

“MILK RUN”

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



History News

Readers, where's your story?

8th AFHS Oregon Chapter News and how to share history with others on the last page.

Boeing's Virtual Walk-around of the Boeing 737

<http://www.newairplane.com/737/explained/#/Home>

Oregon 8th AFHS at the Hillsboro International Air Show

The Oregon Chapter of the Eight Air Force Historical Society again set up a booth at the annual August airshow. This year on Saturday T/Sgt Charlie Gallagher, a 95th Bombardment Group (Heavy) 336 Squadron as a B-17 top turret Gunner/Engineer along (left) with T/Sgt Don Millar (right), who also flew in B-17s as a tail gunner in the 379 Bombardment Group (Heavy) 526 Bombardment Squadron. They both manned the desk to greet and educate people after the 8th Air Force.



On Sunday Captain Bill Seitz (below right) manned the front desk instead of the left seat of a B-24 where he was for 85 missions when he flew with the 98th Bomb Group (Heavy) 15th Air Force. He first joined his B-24 unit as a replacement pilot after Ploesti (Operation Tidal Wave, 1 August 1943). He completed his tour and was assigned to train new pilots in the NW. After doing that for a short time he again volunteered for combat and went back to the 15th. For his final mission, and that of the 15th Air Force, he was the lead pilot of the lead plane of them all into the Reich.



Sitting with Bill is Sam Barber, a B-24 pilot with the 44 BG(H) "Flying 8 Balls" who sat and talked plane to plane at the airshow.

A partial view of the 8th AFHS booth area. Bob Dean is standing behind Bill Seitz who is talking with relatives of an 8th AF veteran. Tom Davis, current President of the Oregon 8th AFHS (back to camera) is standing under a practice bomb dedicated to Reichsmarschall Herman "Meier" Goering. The VFW booth was next to ours and [Dignity Memorial](#), who paid for our insurance, as well as that of the Association of Naval Aviators (ANA). Every group is required to insurance in order to put up a booth at the airshow. Dignity Memorial also provided us lunch. Their booth was the Green tent behind the VFW tent.



On the west side of Portland [Skyline Memorial Gardens](#), where Col. Clint Gruber (Ret) 93 BG (H), was buried earlier this year, is part of their network.

A view from behind Don Keller's (left standing, in grey shirt) B-17 Flying Fortress Cockpit simulator. He is slowly rebuilding it from parts he has collected over the years. Eventually it will be fully operational just like the ones Boeing built to train pilots and maintenance personnel.



B-17 Aluminum Overcast Still on Tour

Lt. Col. Joseph Busick, a B-17 pilot who also flew with the 15th out of Foggia, Italy, and others greeted the Flying Fortress in new Jersey.

http://www.phillyburbs.com/news/local/burlington_county_times_news/b-bomber-visits-new-jersey-amazes-wwii-veterans/article_fd5f679b-e2bf-5860-b13b-3371efa75d8e.html

442nd Regimental Combat Has a new Video: "Valor with Honor"

This is a new video that was produced after interviews with at least 35 Nisei who were in the unit. For it's size, it was the most decorated unit in the US Army. The men in the unit were awarded 7 Presidential Unit Citations, 21 Medals of Honor (upgraded from DSC), over 500 Silver Stars, and over 9000 Purple Hearts.

A Regimental Combat Team (RCT) had 3,500 men in it.

A member of the unit is set to be the speaker at the next 8th AFHS meeting in Beaverton on November, 5, 2011.

www.valorwithhonor.com \$23 plus S&H. Torasan Films, PO BOX 640831, San Jose, California, 95164

<http://www.salem-news.com/articles/august302011/442nd-doc.php>

How the West Financed Hitler's Rise to Power

Interesting read from a person's blog on how international bankers - and the west - loaned money to the NAZI party in order to ensure the WW I debt was repaid to the Western Allies (and the banks who loaned money to the Allies).

<http://www2.ljworld.com/weblogs/swampyilles-the-banshees-cry/2011/aug/22/swampyilles-priming-the-pump-of-world-w/>

First World War project

The Tynemouth World War One Commemoration Project is about documenting WW I and its impact of the town of Tynemouth in the UK who lost 1,700 killed in the war.

