

“MILK RUN”

Oregon Chapter 8th Air Force Historical Society
History News for January 2013



History News → Readers, where's your story?

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

Attributed NAZI Quotes – Often Wrong

Lots of time you see quotes in print/web or radio that were supposedly said by a leading NAZI or Hitler himself– but often they were invented and were never made by them. This site has a list of the most (wrongly) famous ones.

<http://www.ihr.org/other/weber2011fakequotations.html>

442 RCT Congressional Gold Medal to go on Tour

Starting January 11, 2013 in New Orleans, the CGM awarded to the 442 Regimental Combat Team is going on a yearlong national tour that will spread the stories of the veterans, their sacrifices and their triumphs. The tour is organized by the Smithsonian in partnership with the National Veterans Network, a coalition of Japanese-American veteran and civic organizations.

<http://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/2013/01/ap-congressional-gold-medal-goes-on-national-tour-011113/>

100th BG Reunion October 17, 2013 is in Pooler, Georgia

The “Bloody 100th” will have their group reunion this year in Georgia – where the 8th Air Force Museum is at which is next to Savannah. Convention hotel is the Embassy Suites. See info on their FaceBook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/493588624033108/permalink/493613400697297/>

“Keeping The Memories Alive”

Sir, My name is Gus Nathan, Past President of the New York Southern Wing Chapter, 8th AFHS. I am compiling an 8th AF veteran history book, with veteran stories and experiences during WWII in the European Theatre. I would like permission to quote some of your articles and would welcome stories and pictures from your members. The book has been titled, "Keeping the Memories Alive" and 8th Air Corps members, Officers, Enlisted personnel, flight crews, ground crews and administrative personnel are contributing articles and pictures. Each article will contain the by line of the writer and his picture. If you have members interested in keeping the memories alive by putting their experiences in the book, please make sure they send a picture of themselves, in uniform, to me with their chapter. Thank you Gus Nathan 8th AFHS P.O.Box 297 Centuck Station Yonkers, New York 10710. I guarantee each contributor will receive a copy of the book. FYI my telephone number is (914) 439-6883. Again, my thanks gusnathan@AOL.com

People who were stationed at the 1st AD HQ as part the 8th AF

By way of introduction, my name is Jeff Hawley and I have recently been appointed the 8thAFHS point of contact for the 1st Air Division HQ's here in Brampton, England.

<http://www.8thafhs.org/unitcontacts.htm>

I am also a born and bred Oregonian from Newport so very interested in the Oregon Chapter of the 8thAFHS.

I have been researching the heritage of the 1st Air Division in order to document the activities that occurred there and would be very interested if any of your members or their dependents were attached to the headquarters. I am also developing a PowerPoint presentation of the 1st history in the UK and when complete I will be making it available to all Chapters.

If there is anything that either myself or Gordon Richards (UK Director) can assist you or the Chapter with, please do not hesitate to ask.

Kind Regards, Jeff Hawley; yankee2100 @btinternet.com
(remove the space when copying his email address).

[Editor's note: The combat personnel got almost all the press and the books written about them, but the ground crews who serviced the planes, and the HQ personnel who planned the missions, coordinated the groups, ensured that the supplies were delivered (and the replacement crews) you almost never hear about – nor do you get to read about what they did.)

Touring in the Glenn Miller Band

There were people who were in combat, people in the immediate rear areas, support personnel and home front military – and there were some who went all around the world in a moral support role in USO tours including the Glenn Miller Band – which Robert Christoferson was part of playing the trumpet while he was in the US Army Air Force.

The new band was assigned a B-24 bomber — with the armament removed and outfitted for the musicians and “We traveled around to all the bases in France, Belgium.”

Glenn Miller was lost during a storm flying from England to France in 1944.

<http://military.blogs.mydesert.com/2012/12/23/world-war-ii-veteran-played-trumpet-in-glenn-millers-band/>

Stolen Christmas Cards

Every nation's soldiers sent Christmas cards home – but some 86 German cards were never delivered – they were stolen from a post office in Jersey in 1941 – British island Jersey – and only returned in 2006. Some have now finally been delivered.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/12/19/wwii-christmas-cards-delivered-germany_n_2331216.html

With the Arrowhead Division in Italy

The unit symbol of the 5th Division was an Arrowhead – and Sgt “Lucky” Luckasevic went from North Africa to the Invasion at Salerno earning four battle stars for the campaigns in Italy.

