

“MILK RUN”

Oregon Chapter 8th Air Force Historical Society News
Update
February 2011



History News

Readers, where's your story? See the last page on how to share history with others.



Band of Brothers Loses Two Members

On January 2, 2011 Major Richard “Dick” Winters died at the age of 92 and on January 18 Ed Mauser died at the age of 94. Stephan Ambrose wrote the book “Band of Brothers” and interviewed the men of Easy Company in order to document a unit of World War II. That in turn inspired the HBO series and actually let the people of the world know about the extraordinary exploits of just one unit of the 101st Airborne Division and its impact during World War

II. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/military-obituaries/army-obituaries/8253502/Major-Dick-Winters.html>

Ed Mauser was part of Easy Company, but due to movie making needs, he was not portrayed in the HBO series and actually never told his own family about his role in the unit till after the HBO series came out. He was the oldest member of “Easy Company”.
<http://www.google.com/hostednews/canadianpress/article/ALeqM5jw07I6P3t0NhTBxeyk5wBKZbX7aw?docId=5729906>

Ed Mauser of Easy Company

<http://www.newstrib.com/articles/news/local/default.asp?article=25560&aname=Peru+native%2C+oldest+member+of+'Band+of+Brothers%2C'+dies+at+94>

Don Malarkey and Lt “Buck” Compton at Seattle Museum of Flight in January



These two members of the “Band of Brothers” were at the Museum of Flight on January 8th to host the Seattle premier of a documentary about the “Battle at Brecourt Manor” in which 12 men of Easy Company and one member of D company – all that could be found – made the assault on Brecourt manor where a battery of German 105mm howitzers were shelling Utah

beach (around 100 men). This was made by private producers when no major companies would produce it. Is intended to be given to schools for free and others can purchase the one hour long feature. They used animation, interviews, re-creators and on site video to depict the day long action. The presentation was followed by a panel discussion with these two men. The tactics that Dick Winters used with Easy Company in the attack is still taught to cadets at West Point.

The video is expected to be released for purchase sometime in March 2011.

<http://brecourtmanor.net/>

Sandy Air Corp

There are many firms out there finding and recovering aircraft around the world. I came across Sandy Air Corp <http://www.sandyair.com/> when I got a question about a B-17 that was shot down on October 23, 1944. They recovered all they could of the aircraft in 2009 from the Tyrolean Alps. Boeing B-17G-60-BO Fortress 42-102841 Construction Number: 8343 483rd Bomb Group 840st Bomb Sqn MACR 9319 – part of the 15th Air Force.

They have also recovered parts of a P-47, Ju-52 and a Halifax prior to the B-17 recovery.

Here is a web page summary of units of the 15th Air Force - in German.

http://www.airpower.at/news03/0813_luftkrieg_ostmark/15USAF.htm

Escaping to Russia from Poland and Being at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941

Herman Snyder was living in a Jewish ghetto in Poland when one night he decided that it was better to take a chance over the wall than staying where he was. At 91 he is still telling his story of survival walking east to the USSR during the middle of World War II.

Ray Stehle was in the Army at Pearl Harbor working at an airfield on December 7th so he never had to enlist – but he did volunteer for flight training as a Navigator and then flew in a B-24 in the Pacific. Flying in the Pacific was a much more difficult place to navigate due to long over-water flights.

Both stories at:

http://www.pittsburghlive.com/x/valleynewsdispatch/s_719887.html

Paul Cannedy Pilot, 99th BG 15th Air Force

Flying 53 missions out of Italy during World War II starting in November 16, 1943 with an unescorted mission to France, later he flew into Germany to hit the Regensburg Messerschmitt plant (that was originally bombed on August 17, 1943), and finished his final mission in the summer of 1944.

One time the whole 15th Air Force went to northern Italy escorted by all 15th AF fighters available - all 72.

<http://www.baxterbulletin.com/article/20110125/NEWS07/301250001/1002/NEWS01>

January 26, 1944

2nd Lt Audie Murphy was awarded The Congressional Medal of Honor for his actions on this date on the outskirts of Holtzwihr, France.

His citation in part reads:

"With the enemy tanks abreast of his position, 2nd Lt. Murphy climbed on the burning tank destroyer [the tank destroyer located behind Murphy which had just taken a direct hit], which was in danger of blowing up at any moment, and employed its .50 caliber machine gun against the enemy. He was alone and exposed to German fire from three sides, but his deadly fire killed dozens of Germans and caused their infantry attack to waver."

