. He was part of the bomber crew over Mendig, risking his life. In former missions, he reported the "results" of the attacks as seen from 25,000 feet. On January 5th, his crew missed bombing the "heavy guarded air field depot," which was announced as target of the mission.

Let me tell you the same story as seen from the ground by my mother:

It was the 5th of January, the day before Epiphany, in the early afternoon. We heard the planes circling over the village during the whole

morning, but they flew very high and there was also no air-raid alarm. At home [Mendig, Laacherstrasse 45] we were rearranging the furniture, because our kitchen was fitted out as living room and bedroom for the Severin family: The Severins came from Mayen and were “bombed out” since the heavy air raids at the turn of 1944/45.

Our grandmother, “Frett's Gritt” [Margarete Frett born Bell] had promised them a room in Obermendig, because it was a very cold winter. The same morning yet appeared two men of the municipal administration. They were looking for free housing for the billeting of other “bombed out” people. The grandmother had both back somewhat surly, [apparently she strongly denied their demand that housing be provided to homeless citizens of the area] since the distribution of scarce space with the Severins was already a done deal. One of the two threatened, he would not shy away from “sending a 82-year-old for shoveling” – meaning a penalty at the “Arbeitsdienst” (labor service) to the construction of fortifications for the “final battle.” But Grandma did not change her decision.

So we had moved perforce [necessarily] our kitchen in the “parlor.” To connect the cooker, we had to shorten the stove pipe. For this I went with my mother to “Fuhrmanns Jakob,” an elderly neighbor. He was the last remaining man in the street [All the others were in army service, even 16 year old boys manning flak guns (“Flakhelfer”), old man up to 60 in the “Volkssturm”]. We were just at the level of house No. 43, when suddenly we heard a thunderous hiss. So we ran into the basement of the double house Siebenbach/Fuhrmann to seek shelter. The next moment already broken stone blocks rolled down the cellar stairs, the stable of the house had received a bomb hit.

Soon the neighbors came and looked into the cellar holes to see if we survived. We were told that our grandmother lay dead at home in the hall. A piece of shrapnel had hit her and she died instantly.

The houses Siebenbach and Fuhrmann were heavily damaged and uninhabitable. Later, about 10 victims were counted in the village. In house of Ruebers Therese, a bomb hit in the cowshed. A few days later I saw the stiff frozen carcasses were dragged out on the road by horses. Even our house was uninhabitable, it gaped cracks in masonry and all the windows were broken. To solve this problem, the paintings of saints hanging in the

bedroom were taken out of their frames to use the glass in the windows.

On top of this relatives from Koblenz, also bombed, appeared and five people used Grandmas bedroom.

We ourselves (Ruth, Paul, mother) spent daytime with our aunt in the Oberstrasse (house Paul and Margarethe Montermann born Frett). To sleep we went to Aunt Grete and Uncle Paul in Fallerstrasse. The nights stayed with me in no good memories because of the tightness in the house.

The neighboring houses in the Laacherstrasse were crowded with people. The solidarity in the neighborhood, however, was exemplary and the people helped each other out.

Fearing further air strikes, the village community decided to dig a bunker in the slate rock of “In der Hohl.” Old men hewed out the rock, the women carried out the rubble in baskets. Even “Hirschbrunns Karoline,” a descendant of the former “rulers” in the village, helped eagerly. Since the school was closed due to the war, we often played close to the bunker site. In the nearby clay pit, “Huppe Kreid,” we formed marbles or small figurines.

As soon as the siren sounded, we ran toward the bunker. My mother always kept nervously looking for the children. My red hat was very useful. Early in March, American troops appeared around the village. Previously there were tank obstacles erected at the entrance roads (among others Laacherstrasse corner St. Florinstrasse). They consisted of two high boxes made of by wooden poles rammed vertically into the ground. There was only a narrow passage left between them. The boxes were filled with stones and earth.

In retrospect, however, the whole effort proved to be ineffective, the US forces used some sort of dozer tank and the piles buckled away like matchsticks.

The “Amis” [Americans] were watched with curiosity by us children, especially the dark-skinned. Although “fraternizing with the enemy” was under severe punishment, sometimes a piece of candy or chewing gum left “accidentally” somewhere - of course this influenced our image of the “enemy” positively.

The grave of Margarete Frett is still visible on the Obermendig cemetery, together with other war

victims, regardless if soldier or civilian. The inscription on the monument says:

*Die Toten mahnen uns – wahret Frieden!
The dead admonish us – maintain peace!*

I would be very pleased to see this text being released on your website. I understand that the aim of a veteran website is different, but after 71 years of peace in central Europe, I think it is time for a sober, unemotional view on the facts.

I would like to end with a quotation of George Santayana, which is very well known in Germany:

Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.

*Your sincerely,
Olaf Pung*

Fiery Phantoms?



Today we are all familiar with the 423rd Grim Reapers, but did you know that they were not always known by that name? In March of 1942, when the 306th Bombardment Group was activated in Salt Lake City, the 423rd Bombardment Squadron was not even one of the four squadrons comprising the newly formed group. Curious?

In 1942, when the Army Air Force constituted the heavy bombardment groups, the plan was to have each group consist of three heavy bombardment squadrons composed of nine B-17s each with a fourth squadron of B-17s for reconnaissance. On 18 March of that year the 34th Reconnaissance Squadron was officially activated at the Army Air Base in Salt Lake City.

Somewhere at the highest levels of AAF Headquarters, there was some thought that it might be a waste of good heavy bombers having them fly reconnaissance missions rather than dropping 500

pounds bombs on enemy targets. So barely a month later, on 15 April 1942, the 34th Reconnaissance Squadron of the 306th BG was re-designated the 34th Bombardment Squadron. Just eleven days later the squadron was finally designated the 423rd Bombardment Squadron.

Ever wonder why the 423rd was not numbered sequentially following the 367th, 368th, and 369th? The 370th Bombardment Squadron had already been constituted as part of the 307th Bombardment Group flying B-24s in the Pacific Campaign. This was the case for virtually all the heavy bombardment groups that were formed. They were initially comprised of the three bomb squadrons and one reconnaissance squadron, which when re-designated as a bomb squadron, had to be assigned a non-sequential number.

When the 306th, including the 423rd, left Wendover AAB late in the summer of that year, the 423rd Bombardment Squadron had become the Grim Reapers, their moniker of choice. But they would be deprived of that name until the end of the war. Sometime after arriving in England, 8th AAF Headquarters decided that “Grim Reapers” was too dark, something the Nazi propagandists could use to paint the American bomber boys as evil merchants of death.

So the men of the 423rd came up with the new nickname, “Fiery Phantoms,” and were known by that until April 1945. A letter to the Commanding Officer, 306th Bombardment Group from Headquarters Army Air Forces, Washington dated 20 April 1945, authorizes the 423rd to again use the name Grim Reapers and reads in part:

Aircraft Marking: On a violet disc, an orange representation of the winged “Grim Reaper” in flight... holding a scythe inflamed on the blade...The insignia will face toward the front of the aircraft.

Significance: The “Grim Reaper” represents the nickname by which the Squadron was unofficially known for many months. It symbolizes the righteous retribution which our enemies have called down upon themselves from the skies.

The 31st Cadet Squadron at the United States Air Force Academy proudly carries the “Grim Reapers” nickname to this day. ■

Remembered “Over There”

As our members who recently travelled to England and Thurleigh will attest, the 306th is well remembered there through Ralph Franklin and the 306th Museum as well as such other sights as the Imperial War Museum at Duxford, and of course the numerous 306th men who are buried or memorialized at the American Cemetery at Cambridge. But since the 2014 reunion in Colorado Springs, the Association has received numerous inquiries from persons in different countries regarding 306th Veterans and the airplanes they flew in combat. Over there, the 306th, and what they did some 70 plus years ago, is well remembered from France to Belgium, Ireland and back to England.

