

THE U.S. AIR FORCES ESCAPE & EVASION SOCIETY

FALL 2010 Communicator

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--- Photo by Robin Charteris.

*Colditz Castle dominates the sky above a village in northeastern Germany. The Colditz escape glider was built in the high attic above the chapel (left of the clock-tower spire).*

***(Story begins on Page 4.)***

U.S. AIR FORCES ESCAPE & EVASION SOCIETY  
COMMUNICATIONS

<www.airforceescape.com>

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VETERANS ORGANIZATION UNDER IRS CODE 501 (C)(19). IT WAS  
FOUNDED IN 1964,

THE SOCIETY'S PURPOSE IS TO ENCOURAGE MEMBERS HELPED BY THE  
RESISTANCE ORGANIZATIONS OR PATRIOTIC NATIONALS TO CONTINUE  
EXISTING FRIENDSHIPS OR RENEW RELATIONSHIPS WITH THOSE WHO  
HELPED THEM DURING THEIR ESCAPE OR EVASION.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIRES THAT ONE MUST HAVE BEEN A U.S. AIRMAN,  
HE MUST HAVE BEEN FORCED DOWN BEHIND ENEMY LINES AND AVOIDED  
CAPTIVITY, OR ESCAPED FROM CAPTIVITY TO RETURN TO ALLIED  
CONTROL.

IN ADDITION TO REGULAR MEMBERSHIP, OTHER CATEGORIES OF  
MEMBERSHIP ARE HELPER MEMBERS, AND FRIEND MEMBERS.

FALL 2010

NEWSLETTER  
DISTRIBUTION

(as of May 2010)

IN THE UNITED STATES:

Total of 717

Evaders: 388

Evader Widows: 112

2nd Gen. Evaders: 52

3rd Gen. Evaders: 3

Helpers: 30

Helpers Widows,

2nd Gen, 3rd Gen: 5

Friends: 39

Military Friends: 42

Unknow Classification: 46

OTHER COUNTRIES: 187

Australia: 6

Belgium: 20

Canada: 30

France: 72

Germany: 1

Italy: 1

Netherlands: 40

Spain: 2

United Kingdom: 15

Obama reaffirms  
pledge to vets' care

WASHINGTON (AFNS) --

Caring for veterans is a moral obligation, President Barack Obama said Aug. 2 in a speech at the Disabled American Veterans National Convention in Atlanta.

"Every American who has ever worn the uniform must know this: your country is going to take care of you when you come home,"

President Obama said. "Our nation's commitment to our veterans - to you and your families - is a sacred trust."

"We need to keep our military strong, our country safe and our veterans secure," the president said, noting VA's \$15 billion budget increase last year, the largest hike in 30 years.



## THE PREZ SEZ...

By John Katsaros, E&E# 755

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Since the affirmative vote at our Dayton, Ohio reunion to continue to operate AFEES, and our success with the Colorado Springs reunion, I would like to pass on the reports from Executive Vice President Lynn A. David and Colonel Steve Mac Isaac, that plans for the spring of 2011 get together at San Antonio, Tex., are progressing. I am advised that this issue of this publication will provide us the latest information.

Mary and I were invited to the Montreal, Canada, International Convention of the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (AHEPA) in July, to speak about the origin of AFEES, with a video presentation about my book, *Code Burgundy-The Long Escape*. We were well received by the several thousand in attendance who had never heard of the Free French Underground during WWII who aided AFEE members.

We enjoyed a visit by Rich Shandor and Neil Canner, sons of former E&E members. We spent the day at the nearby Lawrence Municipal Airport and took advantage of viewing the Collings Foundation restored B-17 Flying Fortress, "Liberty Bell." I was fortunate to be taken on an hour flight over Haverhill and the local beaches by the Atlantic Ocean.

Rich Shandor will return in September to attend his father's group reunion in New Hampshire. We plan to get together again for lunch on Wednesday, Sept. 29, and tour Pease Air Force Base in Portsmouth, N.H. — named after Harl Pease, who was from N.H., and was shot down.

Interesting that Congress may bring to a head — the possibility of an affirmative vote, to honor WWII Escape and Evaders, with long deserved recognition. It might help to contact your congressional representative for a "Yea" vote.

AFEES Treasurer, Ann Grauerholz, informed the Board of Directors that she received a nice monetary donation from Joe Manos for the AFEES treasury. Thank you Joe!

Larry "Inky" Grauerholz deserves kudos for his work as editor of our newsletter, each issue containing 32 pages of very informative articles.

NOW HEAR THIS! "Ya'all" are ordered to make plans now to report to the AFEES Reunion at San Antonio next April. Details, plus reservation forms and hotel reservation forms are scheduled for the December issue. You can check our website [www.airforceescape.com](http://www.airforceescape.com) for the latest.

# *Colditz Castle: Not so escape-proof*

**From the Otago Daily Times,  
Dunedin, South Island, New Zealand  
June 7, 2010**

**By ROBIN CHATERIS**

A visit to the notorious Colditz Castle was the highlight of a drive around eastern Europe by this former Otago Daily Times editor and his wife, Judi. The older among us well remember the names and exploits of Pat Reid, Airey Neave and numerous other Allied officers imprisoned during World War 2 in notorious Oflag 4C - Colditz Castle -- the Germans' so-called "escape-proof" prisoner-of-war camp.

We've read the books (more than 70 at last count), seen the films and the BBC television series and marvelled at the heroism and determination of these young men to escape the grim, foreboding castle and somehow cross at least 600km of enemy territory to the nearest neutral country.

So, to visit Colditz in early spring this year was, at first, something of a let-down.

The castle wasn't as "grim and foreboding" as I'd imagined.

The rocky crag on which it stood wasn't as high, the sheer drops all around not quite so steep, and the heavy-timbered gateway nowhere near as menacing -- or even guarded by German soldiers -- as the memory of those tales had them. Historical places first hand are sometimes like that; the mind can make veritable giants out of the merely larger-than-life, then reality intrudes.

Colditz Castle, still looming large above the little town of the same name, about 50km east of Leipzig in the far east of Germany, is now painted cream, not dirty brown; the River Mulde beneath burbles and gurgles between grassy, tree-lined banks; and the narrow cobbled roadway leading up and through the open gates seems more an invitation to explore a grand country home than a path to a prison.

Inside the gates, the two courtyards (the first used by the guards, the second by the prisoners) are compact, and quite sloping.

I had assumed they were large and flat, with barbed-wire fences.

"Appels", or roll calls, must have been cramped and awkward affairs, hemmed in by overpowering buildings, and there must have been a definite advantage for those playing down-slope in prisoners' games of "stoolball" [a team game somewhat like cricket and dating from at least as far back as medieval times].

The castle, owned now by the state of Saxony but generally empty, contains a small museum run by local residents.

Those rooms inside open to the public are small and relatively bare, although there are various displays and relics presented in what was the guardhouse (with its memorable stairway down which escapees dressed as German officers several times nervously descended) that make intriguing viewing.

Displays are in German and English, and there is an English-language tour on most days.

Rope ladders, fake uniforms, passes, train tickets, ration books, false buttons, a home-made wooden sewing machine and even a model of the famed glider that was built in the topmost roof cavity of the castle (and was almost ready for flight when the war ended) are among the items displayed. So is a fully-equipped radio room built by prisoners in the eaves of the castle and not discovered, apparently, until 1993.

All fascinating stuff, as expected.

But it was when we stood in the little courtyard and looked up at the plastered walls, 5m thick in places, the still-barred windows and the steep pitch of the various roofs that we began to realise just how difficult were the chances of escape for those imprisoned British, French, Polish, Dutch and Belgian officers.

And when we went outside and looked up from the grounds far below the castle and saw the height of the sheer plaster and rock walls on three sides (the German garrison was on the fourth side) and thought of the number of guards (outnumbering prisoners), the continuous floodlighting and the hostility of the local residents, our long-held awe of



the courage and persistence of those incarcerated here was reignited.

Records vary slightly but it seems there were 30 successful escapes from Colditz during the war -- "home-runs" -- and more than 150 unsuccessful attempts, many of which were "gone-aways" that failed.

There were more "home-runs" from Colditz than from any other prisoner of war camp in WW 2.

Early in the war, Adolf Hitler had personally approved the use of the 12th-century castle, or "schloss", as a special camp ("Sonderlager") for incorrigible Allied officers declared "enemies of the Reich" and for special prisoners such as relatives of Allied royalty or eminent leaders.

His nominated successor, Hermann Goering, had openly boasted it was "escape-proof".

Their later embarrassment, and that of the German military in general, led to officials of the

German Democratic Republic suppressing Colditz escape stories after the war in what became East Germany.

Authorities also wanted to demolish the castle, seen as a symbol of a more decadent era but it survived, firstly as an orphanage for displaced children, then as a hospital.

Like many public buildings in East Germany, it fell into disrepair but in recent years renovation and restoration have begun.

Today, a youth hostel occupies part of the castle. The museum staff at Colditz told us interest in the castle remains reasonably high, especially among English-speaking visitors.

A dozen other people came through the bitterly cold day we were there; just two days before, according to the visitors' book, an Australian couple had enjoyed "fulfilling the memories of our youth". Ditto for two Kiwi baby-boomers.

## *'Moondrop to Gascony'*

*A revised edition*

Anne-Marie Walters

Foreword: Professor M R D Foot, CBE

Introduction, postscript & notes: David Hewson

**The account of an SOE agent working in southwest France in 1944, republished in a new, enhanced edition.**

Anne-Marie Walters was just 20 years old when she parachuted into southwest France on a cold, moonlit night in January 1944 to work with the Resistance in preparation for the long-awaited Allied invasion. The daughter of a British father and a French mother, she was being sent to act as a courier for George Starr, head of the WHEELWRIGHT circuit of SOE. Over the next seven months Anne-Marie criss-crossed the region, carrying messages, delivering explosives, arranging the escape of downed airmen and receiving parachute drops of arms and personnel at dead of night -- living in constant fear of capture and torture by the Gestapo. Then, on the very eve of liberation, she was sent off on foot over the Pyrenees to Spain, carrying urgent despatches for London.

Anne-Marie Walters wrote *Moondrop to Gascony* immediately after the war, while the events were still vivid in her mind. It is a tale of high adventure, comradeship and kindness, of betrayals and appalling atrocities, and of the often unremarked courage of many ordinary French men and women who risked their lives to help drive German armies from French soil. And through it all shines Anne-Marie's quiet courage, a keen sense of humour and, above all, her pure zest for life.

*For inquiries:*

JAN DODD

<contact@moho-books.com>

<www.moho-books.com>

Writing in the immediate aftermath of the war, Anne-Marie largely used pseudonyms to protect those still alive. For this new edition, David Hewson has tracked down the real people behind the story through interviews, backed up by documentary evidence from the French and British archives. Alongside biographical details, maps and photographs, he also fills in the rest of Anne-Marie's own story, from her school days in Geneva to why she was sent back to London across the Pyrenees, and what happened to her in the post-war years.

**David Hewson** grew up in the south of Ireland and subsequently joined the British Army as a Regular Officer. It was during this period that he developed his interest in military history, after visiting the battlefields where his Regiment, The Blues and Royals, had fought during the campaigns of the last three centuries. He has lived in southwest France for 15 years, which has given him the opportunity to retrace many of the journeys made by Anne-Marie Walters and to meet a number of people who still remember her from 1944.

# Downed by flak, rescued by French

From the Atlanta (Ga.)  
Constitution  
Nov. 10, 1944

*He had to be coaxed and cajoled. He was bashful and didn't think he should talk about himself. He said he hadn't done anything, so why should he tell the newspaper about the past six months of his life?*

*Sgt. Harley Jones, tall, 21-year old boy, said he was tired of talking about the Army, telling how his friends were killed. He said he had been lucky and he would rather let it go at that.*

*But he was persuaded. If his friends read his story, maybe they wouldn't always be asking questions.*

*The story of Sgt. Jones is best told in his own words. He has lived a life few men know. No one can tell it the way he can.*

## WITH AIR CORPS

"I enlisted at Fort McPherson in January, '42, and went into the Air Corps. They sent me to Keesler Field, Miss., then out west to Denver, a couple of fields in Idaho, another in Florida and then to Salt Lake City. From Topeka Kan., I shipped overseas.

"When we got to our airdrome near London, I was armorer-gunner on a B-24 Liberator. We had not been over there long before we started our

## Saved by a 'Diphtheria' sign . . .

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missions. Of our first 23 missions, 18 were over Brunswick, Hamburg, Berlin, Friedrichshafen, and a few other German cities.

"Our 24th mission was against St. Martin Laholer, in France. That was June 29, 1942. We didn't come back from that one, not the way we thought we would, anyway.

## NO MILK RUN

"We took off early and it was supposed to be a 'milk run'.

"When we were about 30 seconds from the target the flak started, four bursts came up. We had just opened the bomb bay. Three of the bursts hit us direct and the fourth was a near miss right under the nose. It was near enough to kill the navigator and bombardier.

"The other three bursts exploded us in midair. We were still carrying a dozen 500-pound bombs and about 2,000 gallons of fuel. You can imagine the mess it made.

