

Oregon Chapter 8th Air Force Historical Society
History News for June 2017



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.

B-17 Top Turret Gunner / Engineer Louis Stoffer

He flew a full 35 missions aboard a B-17 between 1943 and 1945. He lives in Centralia, Washington.

He survived a crash landing into an oak forest with just a dislocated shoulder – but the plane blew up after he got out and could be heard for miles around England when it did.

He took lots of photos by knowing a clever base photographer who was re-utilizing excess film from gun cameras that would otherwise be thrown away and selling the film to crews.

(Never mention being an B-17 Engineer in Oregon, they fine you \$500 for being an Engineer without a proper registration in the state even if that was you military title.)

http://www.chronline.com/news/centralia-wwii-vet-still-carries-sharp-memories-of-time-aboard/article_e8ea822e-320b-11e7-bf58-9f30e7d38817.html

The Communist French Partisan George Guingouin

Known as the “French Tito” he never realized that being independent and a self-directed leader is NOT wanted or rewarded in the Stalinist Soviet Model – it gets you killed or, if lucky, just ex-communicated. Since he lived in France he, like Tito in Yugoslavia, was just kicked out of the Communist party.

Being a French Communist in the 1930s thru the 1950s was complicated as this article explains.

<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2017/05/guingouin-stalin-french-communist-party>

Ralph K. Hofer - 32 Victories World War II ace fighter pilot

A short history of Lt. Hofer in the 4th Fighter Group.

http://www.thesalemnewsonline.com/article_a11d6234-25e2-11e7-91bd-67e70bb4a962.html

Pacific Aviation Museum and the 1942 battle of Midway

If on Oahu on May 31 or June 1 there will be a symposium about the battle at the museum.

<http://www.warbirdsnews.com/warbirds-news/wwii-events/pacific-aviation-museum-pearl-harbor-commemorates-75th-anniversary-battle-midway.html>

The I-400 Class Submersible aircraft Carrier from Japan

Surrendered at the end of WW II, they were sunk by the US in order to avoid having to give them over to the Russians and other Allies. Items CAPTURED could be kept, items surrendered had to be shared – and the US did not want to share the technology of the submarines.

<http://interestingengineering.com/uncovering-i-400-japanese-submarine-aircraft-carriers-ww2/>

The Only Museum in the World to see an Authentic Ki-84 “Frank”

“For vintage airplane hunters, their Army Type 4 / Ki-84 Hayate (Allied reporting name: “Frank”) fighter is worth the trip. If you’ve been to a lot of museums and don’t recall ever seeing one of these, that’s because of the 3,416 built, Chiran’s Frank is the only one remaining. According to Pacific Wrecks, it was captured at Clark Field in the Philippines in 1945.”

The museum is dedicated to the Kamikaze pilots of Japan – not all of them who were volunteers.

<http://okinawa.stripes.com/travel/farewells-chiran-museum-kamikaze-pilots-wwii#sthash.98XtORSY.dpbs>

Seattle’s Paine Field Fly Days

In the Pacific NW outside of Seattle you can see some really old – but expertly maintained and flyable – aircraft this coming summer.

Visitors are also invited to attend Historic Flight’s upcoming Member Fly Days on June 10, July 15, Aug. 19 and Sept. 16. Drop in to watch the flights, enjoy the barbecue or even take a flight.

<http://myedmondsnews.com/2017/05/vintage-airplanes-fun-food-nearby-paine-fields-historic-flight/>

Holdouts Surrendering on Tinian

When the war ended not all the Japanese soldiers immediately surrender – they did not believe that Japan would surrender. IN some cases the US brought a well-known Japanese Army commander to islands to show that Japan had indeed surrendered.

Glenn Sanders was a navy man who participated in some surrenders on Tinian in 1945.

http://www.winonadailynews.com/news/local/honor-flight-vet-recalls-post-wwii-surrenders-of-japanese-holdouts/article_76c4f1c2-cf61-5ce9-9d73-afe6209203b7.html

Why The Federal Government Took Over the Railroads in WW I

The federal regulations that governed the RAILROADS prevented them from working together effectively – so giving control to the Federal Government removed the restrictions – thus they could work together!

<http://www.railwayage.com/index.php/news/review-the-great-railroad-war-united-states-railway-operations-during-world-war-i.html>

Three Self Serving Strategies Combined to Defeat NAZI Germany

Once the US entered the war there were three vastly difference ideas on how to win it.

