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*Left to right: Genevieve Tuts, Vivianne Tilkin, Joe Walters and his daughter, JoAnn Lydic.*

*The camera that took the photo (background) of Walters and the Tilkins was destroyed, for security reasons, immediately after the film was removed and developed.*



## Belgian friends and Joe meet again

From *The Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum NEWS, Savannah, Ga., Winter 2004*

If you've visited the Mighty Eighth Museum in Savannah, Ga., you've encountered the compelling image at the entrance to the Escape and Evasion exhibit showing a young American airman being assisted in an escape.

The image, and the accompanying label, give the Escape and Evasion experience a "face" and help strengthen the impact of the exhibit.

In October 2004 the Mighty Eight was honored to welcome Joseph J. Walters, the central figure in the picture, and his daughter JoAnn Lydic, as well as two good friends from Belgium, Viviane Tilkin and Genevieve Tuts, a WWII historian.

Not only were they delightful guests, but we learned even more about this important story and the tie these two visitors from Belgium have to the museum; the two men on either side of Walters in the exhibit photo are Viviane's father and

grandfather. Their bravery and quick action helped ensure that the young B-17 gunner they were photographed with would return to London.

Walters explained that when his squadron was attacked by six German fighters while en route to their targets in Schwienfurt (August 1943), their aircraft *Chug-a-Lug-Lulu*, was seriously damaged.

Nevertheless, they finished their run and turned back toward England.

The Nazi air attack escalated and *Lulu* was shot down, though not before Walters and his fellow gunners took out seven Focke-Wulfes.

Walters bailed out, his parachute depositing him in an apple orchard in the town of Boirs (Liege), Belgium, where it was spotted by Nazi troops on the ground.

But the owner of a neighboring factory, Albert Tilkin, and his son (also named Albert) saw Walters parachute into the trees.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)

# U.S. AIR FORCES ESCAPE & EVASION SOCIETY COMMUNICATIONS

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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.

WINTER 2005-06

## The Prez Sez

By Richard M. Smith

<[afeesone@hotmail.com](mailto:afeesone@hotmail.com)>

The death of Leslie Atkinson brings back memories of the early days in AFEES history in which Leslie was greatly involved.

Some of you may recall that in 1969 AFEES and the Canadian Branch of the RAFES made a joint trip to Holland, Belgium, France and England. A great time for all!

While in France, Margaret and I ventured out into the country and found my primary helpers. We had a great time with plenty of champagne and food.

In 1980, Margaret and I invited my helpers, Paul and Yvonne Begues, to the Air Force reunion in Orlando, Fla. At that time, AFEES was a small organization and reunions were conducted with the 8th AF group.

The Begues had never been on an airplane, but with the help of Leslie, reservations were made and transportation arranged for the them to arrive at the Paris airport on time. I believe that this was the first time helpers had been invited to a reunion.

Our reunion was in a nice Orlando hotel. When I took the Begues to their room, I explained how all the gadgets worked. When I went to see them the next morning you would not think the beds had been slept in. Yvonne had GI-ed the entire area.

That morning I took Paul and Yvonne to the AGM, up on the stage and introduced them with the words, "These are the kind of people who were waiting for you when and if you needed them."

There was a standing ovation and the Begues were very pleased. Of course, they had not the least idea what I had said. I explained later.

The Begues were with us for about a week. We had a daughter in Atlanta, who arranged for a French professor come to her home for dinner with them.

## More --Belgian Friends . . .

(From Page One)

The Tilkins were active in the resistance (son Albert taking the code name "Freddy," which he would later proudly christen his own son, Viviane's brother) and rushed to assist Walters.

Walters remembers the first words Albert Tilkin spoke to him: "Do you want to surrender or do you want to escape?" For Walters, the choice was easy: escape. With that, the resistance fighters spirited him away, just before German troops began swarming into the orchard.

For eight days, Walter was hidden in Boirs, behind stacks of boxes virtually under the eyes of the Nazis the entire time.

"The whole town knew Joe Walters was being hidden and where," Viviane recalls her father's stories, "but they kept quiet."

Eventually, Walters got back in touch with the people of Boirs who made his escape possible, including Janine Adams, a young woman who helped translate escape plans for him.

"More than 100 people knew; the whole village kept mum for over a year," Adams penned in a letter to Walters. (Adams married an American serviceman and moved to the U.S. in 1946, corresponding with Walters in 1998 after searching



*Joe Walters, third from left, with fellow crewmembers of Chug-a-Lug Lulu*

for him for many years.)

Adams closed her 1998 letter to Walters with "thank you for making us free again and at such risks to you . . . how glad we are you made it back to England and eventually home in good health . . . (I) wish you a long and happy life; you deserve it."

*Joe Walter's complete story has been recorded and is part of the Mighty Eighth's oral histories collection.*

# Escape film is shown in Brussels

By FRANK DELL

(Former chairman of RAF Escaping Society)

10A Kanoona Ave., ST. IVES,  
N.S.W. 2075, Australia  
(Winter Address)

During the weekend of Oct. 21-23, some 20 of us representing the former RAF Escaping Society travelled to Brussels on the occasion of the Comete Line Reunion.

Highlight of the weekend was a splendid film shown, telling the wartime story of AFEEES member William D. Grosvenor (E&E 1881, 56th Fighter Grp.) It took place in the splendid surrounding of the Military History Museum in Brussels.

Among the VIPs present were the Crown Prince, Prince Phillip; the Minister of Defence, the U.S. Ambassador and senior officials of NATO, the

Belgian Air Force and the RAF.

Comete itself was represented by such legendary figures as Dedee de Jongh, Michou Ugeux, Nadine Dumont and Raymond Itterbeek. While dear old Jean Jacques Piot came from Paris,

## Rendez-vous with Freedom: the Film

By RAMONA KELLY  
Austin, Tex.

The documentary film, *Rendezvous with Freedom: A True Story of Escape, Evasion, and Remembrance*, catapults the voice of historic activism to the forefront of our consciousness in a riveting, intimate, yet little-known story about the Belgian Resistance in World War II.

This educational, historically significant

documentary springs from the courage and sacrifices of Belgium's working class citizens -- men, women and teenagers -- who fought Nazi oppression during WWII.

The experiences of downed U.S. P-47 fighter pilot Bill Grosvenor (now 85 years old and a resident of Abilene, Texas) provides the documentary's narrative thread. Because of the selfless acts of his rescuers in the Belgian Resistance, Bill stayed one step ahead of the Gestapo for seven months in 1943 and 1944, and his eventual arrest and incarceration in a Nazi prison in Brussels.

After nearly 60 years of silence, surviving Resistance fighters have come forward to reunite with the pilot and share their stories.

As unexpectedly as Grosvenor and his helpers were snared by the Gestapo in an early morning safehouse raid, *Renedezvous with Freedom* transports the viewer to another place and time with a universal message about selflessness and courage in the face of extreme danger and, on an even more transcendent level, the power of the human spirit.

Producers of the film include David Grosvenor (son of Bill), Ramona Kelly, Walter Verstraeten, Mat Hames, Beth Hames and Wilson Waggoner. The film was directed and edited by Mat Hames, who also wrote the screenplay.

The film sets the stage by introducing the viewer to Bill Grosvenor and his wife, Doris, in the intimacy of their home in Abilene. We see Bill sweeping the sidewalk that leads to his pristine front porch.

From this poignant opening, the film gradually descends into the hell of occupied Belgium in 1943 and 1944. It becomes a retrospective, examining the events that preceded Bill's crash, tracking his moves as he was passed among dozens of courageous Resistance workers, and plunging the viewer into the nightmare of Nazi-occupied Europe where Resistance operatives and their airmen lived each moment fearing entrapment and capture.

At moments when least expected, the film whisks the viewer from the past to the present. Witness: after Bill explains how he baled out just 500 feet above ground, he pauses and reflects that he thought he would never return to Belgium after he finally made it out of the country in 1944.

The scene dissolves to the sound of a plane touching down, and Bill and his family emerge in the terminal of the Brussels airport, set to retrace the steps he took in 1943. They visit the meadow where his P-47 burst into flames on Nov. 30, 1943, and the camera captures the spontaneous, heartfelt emotions of the pilot, who finally allowed himself to remember what happened during the war.

In the final moments of the film, Bill witnesses the excavation of his fighter plane, an event that eerily mirrors how this story surfaced after six decades.

The film guides the viewer through pivotal moments of Bill's time with the Belgian Resistance,



**1st Lt WILLIAM D. GROSVENOR**  
**56th Fighter Group**

through his arrest, his incarceration, and his ultimate escape from a German prison train, just as Belgium was liberated by the British 2nd Army.

Members of the Resistance bring the story to closure with compelling statements about why they chose to resist. In the words of Michel Dricot, "I think that the most important thing is that people should not take freedom and democracy for granted. We need to always fight to maintain those values that are jeopardized by all those --isms, Fascism, racism. And we must always keep in mind that so many people died in order for us to be free."

Among the most compelling statements is that of Resistance fighter Mme. Yvonne Rahier, now 97 years of age: "Oh, yes, it was worth helping. I couldn't fight like a soldier, but this was my way of fighting. It was the only thing I could do. The world isn't about us, it's the primacy of the spiritual. It's the spirit that should raise us up, and make us greater."

## ***Escape line Comete:*** ***David versus Goliath***

*(Extracted from the program brochure for the initial showing of the documentary film.)*

In 1941 at 24 years of age Andree (DeDee) De Jongh is a member of a patriotic organizing specializing in hiding and caring for soldiers who did not make it back to Great Britain during the Dunkirk exodus.

Food is hard to come by and the available money source runs dry. The situation becomes untenable and

the fighting men need to be brought back to England without further delay.

On a given day the idea grows on Dedee to establish a life line through France into Spain. She talks about it to her friend, Arnold Deppe. He is convinced and early June departs on a reconnaissance mission. He returns full of enthusiasm as he has found a woman who is quite willing to help the evaders across the River Somme, as well as a go-between in Paris and Bayonne (Aunt Go aka Elvire De Greef) and a man who will be their guide across the Pyrenees.

Eleven Belgian pilots are readied for immediate departure. In spite of some initial obstacles, Dedee and Arnold manage to deliver their evaders to the mountain guide and return to organize a second convoy.

This time one however, meets with a lot of difficulties. They split and Arnold finds himself arrested along with six Belgian airmen. When Dedee finally reached Aunt Go, she learns that the first 11 have been arrested in Spain. She then decided to travel to Bilbao in order to meet with the British instances.

After a full week insistence with the British responsible person an agreement is reached that Dedee will bring the airmen to Spain where the British authorities will reimburse their travel expenses and see to it that the party of evaders gets to Gibraltar.

Michael Cresswell (aka Timothy) is appointed by the British Embassy. This heralds the birth of an escape line and the founding of the Comete escape line.

From then on the escape line expands with incredible speed and growing efficiency, safe houses, guides, forgers of false ID cards, etc. Comete has members in all corners of Belgium who constantly are in search of downed pilots. They bring them to Brussels, where the departure of the airmen is being centralized.

From Brussels they are escorted by guides from the network by train to Paris via Lille or Valenciennes. All evaders are in possession of false ID cards. In Paris, airmen stay from a few days to several weeks before being moved on. The next lap of their trip takes them, usually by train, to Bayonne via Bordeaux. There other guides await them who bring them away by bus or on bikes to Sain-Jean-de-Luz, an ideal spot to cross the Pyrenees with the help of a Basque guide.

After a very short rest the airmen start their night march across the mountains, helped by Basque guides who know the mountains by heart. It is a demanding 12 to 14-hour trip.

In the three years Comete was active, it was subject to continuous arrests of their members. As a life line Comete was an easy victim to German infiltrators. The Germans consistently tried to pry their way by parachuting their own men over Belgium. These men then made it a point to be helped by Comete under guise of a genuine Allied airman. In the autumn of

1942 and spring of 1943 Germans acting as allied airmen infiltrated the network, and gathered information that would lead to the arrest of over a hundred Comete helpers.

Andree de Jongh was arrested along with several of her team on Jan. 15, 1943 at Urrugne at the Spanish border. A local farm worker had betrayed them. The last wave of arrests took place in January 1944 and was the result of infiltration by a German undercover agent who managed to get himself accepted by Comete. The escape line would never survive.

Between 1941 and 1944 members of Comete brought over 700 allied airmen to Spain. They crossed the Pyrenees close to a 100 times. The last crossing was on June 6, 1944. From then on it was impossible to continue bringing airmen to Spain. Operation "Marathon" was started, enabling pilots to be hidden in camps in the Ardennes, awaiting liberation by their own troops.

