

Oregon Chapter 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Historical Society  
*History News for August 2015*



**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.*

## **Sole Survivor – A German A7V WW I Tank – in Australia**

History is very harsh – most “common” things are thrown away, some unique things are also thrown away. Only some rare chance allows something truly unique items to survive – often only due to a few people breaking the “rules” to get them to a safe place or sometimes a museum.

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-07-28/sole-surviving-german-wwi-tank-on-display-aust-war-memorial/6654320>

## **Germany Drops case against former German Soldier**

The German changed the rules on what a “war crime” is and thus put a few hundred thousand more people of being a possible war criminal a few years ago so they could continue to prosecute people. 96 year old Michael Karkoc, born in the Ukraine in 1919, which was VERY anti-Soviet and very pro-western (still is), and living now in Minneapolis, created and lead a Ukrainian outfit fighting for the German Army in 1943. It was disbanded and formally incorporated into the German Galicia Division in 1945, thus he became become a German officer – which allowed the German government to try and prosecute him.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3180891/Germany-shelves-Nazi-crimes-probe-US-man.html>

## **Last One Left Standing**

Roland Dube, Radio Operator, is the only member left of his B-17 crew from the 384<sup>th</sup> BG (H). He flew 34 missions before the war ended out of England.

[http://www.itemlive.com/news/swampscott-wwii-vet-makes-mark-on-history/article\\_9ce61d22-366b-11e5-b4b2-9baac0805ab7.html](http://www.itemlive.com/news/swampscott-wwii-vet-makes-mark-on-history/article_9ce61d22-366b-11e5-b4b2-9baac0805ab7.html)

## **Joining the Caterpillar Club**

Parachutes created by the British Irvin Company came with an extra item after – a brass Caterpillar Club pin given to the user – afterwards.

The club had 4,000 members at the start of WW II – 30,000+ more joined during the war.

“After mergers, Irvin is now Airborne Systems, a division of HDT Global. Their website demonstrates continuing affection for the club: Two years ago, they conferred a pin on a Washington state veteran whose P-38 aircraft was shot down over Germany in 1944.”

“. . . Trova Heffernan, are publishing a series of veteran profiles at [www.tinyurl.com/WashingtonRemembers](http://www.tinyurl.com/WashingtonRemembers). Hughes, former editor and publisher of The Daily World newspaper in Aberdeen, is now the state’s chief historian; he is the nephew of an 8th Air Force B-17 crewman. These profiles are a prelude to the new Legacy Washington exhibit, “Washington Remembers: Their Sacrifice. Our Freedom,” opening Aug. 20 in the front lobby of the Office of Secretary of State at the state Capitol in Olympia.”

[http://www.dailystorian.com/editors\\_notebook/20150724/editors-notebook-tiny-gold-caterpillar-wiggles-into-epic-tales-of-wartime-bravery](http://www.dailystorian.com/editors_notebook/20150724/editors-notebook-tiny-gold-caterpillar-wiggles-into-epic-tales-of-wartime-bravery)

