

HERITAGE HERALD



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Periodical of the Heritage League of the 2nd Air Division

November 2004

Heritage In Kalamazoo

fun and camaraderie with the 453rd

We are working our way up to meeting completely on our own socially, as we know that the 2ADA, at whose remaining conventions we will continue to hold our annual business meeting, will not go on forever. While we have had Executive Committee 'working' meetings midterm 'on our own' (Houston in February 2003; see *Herald* #3), we now

453rd Bomb Group Association, was even closer to the goal. Your Executives did hold a very productive working meeting under returned President Johnson, but mostly it was fun, camaraderie, and more fun!

We began arriving on a warm and clear Friday afternoon, October 8th, and 453rd and HL stalwarts mingled readily in the popular hospitality suite. Sev-



Impressive Start! Heritage Leaguers representing SIX bomb groups attended first 'stand alone' reunion in Kalamazoo. STANDING, L-R: Vicki Brooks Warning, Dorothy Williamson, Betty Prang Eskew, Geraldine Suskin, unknown, Brian Mahoney, Billy Sheely Johnson, Chris Raiser, Rosmary Biel Lighty, Linda Allen Wittig, Margaret Barker, Jim Lorenz, Carl Kinell, Brenda Tudyk, Irene Hurner. SEATED, L-R: Josephine Vercler, Ludie Morris, Rose Zobac, Ed Zobac, Claire Biel, Irene Prang. MISSING: Kurt Warning, Bruce Helmer.
-Brian Mahoney

want to have fun, (non-work!) gatherings for interested members and hard working officers.

Our reunion and Executive Committee working meeting alongside the gracious 8th Air Force Historical Society last October in Colorado Springs was a bit closer to the concept. But our fun social gathering in Kalamazoo (October 7-10) alongside the fun-loving

eral of their leading 'second gens' are several of ours, which certainly helped, and their reputation for having a good time preceded this meeting. None were disappointed! The welcoming buffet featured a moving reading of a war account by two of the veterans.

Your officers held an early, intense working ses-

continued on page 10

President's Update

-President Billy Sheely Johnson

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Corrections

In the last edition we thanked Editor Gene Hartley for permission to re-run the 'Atlantic Ferry Routes' article by Kelsey McMillan. We stated Gene's bomb group incorrectly; thanks to him and the 389th for permission. Room forced us to drop Kelsey's excellent illustration of the South Atlantic Air Routes, which we are happy to include in this *Herald* on page 17.

Several of the HL officers have had minor changes in their contact info recently. We ask that you always reference the most recent *Herald* when you call, write, or e-mail one of us.

Greetings Heritage League Members and friends!

In issue # 34 of the *Herald*, it was my pleasure to announce the Heritage League's offer to meet with individual bomb group associations whenever they gather for regional and/or stand-alone activities. We were graciously invited to join with the 453rd Bomb Group during their meeting October 8-11, 2004, in Kalamazoo, Michigan. It was a wonderful experience for League members, approximately 20 of whom were in attendance. Lloyd Prang graciously included us in all of the activities and festivities. Thank you, Lloyd, and all of your group participants.

Col. Nelson Leggette USAF (Ret.) invited us to join the 491st Bomb Group's annual Fall reunion, October 20-24, in Savannah, Georgia. The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum was the site of many of the group's activities. As always, its wonderful facilities were enjoyed by the 180 members in attendance, approximately 40 of whom were 2nd and 3rd generation participants. It was evident by their interest that their attendance will continue in subsequent years. Especially touching was the wonderful memorial service held in tribute to fallen comrades and those who have passed away since the war. Thank you, Col. Leggette, and the entire 491st Bomb Group, for having included us in your reunion.

Of particular interest for me personally, was my meeting of two other war orphans: Bruce Patten of Smithfield, Maine and Madeline Teremy of Rochester, New York. They have agreed to write articles for future *Heritage Herald* issues. It was most gratifying for me to be with others who share the feelings and concerns specific only to war orphans. We eagerly anticipate their future participation.

We have been invited to join with two more bomb groups as they meet in the coming months. Again, we shall be pleased to join with all veterans at your pleasure, contact us through my address and/or phone number listed on the back page of this issue.

As reported, we have revived the League's essay contest and are delighted to publish the winning entry in this current issue. It was written by Ray Bohuslav, eighth grader and grandson of Alan Senior of the 446th Bomb Group. Alan, whose ship was "Bachelor's Delight," introduced his grandson to the B-24 Liberator and other WW II aircraft by taking him to various air shows and discussing with him issues concerning his role in WW II and Second Air Division. Ray's interest is evident in his essay, a tribute to all Second Air Division veterans and the mighty B-24 Liberator.

We appreciate Ray's essay and his interest. Yes, indeed, Heritage League members will "keep the fellas flyin." Second generation members, don't forget to encourage your children and/or grandchildren to participate in the essay contest. If they aren't interested in doing so, why not help your veteran relative to record his

experiences for your family's history?

Unfortunately, Ann Long, Vice-President, Membership, has found it necessary to resign the office due to personal reasons. We are going through transition with this office and shall have membership cards sent to you very soon. If any of you feel you were sent membership renewal notices in error, please advise so that records can be corrected.

The League's executive committee has been encouraged by receiving many wonderfully positive comments from members as they return current renewal applications. We shall share some of these comments in subsequent issues of both the *2ADA Journal* and *Heritage Herald*. For now, here is a representative one, by Keith Hartzell in tribute to his father, a member of the 458th BG's 754th BS, and all Second Air Division veterans:

"I am proud to be an American. Without your unselfish service, where would we be? I am lucky to have the greatest father, E. Paul Hartzell, who came from the 'greatest generation'! God Bless All of You!!!"

These moving tributes reinforce the League's pledge to veterans, and reassures them of their continued personal value and our appreciation of their past service. We thank them for continued service as they have invested their lives in enhancing the quality of our lives following WW II. Their lives, and those of their fallen comrades, deserve to be honored into perpetuity by the Heritage League of Second Air Division. We shall do so in numerous ways, not the least of which will be through continued support of institutions and museums dedicated to Second Air Division history, memorial tributes in American Battle Monument sites and in English communities which housed the bases of your bomb groups. Monetary donations to the following institutions have been made by the Heritage League of Second Air Division during 2004:

- Memorial Library (Norwich) = \$1,500.00
- Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum (Savannah) = \$1,250.00
- B-24 Memorial (San Diego) = \$500.00

Anyone interested in assisting with responsibilities of any of the league's offices should not hesitate to contact me. We shall be contacting those of you who expressed interest when replying to our renewal appeal.

Help in writing and editing has been the primary interest, thus far. Brian Mahoney, *Heritage Herald* Editor, will be contacting you soon. The League currently needs others interested in the membership office, database management, and volunteer coordination.

Best regards to each of you and your families for a wonderful holiday season!

USAF Memorial Groundbreaking *-by Brian Mahoney*



Artist's rendition of proposed Air Force Memorial to be located beside Arlington Cemetery, above the Pentagon on Arlington Ridge.

-Brian Mahoney

On a drizzly September 15th, my brother Jerry and I attended groundbreaking for the long-awaited Air Force Memorial. The Air Force will be the last branch to get a prominent memorial in the nation's capital, and the struggle to find a suitable site was the stuff of politics and inter-service rivalries, but all of that was put in jovial perspective by chair of the AF Memorial Foundation, H. Ross Perot, Jr., and other dignitaries, including WW II vet (and USAAF pilot) Senator Ted Stevens of Alaska.

A moving narrative by noted author Walter Boyne was read to original music performed by the USAF Band, written and choreographed by Master Sergeant Robert Thurston. Many noted WW II and subsequent AF leaders were recognized from the podium.

A low ceiling prevented the planned 'air parade' which would have featured a dozen notable warbirds from the Stearman to the F-117. All hope that on the final dedication, September 15, 2006, great flying conditions will prevail.