Andree De Jongh spent the remainder of the war in prisons and concentration camps. She was not sentenced before a tribunal but was sent to Germany where she learned the inhuman hardships of the Ravensbruck and Mauthausen concentration camps.

An agreement between the Swedish Count Folke Bernadotte and Himmler lead to the release of some 800 women, enabling Andree De Jongh to at last come back home on April 22. After the war, King Baudouin bestowed onto her the title of countess for her bravery and incessant dedication.

About 700 members of the line were arrested, the equivalent of the airmen rescued by them. Over 200 of them never returned.

---GRIET BROSENS



*AFEES Vice-President Frank Lashinsky and his wife Dorothy caught the cameraman's attention at the New Orleans reunion.*

# *Joke risked her life to help airmen*

By CLAYTON C. DAVID  
Hannibal, Mo.

With all the weather-created tragedies that have been flashed before us on the television and newspapers recently, my thoughts were drawn to some of the problems created by WW II.

While I was a bomber pilot MIA in enemy-controlled countries of Europe, I received help from many brave men and women. I can relate to the life of a displaced person, when for months my parents did not know where I was, or if I was even alive. I also admire the efforts of those who risked their lives to help.

I have the English translation of a Royal Dutch publication in year 2000 about Joke Folmer, who helped me in Holland in 1944. She was born in 1923 and during the war escorted more than 300 people across the border to Belgium on their way to Switzerland or Spain. Some were Allied pilots and aircrew like myself.

As one of the pilots Joke risked her life to help, our families have visited in Holland and in the United States. Today, she is the only living survivor of the 32 women who survived the prison.

*We will Never Forget!*

Joke was sentenced to death in 1944 by the Germans, but was never executed.

She later was rewarded with high marks of distinction and shared her experience in the Dutch publication with the following:

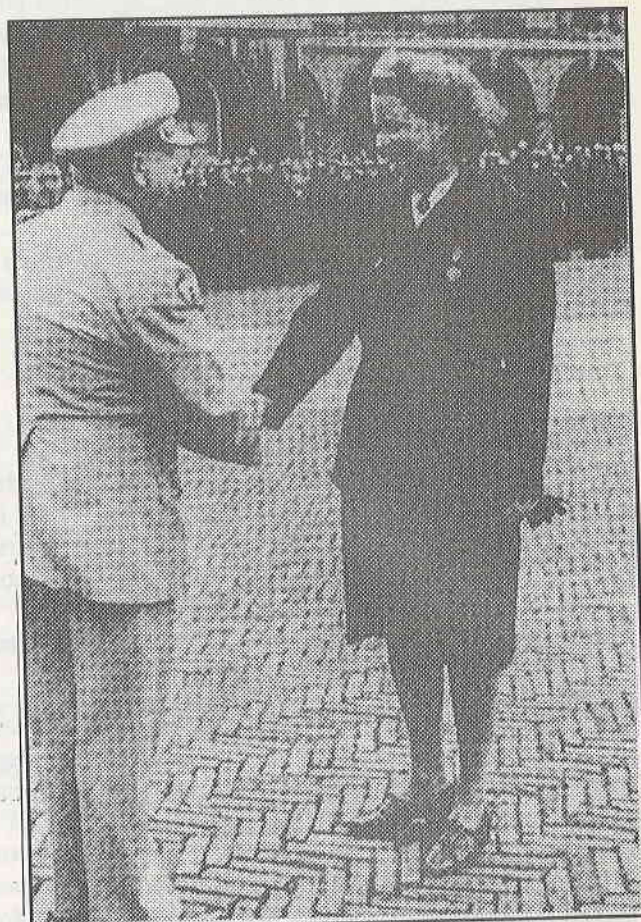
*We only wanted  
but one thing,  
and that was going home*

By JOKE FOLMER

During 1995, here on the island of Schiermonnikoog (my home) a stone was unveiled with names of islanders who perished during the war. Captains torpedoed at sea and victims of English bombers that landed by mistake on houses.

It took about a year to contact all relatives of those victims to ask permission to mention their names. When the unveiling took place, people from Canada, England and other places came over. I expected it to be a sad day, but no, everyone was glad to meet and to realize that now here was a place where each could remember their relatives.

For me the war really started with my good friend Rosette Bannet going into hiding. We were always together. I hardly realized she was Jewish, but at times



*Joke Folmer received the Medal of Freedom  
with golden palm at the Binnenhof  
in The Hague on Sept. 4, 1946.*

when I was in their home on Friday, I became aware how they honored the Sabbath. Then one day the whole family disappeared, which I did not understand till a teacher at school asked me to deliver some homework for Rosette at her hiding place.

That was the moment that it became clear to me what was going on and I became an adult fast. I was still going to school in Zeist, but soon after that changed to college in Amsterdam. From Zeist I was asked to run all kind of errands, delivering packages, etc., and so I became involved in the organized resistance movement. Later, I began escorting people going into hiding and also pilots.

## **SENTENCED TO DEATH**

The pilots had to first be interrogated, to be sure they were not Germans trying to infiltrate our organization. Until April 1944 everything went fine, but then they abolished our whole group. Along with Jet Roosenburg and Nel Lind, I was sentenced to death in Utrecht. Strangely enough, the sentence was only for the first group of five pilots I had escorted in 1942,

while all together, I escorted more than 300 people across the border.

On Crazy Tuesday, Sept. 5, 1944, our group of prisoners was transported to Germany because they feared that Allied forces would arrive in Utrecht within a few days. Our departure from Holland was so hasty that the Germans forgot to send all our papers along. Without the proper papers, the German jail wardens refused to hold us and that became the reason we were constantly moved from east to west and from north to south.

After the war it was discovered that our papers constantly followed us, but never caught up with us.

#### HANDKERCHIEF

From the time I spent in Scheveningen in an isolation cell at the Oranje hotel (jail), I kept track of where and how long I was anywhere. On a big handkerchief my father had given me, I embroidered the names of the jailhouses, plus a symbol. I also left symbols on cell walls.

Of the group of 300 women prisoners we traveled with through Germany, only 32 did not perish. We were "liberated" by the Russians in Waldheim, a small town in southeast Germany. Then it took several months to get back to Holland.

We were walking skeletons, but one way or another, we wanted to go home as soon as possible. We tried with a rowboat to float downstream on the Elbe, but were shot at by the Russians and ended up in a Russian camp.

We were lucky to be in a group that was going to be in an exchange for Russian prisoners. We ended up in Brussels, a luxurious city, since it had been liberated six



*Dutch helper Joke Folmer poses with Lynn David at her home in Holland, surrounded by some of her many books, in July 1999.*

## 'Our regrets to the Queen'

--Joke Folmer in 1945

months earlier. However, we could not enjoy that because we wanted only one thing, to go home. But there were no transport connections yet available into Holland.

We walked in desperation through Brussels until Jet, by surprise, met a cousin who was an adjutant of Queen Wilhelmina. He arranged for us to hop on a truck, the next morning, that was going straight to Holland. He also made it clear that Queen Wilhelmina was anxious to meet us.

We preferred to go home, so we said: "Our excuses and kind regards to the Queen and we hope she will understand."

When I visit schools to tell kids about the war, I sometimes ask what they would have chosen: to go home, or a meeting with the Queen? I consider it important to get children involved.

I also want to know if there is a monument in the neighbourhood of their school and I ask if their grandparents ever tell them about the past war. That way the stories come out through the children.

I don't tell horror stories, but only the better things, about the friendships and solidarity. When I ask them what they would do to fight boredom in a cell, one suggested gymnastics, another suggests singing songs.

I tell them how important singing was for us in jail. Often I show them a paperclip in my purse and how I used it to scratch poems on the walls of the jailhouse in Scheveningen. Not long ago a kid asked, "Mam, is that now a complex to carry that paperclip with you all the time?"

I was lucky during my time in the resistance. I always had to do with real people. The fact that I still have lots of contact with people I assisted soothes a lot. After 20 years, pilots from England, Canada and America started to come by. They all wanted to know where they came down.

Together we go searching for the farms where they were in hiding and other people who assisted them. When they bring their wives along, they will understand for the first time, what their husband talked about all those years. Now, often they bring their grandchildren.

I still stay in contact with more than 70 pilots, or their widows. For me it is interesting to know how their lives went, what they did for a living and about their home life with their kids.

So many people did not survive the war and that is sad. That's why I am so much in favor of remembrances and commemorations. It helps that they are not completely forgotten.

# Re-enactors at 'Camp McCormick'

By ANNETTE TISON  
392nd Bomb Grp. Researcher  
Fairfax Station, Va.

The onlookers in the Dutch city of Zoetermeer watched silently as German soldiers surrounded the wooden building. After an exchange of gunfire, a man dressed in the blue overalls of a Dutch resistance fighter dashed from the structure in a futile attempt to reach the safety of the building next door. After a hail of bullets, he lay unmoving on the ground. When the gun battle finally ended, several German soldiers and another resistance fighter were also motionless. As the bodies were carried away, the crowd of several hundred spectators began talking excitedly about what they had just seen.

Sixty years after it happened, the deaths of 392nd Bomb Group gunner S/Sgt John E. McCormick and Dutch resistance fighter Jacob van Rij on April 29, 1945 were reenacted at a site temporarily renamed "Camp McCormick." The event on May 7-8, 2005 was the culmination of over ten months of planning by Ad Moest and other members of the Dutch military reenactment group, Triple A (American Airborne Association). Although Triple A members normally depict the 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 101st Airborne Division, they wanted to demonstrate World War II history in their own back yard, and Camp McCormick was the result. During the weekend, over 2,000 people visited the site, which had separate sections for reenactors portraying American and German soldiers and Dutch resistance workers. Sightseers

could see authentic WWII-era vehicles, weapons, tents, and other gear used by soldiers sixty years ago.

On Feb. 22, 1945, S/Sgt McCormick was aboard B24H #42-95241, nicknamed *Jolly Duck*. On the way back from a bombing mission to Norheim, Germany, pilot 1st Lt Joseph R. Walker thought he didn't have enough gas to get back to England so he made an emergency landing near Zoeterwoude. Walker then ordered the nine men in the crew to split up. Four (Sgt Francis Nagle, S/Sgt Allan Hicks, S/Sgt Harold Shea, and S/Sgt John A.H. Lingle), were captured almost immediately. Another four—Walker, 2nd Lt Ralph Casstevens, 1st Lt John Donohue, and S/Sgt Elmer Duerr—managed to avoid the Germans until they were picked up by members of the Dutch underground. They successfully evaded until the end of the war.

McCormick was also picked up by the underground, but was taken to the local headquarters of the Dutch resistance, led by dentist J. Kentgens. Dr. Kentgens asked McCormick if he wanted to just stay in hiding or if he wanted to work with the resistance group. The airman replied that he wanted to help.

The apparently undamaged B-24 was spotted in some reconnaissance photos taken by an RAF Spitfire. On Feb. 26, 1945, the RAF returned and strafed *Jolly Duck* until it was completely destroyed. In the process, a German guard and four Dutch sightseers—two children, the manager of the farm where the plane set down, and the mother of five

children—were killed.

For the next nine weeks, McCormick actively participated with the resistance group in their work against the Germans. Twice, resistance members took letters from him to Duerr and Donohue, who were hidden in The Hague. In his second letter, dated April 7, McCormick wrote, "Don't get too pissed off like I was but Jerry found 600 damn gallons of gas before the Spits blew her up. How about that? I get lonely as hell at times but I shouldn't kick because I'm treated swell." He ended with the optimistic, "Well Elmer, Johnny, here's hoping—I hope I won't be here for a reply."

After his death on April 29, 1945, McCormick was buried nearby. On Oct. 31 of that year, he was re-interred with full resistance honors in the courtyard of the Dutch Reformed Church in Zoetermeer, next to resistance fighters Jacob van Rij, Cornelis van Eerden, and Jan Hoorn. The four men share a headstone with a Dutch epitaph that means "Faithful to their Fatherland." Each year on April 29, flowers are placed on the graves by an organization of former Dutch resistance fighters.

Mr. Moest knows the guiding principle of all reenactors—the past is gone, but it should not be forgotten. With that in mind, he and fellow Triple A member Alex van Os also erected a memorial at *Jolly Duck's* crash site. On Feb. 22, 2005—the 60th anniversary—Moest, van Os, and Tako Blokker, all perfectly attired as 392nd Bomb Group airmen, welcomed over

***'I would like my boy to remain where he is'*****--Father of Sgt. McCormick**

100 people, including relatives of the Dutch people killed in the strafing, the mayors of nearby cities, and representatives of the American Embassy, to the unveiling ceremony. The parachute covering the memorial was pulled aside by Coby den Elsen-den Hollander, Ed van Bemmelen, and Bertus van der Post. All were present when the plane was strafed and all lost relatives in the incident.