"What was left of the plane went into a dive with those of us still alive trying to go out the escape hatch. The pilot was still in his cockpit fighting

the dive but he couldn't do much to stop us. We were goners.

"The last thing I remember I felt the plane "belly up", do a slow roll. Then I felt myself falling and somehow the parachute had opened. I still don't know how. Probably concussion.

I hit in some woods near Dieppe and my chute caught in a tree. I wasn't hurt badly, just scared and shaken up. After a few minutes of swinging the limb broke and I hit the ground.

"That was where I cracked a bone in my leg. The limb fell on top of me and it was a good while before I could work free. My leg was giving me fits.

"Had to hide my Mae West and chute and while I was at it I saw a French girl in a clearing. She was carrying two buckets of milk and acted like she didn't see me. I knew she had, though.

"It wasn't long before five Frenchmen came running up and motioned that the Boche were close and for me to hide in the direction they pointed.

"I managed to hide a little way off. You would be surprised what you can do if you are scared. I couldn't stand the pain in my leg much longer and finally another Frenchman came for me.

"He put me in a wheelbarrow and took me to a house. He turned out to be the underground doctor. He gave me civilian clothes and kept me in his house for almost two months.

"How was it the Boche didn't find me? Well, the doctor put a sign over my door. It said 'Diphtheria.'

"On August 30 and 31 the Canadians attacked Dieppe and St. Seans, our little village. Of course they freed me right away and sent me to Caen. From there I flew to England."

Before he joined the Army Sgt. Jones attended Hoke Smith Junior High and Commercial High schools in Atlanta and graduated from R. E. Lee High in Jacksonville.



**SGT. HARLEY M. JONES**  
Chuluota, Fla.  
E&E# 1872, 445th BG



# Family unearths story of war hero

From the Panama City, Fla., News-Herald  
May 31, 2010

By **DAVID ADLERSTEIN**

*Florida Freedom Newspapers*

When Ken Tucker began a memoir on his adventures as a tail gunner on a B-17 bomber, he didn't expect it would be the first bit of welcome news to the family of the one man in the squadron who didn't come home from the war.

Nor did he expect to finally learn the tragic fate that befell the squadron's beloved navigator 65 years earlier.

In his memoir "Last Roll Call," the Panama City retiree, who turned 85 last week, wrote admiringly of 2nd Lt. Halsey Nisula, the man standing alongside him in the 1944 photo of the 414th Bomb Squadron, next to their plane, the "Kwiturbitchin."

"I liked him immediately because he was quiet, like me," wrote Tucker, the youngest in the squadron. Later, he wrote, the squadron would discover "Nisula was the best navigator we could possibly have hoped for."

There were stories of comic exploits and courage under fire, but the events of Feb. 25, 1945, on a bombing mission from their base in Amendola,

Italy over Linz, Austria, left Tucker with his most painful memory, and mystery, of the war.

Because of Nisula's skills, he was much sought-after by the missions' lead pilots, Tucker wrote. When a high-ranking pilot flew the lead plane that day, he secured Nisula to help guide it. The Kwiturbitchin's pilot and copilot were keeping a close eye on the lead plane when they saw it hit, and reported seven parachutes plummeting from the plane.

"Talk about an upset bunch of guys," wrote Tucker. "We all thought the world of Halsey and felt so privileged to have him on our crew. That trip home was a sad one because all we could think about was Halsey should have been with us."

"For the rest of my tour, we never heard anything," wrote Tucker. "We just knew we had lost a good man."

After the war, the crew's ball turret gunner told Tucker the Red Cross reported Nisula landed safely, was captured and later shot trying to escape, but he doubted that account.

"I just never could believe Halsey was shot in an escape attempt," Tucker told his daughter, Wanda Goodwin, his co-author. "He was too smart for that."

## Nisula grandchildren find memoir online

Halsey Nisula, a popular athlete, swimmer and track star for the Gardner (Mass.) High School Wildcats, graduated in 1939 and, when war broke out, decided to join the Air Corps.

"I know my mother didn't want him to go, but he felt it was his duty," said Virginia Nisula Timmerman, Halsey's younger sister by five years. Alice Nisula, a widow raising five children back home, didn't learn her son had been a prisoner of war, only that he was missing in action, until the summer day in 1945 when she received a letter from the War Department, informing her of his death in Mauthausen, a notorious concentration camp.

News of her son's death hit Alice Nisula hard, and

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*Gathered at the Nisula family plot in Gardner, Mass., are at left, Mandy (Nisula) Ostaszewski with her three children, Lana, Logan and Laci Ostaszewski, Mandy's father, Dave Nisula, at right and Virginia (Nisula) Timmerman, center.*

(Continued on Page 8)

(Continued from Page 7)

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she never quite recovered, Timmerman said.

"She never talked about it too much. She was so hurt when he was killed, it changed her whole life," she said. "She always said, 'I wish it had been me instead of him.'"

"From then on she was just a changed woman. She didn't enjoy life anymore," said Timmerman. "It changed the whole family. We couldn't get her interested in anything."

The Nisula children mirrored their mother's silent stoicism, and rarely discussed the circumstances of the little they knew of their brother's wartime experiences and the circumstances of his death.

Timmerman's great-niece, Mandy Ostaszewski, now married with three little children in Ayer, Mass., would ask her a lot about the war years, but still there remained pieces that needed filling in.

"She asked me often about this, that or the other thing," said Timmerman. "Much of it I don't know. We were a very closed-mouthed family. We never discussed anything."

"Mandy is just into this ancestry thing very deeply," she said. "She reads books and she goes to the library and works very hard in it."

One book Ostaszewski happened to find on the Internet was Tucker's "Last Roll Call," as did her second cousin, James Nisula, a police officer in Austin, Texas.

When each learned of Tucker's book, they were eager to read it.

She knew of her great-uncle's exploits, growing up visiting the family plot at Greenbower Cemetery where a plaque had been dedicated in his honor. His body was never recovered, forever resting in a mass grave where once stood Mauthausen.

"I grew up visiting that plot and seeing the flag placed on his marker every Memorial Day," Ostaszewski wrote Goodwin, to share her excitement at reading a first-person account of the war from Tucker, a man who held Halsey Nisula in such high esteem.

"I feel like I know him a little better now."

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And it makes me happy to know he was the kind of guy that I had always thought he was, very much like my own grandfather," she wrote.

"What we had never understood was why he wasn't flying with his crew that day. We weren't ever sure why his whole crew didn't end up in the camp."

### Tucker, in turn, learns the truth

Just as the Nisula family learned more about Halsey, so too did Tucker finally discover the fate that had awaited the downed navigator: execution.

The family had long been told Nisula's death came on April 12, 1945, the same day of President Roosevelt's death. Nisula's German captors reportedly wanted to celebrate their foe's demise, and did so by shooting two Allied prisoners.

But through his research, James Nisula had unearthed a 1994 book by historian Mitchell Bard entitled "Forgotten Victims: The Abandonment of Americans in Hitler's Camps."

In it, Bard documents evidence of Nisula's death, recounted by both the commandant of Mauthausen as well as OSS (Office of Strategic Services) Lt. Jack Taylor, the only American ever to testify at a concentration camp trial.

Taylor had spent six weeks at Mauthausen, and testified that in March and April 1945, as many as 500 prisoners were dying of starvation there each day, and others through gassing and burning. Taylor said he had seen the dog tags of two American officers, including Nisula, Bard wrote.

Bard also wrote of a deathbed confession that included harrowing details of what may have been Nisula's execution:

"The camp adjutant, Viktor Zoller, testified that he was called in to take part in the execution of three parachute agents whom he believed to be British or American," wrote Bard. "Ziereis said he had been looking forward to killing them for a long time and wanted to give them the 'honor' of being shot by SS leaders. The prisoners were brought in and told to face the wall. Ziereis, Zoller and a third man then shot each in the back of the head."

The story of Nisula's death completed the



last unknown details of a friend's death for the one man from the squadron still alive to remember their exploits together.

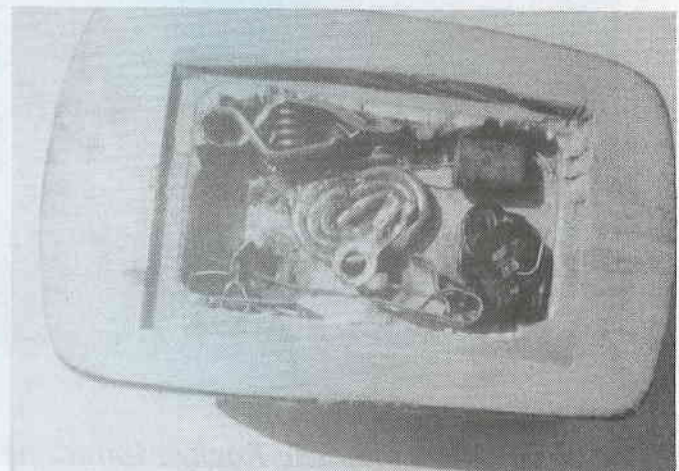
It enlivened the aspirations of a hero's legacy for a new generation of young parents, such as great-niece Megan Nisula Valentine, who wrote Tucker a thank-you note.

"It feels so good to know that the pride we have always felt about him is justified," wrote Valentine. "I am filled with pride for a man who I never knew, but whose blood runs through my veins. And I am so happy that I will be able to share with my future children the legacy of a hero in our family. Thank you, Mr. Tucker, for writing it all down."

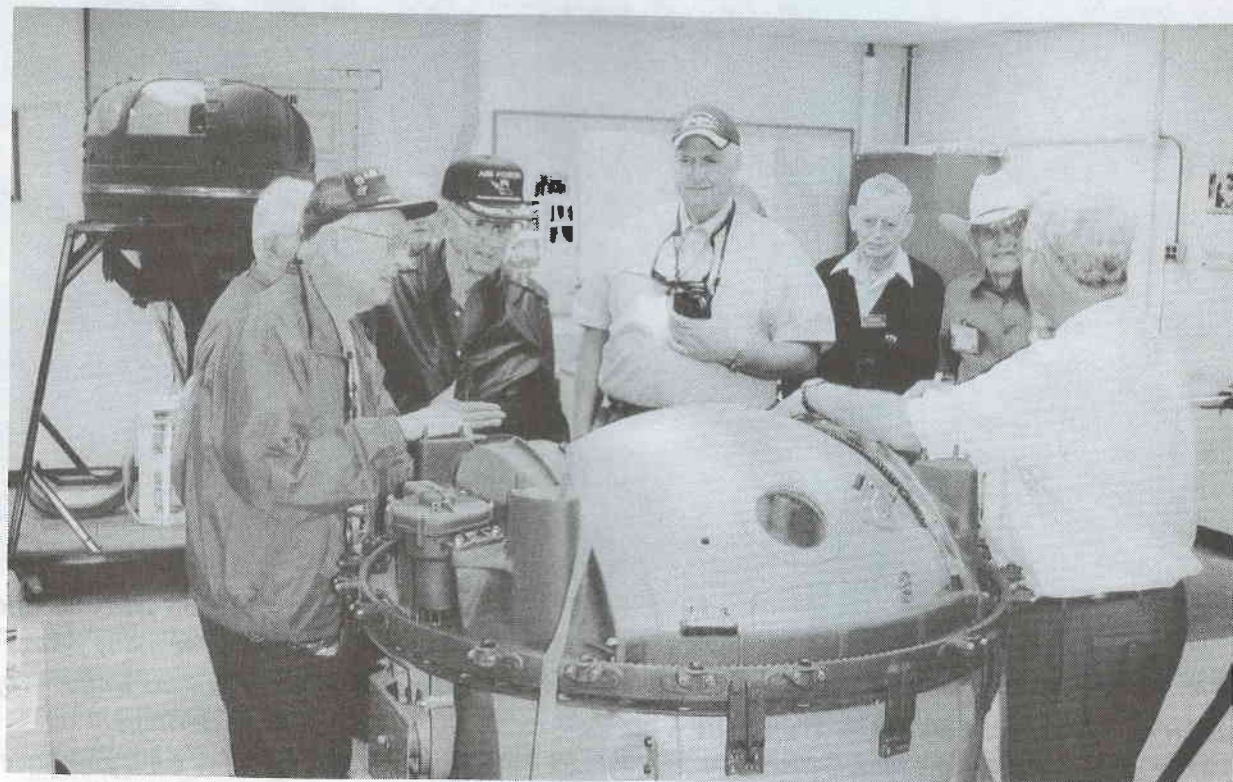
And for Timmerman, the book came as a bittersweet insight into the dedication and love of her older brother, and that of present-day soldiers who lay down sacrifices for their country.

"I cried halfway through it," she said. "It was very hard for me to read that book, because it still is sad memories for me... I try not to think about his death. I try to think about him as being my big brother, who lent me his car when he was in the service."

