

Mark your Calendars
HL Convention 2025
Oct.. 2-5, 2025
Dayton, OH



HERITAGE HERALD

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Periodical of the Heritage League of the Second Air Division (USAAF)

Wild Blue Yonder at Colorado Springs Convention



— By Brian Mahoney, 467 & 492 BGs

Wild Blue Yonder is how the planning committee, comprising hard working volunteers from all three participating organizations, nick-named a wonderful, memorable joint reunion (or convention) in Colorado Springs. Thursday evening, October 17, the Welcome dinner—a cherished 93rd Bomb Group Association tradition—included brief self-introductions by all present, which gave members of the different associations a welcome head start on getting to know one another. Starting then and continuing through the regular reunion, and the add-on days, 96 revelers made many new friends while reconnecting with familiar members of their own group.

Second, third and fourth generations of the Heritage League were all represented. Past President Irene Hurner, daughter of the 453 BG's Albert Biel,

brought along her grandson Axel Derbridge. Having Orla Kennelly, American Library librarian come all the way from Norwich, UK, was a wonderful treat, as was her report to us of exciting initiatives. All of our current officers, save recently appointed VP for Volunteers Bob Gedid (458th and 466 BGs), great nephew of Raymond Pfautz, were present and accounted for, and the attendance of Kurt and Vicki Brooks-Warning (466 BG) meant that three of the four recipients of our most prestigious Kepner Award were on hand! Only the first recipient, Ed Zobac (445th) was absent. The others are Irene Hurner (453 BG) and Marybeth Dyer (458 BG).

Besides the Heritage League and the 93 BGA "Ted's Traveling Circus", the 467 BGA "Rackheath Aggies" shared equally in the work and the rewards. They have held a handful of joint reunions over the past 15 years with the 492 BGA "The Happy (continued on page 3)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

—*Christopher D. Clark* (489th Halesworth & 44th Shipdam)



Photo: Wendy Dwyer.

At over a mile elevation at Colorado Springs, the recent reunion of the Heritage League, 93rd and the 467th Bomb Groups was indeed a wonderful success. Highlights included the memorabilia and research

rooms that provided such a great atmosphere for learning about veterans from World War II; many of whom gave their lives to protect freedom in Europe. We had attendees from Iceland and England. We learned about how Andrews Air Force Base outside of Washington DC (where Air Force One is based) was named.

A video presentation of Second Air Division Veterans who could not travel was indeed very nice to see. Their words still mean much to all. At the Memorial Dinner, our candle lighting ceremony was performed to remember those that died in WWII, and all who fought in World War II.

Special thanks must go to Jim Root and John Marx of the 93 BG, Marybeth Dyer and Sue Risley of the Heritage League, and Yvonne Caputo and Peter Horne of the 467th for all their time and effort in the planning of this successful and memorable reunion at the Embassy Suites Hotel.

Our 2025 convention will be in Dayton, Ohio, site of the National Museum of the USAF October 2-5, again with the 93rd Bomb Group Association. Our hotel will be the Hilton Garden Inn/Austin Landing. More information will follow in later *Heritage Herald*s and on our website. It is also time to renew your annual membership. Please don't forget to renew at: heritageleague.org or by mailings sent by Membership VP Marybeth Dyer and the form included in this *Herald*.

From the Library of Congress (LoC). In addition to all newsletters from our phase one, our second phase is looking like we will have many pages to add. The LoC requests that all Bomb Group websites be transferred to them, so they won't go dark. The LoC will not alter or change any of the content; they just want to preserve for the sake of history, the information in their website.



Seventeen members of the Heritage League in the Air Force Academy's Honor Court gather around the B-24 monument. Photo: via M. Dyer.



On arrival, conventioners were greeted by 'winged fury' a large B-24 poster with 93rd Bomb Group 'Ted's Traveling Circus' moniker marking the reception and meeting room area of the Embassy Suites Hotel, Colorado Springs. Photo: J. Root.

(continued from page 1)

Warriors," but not previously with either 'The League' or the 93rd...who had a glorious joint reunion in Boston in 2023. Each of the organizations have had joint reunions previously, but only with one other group. (From the After-Action Discussion on Sunday evening, it was clear that scaling up from two to three groups was a terrific success for all!)

Also that first evening, Iclander Doddi Marteinsson presented on the recent relocation of the Hot Stuff Memorial to the tragic loss of members of a 93 BG crew going home after being the first 8th AF bomber crew to complete a tour. Only one of 15 survived Iceland's worst crash, and famously LT. General Frank Andrews and several of his staffers, headed to a conference in Washington, were all lost. Andrews was commander of US Forces in the European Theater of Operations (ETO), so Dwight Eisenhower suddenly found himself in that role. Doddi and his late brother were the heavy lifters with impetus from 93rd member Jim Lux in getting the memorial initially installed in May of 2018 near the Mt. Fagradalsfjall crash site, but recent volcanic activity forced the difficult relocation to another stunning site, where it was dedicated five years later, on May 3, 2023, the 80th anniversary of the incident. Doddi accepted a formal recognition and a standing ovation, setting the tone for remembering the service and sacrifices of

all of our veterans. (None were present, but we got great video messages from a few of them.)

That evening, and on following evenings, informal parties into the wee hours happened spontaneously in a handful of guest rooms, and the not-to-miss ones, per Heritage League and 467th traditions, featured either this writer or our HL Treasurer, or both. Unending recitations of inherited 'war stories' (and a few of our own from previous reunions!) and toasts to our missed, esteemed vets, had us in high spirits.

Day Two. Following breakfast at our Embassy Suites hotel on Friday morning, under grey skies but through beautiful scenery, we went to the visitors' center and the Honor Court of the Air Force Academy, and after a small party braved rain to place a wreath at the Academy's cemetery, we had lunch at the Eisenhower Golf Club. While there, we had the bitter-sweet moment of admiring a painting of the 467 BG's iconic B-24 Witchcraft out of the Academy's archive, then being informed of the recent death of its painter, the



Convention organizers Sue Risley, Heritage League Treasurer (C), with Kim Whitney (L) and Kenna Payne (R) of the 93rd Bomb Group Association. Photo: J. Root.

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beloved Michael Bailey of Norwich, who befriended scores of 2AD veterans and families and painted countless other aviation scenes for them, starting in the 1950s. Mike had attended the banquet for the 467th Bomb Group's 2023 Norwich reunion, and was fresh in the hearts and memories of many present. We had our Heritage League Annual Business Meeting after returning to the hotel, and then all again boarded the buses for a most memorable dinner at the spectacular 1870s Briarhurst Manor in nearby Manitou, site of a culinary school, and the food—especially the Boef Bourguignon—had several of us swarming the affable chef afterward! Our own past President and voting representative Second Air Division Memorial Trust Governor, Beverly Tomb (458 BG), on behalf of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), made a quite moving presentation of gratitude and recognition pins to the five Vietnam veterans present.



Heritage League members conferring in the League's display area located in the corner of the convention's memorabilia and research room. Note our banner and two in-uniform manikins. Photo: J. Root.

Day 2 Friday, October 18



Entire convention group of over 90 in the Academy's honor court pose in front of their B-24 monument. In the background is one of the Academy dormitories. Photo: J. Root.



We began this day after evening and morning precipitation to find the season's first snow over Pike's Peak which is about one mile above at 14,100 feet. Photo: D. Dovey.



Proud parents Steve and Marybeth (past Heritage League President) Dyer introduce their daughter, Air Force Colonel, pilot, and guest speaker Amy Meier. Photo: via M. Dyer.



Masters of ceremonies and 93rd Bomb Group Association President Jim Root with daughter Eliza. Photo: via J. Root.



Heritage League wreath presented at the base of the Air Force Academy's bronze B-24 monument was followed by memorializing remarks by Marybeth Dyer. Photo: J. Root.



Beverly Baynes Tomb (Left) honors veterans of the Vietnam War following the dinner at the historic Briarhurst Manor. Certificates passed out were courtesy of the Daughters of American Revolution of which she is an official. Photo: J. Root.



2nd Air Division Trust Librarian Orla Kennelly and Axel Derbidge gather in the arrival foyer of the A.F. Academy's Eisenhower Visitors Center. Note the mural above depicting A.F. Academy cadets hat toss celebrating their graduation. Photo: J. Root.

Day 3 Saturday, October 19

Day Three. Saturday morning the 93rd held its business meetings and announced that next year's reunion will be at Dayton, Ohio, October 2-5, 2025. The 467th delegation made a road trip to the Weisbrod Aircraft Museum in Pueblo, where one of our vets had donated his decorated A-2 jacket and other items. Its site had been a WWII training center (the 44th Bomb Group went there) and warm extrovert volunteers guided us through their eclectic collection, some of it still outside. After lunch each bomb group conducted educational sessions at the hotel.



Posting complete. The active-duty Air Force Color Guard signify a secure posting. The table on the right honors the lost and missing. Ten place settings are set representing the airmen manning the typical B-24 crew. Photo: J. Root.

Saturday evening was the Memorial Dinner, featuring a moving combined candle lighting ceremony initiated by presidents Chris Clark (489th, 44th) for the Heritage League, Yvonne Caputo for the 467th, and Jim Root for the 93rd. The Air Force Academy supplied our color guard consisting of new active-duty permanent party airmen. After dinner we had an eye-opening presentation by USAF Colonel Amy Meier, daughter of Heritage League Past President and Membership VP Marybeth (and Steve) Dyer, granddaughter of Francis Birmingham, and great niece of his 458 BG brother, Bob Birmingham. Amy spoke as a woman career officer and USAF Academy graduate, on women in the service over time, their evolving roles and responsibilities, and the adversities they have endured and overcome. Audience members enthusiastically peppered her with questions, all answered with grace, acumen and humor.



Three Presidents jointly light honor candle. Heritage League President Chris Clark with 467 BGA President Yvonne Caputo and 93 BGA President Jim Root join to illuminate the first candle at the Memorial Dinner. Photo: via J. Root.



At the Memorial Dinner, Colonel Meier illuminates the final honorary candle. Photo: M. Dyer.



During the meal after posting the Colors, five members of the Air Force Color Guard enjoy a read of *Heritage Herald* #80 story by Walter Cronkite on pre D-Day B-24s strikes. Photo: D. Dovey.

Day 4 Sunday, October 20

Day Four. Sunday after hotel breakfast, was a non-denominational religious service, another nice 93rd tradition. This was followed by nearly two hours at the exceptional National Museum of WWII Aviation. Of 37 twin and single engined period aircraft—Army Air Force, Marine and Navy training, liaison, amphibious, pursuit and light and medium bombing types—fully 20 are in flying condition, and make the rounds of air shows around the country. Another seven are under restoration. Very knowledgeable docents fielded even the tough questions!

