

THE AIR FORCES ESCAPE & EVASION SOCIETY

SUMMER 2000 Communications

VOLUME 14, NUMBER 2

WICHITA FALLS, TEXAS 76307-2501

JUNE 30, 2000



AFEES President Richard Smith was selected to serve as Grand Marshal of the 2000 Memorial Day parade in Columbia, Mo. Spectators by the thousands lined the streets of the Missouri city for the 120 units of the parade. AFEES members were honored during the Salute to Veterans airshow and memorial service.

**By ANNETTE SANDERS, Salute to Veterans Corp.
Columbia, Mo.**

On behalf of all the 3000 volunteers and 50 committee chairmen of the private, not-for-profit Salute to Veterans Corporation, I extend our warmest thoughts to members, associate members, family members and Helpers of the Air Forces Escape and Evasion Society. It was an honor to have your group with us for our year 2000 Memorial Day Weekend Celebration.

Please accept a permanent invitation for any and all to join us in future years. If there are "two or more of you gathered together," we will recognize you as reunion members and honor you as we did this year.

Although our mid-Missouri weather was not real friendly on Friday and Saturday morning, by noon Saturday it cleared and we had a wonderful afternoon with all flights at our Salute to Veterans Airshow performing for the crowd.

Sunday, we had a huge airshow crowd. It was a beautiful day, and the sight of your members marching behind the bagpipers in a Parade of Honor to be introduced to the crowd was very special.

The Salute to Veterans Memorial Day Parade on Monday was the largest in our event's history and in the city's history -- with 120 units in the parade and

the largest crowd ever. Spectators came from a 150-mile radius, to stand with us and say, "Thank You for Your Service." The U.S. Army Golden Knights wowed the crowd as they parachuted in and landed at five separate intersections along the parade route to signal the start of the parade. And who could forget the beautiful baritone voice of USMC Maj. Gen. Arnold Fields as he surprised all of us at the military ceremony and wreath-laying by singing his favorite -- the third verse of "America the Beautiful."

Congratulations to AFEES President Richard Smith on being named the 2000 Grand Marshal of the parade. I do think he was as close to being speechless as I've seen him when the announcement was made at our Honored Guests and Volunteers Banquet on Saturday evening.

Thanks to AFEES members who graciously participated in our Living History program, speaking to school children. And, thanks to those who agreed to radio, TV and newspaper interviews. One local radio personality who interviewed Jack Kupsick, talked about the interview for almost five minutes the next morning on his live radio show.

Be assured that **We Will Never Forget!** We hope to soon have "Snapshots" posted on our Internet website -- visit us at: salute.org

**U.S.
AIR FORCES
ESCAPE/EVASION
SOCIETY
Communications**
Published Quarterly
WE WILL NEVER FORGET



Volume 14 -- Number 2

June 30, 2000

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

Gentlemen, your attention please!

Membership Chair Clayton David is in the final stages of preparing a new roster of AFEES members, friends and widows living in the U.S. and Canada.

The last roster was published in February 1996 and, with the many changes in telephone area codes and postal Zip codes, is quite obsolete.

Members and friends must be current with dues in order to be listed in the new directory, to receive a copy and to remain on the AFEES mailing list.

It is AFEES practice that if a member who passes away is current with dues, the spouse may remain on the mailing list and no further dues are expected.

To ensure that your address and telephone listing are correct on the new roster, please confirm them with Clayton David. The form at the bottom of Page 31 may be used to update information. If you wish to have your Fax or e-mail listings published, include that information in the Comment section of the form.

Clayton is making every effort to make the new directory as accurate and complete as possible, but to do so requires YOUR cooperation!

Spokane Next

The next AFEES reunion is scheduled for the Downtown Doubletree hotel in Spokane, Wash., May 2-6, 2001. Room rates will be \$75-\$85.

Registration begins on Wednesday, May 2. The tentative schedule includes a city tour on Thursday, a visit to the SERE school at Fairchild AFB on Friday, the memorial service and annual meeting on Saturday, and an optional trip to Coeur d'Alene for persons not making the Alaska trip.

A 7-day cruise trip to Anchorage, Alaska, will follow. From Anchorage, passengers can fly back to Spokane or to their point of origin.

Cost will be about \$950 pp from Spokane for the cruise aboard a Holland American ship.

Arizona woman recalls helping U.S. airmen

From The Arizona Daily Star,
Tucson, Ariz., Friday, Dec. 16, 1994

By SARA HAMMOND

Rose Schantz agreed to a jaunt into the Ardennes Forest in December 1944, not realizing the journey would take her and seven American servicemen through Bastogne just moments before it was shelled by German troops.