<http://www.tynemouthworldwarone.org/>

Turkey to Return Some Properties Seized after WW I

After WW I, and the resulting breakup of the Ottoman Empire, and various laws were passed in Turkey (legally) to take away property from minorities in 1936 has been ruled illegal and will be returned – in order for Turkey to remain part of the EU.

<http://blogs.reuters.com/faithworld/2011/08/29/turkey-to-return-confiscated-properties-to-non-muslim-minorities/>

Joining the RFC in Canada

Like "The Few" Americans who flew during the Battle of Britain before the USA was in WW II, some Americans went overseas not to work in the Red Cross but fought in combat. Henry Leavitt was one of them who went to Canada and joined and flew in combat during WW I.

He was also shot down and taken prisoner in 1918. Surviving being shot down and surviving in WW I is actually a low percentage – no parachutes so you stayed with the plane till it came back to earth. If the plane is on fire or major parts are gone then the pilot / crew perished.

<http://www.cbs6albany.com/news/properly-1287142-saratoga-vet.html>

Care Packages and Europe after WW II

After WW I the Western allies kept the naval and land blockade against Germany after the Armistice in order to force Germany into signing the Treaty of Versailles – the signatures in Paris they knew that starvation was starting to happen in Germany and if they did not wholesale death to millions would happen in the coming winter.

In 1946 the same situation was again happening in Germany – mainly due to the wholesale firing of all the middle and low end German bureaucrats who actually ran Germany's local cities / towns due to the de-NAZIification policy the Allies imposed – that anyone who was a NAZI member or had close ties were fired until proven they could hold their old job again – and thus all the normal day to day running of German society broke down. (Thus same policy was imposed against the BAATH party in Iraq by the USA and the same breakdown happened there after the UN forced out Saddam Hussein. However instead of just trying to survive, the Iraqis had arms and still had

loyalties to local leaders (not like the NAZI German top down style) and thus it lead to nationwide but mostly locally styled combat).

In 1946 CARE packages started being delivered to Europe based on the meal boxes designed to feed 10 soldiers for a day.

<http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,15313828,00.html>

Remembering the “Murmansk” Run in Archangel

The first convoy to Russia came out of England and arrived at Archangel on August 31, 1941. One of the most dangerous convoys routes to be on (going to Malta in 1941 is just as bad, but there you have warm water to swim in and no the 10 minute survival in Arctic waters). Russians, Norwegians, Americans and Canadians were among the guests.

Two books were published concerning the convoys to the USSR – both named the same: “Arctic Convoys”.

<http://english.ruvr.ru/2011/08/30/55413373.html>

“Night Witches” Talk in Colorado

At the Estes Park Aviation International Club in early August Irrina Johnson (born and raised in Russia but now a permanent US resident) talked about Night Bomber Regiment 588 .

http://www.eptail.com/ci_18616671

From a Wehrmacht Soldier on the Eastern Front to a Comedian

“Loriot – real name Bernhard Victor Christoph-Carl von Bülow, better known as Vicco von Bülow – was a national treasure who combined the eloquence and linguistic dexterity of a Stephen Fry with a Peter Sellers-style sense of the absurd. Pretty much every German newspaper on Wednesday carried a picture of him on the front page, or one of his cartoons.”

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/aug/24/germany-comedy-loriot>

Ian Kershaw’s Book “The End” – German’s final year 1944-1945

A book looking at why Germany fought on after the D-Day invasion of 6 June; the massive Russian offensive in 1944 which resulted in the destruction of Army Group Center; the ANVIL invasion in Southern France – all pointed to the eventual battlefield defeat of Germany – yet the military and people of Germany continued to fight. This book attempts to answer those questions as to why.

<http://www.thisislondon.co.uk/lifestyle/book/article-23979378-the-end-hitlers-germany-by-ian-kershaw---review.do>

“In Deadly Combat” – A Soldier on the Eastern Front

This book review gives it a somewhat passing grade since it was written so long after the war, it cannot be ascertained what was written as it happened and what was reconstructed from faulty memories.