Then off to the Garden of the Gods natural landmark sandstone monument and park. It was a beautiful day, and most were able to enjoy the warm sunshine and box lunches on the patio backdropped by a splendid view of the



On Sunday afternoon we arrived at the majestic red sandstone beauty at the Garden of the Gods. Photo: J. Root.

rock formations at the visitor's center. After lunch, we toured the park by bus. Our extremely knowledgeable guide, outfitted in pioneer apparel, did a wonderful job explaining the dramatic and unique red sandstone formations and breathtaking scenery to us.

Our informal hotel meal, the end of the regular program, was more warm conviviality. Several participated in the traditional 'After-Action Discussion,' led by President Jim Root of the 93rd, and a good deal of excellent suggestions were mixed with high compliments to the joint reunion committee, for putting on a hard-to-beat gathering!



The bright redness of the peaks gave a stunning perspective to the area's geological history. Photo: M. Dyer.



Docent and Garden of the Gods expert tour guide dressed in typical western period apparel, describes the geologic history of the rising rock formations to Heritage Leaguers Marybeth Dyer, Beverly Baynes Tomb, and Yvonne Caputo. Photo: D. Dovey.

Add-On Days

— By Sue Risley, 446 BG



The natural wonder of Seven Falls. Some were hearty enough to climb the 224 stairs to see the top of all the falls. Photo: J. Root.

Several people stayed for the add-on tour after the convention ended. We started at the Cog Railway which ends at the top of Pikes Peak. Unfortunately, because of the weather, we were only able to go part way up the mountain. We got a good feeling of the trip even though we could not go to the top. From the Cog Railway we went to the natural wonder of Seven Falls. As you may figure, there are seven waterfalls of all different heights. Some were brave enough to climb the 224 stairs to see the top of all the falls. The Eagles Nest view platform is only 185 steps – but there was a lift for most of us. The views were fabulous from wherever you looked. We then went to the Airplane Restaurant. The restaurant is built in and around a Boeing KC-97 tanker. You can actually eat in the plane but most of us ate in the main area. The food was good and so too was the conversation and camaraderie.

Day two was a long one. First, we went to the Royal Gorge Suspension Bridge Park. This is the home of America's highest suspension bridge. There was a lot to do at the park. You could walk across the bridge to get to zip-lining and the gondola. Several of us were sitting on the patio of the visitor's center when we heard the screams of those zip-lining across the gorge – including Marybeth and Angela. After the bridge we went to the Royal Gorge Route Railroad to view the gorge from below. The train traveled along the Arkansas river, and it was a very peaceful trip. We were



Smiling High! Standing atop the high suspension bridge almost 1,000 feet above the Arkansas River is Marybeth and Steve Dyer with Jim Birmingham. Photo via M. Dyer.



The Royal Gorge Suspension Bridge Park on the second day. This is the home of America's highest suspension bridge over the gorge. Photo: J. Root.

able to go to an open-air coach to view from the outside. After the railroad we were on the move again to The Cave of the Winds. We took a discovery tour of the caves which have fifteen rooms, a ½ mile of concrete walkways and 196 stairs. It was fabulous day, but not for the faint of heart!

That evening most gathered informally in the atrium of the hotel for a bite to eat and drink. It was a fabulous convention/reunion. We made lots of new friends and re-connected with old ones. Until we meet again.



The Royal Gorge Route Railroad views the Arkansas River gorge from below. Photo: J. Root.

My Experience at the Heritage League Convention

— By Alex Derbidge, 453 BG



Hi, my name is Axel Derbidge. I will be telling you about my grandmother's and my experience during our trip to Colorado Springs, Colorado. We went there because we like to interact with people who have had family or friends serve in World War II. My great-grandfather Albert H. Biel was a pilot in the 453rd Bomb Group stationed at Old Buckenham near Norwich, England. He flew thirty-five missions. On November 21, 1944, his plane was shot up and sustained extensive damage, but he was able to fly the plane over the English Channel and back to base, making a safe landing. He saved all of his crew. The crew called him their hero. He was my hero. He was everybody's hero. He saved countless lives.

The reason we come together is because we share stories and learn about the experiences of someone

who lived during or through the war. It is emotional, but fun. We go to different places to learn. If possible, we lay wreaths at grave sites or monuments to honor the WWII 8th Air Force servicemen who served in the Second Air Division. We also remember all who have



With Grandmother and past Heritage League President Irene Hurner at the diner during the add-on. Photo: J. Root.



Axel with Heritage League President Chris Clark in the lobby of the Embassy Suites. Photo: I. Hurner.

served in the military. This reminds me of when I went to Normandy in 2023. We laid wreaths at the American Cemetery, and visited the beaches where countless men died, were missing in action, or taken prisoner of war.

When listening to Colonel Amy Meir during Education Day, I learned that women during WWII were told that they could not fly planes because they would crash. Women joined WASP and flew planes but did not fly in combat. They delivered many models of airplanes and a large variety of necessary supplies from factories to the different bases and other factories. The men felt like women would take their jobs. When women were assigned to fly B-24s, which were known as "flying coffins" (primarily due to its complex design and difficult escape procedures in an emergency), it was said that they would die. Then, women flew many ferrying trips without crashing. The men began to fly the

B-24s without the many complaints because they thought that, if women can fly them, then they could. This shows that men are not the only people who served during World War II and saved the world.

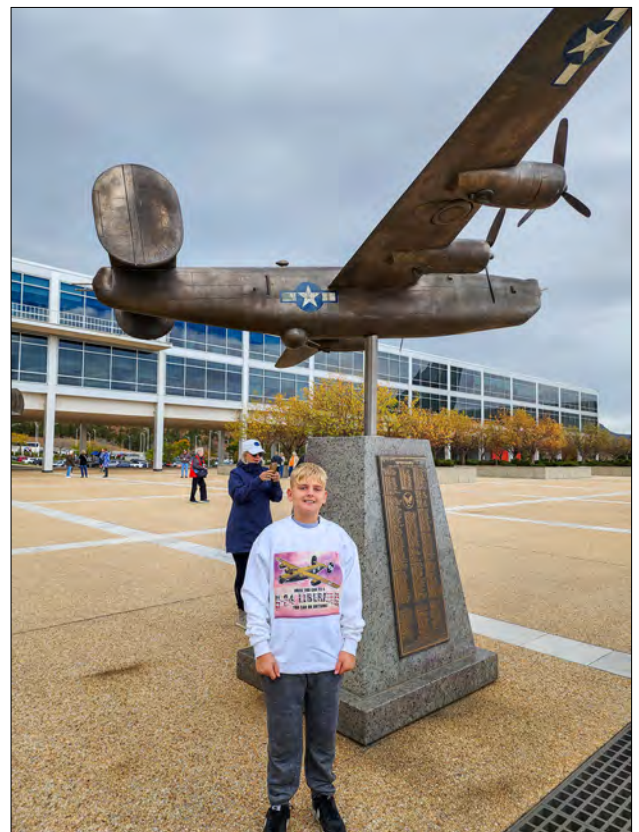
Before going to the plaza in front of the chapel at the Air Force Academy to see the bronze model B-24 placed by the 2nd Air Division Association, we toured the visitors center and learned some of the history of the academy. The Heritage League placed a wreath at the plane in memory of those of the Second Air Division who lost their lives during the war. Attendees included the 467th Bomb Group Association members, and 93rd Bomb Group Association members, in addition to Heritage League members.

We went to the World War II Aviation Museum to see the many planes and learn about flying. There was a flight simulator and instructor who let me experience "flying" a plane. It was fun. In fact, Grandma and I went back to the museum again before we left for home. A retired Air Force pilot led a detailed tour of the museum. One thing we learned is that all of the planes on exhibit are kept in flying condition. Some of the planes have taken up to six years or more to restore. If possible, parts for a restoration project are purchased and reconditioned when needed. If they can't be found, then the parts are made by hand, piece by piece with instructions from the many service manuals which are in the large library at the repair hangar. Parts are made so precise, it is crazy! We were shown some of the original tools manufactured in the 1930s and 1940s which are still used, and given an explanation of how some are used to make those necessary parts.

We go to different places for our conventions. In 2023, we traveled to England and to France. This year we went to Colorado Springs, Colorado. Next year we will meet in Dayton, Ohio, where we will be attending the convention and visiting another air museum. In Colorado, we were greeted by so many loving faces. We kept busy with puzzles, reading story boards about veterans, listening to speakers on several topics, and watching some movies. I helped however I could. Grandma Irene Hurner and I really recommend that you join us on our next adventure in Dayton in 2025 to see more airplanes at the National Museum of the USAF. ✈️



Axel's flying lessons in a WWI biplane. Photo: I. Hurner.



Wearing his fine B-24 Liberator sweatshirt "When you can fly a B-24, you can do anything!" Axel takes a pose at the Air Force Academy's honor court. Photo: I. Hurner.

Minutes of the 2024 Heritage League Annual Meeting—October 18, 2024 (Unapproved)

President Chris Clark called the meeting to order at 3:33 p.m. MST at Embassy Suites Hotel Colorado Springs, Colorado on October 18, 2024.

Invocation was given by Irene Hurner who read a prayer written by the late Chaplain and 466 BG pilot Earl Wassom.

President Chris Clark welcomed everyone present and then reported on the ongoing work at the Library of Congress being done to process the newsletters that have been donated by the Heritage League. Chris informed us that Dwight Powell and Will Elsbury at the LoC have now been given approval for two personnel to help in the process. Chris also announced Bob Gedid as our new Board member as VP for Volunteers and John Jurczak as Protégé for Volunteers. Not only do they work to acquire new volunteers, but are also active with Beverly Tomb with our new "Welcome Home" program for former MIA airmen identified by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA).

Vice President Report

Jim Birmingham reported on his B-24 in San Diego mission. It is still ongoing. Jim Root of the 93rd offered to help Jim in his efforts to have the B-24 maintained there.

Secretary's Report

Colleen Mersman presented the minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting for approval. Doug Dovey made a motion to approve. Mary Lord seconded the motion. Minutes for the 2023 Heritage League Annual Meeting were approved.

Treasurer's Report

Sue Risley reported on the trip she and VP Jim Birmingham made to the funeral of Staff Sergeant Ralph Bode in Racine, Wisconsin. USAAF Staff Sergeant Bode served as a tail gunner on the Hansen crew in the 445th Bombardment Group, 2nd Air Division, 8th Air Force in England. He was killed during a mission over Kassel, Germany.

