

Oregon Chapter 8th Air Force Historical Society
History News for October 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.

Sgt. Alvin York's Reception

His artifacts are there – not him at Fort Oglethorpe's 6th Cavalry Museum in Georgia. One display has one of the German machine guns that he captured.

http://www.northwestgeorgianews.com/catoosa_walker_news/reception-for-sgt-york-exhibit-is-sept-in-fort-oglethorpe/article_5db2ba14-97e6-11e7-bebc-4786d8fdf8e2.html

What US Fighter plane type had highest scoring Ace of WW II Victories in?

Like many fighter pilots have said – it is using your aircraft to the best of *its* ability to help you live.

<https://warisboring.com/americas-worst-world-war-ii-fighter-was-the-star-of-the-soviet-air-force/>

American equipped Spitfire Squadrons of WW II

Lend-Lease did not just go from US to overseas nations – sometimes the USA used foreign equipment too just like in WW I. Flying Legend R.A. "Bob" Hoover was shot down in 1943 flying a Spitfire V near Southern France. "It was a hell-of-a defection shot".

"For example, a tangled headset jammed the landing gear controls on the Spitfire of Lt. Col. John Blythe while returning from mission over Germany on Sept. 12, 1944. The Oregon native was forced to make a belly-landing at Mount Farm aerodrome—an event recorded on camera by his unit's doctor, Jim Savage. Blythe's recollections of his recon missions and the remarkable footage of his crash landing can be seen in the short documentary Spitfire 944."

<http://scout.com/military/warrior/Article/The-US-Army-Air-Forces-and-US-Navy-Flew-British-Spitfire-Fighter-107148305>

Plot or Non-Plot To Kill Admiral Darlan?

The problem of Vichy French in WW II was that it was a defeated nation that was not FULLY occupied – the Germans did not want to spend the troops to garrison both France and the whole French Empire – so it allowed a government to exist to keep France running. Now the people running France are both independent and collaborators at the same time – depending on what you are doing and when it occurred. France has never come to grips with that. Admiral Darlan was a victim of that duality.

<http://www.thedailybeast.com/did-the-allies-plot-to-assassinate-frances-wartime-leader>

How Many Major capital ships did the USA lose in WW I?

The U.S. Navy cruiser San Diego (ACR 6) – was the largest ship and only “capital” ship lost by the USA during WW I – and you’d be surprised to find out where it went down.
<http://abc7ny.com/science/navy-surveys-wwi-shipwreck-off-long-island/2415886/>

From Cars to Airplanes in Less than 2 Months

The us car industry all changed in December 1941. It went literally overnight from making vehicles for the populace to making weapons for the military. “In 1941, before the war, more than three million cars were manufactured in the United States. However, only 139 more were made during the entire war.”
http://www.dailyitem.com/news/lifestyles/u-s-car-industry-played-a-crucial-role-in-winning/article_aaa673db-a384-506a-a00c-1a528c2d04e6.html

From Africa to Italy, to Germany then to Freedom as a POW Exchange Prisoner

Not all captured allied men had to escape a POW camp or wait for liberation at the end of the war – if you were sick enough or medically unfit ever to fight again – you were exchanged. Harry Saunders was a medic who was captured in Tunis in 1942 was one POW involved in such an exchange.
https://www.cadillacnews.com/news/world-war-ii-veteran-reflects-on-time-in-pow-camp/article_5004d882-58a7-5e43-8732-958db359ef00.html

Digging eh Battlefields of Poland

What do you do on a weekend to relax – some groups go to old battlefields to dig up artifacts – without “official” permits.
<https://www.theguardian.com/global/2017/sep/17/battlefield-bounty-hunters-in-polish-ww2-battlefields>

Body of Captain Robert Donald Brown Possible Found

When the allies landed at Salerno in 1943 a fierce battle raged around the landing till the AXIS powers were forced back up the Italian boot. Capt. Brown was one such soldier killed during the beachhead expansion which when he was found by “amateur” historians.
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/09/08/remains-decorated-british-wwii-soldier-fought-german-attack/>

War in a M4 Sherman Tank – 1942 thru 1945

Private First Class Irving Bromberg was an assistant gunner, driver, gunner – depending on the day – in a M4 Sherman medium tank, with a 75mm main gun, from November 1942 till the end of the war, in the 2nd Armored Division.
<http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/the-story-us-soldier-who-fought-world-war-ii-his-tank-22319?page=show>

WW I German U-Boat Discovered Off Belgium Coast

A type UB-II sub, it was found in 100 feet of water – location un-disclosed to prevent looters. According to divers all the hatches appear to be shut.
<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-41318195>

Flying a B-17 Again – at 97 Years of Age

Lt. Herb Heilbrun was nearly 20 when he went on his first combat mission with the 15th Air Force in WW II. At 97 he got to climb aboard the EAA B-17G Aluminum Overcast and do it again.

