

# *306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group Museum Newsletter No.6*

## *November 2019*



On 7 November 2018 a group of “enthusiasts” got together to discuss the future of the Thurleigh Museum, recognising the ill-health and later passing of its founder, Ralph Franklin. Its objectives were to seek a future for the Museum and to consider prospects for its continuing availability to the general public. It is a pleasure to record one year on, that both objectives have been achieved. Due to the continuing generosity of PalmerSport [Bedford] and the hard work of those enthusiasts, a reasonable future can be seen for the Museum and the success of our Sunday openings throughout the summer season has been rewarded by the number of visitors welcomed. As well as friends old and new from the United States, visitors have come from all over the UK, Australia and recently, Germany. A particular pleasure for us was to welcome Glenda and Steve Snyder to whom we owe the following “visit report”.

*On August 25, my wife Glenda and I re-visited the 306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group Museum. Just like our first time in 2014 when Ralph and Daphne Franklin greeted us, we were given a warm welcome from volunteers Clive Carroll, John Watson-Reed, and Mike Dobson when we arrived. I cannot thank them enough for all their dedication and hard work in re-opening and operating the Museum to preserve the memory of the brave young men of the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group who fought and died to preserve freedom in the air war over Europe.*



*Clive, Mike, Steve and John*

*Glenda and I were delighted to see the museum and the grounds in such fine condition; better than ever! We had a lovely day, and I had the pleasure of finally meeting many UK Facebook friends in person and signing copies of my book SHOT DOWN which is centered around the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group. My father, Howard Snyder, was a pilot in the 369<sup>th</sup> Fightin' Bitin' Squadron. He and his crew arrived at Thurleigh on October 21, 1943 as one of the replacement crews after the disastrous Second Schweinfurt Raid.*

*Glenda and I took a break in the afternoon to have lunch at The Falcon at Bletsoe where my dad and the other officers of his crew had "a few drinks" the night before they were shot down over the French/Belgian border on February 8, 1944 returning from a bombing mission to Frankfurt, Germany*

*For anyone interested in the 306<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group and traveling to the UK, a visit to the 306<sup>th</sup> Bombardment Group Museum is a must! Glenda and I stayed in nearby Bedford at The Swan which I highly recommend. While we were in the UK, we also visited a number of other 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force bomb group memorials and museums in and around East Anglia. However, Glenda was a nervous wreck the entire time I was driving (744 miles) on the left side of the road trying to navigate all the roundabouts and the very narrow country roads.*



*Steve and Glenda adorn the Memorial*

Finally before saying farewell to the Summer Season we must offer sincere thanks to Clive and John who have born the lion's share of visitor hosting. Without them we would not have fulfilled our ambitions! Our last day of opening for the year will be 27 October but given reasonable notice, we will try to accommodate any who may wish to visit over the winter.

Until next year.....

MDD