Sue also reported that the Heritage League has a cash balance as of June 30, 2024, of \$66,511. Included in that total is \$13,886 of restricted funds leaving a net cash balance of \$52,625. The net income on June 30, 2024, is \$1,327. That includes \$6,129 of donations received for the Heritage League general fund. The Flower Fund donations from inception to June 30, 2024, is \$9,842. The flowers placed for Memorial Day, Veteran's Day and more recently for burials of previously unidentified airmen is \$6,936 leaving a balance on June 30, 2024, of \$2,906.

Heritage League will be presenting a check for \$7,000 to the Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division at its meeting in November. Beverly Baynes Tomb, our Trust Governor, would usually present the check at the meeting, but she will not be able to attend. Therefore, Orla Kennelly from the American Library, who is in attendance in Colorado Springs, will present the check. Sue reminded us that the Heritage League is a 501(c)(3) organization, therefore, donations to the League may be tax deductible. Please consult your tax advisor to determine the deductibility of your donation. You could also make the Heritage League the beneficiary of your estate.

VP of Volunteers Report

Newly appointed Vice President for Volunteers Bob Gedid started out his report with a story about his great uncle Ray Pfaltz who served with the 466th and 458th as a bombardier. Bob went on to explain that he met John Jurczak and asked him to become a volunteer. John is now the Protégé to the Vice President for Volunteers. Bob also reported that John Marx, John Elk and Colin Mitchell are new volunteers.

Bob wants to find new innovative ways for volunteers to participate. He presented a list of his duties—for the Welcome Home program; monitor DPAA and press releases, funeral announcements, etc. for recently identified

airmen. Organize effort among senior Heritage League members. Search for Heritage League members near the funeral to represent us at the funeral. Coordinate Heritage League flower arrangement.

Contact Vets to let them know we care. Contact inactive Heritage League members to renew their membership.

Bob's future objectives are to enhance YouTube, Instagram, and Facebook opportunities for the HL and help with updates to our website.

Membership Report

Marybeth Dyer reported 12 new members in the 2024 active membership roll. The breakdown is: Honorary Life Members (HLM)—30, Legacy members—263, and Regular—25. Total active members—318. Complimentary non-members—28, bringing grand total to 346.

Communications Report

Doug Dovey highlighted three Heritage League platforms and four outreach programs for members and researchers. He also mentioned and thanked the volunteers who make these programs work.

The *Heritage Herald* newsletter is published three times a year with the tireless help of Lisa Niehoff, Dallas King and Brian Mahoney. The printed version is mailed to about one third of our members with the remaining distributed via email. Our features include researched articles about WWII 8th Air Force events, and dates for bomb group associations and museum activities in England and the U.S.

The Heritage League website at: www.heritageleague.org is supported by volunteer Nancy Hildebrand who maintains the site to be user friendly and informative. At the site one can renew membership, donate to our various programs, find upcoming events, register for conventions and volunteer for Heritage League programs that meet your interests. The website averages about 630 views per month with a bounce rate averaging 60% which indicates those who leave after viewing the home page. We list 204 *2nd Air Division Journals* and 79 *Heritage Heralds*. For those interested in conducting an information search of the entire grouping of Journals and Heralds; it is possible by request. Just submit a request through our website 'contact us' tab for Doug Dovey or Brian Mahoney to search for a name, topic or event.

Facebook page. Please note our official Facebook page is titled: **HERITAGE LEAGUE OF THE 2ND AIR DIVISION—USAAF** and is administered by the Heritage League Executive Committee. There is also an Unofficial Facebook site with a similar title to ours. To ensure you have selected our official page, look for 'USAAF' at the end of the title. The title of that unofficial site ends with the word 'group' and accepts reader posts. Our page is 'Read Only' but our administrators (Marybeth Dyer, Sue Risley and Beverly Tomb) can post specific informational requests for you. Just go to our Website 'contact us' tab to request this. Please also 'Like' and 'Follow' our page!

Veterans Vitality Outreach—Sunshine Program. We reach out to our 2nd Air Division WWII vets to convey our best wishes on birthdays and other times with cards and phone calls. Volunteer Martha Pedersen administered this worthy endeavor to convey our appreciation to our diminishing members of the Greatest Generation.

Newsletters from the Greatest Generation archive. Our growing collection of newsletters and documents from several active and retired bomb and fighter group associations continues to be digitized. Thanks to the tireless efforts of President Chris Clark, we are privileged to have established a connection with the Library of Congress which will archive them for future reference. We are still collecting additional newsletters that were not in the first batch. If you have bomb group or fighter group newsletters or documents, please contact us before you toss them! We'd like to add additional recognition for this project to Brian Mahoney and Beverly Tomb for their tireless efforts in assembling and cataloging the products.

Heritage League Flower Fund. Thanks to the tireless efforts of Beverly Baynes Tomb, with arranging for placement of "We are Forever Grateful" wreaths on Memorial Day at the 13 overseas ABMC cemeteries containing 2nd AD airmen.

Honor and remember MIA 2nd Air Division airmen—Welcome Home. There has been a recent uptick of MIA identifications of 2nd Air Division airmen by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA). The Heritage League is determined to honor and welcome them home. Heritage League representatives have attended

burials of three airmen so far this year to honor and provide historical unit information to family. Two more airmen have ceremonies upcoming. This noteworthy effort was initiated by Beverly Tomb and administered by her, Bob Gedid and John Jurczak.

Report of the Memorial Trust of the 2nd Air Division

Richard Middleton's, Chairman of the Memorial Trust of the Second Air Division USAAF, report was read by Orla Kennelly about the activities of the Second Air Division Memorial Trust. Topic was the Inaugural 2nd Air Division History Seminar and Congress that was held at the American Library where Lord Richard Dannat spoke about the British Normandy Memorial to mark the 80th Anniversary of D-Day.

Richard referenced the difficulties involved in finding candidates for the American Scholars program. He also reported on the state of the principal trust fund and announced Simon Jamieson as new Trust Governor. His full report is contained in this *Heritage Herald*.

Report of the American Library

Trust Librarian Orla Kennelly reported on the activities at the library where visitors have continued to return to Norfolk in great numbers this past year. Online engagement via Facebook, increased massively with a real peak seen in early 2024. Library staff are working to build on this enthusiasm to find creative ways to tell audiences in East Anglia and the USA about the American Library. The library is planning on a special program in 2025 to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the end of WWII. Other special programs include "Coffee and Conversations," a monthly virtual meet up for 2nd Air Division family and friends which has continued to be a mainstay of the library program thanks to the support of the Heritage League. Remaining programs Orla reported were reading promotions, library volunteer programs and the library's archive collection. Her full report is contained in this *Heritage Herald*.

Delegate Committee Report

Irene Biel Hurner presented the report which states: The Heritage League of the Second Air Division (USAAF) is a non-profit, non-political organization composed of U.S. veteran families, friends, and supporters. The veterans themselves are honorary members. It is registered with the Internal Revenue Service under Tax Code Section 501(c)(3). Its Tax Identification Number is 36-3590698. As such, all voting members present are official delegates. The reasonable cost to such attendees is construed to be a charitable contribution and may be deductible by those who itemize deductions on their annual income tax returns. The Heritage League cannot provide advice on these matters. Members are advised to seek their own professional advice as may be needed. The convention Chairperson will make a finalized list of all regular members of the League who attended the meeting and publish that list with the minutes in the *Heritage Herald*.

Irene Hurner motioned to accept the Delegate Committee report, to declare all regular members attending the annual business meeting be official delegates, and that it be so documented in the minutes of the meeting. The motion was seconded by Sue Risley. Motion approved.

Irene had some additional favorable comments on the Library of Congress newsletter project and the efforts to honor the MIA/KIA's who have been identified.

The 2025 convention will be held in Dayton, Ohio, in conjunction with the 93rd BG Association next October. Options were given for the location of the 2026 convention being Pittsburgh, San Diego or Savannah where the 8th Air Force Historical Society will have its reunion.

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m. MST.

Colleen Mersman, Secretary

Share Your Herald!!!

Rather than recycling your *Herald*, please consider sharing your copy with family, friends or neighbors.

Attendance for Heritage League Annual Meeting

Attendees

Bomb Group

Members

James D. Root	93 BG
Yvonne Caputo	467 BG
Axel Derbidge	453 BG
Steve Dyer	458 BG
Jean Kosnarek	93 BG
Mary Betz Lord	458 BG
John Marx	93 BG
Anne Pancella	93 BG
Ted Steichen	93 BG
Mary Yamamoto	93 BG

Attendees Via Zoom

Karen Cavanaugh	44 BG
Joel Fleck	392 BG
Bob Gedid	458 & 466 BGs
Dallas King	448 BG
Barbara Mello	453 BG
David Mercado	491 BG
Steve Snyder	friend
Kate Storms	Hdqts

Non Members

Jim Bates	467 BG
Janice Bates	467 BG
Orla Kennelly	American Library
Richard Lord	458 BG

Heritage League ExCom

Chris Clark, President	44 & 489 BGs
Jim Birmingham, Vice President	458 BG
Doug Dovey, Communications VP	44 & 392 BGs
Marybeth Dyer, Membership VP, Past President	458 BG
Bob Gedid, VP for Volunteers (Via Zoom)	458 & 466 BGs
Irene Hurner, Past President	453 BG
Brian Mahoney, Past President	467 & 492 BGs
Colleen Mersman, Secretary	44 & 491 BGs
Susan Risley, Treasurer	446 BG
Beverly Baynes Tomb, Past Pres & Trust Governor	466 BG

Heritage League of the 2ADA Statement of Financial Position As of June 30, 2024

	Total
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
Checking	10,776.54
PayPal Account	2,697.72
Savings	53,036.45
Total Bank Accounts	\$ 66,510.71
Total Current Assets	\$ 66,510.71
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 66,510.71
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Restricted funds	
492nd Bomb Group Website Mgmt	2,000.00
8th AF Historical Society	50.00
American (Memorial) Library	3,670.00
Flower Fund	3,235.50
Greatest Generation Project	4,930.00
Total Restricted funds	\$ 13,885.50
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 13,885.50
Total Liabilities	\$ 13,885.50
Equity	
Net Assets	51,298.30
Net Income	1,326.91
Total Equity	\$ 52,625.21
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$ 66,510.71

Heritage League of the 2ADA Profit Loss July 2023 - June 2024

	Total
Income	
Donations Received	
Heritage League	6,129.40
Total Donations Received	\$ 6,129.40
Dues	6,290.00
Interest Income	
Interest Income - Other	4.84
Total Interest Income	\$ 4.84
Total Income	\$ 12,424.24
Expenses	
Awards	205.19
Badges	23.98
Bank charges and paypal fees	185.68
Donations	
Memorial Trust of the 2nd AD	1,570.00
Total Donations	\$ 1,570.00
Heritage Herald	
Printing	1,264.82
Production	4,065.95
Total Heritage Herald	\$ 5,330.77
Membership Mailing	
Supplies	377.41
Memorials	111.65
Postage	541.50
Registration fee - State of IL	14.00
Software	309.99
Website	80.00
Total Expenses	\$ 8,750.17
Net Operating Income	\$ 3,674.07
Other Expenses	
Loss on Convention - 2023	2,347.16
Total Other Expenses	\$ 2,347.16
Net Other Income (Expense)	\$ (2,347.16)
Net Income	\$ 1,326.91

2nd Air Division Memorial Trust

Report for the Heritage League

— By Richard Middleton, Chairman, Memorial Trust

I am sorry I am not able to join you, even remotely this year, but I am delighted that Orla is able to be there in person and I am sure she will give you a full update on the American Library activities since you were over in Norwich last year.