The fighting continues for at least an hour. Murphy is wounded. At one point the Germans close to within 10 yards of his position. When his ammunition is exhausted, Murphy leaps off the tank destroyer (the vehicle explodes shortly thereafter), limps and crawls back to his company, organizes a counterattack, and drives the remaining enemy from the field.

January 28, 1942

The 8th Air Force was established at Savannah, Georgia.

Richard Ryrholm Jr – P-38 Pilot

At the age of 19 the P-38 he was flying was reported lost in the jungles of Papua New Guinea and he was only recently identified after the plane was discovered in February of 2005. JPAC went to the site a few times before a detailed excavation was done in January and February of 2010 after which he was positively identified.

An engagement against Japanese planes began, and Ryrholm Jr.'s Lightning last was seen about 900 feet above the tree tops, looking as if it would crash.

But the enemy hadn't shot him down. First reports made it clear it was "highly improbable" that Japanese planes had damaged the P-38.

Instead, officials surmised that "falling parts from other planes damaged the Lightning, thus causing it to crash."

<http://www.argusleader.com/article/20110125/COLUMNISTS0113/101250306/1057/COLUMNISTS>

Saving Aircraft Nose Art

"Right after World War II, the military realized the country didn't need and couldn't support all those aircraft," the museum's director explains. Decommissioned planes were sent to five different military bases, and bids were accepted for salvage rights.

Pratt was general manager at the Aircraft Conversion Company owned by George R. and Herman Brown in Walnut Ridge, and he had his crews chop out and save 34 pieces of nose art, thinking he'd mount them on a fence along the highway. His son, Tully Pratt III, donated them to the Commemorative Air Force in the 1960s. Stored in a hanger since then, there were finally recognized as needing to be preserved and properly stored and were restored and are now part of the Midland museum.

<http://newsok.com/aviation-wwii-enthusiasts-scramble-to-save-nose-art/article/3534631>

Born to Navigate

Gordon H. Tresch wanted to be a combat navigator – but the Army kept trying to put him into other fields. He eventually got into combat flying in B-29s – after two years!

He flew on the final mission to Japan – the longest bomber combat mission of the war – which lasted just short of 17 hours in the air.

<http://www.buffalonews.com/city/article321719.ece>

Kenneth Wall Bombardier 485th BG(H)

"The nose turret is a fine place from which to see the show; but there were times, like going down the run at Vienna, that I would have gladly traded places with the tail gunner. He sees only the flak behind you. I see it as we started into it."

Wounded when the Plexiglas nose was shot away while on this mission over Vienna, Austria, the crew thought he was dead so called ahead and told the field they had a dead man in the nose. Instead, he was wounded, slightly frozen and was very much alive when they landed at the base.

He died January 14, 2011 at the age of 91.

He completed 35 missions during World War II and also served during the Korean war.

<http://www.eagletribune.com/local/x233323652/War-hero-longtime-city-police-officer-dies-at-91#>

B-17 “Chuckie” (N3701G) Leaves Fort Worth for Virginia Beach

The B-17 AT Meacham airport was flown out to its new home at Virginia Beach, Va Military Aviation Museum.

It was sold in part due to “. . . it is expensive to operate -- 200 gallons of fuel for every hour of flight -- and to insure, at a cost of more than \$50,000 a year.”

<http://www.star-telegram.com/2011/01/21/2788018/world-war-ii-bomber-is-leaving.html#>

Pryor Field is named an Historic Location

Southeast Air Forces Training Center, now known as Pryor Field, is where US Army cadets went through training till it was shut down in December of 1944 was named as a historic location in Alabama.

Bombardier Dan Stern – 483 BG (H)



Not wanting to be a pilot after some flight training, he never-the-less was a **QUAT** – **Qualified for All Three** officer positions: Pilot, Navigator and Bombardier. He chose to become a bombardier.

His first combat mission was January 19, 1945 and finished the war with 32 combat missions. He also flew "lone wolf" missions – in order to get his 35 missions in faster in order to go home and ensure that he would not be assigned to units going to Japan.

Planes, on takeoff, would launch 30 seconds apart. There was little room for error. "There was one day, we were racing down that runway and we got a flat tire; there was another plane bearing down on us, going to smash into us. Fortunately, we had enough speed that the pilot was able to raise the tail and take off. That would've been the end of us," he said.

He owns two Norden bomb sights.

[http://nbs.gmnews.com/news/2011-01-20/Front Page/SB resident shares stories as WWII bombardier.html](http://nbs.gmnews.com/news/2011-01-20/Front%20Page/SB%20resident%20shares%20stories%20as%20WWII%20bombardier.html)

Air Raid Pearl Harbor!

