



Flight Lines

The newsletter of the Eighth Air Force Historical Society

Winter 2023

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to support the Eighth Air Force Historical Society (8AFHS) in perpetuating the history of The Mighty Eighth Air Force from 1942 to the present; to honor the memory of lost comrades; and to provide social events for 8thAFHS members living in Oregon and southern Washington.

The organization is open to anyone who has an interest in WWII aviation. It is dedicated to preserving and passing on the knowledge of those who served in air combat and ground support over Europe, the Balkans, North Africa, India, Japan and the Pacific theater, and Russia during the Second World War.

The Oregon Chapter of the 8th Air Force Historical Society holds public meetings every winter (February); spring (May); summer (August) and winter (November).

The Oregon Chapter of the 8th Air Force Historical Society is a private non-profit corporation. Donations to this organization are tax deductible. State of Oregon corporate registry number **1996184**

From the Editor

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Oregon Chapter of the 8th Air Force Historical Society. Don Keller, our Program Manager, has been associated with the group from almost the very beginning, and in this issue presents its human history.

As always, if you have any comments or stories to contribute, please email them to me at dwrightg600@gmail.com, or send them to:

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Treasury/Roster

The Oregon Chapter currently has a balance of \$2,253.15. As of this writing there are 47 dues paid members, 12 members dues pending, and five Life Members. 11 members are WWII veterans.

Folded Wings

It is always a pleasure and a relief to announce that there have been no reports of Folded Wings since our last meeting.

IRS Non-Profit Status

The Oregon Chapter completed its IRS non-profit status request, and was granted Public Charity Status 509(a)2, effective Nov. 5, 2022. Dues, donations, bequests, devises, transfers, and gifts to the 8thAFHS are now federal tax deductible. In 2022 there were \$904 in donations, ranging from a few dollars in excess from dues and lunch payments to \$100 and \$200. These donations are gratefully appreciated and materially aid the ongoing life of our organization.

Our EIN is 93-1097944

General Meeting Program February 11, 2023



Our February meeting heralds the return of one of our most popular speakers, Alice Miller. Alice a serious collector of historical uniforms worn by military service women and members of women's auxiliary support services. This February's uniform display will celebrate the Army Nurse Corps.

The program will start with the story of Dr. Anita McGee, who is considered the founder of the army nurse corps. She also recruited Nurses for the Navy Nurse Corps when it was formed later. Part of the collection display will be a very rare overcoat which she wore from 1900.

Another person we will celebrate will be Lt. Col. Barbra Nichols. Lt. Col. Nichols was trained in the Nurse Cadet program during WWII, after which she served in both Korea and Vietnam. She recently celebrated her 100th birthday at the military museum at Fort Lewis: she is the oldest surviving army nurse in the State of Washington. The Millers set up a large historical display for the occasion.

Alice will be wearing a flight nurse uniform, and she will also be bringing the first Navy doctor's maternity uniform ever made, from the Vietnam era, as well.

Tales of Service, Honor, and Humor

By Donald L. Keller



In 2023 the Oregon Chapter of the 8th Air Force Historical Society will be celebrating their 30th anniversary. I attended meetings during that first year. Fred Paul, their Program Chairman, asked me to help arrange speakers, and within a year I found myself as the Program Chairman and Elks Liaison. Our speakers told of their service, and the valor of others. One of our earliest members said, "We are all veterans, and we all have 'Wild Blue Yonder' stories. Find us speakers that tell of other interests and stories of service." I endeavored with the help of others to fill that request.

We have heard the stories of WASPs, mechanics, musicians, POW magicians, historians, veterans- combat and non-combat, and others who have given of themselves. Kay Gott Chaffey spoke of her time as a WASP, and post war experiences. Barbara Euler told of her adventures as a WW II WAC. Kim Cook talked about her military service, and the role of women in the military.