Fouchy, France – Near the German border, a French gentleman named Jean-Luc Maurer recently (October 2014) found parts of a B-17 that was shot down on a raid to Stuttgart on 9 December 1944, including a piece with the Army Air Force serial number stenciled on that piece. He was able to determine that it was a 306th airplane, 43-38362 named *Sleepytime Gal*. He contacted us through our website and we were able to provide information on the plane and crew and to send him some pictures. With the help of a friend, Francis Muller who did the French to English translation, we recently received photos of the memorial Jean-Luc erected at the crash site in the woods near Fouchy.



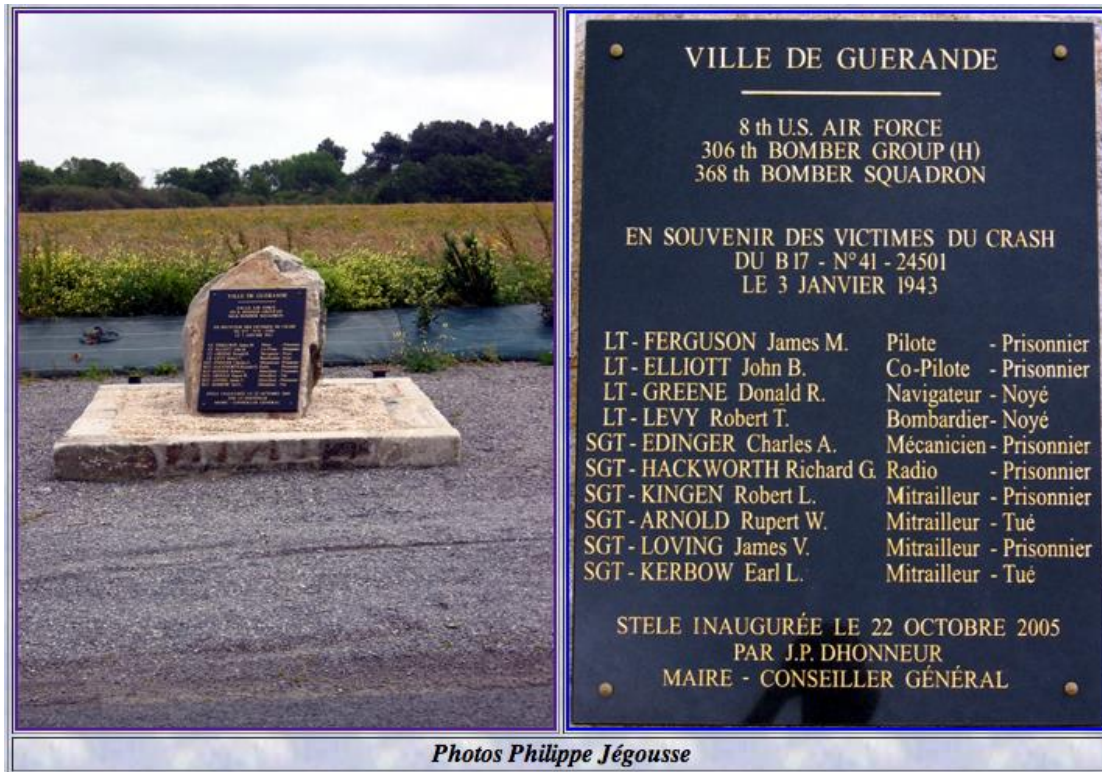
Memorial honoring *Sleepytime Gal* – 43-38362 – at Fouchy

All of the crew survived except the pilot, Lt. Robert H. Brown. The copilot, Lt. William Giglio, was wounded and with the rest of the crew they were taken as POWs: Lt. James Walden; Lt. James Monroe; Sgt. Raymond Ohms; Sgt. Jerrold Fann; Sgt. Ernest Hovey; Sgt. Samuel Abdelnour; and Sgt. Joseph Bollard.

County Clare, Ireland – Mr. Dennis Burke of Dublin, Ireland has a website “Foreign Aircraft Landings-Ireland 1939-1945,” a period when the Republic of Ireland was officially neutral. He wrote us inquiring about a 306th crew and an aircraft that had landed at the Rinneanna Airfield on 21 March 1943 while en-route to England with pilots Lt. Zias Davis, F/O Carl Brown and a crew that included Lt. John Fogarty, Lt. Robert Alexander, T/Sgt. Lewis Ayscue, S/Sgt. Lloyd Meyer, T/Sgt. Earl W. Norlen, T/Sgt. Perry Pedersen, S/Sgt. Larry D. McCoy, and S/Sgt. Jesse Wheeler. The plane and crew should have been held in neutral Ireland under that country’s Emergency Powers Act of 1939, but the men eventually made it to Thurleigh on 11 April and to the air war over Europe.

Mr. Burke had previously made contact with, and gathered information and pictures from the families of Davis, Fogarty, Alexander and Norlen with information on the plane and crew posted on a very reputable web page at internet address www.skynet.ie/~dan/war/42-5220.htm. Flying Officer Carl Brown, as first pilot, with a crew that included Lt. Fogarty, Lt. Alexander, and Sgts. Norlen, Pedersen, McCoy, and Wheeler, were shot down on a mission to Kiel on July 29, 1943. All were killed in action as reported by Russell Strong in his book, *First Over Germany*. However, we found out from Mr. Burke that Lt. Alexander, the navigator on that crew, had in fact survived and did not die until 1947 when he was in a plane crash in Mexico.

Guerande, France – A phone call from Jeff Hackworth, son of 368th radio operator Richard Hackworth, in December 2014 led to a search for a memorial Jeff had previously seen commemorating the crash of aircraft 41-24501, the plane on which his father had been shot down on January 3, 1943, on a mission to St. Nazaire, France. This impressive memorial was erected near Guerand, France and dedicated on October 22, 2005.



Photos Philippe Jégousse

Memorial honoring 41-24501 near Guerand, France

Garston, England (near Watford) – Just before the recent tour of England and Thurleigh in June by a group of our intrepid members, Mr. Chris Scyver contacted us regarding the loss of the 306th aircraft *Choo-Z-Suzy*, 42-107055 that had caught fire and crashed returning from a mission to Koblenz in December 1944. Mr. Scyver is a consultant with Building Research Establishment (BRE) with a building located at the sight of the crash of *Choo-Z-Suzy* in Garston near Watford, England. BRE was aware of the crash site that had been cleared of major debris and wreckage in 1944, but they came across a number of small pieces of the plane that were just recently unearthed. The company plans to have a display of the parts and a memorial to the plane and the crew in their office building and we were able to provide them with background information and 1944 pictures of the crash site and wreckage. We look forward to seeing pictures of the display when it is completed.

The crash of *Choo-Z-Suzy* was featured in the July 2010 issue of *Echoes*. Only Lt. Milton Olszewitz perished when he bailed out of the plane without a parachute. The other members successfully bailed out including pilot Paul Reoix,

Lt. Robert Daniel, Lt. James Talley, and Sgts. John Price, Herman Kaye, Leon “Jack” Persac, Colvin Sheorn, and John Perry.

In addition to these inquiries from overseas and the memorials to the 306th recently erected or in process, we have also been contacted by persons from Australia and Canada, one regarding Major Harry Holt, 367th Squadron CO (Australia), and another regarding 306th evadees (Canada). And of course, there was a memorial to the crew of 42-97185 shot down February 14, 1945, that was also erected and dedicated in 2005 in the Czech Republic (see article in July 2005 *Echoes*).