He had many close calls – on a patrol, in a jeep and on ship.

<http://triblive.com/neighborhoods/yourmonvalley/yourmonvalleymore/3166440-74/luckasevic-christmas-war#axzz2JzpTGFdY>

“I Always wanted to Fly” – a Flight Engineer’s story

John J. Shiver Jr flew 75 combat missions as a gunner or flight engineer and now has published a book about it all.

He was part of the 9th, 12th and 15th Air Force all while serving in 98th Bomb Group 344th Sqd. The group was reassigned from AF to AF as they kept creating new Air Forces and altering their roles.

Bomber crews in the MTO (North Africa, Italy) often flew a minimum of 50 missions before their tour was over.

[I Always Wanted To Fly: Memoirs of a World War II Flight Engineer/Gunner](#) (Amazon link)

Writing the history of “Never Satisfied”

This B-17 was flying as part of the 15th Air Force and was shot down over Hungary – and the crew captured. A history buff started talking to the crew and after four years now has a book about their experiences.

<http://www.journal-news.com/news/news/heritage-hall-curator-releases-first-book-on-wwii/nTbMd/>

A Combat Medic on Guadalcanal

Originally slated to go to North Africa Sidney “Sid” Savage was instead sent to the South Pacific.

“Our first combat was when we went to Guadalcanal to relieve the 1st Marines. When we got off the landing craft, they got on.”

"You don't know what you can do until you have to do it, and you don't know how much you can take until you have to take it."

Savage spent 592 days in the combat zone, so long that his fellow soldiers started calling him "Doc."

<http://www.cantonrep.com/newsnow/x1922387176/WWII-Then-and-Now-Sidney-Sid-Savage-saw-much-suffering-as-a-combat-medic>

A Pole Farm Museum

Before cell phones and satellite and loads of fiber cables to place calls to Europe and the Mideast - there was an AT&T telephone pole farm that transmitted phone calls to Europe and beyond.

http://www.nj.com/mercer/index.ssf/2013/01/lawrence_parks_unique_world_wa.html

A Lecture about the war of 1812 and New York

People remember the Battle of New Orleans – thanks to a song and that it was fought after the war was officially over – but lots of battles took place in up-state New York and the Great Lakes. A lecture about it will occur March 6 at Genesee Community College.

<http://readme.readmedia.com/GCCs-Announces-the-Spring-2013-Civil-War-Lecture-Series/5242473>

Grumman "Duck" Located 40 feet below the Ice in Greenland

The aircraft crashed in November of 1942 while rescuing a crew of a B-17. After an initial rescue and return of two crewmembers it crashed in "white out" conditions coming back with the radioman of the B-17 and was lost.

<http://alaska-native-news.com/alaska-native-news-at-sea/7531-wwii-coast-guard-grumman-duck-crash-site-located-in-greenland-after-70-years.html>

Flying a P-51 Mustang – at 94 years of age

He was an WW II Air Force pilot – but never got to fly a "Mustang" during the war. He went to Kissimmee and flew the dual place P-51 "Crazy Horse" while there.

<http://www.ktva.com/home/outbound-xml-feeds/Flying-High-at-94-Fairbanks-WWII-Vet-Pilots-Fighter-Plane-He-Didnt-Fly-During-the-War-187733291.html?strypg=1>

Flying with the 303rd Bombardment Group (Heavy) “Hell’s Angels”

Charles Coon was a pilot flying B-17s in the 360th Squadron of the 303rd Bomb Group – known as “The Hell’s Angels” and had one B-17 blow up on the runway – just after he was able to stop it and get out and run back to where the crew had already jumped out of it – while it was going 30 MPH. That single event made the newspaper in wartime England.

