

# **“MILK RUN”**

Oregon Chapter 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Historical Society  
*History News Update for November 2011*



**History News → Readers, where's your story?**  
***Oregon 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS Chapter News and how to share YOUR history with others on the last page.***

## **The Fate of Rosalie Ann(s) of the 452 Bombardment Group (Heavy) – Cont'd**

The story of this mid-air collision is one of the incidents featured in Ian McLachlan's book "8th Air Force Bomber Stories" (PSL, 1991). There are pictures of the crash-site, the crew involved, and the damage to the second B-17 involved, which landed at Watton. There are also two colour frames from some cine-film shot from the waist position of a 93rd BG B-24 of the 388th BG B-17 exploding on the ground in the late Roger Freeman's Mighty 8th In Colour (Brit sp!) (Arms & Armour Press, 1992).

Bob Collis

## **Fred Fiske and the Kassel Mission of 27 September 1944 – Cont'd**

For "Castle" should have been "KASSEL" Germany. The actual target was the Henschel AFV (tank) plant.

The actual number of MIA 445BG B-24s on this mission was 28 out of 37 aircraft dispatched. The rest "lost" were those written off after landing due to battle damage.

## **Living in a 747**

One person wanted to recycle a 747 in a different way – he turned it into a house!

Back in the 1950s / 1960s some people turned old a/c into restaurants – there used to be a C-54 like that in McMinnville.

<http://www.smartplanet.com/blog/design-architecture/how-to-recycle-a-747-jet/809?tag=nl.e660>

## **A “White Lightning” becomes a “Red Bull”**

The P-38 Lockheed “Lightning” that Lefty Gardner flew for years at the Reno air races S/N 44-53254 (originally a F5G photo recon plane) until an engine fire and subsequent emergency landing which caused extensive damage, is now flying for the “Red Bull” racing team – in Austria. It was last flown at Reno Air Races by Steve Hinton in 2008 before being sold. It is now owned by the Red Bull Racing Team and is in their hanger at Salzburg, Austria.

## Robert “Jerry” Lundell Sr. Dies at 91

Born, raised and died in Oregon, he was a B-17 pilot and flew 50 combat missions in the ETO during World War II.

An interesting aspect is that his relatives videotaped his experiences and posted it onto YouTube.com in 5 parts. He was in the 301 BG(H).

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zabIDgAmvPk>

## A Slow Boat to China – Especially if you were in the Amphibious Forces

WW II for the Allies was a LOT of amphibious landings – in the Mediterranean was five major assaults, plus countless raids while in the Pacific there were at least 10 times more major assaults. (On some days 3 different assaults took place hundreds of mile apart and each was a division level assault.) And of course this required lots of assault ships.

One of ships restored is the LCI 713 in Portland, Oregon. 951 LCIs were built in 2½ years.

There is a museum just for the ships at [www.amphibiousforces.org](http://www.amphibiousforces.org).

## Lt Col Claire P. Chennault – Dead at 90

The son of General Claire Chennault, who convinced President Roosevelt to allow military pilots to resign with the understanding that they could come back at their previous rank if the US got into the war and thus started the AVG – *The Flying Tigers*, died October 3 in Mississippi. He was the last surviving son of General Chennault.



He flew over 300 combat hours as a fighter pilot in the ETO as part of the 86<sup>th</sup> Fighter Wing in the 376 Fighter Squadron. Photo via Ed Kozicki from

<http://www.littlefriends.co.uk>.

<http://www.knoe.com/story/15615833/lt-col-claire-patterson-chennault-services-announced>

## Izaak Walton league Trees

After the end of WW II in 1946 Elgin (outside Chicago) they took a plot of land and planted 60 evergreen trees to honor each of the locals who went to serve in WW II. Now 65 years later, it looks like a forest in the middle of town.

<http://couriernews.suntimes.com/news/7949663-418/tall-trees-tell-tale-of-izaak-walton-league-world-war-ii-veterans.html>

## **USS Cassin Young – Still in Dry Dock**

What started out as a 6 month overhaul of this WW II destroyer in Charleston Navy Yard has turned into someone far more intricate than originally expected. 30 years in salt water without any bottom paint or maintenance has caused the ship to rust out.

[http://articles.boston.com/2011-08-28/lifestyle/29939035\\_1\\_dry-dock-historic-ship-uss-constitution](http://articles.boston.com/2011-08-28/lifestyle/29939035_1_dry-dock-historic-ship-uss-constitution)

## **Sunk By a Japanese Submarine – off the Coast of California**

The SS Montebello was sunk on December 22, 1941 while sailing north to a refinery in Canada. This tanker was one of the first ships sunk off the US coast. The German U-Boats had yet to arrive off the east coast (*Operation Drumbeat*).

Lying upright in 900 feet of water they are going to examine it not for any historical reasons but to find out what the 3 million gallons of crude oil might do if the ship deteriorates more.

Of the 38 crewman on board, all of whom survived, one 92 year old Richard Quincy is still alive to tell his tale.

[http://www.forbes.com/feeds/ap/2011/10/12/business-us-sunken-oil-tanker\\_8730128.html](http://www.forbes.com/feeds/ap/2011/10/12/business-us-sunken-oil-tanker_8730128.html)

## **Jim Neumann – Navigator, 384th Bomb Group, Grafton-Underwood**

Jim flew his first combat mission on December 18, 1944 to Koblenz. He kept a detailed diary of all his 35 missions when he flew his last one on April 16, 1945. His daughter took all his notes and typed it up so now it is in a pamphlet.

“My first mission was quite a surprise. None of us knew we were flying in the morning. I was up late and wrote some letters and didn’t get much sleep.”

[http://www.kpcnews.com/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=13042:WWII-veteran-survived-35-combat-missions-in-a-B-17&catid=87:dennis-nartker](http://www.kpcnews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=13042:WWII-veteran-survived-35-combat-missions-in-a-B-17&catid=87:dennis-nartker)

## **American Shermans at El Alamein**

The success of the British at the winter battle of El Alamein was due in part to 300 Shermans and 100 mobile artillery pieces ordered to be sent to the British in North Africa by President Roosevelt after the fall of Tobruk.

<http://www.forward.com/articles/144213/>

## **Bells Back to the Philippines**

These are not being returned due to anything concerning WW II, but these bells were taken from a destroyed church at Meycauayan (just north of Manila) during the Philippine Insurrection that lasted from 1899 through 1902.

Other bells that were brought home from various damaged churches are being requested by the Philippine Government where they will be put into museums there rather than in the museums in the USA.

<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/77395/2-war-bells-back-to-philippines-what-about-big-ones>

## **Smelling for Chemicals in WW II**

Unlike modern equipment that detects chemical agents, during WW II people were trained to SMELL for them, then put on their masks, and then sound the alarm. Oliver "Les" Earhart was one of those men from the time he went ashore in Africa.

<http://www.dglobe.com/event/article/id/51655/>

## **With the 455 Bomb Group in Italy**

Guy Proie was a tail gunner in the 455 BG (H) flying B-24 missions as part of the 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force. Mario Capocefalo was a local kid who did odd jobs on the airbase during the war for 10 cents a day. Today Mario is an authority on the 455<sup>th</sup> BG and came to the USA to visit Guy.

As to what Mario knew of the 455<sup>th</sup>: "They stayed at the base night and day. It was mud in the winter and dust in the summer."

Senator George McGovern was a pilot in the 741<sup>st</sup> Squadron.

Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

[http://www.pittsburghlive.com/x/pittsburghtrib/news/s\\_762139.html?\\_s\\_icmp=NetworkHeadlines#ixzz1azuNLeKH](http://www.pittsburghlive.com/x/pittsburghtrib/news/s_762139.html?_s_icmp=NetworkHeadlines#ixzz1azuNLeKH)

## **Shot Down on Mission 35**

Andrew G. Klopchin was shot down by fighters over Bulgaria when flying in a B-24 as part of the 743 Squadron. If you were in the 8<sup>th</sup> that would have been your last mission – but in the 15<sup>th</sup> AF you still had 15 more to go before completing your combat tour – he spent the rest of the war as a POW.

"Klopchin said the worst part of his POW experience was when he and his crew mates were first captured by Bulgarian soldiers, who executed their pilot and put the remaining nine servicemen through a brutal, weeklong interrogation before sending them to a prison camp in Shumen."

<http://www.lohud.com/article/20111015/NEWS03/110150352/Andrew-G-Klopchin-lifelong-Rockland-resident-decorated-WWII-veteran-POW-dies-87>

## **Book: Two Gold Coins and a Prayer**

Published by Jim Keeffe of Issaquah Washington, the book is about his father James Keeffe Jr. experience in World War II as a B-24 pilot and POW experience.

<http://www.issaquahpress.com/2011/10/11/on-a-wing-and-a-prayer/>

## **Working a Water Tender in the Navy**

One of the most important items on any ship is the desalination plant – you need to make fresh water in the middle of an ocean. Emery Suber was already in his 30s when he joined the Navy in 1942 but he went in as a Chief and was quickly promoted even more since he had done similar work at power plants. He died at the age of 102.