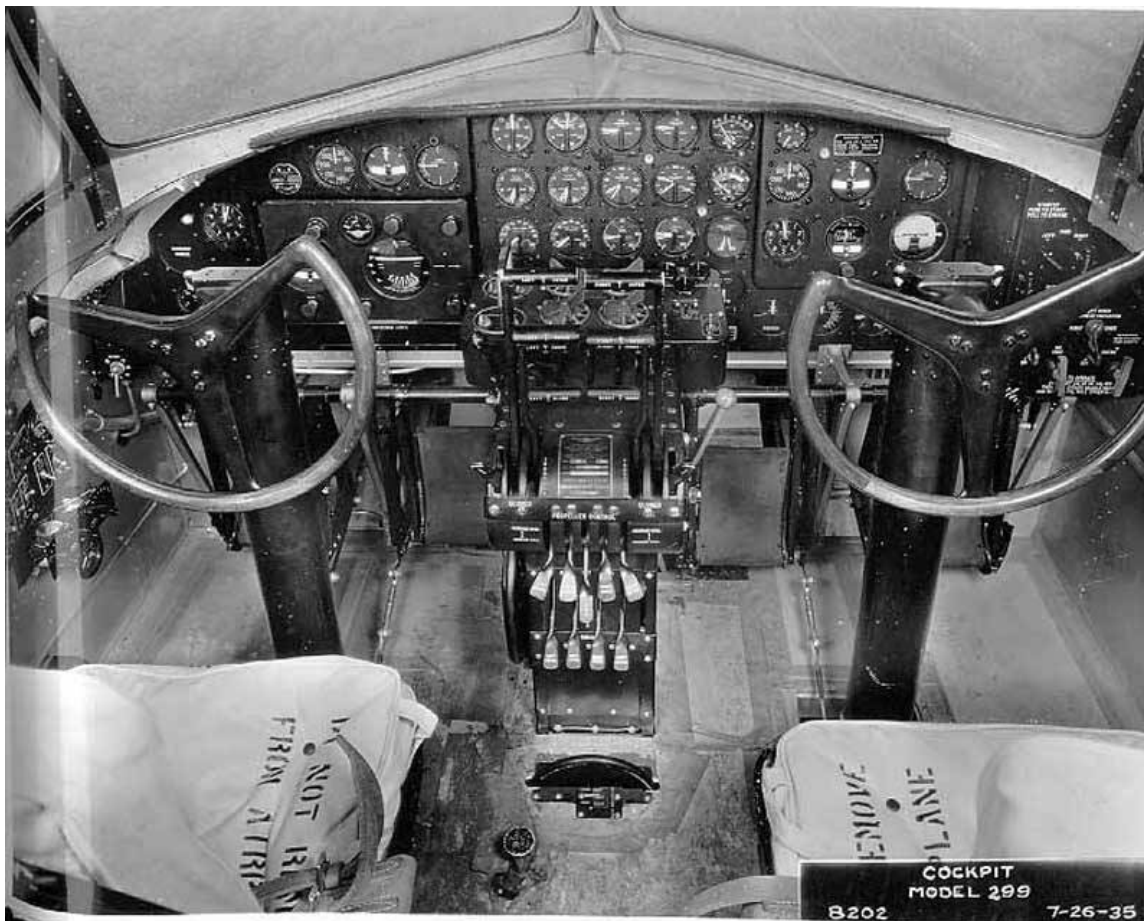
## **Tour of the Bunker at High Wycombe – code named “Pinetree”**

The WW II era bunker finished in 1942 and used by the 8<sup>th</sup> AF and then till 2007 by the US Air Force is a three level underground command center that is rarely seen by anyone.

[http://www.bucksfreepress.co.uk/news/13486789.School\\_opens\\_former\\_WWII\\_and\\_Cold\\_War\\_bunker\\_for\\_one\\_visit/](http://www.bucksfreepress.co.uk/news/13486789.School_opens_former_WWII_and_Cold_War_bunker_for_one_visit/)

## **July 28, 1935 – 1<sup>st</sup> Flight of a B-17**

The Boeing Model 299 – built with private funds for an Army aircraft specification – became the B-17 Flying Fortress. Note the date in the photograph.



<http://www.businessinsider.in/The-B-17-Flying-Fortress-debuted-80-years-ago-today-heres-its-legacy/The-Boeing-Model-299-which-would-later-be-known-as-the-B-17-was-built-as-part-of-a-United-States-Air-Corps-precursor-to-the-Air-Force-competition-to-create-a-bomber-that-could-fly-faster-than-200-mph-with-2000-lbs-of-bombs-and-a-range-of-over-1020-miles-/slideshow/48253005.cms>

## **Rolling with the Waves on the Battleship USS Alabama**

Enlisting into the Navy, he did not want to walk or live out of a foxhole, so he got to see the world from the battleship. During Typhoon Cobra in 1944 the ship rolled 30% - at 32% it would have capsized.

