

Oregon Chapter 8th Air Force Historical Society
History News for March/April 2014



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.

Flying Under the Eiffel Tower

There is a B-26 pilot who flew under the Eiffel Tower in Paris in 1944 after it was liberated – but because it was such a great stunt he did not get in trouble for it. But before then a US Fighter pilot flew under the Tower – while chasing a German fighter.

William Overstreet Jr was the pilot and seeing a NAZI plane being pursued over Paris on the deck inspired a lot of French that the end was coming – because of the symbolic of who was chaser and who was being chased.

Lt Overstreet died at the age of 92 in Roanoke, Va in January.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2533373/WWII-fighter-pilot-flew-THROUGH-Eiffel-Tower-dies-Virginia-aged-92.html>

Both Sides Won The War of 1812

Like many things in life, the War of 1812 was won by the US, and it was won by the British Empire – it all depends on your perspective as to what is a victory.

<http://theadvocate.com/columnists/8058667-55/james-gill-how-the-brits>

WW I – 100 Years Ago In Photos

This person superimposed historical photos over the modern buildings – using the same perspective and POV location as the original.

Did not toggle the overlay of the photos, which would make them more interesting of the “then and now”.

<http://mashable.com/2014/04/08/world-war-1-photos/>

WW I Was A World War

People tend to forget that the UK was a Global Empire – and troops from around the world fought “For England”. As part of the British Army, yet different from the regular British Army, millions of troops fought in France, Italy, Turkey, Middle East & Africa. India contributed a large amount of front line troops.

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/British-better-informed-about-Indias-key-role-in-World-War-I-Survey/articleshow/32933750.cms>

100 Myths and Legends of the 1st World War

The first major setback of the German battle plan in WW I happened Where European Disneyland now exists so when you take a taxi around the park remember the Paris Taxis taking French troops to stop them on the same ground you wander around on. The bill for the 7th infantry Division: 70,102 Francs (which also no longer exist).

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/world-history/history-of-the-first-world-war-in-100-moments/a-history-of-the-first-world-war-in-100-moments-the-legend-of-the-taxis-of-the-marne-9255225.html>

Last of the “Dambusters”

Squadron leader Johnny Johnson, the last surviving member of the 617 Squadron that got the name “Dambusters” after attacking the Ruhr dams in 1943, is trying to get a special medal awarded to the unit – instead of a simple clasp they were awarded. During the mission he was a bomb aimer in Joe McCarthy’s crew.

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2609229/One-surviving-Dambusters-calls-special-medal-involved-daring-raid-Arctic-convoy-veterans-theirs.html?ITO=1490&ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490

What is Vehicle is Pink , Green, Blue & Purple – A LRDG Jeep

One of the first “Special Forces” was the LRDG - Long Range Desert Group – that operated in Africa during the Second World War. Paul Lincoln has restored a 1942 Willy’s Jeep to match the specs of the LRDG.

http://www.edp24.co.uk/norfolk-life/colourful_tribute_to_our_wartime_desert_heroes_1_3566283

Serving in WW I & WW II – Once in the Trenches – Then Near the Front lines as a Supply Officer

William Alfred Baynes was gassed and shot during WW I – but when WW II came about he re-joined and fought throughout the War in the North Africa and Italian Campaigns.

His chess pieces were made from German aircraft and tanks.

http://www.ilfordrecorder.co.uk/news/first_world_war_centenary_the_barkingside_man_who_served_in_both_world_wars_despite_being_shot_and_gassed_in_the_first_1_3546851

Five Came Back – Hollywood Directors in the Military in WW II

A new book out entitled: FIVE CAME BACK: A Story of Hollywood and the Second World War, by Mark Harris. Penguin Press. 511 pp. \$29.95. ISBN 978-1594204302 talks about John Ford, Frank Capra, William Wyler, John Huston and George Stevens who went into the military knowing that they could never make movies like they did before but joined anyway.

Wyler was the director who created "The Memphis Belle" in 1942/1943. "He filmed bomber runs over Europe to create one of the best documentaries of the war, The Memphis Belle. Seven of the 12 B-17s that went out during Wyler's first flight were shot down. On one flight, he blacked out because his oxygen tube had disconnected, and in a flight at the end of the war he sustained permanent hearing loss."

<http://www.concordmonitor.com/home/11213185-95/new-film-insights-in-five-came-back>

Italy also has its share of UXBs

Next to a US military base, which once was a German Luftwaffe & Italian airbase, a 4,000 lb bomb was discovered on the site and has been waiting de-fusing.

"The most dangerous part will be removing the bomb's three fuses, the engineers said. If that's not possible, the plan is to shoot hot water at high pressure into the bomb to "melt" the explosives before hauling it away to a cave." – There is a scene in the British TV series – *Danger UXB!* where they do that.

