

# THE AIR FORCES ESCAPE & EVASION SOCIETY

## Summer 1995 Communications

Volume 8 - Number 3

Wichita Falls, Texas

June 1, 1995

## Photo exhibition honors U.S. airmen

By JOHN & DOROTHY RUCIGAY

Recognition of the 50th anniversary of the end of WWII in Europe for Slovenia was held in Washington, D.C., at the Pentagon on March 10, commemorating signing of a bilateral military memorandum between the United States and Slovenia pledging military cooperation between the two nations. The event was highlighted by a special exhibit of the rescue of American airmen by Slovene Partisans.

Festivities began the previous evening at a reception at the Slovene Embassy in honor of the incoming Slovene Minister of Defense, Jelko Kacin, and his delegation, who were guests of U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry. Included in the guests were several airmen who were rescued by Slovene Partisans during WWII (from a total of over 300 American airmen plus 500 other escaped Allied prisoners.)

A group of OSS (Office of Strategic Services, predecessors of the current CIA) who served as liaison personnel behind enemy lines between the U.S. and the Slovene Partisans, were also present.

In addition, the predominant Slovene communities in Cleveland and Washington sent delegates to this historical event.

On Friday morning, March 10, we arrived at the Pentagon and were escorted to the parade grounds at the Riverside entrance to take our places for viewing the formal welcoming ceremonies. Assembled on the parade ground was an honor guard of approximately 200 servicemen from all of the U.S. armed forces, including a military band and color guard. A contingent of 50 servicemen in the rear echelon each held a state flag, providing a beautiful spectacle on this particularly windy day.

Secretary Perry and Minister Kacin reviewed the troops while the band played, followed by short speeches culminating in an 18-gun welcoming salute. At the conclusion of the formal outdoor ceremonies, a select group of attendees was ushered indoors for the concluding welcoming ceremonies.

The first order of business was the signing of the Bilateral Military Memorandum by Secretary Perry and Minister Kacin. Perry initiated the proceedings from the lectern by welcoming Minister Kacin and all attendees. Retired General Kicklighter presided over the remainder of the meeting.

An award was presented to the vice president of the Slovene Veterans Organization, Lado Pohar, who was instrumental in arranging the photo exhibit of



*The Secretary of Defense  
and the*

*World War II Commemoration Committee  
request the pleasure of your company  
at the unveiling of the  
Republic of Slovenia World War II Photo Exhibit  
on Friday, the tenth of March  
at ten forty-five o'clock*

*The Pentagon  
Second Floor, "A" Ring, Corridor Ten*

American airmen rescued by Slovene Partisans.

All the photographs were obtained from a 1992 exhibit arranged by Edi Selhaus and Janez Zerovc of Slovenia. The stories supporting the photographs are included in a book published by Sunflower University Press, titled "Evasion and Repatriation." Selhaus and Zerovc were instrumental in obtaining the documented experiences of the various airmen rescued by the Partisans and recording the historical American/Slovene event.

The meeting continued by awarding each of the WWII veterans who attended a plaque and a medallion commemorating the occasion. In turn, each of the veterans related some of their experiences and thanked the Slovene people for all that they had done to help them return home safely.

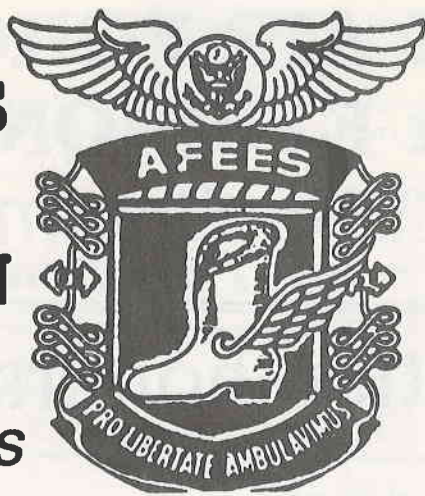
American airmen who were rescued and present for the ceremonies included: Bill Petty, Gerry Armstrong, Jim Ashley, Corbin McPherson and John Rucigay.

OSS veterans accepting awards were: James Goodwin, Nick Lalich and others, including an award for John Blatnik (deceased), former OSS liaison officer with the Partisans, accepted by his widow, Evelyn.

John Rucigay took the opportunity to praise Edi Selhaus and Janez Zerovc for their tireless efforts and announced that a more extensive photo exhibit, plus related WWII artifacts would be donated to Chanute Field, Ill., for permanent display.



# AIR FORCES ESCAPE & EVASION SOCIETY *Communications*



Volume 8 -- Number 3

Summer 1995

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**AFEES COMMUNICATIONS IS THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE AIR FORCES ESCAPE & EVASION SOCIETY.**

**AFEES IS A TAX-EXEMPT VETERANS ORGANIZATION UNDER IRS CODE 501(C)(19). IT WAS FOUNDED IN 1964 AND IS CHARTERED IN THE STATE OF GEORGIA. 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 FULL MEMBERSHIP, OTHER CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP ARE: HELPER MEMBERS, AND FRIEND MEMBERS.**

## 'The Evaders' filming starts

By **GEORGE WOODS BAKER**  
 CEO, Intrepidus

Between May 3 and 12 I was joined by an international crew from Intrepidus as we filmed interviews with Clayton David and Claude Murray at sites along the routes they traveled while hiding out or evading capture during WW II. We also had the opportunity to film a brief interview with George Padgett at his home in Biarritz, France.

This initial trip proved to be a good opportunity to learn what will work best on subsequent trips.

When I first imagined doing this project, I envisioned a series of several episodes instead of a single one-hour documentary. Broadcasters we have been negotiating with have insisted on the latter approach.

We will continue to film interviews and visit locations throughout Europe well into next year until I feel I have enough information committed to film to accurately depict what the experience was like for both evader and helper. This will be tempered only by the final budget and schedule.

Our next trip to Europe is being planned for late July. After that will be a trip to Toronto for the joint American and Canadian AGM.

We hope to meet and film brief interviews with as many members as possible at the AGM meeting. We will set up in a suite and be available throughout each day and evening. Members who wish to give us advance notice of their willingness to be included in this project should contact Kristine Koenig at our office in Los Angeles. She can be reached at 310-315-4805. Faxes can be sent to 310-315-4806.

I am very pleased with my initial experience and most humbled by the opportunity to work with so many fine people. I look forward to putting the pieces together on what I hope will be the definitive work on a most deserving part of our history.

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# Two members have a lot in common

Is it a small world, or what?

Two of our AFEES members who shared similar wartime experiences have wound up living across the street from each other! Accidentally!

Joseph J. Walters, who has a

summer address in Pittsburgh, Pa., has written about the strange coincidence.

Joe writes:

While practicing my putting at Brookridge, a community close to

Brooksville, Fla., I noticed one of the golfers wearing a hat with the caterpillar insignia. After talking to him, I discovered that we shared some similar experiences.

Ralph Smith had been a pilot with the 100th BG, 349th Sqdn. On Sept. 7, 1943, on their second mission, he was shot down over France. He successfully bailed out and was picked up by the Underground.

I was in the 381st BG, 535th Sqdn., in the ball turret on Aug. 17, 1943, destination, Schweinfurt! Our Chug-a-Lug didn't make it back -- too many FWs!

All our crew got out. I landed in a tree and the Belgians hid me.

In our journey to freedom, we found out we had hidden out at different times in the same little inn in the Pyrenees. We were upstairs, the Germans

downstairs at the bar.

It seems ironic that in the 50 years since that fateful mission, I had yet to meet or talk to anyone with or involved with the Underground, a most wonderful and courageous group of people. And now this guy moved almost directly across the street.

Guess our luck must still be holding out. We both celebrated 50 years of happy marriage.

## Baker of Coligny now rests in peace

Bill Rendall of Kinderhook, N.Y., has received word of the death of a helper, Mon. Lucien Mouillet of Orbais l'Abbaye, the baker of Coligny in 1943-44.

Bill recalls that he and Lt. Everett Childs had the good fortune to share a secret room over the baker's ovens. "For two wandering refugees who had been sleeping in haystacks and barns in January, to wake up the odors of baking French bread in a warm room was as close to heaven as we could get under the circumstances. White bread was *verboten* by German decree and we relished the white bread at Lucien's table."

Mon. Mouillet died on Feb. 7 at age 92.



**WAITING FOR YOU -- The Royal York, a Canadian Pacific Hotel/Resort, is the venue for the 1995 Joint Meeting of the AFEES and the RAFEES (Canadian Branch) in September. The Royal York is located at 100 Front Street West in Toronto, Ontario. It is a newly renovated landmark hotel, located in downtown Toronto, near the theatre district and Harbourfront. It is connected to Union Station/CN Tower/SkyDome and offers many modern facilities including new pool and health club.**



## Memories of 63 Brook Street ...

# Real people behind those numbers

For those debriefed in London or Paris who have secured a copy of their debriefing record, it is likely one of these names will appear on the record: Dorothy Smith, Donald Emerson, John White, Edwards or Stone Christopher.

*If you want a copy of your report, call 301-457-7190. Give your name, rank, serial number and E&E number if you have one, and ask for a copy of your E&E report. It will require some time and there will be a small charge.*

Many evaders sat across the table from WAC Capt. Dorothy Smith in London and were debriefed by her.

"I remember her as a very bright person who knew her job well and had the background for what she did," remarked Clayton David. "When I described the church and school where we were hidden in Paris, she told me she had been there. During the debriefing, she asked me some questions about personnel that gave me the feeling she knew more about where I had been, and when, than I could document." Such were the skills and the knowledge of these individuals who headed up this assignment in our Intelligence Department.

