



# 306th Echoes

Educating and Communicating



B-17 Flying Fortress

## 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA and SSMA to Meet in SoCal for 2018 Reunion



Southern California, more specifically Orange County, is the site of the 2018 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA and SSMA Reunion, where the attractions are almost limitless. However, in keeping with the focus of the historical association, this year’s reunion promises to feature World War II related exhibits destined to broaden the educational understanding of the war effort for all who attend the three-day event: 25 thru 27 October 2018.



First on the schedule is a trip to Long Beach and the iconic *Queen Mary*, an extraordinary vessel rich in history, elegance, and grandeur. For three years after her maiden voyage, the

*Queen Mary* was the grandest ocean liner in the world. However, as World War II started, the *Queen Mary's* transformation into a troopship had begun. She was painted a camouflaged grey color and stripped of her luxurious amenities. Dubbed the “Grey Ghost” because of her stealth and stark color, the *Queen Mary* was the largest and fastest troopship to sail, capable of transporting as many as

16,000 troops at 30 knots. After the end of WWII, the *Queen Mary* began a 10-month retrofitting process, which would return the ship to her original glory. On July 21, 1947, the *Queen Mary* resumed regular passenger service across the Atlantic Ocean and continued to do so for nearly two more decades.

Saturday, reunion registrants will board a bus for a trip to the Lyon Air Museum in Santa Ana.

Founded by Major General William Lyon, the Lyon Air Museum is co-located with Martin Aviation, an award winning jet, turbo-prop, and piston-powered aircraft repair facility established in 1923 by famed aviation pioneer Eddie Martin.

The Lyon Air Museum exhibit is comprised of authentic aircraft, rare vehicles and related memorabilia, with emphasis on the defining event of the 20th century – World War II. Through captivating and thought-provoking exhibits based in historical scholarship, visitors gain a better understanding of the important role the United States plays in shaping world history.

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## Leadership

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DEBORAH CONANT (exp. 2020)  
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SUE MOYER (exp. 2018)  
WAYNE TOLMACHOFF (exp. 2020)

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CHARLES NEAL

Use the "click here" feedback line at the bottom  
of the [www.306bg.us](http://www.306bg.us) home page

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306<sup>th</sup> Museum Thurleigh  
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KEYSOE, BEDS MK44 2HP

*The 306<sup>th</sup> 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.*



## A Message from 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA 2017-2019

### President Bill Feeser

Plans for our 306<sup>th</sup> Reunion in Santa Ana, California, this October are well underway!

Reunion Chairman, Steve Snyder, has been able to put together an amazing adventure with tours of the one-time troop carrier for our boys going to England – the *Queen Mary* - and Lyon Air Museum, which houses the VIP B-17 that once carried then General Dwight D. Eisenhower. You



will have the opportunity to see an A-26 Douglas Invader, a C-47 Sky Plane, a Douglas DC-3, North American AT-6 used to train WWII pilots, and

a B-25 Mitchell. In addition, the museum's collection of U.S. and German military vehicles is of particular note.

I am especially looking forward to a presentation by our own immediate past president, Steve Snyder, author of the award-winning book, *Shot Down*. He has presented to other bomb groups, as well as community and military organizations around the country.

Please check out all the details in this edition of *Echoes*, complete your registration form [found on page 5 of this issue and at [www.306bg.us](http://www.306bg.us)] and call for room reservations at the affordable "306<sup>th</sup> BGHA" rate as soon as possible. If you are flying in, get those airline reservations made as well. One of the wonderful things about a reunion in Southern California is that you can extend your time there and take in myriad experiences.

If you have connected with the 306<sup>th</sup> through our internet website where many find information about their father's and grandfather's war records, or via our Facebook page where postings about the 306<sup>th</sup> abound - we hope that you will move beyond an internet connection to an in-person connection at this next reunion.

I first attended with my Dad and Mom in 1996 at Las Vegas, but I did not attend again until 2014 at Colorado Springs. At that reunion I had wonderful experiences, made great friends, and began to

understand just how important it is to remember, celebrate, and communicate the incredible service and sacrifice of a generation of brave men and women in order to inspire and encourage future generations to such greatness.

As you may already know one of the several commitments and goals of the 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA is to “Always Remember and Never Forget.” Fulfilling that commitment translates into sharing the amazing stories of service and sacrifice with the next generation.



Sharing with my grandchildren continues to be a great joy as they learn of their great-grandad, SSGT William H. Feeser’s WWII experiences. My youngest grandson,

Preston, at 5 years of age, proudly wears his 306<sup>th</sup> bomber jacket to school nearly every day. He is already asking questions about B-17s and flying.

If you know stories about your loved one’s service and sacrifice or have picture or treasures from them, find ways to share, celebrate, remember, and inspire.

One of the highlights of our reunions is the veteran’s round table where vets share their war experiences. Nearly as enjoyable is sharing the stories we know of them with one another at meals, over coffee, or while riding the bus to our excursions.

Each year I find new inspiration, new friends, and new discoveries. I hope you will too at Santa Ana this year!

*Bill*



*(Reunion - continued from page 1)*

The Mission of Lyon Air Museum is to provide a quality venue of inspiration where the stories of aviation’s past can touch the lives of its visitors through educational exhibits, authentic historical aircraft, and related memorabilia.

This 30,000 square foot hangar features a pristine collection of historic aircraft and classic vehicles from the World War II era. On exhibit some of the rarest operational aircraft and vehicles in the world. The B-17 Flying Fortress, *Fuddy Duddy*, was used as a VIP transport in the Pacific at the end of World War II. It once carried General Dwight D. Eisenhower who later became the 34th President of the United States. In civilian life, it worked as a fire bomber and was occasionally used for motion picture filming, flying on screen in movies such as the 1962 Steve McQueen movie, “The War Lover” and the 1970 blockbuster, “Tora Tora Tora.”

These exhibits are true pieces of living history and provide a wealth of knowledge that fascinates and inspires visitors of all ages.

Then, for some veterans, the second stop of the day will take them back to where it all began.



Santa Ana Army Air Base (SAAAB) was an air base without planes, hangars, or runways. It was a huge basic training camp where newly inducted soldiers, earmarked for the Army Air Forces, were given 9 weeks of basic training and then tested to determine if they would be pilots, bombardiers, navigators, mechanics, etc. From SAAAB, they went on to other bases for training in their specialties. The base was dedicated in March 1942 and grew rapidly as the need for pilots and aircrews skyrocketed. Turnover was rapid so that by the end of the year 23,470 soldiers had passed through SAAAB. By the end of 1943, that number jumped to 57,895.

The traditional Folded Wings Tribute, Veterans Round Table, and the General Meeting will be hosted on Friday.

Please refer to the reunion registration form found on page 5 of this issue of *Echoes*. ■

# Proposal to Develop UK Thurleigh Airfield into Planned Community Unveiled

It has come to our attention that a development is being planned for the Thurleigh Airfield, which may impact the future of the 306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group Museum in Thurleigh, England. In June 2016, St. Modwen, the UK's leading regeneration specialist and Motorsport Vision (MSV) Group, joint landowners of the airfield, submitted the *Thurleigh Airfield Vision* to the Bedford Borough Council – a proposal for a new settlement of 5,250 homes, which could deliver a minimum of 2,500 homes within the emerging Local Plan period 2019 – 2035.

The 306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group Museum in Thurleigh was opened on July 27, 2002, by proprietor/curator Ralph Franklin. Dr. Jonathan Palmer of Bedford Autodrome generously donated use of the building that houses the museum. In what was once a small arms ammunition storage building, and one of the few remaining original airfield buildings built during World War II, the museum is situated on the airfield and displays a large collection of artifacts assembled to re-create the activities and atmosphere of the airfield and surrounding area during the war years. Many of those artifacts were donated by our own 306<sup>th</sup> vets.



*Aerial view of Thurleigh airfield.*

While this development proposal moves forward, the 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA Board of Directors will continue to

liaison with our contacts and interests in the UK while monitoring the progress of the proposal. We endeavor to represent the rich history, connection, and interest our veterans, families, and friends of the 306<sup>th</sup> BG have with the museum and the surrounding Thurleigh community. Unfortunately, due to recent illness of museum proprietor Ralph Franklin, the museum will remain closed until further notice.

We will continue to provide relevant updates on our website, Facebook page, in the *Echoes* newsletter, and via the membership e-mail. Please feel free to contact Bill Feeser, 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA President, if you have any questions or concerns. Bill's contact information is on page 2 of this issue of *Echoes*.

To see a summary of the *Thurleigh Airfield Vision*, go to the following link:  
<http://www.thurleighairfieldbusinesspark.co.uk/downloads/thurleigh-airfield-summary.pdf>.

A copy of the New Settlement Proposal Summary Document, as well as further supporting documents, are also available at the link cited above.

The Local Plan process is anticipated to take several years to complete; it is estimated the plan will not be finalized until sometime in 2019. Following that process, a planning application for the development would be submitted. Further details are available at the following website:  
<http://www.thurleighairfieldbusinesspark.co.uk/new-settlement.htm>.

**Readers please note:** Our U.S. Association (i.e., 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA) does not own or control any aspect of the UK museum. We hope our voice, on behalf of our veteran heroes, is heard. It is our goal to be able to facilitate the long-term preservation of the museum's collection and the monument to the 306<sup>th</sup> that stands outside the building. ■



*A glimpse inside the 306<sup>th</sup> Museum in Thurleigh.*

**306TH BOMB GROUP HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION AND SECOND SCHWEINFURT MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION  
REUNION REGISTRATION FORM  
25 – 28 OCTOBER 2018**

**Embassy Suites Hotel Santa Ana Orange County Airport North, 1325 East Dyer Road, Santa Ana, CA 92705**

Group room rates (pre-tax): \$124 per night/Suite consists of 1 King and 1 pull-out Queen.

Breakfast and manager's evening reception included for hotel guests.

Please inform the hotel of any special needs (e.g., wheel chair accessible room) and/or any other special requests.

Contact the Embassy Suites Hotel directly to register at (714) 241-3800; ask for the "306th Bomb Group Historical Association" rate.

**DEADLINE FOR HOTEL RESERVATION IS SEPTEMBER 25, 2018**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, and Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ eMail: \_\_\_\_\_

*If there are two or more in your group, provide all Names/Guests and relationship to 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group and/or Second Schweinfurt Memorial Association. Attach a 2<sup>nd</sup> page if necessary.*

**NAME OF 306TH OR SSMA VETERAN YOU ARE ATTENDING IN HONOR OF:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Veteran's Service Assignment:** \_\_\_\_\_

**LIST ALL ATTENDEES IN YOUR GROUP (Please PRINT clearly)**

Name	Relationship to Veteran	1 <sup>st</sup> Reunion?	Arrival Date

	Cost (each)	# of People	Total
306 <sup>th</sup> or SSMA Veteran Registration Fee (No registration fee charged)	@\$0		\$0
All Other Participants (Registration Fee)	@\$50		\$
Thursday: Queen Mary Tour (Fee includes bus and tour; lunch in on your own)	@\$37		\$
Friday: General Meeting, Folded Wings Memorial, Veterans Round Table			
First Over Germany Buffet Dinner	@\$54		\$
The Honey Whiskey Trio entertainment			
Saturday: Lyon Air Museum and Heroes Hall, Santa Ana (Fee includes bus, museum tour fee, and boxed lunch at Santa Ana Army Air Base)	@\$37		\$
306 <sup>th</sup> BGHA/SSMA Banquet (typical attire: jacket for men; evening wear for women)	@\$52		\$
<i>For each person in your party, please make meal selections for the banquet</i>			
Chicken			
Filet Mignon			
Salmon			
Vegetarian			
Donation to 306 <sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association			
<b>Total Amount payable to 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association</b>			

EACH DAY all attendees will have the opportunity to network with World War II veterans and enjoy exhibits and archived 306<sup>th</sup> World War II memorabilia displayed in the Hospitality Room.

**Send completed form and check to:**  
Jennifer Mindala, 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA Treasurer  
3244 S. Lamar Street  
Denver, CO 80227  
Checks made payable to:  
306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association  
Memo Line: 2018 Reunion Fees



**Hotel Reservation Deadline:**  
**September 25, 2018**  
Questions?  
Contact Steve Snyder, Reunion Chairman  
eMail: [palmсны@gmail.com](mailto:palmсны@gmail.com)  
Cell: 562-355-0461

To become a 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA member or donate online, visit: [www.306bg.us](http://www.306bg.us)

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# Reunion Site Has Historic Past

[Editor's Note: The following information is extracted from an article that first appeared in the July 13, 2013 edition of the *Orange County Register*.]

The swamp-covered land on the lower portion of the Irvine Ranch was once thought to be useless. However, the marshy, salt watered soil created the perfect growing conditions for one of Orange County's leading agricultural crops in the early 1900s: the sugar beet.

By 1901, Orange County was the nation's leader in sugar beet production, and the Irvine Ranch was a major contributor. Samuel Armor's "History of Orange County, California" says Irvine had 2,300 acres of sugar beets in 1911. This acreage nearly doubled the following year.

James H. Irvine and partners formed The Santa Ana Sugar Co-Operative in order to process their sugar beet crop. Irvine provided the land and much of the money to build the factory at 1301 E. Dyer Road. The street was named to honor Ebenezer H. Dyer (1822-1906) who had built the first successful sugar beet factory in California and was considered to be the "Father of the American Sugar Beet Industry."



The sugar factory opened in July of 1912 at a cost of \$650,000. Two million bricks were used to construct the building. According to historian Tom Pulley and the Historic South Santa Ana website, the factory processed 70,000 tons of beets during its first season of operation and produced 2 million pounds of sugar.

The company name was changed to The Santa Ana Sugar Company in 1916. A year later, The Holly Sugar Company purchased 70 percent of the stock for \$2,250,000. The remaining 30 percent was held by James Irvine and was valued at approximately \$41M.

The once booming sugar beet industry declined sharply in the 1920s, and by 1926, the Holly Sugar Plant on Dyer Road was the last remaining sugar refinery in Orange County. The iconic plant continued production however, even as the local sugar beet acreage dwindled. For years, the Holly Sugar Plant was a local landmark. Its signature, "burnt sugar" smell is still a common sensory memory for many longtime residents.