<http://www.bnd.com/news/local/community/highland-news-leader/article29396758.html>

## **Texas Medal Of Honor Winners**

Though the USA was in World War One for only a year and seven months, the style of warfare meant people were killed in large numbers. Over 5,000 Texans were killed during that short timeframe. This is a summary of the four who were awarded the MOH.

[http://www.yourhoustonnews.com/cypresscreek/blogs/congressman-poe-texans-of-world-war-i/article\\_c60d2ed6-3664-11e5-9910-6b112b579556.html](http://www.yourhoustonnews.com/cypresscreek/blogs/congressman-poe-texans-of-world-war-i/article_c60d2ed6-3664-11e5-9910-6b112b579556.html)

## **Russian WW I Sub found off of Sweden**

Found recently by accident, the Imperial Tsarist sub collided with a Swedish ship on May 18, 1916 and went down with all hands.

<http://freebeacon.com/national-security/officials-wreckage-of-russian-sub-near-sweden-from-world-war-i/>

## **Post War Spy Ring?**

Gen. Reinhard Gehlen, Hitler's senior military intelligence officer on the Eastern Front, who was a suspected CIA agent for the U.S., had a FOIA request about his work submitted in 1985 and was completed this year – 30 years after initial request. With over 400 pages redacted.

He ran a NAZI spy ring during WW II on the Eastern Front, and then was recruited by the CIA to continue to ring – still against the Soviet Union.

<http://www.courthousenews.com/2015/08/03/army-cia-satisfied-nazi-spy-information-request.htm>

## **Possible Film about Normandie-Niemen Free French Fighter Regiment**

This French unit, of pilots who escaped the fall of France, went to the USSR in mid-1943 and fought the war against Germany from there.

The French actor Gérard Depardieu wants to make a movie about them. He holds French/Russian citizenship and is banned from entering the Ukraine.

<http://www.theguardian.com/film/2015/jul/28/gerard-depardieu-film-second-world-war-french-fighter-pilots-russia>

## **The USS Eagle, aka German built Horst Wessel, a Prize of WW II**

What does the US take in reparations from a defeated Germany after WW II – the only tall ship afloat and it becomes the training vessel of the US Navy.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-33543706>

## **Desert Rats on Parade**

Almost every military unit has been renamed, renumbered, disbanded, and reformed over hundreds of years – especially UK units. Very few really become famous – but the Desert Rats, the 7<sup>th</sup> Armored Brigade and the 7<sup>th</sup> Armored Division – live on.

<http://www.hertsandessexobserver.co.uk/Essex-soldiers-parade-mark-new-chapter-history/story-27535438-detail/story.html>

## **Dump Truck Logistics Wins The War – But those Rear Area Logistics Work are often ignored**

425<sup>th</sup> Dump Truck Company does not sound impressive – but moving supplies to those who really need it allowed WW II to be won.

"Daddy's War: Letters from the Commander of the 425th Dump Truck Company."

[http://www.al.com/living/index.ssf/2015/08/black\\_soldiers\\_built\\_roads\\_for.html](http://www.al.com/living/index.ssf/2015/08/black_soldiers_built_roads_for.html)

## **Operational Maps of Italy**

Need to find your way around Italy during WW II? These are some of the various tactical and operational maps as issued by the Army to units.

<http://custermen.com/Maps/ArmyMaps.htm>

## **A Seabee on Two Fronts**

Drafted into the Navy in 1943 Alfred Edwards steered a "Rhino" to the beach at Omaha on D-Day. Once the breakout occurred he then became part of the "Red Ball Express" till the railroads, which the 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Air Force had totally destroyed in France, had been rebuilt by the Seabees to be used again. After that he went to the South Pacific!

Their Seabee unit was the only one to serve both in the ETO and PTO.

<http://www.news-sentinel.com/article/2015150809948>

## **The Ploesti Raid – Tidalwave- Army Air Corps Staff Sgt. Rans**

As an official photographer on the mission he had a grand view – till he was captured after bailing out of his B-24 named Yen Tu at 300 feet above the ground.

