

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

## **Stalingrad 2003 Mini-Series to be released in December**

Original airing was in Russia and Germany in 2003, is now coming out on Blue-Ray with extra items in December of 2015.

[http://www.highdefdigest.com/news/show/Synapse\\_Films/Disc\\_Announcements/the-acclaimed-stalingrad-bluray-bound/26474](http://www.highdefdigest.com/news/show/Synapse_Films/Disc_Announcements/the-acclaimed-stalingrad-bluray-bound/26474)

## **Stalin Makes a Comeback**

Despite all the factual writings of the decisions that Stalin made between 1927 and 1953 that left millions of people dead, and hundreds of thousands personally he ordered killed when he signed off on the death lists (which showed usually about 1 person in 1,000 crossed off the list, i.e.: being spared), new statues of him are being erected.

<http://www.newstatesman.com/world/europe/2015/10/russia-stalin-back>

Ivan Maisky - USSR's Ambassador to the UK from 1932 to 1943

Smart, in the know, and a Professional, he was one of the few to survive Stalin's fear of smart people.

<http://www.bostonglobe.com/ideas/2015/10/07/the-secret-diary-stalin-man-churchill-squad/iCGkqUynjw62nqXpSdXVVN/story.html>

## **Bob Dole to Visit Italian Town of Castel D'Aian**

It was here on April 14, 1945, as part of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division, he was wounded.

<http://www.kansas.com/news/local/article37805748.html>

## **Medivac Pilot Scott Johnson flew during "Black Hawk Down" in 1993 Somalia**

During the two days he flew 6 ½ hours over the combat zone evacuating the wounded.

His grandfather, still alive at 95, was a tail gunner in a B-17.

<http://www.wbir.com/story/news/local/2015/10/01/service-sacrifice-remembering-black-hawk-down/73163910/>

## **A Good Article Summarizing US Public, and Private, Attitudes before WW II**

Hawks and Doves do live together in the US – and most often they flock together *when needed*.

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/timreuter/2015/10/08/america-first-what-isolationists-can-teach-hawks-about-public-opinion-and-world-war-ii/4/>

## **From B-17 Pilot to an Engineer**

John Walter was a B-17 pilot in the 95<sup>th</sup> BG (H) and from that start, after flying 35 combat missions over Europe, he went on to become a college graduated Engineer. His highly detailed book: [My War: The True Experiences of A U.S. Army Air Force Pilot in World War II by Walter, John C. \(2004\) Paperback](#), has the details.

<https://news.usc.edu/87048/war-and-remembrance-usc-alum-recalls-his-experiences-on-the-front-lines/>

## **Donald Myers - B-24 “Mickey” operator 445th Bomb Group**

From September 1944 to March 1945, Myers flew as lead on all 30 of his missions, operating out of Tibenham and other bases in England.



Photo taken by Lead Navigator Lawrence Fick of a Mickey Ship, after a mission in the landing pattern over Tibenham. This image is in our Oregon 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS archive.

Donald Myers was in the lead aircraft on the Kassel mission of Sept. 27, 1944, in which his bomb group lost 26 of the 32 aircraft dispatched.

[http://www.tulsaworld.com/news/local/world-war-ii-veteran-donald-myers-dies-at-remembered-as/article\\_6ddefc03-3a79-5022-a6e0-235cf994518f.html](http://www.tulsaworld.com/news/local/world-war-ii-veteran-donald-myers-dies-at-remembered-as/article_6ddefc03-3a79-5022-a6e0-235cf994518f.html)

## **B-17 Found off of Sicily**

"The B-17, nicknamed Devils from Hell by its nine-man crew, was discovered by divers at a depth of 245ft (75 metres), around four miles from the port of Palermo in southern Italy."

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/italy/11907666/B-17-Flying-Fortress-bomber-found-on-seabed-off-Sicily.html>

## **Summary of Hitler's Ideas and Failings in WW II**

Written from the view of how Adolf Hitler thought about tactics, strategies, and why his emotional core which he trusted above logic so people can better understand some of the policies and military orders he implemented and ordered.

Part 1

<http://www.renewamerica.com/columns/washington/151010>

Part 2

<http://www.renewamerica.com/columns/washington/151015>

## **Kansas U Lecture Series on The Battles of the Eastern Front in WW I**

Seldom talked about in the US, not even in history classes concerning WW I, the University of Kansas will have three lectures on the subject in 2016.