After her April 1943 arrival in England, Captain Smith worked at 63 Brook Street in London with Donald Emerson and John White until she was transferred to Paris in November of 1944. She created many of the forms and methods for getting and recording information in an orderly fashion which increased its value to others then and now. While doing the followup work on our helpers in France as they were liberated, Dorothy found that unlike England and other countries, our country did not have a medal that could be awarded civilians of another country. Not to be outdone, her ingenuity met the challenge. She recommended action be taken and what we now know as the "Medal of Freedom" resulted from her vision of need and a desire to meet that need for proper recognition.

Dorothy married Pierre Hentic of France. He still lives in France, but she lives in New York where their son also makes his home.

Col. Stone Christopher has had a long and distinguished career with our Intelligence Department. Many of his experiences are still secret and will probably remain that way. In 1983, at a meeting at HQ USAF in the office of Chief of Intelligence, the executive asked if he was writing his memoirs. When told no, the chief replied "Well, you can't, we could never pass them."

In 1992, while meeting with a former Chief of Air Force Intelligence, he was informed that some of the actions he had been engaged in were still under wraps. Those examples speak well of Chris, his dedication and loyalty to his adopted country.



**Col. Stone Christopher and Dorothy Smith-Hentic, at the 1992 reunion of the 8th Air Force Historical Society in Louisville, Ky.**

He was born in Sweden in 1909, emigrated to the United States in 1928, and became a U.S. citizen in 1935. Chris enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps in April 1942 and graduated as a 2nd Lt. from Officer Candidate School in March 1943. While attending Air Combat Intelligence School at Harrisburg, Pa., October to December 1943, Stone Christopher had his first exposure to E&E. It was from an officer who gave a lecture on E&E activities. When the class was asked if any student had a language capability, Chris was identified and interviewed.

He arrived in England in January 1944 as an intelligence officer with a fighter group. In March he received TDY orders to Camp 20, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire. There he met Col. Richard Nelson and soon received orders transferring him to MI-9 IS-9 (WEA).

IS-9 consisted of British and American units being trained for the invasion of Europe. Each had six retriever teams being trained to go through enemy lines to retrieve escapees and evaders. Six debriefers were also trained. Both the 1st and 3rd Armies received teams of retrievers and debriefers.

Camp 20 at Beaconsfield is where all E&E maps and equipment were developed. It was there that Dorothy and Chris met. Both called New York City home and often traveled together to London to 63 Brook. Dorothy was one of the first WACs in the UK and became the expert on Brittany.

On D-day plus 15, retriever teams and a few debriefers went to Normandy. It was the end of July when Chris took his team to Normandy and joined the 1st U.S. Army. As the 1st and 3rd began rolling

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eastward, they began to pick up airmen and soldiers who had escaped the Germans.

Col. Christopher reports that the only transportation the Army forward units had to the rear was trucks carrying German prisoners. The evaders found themselves on the same trucks!

Debriefers established the identity of the evaders and had them put back in uniform. The Americans were sent to Brook Street for detailed interviews. After the liberation of Paris, most of the evader hideouts had been cleaned out.

Our Intelligence knew there was a network of lines that collected evaders throughout France, brought the men to Paris and put them on the lines for the Pyrenees.

"MI-9" by M.R.D. Foot and J.M. Langley has this account:

"Raymond Picourt, a pharmacist at Chartres with a shop conveniently close to the railway station, reported after the liberation of his area in late August 1944 that there had been a disaster out to the northwest of him, on the great plain of Beauce. Jacques Desoubrie, who had done 'Comet' so much harm, and a similarly minded double-agent called Guy Marcheret had set up a false piece of basketwork of their own in this area in the summer of 1944, when it was the scene of frequent air battles close to the Normandy front. They secured about 150 evaders, who they sent to Fresnes prison."

When debriefing slacked off in Paris, Chris rejoined the 1st Army near the Belgian border. Most evaders went to Brussels to Hotel Metropole. The British IS-9 under Lt. Langley operated the reception center and sent U.S. evaders to a unit in the Hotel Meurice at Paris.

When the Battle of the Bulge began, intelligence became busy. Some soldiers who had been captured by Skorzeny's Panzerbrigade 150 wearing American uniforms were able to escape. They gave a vivid account of the situation. When the Germans returned from patrols into American territory, they threw a German overcoat over their stolen American uniforms and brought back the American password of the day.

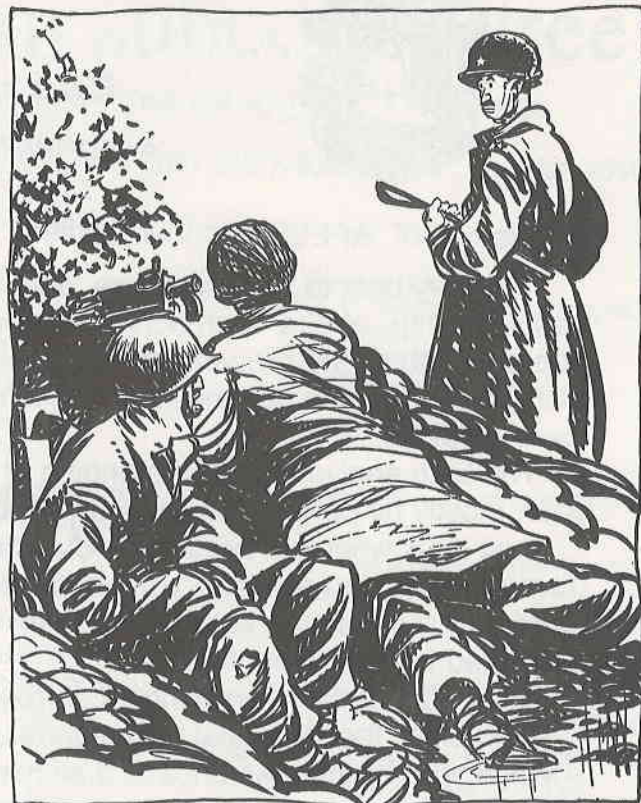
In January 1945, Stone Christopher was ordered to take his team back to Paris and 1st Army E&E operations were terminated. Placed in charge of IS-9 (WEA) operations at Hotel Francia, they had a few E&Es arrive from Holland. Among them, on April 14, was Col. Glenn E. Duncan, CO of the 353 FG (E&E 2970) who had gone down in Germany on July 7, 1944.

After VE Day, Chris was assigned to the Embassy in Oslo, Norway and later returned to the States to serve in Intelligence 1946-48 with the Air Defense Command at Mitchel Field, N.Y. In late 1948, he was transferred to Hq. USAFE, Wiesbaden. There in December 1951, Col. George R. Weinbrenner, (E&E 2060) had him reassigned to E&E business.

Later, Stone Christopher was director for the Joint Intelligence Agency, JCS, Pentagon, and saw service in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. He retired in 1972 and lives in San Antonio, Tex.

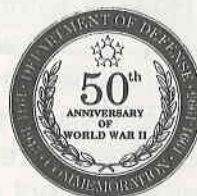
He can still be found when his knowledge of the intelligence business is needed!

# WILLIE & JOE Bill Mauldin



Copyright 1946 by Bill Mauldin, used with permission

*"Sir, do ya hafta draw fire while yer inspirin' us?"*



Bill Mauldin achieved international fame as the youngest person ever to win a Pulitzer Prize with his famous World War II editorial cartoons. Though Willie and Joe were soldiers, service members of all branches could see themselves in their cartoons. Now 50 years after Mauldin brought Willie and Joe to the pages of the *Stars and Stripes* newspaper, they speak again to a new generation.

## George Wyatt tracks 17s

George L. Wyatt, a former Marine, has a data base of some 10,600 B-17s. He has tracked down the disposition of almost every B-17 ever built. He has recorded the tail number, nose art and unit assignment of most B-17s that went overseas.

In a recent letter to Ralph Patton, George Wyatt states, "I am willing to share whatever information I have with your organization in the interest of history and as an aid to any of the members who may want to know what happened to their aircraft. I would also appreciate any input members may have concerning aircraft they crewed: tail numbers, names, units, etc."

"One of my many problems is tying nose art names to aircraft numbers. It seems crew members remember the name of the aircraft and have no clue to the aircraft serial."

If you have any information for George or have any details to give him, please contact him: George L. Wyatt, 3091 Bron Circle, Medford, Ore. 97504





# AIR FORCES

## Escape & Evasion Society

9 GEORGIA PARK

— CONROE, TEXAS 77302

Gentlemen of AFEES and their Ladies:

The very best to you and yours and may you all be enjoying each new day and the best of health. We're approaching mid-year and the affair in Toronto draws ever nearer. With all the preparation that such a gathering requires to be successful, let's plan on this reunion surpassing all past frolics that AFEES members and their kin have enjoyed.

The 50th anniversary of the ending of WWII has been and will be celebrated this year, mostly by persons having little or nothing to do with its conclusion.

Just think what our existence would be like today under a Nazi or Japanese form of government, had our victory not occurred! It's easy to enlist people in a Gestapo-like force; just put them on salary, give them orders that go unquestioned and watch your cherished freedoms vanish.

Too bad that those enjoying most freedoms today, value it so little.

God bless the individual who stands up in a public assembly and confronts a speaker who belittles America and all that America stands for. Be an active citizen, vote, let your opinions be heard, and above all, think for yourself.