<http://clermontsun.com/2017/09/14/wwii-vet-flies-in-a-b-17-bomber-again/>

XBOX warfare – on a Real Sub

While there are not any submarine games being sold to play on the XBOX system – they are using an XBOX to control the periscopes on real submarines.

<https://www.digitaltrends.com/gaming/xbox-360-controller-us-navy-submarine-periscope/>

Mitchell Flint – Navy Pilot Who Helped Found Israel's Air Force Dead at 94

The USA had a ban on helping Israel in any manner from 1946 onwards – but US citizens went there and helped them create an Air Force using Czech Built Bf-109s, leftover B-17s and other “outdated” aircraft. They flew against the latest British built Spitfires and won.

<http://ijr.com/the-declaration/2017/09/977215-us-navy-pilot-helped-form-israeli-air-force-got-planes-not-perfect/>

Looking for Artifacts in all the Wrong Places

WW I is thought of a static warfare of four years – which is somewhat true on the western front – the Eastern Front was very mobile. But the TROOPS on the western front were very mobile – they always got moved around. And every time they did they left stuff behind. This Australian is trying the stuff that got left behind.

<http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/messenger/east-hills/south-australians-in-france-project-looking-for-world-war-i-artefacts-hidden-in-peoples-drawers/news-story/f5c25942b004b0ee5af8c1680b5c2828>

WW II USSR Soldiers – Not all Russians

The USSR is almost always depicted as Russians, but that was never true. Anyone who was inside the USSR borders was drafted in WW II – this Armenian soldier who died in the Ukraine was just one of millions non-Russians who were in the Soviet Military.

<http://www.panarmenian.net/eng/news/246673/>

An Anthropologist and the Battle of Tarawa

How does a modern anthropologist like Dr. Stephen Perkins get involved in a WW II battle? When he is part of History Flight which examines old battlefields and discovers buried soldiers (of any side) then work to return them back to the country of origin. Some nations, like England, bury their soldiers when they die and do not have a policy of returning fallen soldiers to the country of origin.

<http://www.newson6.com/story/36411255/osu-anthropologist-works-for-return-of-wwii-fallen>

Lecture on the Start of WW II by Victor Davis

The start of WW II was back when the Rhineland was re-occupied by Germany – the re-assertion of the Western German border – and the German border expansion continued until the USSR was invaded.

<http://www.hillsdale.net/news/20170919/military-historian-victor-hanson-talks-about-world-war-ii>

Italian Women in the Resistance

Italy was always a divided nation in WW II – both before and after August of 1943 – but once there was a true Italian military and civilian split the resistance move moved up a notch and printing blocks and women became more important.

<http://www.bbc.com/travel/story/20170913-how-italian-women-used-words-to-fight-the-nazis>

The Wind Tunnel that made the Hurricane Fly

Royal Aircraft Establishment in Farnborough secretly built a massive wind tunnel in 1935. The USA built theirs in Langley, Virginia, openly in 1921.

<http://www.bbc.com/future/story/20170919-the-abandoned-wind-tunnel-that-tested-world-war-two-aircraft>

Mikhail Kalashnikov Statue Unveiled in Moscow

Wounded after a tank battle in WW II, he ended up in an engineering lab in 1943 after his recovery due to his natural engineering talent. Once there, he worked on his own to help the common soldier's ability to fight more effectively than the current bolt-action rifle the Soviet army fielded.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/sep/19/30ft-high-statue-of-mikhail-kalashnikov-unveiled-in-moscow>

Have a Computer and Lots of Time – Annotate Old Newspapers Online

Go to the labs.loc.gov , a Library of Congress web site, and look at scans of newspapers then do the electronic markup of cartoons, photos and such so that they become searchable for others.

<https://www.loc.gov/item/prn-17-129/?locl=ean>

Operation Ginny – An OSS Mission That Went Wrong

How a single word in a German message to a higher HQ sealed the fate of a wartime mission.

<http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/operation-ginny-how-nazi-germany-crushed-america-during-22408?page=show>

Air Power Test Case: Pantelleria

1943 saw the Allies on the offensive in the MTO – but a little island hinder the attack on Sicily.