Maj. Gen. Ed Grillo, Jr., Master of Ceremonies, reading "A Tribute to Airmen of Yesterday and Today." To his right see the very facade of the Pentagon which was struck by terrorist-controlled airliner on 9/11/01. Site east of Navy Annex has commanding view of Potomac River and Washington.

-Brian Mahoney

From Your New 2ADA Fullbright Librarian

-Alexis Ciurczak

(By the time you are reading this, the recent Fulbright Scholar/Librarian, Tahitia Orr, will have followed a noted trend by marrying a Brit. We wish her all the best and do hope to stay in touch! Alexis assumed her post at the end of August. -Ed)

On September 1, 2004, I started my new position as the Fulbright Librarian at the Second Air Division Memorial Library in Norwich, England. The library staff, who are very knowledgeable and experienced, gave me a warm welcome and made me feel at home. It is truly an honour to be chosen as the current Fulbright Librarian for this wonderful library and living shrine.

My professional background includes close to 30 years experience as a college librarian at Palomar College, San Marcos, California. Palomar has a student population of about 33,000 and the library is a large 3-story building, but nothing really prepared me for the monumental feeling of being part of the Forum and the Millennium Library in Norwich. The inspiring architecture of the building and the level and variety of activities taking place within it, make this a perfect place for the 2nd AD Memorial Library. It is exciting just to walk through the doors and come to work!

In addition to my experience as a librarian, the USAF also has played a part in my life, from the very beginning. I was born at Mitchell Field in Long Island, New York, where my parents were stationed after WW II. My early years were spent living on USAF bases in the US and abroad. During the war itself, my father Alexander flew in B-24s as an aerial gunner and combat cameraman with the 11th Air Force, first in the Aleutian Islands then in Europe. He received the Distinguished Flying Cross, with an oak leaf cluster, for heroism during aerial flight, the Air Medal and other awards before retiring as a Captain. Ten years ago, on the 50th anniversary of D-Day, June 6, 1994, he founded the Distinguished Flying Cross Society; a non-profit society "dedicated to the preservation, perpetuation, and publication of the history and traditions of men and women who served in all military services worldwide and who have been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross as a result of deeds accom-

plished." (See their website at www.dfcsociety.org.)

Helping my dad start up the Society gave me valuable experience with veterans' groups and researching US Air Force history. Now I plan to learn a lot about the Second Air Division and the bomb groups and am pleased to find so much information, collected and preserved by the Memorial Library and readily available to interested patrons. It is also quite moving to learn of the network of local people who collect, preserve and display photos and memorabilia and are willing to serve as resources for other information seekers.

A few weeks ago I was pleased to visit with just such a group of dedicated people at the Seething Tower (Station 146) Open Day. This first experience driving in the countryside was also quite memorable! I was invited out by Tony North, one of the first employees of the Memorial Library and a 2nd Air Division local his-

torian. He and his fellow volunteers in the Station 146 Tower Association have a great collection. The exhibits were very informative and I was particularly impressed with the photograph collection of Patricia Everson, who, through much hard work, has amassed a wonderful tribute to the heroism and the daily life of the personnel stationed at the home of the 448th Bomb Group. These volunteers did all the work on the restoration of the tower and the result is a tribute to their association as well. The visitor comes away with a good idea of what life was like then. (Check them out at www.seething.org.uk.)

As for my projects this year, I will continue the work of the excellent Fulbright Librarians who have come before and strive to develop more outreach contacts with the local schools. The Library was part of a large mailing campaign by the Forum, which targeted schools specifically and included a colourful and informative brochure designed by my immediate predecessor, Tahitia Orr, focusing on our services to schools. We have already had numerous responses and I look forward to making more teachers aware of our collection and how useful it can be for their students.

We have had numerous visitors on site—in this first month, Trust Librarian Derek Hills and I have



Our 2 AD Memorial Librarians in front of wonderful photo-mural. .Derek Hills, Trust Librarian, Alexis Ciurczak, Fulbright Librarian, Jenny Christian and Lesley Fleetwood, Library & Information Assistants.

given talks to over 200 people. I have a schedule of speaking engagements, some to surrounding business and professional groups, which has me quite excited.

The Memorial Library will also be represented at the Annual BBC People's War Conference next month in Bury St Edmunds. Jenny Christian has been involved with the other Fulbrighters in collecting and recording personal war recollections, which are then posted on the BBC's People's War website www.bbc.co.uk/dna/ww2. Look for my report in the next *Herald* on the full programme of events—it promises to be an interesting and exciting experience.

Lesley Fleetwood has been invaluable in providing me with on-site training and support, and her long-term knowledge of the library and its collection is much appreciated by this new member of staff. I look forward to working with her and all the staff as my Fulbright year progresses.

And finally, among my projects I hope to redesign the Library's website, updating it and making it more user-friendly. Check back from time to time at www.2ndair.org.uk. Also, please feel free to contact me with any comments or suggestions at alexis.ciurczak@norfolk.gov.uk.



TUXEDO PARK,

A Wall Street Tycoon and the Secret Palace of Science That Changed the Course of World War II,

by: Jennet Conant

Simon Schuster (published 2002)

-reviewed by Jim Lorenz, 466th BG

"In the fall of 1940, as German bombers flew over London and with America not yet at war, a small team of British scientists on orders from Winston Churchill carried out a daring transatlantic mission. Churchill and President Roosevelt had discussed possible upcoming war problems and agreed to share their most secret activities. The British and Americans unveiled their most valuable military secret in a clandestine meeting with American nuclear physicists (our top secret project) at the Tuxedo Park mansion of a mysterious Wall Street tycoon, Alfred Lee Loomis. Powerful, handsome and enormously wealthy, Loomis had for years led a double life, spending his days brokering huge deals and his weekends working with the world's leading scientists in his deluxe private laboratory that was hidden in his Tuxedo Park stone castle. In this dramatic account of a hitherto unexplored but crucial story of the war, Jennet Conant, granddaughter of Harvard President James B. Conant, traces one of the world's more extraordinary careers and scientific enterprises." (Book jacket blurb)

Loomis foresaw the market crash in 1929 in time to protect his vast holdings, making a fortune while others lost. Later he retired and devoted himself to his laboratory, where he sponsored the meeting and collaboration of the most visionary minds of the twentieth century: Einstein, Neil Bohr, Fermi with Vannevar Bush, Karl Compton and James Conant. These mobilized civilians helped change the course of WW II. Loomis, through his cousin Henry Stimson, Secretary of War for FDR, was able to convince the President to fund creation of advanced radar systems that helped defeat the German Air Force and sink U-boats. Later, a note written by Loomis' friends, but signed by Einstein, convinced FDR to sponsor secret research at MIT to build the first atomic bomb.

Loomis, through his Tower House lab contract, attracted the top scientists from around the world and thus had good insight into the status of science, even in England, France and Germany in 1930-38. He settled—for a while—on two main subjects; the cyclotron to split atoms, and extending the range of British original radar, then based on Doppler Effect. With war imminent in 1940, Stimson agreed to set up a larger lab, but no military base had a suitable place for research. The highly secret Radiation Laboratory (RAD LAB) was set up as a civilian lab on the MIT campus.

"In one of the great gambles of [the war], Churchill, in July 1940, decided to support the idea of a technical mission to America—and FDR readily agreed. Sir Henry Tizard, an Oxford chemist, was named head of the

Essay Contest

Despite the extended deadline, our rejuvenated idea did not attract enough participation, so your League officers are open to suggestions for improving or replacing this learning exercise. One suggestion, from educator and former Heritage League Executive VP Carol Kendrick, includes posting an internet resources guide on our website, which we consider to be an excellent idea in its own right.

Are you one of our school-age members who would have participated if a few things were different? We would love to hear about it! Are you a parent or a teacher who can tell us about scholastic competitions that regularly attract a healthy number of entrants?