<http://www.mauinews.com/page/blogs.detail/display/3293/Book-Review-209--In-Deadly-Combat.html>

Desert Fox Soldier's POW Camp Reveals Africa Corp Secrets

In Manitoba Canada, POWs captured by the 8th Army were sent (truly a punishment going from desert to snow, must not have known about Canada's winter) after they VOLUNTEERED to be sent there.

Now archaeologists are digging at the old camp and finding some interesting items.
<http://news.scotsman.com/world/Camp-that-held-Rommel39s-men.6825279.jp>

“Sacrifice on the Steppe” – A book about Italy in the Stalingrad Campaign

Written by Hope Hamilton it deals with the Italian Alpine Corps battles in the USSR till 1943. Italy, Hungary & Romania all had troops involved in the battle, and were mainly on the flanks of Stalingrad city battle. They bore the brunt of the Russian counter-offensive and were overwhelmed by sheer numbers.

Philadelphia & Newbury: Casemate/Havertown PA and Newbury, Berkshire, 2011. Pp. ix, 366. Illus., maps, notes, biblio., index. \$32.95. ISBN: 1612000029.

<http://www.strategypage.com/bookreviews/614.asp>

Volunteered for Navy -- Ended Up in Infantry

Tido Holtkamp was 16 in 1943 and his mother gave him some advice before his draft notice arrived: “the smallest bunk on a ship is better than the biggest fox hole”. The difference was that he was living in Germany and he suspected that Germany was going to lose the war.

Now living in New London he gets to see his old German Navy training vessel the *Horst Wessel* – now owned by the Coast Guard and named *Eagle*.

<http://waterford.patch.com/articles/waiting-for-his-ship-to-come-in>

Billy Drake, British Ace, Dead at 93

Starting out in combat in 1940 in France where he scored his first two kills, he went on to fly recon missions during the Battle of Britain and then commanded squadrons in the Mediterranean in both North Africa and Malta. He finished the war with 24.5 aerial victories and is known to have destroyed at least a dozen aircraft on the ground.

“You accepted that they could be shot down, and if they were, bad bloody luck. That's war. You'd go up to their room and see if there was anything you could borrow.”

He was a descendant of British naval hero Sir Francis Drake.

http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/obituaries/billy-drake-british-world-war-ii-ace-dies-at-93/2011/08/30/gIQAeiNmQJ_story.html

NAZI's on the Run – how they escaped from Europe

A new book by Gerald Steinacher explores how after the war thousands of dedicated NAZIs escaped from Europe via Italy – and wanted to find out how and why they were able to do so.

A movie called “The Odessa File”, based on the Frederick Forsyth's novel, fictionalized this. “Recent research shows that the ODESSA organization was a myth that said this organization operated worldwide with endless financial support—Swiss bank accounts, gold here and there—and centrally organized. All of these things are not true. There's

no evidence whatsoever that such a centrally-organized group with these funding possibilities ever existed."

One of many interesting interview questions and answers:

ICRC = International Committee of the Red Cross

Robin Lindley: Some people may be surprised that the ICRC helped prisoners of war but not concentration camp victims.

Gerald Steinacher: The ICRC's work is based on the Geneva Convention, and the Geneva Convention of 1929 was designed for prisoners of war. With civilian nationals of all kinds, such as German Jews in concentration camps, *the Red Cross had no legal authority to intervene*. These prisoners would be considered an internal affair of Germany.

<http://hnn.us/articles/8-29-11/how-the-nazis-fled-europe.html>

Bailing Out of a Ball Turret at 28,000 Feet

"We got hit on engine No. 1 and it started vibrating our wing. The wing was coming off between the one and two engines, and I noticed it was popping rivets. I said, 'We've got to get out of here. We're going to lose a wing.'"

That is how Richard C. "Dick" Miller described part of his thought process at 28,000 feet over Frankfurt Germany in early 1944.

He was assigned to the 303 Bomb Group (H) 358 Squadron.