Pulley notes that the last sugar beets grown in Orange County were harvested in 1973. They were grown on Irvine Ranch property, which was leased by Joseph Changala, the last beet rancher in the county. With sugar beet profits declining, the Holly Sugar Plant nearly closed its doors. Instead, the plant was retooled in 1979 and began to process raw cane sugar.

Faced with continued losses, Holly finally closed the Santa Ana facility for good in January of 1982. In August of 1983, the factory was razed despite the attempts of local preservation groups to prevent the demolition of the historic building.



Today, The Embassy Suites Hotel sets to the east of the Holly Sugar Company's former site. The building, clearly visible from the 55 Freeway, was designed to resemble the architecture of the old Holly Sugar Company plant. ■

# Reunion Information You Need to Know

**Hotel Parking:** Rate is \$12 per day

**Welcome Package:** When you arrive at the Embassy Suites Hotel, be sure to stop at the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association Registration Table near the Hospitality Room. Pick up your Welcome Package, which will contain your event tickets, badge, and reunion schedule.

**Wednesday Field Trip:** Come early to join us on Wednesday afternoon as some of us plan to carpool to one of two locations: (1) *USS Iowa* in Long Beach, or (2) the Richard M. Nixon Presidential Library in Yorba Linda. Space is limited and dependent upon the number of those with cars willing to drive to either sites.

**Extending Your Stay in Southern California:**  
For those contemplating an extended stay in Southern California, here are some suggested attractions in the area:

- Disneyland, Anaheim
- Knott's Berry Farm, Buena Park
- Richard Nixon Library, Yorba Linda
- Discovery Cube [Family/Children's Museum], Santa Ana
- Chapman Library, Chapman University, Center for American War Letters, Orange
- March Air Field Museum, March Air Force Base, Riverside
- Planes of Fame Air Museum, Chino Airport, Chino
- Long Beach Aquarium, Long Beach
- *USS Iowa*, Long Beach
- Universal Studios, Los Angeles
- Hollywood
- Ronald Reagan Library, Simi Valley
- Legoland, Carlsbad
- San Diego (Zoo, Sea World, and *USS Midway*), San Diego
- Palm Springs Air Museum, Palm Springs
- Palm Springs Aerial Tramway, Palm Springs
- Living Desert Zoo and Gardens, Palm Desert

**Suggested Dress Code for Saturday Banquet:**

Saturday night's dinner honors the men of the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group and the Second Schweinfurt mission. Group photos will be taken. Typical attire for this occasion is jackets for men, evening wear for women.

**California Weather:** Historical averages tell us the temperatures in late October indicate a high of 70<sup>o</sup> and a low of 59<sup>o</sup>.

## ***WANTED: Silent Auction Items***

*Do you have –*

- ✓ Artifacts from World War II
- ✓ Personal items from 306<sup>th</sup> veterans
- ✓ Books about World War II
- ✓ Books about the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force
- ✓ Books about the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group
- ✓ Pictures
- ✓ Other Memorabilia

If you have any items relative to the mission of our veterans that you would like to donate for our Fourth Annual Silent Auction, please notify Sue Moyer ([ssma42@gmail.com](mailto:ssma42@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 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association) will occur at that time.

Proceeds from the silent auction will go to the support of the 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA.





## From the Editor

### Preserving Family Heirlooms

by Nancy Huebotter

(Editor's contact information on page 2)

Preserving valuable family heirlooms, in anticipation of passing them down to future generations, helps keep the memories alive, provides insight into the lives of our family, and gives us a richer understanding of their history.

The 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association has made a concerted effort to preserve archival items relative to the bomb group and its veterans. For those concerned about safeguarding family treasures, here are some tips for preserving and storing old documents, photographs, and keepsakes.

1. Preventing damage or any further damage is key to preservation. Never do anything to an item than cannot be undone.
2. Before handling any item to be preserved, wash your hands to avoid transferring oils to paper. Work on a clean, flat surface.
3. Carefully unfold documents. Remove any staples, pins, paperclips, or other fasteners. If the paper seems brittle, allow it to relax gently as it absorbs moisture from the room. Do not press or force flat. Use a small spatula tool to fold gently back any creased corners.
4. Place documents and photographs in acid-free or archival plastic enclosure or folder.
5. Picture albums whose pages are of the old style black paper or the magnetic page photo albums are the enemy of preservation. To remove gently photos from the "waxy" pages, work a small spatula blade between the photo and the page. Slide regular dental floss under the photo and with a gentle back-and-forth sawing motion, cut through the wax.
6. Consider digitizing photographs and documents to enable viewing and sharing items without handling, which can cause damage.
7. Store documents in a controlled environment. That repository should be dark, not susceptible to major temperature and humidity, and accessible in a house emergency. Never store items in the basement, attic, or in an uninsulated garage.

A small investment in storing precious family documents will help maintain them for future generations.

For additional information regarding archival procedures, consult the National Archives website at [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov) and click on Preservation. ■



## Secretary's Column

by Barbara Neal

(Secretary's contact information on page 2)

### ORAL-HISTORY VIDEO INTERVIEWS of WWII VETERANS – where YOU are:

If YOU have NOT yet done a video oral history interview about your time in WWII, and are willing to have one recorded, please let me know. An experienced interviewer with the non-profit Witness to War Foundation was with us at our 2013 New Orleans Reunion. He recently told me their goal is to interview all living WWII veterans who have not yet been interviewed. Since then he has done interviews of THREE of our veterans in the New Jersey and New York area. He is willing to interview more of you, if you live near his 2018 areas of travel. He keeps me aware of his upcoming travels. Let me know please if you are interested. My phone and email address are on page 2 of each *Echoes*.

**MEMBERSHIP is FREE:** Thanks so much to those of you who HAVE already done a Member Registration for 2018. If you have not, please be assured – whether you were in WWII or are an interested non-WWII generation person – your interest NOW in 2018, is important to us and our educational purpose. You can easily do an online Member Registration directly now from the NEW "Link\_to\_on-line\_registration\_form" button in the center of our website home page at [www.306bg.us](http://www.306bg.us). IF you prefer to let us know by mail of your Member interest, there are two ways to complete this process: (1) use the Membership Registration Form on page 35 of this *Echoes*, mailing it to our Director of Membership Bruce Chase whose mailing address is on the form; or (2) let us know your interest in becoming a Member when you make a donation by indicating in a note to our Treasurer, whose mailing address is on page 2 of each *Echoes*. IF you need help registering your 2018 membership, I can assist you, so please call me on my cell phone.

**REUNION:** I look forward to seeing many of you again at this year's reunion in Santa Ana, CA, scheduled for 25 thru 28 October – AND to meeting you if this will be your first reunion. Welcome!■





**Donation Update:**

## **Your Dollars Sustain the 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA Mission**

The 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA does not charge membership dues. Because of this, your tax-deductible donations are needed to support the continuing education mission of our organization. Donations may be made online at [www.306bg.us](http://www.306bg.us) or by mail to the treasurer using the address on the form below. Many thanks to those of you who have submitted donations thus far in 2018. As of March 31, a total of \$2,286.36 has been received from 31 donors. **All** donations are greatly appreciated!

**DONATION FOR THE  
306<sup>TH</sup> BOMB GROUP HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION**

Make checks payable to:  
**306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association**  
Send to:  
Jennifer Mindala, Treasurer  
3244 S. Lamar St.  
Denver, CO 80227-5426

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Name**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Address**

**Telephone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to register as a member of the 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA or renew your membership with this current information, please initial here. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

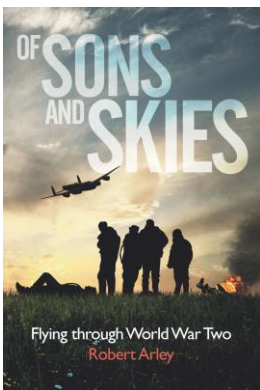


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## *Of Sons and Skies* Author Shares Book Excerpt



Robert Arley is a writer, producer, and director whose career has centered primarily in the British Broadcasting Corporation's television industry. While producing a film profiling World War II military veterans for the MoD Armed Forces Community Covenant, he was shocked by some of the information shared by interviewee Ted Miles. Miles, an ex-Bomber Command engineer, was assigned to the Lincolnshire air station. Mr. Arley confessed he had no idea so many men and their aircraft failed to return and questioned how he could have gone through life not knowing anything about the staggering statistics brought about by the war. As a result, he began to explore the war's harrowing times and decided not enough people knew about the difficulties of flying in those times. His studies lead him to believe that most aviation books are aimed at already committed aviation enthusiasts, so he drafted a manuscript for lay people – men, women, and children – to introduce them to the extraordinary demands and impact of aerial endeavors through those anguishing years.



The by-product of his research is a book entitled *Of Sons and Skies*, in which he sought to convey the daunting task of introducing his readers to the vast, complex, and challenging issues faced by airmen during the war years. He is determined to reach as many people as possible who know little or nothing about these

huge challenges and the tragedies that ultimately brought peace and prosperity to most of Europe.

In an effort to achieve his goal, Mr. Arley has shared an excerpt from his book entitled, "We Kicked Their Asses." If you are interested in obtaining a copy of his book, it is available through [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com). More information about the book is available at [www.ofsonsandskies.com](http://www.ofsonsandskies.com).

## *We Kicked Their Asses*

1944 was the year when the greatest quantity of American planes, airmen and ordnance took to the air, and when the U.S. Eighth Army Air Force based in East Anglia grew to be the single biggest aerial fighting command, with more machines and personnel than the R.A.F.

Not every American plane was perfect. Some engines had flaws that became exposed on long flights and in novice hands. Some U.S. pilots were given extra training in preserving their engines by not pressing them unnecessarily hard. The goal of the bombers was defined as getting at least 50% of their ordnance to land within 300 metres of targets. When faced with Luftwaffe fighter planes and dense anti-aircraft fire, this prospect was painfully challenging. One January mission saw 650 U.S. bombers trying to raid enemy aircraft factories; 60 lost in the process. Some German planes now deployed rocket launchers, able to disable a big bomber from a good way off.

The Americans needed more practice, better engineering, and kinder weather. They got a window of high pressure over Europe in the middle of February and made the most of it. 1,000 U.S. bombers took to the skies on a succession of days, aiming - with clear sight of the terrain below - to damage aircraft factories and facilities throughout the west side of occupied Europe. 200 U.S. bombers were lost during "Big Week." And through the nights, the RAF lost 200 planes while carpet bombing near those factories.

Roger Freeman's histories log heroic episodes when pilots were killed or injured and other crew members, peering through blood-splattered windshields, tried to bring back their craft in one piece. Returning American planes were vulnerable to Luftwaffe fighters lurking over the French coast. Two returners collided over Great Yarmouth, eliminating all 21 aboard.

Freeman records some remarkable survivals. One American airman lost consciousness in the bomb bay while trying to dislodge jammed ordnance. He came round when free-falling, and yanked his parachute open just in time to land in one piece. Another airman's plane blew up, throwing him alone clear. He was holding his

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parachute but managed to strap it on to his back and so slow his descent into a tree.

The USAAF's first trip to Berlin in March consisted of 31 planes of which five failed to return. Next outing to the capital was made up of 700 bombers escorted by even more fighters. 80 planes were lost. When so many aircraft travel together in close formation, some buffeting is inevitable. Turbulence, often caused by the aircraft ahead, combined with novice piloting could see planes collide. Sometimes both could head home with broken wings or tails; other times neither journeyed further.

Hairy exchanges saw many Luftwaffe defenders eliminated by the valiant gunners aboard the U.S. bombers, or by their escorting fleets of audacious fighters. Germany lost 40% of its western perimeter aircraft in the first six months of 1944. In one month, a quarter of all assigned Luftwaffe fighter pilots died while trying to resist the intruders.

Clusters of planes in bad weather might drift and lose a clear sense of their position. Some disorientated American aircraft released their cargo above urban areas in Switzerland. On discovering the errors, the USA government offered apologies and compensation to the neutral nation, but not before the tiny Swiss air force shot down several of the alarming visitors.

All American endeavours from East Anglia were scheduled to happen in daylight, but occasional long runs with late starts and route diversions meant some planes did not get back across the North Sea until after dark – which enabled some daring Luftwaffe fighters to follow them. One April evening saw fifteen German planes bring down nine “heavies” then damage nine more on the airfields, killing 38 American servicemen in the process.

The month of May saw a horrible mishap caused by bad weather: at take-off, one bomber failed to rise and instead rammed through fencing and crashed into the woods beyond, its full payload of ordnance aboard. In heavy mist, ground control signalled to halt further take-offs. The next plane, already half-way down the runway, braked and came to a stop. The following pilot did not see the order to wait and proceeded with his take-off, so hitting the stationary craft mid-runway. Twenty-

one crew died and it took three days to fill the cavity in the tarmac.

For D-Day, the Allies deployed more than 3,000 aircraft. Fearsome resistance was expected from the Luftwaffe, but it proved insignificant. Most German planes had been assigned to defend the Fatherland, and it took several days before they were ready to operate back in France.

Bombing front-line German defenders required the greatest of accuracy by Allied Air Forces. Of course, a proportion went astray. Perhaps most cruelly, one bomb exploding amongst Allied troops might indicate to the pilots behind that this was the required destination and so further ordnance was delivered there.

The month of June saw the highest number of American sorties from Britain in the whole war: around 30,000. Whilst German aircraft factories, despite their pummelling from above, were still turning out formidable quantities of machines, the training programmes for German pilots were becoming briefer, often due to fuel shortages caused by the American assaults on oil plants. Goering was desperate for a positive public relations story and aspired to see at least one hundred U.S. planes being brought down by his flyers in a single day. The master-mind threatened his crews that failure would have them flung into the army for service on the Russian front. Hermann's gruesome ambition did not come about, though on one occasion 25 USAAF bombers were shot down by 90 Luftwaffe fighters in just three minutes, and on another day a total of 73 U.S. fighters were lost.

By July, the “Mighty Eighth” was mustering more than 1,000 bombers protected by fighter escort fleets of 700. The raiders would head for a variety of destinations to dilute the defence effort, much of it now staged by novice German fighter pilots with only a few weeks of combat experience.