<http://news.ku.edu/wwi-series-will-shed-light-eastern-front-experience>

## **Clare Hollingworth – Reporting the Start of World War II**

On assignment in Poland in the town of Gleiwitz on September 1, 1939, she called the British Embassy in Warsaw to tell them the Germans were invading Poland – they did not believe her.

"Hollingworth continued to show no fear, and take no shit, throughout her career. Travelling only with a typewriter and a toothbrush – what she called "a T and T" – and a pearl-handled revolver for her safety, she witnessed historic moments and took daring leaps to report fearlessly on the volatile world around her."

Hollingworth resides in Hong Kong. On Saturday, October 17, 2015, she turns 104 years old.

<http://www.buzzfeed.com/rossalynwarren/clare-hollingworth-slay#.uu86Gkv7k>

## **British Arctic Convoy Veterans Meet in Sevastopol**

A small group of Naval veterans who make the perilous "Murmansk Run" during the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War traveled south to Sevastopol meeting up with their Russian counterparts from the war.

[http://rbth.com/society/2015/10/14/british\\_war\\_veterans\\_travel\\_to\\_crimea\\_to\\_visit\\_black\\_sea\\_naval\\_port\\_50055.html](http://rbth.com/society/2015/10/14/british_war_veterans_travel_to_crimea_to_visit_black_sea_naval_port_50055.html))

## **POW Survival Stories Documentary “Never The Same” Director to make a new Movie**

Jan Thompson made a movie once she found out that her how badly father was treated as a POW by Japan in WW II. She is now making a new movie on the descendants of the survivors, and the descendants of those who purposely killed, starved, and tortured the Allied POWs, have come to grips with their respective knowledge of what their forebears did.

<http://www.militarytimes.com/story/veterans/2015/10/16/film-pows-daughter-explores-reconciliation-japanese/74054652/>

## **Once Buried You Stay Buried in a British War Cemetery**

There are over 2,500 British Commonwealth cemeteries around the world, and where you fell in combat is where you stay.

No matter who you are, how well politically you are connected – your relatives remain where they fell.

Brig-Gen Frederick Hermann Kisch, the highest ranking Jew to serve in the British military during the Second World War was killed in April 1943 when he stepped on a land mine in Tunisia during the closing months of the North African Campaign. He is buried at Enfidaville War Cemetery in Tunisia.

<http://www.jpost.com/Israel-News/Politics-And-Diplomacy/Israeli-lawmaker-wants-war-hero-grandfathers-remains-transferred-from-Tunisia-428616>

## **WW II Movie “The French American” Opens in 2016**

The movie is based on a true story of Bombardier John Tschirart, engaged to a French woman at the start of the war and is returned to the US by the Germans after France fell leaving her behind – in the French Resistance.

He then re-visited France every few weeks from 25,000 feet during the war in the nose of a B-17 Flying Fortress.

They used, and flew in, a real B-17 in Colorado to film the movie.

<http://kdvr.com/2015/10/16/movie-maker-gets-to-use-real-wwii-b-17-flying-fortress-during-shoot-in-colorado/>

## **“Swamp Ghost” Makes it Back to Hawaii**

Last time it was in Hawaii was in 1942 when it stopped them on the way to the South Pacific.

It is the only original combat proven - still showing the scars of combat against the Japanese - B-17E left in the world.

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/swamp-ghost-pearl-harbor-wwii-bomber-hawaii\\_56200556e4b0c5a1ce62a803](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/swamp-ghost-pearl-harbor-wwii-bomber-hawaii_56200556e4b0c5a1ce62a803)

## **489 BG(H) Reactivated**

After 70 years of being just a number in a list of US Army Air Force heavy bomber units of WW II, the 489<sup>th</sup> BG is now a reserve unit of the US Air Force flying the B-1 Lancer heavy bomber.



<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3278332/Veterans-Air-Force-unit-flew-France-1943-WWII-bombing-missions-help-win-war-reactivated-ceremony-Texas.html>

## **New Movie about PT-109**

"They are looking for a director, and an actor to play the young JFK. Kent Kubena and Taylor Zea will oversee for Thunder Road. Scott Sheldon will oversee for FlynnPictureCo. They'll set it up at a studio shortly."