The essay reprinted here was felt strong enough by Contest Chair Billy Sheely Johnson and her committee to take the sole prize, in the 7-9 grade category. Our thanks and congratulations to eighth-grader Ray Bohuslav, whose chosen subject was "The B-24 Liberator." We will soon send him the \$100 prize, but would like to have him join us at our next convention (in San Antonio with the 2ADA in May, 2005) for an official presentation of his certificate—in his hometown!

Ray followed Contest guidance by not mentioning his grandfather in the essay, as we like to judge all entries 'blind.' Turns out it is the urbane and gracious Alan Senior of the 446th, who co-hosted the HL officers (with his bride Joyce) for a memorable outing at the George Ranch when we held a midterm 'retreat' in Houston, February 2003. (See article on p. 3 of *Herald* #32.) Alan (with Bud Chamberlain) was also the generous genius behind the wonderful Medallions issued to those attending the Rededication of the Memorial Library in Norwich in 2001, and those beautiful color prints of The Forum, the building housing "our Library." Grandson and grandfather have every reason for mutual pride.

Winning Essay: The B-24 Liberator

-Ray Bohuslav

My grandfather manned several gunner positions in a B-24 nicknamed "Bachelor's Delight" during World War II. His stories of the heroism and bravery displayed by the young men who made up the crew of every Liberator have inspired me to have a great sense of respect for those who served our country in the second World War, especially for those brave men who flew the mighty B-24 Liberator.

As the United States rushed into World War II, Nazi Germany's early dominance soon made it clear that military prowess in the air would play a decisive role in the potential victory. The government hurried to produce fighters and bombers capable of controlling the skies and decimating enemy territories, and for a time the vaunted B-17 "Flying Fortress" was able to carry the load as the US' main heavy bomber. But as the war progressed, the need for a new, more capable bomber to fight alongside the B-17 became painfully obvious, and once again the government looked to its engineers for the answer. Thus, the immeasurably important B-24 "Liberator" was born.

The B-24 was designed to have a longer range on missions, while being able to deliver a more powerful bomb load on its target than the B-17. Several models were built, with the most produced being the B-24J. The 24J model could fly at speeds of up to 290 mph, while

remaining capable of sustaining long missions due to its 2,100 mile range. The versatility of the B-24 allowed it to perform many important jobs for the Air Force. As the Air Force took notice of the B-24's success, more and more Liberators started rolling off the production lines and into combat. By the end of the war over 18,000 B-24 aircraft had been produced.

The B-24 has been largely overlooked in the years since WW II, yet the aircraft's performance and the sacrifices made by its crews are nevertheless historic. The young men who braved grueling conditions and tough jobs throughout the war flying B-24 missions symbolize the best qualities of American patriotism. Far too rarely are the pilots and crewmen who manned countless missions combating their own fears while enduring the harsh cold at high altitudes and the relentlessly tiresome, time-consuming flights, recognized. Liberators flew in every theater of World War II, from the fighting over the Japanese-controlled Pacific to the multiple decimations of the Ploesti oil refineries of Romania.

The Ploesti raids are probably the most noted accomplishment of the B-24 in WW II. Taking to the air from bases in Egypt and Africa, Liberator fleets wrought destruction upon the oil fields on three occasions, with the final assault, flown by 15th Air Force B-24s, completely destroying one of the Nazis' most valued sources

of fuel, and dealing a serious blow to the Axis. On these missions, B-24 crewmen were forced to endure even harsher conditions. As the raids were needed to be made at extremely low altitudes, the smoke and heat of the burning refineries below added to the laborious circumstances.

World War II remains one of the most important

events in world history, and it took the efforts of every young man, like my grandfather, who served his country against the Axis invasion to secure the victory and preserve world peace. The B-24 and its crewmen were very much a part of the reason America and the Allies returned victorious, and it is about time they received the credit they are due.

‘Old’ Essay Contest Winner Makes Good



Great Outcome! 1994-1995 Heritage League Essay Contest winner Matthew Beasley, shown graduating with honors from the University of Wisconsin (Eau Claire), spring 2004.

Ten years after winning the Heritage League Essay Contest, Matthew Beasley is living in London on a Mountbatten Fellowship through mid-summer 2005. Described as well rounded by his grandparents (Norma and Bill Beasley of the 492nd), Matt has already made good use of opportunities to travel to Greece and other continental points, and been complimented on his horsemanship by British acquaintances.

In recent e-mail correspondence, he explained his current program: “The Lord Mountbatten of Burma Fellowship provides young American international business professionals the opportunity to spend a year abroad working and living in the UK. The fellowship is highly regarded, as only a limited number of individuals 21-28 are awarded the fellowship each year. Upon being accepted as 2004-2005 Mountbatten Fellow, I have been hired with UBS Investment Bank in their London office. I am working on a multi-million dollar project to develop organizational strategy for client information systems. As a part of the fellowship I have also been provided the opportunity ...to take courses towards an advanced degree in International Business Practice at Cambridge University, England.”

Our continuing congratulations to you, Matthew.



Nine Years Ago! 1995, Lexington convention of 2ADA and Heritage League, during her first presidency, Billy Sheely Johnson presents Matthew Beasley award for first place in Essay contest. He tied with his cousin Chad Beasley; both are grandsons of Willis Beasley of the 492nd. Watching are then Communications VP Mary Beth Barnard, Executive VP Irene Hurner, and Secretary Janice Bates.

Veteran Files Become More Accessible

Thanks to original Heritage League officer Norma Beasley, who called our attention to an item that will be of great interest to researchers, from the online edition of *Stars and Stripes*, the “hometown paper” for overseas American service members and their families.

The records of all service members since 1885—once 62 years have elapsed since their discharge or separation—will become available to the public, subject to the practice of protecting still-living personnel by blacking out sensitive identifiers such as Social Security Numbers before releasing requested copies.

Until now, release of this information was limited to the living veteran *or* their next-of-kin after their death. Because the program will be making records available digitally, it will allow powerful online database searching methods yielding instantaneous results, accelerating research tremendously. The National Archives Records Administration, perpetual stewards of the files, has their work cut out for them: it is anticipated that the digitization of this 56 million record collection will take a decade; release of records through the WW I era should be finished in the present calendar year.

URL to the full July 14 article by Linda Burgess is <http://www.estripes.com/article.asp?section=104&article=22353&archive=true>.

Play It Again, John! *-Brian Mahoney*

At the 492nd's warm and memorable reunion in mid-May in Salt Lake City, I snapped a photo of a veteran during the playing of *Taps*. I had not gotten to know John Moore during that meeting, but have had an interesting correspondence since sending him a copy of that picture.

In excerpts from his letter, readers will note the 'tie-in' to the article "One Number, Two Groups..." John is one of the relatively rare cases which was 'reassigned to the same outfit,' becoming a Carpetbagger when the original daylight bombing group was broken up in early August, 1944. On September 6th, 2004, he wrote:

"My A-2 jacket has little white bombs from WW II (35) and twenty-five from the Korean War. When WW II ended, I was put in the inactive reserve. The Korean War started in 1950 and I was recalled to active duty in 1951. 8th Air Force did not wish to put their B-36s and B-47s at risk so they activated some old B-29s. Also old air crew members were activated. After the 492nd was broken up, I spent 2 1/2 months in the hospital (a bicycle accident). I was assigned to the Carpetbaggers. I flew two Carpetbagger missions and 5 practice missions with a pilot named Jim Watson.

Jim Watson left the service and was also recalled. I met him in Texas and I had him ask for me on his crew. I flew 25 missions over Korea with him. A small world."

John enclosed a clipping from the newsletter

'CROSSHAIRS, the Bombardier, Inc.' It reads in part:

"My original 8th Air force group was broken up and became the 492nd Bomb Group know as 'The Carpetbaggers,' flying black B-24s. Normally we flew supplies to underground people in northern Europe... 300 feet at night! However, occasionally we flew night bombing missions (to show the Royal Air Force the 8th AF could do it!) using RAF tactics—flares, etc.