Ed Chlapowski was a sailor on duty who sent out over the radio that Pearl Harbor was under attack – but there are also reports stating that others also sent out the famous message:

"This is no drill, Pearl Harbor is being attacked by the Japanese. This is no drill."

Ed Chlapowski died in Billings Montana on January 18, 2010 and the Associated Press wrote up a story saying that he is the one who tapped out that "in the clear" message from Pearl Harbor.

http://hosted2.ap.org/APDEFAULT/04deb7e9810946d4b3f8e26f02225b96/Article_2011-01-18-Obit%20Chlapowski/id-968f61e91238499296926138913f0044

However, others credit Rear Admiral Patrick Bellinger, Lt Commander Logan C Ramsey, and Buzz Boyer.

<http://voices.washingtonpost.com/postmortem/2011/01/air-raid-pearl-harbor-who-said.html>

Minard Willson – A Marine on Guadalcanal, Tarawa and Saipan battles

Willson, 91, was wounded on Guadalcanal and on Saipan – but came through unscathed when he landed on Tarawa in November of 1943.

The air and sea bombardment by 17 carriers and numerous capital ships had stopped by the time they landed on Betio atoll in the belief that everything had been destroyed and the Japanese Marines defending it were incapable of defending the island: "Were they ever wrong," said Willson.

978 U.S. Marines and 4,690 Japanese defenders were killed during the 72 hours of combat. One Japanese officer, 18 enlisted Japanese Marines and 129 Korean forced laborers survived the battle.

A 20 minute documentary of the battle, "With the Marines at Tarawa", won the Academy award in 1945.

<http://www.baxterbulletin.com/article/20110117/NEWS01/101170336>

Delivering Fuel to General Patton in a B-24



During the late summer of 1944 Patton's Third Army was racing across France – and out-running the supply line. The 8th and 9th Air Forces had destroyed lots of bridges and rail lines and all had to be rebuilt in order to properly supply the field armies - and that took time. Thus, the military took B-24s and B-17s from the strategic bombing task and had them haul fuel to the third Army. In 13 days in September 1944, 327 bombers transported 462,844 gallons of gasoline to Patton's forces. Frank Spurlock was a radio operator in a B-24 crew that was tasked to fly the fuel – and they almost did not make it.

He later completed 35 combat missions.

<http://www.kansascity.com/2011/01/15/2583382/mission-makes-a-turn-toward-victory.html#>

The Bridge on the River Kwai

Paul Picerni was a bombardier in the CBI – China Burma India – theatre where the River Kwai is located. In the movie the bridge is blown up by people on the ground, but in real life Paul was in the squadron that actually bombed the bridge and knocked it down. The bridge of the River Kwai has long since been rebuilt and is still in use.

http://www.dailynews.com/news/ci_17099351

Life Aboard A Mine Sweeper

George Oliver went into the Navy in 1943 and applied to become an officer – qualified for everything but in his height – you had to be 5' 6" in order to get into the Naval Academy. He instead spent the war on the minesweeper USS Signet. After the war ended they had to stay and sweep all the area around Okinawa – they cleared around 4,000 in the three months after the war. He kept a diary of his life aboard the ship.

<http://www.delmarvanow.com/article/20110122/NEWS01/101220336/1002>

The Laconia Incident

In the summer of 1942 a German U-Boat sinks a British cruiser – but which had been converted into a passenger ship without markings - that is now carrying Italian POWs, civilians, and their Polish Guards. The U-Boat Captain realized it was NOT a warship but carrying non-combatants and surfaced and ordered a rescue – and notified the allies. An American airplane came upon the scene of the U-Boat towing the lifeboats and was ordered to attack the U-Boat anyway – killing some of the people in the lifeboats which forced the U-Boat to leave the people in the boats to escape.

After this event, because the allies attacked a red-cross flag draped U-Boat towing lifeboats, Adolph Hitler ordered that no U-Boats were allowed to rescue any crew of any ship anymore.

Mrs Pratchett, who was on the ship when it was sunk, stated in an interview: "I don't do cruises now. I'd rather stick pins in my eyes!"

A two part BBC drama about this event was aired in Britain.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/northampton/hi/people_and_places/newsid_9344000/9344950.stm

Australian Pilot Recovered in his Spitfire

Royal Australian Air Force Flight Lieutenant Henry Lacy Smith, from 653 Squadron, was lost in action on 11 June 1944 over the coast of Normandy. Local museum curators found the Spitfire in the Orne Estuary, near Ouistrechain, Normandy in December.