It's not as if Schantz, then Rose Exterbille, were immune to danger. She, her mother and brother had been members of the Belgian underground, hiding downed Allied fliers for two years before Belgium was liberated in 1944.

Before D-Day, the family had been forced to flee its home in a Brussels suburb after Germans began to suspect them of assisting downed air crews.

In mid-December 1944, Schantz, then 19, and her brother were visiting regularly at an American air base on the outskirts of Brussels at Saventhem.

She was asked by officials there whether she knew of a safe place between Bovigny and Ourthe where a group of airmen could stay as they ventured into the countryside to recover parts of an engine from a wrecked plane.

Schantz, now retired to Green Valley, said she knew of a farmhouse, also part of the Belgian resistance movement, where the men could go. She was asked to accompany the group to help assure their safety.

Schantz said she and the airmen "sang all the way to Bastogne." They arrived at noon and planned to have lunch with members of the 101st Airborne.

"An MP (military policeman) stopped us and said to go on, that there was something going to happen," she said. At the time, the town appeared quiet.

Five or 10 minutes later, their truck was stopped by another MP who told them that Bastogne had just been shelled.

Schantz said the group made it to the farm and was welcomed by a farm woman who recognized her from an earlier visit. The farmer had been killed by the Germans because of his resistance activities.

The downed aircraft was a five-minute truck ride from the farm, and the airmen planned to recover parts they next day, Schantz said.

"In the early morning, I went downstairs and told the sergeant to come up and listen. We had no idea what was going on, although the sound of the shots kept coming closer, she said.

After breakfast, the airmen headed for the plane, and Schantz and the farmer's wife stood out front, watching.

"About noon, a Jeep drove up and a soldier asked what we were doing. I told him about the engine, and he said we should leave because the Germans were advancing," Schantz said.



Rose Schantz, then Rose Exterbille, long ago. She, her mother and brother were members of the Belgian Underground, hiding downed Allied fliers for two years.

The soldier drove to the crash site, she said, and the group came back to the farm and picked her up.

"We had to shoot our way through the woods," she said of the return trip.

"All the way to Namur (a city on the Meuse River northwest of Bastogne), there were U.S. tanks standing in the side streets. Once past Namur, we were safe," she said.

Schantz came to the United States after her marriage in 1950. "For two years, our lives were at stake" hiding downed pilots and air crews, she said.

She recalled watching an American plane fall from the sky into a park near her Brussels home. Schantz, her brother and friend raced to the area, with the boys heading for the parachutes, and Schantz running for the plane where an airman had been trapped.

"I could hear the Germans coming on their motorcycles," said Schantz, who wore a Red Cross armband to attend to hurt air crews.

"The pilot was still alive. A German tried to push me away, but I told him, 'No, he's still alive.' I held his hands until he was gone. I was not going to let that guy die with a bunch of Germans over him," she said.

Schantz said her family had a room in the upstairs of their home for rescued American fliers as they were passed from hand to hand in occupied territory.

"My brother played guitar and we all sang. That was our entertainment," she said.

The Stalag was not a happy place

By MICHAEL R. CIANO

Holly Hill, Fla.

Tail Gunner, 445th Bomb Grp.

My freedom ended April 12, 1944, when I had to make my first and last parachute jump from a burning B-24 over Belgium. After a week of recuperating from my wounds at a hospital in Brussels, I was allowed to go out into the walled courtyard.

It was just a question of time when I would be sent to Germany and who knew what.

One morning the nurse came in to re-bandage both ankles and issued me a pair of wooden shoes, pants too big for my small frame, no stockings and an old shirt.

Soon I was struggling to get into a pie wagon and sat next to a Gestapo civilian; another was up front. We were on our way to the rail station and a train headed for Germany.

Two or three days later, we came into the Frankfurt station. The 8th Air Force had done a beautiful job on the station and the city around it. We walked to the front entrance and looked out and saw nothing but rubble upon rubble.

Everybody wore black and death was all over. Some waved fists at me, a few spat and I guess cursed me.

We walked to the corner where people were lined up waiting for the trolley. It finally came and we walked right in as one of the Gestapo showed his ID and said something in German.

At Dulag Luft I was stripped naked and inspected all over. When one officer saw my name, he said something about Italy now being on our side and that Count Ciano, Mussolini's son-in-law, was an enemy of Germany.

One Gestapo mentioned the 445th and asked if actor James Stewart was with the outfit. They told me that five of my crew members were found dead at the scene of the bomber crash.