I believe it was in January 1945 during one night bombing mission we were trapped in three visually aimed search lights. I asked our pilot, Jim Watson, if he could do a 'RAF Corkscrew' to get out of them. He could and did and we did!

Seven years later in 1952 Jim Watson and I were back together again. This time we were in a B-29 over North Korea. We were caught in three or four Chinese visually aimed searchlights! I asked Jim if he remembered the same 'RAF Corkscrew' so successfully used in Europe. (The Corkscrew won't work with radar directed lights.)

He remembered, executed it, and it worked again!"



Outside HILL AFB Chapel. 492nd veteran John Moore during playing of *Taps*, just prior to 'Missing Man' flyover.

- Brian Mahoney

One Number, Two Groups, Enduring Confusion

-Brian Mahoney

Army pride, protocol and convention require that one know a few facts left out of the official US Air Force book on WW II air force combat unit histories, and also know how to read between its lines, to realize that the numeric designation "492nd Bomb Group," is correctly claimed by two entirely different, very colorful outfits.

The designation was first applied to the conventional daylight bomb group, built around a cadre of an anti-sub patrol squadron based at Langley Field, Virginia, in late 1943, which moved into the European theatre in April, 1944. My father served in that original cadre (the 12th Anti-Submarine Squadron) and commanded the *original* 492nd's *original* 859th Bomb Squadron for its entire short and fiery life. They flew unpainted four engine B-24 Liberators and did strategic daylight bombing of targets in Northern Europe from their base, USAAF Station #143, North Pickenham, in western County Norfolk. They had 2 older sister groups in their 14th Combat Wing, within the B-24 equipped Second Air Division of the 'Mighty Eighth' Air Force.

They suffered higher losses in a 90-day period than any other outfit in the US Army Air Forces (or the predecessor *Army Air Corps*, or follow-on United States Air Force). They flew their first combat mission on May 11th, 1944, against train marshalling yards in Mulhouse, France. Before completion of their 67th and last mission a mere 89 days later, 588 were killed or missing in action, out of the original 70 ten-man crews plus an amazing 49 replacement crews that were infused to meet the demoralizing and virtually unsustainable losses. For the entire time they were on combat operation, this group lost one man, on average, *every four hours*. Their question-begging high loss rate, especially at this relatively late date in the European airwar, continues to be the subject of unending speculation 60 years later.

In early August, a series of orders sent all of the combat men and some of the ground compliment to different places and organizations. My father took 'his' *original* 859th, swelled for the purposes of the movement order to include 29 crews that tended to have fewer than 15 missions, to a much luckier assignment with the 467th BG (H) at USAAF Station #145, Rackheath. This represented the largest single chunk of the split-up *original* 492nd BG (H). When this squadron arrived at their new home, per the same complex movement order, their new designation was the 788th BS. More on that later.

Prior to the invasion of the continent on June 6th, the Office of Special Services (OSS, precursor to the post-war Central Intelligence Agency) needed air combat personnel and equipment to secrete propaganda leaflets, agents and materiel into occupied countries in support of partisan operations. In early May, commanders of the three groups in the 96th combat wing of the Second Air Division met with their commander, General Peck, to draw a short straw. Colonel Shower of the 467th at Rackheath 'donated' the *original* 788th BS to this fledgling clandestine force, provisionally called the 801st BG (H), which did not fall under the direct command of any of the 3 divisions of the Eighth Air Force, but was logistically supported by different wings and groups for the duration of war in Europe. An ironic loop was closed, in terms of formal numeric designations, when those 300 'orphans' of the *original* 492nd who went to the 467th, became its *new* 788th BS.

At the same time, by the same comprehensive movement order, the 801st BG ceased to be in name; it assumed the name "492nd BG." It was not a daylight bombing outfit, it was not in the 2nd Air Division with the other B-24 groups, and indeed was officially lacking a commanding officer for a matter of several days.

It is probable that 8th AF HQ was cooperating with the OSS (and its colorful General "Wild Bill" Donovan) in the slight-of-hand aspects of the movement order... a spy operation was hiding in plain

sight, operating for the most part from their base at Harrington. Additionally, by this papering over of the real dissolution of the hard-luck *original* 492nd BG, the US Army was able to say, with nary a bureaucratic wink, that it had never stood down a combat unit in war owing to unmeetable attrition.

Maurer Maurer served as editor of "Air Force Combat Units of World War II," published by the Air University of the Department of The Air Force in 1961. It is typically cited as a definitive researcher reference. Those who know the bloody history of the disbanded

original 492nd will tell you to read its concise 500 word article 'The 492nd Bomb Group,' like verbiage from a cynical spin-meister, not from a guileless historical source. Two stunning sentences in the middle of the passage 'unhappen' one entire heroic organization, re-clothe a remarkable cloak-and-dagger organization, and pass off a deft shell game in words they hope no one will notice:

"Resumed bombardment of strategic targets in Germany and, except for support of the

infantry during the St Lo breakthrough on 25 Jul 1944, continued such operations until Aug 1944. Transferred, less personnel and equipment, to another station in England on 5 Aug 1944 and assumed personnel, equipment, and the CARPETBAGGER mission of a provisional group that was discontinued."

In case anyone missed it, the transfer of an organization, without any of its personnel or equipment, is the transfer of its name alone, and the total obliteration of any meaningful continuity of the first holders of that name with history.

The carefully crafted article is technically accurate but, per official intentions, brilliantly misleading. It does the truth no further harm when correctly reporting that the (new) 492nd, the 'Carpetbaggers,' continued to harass the enemy by unconventional operations and earned a Distinguished Unit Citation for operations in Germany in March of 1945 and was awarded the Croix de Guerre, with Palm, by the French government. Veterans of the *original* organi-



Original 492nd Staff. Group Operations Officer, Jack Turnbull, and Air Executive Lou Adams, assumed same duties when reassigned to 44th BG (Shipdham) upon breakup of original 492nd in August, 1944. We are looking south from the North Pickenham tower.

Kalamazoo continued from page 1



Low ceiling, heavy flak. Lloyd Prang flies lead for 453rd BG Association, a lively fun bunch who throw out a memorable welcome. -Brian Mahoney

sion Saturday morning under the crisp and experienced gavel of Billy Sheely Johnson. Immediate past Secretary Linda Wittig graciously offered to record the proceedings for her successor, Margaret Heckman, who was unable to attend.

We caught up with the 'non-working' majority at the Kalamazoo Valley Museum next door, then via 'coach' to lunch and the 'Air Zoo' (Kalamazoo Air Museum). Besides fine fall

weather, we basked in the warm reception given the veterans by the museum docents, restaurant staff, and our coach driver.

Back at the Radisson, we retreated to the hospital-ity suite again then the informal banquet with remarks by 'both presidents,' the presentation of keepsake personalized 'Liberator hats' by us to their officers and ours. A group photo made it finally clear how many 'Leaguers' were in attendance, and we can happily report that almost half of the bomb groups of the 2nd Air Division had representation at this first-ever (sort-of) 'stand alone.' A resounding success!

This writer missed the last day's activities, but is

assured that all had a fine time without me, visiting the Kellogg house and the Gilmore Car Museum.