Sgt. Alfred Lubojacky, related to 306th members, brother Walt, niece Barbara Neal, and nephew Karl Poythress, died that day. With the assistance of Milos Podzimek, the family now knows where Alfred died. Many family members attended that memorial’s dedication. The commitment of the Czech people to not forget what was sacrificed for them by the men and planes of the 8th AAF continues today.

In March 2014, Mr. Podzimek attended the dedication of another memorial in Vizka, Czech Republic, this one in honor of the *City of Savannah*.



*Milos Podzimek
at dedication of
memorial to "City
of Savannah,"
Viska, Czech
Republic*

Seventy-two years after the close of hostilities in Europe, the men and airplanes of the 306th Bombardment Group are not forgotten. The continental United States was never seriously threatened or attacked during WWII. Our citizens only endured the hardships of rationing and the loss of loved ones overseas. In England, France, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and the other countries of occupied Fortress Europe, the ravages of the war were found in the farms and factories, the cities and townships of these countries. They will not soon forget the 8th AAF and the 306th. ■

Thank you so much Mrs Neal and Mr Deets, for the time you raised for me.

I apologize for my late answer but I don't speak english. One of my friends translated my letter.

Your web page helped me alot to go further on in my research work. At the end of that year, a commemorative tablet will be put on the crash site in order to inform people of the B17 story.

The B17 was hit by the german flack over the town of Stuttgart and the crew baled out close to the town of Wolfach. The empty B17 continued approximately 70kms (approx.50miles) until he finaly crashed in Fouchy (France).

Thank you again for the informations you provided and the nice picture.

If you would like to receive pictures of the crash site or items belonging to the B17 and collected after the war, please inform me and I am ready to send these.

Regards,

Email received from Jean-Luc Maurer

CMSgt Theodore C. Hood Shares Information: What is the Significance of the Patch Worn Behind Wings?

Thanks to 306th BGHA member, Retired Chief Master Sergeant Theodore Hood, perhaps a little-known piece of information is being shared.

In the movie, *Twelve O'Clock High*, Brigadier General Frank Savage, played by Gregory Peck, is seen wearing a patch behind his wings. CMSgt. Hood tells us the Blue Patch was worn behind their Silver Wings when they entered Combat Crew training in Ardmore, Oklahoma. He continued to wear that patch until placed on Combat Status in June 1944. At that time, the patch was exchanged for a Red Patch. The Red Patch was worn until the end of the current tour of service.



*Patch can be seen worn by Gregory Peck in
Twelve O'Clock High*

An excerpt from the *History of Combat Service Insignia* indicates that during World War II Combat Crews were allowed to wear a blue cloth patch sewn on the uniform on which aeronautical badges were worn. The combat box signified that the individual was an active AAF member in theater. This was authorized to prevent non-aircrew members from pinning on wings when off base to "impress the girls." USAAF Flight Badges were worn by Members of the Eighth Air Force during World War II. ■

Flak: An Airman's Nightmare

Exploding in daylight with puffs of black smoke and little red interiors, flak was responsible for more than half of all Allied Aircraft losses during World War II. It was a nightmare to bomber crews. Unpredictable and unable to see it coming, pilots were warned during mission briefings of where to expect high concentrations of anti-aircraft fire.

Flak's primary purpose was to protect while shooting down enemy aircraft. It could be effective without doing so. Flak could disorder formations, decrease accuracy, and cause bombers to bomb from unfavorable angles or altitudes or with less favorable techniques.

Designed to safeguard their major industrial cities, particularly those in the Rhur Valley, the Germans produced an incredible number of Fliegerabwehrkanone guns. This land-based anti-aircraft defense system, translated as "pilot warding off cannon," became abbreviated as *flak* by American airmen for obvious reasons. The British used the World War I anti-aircraft artillery term "ack-ack" when referring to counter air defense measures.

During World War II, the development of flak effectiveness went in tandem with the development of radar. This would give precise data for enemy aircraft position and height. Using an optical range finder or radar to determine the target's altitude, range, and speed, the data would be fed into an electro-mechanical computer system. This, in turn, would deliver the necessary time for fuses, gun lead, and where to turn the gun.

A second method used to fire on aircraft was known as the "box barrage," and was used when the radar tracking system was not available or was not working due to cloud cover. In this case, the battery director fed a best guess regarding altitude and position to the gun

operators who would mark out a "box" in the sky of the anticipated path of the target. The battery was then ordered to fire into this box, filling it with flak. The expectation was that the target would fly through this box.

However, this method was extremely wasteful of shells. The rate of ammunition expenditure could not be maintained and orders were issued prohibiting such barrages except in the most extreme circumstances. A side effect of mass firing was that an extreme shortage of artillery and even small arms ammunition for the army resulted. The German industry simply could not produce enough ammunition to keep up with its use.

In 1944, flak accounted for the destruction of 3,501 American planes. Constant demand for front line troops for the German army resulted in many of the flak crews being comprised of elderly men and school boys.

The idea of flak was not to take out individual bombers, but to spread and break-up the large formations of American bombers into smaller groupings, thus making it easier for ground forces to deal with air attacks. Although the theory never really worked, it undoubtedly did much to bolster the morale of the German civilians who were heartened by their ability to fire back. ■



Obituaries – *Secretary's note: Full obits are here for deaths of those who have family members, crew mates, or friends who I know are following Echoes. Men are first; then family. At the bottom of the column, are other 306th men, with only names, brief Thurleigh, death, and career information if known. As resources permit, fuller obits will be posted at our website, 306bg.us at the 'Obituary' tab for all 306th men. If you want, or have, more obit information please see Echoes page 2 to contact the Secretary, who appreciates all obituary info.*

Bevan, Donald J, 423rd Original, replacement waist gunner (various crews) and POW, originally from MA, at 93, died 29 May 13 in Studio City, CA. Pre-war he attended art school in Manhattan and was a cartoonist for New York's *Daily News*. With Mack McKay, on his first mission

(Rouen) Don shot down a Focke Wulf FW-190 (see Apr 91 *Echoes* pp.1-2 articles); his de-briefing illustrations of that kill appeared in *Stars and Stripes* 14 Dec 42. Sketches he drew of Original crews are in Jul 92 *Echoes* pp.4-5. After 15 missions, he was downed 17 Apr 43, Bremen, with Warren George Jr (who was KIA); Don was held at Stalag 17-B. Post-war in 51 he wrote the famous stage play *Stalag 17* which in 53 was made into a successful film. He was a caricature artist at Sardi's restaurant in NYC. He spoke at the Seattle 93 Reunion. Predeceased by his wife Patricia and 2s; survived by 1c; buried at Riverside National Cemetery, Riverside, CA.

Bovich, Edward R, 367th navigator (William Wear crew), a native New Yorker, died 28 May 14 in Farmingdale, Suffolk Co, NY at 90. He reported with Wear

13 Jan 45, and had initially voluntarily enlisted as a Pvt in the Air Corps in Dec 42 at NY City. No info re post-war career. His funeral mass was at St Kilian; burial at Calverton National Cemetery in Calverton, Suffolk Co, NY; memorials suggested to St Jude Children's Research Hospital; survived by Dorothea, wife of nearly 68 years, 2s and 2d, 9gc, 8ggc.

Brown, Merle P [Paul], 368th pilot and co-pilot (Charles W Smith crew), who was born in WV and grew up in Akron, OH, died in Lakeville, MN, long his home, 8 Dec 14, at 97. He reported 20 Nov 43 with Smith. On 6 Mar 44 (Berlin mission) his stricken B-17 made a crash landing on the Swedish island of Gotland. Brown was sent back to England and resumed his missions 20 Jun, completing his 35-mission tour 22 Feb 45, per his Sortie Report in his Correspondence File at our website, 306bg.us under "Education/Research" in the Archives section. While in Sweden, he fell in love with his later war-bride. Post-war he married Maybritt, and returned to Akron, where he worked 17 years as a corporate pilot for Firestone. In '63 he accepted a position in Minneapolis, MN, flying for International Jet. In 64 he divorced. He retired in '82, moving to Lakeville. With family and friends, he built a log cabin on land he bought on a lake in the northern MN wilderness, where they enjoyed hunting, fishing, winter sports, and ice-fishing. In '00 when his macular degeneration and hearing worsened, he moved into senior housing and got a rechargeable chair that he continued driving around Lakeville until well into his 97th year. Predeceased by 2c, he is survived by their spouses, a later son, 8gc, several ggc. Buried at Lakeville Grove Cemetery; memorials suggested to the Macular Degeneration Society or charity of one's choice.

Burroughs, Winston W [Woodbury], 367th ball turret gunner (Perry Raster and Virgil Dingman) and POW, of Waldorf, MD, died 26 Jul 15 at 92. He reported 25 Feb 44 with Raster. Downed on his 23rd mission 17 Jun 44 (Noyen) with Dingman, Burroughs and four became POW while crew mate Bob Starzynski and three evaded capture. Wounded by shrapnel he was held by Germany and survived the 82-day forced march begun in Feb 45, when thousands of POWs marched west with little food and no shelter. After being liberated 6 May by the Brits, he spent 21 days in a Belgium hospital before being sent home. Post-war, he married Rose; his career was at the Naval Research Lab and the Naval Oceanographic Office until retiring in 79 as Supervisory Senior Electronic Tech. Reunions attended included Omaha '83, Ft Worth '84, Dayton '86, Washington '87, Little Rock '89; and his Correspondence File at 306bg.us indicated they looked forward to the '92 Thurleigh trip, when at Cambridge American Cemetery he wanted to visit the marker for his Raster crew mate, tail gunner Virgil F Jenzen, KIA 29 Mar 44 (Brunswick). He was a member of the American Legion, VFW, Military Order of Purple Heart, and All Faith Episcopal in Charlotte Hall, MD. Predeceased by 1s; survived by his wife of 64 years, Rose; 3c, 10gc, 7ggc.

Memorials suggested to Hospice of St. Mary's, MD, or Charlotte Hall, MD Veterans Home.

Carnahan, Kenneth R [Russell], 369th Squadron GF navigator, originally from OH, died 6 Jul 15, at 92 in Satellite Beach, FL, where he'd long lived. His online 306th Correspondence File shows he reported in Jan 45; flew 29 missions by 7 May as Squadron GF navigator with various crews; and departed 1 Jun 45. He also served in 303rd BG; and stayed in the service, serving as Senior Intelligence Officer, ACSI (Pentagon). Post-war, in '49 he earned his Bachelor's in Electrical Engineering at OH State U, and in '58 his Master's (also EE) at AF Institute of Technology. He retired as Senior Engineer in Computer Sciences at Raytheon. He and wife Betty had attended no reunions by his Nov 94 correspondence. Notice appeared in the Ashland [OH] Times-Gazette, of his funeral service at Sonata Assisted Living Community, in Melbourne, FL. No further info.

Cohn, Herbert B, 368th pilot, originally from NY, died 25 Dec 12, at 89, having long been a resident of the Philadelphia, PA area. He reported 3 Feb 45, completed 31 missions by end of combat; continued during the Casey Jones Project; and departed in Oct 45. The 306bg.us 'Echoes' tab has the Jan 90 issue, p.3, with Cohn's article and one by 423rd pilot Clifford Steiger, covering their planes' collision over Germany on 7 Mar 45 (Giessen, Germany mission). Cohn's *Elizabeth* made it back to Thurleigh; Steiger's *Dear Mom* tail gunner, Harold W Rial, fell to his death before other crew all successfully parachuted near field "A-70," of the 409th BG at Laon Couvron, France. In Dec 12, he was survived by wife Esther, 2s, 2gs. Shiva was observed at his late residence; memorials suggested to Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia or Congregation Beth El-Ner Tamid; no further info.

Davis, William 'Bill' A, 367th engineer top turret gunner (Verlin Higginbotham crew), born on a dairy farm in Ooltewah [near Chattanooga], TN, and in recent years of Apple Valley, San Bernardino Co, CA, died 3 Mar 13 at 91. He'd joined the Army Air Corps at a young age and was stationed at Hickam Field on Oahu, Hawaii when Pearl Harbor was attacked 7 Dec 41. In Kearney, NE, after a brief courtship, he married Lillian, who was born on a dairy farm in CA, and grew up on an alfalfa farm in Riverside. He reported in Jan 45; flew 24 missions by end of combat; and departed 19 May 45. In Nov 45, he re-enlisted in the AF for the Hawaiian Dept. He served briefly in the MidEast, primarily Saudi Arabia, and had extended tours in Germany and France before his last assignment at George AFB in Victorville, CA in '62. He retired from the AF Nov 65; worked a couple of years in civil service; and then had a career buying, renovating, and renting older homes and apartments in Old Town Victorville, before they retired to Apple Valley in 86. In their early years, Lillian was involved in Eastern Star. Bill was a 32nd degree Scottish Rite Mason. He and Lillian were active members of the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association, of which he became

state chairman. After 69 years of marriage, Bill was survived by Lillian only until 13 Apr 13. They were survived then by 2s, 2d, 10gc, 22ggc, and 1ggd; buried at Sunset Hills Memorial Park, Apple Valley.

Decker, Raymond R, 369th radio operator and POW, died at an unknown location 16 Jan 91, at 78. He reported 19 Nov 43 with Robert Schoch; was with Bill Hilton's crew in Aberdeen, Scotland for the newly-posted 'Hilton_bill_2' photo at 306bg.us; and was downed with Barney Price 26 Mar 44 (Pas de Calais). The POW index indicates he was at Stalag 17B. Info found by searching with his Serial # determined that he was born in Maine in 12. When he was enlisted at Ft Devins, MA at age 30 in Aug 42, he resided in Middlesex County, MA, then separated with no dependents. Decker may never have known of the Association; his name was not found in decades of 306th Directories. No further info.

Emeigh, C [Clair] Larry, 367th crew chief and group engine change specialist, of Bethel Park, PA, died 7 Feb 16, at 97. Larry reported 3 Apr 42. Larry led Thurleigh's Big Band orchestra, with which Johnny Schupp sang. At Reunions Larry often played piano, as he is shown doing in *Echoes* Jan '97. Post-war he married Beatrice; his career was as a carpenter, who even after retiring, continued performing under his stage name 'Larry Ames' with his group, The Esquires. *Echoes* July 95 has a great story of how he, Bea, and their family welcomed his newly-discovered British first-born son into the family, discovering in '93 he was born to the Yorkshire girl to whom Larry had been engaged in '44 before she broke off their engagement and married an Englishman she knew earlier. Bea, 94, died in Dec 15. They're buried at National Cemetery of the Alleghenies; survived on both sides of the Atlantic by 4c, 4gc, 5ggc.

Frantz, Carl M, 369th bombardier and Squadron Bombardier [erroneously listed with middle initial "H"], originally an IN son of a father born in Germany, and long of Albuquerque, NM, died 3 Sep 12, at 92. He reported 19 Nov 43 with Robert Schoch; is pictured with the Richard B Thompson crew; and was in Aberdeen, Scotland with Bill Hilton's crew for the 'Hilton_bill_2' photo. He departed in Aug 44 having completed his tour. Post-war he earned his Mechanical Engineering degree at Univ of NM and enjoyed 32 years at Sandia National Labs, retiring in 82. Predeceased by his wife Mary Jane in 09; survived by 2d, 2gs, 2ggc; buried at Santa Fe National Cemetery.

Geitz, Frederick H [Horst], 369th ball turret gunner (Jack R Lewis crew), who was born in Barmen-Ebberfeld, Germany and came to this country in '27, died in Des Moines, IA 14 Nov 11, at 86. With Lewis he reported 26 Jul 44. He completed a 35 mission tour and departed 8 Mar 45. Post-war he married Jean, his h.s. sweetheart, in 45; completed his Teaching degree at Drake and Bachelor's at N Dakota State. He taught high school for 30 years and loved the outdoors, enjoying fishing, boating, and golf. Jean survived him to Sep 13. Survived by 2c, 3gc, 5ggc; buried at Laurel Hill Cemetery, Des Moines.

Guy, Walter P [Perry], 367th bombardier (Gordon Donkin crew), died 15 Sep 96 in Sonoma, CA at 74. He reported with Donkin 29 Jun 44, and completed 30 missions before departing 10 Feb 45, with apparently many missions with different crews since he noted in his correspondence with Russell Strong that after he'd trained for lead bombardier, he flew 14 missions as lead bombardier; 1 as deputy lead; 1 with 40th wing; and 6 for the group, according to a letter Guy had received from Don Ross. He voluntarily enlisted as an aviation cadet after a year at UCLA. Post-war he returned to college, completing his BS in '48 at UC Berkeley. His '47 bride, Beatrice 'Eileen' grew up in Danville and graduated UC Berkeley in 46. His career was with State Farm Insurance, as Director Management Planning; she taught elementary school in Sonoma Valley many years before retiring in the early 80s. Interests included travel. They attended 306th reunions in '84 Ft Worth, '85 CO Springs, and '87 in DC, in spite of his then 20 years of Parkinson's. She survived him to Nov 09, when she died of a long illness at 85. Survived then by their 3c, 6gc. Memorials for her suggested to Santa Rosa Memorial Hospice or one's favorite children's charity.

Haase, William J, 369th pilot and Sq Operations Offr, originally of WI, died 20 Jun 15 in Lakewood, CO at 96. He reported 21 Aug 44 and completed a 30-mission tour, then serving as 369th Squadron Operations officer, participating in the Casey Jones Project prior to departing in Oct 45 as Capt. Before reporting to Thurleigh, he and Jean married. Post-war, he graduated from U of WI-Madison as an electrical engineer; worked for WI Bell Telephone Co in engineering; and retired in 87 as VP in Engineering after 44 years of service. In retirement he enjoyed fishing, golfing, and woodworking, in Punta Gorda, FL and WI. Jean, a Red Cross volunteer, greatly enjoyed flower gardens, great Danish cooking, and golf. After 69 years of marriage, Jean predeceased Bill in 11, at 90. Many of us particularly enjoyed seeing Bill at our 14 Reunion in CO Springs, thanks to their daughter. Hospice played an important part in Bill's final care. Survived by 1d, 2gc, 2ggc; interned at Forest Home Cemetery, Marinette, WI.

Hebert, Harvey H [Henry], 368th waist gunner and after being injured in a plane crash, aircraft mechanic, of Iota, LA, died 4 Dec 15 at 94. He reported 8 May 43 and had flown 6 missions by 8 Jul. In Dec 41, he had voluntarily enlisted in the Air Corps with a year of college education. Post-war he worked for Shell Oil until his father died in 48 and he then farmed the family's farm while rearing 4s. In Iota he was member of St Joseph Catholic, Knights of Columbus, Sierra Club, and St Joseph Catholic's French Choir. Predeceased by his first wife, Ruby, and by an infant son in 57; survived by Rita, his wife of nearly 31 years, 4s, 6 step-c, 36gc, 39ggc, 2gggc; buried at St Joseph Cemetery Mausoleum.

Hodgson, Richard 'Dick' S [Staten], 368th bombardier (initially crew of William H Breslin and co-pilot Maurice 'Chris' Christianson), born in PA and long-time resident of

San Luis Obispo, CA, died there 15 Jun 03 at 85. In his Correspondence File at 306bg.us one can read his high praise for Christianson's navigational skills enabling them to make it to Scotland from Iceland; they reported 29 Apr 44. He served as lead bombardier with pilot Gwynn Boswell, completing his tour by Sep 44. Post-war, he married Mary. He retired in '81 from a 35-year career owning and operating wholesale and commercial liquor businesses. He was an active member of the Old Mission Church. Predeceased in Sep '00 by Mary, his wife of 55 years; survived by 4c, 12gc, 7ggc; memorials suggested to Hospice Partners of the Central Coast, in San Luis Obispo, CA.

Howard [earlier Horowitz], Bernard M, 369th intelligence, born in Mt Kisco, NY, who spent most of 90 years in White Plains, died 13 Jan 15 in Kennesaw, GA, where they had moved in '00. A graduate of Mt Kisco High in 42, his surname was still Horowitz when he enlisted at NY City 16 Oct 42 as Pvt in the Air Corps. With no card in Card File, his 306th reporting date is unknown. After returning from war, he married Amy in White Plains, graduated Rider College in 49, and developed his career as an insurance agent, first with Prudential, then US Life, and then his own agency. Survived by his wife of 66 years, Amy, 2s, 5gc. Memorials suggested to the SPCA.

Iacona, Richard P, 367th waist gunner and flight engineer (Irwin Schwedock crew) and Swiss internee, of Amityville, NY, died 11 Jan 15 at 90. He reported 15 Mar 44; on 24 Apr 44 mission (Oberpfaffenhofen), crippled by flak, they landed in Switzerland. Thanks to Iacona, posted at 306bg.us is a photo of the interned Schwedock crew. Predeceased by wife Mary; survived by 2s, 4gc, 4ggc; funeral mass at St Martin of Tours in Amityville; memorials suggested to Good Shepherd Hospice

Jones, Ralph W [Ward], an Original, 423rd pilot, and co-pilot (Raymond 'Pappy' Check), who was born in Boise, ID, spent his childhood in Salt Lake City, before moving to CA where he spent many years, died 7 Feb 16 at 95. At Thurleigh, after 5 missions as co-pilot for Check, in early Jan 43 he assumed the pilot slot on the crew Dave Steele had brought. Ralph was the 24th officer in the 306th to complete a 25-mission tour, 4 Jul-43. He came to the Air Corps having joined the Army in 39, and realizing in training while being bombed by bags of flour, "I could be up there dry and eating steak tonight." In Aug 45, he married 'Dee' (Dorris), who he'd met in high school, and headed for American Airlines pilot training, NYC. Their family grew in Westchester, CA and he began college at USC. Recalled to active duty in 51 for Korea, he flew 26 B-29 combat missions; Viet Nam added 25 B-52 combat missions; the Cold War added many alerts and missions with the 320th BW and CINCPAC in Hawaii, where he retired as Col, having proudly served 35 years. He'd earned his BA at Univ of NE and MBA from George Washington U. He and Dee designed their N. CA home of 37 years in Cool, CA. He loved involvement in the community, working at Georgetown Building Supply and as a guard at

Auburn Lake Trails; helping build the Georgetown Seventh Day Adventist Church; involvement in SIRS (Sons in Retirement) men's organization; and being 'The Head HOGG' (Happy Old Geyser Golfers). In '12, health emphasized the need to move to Floresville, TX to be with family. In '13 he shared with the Secretary and Steele's son, memories of all the 306th crew, of which he was the last living. Many enjoyed meeting Ralph, Dee, and many family members in CO Springs at our '14 Reunion, just a month before Dee's death 20 Oct ended their 69 years together. (For her obit, see *Echoes* issue 3and4 of '14) Survived by 2d, 3 foster d, 4gc, 6ggc; burial at Fort Sam Houston Nat'l Cemetery near San Antonio. His personal narratives were recorded as the Ralph Ward Jones Collection, Riverside Public Library [CA] contributing via LOC [Library of Congress] AFC [American Folklife Center] Veterans History Project; Collection # AFC/2001/001/22774 at Riverside Public Library.

Knara, William J, HQ Gp NCO in charge @ night planning and coordinating from 1st Div to various functions and squadrons, of Kane and DuPage counties, IL, died 27 Jul 15 at Seasons Hospice of Naperville; 93. He reported Jun 42, having enlisted at Chicago in Jan 42 as Pvt Air Corps. Post-war he married Dorothy in Jun 47. His 40+ year career was in Industrial Engineering at Lyon Metal Products, initially in Montgomery, IL and retiring in 84 after 6 years as Plant Manager in the Los Angeles area outside Whittier. He served as VP of Valley Industrial Assoc of Safety Managers. In retirement they moved back to Aurora, IL and enjoyed traveling, fishing, golfing, wintering in FL and AZ, and maintaining the genealogy of the Nickels, Knara and Windisch families. He was member of Holy Angels Church, Moose Lodge, and Life Member of VFW. Survived by Dorothy (for exactly one month); 5d, 12gc; their funeral masses were at Holy Angels; burial at Mt Olivet Cemetery; memorials suggested to their church; for Bill to Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley; and for Dorothy to American Cancer Society.

Kresch, Harvey H, 367th (unknown duties; no card in card file), originally from NY, NY, formerly of Fair Lawn, NJ, and long of Delray Beach, FL died 11 Jul 15, at 90. He enlisted in Mar 43 at 17 in NYC, NY with a high school education and experience as a shipping and receiving clerk. Husband of 64 years of Eleanore; 2c; 5gc. Beth Israel Funeral Home announced cryptside service 13 Jul at Eternal Light Memorial Gardens, Boynton Beach, FL; memorials suggested to Wounded Warriors Action Foundation. No other info. **Please contact Secretary if you know anything of his duties in 367th. Thanks!**

Michaelis, 'Mike' Robert E (369th Sq engineering officer), born in CO (of a father from Germany and mother from IN, per the 1930 Census) and resident since Mar 54 of the greater Washington DC area, died 28 Apr 00; 79. He reported 13 Sep 43, and was with the Bill Hilton crew in Aberdeen, Scotland when the 'Hilton_bill_2' photo at our website 306bg.us was taken; it includes our active vet Philip Mundell. Though his departure date is unknown,

Frank Phillips succeeded him as 369th Sq engineering officer. Post-war he earned his Metallurgical Engineering BS and did post-grad work at CO School of Mines, Golden, CO. The US National Register of Scientific & Technical Personnel Files (indexed at FamilySearch.org) indicate he was employed by the Federal gov't including Armed Forces, not on active duty; and was member of the American Institute of Physics. Unfortunately his 1st class mail was returned in 07 'Unable to Forward' so he was lost to the 306th since. He was predeceased by Beatrice in 94; their marker bears Christian crosses for both of them at Parklawn Memorial Park & Menorah Gardens, in Rockville, MD. No further info.

Myllykoski, 'Bob' L [Leo] Robert, 423rd radio operator (Norman Armbrust) and POW, originally from OH, who moved to Sebastian, FL from Riverdale, GA in the '80s, died 21 Nov 12, at 93 at Sebastian. He reported 4 May 43 with Jim P Leach who was detached to another group in the first month, at which time Armbrust led the crew. After they were downed 26 Jul 43 (Hannover), Bob was POW at Stalag 3B Furstenberg, Brandenburg, Prussia per the POW index. Post-war he was a Master Electrician for Dow Chemical and Owens Corning Fiberglass until retirement. In FL, he was Charter Member of Christ the King Lutheran in Sebastian; member of Ex-POW group (Cocoa, FL), VFW, and American Legion. Survived by his wife Lillian, 2d, 5gc, 3ggc; celebration of life was 26 Nov 12 at his church; buried at Arlington National Cemetery 4 Oct 13; memorials to the church.

Nahmias, 'Greek' 'Lee' Leon, 369th tail gunner (Kenneth Streun and Boylston B Lewis), born in lower east side Manhattan, NY, one of 14 children of Greek immigrant Jews, died of complications from pneumonia 30 Dec 15 in Menlo Park, CA at 90. With Streun, 'Greek' (as he introduced himself to crew mates) reported 11 Dec 44. After Streun and the crew's original navigator, Lewis Wilson were KIA 1 Jan 45 (plane disappeared over the North Sea returning from Magdeburg with the experienced crew of Robert Stewart), Lee and the remaining crew began their combat missions, mostly with BB Lewis. Lee, 1 of 3 then-surviving crew members, responded in 00 to my letter seeking crew mates of my uncle (Alfred Lubojacky), calling 55 years to the day after their downing. On 1 Mar 00 he (with his wife Judy) talked at length with me at the home of their elder son in L.A. during their CA trip, sharing stories of Al, the crew's training and time together, and their last mission. On 14 Feb 45 (Dresden), over what is now northern Czech Republic, all parachuted before the plane, engulfed in flames from attack, exploded; the empty plane's wreckage crashed near Lazne Belohrad, close to village homes at Hridelec [at 306bg.us under 'Education' and then 'Histories of 306th...planes' see Memorial to plane 42-297185 and crew]. Lee had difficulty exiting the plane with severe shrapnel injuries in his limbs, including loss of use of one arm. Locals turned him over to the SS who, knowing him to be a Jew, tortured and questioned him extensively. Even after reaching POW locations (per the

POW Index, Dulag Luft 12; last, per Lee, at Stalag Luft 7A) his injuries went untreated by the Germans. Stateside again, after much rehab to gain use of his arm, he used the GI Bill to attend Long Island Univ, where a few years after the war he told his crew mate he had to drop out due to stress (now called PTSD). He then learned watch repair and jewelry making skills. He married in 48. In 54, he became a self-employed jeweler in NY, opening Lee's Jewel Box in Whitestone, NYC; he and Judy ran the store together. All 4gc spent summers in NY with grandparents, time that included fond memories by a gs of working with Lee in the store where he obviously was a much-respected community member. His Rabbi and friend for 50+ years spoke of his service when president of Free Synagogue of Flushing, NY, orchestrating pay-off of its mortgage. After 58 years, Judy died 6 Jul 06 in NYC. He moved to CA, living alternately with his sons until 11 when moved to the V.A. in Menlo Park where additional needed care could be provided. There, he and family (with 2ggc), enjoyed his 90th birthday. Survived by 2s, 4gc, now 4ggc (and surviving crew mate McChesney, whose oral history interview is now part of the re-done B-17 display at Duxford, England's newly-reopened American Air Museum).

Ness, Andrew H, 369th flight engineer top turret gunner (Harvey Ryder), of Falls Church, VA died 2 Dec 2015 at 92. With Ryder, he reported 13 Dec 44. He completed 30 missions and continued in the Casey Jones Project, departing 25 Sep 45. Talking with the Secretary in 10, he relayed "After one hectic mission which took us 3 days to get back to our base, with no showers, no shaving, and so on, we dubbed ourselves Ryder's Raunchy Raiders; we smelled a bit. No one at Thurleigh knew what had happened to us; we arrived as they were preparing MIA papers to send to our relatives; thank goodness they were never sent." When he'd enlisted at Kalamazoo, MI in Dec 42, he had a year of college. Post-war he married Jean in 47; earned his BA at Western MI Univ in 48; taught English at a school in the Kalamazoo area; and earned his MA at U of MI in 51. He explained that while at MI, he applied to the CIA; joined the Agency in 52; served in Pakistan, Thailand, Iraq, Kenya, UN, and Sudan; retired in 81; was back on contract until 04, after which was employed training Dept of Defense officers until completely retiring Jan 10. They were last at a 306th Reunion in 10 in DC. In Oct 14 he was working on a book re his years in the Agency, with a friend who wanted to publish it. Survived by his wife of 68 years, Jean; 1s, 1gd, 1ggd (and one crew mate, Mel Loes, tail gunner).