At the ceremony, Lt. Col. Ralph King, USAF attaché at the American Embassy, read a letter from Col. Lawrence G. Gilbert, last war-time commander of the 392nd Bomb Group. Col. Gilbert wrote, "The memorial plaque that is unveiled today is a reminder of innocent Dutch victims of the war. It is also a reminder of the men in the 392nd Bomb Group who were killed in action or captured, and those who evaded capture with the help of courageous Dutch patriots who risked everything in the name of freedom."

Dr. Kentgens' actions after the war were especially meaningful to Col. Gilbert. In early 1946, S/Sgt McCormick's father was asked by John's Dutch comrades if he would leave his son buried in Zoetermeer rather than have his remains returned to the US. They told Mr. McCormick that they were taking up a collection for a monument to be placed over his son's grave. Mr. McCormick agreed, and wrote the Army that he "would like my boy's body to remain where it is."

The Army felt that was not the wisest decision since "the willingness of the present

inhabitants of this small town to care for his son's grave does not guarantee in any way permanent care which will be insured if [the] body is concentrated to a U.S. Army installation." Mr. McCormick then wrote the Army, "I considered that it was very nice of the people of Zoetermeer Holland to subscribe for a monument to be erected over my boy's grave; and that they wanted his body interred there; and they stated that his Grave would be taken care of. So I had no other alternative but agree with them... Therefore under these circumstances—I would not like to alter my decision."

Mr. McCormick duly completed and returned the waiver request. There was just one final obstacle. In Sept. 1947, the Army informed Mr. McCormick that to complete the process, he had to arrange for someone to act as his agent, meet with an Army representative in Zoetermeer, and accept in writing the custody of S/Sgt McCormick's remains on his father's behalf. The agent also had to ensure that local authorities had no objections to the remains remaining permanently in place.

Mr. McCormick turned to Dr. Kentgens for help and he quickly responded. Acting as Mr. McCormick's agent, Dr. Kentgens met with representatives of the Army's Grave Registration Service and formally accepted responsibility for John's remains. It was through his efforts that John McCormick is buried in Zoetermeer today.

After Camp McCormick had



***Staff Sgt. John E. McCormick in peasant dress while with the Dutch Underground.***

successfully concluded, Mr. Moest visited Dr. Kentgens. He brought with him a letter from Col. Gilbert and a 392nd Bomb Group medallion. Col. Gilbert wrote, "Because of what you did for your fallen comrade so long ago, John McCormick is remembered even today by the Dutch. School children learn about him, flowers are laid on his grave, a scouting group is named for him, and thus his memory lives on. The 392nd Bomb Group will never be able to adequately thank you for honoring him equally with your own fallen resistance fighters."

In the course of their nine weeks together, American airman John E. McCormick and Dutch resistance fighter J. Kentgens forged bonds of loyalty and friendship that not even death could break. They stood shoulder to shoulder in the closing days of World War II, and today Dutch reenactors dressed as American airmen are continuing to ensure that their legacy of patriotism and valor is not forgotten.

For more information on S/Sgt John E. McCormick, see Triple A's website at <http://www.101st-airborne.net/> or the 392nd Bomb Group's website at [www.b24.net](http://www.b24.net).

# Last of the *Passeurs* in the Ariège region

By SCOTT GOODALL  
Lescure, France

Paul Barrau from the village of Sentenac d' Oust near Saint Girons, France, died in August this year at the age of 82.

His demise marks the end of a remarkable chapter in the history of the local mountain guides or "passeurs" who operated in the Ariège region of South-West France during the Second World War.

By 1942, thousands of people -- Jews, evading Frenchmen and shot-down Allied airmen -- were converging on the Pyrenees in an effort to escape over the mountains and reach safety in neutral Spain. Of the eight known "passeurs" who lived in the villages of Seix and Sentenac d' Oust, six were members of the Barrau family.

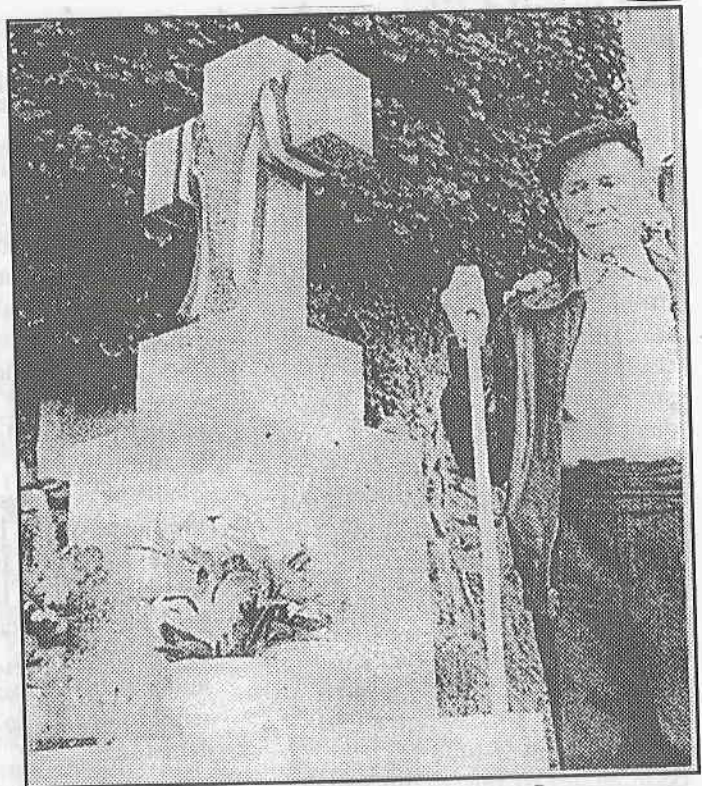
Brothers Louis and Paul Barrau were just 19 and 20 years of age respectively when their father and uncle, Norbert and Jean Barrau, began to smuggle groups of refugees and evading airmen along a high-level "Chemin de la Liberté" or freedom trail between Saint-Girons and the Spanish frontier. Their luck ran out in April 1943 when they were arrested, imprisoned and subsequently deported to a German labour camp. Both men died there six months later.

Louis and Paul, meanwhile, had taken over their father's and uncle's roles as local "passeurs". Many times, both young men -- working independently and always at night -- led groups of up to thirty evaders hidden in isolated barns in the hills above Saint-Girons on and up past the soaring massif of Mont Valier at 2838 metres to the Spanish frontier at la Pale de Claouere.

On the night of 12 September 1943, Paul Barrau was tending his sheep at a cabin not far from the Col de la Core when a relative arrived with the chilling news that Paul's younger brother Louis had been killed by a German patrol at a barn just above their home near the Col de l'Artique.

Louis, in fact, had been betrayed by a so-called Spanish "friend" while waiting for another group of French and Allied evaders to arrive. Instead, it was the Germans who climbed to the Col, surrounded the barn and called on Louis to surrender. Knowing what had happened to his father and uncle, Louis refused. The Germans then set fire to the barn and Louis made a break for it through a window at the rear. He was shot and killed before he had covered 50 metres.

The traitor who had betrayed Louis Barrau had also given Paul's name to the occupying forces. From the night of 12 September 1943, Paul became a hunted man. Unable to return home, he hid for five days and



*Paul Barrau shown at the memorial in the French Pyrenees that honors his brother Louis, a Resistance fighter killed by the Germans in 1943. (1999 Photo.)*

five nights in the high peaks that he knew so well before crossing the border himself to seek safety in Spain and -- with the fierce determination of so many of the many of the French evaders he had already helped -- to join the Free French forces of General de Gaulle in North Africa.

But escape to Franco's Spain was never as easy as it sounded. Paul Barrau spent several months in Lerida jail and lost ten kilos in weight before finally being released by the Red Cross to join his compatriots in North Africa, where he later fought with the Free French army in its various campaigns northwards through Europe to Alsace as the allies at last drove the German conquerors back across the river Rhine.

After the war, Paul returned to his native Ariège and the simple life that he had always known and loved as a farmer and shepherd. Those international hikers who have participated in our annual "Chemin de la Liberté" event each July will know that at lunch time on day one, a ceremony is held at the barn at the Col de l'Artique where Louis Barrau was killed.

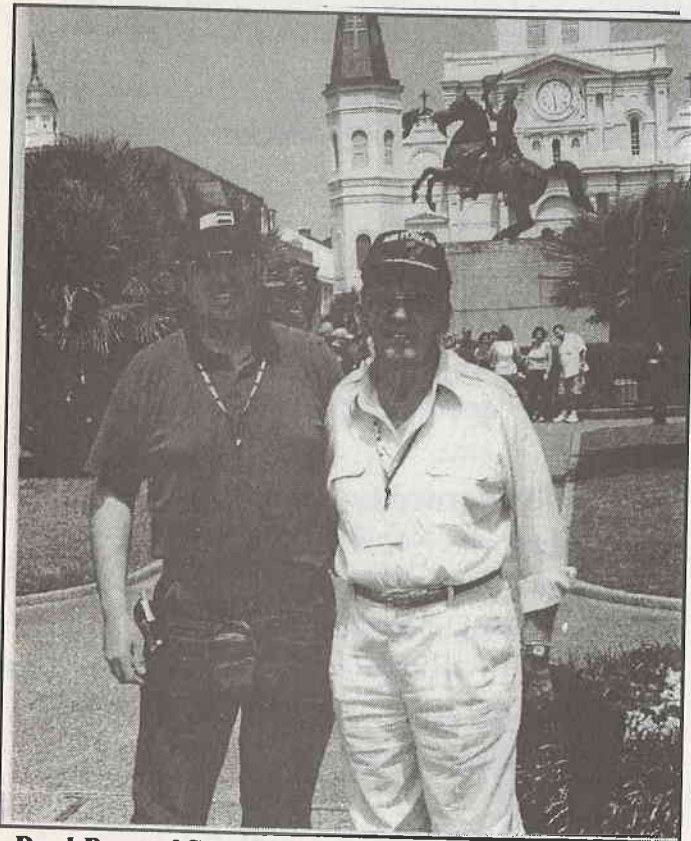
For many years, from the inauguration of the hike in 1994 until ill health prevented him in 2002, Paul Barrau was always present at this moving occasion. A quiet, almost solitary and enigmatic figure standing silently in the background. In good weather crouched with his faithful dog and long mountain walking pole in a typical "shepherd's stance".

In bad weather, barely visible under the cover of his

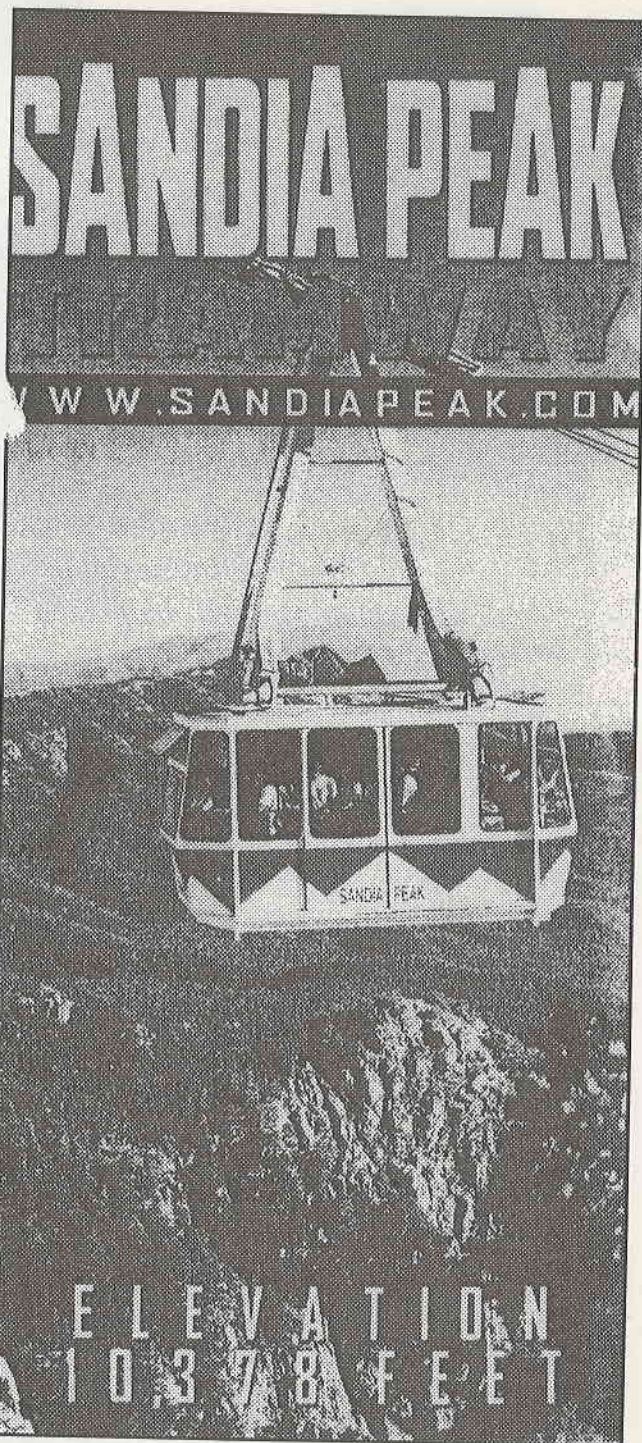
vast black and very traditional shepherd's umbrella. Many thoughts and memories must have gone through his mind every year as he watched the youth of today laughing, willing and eager to take on a challenge that was infinitely more difficult and dangerous back in the war-torn years of the 1940s.