Luft was comprised of long wide hallways with the appearance of being built during World War I. The hall was flanked with doors that opened into 5x7-ft. rooms with a small window close to the ceiling. Each room had a cot, no sink and what looked like half an oil lamp that was used to urinate in.

bread that contained sawdust to give it body, quite commonly used in Europe during the war.

Supper was hot water, boiled beets, potatoes and what we figured to be horse meat. What else would they be giving POWs when all of Europe was hard up for food?

In accordance with the Geneva Convention, POWs of member nations were to be assured of at least 6% above starvation diet. This was barely met by the Germans and so the U.S. government, via the Red Cross in Geneva, had food parcels made up of a can of beef, powdered coffee, D-bar, blades and 5 packs of cigarettes. These parcels were to be rationed out at two parcels a month, but actually, the Germans handed them out according to how they felt and how we behaved.

Many times they would tell us our bombers had destroyed the train loaded with the parcels and gave other excuses. There were times we would not see a parcel for two months.

Many times we would be rousted out of the sack at 3 a.m. with the aid of dogs and guards because the USAAF had bombed nearby oil tanks the day before. Many times they nearly dropped bombs on our camp as the fuel tanks were just a few miles down the valley.

There were endless attempts at tunnelling and great efforts made to keep it a secret. It seemed that about the time the diggers were ready to break through the top, guards were waiting with

spotlights on the spot. We suspected the Germans had plants in each compound.

Winter came and snow soon covered the valley. The days grew shorter and more time was spent indoors. The old timers told us how we would be spending all day in the sack cuddled up to stay warm.

The only good thing we looked forward to was the war news read by a guy from Chicago who went barracks to barracks with the aid of lookouts. Where he got the news remains a mystery.

The guards were becoming less tolerant of us as the Air Corps was turning Germany into a heap of rubble.

There was a cutout at the bottom of the door to slide food through. No electricity. On the walls were scribbled such phrases as "Don't talk", "Don't be afraid", "Remember Pearl Harbor", and "I'm so-and-so from California." Each cell block held an airman. Most of them were American with some RAF. The diet consisted of barley soup, black bread, cheese and ersatz coffee once a day.

A couple weeks later, I joined hundreds of airmen put in box cars and sent to Krems, Austria, and Stalag 17. We were crowded with little food. We could not see out and were horrified when we would come to a stop and begin to hear AA guns and exploding bombs. I heard a lot of swearing and banging on the sides of the car from just plain fright.

How happy we were to arrive at our destination! I can recall how we assembled in the station and were given something to eat, then started our march to the camp. It was late at night and soon we could see the searchlights and the barbed fences.

As you walked through the main gate you began to feel different and wonder if you'd ever walk back out. First building we entered was a washroom where we were deloused and our heads shaved.

We walked into a barracks and got our first view of how it was to be for a long time. Men were sleeping two together, set up in three tiers, about two feet apart.

New POWs meant news on how the war was progressing. No one slept much that first night as question after question was asked.

Stalag 17 living quarters consisted of



long wooden barracks with a washroom separating the halves. Our beds were 3-inch slats; we were issued one thin blanket.

Our breakfast diet consisted of hot water to shave or make coffee. Lunch was hot water, dehydrated cabbage that resembled cigarette tobacco and tasted like it, boiled carrots and a piece of black. On one occasion we had a grandstand view of a dog fight overhead and saw one plunge earthward with black trail of smoke behind.

Spring was near and the news began to come alive. Rumors of Allied breakthroughs all along the front were promising and liberation was more real. A rumor swept the camp in March that we were going on a forced march, heading westward because the Russians were just east of Vienna.

We soon could hear big guns in the east and the nights brought a pink glow in the Vienna area.

We never had figured on an evacuation. We found out later this came about because the Germans didn't want the Russians to see how brutally their comrades were treated. It figured.

Our possessions were little. I had a wornout blanket and food that was rationed out for the march. We were told what to do if civilians turned on us. Also, at what pace to walk and how to assist each other.

There was a chance the guards would abandon us if the going got too tough because the young guards were being replaced with older ones. Young guards were being sent to the Eastern front.

On April 1, 1945, Yanks, Russians, Poles, Czechs, British, Italian and some French all began to move out in a westerly direction on what was to be a frightful experience overshadowing our liberation. The forced march was 190 miles.

Our days consisted of marching a good nine hours with 10-minute breaks every two hours. We were out about five days when our rations began to run out. After two weeks out it was starting to have an effect and our pace slowed.

Several times we ran into gypsy caravans. We tried to scrounge food from them but they wouldn't part with a crumb. Many of the prisoners, especially the Russians, were now without shoes. More and more were depending on their

comrade's shoulders to hang on for dear life. Many were left to die on the road.