Perin, Eddie A [Allen], an Original and 369th propeller specialist, who lived most of his life in Priest River, ID, died 19 Feb 2016, at 93 in Newport, WA at Newport Hospital Long Term Care. While at Thurleigh he married Rachel in Glasgow, Scotland; they had a daughter; after the war they divorced, unable to stay together across the Atlantic. Stateside he married Eloise in WA and had 4c; Eloise predeceased him in 62. He worked as a mechanic at Priest River's Chevrolet Garage, and the Olson Lumber Co.

He was a long-haul truck driver until the early 60s when he joined Diamond Int'l Corp, starting in the woods, making roads, handling timber sales, and worked up to Woods Foreman; he retired in 92 enjoying tending his roses and yard, and hand-crafting wooden toys and furniture for his descendants. Earlier he was an avid hunter and fisherman; he enjoyed travel - to visit family in Scotland, and to gather with 306th pals, including Reunions in '84 Ft Worth, '85 CO Spgs, and '96 Las Vegas. Survived by 5c, 10gc, 14ggc. Buried at Evergreen Cemetery in Priest River, ID.

Rothstein, Murray, Group radar shop with specialty in maintenance, of New York, NY, died 27 Apr 15. He reported 3 Oct 44, having enlisted at 19 in Feb 42 with 2 years college, then single without dependents. He was discharged as S/Sgt in late Dec 45, so his work after V-E Day with the Group continued while it participated from Jun 45 in the then-Secret Casey Jones Project of aerial photographic mapping of Europe, Iceland, and N. Africa, working perhaps in Germany, or perhaps at Thurleigh until the base was closed in Dec 45 (when the remaining Group moved to Giebelstadt). In 47, he earned a Bachelor's in Business Administration at St Johns U in NY. He became a CPA with his own public accounting firm, retiring in '91. Predeceased by his wife Suzette (born in Antwerp, Belgium), in Apr 97 at 71; survived by 2d; buried at Valhalla, Westchester Co, NY. No further info.

Row, Harry S [Slack], 367th navigator (crews of Charles M Tell and Paul Martin), originally of Maringouin, LA and long of Baton Rouge, LA, died there 9 Mar 04 at St James Place Wellness Center at 81. He reported 15 May 44 with Tell; his 27 WWII missions included several with Martin's crew (after their original navigator, Art Trimble, suffered wounds that kept him from continuing). Row attended LSU and had 3 years of college when he enlisted in Nov 42 as Pvt in Air Corps. He graduated in industrial engineering at Texas A&M, where he was a member of Sigma Nu. Called back for the Korean War, he flew more than 50 missions, serving again with distinction. His career was as an Industrial Engineer. Secretary found no indication whether he married or further info. Buried at Roselawn Memorial Park & Mausoleum, Baton Rouge.

Trimmer, Henry C, 368th waist gunner (Clarence Halliday), of York Co, PA, died 22 Jun 11 at 87. He reported 8 Aug 44 and completed his tour; he is in the crew's photo at 306bg.us. He and Gloria were married 63 years. He retired from both Pennsylvania Railroad and McCrory's distribution center. He was member of St Patrick Catholic, Girard Club, Viking Club, and lifetime member of 13th Ward. Gloria, who was a machinist, retired from DENTSPLY and survived to Jul 14, at 83. As of Jul 14 they're survived by 6c, 13gc, 3ggc; buried at Holy Saviour Cemetery in Roundtown, York Co; memorials suggested to Hospice and Community Care, Lancaster, PA.

Vaughn, Watson R, 367th tail gunner, originally of WI, died 3 Sep 15 in Cathedral City, CA at 92. He reported 30 Jan 44 with a partial crew and completed his tour of missions. He was on Perry Raster's crew when they were

introduced to the Royal Family 6 Jul 44, when their plane, 'Rose of York' was christened by then-Princess Elizabeth. Post-war, in the Seattle, WA area he was co-owner of a large masonry restoration company. When he retired, Wat and Fran were snow-birds with a home in Cathedral City, CA, southeast of Palm Springs. They were members of Hope Lutheran Church of Palm Desert; and he was a member of Mission Hills and Date Palm Country Clubs. He was a life-long sports lover – an avid bowler, golfer, and exceptional baseball player from high school through playing semi-pro baseball post-war. He enjoyed golf until months before he died. Predeceased in 92 his first wife, Germaine, and in 11 by his second wife Fran, a daughter, and a granddaughter, he is survived by 1 d, 2gc, 1 step-d, 3 step-gc, many ggc. He is to be interred at Tahoma National Cemetery in Kent, WA.

Waugh, Francis 'Fran' L, 423rd photo technician in charge of all cameras of Thurleigh's photo section, died 11 Dec 06 at 88. He reported 1 Jul 43. *Echoes* Oct 76, p.2 quotes his explanation that in Thurleigh's first year the photo section lacked cameras for on-the-ground photos; Jan 83, p.12 has his full-page article about the photo section; Apr 89, p.3 speaks of his 5 Apr 83 flight (Antwerp mission) accompanying his buddy Mike Roskovitch on Rosky's 25th mission, and realizing the reason many radio operators had previously not properly timed on, or off, the aerial camera, leading to installing a solenoid in the bomb bay to automatically turn on and off the cameras; Jan 98, p.1 covers Waugh having been sent early 5 Feb to photograph the 4 Feb 44 RAF Drem, Scotland site of the 306th B-17 that crashed attempting to take off with only 3 engines, killing all six on board, two Brit service members, and four 306th men, who Waugh was dismayed to learn when identifying their bodies, included Rosky, experienced pilots Arthur G Moseley and Edward D O'Malley, and bombardier Woodrow S Ellertson; Apr 98, p.7 had Waugh speaking of his older brother in context of the then-contemporary decline of WWI veterans. We learn from Waugh's Card File entry that he contributed a German aerial Leica camera, purchased in Germany, to a place this Sept's Dayton Reunion attendees will visit, the USAF Museum, Wright-Patterson AFB, OH; and that his entire photo collection was contributed to 306th Group Collection. His widely-published wartime photo of Bob Hope can be seen at the beginning of his 81-page Correspondence file, at 306bg.us, under Education/Research, and then Archives, and then 306th BGHA Correspondence file. There in Waugh's 14 Sept 76 letter, we learn of his long post-war career as Information Officer and photographer for the CO Division of Wildlife, retiring after 30 years in 80. It is from that file that the Secretary learned of his death thanks to the May 07 handwritten letter from his wife of 56 years, Vernetta, who stated he was survived by her, 2c, 3gc; buried at Black Hills National Cemetery at Sturgis, SD.