<http://tbo.com/list/military-news/altman/tampa-veteran-flew-in-historic-wwii-raid-20150802/>

## **Search for the MIA in The Pacific – Both US and Japanese**

Two combat veterans, US Marine Leon Copper, and Imperial Army Lance Corporal Kokichi Nishimura, both work on finding and returning MIA remains of their respective countries soldiers to their own country.

Leon fought from Tarawa to Iwo Jima. Nokichi was wounded three times on the Kokoda Trail to Port Moresby in 1942 and was the only survivor of his 56 man platoon.

<http://www.stripes.com/news/wwii-veteran-s-effort-to-recover-mia-remains-in-the-pacific-bears-fruit-1.361231>

## **Sunken Flag returned to Japan**

A US Navy diver, exploring a sunken Japanese warship in shallow water, now known to be the Shizugawa Tenyomaru, brought up the ship's flag and gave it to Pete Losh. He contacted the Japanese Consulate this year and had it returned to the dead captain's family in Japan.

<http://www.stripes.com/flag-kept-as-souvenir-by-world-war-ii-veteran-returns-to-japan-1.360215>

## **Indian Soldiers of WW I**

The British Empire was massive, and with WW I it needed a massive army and it recruited from every nation within the Empire. India supplied lots of men and they fought in the trenches of France.

<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/indian-soldiers-world-war-i-shashi-tharoor-letters/1/454230.html>

## **The Spy Ring that Broke the Germans at Moscow**

The ability of the USSR to attack the Germans when they got within 20 kilometers of the Kremlin was due to the knowledge that the Japanese would send their troops south – and not into the USSR. This allowed them to move a whole Soviet Army out of Mongolia to Moscow in time to launch the counterattack.

Soviet Spy Soviet Richard Sorge recruited Japanese journalist Hotsumi Ozaki who confirmed Japans military plans.

“Ozaki and Sorge were both arrested for espionage and hanged by Japanese authorities. Ozaki, however, has the distinction of being the only Japanese civilian executed for high treason in World War II.”

<http://atimes.com/2015/08/did-a-forgotten-japanese-journalist-turn-the-tide-of-world-war-ii/>

## **New Book about the LAFAYETTE ESCADRILLE**

FIRST TO FLY: THE STORY OF THE LAFAYETTE ESCADRILLE, WORLD WAR 1 AND THE AMERICANS WHO FLEW FOR FRANCE

By Charles Bracelen Flood

Atlantic Monthly Press, \$25, 266 pages.

## **Ground Checkout of you P-61 *Black Widow* Night Fighter**

A P-61 unit did get deployed to the ETO, but it was operational too late to have any impact. But in the Pacific, it was a great fighter and with the range it had it was very effective. This is a WW II training video of how to inspect and start up your very, very, very big fighter.

<https://youtu.be/FZxIjQqiTk>

## **Visiting Military Museums in Europe**

Europe has been recording battles since at least 600 BC, and there is a lot of military history in museums all over Europe.

This article talks about some of the best museums to visit in Europe.

<http://www.miamiherald.com/living/travel/article5252544.html>

## **Hunting for a Polish Sub**

After leaving Scotland in 1940 for a patrol in the Baltic the Polish submarine ORP Orzel never returned to its English home port. They are still hunting for it. Unknown if any German records about attacking a sub in the spring of 1940 are still around.

<http://www.stripes.com/news/europe/poland-to-search-for-its-famous-wwii-submarine-1.322331>

## **Army Air Force Maj. Peyton S. Mathis Jr.**

Shot down and crashing into a swamp on Guadalcanal in 1944, he was eventually found and returned to the USA and was laid to rest in his hometown Saturday, a journey that took 70 years and 7,938 miles to complete.

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2015/01/03/world-war-ii-flier-laid-to-rest-after-70-years/21236533/>

## **A British Soldier like No Other**

Spanning 60 years of war with the British Empire Sir Adrian Carton de Wiart was already at a disadvantage already having lost an eye, and arm during the Boer War and while in Afrika at the start of the 1<sup>st</sup>. During the Battle of the Somme in July 1916 he was " seen by his men pulling the pins of grenades out with his teeth and hurling them with his one good arm during the Battle of the Somme, winning the Victoria Cross."