Paul Barrau was the last surviving "passeur" in this area of the central Pyrenees. His funeral service took place on a fine, sunny day in August with the participation of dozens of his friends and neighbours, representatives of "Les Evades de France" and "Les Anciens Combattants", plus myself.

Paul is buried alongside the grave of his brother Louis in the small mountain cemetery at Sentenac d'Oust.



*Paul Rees of Syracuse, N.Y., a busy photographer at the New Orleans reunion, poses with his uncle, Leonard Rogers of Youngstown, Ariz.*



Beetle Bailey



# *It's a Trip!!!*

## **Annual AFEES Reunion & AGM**

**May 11-14, 2006**

**MCM Elegante Hotel & Event Center**

**2020 Menaul Blvd., Albuquerque, N.M. 87107**

**(Reunion Registration Form on Page 17)**

*All times and events are subject to change!*

*Daily schedules will be posted at Hospitality Suite and Registration Table*

### **2006 Reunion Schedule**

#### **Wednesday, 10 May**

Registration Begins

AFEES Tour Desk Opens

Hospitality Suite Open, 1300-2300 hrs.

Board of Directors Meeting, 1700

#### **Thursday, 11 May**

Registration Continues

Hospitality Suite Open, 0800-2300

AFEES Tour Desk Open

Sandia Peak Tramway Tours,

0930 - 1230 and 1230-1530

Santa Fe Trip (on your own), 0900-1530

Golf

**WELCOMING BUFFET DINNER**

Reception 1815; Dinner 1845

#### **Friday, 12 May**

Kirtland Air Force Base Tour

with Luncheon, 0900-1500

**EVENING FREE**

#### **Saturday, 13 May**

Memorial Service, 0945 - 1045

Annual General Meeting, 1100 - 1230

BOD Meeting Follows

Hospitality Suite Open, 1230 - 2300

**AFTERNOON FREE**

Sandia Peak Tramway, 1300 - 1600

Golf

**ANNUAL BANQUET**

Reception, 1815; Dinner, 1845

#### **Sunday, 14 May**

Complimentary Hot Breakfast in main dining room

Santa Fe Unaccompanied Tour, 0900-1500

Sandia Peak Tramway, 0930 - 1230

(Tickets available if signed for in advance.)

#### **ATTENTION, HELPERS!**

As usual, extra nights at the MCM Elegante are not included in the account which AFEES provides for your hospitality. You will be responsible for more than four nights (May 10, 11, 12, 13) at the hotel.

Should a Helper require an aide because of physical handicap, AFEES will cover the room and reunion package if they share a room.

AFEES will cover the Helper and spouse. Additional members of the Helper's party will be expected to handle their own expenses.

#### **For Reunion Information, Contact:**

Yvonne Daley, 1962 Brae-Moor Drive,  
Dunedin, FL 34698, Ph. 727-734-9573



## Reunion agenda includes visit to Kirtland AFB

On Friday, May 12, of the 2006 AFEES reunion at Albuquerque, the 58th Special Operations Wing at Kirtland AFB will be our host.

The history of the 58th SOW officially began with the activation of the 58th Fighter-Bomber Wing on July 10, 1952. However, its lineage goes back to the WWII era.

The 58th Tactical Fighter Training Wing was stationed at Luke AFB until it moved to Kirtland on April 1, 1994.

The wing is scheduled to begin training for the new CV-22 Osprey, due to arrive in 2006.

## Tee, anyone?

Anyone interested in playing golf during the Albuquerque Reunion next May should contact Steve MacIsaac.

Colonel Mac says that if the number of golfers is small, he can make arrangements for a REALLY GREAT GOLF COURSE FOR FREE!

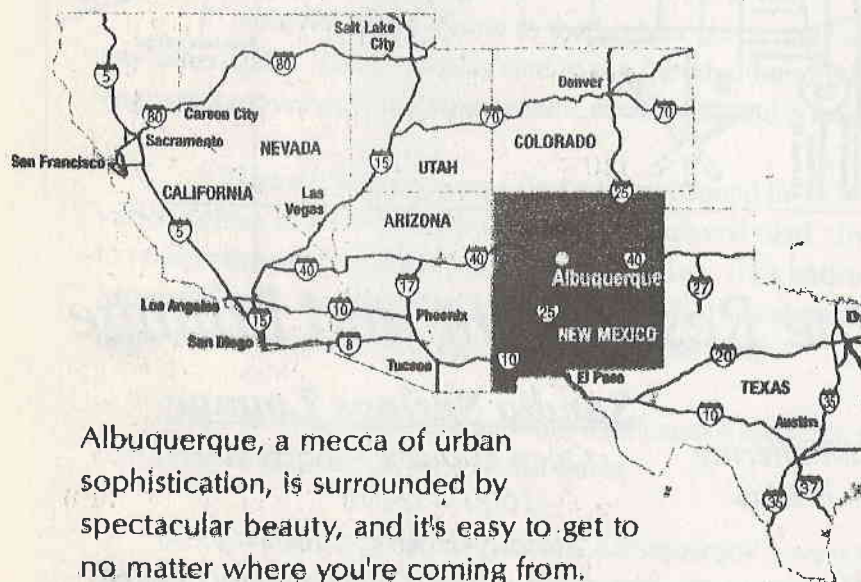
If the number of golfers is more than eight, he can get them on a great course for a small greens fee.

If interested in some time on the links, contact Mac at 505-867-3367; cell phone: 302-249-1499 or <colmacmac@mac.com>

## ALBUQUERQUE

### in the heart of New Mexico

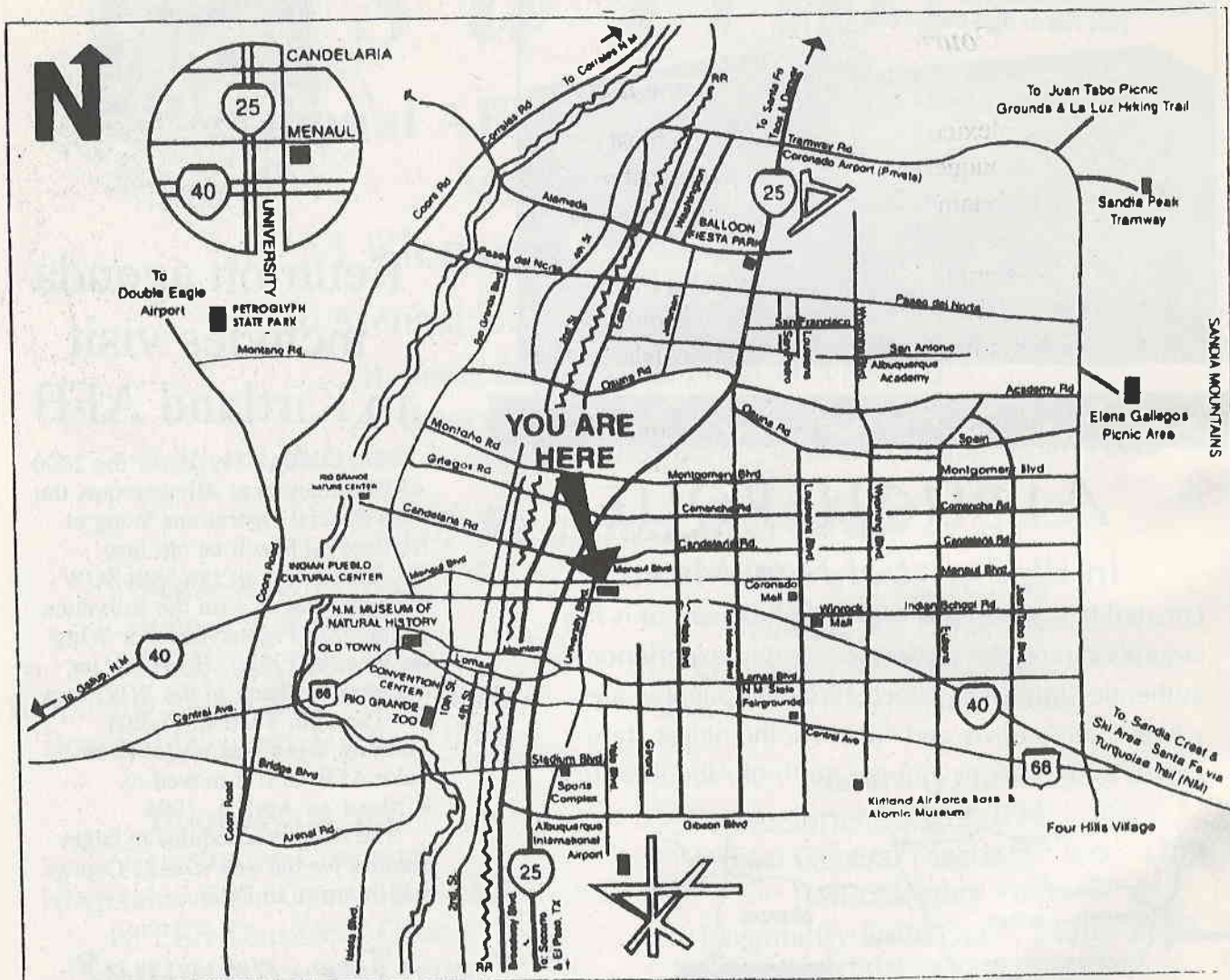
Located in central New Mexico, Albuquerque is the largest city and the perfect location to experience the authentic Southwest. Nineteen Indian pueblos are within a day's drive, and Santa Fe, the oldest state capital in the U.S., is an hour north of Albuquerque.



Albuquerque, a mecca of urban sophistication, is surrounded by spectacular beauty, and it's easy to get to no matter where you're coming from.

Albuquerque is less than an hour by air from Denver or Phoenix, two hours from Los Angeles or Dallas and about three hours from Chicago. Direct and non-stop air services from major airlines fly to Albuquerque from 70 cities in the U.S. The city is also a major destination for transcontinental Amtrak trains. Highway 550 [marblestreetstudio.com](http://marblestreetstudio.com)

# MCM Elegante Hotel & Event Center



## Join Us in Our Fine Restaurant and Lounge

### Mesa Grill

Full Service fine dining restaurant offering  
our Luncheon Buffet, Monday -- Friday

Open Monday -- Friday:

0600 -- 0900: Complimentary Breakfast

1100 -- 1400: Lunch

1700 -- 2200: Dinner

Saturday and Sunday:

0700 -- 1000: Complimentary Breakfast

1100 -- 1400: Lunch

1700 -- 2200: Dinner

### Sandia Springs Lounge

Open Monday -- Saturday

1600 -- 2400

Sunday Hours, 1400 -- 2200

1730 -- 1900, Complimentary Cocktails

# *Just Facts about Albuquerque!*

*Courtesy of Albuquerque Convention and Visitors Bureau*  
<[www.itsatrip.org](http://www.itsatrip.org)>

New Mexico is one of the nation's most sparsely populated areas. The Albuquerque Metro Area, with just over 753,000 residents, can't help but retain its neighborhood feel.

Albuquerque is bordered on the east by the Sandia and Manzano Mountains, on the west by Petroglyph National Monument, to the north by Sandia Pueblo and to the south by Isleta Pueblo.