<http://www.stripes.com/news/tens-of-thousands-to-evacuate-italian-city-as-wwii-blockbuster-bomb-defused-1.278684>

Building Quonset Huts for "Old Blood & Guts"

Robert Blatt was drafted at the age of 27, his civilian work got him assigned to the Engineers, and he found himself working under General Patton one time building quonset huts. After landing on Utah beach after the invasion he did other engineer work – removing mines.

"We'd dig out the unexploded anti-personnel mines and booby traps in the fields. We'd put our hands under the mine to make sure there wasn't a second one beneath the first one. One of the tricks the Germans like to do was place a second mine under the top one, thinking we wouldn't check, and then the second would explode."

<http://www.buffalonews.com/city-region/saluting-our-war-heroes/wwii-engineer-was-involved-in-construction-destruction-and-much-more-20140420>

Following the Trail Of WW II Carvings – With your Cell Phone

During WW II people often cared their names and dates on things. Marshall Webb did this starting in Italy – and some of his carving like "M.A. Webb, C-ville, Ky, 1944 -

March 30" is still on a wall in an Italian village. Now you can take you cell phone, snap the photo, and listen to him talk about it.

http://www.daily-journal.com/news/local/voice-of-wwii-on-cellphone/article_4ed77ba9-2009-5222-a3b0-0ea8dea1edcd.html

Nick Alicino – A Monuments Man

One of the men who really did find gold in Germany, is 93. His scrapbook of newspaper clippings were used in telling the story in the movie.

http://www.mycentraljersey.com/article/20140417/NJNEWS10/304170022/World-War-II-vet-from-Highland-Park-discovered-gold-works-of-art-in-German-mine-in-1945?nclick_check=1

Staff Sgt. Waldrop Was on his 5th Mission When Shot Down Over Germany

Shot down on February 4, 1944 on a mission to Frankfurt Germany, he spent the rest of the war as POW.

"It was a normal routine to take a head count twice a day. A German sergeant, previously wounded on the Russian front, would take down the count with pencil and paper. He said they called him 'Big Stoop'. Guys in the back row would shift around, so he'd never get the same count twice."

<http://www.beaufort.marines.mil/News/NewsView/tabid/14981/Article/162887/wwii-pow-remembering-past.aspx>

Memorial for a B-17 Personnel Killed at Braintree

When two B-17s collided over Braintree it was not on a combat mission – but on a tour to see what the 8th AF had destroyed in Germany for the ground crews who had spent 2+ years servicing the aircraft that helped win the war. The 11 Americans who died who the tail was sheared off and the plane spun into the ground have no memorial to them. This is trying to be changed by tAnthony Lynch and Karen Brown.

http://www.dailyprogress.com/news/local/english-couple-works-to-get-memorial-for-wreck-that-killed/article_0b374284-c817-11e3-8493-001a4bcf6878.html

Yankee Air Museum Gets A Guinness World Record

Asides from WW II when around 24,000 worked at Willow Run Airport – the most "Rosie's" in one place since then has been set in one part of the factory that used to build B-24 Liberators at the rate of 25 a day.

There were 788 there at the ceremony – including stand-ins for those who have since died. 18 original workers, all in their 80s and 90s, were at the Yankee Air Museum.

http://www.heritage.com/articles/2014/04/21/ypsilanti_courier/news/doc53552f6d7854c389868713.txt

Aussie Airmen in Italy

The main British bombing effort was out of the UK – but some bomber formations, using American B-24s due to ease of logistics, were in Italy – manned by Australians.

<http://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/2014/04/21/italian-village-commemorates-sacrifice-wwii-aussie-airmen>

Warbirds in Alaska

“Hidden Warbirds” is a book about aircraft lost and then re-discovered around the world. Special emphasis is on aircraft lost in Alaska – where a nearly intact B-24 is still on Atka Island – where it is rotting away due to Federal Rules since it is on a National Wildlife Refuge and thus cannot be taken off and saved and restored.

<http://www.alaskadispatch.com/article/20140419/hidden-warbirds-takes-readers-hunt-aircraft-around-alaska-and-world>

449 BG(H) Crash Site off Grado Italy

Discovered by divers in 40 feet of water, easily accessible by scuba divers, parts have been taken off of it for years. Only when a skull was recovered and displayed has the Italian police stepped in. The Recovery of other remains still trapped in the aircraft has not been started by the US Government MIA department in Hawaii.