<http://deadline.com/2015/10/john-f-kennedy-mayday-109-wwii-hero-thunder-road-flynnpictureco-1201588907/>

## **Indian Support Troops in WW I – As Young as 10 Years Old**

Often lying about their age in order to earn as much as 11 Rupees a day from the British Government their task was doing support work behind the front line. However, since the rear areas were often shelled and bombed, they could, and were, killed and wounded.

<http://www.dnaindia.com/world/report-child-abuse-britain-paid-indian-children-blood-money-to-fight-the-germans-in-world-war-i-2138507>

## **The Sole Survivor Law Was Passed in 1948 – too Late for 3 Brothers from Ashland**

After the Sullivan Brothers were killed on the USS Juneau CL-52 in November of 1942 the law was proposed to ensure that at least 1 son would not be sent into combat.

For Norman and Ethel Ashcraft it was too late since in February of 1944 the last of their three sons, SSG Alden Ashcraft, was killed at Monte Cassino.

<http://www.dailytidings.com/article/20151021/NEWS/151029950>

## **Harry W. Colmery “Father” of the 1944 GI Bill**

Having served as a flight instructor during WW I, he went on to become head of the American Legion and championed, and actually penned the first draft of the bill, on Mayflower Hotel stationary in the nation’s capital in January of 1944.

<http://cjonline.com/news/2015-10-25/harry-colmery-statue-honors-unsung-hero-american-veterans>

## **Scrounging For Souvenirs Between Combat**

As a communication wireman you always moved into and along the front lines connecting field telephones. Melba Jones did that while in France, Belgium and Germany during WW II. But between times in the front line he would explore the battlefield and pick up interesting items – including a 1936 Berlin Olympic Scarf found in a house.

[http://www.muskogee phoenix.com/news/veteran-melba-jones-shares-memories-memorabilia-of-world-war-ii/article\\_c8afcd18-442f-501a-bdd6-cad0dba6f511.html](http://www.muskogee phoenix.com/news/veteran-melba-jones-shares-memories-memorabilia-of-world-war-ii/article_c8afcd18-442f-501a-bdd6-cad0dba6f511.html)

## **General Devers – a High Ranking WW II General You Never Hear About**

Being a US Army General you are a manager, commander, politician, strategic thinker – and a decision maker. If you are quick in doing all of them well, your commander will put you into a position where you cannot be seen doing a better job than your commander.

<http://www.ydr.com/story/opinion/columnists/2015/10/27/jacob-l-devers-ww-ii-why-didnt-ike-like-him/74617132/>

## **1945 Aircrew Returns to the US from China**

Crew of a US Army C-87 (B-24 built to be a cargo only configuration) was first found in 1983 within a glacier and was only recoverable in 2015.

The remains were recovered with the coordination and cooperation of China. Due to the high altitude of the crash site, they had to wait till the glacier had moved the crash site down to a recoverable area.

The Sichuan province was where the first B-29 mission to Japan, of 70 planes, was launched in June of 1944.

<http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/china-hands-over-remains-of-us-world-war-ii-allied-pilots-in-chengdu-300166788.html>

## **Revising *Battle Of Britain* History – With Valid Facts**

This article talks about five common myths that have been told about the British and Germans during the “Battle of Britain” over the years.

<http://www.historyextra.com/article/military-history/6-battle-britain-myths>

## **Sometimes Just Delaying a Victory Wins A War**

Much has been written and speculated over the spring 1941 German southern attack into the Balkans had on the effect of the 1941 Russian Campaign.

Germany had told the USSR that the troops near the Polish border were there to be refitted before going elsewhere. When Germany did move some German divisions from Poland to attack into the Balkans it helped calm USSR (Stalin's) fears and helped re-inforce the deception – even if unwillingly.

The broader impact is that this caused a change in some plans, removed some divisions from use in the USSR, especially the Airborne division, and may have delayed the start of the campaign from May 15<sup>th</sup> (original plan) to June 22, 1941. The subsequent fighting and garrison duties also permanently removed divisions from the OOB for use in the USSR.

<https://hellenicnews.com/lest-we-forget-the-28th-of-october-of-1940/>

## **Next General Membership Meeting for Oregon 8<sup>th</sup> AFHS is November 7, 2015**

### **Meeting Topic is the Annual Salute to Veterans**

There will be a panel discussion with 5 veterans who served from WW II and beyond.

***Last meeting for 2015.***

***Food for the Meeting***

The Nov food menu is tentatively 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**

- August 2015 P-38 pilot of the 94th Fighter Group Robert “Bob” Vrilakas
- 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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