A test flight over Lancashire brought about the worst UK air crash in the war: a Liberator was overwhelmed by bad weather and came down on a village school, killing 23 adults and 38 children, mostly from the fires generated by 3,000 gallons of gasoline.

During the autumn, U.S. planes began to encounter the devilish new German jet fighter - which could zoom through the sky but was menacingly difficult to manage. Rattled Luftwaffe

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users complained that they struggled to get the roaring beasts to slow down enough to tackle a viable landing.

Meanwhile, American and British fighter pilots started to wear special high pressure suits which stabilised the blood flow in their bodies when in the midst of high speed turns, hence overcoming the repercussions of the G-forces that could cause an airman to pass out.

Reach into German territory was eventually enhanced by additional fuel tanks fitted below U.S. fighter wings. Rather than carrying just enough juice for the planned trip, the tanks were filled and, when an opportunity arose, were dropped still half-full on an enemy airfield or railway station, so the pilot could then fly over again to strafe the large, reinforced-paper capsule and set it on fire. Many fearless and fast-thinking American fighter pilots deployed sophisticated teamwork. One guy saw a colleague's craft descend to earth behind enemy lines. The mobile airman swiftly landed in an adjacent field to pick up his pal for a lift back to base.

The most daunting challenge for the Americans were punchy flak batteries deployed around prospective targets. A quarter of all bombers were at some time hit by flak, causing on average one in twelve to crash mid-mission. But in case you might imagine that every German anti-aircraft crew were a superbly-functioning killing machine, consider the following: one disgruntled flak operative was accused by his officers of failing to follow orders. He was brought before a tribunal which determined that the shoddy fellow should be executed. However, the German judicial system allowed a guilty party to choose their method of death. So the prisoner - continuing to be awkward - requested a firing squad of anti-aircraft guns. Hence he was chained into the top of a tall wooden turret some distance from a flak battery and the crew were told to fire at him. His ex-colleagues took pot shots intermittently but none of the shells struck as required. Perhaps the defiant offender had a bit of wriggle room on his platform. He died of starvation three weeks later. This German's ass had not been kicked, unlike many, many thousands of his fellow servicemen. ■



## More Fighting Scouts from the 306th

The Winter/Spring 2017 issue of *Echoes* includes an article about the 8<sup>th</sup> AAF Fighting Scouts, whose mission was to check for Anti-Aircraft (flak) sites, weather conditions, and Luftwaffe interceptor airfields. Brave young men assigned to this experimental aerial group were lead bomber pilots who, after completing their tour with the bomb groups, were retrained to fly P-51s and to precede heavy bomber formations over Occupied Europe and Nazi Germany. These flights were a way to gather real-time intelligence prior to the bombing missions being flown that day.

Captain Dale Briscoe, featured in that issue, was not the only Fighting Scout from the 306<sup>th</sup>. Lt. Robert H. Wood, pictured in the cockpit of a P-51, also transitioned to the Mustang and flew missions with both the 364<sup>th</sup> and 356<sup>th</sup> Fighter Groups of the 1<sup>st</sup> Scouting Force from February to July 1945.



*1<sup>st</sup> Lt Robert H. Wood*

Then there was another 306<sup>th</sup> veteran that joined the Fighting Scouts – 368<sup>th</sup> pilot John J. Allen. He flew with the 384<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron/364<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group. While flying a scouting mission on 3 February 1945 in P-51D serial number 44-13686, he was shot down, crash landed, and was taken prisoner. He was put in a French hospital where he would later die of diphtheria.

If you know of any other Fighting Scouts from the 306<sup>th</sup>, please notify historian Cliff Deets by sending an email to [cldeets@att.net](mailto:cldeets@att.net). ■

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# Keeping the Shades Up On Our Window to the World

by Charles Neal

We second generation admirers of the greatest generation are advancing seniors ourselves. Now being in my eighth decade I am fortunate enough to still be able to help the association extend and modernize our educational efforts thru the website ([www.306bg.us](http://www.306bg.us)) that I believe is essential to preserving the contributions and lessons, as well as memories of our vets. Rewriting the initial student version, enhancing and maintaining our website has been a very time-consuming and challenging labor of love. Granted, I have not been very efficient because until four years ago I had never written code in HTML or scripts (in other computer languages) that create the website. Someone trained in modern computer coding techniques would have been (and could be in the future) far more efficient. I realize our site is not “modern” looking; however, I have focused on making available the large amount of content we have rather than the aesthetics of our site. This has only been possible by a relatively few dedicated volunteers (thank you) who have also contributed many hours indexing our scanned content.

I hope to continue “for a while” as your volunteer webmaster to get the site to a point where the task becomes one primarily of maintenance. Maintenance consists of adding new index files, that our volunteers (thank you again) also spend hours producing, and performing transitional coding changes sometimes required as technology renders some code obsolete.

“For a while” is not indefinite, and we need to plan for maintaining the website into the future. We do not want the many thousands of volunteer hours to go to waste, or see a powerful educational website fade away. Elsewhere in this issue and on the website, you should note the concern we have regarding the 306<sup>th</sup> museum in the UK. It has not been open for many months, and its future is uncertain. Our association does not own or control the UK museum and its future; however, we do own and control our website.

We can avoid a similar issue with our website if we plan now and volunteers emerge to execute our plan. The sooner the better as we currently have no backup webmaster should I become suddenly

unavailable. We need to recruit a volunteer or pay some person or organization to assume the role of assistant webmaster, and at some point, take over as webmaster.

YOU our readers, members, and site visitors will determine our future. I believe we need to establish a revenue source or a fund to finance paying for future website maintenance even if we find a volunteer to follow me. Future financing is insurance for the future, and there are businesses that perform website services for reasonable fees. Our board of directors must make any decision regarding funding and possible solicitation of donations for that purpose.

Regardless of any potential future fundraising, someone among you may be able to help now. Is there anyone among you who will consider volunteering to be an assistant webmaster? If so, please let me know (see contact information below).

In addition, if more of you volunteer to do indexing (it does NOT require technical or computer expertise) it will shorten the time to make all our records easily accessible and get our website to the maintenance only state.



## 306bg.us – what’s new:

We continue to receive more individual histories containing interesting stories. In addition, we continue to add new index entries to the database, allowing visitors to more easily find documents concerning their vet of interest via our search function. The BIG recent enhancement is to the “search all” function that now provides a link to the mission reports found by the search. This is added to the similar capability when the search finds Russell Strong index cards, correspondent files, special orders, and obituaries. The same capability will soon be added for Missing Air Crew Reports (MACRs).

**Contact me**, by clicking the feedback link at the bottom of the 306bg.us homepage. ■

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# Women Ferry Pilots: Some of World War II's Under-Recognized Heroes

In 1942, as the country reeled from the attack on Pearl Harbor, trained male pilots were in short supply, and they were desperately needed to fight the war. To compensate for the manpower demands of the military, the government encouraged women to enter the workforce to fill both industrial and service jobs supporting the war effort.

There was also a critical need for pilots to deliver newly built trainer aircraft to flight schools as well as transport combat-bound aircraft across the country for overseas deployment.



*Jacqueline Cochran*

Henry H. "Hap" Arnold, Commanding General of the Army Air Forces. Ms. Cochran was restless and was anxious to strike a blow against the Axis powers. Initially, allowing women to become involved in the war effort was met with resistance, so her proposal was dismissed.

Not one to be deterred, and driven to develop a plan of action, Cochran traveled to England where she joined the British Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA), which was actively recruiting women. At the suggestion of Arnold, Cochran recruited 76 of the most qualified female pilots to join her. Arnold knew women were being used successfully in the ATA, but he wanted first-hand information regarding its activity. He needed to be convinced that women pilots were the solution to his staffing problems.

Cochran had used her association with the President and Mrs. Roosevelt to lobby Arnold to

reject any plan that did not commission women, and set up an independent organization commanded by women. Arnold promised Cochran that no decisions regarding women for the USAAF would be made until she returned.

Cochran and her 76 pilots found that qualifications were high and the washout rate was even higher. Despite meeting the initial qualification of a minimum of 300 hours flying time, only 25 women passed the tests and were accepted in the ATA.



*Nancy Harkness Love*

While Cochran was in England, another American aviatrix was proposing a plan of her own. In May 1940, Nancy Harkness Love wrote to Col. William H. Tunner of the Ferrying Division of the Armed Air Forces with a similar idea regarding the role of female pilots, but again, the Armed Forces were not ready to put women in the cockpits of its planes. In September 1942, however, all that was changing. Tunner, who was in charge of the Air Transport Command (ATC) and tasked with acquiring civilian ferry pilots, realized the number of available male pilots was painfully low. To compensate for this lack of personnel, he decided to integrate the civilian force with a group of female pilots. Unaware that Arnold had previously shelved such a proposal, Tunner became convinced of the feasibility of such a program after speaking to Love.

By mid-summer of 1942, Arnold was willing to consider prior proposals seriously and ultimately Tunner received Arnold's blessing, the impetus of which stemmed from the publication of a newspaper article in which Eleanor Roosevelt suggested the use of female pilots to ferry planes to various stateside locations should be considered. Soon after General Arnold authorized the formation of the Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS) under the direction of Nancy Harkness Love.

When Cochran returned to the United State in early September, as the new organization was being publicized, she immediately confronted Arnold for an explanation. Arnold claimed ignorance of her

plan and tried to place the blame on others. With the publicity involved, the WAFS program could not be reversed. Unable to bear the idea of someone else shepherding “her” vision, Cochran mounted a campaign, pressing the military to revisit her original proposal. In the end, Cochran’s training proposal was also adopted. As a result, Cochran’s and Love’s squadrons were thereby established separately.

Though rivals, the two programs, and their respective leaders operated independently, and without acknowledgment of each other until the summer of 1943, when Cochran pushed aggressively for a single entity to control the activity of all women pilots. Tunner, in particular, objected on the basis of differing qualification standards and the absolute necessity of the ATC being able to control its own pilots. Nevertheless, Cochran’s preeminence with Arnold prevailed, and in July 1943, he ordered the programs merged, with Cochran as director. The WAFS and the WFTD were combined to form the Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP). Love continued with the program as executive in charge of WASP ferrying operations.

Cochran’s experience in Britain with the ATA convinced her that women pilots could be trained to do much more than ferrying. Thanks to Cochran’s lobbying efforts to expand expanded flying opportunities for female pilots, Arnold sanctioned the creation of the Women’s Flying Training Detachment (WFTD), headed by Cochran.



A cadre of American women left homes, families, and jobs to risk their lives as the country’s first female military pilots. The WASP training spanned 19 groups of women: WAFS led by Nancy Love, and WFTD training led by Jacqueline

Cochran’s first of 18 classes of women pilots. They were required to complete the same primary, basic, and advanced training courses as male Army Air Corps pilots, and many of them went on to specialized flight training.

By example, Love won the right for women ferry pilots to transition to increasingly more complex airplanes. Love was checked out on 23 different military aircraft and became the first woman to fly several of them, including the B-17 Flying Fortress.

The WAFS each had an average of about 1,400 flying hours and a commercial pilot rating. They received 30 days of orientation to learn Army paperwork and to fly by military regulations. Afterward, they were assigned to various ferrying commands.

Women, unlike men, faced some duty restrictions. No woman was assigned to flying duty when pregnant and women were not to fly one day prior to through two days after their menstrual period. The restriction meant a wasteful eight or nine days of non-flying time each month per WAFS.

While the WAFS began their ferrying duties, Jackie Cochran was organizing the WFTD and began recruiting classes of women pilots. They started training at the Houston Municipal Airport on November 16, 1942, as part of the 319<sup>th</sup> Army Air Force Women’s Flying Training Detachment (AAFWFTD). This was just after the WAFS had started their orientation in Wilmington, Delaware. Unlike the WAFS, the women that reported to Houston did not have uniforms and had to find their own lodging. There was an insufficient administrative staff, and a hodgepodge of aircraft – 23 types – for training. As late as January 1943, when the third class was about to start their training, they were described as “a raggle-taggle crowd in a rainbow of rumpled clothing” while they gathered for morning and evening colors.

As a combined group, each WASP had a pilot’s license. They were trained to fly “the Army way” by the U.S. Army Air Forces at Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas. More than 25,000 women applied for the WASP, and fewer than 1,000 were accepted. After completing four months of military flight training, 1,074 of them earned their wings and



became the first women to fly American military aircraft.

While the WASPs were not trained for combat, their course of instruction was essentially the same as male aviation cadets. The WASPs thus received no

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gunnery training and very little formation flying and aerobatics, but they went through the maneuvers necessary to be able to recover from any flying position. The percentage of trainees eliminated compared favorably with the elimination rates for male cadets in the Central Flying Training Command.

After training, the WASPs were stationed at 122 air bases across the U.S., assuming numerous flight-related missions, and relieving male pilots for combat duty. They flew sixty million miles of operational flights from aircraft factories to ports of embarkation and military training bases. They also towed targets for live anti-aircraft artillery practice, simulated strafing missions, and transported cargo. Women in these roles flew almost every type of aircraft flown by the USAAF during World War II. Between September 1942 and December 1944, the WASP delivered 12,650 aircraft of 78 different types.



In her final report to Army Air Forces General Arnold in 1944, Cochran wrote, “It was of importance to prove that a whole group of women, without special selection except for physical requirements, could be assigned to the Fortresses or the B-26s or the B-25s, pass through their transition training as successfully as male pilots and thereafter carry on regularly in operations without undue fatigue or higher-than-normal accident rate.”

While legislation giving women pilots complete military status waited for Congressional approval, WASP trainees were accepted as federal employees on temporary Civil Service status, so they did not

qualify for flight pay or other standard military benefits.

Each member, personally, paid for her own transportation costs to training sites, for her dress uniforms and room and board. Although attached to the U.S. Army Air Forces, the members could resign at any time after completion of their training, although few, if any did.

Thirty-eight WASP fliers lost their lives in accidents while serving with eleven dying during training and twenty-seven on active duty missions. Because they were not considered part of the military, under the existing guidelines, a fallen WASP was sent home at family expense. Traditional military honors or note of heroism, such as allowing the U.S. flag to be placed on the coffin or displaying a service flag in a window, were not allowed.