He has published some of his stories online (links to a PDF) http://prod-admin1.halifax.atex.cniweb.net:8080/polopoly_fs/1.78953.1358202342%21/menu/standard/file/15%20World%20War%20I.pdf

<http://www.nwfdailynews.com/local/wwii-vet-shares-his-stories-it-was-like-i-was-in-alice-in-wonderland-except-people-got-hurt-1.78853>

Mission Critical – the Weather Officer

What allows modern weather to be so good is all the work and techniques worked out during World War II in order to predict the weather for the Air Force – and the invasions. Those same methods created by the 8th Air Force, 9, 11, 12, 15th & 20th – as well as the others – is still used today but with better equipment than they had.

Owen Brough was the weather officer that allowed FDR to fly and attend the Yalta Conference in 1945.

One day when the fog was starting to roll in, “a lieutenant colonel came in for a weather report. I told him, ‘You better leave in the next 15 or 20 minutes or you won’t get it off the ground.’”

A big plane, with curtains over the windows, sat on the runway ready for take-off.

“It was President (Franklin) Roosevelt. He was going to the Yalta Conference.”

He trained as a meteorologist and spent several months at airfields in Oregon and Washington, and attended weather forecasters school at Chanute Field in Illinois.

<http://military.blogs.mydesert.com/2013/01/20/world-war-ii-weather-officer-gave-fdr-the-all-clear-in-tripoli/>

Wake Island – A Military defeat that inspired Victory

During the first bleak days of WW II in the Pacific – Wake Island defenders held off the Japanese Navy with 4 Grumman F4F wildcats – and in the process sunk the Japanese destroyer Kisaragi by dive bombing it and aiming for the rear deck – where the depth charges were stored.

The maintenance officer, John F. Kinney was not only fixing the Wildcats but flying combat missions – since all the aircraft mechanics had been killed in the first attack against Wake Island.

Wake Island held out for 13 days before surrendering. Only 40% of those who surrendered survived the Japanese POW camps including the 1221 civilians working for the Morrison-Knudsen Company.

<http://www.hawaiireporter.com/wake-island-hero-brigadier-general-john-f-kinney-u-s-marine-corps-wwii-and-korean-war-1914-2006/123>

British Raid to Amsterdam in 1943 – Disaster for all but one plane

A bombing raid to Amsterdam in 1943 did not go well – when it was spotted by a group of German Pilots at a conference as New Zealand squadron passed by on the way there – and all but one plane of the squadron was shot down.

In 1980 the German pilot who shot down and killed Ailsa Courtts' husband, called to say he was sorry for shooting him down – they had to comfort him. She is still alive at 100.

The phone call was made possible by a Dutch researcher who gathered information on both the New Zealand 487 Squadron and the German fighter pilots during the mission.

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/auckland/local-news/8228895/Fighter-pilot-sorry-for-WWII-death>

New HBO Series in the Works about the 8th

The producing A-Team of Steven Spielberg, Tom Hanks and Gary Goetzman are regrouping for an adaptation of Donald L. Miller's [Masters of the Air: America's Bomber Boys Who Fought the Air War Against Nazi Germany](#) (Amazon link)

An account of the famous "bomber boys" of the Eighth Air Force, HBO's source material is likely to prove consistent with the parallel examinations of the ideological perversity of war, and of the fellowship it inspires, which were so prized by audiences in "Band of Brothers."

<http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/live-feed/hbo-developing-third-wwii-miniseries-413632>

Flying Combat in A-20s, RAF Boston's and in B-17s

Melvin Jenner started combat as a gunner in A-20 "Havocs" but they ran out of planes and so he went to fly the RAF in their "Boston" medium bombers, then he was transferred to B-17s in the 452 Bombardment Group (Heavy) and flew 30 missions with them.

"Every time we went on a mission we had a camera," Jenner said, "and sometimes if we didn't have a bunch of fighters on us, I might just stick the camera out the window and shoot.

“That time when Oscar went down, he had looked at me and waved his guns, acknowledging that he had seen me. I turned around to do something, and when I turned around again, I saw the wing of his airplane go by. He was hit by anti-aircraft.”