<https://tgnreview.com/2017/05/08/v-e-day-in-perspective-how-different-originally-were-each-of-the-allies-own-plans-to-defeat-hitler/>

MOH Sgt Wilburn Ross Dead at 94

As part of the 3rd Infantry Division from North Africa to France he was awarded the Medal of Honor for manning, by himself, a light machinegun for over two days fighting off repeated counter-attacks by German Infantry.

"On Oct. 30, 1944, Sgt. Ross's company took heavy casualties from German forces, losing 55 of its 88 men. About 11:30 a.m., Sgt. Ross moved to a forward position, 10 yards beyond his company's riflemen, and set up his light machine gun."

https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/wilburn-ross-who-received-medal-of-honor-for-heroism-in-wwii-dies-at-94/2017/05/11/1cf932ee-365e-11e7-b4ee-434b6d506b37_story.html?utm_term=.14b08fe02e39

A summary of the Raid to Berlin: February 3, 1945

A long summary of what one of the largest air missions of the 8th Air Force was like in 1945.

"Doolittle felt he was being ordered to change U.S. strategy and betray American principle. The Eighth Air Force commander got on the phone with his boss, General Carl "Tooe" Spaatz, commander of Strategic Air Forces in Europe (and an immediate deputy of General Dwight D. Eisenhower). No transcript of the conversation exists, and Doolittle did not mention the conversation in an autobiography published decades later."

This article was by Robert F. Dorr.

<http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/the-biggest-bombing-raid-world-war-ii-1000-bombers-sent-20475>

Amazon book link: [Mission to Berlin: The American Airmen Who Struck the Heart of Hitler's Reich](#)

I met and talked with Robert at the Dulles Airport museum back in 2008 just after he published his Hell Hawks book. [Hell Hawks!: The Untold Story of the American Fliers Who Savaged Hitler's Wehrmacht](#)

Brazil's Naval War Contribution during WW II

The battle of the SOUTH Atlantic was also of great importance during WW II. While most finished shipping occurred across the North Atlantic, the raw materials came from the South Atlantic – without raw materials there would be no finished materials.

<http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/the-other-world-war-ii-battle-the-atlantic-everyone-forgets-20645?page=2>

The Italian P-40 – Tank That Is

Most Italian tanks of WW II were fine as long as they never faced a good anti-tank gun or enemy tank – they were not really designed for tank vs. tank warfare since Italy did not really plan to fight another major power. However, they did produce a good medium tank called the P-40. It never saw widespread use to when it was produced.

<http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/the-p40-italys-killer-world-war-ii-tank-you-may-have-never-20653>

A “40 or 8” Needs a New Home

One of the 49 French railroad cards sent to the USA in 1947, this one at VFW Post Number 6 in South Carolina, needs a new home where it can be stored.

The one in Oregon has disappeared but the one shipped to Nevada is at their RR museum.

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article150664797.html>

Building the Type-95 Model 1 Japanese WW II Trainer from Scratch

Unlike most Axis aircraft of WW II there are no engineering drawings of Japan's WW II trainer aircraft. After Japan agreed to surrender, but before it actually did, the whole government and military spent two weeks destroying most every document created during the war – including design plans of most everything. Plus after the war we destroyed most every aircraft discovered – unless it was interesting. Thus this firm, Tachihi Holdings, has to figure out how to build a full size functioning aircraft without the normal drawings that exist for most any other aircraft ever built in the world.

<http://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2017/05/15/business/corporate-business/small-tokyo-firm-olympus-working-re-create-wartime-trainer-aircraft/#.WSNTvf67oeM>

1917 Was Low Point of WW I for the Allies

From high expectations of 1914, to the bitter defeat and high casualties of 1916 for both the British (Somme) or French (Verdun) with little gain, 1917 ushered in lack of leadership and vision for the allies – and new innovations for the Germans.

<http://www.irishtimes.com/culture/heritage/a-year-when-the-allies-snatched-defeat-from-the-jaws-of-victory-1.3089481>

The U-Files of WW I

U-File is a US Government shorthand term for unknowns who were killed during WW I. The US Government stopped trying to identify unknown remains in 1933. Enter the Doughboy MIA Team volunteers who has taken up the task to try and track down those who were listed as just missing, or hastily buried, re-buried then their grave location was lost track of during WW I.