At WASP graduation ceremonies in 1944, Arnold presented the WASP with a bronze plaque dedicated to the “Best Women Pilots in the World.” He told the new graduates that women pilots could do everything needed, short of combat.

However, by February 1944, plans for the coming invasion of Europe shifted the military emphasis to ground troops. Thousands of men in Air Forces training programs, including the Civil Aeronautics Administration’s War Training Service Program and the contract schools for cadets, were dismissed. They were no longer eligible for the draft-deferred status many held as reservists and would likely be drafted into the infantry. These pilots lobbied Congress to squash House Bill 4219, designed to grant the WASP full military status, and with it, insurance coverage, hospitalization and burial benefits, and veteran status.

The Military Service Committee agreed with Arnold that the WASP should be commissioned. However, the powerful Civil Service Committee claimed Congress never authorized the formation of the WASP and voted to discontinue the program. On June 21, 1944, the bill was defeated by 19 votes.

On October 1, 1944, each WASP received a letter from Arnold saying that all the Women Airforce Service Pilots would be released December 20, 1944. At bases across the United States, WASPs hung up their parachutes and paid their own way back home.



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“I salute you and all WASP. We of the Army Air Force are proud of you and we will never forget our debt to you,” Arnold told the last group of WASP at Sweetwater. The WASPs had completed its mission. Their job had been successful. But as is usual in war, the cost had been heavy.

Yet America did forget.

For 35 years all records of WASP service at the air bases were classified and sealed making their contributions to the war effort little known and inaccessible to historians. In 1975, under the leadership of Colonel Bruce Arnold, the son of General Hap Arnold, along with the surviving WASP members organized as a group again and began what they called the “Battle of Congress.” Their goal was to gain public support and have the WASP officially recognized as veterans of World War II. In 1977, the records were unsealed. Due to the lobbying efforts of the WASPs, Congress passed legislation, *P.L.95-202, Section 401, The G.I. Bill Improvement Act of 1977*, which stipulated service as a WASP would be considered “active duty” for the purposes of programs administered by the Veterans Administration. Honorable Discharge certificates were issued to the former WASP members in 1979, and in 1984, each WASP was awarded the World War II Victory Medal. Those who served for more than one year were also awarded American Theater Ribbon/American Campaign Medal for their service during the war. Many of the medals were accepted by the recipients’ sons and daughters on their behalf.

At long last, efforts and sacrifices of a talented and courageous group of women were accorded (retroactive) status as military veterans. Certainly, they have inspired the Air Force women who now follow in their footsteps. The unknown, gutsy women of the World War II Army Air Forces at last occupied their rightful place as the first female military pilots in America.

However, additional recognition was yet to come. The 1977 legislation did not expressly allow WASPs to be buried in Arlington National Cemetery. That was because Arlington National Cemetery, unlike most other national cemeteries, is administered by the Department of the Army, not the Department of Veterans Affairs. The Secretary of the Army determines eligibility for Arlington burial. The reason for the position taken by the

Army on this issue may have been the rapidly diminishing space at Arlington. But in 2002, the Army re-considered and decided that deceased WASPs were able to be buried in Arlington National Cemetery. In 2015, however, the Army re-interpreted the law and its own regulations against the backdrop of thirteen years of war, which once again threatened to deplete the cemetery of land. The Army ruled that the 1977 statute did not mandate the burial of deceased WASPs at Arlington. Legislation in 2016 seemingly overruled the Army’s interpretation, and it was widely reported that WASPs could “again” be buried at Arlington. The 2016 law revived the long held concern about limited space at the cemetery. Thus, the legislation in the 114th Congress provides only for interment of cremated remains and not ground burial.



These 1,074 Women Air Force Service Pilots flew wingtip to wingtip with their male counterparts and were just as vital to the war effort. Because of the pioneering and expertise they demonstrated in successfully flying military aircraft, the WASP records showed that women pilots, when given the same training as male pilots, were as capable as men in non-combat flying. ■

[Excerpts from the March 2008 edition of *Boeing Frontiers* were used in compiling this article.]

# Individual Deceased Personnel Files: Key Research Tool for Those Killed in World War II

According to an article written by Jennifer Holik, a nationally recognized World War II research specialist, one of the most important files any researcher needs to access when investigating the life and death of a soldier, sailor, or Marine who was killed in action or died in World War II is the Individual Deceased Personal File (IDPF). These files document the death, burial information, and final internment details for those Killed in Action (KIA).

IDPFs are a rich source of genealogical information that can complement other record material pertaining to military service. No two records are alike: each is as unique as the individual they document.

The IDPF is a collection of documents created when a member of the military was declared Missing in Action (MIA) or died during the war (i.e., Killed in Action, died as a Prisoner of War, or Died of Wounds). These files contain a wealth of information about the individual, and records contain anywhere from 20 to 100 pages.

The individual deceased personnel files of U.S. veterans, which are housed at the National Archives, can be used as a tool for reconstruction of the Official Military Personnel File (OMPF), often known as the service file, most of which had been previously destroyed by the 1973 fire at the St. Louis National Archives facility where military records had been stored. The OMPF does not include the IDPF.

An IDPF usually contains information on the service of an individual, explanation of the cause of death, condition of the individual, details about the disposition of the deceased veteran's remains; location, time, date, and cause of death; location, time, date, and place of temporary burial (often an isolated grave or unknown location until after the war); letters from the military, Congressmen, and U.S. military organizations to the family; maps, search area testimony and documentation if the soldier was recovered from a crash site or not

located immediately; stateside service training locations and dates; and correspondence with the family regarding the burial of the veteran, and many other records that can help the researcher understand the military service of World War II veterans who became casualties during the war.

Declassified in accordance with D.O. 13526

WAR DEPARTMENT  
MESSAGEFORM  
Date: 18 January 1946

File No. HQ 40 258 Under HQ and L-9 (Butzbach) Germany Telephone No. Ext. 6617

Office of origin: AST, OJMS Memorial E & R Identification

Address: 3rd & T Sts. SW Washington, D.C.

To: Commanding General, American Graves Registration Service, European Theater Area, Versailles, France, APO 807, c/o Postmaster, New York, New York

PRECEDENCE

WIDE CO RATED: [ ] ESSENTIAL MILITARY MAIL

Urgent: [ ] Air mail

Priority: [ ] Special delivery

Routine: [ ] Ordinary

Deferred: [ ] Deferred

Work and: [ ] Immediate action X

Any message not X'd for precedence will be sent "Deferred."

MESSAGE: SUBJECT: Information required for Graves Registration

1. Reference is made to letter this office dated 18 October 1945, copy inclosed, to which reply has not been received.

2. It is requested that this office be informed of the status of the communication referred to in the preceding paragraph.

FOR THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL:

1 Incl  
cy ltr 18 Oct. 45

ARTHUR S. ROSEBARD  
3rd Lt., QMC  
Assistant

993/Barrow, C.H., 0-716290

W.D., A. G. O. Form No. 632  
March 15, 1945

Declassified in accordance with D.O. 13526

13. Give as detailed description as possible of condition and amounts of remains: all members of the body present. Body intact, flesh nearly all decayed from the body.

14. Give probable cause of death, type and location of wounds (if there evidence that body was burned):  
Probable cause of death unknown.

15. Give minute description of all effects, clothing and shoes, including clothes markings and sizes, as well as shoe size. List each item of clothing, with a description of any unusual cuts, design markings, pockets, colors, patches, etc. Also list, with detailed descriptions, all effects without intrinsic value, such as gun, food, soap, papers, letters, tobacco, etc. giving brands when applicable: leather flying jacket common type worn by pilots. These ripped away left breast. Green flighter's shirt and pants. These are rotten and falling apart. Both side markings still visible also 11 tool drawers and undershirt. These are rotten and falling apart. No shoes or headgear. Absolutely nothing found on remains or in pockets such as personal effects or matches, gun etc.

16. Give description of any vehicle found in the area that could be connected with the death of the deceased:  
No plane found.

(Type) (RD Serial No.) (Organization) (Serial No. and  
Type of each gun)

17. Give exact location of remains in vehicle before removal: Body not removed from a plane.

18. If buried in a coffin, give description and markings: Body not buried in a coffin.

19. List names of all other deceased persons buried in the vicinity. Also give available information concerning the cause and place of death of each that may assist in identification of these remains: This body was buried in a common grave with 23 other English and American bodies. Name not known.

A TRUE COPY:  
ARMY  
S.A. 18 WASH 1st Lt. QMC  
Copy to Cr. Eng Co.

20. Other pertinent information which would aid in establishing identity: Assand investigation revealed that the plane crashed on the 26 August 1944. The wreckage of the plane was taken away by German soldiers. The civilians said it was a four motor bomber.

Joseph B. Adams /s/ 33930537 1st Lt. Cr. Eng Co.  
(Inscribed in Charge of Disinterment) (Rank) (ASN) (Organization)

In addition to the strictly military-related records that can be a bit technical in content, there are often family and beneficiary records, all of which are valuable resources for those seeking military and genealogical research. Frequently the files include dependency records, paperwork on the next of kin and other family members, documents detailing the chain of the World War II veteran's remains. The correspondence found inside many IPDF casualty records can add a human element to the research process. These letters can often lead to intriguing details about the deceased veteran's World War II service and family life.

original records in a shorter period of time. Digital copies can be viewed exactly as they appear in their original form. In addition, hiring a reliable skilled researcher can actually mean a cost savings. The National Archives bills a per page fee; professional researchers often have a set price.

There are many researchers seeking IDPFs and many organizations and foundations that use the files to honor service men and women. One such foundation, the *Stichting Verenigde Adoptanten Amerikaanse Oorlogsgraven* (Foundation United Adopters American War Graves), runs the Fields of Honor Database in the Netherlands. The Fields of Honor Database has a mission to compile information and photographs, in their free online database, for all those buried or listed on the Wall of the Missing at ABMC cemeteries in Margraten, Netherlands; Henri-Chappelle, Belgium; and Ardennes, Belgium.

Declassified in accordance with D.O. 13524

WAR DEPARTMENT  
THE ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

—BATTLE CASUALTY REPORT

NAME AND ADDRESS OF S. A. Mr. Charles H. Evans (father)  
63 North Euclid Ave.  
Bellefonte, Pa.

NAME OF CASUALTY Mr. Charles H. Evans, Jr.  
RANK AND GRADE PVT  
SERIAL NUMBER 0716290  
DATE CAS. REPORT RECEIVED

PLACE OF CASUALTY KILLED IN ACTION  
IN GERMANY  
DATE OF CASUALTY 29 AUG 44  
CASUALTY CODE L U-1

REMARKS: A telegram sent special letter  
706 16 JUN 46

MEMO OIC SR AND D SEC APPROVED CHIEF OF CAS BR. KILLED NEAR GROSS GERAU, AFTER HAVING ESCAPED FROM A TRAIN ON WHICH THEY WERE BEING TRANSPORTED WHILE POW. SPECIAL DRAFT OF A CONFIRMING LETTER WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE APPROPRIATE LETTER SUB-SECTION; OPEN SEC. FINDING OF DEATH ISSUED PREVIOUSLY UNDER SEC 5, MISSING PERSONS ACT, SHOWING PRESUMED DATE DEATH: 27 AUGUST. THIS RPT OF DEATH, BASED ON INFO RECD SINCE THAT DATE, IS ISSUED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SEC 9 OF SAID ACT, ITS EFFECT ON PRIOR PAYMENTS AND SETTLEMENTS IS AS PROVIDED IN SEC 9. /ENL ASN 13087300/ Reports of death issued 15 June 1946 rs

ACTION BY COMPOSITE SECTION: REPORT VERIFIED [ ] FORM 43 [ ] AS SET REL. [ ]

PREVIOUSLY REPORTED: FILE NO. 706 0553

DISTRIBUTION: COPIES [ ]

Declassified in accordance with D.O. 13524

7 April 1949

Sgt IA Charles H. Evans, Jr., ASN 0 716 290  
File E, Row 19, Grave 16  
Headstone: Cross  
Margraten (Holland) U. S. Military Cemetery

Mr. Charles H. Evans  
63 North Euclid Avenue  
Bellefonte, Pennsylvania

Dear Mr. Evans:

This is to inform you that the remains of your loved one have been permanently interred, as recorded above, side by side with comrades who also gave their lives for their country. Customary military funeral services were conducted over the grave at the time of burial.

After the Department of the Army has completed all final interments, the cemetery will be transferred, as authorized by the Congress, to the care and supervision of the American Battle Monuments Commission. The Commission also will have the responsibility for permanent construction and beautification of the cemetery, including erection of the permanent headstones. The headstone will be inscribed with the name exactly as recorded above, the rank or rating where appropriate, organization, State, and date of death. Any inquiries relative to the type of headstone or the spelling of the name to be inscribed thereon, should be addressed to the American Battle Monuments Commission, Washington 25, D. C. Your letter should include the full name, rank, serial number, grave location, and name of the cemetery.

While interments are in progress, the cemetery will not be open to visitors. You may rest assured that this final interment was conducted with fitting dignity and solemnity and that the grave-site will be carefully and conscientiously maintained in perpetuity by the United States Government.

Sincerely yours,

E. WHELAN  
Major General  
The Quartermaster General

Caution should be exercised when referencing the IPDF. The IPDF provides information on military personnel for one moment in time. It usually does not contain the entire story, so researchers are encouraged to investigate other records to add to the information about the veteran.

By sharing a veteran's information with these cemeteries, researchers can help them accomplish this mission. ■

As indicated, the IPDF files are maintained by the National Archives. Obtaining copies of these files can often be very challenging and the wait time for receiving the records can be months. Often times the quality of the photocopies can be less than desirable, and the cost of obtaining the records can be formidable. An alternate method to procuring IDPF records is to hire an on-site reputable researcher who can provide digital scans of the

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*[Editor's Note: From time-to-time, descendants of our 306<sup>th</sup> veterans craft a story from the facts they have in combination with their imaginations. What follows is an account penned by James D. (David) Ellen, son-in-law of Norman A. Armbrust, a 423<sup>rd</sup> copilot/pilot. Norman was shot down 26 July 1943 over Hannover while on his 12<sup>th</sup> mission, becoming a POW at Stalag Luft 3A. This story is dedicated to him.]*

## ONE WAY OUT OF THURLEIGH

by James D. Ellen



Flight Officer Gustavus Bowmaker lifted off Thurleigh Field for the thirteenth time with a letter in his leather flight suit and a song in his heart. “Only twelve more missions after this,” he thought. Heck, he was halfway home.