The city spans 187 square miles at elevations ranging from 4,500 feet in the Rio Grande Valley to 6,500 feet in the foothills of the Sandia Mountains.

Ernie Pyle, the World War II correspondent, made his home in Albuquerque. The house is now a branch of the Public Library and it houses a display of his personal memorabilia.



## **SOME ALBUQUERQUE FUN FACTS**

- \* Albuquerque is considered the Ballooning Capital of the World because of the excellent flying conditions, number of resident hot-air balloonists and the Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta.
- \* New Mexico is home to the highest percentage of people with Ph.D.s per capita than any other state. This is largely due to the fact that hundreds of highly educated scientists and engineers moved into the state when Los Alamos and Albuquerque built laboratories after WWII.
- \* Historic Route 66 was first commissioned in 1926 with a giant S-curve connecting various cities in New Mexico with mostly unpaved road. In 1931 federal funds were designated to realign the road on a more east-west direction. The entire route from Chicago, Ill., to Santa Monica, Calif., was paved in 1937. Today I-40 runs along much of the original roadbed with many of the original neon signs still dotting the path.
- \* The American International Rattlesnake Museum in Albuquerque is home to the largest collection of live rattlesnakes in the world.
- \* Five dormant volcanos mark Albuquerque's west side. They were formed about 190 thousand years ago, but smoke was seen rising from them as recently as 1881. The volcanos are still in the cooling stage; when it snows in Albuquerque, the snow melts first in the area of the volcanos because of residual heat.
- \* "Bosques" are groves of coottonwood trees that grow along the riverbed of the Rio Grande amongst an otherwise arid environment. The ribbon of green provides a colorful contrast to the desert shades of the area.

**AIR FORCES ESCAPE AND EVASION SOCIETY ANNUAL REUNION AND AGM**  
**Thursday -- Sunday, May 11-14, 2006**

**MCM ELEGANTE HOTEL & EVENT CENTER**

2020 Menaul Boulevard, NE

Albuquerque, NM 87107

**Reservation Toll-Free Phone Number: 1-866-650-8900**

**Direct Line Phone Number: 505-884-2511**

**Reunion Code: AFEES**

**(Room rate applies three days prior and three days after reunion)**

**Reservation Request Form**

***(Effective Jan. 1, 2006)***

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ Rooms for \_\_\_\_\_ Persons  
**DOUBLE OR SINGLE: \$73.00 Inclusive** \_\_\_\_\_ **SUITES (if available) \$111.62** \_\_\_\_\_

Arrival Date \_\_\_\_\_ Departure Date \_\_\_\_\_

CHECK-IN TIME: 3 p.m. CHECK-OUT TIME: Noon

**ROOM TYPE REQUESTED**

King Smoking \_\_\_\_\_

Two Double Beds, Smoking \_\_\_\_\_

King Non-Smoking \_\_\_\_\_

Two Double Beds, Non-Smoking \_\_\_\_\_

Wheelchair Access. \_\_\_\_\_

Suite \_\_\_\_\_

Total Rooms Requested \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State and ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ <e-mail> (not required) \_\_\_\_\_

**ONE NIGHT'S DEPOSIT OR CREDIT CARD NUMBER REQUIRED FOR RESERVATIONS**

**All except Helpers should Mail this completed form to MCM Elegante Hotel at above address**  
**or Call Reservation Number listed above.**

**PLEASE NOTE: Helpers only should make Hotel Reservations for Albuquerque with**  
**AFEES Reunion 06, c/o Francene Weyland, Treasurer**  
**11644 SW Egret Circle, Unit 101, Lake Suzy FL 34269-8732, U.S.A.**  
**Telephone: 1-941-624-2646**

***Reservations must be received by April 26, 2006. Later reservations will be subject to availability.***

**REUNION RESERVATION FORM**

AIR FORCES ESCAPE AND EVASION SOCIETY

**Thursday-Sunday, May 11-14, 2006****MCM Elegante Hotel, Albuquerque, N.M.**

*Please complete this form and return form with check or money order (No Credit Cards) to arrive not later than April 26. Your check is your receipt.*

**MEMBERS:** Make check payable to AFEES REUNION and mail to:

**AFEES, c/o Yvonne Daley-Brusselsman, 1962 Brae-Moor Drive, Dunedin, Fla., 34698**

**HELPERS ONLY:** Send both Hotel Reservation Form and Reunion Reservation Form to:

**AFEES, c/o Francene Weyland, Treas., 11644 SW Egret Circle, Unit 101,  
Lake Suzy, FL 34269-8732; Phone 1-941-624-2626**

\_\_\_\_\_ Reservations for total reunion package, \$129 per person, which includes  
Registration Fee and events listed below ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*If you do not select the total reunion package, please indicate events of your choice:*

\_\_\_\_\_ Registration Fee @ \$30 per person ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Sandia Peak Tramway @ \$16 ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 Choose One: Thursday A.M. \_\_\_\_\_ Thursday P.M. \_\_\_\_\_ Saturday \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Thursday, Welcoming Buffet/Helpers Dinner @ \$30 ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Friday, Kirtland AFB Tour with Lunch @ \$18 ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Saturday, Banquet @ \$35 ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**TOTAL ENCLOSED** ..... \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*For Saturday Banquet: Please indicate choice of entree: Beef \_\_\_\_\_ Chicken \_\_\_\_\_ Fish \_\_\_\_\_*

**OPTIONAL REUNION DAY TRIP:** To Santa Fe, N.M., Lunch on your own,  
offered Thursday and Sunday, 0930 to 1500 each day. Estimated cost: \$30.

If interested in Santa Fe trip, please indicate your interest: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

When registering, check with Nancy MacIsaac at Events Desk to sign up for tour you want to take.

See the AFEES Tour Desk to arrange the following events on your own  
or by use of the Hotel Shuttle:

**Atomic Museum, \$3; Balloon Museum, seniors \$2; Sandia Casino, Free pick up**

For Reunion information, contact Yvonne Daley-Brusselmans, 1-727-734-9573;  
Cell Phone, 727-415-3803; <gadabout127@msn.com>

**NAME BADGES:** List names as you wish them to appear:

NAME (please print) \_\_\_\_\_ Service Unit \_\_\_\_\_  
 Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Guest's Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_  
 Emergency Address \_\_\_\_\_



*The B-17F "Memphis Belle" is loaded for a trip to Wright-Patterson AFB .*

## *The Belle is at Dayton museum for restoration*

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio (AFPN) ---The "Memphis Belle," the Eighth Air Force first B-17F heavy bomber to complete 25 successful bombing missions over Europe during World War II, is now at the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force here.

The move came under terms of an agreement between the Air Force and the Memphis Belle Memorial Association.

The aircraft, which is currently in the museum's restoration hangar in Area B here, is being prepared to undergo several years of restoration work.

Once restoration on the aircraft begins, the public can view it as part of the museum's "Behind the Scenes" tours. For announcements and tour updates, check the museum website:

<[www.wpafb.af.mil/museum](http://www.wpafb.af.mil/museum)>



**"Sometimes the best way to teach kids  
that won't listen is let 'em have their own way."**



## **EVADE! films still available, for only \$5.00**

Copies of the DVD and VCR featuring evasion experiences of World War II airmen are still available.

**EVADE!** tells the stories of six evaders, including that of Ralph Patton, AFEES co/founder and first president. Told in their own words, the stories of these American airmen come to life through footage of actual shoot-downs and through the artifacts of the Ralph Patton Collection.

Members of the Belgian and French undergrounds relive their most frightening moments and tell why they risked everything to help Allied airmen.

The price of the films has been reduced to \$5.00, postage and handling included. Orders and inquiries should be directed to:

Clayton David, 19 Oak Ridge Pond, Hannibal MO 63401-6539; phone 573-221-0441.

<davidafe@adams.net.>



*Scott Goodall of Southern France, a great friend of AFEES, was awarded the medal of the Order of the British Empire on Oct. 28, 2005. The honor was bestowed on him for "Services to the History of the Second World War."*

*Prince Charles pinned the medal on Scott's chest in a ceremony in Buckingham Palace. Scott says the Prince was filling in for the Queen, who was busy entertaining the King of Norway that day.*



*Steve and Nancy Borel of Overland Park, Kans. and her father Kenneth Dunaway enjoyed the New Orleans reunion last May.*

# It was luxurious at the Benier home



*Frank Schaeffer in the Benier family backyard, August 1944.*

*Frank M. Schaeffer, E&E 1369, bailed out of a B-24 east of Paris on Aug. 8, 1944. He was hidden until liberated by the U.S. Army 2nd Division.*

*This is part of his story.*

**By FRANK N. SCHAEFFER**  
506th Sqdn., 44th Bomb Grp.  
Montello, Wis.

It was a frightening experience, hanging there in the sky above enemy-occupied France. At one or two thousand feet I saw two bicycles traveling along a road. Then there were people coming out of farm houses and I could hear shouts. The earth was approaching fast, so I began to prepare for landing.

The French people who saw me land were all about me. I went down the road about a half mile with a crowd of people following.

I could speak only a few words of French. They asked if I was English or American.

My initial evasion helpers names are: Charles Dupuis, who now (2000) lives in the village of

Margny, and I believe he also had a brother involved. Also, there was Jean Perault, one of the first escorts to a rendezvous with the next two escorts, Henri Meysonet and Jean Piquet, who escorted me to the Benier home at Orbais, where Andre and Lucienne were living with their mother.

Other than our radio operator, John McKee, who was taken prisoner and Coley W. Richardson, badly injured on landing, and I believe hospitalized under German control, the rest of our crew spent the time hiding in the forest and often moving at night.

My time at the Benier home was relative luxury. I slept in a feather bed, and had regular meals prepared by the women.

Then I went on with a new escort. Next day there was a young man who ate with us; he turned out to be my closest companion for the next month. I never learned his name at the time; he was called "Shorty." He could speak some English.

I later learned that he was a British agent who had been trained in England. Years later I learned that his name was Louis Guyomard. He was French and his home was in Paris.

His equipment included two radio sets, small storage batteries, a generator, an American .45 automatic pistol, knives, a bicycle and a hand grenade. Through him, I learned much. He was the only one with whom I could carry on a conversation.

Shorty told me that I was on the edge of a town called Obais L'Abbaye, about 22 km south of Epernay, which is south of Reims.

Finally, the Yanks took Paris. After that, the 3rd Army made a drive south of Paris and to the east. I began to see more and more Germans. They seemed to be rushing about more than ever.

On August 28 we have having dinner when I saw a German go past



*The Benier family in the war years, from left: Lucienne, Colette, Gaston, Grandmother, Blanche, Jean-Pierre and Andre.*

on a cycle. A few minutes later there was machine gun fire nearby. Then there came some rumbling from the village. Everyone ran out of the house toward the center of town. They left the front door open. I had been trained to stay in the house, so I simply stayed and finished my meal.

In a few minutes, Mme. Lucienne came running back to the house, out of breath. She told me to follow her down the road and that the Americans were there. Sure enough, there was a convoy going through town.

Already the townspeople had their homemade French, British and American flags hanging from every window of every building. I had helped make some flags at the Benier home.

The second day of liberation was another day I'll never forget. We were taken around town to meet many families, and of course, to celebrate some more. At each house people would kiss us and pour champagne.

There were more convoys of men, vehicles and supplies coming through town. We had great

conversations with the fellows. Also we managed to keep ourselves and friends supplied with cigarettes, candy and other things. After all, they had opened all the wine and champagne they had been saving for so long, for this occasion.

We stayed in Paris for three days. On the third day, we loaded onto trucks to Orly field and boarded C-47s to be flown back to England.

After crossing the channel, we let down through the overcast and found ourselves once again over good old England. We taxied in and unloaded. After customs, we got coffee and doughnuts from a Red Cross canteen.

We were all bought our first Cokes by a captain who was in charge of our group.

Finally, on October 18, we boarded a C-54 aircraft at Prestwick, Scotland and 18 hours later, after fuel stops at Iceland and Gander, Newfoundland, we touched down at Washington, D.C. We were taken to Bolling Field to spend the night, before further interrogation and processing the following day, then traveling to Fort Sheridan, Ill,



Ed, careful with that knife!