Wesner, Kenneth, 367th radio operator (Don Kingsley crew), of Bethlehem, PA, died 23 Nov 15; 92. With Kingsley he reported 5 Feb 45, so would have continued in the Casey Jones Project, then Secret, of aerial mapping by photos of Europe and N Africa. He married Arlene in 44 before going overseas. His career was as a structural and civil engineering draftsman at Bethlehem Steel Corp for 34 years, retiring from its Mining & Projects Engineering Dept in 83. Afterward, he continued to work several more years in the same capacity for Lehigh Valley engineering firms. He was a member of American Legion; a Master Mason; former Chaplain of his lodge; a 32nd degree Mason in Scottish Rite; and member of the local Masonic High-Twelve Club. A former member of Emmanuel Evangelical Congregational Church in Bethlehem, he had served as its Director of the Youth Sunday School Orchestra; Sunday School Superintendent; on its Board of Trustees; in the choir; on its Dart Baseball team; in the Couplers Group; and as Vice Chair of the Building Committee. He was a member of Christ Church UCC in Bethlehem, serving as an usher; in the choir; member of its Senior Club; and on the Dart Baseball team. He was always very interested in sports, especially Philadelphia Phillies, and ran many bus trips to see them play. Predeceased by a dtr-in-law and 1gs, he is survived by his wife of 71 years, Arlene, 4c, 4gc, 1ggs; buried at Bethlehem Memorial Park Cemetery; memorials suggested to Christ Church UCC in Bethlehem or Wounded Warrior Project.

Wood, Wallace 'Winston' W, 423rd pilot, originally of Tyronza, Ark, died 29 May 15 at 93 in his long-time home of Laguna Vista, TX. The Secretary found his online TX obit thanks to Betty Neely, whose husband 'Jack' (John H, died in Nov 95) was Wood's ball turret gunner. Wood reported 7 Jul 44, completed 35-missions, and departed 11 Jan 45. Winston and Evelyn had married in Chico, CA in Jun 43, during his pilot training. Post-war, in Tyronza, AR he was a farmer and they reared their sons. In 69 they began visiting the Rio Grande Valley of TX in the winters; they became permanent residents in 80 initially on South Padre Island and in 94 in Laguna Vista. Also in 94 they moved to Holiday Island, AR for summer months. He was an avid fisherman in both places, and took up golf to join Evelyn and their sons. In Mar 15, Evelyn predeceased him. They are survived by 3s; 5gc; 11gpc. **Help please! At 306bg.us are 2 Winston Wood crew photos: the first one includes Will MacDonald as co-pilot. It shows an unnamed mechanic and an unnamed crew chief. If you can identify either or both of them, please alert the Secretary, as listed on page 2 of Echoes, or on leadership page at website. Thanks.**

Brief death listings for future website obits: *If you want more details for the following men, who have no known family or crew mates following Echoes, please contact the Secretary. When resources permit, all 306th men will have full obits posted at 306bg.us under the Obituary tab. The Secretary appreciates ALL obit info. See page 2 for contact information.*

- **Blotner, Joseph L**, 368th bombardier (William Moroz), later noted author, d.16 Nov 12, Oakland, CA; 89.
- **Dinkel, Christian A**, 367th navigator (Walter Peterson) and POW 24 Apr 44 (Oberpfaffenhofen), later on SDSU faculty, d.14 Dec 04, Brookings, SD; 82.
- **Gedney, Herbert D [Douglas] Jr**, 367th toggler gunner (Verlin Higginbotham), later chaplain AF Sgts Assoc, d.2 Sep 14, Salem, OR; 92.
- **Puskar, J [Joseph] Douglas**, 367th waist gunner (Richard Somerville), later had Doug Karr's All-Stars band at Silver Stope in Virginia City, NV, died 4 Aug 13, Reno, NV; 89; buried Evergreen Mem'l Gardens, Panama City, FL.

306th Family

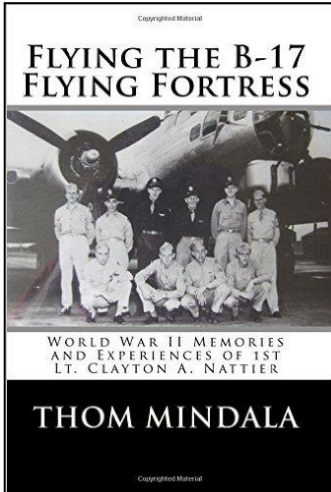


Griffin, Charlotte, widow of William 'Mickey' F Griffin [367th co-pilot for Charles Wegener on *Umbrigo*; and POW who died 2 Jun 14], a native of Germany, died in Tucson, AZ, 29 Oct 15, just weeks short of her 82nd birthday.

Many in the 306th have happy memories of Charlotte and Mickey at 306th Reunions, and of our time with this dear, vibrant, active lady during our England trip in June 15, when she proudly personally delivered Mickey's medals to Ralph Franklin, founder of the 306th Bomb Group Museum at Thurleigh. From England, she traveled on to Germany to visit many relatives, before returning to her longtime home in Tucson. There she was diagnosed with brain cancer. Charlotte generously shared stories of growing up during the war in Germany; of coming to America in 62; of her beloved second husband, Mickey; and of dishes she enjoyed cooking. She was a dental technician who owned her own business for many years, and an artist, working mainly in pastels and oils. She loved travel and was active with many friends in German Club, canasta group, and water aerobics. Survived by 1d, 2gc; memorials suggested to Tucson Medical Center Hospice.



306th BGHA Member Publishes Book Relating Father-in-Law's World War II Experiences



In a book entitled *Flying the B-17 Flying Fortress: WWII Memories and Experiences of 1st Lieutenant Clayton A. Nattier*, author/son-in-law Thomas Mindala narrates the wartime experience of this B-17 pilot. While his experience was not all that much different than so many others who went to war in those days, Clayton's personal experience was both

harrowing and improbable in places, yet he always describes himself as one of the lucky ones. The book includes details of his training experience, what it was like to fly the B-17, his crew, his missions, life at Thurleigh, the horror of getting shot down and becoming a prisoner of war, liberation and returning home, and his thoughts and experiences in the years since. The crispness and detail of Clayton's memory over 70 years after the fact is astonishing. The book also includes the author's thoughts about Clayton's experience and his example as a true hero and an amazing member of our Greatest Generation. The book is available from Amazon.com or by accessing the following link: <http://www.amazon.com/Flying-B-17-Fortress-Memories-Reflections/dp/1453602518>

Government Medallion Placement in Private Cemetery Authorized

In 2010, Veterans' medallions became available through the Department of Veterans Affairs, which can be affixed to existing privately purchased headstones or markers to signify the deceased's status as a veteran. These medallions are furnished upon request in lieu of a traditional Government headstone or marker for the veteran that died on or after November 1, 1990, and whose grave is marked with a privately purchased headstone or marker. The benefit is only applicable if the grave is marked with a privately purchased marker. In these instances, eligible veterans are entitled to either a traditional Government-furnished headstone or marker, or the new medallion, but not both.

Wanted:

Silent Auction Items

Do you have

- Artifacts from World War II
- Personal items from 306th veterans
- Books about World War II the 8th Air Force the 306th
- Pictures
- Other Memorabilia

If you have any items relative to the mission of our veterans that you would like to donate for our Second Annual Silent Auction, please notify Sue Moyer (ssma43@gmail.com) with a description of the item and a suggested minimum bid.

All items will be displayed in the hospitality room where reunion attendees will have the opportunity to review the items and place their bids.

Winners will be announced at the Saturday night banquet and payment transactions (cash or check made payable to the 306th Bomb Group Historical Association) will occur at that time.

Proceeds from the silent auction will go to the support of the 306th BGHA.



BOEING B-17G FLYING FORTRESS

The medallion is inscribed with the word VETERAN across the top with the Branch of Service at the bottom. Additional information is available at the VA website (www.va.gov) and by accessing VA form 40-1330M.

A word of caution: Be sure to check with the administrators at privately owned cemeteries prior to ordering the medallion. They may have some restrictions or they may have experiences with these medallions and can offer some suggestions. Remember – it is the veteran's grave, but it is not their cemetery. ■