Even First Lieutenant Borsch didn't bother Bowmaker today. Borsch outranked him, but the 8th Air Force assigned the left hand seat to the best pilots and Borsch didn't cut it. Borsch bitterly resented the farm-boy-without-commission who gave the orders in this B-17, and it showed. He wanted his own ship and imagined that the only way he would get it was to get out of Thurleigh. Until then, he tired of flying after fifteen minutes or so, and when the crew tried to bring him in to the fold by cutting his neck tie off like they did for every incoming officer on the ship, he fought them and got a nasty cut. Bowmaker could handle the extra flying, but the crew—the crew treasured its rituals and never forgave Borsch.

None of that mattered on this mission, number-thirteen, over-the-hump, downhill-from-here, home-by-Christmas mission. Flight Officer Bowmaker smiled, and gave the order to test fire the guns.

The gunners always enjoyed test firing. Some of them were farm boys too, and drew a good lead with a shotgun back in Idaho at the training grounds. Tiny Johnson, curled up in the ball turret, was best. Back in Idaho, he was so deadly with a shotgun that the training officer tried to keep him back to train new gunners. The 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force, mindful of the shortage of men who could both shoot and squeeze into the ball turret, ordered him to Thurleigh and let the second best gunner, a large man, stay in Idaho to train more gunners.

Bowmaker felt the Fortress shudder at the short burst from the guns and relaxed. No jams this time. Good. It would be a long flight, and flak would be thicker than pea soup over the target. . . .

Borsch's mood was sour, like spoiled soup. He had no letter in his pocket and no one to send him one from back home. When the British girl rebuffed his overture last night, he sulked in a bottle. It left him with a headache that woke up with him for the mission briefing, and clung to him like a leather flight helmet that was two sizes too small.

“Copilot to gunners: Knock off that firing, Dammit!” It was wasted breath. They were already relaxing, and the firing lived on only in his head. And oh, did it ever hurt.

Bowmaker nodded to Borsch and yielded up the stick for his customary tour of the ship before entering enemy territory. The short stretch felt good, even in the cramped confines between the bomb racks.

“Thank God I'm not tiny like Tiny!” he thought to himself, grateful that his size exceeded the maximum for ball turret gunners. The scarcity of small stature determined where farm boys flew, not the native feel for the stick that put Flight Officer Bowmaker in the left hand first pilot's seat.

He much preferred the cockpit of the Flying Fortress. Even if he had to share it with Lt. Borsch. The spoiled. . . .

For the moment, Bowmaker lost himself in reflection of the past few months.

*Spoiled soup was an apt description of First Lieutenant Borsch. “Soup,” in fact, was the friendly nickname given to him by the British liaison officer on his first day at Thurleigh. The Brit, whose parents had toured St. Petersburg, Russia*

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just before it was renamed Petrograd in a wave of patriotism at the start of the Great War, was raised on the tart soup they made from beet stock.

"I say, Lieutenant, is that borsch with tea or borscht with a 'T'? I'll take it either way," he said. He loved borsch and for him "Soup" was the perfect nickname for Lieutenant Borsch, who answered with a disagreeable grimace. Soon, it became obvious to all that the Lieutenant was indeed spoiled. But "Soup" stuck. Everyone, including his few friends, called him "Soup" to his face. "Spoiled Soup" was the understood conveyance of the name to those who had to fly with him.

The British liaison issued Flight Officer Gustavus Bowmaker a nickname too. A deeply religious man, Bowmaker was never without his Holy Bible. Variations of the Cross--embossed in gold on the cover--found their way into his constant doodling on every scrap of paper he could find around the barracks.

"Cross," said the Brit within earshot of half the American fliers at Thurleigh, "Stay out of my office! I can't spare any paper for your bloody doodling."

Flight Officer Gustavus Bowmaker's crew was merciless. They teased him so relentlessly that he finally drew a Cross in the form of a crossbow, and thereafter filled scraps of paper with drawings of the ancient weapon firing bolts into a caricature of Adolph Hitler. Suspecting that a fierce warrior spirit dwelled in the heart of their skipper, the crew finally let off their teasing.

"Cross" stuck on Bowmaker just like "Soup" fastened on Borsch. It was "Cross, would you open the bomb bay so I can take a leak?" "Cross, did you get another letter from your sweetie?" "Cross, how about a pass for the weekend?"

"Cross, let's paint a babe on the ship and call her 'Bare-able You!'" Cross put his foot down on that one. It didn't square with his Presbyterian scruples.

"Cross! Bandits! Ten O'Clock high! I got one, Cross!"

The crew slowly formed into a fighting unit, and Cross was its undisputed leader. All except "Soup." Soup Borsch was just as sour as ever.

Tiny complained that Lieutenant Borsch was always cranky but nobody called him cross. "Just call him 'Soup,' Tiny. I have to keep the peace

around here, and I don't want him any crankier than he is already."

Lieutenant Borsch applied for another transfer out of the base at Thurleigh, but "Cross" Bowmaker refused to send his request up to the CO. "I need a good co-pilot," he said, "You're it." Soup was not really a good co-pilot, but Bowmaker had learned on the farm to deal with his own problems. He wasn't about to inflict Borsch on somebody else.

Soup Borsch persisted. Each failure made him more sullen, but he kept repeating, "I gotta get out of Thurleigh!" Over and over and over again.

Reflection gave way to reality when well inside Germany a small sortie of Luftwaffe fighters attacked the formation. Machine gun fire ripped through the fuselage. Zip zip zip! Cross thought it sounded like the action of heavy zippers on their sheepskin flight suits. Zip zip! Two more German slugs sliced in and bounced off the racked bombs like hailstones in a cook pot left outside in a storm.

Hot brass casings from the waist Brownings littered the aft deck and rolled around like marbles. The tail guns and top turret guns were hot too. Tiny made two fighters pay dearly, but not before the lead plane lost an engine. The lead plane slowed ominously, and the entire formation was forced to drop a thousand feet to gain airspeed for the bomb run on Hanover.

Flying Fortresses in formation strike fear into the heart of the enemy on the ground, and that fear rises up in the form of blossoms of flak, blacker than coal dust. Flak bursts harmlessly below the Forts at 27,500 feet altitude, but the loss of a thousand feet gave flak an edge.

"Cross! Cross! Fire in Number Two!" Cross felt it before he heard the waist gunner's cry. He knew this feeling. It was familiar. For an instant in his mind, he was a boy back on the farm pushing sheep into the pen. An unruly buck sheep didn't take kindly to the lasso he had put around its neck—the Fortress felt like that, an unruly buck sheep on the end of a rope. Cross feathered the prop on Number Two.

A nauseatingly sweet smell reminiscent of burning carcasses back on the farm joined the faint scent of oily smoke from the wounded lead plane. This time, Cross knew, the smoke came from his

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own plane. He was too busy at the moment to appreciate the already legendary reputation held by the B-17's ability to absorb damage. One flak-hit plane had come in to Thurleigh with its waist guns blown away and the fuselage looking like a load of apple crates after a train wreck. Another landed after losing half its rudder, the left stabilizer, and two engines.

"Pilot to crew: hold steady for the bomb run," was all Cross said. "Bomb doors open." Then, "She's yours, Nord." Nord, the bombardier, got his nickname from the crew, who marveled at the Norden bombsight that no one but he understood.

Nord and the Norden bombsight did their best to fly the Fort steady, but it was an unruly buck sheep on the end of a rope. Finally, the gyros and adjustment knobs came together for an instant, and when the contact points met, Nord cried "Bombs Away!" The Fortress lurched as the bombs slid out of their racks into oblivion.

"Fire in Number Three, Cross!" Cross feathered Number Three. The buck sheep fought the rope. Cross held the course, but the ship was losing altitude fast. He had to keep it aloft until they were over farm country. Crews who bailed out over the target were often executed on the spot.

"Pilot to crew: Everybody out!" Cross exclaimed. Soup Borsch looked at Cross frantically, his eyes wide as saucers. "Everybody! Stay together if you can." Cross said. Borsch unbuckled his harness and scrambled to the deck, where the upper turret gunner was already stepping out to the bomb rack to bail out. The radio operator dropped through the bomb bay from the rear, and then the turret gunner was gone.

Borsch froze, his hands clamped to the bomb rack like a vise. Through the bomb bay he could see Nord, the bombardier, and the navigator falling away from the ship. The waist gunners, tail gunner, and Tiny, the ball turret gunner went out the rear, but he couldn't see them. He just stood there, hanging on to the bomb rack.

Cross put the ship on the failing autopilot and unshackled his harness. When he got to the deck just forward of the bomb bay, Soup Borsch was still blocking the way, clamped solidly to the empty bomb rack.

"Time to go, Soup!" Cross exclaimed. "Go!"  
Soup held fast.

"Come on! Go! Jump!" Cross shouted into the rattling wind.

"I can't! I have to get out of Thurleigh!"

"That's an order, Lieutenant! Jump!" Cross yelled.

"I'm afraid!"

The Flying Fortress, unofficially known as "Bare-able You," was chattering now like a sheep pen full of sheep with a circling coyote. In a moment, it would collapse.

"There's only one way out of Thurleigh, Soup. Take it!" Cross said.

Cross jumped up from the deck and grasped the bomb rack with both hands a foot over Borsch's head, placed both of his feet on the co-pilot's back and gave a mighty shove. Borsch fell free, and seconds later Cross saw his parachute blossom.

Cross's own chute billowed seconds later.

And the rest, as they say, is history.

But that is another story.

– The End –

*Author's note:*

*Some might be tempted to discount people like the fictional First Lieutenant Soup Borsch, if indeed they exist, but in my view they are in their own way heroes like the entire Greatest Generation that the fictional character Flight Officer Gustavus Bowmaker, my mother and father, my wife's mother and father, and so many others came from.*

*Hero and coward alike, they put their lives on the line for us. We must, all of us, be eternally grateful to them.*

*This story is dedicated to Flight Officer Norman A. Armbrust, Pilot, United States Army Air Corps, and Technical Sergeant James D. Ellen, Navigator, United States Marine Corps, and their comrades in arms, heroes all. ■*



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# A-2 Jacket – An American Classic

It wasn't just "a jacket," . . . it was a status symbol treasured by those who earned it. Even today, the A-2 jacket remains the most recognizable and sought after American flight jacket by World War II buffs and artifact collectors.

During early flight and throughout the First World War pilots rode in open cockpits. These daredevils of the sky were quick to wear whatever they could find that was warm and that often included whatever their personal finances could afford. There was not much in the way of "Service Issued" military clothing allocated to pilots and crews, other than the standard uniform. There was nothing like a standard Bomber Jacket or Flight Jacket at that time. What they could find to wear was clearly functional for practicality and warmth. In France and Belgium, the Royal Flying Corps had begun wearing long leather jackets in 1915, and the trend caught on. However, it took the U.S. Army until September 1917 to establish the Aviation Clothing Board. Finally, they began distributing heavy-duty leather bomber jackets with high wrap around collars, zipper closures with wide thick wind flaps, snug cuffs and waists. Some even came fringed and lined with fur. The American flight and bomber jacket was born.



First introduced on May 9, 1931, the U.S. Army Air Corp brought into being the Standard Issue Leather "Jacket, Flying, Type A-2" was the successor to the Type A-1 Flying Jacket. The Type A-2 was designed for open cockpits, which explains the sturdy snaps and reinforced pockets. The A-2's collar could be closed complete, the idea for which was to make the jacket more windproof. The rather slim, functional cut was ideal for the cramped cockpit.

The Type A-2 Bomber Jacket was a waist length leather jacket that featured two front patch pockets toward the bottom, stretch webbing attached to the bottom of the jacket and at the end of the sleeves to close out the air, shoulder epaulets, and nothing else. It was a real "Plain Jane" intended to look good for the Generals, and be barely functional for the wearer. However, there were several different types of styles for use within the U.S. Army, but the Type A-2 Bomber Jacket added a brilliant distinction to the U.S. Army Air Corp.

The Type A-2 leather flight jacket is an American military flight jacket originally invented and developed for and closely associated with World War II U.S. Army Air Force pilots, navigators, and bombardiers, who often decorated their jackets with squadron patches and elaborate artwork painted on the back. Sometimes casually referred to as a bomber jacket, its original designation was "Jacket, Pilot's (summer)," and its wartime usage was limited neither to pilots nor to bomber crews.

The U.S. Army Air Force Class 13 Catalog listed the garment as "Jacket, Flying, Type A-2," Spec. No. 94-3040. It describes the jacket's construction as "seal brown horsehide leather, knitted wristlets, and waistband (skirt)." Broadly similar in construction to the A-1, it replaced the A-1's buttoned front and pocket flaps with a zipper and hidden snap fasteners (although some very early A-2s retained the pocket buttons). The A-1's stand-up knitted collar, which buttoned closed, was supplanted in the A-2 by a shirt-style leather collar, with hidden snaps at the points and a hook-and-eye latch at the throat. Stitched-down shoulder straps were also added to the design. Sizes were listed as ranging in even numbers from 32 through 54.

Although the actual design would vary slightly depending on the manufacturer, and even among

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contracts within a single manufacturer, all A-2 jackets had several distinguishing characteristics: a snap-flap patch pocket on either side that does not have hand warmer compartments (hands in pockets were considered unfit for a military bearing), a shirt-style snap-down collar, shoulder straps (or epaulets), knit cuffs and waistband, a back constructed from a single piece of leather to limit stress on the garment, a lightweight silk or cotton inner lining with a leather hang strap (not a loop), and military spec tag attached just below the back collar.

A-2s were to be constructed of horsehide, which was either vegetable- or chrome-tanned. Some original A-2s were made from goatskin and others from cowhide (which can be very difficult to tell from horse if tanned identically). All Spiewak and Doniger jackets are of goat, as are many Cable, Dubow, Bronco, Perry, and Rough Wear examples.