It has been a successful but challenging year for the American Library. The highlight of the year was the Heritage League visit to Norwich. Reading the report in the *Heritage Herald*, it was clearly a success, despite the unfortunate early departure of Allan Hallett and his family; we were all relieved that he got home safely and pleased to see he celebrated his birthday in April. It is always a pleasure to welcome the Heritage League and the Bomb Group Associations to Norfolk and we look forward to more visitors next year when we commemorate the 80th anniversary of the end of WW2.

On the other hand, we were sorry to hear that Don O'Reilly had 'folded his wings' in April. He was a tremendous character and seemed such an active supporter of the HL; he was one of the few veterans I met in person. In the UK we were sad to lose Mike Bailey who many of you will know from his wonderful paintings of B-24's; I am sure some of you will have one of his paintings at home. He was a great friend to many veterans and to the library.

The main challenge for the Trust during the year was to balance ambitions to broaden the American Library's activities programme with the need to meet a significant rise in staff costs.

Orla and the American Library staff organized a wide range of activities during the year. Events took place in the library, on-line and in the wider local community which Orla will cover in more detail in her report. Of particular note, apart from the Heritage League visit, were the inaugural 2nd Air Division History Seminar and Congress to Campus. Both events enabled the American Library to reach a wider audience. We look forward to welcoming Congress to Campus again in 2025 and we will hold another seminar in due course, perhaps in conjunction with our planned activities to mark the 80th anniversary of the end of WW2 in 2025. In addition, fellow Governor Richard Dannatt, gave an excellent talk about the British Normandy Memorial to mark the 80th Anniversary of D-Day. He has also writ-

ten a book—*Churchill's D-Day* which was published on the same day and signed copies were available after his talk.

Last year I mentioned that we were having difficulty finding American scholars and this year was no different. Indeed, we were not able to find a suitable new candidate. Fortunately, Eric Nicolls, our one-year scholar from last year applied for a second year and so will remain with us. The lack of candidates for the 3-year scholarship is more worrying, but we have been able to cover next year by appointing Lauren Cortese for a one-year scholarship. As you will remember, she was our first 3-year scholar and has been a tremendous asset to the library. We are fortunate to be able to keep her for an additional year, but we must try to find a solution for next year when both our scholars will finish. The Walker Scholar for this year is Tabitha Woolcott who is studying for a degree in American Culture and Creative Writing. She will spend her year in the USA at North Carolina's Chapel Hill University.

After lengthy discussion with Norfolk County Council, it was agreed that the Trust would continue to meet staff costs in full. While there would be no effect on current staff contracts, the ability to take on new staff, including relief staff, would be constrained by the Trust's income. As a result, the Governors decided that it would be prudent to maximise income by converting the Capital 2 fund to income units and they will monitor the position carefully over the year. Fortunately, the value of the Trust's funds rose during the year from £5.35m to £5.85m, with a commensurate rise in income. The rise was helped by some generous donations, including \$8,000 from the Heritage League, thank you. In addition, the Governors carried out a due diligence review of investment brokers and decided to re-appoint CCLA for another 3-5 years.

In May, the Board welcomed Simon Jamieson as a new Governor. Simon has a background in finance in both the USA and the UK; he will be a valuable addition to the Board. Unfortunately, we said farewell to Simon Garnier who stepped down from the Board. Simon had been a Governor since 2009. During that time, he contributed to the Trust not only by serving on the Finance Subcommittee but also by agreeing to lead the American

Library Refurbishment Project, which he did expertly, despite the restrictions imposed by the COVID lockdown.

I am grateful to all the staff for their efforts and for the support of my fellow Governors. Despite the increased draw on income to meet staff costs, the Trust remains financially sound, and the American Library will continue to meet the wishes of the veterans for a living memorial which has an influence on the cultural life in East Anglia.

American Library Memorial to the 2nd Air Division 8th Air Force Report for the Heritage League

— By Orla Kennelly, Trust Librarian

Introduction

American visitors have continued to return to Norfolk in great numbers this year. This was encouraged by local reunions such as the Kassel mission families visit in September, memorial dedications, and group tours such as those in June by the National Museum of WWII. A surge in interest in the WWII USAAF story was also seen with the *Masters of the Air* TV series which premiered in January. Visits by veterans' families represent an important opportunity to make new connections, reignite old friendships and explore research collaborations. We have been working to build on this enthusiasm for the history and find creative ways to tell audiences in East Anglia and the USA about the American Library. We've also been working very hard to plan for 2025 and commemorating the 80th anniversary of the end of WWII.

Online Activity

Online engagement via Facebook increased massively with a real peak seen in early 2024. It has been great to see huge activity on the various USAAF and 8th Air Force groups and the American Library will continue to post to these groups and connect here. At the same time there has been a decrease in use of X (formerly Twitter) and we will review use of this platform in 2025. "Coffee and Conversations," an invite only virtual meet up for 2nd Air Division family and friends has continued to be a mainstay of the library programme and we're grateful for the support of the Heritage League. The 93rd and 392nd Bomb Groups also featured in online talks this year and their associations provided support and information for these activities. The first virtual author event saw the library host the *New York Times* best-selling author Shelby Van Pelt in December 2023. A similar event with *Paper Names* author Susie Luo is planned for November 2025.

In Library Activity

"Their Finest Hour" saw us run digital collections days in partnership with Oxford University in Norwich and at Thetford in South Norfolk. These attracted people wishing to share their own and their family's WWII stories. Some recently retired local USAAF personnel attended, and the events were supported by Norfolk Museums Service.

In February, the Library marked 80 years since Operation Argument (Big Week) with an exhibit, talk and film premiere entitled *Slipstream 24*. The Royal Photographic Society, East Anglia Documentary Group were behind the images, which focused on Tibenham airbase, home of the 445th Bomb Group. The inaugural 2nd Air Division History Seminar took place in the library and online, in November, attracting an audience of 70. There were panelists from the academic and museum sectors as well as independent researchers and those with family connections to 2nd Air and wider 8th Air Force history. This will be a bi-annual event going forward.

In November, "Congress to Campus" saw the library partner with American Studies at UEA to host this well attended public forum featuring two former US politicians. "Congress to Campus" was brought to the UK by the Association of Former Members of Congress, the US Embassy in the UK and the Eccles Centre for American Studies at the British Library. This event is scheduled again for November 2025.

Reading Promotion

The "Big American Read" was the American library's first Norfolk wide reading promotion. In November and December 2023 this saw a 32% increase in the number of books issued. The program was significantly supported by the UEA American Library Scholars. The regular book groups continued to attract a full attendance this

year. The book stock at the American Library is purchased with endowments made by 2nd Air family and friends over the years since World War II. This enables the library to ensure there is an update and relevant collection of 2nd Air Division, general WWII, and wider U.S. life and culture books, magazines and e-media. The library and Memorial Trust are very grateful for your historic and continued support.

Volunteers

Four volunteers including one young volunteer and their support worker assisted at "Their Finest Hour" at Thetford Library in October. Five volunteers attended the Norwich "Their Finest Hour" training day in January 2024 and we were supported by volunteers at the event day the following week. Four Record Club volunteers supported this activity. Our regular collections volunteer continues in her weekly Wednesday slot. A new young volunteer has also been recruited for 2024/2025 school year.

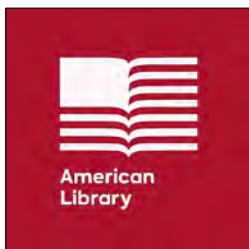
Library and Archive Collections

The number of prospective donations and donations remains significant. Staff had training in cataloguing which has enabled us to add books to the collection within the American Library team. The Fighter Group collection was identified for development in late 2023. This work was shaped by advice to the library from Dr. Graham Cross of Manchester Metropolitan University and stock was purchased from East Anglia Books. More recently areas for development have included the US Civil War and sports and sporting culture in America. Three new titles have been added to the magazine collection. The magazine from the 8th Air Force historical collection is a popular new addition.

"In the Picture," a new archive project begins soon, and we will be seeking online volunteers. In partnership with the Norfolk Record Office, we will be making the photographs in the collection more accessible. Many of these photographs have captions which tell us who the people pictured are. However, the information in this format is not searchable. We would welcome any input or collaboration from individuals, researchers and bomb group associations on this project.

American Library Announces Project for September 2025 "Silver Wings" The US Army Air Forces in WWII Norfolk

— By Orla Kennelly, Trust Librarian



Eighty years after the end of World War II, a new project comes to Norfolk in 2025 honouring the history of our local community, and the influence of the United States Army Air Forces during the war.

Presented by The Forum in partnership with the American Library, Memorial to the 2nd Air Division, 8th Air Force, United States Army Air Forces, a project called Silver Wings: The US Army Air Forces in WWII Norfolk, has been awarded a grant by The National Lottery Heritage Fund and funding from the Paul Bassham Trust, to preserve and collect the untold and forgotten stories of the British civilians and American servicemen and women who were thrown

together in the war. The project will draw on the collections of the 2nd Air Division archive and will culminate in a ten-day exhibition and series of talks at The Forum, presented Fri. 12--Sun 21 September 2025 as part of Norfolk Heritage Open Days. The project will be supported by a program of community participation and schools' outreach which will begin in early 2025. This includes archive inspired creative writing, research workshops and oral history training, with some opportunities being available online. Keep up to date with the project on www.theforumnorwich.co.uk/festivals-projects/silverwings, to book events go to www.americanlibrary.eventbrite.com. If you have any project questions or queries, or stories you want to share, please email: americanlibrary@norfolk.gov.uk.



Maximum Effort—A New Era for the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force

— By Dawn Brosnan, Director of Communications and Marketing

Editor's Note: With the expansion of the Savannah museum underway, the museum has renewed its efforts to obtain a full-size B-24 for its soon to be expanded exhibit areas.