## *MIS-X craftsman hid radio in hairbrushes*

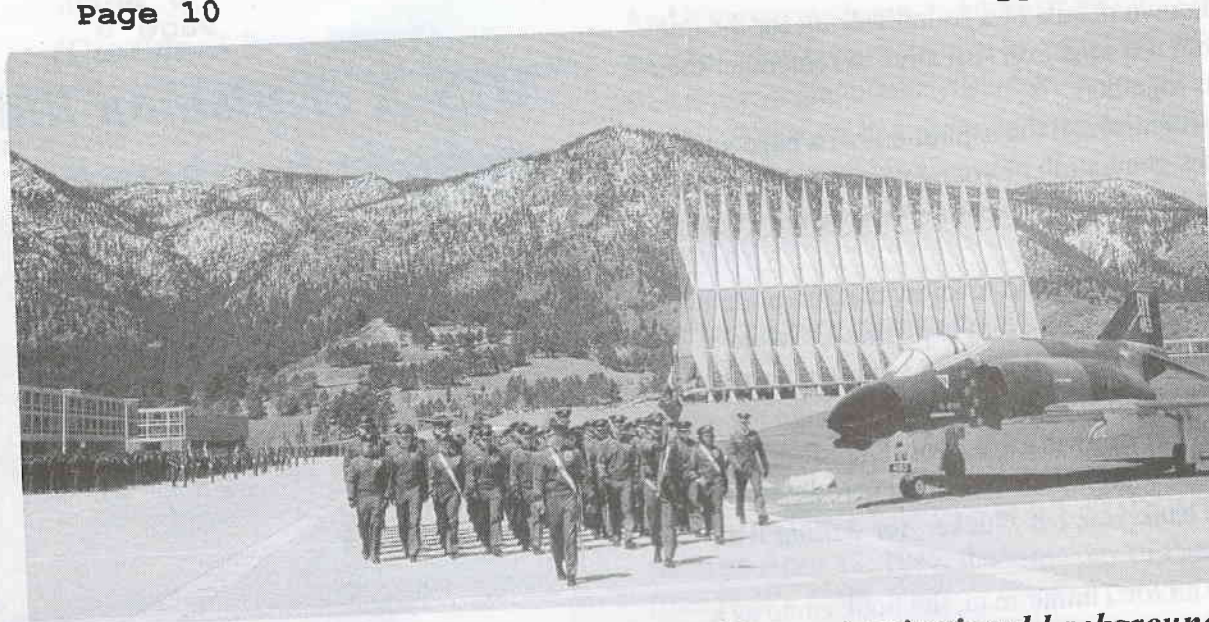


Sergeant Sam Haines, a MIS-X craftsman, concealed radios within hairbrushes. He carefully sawed them in half, hollowed them out, installed the radio components, and glued them back together. When finished, his brushes were externally identical to regular brushes.



*Art Mattson explains what a ball turret is like to a group visiting the Dayton Museum during the 2009 AFEES reunion.*





*A backdrop of the majestic Rocky Mountains provides an inspirational background for the Cadet Chapel at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. The chapel was the site for the traditional memorial service at the 2010 reunion last May.*



*It was an emotional moment when Regina Sarnow, daughter of deceased Evader Hank Sarnow, met Co de Swart, Dutch organizer of the Baker Crew reunion at the 2010 AFEES meeting.*



*Steve Mac Isaac, AFEES Director and Hospitality Maestro for many years, does not hesitate to don the uniform of his Scottish heritage. Again, Mac, merci for what you have done for AFEES -- and continue to do!*



# 2010 reunion legacy lives on and on!

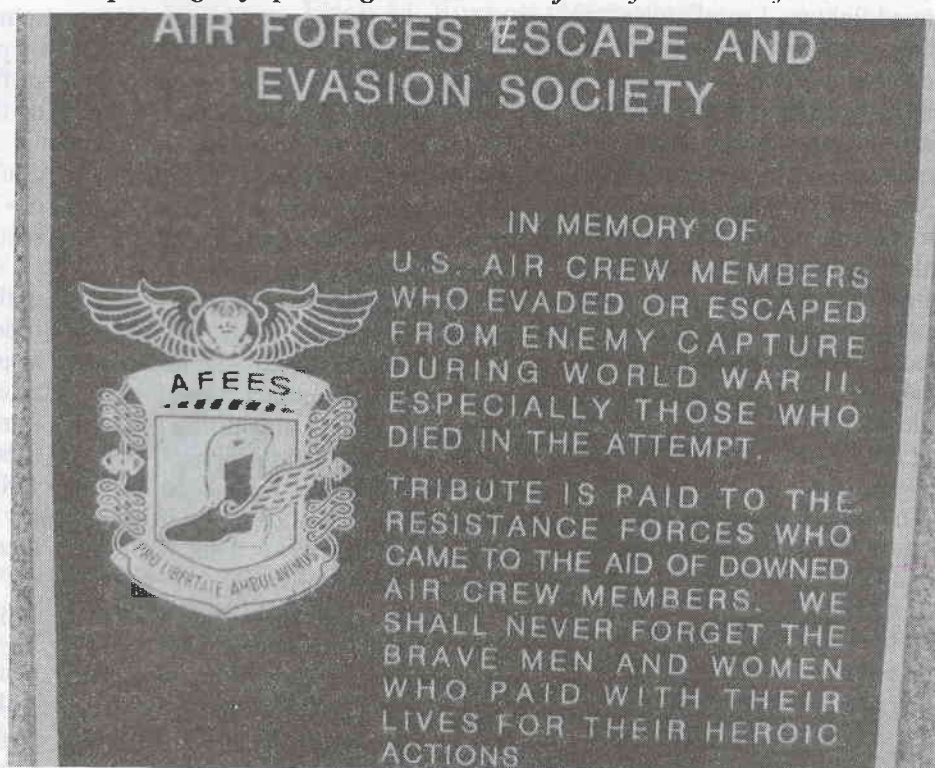
**Next Mission:  
San Antonio,  
Texas**



*Life Member Robert Wilson of Peoria, Ill., related some of his experiences with the 483rd BG, 15th Air Force, to a classroom of cadets at the AF Academy as part of the 2010 reunion. Several members had the privilege of speaking to members of today's academy students.*



*Betty Hennessy, our recording secretary, lights a candle at the traditional memorial service at Colorado Springs.*



*This memorial plaque at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo., was dedicated in 1988 when AFEES members met for the reunion in Denver.*

*A delegation from that reunion attended the dedication at the academy. A total of 113 evaders, 40 Helpers, 10 members of the RCAF, and 109 friends and family members registered for the reunion 22 years ago.*



# Ploesti: #40, 04-04-44, 1400 hrs.

*By 1st. Lt. John (Jack) Rhoades  
719th Sqdn - 449th Gp.*

I reported to the 719th Squadron in Italy in January 1944 as a B-24 co-pilot and three days later flew my first mission over Northern Italy. A 7-hour milk run, but then the missions started to get rough. I began to realize that a fellow could get hurt up there when the "Yellow Nose" ME's began to jump us and the flak got heavier and thicker.

We continued hitting targets in Germany, and other countries, until that fateful Group Mission #40 on 4/4/44 at 1400 hours over Bucharest.

That day when we were being taken on by the entire Rumanian Air Force (and they were damned good pilots) as well as countless German manned fighters, I recall one enemy fighter actually rolling upside down as he came at us from 12:00 o'clock dead level firing as he roared over us so close our "green house shook" with his passing.

We were all under attack and badly hurt. Our plane had three engines feathering and burning with the control cables shot out and we were skewing all over the sky. Pilot Dick Kendall yelled at me to get on the pedals and the wheel and hold them while we got the crew out. He then rang the "BAIL OUT" alarm to signal the rear crew.

The rest of us got out of that doomed plane anyway we could. I had always made it a habit to keep a pair of G.I. hiking shoes behind my seat (In case I crash landed and had to walk out of enemy territory). I was flying in a pair of newly issued English high, fleece lined boots instead. However, by the time I got my oxygen mask, throat mike, flak vest, steel helmet and seat belt off-- and my chest chute pack on-- I had no time nor desire to change into those G.I. shoes.

I dove through the bomb bay from the navigator's deck just to get out of there in one piece. The whole period

probably took one minute, but it seemed like hours until that parachute opened with a most painful (but welcome) jerk. I remember thinking that I would never be a father again after that jolt.

As I drifted down under that beautiful chute, I had time to survey the sky and the countryside. It looked like a paratroop invasion, with white and colored enemy chutes by the dozens---either in the sky or already on the ground. In addition, the horizon was dotted with fires of burning planes, both American and enemy.

I was also so engrossed that I hit the ground sideways -without warning- and badly sprained my right ankle. Later it was discovered to be a multiple fracture.

Sgt. Gerald Danison, our Flight Engineer, hit the ground close to me and after collecting our wits and discussing the situation, we decided to abandon our chutes. We could see unidentified soldiers with search dogs, trucks and peasant carts in the distance, but we had not been discovered and escape seemed possible.

We crawled several hundred yards to a hedge row until dark and then, with Sgt. Danison supporting me under one arm, and the help of the little compass from the escape kit, we covered several miles in a westward direction before dawn. That night we slept in a corn shuck pile.

The next day I fashioned a crutch from a forked stick and instructed Danison to keep proceeding due west and then rest until I caught up with him. (I kept my hands on the compass because Danny could not read one.)

We were terribly thirsty, but the concentrated food bars seemed to give us nourishment. They tasted like molasses covered sawdust. In search of water, we came upon some wagon ruts in the road with green stagnant water.

In desperation, I filled my rubber

water bottle and used the Holocene tablets thoughtfully supplied in the escape kit for water purification. The instructions said to use just one, two if the water seemed polluted. I used four and after a brief (very brief) waiting period, we quaffed that awful mess like vintage wine.

After the third day, my ankle was swollen and purple with a red inflammation running up my leg to the knee. I had a fever and I realized our plans of escape were hopeless. It was with a feeling of relief, I suppose, when we were finally discovered by a peasant working in his field. He loaded us into a cart and took us to a German garrison in a little town called Giurgiu.

We were treated courteously and that night we ate well. I remember some thick vegetable soup followed by pork chops and potatoes. I was stuffed when they offered us seconds on the meat which I refused.

Sgt. Danison said, "Lieutenant, I don't normally criticize anything you do- but don't ever, ever, turn down seconds on pork chops."

After several days of confinement in their local garrison, I was as ordered to shave and clean up as best as possible. We were going "for a ride". I recall that the car was an immaculate old Chevy and I was accompanied by a German captain. I can also recall that I was carried to the car under the arms by two husky German orderlies who wiped the mud off my boots before I was allowed to step on the upholstery. With some misgivings, we were driven to a local cemetery where I noticed, with a sinking feeling, about a dozen newly dug graves. I felt certain that one of these pits was for me.

However, after alighting, they politely asked me to try to identify any of the remains of the many bodies (and parts of bodies) laid out beside the graves. Most were horribly burned and dismembered beyond

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(Continued on next page.)



recognition. stenciled name on the parachute harness.

The funeral and burial were completed with dignity and a number of the local peasant women tearfully placed flowers on the graves. Afterwards, I thanked the German officer for the solemnity and Christian burial and he shrugged and said, "Of course. They were soldiers."

I was later taken under guard by train to Bucharest Garrison where I was united with about a dozen of my surviving fellow officers and many of our enlisted men from the original mission. Others not accounted for were hospitalized in other places.

The remainder of our imprisonment is history until our release in September 1944.

(1st Lt. Jack Rhoades of  
Richmond Heights, Mo.,  
died April 12, 1994)

## WWII vet receives DFC at Pentagon

WASHINGTON (AFNS) -- A World War II veteran received recognition for the heroism he displayed 65 years ago in the sky above Nazi Germany, during a ceremony July 19 in the Pentagon's Hall of Heroes.

Retired Col. Claude M. Schonberger received the Distinguished Flying Cross for his actions Feb. 16, 1945, from Lt. Gen. David A. Deptula, the deputy chief of staff for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance at Headquarters Air Force here.

"I am in awe and ecstatic to be in the Hall of Heroes for this presentation," Colonel Schonberger said. "It is indeed a great privilege and honor to receive the Distinguished Flying Cross for my actions in World War II."

"I share the Distinguished Flying Cross award with my former B-24 (Liberator) crew members who flew with me on most of my missions, many who were fatally injured," the retired colonel said.

General Deptula praised Colonel Schonberger's heroic actions,



*Erich Burkert, who shot down OUR BABY BEE in 1943, looks at the wreckage in de Bilt, hometown of 7-year-old Co de Swart.*

## Message from daughter of a Luftwaffe pilot

From Gisela Burkert, Berlin, Germany,  
Daughter of WWII Luftwaffe pilot Jagdflieger  
Erich M. Burkett (1909-1944)

*Read at the meeting of the Baker Crew descendants and friends  
on May 8 at the AFEES reunion.*

*Translated and provided by Co de Swart, The Netherlands*

This message is for you, children of American WWII airmen, present in meeting each other these days in May 2010 remembering the crews of two B-17s shot down by my father in 1943 during that horrible war.

My well-meant regards to you this way, as, though I wanted, I cannot be there with you today, to give you my words personally.

My Dad, Erich Burkert -- I never knew him -- as a soldier and fighter pilot, caused much pain, grief and sorrows to you and to your families. I realize that so well.