In the third week, American fighter planes began to appear daily to keep tabs on the POWs. The Germans guards would run for cover or just get among us for safety as the planes buzzed us and dipped their wings. We enjoyed seeing the guards run like scared rabbits.

We now had reached a point where we just barely moved along, oblivious to the barking dogs and irate guards. When we were allowed to rest, it would take threats with guns to get us up.

More Russian prisoners were dying. The GIs were haggard and drawn. Quite a change from the smart-looking airmen you would see around London. Many were taking on a sallow appearance, especially a 701st gunner named E. B. Johnson. His face was boney and his eyes were deep and starry. He was one of four of us who stuck together all through the imprisonment. The other two were James Clemente and Tom Florio. The three were from the same crew.

Our forced march came to an end on or about April 29 in the woods of Braunau, Hitler's birthplace. We couldn't go further because the GIs were about 15 miles beyond. Orders were to settle down and wait to see what happens.

We began to see other marchers coming in, mostly Russians with some Poles and some Czechs. I never saw such a sorry-looking bunch of humans in my life. Many were half-dead.

The next morning some of us decided to get out of the woods and head for farmhouses to get food. During the day we began hearing rifle and machine gun

fire which meant the fighting was closer.

No one slept that night because of the roar of the guns.

By mid-morning German combat troops were in full retreat; we had a live view. Our guards were not to be seen. We now were certain this was the day we waited so long for.

Shortly we heard the rumble of tanks coming up the dirt road and in a few minutes we saw an American tank come in view. This was a thrilling sight! An officer standing half out the hatch was waving to us. GIs were now appearing in pursuit of the retreating Germans. We all yelled with mad joy as more tanks appeared. We settled down for the night with smiles on our faces and with an agreement that General Patton's 13th Armored Division was the best fighting unit in the world.

We were housed in an old factory near the airfield while we waited for transport planes to take us to Stuttgart. From there we flew to Metz. We then boarded trucks and headed for Camp Lucky Strike.

We went through medical checkups, interrogation and were put on a special diet with sugar and charcoal to plug us up. Then we were processed and waited for shipping orders.

A month later our orders came and we were on way by truck to the port of LeHavre. Finally we set sail across the big pond to Hoboken, N.J. Before you knew it, we were rolling along the tracks heading for Camp Kilmer.

AFEES member Philip Solomon was the navigator on Mike Ciano's crew and evaded.

Our plaque unveiled at Eden Camp

John Miles and Simon Smith of the Joint Personal Recovery Agency (JPRA) of the U.S. Department of Defense filled in for AFEES members at the unveiling of a brass commemorative plaque in the Memorial Chapel of the Modern History Theme Museum at Eden Camp, North York, U.K., on Saturday, April 29, 2000.

The plaque, designed by Ralph Patton and Richard Smith, was installed by Roger Stanton in late 1999 with formal unveiling on April 29. Roger arranged to have the plaque made and selected a prominent location on the Wall of Honor for its placement. The plaque displays the AFEES logo and simply states that *"We Will Never Forget"* our Helpers.

Eden Camp is a former POW camp converted to a unique museum. Located at Malton, 60 miles north of London, it is worth the effort required to get there, according to members who have visited it.

Our society appreciates the efforts of Roger Stanton and Joe Miles for their work in the project.

They thought they were headed south

Crewmen were betrayed in Antwerp

Report by Fred Brown, RAF airman, based on post-war research by Marcel Claes of Zichem, Belgium, in Brussels court records. Brown, one of the airmen betrayed, spent the rest of the war in Stalag Luft 8. He now lives in Australia.

Between December 1943 and August 1944, Rene Van Muylem, using aliases of **Donald, Alfons/Alphonse, Robert and Marlant**, betrayed more than 177 Allied aircrew, turning them over to the Gestapo in Antwerp. He also betrayed more than 100 of his countrymen who were workers in the evasion lines.

Born in Belgium in 1908, Van Muylem and his brother became Nazi sympathisers in the 1930s. When Belgium was overrun in 1940, Van Muylem volunteered to work in Germany.

He plied his trade of hair stylist in Cologne until July 1943, when the bombing became too much for him. He returned to Belgium and was trained to infiltrate resistance escape lines. He carried documents which he presented as a British agent, one who had been parachuted into Belgium to establish contact between the resistance and London. The documents were those of a real agent who had been captured on landing.

Van Muylem ingratiated himself into various groups running evaders through to France. He in turn formed a spurious evasion line, "The KLM Line." Evaders caught in Van Muylem's web were taken to Antwerp.

In Antwerp the evaders stayed in a cafe, the *Petit Paon*, or in an apartment at Van Eycklei 17, where a blonde, