

# “MILK RUN”

Oregon Chapter 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Historical Society  
*History News for January 2013*



**History News → Readers, where's your story?**

***Oregon 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS Chapter News and how to share YOUR history with others through our 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS Chapter is on the last page.***

## **Vaughn Erickson – 398 BG (H)**

S/Sgt Vaughn Erickson died on December 9, 2012. He was ball turret gunner, rather large to get into there at just over 6 feet, but he was able to scrunch in there with no problems throughout his 35 mission career in B-17s. He was a local member of the Oregon 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Historical Society.

He was wounded on a mission over a target when he got out of the turret, the Luftwaffe would not go after bombers while their friendly flak was firing, and was promptly wounded. Afterwards he thought it was safer to stay in the turret. He still had his piece of flak. He never reported it, since to do so would have grounded him on his next mission, his 25<sup>th</sup>, with his crew. And after 25 you also got to go on a 1 week leave usually.



He also photographed Ravenoville Plage, near Utah Beach, on D-day out of the bomb-bay from 8,000 feet after they had bombed a coastal battery there.



<http://obits.columbian.com/obituaries/columbian/obituary.aspx?pid=161693418>

## **Burma Dig a “Go”**

David Cundall has received permission to go to Burma and perform the excavation of dozens of rare Spitfire fighters which were buried in the country at the end of the Second World War.

"We estimate that there are at least 60 Spitfires buried and they are in good condition."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/history/world-war-two/9615146/British-plane-enthusiast-wins-right-to-dig-up-buried-Spitfires-in-Burma.html>

## **US WWI Centennial Commission to based out of Kansas City**

World War I, "The Great War", "The War to End all Wars" started on July 28, 1914 as results of a Serbian killing Archduke Ferdinand while he visiting Sarajevo inside of Serbia June of 1914. . This caused The Austrian-Hungarian Empire to declare War on Serbia, who was allied with Russia, and thus the entangling alliances of Europe all honored their treaties and World War I was started. Actual battles in Northern Europe did not start till August after all sides had mobilized. The USA did not join the war till April of 1917.

<http://www.kansascity.com/2013/01/02/3992087/world-war-i-centennial-commission.html>

## **James Morehead – P40 Combat Ace**

Col Morehead died in March of 2012. He joined the Army Air Corps in 1940 (renamed Army Air Force in 1941)and trained at Hamilton Field. A pilot crashed into him while he was awaiting to take off and put him into the hospital. The unit he was to be assigned

to was shipped to the Philippines before the war – and all were either killed or captured. He then was assigned to the South Pacific in 1942.

"On pure bravado, he did a slow roll and went after a Betty bomber," DeLisle said. "The bombers had guns around their nose and in the tail. Morehead came in at a perfect angle. The bomber's guns had no shot."

<http://news.investors.com/management-leaders-in-success/122712-638469-james-morehead-second-world-war-ace-pilot.htm#ixzz2HFv5IGzI>

## **A Status for MOH winner Homer L. Wise**

Part of the 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division that landed in Normandy, he was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions on 14 June, 1944 in Normandy.

His home town of Stamford will dedicate the status in 2013.

[http://www.thehour.com/stamford\\_times/news/stamford-wwii-hero-receives-statue-in-his-honor/article\\_bc33b600-538b-11e2-87e1-001a4bcf6878.html](http://www.thehour.com/stamford_times/news/stamford-wwii-hero-receives-statue-in-his-honor/article_bc33b600-538b-11e2-87e1-001a4bcf6878.html)

## **Part of the “Spearhead” – 3<sup>rd</sup> Armored Division of WW II**

William T. “Bill” Allen started the war on Omaha Beach – and was 1 of the 13 to survive the beach out of his platoon of 52.

He then went on to be one of the first into Germany, then to Bastogne as part of Major General Maurice Rose division.

<http://bdtonline.com/local/x1303500434/Local-World-War-II-veteran-recalls-infamous-campaign>

## **Omaha Beach to Germany as a “PFC - personal friend of the Colonel”**

William H. Erick was a infantry replacement that landed on Omaha beach in August of 1944 on his way to the 30th Infantry, 119th Regiment, 1st Battalion, Headquarters Company, Communications Unit, Radio Section.

“In a hedgerow in France, one of our radio operators was walking behind the row and just the top of his antenna was showing. The Germans must have had their binoculars. An 88-millimeter gun of theirs let go. It hit the top of the antenna and radio and knocked the radio operator ass over tea cart, but he was never scratched. The shot tore the radio right off his back.”

<http://www.buffalonews.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20121230/CITYANDREGION/121239916/1010>

## **Flying in the 108<sup>th</sup> Bombing Squadron in the South Pacific**

Bob Strong was supposed to be a ground crewman – but that did not always stop someone from flying combat in the South Pacific.

Their pilot, George Webster, also recalled when the engines went out. Strong used hoses to transfer the gasoline to the working engines. They landed with 18 gallons of gas. Webster, who is 97 and lives in Virginia, recalled Strong as efficient and conscientious.

<http://www.navytimes.com/news/2012/12/gannett-navy-world-war-ii-veteran-92-distinguished-flying-cross-122812/>

## **Jews in the Soviet Military**

Before the Great Patriotic War (WW II) Jews living in the Soviet Union were 2<sup>nd</sup> Class citizens at best – but as a result of the war, and the need for soldiers, they were drafted like any other Soviet Citizen and sent to the front, some 500,000 ended up serving in the USSR forces. Surrendering was not an option for them. A new exhibit is about their stories from WW II.

<http://bloomfield-mi.patch.com/articles/new-holocaust-memorial-exhibit-features-soviet-jewish-soldiers>

## **Arctic Convoy Medal Finally Authorized in the UK**

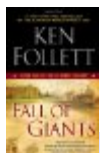
After decades of asking that a medal be awarded to those who went on the “Murmansk Run” between 1941 and 1945, the UK Government finally agreed to authorize a medal.

<http://www.newtownabbeytoday.co.uk/news/local/delight-as-war-veterans-finally-get-rightful-recognition-1-4623400>

## **Ken Follett’s new Historical Novel: Winter of the World**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> book in the “Century Trilogy” series, the first was *Fall of Giants*, picks up the continuing lives of an interrelated family of American, German, Russian, English, Welsh just prior to World War II.

AMAZON Links:



[Fall of Giants](#)



[Winter of the World](#)

[http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2012-09-17/entertainment/35495797\\_1\\_century-trilogy-ken-follett-world-war-ii](http://articles.washingtonpost.com/2012-09-17/entertainment/35495797_1_century-trilogy-ken-follett-world-war-ii)

## **Mikhail Kalashnikov in Intensive Care**

Drafted into the Soviet Tank Forces as a driver, wounded and pulled out of combat, he started working in factories during the war and was a gifted natural machinist, plus his front line combat experience, he eventually joined a design bureau and invented the AK-47.

<http://rt.com/news/mikhail-kalashnikov-intensive-care-826/>

## **Battle of the Bulge December 16, 1944 thru January 31, 1945**

The intelligence, logistical, operational, tactical, and personnel lessons documented during this winter battle is still being studied by people to this day time. Just like the Brecourt Manor action in Normandy of Easy Company, 506 PIR, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne "Band of Brothers" fame, the lessons learned there are taught to the next generation of soldiers.

<http://www.salemnews.com/opinion/x730420457/Column-Battle-of-the-Bulge-offers-lessons-on-military-skill>

## **Destiny in the Desert: The Road to El Alamein by Jonathan Dimbleby**

A new book covering North Africa – where it could go from 100F+ to 20F degrees at times - sheds new light on the only place where UK could fight face to face with the NAZI Wehrmacht war machine for over three years.

[http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/non\\_fictionreviews/9750108/Destiny-in-the-Desert-by-Jonathan-Dimbleby-review.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/non_fictionreviews/9750108/Destiny-in-the-Desert-by-Jonathan-Dimbleby-review.html):

## **Switching Sides in 1943 – Italian Civilians Paid the Price**

After the Allies invaded mainland Italy in September of 1943, and Italy's Government switched sides joining the Allies, the civilian population of Italy suffered heavily as a result of their Government's about face. It is estimated around 160 Italians were killed, per day, by the NAZIs as retribution / punishment in joining the Allies and as reprisals for guerrilla activities.

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/war-crimes-report-explores-world-war-ii-nazi-brutality-in-italy-a-874024.html>

## **Grady Sain: A Bombardier Photographer**

The daughter of Grady inherited his photos, often taken with a K20 hand-held aerial camera, organized and put stories with the photos that he often told about the photos to her.

"World War II: The Young Photographer." The book is filled with photos – some her dad took and some she believes were confiscated from German soldiers – and the stories he used to tell about them.

He flew in the 97 Bombardment Group (Heavy) Flying B-17s.

[http://www.douglascountysentinel.com/view/full\\_story/21281799/article-The-Airplane-Book--Wood-preserves-dad-s-WWII-photos--history?instance=DShome\\_news\\_top2](http://www.douglascountysentinel.com/view/full_story/21281799/article-The-Airplane-Book--Wood-preserves-dad-s-WWII-photos--history?instance=DShome_news_top2)

## **DUWK of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division found at bottom of Lake Garda**

On April 30, 1945 an amphibious operation against Il Duce's home on the lake was mounted and this vehicle, along with 24 soldiers, sunk during the night mission. It was found 600 feet below the surface by sonar mapping the lake. 1 soldier survived.

<http://www.indianexpress.com/news/world-war-ii-us-amphibious-jeep-that-led-assault-on-benito-mussolini-found/1044177/>

## **The “Big E” put into retirement**

The nuclear powered Enterprise, put into service 51 years ago, has ended its naval career on December 2, 2012. Designed to service 25 years, upgrades and needs of the USA meant that it served double its designed lifespan. It will be towed to Washington State to be scrapped after the nuclear reactor is taken out.

<http://www.usnews.com/news/us/articles/2012/12/02/uss-enterprise-carrier-taken-out-of-active-service>

## **Plaque in Memory of Lt Clifford W. Jensen in Telford**

While on a training flight Lt Jensen lost control of his Republic P-47 Thunderbolt after it caught fire but instead of bailing out he steered it away from buildings and crashed at Lawley Bank dying in the plane.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-shropshire-20542244>

## **Wing Commander Ken Gatward Medals Auctioned Off**

In 1942 he took a Bristol Beaufighter past the Eiffel Tower, down the Champs-Elysees, dropped the French Tri-Color over the Arc de Triumph, machine gunned the Gestapo Headquarters and flew back to England. They were sold for 41,000 pounds.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-20528033>

## **The USA in the 1930s and 40s in color via the Library of Congress**

Some 1600 original color photos taken have been published online at the LOC. Easier to view snapshots of them via Flickr.com than the LOC web site.

[http://www.flickr.com/photos/library\\_of\\_congress/sets/72157603671370361/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/library_of_congress/sets/72157603671370361/)



## **Flying Mustangs over Tokyo**

Jerry Yellin and Al Sherren went through fighter pilot school together at Luke AFB in Arizona and ended up in the 78<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group flying P-51 Mustangs. Lt Sherren was shot down over Tokyo on July 8, 1945. 16 other pilots in the group also died during the war.

[http://wcfcourier.com/news/local/wwii-pilot-to-honor-fallen-comrade-tuesday/article\\_5a10eb66-4d5a-5673-98b4-4f25806d8f78.html](http://wcfcourier.com/news/local/wwii-pilot-to-honor-fallen-comrade-tuesday/article_5a10eb66-4d5a-5673-98b4-4f25806d8f78.html)

## **A WAC in North Africa and onwards**

"It was the lady's duty to do the paperwork and the men went out to war. I'm very proud I served." Pauline Gorman, also trained in glider planes, so that they could land and do the administrative work as needed in the messaging center.

<http://military.blogs.mydesert.com/2012/12/02/wwii-vet-pauline-pat-gorman-served-in-womens-army-corps-in-north-africa-italy/>

## **Col Andrew C Lacy – 334 Squadron 4<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group**

Graduating in February of 1944 he was shipped over the England and joined the 4<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group – which was itself formed from the RAF Eagle Squadrons in 1942. He flew 50 combat missions before being shot down by ground fire in February of 1945.

He died in December at the age of 91.

[http://www.mansfieldnewsjournal.com/article/20121213/NEWS01/312130013/Former-local-guard-base-leader-dies?nclick\\_check=1](http://www.mansfieldnewsjournal.com/article/20121213/NEWS01/312130013/Former-local-guard-base-leader-dies?nclick_check=1)

## **1st Lt Elmore E. Leppert – Air Force Intelligence 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force**

From teaching classes in pre-war Iraq to serving as an Intelligence Officer in the 8<sup>th</sup>, little is known of what they IO really did during the war.

"Army engineers called Leppert's report that German pilots were carrying portable oil refining units around in their fighter planes "entirely feasible."" (In Iraq!)

[http://www.mlive.com/news/muskegon/index.ssf/2012/12/lookback\\_little\\_intelligence\\_k.html](http://www.mlive.com/news/muskegon/index.ssf/2012/12/lookback_little_intelligence_k.html)

## **Fighter Pilot Training – then and now**

During WW II pilots few against fellow pilots to learn air to air combat, then found out if it worked in actual combat. Vietnam changed things due to dissimilar aircraft being

flow, pilot training, and thus "Top Gun" and "Red Flag" schools were founded. Now the Chinese have adopted the same school idea for their pilots.

<http://www.strategypage.com/htmw/htwin/articles/20121129.aspx>

## **The "Green Knights" get F-35s**

The squadron known as VMFA-121, which was once headed by Marine Ace Joe Foss during the air battles at Guadalcanal in 1942/1943, has started its conversion from F/A-18D Hornets to F-35s.

<http://www.dvidshub.net/news/98448/history-green-knights>

## **Daniel Joseph Usalis - 4th Marine Raider Battalion**

"He was shot, stabbed and burned, but made it out of the war alive." He fought at Guadalcanal, Guam and Okinawa plus other operations inbetween.

[http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-11-28/news/ct-met-obit-usalis-1127-20121128\\_1\\_chicago-police-officer-units-burns](http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-11-28/news/ct-met-obit-usalis-1127-20121128_1_chicago-police-officer-units-burns)

## **Empress Dowager Cixi – Photographer**

She was the head of China during the Boxer Rebellion – which she supported. An exhibit in DC shows off her photographs of this era.

<http://www.thenewstribune.com/2011/09/30/1846288/chinas-empress-dowager-cixi-is.html>

## **Boer War Victoria Cross to fetch £140,000**

Sergeant William Traynor was wounded so badly in earning the VC, that he was reported killed to his wife. He is one of the few people to be awarded the VC while both dead and alive.

"As is oft forgotten, the Victoria Cross is as much issued for saving life as it is for taking it."

1,351 VC have been awarded since 1856.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2239841/Boer-war-hero-William-Traynors-Victoria-Cross-expected-fetch-140-000-auction.html?ito=feeds-newsxml>

## **A Missing Lynx**

The war of 1812 was about trade, and the British naval ships stopping and impressing US citizens into their navy. The Lynx was a ship that ran the British blockade of the USA and is there to teach history about the War of 1812.



[http://articles.sun-sentinel.com/2012-12-03/news/fl-winterfest-boat-parade-20121201\\_1\\_lake-santa-barbara-boat-parade-schooner](http://articles.sun-sentinel.com/2012-12-03/news/fl-winterfest-boat-parade-20121201_1_lake-santa-barbara-boat-parade-schooner)

## **Reading a French letter – Written by Emperor Napoleon**

For \$244,000 you could have read it forever – since it was auctioned off in Paris.

It was a coded letter, still signed by him anyway, and the first line read: "I'm blowing up the Kremlin at three o'clock in the morning."

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/12/03/napoleon-letter-auction-sold-rare\\_n\\_2233254.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/12/03/napoleon-letter-auction-sold-rare_n_2233254.html)

## **General Eisenhower**

When he left the White House in 1961, he puzzled his successor, John F. Kennedy, by asking to be returned to his five-star army rank, which meant that in retirement he would be referred to as "General," not "Mr. President.

<http://www.foxnews.com/opinion/2012/12/16/ike-and-generals-how-eisenhower-stood-up-to-his-own-military/>

## **Among the Boers in Peace and War**

A book originally written in Norwegian in 1925, and now translated into English, it tells of this Norwegian who joined to Boers in their fight and was captured by the British.

Africana Publishers ([africanapublishers@mwebbiz.co.za](mailto:africanapublishers@mwebbiz.co.za))

<http://www.iol.co.za/tonight/books/among-the-boers-in-peace-and-war-1.1440317>

## **Afrika Corps POWS in the USA**

Mainly housed in Louisiana, quite a number former POWs came back to the USA after the war.

<http://www.americanpress.com/Informer-12-12-12>

and

<http://www.americanpress.com/Informer-12-16-12>

## **Birds in A Cage – British POWs studying Birds**

When transferred to a POW camp in Warburg Germany, some of the British POW ornithologists were quite happy – they were in an area populated by interesting birds that flitted about the camp. And now there is a book about them.

Amazon link:



[Birds in a Cage](#) by Derek Niemann

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2012/dec/20/birds-in-a-cage-derek-niemann-review>

## **Oregon Chapter News**

### ***Membership Status & Annual Membership Renewal***

**The membership renewal letter was sent recently.**

The Oregon Chapter annual dues are \$15 a year. People who have presented to the chapter are automatically granted membership for a full year.

Currently the chapter continues to send to people meeting notifications and information to people who have NOT paid their dues for two years before they are officially dropped from the roster. After two years all those in non-paid status are dropped from the official roster.

Please check with Sharon Campbell if you are unsure of your membership status at 503-632-7633.

When a member dies the chapter continues to send notifications for a year after being notified of their death, unless otherwise requested.

***Next General Membership meeting is February 9, 2013.***

### ***Oregon Chapter Executive Board Meetings***

All members can attend any Executive board meeting. The Board meets at the Elks Lodge three Saturdays before the regular membership meeting. If you can spare up to 2 hours between 10 AM and Noon you can also join the board and help make our chapter a continuing success.

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

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

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