It is my great wish that, though there'll always be a shadow over your lives and mine, a feeling peace may be -- and stay -- in your hearts and souls.

For us all, as children of those who fought this war, but also victims of this war, it is our dedication to plant the seeds of tolerance and modesty in the hearts of new generations, getting away from former enemy ideas, but also to give them the signs and warnings for dangerous clouds.

I hope and pray that leaders of this world in the future will stay on speaking terms with those who threaten this world with war but also without losing self-respect and our roots. That's our mission for generations who come after us. In respect and with greetings,

GISELA BURKERT  
Spring 2010



# The Partisans cared for Michael

By MICHAEL A. MODICA

Reading, Mass.

15th AF, 97th BG

*(From a Veterans Day program presented at his church in 1994.)*

On Dec. 3, 1944, I had just turned 19, the youngest in my crew. I was a ball turret gunner in the "Flying Fortress," a B-17, flying out of Amendola Airfield in Foggia, Italy. It was Mission #396 and we were heading for the southeast section of the Vienna marshalling yards (railroad yards) in Austria. Our primary targets were oil fields, transportation, bridges, rail yards, etc. This was our first mission together as a crew. Our first two missions were flown with other, more experienced crews.

We had not yet gotten to our target when we were hit by flak on #3 engine. The engine caught fire and the prop started to windmill, a shattering vibration. The pilot, Lt. Charles Roth, got different headings. We were losing altitude. The pilot thought the prop would break off and crash into the aircraft so he gave the order to bail out.

Just at that time, the togglier, substituting for our regular bombardier, told the navigator of a similar experience he had had and stated that the prop, after breaking off, would fall under the aircraft. The navigator called the pilot relating the togglier's experience. With that information the pilot asked the crew if they wanted to chance getting back to base. In the meantime, the five crew members in the rear had already bailed out.

The crew was Radio Operator Robert Kimble, Ball Turret Gunner Michael Modica, Right Wing Gunner Elmer Humphrey, Left Wing Gunner James Addington and Tail Gunner Milton Moen.

When the pilot gave the order to bail out, I swung the ball around to exit into the aircraft, opened the hatch and climbed out. Since ball turret space is cramped, my chute and walking shoes were outside the ball. Because there was no heat in the aircraft and temperatures could go to 60 degrees below zero, we all wore heated slippers and suits. I hooked on my chute and then discovered that the rip cord handle was on the wrong side. I asked the radio operator (Bob Kimble) to help me remove the chute so I could reverse it. He was having such difficulty unhooking the chute that I managed to remove and reverse it myself. The chute was a chest pack.

Milton Moen, tail gunner, said the tail was shaking. He did not hear the order to bail out. Addington bailed out first. Kimble was to be next, then me. With a runaway

engine, the pilot couldn't feather the props. He had lost control of the plane. The propeller broke off after the five crew members had bailed out. It was then that the plane quieted down and the pilot, co-pilot, engineer, navigator and bombardier returned to their base.

I proceeded to the waist door to jump out when I realized that I did not have my boots. I ran back toward the ball turret to get them. The waist gunner (Hank Humphrey) was standing by for me to jump. He thought I had chickened out and went after me to throw me out until he saw me returning with my boots in hand.

I was trained to count to 10, clear the aircraft slipstream, hold my hand on the ripcord and, in my left hand, hold tight to my boots (laces were tied together). With this procedure in mind, I jumped.

After the count of 10, I pulled the ripcord. The chute opened flawlessly -- and my boots were still clutched in my left hand.

Suddenly everything was quiet. I could see clouds below. I was floating peacefully down when I panicked. A "V" formation was coming toward me. I thought they were the enemy and were going to shoot me down. I tried to spill the chute by tugging on the shroud lines, thinking I would take a free fall than get shot up in the air. I had no success in spilling the chute. Then I realized that the "V" formation was a flock of birds. If I had had a quick-release type of harness--the type used over water -- I would be missing today.

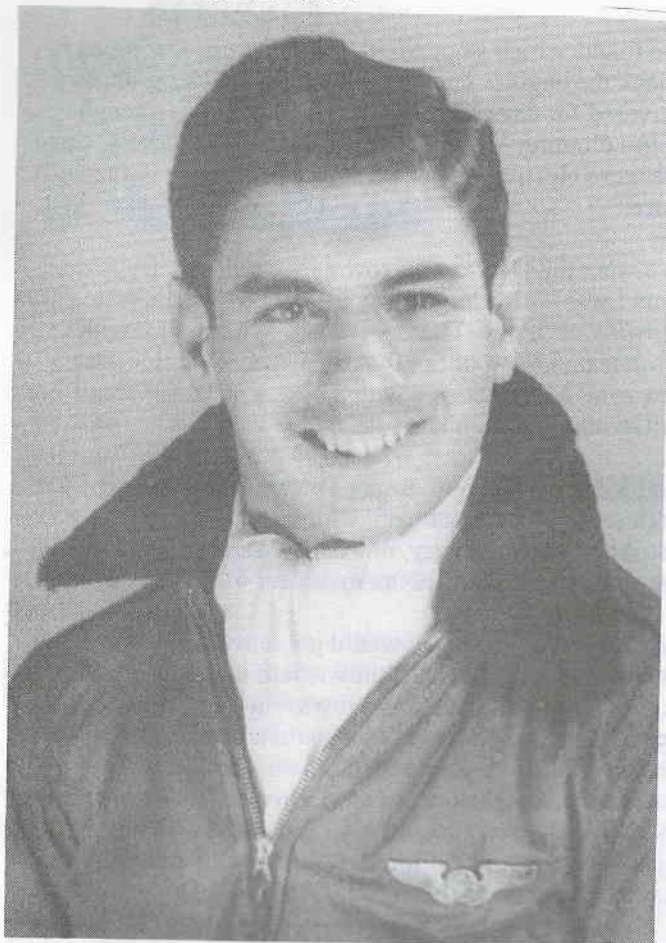
Robert Kimble, a 21-year-old married father, was never found after he bailed out. He was the only crewmate never found.

I heard small arms firing below as I descended through a layer of clouds -- and then another layer. Suddenly the land was coming toward me very quickly. I was heading for a garden with stakes in the ground on which I expected I would be impaled. But a gust of wind blew me over to the edge of a wooded area and I became hung up in the trees.

Before I had a chance to look around, I saw men coming toward me. They wore caps with red stars and had their rifles pointed at me. I called out "American" in every language I could think of. Also I was wearing an American flag armband. The men started cheering me and began making preparations to cut me down. Several of the group had stringed instruments and began playing music as I was being freed.

Once on the ground the commandant of the 18th Brigade, Milan Savo(sp?), introduced himself to me.





**AIRMAN MICHAEL MODICA IN 1943**

(Note: I have a gold signet ring given to me by the Commandant. It is inscribed with M/S entwined and on the inside it reads "Hilde.") The men were passing around a bottle of clear liquid. When it was passed to me I took a heavy swig and gasped for breath. The men were all laughing and joking. The drink was Yugoslavian rockia, similar to Russian vodka.

I found that I was with a group of Marshall Tito's partisans. They took me over to the edge of a hill, gave me a pair of binoculars and pointed out the enemy on the other side of the hill. They were fighting a band of Ustachi (Yugoslavian Fascists). Had I landed with them, just several hundred feet away, as I expect Kimble did, I would also be among the missing today.

I had had nothing to eat since a 5 a.m. pre-flight breakfast. The Partisans fed us apples and gave us more roccia to drink as we retreated through the woods. Food was scarce. Bullets were flying around us as we retreated. I was getting pretty high and starting to stumble through the woods. When night fell, we placed white cloths in our epaulets so we could follow each other in a single line as we filed through enemy lines. I could hear the Ustachi asking "Who's there?" Then the snorting of horses and sounds of captive enemy guards

as they were taken to the side and shot.

My buddy Milton Moen had landed in a tree, upside down, injuring his leg/hip. He had to cut himself down. He slipped to the ground and passed out. He then took out his compass and headed east toward the Adriatic -- perhaps two hours. He was hiding behind a tree when he saw two Partisans. When we bailed out it was probably late afternoon. The Partisans were looking for crewman Kimble. There was a small battle between the Partisans and the Ustachi.

We were then taken to a house full of Partisans. They were playing music and dancing. Some were women wearing hand grenades in their belts. We rested a while and then were given horses. I had never ridden before. Luckily the horse followed the others through the woods in single file. I was bouncing against the horse's back - could not get the rhythm or stride of the horse when the commandant rode beside me and gave me some pointers, calling "Avanti, Comrade." However, I could only manage to hang onto the horse's neck and hold on to my .45 as we dashed through the woods.

We slept in the mountains on pine boughs with parachutes for cover. We walked down to a German plane and caught hell for this. They said we could have been shot.

We stopped at a farmhouse. The Partisans took us in and we asked for food. The farm people were making blood sausage -- quite messy. They then fried some for us, which we were glad to have. I had never eaten blood sausage before, nor have I since.

I can recall once when my buddy Milton Moen and I were taken into a house in Yugoslavia for a night's sleep. There were all women in the house. They led us to the beds and stood there waiting for us to get into bed. "Moe" and I were embarrassed to get undressed in front of them. However, we had no choice but to undress and get in. The mattresses and covering were filled with feathers or down such that we sank in and almost disappeared. It was comfortable and restful.

I can remember riding in a small cart drawn by an ox. It was raining hard. Everything seemed dismal and miserable; I was lonely. At other times I walked. The Partisans were leading us to a possible air landing site so that we could be flown back to our base. Each time we arrived at a landing strip we found it marked with bomb craters. Finally the Partisans took us up to a mountain site in the Papuk Mountains. We had rough log cabins -- no other facilities. We slept on beanpoles resting on wooden horses -- very uncomfortable. We had a few old

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*(Continued on next page.)*



## FROM PAGE 15

paperback books that we used for toilet tissue and for making cigarettes.

The Partisans gave us a quota of one tobacco leaf every several days. We would roast them on a tin over a fire and then roll them up with pages from our dual usage book. Not very good, but better than nothing. We were contacted by an English military mission who supplied us with a bar of Lifebuoy soap. I twisted some twine around a stick, rubbed it with the soap and brushed my teeth. I bathed using mountain water running down hollowed-out logs while standing next to a reflector fire. That is, a stack of wood behind the fire to reflect the heat to us.

There was snow all around. It was cold -- very cold -- but at least we were clean. We had no blankets -- only the clothes on our back. We dined on pieces of hard sausage and more rockia. Once I had to sleep in an open field. I woke up to find mice crawling over me. I had to get up and sleep leaning against a tree.

The Partisans led us down the mountain to a river -- the Drava. Once ferried across, we met and were turned over to the Russians. As we were ferried across on crude rafts, we were being bombed by Ustachi in small bi-wing planes. They were dropping homemade cement bombs with poor-enough accuracy that we all got across with only minor casualties.

Across the river in Hungary, the Russians had huge fires going with which we warmed ourselves - hot in front and freezing in back. The Russians gave us fur hats with a red star. It sure helped to fight the cold. We then were placed into trucks.

The weather was very cold (I was glad I had gone back for my shoes on the plane), and it was cold in the rear of

## FALL 2010

the trucks which stopped, it seemed, every few miles to check the engine. They would not let us ride in the cab. I shivered for days on this trip. We didn't have enough warm clothing -- only flying togs and light jackets, since we wore electrically heated suits and slippers in the ball turret.

We were then led to a narrow gauge railroad. By this time I was with a large group of people, which was growing each day. These were Allied airmen: English, American, Union of South Africa, Canadian, to name a few -- all having been downed by enemy anti-aircraft fire or German fighter planes.

The Russians had burlap sacks on board containing salt pork strips and black bread, which they rationed out to us. When you're hungry, this is like a treat. At one point, we were taken to a Russian mess hall to eat.

When evening came we would get into small groups and knock on doors, asking if they would take us in for a night's sleep. At one house, it was my turn. The occupant of the house said he could accommodate one person. When I was led to the room I noticed two double size beds and wondered why they didn't take in more of us. Since Hungary was pro-Nazi, I was suspicious and moved furniture against the door. I stayed awake all night with my .45 in hand.

The next morning I understood why they let in only one soldier. They had an attractive young daughter. I thought they were brave to let in even one soldier, especially with a .45 in hand. They made me a fairly decent breakfast with what they managed to scrape up. Later a Russian came into the house and directed me to a truck at the corner of the street. When I got to the truck a Russian handed me a piece of meat about the size of a large roast. I took this back to the house and gave it to them. They cooked it for supper and we all enjoyed that meal.

The next day as I was walking down the street, a Russian on horseback stopped. He handed me a sword and scabbard or sheath, and then rode away. I was returned to my base after 43 days.

## GRAND AVENUE

QUESTION:  
DEFINE NEWTON'S  
LAW OF GRAVITY:



Old people tend to  
gravitate toward  
Wayne Newton's  
music.



# Being careless led to capture in the Balkans

From the **FLYING FORTRESS  
NEWS LETTER,**  
September 2010

By **CHARLES (Jack) WILSON**  
97th Bomb Group

I was assigned as a new 2nd Lt. with a replacement crew at the base at Foggia, Italy, early in the war. My first mission was to Northern Italy in mid-July.

