

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

Combat Lessons from The Guadalcanal Campaign

Both the Americans and the Japanese learned from the 6 month long battle in the Solomons. The main difference was that the Americans had the extra resources to implement them, while the Japanese could not.

<http://nationalinterest.org/feature/3-strategic-takeaways-the-guadalcanal-campaign-22987?page=show>

Book Review: Dispatches from the Pacific

Landing in the first wave of every assault with the US Marines, war correspondent Robert Sherrod wrote dispatches literally from the front line – and lived to tell it.

<http://hottytoddy.com/2017/11/20/review-dispatches-pacific-tells-robert-sherrods-story-outstandingly-well/>

One of the Must-Do things in Australia

Having to go so far out in the back country to see it a lot of people must climb Ayers Rock – but In October of 2019 onwards it will be banned.

Un-intended consequences is that most people will now just look at it from Google Earth to avoid the long, long, long ride to just see it – and thus no income along the route to it, or while there, anymore.

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/indigenous/climbing-uluru-banned/news-story/53511b7f2e58f7ed03d5b0c3f66e2792>

The Creeping Barrage Of WW I at El Alamein in WW II

The KIWIs lead the charge – well slow walk - at the 2nd Battle of El Alamein in North Africa.

<http://www.newshub.co.nz/home/new-zealand/2017/11/75-years-since-new-zealand-handed-nazi-germany-its-first-land-defeat-of-wwii.html>

When is an Aircraft Carrier NOT an Aircraft Carrier? In Japan

WW II dictated the new constitution of Japan, including what military it could have, so now that they have ships that looks like an aircraft carrier – has decks like one, hanger space like one, elevator like one, it is not – since it only has helicopters on it. Which are considered aircraft. And one of the ships is named KAGA.

<https://scout.com/military/warrior/Article/Japans-Non-Aircraft-Carrier-Is-Also-a-Secret-Weapon-109763148>

5 ½ Years as a POW in The Hanoi Hilton

Retired Lt. Col. Richard Smith was shot down in October of 1967 right outside of Hanoi during a mission. Enduring real torture, beatings, solitary confinement for weeks on

end, and starvation rations, he was re-patriated in March of 1973 when the US formally pulled out of Vietnam and conceded defeat.

No North Vietnamese person was ever held accountable for the beatings or torture that US servicemen endured, or those that died due to the beatings. Unlike European WWII atrocities, SE Asian, and often African ones, all get a pass on prosecution.

<http://www.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/1354444/pow-recalls-mission-that-led-to-capture-50-years-ago/>

United Airlines Retires Their Last 747 – after 40 Years of Flying

Unknown if the a/c will go to a graveyard, or be converted to a cargo a/c.

<https://www.cnet.com/news/boeing-747-history-united-retirement/>

Across The Atlantic and Pacific in Two Years

The physical path one took during WW II was not always a straight line. Bob Moe's rail and ship journeys shows how convoluted it could be.

<http://www.ourmidland.com/news/article/Midland-Remembers-Robert-Moe-World-War-II-veteran-12325831.php>

From Acropolis to Giza and Back Again

Col. Eleftherios D. Smirniotopoulos (Royal Hellenic Air Force-Ret.) started flying over Greece in WW II, then went to Spits and Hurricanes with the British in the Desert with the 8th Army, then back again to Greece. He retired out and ended up in the USA for medical treatment due to wounds and stayed here.

<http://www.connectionnewspapers.com/news/2017/nov/02/smirniotopoulos-honored-posthumously-washington-ox/>

TBF Avenger – One Plane's History

From 1945 to now this is the story a TBF Avenger – and it's successful flight into the Bermuda Triangle.

"Do you actually think that a 76-year-old man flying a 63-year-old airplane way out over the ocean is a very smart thing to do?"