Mildred Bradley-Harris was an aeronautical engineer at Boeing before the war, and a Final Inspector on the B-17 Flying Fortress. She had an Engineering Degree before Rosie the Riveters were even allowed to work on aircraft. She respected the women who worked at Boeing, but DO NOT call her a Rosie! She gave her Boeing Inspector's armband to my youngest daughter, to help inspire her. My daughter is now working in aviation and well on her way to her pilot's license. We must inspire these younger generations.

Brigadier General Donna Prigmore, the first female General Officer of the Oregon Air National Guard, addressed our Group. She is an example of hard work, leadership, and intelligence rising to the top.



Alice Miller and her husband have given several presentations on the contributions and history of women and military service. Their uniform collection is not just a clothing display, but the history of the person who actually wore that uniform.

They also answered the question of the taste difference between Red Cross donuts and their modern donut counterparts. They made a batch by the original recipe, and provided it to us for a taste test.

The early days of the war were retold by AVG Flying Tiger pilot Ken Jernstedt. He gave us a firsthand look at the AVG, rather than the Hollywood version. Jacob DeShazer told of his time on Crew 16 of the "Doolittle Raiders". He also told of his missionary service in Japan after the war. After his conversion in a Japanese prison, he returned to Japan, and was instrumental in the conversion of Fuchida, the leader of the Pearl Harbor raid. Jacob was a kind and honorable person. It was a privilege just to know Ken and Jacob.

There were many others. C. M. Graham gave of a glimpse of his Corregidor experiences, while Byron Heichel told of his time in B-17s in the 43rd B.G., and his Japanese imprisonment. He said that when the Allied attacks came, the prisoners climbed on top of the huts, and cheered for the Allies, as if at a college football game. When the bombs and bullets started exploding nearby, they sought safer vantage points. As the Allies opened the gates, the prisoners did not recognize their liberators. They had never seen such strange weapons and different uniforms. When they were captured, their uniforms resembled the Doughboys and Tommie's.

The R.A.F. was well represented from Robert Quarterman, a Lancaster pilot, to Roland Fisher, an Eagle Squadron member. Roland flew with the R.A.F., and his experience with night fighters led to him being assigned to the U.S.A.A.F.s 43rd B.G., on Snooper B-24s. While on a night mission to Davao, his B-24 was attacked and rammed headon by a Japanese Nick fighter. He was able to bring his aircraft, "Miss Liberty" back, but he was sure that the Japanese pilot had been killed. Twenty years later, he read the story by a Japanese suicide pilot who claimed downing "Miss Liberty." Both pilots were reunited on the Dick Cavett Show and featured in "Life" magazine.

Roland also brought his squadron mate Al Clatworthy come to talk with us. After completing 40 hours as Pilot in Command training in B-17s, Al was congratulated by his C.O. on becoming a B-24 Airplane Commander. He had never set foot in a B-24. After completing 200 hours training in the Liberator, he was sent overseas to the 43rd. As a kid, he snuck his Brownie camera into a burlesque theater to photograph Mae West. He said he was proud to wear a vest named after her while flying over water.

While Roland and Al gave the view of radar equipped Liberators in the Pacific, Bart Bartholomew presented his experiences in B-24 Carpetbaggers flying at night from England. Fred Paul and John Lansing rounded out the “Smart Technology of WW II” with talks on the answers to the V-2 and the Project Aphrodite.

We also had our controversies. U.S.A.F. Chief of Staff General Merrill McPeak gave an interesting talk, and was given mixed reviews by those who served under him. The unwritten part of the First Amendment is every soldier’s right to his opinion of superior officers. Whatever the opinion, you must consider the contributions.



Pete Hardiman gave a riveting talk in the days before SNOPEs. We also had a man from British Intelligence give a presentation. When members questioned his credentials, President Joseph Chassaing replied: “We requested an entertaining talk. If it was true, he was entertaining, and if it wasn’t we still had a good time.”

Norman Leyden gave us a view into his times as a clarinetist and arranger with the Glenn Miller Band. He was also a Conductor of the Oregon Symphony. We enjoyed his tales and musical interlude. He called my oldest daughter up to the dais, and showed her some of his clarinet techniques. He told her that she was the only other person that touched his clarinet. Again, passing this history on to younger generations is most important.