Most of our missions were about 8 hours long over the Adriatic Sea, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Rumania and Poland. Some times we were given credit for two missions rather than one..

We were shot down on #24 on Aug. 27, 1944, as we left the target, Bleckhammer, near Osewicz in Poland. I landed by parachute in Czechoslovakia, and walked for the rest of the day.

After dark, a band of Partisans led me to a hiding place in a potato bin under a small house.

Their leader was Alexander Dubeck, who later became the political leader of the Czechoslovakia nation. Old tattered clothes were given to me to wear over my uniform.

I was given travel directions and walked through the mountains near the Polish border for several more days.

Partly because the natives were so friendly, I became less cautious and I was captured..

Being careless about my cover and hiding was a hard lesson to learn, particularly when I found out later that the tail gunner, Sgt. Silas Crase, who bailed out there too, made it all the way back to Allied territory. He managed to evade for the remainder of the war.

*Ed. Note: AFEES Life Member Sgt. Silas Crase now lives in Columbus, Ga.*



## Royal Air Forces Escaping Society

CANADIAN BRANCH

### Excerpts from July 2010 newsletter

#### IN MEMORY

James Donald Fulton passed away Dec. 26, 2009, in Truro, NS

Monique Bauset, wife of Pierre Bauset, passed away Nov. 27, 2009, at Montreal

Hugh Alexander McIvor Cleve passed away May 28, 2010, at the George Derby Centre, Vancouver.

Madam Renee Roussel passed away April 26, 2010, age 94.. She and her husband were Ray Sherk's helpers. She was an RAFES guest in Canada in 1979 with Louisette Bouchez.

From Diana Morgan, July 3, 2010: I'm off to Poland next week with 8 other members of ELMS including "Nadine" (Andree Dumon, sister of Miichou) and we will visit the camp where her father died and then look around Wroclaw and Krakow for a few days.

Ray and Heather Sherk returned from France last October to visit Ray's helpers. Here is an excerpt from a draft translation of the text from the Courier Picard newspaper:

Sixty-five years ago, Raymond Sherk's Canadian aircraft crashed in the Haute Somme. His recent return visit was made more smoothly. The ceremony was held in the presence of those who helped him.

Sixty-five years ago the crash of his plane and parachute landing beside Auchonvillers, Raymond Sherk was received during a moving ceremony at the Mairie de Mailly-Maillet. An exhibition recounting the events was shown there.

After being rescued, namely by Rene Muchembled in March 1944, he met the daughter, granddaughter and great-granddaughter of the man who served as his guide.

First collected by Louis and Jeanne Serre, farmers, and Louis Feret. Raymond Sherk was then supported by a network of French civilians. After providing him with false papers, they helped him to return to England via Paris, Bordeaux and Spain.

This cost Rene Muchembled his life, as he was executed by German forces on July 10, 1944.



**100THBG.COM****100TH BOMB GROUP (HEAVY)***The Bloody Hundredth*

Sunday July 19, 2009



The Flying Boot patch was awarded to airmen who evaded capture and "walked out" of occupied territory.

**Introduction by Michael Faley****100th Bomb Group Foundation Historian:**

We have been very fortunate to have a gentlemen, Michael Moores LeBlanc, provide us with information previously unavailable to us, and he is willing to share this information with our veterans, families and historians.

As you will see in the coming weeks, this section will grow with information on our men who "walked out" with the help of Belgian civilians, under penalty of death. We hope you will view this material, ask Michael questions and provide him with info you may have for his research which he in turn is passing on to us. We are happy to welcome his expertise and passion to our website. Welcome aboard, Michael!



George P. Gineikis



Harold L. Pope

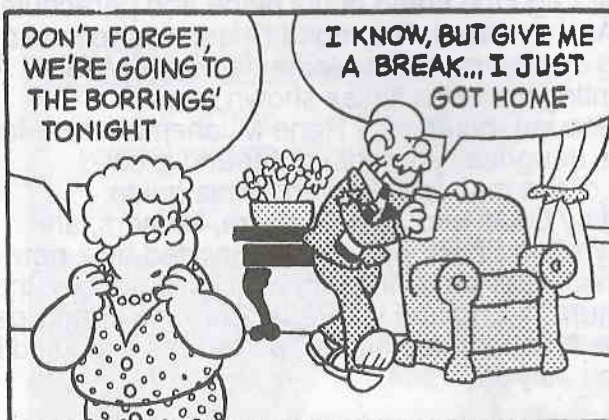
**Introduction by Michael Moores LeBlanc****Explanation of E&E Report Content:**

Though evaders were debriefed when they reached Spain, their E&E numbers (American designation) or SPG numbers (British Commonwealth Forces) weren't assigned until they had been debriefed & interrogated in London when they returned there. E&E numbers from 1 to about 675 represent Americans who reached England before D-Day. (For the British this number is ca SPG 2,000). Generally speaking airmen whose evasion number appear after this sequence were liberated when the Allied armies over ran them - with ca E&Es in the early 2,000s representing US airmen liberated in Belgium with SPGs in the range of 3000 being British forces. I have had little interest or reason to focus on the evasion experiences after early September 1944 so cannot comment on that later period but that is not to say there isn't a fascinating story there too. It just happens to be my cut off point.

**E&E files are generally presented as follows:**

(1) There is a general E&E file listing the basic stats of the airman involved : His E&E number, name rank, ASN, BG/BS, FTR date, crew, etc, followed by a general questionnaire.

(2) There is an Appendix 'A' file. This section usually gives information about events from the time of take off, including details of the a/c being shot down and observations about other members of the crew. I expect that from the 100 BG historian's point of view some interesting information can be found in this as it sometime offers tactical information about the mission and the fate of the a/c and crew.

**Beetle Bailey**



## *Lynn speaks to 400 AFA cadets; finds no takers on his invitation*

On July 10, AFEES Executive Veep Lynn David addressed about 400 cadets at the Air Force Academy who that day completed their three-week survival training.

Gen. Samuel Cox, the commandant of cadets, asked Lynn if he would accept his assignment when General Cox spoke at the AFEES reunion in Colorado Springs last May.

All cadets are required to complete the survival school during the summer between their freshman and sophomore years at the academy.

About 1,200 cadets must complete one of the three survival training sessions.

Lynn discussed the evasion techniques used by his father, Clayton David, during his route from Amsterdam to Spain between Jan. 11, 1944, and April 15, 1944. Lynn reminded the cadets that at the time airmen did not have

satellite radios, global position equipment or locator devices used by evaders in current times.

Common sense and a positive mental attitude were very important when dealing with the stress of potential capture and imprisonment. In addition, some of the airmen were injured.

Cadets present were impressed by the ratio of helpers' lives lost versus the airmen who managed to evade. Lynn explained this is the reason for the AFEES slogan, "WE WILL NEVER FORGET!"

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*Lynn asked the cadets if any of them wanted to climb Pikes Peak with him the following morning.*

*However, few of the exhausted cadets showed any interest in accepting the challenge.*

*Lynn began the ascent at 0430 hours and completed the 13-mile climb to the 14,110-ft. summit at 1300 hrs.*

## **Warren didn't get a ride with the Major out of France**

Warren Cole of Wallingford, Conn., adds to the story of Bud Mahurin, America's first double ace, in the Summer issue. (Page 29.)

Warren writes: "I was a B-17 gunner shot down in Holland on June 11, 1944, and spent several months with the Underground.

"While at Chartres, France, I witnessed the bombing of the German fighter base. Soon after the bombing, a P-47 made a pass at the base. Two days later, Major Mahurin appeared at the house I was staying at, looking for refuge. He had crashed a few miles south of Chartres but was not injured.

Three days later, a plane came in and picked him up and returned to England. I wish there had been room for me!"

## **Ambassador Dean to deliver lecture on military secrets**

This item of news is a bit late for most of our readers, but Ambassador John Gunther Dean is scheduled to deliver a lecture at the Women in Military Service Museum in Arlington, Va., on Monday, Sept. 13.

He will speak on his WWII experience as a prisoner of war interrogator, unveiling untold stories of the secret military installation often referred to as PO Box 1142.

Ambassador Dean is a Harvard graduate and a WW2 vet.

## **WRITING A BOOK**

### *Tours author asks for some help!*

Philippe Canonne of Tours, France, teaches History and Geography in Tours and is proud to be an AFEES associate member.

He is writing a book relating to the airwar over the city of Châteauroux (the département of Indre area in central France). He studies bombings, crashed aircrafts, special air missions from 1939 to 1944 with the help of eyewitness, Underground associations, veterans. He would like to be in touch with persons: researchers, former American, British flyers or members of their families who had been hidden in the area or who crossed this area during their escaping venture.

Contact: Mr Philippe CANONNE, 41 rue Balzac. 37.700 Ville-aux-Dames. France. Or <canonne.phil@wanadoo.fr>



*Major Eveland's Story*

# French mayor arranges a party!

**From the Memoirs  
of I. Wayne Eveland  
Helena, Mont.  
(Deceased since 1990)  
E&E #478, 401st BG**

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**Continued from Summer  
Communications, Pages 4-7**

My host finally arranged a new hiding place for me some miles away. He drove his little French automobile into the barn and had me lie down behind the driver's seat. He covered me over with a blanket and delivered me to Pierre Lemee, who was then the mayor of the town of Bretagne DeMarsan. Pierre Lemee's home was in the country some distance from the town.

Apparently Mr. Lemee was a farmer and as such he had a few hired hands. One proved to be a man who had escaped out of Algeria and was hiding there. Another was a young lady about 18 years of age whose home was in either Alsace or Lorraine. Now I was hiding there, too. Possibly there were others.

Pierre was delighted to play host to an American major. He was very exuberant. He asked all kinds of questions that I was unable to answer because of the language barrier. The first evening there, he arranged a party in my honor. He killed a fatted goose from the barnyard and invited among others, a doctor to treat my hand and feet, and a French nurse who spoke English. The party was very festive with lots of wine and Cognac. I was greatly concerned for fear the presence of so many people might provide a leak as to my presence in the house, with resultant

damage, not only to me, but also to this marvelous host and his friends. (Apparently my fears were not unfounded because after the war, Pierre reported that soon after I had left his home the Germans arrived in force and molested his family. He fled and spent the rest of the war with the Maquis. The Germans did apprehend the doctor. He did not respond to their interrogation. They shot him and continued the interrogation for several days, during his suffering, before they finally killed him.)

After several days of recuperation in Pierre's house, where I had good food, a clean bed, and good companionship, he arranged for the next leg of my journey. Travel, of course, was very hazardous, so considerable planning took place in Pierre's home. Somehow, Pierre got me from his home to Mont de Marsan and to my new host, named Dupeyron. I do not recall whether by train, by foot, or by auto.

Monsieur Dupeyron was an auto mechanic and operated his own garage. His living quarters were over the garage. He and his wife received me warmly and then looked after me for some days. They had a daughter who was of high school age and she studied English, but being extremely shy, was most reluctant to try to talk to me. It seems to me there was a son, also. As always, we had a language barrier.

However, I recall one time they told me that Madame Dupeyron also flew airplanes. As I understood it she had participated in a race from Paris to Baghdad during the depression years of the 30's. It so happens I remember this race. The lady entrant, a French

lady was lost in the desert for several days and this fact hit the headlines of the United States newspapers. Being a budding aviation enthusiast at the time, I recalled there was such an incident. It seems that my hostess Madame Dupeyron, was this same French aviatrix. As a school lad I always visualized this lady to be a French socialite who flew airplanes for the adventure and thrill of it. Instead, I now found that Madame Dupeyron was no socialite whatsoever, and further, that the airplane that she had flown on this race had been one built by her auto mechanic husband.

The garage of my host had been taken over by the Germans and his primary duty was to repair German vehicles. Consequently, there were many officers and drivers popping up at all times of the day and evening, both in the garage below and also at the kitchen door, which was at the head of the stairs leading from the garage below.

My host seemed to dearly love aiding an American officer within his home and shielding him from the Germans. Often the Germans would bring him some beer, cigarettes or cigars as tokens of their friendship. He would share the loot with me and laugh heartily gesturing. "I am like an Arab. I shake their hand and stab them in the back while doing so," he would say.

Each time steps were heard on the staircase leading to the little apartment, I hurried off to the side bedroom, which was over a pub. When the visitor would leave I could then return to the kitchen or living room to visit with my hosts. The



room over the pub proved to be interesting, but nerve racking. The pub was patronized by many German soldiers. In the evening there would be laughter and the usual barroom activities but I was listening mostly to the German language. The floor was made of simple boards, and I did not turn on the light at any time because of this. At times I could see movement below and hear the German soldiers underneath me. They were too near for comfort...

On another occasion the French brought me information as to the exact location of the officers barracks, the fuel dumps and other pertinent data to the airbase at Mont de Marsan. For example one of the messages they wished me to carry back was to tell the British or the Yanks to bomb the hospital near the airbase because the Germans had long ago moved all patients out and were using the hospital as an officers barracks. In order to pass away the time, I spent hour after hour redrawing this map so that I could draw all runways fuel dumps, barracks, shops and so forth, by memory with the proper distances and compass headings. In a way it was a welcome diversion with so many hours of free time and boredom while hiding out.

It was in this place above the garage and in the near vicinity of the German soldiers that the Dupeyrons, in conjunction with Pierre Lemee, arranged the next leg of my journey—the train trip to Bordeaux.

Pierre Lemee got me a "Carte Identite" (identification card.) On it was my name (false), occupation, signature, and description. Another card stated, in essence, that I was a German collaborator and gave other details of my occupation and job assignment, and included my fingerprints. Since I had not given them my fingerprints, I inquired as to

whose fingerprints were used. I was informed that they were Pierre's. It seems that as Mayor of the village, he had access to police procedures and other information. His plan was that they would deposit me in the railroad station with the proper identification so that I could ride a German troop train to the city of Bordeaux where other hosts would receive me. Pierre was delighted with the theory of the escape plan because, as he reasoned who would ever expect to find an American Major on a German troop train? It fascinated him—and it scared the hell out of me.

There were to be at least two railroad cars that would have German troops and at least one car that would have civilian passengers, all of whom were certified as "faithful Frenchmen working for the Germans". I was to be one of these and that is why the special card had been prepared for me. Needless to say the detailing to me of this information required someone who spoke English and though I cannot remember clearly, I believe it was the nurse, whose name was Miss Nicod. She also bandaged my hand and ankle. She had performed duty with French forces in Algeria, but had avoided capture there when the Germans took over that region and had returned to France. Since it would be too hazardous for any Frenchman to sit with me on this journey, I was briefed as to precisely which railroad car I was to enter so as to avoid contact with the German soldiers.

I proceeded at the station as briefed and entered the proper car, showing my special card to the German soldier as I entered. I entered the car thinking, "All's well so far". But later, German soldiers entered the same car. I had not counted on this. I hastily decided it was better for me to get off this car, past the guard, and get on the car behind. As I got off the car, the German guard said something to me.



**Col. I. Wayne Eveland**

I don't remember whether he spoke to me in German or French. I ran into the crowd on the 'platform, being very fortunate that a throng was there.

As I am short in stature, I also pulled off my French tam and managed to wriggle out of my tattered overcoat and put it over my arm. It seems that the guards on the following car had been excited by the first guard who yelled as I ran away, but I was able to get on the second car with no problem. The train departure however, seemed to be delayed by some excitement amongst the throng of people on the platform. It was obvious the Germans were looking for someone. Conceitedly, I thought I knew who they were looking for! Perhaps only minutes later, but it seemed much longer, the train moved out. Each moment I expected Germans to enter the car, reviewing the special passes and interrogating all aboard. Fortunately, this did not happen. We arrived at the next railroad station with no further incidents and with no damage except to my frayed nerves.

My recollection of arrival at the station in Bordeaux is hazy. I do remember that I met someone; I remember following him through concourses of people and light motor traffic. I presume that I was met there by Gustave Souillac who became my host in Bordeaux. He and his wife lived at 54 Avenue Hugo, LeBouscat, Bordeaux. He, his wife, and their family were charming people. They

*Continued on next page*



had two children—the boy, Christian, and the daughter (cannot remember her name.) Mrs. Souillac's mother, who had been raised in Peru, was also a member of the household. They had a housekeeper-maid by the name of Maria, and her husband served as the gardener, chauffeur, and handyman. The Souillacs were dedicated French patriots.

Gustave and his brother owned a shoe factory near his residence. The Germans had taken over the factory and were producing items for the German Army. The Souillacs were permitted limited production of shoes, but having no leather, they were constructed of wood, with grooves in the soles to give a little bit of flexibility.

A German officer supervised activity within the factory every day. Gustave and the officer had desks facing one another, as Gustave described it to me.

Formerly, Gustave and his family had resided in a large mansion in Bordeaux. Gustave was active in an intelligence unit of the French underground (Maquis) and for this reason did not wish to have any German officers billeted to him. Therefore, Gustave had elected to take over this very small home and his brother had taken over the large home. On the other hand, Gustave's brother was a collaborator with the Germans. The brother and his wife believed that the Germans were in France permanently and the best adjustment was to get along with them. Gustave and his brother disagreed on this point.

As time passed, I became very nervous about my presence in Gustave's household. The Gestapo headquarters were close by in the neighborhood. At times we heard gunfire nearby, which Gustave would say was "target practice," (But his gestures were sinister.) Gustave and

his family spoke Spanish as well as French, but did not speak English. We carried on a bit of conversation using gestures and bits of the three languages.

While in Bordeaux, I rode a streetcar several times. There had been a meeting with cognac, and farewells with more cognac. The combination was in sufficient quantity to cloud my judgment and over estimate my courage. The streetcar was extremely crowded and I was on the rear platform, elbow-to-elbow with other standing riders the rider on my right elbow happened to be about 6'2 and was a very young, handsome German officer dressed in his snappy uniform including a great coat. He was really a fine sight to behold contrary wise, I had a dingy dirty tam on my head and a most dingy, ragged old overcoat probably a day or two of beard but in any sense, I must have looked like a rag-picker. The ride was rough and every time the trolley bumped, I would jostle into this officer. Each time we stopped or started there was a similar automatic jostling. It startled me a little bit and I tried to avoid any physical contact with the German officer. Then all of a sudden my mood changed completely. The cognac had taken its effect! I thought it was very funny indeed and I gave him several intentional bumps, coordinated with the antics of the trolley. It was shameful lack of judgment but the situation amused me tremendously and gave me great satisfaction.

Gustave had several interesting visitors, one of whom we called "the young man." This man's job in the underground was to set up radio communication in Paris for several days, communicating with London and then setting up communication again with London from Bordeaux for a few days. There was also a third point of communication. Though this young man didn't speak English, we did manage to communicate. One time he showed me an American hand

## FALL 2010

grenade and some other explosives, thinking I would know how these explosives should be used. Unfortunately my knowledge was most limited.

One time the "young man" arrived at Gustave's home, rather breathless, with his suitcase in hand. The suitcase contained his radio equipment. It seems that on his trip from Paris the train was stopped mid-point between towns. He suspected something amiss and as the train slowed down he was able to jump off. The Germans had received information that there might be a wireless operator or underground member aboard the train and they interrogated every passenger. But our "young man" was no longer aboard. On arrival at Gustave's home he was exuberant over his escape triumph.

Another visitor was known as "Le Bard", which I think, means the beard. This full-bearded man headed a resistance group someplace in the south of France and he came to the house once or twice working on plans to get me safely out of Bordeaux. Another visitor that I enjoyed very much was a Catholic priest who came to see me several times and each time he brought me a gift. Usually, believe it or not, it was a pack of Lucky Strike cigarettes or a bottle of wine, and once a bottle of Irish whiskey. The priest spoke English and sometimes brought me something English to read. I looked forward to his visits.

Gustave knew I was very lonesome due to the language barrier and my confinement within the house. He deplored the fact that there was so little opportunity for me to visit with anyone who spoke my own language. His collaborator brother had an English-speaking wife. She had been married to an American colonel during WWI and had been deserted by him. Gustave therefore invited her to dinner in spite of her and her



husband's political views. She spoke English very well indeed. She said all resistance movements in France were dominated by Communists. Having seen so many of those individual patriotic Frenchmen, I didn't like that axiom. She also said much of the American bombing in France was terroristic bombing. She claimed there was a good deal of intentional bombing of non-industrial targets. I put her straight, in as restrained a manner as I could, that when the industrial target within France was cloud-covered, the American planes flew their bombs back to England and landed with bombs aboard. We sure as hell did not take such precautions on bombing missions over Germany! In no way did we wish to harm the French people. I was greatly distressed that Gustave's well-meaning gesture had worked out so poorly. After his sister-in-law's departure that evening, I worried considerably that I would bring about a rift between Gustave, the Patriot, and his brother, the Collaborator, and this all might tumble somehow into

chaos for this family. Gustave tried to console me. He explained that in spite of the bitterness of the war and the differences between family members, the family would protect one another. For this reason, the sister-in-law would not report me to the Germans nor say anything to cause trouble.

On another occasion, another of Gustave's brothers who lived near Mont Blanc came one evening. In this instance, I was guided to an open window where I could step outside into the courtyard without being seen. Gustave explained to me that it was best that this brother not know of my presence in his home.

I was with Gustave and his family for several weeks. Daily I became more anxious to leave and requested that they give me wine and bread and let me proceed southward on my own before my presence caused disaster.

Gustave would become furious, saying that under no circumstances would he let me leave until he had

engineered a plan to get me over the Pyrenees into Spain. Eventually a plan was developed, at least another phase in the plan was developed.

The idea was to wait until a friend had an opportunity to steal a wine truck from his employer. This would be done the first day the employer was not to be at work. Meanwhile, Gustave had heard through his underground intelligence group that there were at least three other Americans in Bordeaux who were likewise awaiting a plan to get out of the city. The truck would answer the purpose for all four of us.

One morning before daylight the truck arrived in the back yard (February 10, 1944.) We had been expecting it. My host embraced me with tears in his eyes, gave me a bottle of wine, and bid me adieu.

In France they deliver wine in trucks much similar to the trucks that carry gasoline to service stations in the U.S., except the wine trucks are smaller. In essence, they consist of a large steel horizontal cylinder, with an opening at the center top, and a hatch that bolts over the opening. The horizontal cylinder is divided into three compartments by means of vertical baffle plates. The baffles have a small opening at the bottom to let the wine run freely at the bottom only. If you were to open the center top hatch and peer down with a flashlight you would never believe that the opening at the bottom of each baffle plate was large enough for a man to crawl from the center compartment into either end compartment. But the opening was barely large enough for a man to crawl through on his stomach. I was told there were two men in the front compartment. I was to crawl into the rear compartment. There would be an

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*(Continued on next page.)*

## ***AFEES Roster Updates***

***(Please report changes in address or telephone # promptly to Richard Shandor, Membership Chair,***

- Dr. Marvin T. Goff, 348 Rolling Hills Dr, Conroe TX 77304-1281
- Mrs. Ann Marie Holloway "W," 617 S. University Dr., Edmond OK 73034-4663
- Mr. Heath N. Liddle, 201 Wheatland Ct, #A10, Christiansburg VA 24073-1091
- Mr. Andrew Marcin, 760 Allegheny River Blvd, #200, Verona PA 15147-1302
- Mr. Herbert G. Ruud, 1907 201st Place SE, Apt#458, Bothell WA 98012-8581
- Lt Col Charles J. Salivar, 1401 S. Brentwood Blvd, Ste#575, St. Louis MO 63144-1493
- Mr. Bertram R. Theiss, 2974 Holland Dr., Auburn NY 13021-5608; 315-253-9024
- Mr. John S. Vitz, 3400 Wagner Heights Rd, Apt#128, Stockton CA 95209-4872
- Mr. Thomas R. Westrope, 555 S. Rockrimmon Blvd, Apt#102, Colorado Springs CO 80919-2038



be an American lieutenant in the darkness of that compartment. So there was.

They bolted down the center top hatch and we left for the first German highway checkpoint. At this point as anticipated, the German guard climbed up on the wine truck, opened the hatch, peered down, saw the tank appeared empty, bolted the hatch back down, and took the driver into his post to fill out the necessary clearance papers. This was done at each sentry point. Between checkpoints the driver opened the top hatch to help refresh the air and then would close and lock the hatch before the next checkpoint.

Finally we reached the outskirts of the city of Perigueux. The driver pulled up near some trees and bushes and told us to run to a nearby farmhouse, staying in the trees. This we did. Here we made our first contact with the actual Maquis. Up until now we had been hosted by patriotic Frenchmen who knew little about escape routes and procedures but only wished to help and shelter the likes of me. It had taken approximately six weeks to get this far.

Later the same day my three wine truck companions and I were in the city of Perigueux making our way to a previously designated barroom. We entered the barroom individually. There were several people present in the bar and one a lady spoke to me in English. I pretended I did not understand, because I feared a trap. I tried to walk away from her but eventually she led me into a little room and laughed and said, "You are safe. You are safe" It was in this little room off the barroom that I met the young Frenchman whom the lady told me was the head of the local Maquis organization. He told me that he knew what to do with evading Americans because his group assisted with moving them to Spain. Glad tidings. I do not recall just how I separated from the other members of the wine truck, but either the same day or the following day I was in an automobile alone with this young Maquis leader and he gave me a most memorable ride.

He drove like a madman. I thought he was likely to draw unwanted attention to our vehicle. He raced down back roads to avoid security posts. I had the feeling he knew every foot of the way. He indicated to me that in front of me, in the glove compartment was a loaded revolver. I was to familiarize myself with it by checking it over. I did. He indicated by gesture that if anyone attempted to stop us, he would slow the car down and I was to put the gun out of the window and shoot them, aiming at the forehead, while he did the driving.

Someplace I was reassembled with my three wine

truck companions. I do not recall precisely where or how long I was with the Maquis leader. I do recall that he used me as a showpiece article, probably to enhance his prestige within his organization. I remember being in his company in various homes, apartments, and locations with various hosts at each.