For the next few years, your officers have em-



Heritage Officers. L-R: Representative to 2nd Air Division Memorial Trust Vicki Brooks Warning (466th), President Billy Sheely Johnson (492nd), recent Assoc. Sec'y Brenda Tudyk (453rd), Past President Irene Hurner (453rd), Communications VP Brian Mahoney (492/467), recent Sec'y Linda Wittig (453rd), Treasurer Ed Zobac (445th), and Liaison from 2ADA Jim Lorenz, a 466th veteran. Irene and Linda have graciously accepted appointments to continue service on the Transition Committee. -Brian Mahoney

braced the concept that we want to have our gatherings in the company of veterans. We realize that we enjoy their company and should not be in a rush to meet 'independently,' so long as various groups and the 2ADA itself are available for socializing and reminiscence. At some point soon, this might mean that we play the lead role, and let one or more veteran groups meet alongside us, with us doing the 'heavy lifting' of selecting the site and arranging the activities. This is another way in which we are prepared to grow, and looking for appropriate energy and competence within our ranks. Any readers who are interested in helping us with convention planning are encouraged to contact members of the Executive Committee. For now, we want to extend a heartfelt 'thanks' to Lloyd and Irene Prang and their crew, who provided a 'real fine clambake' for nearly 90 all told.

In May we will once again meet at the 2nd Air Division Association Reunion in San Antonio, Texas, and combine business with pleasure. We hope to have informal presence at a variety of smaller reunions throughout the coming year, such as the 8th Air Force Historical Society's gathering in Arlington, VA, Sept. 27 to Oct. 2, 2005. We will keep you posted in hopes of seeing you there with us, making visible our perpetual purpose of 'honoring and remembering.'



Original Issue. Keepsake cusotimized caps being distributed to officers of Heritage League and the 453rd. L-R: recent HL Secretary and 453rd daughter Linda Wittig, 453rd Secretary Dick Robert (taking notes!), 453rd President Lloyd Prang (obscuring Heritage President Johnson), Past HL President and 453rd daughter Irene Hurner, HL Communications Veep ' Mad Hatter' Mahoney and HL Treasurer Ed Zobac. -Brian Mahoney

More From Kalamazoo!



Dashing son. Chris Raiser wore period lieutenant's uniform to banquet, joined Heritage League, and accompanied his father, 453rd pilot Jack Raiser, to Kalamazoo. *-Brian Mahoney*



Over lunch. Jim Lorenz, Kurt & Vicki Warning, Rosie and Ed Zobac savoring good company, great day trip together. *-Brian Mahoney*



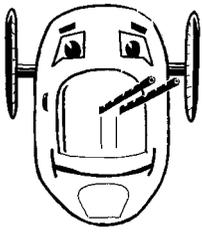
Margaret Barker is rightfully proud of her dad, Col. Henry Barker, USAF (Ret.), a 453rd co-pilot. *-Brian Mahoney*



"When justice and mercy prevail, children may safely play." Plaque in Kalamazoo's moving Bronson Park accompanies prominent peaceful sculpture. Fountain with these figures is encircled by memorials to American wars from Civil War through First Gulf War, in which city's residents served. Lincoln delivered an abolition speech 100 yards from this point in 1856. *-Brian Mahoney*



Fabric sides, no engine! Interior of WACO CG4-A glider configured for 13 troops. Typically towed by C-47, the 'Hadrian' could alternatively hold a jeep, a quarter ton truck, or a 75mm howitzer loaded through up-swung nose section. 15 companies produced total of 12,000. *-Brian Mahoney*



*Pitch
it to
PETE!* -by Pete O'Tube, expert

Dear Pete,

I was under the impression that the Liberator was a pretty austere bit of transport-drafty, unpressurized, no 'indoor facilities,' very limited armor, and thermostat set at 30 °F below zero most of the time. What is this talk I hear about carpet??

Curiously yours,
William Osborne Runn

Dear Will O. Runn,

'Carpet' was the code name for the radio counter measure designed to interfere with German radar that was connected with their anti-aircraft batteries. The idea was to determine on which frequencies their radar was operating, then to transmit cancelling signals rendering the 'Wurzberg' equipment useless. The second generation APQ-9 Carpet III sets which started to show up in 2nd Division aircraft in the summer of 1944, were able to transmit across multiple frequencies, or could be directed automatically by the AN/APR-4 scanner to a specific detected frequency. Jamming was most effective if it came from multiple ships in a formation.

If you have ever seen pictures of Liberators with three plexiglass bumps on the midline aft of the nosewheel, you were looking at a Carpet equipped plane whose three sending antennae needed protection from the windstream.

-Pete

Dear Pete,

My burning question: In looking at mission reports, I see occasional reference to 'synthetic oil' targets. What were the Germans making fuel from, and just how successful were they?

-Jeremiah Canne

My Dear Jerry Canne,

Germany had an ample coal supply, but continually ran short of petroleum. It relied on a number of synthetic oil refineries to convert coal into about 2/3rds of the liquid fuel required to run its war machine. (The other third came from the natural oil refineries of Ploesti, Romania.) Nearly all of the Nazi's aviation fuel was made in synthetic oil plants using a hydrogenation process, known as Fisher-Tropsch process.

Planners of the strategic bombing campaign never lost sight of the high priority of this type of target, and intense German defenses of targets such as Politz, Poland, reflected the enemy's complete agreement. Denying Germany of natural and synthetic fuels, in postwar analysis by Allied and German experts, was the most effective blow the air arm struck in shortening the European war.

-Pete

Dear Mr. O'Tube,

Hoping you can help me find the definitive biography of an airman who seems to have really gotten around... I see 'Tail-end Charlie' referred to in accounts from Europe, the Pacific, the Mediterranean... Clearly this guy got around!

Ms. Sylvia Edwards Byrd

Dear Syl E. Byrd,

'Tail-end Charlie' was not a specific man, but a role unhappily played by every crew that was at the back of a big aerial formation. And they all 'got around,' more than they wanted to. As a formation changed direction or speed, those close to the leader had to make relatively minor adjustments to keep a good formation, but at progressively greater distances from the leader, small adjustments got magnified and had to be executed quickly, not always smoothly.

Fuel reports after missions showed that those toward the back of a formation consumed much more than those in front. Jockeying throttles and

controls to catch up in a turn or make lots of smaller speed and course corrections was tough on the pilots, passengers and planes. Seasoned pilots came to recognize and appreciate lead crew pilots who flew as smoothly as possibly—on autopilot whenever conditions favored it. They resented ‘throttle jockeys’ making extra work, fuel consumption and discomfort for those following.

‘Tailend Charlie’ was in a vulnerable place when enemy fighters attacked from behind. Tail gunners in these ships had an unhindered gruesome view if a following formation was under

attack.

Speaking of tail gunners, the same principle applied within a plane as within the formation... note that the tail gunner is much further from the center of gravity (near the middle of the wing) than anyone else on a Liberator (or a Fortress, Mitchell or Marauder, for that matter.) A pitch or yaw of the nose that moved the bombardier 2” from the perfect smooth path through space, shook the tail gunner 4” in the same time. On any number of counts, the tailgunner had to have an especially strong stomach.

-Pete

One Number, Two Groups continued from page 9

zation sometimes like to think of the latter especially as applying retroactively to them, but Maurer aside, the historical facts of their service do not appear in either of the citations. Tellingly, the Maurer book lists no 801st BG.

The official conflation of an unforgettable outfit (which the Army wanted to forget) and a clandestine operation (which was best kept secret but shines now in declassified history) has done a lasting disservice to the record. Documentaries, articles and histories that have relied on the Maurer account without the required careful reading, or consulting other sources, completely miss the story of the hardest-luck bomb group of the Eighth, one of the toughest in US history.

References

- Roger Freeman’s “The Mighty Eighth: A History of the US Army 8th Air Force,” see Harrington’ in index of UK place names.
- Maurer Maurer’s “Air Force Combat Units of World War II”
- Tom Ensminger’s ‘Carpetbaggers’ web page <http://www.carpetbaggerops.org/NewMenu.html>



New pin, above, and limited edition commemorative pin from Norwich, below. Proceeds support the Memorial Library.