Wartime-issued A-2 jackets appear in a wide range of color tones and hues, although all are based on two distinct colors: Seal (dark brown to almost black) and Russet (pale red-brown to medium brown). Most seal jackets were russets re-dyed during the war to cover scuffing and discoloration, although some contracts, like the Aero Leather 21996, were dyed seal right from the start. Original knit cuffing typically matched the leather or came close, but exceptions exist, such as Aero Leather's eye-catching rust-red cuffing on seal brown hide.

The A-2 was one of the early articles of clothing designed expressly to use a zipper. Zippers were made of steel or brass, and some were nickel plated and were manufactured by known zipper suppliers Talon, Crown, Conmar, and Kwik, with Talon providing the majority of zippers used in wartime A-2 construction. The zipper had a "wind flap" of thick, double layers of leather. Interestingly, the A-2 did not have any inside or slit pockets. Until about 1940, Talon zippers with riveted or grommeted metal bottoms were used.

Between 1939 and 1943, there were 16 different manufacturers of the A-2 jacket. Rough Wear manufactured the A-2 under several different contracts, each varying slightly in color and style.

The A-2 was a treasured item to the airmen and was worn with as much pride as his wings. As airmen progressed through various duty stations, they often added and removed squadron patches,

rank marks, and occasionally elaborate artwork depicting the type of aircraft they flew or a copy of the artwork painted on their airplane. Bomber crews often added small bombs to the right front of their jackets indicating the number of missions they had flown. As a result, many jackets ended up with numerous stitch marks as patches of various sizes were removed and replaced when the owner changed units. AAF personnel could only display the patch of their current assignment. The emblem of the Army Air Forces was often sewn, painted, or applied by decal on the left shoulder, while the shield of the specific Air Force (5th, 8th, etc.) was often displayed on the right.



Throughout the War, as the A-2's popularity grew, so too did the demand for it. Only aircrew men could obtain A-2 jackets through regular channels, although a few celebrated nonflying officers like Generals MacArthur and Patton and Major Glenn Miller also procured and wore them. A small "cottage industry" soon appeared, especially in England, to make A-2-style jackets for GIs (including many airborne infantry troops) who otherwise could not get one. This was especially true after the Army stopped purchasing new leather jackets in mid-1943, and disappointed airmen were sent to war in the less desirable cloth jackets, or were unable to replace A-2s they had lost or damaged. As a result, some war-era jackets used by World War II airmen are clearly not true to original AAF specifications, though this makes them no less historic.

Leslie Irvin, a recognized leader in parachute production, first designed and manufactured the classic sheepskin-flying jacket. In 1926, he set up a manufacturing company in the United Kingdom and became the main supplier of flying jackets to the Royal Air Force during most of World War II.

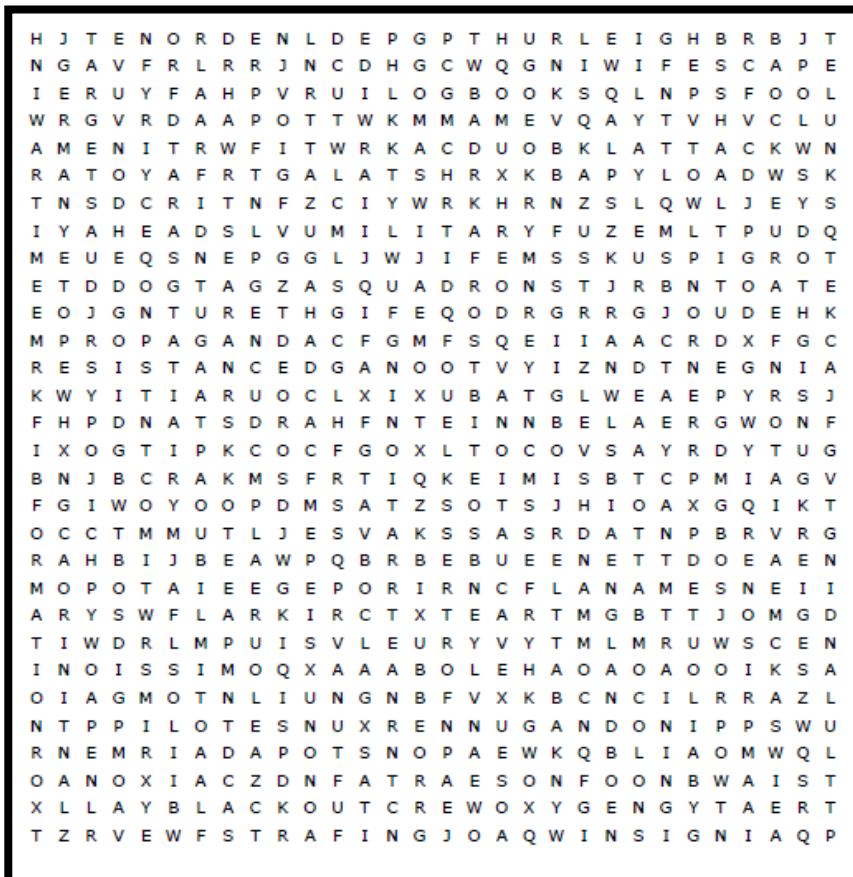


However, the demand during the early years of the war was so great that the Irvin Company engaged subcontractors, which explains the slight variations of design and color that can be seen in early production of these flying jackets.

Moreover, the A-2's design is rather simplistic in the sense that its back is cut from a single piece of leather, as are the two front pieces, and the sleeves are cut into just two pieces. It was lined with pure silk and the uppers were cut from vegetable-tanned or chrome-tanned horsehide, which was rather affordable at the time. Considering the current prices of horsehide today, it might seem wasteful to use leather from horses, however back then increasing industrialization rendered horses obsolete, resulting in an oversupply of horsehide and subsequently low prices.

### 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Word Search

All the words listed to the right of this puzzle appear in the puzzle – horizontally, vertically, diagonally, and even backward. Find them and circle each word. Good luck!



When it became clear that the U.S. would have to intervene in WWII, the demand for horsehide increased, and silk was mostly reserved for parachutes. Consequently, the Type A-2 jacket specifications were amended to accept also goat leather and cotton linings.

Although General “Hap” Arnold cancelled the original A-2 after twelve years because he wanted “something better,” the A-2 remains the most recognizable and sought-after American flight jacket. The flight leather jacket is one garment that initially was appreciated inside the military and later its popularity was adopted by the public, where it became a timeless and classic jacket. ■

AIRFIELD	INITIAL POINT
AIR FORCE	INSIGNIA
AIRMEN	INVADED
ALLIED	JACKET
ALTITUDE	JETTISON
ANOXIA	KHAKI
ATTACK	KREIGE
AVIATOR	LANDING
BAILOUT	LOGBOOK
BASES	LUFTWAFFE
BATTLE	MAE WEST
BLACKOUT	MILITARY
BOMBER	MISSION
BONDS	NAVIGATOR
BUZZ BOMB	NORDEN
CASUALTIES	NOSE ART
CHOW LINE	OXYGEN
COCKPIT	PARACHUTE
COMBAT	PILOT
COMMAND	PRISONER
CREW	PROPAGANDA
DOGTAG	RADAR
ENGINEER	RADIO
ENGLAND	RATIONING
ESCAPE	RESISTANCE
EVACUATION	SQUADRON
FEAR	STALAG
FIGHTER	STRAFING
FLAK	STRATEGY
FORMATION	TARGET
FORTRESS	THURLEIGH
FREEDOM	TRAINING
FROSTBITE	TREATY
GERMANY	WAIST
GESTAPO	WARTIME
GUNNER	WEAPONS
GUNSIGHT	WING
HARDSTAND	

Answers to the puzzle will be available in the next issue of ECHOES.

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*(Editor's Note: The following article appeared in the Stars & Stripes, daily newspaper of the United States Armed Forces in the European Theatre of Operations, on April 27, 1944. It is reprinted here, unedited, for your reading pleasure.)*

## **HEROES COME WHOLESALE**

Here, briefly, is the story of one Fort Group, one of many units making air war history fighting the Germans.

**By Andy Rooney**  
*Stars and Stripes Staff Writer*



If gallantry came in cans, there would never have been enough shipping space to get all the Eighth Air Force has used to England.

Heroism has been buried by heroism here. Heroes have come wholesale and there have

been more than America could digest. Stories, which in normal times would be headlined in every paper in America, end up as two paragraphs in someone's hometown paper. In U.S. military history, no fighting unit the size of the Eighth Air Force ever performed with a higher percentage of work-a-day heroes; not heroes in name, but men who have actually been warmed by comradeship to do more for their fellow men than they need have; men who have unnecessarily risked their lives to save others and men who have performed with an intelligence and courage to save their own lives when it would have been easier to die.

Had the men of any one of ten U.S. heavy bombardment groups operating from fields in England performed with commensurate heroism in battle actions which caught the imagination of the American public as did Guadalcanal, that group would be the most celebrated in American military history.

Here, briefly, is the story of one Fortress group, which has been operating against the German for a year and a half. It is a story of American boys, which could be a book; there are other groups with

the same story and people don't want to read that many books.

The group has never had a name that struck. The boys know it as a number or by the name of the small town near the field. Both are restricted information.

Its first haul was last October 9 when it went into Lille, France. From that day on the group was at war and it didn't take the men long to find out that heavy bombardment of targets on the Continent was no picnic. Principal objectives in the early days were German U-boat pens. Again and again they struck at St. Nazaire, Lorient, and La Pallice. On the second trip into St. Nazaire, the one Nov. 9, the group participated in one of the Eighth Air Force's, most successful experiments – the experiment proved to everyone's satisfaction that medium level was not the altitude at which to send in Flying Fortresses. They got the hell shot out of them.

The group went in that day at about 8,000 feet and the ships that did come back that day came back looking like collanders. There are still a few veterans left in England as gunnery instructors who will tell you about that raid. They may have been to the heart of Germany since that day but when they have dreamed it is the flak that day over St. Nazaire, they dream about.

The group has completed 135 missions as of April 18, 1944 and dropped about 6,000 tons of bombs in Germany and German targets in occupied countries. Like too-short or too-long artillery fire, some of the 6,000 tons fell in kraut fields and potato patches, but a lot of it has fallen in the middle of some of Germany's best industrial plants.

The group is made up of four squadrons, the Eager Beavers, the Clay Pigeons, Fitin' Bitin' and one which has never adopted a name that stuck. One they picked held too much blood and thunder and was forbidden. In anger, the fliers dubbed themselves "The Buttercup Boys."

Of the four, Fitin' Bitin' and the Clay Pigeons squadron gained most of the early fame. A story appeared in the Saturday Evening Post dubbing the one squadron as "The Clay Pigeons" because in those early days they had lost so many men. Time after time they returned, and while squadrons on each side of them would be lossless the Clay Pigeons would have lost two or three ships.

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What made the thing even harder to understand was that flying in the same group with the bad-luck squadron was the Fitin' Bitin' outfit. The Clay Pigeons set up an attrition record at the same time Fitin' Bitin' was starting a loss less streak that was to extend to 43 raids. Today the Clay Pigeons have 20 raids without a loss.

There were heroes in the group, First of the long line a young lieutenant by the name of Bob Riordan. Riordan piloted the first really famous ETO Fortress named Wahoo and on three successive occasions he brought the ship back under circumstances which when set down on paper set the style for the thousands of wing and prayer stories which have come out of the Eighth Air Force since.

Riordan went on to finish a tour of operations. Now, more than a year later he is several years older and a lieutenant colonel who shows no sign of stopping at that rank. Last week Riordan went home for a 30-day rest.

Because of its early start on operations the group had the officer and the first enlisted man in the ETO to complete a tour He was a tech sergeant radio gunner at the time with a penchant for cutting off people ties whether they were colonels or corporals.

Rocky went a long way towards being one of the happiest man who ever lived and his was almost a completely happy story. He was commissioned soon after he finished his ops and assigned to nearby station as gunnery officer. As a non – flying officer he made more trips than anyone knows of and possibly completed more than any other man in the Eighth Air Forces. Unofficially he had 33.

The colorful Rocky came to a tragic death last February. In Scotland on furlough, he was in a plane taking off for home. For reasons, which are not altogether clear, the pilot was trying to take his B-17 off with three motors. The plane crashed and all were killed. After 33 missions over the most dangerous enemy territory in the world, Rosky died in an ordinary accident.

The first officer in the ETO to finish a tour was 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Eugene Pollock of New Orleans, La. Pollack was a navigator.

The group's most popular legend and hero is Arizona Tempe Harris. Arizona was a gunner's own gunner, a hero's hero. He hated the army at the same time he was one of the best combat man in it. In the States, the boys in the group knew him as

a spirited red head who was afraid of nothing and who didn't want to do much but get back to his home in Tempe. Once in England, Arizona was one of the most conscientious gunners of the war. No American touched Arizona's gun or the gun of any man in his crew.

Returning from a haul to the U-boat pens at St. Nazaire, Harris' plane with Charley Cranmer at the controls was forced down in the Bay of Biscay. German fighters kept up the attack as the plane eased down to the water. In another ship Bill Casey, pilot of the famous Fort Banshee, pulled at his stick and wheeled the Banshee out of formation to help protect Cranmer.

The ship finally hit the cold waters of the bay but in the tail of Casey's ship P.D. Small could see Harris still firing away from the top turret. As the plane settled and the water crept up over the wings they could still see Arizona Harris at his guns in the turret firing away at the FW 100s, which dived into, strafe any possible survivors. The last thing they saw of the ship was Arizona's smoking guns as he drowned at his port.

That story and Arizona himself is a legend at the base and when the story comes up there is always an old timer who still will swear that if any man ever deserved the Congressional Medal it was old Arizona Harris.

In the first days, Col. Frank Armstrong was the group CO. He was promoted to brigadier general, and Col. Charles S. Putman, a tall, slim pilot with a brain like a whip moved in. The present CO is Col. George L. Robinson

Like men from any bomber outfit, the boys the boys are proud of theirs. Talk to any one of them for ten minutes and he will be listing for you the things the group has done first, most and best. They'll tell you:

1. The "Eager Beavers" were the first squadron in the USAAF to drop 1,000 tons of bombs on the Germans or anybody. They passed that mark the last day of 1943.
2. "Fitin' Bitin'" went 43 missions without a loss in the days before fighter escort.
3. We have the only enlisted man who ever got the Congressional Medal of Honor here, 'Snuffy' Smith.

4. This base was the first in England to be turned over to the U.S. from the British. We had the first aero-club.
5. We had the tallest tail gunner Hank Cordery. Used to be a first sergeant. He was six feet five inches.
6. Only ship in ETO that shot down 11 planes and had them confirmed. Lt. Bob Smith's crew got them May 21 over Wilhelmshaven.

The three-man awards and decorations section at Col. Robinson's station have done a lot of work. They have handled the paper work for one Congressional Medal of Honor, four DSCS, 200 Purple Hearts, 4500 Air Medals and Clusters, and four Soldiers Medals.

The station's heroes today are men like Gilbert Roeder. Roeder's got 25 in now and he's come back on one, two and three engine's more times than he's come back on four. He's got a knack for flak. The boys will swear, though, that there's not a better pilot in the Air Force than Roeder. He and his crew could have been living in Switzerland, Sweden, France or Germany now if they'd chosen the easy way out, but instead they chose to fight it home the hard way, take a chance of going down in the North Sea or blowing up in mid air, or of crashing over England. They've taken chances and they've paid off.

One of the group's favorite wing and a prayer stories is the one they tell of Cpt. Purvis E. Youree and Le Roy C. Sugg his co-pilot. Their Fort was badly damaged in the best tradition of flak riddled Fortress. It was in danger of spinning out of control any minute because the cables on one side had been completely shot away and Youree had little control over the ship.

Sugg looked the situation over, without a thought for his personal safety stripped his parachute off, and used the harness to tie to one end of the frayed control cable. The other end he gave to Youree and that way the pilot guided the plane home---pulling on one end of his co-pilot's parachute harness.

Two of the station's favorite characters were Jewish boys. The story of one was a happy story. Capt. Arthur Isaac was a character from Brooklyn in every sense of the word. He ditched once, crashed once, and came home on countless occasions in a ship full of holes but always he came

home. Now that it's over the secret of Isaacs' dog tags is out.

He carried three pair. One was his right name. On another, he had "Otto McIsaac." That set was in case he was shot down over Germany.

On a third pair of dog tags, he had stamped "Francois d'Isaac," to be used in the event he went down in France. The Brooklyn bombardier always swore that the first thing he would ask for if he was shot down in Germany was the nearest church where he could hear a Catholic mass said over him.

The other Jewish boy was Eric Newhouse (née Neuhaus) an Austrian gunner whose family owned a little chocolate shop in Vienna when Hitler began making European Jews uncomfortable.

Eric joined a band of kids – he was 15 in 1937 – and with them slugged German police and tore up German rails. He made his way from Germany to Jugoslavia, to Greece, to Palestine, to Syria. Still 15, he convinced British authorities that he was 19 and joined the British Army there, where he fought with the Kent regiment against the Arabs. Travelling on he bribed a German consul for £3 at Jaffa, Palestine, for a visa and finally got to Gibraltar in his fight to get to America.

Newhouse was broke, but on the boat he met an American nurse. As a souvenir the nurse gave him a dime, and when he got to Boston that was all he had. He didn't speak a word of English but he was so thrilled with America that he spent the dime on two trolley rides. He went to the end of the line for one of the nickels and came back with the other.

On Dec.7, 1941, Newhouse was not yet a citizen. The minute he heard of the Jap action he volunteered for the Army. He was rejected and for 120 consecutive days he heckled his enlistment office at Wausall, Wis., until they finally took him. He was assigned to the Air Force and became a gunner.

Once in London he met a French refugee girl and became engaged. The day before he was to be married, Newhouse was shot down. Dave Scherman, *Life* photographer who had planned to picture the happy ending to Newhouse's story, was left a tragic finish and no pictures.

Men on the field will tell you that Newhouse was the only man in the group who ever hated the Germans with the intensity that drove him to kill and kill. Emanuel Klette, a pilot on the base,

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finished a tour of operations and crashed at his home field after his 28<sup>th</sup> raid. He has been in the hospital recovering for several months and has recently been put back on operations at his own request, but Klette loved flying more than he hated Germans.

The happiest story that the group pro-China-born Capt. Bill Van Norman ever handled was that of S/Sgt. Maynard Harrison Smith. Smith occupies a unique place in the annals of Eighth Air Force heroes. Not only is Smith the only enlisted man in the Eighth Air Force ever to be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor but if there had been 20 awarded there would never have been another recipient like Maynard Smith.

Smith's right to America's highest award for gallantry was beyond doubt. What set him apart from other heroes was that he conscientiously played the part of a Congressional Medal of Honor winner. He realistically admits that not everyone would have done the same thing in similar circumstances; he concedes that his metabolic processes were just right for the job.

Capt. Raymond Check, of Minot N.D. was one of the group's great heroes and the circumstances of his death were tragic. Check was on his last mission. Col. James Wilson, air executive, flew with Check as co-pilot and Ray's regular co-pilot 1/Lt. William P. Cassidy, refusing to miss Check's last haul, went as a waist gunner.

Check was killed instantly. A 20 mm shell struck him in the head. A fire started in the cockpit and Col. Wilson stayed with the controls until the rubber of his oxygen mask melted on his face. His hands were so burned that he could not let go of the wheel. Finally, Cassidy came up from the waist and helped Wilson. In the ship that day, they were luckily carrying a flight surgeon who wanted practical experience, and had it not been for his work on Col. Wilson, he might not have lived.

There had been a party planned that night at the officers' mess and Check was to have been the guest of honor. A cake was baked and his name was inscribed on the top. When Check's ship flew into the field with Cassidy at the controls, there wasn't a man on the field who felt like eating cake or having a party.

The ground personnel at the field was unsung is the tradition and knowing that they would live to

tell their own story they had no objection. Maj. Thurman E. Dawson and his crew of bomb loaders have put every last pound of the 6,000 tons the group has dropped into the bomb bays. In addition, they have done the work that hurts. The work that has to be undone a few hours later when the report comes through that the mission has been scrubbed, bombs must be unloaded.

That doesn't tell all the group's story. It doesn't tell about the officer whose greatest delight is to take a Very Pistol and a pocketful of assorted green and red flares and chase the old white horse in the pasture next to his Nissen hut around in circles; it doesn't tell about Harold Rogers and his dog "Mister" who went on eight missions with his gunner master who used to be a Hollywood stunt man, and it leaves out completely the hundreds of ordinary Joes in crews who have stood around their pot-bellied stoves at night worrying and throwing .50 caliber shells into the fire for excitement. It doesn't tell any of that; it would take a book.

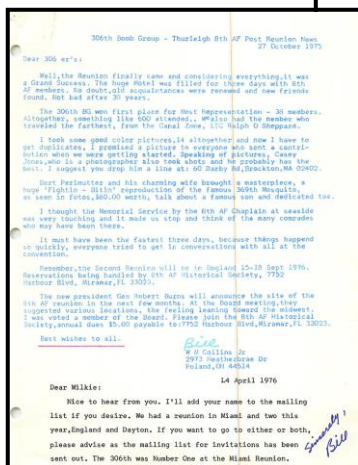
You can tell, though, from these few people, why the Germans haven't got a chance. You can tell why the U.S. Air Force can make a lot of mistakes and still somehow struggle to the top of the heap of world air forces. ■



**From the Archives:**

# In the Beginning. . . .

What follows is a series of four letters, written by Mr. William Collins, an early vice president of the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Historical Society. By August 1976, Mr. Collins had spent a year heading up what was termed the “306<sup>th</sup> Veteran Identification Movement,” responding to the 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS’s quest to locate men from various Bomb and Fighter Groups. Letters soliciting information were mimeographed and sent to the over 400 addresses that had been gathered. Thus, the beginning of what would eventually become the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association was born. Mr. Collin’s letters have been retyped in their entirety for ease of readability. The small inset shows the original letters.



306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group - Thurlleigh 8<sup>th</sup> AF Post Reunion News  
27 October 1975

Dear 306 er's:

Well, the Reunion finally came and considering everything, it was a Grand success. The huge Motel was filled for three days with 8<sup>th</sup> AF members. No doubt, old acquaintances were renewed and new friends found. Not bad after 30 years.

The 306<sup>th</sup> BG won first place for Most Representation - 38 members. Altogether, something like 600 attended. We also had the member who traveled the farthest, from the Canal Zone, LTC Ralph O Sheppard.

I took some good color pictures, 14 altogether and now I have to get duplicates. I promised a picture to everyone who sent a contribution when we were getting started. Speaking of pictures, Casey Jones, who is a photographer also took shots and he probably has the best. I suggest you drop him a line at: 60 Darby Rd, Brockton, MA 02402.

Bert Perlmutter and his charming wife brought a masterpiece, a huge 'Fightin - Bitin' reproduction of the famous 369<sup>th</sup> Mosquito, as seen in fotos, \$60.00 worth, talk about a famous son and dedicated too.

I thought the Memorial Service by the 8<sup>th</sup> AF Chaplain at seaside was very touching and it made us stop and think of the many comrades who may have been there.

It must have been the fastest three days, because things happened so quickly, everyone tried to get in conversations with all the convention.

Remember, the Second Reunion will be in England 15-18 Sept 1976. Reservations being handled by 8<sup>th</sup> AF Historical Society, 7752 Harbour Blvd, Miramar, FL 33023.

The new president Gen Robert Burns will announce the site of the 8<sup>th</sup> AF reunion in the next few months. At the Board meeting, they suggested various locations, the feeling leaning toward the Midwest. I was voted a member of the Board. Please join the 8<sup>th</sup> AF Historical Society, annual dues \$5.00 payable to 7752 Harbour Blvd, Miramar, FL 33023.

Best wishes to all.

W M Collins Jr  
2973 Heathbrae Dr  
Poland, OH 44514

Dear Wilkie:

Nice to hear from you. I'll add your name to the mailing list if you desire. We had a reunion in Miami and two this year, England and Dayton. If you want to go to either or both, please advise as the mailing list for invitations has been sent out. The 306<sup>th</sup> was Number One at the Miami Reunion.]

Thurleigh Tell-Tales Newsletter 9 February 1976

Dear 306'er:

Your name has been added to the 306<sup>th</sup> mailing list, as a result of your request or at the request of a friend of yours.

We have been working on getting 8<sup>th</sup> AF personnel together for about a year now and have hundreds of responses. I agreed to be 'contact man' for the 306<sup>th</sup>, as I was the first to reply to a query last spring. We publicized an 8<sup>th</sup> AF reunion in Miami, FL in October 1975. The 306<sup>th</sup> won first prize for having the most representation at the reunion, 45 members. The next reunion will be in Dayton, Ohio the week-end of 15-17 October (19076). You can meet your Buddies and talk over all sorts of subjects. This work is voluntary on my part.

You can keep advised on news by subscribing to the "8<sup>th</sup> AF News 7752 Harbour Blvd, Miramar, Florida 33023: - Cost is \$5.00 per year. This publication will keep you posted on the reunion in England Sept 12-26, 1976 and the reunion in Dayton, October 15-17, 1976. This will include reservation forms for both. We realize that most of the 8<sup>th</sup> AF'ers will go to Dayton, but there will be a big delegation going to England.

Here is an extract from 'Friends of the Eighth,' an organization in England, faithful to and grateful for the Eighth:

THE 306<sup>th</sup> BG LIVES ON by Cyril J Norman (of Bedford, England)

Thurleigh is now part of the Royal Aircraft Establishment, and much altered from the days when B-17's struggled to gain altitude. A number of huts, which served as "home" for aircrew, survived as farm buildings. 'n inspection, a number of these were found to contain mission lists, gambling debts, home addresses, etc., written on plaster-board walls.

On seeing these I realized there was history which just had to be served. It took two or three years of writing to everyone in the "States" who thought I could help. In the end I contacted Major General Hill who put me in touch with Royal D Frey at the Air Force Museum, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, and then from then on things began to move. Finally with the assistance of the USAF, the panels were removed, packed, and flown to Wright-Patterson where they are to be place in a reconstructed Nissen hut. The 306<sup>th</sup> will be represented in the one place they should be.

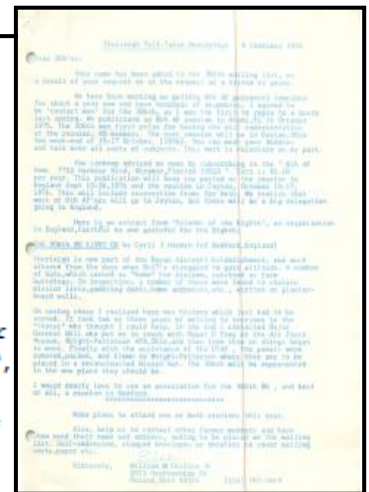
I would dearly love to see an association for the 306<sup>th</sup> BG, and best of all, a reunion in Bedford.

\*\*\*\*\*

Make plans to attend one or both reunions this year.

Also, help us to contact other former members and have them send their name and address, asking to be placed on the mailing list. Self-addressed, stamped envelopes or donation to cover mailing costs, paper etc.

Sincerely, William M Collins Jr  
2973 Heatherbrae Dr  
Poland, Ohio 44514 (216) 757-3463



Thurleigh Tell-Tales New Letter 19 March 1976  
306th Bomb Group

Dear 306 er's:

The correspondence is starting to roll in again and it looks like there already is a lot of anticipation about getting to the reunions in Dayton and England. If you are on the mailing list, you will get the invitation from 8th AFHS and info about the reunions. Your friends and anyone who wants to go should write to 8th AFHS, 7752 Harbour Blvd, Miramar, FL 33023.

I had a letter from a former member who wanted to know who, from the 306th, went to the Miami reunion. Here is the list as registered:

J Bloom	R Bordner	W Borges	J Brennan	W Carlile
W Casey	J Corcoran	H Cordery	W Collins	H Doles
E Dinstbier	W Fahrenhold	W Flanagan	R Folk	B Jefferies
C Jones	H Key	A Krajcik	A LaChasse	J Marciano
J Musial	A Nahabedian	E Odle	P O'Driscoll	E Rapp
H Roth	D Schrack	E Schwab	R Sheppard	D Sheridan
R Sprunger	J Stoner	R Strong	A Walton	H Wein
W Boring	J Buccellato	M Dee	R Holbert	E Howe
B Perlmutter	D Ross	J Stutz	H Winning	L Mikles

There they are and we look forward to a bigger list this year.