On the lighter side, we had Dick Pressey and Stanley P. Richardson. Both men gave enthralling talks on their military service. Stan was always the quintessential fighter pilot, a hunter, but with a sense of humor. When talking with him, he made you feel like you were the only two people in the room.

Dick was as his son labeled him, “a tough old bird.” He could draw you in with his charm, and hold you with his stories. His tale of belly landing “Round Trip Topsy” in a farmer’s field is a classic. While trying to destroy the Norden Bombsight, he accidentally hit a Swiss Officer in the head. He did not know the Officer was behind him. He was later contacted by the U.S. government regarding the farmer’s bill for the crops he had destroyed. Stan Greer had fooled with magic as a hobby before the war. While interned as a POW, he honed his craft to entertain the other kriegies. It led to a lifetime avocation.

Like Stan Richardson, Wally Groce and Clayton Gross as fighter pilots were hunters, cut from the same cloth.

Eldon Bevins was a B-17 ball turret gunner in the 390th B.G.. He told us of his Army experiences and life of service to his community. He said that he never went very far in life. He was born at one end of the street in Dallas, Oregon. He spent most all of his life living at the other end of the same street.



We have had many members and speakers whose service encompassed 2 or 3 wars or “combat actions.” Ken Reusser and Dick Heyman Jr. both flew combat in WW II, Korea, and Vietnam. Dick’s career in the Air Force consisted of a high number of missions and decorations. Ken’s career in the Marine Corps included 253 combat missions, 59 medals including 2 Navy Crosses. While intercepting an enemy bomber at high altitude, his guns froze. Unable to shoot down the enemy, he pulled in close and used his propeller to damage the enemies’ tail, bringing it down.

“Beads” Popp was a Navy pilot involved in the fight for Rabaul and Bouganville. At least twice during the conflict, Japanese Suicide Squads attacked his airfield. They would land or crash an aircraft on the field, and commandos would exit the aircraft, trying to do as much damage as possible before being killed. Bruce Porter told of his exploits as a U.S.M.C. night fighter pilot in the F6F-5N, and the F4U Corsair. He would go on to become an Ace.

Other branches of Service, and other nations were represented. Jerry Nudelman related his experiences as a Forward Artillery Observer. He was a little too close to the action. Don Malarkey gave us the benefit of his experiences as part of the “Band of Brothers.”

Ed Flabetich talked about his time in the 10th Mountain Division, and serving with Sen. Robert Dole. Veterans of the 10th Mountain would be instrumental in establishing Pacific Northwest ski trails, and the Mount Hood Ski Patrol. Dick Pressey started out in the 10th Mountain Div. as a mule tender. While near Mt. Rainier, he saw a shiny new B-17 flying overhead. “I looked up at the B-17, and then at the rear end of that mule. I compared them again, and decided I would rather be up there, than down here with the rear end of that mule.” He went on to be a B-17 pilot in the 91st B.G.

Hampton Panny gave us an extraordinary view of his life as a Wehrmacht infantryman.

Russell Hines served at Base Air Depot 2 in Warton, England, as its Maintenance Director. He explained the reason for the grounding of all P-51 Mustangs during the war. Several of the Mustangs had inexplicably crashed. They grounded all Mustangs, and conducted tests to look for the cause. Russell said that the Hangar was constantly full of Brass, trying to find the answer. A rumped, grizzled old Crew Chief would walk up; watch the proceedings and walk away muttering. A Full Bird Colonel finally called to him, inquiring as to his actions. “I am just seeing how long it takes you college boys to figure it out.” The Colonel haughtily asked if the Crew Chief could do better. “Clear the area, give me a Mustang and 2 hours, and I will show you how to fix the problem.”

They came back 2 hours later to find a P-51 up on jacks. The Crew Chief retracted the gear. After a short while the Colonel became impatient, but the Crew Chief told him to watch the underside of the wing. Ever so slowly, one landing gear door came down slightly. “I added a second metering valve so that both sides are controlled. With only one valve, it will bleed off, and the door will come down slightly, and the aircraft will pancake in.” They installed the additional valve and the problem was solved.