The dates fly by and September in Toronto draws ever closer. Plans have firmed up and the mutual reunion, held by AFEES and the RAFEES--Canadian groups will take place at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto, starting with registration on September 21 and an evening cocktail party. Along with other activities the auction is scheduled for noon Friday, the 22nd, and the final banquet on the evening of the 23rd.

It has been agreed that AFEES will again attempt to host Helpers associated with AFEES members. While all attendees are welcome, our treasury is limited and an unusually large number of Helpers might drain what financial resources we have. Therefore, we ask Helpers who can, please offer to cover your hotel and banquet costs along with whatever activities are planned. AFEES members related to visiting Helpers should alert your officers concerning special situations.

Most importantly, we want you to attend at Toronto, regardless of your financial straits. Our chairman, Ralph Patton, is our contact man with our Canadian friends and will be working to get all reservation notices and related information into the hands of members and Helpers as soon as possible. If questions arise, contact him. If Ralph needs your help, please respond when asked. Adequate time allowance and good old effort will result in the finest AFEES reunion yet and the novelty of sharing the occasion with our Canadian friends should make it all that more enjoyable for all!

There are reservation forms included in this journal concerning the Toronto reunion, so make your reservations ASAP and follow the mailing instructions. Any monetary donations to AFEES should be directed to Clayton David, director, membership--or Paul Kenney, director, treasurer.

Stay in good health and spirits until we see your smiling faces once again!

May 19, 1995

JIM GOEBEL, Jr., President

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## Introduced in Congress

# H.Res. 37 stalled in subcommittee

H. RES. 37, which would grant recognition from the military for meritorious service rendered by our members in evading capture after having been downed behind enemy lines, has been introduced in Congress by Rep. Cliff Stearns upon the request of AFEES member James Wilschke.

After introduction, the bill was assigned to the House Committee on National Security. On Jan. 30 of this year, the measure was assigned to the Subcommittee on Military Personnel.

Rep. Robert Doman of California is chairman of the subcommittee.

For many years, Col. I. Wayne Eveland, an AFEES member, has sought to obtain the Army Commendation Medal for escapees and evadees. Here is a summary of his presentation:

1. Each member of the AFEES is a former combat soldier or airman who was listed as Missing in Action and escaped or evaded capture behind enemy lines.

2. Since the creation of the Prisoner of War Medal, many efforts have been made to secure similar recognition for men who refused to surrender and successfully evaded capture (or escaped from capture) and returned to Allied control. These efforts have been unsuccessful.

3. Attempts to obtain recognition for evaders began in 1985.

4. In June 1993, General Colin C. Powell, Chairman, JCS, arranged for our suggestion of a Commendation Medal for Evadees and Escapees to be presented to the "next quarterly meeting of the Service awards points of contact." We were not permitted to have representation at the meeting which was held in October 1993. After the meeting, a letter from the Department of the Army stated "an additional medal is not necessary."

Another medal was never suggested!

5. A letter from the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations stated, "to automatically award a medal to a Service member temporarily lost or separated

## SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY PERSONNEL

2340 RAYBURN HOB (ZIP: 20515-6038) ..... 225-7560

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from his/her unit would be a disservice to those servicemen who genuinely escaped or evaded the enemy." (AFEES represents no one except those who genuinely escaped or evaded the enemy.)

6. Another Navy Department letter states, "it is not, nor ever has been policy to award medals for the routine performance of duty."

7. A letter from the Department of the Army states that commanders had at their disposal the full spectrum of awards to reward distinguished acts etc. Our position as evidenced by confidential orders is that commanders were not privy

to any information regarding escapes or evasions.

8. Lack of precedent is another reason for us having been shot down in requests for recognition.

AFEES recommends the Commendation Medal for Evaders as we believe the evader has been ignored long enough and recognition should be accorded him while he is still living.

We believe that a successful escape or evasion is automatic proof of "meritorious service," which is the criterion for the Commendation Medal.



"I just love it when the saints come marching in!"



# Jim Wagner gets Rita's ring back!

James M. Wagner of North Pembroke, Mass., is one of our members who has been keeping in touch with his Helpers in the Belgian Resistance. In a recent letter, he describes some of his visits during the past few years. Jim writes:

I have been going back to Belgium for the last four years and visiting with many of the Belgian Resistance who had helped me when our plane crashed in Orcq, Belgium, on July 11, 1944. I also spend much time with their families.

I have had some great experiences every year. The year 1991 I visited with the family of Alfred Van Huys. Back in 1944 when I first stayed with Alfred I had to give up everything that connected me with the U.S. Army Air Corps — clothing, personal possessions and a gold Air Corps ring that my fiancée gave me before I went overseas.

When I returned 47 years later, the daughter of Alfred said to me, "James, I have a special gift for you." When I opened the package, it was my Air Corps ring that I had given up to Alfred. I recognized it immediately because the inscription inside read "to Jim from Rita." Quite a treasure!

I have brought home many gifts; some are very precious to me. This past year I was taken to the home of a Belgian family. The man of the family was a young boy of 15 when we crashed in '44. He lived near where we crashed and saw the Germans dismantling the plane. At night he would go out and collect some parts that the Germans left behind.

From then on he became a collector and now he has a large collection of B17, B24, P38 and German aircraft. Before we left, he presented me with his collection from our plane, "Our Gal Sal."

I have brought home parts from a P-38 that are like new.

## 'Temporarily Away'

That reply from the post office is still giving us a problem with the newsletter. If you are away for two weeks or a short period of time and have all mail "held for your return," there is no problem.

If you fill out a card to have mail forwarded to your "Temporary Address" and the first-class mail is being forwarded, sometimes the post office will hold your third-class mail if you have someone pick it up every two weeks.

The newsletter is being produced every three months. Therefore, expect to receive it during the first week or two of June, September, December and March. If you plan accordingly with us and with your post office, you will receive better service for less money.

If you have regular seasonal addresses for winter and summer and make your moves at the same time each year, let us know and we will enter both in our records and use the one applicable.

Thanks! Clayton C. David, 19 Oak Ridge Pond, Hannibal, MO 63401. Phone: 314-221-0441.

The plane was buried 25 feet underground and was well preserved when it was dug up. It had been shot down by a FW-190. The pilot was killed when he bailed out and the plane crashed into a swampy bog. Through the years, the ground dried out and became sandy. When the plane went down, the flames from the engine caused the oil to form a seal over many parts of the engine and preserved them.

In 1993 I visited the airfield that was the base of the Red Baron yellow-nose squadron. The lounge where the pilots relaxed was exactly the way it was during the war. We sat and had a few drinks there.

They also have a small museum there. Stored in a safe place was a set of pictures of the Red Baron, taken in WWI. One of a kind and priceless.

Before I left the museum keeper made a special call and received permission to give me copies of the photographs with my promise not to copy or let anyone use them.

I have visited the place where our plane crashed every year and also the prison I was in after being sold out to the Gestapo by a double agent. I have pictures of the double agent and his mistress, also pictures of the Germans standing in front of and on top of our plane after the crash.

These people in Belgium are about the greatest friends that you could ever have!

JIM WAGNER, 445BG, 701 Sqdn.

PS: We crashed on my 23rd mission. Target: Munich. I was lucky, the only one of the crew to escape; the rest were captured that day.

## E&E exhibit planned at Chanute museum

On Thursday, April 20, four AFEES directors met with officials of the Octave Chanute Aerospace Museum at Rantoul, Ill., to discuss a future Escape and Evasion exhibit.

Those present for the museum were: Donald O. Weckhorst, curator-historian of the museum; Hal Loebach, vice chairman of the board of directors; Earl Weichel, director; and John Andressen, active volunteer at the museum and a member of AFEES.

Representing AFEES were Clayton and Scotty David, Russell and Francine Weyland, Clyde Martin, and Ralph Patton.

It was agreed that AFEES would furnish memorabilia, photographs and stories around which to build an exhibit. We were offered part, or all, of a room approximately 20 feet square to house our exhibit.

We will be especially interested in memorabilia, pictures and/or stories from AFEES members from Illinois. If you have anything that you are willing to contribute to the Chanute museum or any ideas for a display, please feel free to contact John Andressen or Ralph Patton.

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# Madame Vignon sheltered evadees

By LESLIE ATKINSON

The most important lodger of Allied airmen in Amiens, 100 kilometers north of Paris, was Mrs. Jeanne Vignon. Thanks to our friend and reputed helper Mrs. Michele Agniel to whom I had described the wonderful work of Mrs. Vignon, I am now in excellent relationships with her two grandchildren, who are Mr. Claude Vignon, 22 rue Cheret, 94000 CRETEIL, and Mrs. Liliane Le Goff, 280 rue de Cottency, 80000 AMIENS.

I hope to have Mr. and Mrs. Claude Vignon with us in Toronto in the fall. Mr. and Mrs. Le Goff plan to come in 1996.

Madame Jeanne VIGNON-TELLIER was born in 1883 and died in 1963. She was awarded the Legion d'Honneur, the Medaille de la Resistance, the Croix de Guerre 1939-1945, the Medal of Freedom with Palm, and the King's Medal.

Madame Vignon started to help evaders in 1941 and sheltered Allied airmen sent to her by the local Resistance in 1942-44. She worked closely with Joseph Balfe in Hornoy and Michel Dubois and gendarme Robin in Amiens.

The British Forces reached Amiens on Sept. 1, 1944. The day before, a photograph was taken of the group of 12 airmen still lodged in her house with Mrs. Vignon and her two grandchildren who assisted her.