He remembers the date, March 28, 1944, and the mission, to bomb a small target, Chateaudun in France, which was being used as a German military airfield.

http://www.wotimes.com/articles/2013/01/23/news/top_stories/news01.txt

American Field Service Ambulance Drivers

An unknown part of WW II was there were many Americans who went overseas as Ambulance Drivers – just like in World War I – before the US entered the war. And most severed throughout the war in the various allied armies – but 36 were killed in Action – including Henry Larner.

[The History of the American Field Service, 1920-1955](#), is a book about this little known unit. (Amazon link)

<http://www.timesunion.com/local/article/Letters-circa-WWII-reveal-tragic-journey-4226249.php#page-1>

Middle Rank Officers saw both sides of a Battle

Maj. General Price-Davies saw action in the Boer war but as a mid-level officer in the 48th Welsh division he saw a complete disconnect as to what is happening at the front and what the Generals though was going on dozens of miles in the rear. British Generals rarely lead from the front in WW I – and relied on runners and did not adapt to using modern telephone and aircraft recon abilities till after the Somme Battle of July 1916 – where they lost 50,000+ troops on the first day.

Letters home by Price-Davies vent his frustration with those realities of 1916.

[ellmount Military Memoirs: The Letters of Major General Price Davies VC, CB, CMG, DSO: From Captain to Major General, 1914-18](#) (Amazon link)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-21228935>

Making the Equipment that made Victory Possible

There are “big idea people” and then there are the people who engineer the ideas into reality. A new book out is about the people who came up with the ideas and turned them into working practical combat methods.

[Engineers of Victory: The Problem Solvers Who Turned The Tide in the Second World War](#) (Amazon link) by Paul Kennedy.

http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/non_fictionreviews/9826648/Engineers-of-Victory-by-Paul-Kennedy-review.html

A Staff Sergeant Bombardier

William R. Houns was a Staff Sergeant and was assigned to Polebrook where the 351st BG (H) was at – and became a bombardier – sometimes known as a toggler – since he toggled the bombs by watching when the lead squadron plane dropped their bombs. He died at the age of 90 in January.

His first mission was on Christmas day 1944.

http://www.leadertelegram.com/people/obituaries/article_5720874c-f1b1-5fe5-b363-1c8db7c9ba6b.html

Claude W Reece flying “Unstable Mablel”

Assigned to 389th BG (H) flying B-24 Liberators out of Hethel as part of the 8th Air Force, he flew 30 missions over Europe including one where three of the four engines in the B-24 were shot away and landed on the remaining engine running in Belgium.

He was one of the pilots who went overseas in late 1943.

(Editor’s note: You can estimate when a person went overseas by looking at the number of missions flown when they finished their “tour”. 25 missions means they went over sometime in 1942 to mid-1943; 30 missions from mid-1943 till mid-1944, 35 missions thereafter. As the war progressed they upped the mission count required to complete a tour. I don’t know the exact dates when the count was “upped” by the 8th Air Force.)

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.

PROGRAM: Tuskegee bomber trainee Ben “Flaps” Berry

The Tuskegee airmen are most known for the fighter squadrons that flew as part of the 15th AF in North Africa and Italy – but in 1944/1945 a medium bomber unit was also being formed for deployment and Mr. Berry was part of that group of airmen being trained for combat in WW II. The unit was never deployed due to the ending of the war. Mr. Berry went on to work for NASA and was part of the Apollo program. Mr. Berry will be the featured speaker talking about his time during WW II as well as his time as an engineer with NASA.

He has published a book called [TUSKEGEE AIRMEN -- To the Moon, Mars and Beyond: \(Secrets Revealed\)](#)

Congress authorized a Congressional Gold Medal in honor of those were part of the “Tuskegee Experiment” during WW II on April 11, 2006. Only 1 medal is actually struck per award (except for the 1980 Olympic participants) and the metal will be on tour around the USA in 2013 – starting at the National WW II Museum in New Orleans. People who are part of the group which get the award, like the women who were part of the WASPs, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team (Neisi) , can buy copies of the medal from the National Mint <http://www.usmint.gov> so they can have a copy. Course the original metal is made out of real Gold and the copies are not.

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 8th AFHS

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

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