<http://www.heraldsun.com.au/news/breaking-news/dead-wwii-pilot-an-australian/story-e6frf7jx-1225972490243>

Flying OSS Operatives Into France on a B-24

George Coleman was a tail-gunner on a B-24 flying in the Mediterranean theatre and was detailed to be on a night mission into France to drop French agents. Part of his duties was to ensure enough parachutes were on board for all.

There were 15 passengers and only 14 parachutes. "The captain told me that if the plane went I was the one that counted them and I'd be the one without."

<http://fredericksburg.com/News/FLS/2010/122010/12192010/595185>

“Aircraft Bridge” to be Torn Down

Moving aircraft parts around in San Diego from the Consolidated Aircraft factory required a bridge to be built – now 70 years later it is being torn down.

<http://www.760kfm.com/Global/story.asp?S=13739011>

Tuskegee Airman at the Fantasy of Flight in Florida

February 11-12 at the Fantasy of Flight in Polk City Florida they are going to have several of the Tuskegee Airman at their museum. They have a P-51C painted up in the colors of Col Archer. They usually fly 1 or 2 of their aircraft every weekend.

<http://www.fantasyofflight.com/livinghistory/index.htm>

A Radioman on the USS Texas

George Dudek thought about joining the Marines – but the line was too long so he joined the Navy instead. Trained as a radio operator he spent the war in the Atlantic and Mediterranean participating in both D-Day off Normandy and D-Day in southern France on August 15, 1944.

<http://www.orlandosentinel.com/news/local/lake/os-lk-military-christmas-story-20101225,0,4181738.story>

The First Naval Aircraft Carrier - *George Washington Parke Custis* - built in 1861

Course the aircraft was a balloon and it was used to just observe and report on the Confederate positions – but it was still the first “aircraft” carrier.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2010/12/before-the-aircraft-carrier-the-union-army-balloon-corps/68592/>

John T. Hoops Chief Yeoman and Flag Writer for the Fleet Adm. William F. (Bull) Halsey dead at 89

A "plank owner" – commissioning crew – of the destroyer USS Walke (DD-723) was off the coast of Normandy on D-Day and then into the Pacific participating in invasions and in the sinking of a Japanese destroyer Wakaba by gunfire. During action in the Phillipines he was awarded a Bronze Star for actions during a Kamikaze attack.

<http://huntington.patch.com/articles/john-t-hoops-world-war-ii-hero-passes-away-at-89>

The Man Who Torpedoed the Bismarck

John Moffat was the last plane in the attack when he was separated from the rest – and his torpedo struck the ship which jammed the rudder of the German Battleship. He wrote a book and the publisher changed the title from "I Sunk the Bismarck" to "We Sunk the Bismarck".

It was the only torpedo he ever dropped during the whole war.

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2010/12/29/us-britain-bismarck-idUSTRE6BS2CD20101229?pageNumber=1>

Lynn Gear Plant Closing – built massive gears for ships from WW II onwards

General Electric's Lynn Gear Plant, which started being constructed in June of 1941 before the beginning of WW II by the US Government, was shut down permanently in January, 2011. This plant created the gears that went into the Arleigh Burke (DDG-51) class guided-missile destroyers.

<http://www.thedailyitemoflynn.com/articles/2011/01/06/news/news05.txt>

Former Laotian general Vang Pao Dead at 81

He went from fighting the Japanese in World War II to fighting the Communists in Laos and Vietnam. Educated by the French and commissioned an officer in the Laos army he led the Hmong during the "secret" war under with advice from the CIA. He has been written about in various books including one concerning pilots flying called: "[The Ravens -- Pilots of the Secret War in Laos](#)"

http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gzCGpyvDYhqVVWMQaZb4_fm1MfQw?docId=CNG.15bd5dcd9923ec1ede1841c7911a83dc.491



Evergreen Museum's Me-262 "Swallow"

Last year the Evergreen aviation museum in McMinnville Oregon acquired a new production

Messerschmitt Me-262 – built in the USA. It is actually a lot smaller than I thought it was, about the size of a P-47 with tricycle gear. An interesting aspect is that they have wooden launch rails for the 12 rockets under each of the wings.

DC-3 “Gooney Bird” “Dakota” Stats

The prototype was first flown Dec 17, 1935. By the middle of 1936 it was being used by airlines. By December of 1941 only 507 had been built with 434 to the airlines and 95% of all passengers were being flown in DC-2s or DC-3s. By the end of WW II 10,654 had been delivered to the military. At the peak of production Douglas completed a DC-3 every 34 minutes.