## AFEES couple ties the knot

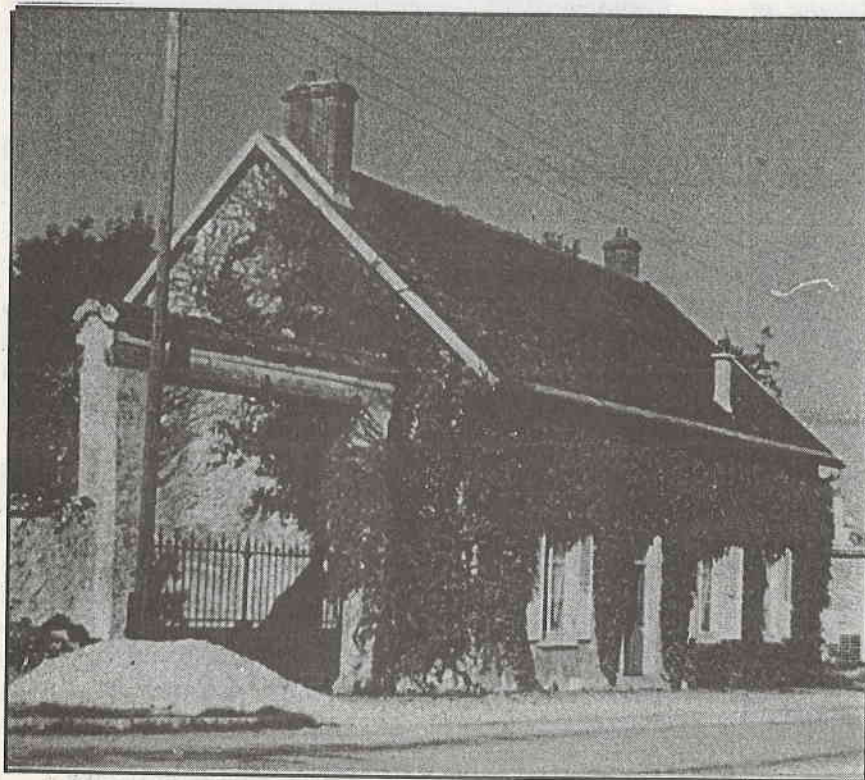
Marguerite Fraser, a French Helper, and Edward Miller, E&E #693, were married in Sedona, Ariz., on Oct. 22, 2005.

The ceremony was conducted in Christ Lutheran Church with the pastor, Rev. Jim Scharwtz, officiating.

Music was by Jim Buckanon, a soprano, who sang *The Wind Beneath My Wings* and Shubert's *Ava Maria*.

After the ceremony, about 120 persons attended a reception hosted by the congregation.

Ed's three sons and a daughter, plus a sister and other relatives were present. Marguerite's two daughters and other relatives also attended.



A frontal view of the Benier home (Photo about 1965)



# General assumes command at Scott

*General Duncan McNabb assumed command of the Air Mobility Command at Scott AFB, Ill., in October. General McNabb is an honorary member of AFEES and has attended several reunions. We hope that he and Linda can join us next year in Albuquerque.*

By Tech. Sgt. MARK DIAMOND  
Air Mobility Command Public Affairs  
SCOTT AFB, Ill. (AFPN) -- Gen. Duncan J. McNabb took command of Air Mobility Command during a ceremony here Oct. 14.

During the ceremony, the general discussed the importance of the command now and in the future.

"It has been six years since I left here as commander of the (Tanker Airlift Control Center)," said General McNabb. "And it seems like I've been fighting to get back here ever since I left."

The general said although he spent the past six years at the Pentagon, his heart has always been with AMC.

"When I think about this command, I am so honored to be entrusted (as its new commander)," he said. "AMC is truly one of the crown jewels in our national defense. It's our strategic ability to move, and we are the only ones who have it."

General McNabb said he was amazed as he watched the command's response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. He said from establishing and maintaining air operations, to moving evacuees and patients out of harm's way, and delivering critical supplies and equipment, AMC performed magnificently.

"The world depends on you, and you always delivered," the general said.

About his return to Scott, General McNabb said he feels like he has come home.

"Our youngest (child) was born here. We taught our kids to ride their bikes here, and when we came back the second time, we taught them how to drive here," said General McNabb. "We also have tremendous friends in this community. When you look at Scott, the warm feeling that it has is much to do with the great community that is here."

Before handing the command lead to General McNabb, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley talked of the importance of air mobility, and the trust he has in the new commander.

"We have a lot of work ahead of us, and there isn't anyone better to do this than (General McNabb)," General Moseley said. "This country's at war and this population is depending on the American military to do this. And to a certain extent, the world is depending on Air Mobility Command to be able to deliver at the right time and the right place, the

equipment, the people, the capabilities and the effects required to fight the global war on terrorism."

The chief of staff also talked of what the Air Force and its coalition and Guard and Reserve are doing.

General McNabb is responsible for more than 148,000 men and women -- active duty, Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve and civilians -- who provide rapid, global mobility and sustainment for America's armed forces. The command also plays a crucial role in providing humanitarian support at home and around the world.

General McNabb has extensive experience in the mobility world. He was an instructor navigator, instructor pilot, chief pilot and airlift director at Norton Air Force Base, Calif. And he has held various squadron, group and wing command positions with the command. The general commanded the Tanker Airlift Control Center here for nearly two years during the late 1990s.

He is a command pilot and navigator with more than 5,400 hours flown in a variety of aircraft.



*General Duncan McNabb poses with his wife Linda at Scott AFB, Ill., where he assumed command of the Air Mobility Command recently.*



*Roving monkeys on Gibraltar, the destination of most WWII evaders who crossed the Pyrenees Mountains, have learned to beg from tourists. Some residents are getting tired of their monkey-shines.*

## *Monkeys: a nuisance on the Rock*

From the New York Times Large Print Weekly, July 11-17, 2005

By LIZETTE ALVAREZ

GIBRALTAR -- Legend has it that as long as the Barbary apes roam the rock of Gibraltar, the territory will remain safely under British rule.

The British have embraced this particular piece of folklore for centuries; not even Churchill, in the throes of World War II, dared to disregard it. In 1944, with the Rock's monkey population dwindling, he took no chances. He ordered a shipment of Barbary macaques from Morocco, a short distance across the strait.

Little did Churchill envision how big the monkey populations would grow, or the mischief that would

come along with it.

There are now nearly 230 tailless Barbary monkeys on Gibraltar, and they do not merely live on the Rock so much as dominate it. As the last free-ranging monkeys in Europe, the macaques happily exploit that privilege, oblivious to the consternation they provide among the Rock's other set of primates, their human neighbors.

The monkeys do have a dedicated home, an ape den, at the reservoir up on the limestone rock that constitutes the bulk of tiny Gibraltar. But they are free to stray, and they do so, mostly in a quest for candy bars, shady spaces, fruit trees, swimming pools and human toys.

They have a special affinity for

the purses, shiny cameras and plastic shopping bags that people tote around.

And the monkeys -- despite being called apes, they are really monkeys -- have grown so accustomed to the kindness of tourists and tour guides that little will frighten them away, not even the sharp flick of a broom or the shrill screams of children.

"People think they are cute, and they hand them crisps and biscuits, so the monkeys climb up and take the food," said Eric Shaw, who works for the nonprofit Gibraltar Ornithological and Natural History Society and is in charge of the monkeys. "I mean, if you want to buy me a free drink, I'll take it. It's not that they are so clever. It's that we are so thick."



*Lt. Catlin's crew, 743rd Sqdn., 455th BG, May 1944: From left, standing: Sgt. Lycan, Lt. Paurice, Lt. Greenquist, Lt. Catlin, Lt. Singer and Sgt. Linneweh. Kneeling: Sgt. Mattson, Sgt. Bodenhorn, Sgt. Skinner and Sgt. Mazoros.*

### **ART'S WAR, 1940-45; Part III**

## *After 135 days, back with the Allies*

***Art Mattson was a gunner on Leakin Deacon, a B-24 downed June 9, 1944, over Northern Italy. This is the conclusion of his story of being helped by Italian Partisans. Parts I and II have appeared in earlier editions.***

**By ARTHUR MATTSON  
Houston, Tex.**

During grain threshing and potato digging season, work quit about 4 p.m. This allowed me time to go to the B-25 evaders' hideout to listen to BBC London at 5 p.m. on the clandestine radio left there by Major Williams and Sgt. Roberts.

When I returned to Febio, the community was waiting to hear the news and they always asked, "Arturo, cosa nuova?" (What's New)

By this time I was quite fluent in Italian and could tell them the news. I used my silk map of Europe to show city and river locations. They were especially interested in news about the Italian front.

Since I worked with them and brought them the 5 p.m. war news, the Febio people considered me an okay guy and were all very friendly. One day I had this conversation (in Italian) with Silvia, a girl about 17:

Silvia: Arturo, will you take me to America?

Art: Silvia, you know before I can take you to America, we have to go to Father Don Vosco in Monteorsaro.

Silvia: Well, we can go.

Art: But Silvia, I do not have a ring for you.

Silvia: We can use my grandmother's ring!

Art: Silvia, if I take you to

America your mother will cry.

Silvia: Oh, we can take her with us!

I don't believe she was serious, yet most people wanted to come to America.

On Oct. 17, James Paurice and I were told that a fellow from south of the combat line was in Monteorsaro. He told us he had been sent by the 15th Air Force to guide us. This sounded too good to be true.

About 15 people from Febio went with us to Monteorsaro to meet the guide in the residence of Father Don Vosco. After a few questions, we believed he was legitimate, since he knew the location and numbers of our squadron and bomb group.

He was leaving the next morning with about 13 escaped POWs and the two B-25 men.

After the meeting, the Febio men lined up on one side of the room and the women on the opposite side; they were ready to wish us well and tell us goodbye.

The next morning, there was a light snow and some sleeting rain. On passing a flock of about 100 sheep, we saw that Silvia's mother was leading them. She was carrying a pack and a blanket. It would take several days to reach the line.

Sheep had to be moved from the snow area in the mountains to the Arno valley south of the line.

Our route took us along the east side of Mt. Cimone and then south to a point about 40 miles west of Florence; it took four days.

Two nights, we slept in the shelter of trees. The third night was spent at the habitat of two hermits, but we slept outside on some hay. After breakfast, we continued on our way south.

In the afternoon, we suddenly found ourselves under an artillery barrage. The question: is the German army here and was the barrage for them? We were afraid of being hit and ran out of the area where shells were dropping; it was a close call.

Since we soon learned that it was Allied shelling, we knew the line was a short distance away. At dusk, while descending a tree-covered hill, we stopped before crossing a road that curved to the right. While we were surveying the area, a German patrol passed and when they were out of sight, someone said, "Let's Go."

Being ex-infantry, I called out in a loud whisper, "No! Watch for the rear guard!" Two minutes later, the rear guard came around the bend; he was carrying a light machine gun that could have killed all of us.

When the rear guard was out of sight, we scampered across the road and walked about a mile. By now it was dark and an Allied sentry called, "HALT!"

We were ordered to approach one at a time; our guide went first. As we advanced, our guide vouched for each of us. Paurice and I were

taken to a British artillery unit; I don't know where the others were sent.

At last we were with Allied friends and free after 135 days. The date was Oct. 22, 1944--Paurice's 21st birthday.

The British welcomed us with a shot of whiskey and a cigarette. We told them we had dodged an artillery barrage earlier in the day and they said they had fired their daily quota to keep the Krauts backing up.

Since we had not eaten all day, they served us leftover corned beef, potatoes, bread and tea. After not having tasted salt in four months, the first bit of corned beef really shocked us. Since we were infected with lice, we were not offered a bed so it was another night on the ground (our last).

Having been hunted by the Nazis and Fascists for 4 1/2 months, it was difficult to describe how it felt to be free and secure. There were numerous close calls of being captured. Being dressed in civvies, traveling with partisans and carrying ammo made us partisans and all captured partisans were shot. It was



*Art Mattson holds a .50 cal. waist gun with ammo belt during an air show in 2002.*

such a relief to be safe and secure.

The next morning we were interrogated by British Intelligence who asked about partisan activity and whether we had seen German units moving to the north. We told them we met Major Williams and Sgt. Roberts in Monteorsaro in July.

That afternoon, Allied HQ in Florence sent a truck with an armed guard to pick us up. The guard stood up front by the cab and ordered Paurice and me to stay at the rear.

After the friendly morning with the British, we thought it strange that the Americans treated us like a couple of prisoners.

On arriving in Florence, we were ordered to enter a stockade full of questionable individuals. Needless to say, we objected and raised hell.

When we asked to see the commanding officer, we were told he had retired for the day but that didn't satisfy us; we continued to insist on seeing him.

Paurice mentioned that his senator in New York would hear about this when we got back to the States. With our continual protests, the commanding officer finally came.

He offered no apology other than to say that all who crossed the line had to be cleared. After showing him our dog tags and answering a few questions about U.S. geography, he ordered our release.