<http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/world-war-ii-battle-gave-rise-victory-through-air-power-22322?page=show>

Plastic Surgery Makes its Mark in WW I

When WW I started soldiers did not wear helmets, the heavy use of machine guns and artillery means peeking over a ridge or trench exposed you to being wounded in the head – and if you lived you had permanent damage to your face – till you got back to an innovative surgeon in England.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-4920628/WWI-soldiers-facial-injuries-transformed-surgery.html>

Warsaw – Before and After WW II

A photo exhibition in New Delhi shows the history of Warsaw 1939 thru 1946.

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/delhi-news/revisiting-wwii-a-photography-exhibition-that-showcases-destruction-and-reconstruction-of-warsaw/story-XCInVafN6GO3FDrT9YEmQP.html>

Free Speech in Italy – But only for some things

A proposal to ban anything to do with Fascist ideas, books, images etc is being proposed in Italy. This goes further than what is already banned in the EU that has anything to do with NAZI imagery.

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/italian-parliament-floats-legislation-to-ban-fascist-propaganda/>

A Japanese Temple Grave for an American?

Shot down in 1945 an American may have been buried in a Japanese Temple compound after he washed ashore.

“There is a grave there but since we’re an investigation team we don’t exhume graves.”

<https://www.stripes.com/news/japanese-temple-grave-may-contain-wwii-navy-pilot-s-remains-1.488709#.WcrRFf4UnCQ>

Kamikaze Boats

Most everyone knows about the aircraft, a few about the manned torpedoes, but few know about the method to be used to attack American ships using wooden high speed boats in 1945.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-4897094/Underwater-remains-Japan-WWII-kamikaze-boats.html>

Book Review – Belt, Boots and Spurs

The view from the ground of a British Artillery Officer, Peter Raban, from Dunkirk till the end of WW II. A very good first-hand account of many battles that he was in as written by his son based on diary and other histories to fill in the blanks.

The information about Dunkirk battles, and an officer’s perspective, is timely.

His father was in the initial sweep into Belgium while Rommel was on the sweep in from the Ardennes. On the way out of Belgium all the British troops were very tired and falling asleep.

“Rommel, who led the speediest of the tank divisions, was said to take Pervitin as if it were his daily bread. ‘He had no apparent sense of danger, a typical symptom of excessive methamphetamine consumption.’ ”

<https://www.lrb.co.uk/v39/n19/jonathan-raban/belt-boots-and-spurs>

Alvin Page Colby - WWI with comic sketches

Everyone copes with change in their own way, Alvin drew comics of his adventures in WW I.

<http://www.mercurynews.com/2017/09/26/peninsula-museum-offers-personal-new-look-into-old-war/>

Accidental Wars – There is no such thing

People make decisions, sometimes bad ones, but always it is a decision – including going to war.

<http://www.worldpolicy.org/blog/2017/09/28/myth-accidental-war>

64 B-24 Combat Missions in The South Pacific

1st Lt. Oscar C. Fitzhenry's flew the missions, though enemy flak barrages and with Japanese fighter aircraft after him from 1943 thru 1944 – and even with hundreds of holes in his aircraft, no one was ever wounded aboard his ship. He was in the 72nd Bomb Squadron, 5th Bomb Group, 13th AF.

Rules are rules and when he was assigned to a B-24 unit he got immediately promoted: "By regulation at the time no four-engine aircraft commander could be less than a First Lieutenant."

http://www.moultrienews.com/news/tales-of-valor---turbulent-times-in-the-south/article_a1c765c6-9f05-11e7-8355-7394f126b80a.html

“Green Two O.K.” – Then never heard from Again

In combat some things seem to take forever, like getting to a target, and some things just feel like forever – when you are in combat. Often heard about air combat is that there are aircraft all over the place then suddenly there are none anywhere. When you join back up afterwards and do a count and one is missing and no one saw anything they become MIA.

<http://www.swtimes.com/news/20170924/finding-It-mitchell-wwii-p-38-pilot-from-arkansas-still-listed-mia>

Next General Membership Meeting for Oregon 8th AFHS is November 4, 2017

Remaining Meeting Dates in 2017 is November 4^h

PROGRAM: TBA

Food for the Meeting YOU MUST CALL IN

The food menu is a hot type meal will be available at the Beaverton Elks lodge. **YOU MUST CALL** in by **November 1** 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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The Oregon Chapter is a registered Non-Profit 503(c) with the IRS and within the State of Oregon.

The Oregon 8thAFHS maintains a person on the club roster for up to two years even if they had not renewed, or if the original member is deceased their next of kin will continue to receive all club mailings, before they are removed them from the club roster.

If a person wishes to receive the club mailed newsletter and meeting notice they need to submit the membership form along with the yearly \$15.00 dues (pro-rated if necessary) to become a member of the chapter.