In good French fashion they always brought out the wine or cognac, or both, at introductions during conversation, and at departing I left each location, a bit inebriated. Eventually he informed me that he had made contact with another Maquis leader who would take us on the next leg of our journey and soon we would be over the mountains to Spain.

The rendezvous point selected to meet our new contact was in a cemetery near Periguetix. In the very early morning, just at dawn we Americans and several Maquis walked singly and in two's among the graves. One of the Maquis indicated that I was to walk into a small mausoleum-type structure. Inside the large entryway I was greeted by a man who spoke the King's English.

This Englishman told us that as soon as he took our name, rank, and serial number he would see that the information was transmitted to London so that our families would know that we were not dead, but were proceeding on a successful escape route. We were greatly elated!

The Englishman paired off Lt Plytinsky and myself and told us what route to follow to exit from the cemetery and to follow a certain man. We were not to talk to him, merely follow him enter the residence where he entered. We found the man and followed him through several streets in Perigueux. When he entered a small residential building we followed him inside.

Inside, we were warmly greeted. He became known to us as Renee Lamy. (I discovered after the war, that his real name was Claude Lamy.) Renee, himself, had a terrific escape story. He had been captured as a French soldier in the early part of the war and sent, to a German prison camp. From the prison, he was reassigned to a German farmer to assist with the farm work. He finally arranged a successful escape through Germany and into Switzerland where he almost died in a blizzard.

He later made his way back to France and rejoined his family and became a policeman. Part of his duty as a policeman was to trace down American and British airmen who were trying to escape through the vicinity of Perigueux. Instead, he helped them to escape.

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TO BE CONTINUED IN NEXT ISSUE



Boston Traveler, Thursday, Sept. 6, 1962



## Hardware Owner Recalls Wartime Hideout Days

Yesterday I was sitting in Emanuel's Spa on River St., Hyde Park, having a cup of coffee with Stan Canner. Stan runs the hardware store, Central Paint & Supply, a few doors away.

He's a Brighton boy who moved to Hyde Park in 1948 and started the store. You know what we talked about? We talked about Stan's time with the French Resistance behind German lines.

How did he get there? Very simple. He just dropped in. Stan was a pilot (First Lieutenant, 101st Tactical Reconnaissance, 9th Air Force; Air Medal, Purple Heart)

He and his wing man had just completed their photographic mission near Caen, flying below a low overcast. Stan's P-51 developed engine trouble. He lost power and couldn't maneuver.

At that moment, there was a break in the clouds, and, he was spotted by a heavy patrol of ME-109s. (Those were the bad guys, Junior). A burst behind his seat, one in the engine gave him a piece of shrapnel in the head and only one place to go.

He went. He flipped his plane over on its back to free himself from the cockpit, and bailed out close to the ground. As he parachuted earthward, the Germans shot at him. It was July, 1944, and the Germans were anxious to shoot somebody.

"But the Resistance must have seen me too, because when I landed, there were two kids there to greet me. They took me to a hut, and the people there hid me for the night and gave me a blue denim jacket to put on.

"The next morning an open truck, a charcoal burner, picked me up and drove me about 35 miles to a farmhouse," he said.

"There were six or eight of us riding in the back of the truck. We made a lot of stops, usually when we came to a town, and every time we stopped, I died another death.

"At the farmhouse a doctor came and treated my head. Soon after, an Australian flyer and an American tail gunner were brought in too."

A resistance leader named Robert Martin took Canner by bicycle to a manor house about 10 miles away. This was Martin's headquarters, where he was assisted by the lovely brunette Irene Marrette, now Mrs. Martin.

"I was put in a 3rd floor room, beautifully set up and piled with Life Magazine from 1937 to 1940. What a life. Every morning this beautiful French girl brought me breakfast in bed. But after a couple of weeks, Martin had to take me back to the farmhouse. The Gestapo was looking for me.

"They got me back safely, but the Gestapo caught them. Irene was released and Bob escaped."

Back at the farm, Lt. Canner in peasant dress made himself useful. He shouldered the wooden yoke and carried milk pails. He ran the cream separator, and he churned the butter. He acquired a smattering of French, and he was afraid.

The Nazis and their French collaborators were in last-ditch desperation. For three days the three Allied airmen lay (no room to stand or even sit) in an attic, while Germans periodically inspected the house.

Those were the last three days. Then the Canadian Army broke through, and after a celebration with Normandy cider and salt tears, Stan headed back to his outfit.

Today, after 18 years, he is meeting Mme. Gilles, whom he knew as "Jeanine". She was the woman who directed the rescue network, and to whom, very likely, he owes his life.

Twentieth Century Fox, the movie people, brought her over. Part of her story appears in "The Longest Day", the D-day film which opens next month (1962) in New York.

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## 2011 AFEEs REUNION:

April 13-17 (Wednesday-Saturday)

**Holiday Inn, San Antonio, Tex.**  
(Details and reservation forms in next issue.)



Commander says . . .**TRANSCOM gives U.S. advantage**

WASHINGTON (AFNS) -- One of the U.S. military's greatest advantages over its adversaries is its ability to move an enormous amount of equipment and people quickly anywhere in the world, the commander of U.S. Transportation Command told the House Armed Services Committee March 17.

Gen. Duncan J. McNabb said he was honored to represent the 145,000 people who make up TRANSCOM, which he called "a unique partnership" of active duty and reserve components, federal civilians, contractors and commercial partners.

"It is the crown jewel in our national strategy and gives us our true global reach," he said of the command's logistical capabilities.

"Together, we are an unrivaled, global team operating an integrated, networked end-to-end defense distribution system, providing logistics superiority when and where needed," he added in prepared testimony to the committee.

TRANSCOM works in coordination with the Air Force's Air Mobility Command, the Navy's Military Sealift Command and the Army's Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command to provide military and commercial transportation, terminal management, aerial refueling and patient movement across the range of military and humanitarian operations around the world, General McNabb said.

Last year, TRANSCOM airlifted more than 2 million passengers and

750,000 tons of cargo, while its tanker fleet delivered 230 million gallons of fuel to U.S. and coalition aircraft, he said.

To support the war effort, TRANSCOM deployed and redeployed 36 brigade combat teams; 34,000 air expeditionary forces and eight security force packages, and moved Marine expeditionary units, and Army Stryker and combat aviation brigades in support of the Afghan elections, General McNabb said.

The command is responsible for delivering an additional 30,000 troops to Afghanistan by August, while redeploying more than 40,000 out of Iraq this summer, he said.

In 2008, TRANSCOM improved logistics into the Iraq and Afghan theaters by standing up the Northern Distribution Network, in partnership with U.S. Central Command, U.S. Pacific Command and the departments of Defense and State, General McNabb said. Last year, 80 percent of equipment into Afghanistan came through the network, he said, calling the routes "a

key strategic alternative to the congested Pakistan ground lines of communication."

The distribution network secured routes across northern Europe, Russia, Central Asia, and the Caucasus region to allow shipments by commercial air, ship, truck and rail, General McNabb said. The network has delivered 8,100 containers since March 2009 and has delivered more than 2,600 mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicles.

Coordination is the toughest challenge, General McNabb told the panel, noting that the command supported the unforeseen humanitarian mission to Haiti while continuing its work in drawing down forces and equipment in Iraq while supporting the build-up in Afghanistan.

"Afghanistan is a particularly tough place to get into," he said. "It has the highest mountains in the world to get into and some very interesting neighbors. We need to make sure that our forces not only get in there, but that they have everything they need."

**THE SEA OF LIFE**

I am miserably lost as I sail  
on The Sea of Life,  
pushed off course by the high  
winds of woeful strife.

I have strayed from my charted way  
onto rocky shoals.  
Now I will I continue to pursue  
my lifetime goals.

I will ask God to guide me to  
a smooth hidden sea,  
where I will surely find that  
which has long eluded me.

-Composed by Keith McLaren Abbott, 15th AF

**General Duncan J. McNabb,  
commander of TRANSCOM,  
is an Honorary Director of  
AFEES and has attended  
many reunions in recent  
years.**

**He hopes to be with us in  
San Antonio next spring.**



# Resistance memories remained

(From the Indianapolis Star, 2004)

After living in a world where a neighbor can quickly become an enemy, trust is a hard thing to muster, confesses World War II survivor Elly Manion.

She knows better than most.

As a member of the Dutch Resistance in her native Amsterdam she was turned over to German authorities by a neighbor who Manion had lovingly called grandma -- a woman who had been a baby sitter for Manion's newborn son.

Speaking with a still-distinct accent, the 84 year-old Zionsville resident shared her remembrances with fourth graders at Fishers Elementary School this week.

The visit, classroom teacher Barbara Huff said, was designed to bring to life what students had read about in the book "Number the Stars" That book told the story of a family involved with the Danish Resistance effort. "To have somebody like this... she's such an important story," Huff said.

Manion's experiences, which read like a Hollywood movie script, began at age 20, shortly after the war began. Almost immediately, Manion, who spoke Dutch, German, French and English, began service with the Resistance.

Her motivation was simple.

"For our freedom," Manion told the children. "You wanted to be free, like here in America, so we had to fight for it."

Because of her language skills - Manion said her German was "flawless" - she posed as a German nurse. Information she gathered was sent through the Resistance pipeline in codes that included Dutch words written backward.

"The papers (messages) were in

Elly de Vries (van Konijnenburg) Manion died at age 90 on June 8, 2010, in Zionsville, Ind. She was born in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, in 1920, and emigrated with her family in 1948, settling in Minnesota.

She is predeceased by her first husband, Cornelius de Vries, and her second husband, Clyde Manion, E&E# 577, 100th BG.

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*Elly Manion, a Dutch Resistance member during World War II, is thanked by the teacher after sharing her experiences with a fourth grade class in Zionsville, Ind., in 2004.*

code," she said. "It was where the Germans had hidden things -- where to find guns, other (documents), money."

Though it was risky, Manion and others even dated German soldiers when information was needed.

Manion and other family members didn't stop there. Downed pilots who could be rescued were nursed back to health in her home. For a time, the Manions harbored a young Jewish couple in addition to helping other Jews move through the Resistance system.

Just days after being implicated by her neighbor, Manion saw her own life flash before her eyes.

She was making what was supposed to be a routine delivery of a message on her bicycle. Soldiers stopped her - because, she believes, her neighbor had turned her in --and began questioning her activity. Quick thinking and sleight of hand allowed Manion to swallow message she had secured inside her bra.

Regardless, she was arrested and taken to jail with a half dozen other women.

Repeated interrogations and beatings filled the next handful of days. In the background, Manion said, the constant, sickening soundtrack of prisoners being rounded up in the jail courtyard and shot to death played again and again.

One day, Manion was sure her time had come.

"I heard the heavy boots scraping on the floor," she said. "My whole life -- from my birth to that moment -- went through me."

The soldier that came to her door hurried the women along the corridor and down a flight of steps.

The group went out the door, and one of the soldiers pulled Manion aside, and began speaking to her in Dutch.

"He asked for a kiss," Manion said.

She scratched his face, then realized it was her husband who had come to rescue her.

He and other men of the Resistance had posed as German soldiers, infiltrated the prison, killed several of the guards and freed the women.





This gripping memoir gives a detailed account of AFEES Member Edward Logan's experiences throughout his Army Air Corps career. It outlines the progression of a determined would-be pilot through two years of training, his 1944 journey to the war's theater and advent into combat.

While other missions are summarized, the work's main focus is the author's 34th combat mission, which took place in March 1945.

During this operation, his B-17 bomber sustained damage so severe that he and nine crewmen were forced to bail out over enemy territory. Aided by Slovenian partisans, Logan and his crew evaded German troops.

This firsthand account includes insider details, technical specifications of the B-17 bomber and previously classified information.

An epilogue provides additional information on the partisans and the composition of the 15th Air Force.

Retired airline pilot and aviation administrator Edward (Ed) F. Logan Jr., lives in Hendersonville, N.C.

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## His radio sign: 'Bruno'

# French general who served in WW2 Resistance dies at 94

By The Associated Press  
Saturday, June 19, 2010

Gen. Marcel Bigeard, who led France's elite parachute forces in colonial wars in independence-seeking Indochina and Algeria after serving in the French Resistance in World War II, has died at age 94. "He has been called the best paratrooper in the world, and whatever the truth of that, he most certainly has a claim as the most battle-proven," said Martin Windrow, a British military historian and expert on France's colonial wars.

But Gen. Bigeard also was captured by insurgents while fighting in Vietnam, and he was accused of being ruthless against POWs in Algeria, in a conflict his country eventually lost.

Born Feb. 14, 1916, in Toul in eastern France, Gen. Bigeard went into German captivity as a warrant officer in 23rd Fortress Infantry Regiment in June 1940. He escaped on Nov. 11, 1942, made his way to Senegal, in what was then French West Africa, and was commissioned into Gen. Charles de Gaulle's Free French Forces.

Gen. Bigeard made his first combat jump in 1944, when he was dropped into occupied France to organize local resistance fighters. He ended World War II with many decorations and with the radio call sign that he retained for the rest of his life -- "Bruno."