Next day, Oct. 24, we were interrogated and legally cleared back into U.S. service. I was given a pair of army pants to replace the threadbare Italian pants I had been wearing for months.

Transportation for Paurice and me to the 455th Bomb Group was by B-25 from Florence to Foggia and then by B-17 from there to Cerignola.

Once we received our travel orders, we were flown to Naples with about 12 others on a C-47 equipped with side bench seats.

On Nov. 29, 1944, I was taken to the port of Genoa to board ship for the United States.

**THE END**

# THE FRENCH CONNECTION

*Ex-POW hosts members of the family who hid him from the Germans*

From the Indiana (Pa.) Gazette.  
Saturday, Aug. 2, 2003

**Bob Henry was tail gunner on *Wabbit-Twacks III* of the 96th Bomb Group when he was downed near the French-Belgian border.**

**By BILL ZIMMERMAN**  
**Gazette Staff Writer**

After successfully exiting his B-17 bomber by parachute, Robert Franklin Henry saw a German fighter plane heading his way. Henry's plane had been experiencing engine trouble when it was hit by German fighters over eastern France on Oct. 14, 1943.

It was returning to England following an air raid in Schweinfurt, Germany, that resulted in 60 U.S. planes being lost.

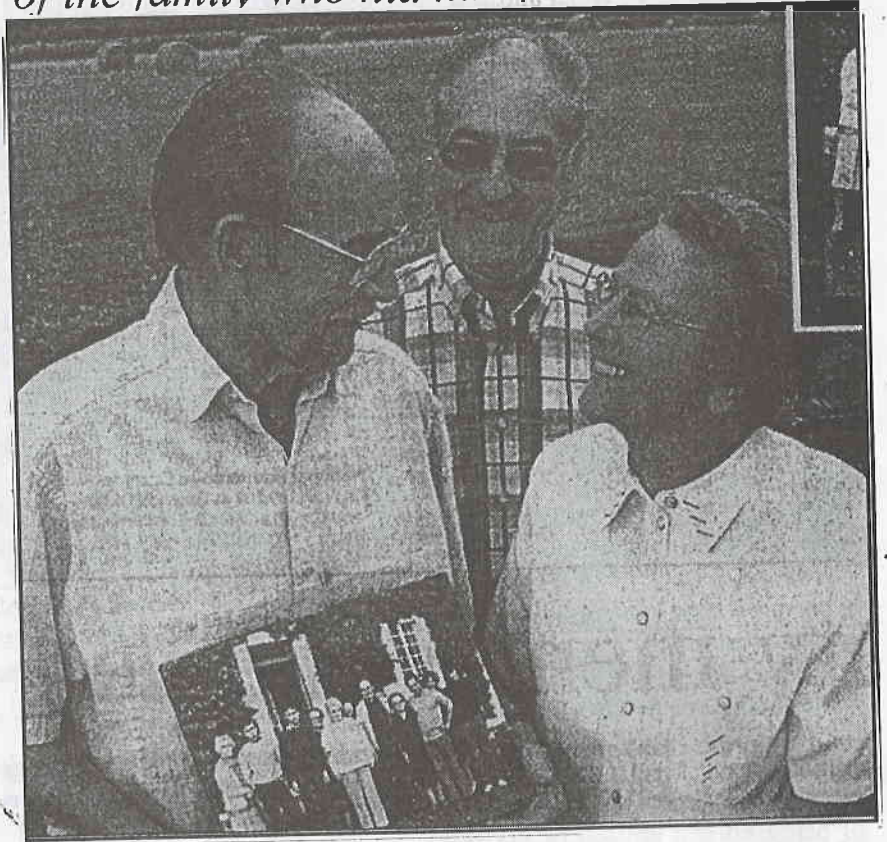
After safely landing after his first and last drop from a plane, Henry eventually came in contact with Irene Dardenne and her family, who offered to give him a place to stay at their home in Vrigne-Aux-Bois in northeastern France. The act of kindness sparked a friendship that has lasted more than 58 years.

Now, at his home near Cherry Tree, Henry, 87, is giving a member of the Dardenne family a place to stay.

Josette Bertrand, 79, and her husband Ghislain, 75, have been visiting Henry since July 21. They are from Floing, France, and Josette is the niece of Irene Dardenne.

Josette was almost 15 when Henry was staying with her aunt, and she rode her bike to the house almost every day. "She never failed coming down there to visit," said Henry. "You looked forward to her coming."

Josette learned some English in school and was excited about the chance to practice the language.



**Robert Henry, left, returned a favor to the Dardenne family by hosting Ghislain and Josette Bertrand, niece of Irene Dardenne, who first hid him after he was shot down in France.**

Josette and Henry kept in contact for many years; this is the second time she has been in the United States to visit him. Henry made his first trip to France in 1983 with his wife, LaRue, who died in 1986.

Their visit was documented in two French newspapers. Henry also attended the wedding of Josette's cousin's son in 1994 and visited again in 1997.

Josette came to attend the wedding of Henry's granddaughter Sabrina on July 28, and it has been the high point of her trip.

"It was a great, great day," said Josette. "I've never had such a great time in my life."

After his plane was shot down, Henry received help from the French Resistance, which provided him with food, shelter and medical

care for five ribs that were broken after bailing out.

Henry helped the Resistance gather weapons dropped by British planes and was shuffled among families who were willing to hide him.

Many people helped Henry, but the generosity, hospitality and bravery of the Dardenne family made the biggest impact.

Irene Dardenne was the first to contact Henry's family to tell them that he was alive after he was declared missing in action. Henry spent about three or four weeks at the Dardenne home. He was able to go out at night occasionally, and he claimed that there was never a shortage of good wine, but food was scarce.

Josette peeled potatoes for men in the Resistance and even though

they were risking their lives, she wished her family could have done more.

Henry was provided with some books written in English and read those during times of boredom, but some days were pretty intense.

The final close call occurred when the French Underground got word of a planned invasion and alerted Henry. He fled before German soldiers entered the home to find the bed that he had been lying in still warm. Somebody had tipped off the Germans about Henry's location, and the family remained defiant even after being told to start digging their own graves.

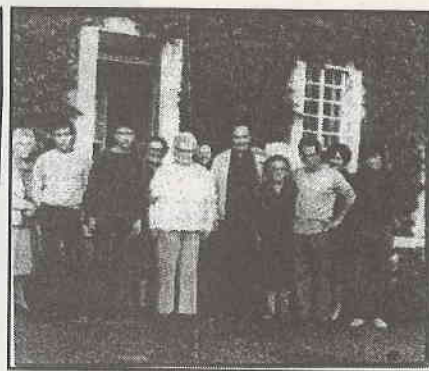
Her uncle claimed that his son was in the bed and had just left for school. "If Robert had stayed at home one hour more, I think we would no more," said Josette.

Henry was captured by the Germans in Spain near the border with France in May 1944. He was kept in prison camps in France and Germany.

At one camp he was beaten by members of the Gestapo, who knew his plane had been shot down and that he had been hiding in France. They wanted the names and addresses of people who had helped him and beat him with clubs when he refused to tell.

"They beat me 11 hours straight," said Henry. "From 11 at night to 10 in the morning. There wasn't a square inch of my body that wasn't black and blue."

Henry was freed on May 2,



*Robert Henry, fifth from right, and his late wife La Rue, fifth from left, posed for this photograph taken by a French newspaper in 1983 at the home of Irene Dardenne.*

1945, after the German soldiers surrendered to English troops, but it wasn't before he was led on an 87-day walk during a winter that Henry claimed was one of the coldest in German history. He arrived home in Cherry Tree on July 5, 1945.

Henry, a retired mail carrier and farmer, is reluctant to talk about the emotions he felt during his return home, or how he feels now.

Despite Henry's guard, his daughter, Sandy Fairman of Indiana, who had accompanied him to France, knows how important Josette and her family are to him; she helped arrange their visit.

"I wanted him to be able to see his friends again," said Fairman. "They respect each other. They care for each other so much."

Henry is equally important to Josette's family. "I think since the war, the family of Robert's is our family," Josette said.

## Four crew members evaded

Four of Robert Henry's crewmates had better luck and evaded:

E&E 290, 2nd Lt Vernon E. Clark, navigator

E&E # 292, 2nd Lt Charles P. Bronner, bombardier

E&E # 296, T/Sgt William B. Dunning, flight engineer

S/Sgt Lester W. Knopp, right waist gunner

Clark, Bronner, Dunning and other evaders were picked on Tariac, a tiny island off the Aber Benoit estuary, 25 km north of Brest, by MGB 318 of the Royal Navy during the night of 25/26 December 1943. (Operation Felicite II).

--Information provided by Claude Helias, Plomelin, France

*A visit to the D-Day Museum was a feature of the 2005 AFEES reunion in New Orleans.*

## D-Day Museum is again open after Katrina

*By The Associated Press*

NEW ORLEANS, La. -- The National D-Day Museum, looted and vandalized in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, reopened Saturday, Dec. 3, with a smaller staff, but with its artifacts and exhibits intact.

About 300 people were on hand for the opening, and more filed in through the day to see the video and audio exhibits that complement the artifacts, war planes and military vehicles on display.

Unlike much of the city, the museum in downtown New Orleans was not flooded. However, it suffered about \$200,000 to \$300,000 in damages, primarily related to theft and vandalism at the gift store and coffee shop, both of which were open Saturday, said President and Chief Executive Nick Mueller.

The museum will now operate with full-time staff of 26, rather than its 62-member pre-Katrina payroll.

It will be open five days a week, instead of seven, closing on Sunday and Monday.

The museum was opened on June 6, 2000, on the 56th anniversary of the Allied invasion of Normandy.

### NEW MEMBER

JOHN E. VERBOUT

11399-550 E Street

Neponset IL 613-9125

E&E 1171, 379 BombGrp.

Phone 309-594-2287

### NEW 'FRIEND'

CHARLES O. GLENN

163 N. Canyon View Drive

Los Angeles CA 90049-2721

Wife:Linda

## 'Agents for Escape' tells how some reached safety

**AGENTS FOR ESCAPE**, by Andre Rougeyron  
Translated by Marie-Antoinette McConnell,  
Louisiana State University Press, 1996

*This report of being shot down on July 4, 1943 was written by 2nd Lt. Paul McConnell, E&E # 380. It is extracted from this book. Paul is now deceased.*

*(From Flying Fortress News Letter, January 2005)*

On our way to the target at LeMans, France, we were intercepted by a large number of German fighters. Thick smoke escaped from our No. 4 engine. Our tail elevator also was hit.

Unable to stay with the formation (381st Bomb Grp.), we headed for England, losing altitude at the rate of 2,500 feet per minute. Enemy fighters pressed their attack on our Fort.

At about 8,000 feet we got lots of AA fire near Laval.

Our pilot Olaf Ballinger gave the order to bail out as I fired, from my navigator's position, at the cockpit of a ME 109, which fell into a tailspin.

I bailed out, followed by the others, as the plane crashed in a pasture. Some of the bombs aboard exploded.

A French farmer took me into the forest after taking my parachute, flying helmet and flight boots. I hid under a bush, but German troops came with dogs. I heard gunshots as I crawled and walked south through the forest.

Later, after about 30 hours without water or food, a man working at a sawmill led me to a well where I drank. He then took me to a building where I was given food and wine. There I was given clothes to replace my leather jacket and flight overalls.

I was hidden in a castle in the woods where Andre Rougeyron found me. It was then we thought that pilot Ballinger, co-pilot John Carah, and gunners Ownes and William Howell had escaped. I learned that bombardier George Williams, gunners Wackerman and Bochee were killed during the attack.

The Germans were conducting a great search of the area and threatening the French people, and taking French hostages in that area.

I was now wearing gray striped trousers, a corduroy jacket and a Basque beret. Then, accompanied by Andre or Marie Louise of the underground, I was moved from house to house, staying only a day or two at each.

Every day, Andre rode his bicycle out looking for more of my crew.

+++++

**Agents for Escape tells how some of the crew evaded and escaped over the Pyrenees.**



**Leslie A.G. Atkinson, 1920-2005**

Leslie Andre Georges Atkinson, a French patriot and co/founder of the Air Forces Escape and Evasion Society, died Oct. 10, 2005, after five weeks in the hospital. He was 85 years of age.

A hero of the French Resistance in World War II, he helped many downed airmen.

Years later, he vowed to form an association which would reunite airmen shot down over enemy occupied territory and their European Helpers. In July 1963, the Air Force Rescue Association became a reality. Later, with the aid of Ralph Patton, AFEES was founded.