Artist rendition of expanded museum with new expansion at left. Museum drawing.

They Saved the World, We Save Their Stories is the motto of the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force in Pooler, Georgia. The museum, which opened in 1996, was the project of the veterans of the Eighth Air Force, led by Major General Lewis A. Lyle. Lyle knew



Phase 2. Completion of flooring and framing commences. Museum Photo.

there needed to be a place for people to remember and honor the heroes of the Eighth; a museum was essential to preserve the stories and militaria, ensuring their history would not be forgotten. For over 28 years the museum has done just that, and now, thanks to the support of the generation of children and grandchildren of those same heroes, the museum is undergoing a massive transformation in the form of a 20,000-square-foot expansion and complete overhaul of the visitor experience and exhibits.

Maximum Effort, the Capital Campaign for the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force began in earnest in 2020 to expand the museum's facilities to continue presenting the stories of the greatest air armada the world has ever seen to a new generation.

Phase I, of three phases, was completed in August of 2023 with the installation of two cooling towers for visitor comfort and the preservation of the collections. In February of 2024, the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force continued to Phase II, by breaking ground for a 20,000-square-foot expansion project will enhance the museum's ability to preserve and share the remarkable stories of the Mighty Eighth Air Force. The framing of this section began this past December.

New Exhibition and Gallery Spaces

This \$13 million project, in total, will enable the museum to showcase additional artifacts currently not on display from the collection, documents, and interactive displays that delve deeper into this pivotal chapter in history. This expansion will allow the museum to highlight even more stories of courage and resilience from those who served in this elite Air Force unit.

Visitors will have a chance to experience firsthand accounts and gain a deeper understanding of how these heroes played a crucial role in destroying the Luftwaffe while providing vital support to Allied forces.



More gallery space is in the future, hopefully for a B-24. Museum drawing.

The current exhibits were built years before the first smartphone was introduced and have begun to show their age. The initial focus was on displaying objects in the collection with limited historical contexts and interpretations. Consequently, visitors walk away without fully comprehending the value of what they have seen, and thus the museum does a disservice to the airmen to whom we owe everything. The forthcoming expansion will introduce state-of-the-art exhibition and gallery spaces, that have been specifically designed to accommodate a breathtaking B-24 bomber in the future, along with rotating exhibition programs that will ensure there is always something new and exciting for visitors to explore. In addition, recent advances in climate

control and security systems will allow the museum to better protect and conserve the permanent collection.

H+STEM Educational Center

We take bombsights and radar for granted today, but they were extensively used during WWII, which contributed to the success of the Mighty Eighth. WWII history and STEM fields together will be explored in new classrooms designed for experiential learning.

We encourage you to visit the museum's website at: www.mightyeighth.org and our social media channels to keep up to date on the progress of this exciting new phase of the National Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force.



Remembrance Sunday 2024

Greetings from Halesworth — By Marjorie Shiers, 489 BG

To our 489th Veterans, Families and Friends

The sun shone here in Halesworth today, on Remembrance Sunday. Just before 11 o'clock we gathered around the Holton Village Memorial to remember those who lost their lives during the two world wars. Poppy wreaths were placed in tribute to the fallen from both our nations and a two minute silence was kept. We also remembered our American airmen who served here in Halesworth (Holton Airfield) during World War Two. Following the wreath laying we went into St Peter's Church for our annual Remembrance Day Service.

A large group of our friends from RAF Lakenheath were with us today and after the church service, during the walk from the church to the Airfield Memorial Site, the young serving airmen read aloud the names of each and every man who lost his life whilst serving at Halesworth during WWII.

A short service was held at the memorial site, where poppy wreaths were placed on the three memorials—to the 56th Fighter Group, the 489th Bomb Group and the 5th Emergency Rescue Squadron. Following this an aircraft flew over the memorials and dropped red poppy petals which fluttered down onto the airfield ...and the sun still shone. Everyone was welcomed into the museum for refreshments.

Your families were remembered today, and we continue to thank them all for their Service.

With love and best wishes, the Friends of the 489th, Halesworth and from all the volunteers at Halesworth Airfield Memorial Museum.



Air Force personnel from Lakenheath RAF partake in the Remembrance Day (our Veteran's Day) ceremonies at Halesworth's memorial. Halesworth had three 2AD Groups assigned there. Photo via M. Shiers.

Happy Birthday Liberator! The B-24 Turned 85

— By Brian Mahoney, 467 & 492 BGs

On December 29th, 1939, the first prototype Liberator took to the air from Lindbergh field, San Diego.

This notes our quiet celebration of the 85th birthday of the workhorse of the Second Air Division and numbered US Army Air Forces in every theater of WWII. In the 1930s run-up to US involvement in WWII, the Army



B-24 Strawberry Bitch located at the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force in Dayton Ohio. Site of next year's Heritage League convention. AF museum photo.

to counter-propose something newer of their own design, consciously designed to deliver more and further, than the already proven but increasingly dated B-17.

Depending on how much of a stickler you are for detail, only a handful of B-24s remain, with one or two flyable. The tragic lethal September 2019 crash of the B-17 at Bradley Airport, Connecticut, makes the specialness of the Collings Foundation's airworthy B-24 *Witchcraft* all the more profound. The Commemorative Air Forces *Diamond Lil* is also considered airworthy but is currently in maintenance. The National Museum of the Mighty Eight Air Force in Pooler, Georgia is active in trying to procure a non-flyable B-24 for display for its enlarged galleries currently under construction. By knowing and sharing the story of 'our' very special Liberator bomber, we can take some of the burden from *Witchcraft* and *Diamond Lil* in preserving the rich and inspiring story for many more birthdays to come.

[For the full story referenced, go to *Heritage Herald* #68, Sept. 2019, page 13—Ed.]

Air Corps needed, in very large numbers and fast, multi-engine heavy bombers that could deliver lots of hurt to the enemy while defending itself. The Boeing B-17 became production-ready in 1935, but war planners were hoping to scale up both range and lethal payload if possible. When Consolidated Aircraft was asked in 1938 to take on a large production contract for the 'Flying Fortress,' a little bit of corporate pride and competitiveness stirred CEO Rubin Fleet



The drivers' seats. Flying the B-24 kept pilots busy. AAF photo.



Jim and Mary Lorenz (466 BG), sent holiday greetings and New Years best wishes. Jim, in his 2nd Air Division Association jacket, turned 101 years old last December. Photo: M. Lorenz.

Heritage Herald Staff

Published three times a year, the *Heritage Herald* is the official publication of the Heritage League of the Second Air Division (USAAF). The mission is to educate future generations about the sacrifices of our forebearers of the bomb and fighter groups of the 2nd AD in WWII. Membership is open to all those who follow this ideal.

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Winter 1944

— By Annette Tison, 392 BG Wendling

The 392nd Bomb Group history confirmed inclement weather. "An unusually heavy frost provided the necessary accompaniment to make it a white Christmas. Observances were held in most of the barracks, mainly with the assistance of barrels of beer, chaff decorated trees, and an absolute superabundance of packages from home." Chaff looks remarkably like tinsel, but it was created to confuse German flak radars about the altitude, location, speed and size of a bomber formation.

579th Squadron pilot 1.LT Harrison S. Cassell Jr. had a more somber view. He wrote his wife after flying a Christmas Eve mission, his seventh, on his 24th birthday: "Yes dear, I went to church this morning. Had to leave our heavy coats on as we had no fire in the place, but it is church, and it means more to me over here than it ever did in the states—because we are living so much closer to God, and we realize it, too. I am not going to be any more of an Englishman when I get back than when I left. I haven't changed any except I realize how im-

portant life is when it comes to winning a war and I am a very strong companion of the Lord."

[Editor's note: These excerpts are from the book *Lead Crew: The Boys of the Sally Ann*, by Cassell's son, Allen M. "Mac" Cassell. Available at Amazon.com.]



Chaff looks remarkably like tinsel on the Christmas tree. Photo: 392nd Bomb Group Association.

Kelley's Christmas Gift

— By Og Mandino, 44 BG Shipdam

Christmas, from now on, will have a deeper meaning for you after you understand. The month of December was cold and wet and gloomy in England in 1944. Although the tides of war had shifted in favor of the Allies, our casualties still continued high, so our morale matched the weather.

Our B-24 airbase, fifty miles north of London, was just like a hundred others spread carelessly over the face of England and we were similar to all the others in planes and personnel with one exception—we had Kelley.

I don't remember his first name, but I do recall he was a navigator, and a good one. Kelley had habits that set him apart from most of us who assumed a phony air of boldness to hide our fear. For one thing he was older than most of us—probably near thirty. When we went to London every two weeks and raised unholy hell he remained behind and wrote letters to his wife, his mother, his son and every other relative whose address he kept in a little brown book. A forty-eight-hour pass to Kelley meant stuffing his duffel bag with candy bars and canned food and bringing it to poor families in the village. Before each mission, Kelley attended chapel services while most of us slept those extra fifteen minutes. Yes, to many of us, Kelley was a strange guy.

Then, about two weeks before Christmas, Kelley got an idea. He decided that we would throw a Christmas party on our base for all the British kids that lived in the area. He sold the idea to our Colonel and then he assigned projects to all of us. It was difficult to say no to Kelley, and when we weren't flying missions we had plenty of time on our hands anyway. Kelley set up collection boxes inside the Post Exchange and I painted signs that asked for contributions of candy bars, chewing gum, canned fruit and cookies from each man's weekly allotment purchase. We filled dozens of boxes.

Then Kelley coaxed the mechanics on the flight line to make toys from spare parts and scrap metal. The carpenters got into the act and began building toy carts and crude rocking horses and even the nurses made stuffed dolls and animals. Everyone became involved and Kelley kept the whole operation coordinated in a way that would have made General Motors proud.

Two days before Christmas, the mess hall began to look like Macy's warehouse, and Kelley was all smiles until someone reminded him that we had no Christmas ornaments or lights to hang. He solved this problem as swiftly as he solved the others. He commandeered boxes of silver chaff that we dropped during our bombing missions to confuse the enemy radar—and we had our "icicles." He had the base electrician wire a couple of hundred spare wing-tip lights to heavy cable and we spent a morning coloring them with paint that he produced from Lord knows where.

On Christmas eve we decorated the mess hall and although it was no Rockefeller Plaza we were all proud of our handiwork, even though none of us would admit it. On the way back to our barracks we got the "good news." We were flying a mission on Christmas Day. You can imagine the remarks the next morning before, during and after the briefing. We were all thinking the same thing—what a day to die! Our mission, of course, wasn't going to affect the Christmas party. The base personnel all had their instructions from Kelley and all the buses from the motor pool had been assigned a special town or hamlet where they were to go to pick up the children.