Finally, we have had many POWs from different branches of service, different theaters, and different wars. Our veterans have seen the cost of war, and know full well why it must be a last resort. Almost to a man they have told me that they were not heroes. The heroes are those who did not come back.

Of those who did come back, a very high toll was paid by those who were POWs. Most of them came back with physical or mental scars. Many of them came back with diseases or conditions that would take their lives all too soon. They would pay that price most of their lives, especially as they grew older. Carl Hensley contracted Beri-Beri of the heart while a POW. The V.A. kept stalling off his benefits. "They are just waiting for me to die and go away. I won't go until they approve my benefits." The V.A. finally approved the benefits for him, and eventually his widow. He passed away 6 months later.



I have had the privilege of talking with these speakers, listening to their stories and experiences. I invite you to read their books, or go to our website and live or relive their stories.

Donald L. Keller, 2023

8th Air Force Historical Society – Oregon Chapter Speakers Feb. 1993 to Nov. 2023

- Feb. 1993: Fred Paul Search for his brothers' 96th BG crash site
- May 1993: 1st. Lieut. Harold Fritzier B-24 491st BG "RingMasters"
- Aug. 1993: Dean Tate 379th BG B-17 Escape & Evasion story
- Nov. 1993: Major Everett Perry Shot Down 1st Mission POW Pt. 1
- Feb. 1994: Kaye Gott Chaffey Experiences as a WASP pilot
- May 1994: Major Everett Perry Shot Down 1st Mission POW Pt. 2
- Aug. 1994: Col. Russell Hines B.A.D. 2 Maintenance Director
- Nov. 1994: Bart Bartholomew 801st BG/406th BS B-24 Carpetbaggers
- Feb. 1995: Jacob De Shazer "Doolittles' Raiders" Crew 16 POW
- May 1995: Fred Paul 8th Air Force answer to the V-2 Rockets
- Aug. 1995: Corbin Willis B-17 486th BG POW Experience
- Nov. 1995: Don Turner A-20 Havoc Lost 1 Engine 7 ft. of wing
- Feb. 1996: Capt. Clayton Kelly Gross P-39/P-51 Ace escort duty talk
- May 1996: Elmer Drake Marine in Pacific POW 44 Months
- Aug. 1996: Ted Harris 8th AF/R.A.F. WW II Korea POW
- Nov. 1996: S/Sgt. Roland Stewart Memorials for Chapter Deceased
- Feb. 1997: Fred Lidell 2nd Div. Signal Corps. Korean War Experiences
- May 1997: Hampton Panny Wehrmacht German Army Experiences
- Aug. 1997 Bruce Porter Marine Pilot/Ace/ F6F-5N & F4U
- Nov. 1997: Capt. Wally Groce 56th FG P-47 Shot down ME262
- Feb. 1998: Kim Cook Army Experiences Women in the Army
- May 1998: "Beads" Popp USN Pilot Rabaul and Bouganville VF-17
- Aug. 1998: Major Roland Fisher B-24 Pilot Snooper Missions
- Nov. 1998: John Donnelly Pearson Air Museum B-52 Pilot
- Feb. 1999: Col. J. E. Cottell British Army/French Resistance (?)
- May 1999: Byron "Dutch" Heichel 43rd BG B-17 POW
- Aug. 1999: Major Stanley P. Richardson P-38 55th F.G.
- Nov. 1999: Major Jack Lansing Project Aphrodite Early Smart Bombs
- Feb. 2000: Ken Jernstedt P-40 A.V.G. Pilot
- May 2000: Robert Quarterman R.A.F. Lancaster Pilot
- Aug. 2000: Hoyt "Bud" Embree B-17 Training and Combat
- Nov. 2000: Tom Philo Slide Show 8th AF Bases Then & Now
- Feb. 2001: Ken Reusser F4U Marine Pilot chewed enemy bomber tail w/ prop
- May 2001: Jerry Nudelman Artillery Forward Observer Europe WW II
- Aug. 2001: Ken Buckles Living History Day at Milwaukie H.S.
- Nov. 2001: William Tunstall Experiences on a carrier in the Pacific
- Feb. 2002: Charlie Gallagher 95th BG B-17 & Lockheed Experiences
- May 2002: Capt. Dick Pressey B-17 Pilot 1st BG & 10th Mtn. Div. Experiences
- Aug. 2002: Pete Hardiman RCAF/RAF/USAAF P-51 Experiences ???
- Nov. 2002: Gen. Merrill McPeak USAF Chief of Staff Experiences
- Feb. 2003: C. M. Graham Corregidor Experiences
- May 2003: Don Bourgeois Rex Barber Yamamoto Mission
- Aug. 2003: Eldon Bevins B-17 390th Ball Turret Gunner Experiences
- Nov. 2003: Norm Leyden Glenn Miller Arraigner & Clarinetist
- Feb. 2004: Major Stanley P. Richardson F-86 Korea
- May 2004: Ed Flabetich 10th Mtn. Division
- Aug. 2004: Mildred Bradley-Harris Boeing Aero. Eng. & B-17 Final Inspector
- Nov. 2004: Don Malarkey 101st Airborne Author "Band Of Brothers"
- Feb. 2005: Major Stan Richardson (meetings changed to Saturdays)