He went to give a two week notice to his boss but his boss told him to leave right now since he could easily be replaced. He was wrong. His boss asked him back and he told him: "I'd rather go other there knowing that I was going to get killed than come back and work for you."

[http://www.menafn.com/qn\\_news\\_story.asp?storyid=%7Bfa8530b6-ab41-4770-b2fd-3c7247069158%7D](http://www.menafn.com/qn_news_story.asp?storyid=%7Bfa8530b6-ab41-4770-b2fd-3c7247069158%7D)

## **Replicas**

Aircraft replicas are around – but usually WW I types. The firm in Washington makes Me-262s and a firm in Germany make FW 190s but here is a replica of a Panzer VI: aka a Tiger I .

<http://maketoff.net/portfolio.html&gid=23>

## **Fantasy Of Flight**

Time for their annual racing machines gathering – but you better live around Polk City Florida.

<http://www.fantasyofflight.com/roar-n-soar/>

## **National 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Historical Society YouTube Channel**

Pat Keeley has posted new videos from the national reunion meeting. The link below is to the main feed and from there you can get to the other videos including those from the 2011 reunion.

Below are listed all sites owned by the national organization:

YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/8thafhs>

Blog: <http://blogs.ny8thswcafhs.org>

FaceBook page:

<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100000202464655#!/groups/8THAFHS/>

## **Luftschacht Uber Buchenberg : Air Battle Over Buchenberg**

Is a book written in German about the 15<sup>th</sup> Air Force Raid on July 18, 1944 from Italy to Memmingen Airfield in southern Germany. 167 B-17s were dispatched but were weather recalled – except for the 483 BG (H) which went on by itself and its 26 aircraft

to the target. They lost 14 aircraft. In Kempton Germany there is a memorial plaque listing the 29 Americans killed on the raid.

The book contains 1944 and 1998 photos of WILLI UNGER and HANS WEIK, and their "After Action" reports each describing shooting down one B-17.

In Munich a military researcher has a database of 3000 crash sites in Germany and in it they have the serial numbers of all the machine guns – which allows them to trace to gun to the aircraft it was found on.

On every mission names of the crew and their SN were recorded but also the SN of the machine guns, engines, Norden bomb sight and other critical items was kept at the base where the plane flew from. Thus each plane can be identified if any one of those hardware items are found and can be read.

## **Bombing Campaigns and Strategic Thinking**

This year has seen the publishing of various books about the American and British bombing campaigns against Germany during WW II. Three years ago there was an article written about how political pressure forced the USA to change, in a few cases, their stated mission of strategic bombing of military target and instead on a few select missions to target civilians. The US commanders objected but were forced to carry it out the mission as stated anyway.

I've read and talked to a few who flew on these missions and in some cases the pilots / bombardiers of the lead groups ignored the order and dropped on military targets (usually rail yards) within the target city and not the designated aiming point – which was the housing area.

<http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/HL0808/S00038.htm>

## **91<sup>st</sup> BG "Dailies"**

The 91<sup>st</sup> BG (H), the group that the "Memphis Belle" was part of, has a museum – in the control tower at Bassingbourn, and a nice web site. Merle Choffel transcribed the "dailies" for 1944 and it is on their site. It is a good way to see what was actually recorded for a group on a regular basis.

(Note: the formatting of the info is messed due to a HTML conversion, but the info is all there just hard to read!)

<http://www.91stbombgroup.com/Dailies/401st1944.html>

## **Me-262s On The Move**

One of the 262s built at Paine Field was flown over to it's new home in Virginia – by a German Pilot.

[http://globegazette.com/news/local/german-world-war-ii-plane-stops-in-mason-city/article\\_d5154126-fc1f-11e0-8cf7-001cc4c03286.html](http://globegazette.com/news/local/german-world-war-ii-plane-stops-in-mason-city/article_d5154126-fc1f-11e0-8cf7-001cc4c03286.html)

## **Rear Adm. John H Benson dead at 99**

A pre-war Naval Academy officer in the class of 1935 he was a Lt in charge of a destroyer during one of the 1942 battles of Savo Sound (4<sup>th</sup> battle, known as Tassafaronga) which his ship, the USS Pensacola, was hit with a "long lance" Japanese torpedo and nearly sunk. Around 1/3 of the crew was killed in the night engagement when the ship was set afire.

He lived in Oregon.

<http://obits.oregonlive.com/obituaries/oregon/obituary.aspx?page=lifestory&pid=154377331>

## **Malin Oregon Airport to be named after 303 BG (H) Lt. Ehle H. Reber**

At the July Malin City Council meeting, Pence brought the motion before the other council members. Mayor Zieg recognized Councilman Pence and gave him the floor. After proposing the name change, Councilman Pence read a short biography of Reber who died at 23 over Lorient France in his B-17.