<http://www.warbirdsnews.com/warbirds-news/wwii-events/bermuda-triangle-revisited-2.html>

Illegal Salvage of WW II Pacific Wrecks

On the high seas, or even within controlled waters, people with barges and some explosives are dismantling sunken ships without regard to local or international laws for the high quality steel and other metals that makes them up.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/ng-interactive/2017/nov/03/worlds-biggest-grave-robbery-asias-disappearing-ww2-shipwrecks>

Claiming Credit – 72 Years Later – Still Controversial

Applying modern jargon and spin on events in the past occurs all over the world. In the USA modern people are applying modern values to people who lived in the 1860s – and the monuments of them, in forcing people to destroy them or store them away from sight. This occurred in Russia with Statues of Lenin and Stalin. In modern Russia

they are applying their self-taught accomplishments that they had during WW II, The Great Patriotic War in their words, to monuments and history in other countries. Russia, back then the USSR, stated that they saved thousands of Jews, and others from Death Camps which is true, but the reasons they invaded and took over seven countries at the end of WW II, was not to save people from the Death Camps, but to take territory and ensure that they could not be invaded again by having "friendly" countries surrounding them. Liberating the camps was an aside of the war whose main goal was destroying NAZlism.

<https://sofiaglobe.com/2017/11/05/russian-embassy-in-sofia-attempts-new-spin-in-row-on-claims-soviets-rescued-bulgarian-jews-from-holocaust/>

Return from Tarawa

Frank Louis Masoni was an assistant cook in the Marines, and in the Marines your main job is always infantry. During the Battle on Betio Island his cook status was not important, being a rifleman was and he was killed in combat on Day 2. Due to lack of experience in combat situations the stateside standards were impossible to adhere too due to the confusion on the island battlefield; his remains were never formally identified till this year.

The Tarawa battle saw hundreds of improvements in island assaults and casualty clearing implemented later on in the war – and still in use to this day.

http://www.gilroydispatch.com/news/gilroy-veteran-s-remains-return-home-after-years/article_3f4dd9b0-c2a6-11e7-981b-7b7280ec7d14.html

Reading Like Patton

Unlike modern deployments done by air, Patton, and some 33,000 others, was forced to cross the Atlantic on a ship. He had no planning or real meeting to attend so he read some books during the 10 day crossing prior to the Torch landing in North Africa.

Parts of the Koran, 'Three Harbors,' , 'The Raft,' and " The Cairo Garter Murders" are four books that we know he read over on the trip.

[Editor's note: I bought and read "The Raft" when I was in 6th grade.]

https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/books/george-s-patton-sailed-off-to-save-the-world-75-years-ago--and-read-these-novels-on-the-way/2017/11/06/c1316474-af82-11e7-9e58-e6288544af98_story.html?utm_term=.1f5434d32b97

Money For Past Sins

Compensation claims for WW II military and civilian actions are still being filed against Germany. With Germany being the richest nation in Europe, since the 1870s and even after WW I, and WWII, does not help since everyone thinks it has unlimited money.

An Italian court ruled that Germany owes a town money – even though other courts have rules that Germany no longer needs to pay damages to Italy or any Italians for WW II actions.

<http://thenews.pl/1/10/Artykul/333413,Italian-court-says-Germany-should-compensate-for-WWII-massacre>

What 100 Year Anniversaries are Ignored in Russia?

You can learn a lot from what people don't celebrate as well as what they do.

<http://gulfnews.com/opinion/thinkers/russia-can-t-celebrate-its-revolutionary-past-it-has-to-smother-it-1.2119771>

Found After 44 years – His Combat .45 Pistol

Stolen out of his car while on a vacation at Pittsburg airport, he duly reported it stolen to the police and they stated he will never see it again. In 2015 the ATF contacted him stating that they found it – but it took 2 years and a local TV station to get it returned. “While McKinney says he's told the gun is quite the collector's item, worth at least \$3,200. But he tells Berman that he has no plans to sell it, although he does plan to go out and fire it at a local shooting range very soon.”

<http://www.wtae.com/article/wwii-vets-stolen-gun-found-at-pittsburgh-crime-scene-after-44-years/13438816>

A “Desert Rat” Turns 100

JJ Wade was part of the Australian 9th Armored Division, 2/28 Battalion during WW II where he fought at Tobruk then over to Lae in New Guinea.

“When I was farming, there was always a reason to get up. Now I get up and I get the paper and I look down the long list of the names (in the obituaries) and make sure mine's not there. If it's not there, it's a good day.”