May 2005: Sig Unander Mexican Air Force Aztec Eagles
 Aug. 2005: Steve Vermillion Vietnam Huey Pilot
 Nov. 2005: POW Panel – Lt. Col. Clint Gruber & S/Sgt. Ramsey Fendall
 Feb. 2006: Around the Room Veterans' Stories
 May 2006: Ground Crew Panel – Ray Winters & S/Sgt. Urban Kluthe
 Aug. 2006: Judge Ron Commoger Vietnam Skyhawk Pilot
 Nov. 2006: Col. Mike Bieniewicz, ORANG
 Feb. 2007: Barbara Euler WWII W.A.C.
 May 2007: Held at the ORANG Base Tour
 Aug. 2007: Gary Mortensen National Combat History Archive
 Nov. 2007: Jim Boyle B-25/C-121/C-123 C.O. U. Of Port. R.O.T.C.
 Feb. 2008: WASP Panel - Janette Goodrum & Isabel van Lom
 May 2008: WASP Panel - Janette Goodrum & Ruth Guhse
 Aug. 2008: Major Roland Fisher American Eagle B-24
 Nov. 2008: U.S. Coast Guard member as Speaker
 Feb. 2009: Sig Unander
 May 2009: Jim Boyle B-25/C-121/C-123
 Aug. 2009: Roland Fisher substitute
 Nov. 2009: Paul Bazeley DC-3 Aerometal Intl.
 Feb. 2010: Carla Gleason Father in Resistance
 May 2010: Col. Tom Lingle U of O ROTC C-121/C-123 Pilot
 Aug. 2010: Sgt. Tom Kielbowicz U.S. Army Medevac
 Nov. 2010: Lt Cmdr. Bob Zafran VP-4 & ASW Tactics
 Feb. 2011: Capt. Greg Wooldridge USN Blue Angels
 May 2011: Ron Roden, USN Silent Service
 Aug. 2011: Jack Klein Radar Met. & 1st Recruiter O.A.N.G.
 Nov. 2011: Motoya Nakamura Speak on 442nd and Nisei
 Feb. 2012: Angel Pilato Udorn, Thailand Ran "Angel's Truck Stop"
 May 2012: Jack Kramer B-29 Nav. On Tinian & P/U Dog on Low Level
 Aug. 2012: Capt. Kelly Gross P-39/P-51 Mustang Ace "Live Bait"
 Nov. 2012: Capt. Bob Brown B-26 Marauder Pilot
 Feb. 2013: Ben "Flaps" Berry Tuskegee & NASA
 May 2013: Jack Klein Vanport Flood and the O.A.N.G.
 Aug. 2013: Frank LeSage PT Boat Service Medit.
 Nov. 2013: Bob Schuberg 8th AF Airfields Revisited