Commemorative Pins

The wonderful pins designed by our own talented Caron Veynar continue to raise funds for the Memorial Library and are proudly worn on more and more lapels at reunions. Quality cloisonné stud-backed pins of bright brass and enameled red, white and blue feature our logo fittingly supported by ‘wings of friendship’ in the form of the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes.

We have a few remaining special edition pins commemorating the Rededication of the Memorial Room in November 2001, featuring a variant of the wing and flag motif. Like the new pin, it is about 1.5” (37 mm) across.

Either can be ordered. Make your check payable to the Heritage League, c/o Caron Veynar, 4919 Bristow Drive, Annandale, VA 22003-5457. \$5 for the Rededication pin, \$7 for the new pin. Include \$1.00 for shipping and handling up to three pins, \$1.50 S & H for 4-6 pins.

<http://WebpagesWeWike/html/by.SiwwyWabbit>

The usual cautions against relying on things read on the web, unless the source there does a nice job of leading viewers all the way back to authoritative origins. As stewards of an exciting legacy, we know that the truth needs no embellishment. We all have a responsible part to play in keeping the stories and history of the 2nd Air Division alive—and accurate. If you publish to the web, let viewers know precisely where you got your material, and if you need to, ‘qualify’ its reliability. Know that in doing that clearly you will have done a service to the truth, as well as the service and sacrifices we would honor.

 **Heritage League** Our ‘home’ page. Check for announcements between *Herald* mailings. Missing a back issue of the *Herald*? From #31 forward, they can be viewed and downloaded in convenient .pdf format (requires free Adobe Acrobat software or its equivalent). Just click on the Newsletters tab. (If you have a broadband connection, try it out! Are you willing to receive your subscription by e-mail, saving the League some printing and postage costs? Please contact the Communications VP at BriCamera@MindSpring.com with ‘eHerald’ as the subject.) Continuing thanks to webmaster Bob Books! <http://www.heritageleague.org>

 **Second Air Division Memorial Library** Track the evolution of General Kepner’s great idea at war’s end, and virtually tour the wonderful living memorial into which it has evolved. “Freedom Shrine” is a must-see primer in civics, even if you thought you knew all your stuff cold. <http://www.2ndair.org.uk/>

 **Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum** Viewing this site will whet your appetite to visit their collection just outside Savannah, GA. Exhibits, memorial garden, library, chapel and educational programs all designed to ‘connect’ with youngsters and older generation alike. Renewed exposure for 2nd Air Division will take shape when “Fightin’ Sam” B-24 nose section is installed in the Combat Rotunda alongside interactive educational elements. <http://www.mightyeighth.org/>

 **American Battle Monument Commission** Official burial grounds around the globe of our war dead are presented in dignified and very accessible. Comprehensive cross referenced data on all who are interred in, or commemorated at, these moving memorial cemeteries. <http://www.ambc.gov/>

 **Stars and Stripes daily, online** The civilian and military writers that have churned out Pacific and European editions (recently combined) continuously since WW II, and the new Middle East edition (distribution on paper, printing in Baghdad) serve up the straight stuff, independent of chain of command and politics, as seen and experienced by reporters ‘on the scene’. <http://www.estripes.com/index.asp>

 **National Archives Records Administration/military records** Request military records, debunk rumor about records to be destroyed, learn of records lost to fire in St. Louis facility 30 years ago. http://www.archives.gov/research_room/vetrecs/index.html

 **Veterans History Project/Library of Congress** Our friends in Savannah are one of the Partners in the Oral History project; find guidance here in collecting your veteran’s story and then donate copies there and to the Mighty Eighth Air Force Heritage Museum. <http://www.loc.gov/folklife/vets/>

 **Kalamazoo Air Zoo Heritage League** Reunioneers and their 453rd friends thoroughly enjoyed this collection and its knowledgeable docent staff; see our reunion write-up and photos elsewhere in this *Herald*. <http://www.airzoo.org/>

 **Yankee Air Force** Impressive non-profit warbird restoration and display outfit took a bad hit with severe hangar fire; they seek monetary and artifact donations to rebuild their collection. Located near Ford’s famous Willow Run production line, but they do not have a Liberator. <http://www.yankeeairmuseum.org/>

▶ **National Air & Space Museum** World's most popular museum on 'the Mall' in DC is now complimented by the Udvar-Hazy Center near Dulles Airport. (See story in this *Herald*, below.) Each deserves a day, and comprehensive research resources on the websites make preplanning easy.
<http://www.nasm.si.edu/>

▶ **Collings Foundation/Wings of Freedom Tour** See what HL members Clark & Mahoney report on in this issue, and bookmark the site to plan your 2005 visit or ride in a restored Liberator (or that *other* plane) when they are in your area.
<http://www.collingsfoundation.org/menu.htm>

▶ **Women In Military Service to America (WIMSA)** Within Arlington National Cemetery is a housed institution which commemorates servicewomen and advocates for 'militarization' of WASPS during WW II. Oral history production advice by following 'History and Collections' link and selecting 'oral histories.' http://www.archives.gov/research_room/vetreces/index.html

▶ **492nd BG** Another sons' effort—Paul and Dave Arnett honor their father, Charles, one of the pilots, who retired as a USAF Lt. Col. It is under construction and filling out nicely.
<http://www.492ndbombgroup.com/>

Visit to New Air and Space Facility

The Stephen F. Udvar-Hazy Air and Space Museum, Dulles Virginia



Colorful Career. Campaign ribbons of the late great Jimmy Doolittle, hero of the April 1942 raid on Japan and later illustrious CO of the Mighty Eighth. Immediately under his wings note ribbon version of his Medal of Honor. Three stars on this shoulder stood for a lot of capability and responsibility.
-Brian Mahoney



Kids in a candy shop. Heritage stalwarts and prolific researchers Kelsey McMillan (a 389th daughter) and Chris Clark (a 44th son) in front of a 'little friend,' a P-47D sporting distinctive yellow and black cowl marking of the 350th FS of the 353rd Fighter Group, based at Metfield then Raydon.
-Brian Mahoney

VE + 60 trip...?

A week of commemorative visits to East Anglia and northern Europe, to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of Allied victory in Europe is being discussed by a small core of interested HL members. If the itinerary listed below is of interest to you, please contact Brian Mahoney no later than January 3rd. (Contact info on the back cover.) At that time, if we have a party of at least 8, it will be a 'go,' and those interested will cooperatively make all of the arrangements. This will be a trial transatlantic cultural and social outing, to include interested 'Friends.' If it flies, the concept of us hosting an English delegation stateside in 2010 seems the next logical step in regularizing substantial friendship and exchange.

•**Friday, May 6, 2005** Begin flights from US points to Norwich, England, via Amsterdam. (KLM is in partnership with the cross-channel carrier and one can go from KLM US served locations to Norwich International on a single ticket. Return ticket from Norwich to Amsterdam will not be needed.) Some may chose to arrive earlier and/or through different gateways and rendezvous with the main party in Norwich on Saturday.

•**Saturday, May 7:** Arrive Norwich, settle in, rest, share late informal dinner, possibly with Friends. Good night to have arranged 'hostance' (and airport pick-ups) by interested Friends.

•**Sunday, May 8:** 60th Anniversary of Victory in Europe Services in Norwich Cathedral, base visits with Friends, possible other commemorative ceremonies in or around Memorial Library, nice reception dinner with Friends. Good second night for home hostance by Friends.

•**Monday, May 9:** Library visit, city tour, in morning, followed by lunch with Friends as available. Transfer to Cambridge (bus, train, or rides offered by our hosts?) and visit Madingley American Cemetery in afternoon, laying Heritage League wreath at the Wall of the Missing. Some quaint modest Cambridge accommodation, dinner, and optional pub crawl before reasonably early retirement.