## AIRMEN SHELTERED BY MRS. VIGNON

AFEEES	Name	MIA Date	Free/Exit
221	A. L. PERKINS	6 Sep 43	28 Oct 43
695	RUTHERFORD	11 Feb 44	8 May 44
696	J. R. LANDERS	11 Feb 44	8 May 44
697	S.A. SOKOLOWSKI	11 Feb 44	8 May 44
711	J. B. AVERY	24 Feb 44	8 May 44
712	J. W. MCGINTY	24 Feb 44	8 May 44
713	M. ELISCO	18 Mar 44	8 May 44
716	W. A. MIZE	11 Feb 44	8 May 44
730	E. V. LINDEL	14 Jan 44	7 May 44
731	G. A. FRUILLI	21 Jan 44	7 May 44
1463	L. C. CASTRO	18 Mar 44	3 Sep 44
1464	F. RINKEL	22 Apr 44	3 Sep 44
1465	H. E. BOYER	27 May 44	3 Sep 44
1466	R. E. CAUGHMAN	24 Feb 44	31 Aug 44
1467	J. E. ZENGERLE	25 May 44	3 Sep 44
1469	C. P. LIEBRING	4 Mar 44	31 Aug 44
1531	P. B. YOUNG	24 Feb 44	31 Aug 44
1570	J. G. HARMS	21 Jan 44	2 Sep 44
2194	J. C. MATTILA	24 Feb 44	1 Sep 44

## UK AIRMEN (Incomplete)

RAF: Dredge, McCauly, Simms, Harry Williams  
and his pilot (Mosquito), Wing Cmdr. Donald  
Donalson  
RCAF: F/Sgt Johnston, Bryn, Powell



Madame Jeanne Vignon-Tellier

## Control tower replica dedicated at Dayton

Saturday, April 22, at 2 p.m. more than 300 former 8th Air Force members and their families braved the piercing winds of a cold spring day to dedicate a replica of a World War II 8th Air Force Control Tower at the Air Force Museum in Dayton, Ohio.

This exact replica of one of the control towers at an 8th Air Force base in England was constructed and furnished under the direction of Tommy Thomas and Fred Dundas, directors of the 8th Air Force Memorial museum of which Ralph Patton is a director.

On April 22 the tower was officially accepted by the Air Force Museum who will maintain it and make it available to the public starting with the Memorial Day weekend. The tower is dedicated to the 26,000 men of the 8th Air Force who were killed in action.

In his main address, the Chief of Air Force History, Dr. Richard Hallion, pointed out that this number is greater than the combined losses of the U.S. Marine Corps and the U.S. Navy in WWII.



# Heritage opening set for May 1996

On April 22 Ralph Patton met with Gen. Lew Lyle and Gen. Buck Shuler at Dayton, Ohio, to discuss the Escape & Evasion exhibit at the 8th Air Force Heritage center at Savannah, Ga., Dedication of the new center is scheduled for the middle of May 1996.

The AFEES 1996 annual meeting is scheduled for Savannah at the end of May.

We have a long way to go before our E & E story

## UT-Dallas wants AFEES papers etc.

Fred Platt, one of our Vietnam era members, has been in contact with The University of Texas at Dallas relative to it being a repository for some of our AFEES Records. In a recent communication, Larry D. Sall, Associate Library Director for Special Collections, has written the following:

Dear Mr. Patton,

Thank you for your letter of November 10. I have indeed discussed the AFEES Records with Fred Platt. We have here, as you may know, a very large collection dealing with aviation history. As part of that program we are the official depository for both Civil Air Transport and Air America veterans. Recently, we received General James H. Doolittle's personal papers. During his lifetime General Doolittle granted us the honor of naming all of our military history activities after him. So we have under the rubric of the General James H. Doolittle Military Aviation History Collection both a library and an archival program. The AFEES Records would fit very well into that program.

One thing I must point out, however, is that we are not a museum and do not accept collections of artifacts. We are not in a position to properly deal with material of that sort, and rather than disappoint donors with the poor treatment of their materials we suggest they look for other alternatives for their museum objects.

I hope you will extend our request to house your records and any books, video tapes, films, and photographs and the like here with us.

Sincerely,

Larry D. Sall, Ph.D.

Associate Library Director for Special Collections  
The Univ. of Texas at Dallas

Box 830643

Richardson, TX 75083-0643

is put into exhibit form but we are off and running in the right direction. AFEES history will be a part of the exhibit as will stories of various escape lines and their leaders.

Hopefully our exhibit will include research material and be accessible to historians and interested writers. This will include books, manuscripts, video tapes, and personal stories.

We are dedicated to making this the finest collection and exhibit of Escape & Evasion material in the USA. It will be the only exhibit in the world that will emphasize the efforts of our Helpers.

Paul Kenney and Ralph Patton are looking forward to meeting with museum officials in June to further develop our AFEES exhibit. We will also be discussing a fund-raising drive and the best possible way to recognize our Helpers. We hope that AFEES members will be willing and able to honor the men and women who risked their lives to help them.

## *French couch potatoes like their junk food too*

A recent issue of "FRANCE" magazine reveals startling facts about French eating habits.

A tongue-in-cheek article by Michel Faure entitled "Table Matters" starts out "My dear American friends, I have a confession to make. I'm afraid it's time to destroy your illusions about how we descendants of those great men and women who invented cassoulet toulousain, foie gras du Perigord, Gevrey Chambertin, millefeuilles and a thousand and one cheeses really eat. How we eat, that is, on a normal everyday basis. Some of us, including the best and the brightest, even go so far as to eat hamburgers. At fast food restaurants, yet.

"We now have rather precise data on our eating habits, thanks to a recent study by the BVA polling institute on behalf of the French Committee on Health Education. We eat very little in the morning, start feeling weak around 11 a.m., stuff ourselves at lunchtime and consequently spend a good part of the afternoon just trying to stay awake. Then we get home, pull up a tray and have dinner in front of the TV."

Seven and one-half percent of the French have breakfast in front of the TV, some 23 percent eat in front of the TV at lunchtime and fully 43 percent have dinner in front of the tube.

As Michel Faure reports, "Yes, we gobble up our soup and camembert in front of the set—Madame in curlers and Monsieur in pajamas. A little depressing, n'est ce pas? Admit it, you thought we were fun-loving epicurean bunch, sampling our sauces while the wine was chilling in a silver bucket, and tasty little dishes made from our grandmother's recipes were simmering on the stove in cast iron pots."





# **AFEES-RAFEES**

**(Canadian Branch)  
JOINT MEETING**

**Royal York Hotel, Toronto Canada**

**SEPTEMBER 21,22,23, 1995**

**AIR  
FORCES  
ESCAPE  
EVASION  
SOCIETY**



**ROYAL YORK HOTEL**

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## PROGRAM

HOTEL CHECK-IN 3 PM/CHECK OUT - 12 NOON

**THURSDAY  
SEPT. 21**

1000 - 1700	REGISTRATION DESK OPENS - HOTEL LOBBY
1000 - 2200	RENDEZVOUS ROOM OPEN
1500 -	EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING
1800-2100	JOINT RECEPTION - IMPERIAL ROOM

**FRIDAY  
SEPT. 22**

0700 - 0900	BUFFET BREAKFAST
0900 - 1200	GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING
0900 - 1100	TOUR #1 CITY OF TORONTO
1000 - 2400	RENDEZVOUS ROOM OPEN
1200 - 1330	LUNCH - CONCERT HALL
1400 - 1630	AUCTION

**SATURDAY  
SEPT. 23**

0700 - 0900	SIT DOWN BREAKFAST
0900 - 1700	TOUR #2 NIAGARA FALLS
1000 - 1700	RENDEZVOUS ROOM OPEN
1800 - 1900	CASH BAR
1700 - TIL	DINNER - CONCERT HALL

**SUNDAY  
SEPT. 24**

0700 - 0900	CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST
	FAREWELL GOODBYES
1200 -	CHECK OUT OF HOTEL

TERAR OFF HERE PLEASE PRINT



# AFEES-RAFEES

## JOINT MEETING

### REGISTRATION FORM

REGISTRATION FEE: ONE PER PERSON \$20.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(RETURNED TO AFEES)

#### THREE NIGHT PACKAGE INCLUDES:

SEPT. 21, 22, 23, 1995 THREE (3) NIGHTS

ROYAL YORK HOTEL, TORONTO, 3 BREAKFASTS (FRI, SAT, SUN)

1 LUNCH, 1 RECEPTION, 1 DINNER

PER PERSON DOUBLE \$249.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

PER PERSON SINGLE \$349.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

YES ☐ NO ☐ I WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH  
ANOTHER AFEES MEMBER

#### LOCAL PACKAGE: (NO ACCOMMODATIONS)

DINNER ONLY SEPT. 23, SAT PER PERSON \$40.00 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### EXTRA NIGHTS AT THE ROYAL YORK HOTEL:

PER NIGHT - DOUBLE OCCUPANCY...PER PERSON W/TAX \$45.00

PER NIGHT - SINGLE OCCUPANCY...ONE PERSON IN A ROOM W/TAX \$90.00

YES, I WILL BE ARRIVING EARLY:

SEPT. \_\_\_\_\_ FOR # \_\_\_\_\_ NIGHTS \$ \_\_\_\_\_

YES, I WILL BE LEAVING LATER:

SEPT. \_\_\_\_\_ FOR # \_\_\_\_\_ NIGHTS \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### OPTIONAL TOURS:

#1 SEPT. 22 - 9 AM FRIDAY

2 HOUR CITY TOUR OF TORONTO

(MIN. OF 25)

\$23.00 PP

X \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#2 SEPT. 23 - 9 AM SATURDAY

8 HOURS, NIAGARA FALLS TOUR

WITH LUNCH (MIN. OF 25)

\$54.00 PP

X \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

MY TOTAL PACKAGE IS (CHECK ONLY) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ SPOUSE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_ TEL: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Your 1995 Target: Toronto!