Gen. Bigeard rose to fame during France's ultimately doomed effort to reassert control over its colony in Vietnam, after it proclaimed independence in 1945. He served three combat tours there, and his crack 6th Colonial Parachute Battalion became France's spearhead in the war against President Ho Chi Minh's nationalist guerrillas.

Gen. Bigeard argued -- unsuccessfully -- that the colonial army could only defeat the insurgents if they matched their enemy's aggression, endurance and fieldcraft.

He was captured, along with about 12,000 other defenders, when insurgents overran the French fortress of Dien Bien Phu in May 1954 -- knocking France out of the war and paving the way for the 20-year American involvement in Vietnam.

"Bigeard was personally fearless, tactically brilliant, and an intuitive master of terrain, who could conduct a battle by map and radio like the conductor of an orchestra. He inspired the absolute loyalty of his officers and men," said Windrow, who described Gen. Bigeard's exploits during the battle in his book "The Last Valley."

Within a year of his release, Gen. Bigeard -- by then in command of a parachute regiment -- was back in action, battling Algerian freedom fighters in the capital, Algiers.

His ruthless methods helped stabilize the military situation there. But they also linked him to widespread torture of captured insurgents, an accusation Gen. Bigeard always vehemently denied.

Gen. Bigeard was widely credited with winning the battle of Algiers, the brutal 1957 campaign that saw the French army reclaim control of the center of the Algerian capital. The 1966 movie about the campaign, "The Battle of Algiers," is considered a counterinsurgency classic.

He ended his career as a four-star general and went on to serve as secretary of state for defense in the 1970s, and as a legislator in France's lower house of parliament.



# **-FOLDED WINGS-**

**Lt. Agnes Jensen Mangerich** passed away on 3 May 2010. She was a nurse in the Army Nurse Corps and had volunteered for Flight Nurse Training, after which she served with the 807th Medical Air Evacuation Squadron. On 8 November 1943 while on a mission to transport wounded soldiers a storm and German Messerschmitt fighters caused her C-53 Transport plane to crash land behind enemy lines.

Agnes and 12 other nurses, 13 medics and 4 air crew then spent 62 days on a long hazardous journey to the Adriatic coast where they were evacuated by boat on 9 January 1944. While on the run Lt. Mangerich and her group were aided by Albanian partisans, were strafed by German planes and had to cross the second highest mountain in blizzard conditions. Agnes was the only female evader member of AFEES. For more on her adventure, see "Albanian Escape: The True Story Of US Army Nurses Behind Enemy Lines."

**E&E #554 Lt. Hugh C. Shields** died peacefully on 15 May 2010. Hugh served as a bombardier with the 94th Bomb Group's 410th Bomb Squadron of the 8th Army Air Force. On 5 January 1944, his B-17 "Lil Butch" was shut down by German fighters near St. Laurent Medoc, France. Only the navigator and Lt. Shields survived; the other crew members were killed. He was aided by the Francoise Network and crossed the Pyrenees in Spain and arrived in Gibraltar in March 1944.

**E&E #152 S/Sgt Dale V. Lee** completed his life's journey on 18 May 2010. Sgt. Lee served as a left waist gunner with 8th AAF's 506th Bomb Squadron of the 44th Bomb Group. His 9th mission was the first low level Polesti raid on 1 August 1943. On 16 August 1943 they bombed the enemy airfield at Foggia, Italy. On this mission his B-24 "Southern Comfort" was shot down when the formation was engaged by over 100 German fighters. Two members of the crew were killed, while the other eight bailed out and were captured. Dale and six others escaped from the Italian POW camp.

After 300 plus miles they made contact with Canadian Forces and transported to an American air base. On their journey Sgt. Lee had discovered a Nazi camouflaged armor group camp and it took him awhile to convince the fighter group to attack it. After they dropped one bomb in there and all hell broke loose, they attacked again and totally destroyed the outpost. Within three months of being shut down, Dale and Ray Whitby had a reunion with the five other escaping crew members in a London bar.

**E&E #2609 2nd Lt. Walter S. Hern Jr.** left our world on 2 July 2010. He was a bombardier in the 446th Bomb Group's 705th Bomb Squadron of the Mighty 8th. On 26 August 1944, he and his crew were flying B-24 #42-95626 on a bombing mission to a major chemical plant in Ludwigshafen, Germany. While over Holland they started to have engine problems and could not maintain attitude, so they aborted and turned for England. The B-24 started dropping even faster after suffering flak damage to the left inboard and right outboard engines, so the bailout bell was rung.

Everyone but the pilot bailed out, he was killed in the bomber. Walter and 6 crew members bailed out safely but two others also were KIA. Once on the ground 5 men were captured. Walter and Walter Homa, the only two evaders were aided by different



Dutch groups. Lt. Hern was sheltered by the Van den Boom family, who lived across the street from the German city commander. This family had three young children and a housekeeper, but still sheltered Lt. Hern, as well as an AWOL soldier, and a Jewish couple. This continued until mid-November 1944, when the Canadians entered Bergen Op Zoom and the Germans left. He then was returned to his base and to the U.S.

**E&E #154 Sgt. Ray Leo "Wiff" Whitby** passed away on 14 August 2010. Whiff was a radio operator in 506th Bomb Squadron of the 44th Bomb Group of the Mighty 8th. He was flying with Dale Lee on the B-24 "Southern Comfort" and escaped with him and 4 others from the Italian POW Camp the night before the Germans were to take control of the camp. He traveled over 300 miles to make contact with friendly forces. Sgt. Whitby and Dale Lee and the other five escaping crew mates had a reunion in a London bar, 3 months after being shut down.

**Gwen Holt** died on 21 August 2010 in Great Britain. She was Billy Webb's special friend and had attended several AFEES reunions with Billy.

**James P. Cruise Sr.** passed peacefully on 15 July 2010. He served as a medic with the 807th Medical Air Evacuation Squadron. On 8 November 1943 while on a mission to transport wounded soldiers his C-53 Transport plane crash landed behind enemy lines. He evaded capture with 29 women and men. On 9 January 1944 he and the others returned to custody of friendly forces. For more on his story see Lt. Mangerich's story above.

**Lt. Howard R. DeMallie** died July 18, 2010. Flew B-17's with the 8th Air Force's 447th Bomb Group's 708th Bomb Squadron. On 6 December 1944 Howard or "Skipper" as his crew called him, was piloting "Blanco Diablo" with 8 other men to bomb the Merseburg synthetic oil plant. After bombing the target, they encountered heavy flak, which knocked out the two outboard engines as well as damaging the wing and tail stabilizer. They radioed the main formation for fighter cover and received a P-51 escort.

The crew lightened the bomber by throwing out all unnecessary equipment, which helped until they lost engine #2 over Holland. At that time he tripped the bailout alarm bell and everyone parachuted out. Loel Bishop (tail gunner) and Howard were brought together and sheltered by two different Dutch families. On the 12th day at a little after 10 PM the German SS troops raided the second house and arrested the two airmen as well as the three Dutch Helpers, Mienkia, Mimi and Peter.

At the time of Lt. Demallie's arrest one of the SS goons took a swing at him, but instinctively he pulled his head to the side and the goon's hand smashed into the wall. Howard thought he would be killed then but a civilian in a suit entered the room possibly saving Howard's life. Eventually Howard was turned over to the Luftwaffe and shipped to Dulag Luft for interrogation before being shipped to Stalag Luft I where he was imprisoned until liberated by the Russians in late April 1945.

**Howard was forever grateful and wrote his first book in testimony to the Dutch people who with their sacrifices allowed him to survive and Say "Thank You" for His Life.**

He wrote two books about his World War II experience: "Beyond The Dikes" and "Behind Enemy Lines: A Young Pilot's Story."



## Dale caught, escaped from prison

## Move to honor evaders is stalled

*From the Herald,  
Bellingham, Wash.*

Dale V. Lee: E&E# 152, 44th BG, husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, friend and American hero, completed his life's journey at on May 18, 2010.

**(He had attended the 2010 AFEES reunion in Colorado Springs only 10 days earlier.)**

He was laid to rest beside his wife and life partner of 55 years on Friday,



**DALE V. LEE**

May 28, at Sunset Hills Memorial park, 1215 145th Place SE in Bellevue.

Dale joined the Army Air Corps during the start of World War II and was assigned to the 44th Bomb Group.

Sgt Lee served as Flight Engineer/Waist Gunner on the B-24 J. He completed 11 bombing mission, including the Ploesti Raid and he was eventually shot down. He was captured and held in a Nazi prison camp. After 3 months of captivity, he escaped and spent weeks travelling 300 miles on foot back to Allied territory.

Dale Lee was born on June 29, 1920 to the Iver and Anna Lee in Albion, Neb.

He is survived by 5 children, 14 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his wife, Alice Nore Lee, in 2002. He was a self-made millionaire rising from the poverty of his Nebraska farm to be become one of the top-rated privately owned/operated dairy farms in Washington State.

He retired from the intense work of the dairy business and cattle investing to Sun Lakes, Ariz., 20 years ago.

Last March 1, the U.S. House of Representatives unanimously passed Rep. DeFazio's H.Res .925 to honor Air Force escapers. The bill provided Congressional recognition for "the meritorious service performed by aviators in the United States Armed Forces who, as a result of hostile action, mechanical failures, or other problems, were forced to evade or escape enemy capture, were captured but subsequently escaped, or were compelled to endure confinement, retaliation, and even death."

It also states that "the Secretaries of the military departments should consider these aviators for appropriate recognition within their branch of the Armed Forces."

As of presstime for this issue, there had been no confirmation from the office of the Secretary of Defense as to where official recognition for downed aviators stands.

The House of Representatives has asked that the military departments to consider these airmen for appropriate recognition, but it is ultimately up to the military departments to act.

## Please send roster changes to Richard Shandor!

**AFEES membership dues are \$20 per year; \$50 for three years.**

**Changes of address a/o telephone # and checks (payable to AFEES) should be sent to**

**Richard Shandor, PO Box 254, Cresson PA 16630-0254;**

**Phone: 814-886-2735; <rshandor@hotmail.com>**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Amount enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Street address or other \_\_\_\_\_

City and State \_\_\_\_\_ 9 digit zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_

Related to Evader? Yes ☐ No ☐ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_ Evader's name \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a Veteran? Yes ☐ No ☐ If yes, what Branch \_\_\_\_\_ Years \_\_\_\_\_

Prefer to receive Communications electronically -- Yes ☐ No ☐

Other comments \_\_\_\_\_



# The editor has the last word

By **LARRY GRAUERHOLZ**  
<afees44@hotmail.com>

WICHITA FALLS, Tex.--  
Yes, life is like a roll of toilet paper. The closer you get to the end, the faster it goes.

With this issue, your ink-stained editor completes 16 years of producing this AFEES newsletter on a quarterly basis. I have been putting ink on paper since I was sophomore in high school and still love it!

As we uns say here in West Texas, Lord willin' and the crick don't rise, I intend to continue as long as possible.

Looking forward to the 2011 reunion in San Antonio?

\*\*\*\*\*

## ATTENTION!!!

IF YOUR MAILING  
LABEL ON THIS  
PAGE IS PRINTED  
WITH RED INK, THIS  
COULD BE YOUR  
LAST NEWSLETTER.

CONTACT  
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TO RESOLVE ANY  
PROBLEMS WITH  
YOUR MEMBERSHIP

AT PO BOX 254,  
CRESSON, PA

16630-0254

OR 814-886-2735

OR

<rshandor@hotmail.com>

\*\*\*\*\*

Santone is a great GI town with three air bases and many retirees living in the area.

Dates are set for the weekend of April 13-17. The venue will be the Holliday Inn on the world-famous River Walk, in the middle of the entertainment district. Details and reservation forms will be in the next issue.

Eddie and Michele Wing of Catus, France, report the passing of Resistance worker Mme. Odette Chaput on Aug. 20. She was 89.

Many WW2 airmen took training at the Primary Flight School at Union City, Tenn.

Now a group of interested citizens there plans to construct a museum in the city.

They are asking for any memorabilia from men who trained there, including artifacts, photos, yearbooks or other publications about the flight school that would relate to the

military section of the Discovery Park Museum.

If you can help, contact Hugh Wade, 1105 Ethridge Lane, Union City, TN 38162

## FOR NONAGENERIANS

Noddy is 90 years old. He's played golf every day since his retirement 35 years ago. One day he arrives home looking downcast.

"That's it," he tells his wife. "I'm giving up golf. My eyesight has become so bad that once I hit the ball I can't see where it went."

His wife sympathises and makes him a cup of tea. As they sit down she says, "Why don't you take your old pal Milton, and give it one more try."

"That's no good" sighs Noddy, "Milton's a 103. He can't help."  
"He may be a 103", says Noddy's wife, "but his eyesight is perfect."

So the next day Noddy heads off to the golf course with Milton. He tees up, takes a mighty swing and squints down the fairway.

He turns to Milton and says, "Did you see the ball?"

"Of course I did!" replied Milton. "I have perfect eyesight".

"Where did it go?" says Noddy.

"I don't remember."

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