When we returned on Christmas afternoon, from what had been a rough mission, we hurriedly changed clothes and dashed to the mess hall as soon as debriefing was finished. The place was bedlam. It looked like



Winter snow removal duty at an USAAF airbase. AAF photo.

recess time at my old grammar school. Kids were pushing their new carts and toy trucks, little girls skipped and danced with their new stuffed dolls clutched tightly to their breasts, while the boys ran from one end of the hall to the other holding their miniature planes and imitating the sound of Spitfires and P-51s. Every smiling face was smeared with chocolate, many for the first time ever. The wing-tip lights blinked overhead in multicolored joy and someone had found a phonograph which was playing tinny but recognizable Christmas carols. I watched for a few moments remembering many happy childhood Christmases of my own. Then I left and slowly walked back to my barracks. In the distance someone gunned all four motors of a B-24, drowning out the joyous shouts from the hall.

I passed the chapel and then I stopped. Without even knowing what I was doing, I found myself walking back up the cobblestone walk and pulling open the metal door. I stepped inside for the first time since I had been on the base. The outside world quieted down. I felt myself kneeling and before I could stop myself I was sobbing. It was the first time I had cried since my mother had died. Finally I prayed—prayed for Kelley and the rest of his crew whose plane I had watched explode into flames after taking a direct hit only a few hours ago.

Since that Christmas, so many years ago, I never hear a Christmas carol or watch a child open a Christmas gift without remembering Kelley and counting my own blessings. Why Kelley is not here to enjoy each Christmas like the rest of us is a question I stopped asking myself. I finally realized that Kelley's gift to all of us was the same priceless gift of sacrifice and love that we all received from Him whose birthday we celebrate on Christmas Day.

Reprinted from *2nd Air Division Journal*, December 1984, page 9, and the Book *A Treasury of Success Unlimited* (Pocket Books of NY)



At another base, Santa passed out candy and knick-knacks in the squadron hall. AAF photo: courtesy of P. Everson, 446 BG collection.

We appreciate gifts from members inspired by an individual to whom we are all connected. We wish to thank members who have contributed to the Heritage League

IN MEMORY OF... *Donors*

Capt. USAF Alex Ciurczak, DFC Alex Ciurczak
SSgt. Jack Wyndham Coy (445th) Shawnelle Johns

—Folded Wings—

<i>Lucian Robb Smith, Jr.</i>	3/18/09	66 BG
<i>Harvey Naber</i>	2/16/24	393 BG
<i>David G. Moore</i>	5/11/24	93 BG
<i>David Woodrow</i>	6/14/24	93 BG
<i>Clair D. Rowe</i>	6/18/24	448 BG

In Remembrance

The Heritage League is sad to announce the passing of two very special friends.

John Gilbert. Great friend, avid supporter.

We are very saddened to learn of the recent passing of a special friend of the Heritage League and its 14 Bomb Groups, especially the 392nd Bomb Group at Wendling Airbase. Having lived on that base as a young boy he got to know many of the airmen there. Since then, he was passionate and very active in preserving their WWII history.



John memorializing VE day May 2023 from his garden. Photo: via Gilbert family.

He frequently collaborated with the American Air Museum, sharing his knowledge and insights. His many stories, memories, and site visits have been essential for historical factfinders, and a source of comfort and enjoyment for many visitors and at our reunions over the years. A true gentleman, he will certainly be missed.

Funeral service is scheduled for February 12, 2025 at 2 pm UK time at Cromer Crematorium, Norfolk.



John escorts the Birminghams in front of 392 BG's *Dugan* at the American Air Museum, Duxford in 2014. Next to him is Veteran Robert Birmingham's son, Bob; nose-gunner Veteran Robert Birmingham (458th nose-gunner), other son Jim, niece Marybeth Dyer with her husband Steve. Photo: B. Tomb.

Michael Bailey. Artist.

Mr. Bailey was a renowned aviation artist who contributed greatly to the canon of art and literature of WWII East Anglia. Known for his detailed and evocative paintings, Mr. Bailey was also a lifelong friend of the 458th Bomb Group of the 2nd Air Division, where he observed flights from Horsham St Faith. His specialty was creating stunning depictions of aircraft, especially B-24s, one of which was on display at the U.S. Air Force Academy during our visit.

He also worked with various authors and historians, contributing to numerous books on aviation history. His legacy is celebrated in both public and private collections worldwide and will be remembered fondly by the Heritage League, veterans and aviation enthusiasts.





Videos We Like

By Lisa Niehoff

When a Ball Turret Gunner Fell Without a Parachute

Seventy-two B-17 Flying Fortresses were on a bombing mission over occupied France on January 3rd, 1943. The attack targeted a heavily fortified German U-boat base at St. Nazaire, an important strategic location during the Battle of the Atlantic for the Kriegsmarine. Inside a B-17 named Snap! Crackle! Pop! was 24-year-old Staff Sergeant Alan Magee in the position of ball turret gunner. At 20,000 feet altitude, Magee was sucked out of his B-17 without a parachute on his seventh and last combat mission. You have a long time to think about your life when you fall from that high.

This amazing real-life recreation of a horrendous but incredible fall tells the story of Allan Magee who really did have a Guardian Angel to have survived this. Magee was fully aware of what was happening, praying and negotiating with God for his survival. And God did grant his petition! It took me a minute, but I almost thought the animation was real life. An amazing story that will keep you on the edge of your seat; excuse the pun!

14:30 Mins/Color/ Animated Recreation/ YouTube: https://youtu.be/yEhXKx_3glA?si=hu11VEhOztCcqu8w.

What Was Life Really Like For a WW2 Bomber Pilot?

From Fear to Terror to Revenge! Interviews of British Bomber Command crews recounting the anxiety of their night missions to Germany in response to the bombing of Britain contrasted by interviews of Germans on the ground who confronted these attacks. German pilots describe their attacks on Allied bombers. This gave a me insight as to the emotional toll it took on all those unfortunate enough to be there, reflecting on this dark chapter of human history. The loss and chaos of war never leaves you even after decades of peace has returned. Video information courtesy of Bob Gedid, VP for Volunteers.

43:29 Mins/Color YouTube: https://youtu.be/CV8EiH3_UNs?si=6AXvGBY5H3oy8Ro2.

Visiting a British Pub with Burgess (The Penguin) Meredith

Narrated by Burgess Meredith, this short film highlights the American GI behind the scenes in a British pub during the Second World War. A little drinky-poo for company's sake? "Pub" is actually short for "public house". And that's how the Brits treat it. There's nothing like a good English pub that made your home-away-from-home more comfortable and tolerable. Courtesy of B-24.net/Training Videos.

8:37 Mins/B&W YouTube: https://youtu.be/_GCcoaSq3x4?si=q11RCQFMBh3JrvKo.



Folded Wings Report

Please report the death of a member or spouse and provide a copy of the newspaper obituary if possible.

Name of deceased _____ Unit/Sqdn. _____

Address _____ City _____ State/Zip _____

Date of death _____ Survivors _____

Reported by _____

Address _____ City _____ State/Zip _____

Please return to: Marybeth Dyer, 6410 Valley Oak Plaza, Martinez, CA 94553

or Email to: smbdyer@sbcglobal.net.

Welcome Home Tributes

Heritage League Honors Final Ceremonies of Three More Recently Identified Airman of the Second Air Division

Since 2024, Heritage League representatives have attended five funerals providing floral tributes funded by our flower fund.

Staff Sergeant Ralph H. Bode, Racine, Wisconsin, September 27, 2024

— Story and photos by Sara Risley

On a beautiful Friday morning with the first crisp hints of autumn in the air, a crowd of more than 125 gathered at Racine's Graceland Cemetery to bury the remains of Racine native Staff Sergeant Ralph H. Bode, of the 445th Bomb Group. Motorcades of police cars from throughout the region and a cadre of motorcycles escorted SSGT. Bode through a gauntlet of waving American flags. At exactly 10:03 AM, a lone military airplane flew



over commemorating the exact time and day 80 years ago that Bode's B-24H Liberator went down on a bombing mission over Kassel, Germany during World War II.

His parents died never knowing what happened to their son. Generations of his family never knew what happened to their son, nephew, brother, and grandson. Several of his family members were in attendance and were presented with the stars and stripes from "a grateful nation."

In the crowd were military veterans, active-duty service members, police and fire departments as well as neighbors and local families with many generations together to honor this man they didn't know and to remember the many others lost in service to our country. It was a humbling and historic moment.

Thanks to efforts of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency, whose mission is to "provide the fullest possible accounting for our missing personnel to their families and the nation," Staff Sergeant Bode's remains were identified late last year and arrangements were made to commemorate his burial in his hometown to align with the anniversary of his loss on September 27, 1944 at 10:03 AM.



Representing the Heritage League were Vice President Jim Birmingham of Greendale, WI and Treasurer Susan Risley of Elgin, Illinois. Of the event, Risley said, "I was deeply moved and so gratified that the family of Sgt. Bode now has closure after 80 long years. It was a powerful ceremony."

As a solo trumpeter stepped forward, the plaintive echo of Taps filled the silence of Graceland Cemetery and tears fell for Staff Sergeant Ralph H. Bode who was finally home.



Staff Sergeant John A. Tarbert Schuylerville, New York, November 8, 2024

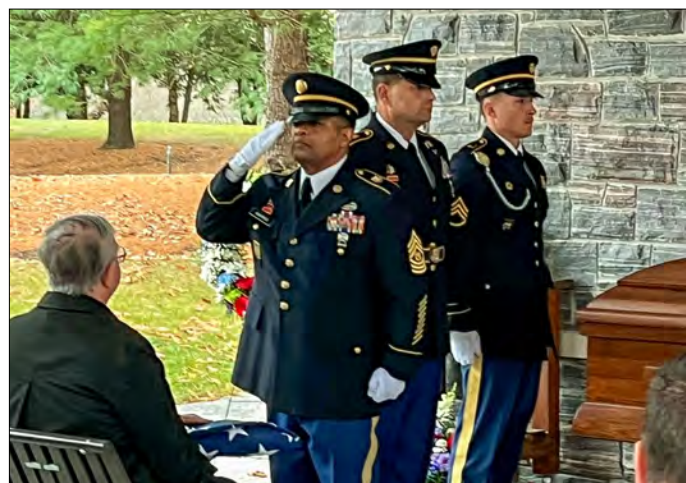
— Photos by Laurie Huntley, 392 BG

Staff Sergeant John A. Tarbert, 24, a B-24 waist gunner assigned to the 445th Bomb Group, Tibenham, was recently honored with a long-awaited military funeral in Schuylerville, New York last November 8. This was an incredible event in which his 80+ year-old son, John Elliot, buried his 24-year-old father. The Heritage League, represented by Laurie Huntley presented her personal wreath and was accompanied by Michelle Augustyn and Katrina Krauss. We appreciate the efforts of Laurie to travel from Connecticut to represent the Heritage League. His funeral included full military honors. A group called Patriot Guard Riders holding U.S. flags also added special meaning.