**TOUR #1 2 HOUR CITY TOUR OF TORONTO** - A CITY WITH PEOPLE FROM EVERYWHERE IN A CITY WITH EVERYTHING. YOU'LL SEE OLD CITY HALL, NEW CITY HALL, ST. MICHAELS CATHEDRAL, ONTERIO PLACE, AN ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX OF 96 ACRES OF MAN MADE ISLANDS. SEE THE HOME OF THE TORONTO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA, MAPLE LEAF GARDEN AND MUCH MORE. TOUR INCLUDES TOUR GUIDE, TRANSPORTATION, 2 HOUR COMMENTATED CITY TOUR, AND SERVICES TAX.

**TOUR #2 8 HOUR TOUR OF NIAGARA FALLS** - TO INCLUDE TABLE ROCK HOUSE AT THE CANADIAN "HORSESHOE" FALLS. OPTIONAL MAID OF MIST, OR SIDE TRIP TO MINOLTA TOWER FOR A BIRDS EYE VIEW OF THE FALLS. FINISH WILL BE AT THE QUEENSTON HEIGHTS RESTAURANT. WE'LL VISIT NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE, A CHARMING TOWN KNOWN AS THE PRETTIEST IN ONTARIO. THE TOUR INCLUDES A TOUR GUIDE, TRANSPORTATION, COMMENTATED TOUR TO AND FROM THE NIAGARA AREA, 3 COURSE LUNCH WITH TAX INCLUDED, RESTAURANT GRATUITIES, SERVICES TAX.

PLEASE... FILL OUT THE INFORMATION NEEDED IN THE SPACE BELOW AND MAIL IT TO US AS SOON AS POSSIBLE... PLEASE NOTE THE CUT OFF DATE.

**Please print your name(s) clearly, as you wish them to appear on your name tag(s)!**  
**Name tag deadline - August 14, 1995**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spouse \_\_\_\_\_ Group # \_\_\_\_\_

\* \_\_\_\_\_ YES, I WOULD LIKE TAMARAC TRAVEL TO ARRANGE FOR AIRLINE RESERVATIONS.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DEPARTING CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

RETURNING CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE BILL ME \$ \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE CHARGE TO MY CREDIT CARD (airline tickets only)

# \_\_\_\_\_ EXP. DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_



# After 50 years, a day not forgotten

**By VIRGIL R. MARCO**

During the night of Sept. 1, 1944, I heard explosions and saw flickering lights on the horizon as if a storm was brewing when in reality it was American guns firing. They seemed to closer than ever now. Would Chauny be another battlefield as it had been during World War I when it was turned to rubble?

The noise of the enemy trucks and horse-drawn wagons were rumbling through Chauny most of the night.

The next morning, Saturday, Sept. 2, was a day I will always remember. I was awakened by a loud knock on the door with Genevieve's voice saying, "Wake up, the American soldiers are here!" The daily fear of being caught and the consequences were over. Chauny was not going to be a battlefield in this war, thanks to the 28th Infantry Division.

Chauny was 70 miles northeast of Paris. Fortunately for me and many other Allied airmen, there was well-organized Resistance. The FFI had a strong presence in the area and gave the enemy trouble every chance they had.

At least 50 airmen either passed through Chauny to escape by way of the English Channel or stayed after the escape route had been cut.

In November 1993 I received an invitation from Monsieur Jean Hallade to attend the 50th anniversary of the Chauny liberation. In recent years I had met four other airmen who had similar experiences of hiding in Chauny when the 28th Infantry arrived. They also received invitations. They were John Harms and John Kupsick, both Americans, and John Neal and Bob Linday, both Canadians.

My wife Bobbie and I arrived at Charles DeGaulle Airport on Aug. 31, 1994, where we were met by Genevieve and Rene Martin. They drove us to their home in Soisy which is about 10 miles from Paris.

That evening we drove to Chauny and arrived at the home of Denise and Lucian Gosset, Genevieve's sister and brother-in-

law. I hid in this house along with two crew members, Gene Snodgrass and Bill Bergman in 1944.

The next afternoon we attended a celebration at the town of Bichancourt and that evening we attended a banquet at the home of M. and Mme. Hallade.

On the afternoon of Sept. 2, 1994, we met in front of the garage where I first arrived in Chauny 50 years before on a motorcycle driven by Bob Pique, a Resistance fighter. A high-ranking and decorated Resistance hero lived above and operated the garage. He kept in touch with London by radio and directed underground activities. The parade started here to honor his memory.

John Harms and I had the honor of placing flowers at the

monument to the Resistance members who gave their lives for freedom. Last stop was at City Hall where we were greeted by the mayor and attended a reception.

After three memorable days in Chauny, we drove to the home of Genevieve and Rene in Soisy. We spent two days visiting museums and the invasion beaches, a treat I never expected.

I never dreamed that some day I would be looking down on the beaches where the invasion began. A lot of sacrifices were made here 50 years ago!

We arrived back in Dallas, Texas, on Sept. 12, 1994.

Ed. Note: Virgil reports that his helper, Genevieve (Tavernier) Martin, passed away on April 2, 1995.

## NEW MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

MR. MICHAEL F. BISEK  
1295 Center St., N.E.  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52408  
Ph: 319-364-1024

MR. EDWARD F. CHONSKIE  
974-A W. Coal St.  
Shenandoah, PA 17976  
Ph: 717-462-0728

MR. JOSEPH FOTO  
409 Genet Dr.  
Arabia, LA 70032  
Ph: 504-279-5420

MR. ELWOOD L. HOWARD  
619 S. 22nd Ave.  
Yakima, WA 98902  
Ph: 509-457-9330

MR. VICTOR W. KRUEGER  
4278 N. 63rd St.  
Milwaukee, WI 53216-1243  
Ph: 414-461-1684

MR. JOHN I. SNEDE  
2601 Kenzie Terrace #315  
St. Anthony, MN 55418  
Ph: 612-782-9608

MR. KENNON B. SORGENFREI  
4525 37th Pl. SE  
Snoqualmie, WA 98065  
Ph: 206-888-5570

MR. JOHN E. WARREN  
207 N. Water St.  
Mill Hall, PA 17751  
Ph: 717-726-3037

COL. HAROLD H. WILSON  
619 North Nevada  
Colorado Springs, CO 80903  
Ph: 719-634-1934

**French Helper:**  
AGNES N. FRISQUE  
3225 Balsam Rd.  
Brooklyn, Ont. L0B 1C0  
Canada

## Lost Souls Relocated

M/GEN. HOWARD W. CANNON  
3079 Monte Rosa Ave.  
Las Vegas, NV 89120

MR. EDGAR M. JACOBUS  
2513 Rachel Ct.  
Antioch, CA 94509  
Ph: 510-754-8412

MR. CHARLES S. OLDFIELD  
1412 Plaza NW  
Albuquerque, NM 87107-3251  
Ph: 505-344-8488



# French honor Abilene flyer who dropped in 51 years ago

From the Reporter-News,  
Abilene, Tex., Oct. 8, 1994

By ROY A. JONES II  
Religion Editor

Plummeting to earth after his B-17 bomber blew up, Sgt. Paul Ruska got a graphic reminder that God was with him.

He remembers breathing a prayer that he would miss the church steeple that seemed to be coming toward him like an enemy missile.

"I was coming down too fast. I was afraid I was going to be impaled on the church steeple," the longtime Abilenian recalled this week.

But at the last minute a gust of wind caught Ruska's parachute and he sailed so close to the steeple he could nearly touch it. He also narrowly missed landing in a flaming section of his plane's fuselage as he slammed down in a French pasture a few feet from an apple tree.

Unable to walk, he crawled painfully from the searing heat and into the arms of two young French girls as the tree burst into flames.

That was July 10, 1943.

Before Ruska finally got home nearly two years later, he had been hidden out by grateful French citizens for six months, then captured and imprisoned in the infamous Stalag 17 prisoner of war camp in Austria until World War II was over.

Only then did he learn that he was one of only four survivors of the 10-man crew of his bomber, which exploded after being hit by German anti-aircraft fire.

It would be 30 years before Ruska returned to the small French village of Saint Didier de Bois, where the girls' family had risked their lives to protect him.



City of Serquigny France, photo

**BACK TO SERQUIGNY** -- Paul Ruska of Abilene, Tex., left rear seat, and his wife, Julie, in front seat, lead an Aug. 24, 1994, parade celebrating the 50th anniversary of the liberation of the city of Serquigny, France. Residents of the city hid Ruska for a month after his B-17 (95BG) was shot down near there in July 1943.

He found the apple tree where he landed still alive, but learned it had not produced any fruit since the scorching.

□ □ □

Paul and Julie Ruska, partners in JP Business Products and longtime members of Grace Lutheran Church, had just returned from a church trip in July when they received an unforgettable offer.

In the mail Ruska received an invitation from the mayor of Serquigny to be the guest of honor at the 50th anniversary celebration of the Norman city's liberation. The mayor offered to send free round-trip airline tickets for the couple if they could come for the Aug. 24 observance.