<http://www.perthnow.com.au/news/western-australia/why-jj-wade-walks-on-century-of-memories-for-hero-of-tobruk/news-story/72518a495e20aa731f5dd649ff3016c3>

Walter Olmsted Jr. – B17 Gunner 1943-1945

Landing in England in November of 1943 he ended up flying 43 missions. Then returned for a 2nd Tour in June of 1944 but was posted to be a Gunnery Officer at the base training all the new crewmen. However, he was allowed to pick which missions he flew on during his 2nd Tour.

<https://www.williamsnews.com/news/2017/nov/07/memories-williams-wwii-veteran-walter-olmsted/>

Kill or Be Killed: One Soldier's WWII Experience

Surviving behind the lines as part of a recon unit for over two years with the 4th Princess Louise Dragoon Guards, Bill Palfrey made it through the whole war unscathed physically but took him a while to recover from the constant worry of combat after the war.

https://www.theepochtimes.com/kill-or-be-killed-one-soldiers-wwii-experience_2339065.html

Honoring Jimmy Stewart via His Cessna 310

Retiring as a Colonel from the Air Force he continued to fly a twin engine aircraft instead of the 4 engines of B-24 that he flew in Combat over Europe. His 310 was found parked and unused after years of neglect – almost restored, now it is being towed in the Parade on Veterans Day.

https://www.indianagazette.com/news/veterans-day-parade-to-feature-stewart-s-airplane/article_f3970fb4-c3cc-11e7-9378-b7cf3af4317b.html

Distracted While Flying and there goes 88 Million

Sometimes too many alarms and people in the mix talking means you forget the basic rule of aircraft flight: flying. A Naval flyer had this occur to him while flying off a carrier in his Super Hornet.

<http://www.military.com/daily-news/2017/11/08/pilot-who-ejected-in-april-hornet-mishap-was-senior-navy-officer.html>

From the Backwater of Bletchley Park to the Front Lines of El Alamein

Captain Harry Meirion Evans was most unsuited for frontline combat duties – but then he went to North Africa as a frontline message decoder in the British 8th Army in 1942.

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/how-student-who-lack-bloodlust-11487610>

Views of the North Africa Front in 1942

The job assigned to you in the military always frames your local view of the war. What was experienced, even in the same type of job, could vary wildly by unit and time.

"We had foxholes, but we didn't bother getting in them."

http://www.cleveland.com/metro/index.ssf/2017/11/gis_got_baptism_by_fire_in_nor.html

Know Where You Have Been but Not Where you are Going

As a tail gunner in a B-17 in the 92nd BG, 326 Sqd, Phillip Azure could see where they have been but not where they were going in his 35 missions over Europe in WW II.

<https://www.columbian.com/news/2017/nov/11/veteran-of-two-wars-recalls-wwii-air-campaigns/>

A Short Combat History of Erich Hartmann

Lots of training, a natural ability – and forgiving commanders – allowed a slow start for the Ace of Aces to survive the Eastern Front.

<http://nationalinterest.org/blog/the-buzz/here-the-shocking-story-nazi-germanys-greatest-fighter-ace-23125?page=show>

Visit Casablanca in Massachusetts

The WW II Museum there will show you both versions of the of the 1942: the movie and the real invasion of North Africa.

Remember – You'll always have Paris. "The Germans wore gray you wore blue."

<http://www.providencejournal.com/entertainmentlife/20171109/massachusetts-wwii-museum-looks-at-casablanca-north-africa-invasion>

Looking for Info on B-24 Crew Member Don Elliott

His B-24 was shot down in August of 1944 over Koror in the Palau archipelago. On August 28, 1944 the B-24 Liberator commanded by Capt. Gordon Dixon, head of the 372nd Bomb Squadron, led a group of planes in a bombing run over Palau when it was struck by a 70mm Japanese anti-aircraft cannon, caught fire, then broke apart.

http://wcfcourier.com/news/local/info-sought-on-waterloo-airman-shot-down-in-wwii/article_4f08e588-8bd5-5752-985a-86111c4128a5.html

Closing the Story: B-17 Pilot Harry Chandler - March 15, 1945

Being shot down in any plane is full of what-ifs – what if I had not turned left, climbed up, jinked right and not gotten hit? Lt. Harry Chandler unstrapped himself from his pilot's seat and was thrown clear of his B-17 when he tried to use the controls of his dead co-pilot after his was shot way and only found out why he survived in 2005.