<http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-30685433>

## **PM Winston Churchill in Stained Glass**

Sir Winston Churchill is buried at St Martin's Church in Bladon, Oxfordshire, and now there is a window in the church that tells his life story – in a single pane of glass.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-oxfordshire-30672615>

## **A look back at the News from January 2, 1945**

War News was always front page – but some exploits sounded unbelievable – but were true.

<http://www.sanluisobispo.com/2015/01/07/3430583/slo-pilot-brings-damaged-bomber.html>

## **Great Grandfathers Boxer Rebellion stories create a Story**

Brock Clayard's book uses the stories told to him, plus his own work in catching real spies in the UK, to create a portrait of like in the 1890s.

<http://www.peninsulanewsreview.com/entertainment/287952781.html>

## **P-47 Pilot Gets Part of His Plane Back**

"The pilot, 2nd Lt. Charles Screws, was reunited Friday afternoon with part of his plane, 42-75417, after 71 years.

Screws was supporting a bombing run over Europe when his fighter was shot down January 29, 1944. He crashed his P-47 near Dunkirk and for four months, evaded capture by the Germans."



<http://www.ktxs.com/news/world-war-ii-veteran-to-be-reunited-with-tail-of-p47-thunderbolt-aircraft/30757542>

## **C-46s Fly On in Alaska**

Built in 1946, this DC-6 (The C-46 commando started to be built in 1940 and was the large cargo carrying a/c extensive used by the USA in WW II) and this version of it still flies cargo in the Far North.

<http://peninsulaclarion.com/news/2015-01-17/from-wwii-to-alaska-rare-planes-with-history-continue-to-fly>

## **Was there any Chivalry in the Second World War?**

It depends on when and where you were at during the war. North Africa is often seen as a "good" war zone where both sides were fairly good to each.

The Eastern Front some front line units were quite good (both German and Soviet) but once in the rear areas things could quickly change.

<http://www.newstalk.com/Was-there-any-chivalry-in-the-Second-World-War>

## ***Precious Metal* Mechanic at Work**



While down in Florida at Kissimmee Airfield I came across the mechanic of the P-51 *Precious Metal* working on it in their hanger / museum.

## **B-17 at Salem, Oregon, Airfield in September**

This coming September from Wednesday the 10th thru Saturday the 12th, 2015, the B-17 Flying Fortress ***Aluminum Overcast*** will be making a rare West Coast visit to Salem's McNary airfield.

## **Next General Membership Meeting for Oregon 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS is August 8, 2015**

## **P-38 pilot of the 94<sup>th</sup> Fighter Group Robert "Bob" Vrillakas**

He flew in the MTO during WW II.

***Remaining Dates in 2015 are August 8 and November 7<sup>th</sup>***

### ***Food for the Meeting***

The August food menu is a sandwich type meal will be available at the Beaverton Elks lodge for \$10. **ONLY** if you are planning to eat contact Tom Philo via email at [secretary@8thafhsoregon.com](mailto:secretary@8thafhsoregon.com) or phone him at 503-591-3227 – again **ONLY** if you are planning to purchase a meal.

### **Prior Programs**

- May 2015 – Henry Bendinelli Navigator in C-46s in WWII & Photo Recon pilot of B-26s over Korea.
- February 2015 – Alice Miller Women Flight Uniforms
- November 2014 - Salute to Veterans
- August – 2014 Dick Foy and Air Tanker Operations w/ WWII Aircraft
- May 2014 – Multiple presentations
- February 2014 - Beauty and Brains – Women in the Military
- November 2013 Bob Schuberg and revisiting the airfields of the 8th
- August 2013 - Frank LaSage – PTs in the Med
- May 2013 - Jack Kline and the Vanport Flood
- February 2013 - Ben “Flaps” Berry – Tuskegee Airman
- May 2013 – Jack Cramer B-29 Navigator of “Going Jesse” in the Pacific

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

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

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