As if Ruska needed any more incentive, the mayor included a letter from one of his city council members. Not just any council member. It was from Lucette Bernier, who introduced herself as the niece of Mr. and Mrs. Ecalard, the couple who had hidden Ruska 51 years before.

"I live in their house ... since 1981," she wrote in broken English. "I have often heard about you in the past by my uncle and

aunt ... I hope a positive answer from you."

The Ruskas immediately said they'd come, but they declined the offer of free tickets. They said they wanted to visit some other places in France while they were there and didn't want to be bound by a strict schedule.

In 1943, a very pale Ruska had entered Serquigny under cover of darkness after five months of hiding in the home in Saint Didier de Bois. Serquigny was to be his first stop on a trip out of the country via the French resistance's underground network.

This time he returned in broad daylight in the back of a World War II Army Jeep and was cheered during a downtown parade. Pretty girls and old women hugged him, old men pumped his hand, and children lined up for his autograph.

Even if he didn't have a working knowledge of French, Ruska could have understood the emotion expressed by the tearful mayor and others during a ceremony at City Hall. He was lavished with gifts, applause and more hugs.

(Continued on next page)



# Clayton & Scotty deliver for Danish embassy

We can all be grateful for the help Scotty David has received from Carl Adamczyk, POW Coordinator of the Regional Veterans Administration in Philadelphia, Pa.. Within the guidelines of regulations, he has aided AFEES in determining those known to be deceased and forwarded letters when they had addresses. His assistance has been most valuable. Recently there was a 355 degree turn on the information circuit. The request was FROM Washington, D. C.. not one going TO Philadelphia.

At 10:30 AM on Feb. 21, 1995, Clayton & Scotty David received a call from the Department of Veterans Affairs in Washington to determine if our records showed the names of any men who evaded from Denmark in 1944. The Danish Embassy had contacted them for current information on some men whose names the Embassy had listed as American Flyers who evaded from Denmark and got back to England. The caller expressed himself as being "against the wall" on a reply to the Embassy, but someone had given him AFEES and the Davids as contact.

He was assured that some names and addresses were available. He then faxed Clayton a copy of what

he had been supplied by the Danish. Scotty and Clayton faxed their reply just 23 hours later, the 22nd. The list included current information on nine men, six of whom are members of AFEES. In addition, it was reported that three were deceased.

The results and quick turn-around on information elated those making the inquiry. The Danish Embassy made their selection of who they will host. The first week of May three evaders and their wives were to travel to Denmark and be part of Denmark's 50-year celebration marking the end of WWII in Europe. The men scheduled to make the trip: Robert Kerr, 303rd BG of Mesa, Ariz.; Orland Howard, Eugene, Ore.; and Laurin M Derosier, Colorado Springs, Colo.; Howard and Derosier flew on the same crew with the 448th BG.

In appreciation for supplying his name, address and phone number, Robert Kerr sent in his dues for a Life Membership and has promised to keep a record of the trip.

These are not the first trips made possible because Scotty and Clayton found their men. Who knows, it may not be the last.

MORE ABOUT---

## French honor Abilene flyer with parade

"It was grand emotion," Ruska said Tuesday, pointing to a French newspaper's headline on the story: "*La grande emotion.*"

That was the highlight of the trip, Ruska said, not the gifts and the praise, but the pride in knowing that he and his perished fellow crewmen had played a role in liberating the French people.

"They said many times that if it hadn't been for Paul and the other Americans the French would not be in Serquigny today," Mrs. Ruska said proudly.

Another highlight was visiting Ms. Bernier and her family and staying in the same room where her aunt and uncle had hidden him half a century before.

"I used to listen to the German soldiers going from the beer joint back to their barracks," Ruska said. "They'd be singing beer drinking songs when they walked right beneath my window."

Raised a Lutheran, Ruska said he "prayed a lot" and "never had any doubts about coming out of this alive." That faith enabled him to survive three months in French and German prisons and

13 months in Stalag 17-B POW camp in Austria — all on "starvation rations."

It also helped him survive a six-week march across Austria to freedom when the Russians liberated Vienna. The only food the emaciated prisoners had then was what they could scavenge.

Ruska said he was in prison in Frankfurt when the Americans and English decided to level the city.

"When you hear the bombs coming down that's when you really start praying," he said. The day after one particularly heavy night of bombing a Gestapo interrogator showed him outside.

"Everything was flat all the way around the prison for several blocks. But only one bomb had fallen inside the (prison) courtyard and it didn't do much damage," he marveled. "That's when you knew somebody up there was watching over us."

This summer's mail also brought another surprise to Ruska: at long last he received the Purple Heart for the leg injuries he suffered 51 years before.

## Looking for help

Tom Wingham of 12 Orchard St., Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, IP33 1EH, is secretary of the RAF Ceylon Squadron Association and has appealed for help in locating any member of an aircrew who received help in the Vallee d'Eure sector.

He writes:

"Last year I attended the unveiling of a memorial at Authueil, France, to one my squadron's crews who came down and were all killed in 1944. The host for my stay in the area was a Robert Lefebvre. During the war his father, Roger Lefebvre, was responsible for the Eure Valley area in the corps *Vengeance*.

"Roger Lefebvre was taken by the Gestapo in 1944 and died in a concentration camp of typhoid. He was posthumously awarded a Tedder and Eisenhower certificate for assisting Allied aircrew but his son has no record of any names.

"I hope it is possible to find at least one aircrew who received assistance during 1943-44 in the Authueil area which is the center of a triangle formed by Louviers-Evreux-Vernon just south of Rouen on the Paris Road. Two other names involved with Roger were Louis Maury and Henri Chavin."

Note: Ralph Patton has searched the AFEES computer files for the name Roger Lefebvre without success.





**VETERAN FIGHTERS --** Gen. Ronald Fogleman, AF chief of staff, pauses for a moment in the cockpit of a WW2 P-38 Lightning. Fogleman, who flew F-100s and F-4s in Vietnam and Thailand, visited Sheppard AFB at Wichita Falls May 13 for a meeting of

NATO air chiefs. The P-38 was part of a display of more than 20 vintage aircraft presented by the Confederate Air Force, headquartered in Midland, Tex. Other aircraft included B-17 and B-24 bombers, P-40 and P-51 fighters, and many others.

## *Remember your dues*

Life Members have put the task of remembering to send AFEES a check for \$20 each year behind them. Also, *we do not expect widows and helpers to pay dues.*

For others, if your membership card does not show Dues Paid to 1996, it is time to take care of the annual remittance. In short, PAY UP!

Should that create a financial hardship, let us know and we will keep you on the mailing list provided you keep us informed of your current address.

When paying dues or sending a contribution for our Helper fund, make your check payable to AFEES and mail it to Clayton C. David, 19 Oak Ridge Pond, Hannibal, MO 63401-9554.

## **FEATHERS ON THE WIND, by Frank B. Resseguie, \$25.95**

This is an American fighter pilot's real life story of escape from behind enemy lines in World War II.

The book is enhanced by original poetry composed by the author.

Frank Resseguie grew up on a farm in Susquehanna County, Pa. He served with the 78th Fighter Group of the 8th Air Force stationed at Duxford.

After going down in France, he escaped through German-occupied territory, across the Pyrenees Mountains, and across Spain with the aid of the French Underground.

Order from Brundage Publishing, 102 State St., Suite 600, Binghamton, NY 13901-3328



# 'The Sluice' picked up 177 airmen

Were you one of the 177 Allied airmen betrayed by Rene Van Muylem while trying to evade capture in Belgium and Holland?

Rene Van Muylem, alias Donald, Alfons, Robert, Marlant.

Between December 1943 and August 1944 Rene Van Muylem and his brother were Nazi sympathizers before the war. When Belgium was overrun in 1940, he volunteered to work in Germany. He was a "hair stylist" in Cologne until July '43 when the bombing became too much for him. He returned to Belgium to be trained to infiltrate the Resistance escape lines.

He carried documents which presented him as an agent of the British who had been parachuted into Belgium to establish contact between the Resistance and London. The papers had been taken from a real agent who had been captured on landing.

On May 6, 1945, Van Muylem arrived in Paris, claiming he had been imprisoned in Germany. He found work in the bar of "The Mayflower" American Red Cross Center on Francois Street, Paris.

Here his luck ended. Robert Hoke, an American airman he had handed over to the Gestapo, recognized him. When finally handed over to Belgian authorities he confessed fully, naming everyone who had helped him. He was sentenced to death and shot in a baker's yard in Antwerp on May 29, 1948.

If you were one of the 177 Allied airmen betrayed by Rene van Muylem, perhaps in coming from Holland to Belgium, you were met on the Belgian side by a dark-haired 24-year-old beauty called "Pam" or a 34-year-old lady called "Anna" who escorted you to Antwerp on the tram from Wuustwezel or Meerle or Poppel.

Did you spend your first few hours in Antwerp at a cafe called "Le Petit Paon?" Did you meet the girl called "Mimi" and her friend "Opa"--the 60-year-old Dutchman with an Alpine style cap who smoked Players cigarettes?

When arriving in Antwerp were you met by "Donald, Robert, or Alphonse," a blond 36-year-old fellow, dressed in gabardine, with gentlemanly manners and an air of confidence? Were you taken to the top floor, left hand side of the building at 17 van Eycklei, where "Jules" and the blond girl "Amelia" held court with her little white dog?

Was it here that you ate and drank the evening away while discussing your next move down the escape line with the top members of the Antwerp resistance? Perhaps the names Harry or Verhagen will ring a bell.