•**Tuesday, May 10:** Early rise and breakfast, early departure (with our packed bags) for Imperial War Museum/American Air Museum in nearby Duxford. Early lunch (possibly at Duxford Officers' Club?) Early afternoon train from Duxford to London for dinner, baggage left in secure storage at train station. Train south to Portsmouth; board overnight ferry for Caen, Normandy, France. Outside berths for four of us would be about

£80 per person. British friends wanting to come along could take their autos with them, drive some of us to Portsmouth.

•**Wednesday, May 11:** Arrive Caen 7:15 am, drop bags at hotel. Visit marketplace for light breakfast and to make up picnic lunches. Bus to Normandy Cemetery (wreath laying?) and landing beaches. Plenty of walking; hope for good weather! Mid afternoon, visit Bayeux on return to hotel.

•**Thursday, May 12:** Pick tour of D-Day Museum or trip to Ouistreham ('Pegasus Bridge'). If bad weather on prior day, switch agendas. Tour Caen in late afternoon and evening, nice restaurant dinner before boarding night train to Frankfurt am Main, Germany (Check bags at train station).

•**Friday, May 13:** Morning tour of rebuilt Frankfurt's Medieval Quarter, churches with war memorials, shopping district. (This entire day will be enhanced by comparison of each of our present day Rhineland destinations with photographs of the utter destruction of each during WW II.) Mid-morning visit to an authentic „Konditerei“ for Kaffee und Kuchen. Early afternoon train up Rhine Valley past Mainz, Bingen, Remagen Bridge, Koblenz and other important 8th AF targets and scores of enchanted quaint towns and castles. Lunch on train with running commentary by Brian and knowledgeable others. Arrive Cologne late afternoon. Check in hotel, do some walking touring of city, enjoy authentic German dinner in old Town Hall Square area, followed by more walking touring and some good Bier or Wein.

•**Saturday, May 14:** Train to Aachen, Germany. Hired or volunteered transport to Maastricht (Netherlands American Cemetery), lunch in Maastricht area, then Henri-Chapelle then check into hotel in Liege, Belgium. Late afternoon excursion to Ardennes Cemetery or tour city. Special last dinner together.

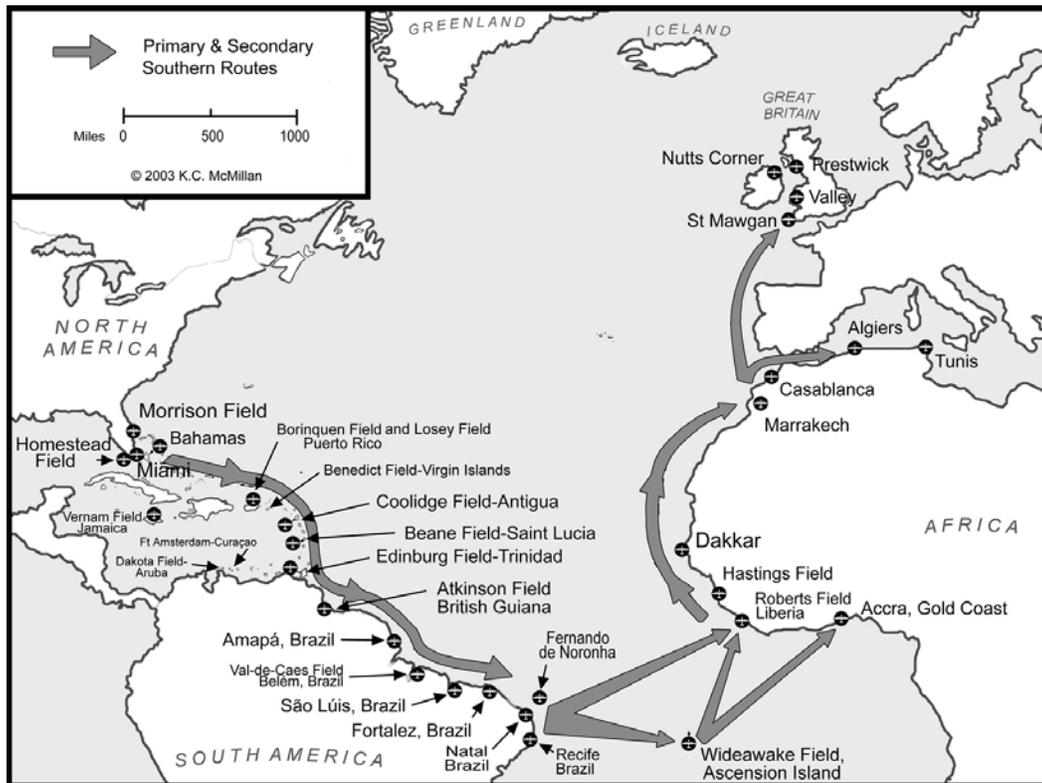
•**Sunday, May 15:** Early train departure to Schiphol Airport (Amsterdam) for early afternoon flights home.

If it all looks like it will happen, the League may support wreathlaying in the American Cemeteries and a banquet with our hosting Friends.

This itinerary could be refined, and it is hoped that interested 'Leaguers and Friends' will fully participate in all of the planning and logistics needed.

Please understand that neither the Heritage League nor Brian Mahoney are holding forth as professional tour operators; Brian has, however, been in each of the listed destinations and used each of the conveyances in the current proposed itinerary, so is willing to 'lead the party' in mutually making the arrangements early in the new year.

Addendum: South Atlantic Routes



THE SOUTH ATLANTIC AIR ROUTES OF WORLD WAR II

Several readers of Kelsey McMillan's wonderful researched article 'Atlantic Air Routes of WW II' (page 19, *Herald* #34) lamented the lack of a map of the southern routes. Space constraints prevented us running it there. We are pleased to present it here, and delighted that so many of you noticed and asked.

Divine Comedy

A Soldier, a Sailor, an Airman and a Marine got into an argument about which branch of the service was best. The arguing became so heated the four service men failed to see an oncoming truck as they crossed the street. They were hit by the truck and killed instantly.

Soon, the four servicemen found themselves at the Pearly Gates. They asked Saint Peter as arbiter of truth and honesty, "Which branch of the United States Armed Forces is the best?"

Saint Peter replied, "I must defer to Higher Authority to answer that. Meanwhile, thank you for your service on Earth and welcome to Heaven." Suddenly, a sparkling white dove landed on Saint Peter's shoulder. In the dove's beak is a note glistening with gold dust. Saint Peter reads the memo as trumpets blare and harps play...

MEMORANDUM

FROM: The Desk of The Almighty

TO: All former Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines.

SUBJECT: Which Military Service Is the Best?

1. All branches of the United States Armed Forces are honorable and noble.
2. Each serves America well and with distinction.
3. Serving in the United States military represents a great honor warranting special respect, tribute, and dedication from your fellow man
4. Always be proud of that.

Warm regards,
God, USAF (Ret.)

(Our thanks to Kay Butler Drake, daughter of the 44th's Col. Dick Butler, USAF Ret. *Ed.*)

Friends of the Memorial

Many of our readers have heard of our approximate counterpart on ‘the other side of the Pond,’ the Friends of the 2nd Air Division Memorial. They also include in their membership an impressive network of knowledgeable and helpful base contacts, who coordinate tours and orientations when we visit East Anglia. American subscribers receive the periodical ‘Second Thoughts.’

The description of their annual fundraising Thanksgiving dinner is both mouthwatering and heartwarming. It is hoped that many of them will join us in the proposed ‘VE + 60’ tour outlined elsewhere in this edition.

Several of you earmarked contributions for them during our special summer renewal appeal, this is a welcome encouragement to the officers of both hard-working non-profits, who each prioritize support for ‘our Library,’ as David Hastings has taught us to regard it.