The 449th is having a reunion in Dayton Ohio this summer.

http://www.cleveland.com/metro/index.ssf/2014/04/nephew_urges_investigation_of.html

Snoopers in the South pacific

This was the special nickname given to nighttime radar guided bombing B-24 868th BG (H) unit that few as part of the 13th Air Force in the South Pacific. Ludwig A. Havlak was a creman on one of these SB-24s that carried air to surface radar units to hunt down and sink Japanese ships. He flew 43 combat missions.

His first assignment: get filmed flying in his B-24 so they can make a training film for those still in training in the states. He has never been able to locate a copy of that training film yet.



Havlak's SB-24 Snoopers crew: Top Left: TSGT James Johnson, Radio Operator, Ohio; TSGT Johnny Dugan, Asst. Engineer, Georgia; TSGT Burnace Allen, Engineer, Texas; TSGT George Brundage, Nose Gunner, Missouri; TSGT Ludwig Havlak, Radar Gunner, Texas; Bottom Left: 1Lt Charles Binford, Pilot, Virginia; 1Lt Alex Ripingill, Bombardier, Illinois; 1Lt Harlan Price, Copilot, Kansas; 1Lt Jim Lockwood, Navigator, Virginia.

<http://sanangelolive.com/news/2014-03-31/ludwig-havlak-and-b-24-snoopers>

Bob Friend Flies a P-51C

At 94 years old he was not allowed to take off and land, but as the GIB (Guy in Back) of the P51-C Mustang on tour as part of the Collings Foundation's Wings of Freedom tour for 2014, this Tuskegee airman got back into the air again – on his birthday.

<http://www.kesq.com/news/94yearold-tuskegee-airman-celebrates-birthday-in-the-sky/25500570>

Dog Tag on Saipan

Found in a cave on the island of Saipan was one of Bernard Gavrin, an infantryman reported as missing during the battle to take the island from the Japanese so that B-29s could be based there to bomb Japan.

They were found when a group from Japan were digging in the cave looking for remains came across a mass grave in the cave – which included at least 3 Americans

due to the dog tags they found. The Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command in Hawaii are now researching.

<http://www.foxnews.com/us/2014/04/20/world-war-ii-dog-tags-found-in-saipan-may-solve-70-year-old-mystery/>

Searching for Aviation Wreck Sites in Palau Group of Islands.

The BentProp non-profit group has been hunting, locating, and reporting wreck sites since 1999. They recently discovered two aircraft wreck sites in the waters off the islands. One of the sites is that of a Hellcat shot down by enemy ground fire.

<http://www.foxnews.com/us/2014/04/03/group-hunts-pacific-jungles-for-remains-wwii-fighters-planes/>

1896 Hennessy (cognac) The Choice of the Doolittle Raiders

The year was picked since that was the year General Jimmy Doolittle was born and the bottle year of the cognac given to him after the war to commemorate the raid – and to have the last two raiders have a toast to all the others.

The one and only toast using that bottle was done with 4 of them last November.

<http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/local/communities/northeast/article/Doolittle-Raider-raises-goblet-to-toast-heroic-5418999.php>

Joining the war at 15

Desperately wanting to join the Navy he tried to alter his birth certificate and ration book to say he was 17 but was not destined to be a forger – so instead he got a friend to notarize his birth as 1925 – and joined the Navy.

"My father worked the night shift. He didn't miss me for a week."

James Carroll first combat was at going ashore in the first wave at Saipan.

<http://www.tampabay.com/news/aging/lifetimes/lying-to-enlist-in-world-war-ii-began-15-year-olds-long-journey/2176141>

Oregon Chapter News

Local Area News

Next General Membership Meeting for Oregon 8th AFHS is May 10, 2014

Program: Richard “Dick” Foy – Co founder of Aero Union Corporation

He has been a key figure in modifying various aircraft into air tanker operations. These include B-25s, B-17s, C-119s C-54s P2V and P-3s. He has even designed and modified MAFFS – Modular Air Fire Fighting Systems for both the Greek and US Air Forces. He

has done many other various aircraft modifications for other aircraft for both the US and Israeli air forces.

A sandwich type meal, for \$10, will be available at the Beaverton Elks lodge. ONLY If you are planning to eat contact Sharon Campbell via email at sscampbell@bctonline.com or phone her at 503-632-7633 – again **ONLY** if you are planning to purchase a meal.

Prior 2014 Programs

- Beauty and Brains – Women in the Military

Previous PROGRAMs in 2013:

- Ben “Flaps” Berry – Tuskegee Airman
- ;Jack Kline and the Vanport Flood
- B-29 Navigator of “Going Jesse”
- Bob Schuberg and revisiting the airfields of the 8th

All programs are videotaped and transcribed and put into our archive. You can purchase each DVD of each presentation for \$10.00.

There is no cost to attend the meeting and it is open to the public

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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