The re-naming event was sometime in October 2011.

<http://www.303rdbg.com/news/2011-09-18.html>

## **Lt Ferris Suttle Memorial at Dombasle-sur-Meurthe**

Flying in the 359 Fighter Group 369 Fighter Squadron Lt Suttle was killed while strafing a German convoy at the town of Dombasle-sur-Meurthe, which is near the Swiss / French boarder.

His sister went to France to be there at the dedication in 2011.

<http://www.gastongazette.com/articles/war-62298-little-ross.html>

## **Seminar On Pearl Harbor – if you happen to be in Springfield Ohio**

Retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Paul Cooper will host a discussion on November 5 at the Clark County Historical Society's World War II Conference.

<http://www.springfieldnewssun.com/news/springfield-news/wwii-seminar-to-examine-why-pearl-harbor-attack-surprised-strategists--1273522.html>

## **Michael F. Pungercars' Book – Due around Thanksgiving**

Mike has found out how hard it is to get a self-published book created! Latest information is that before Thanksgiving Day This year it will be out (he originally planned it for Veterans' day 2010!).

He should be at the Oregon Chapter meeting in November.



The title is "The Promise Kept"

## **Dog Handler & His Dog Buried Together**

Cpl. Kory Wiens, who came from Oregon, and his bomb sniffing dog Cooper were killed in 2007 while on patrol in Iraq. This month a park was named in their honor at Fort Carson Colorado.

A kennel and a veterinary facility at Fort Leonard Wood were already named after the two.

[http://www.oregonlive.com/pacific-northwest-news/index.ssf/2011/10/oregon\\_soldier\\_his\\_military\\_do.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/pacific-northwest-news/index.ssf/2011/10/oregon_soldier_his_military_do.html)

## **Warhawk Museum in Idaho**

If you happen to going through Idaho near Nampa you should stop in at their museum. See their web site <http://www.warhawkairmuseum.org/> for details. You can do a "virtual" tour via their web site.

And they do have a P-40 Warhawk there.

In Oregon along the cost there is the Tillamook Air Museum. There were I think 4 blimp bases built during WW II and Tillamook was one of them. <http://www.tillamookair.com>

## **Sons of Confederate Veterans**

The US Civil War Ended in 1865 – yet organizations exist to remember the men, and women, who served during the conflict (on both sides). This one is for the Confederate States of America.

There is a local chapter in Oregon, S.C.V Camp #458, [www.scvportland.org](http://www.scvportland.org) .Oregon has a large number of Civil War re-enactment groups – even though no battle was ever fought in the Pacific Northwest – but we do have a few Civil War Era forts around. National web site is: [www.scv.org](http://www.scv.org)

## ***8<sup>th</sup> AF Type Organization in Utah?***

Corbin Willis moved from here in Oregon to Idaho and he knows of no 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS Chapter there – anyone know a good organization locally in Brigham City Utah that would fit in with people who flew in combat, or directly with the 8<sup>th</sup> AF?

If someone does, send an email to the newsletter editor.



# Oregon Chapter News, Archive Loan / Donation, and Contact Information

## ***Next Oregon Chapter Meeting November 5, 2011***

**PROGRAM:** The speaker is Motoya Nakamura. Nakamura has documented in photographs, as well as in oral format, the stories of veterans of the 442 RCT who live in the Portland Oregon local area.

It is hoped that two or three members of the 442 who live locally will attend.

The 442 RCT - Regimental Combat Team - fought in eight campaigns in Italy, France and Germany during WW II. A WW II regiment usually consisted of 1,200 front line infantry combat soldiers - and this RCT earned over 18,000 total decorations.

LUNCH: The meal will be a Thanksgiving style hot meal with a second lighter choice. The price will be \$13.00 which includes gratuity. The cost of the meal also covers the room rental fee so that we can use the building for the meeting.

## ***Oregon Chapter Annual Dues***

Sharon will have the dues letters at the meeting and if you can pay the \$15 annual dues at the meeting it will save the cost of an envelope and stamp. Otherwise, the letters reminding exiting members to send in their **2012 dues of \$15** will be sent out after the November meeting.

*Any money given to the chapter ABOVE \$15 is tax deductible.*

## ***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@8thafhsurgeon.com](mailto:secretary@8thafhsurgeon.com) if you do not have the phone numbers for the people listed above.

## ***Oregon Chapter 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS***

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

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