Was it here that you were first introduced to the big red-headed man, "Stahl" who spoke English with a perfect American accent? Did he and his dark-haired friend lead you away at night and take you for a car ride in a big black sedan? Was your confidence in

them inspired when they cocked their pistols in front of you, giving the air that they were men and women determined not to be taken without a fight?

While sitting in a cell at the German Field Police headquarters shortly afterwards, did you ask yourself which of all of these people had been responsible for your betrayal? Have you ever asked yourself the same question over the past 50 years?

The answer is all of the above. They were members of the Abwehrstelle III/f-Antwerp, a German Military counter-intelligence unit led by German officers. The Abw employed Dutch and Belgian collaborators as V-men and V-women (agents) who set up a false escape line to catch airmen. "The Airman's Sluice" picked up 177 Allied Airmen.

The information above is furnished by Michael H. LeBlanc, who is researching escape line infiltrators such as Rene van Muylem. If any of the above rings a bell you can contribute to this research by contacting: Michael M. LeBlanc, 16 Greenore Crescent, Acton, Ont., Canada, L7J 2T2. Phone 519- 853-1748.

## FOLDED WINGS

EE 305 JOHN T. ASHCRAFT, Mineola, Texas,	385 BG	May 9, 1994
15 AF. EUGENE E. FARROW, Winnebago, Wis.	463 BG	Dec 24, 1994
EE 700 FRANK MITCHELL	303 BG	Jan 8, 1994
EE 848 CHARLES W. ROOF, New York, N.Y.	457 BG	Feb 19, 1994
EE 704 MURRY L. SIMON, Philadelphia, PA	801 BG	Feb 13, 1981
EE 528 JAMES M. THORNSON,	92 BG	June 6, 1982
EE 282 GEORGE WATT, Northport, New York	388 BG	July 7, 1994

### HELPERS

JOSEPH DANIEL, Binic, France	May 18, 1994
GENEVIEVE MARTIN, Montmorency, France	April 2, 1995
ANNIE SUNTJENS-ELST, Roermond, Holland	Feb 17, 1995



# 'The return of the American friend'

(Translated from the French  
by Jacqueline S. Guy)

The American airman, Jo Gross, came back yesterday to the "crime" scene. Taken in at Chenon in 1944, he was welcomed as the liberator in the community's new reunion hall. The reason for the festivities was the return of the American, veteran of the U.S. Forces. On 5 January 1944, the Fortress in which he was flying as a radio operator was hit by a German fighter. The large plane fell on Nieul les Saintes. Of the ten crewmen, four survived and were taken in by the resistance. Jo Gross was one of them and, with his friends, was taken in by Felix Aubon at the Chateau de Chenon. "We stayed there two months; they are deeply engraved in my memory," says Jo Gross.

The American airman, tall in stature, and barely stooped by the weight of years past, came back to give his thanks. "I came here with my heart full of emotions. I am Jewish. If the Gestapo had found me, I was a dead man."

## 'I CRIED LIKE A CHILD'

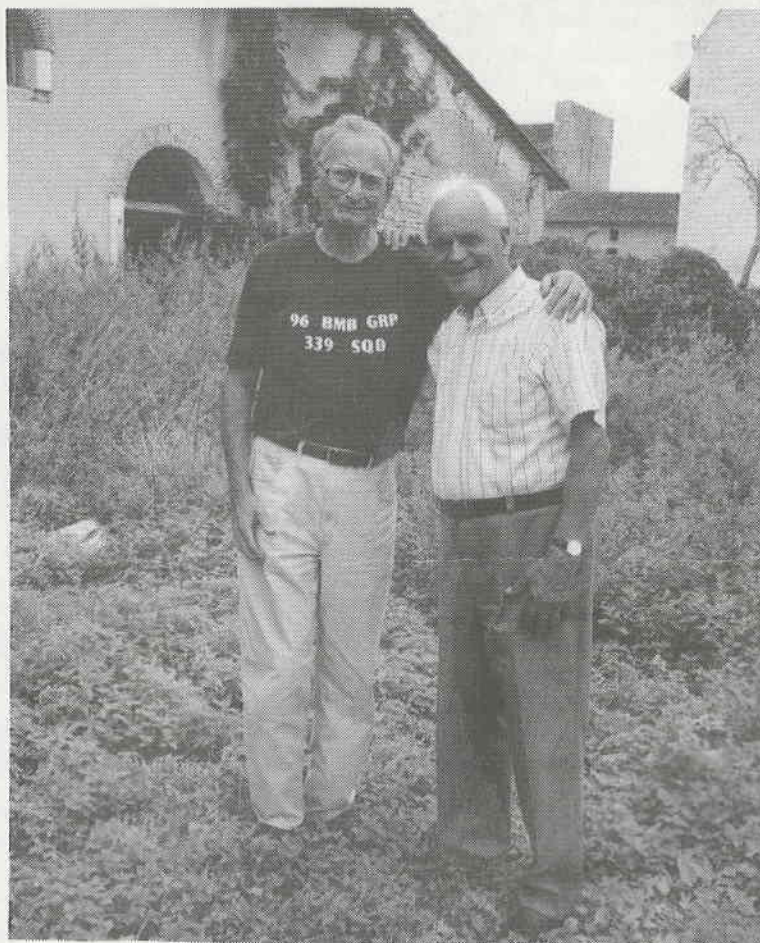
The other link in the chain was Andre Aubon, the man from Charente, who welcomed the group of Americans. "My father took care of them. A mechanic from Ruffec brought them to us. His name is Moneieur Rainaud. We did not ask any questions. We had a very large home and lodged them in one of the wings. We took them for walks at night."

The man remembering is Andre Aubon who was 23 years old then.

"The Germans knew we were around and they were actively looking for us. The last two weeks we had to hide in the woods and someone brought us food at night," adds Jo Gross.

Last night the entire community celebrated with their American friend. The mayor was heading the festivities.

Fernaud Rainaud took this opportunity to "celebrate the Franco-American friend-ship." It is because of their bomber



**IN FRANCE --** Joseph Gross of Cherry Hill, N.J., poses with his helper, Andre Aubon, outside the chateau where he was hidden from the Germans in 1944.

jackets that Andre found the airmen.

"I had given their clothes to the Museum of the Resistance. At the opening of the Museum an American asked if someone knew the name of the man who owned the jacket. I was so glad I had kept their names as all of them signed a British pound note. This is how they are contacted," says Mr. Aubon. Mr. Aubon received from the hands of Jo Gross a certificate signed by the American President giving thanks in the name of the U.S. Air Force.

When he arrived in Charente, Jo Gross admits to having cried like a child "even though while in the States, he confused the Chateau Chinon with the Chateau de Chenon!"

(Ed. Note: The ETO flying careers of Joe Gross and your editor came to a halt on the same day, same mission, about 45 minutes apart.)

## Joe was treated as a conquering hero in France

### JOE WRITES:

"I recently returned to France after locating our saviors. It was a very emotional trip. I fielded questions to about 100 people in an auditorium in a village called Chevon.

"I presented a certificate to a man now 73 (Andre Aubon), whose parents hid us in their chateau at great risk, as there were periodic searches by the Gestapo.

"I was treated like a conquering hero and everyone cried and could not get over the fact that we came and helped a country in need."



## 'Not a walk in the park'

# Intrepidus crew goes to work

"It was not a walk in the park or a news camera crew at work. Their approach to the task is movie quality by a team of profession-

als," remarked Clayton David after spending time in Holland and France with the INTREPIDUS crew of five in early May.

The crew arrived in Amsterdam on May 3 and started filming the following day with great attention to detail that would catch the reality of what Helpers and evaders went through more than 50 years ago.

They completed their on-site work in the foothills of the Pyrenees on Friday, May 12, and headed for planes back to London and Los Angeles the following day. They had been able to film several Helpers and evaders, as well as catching the flavor of local celebrations recognizing the end of the war in Europe.

The task of lugging equipment and dealing with impromptu situations was tough, but their success in capturing footage and sound never before captured cast a gleam of satisfaction on their faces.

Along the way were frequent

references to "when we come back."

If the task of doing a proper documentary on some of the experiences of Helpers and evaders was easy, it would have already been done!

George Baker and his staff have done their homework and have the background which gives them the enthusiasm to tackle this project. We believe they captured enough on film and sound during this trip to be able to introduce a subject that people cannot begin to grasp unless they experienced it.

## Obituary Life Member Francis Marx

Francis C. Marx, 76, passed away at Oldsmar, Fla., on Nov. 21, 1994. He is survived by his wife, Ida, of 51 years, two sons, one daughter and four grandchildren.

Francis was born in Oppenheim, N.Y.

With a 448th BG crew, he was missing in action after bailing out over Occupied Paris. He avoided capture by "walking out" over the Pyrenees Mountains to Spain before being sent back to Scott Field, Ill., where he was assigned as NCO in charge of the Intelligence Office.

After the war, he lived in Dolgeville, N.Y., moving to Tenafly, N.J., where he lived for 35 years before retiring to Tampa in 1987.

On April 1, 1994, Clay Mellor, pilot of his crew, rented the All-American B-24 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the crew bailing out over France. At that special reunion at New Smyrna Beach, Fla., were Clay and his wife Helen from Vermont, Dr. Marvin and Ida Goff from Texas, Walter and Ruth Bressler and son Terry from Pennsylvania and Francis and Ida Marx.

The one-hour flight was a fitting climax of their many flights together even though this one, they agreed, was not as exciting as some of the others; this was the ride they enjoyed most!