<http://www.history.com/news/volunteer-sleuths-ensure-world-war-i-mia-receives-just-due-100-years-after-death>

Supplying the USSR via Iran in World War II

Most people know about the arctic convoys to the USSR, however, much more military goods were shipped to the USSR via Iran by train than ever went via water. In 1943 Iran was fully in the allied cause – after being invaded by Britain and the USSR in 1941.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4533298/Pictures-Iran-America-allies-1943.html>

Playing the French Open Then Fighting in History

Two Germans who had won the French Open in the 1930s ended up fighting in WW II – one survived one did not.

<http://www.newindianexpress.com/sport/tennis/2017/may/23/triumph-to-tragedy-for-germanys-french-open-champs-1608066.html>

Fighting For and Against the Axis

Frank Cortese joined the Italian Navy at 17 long before WW II started. When, in 1943 Italy switched sides his ship also did he was now part of the Allied forces.

<http://buffalonews.com/2017/05/21/salute-52217-serving-sides-world-war-ii-italian-immigrant-arrived-america-arranged-marriage/>

Move Over Soviet Era Aircraft – There is a New Big Kid on the Block

Paul Allen's Stratolaunch Carrier Aircraft Rolls Out of Hangar and is now the largest aircraft ever built.

The Soviets were the ones who created really huge aircraft in the 30s thru the 80s – now comes Paul Allen's launch aircraft.

<http://www.popularmechanics.com/flight/a26715/stratolaunch-rolls-out-of-hangar/>

The First and the Last WW I Officers to Die

It is the human brain that remember things like first and last easier than all the in-between. The USA officially entered the war late, but like the first officer he was in the war 3 years before the USA officially was.

<http://www.ncregister.com/blog/joseph-pronechen/who-were-the-first-and-last-officer-and-chaplain-to-die-in-world-war-i>

100 Year Anniversary of The Soviet Revolution and The Fate of the Catholic Church

The October (November, depending on the calendar) Revolution ushered in the Soviets after a summer of somewhat Democratic government and forever altered the world. How the Catholics and other churches fared was not very good after October.

<https://www.ncronline.org/news/world/russias-catholics-reflect-centenary-lenins-bloody-revolution>

Antique Shows and Gun Shows are often where Military Medals are Discovered

Military history is always a subset of overall history – but it one where you can always put in context and within almost always put an exact date on an object – and who. A WW II Bronze Medal with certificate turned up at a show and the person who bought it now wants to track down the family.

<http://www.dl-online.com/news/4273789-its-mystery-bronze-star-earned-dl-man-wwii-found-gun-show>

The Aerial Photography School of WW I

Aerial photography was very advanced by 1917 – yet the US Military had no trained pilots or photographers when we went to war. Kodak has to pressure the War Department to get a school started to train them.

<http://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/2017/05/26/kodak-wwi/102004644/>

“Over There” published 100 years ago June 1, 1917

One of the most famous songs of WW I, and still today recognized by some, is George M. Cohan's patriotic song 'Over There'.

http://lancasteronline.com/news/local/thursday-is-the-th-anniversary-of-the-publishing-of-george/article_e57bdae8-46c9-11e7-8d2e-0bd98e8464e6.html

MOH WW I Naval Doctor Thompson Boone - Surgeon to Troops and Presidents

By policy Naval corpsmen and doctors are assigned to Marine units, and in WW I there were a lot of Marines in the Meuse-Argonne offensive with the 6th Marine Regiment.

<http://republicanherald.com/news/world-war-i-medal-of-honor-recipient-remembered-for-achieving-greatness-1.2198982>

Amazon book link: [The Presidents' Doctor : An Insider's View of Three First Families](#)

The Soviet Era “Shock” armies are back – but are more like the Honorific “Guards” Designation

The Bolsheviks military philosophy was that of attack was the best way to win. In that vein in the 1930s they always practiced offensive operations and one part of the offensive was a specially re-enforced army, a Shock Army, to break through lines to then exploit the rear – the Blitzkrieg tactic. But due to purges and Soviet top-down command style no army ever had the low level leadership or flexibility of command, and training, to actually do it till late 1944.

Their offensive only minded training is of the many reasons why in 1941 they lost so often. The Red Army was never trained in defensive operations – only attack operations, even when in defensive positions.

<http://www.scout.com/military/warrior/story/1781067-russia-bringing-back-its-wwii-shock-armies>

Douglas Bader and Aleksey Maresyev – Birds of A Feather

Most people know that Douglas Bader had lost both legs in an air accident but none-the-less flew during the Battle of Britain in 12 Group and was later shot down and became a POW (they would take his legs away to keep him from escaping on occasions). The Soviet Union also had a pilot, Aleksey Maresyev, and he too had lost both after a combat mission and continued to fly during WW II.