I have a request from one of our members. If anyone knows the whereabouts of Richard C. Huebotter or Charles R. Reinartsen please advise Chuck Rapp, 1952 Antietam St, Pittsburgh, PA 15206 or myself. Would be appreciated as Chuck is searching for someone in his father's crew.

As many of you know, the Air Force Museum is in Dayton, at the Air Base. There will be a tour going there on Saturday 16 Oct 76, during the reunion. I have a letter from the Curator and he advises that there is no charge for admission and there is plenty of free parking. The Museum itself is worth the trip to Dayton.

I also have a letter from the Dayton Daily News, wanting information about the reunion and it's seven month away. John Woolnough has reserved more than 200 rooms at the Stauffer Motor Inn, brand new, and with the enthusiasm so far, it would be wise to get a reservation in promptly, when invitations go out. There are many other places, but this will be in the central area.

If you know anyone who wants to be on the mailing list, have them send a stamped, self-addressed envelope, letter-size to me or they can call the number listed.

At the reunion in Miami, some of the members want to organize an 306th Bomb Group Historical Society. We will discuss this in Dayton and possibly form an Organization. Point being, be prepared to nominate and elect officials. Other organizations are doing it and non can match the 306th in accomplishments. We're looking for a President, Secretary, Treasurer and Board members.

Best wishes to all.

Sincerely, William M Collins Jr  
2973 Heatherbrae Dr  
Poland, Ohio 44514 (216) 757-3463

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306th Bomb Group

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E Dinstbier	W Fahrenhold	W Flanagan	R Folk	B Jefferies
C Jones	H Key	A Krajcik	A LaChasse	J Marciano
J Musial	A Nahabedian	E Odle	P O'Driscoll	E Rapp
H Roth	D Schrack	E Schwab	R Sheppard	D Sheridan
R Sprunger	J Stoner	R Strong	A Walton	H Wein
W Boring	J Buccellato	M Dee	R Holbert	E Howe
B Perlmutter	D Ross	J Stutz	H Winning	L Mikles

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2973 Heatherbrae Dr  
Poland, Ohio 44514 (216) 757-3463



Thurleigh Tell-Tales Newsletter 2 November 1976 306th Bomb Group

306th again had the largest contingent at the Second Stateside reunion in Dayton during the week-end 15-17 October 1976. We had 84 former 306 ers plus wives and friends. There were 816 at the banquet on Saturday

Casey Jones took some excellent pictures. He is offering an 8 x 10 color photograph of the pictures he took after the general meeting on Saturday. He has each Squadron plus the Group. For orders, specify picture(s) and send \$2.00 for each print to: Casey Jones, 60 Darby Rd, Brockton MASS 02402. His phone number is (617) 587-5885.

Also, if anyone wants the series of pictures that were displayed in the Hospitality room, send \$7.50 to Bill Collins or Jack Grimm.

Next reunion will be St Louis - 7-9 October 1977. England trip will be in August 77, only 250 seats available. If you plan to go to England, suggest you make \$100.00 deposit now for each seat. For info write: Reunion Services, PO Box 4738, Hollywood, FL 33023. Dates - 23 Aug - 7 Sept.

The Directory is the contribution of Chuck Rapp, Pittsburgh, PA who spent many long hours putting it together, thanks Chuck. We hope you may find an address or two that will bring someone together for chit-chat or camaraderie. Since we are adding new names almost daily, the list must be supplemented. Add the following:

Thurleigh Tell-Tales Newsletter 2 November 1976 306th Bomb Group

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- |                      |                     |                                   |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Dr Orlie Parker      | Rt 3 Box 608        | Blythville, ARK 72315             |
| William H Gentle     | PO Box 112          | Douglas, WY 82633                 |
| Glenn Loveland       | 1406 Myrtle Ave     | Ashtabula, OH 44004               |
| Ed Dostie            | 19 Jones Ave        | Kittery, MAINE 03904              |
| Dr Dennis Sharkey Jr | 570 N Michael St    | St Marys, PA 15857                |
| Winston W Burroughs  | Rt 1 Box 244        | Waldorf, MD 20601                 |
| Robert H Reck        | 807 Washington St   | Nendota, IL 61342                 |
| Robert E Crane       | PO Box 21           | Portland CONN 06480               |
| Edward M Murphy      | 706 San Pablo NE    | Albuquerque, NM 87108             |
| E A Bill Williams    | 4206 Oakcrest       | Enid, OK 73701                    |
| William R Cain       | 275 Jesselyn Ln     | Woodside, CA 94062                |
| Thomas E Stillson    | 618 32nd St         | south Bend, IN 46615              |
| Robert P Ashwood     | 250 Conover Rd      | Hightstown, NJ 08520              |
| Nolan D Hardin       | Leisure World       | De Bary, FL 32713                 |
| Edward H Tutun       | 1114 Av of Americas | Grace Plaza, NY, NY 10036         |
| M/G James S Cheney   | 630 Cinnamon Ct     | Satellite Beach, FL 32937 (Ad Ch) |
| Lawrence Dammert     | 365 Catherine NE    | Port Charlotte, FL 33950          |
| Rudolph Skalak       | 3309 Indian Rock Rd | Mt. Mesa, Lake Isabella, CA 93240 |

- Who was at Dayton? Col GL Robinson plus: R Ashwood, R Argo, H Balawajder
- |               |               |              |             |               |
|---------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| J Bloom       | E Blucher     | R Bordner    | W Borges    | W Boring      |
| C. Bremmer    | Cathy Brennan | W Burroughs  | W Carlile   | W Colantoni   |
| W Collins     | J Corcoran    | W Churchman  | A Dickholts | E Dinsbier    |
| H Doles       | E Dostie      | W Fahrenhold | C Fisher    | J Gaydosh     |
| R Graham      | J Grimm       | C Hayen      | W Hifler    | H Hodges      |
| R Holbert     | W Houlihan    | H Hutchinson | W Hull      | J Inman       |
| Keith Jackson | P James       | B Jefferies  | C Jones     | Knight        |
| W Koons       | J Kostal      | A Krajcik    | A LaChasse  | C Lamb        |
| R Lavery      | E Leahy       | W Leggett    | J Lenghan   | J Lee         |
| G Loveland    | J MacPherson  | J Marciano   | D Michael   | C Mullins     |
| J Mynatt      | R McGill      | L Northcott  | D Norman    | E Odle        |
| W Pilat       | A Resser      | G Robinson   | H Roeder    | F Rector      |
| D Ross        | H Roth        | D Sharkey    | D Schrack   | E Schwab      |
| D Sebastian   | R Shuller     | R Shults     | E Smartt    | M H Smith-CMH |
| G Stahl       | R Starsynski  | J Stoner     | R Sprunger  | R Tripp       |
| D Upchurch    | C Vondrachek  | A Walton     | A Wiehs     | R Williams    |
| C Wilson      | G Wortham     |              |             |               |

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# In Memorial

**Obituaries – Veteran death information should be submitted to the Secretary. Contact info is on p.2.**

**Adeimy, Charles A**, airplane and engine mechanic (367<sup>th</sup>), of Cheraw, SC, passed away December 5, 2017. He continued his service with the South Carolina Army National Guard after WWII, was activated during Korea, and retired as a Major after 35 years. He worked for Bennett Motor Company as their parts manager. He is survived by son Stuart C. Adeimy, daughter Susan Pressley, ten grandchildren, and nine great grandchildren.

**Alston, Frank F. Jr.**, gunner (368<sup>th</sup>, Harold Altshuler's crew), of Parrot, GA, died 25 August 2017, at age 93. He worked for the U. S. Postal Service for 40 years and served on the Terrell County Board of Education, the Terrell County Hospital Authority, the county draft board and the Terrell County ASCS Committee. He is survived by his wife, Rebecca, son Dennis, and daughter Beth.

**Black, Tim L**, ball turret gunner (423<sup>rd</sup>, George Broz crew), passed away in Michigan on 31 July 2017. He attended the University of Toledo and then worked for Chrysler Corporation as a market analyst until his retirement. Surviving are his wife, Bernadine, two daughters, and three grandsons.

**Cavedo, Kermit B**, navigator (369<sup>th</sup>, Keith Conley crew and Roy Vinnedge crew), passed away in Richmond, VA, November 22, 2017 at age 97. He is best known for naming and designing the logo for the 369<sup>th</sup>, the familiar "Fightin' Bitin'" boxing insect. He studied at the Art Students League of New York before the war, and then after the war he painted watercolor artwork that was exhibited at museums throughout Virginia, including at Luray Caverns. He is survived by his wife, Baxcetta, four children, a stepson and stepdaughter, nine grandchildren, and seven great grandchildren.

**Hitchcock, Robert H**, radio operator (369<sup>th</sup>), long time resident of Benicia, CA, passed away January 30, 2018, at age 94. He was a cousin of Gen. Jimmy Doolittle. He was trained and served as a "spot jammer," using radio equipment to confuse German flak battery radars as to the correct altitude of bomber formations. He worked in the Concord and Benicia oil refineries after the war and was a frequent attendee at 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA reunions. He was married to wife, Lori, and had three sons.

**Kutz, Richard M**, gunner (369<sup>th</sup>, Aldo Romanin crew), passed away September 5, 2011 at age 85, in Riverview, MI. Richard built engines for Chrysler for over forty years. Daughter Pamela, son Christopher, and two grandchildren survived him at the time of his passing.

**Lavery, Robert K**, ball turret gunner (367<sup>th</sup>, William Wood crew), died in Green, OH, October 9, 2015, age 90. Before enlisting, Robert graduated from Pennsylvania Institute of Aeronautics. After WWII he served with the Summit County Sherriff's Department, then as a patrol officer and later a detective with the Fairlawn Police Department. At the time of his passing, he was survived by three children and six stepchildren.

**Mallia, Louis S**, crew chief/airplane mechanic (423<sup>rd</sup>), died 17 January 2018, age 101, in Raleigh, NC. He attended Rutgers University and served 36 years as the Receiver of Taxes and City Treasurer for the City of Garfield, NJ. His son, Louis P, daughter Karen, and five granddaughters survive his passing.

**Moulis, Ralph E**, ball turret gunner and POW (423<sup>rd</sup>, Nelson Hardin crew), died December 18, 2017, in Clearwater, FL, at 94 years of age. He was shot down on a mission to bomb Brunswick on 29 March 1944, and was a POW in Stalag 17B. He continued his service after WWII, retiring as a Master Sergeant after 23 years. Survivors include his wife, Patricia, and sons Andrew, Richard, and Kenneth.

**Nance, Robert F**, gunner (423<sup>rd</sup>, Henry Wills crew), died March 6, 2015, at age 90, in Sumter, SC. He attended Clemson University and worked for Burroughs Corporation after the war for almost 40 years as a field engineer. He is survived by his wife, Mary Ann, three children and three grandchildren.

**Sawicke, Nicholas M**, engineer/top turret gunner (423<sup>rd</sup>, original), passed away 7 January 2018 in Liverpool, NY at age 94. Nick was a regular attendee at recent 306<sup>th</sup> BGHA reunions. He graduated from Cornell University in 1950 with a BS in Engineering and had a long career consulting with various construction companies in the Syracuse area. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus and the Elks. He is survived by daughter Dr. Janis Sawicke.

**Sentfen, Eugene R**, pilot (423<sup>rd</sup>, John Winward crew), died in Petaluma, CA, on 16 June 2015. He continued his service after the war, retiring as a Lt. Colonel in 1982. He earned an MS degree in Dairy Manufacturing, Chemistry, and Bacteriology from the University of Idaho and worked for the Idaho Department of Agriculture, and then as Quality Control Manager for the Petaluma Co-operative Creamery, retiring in 1987. At the time of his passing, he was survived by his wife, Gloria, sons Bradford and Robert, three grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

**Sharkey, Dennis A. Jr.**, navigator (369<sup>th</sup>, Kenneth Dowell crew), passed away December 20, 2017, in Bellefonte, PA. He received his Doctor of Medicine from the University of Pennsylvania in 1954, was trained in anatomic and clinical pathology and completed his medical career as Chief of Pathology Services at Andrew Kaul Memorial Hospital and Elk County General Hospital. He is survived by son Dennis, and daughters Muffie Silber and Denise Yeager.

**Tinklenberg, John**, tail gunner (423<sup>rd</sup>, John Endicott crew), age 95, passed away 27 October 2017, in Kalamazoo, MI. He was a self-employed painting contractor and also worked for Koopsen's Paint and Wallpaper Company. John is survived by son Ronald, daughters Jayne and Karen, five grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

**Trostle, Richard A**, engineer/top turret gunner (369<sup>th</sup>, Ray Schieb crew), died October 23, 2017 in Littlestown, PA, at 93. After the war, Richard owned and operated Bon Air Exxon Station in Baltimore. Surviving are his daughters Deborah Lynn Boehing and Joanne Marie Dauber.

**Tucker, William E. Jr.**, tail gunner (367<sup>th</sup>), died June 1, 2014, in Yoakum, TX. He was instrumental in the development of First Capitol Park in West Columbia and the West Brazos Swim Team. He is survived by son Randy, daughter Pam Moritz, and seven grandchildren.





## 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association Membership Registration Form

*Print all information.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

306<sup>th</sup> Unit: \_\_\_\_\_ Duty/Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Information: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have an interest in a particular WWII 306<sup>th</sup> veteran, please complete the following:

Your relationship to a 306<sup>th</sup> Veteran: \_\_\_\_\_

Veteran's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ 306<sup>th</sup> Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Duty/Job Title or Additional Information: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you?

- World War II History Buff       Author/Writer       Researcher       Other

Additional Information: \_\_\_\_\_

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**306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Historical Association**  
c/o Mr. Bruce Chase, Director of Membership  
2324 Hatch Hill Road  
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You will be placed on our membership list for the current calendar year only; annually we will ask you to confirm your willingness to remain on our membership list.

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**(See feature article on page 1 and registration form on page 5 for additional information)**