Tarbert's remains were initially held in a mausoleum, then later moved to an American cemetery in Tunisia, marked as "unknown." On May 10, 2024, he was accounted for by DPAA's advancements in forensic technology along with the dedicated efforts of the Kassel Mission Historical Society, he was brought home at last. SSGT. Tarbert is also memorialized on the Wall of Missing at Luxembourg American Cemetery, Luxembourg. A rosette will be placed next to his name to indicate he has been accounted for.

Sources: News 10, Albany, New York and John Jurczak, Heritage League.



Honor Guard presenting United States Burial Flag to SSGT Tarbert's son John Elliot, recognizing his father's sacrifice after almost 80 years.



The Patriot Guard Riders accompanied the funeral procession on motorcycles and presented their flags.

2nd Lieutenant William Scott, Wrightstown, New Jersey, Dec. 9, 2024



Second Lieutenant William Scott, a B-24 navigator assigned to the 44th Bomb Group, was killed in action on August 1, 1943, during Operation TIDAL WAVE, the mission targeting oil refineries in Ploiesti, Romania for which he was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) identified his remains on November 28, 2022. One hundred and seventy-seven B-24 Liberators took off from Benghazi, Libya, for the raid. LT. Scott was aboard the Liberator nicknamed Satan's Hell Cats, one of 51 planes that failed to return.

His unidentified remains were buried as Unknowns in the Hero Section of the Civilian and Military Cemetery of Bolovan, Ploiesti, Prahova, Romania. After the war, the American Graves Registration Command exhumed unknown remains, eventually reinterring those that could not be identified at the Ardennes American and Henri-Chapelle American Cemeteries in Belgium. In 2017, DPAA began exhum-



William, and the totality of the circumstantial evidence available established an association between one set of these unknown remains and LT. Scott.

He was honored with full military ceremonies on December 9, 2024, at Wrightstown, New Jersey. Attending were his two nephews William (bearded) and John Scott. We appreciate the attendance of Heritage League member George Jung along with two 93rd Bomb Group representatives Karyn Senatore and James Blumenfeld. Representatives from the New Jersey American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Rolling Thunder group were also present. The New Jersey Army National Guard provided the official delegation. Scott is also memorialized on the Wall of Missing at the Florence American Cemetery in Italy where a rosette will be placed next to his name.



New Jersey Honor Guard presents the United States Burial flag to Lieutenant Scott's nephews, William (with beard) and John (partial view right).

ing those unknowns for comparison with the unaccounted airmen lost during Operation TIDAL WAVE. The laboratory analysis with DNA supplied by nephew

Sources: DPAA, John Jurczak, 446 BG, Heritage League.
Photos: via New Jersey National Guard

Happy Birthday VETS!

The Heritage League is pleased to acknowledge our Veterans' birthdays who have recently, or are about to celebrate their 'special day.'

HELP! We have been able to get photos of some, but not all of our Veterans who served in the 2nd Air Division. We strive to highlight more Veteran birthdays as a regular feature, but we need your help as we do not have photos of all. If you have a fairly recent photo of your Vet, please email it with '2AD VET Birthday' in the subject line to: ddovey@hotmail.com.

Our country is filled with much promise for tomorrow's generation, all because it was shaped by legends like you who risked your lives defending our nation. **HAPPY BIRTHDAY!** We honor you and thank you for our freedoms today.



Joe Haenn. The most senior of our group of birthday veterans. Joe was crew chief at 467 BG Rackheath airbase and reaches 108 years in May. Wow! Photo: D. Dovey.



B-24 pilot and Captain, Leland Spencer, 93 BG Hardwick, celebrated his 103rd birthday this February. Photo: C. Dubishar.



Our youngest Vet of this group is Allan Hallett, 389th BG Hethel top turret gunner. He celebrates his 99th this April. Photo: D. Dovey.

Whatever you guys are doing—keep it up!



Heritage League members gather after Saturday's memorial dinner. Photo: K. Oh! Photography.



Readers will recall in issue #79, I fielded a question (thanks, N. 'Der' Preshir) concerning aviation tires, rubber supply, and related issues. I managed to handle the part about natural rubber as a strategic material, only partly offset by the rapid development and production of synthetic rubbers. I promised to dive deeper 'next time,' and I am finally back from vacation, so here goes!

As to the tires themselves, a great deal was demanded of them, especially during braking and landings, even the smooth ones. Much load was borne by a small contact patch with various surfaces on the ground. The Liberator, with take-off weights as high as 64,000 lbs. (and allowing for rough emergency landings potentially that heavy), required many belts or plies in their construction, which entailed mostly skilled hand work. Pressure in the two 56" tall 'mains' was nominally 64 PSI, but ground crew were given a great deal of very specific guidance on when and how much to measure and vary this to potentially almost twice that. You may have noticed the substantial squish or bulge of these tires when fully laden. Pilots of heavy bombers were exhorted to never pivot on a stationary wheel but make turns as widely as practical with wheels moving. Scrubbing rubber by doing it wrong created a flat spot on the wheel, shortening its life, making it more dangerous, and giving the plane and crew an avoidably lumpy take-off or landing. Knowing either the actual weight of an aircraft (or land vehicle) and calculating the total area of ground contact, one can calculate the pressure, or knowing the



pressure and the total contact area, one can calculate vehicle weight fairly accurately.

The writer astutely raised the question of low pressure at altitude. It turns out that the extremely low

temperatures, effectively reducing volume, has almost exactly the right effect to counter the pressure differential. (I had always wondered about this too; this research journey has *inflated* Pete's subject knowledge.)

I have, like the writer and many others before us, wondered why the airstream of lowered undercarriage is not to be harnessed, with well-designed sidewall vanes, to pre-spin the wheels to reduce the smoky and scrubby damage when very heavy wheels must go from 0 mph to over 100 mph in an instant, while pressed extremely hard to the rough concrete. Short answer: there has been much experimenting, and no acceptable length of 'wheels down' time, with the most highly evolved vanes or cups, came close to spinning them up to landing speed. Schemes to spin them up inside the wheel wells with a motor could do the job, but, in addition to adding very substantial weight to a plane, these systems required intrusion and complexity in the already too crowded and complicated landing gear bays. That is, across a century of tries, around the globe, a nearly universal consensus has evolved: saving some rubber is just not worth the added weight, volume and complexity.

Diamond treads were indicated for situations where soft ground or mud could be a factor, but wore faster (and required even higher pressure) because they had more voids in the contact patch. Straight grooved ones had more rubber on that patch, and were the best for hard runways and channeling water. Naturally in the 8th Air Force, these became ubiquitous by war's end. Tires with no tread pattern worked in drier climates (think: North Africa) or for some very light planes operating from grass fields.

There were some tubeless aircraft wheels back then, but almost all tires contained inner tubes, which also had to be very well engineered, and handled with great care during installation and removal. One development that saw deployment to Liberators in the field was a two chambered inner tube that provided some puncture resistance, but it added weight and added regular maintenance work and required a special valve stem. Readers have likely seen the bad results when shot out tires severely hampered control during landing, so this research area was considered more worth it.

The questioning reader did not ask about one other interesting area: how landing gear tires seem to 'blow' in the presence of extreme brake overheating, sometimes including fires, when heavily laden planes

perform what is called a 'rejected take-off.' There are films of mandatory certification tests showing successive 'failure' of most or all of the wheels in a multi-wheel 'truck' of main landing gear, following braking *nearly one million pounds* of jumbo jet to a stop from 200 mph, *with 99% worn brake pads*. With the phenomenal concentrated heat and predictable consequences allow five long minutes for firefighters to arrive; it is a 'pass.' The tire part of this is the temperature activated blow plugs designed to deflate the tire in this extreme case, rather than them exploding, possibly killing anyone nearby.

The Internet offers up many interesting videos on the subject; "WWII aircraft tires" is a good search term. [B-24 Aircraft Tire Check, Balance and Installation](#) uses period training film and is fascinating. An [Introduction to Aircraft Wheels and Tires](#) takes the subject through to current practice, while dealing with the unchanged basic issues that faced designers 80+ years ago, and further addresses issues for owners of general aviation light aircraft. [Note: the above titles in blue are also links to YouTube videos. For those reading our printed version, we suggest you type in the above *titles* into the YouTube search box.—Pete.] 

Nose Art *Edited by Lisa Niehoff*

Nose art boosted crew morale, fostering camaraderie and a sense of identity within the unit.



Jamaica nose art includes bombs, probably representing missions flown, with a picture of a young woman removing her skirt or slip, and the word "Jamaica". The pilot's name, Lieutenant Larry Booth, Mississippi, and another name, Chas Herb, are also painted on the plane. *Jamaica* was part of the Army Air Forces 466th Bombardment Group in England, and was later lost on September 25, 1944 during a fuel hauling mission.

Source: Library of Congress. Photo Credit: Wikimedia Common.

The Dragon And His Tail was an amazing design which stretched back along the entire side of the B-24 from the nose turret to the tail turret. Although this aircraft was assigned to the Pacific theater, it is worth including here because the striking and colorful artwork crafted by Staff Sergeant Bartigian made the aircraft one of the most visually iconic of World War II. Surviving war, it unfortunately did not survive postwar preservation efforts and was scrapped. The hope was that someone would come along and buy the plane to save it for posterity—just \$2000 would probably have secured it in 1946 but no one came. The plane went the way of almost all the B-24s and B-17s which had survived the fighters and the flak and the long trip home into the melting pot to be made into pots and pans for a world sick of war.



Sources: Maurer, *Air Force Combat Units of WWII*, pps. 99-100. Army Air Corp Museum.



Exterminator originally flew with the 329th Bomb Squadron of the 93rd Bomb Group and was later transferred to the 93rd's 330th Bomb Squadron, in March 1943. The first mission with the 330th Bomb Squadron was on 1 May 1943. The aircraft was flown throughout the war and the entire crew was KIA during Operation TIDAL WAVE when it collided with one of the other planes after entering the clouds while returning from Ploesti on 1st August 1943. Both planes went down in flames and crashed in the mountains.

Credit: American Air Museum. 