Updating History

Howard Roth was in the 306th BG (H) and is listed on page Combat Crews of the 306th on page 174 as being in the Charles Gibson crew but no crew photo was available to be published. I received an e-mail Howard stating as to why there were no crew photos: “I was Charles Gibson’s copilot. Our crew flew a new B17 from Kearney Nebraska to Iceland. Shortly after Gibson came down with a Virus and was grounded. After indoctrination of 5 missions I was made 1st pilot and for 30 missions had various crew members. In fact Charles Gibson flew as my copilot on his 1st mission. I see the name of Wendell Larson 423rd, he was our navigator in our original crew; the copilot in the photo is not me but James Seymour.”

I’ve added that bit of information into the updated notes section about the combat crews of the 306th – I am sure there are other updates to the 306th and other units that people just know about which needs to be recorded. If you have this type of information – please share!

Thus the group of men who came over never ended up flying as a crew – so no crew photo was taken of them in England.

Howard has his own web page about his WW II combat as well as a section on band leader Glenn Miller.

<http://www.stargeezer.net/b17new/Dadshome.htm>

8th AFHS Chapters and Other WW II Related Organizations contacts

<p>Pennsylvania Chapter Keystone Tale Winds PO Box 102 Warminster, PA 18974-0511</p>	<p>National 8th AFHS Web site www.8thafhs.org</p>	<p>398 Bomb Group Flak News c/o Allen Ostrom 14900 1st Ave NE Apt 327 Shoreline, WA 98115-6815</p>
<p>NY Chapter Contact info Joseph P Keeley NY SW Chapter 8th AFHS President Chapters/Units/Groups Liaison & Board Member for the 8th AFHS fxe84@optonline.net</p>	<p>Wisconsin Chapter William Bergner Jr 9632 W Metcalf Place Milwaukee, WI 53222-2567</p>	<p>11th Air Force Association 355 Broken Post Road Texarkana, TX 75503</p>
<p>NY Chapter BLOG http://blogs.ny8thswcafhs.org</p>	<p>95th Bomb Group (H) (News & other Media) 307 ½ E 14th Avenue Eugene, Oregon 97401-4207 http://95thbg.org/95th_joomla/ Note: Reunion is in Seattle 12-16 October 2011 Marriott Sea-Tac Hotel</p>	<p>National Wasp Museum P.O. Box 96679 Washington, DC 20090-6679 www.waspmuseum.org</p>
<p>B-17 Flying Fortress Association Ron R. Hayes 1640 Cambridge Drive Walla Walla, Washington 99362</p>	<p>Association of Naval Aviators Flying Beaver Squadron PO Box 432 Clackamas, OR 97015-0432</p>	

Oregon Chapter News and Contact Information

Oregon Chapter meeting is on *February 12, 2011. 10 AM till 2 PM*

Presentation will be by Greg Wooldridge (Ret), the only three time CO of the *Blue Angles*. He will talk about his career and his command of the Navy Flight Demonstration team.

For this meeting a hot meal is prepared and will cost \$13. Please notify secretary@8thafhsorgeon.com if you are planning to eat at the meeting.

All meetings are free and open to the public – there is no cost to attend any 8th Air Force Historical Society meeting.

Need a Ride to the Meeting?

There are many members who can no longer drive due to age so we are trying to find out those who are in need of transportation so that we can find other members who live nearby who can pick you up and then take you home afterwards.

If you would like to come to the meeting and need a ride please contact any chapter officer or board member and let them know.

Tom Davis, Bob Dean, Tom Philo, Sharon Campbell, Charlie Gallagher, Wally Groce, Bob Schuberg, Jerry Ritter, Joani Hamilton, Bert Campbell, Warren Caldwell, or Don Bourgeois. Via e-mail you can send the request to secretary@8thafhsorgeon.com if you do not have the phone numbers for the people listed above.

Send Stories and documents to be Borrowed / Archived

If you have items that you wish to share with others, they can be loaned to the Oregon Chapter, scanned and catalogued and then returned to you. You can always donate them permanently to the chapter if you wish. Contact Tom Philo to make arrangements for the documents.

Items in the archive are usually be posted onto the web site (see release form on web site) so that everyone can learn from what others have experienced.

Oregon Chapter 8th AFHS

If you wish to be removed from the e-mail list please let us know.

Secretary 8th AFHS of Oregon
Tom Philo
17502 SW Kimmel Ct
Beaverton, Oregon 97007-6877
secretary@8thafhsoregon.com
<http://www.8thafhsoregon.com>

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