In *Herald* #34 our general pitch for readers to join ‘The Friends’ was missing one tiny detail, the cost! Show your support by sending your dues of \$8 per individual or \$12 for a couple or family, to our treasurer. Make checks out to The Heritage League, but please note ‘2005 Friends dues’ on the memo line. Treasurer Zobac’s address appears on the back panel of this Herald.



continued from page 5

British Technical and Scientific Mission and chose 5 scientists and military men for his team.” The team arrived in Washington in August, with Britain’s most valuable secrets—a model resonant cavity magnetron, a powerful source of microwaves, needed for radar development. The U.S. Navy was using a cumbersome low range 2-3 meter wave length radar; here the British demonstrated their new device—generating ten centimeter pulsating waves of 10 KW power that could detect a plane at two miles.

Things moved rapidly, from the early British AI (airborne interception), to GCI (ground controlled interception) and a “transmit-receive box.” A test with a B-18 bomber proved detection of aircraft at 10 miles. That June 19th, the Office of Scientific Research & Development, run by scientists, was approved by FDR. Soon the SC-584 automatic tracking radar was put into production. The British “GEE” early radar was replaced with the improved “H2X”—terms we 8th Air Force WWII crews know very well. Later LORAN—long range aid to navigation based on ultra high frequencies—was operating around the world. And then GCA (ground controlled approach) landings were developed.

While all this was going on, another group at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, RAD LAB, was working on the highly secret atomic bomb program, the ‘Manhattan Project’ under General Leslie Groves. Groves wanted to induct all the scientists into the Army, but this was deferred until Aug. 1944, and never really instituted. Los Alamos Laboratory was set up and Uranium -235 was used to make the first atomic bomb, ‘Thin Man.’ The Enola Gay dropped the four-ton brother ‘Little Boy’ bomb. Meanwhile the Hanford Atomic plant produced the plutonium 239 for the second bomb dropped, dubbed ‘Fat Man’ in honor of Churchill.

I found this book fascinating, as we in the 8th Air Force were fortunate to benefit from Alfred Loomis’ projects. More than that, in 1948 “...the King awarded Loomis His Majesty’s Medal for Service in the Cause of Freedom, in recognition of the valuable service he rendered to the Allied War effort.” That same year, President Truman awarded Loomis the Presidential Medal of Merit, our highest civilian award.

This book recognizes the rather fantastic cooperation between the British and American scientific war efforts. The late Stephen Ambrose stated, “No one man won World War II for us, but none exceeded Alfred Loomis’ contributions. He was critical to the crucial developments, everything from radar to the atomic bomb.”

Much material in this book was classified until 1992. Author Jennet Conant, granddaughter of Harvard President James B. Conant, had access to many unpublished documents. From 1950 to 1985, this reviewer worked as an inorganic chemist at Union Carbide and had security clearances to work on the atomic bomb, nuclear power plants and the space program. The early work described in this book was especially meaningful to me, as all we really knew until now was that “Einstein wrote a letter to FDR to convince him to back atom splitting research.” This book also confirms rumors that FDR was really cooperating with England prior to Pearl Harbor.

Heritage Outing with Collings Planes *-Brian Mahoney*

Saturday, October 16th started out as a crisp clear autumn flying day, though it was gusty at times and ended up with rain. The next day was also glorious, all the better for the Collings Foundation's 'Wings of Freedom' Tour visit at the Manassas Regional Airport. The mixture of reenactors, vendors of militaria, and the travelling thematic exhibit, made a dozen fully functioning warbirds and their fans fit right in.

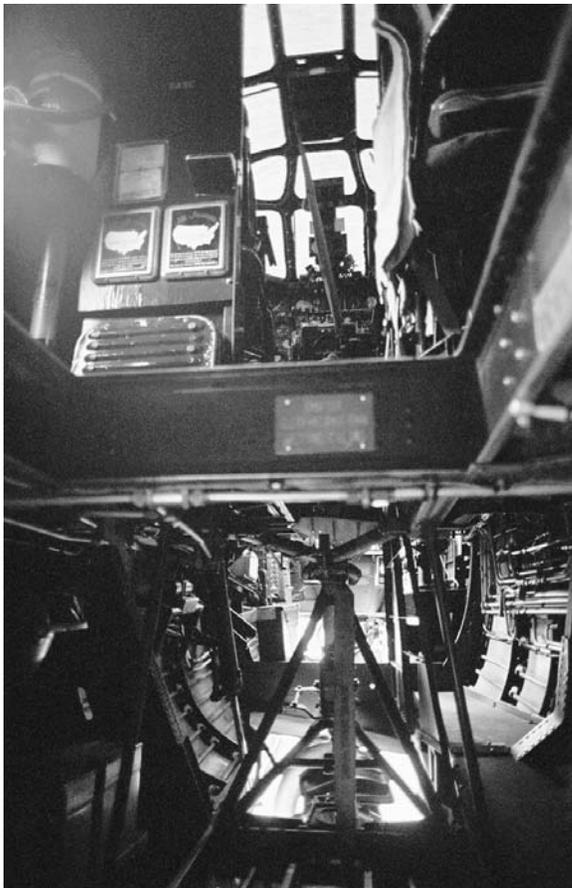
Heritage member Chris Clark and I 'tabled' together while also nominally volunteering, giving us access to the two big bombers and the substantial number of visitors to both. Chris brought display boards and attractive posters that allowed us to make several wonderful 'connections.' No less than three Ploesti raid veterans were met, one of whom had never realized that his bomb group has had an active association for many years—we gave him contact info for the 93rd and the 2ADA.

A few of the 'paid rides' got off shortly after 9 AM in the good weather, and this writer took full advantage of our access to videotape his first personal sighting of a Liberator fired up, taxiing, and taking wing. Throughout the day,

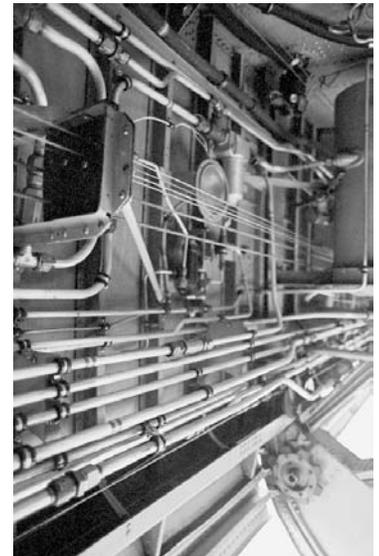
while meeting veterans, their descendants, present-day active duty service members and plain-ole plane buffs, we got up close and personal with the beautifully restored and maintained 'Dragon and His Tail/All American.'

I got to briefly meet affable pilot Rob Collings, who made it clear to us that he appreciates the special role of the Heritage League. We are to prepare for him a weatherproof recruitment information poster for them to carry about in their almost non-stop schedule, which has upwards of 2 million visitors in a typical year.

See our article 'Fastest Production Ford' in *Herald #33*, page 14, for more info on this family foundation and their fascinating program of preserving our technological heritage. If you have a chance to get to one of their landings near you, you should make the effort, even if you cannot spring for the paid ride. Their website is listed in 'Webpages We Wike,' and they re-post their evolving schedule there regularly.



6 stations, close quarters. Wide angle shot looking forward in Collings B-24 from bomb bay. Near us at top, to left, Engineer/top gunner station. Near upper right, radio operator. Beyond, upper half: pilot to left and copilot to right on the flight deck; note dense array of instruments on panel. Forward, below: bombardier/nose gunner in front, navigator's desk just above our view is just obscured by flight deck. *-Brian Mahoney*



Looking toward tail, inside right bomb bay. Note complex and vulnerable rudder, aileron and elevator control cables, hydraulic lines for flaps, landing gear, bomb bay doors, de-icer boots. Upper right corner shows part of wing spar. At lower right see roll-up bay door mechanism and open bomb bay. *-Brian Mahoney*



Heritage Visibility. Chris Clark brought attractive posters for 2ADA and the 44th, and his very winning ways with veterans and 'warbird' fans. No less that 3 Ploesti veterans were met, and another vet was given his first-ever info to contact his bomb group association.

-Brian Mahoney

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