<http://www.heraldtribune.com/article/20110826/ARTICLE/110829662/-1/news?Title=Airman-was-POW-in-Europe>

Two Merchant Marines and the U-Boat War

Two men, who knew each other for years, only found out in 1982 that they were on the same ship at the same time – which was sunk by a U-Boat off of Liverpool, England.

The Allies lost 175 warships, 3,500 merchant ships, and 72,200 sailors to U-Boats. Half of those killed were in the merchant navy.

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/tale+merchant+mariners/5320622/story.html>

“Two Gold Coins and a Prayer”

This self-published book written by James Keefe III about the experiences of his father, Jim Keefe Jr., during WW II.

James was a speaker at the Seattle Museum of Flight August 27, 2011.

<http://snovalleystar.com/2011/08/24/author%E2%80%99s-work-reunites-former-pow-with-holocaust-survivor>

Fort Monmouth Puts on a 3 hour World War II Symposium

Dioramas, U-Boats, Radar, and vehicles were all talked about.

<http://littlesilver.patch.com/articles/world-war-ii-symposium-at-infoage-2>

Visiting Your Brother In Rome – and thus not becoming a POW

When his brother, also a pilot, showed up by in Italy, Stephen Cushner got a 3-Day pass from his CO of the 451st bomb group out of Castelluccia, Italy to go visit with him in Rome. The substitute pilot and his normal crew were then shot down on the mission he missed.

<http://www.hudsonhubtimes.com/news/article/5082207>

Here's Your Complete High-flying Wardrobe

1. Jacket	6. Shoes, Felt	11. Scarf
2. Jacket Insert, Heated	7. Shoe Insert, Heated	12. Lead Card
3. Trouser	8. Glove, Heated	13. Woolen Shirt
4. Trouser Insert, Heated	9. Rayon Glove Inserts	14. Light Socks
5. Helmet	10. A-12 Mittens	15. Long Underwear

THE electrically heated suit assembly is designed to maintain top body efficiency of the wearer during routine flight, training or combat flying for all temperature conditions to 40 degrees F. below zero regardless of the time duration of flight.

GE- Keeping you Warm at 30,000 Feet

During WW II GE developed electrically heated suits – but how do you test them to see if they actually work? GE made a “copper man” in order to do just that. Less heralded, then or now, but still in use, is GE’s “Copper Man,” a quarter-inch-thick, electroplated copper mannequin from the early '40s that the Army used to evaluate the thermal-insulating quality of protective clothing issued to B-17 and B-24 airmen.

<http://www.rdmag.com/News/Feeds/2011/08/manufacturing-ge-s-world-war-ii-era-copper-man-gets-his-due/>

Proposed on the First Date Then Off to War

Hal Wilder went out on a blind date while stationed at Mira Loma Flight Academy, and proposed to her that same night. They were married for 56 years before she died.

After training he went to England as part of the 458th BG (H). It was the last heavy bomb group

deployed to Italy.

<http://www.vcstar.com/news/2011/aug/26/venturas-hal-wilder-found-love-and-then-a-world/>

Kessler Air Force Base Mississippi

During WW II a total of 336,000 recruits and 142,000 aircraft mechanics were trained at Kessler. Most B-24 mechanics stationed throughout the several theaters of war - Europe, Africa, the Far East and Pacific. The base is named after 2nd Lt. Samuel Keesler who was killed in action in World War I against four German fighters.

In 1947 the radar school moved from Boca Raton, Fla. (Which Dick Klein talked about at last Oregon 8th AFHS meeting – he was an instructor there during WW II), to Keesler, and then elements of its communications and electronics courses from Scott Air Force Base, Ill.

<http://www.militaryaerospace.com/index/display/avi-wire-news-display/1487144164.html>

James Des Jardins P-51 Found

His brother Eark Des Hardin was KIA flying a B-24 over France two months earlier but his remains were known. James' P-51 was discovered during a dredging operation in a field near Einhausen earlier this year.

<http://www.chron.com/news/article/Plane-remains-of-WW-II-vet-recovered-2135504.php>

Oregon Chapter News, Archive Donation, and Contact Information

Next Oregon Chapter Meeting November 5, 2011

442 RCT veteran to be our speaker.

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.

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.

Oregon Chapter 8th AFHS

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

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