Leslie's survivors include his wife, Renee, and four sons, Alain, Eric, Sylvain and Francis.

Funeral services were conducted Friday, Oct. 14, in Fontainebleau, France.

\* \* \* \* \*

Renee Atkinson has sent a statement of appreciation to members of AFEES:

*"Je vous remercie pour tous les témoignages de sympathie que j'ai rescu dans ce moment difficile.*

*"Je vous remercie pour tous les témoignages d'amitié et d'estime pour Leslie."*

(My profound gratitude to all for their tokens of sympathy I received during this difficult time for me. I wish to thank you also for all testimonies of friendship and esteem towards Leslie.)

Leslie A.G. Atkinson:

# He brought AFEES together

(Reprinted from *Communications*, Spring 1995 edition)

By RALPH K. PATTON  
Chairman/Co-Founder of AFEES

Leslie Atkinson is known by AFEES members as our representative in Europe, but to those of us who have worked with him these past 30 years he is much more than this. It is safe to say that "without Leslie Atkinson AFEES would not exist."

Long before AFEES was founded, Leslie had made considerable progress towards starting "The Air Force Rescue Association." This association came to my attention when I read the following letter in the July 1963 issue of Air Force magazine:

## RESCUED FLYERS SOUGHT

Gentlemen: I want to revive the bonds of friendship created during World War II between American airmen shot down in Europe and people who helped them by means of an 'Air Force Rescue Association.' The aims are to:

1. Unite all aviators who were rescued in the Association, as well as other persons who may be interested in such a project.
2. Establish contact once more with those people in Europe who participated in assisting American flyers.
3. Establish between the aviators and those who helped them a system of friendly exchanges through correspondence, a magazine, visits and meetings.

The object I have in view is to make a call to the rescued aviators for a broad and friendly team to make this project a solid and dynamic reality.

Signed,  
Leslie Atkinson

I contacted Leslie by letter dated January 29, 1964, seeking help in planning the first reunion of AFEES in Buffalo, N.Y., in June 1964. Since that first contact, Leslie Atkinson has been a vital arm of AFEES. Although AFEES is in the image of Leslie's grand idea, we probably have disappointed him in that we have not attained the international stature he envisioned.

Most AFEES members are not aware that Leslie is a true hero of the Resistance and a bona fide Helper of American Airmen. The following is a direct quote from a letter written in 1953 by now deceased AFEES member Earl O. Smith.

"After getting clear of the Germans, and being in the field for some time without food and medical assistance, I was in rather desperate strait even though I had made initial contact as indicated. Mr. Atkinson

immediately took charge of the situation and arranged transportation, food, clothing, identification and medical care and subsequently rendered invaluable assistance in preventing the German Occupation Forces from apprehending me. This was accomplished at considerable risk to him and his immediate family without any thought of payment for the services.

"To my personal knowledge, Mr. Atkinson was assisting four other airmen during this period. Various people with whom I came in contact spoke very highly of him and told me that he had aided numerous airmen during the war. I was also informed that he had been a Senior Sergeant in the French Air Force at some earlier date and had used his military background to great advantage in harassing the Germans."

Similar letters from American airmen are in the AFEES files. Before becoming a Helper, Leslie was active in sabotaging German installations and railroad facilities.



Leslie Atkinson (left) and Ralph Patton get together at a conference Dec. 4, 2000, at the Salle Medecis of the Palace du Luxembourg in Paris.

# **-FOLDED WINGS-**

## MEMBERS

#169 George S. Monser "L", Peoria IL, 306 BG., Sept. 12, 2005

15AF James C. Sanders 'L', Knoxville TN, 483 BG, Aug. 11, 2005

#1671 Gilbert S. Shawn "L", Longwood FL, 445 BG, Nov. 12, 2005

## HELPERS

Leslie A.G. Atkinson, Fountainbleau, France, Oct. 12, 2005

Yvonne Files, Belgium, Riverside, CA, Oct. 15, 2005

M. Lucien TERRIER, Braine-le-Comete, Belgium, Sept. 19, 2005

## **MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY UPDATES**

(Changes are in **BOLDFACE** type)

1. WARREN W. COLE "L", **Ashler Village Apt. 2303, Wallingford, CT 06492; Ph. 203-284-3708**
2. GLENDON V. DAVIS 'L', **16 Maui Way, Napa CA 94558-1525 (Postoffice Notice.)**
3. L/C ASHLEY IVEY "L", **4772 Abor Drive, Acworth, Ga., 30101; Phone 770-974-9421**
4. FRED KREISBERG, **2485 N. Park Rd., Apt. 309W, Hollywood FL 33021; Phone 954-961-3400**
5. CURT LOWENS "LH", **8343 West 4th St., Los Angeles CA 90048-4202**
6. MRS. FRANK (Wilma) RAMSEY "WL", **114 Chaucer Drive, Gaffney, SC 29341; Phone 864-489-6457**
7. PAUL H. SCHLINTZ, **9633 Outlook Drive, Overland Park KS 66207-2839**
8. MRS. MARTHA STANFORD "W", **100 Spring Harbor Drive, Apt. 122, Columbus GA 34094-4620; Phone 706-653-1363**
9. MRS. MARY JANE STEAD "WL", **2700 Burcham Drive, Room 302, East Lansing MI 48823; Phone 517-203-3041**
10. WALTER W. SWARTZ "L", **2674 Winkler Ave., Apt. 121, Fort Myers FL 33901-9315; Phone 239-277-1039**

### Elizabeth Carlson, a supporter of AFEES

Elizabeth Carlson, the widow of Charles Carlson (E&E #1665), of Morris, Minn., died Nov. 22, 2005. She was a dedicated supporter of AFEES and attended many reunions with her daughter, Margaret Fricke.

As one member said, "She was one sweet lady."

Her husband graduated from bombardier school at San Angelo with the class of 43-6. He joined the Robert Grimes crew at Moses Lake, Wash., among the first crews to train there.



**Yvonne de R. Files**  
**Helper and Author**

Yvonne de Ridder Files, wife of Lt. Col. Roger B. Files, died peacefully in Riverside, Calif., on Sunday, Oct. 15, 2005.

Yvonne was the author of *The Quest for Freedom*, an autobiography of her experiences as a member of the Belgian Resistance.

After the occupation of Belgium, she joined an espionage network, the Groupe General de Sabotage de Belgique or "Group G," and began the work of the Resistance. She hid downed allied pilots in her back bedroom, cached explosives in the basement, and rode a bicycle loaded with explosives through occupied Antwerp under the noses of the Gestapo.

She smuggled airmen through France and Spain, harbored Jewish neighbors against Nazi raids, distributed propaganda leaflets, made incendiaries, sabotaged German army vehicles and recovered caches of explosives dropped into Belgium.

She was betrayed and arrested by the German SS in July 1944 and spent many months in solitary.

She was condemned to death by hanging but liberated 10 days before the execution date. She was decorated by the governments of Belgium, France, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Mrs. Files came to the U.S. in 1952. She immediately sought U.S. citizenship and was a passionate American patriot for more than 50 years. She often spoke to service clubs and school groups, recounting her wartime experiences and her love of the United States.

## *Gil kept in touch with the Belgians who helped him*

AFEES lost one of its most loyal members when Gil Shawn of Longwood, Fla., passed away on Saturday, Nov. 12, 2005 after a prolonged illness. Gil's brother Jay reported that Gil passed away after a five-month battle with cancer.

Gil never completely recovered from a fall while visiting the D-Day museum in New Orleans during the AFEES reunion on May 14, 2005.

Gil earned his gold bar as a second lieutenant and his silver pilot wings when he graduated from flight school on May 24, 1943, with the class of 43-E at Altus AAB, Okla. Ralph Patton, AFEES chairman and co-founder, was a classmate.

After graduation, Gil was assigned as a co-pilot on B-24s and Ralph became a co-pilot on B-17s. Gil ended up with the 445th BG, 703rd Squadron, which was headed by Jimmy Stewart.

1st Lt. Shawn, E&E # 1671, was shot down April 12, 1944, at Perivez, Belgium. He was sheltered by the Belgian Underground for several weeks. He ended up in the first of several camps in the Ardennes Forest.

The forest camps were liberated by the Canadian Army in September of 1944.

Gil served in two wars, WWII and Korea. He served as a Reserve pilot with much time in C-47s. He retired from the Air Force in 1980.

Gil maintained a relationship



*Gil Shawn poses with the marker that marks the crash site of his B-24 in Belgium.*

with several of the Belgian families who helped him during the war, and visited with them on several occasions.

His close relationship with the family of Mme. Maggy Bozart-DeFosse made it possible for him to acquire, on loan, her father's radio, receiver and transmitter, now on display in the E&E exhibit in the Mighty 8th Air Force Museum in Savannah, Ga.

Gil was a commercial artist who spent his working career in New York City. In later years, he retired to Florida. He spent two years in northern Kenya as a member of the Peace Corps in the 1980s.

He assisted Lou Rabinowitz in organizing AFEES's most successful reception of foreign helpers ever staged in the U.S., the 1974 visit of 72 members of the Belgian Comete line.

The smiling face of Gil Shawn will be missed at AFEES reunions.

## *December means that it is time to catch up on annual dues!*

*Dues are \$20 per year. Life Membership is \$100. Make checks payable to AFEES.*

**Send payments and changes to Clayton C. David, AFEES Membership Chair,  
19 Oak Ridge Pond, Hannibal, MO 63401-6539, U.S.A. <davidafe@adams.net>**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_ CITY & STATE \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS \_\_\_\_\_

# The editor has the last word

By LARRY GRAUERHOLZ

<afees44@hotmail.com>

OR

<archerco@wf.quik.com>

WICHITA FALLS, Tex. -- For more than half his life, Leslie Atkinson devoted himself to reuniting downed Allied airmen and the patriots who helped them get back to Allied control.

Before health problems caught up with him, Leslie was a regular at our reunions and a valuable source of information concerning work of the French Resistance.

At the final rites on Oct. 14, Mme. Godlieve Pena arranged a wreath from AFEES and also represented us.

In this issue you will find the skinny on the '06 reunion with tentative schedules and reservation forms for the hotel and for the agenda.

Reunion Coordinator Yvonne Daley is officer material. She has learned to delegate.

She asks that all questions regarding accommodations for helpers be addressed to Francene Weyland (815-385-4378); those concerning reunion tours should go to Col. Steve MacIsaac (505-867-3367). And Yvonne (727-734-9573) will field what's left.

The hotel will begin accepting room reservations Jan. 1 and complete information will be published in the March issue.

We are advised that the MCM Hotel shuttle phone is right next to the visitors board at baggage claim in the Albuquerque airport.

**TRAVEL TIP:** Southwest Airlines has special senior fares and escorted family members can get special rates on Tuesdays. Check it out at <www.southwest.com>

The AFEES PX is officially closed, but Tom Brown says he has

some caps, a few bolo ties and tool kits left. I understand that the remaining stock will be available at Albuquerque.

Because of exorbitant prices for hot air balloon rides (\$110/\$150 per person) at Albuquerque, the balloon ride is not part of the agenda for the May reunion. If anyone does wish to "get high," information will be available at the tour desk.

A substitute would be the new Balloon Museum located near the balloon launch field. The tab is only \$2 for seniors.

The May-June issue of the AARP magazine included an article about a couple friends of AFEES, Art and Lee Beltrone of Virginia.

Art is a U.S. Marine Corps vet and has produced several books related to military affairs. He and Lee were part of the American contingent that tackled the Pyrenees commemorative hike in July 1999.

Roger Freeman, the supreme authority for history of the 8th Air Force, died at age 77 on Oct. 7, 2005. As a young man, he heard the thunder of aircraft in East Anglia.

He became the final word on the

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8AF, writing many books in great detail. He coined the term, *Mighty Eighth Air Force*.

He and his wife Jean attended most 8AFHS reunions. Other survivors include three children and a grandson.

Memorial services were conducted at St. Mary's Church, Dedham.

Copies of the film *EVADE!* that tells the stories of several AFEES members are still available from Clayton David. And at a bargain price!

Guess what some of my relatives are getting for Christmas.

Member Al Lea reports that David Westheimer, author of the book and movie, *Von Ryan's Express*, and formerly with the Houston Post, died Nov. 8, 2005, in California. He was with the 15AF and evaded.

And this one from a friend: A man and his wife are sitting in the living room and he says to her: "Just so you know, I never want to live in a vegetative state dependent on some machine. If that ever happens, just pull the plug."

His wife gets up and unplugs the television set.

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