## A 'Comete' book

A new book, "En Passant La Bidassoa-Le Reseau 'Comete' au pays Basque (1941-1945). By way of the Bidassoa, the Comete Line in the Basque Country (1941-1944)" has been published in Anglet in Southwestern France. Unfortunately for most of us, it is in French.

This well-researched book tells the story of the southern end of the Comete Line. The book is full of stories and photographs of members of Comete who are well known to AFEES.

The stories of the actions of Dedee, Franco, Florintino, Taunt Go and the Lapeyres make fascinating reading. Who among us knew that after D-Day the Germans increased the patrols on the Franco-Spanish border to stop German deserters from going to Spain, and that as a result of this Florintino was badly wounded by a German machine gun company as he returned from Spain on what was to be his last crossing?

The actions of the members of Comete in arranging his escape from the hospital is an outstanding example of courage, loyalty and resourcefulness.

AFEES members and friends who read French will find this book an interesting addition to their knowledge of the workings of the Comete Line.

It can be purchased from the author:

Juan Carlos Jimenez de Aberasturi, Ville d'Anglet, Hotel de Ville, rue Amedee-Dufourg-BP 303, Anglet, France

## Widow visits Andorra

Lucille Winter, widow of August Winter, bombardier and evadee No. 179, made a visit last year to Andorra, the tiny country high in the Pyrenees. It had been more than 50 years since her husband walked through Andorra on his way to Spain and Gibraltar.

Winter was downed Sept. 5, 1943, on a mission to Kiel. He died Mar. 20, 1978, in Vallejo, Calif.

- from 306th BG Echoes

## Luke gains training

LUKE AFB, Ariz. (AFNS) — Countries that buy the F-16s are sending their pilots here for familiarization training; a spokesman said.

## All military and civilian personnel who were

stationed or worked at the DYERSBURG ARMY AIR BASE, or their survivors, will hold a 50th Reunion and Commemorative Air Show the weekend of August 25, 26 and 27, 1995.

CONTACT: Pat Higdon, 719 W. Main, Halls, TN 38040 or phone (901) 836-7400 after 7 p.m. CST.



## THE EDITOR HAS THE LAST WORD

WICHITA FALLS, TEXAS -- Many of our members may be recovering from jet lag, vitamin-deficiency, or just plain exhaustion these days after spending a few weeks in Europe, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the end of the war in that part of the world.

Deadlines don't permit much in the way of accounts of such *deja vu* in this issue of the Newsletter, but I hope that we can have several personal accounts in the next issue. Those of us who were Stateside during the anniversary festivities caught the dignitaries, the speeches etc. on television. I would like to have some of you sojourners give us an account of how you saw things first hand when you visited with Helpers and friends in France and the Low Countries.

While I was struggling away at the computer the other day, my ears caught a sound I haven't heard much in recent years -- the full-throated rumble of those piston-powered bombers of yore! The Confederate Air Force, now based in Midland, Texas, was putting on a show at our local air base for the Big Wheels of NATO.

A photographer caught General Fogleman, the Air Force Big Boss, looking over the controls of a P-38. That picture should be on Page 18 of this issue.

Far as I know, the general is not checked out in the 38!

Those of you who were counting on a freebie trip courtesy of KLM airlines can forget it. In the Spring Communicator, announcement was made of a contest marking the 75th anniversary of the airline. There were

about 12,000 entries and ours was one of the losers. But thanks anyhow to Ralph Patton, our gentlemanly COB, for preparing our entry. Ralph, we don't really blame you for not winning!

Elsewhere in this issue is a report on our continuing effort to gain some official government recognition for airmen who evaded or escaped from enemy territory during WW2.

H. RES. 37 has been introduced into Congress and at mid-May was mired in the House Subcommittee on Military Affairs. If some member of this subcommittee works directly for you (as your congressman), he needs to know what you think of the idea. Oftentimes, a congressman judges an issue by the amount of mail it generates. LET HIM KNOW HOW YOU FEEL!

My North Texas congressman is a member of the subcommittee and his staff has promised to keep me updated on the status of the bill.

If AFEES had a Patron Saint, it would be somebody like Leslie Atkinson. Now Leslie, who has done so much, wants to do more. He is attempting to identify the evadees who were being sheltered by Madame Vignon north of Paris when British Forces liberated the area. Details are on Page 9. I have a copy of the photo if any of you would like to see it. Call me at 817-692-6700 evenings; we are in the garden daytimes.

I haven't cleared this one with the AFEES brass yet, but I would like to have a stall or table next to the registration or PX table at Toronto with the idea of visiting with some of you

about ideas for stories in the Communicator. Perhaps we could have some dialog about what you would like to see more of (or less of) in the newsletter. I plan to have some family members present to help out and perhaps convince them that not everything I have told them about my 1944 European government-expense tour was just fantasy.

My favorite CBS curmudgeon, Andy Rooney, has a new book out that I want to get ahold of. It is MY WAR, published by Times Books. A review in our local paper says that Andy examines the air war over England and Europe and the ground war in Europe from the perspective of a reporter "and puts into stark terms the cost of the air war."

As if we weren't already painfully aware of it, he says the casualty rates among Allied bomber crews flying B-17 and B-24 aircraft over Europe were "staggering."

MY JOKE DU JOUR:

Neighbor: "Has your youngster learned to talk yet?"

Mother: "Oh my yes, now we are teaching her to be quiet."

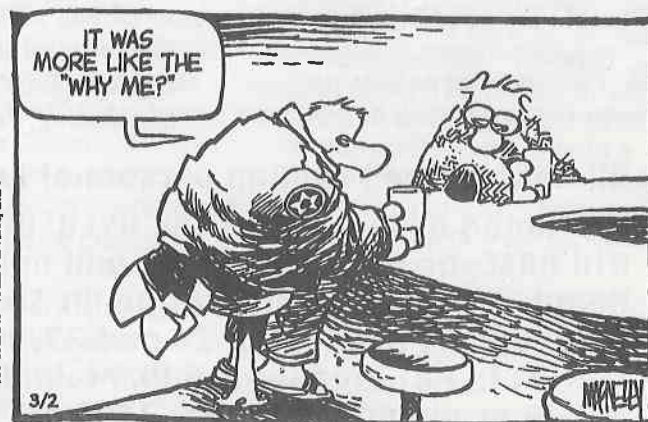
Okay, if you don't like my jokes, send me some better ones!

I certainly am not a travel agent, but I can assure you from personal experience that Toronto is a great city with many wonderful attractions. (I believe they advertise the second largest Chinatown in North America). The Blue Jays will be on the road, but that only means more time for some serious quaffing and reminiscing!

It is the place to be next September!

-- LARRY GRAUERHOLZ

## Shoe





for civilians--

## Freedom Medal was awarded in six grades

Many of our helpers received the Medal of Freedom after the war ended in Europe. Here is the story about that award.

The Medal of Freedom was authorized by Executive Order 9586, July 6, 1945. Congress established the medal in four degrees: gold, silver, bronze, and basic. It was to be awarded to U.S. civilians serving outside the continental United States and to foreign civilians for meritorious acts or services on or after December 7, 1941, that aided the United States in the prosecution of the war or furthered the interests of any nation allied or associated with the U.S.

The six grades of American awards were the following:

**Grade 1** - Medal of Freedom with gold palm: awarded to chiefs of evasion reseaux who (or whose reseaux) passed over 100 airmen to safety.

**Grade 2** - Medal of Freedom with silver palm: for chiefs or helpers who were successful in returning at least 40 to 50 evaders.

**Grade 3** - Medal of Freedom with bronze palm: awarded to helpers who sheltered or conveyed from 20 to 40 evaders, heads of sections, or chiefs of small organizations.

**Grade 4** - Basic Medal of Freedom: for helpers who sheltered or conveyed from 8 to 20 evaders.

**Grade 5** - Certificate signed by General Eisenhower: for helpers who sheltered from 1 to 7 evaders.

**Grade 6** - Informal letter of thanks signed by a military attache.

The requirements for each award were not always the same; they were sometimes modified, depending upon the time and circumstances.

The above information is taken from Peggy Rossiter's book *Women in the Resistance*.

## AFEES PX PRICE LIST

Ideal gifts for any occasion

### Decals

4 1/2 in. Exterior .....	\$2.00
3 1/2 in. Interior .....	2.00

### Winged Boots

Tie Tack with chain, 3/4 in. Pewter .....	\$6.00
Tie Tack with chain, 3/4 in. Blue .....	6.00
Lapel Pin, 3/4 in. Pewter .....	6.00
Cloth with metallic thread (dry clean only) .....	5.00
Cotton Sport Shirt Patch (can be laundered) .....	2 for 5.00
(Silver on dark blue)	

### Blazer Patches

Royal Blue Only .....	\$10.00
Blue with metallic thread .....	15.00

### A.F.E.E.S. Merchandise

Car License Plate .....	\$10.00
T-Shirts, sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL .....	18.00
Lapel Pin, blue and silver .....	6.00
Quartz Wrist Watch, with AFEES logo .....	49.95
Clock, Helping Hand logo (with battery) .....	15.00

### Official AFEES Caps, one size fits all

Mesh Back, Navy Blue .....	\$12.00
Mesh Back, White .....	12.00
Closed Back, Navy Blue only .....	12.00

### Books by AFEES members

<i>The Evader</i> by Harry A. Dolph .....	\$18.95
<i>In the Footsteps of a Flying Boot</i> By Art Horning .....	13.00

(Please add \$1.50 for shipping and handling for each order; add \$2.00 per order for books)

### Make checks payable to AFEES and mail to:

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