<http://www.benningtonbanner.com/stories/a-crucial-mission-story-of-survival,524408>

The Official Ukraine name of the conflict is now World War II

The USSR, and the Russian Federation called it the Great Patriotic War to get people to feel that the war was fought from 1941 to 1945 as a common good of the USSR's controlled nations. With the breakup of the USSR, and Ukraine being one of the main locations battles were fought, and with the history of how the USSR chose to subjugate the people of the Ukraine especially under Stalin, they have now officially changed how books and people should refer to it as World War II like almost every other nation has since 1945.

http://www.pravdareport.com/news/world/ussr/ukraine/14-11-2017/139180-great_patriotic_war_ukraine-0/

Frank Hosimer 35 Mission B-24 Pilot

Assigned to the 455th Bomb Group in the 15th AF flying out of Italy to the “soft underbelly” of Europe he flew his first combat mission as a pilot at 19 ½ years old. He never got a drivers license so he could not drive a vehicle on the base though.

https://www.wvgazette.com/news/south-charleston-man-recounts-life-as-a-teenage-bomber-pilot/article_965a96cf-ab5f-5092-bc44-5a18f8520f8e.html

King Tiger – One Year too Late?

The movie of King Tigers on parade in 1944 just before the Battle of The Bulge shows the size of them – but with only 452 built, and penny-packeted out from June of 1944 onwards, their psychological impact outweighed their battlefield impact. If fielded in 1943 they would have made more of a difference in USSR battles where their reach out and touch of 3 miles on open steppes would have made more of a difference.

<http://nationalinterest.org/feature/nazi-germanys-king-tiger-tank-super-weapon-or-super-myth-17332?page=show>

Pragmatism in NAZI Germany: Winning Overcomes Prejudice

“German officials showed themselves to be more pragmatic: Non-Jewish Turks, Iranians and Arabs had already been explicitly exempted from any official racial discrimination in the 1930s, following diplomatic interventions from the governments in Tehran, Ankara, and Cairo.”

<http://www.dw.com/en/how-nazis-courtied-the-islamic-world-during-wwii/a-41358387>

World War II On The Eastern Front – Epic Battles Epic Losses

It is hard to comprehend the scale of combat that the USSR faced against NAZI Germany. A perspective of the size of the war is that, on average, 19,000 Soviet people – civilians and soldiers - died each day during the war. Which comes to around 25 million people.

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/inquirer/battle-of-stalingrad-19000-deaths-a-day-the-human-cost-russia-endured/news-story/56baeb4588244c47c86a0cea64f73b8b>

The USS Oglala at Pearl Harbor

The minelayer drew such little water that a torpedo aimed at it passed under it and hit the USS Helena instead. Seaman First Class Loren Bailey survived the attack due to that unusual situation.

<https://plainsman.com/article/a-valiant-pearl-harbor-survivor>

Japanese WW II Jets parts found in University

Thought they never test flew or put in production a jet aircraft during WW II, they were actively working on them.

<http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201711270038.html>

Fist of Kind Book on German Training Rifles of WW II

Book arose from a collector's passion of small arms to a published book – after a few decades.

<https://www.timesleader.com/features/683609/illinois-shop-owners-compile-publish-world-war-ii-history>

75 Years of Tinkering with the Wright R3350 Radial Engine

Developed from the Curtis-Wright R1820 which powered lots of aircraft from the 1930s this was the workhorse engine of the B-29.

<https://www.dvidshub.net/news/256487/tinker-celebrates-75-years-wright-r3350-radial-engine-profile>

French Colonial Troops in WW II – 1st Rate Troops Led by a 2nd Rate Nation

France fell in 1940 but their colonial attitude remained throughout WW II – both by Vichy and Free French Forces in unequal treatment of volunteers and drafted colonial troops.

<http://excal.on.ca/the-colour-of-war/>

Next General Membership Meeting for Oregon 8th AFHS is February 3, 2018

Annual Dues are due - \$15 can be paid at the meeting or mailed to the secretary.

There is no cost to attend meetings 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.