Please renew your membership for 2025

Note: We have a student rate

Membership Application/Renewal for Heritage League

Please RENEW ONLINE and pay via PayPal. It is a safe and secure way for you to pay your membership and contributions. LOG ON to

<https://heritageleague.org/membership/> OR

Return this page with your check, payable to the Heritage League Membership, 6410 Valley Oak Plaza, Martinez, CA 94553. If you have questions, please email:

smbdyer@sbcglobal.net.

VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME AND TALENT. We are very appreciative of the strong financial support you have shown for The League and related entities. Would you also be able to share your time and talent with us? You can fill out a form at: <https://heritageleague.org/volunteer/> that lets our expanded Volunteer Program pair you with work supporting our mission!

NAME _____ SPOUSE _____

ADDRESS _____ TELEPHONE (_____)

CITY, STATE _____ ZIP _____

E-MAIL _____ @ _____

(If you receive the newsletter by email, please make sure you provide your email address)

NAME of related 2nd Air Division Veteran _____ VET Birthday Date: _____

VET's Bomb Group or Unit No. _____ Their relationship to you _____

Dues for students, friends and relatives of 2nd Air Division Veterans (check one):

_____ PDF Newsletter via Email—provide email address above—**\$25** \$ _____

_____ Students (up to age 25), PDF Newsletter via Email only—**\$20** \$ _____

_____ Printed Newsletter sent by US mail—**\$35** \$ _____

2nd Air Division Veterans are eligible to be an Honorary Lifetime Member (check one).

_____ PDF Newsletter, via Email—provide email address above—**\$0 (free)**

_____ Printed Newsletter sent by US mail—**\$30** \$ _____

(If the cost of the printed newsletter causes a hardship, please let us know)

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS (We are a tax deductible 501(c)3 organization)

Contribution to the Heritage League operations \$ _____

Contribution to American Library 2nd Air Division (Norwich, UK) \$ _____

Contribution to Flower Fund for Overseas Cemeteries and Welcome Home Tributes \$ _____

If you like, we would be pleased to note your contribution as...

In Memory of (deceased) _____

OR

In Honor of (living person) _____

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Winter/Spring 2025 Heritage Calendar

and Historic Events of note

January-March

1939—B-24 first flight. December 29.

1941—President Roosevelt signed the Lend-Lease Bill, providing war supplies to countries fighting the Axis. March 11.

1942—President Roosevelt calls for production of 60,000 planes in State of Union address. Jan 6.

1943—Government announced rationing of leather shoes limiting purchases to three pairs per year. It was lifted on Oct. 1945.

1944—Big Week. Maximum effort missions, also known as 'Operation Argument,' to suppress German air superiority in preparation for the future land invasion. February 20-25.

1945—2nd Bomb Division becomes 2nd Air Division. Jan 1.

April-May

1942-Dolittle raid on Tokyo. April 18.

1945-Final 2nd Air Division combat missions in Europe and last combat losses, April 25.

1945-German surrender, Victory in Europe Day, V-E Day, May 8, 80th anniversary.

1987-Heritage League is established at 2nd Air Division convention. May.

93 BGA trip to Hardwick for 80th anniversary of VE day. May 7-11. Info at: www.93bg.com.

80th anniversary of VE day England tour. Sponsored by Mighty 8th Museum. Pooler, Georgia. April 3-13. Info at: www.mightyeighth.org.

2nd Air Division Trust Governors mid-year meeting. May 14, 2025, Norwich, England.

Memorial Day Ceremonies at overseas American Battle Monuments Commission Cemeteries. Dates vary from May 24-26. Check their website at: <https://www.abmc.gov/> for latest information. Heritage League will provide wreaths to the 13 overseas cem-

eteries containing 2nd Air Division airmen.

Flags For the Fallen, Mighty 8th Museum Special Event, 26,000 flags placed to remember fallen 8 AF airmen. Pooler, Georgia. May 24-26. Info at: www.mightyeighth.org.

June

1941-U.S. Army Air Corps becomes the U.S. Army Air Forces, June 20.

1942-General Eisenhower takes command of U.S. forces in Europe, June 25.

1944-D-Day invasion. Normandy.

1948-Berlin airlift begins. June 26 until May 1949.

WWII Weekend and Airshow. Reading, Pennsylvania. Carl A. Spaatz Field, Mid-Atlantic Air Museum and Jimmy Stewart WWII control tower (under construction). June 6-8, 2025. Info at: www.maam.org.

Duxford Summer Airshow. June 21-22, American Air Museum: www.iwm.org.uk/airshows/events/july-flying-day-one.

July

1943-President Roosevelt announced the end of coffee rationing which limited people to one pound every five weeks since it began in Nov. 1942. July 28 1943.

Airshow at Old Buckenham (453 BG). July 26-27. Tickets on sale. Contact: www.oldbuckenhamairshow.com or email: air-field@oldbuck.com.

Reunions

Heritage League Convention with 93 BGA. October 2-5, 2025. Dayton, Ohio, and National Museum of USAF. Hilton Garden Inn, Cayton South/Austin Landing

8th AF Historical Society Reunion. Oct.. 1-5. Colorado Springs CO, Double Tree by Hilton.

392 BGMA Reunion. With 8th Historical Society at Colorado Springs CO, Oct.. 1-5. Double Tree by Hilton.

466 BGA Reunion. With 8th Historical Society at Colorado Springs CO, Oct.. 1-5. Double Tree by Hilton.

467 BG Reunion. Oct. 22-25. Savannah, GA and Mighty 8th Museum.

Museums and general activities

American Library. Monthly web coffee. The Norwich U.K. Library hosts a regular web-based activity 'Coffee Afternoon' the second Saturday of every month on Zoom at 11 AM U.S. Eastern time [16:00 British time]. Hosted by library assistants Jane Appleton and Linda Sheppard; it is an opportunity for 2nd Air Division families and friends on both sides of the Atlantic to get together. Email for an invite at: americanlibrary@norfolk.gov.uk. Additional library presentations can be found at: <https://www.americanlibrary.uk/>.

American Library Silver Wings Project: "The U.S. Army Air Forces in WWII Norfolk." In partnership with the Norwich UK Library Forum honoring the influence of the USAAF. The project will draw on the collections of the 2nd Air Division archive and will culminate in a ten-day exhibition and series of talks at the Forum, presented Fri. 12-Sun. 21 September 2025 as part of Norfolk Heritage Open Days. Keep up to date with the project on: www.theforumnorwich.co.uk/festivals-projects/silverwings, to book events go to: www.americanlibrary.eventbrite.com. If you have any project questions or queries, or stories you want to share, please email at: americanlibrary@norfolk.gov.uk.

93 BG Hardwick Museum generally opens for the season beginning in May through October on the 3rd Sunday of each month. Info at: www.93rd-bg-museum.org.

446 BG Norfolk and Suffolk Aviation Museum. Featuring artifacts from Bungay Airfield plus a lot more. After February 18, open Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays. Info at: <https://www.aviation-museum.net/>.

448 BG Seething Control Tower Museum. Home of the Seething Airfield Control Tower Museum opens the first Sunday of each month from May to October. Info at: <https://www.448bombgroup.co.uk>.

453rd Bombardment Group Museum & 8th AF Heritage Gallery, Old Buckenham. Open all year Friday, Saturday and Sunday and by request other days. Contact: James Clarey, Museum Curator. Email at: curator@453museum.com. Tel from US: 011 44 1366386119. Info at: www.453museum.com.

Mighty 8th Air Force Museum, Pooler, GA. Closed Mondays except Memorial Day. Weekly webcasts. 'Target for Today' lecture series digging into the history of the Eighth Air Force. It broadcasts each Thursday at noon ET via 'Mighty 8th Video' or 'Mighty 8th Facebook.' More info at: www.mightyeighth.org.

National Museum of U.S. Air Force, Dayton, OH. Museum's 102 Anniversary. Open daily. Plane Talks at museum—78th Anniversary of the Air Force, Sept. 18. Plane Talks programs occur throughout the year in conjunction with significant Air Force or military event. Info at: <https://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/upcoming/events/>.

Military Aviation Museum, Virginia Beach, VA, USA. Home to one of the world's largest collections of flying vintage military aircraft. Includes over 50 aircraft from World War I and II. The museum is also home to a rebuilt control tower from RAF Goxhill. Open daily. Info at: <https://www.militaryaviationmuseum.org>.

Freedom Museum, Manassas, Virginia. The museum has an exhibit on the WWII air war which contains the recently donated B-24 navigator compass. Open Friday, Saturdays and Sundays and Thursdays from March 15-January 1. Info at: <https://www.freedommuseum.org/>.

Jimmy Stewart Museum. Indiana, Pennsylvania. The movie star and command pilot held many command positions in the 2nd Air Division reaching the rank of Colonel as chief of staff of the 2nd Combat Wing. In later years, he attained the rank of Brigadier General in the Air Force reserve. Jimmy's legacy is alive and well in Indiana and worth a visit to his quaint hometown. More info at: <https://jimmy.org/museum-events/>.

2025 notable occasions

82nd anniversary of American forces arrival for European campaign.

78th anniversary of United States Air Force.

28th anniversary of American Air Museum, Duxford U.K.

Also, check the following websites for more information:

<https://www.americanlibrary.uk/>

www.mightyeighth.org

<https://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/Upcoming/Calendar/>

<https://www.8thafhs.org/>

<https://www.abmc.gov/>

<http://aomda.org/en/content/ceremonies>



Your Heritage League Executive Committee in house for the Annual Members Meeting. (L-R) Marybeth Dyer (458 BG), Past President and Membership VP; Irene Hurner (453 BG), Past President, Sue Risley (behind) (446 BG) Treasurer and chief convention organizer; Jim Birmingham (458 BG), Vice President; Brian Mahoney (behind), Past President and Data Manager (467 & 492 BGs); Chris Clark, (489 & 44 BGs) HL President; Doug Dovey, Communications VP (behind) (44 & 392 BGs); Beverly Baynes Tomb (466 BG), Past President and 2nd Air Division Memorial Trust Governor. Not shown: Colleen Mersman (491 & 44 BGs), Secretary and Bob Gedid (458 & 466 BGs), VP for Volunteers. Photo: K. Oh! Photography.

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the Second Air Division (USAAF)
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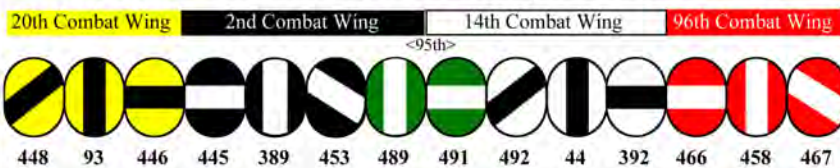
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