<https://www.rt.com/news/389109-maresyev-plane-found-documentary/>

Olin E. Smith – From a buck Private to a General

Federalized while in the National Guard in West Virginia, he went from defending the Panama Canal to fighting all the way up the Italian boot to the PO Valley, then Korea, where he got a field promotion, then to Combat Flying in Hueys in Vietnam.

<http://www.thestate.com/news/local/article152959279.html>

A Memorial For those who died in Training at Victoria International Airport

During WW II it was known as Royal Canadian Air Force Station Patricia Bay and they trained aircrews and ground crews there. 179 of which died while in training.

<http://www.lakecowichangazette.com/community/t-w-paterson-at-last-honouring-the-lost-airmen-of-the-empire/>

The Last Fighter Combat Mission Over Japan – Aug 14, 1945

Capt. Jerry Yellin lead his squadron to Tokyo and bombed and staffed the airfield there, then found out after landing the war had been over for 3 hours.

He now has a book out about his WW II missions and the last pilot, Lt. Philip Schlamberger, who died on the mission.

<http://nypost.com/2017/05/28/wwiis-last-fighter-pilotrelives-fateful-flight-and-the-ptsd-that-followed/>

Battle Of Midway June 4-7 at Patriots Point on board CV-40, USS Midway

A Special event behind held on board the USS Midway during the 75th Anniversary of the Pacific Carrier Battle that changed the course of the war in the Pacific at Midway.

<https://www.patriotspoint.org/news-and-events/battleofmidway/>

Clarence “Bill” Gregg – Dauntless Dive Bomber Pilot at Midway

With 300 total flight hours in his log book his first combat mission of the war was attacking the Japanese aircraft carriers NW of Midway.

<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/community/miami-dade/article153130454.html>

Tech. Sgt. Harold “Peaner” Ripslinger Of the “Lady Be Good”

He was one of the last members of the crew to die, after they mis-calculated their location and bailed out over the Libyan Desert 350 miles from base.

http://qctimes.com/news/opinion/editorial/columnists/bill-wundram/wundram-mystery-of-wwii-lady-be-good-crash-has-q/article_040541d5-88f0-5d09-8c07-043fbbecbeb7.html

Locating WW II Wrecks in the waters around of Papua New Guinea

For over two years heavy air warfare occurred in the South Pacific until New Guinea and Bougainville was taken in late 1943 / early 1944. Till then thousands of US and Japanese, plus Australian, and British Aircraft, went down in the waters around harbors and airfields. Allied records are pretty reliable as to where they went down, few if any records of Japanese aircraft locations exist since they were purposely destroyed after the way to avoid having a record of what they were really losing in the war.

<http://www.philly.com/philly/health/science/b-25-bomber-ww2-delaware-missing-action-mia-20170524.html>

Lucky 666 – The Only WW II Crew that earned two MOH and the other 7 crewmembers were awarded the Distinguished Service Cross on a Single Mission

With their salvaged B-17E 41-2666, that had a name of “Lucy” (which they painted over), which also happened to have a specialized installation of 3 photographic cameras that allowed it to see underwater reefs, it went alone on a photo recon

mission over Bougainville on June 16, 1943 where Captain Jay Zeamer, Jr. and crew were intercepted by over 20 Japanese fighters, including the new A6M3 version of the Zero, and shot down at least 5 and made it back to base with the film.

http://www.crazywebsite.com/Pg-Online-Funny-Videos/WWII_Planes_B-17_Old_666_American_Patriotic_War_Stories.html

<https://www.pacificwrecks.com/aircraft/b-17/41-2666.html>

Amazon Link to the book: [Lucky 666: The Impossible Mission](#)

Next General Membership Meeting for Oregon 8th AFHS is August 12, 2017

Remaining Dates in 2017 are, August 12 and November 4^h

Food for the Meeting YOU MUST CALL IN

The May food menu is a sandwich type meal will be available at the Beaverton Elks lodge. ***YOU MUST CALL*** in by ***May 9*** if you are planning to eat - contact Tom Philo via email at secretary@8thafhsoregon.com or phone him at 503-591-3227 – again ***ONLY*** if you are planning to purchase a meal.

3464 SW 106th Ave
Beaverton, OR 97005

<http://beavertonelks.org/>

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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