Feb. 2014: Brent Conner Air Tanker Pilot, Erickson Air Group pilot
 May 2014: Don & Jerry Show ad lib
 Aug. 2014: Dick Foy Air Tanker & Aero Union History
 Nov. 2014: Salute to Veterans Panel
 Feb. 2015: Alice Miller Beauty, Brains, and Duty
 May 2015: Capt. Henry Bendinelli C-46 Navig., B-26 in Korea
 Aug. 2015: Capt. Bob Vrilakas P-38 Pilot "Look Ma, I Can Fly" 94th FG
 Nov. 2015: Honoring our Veterans & Their Service Panel
 Feb. 2016: Alice Miller Salute to Women & Women's Uniforms
 May 2016: 1st. Lieut. Tom Moore P-38 & P-51 Pilot
 Aug. 2016: Capt. Fred Massaro 458th BG B-24 Navigator
 Nov. 2016: Oregon Air Natl. Guard Pilot Former F-18 Pilot
 Feb. 2017: Spirit of '45 Veterans Recognition Organization
 May 2017: George Bickford U.S.N. Pilot, Instructor, and A.N.A.
 Aug. 2017: Paul Payne Evergreen Air Museum
 Nov. Nov. 2017: Veteran Members Discussion Panel
 Feb. 2018: Alice Miller WWI 100th Anniv. Armistice
 May 2018: Richard Heyman P-338 WWII/B-26 Korea/F-105 Vietnam
 Aug. 2018: Dick Duggan F-89 Scorpion Pilot P.A.N.G. Base
 Nov. 2018: Tom Flaherty Former Marine Civil Warbird Pilot
 Feb. 2019: Ron Roden Update
 May 2019: Veterans Review
 Aug. 2019: Barbara Heyman wife of Dick Heyman
 Nov. 2019: Salute to Veterans: PFC Bill Gier, Don Anderson, & George Bickford
 Feb. 2020: Alice Miller Women in Aviation
 May 2020-May 2021: **COVID** no meetings
 Aug. 2021: Susan Tate & John Kupsick 379th Tribute
 Nov. 2021: Jenny Pfaff PBY Princess of the Stars
 Feb. 2022: Terry Popravak History of the 388th BG
 May 2022: Bert Campbell U.S. Army LRRP in Vietnam
 Aug. 2022: Frank Heyl B-25 WW II, C-46 Korea A.N.G. Viet Nam
 Nov. 2022: Brig. Gen. Donna Prigmore Commander O.A.N.G.
 Feb. 2023: Alice Miller Flight Nurses and Women in Military Medicine



Next Meeting: Saturday Feb. 11

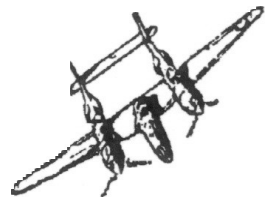
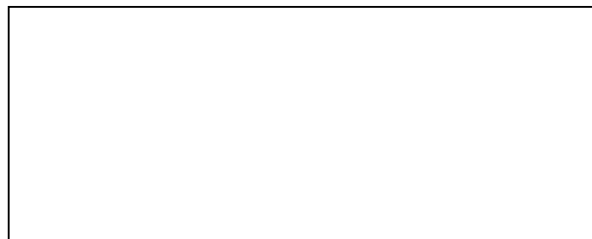
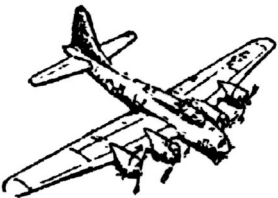
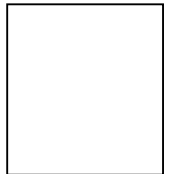
**Beaverton Elks Lodge
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<http://www.beavertonelks.or>

**Social hour 10:00am
Meeting starts 11:15am
Meeting ends 2:00pm**



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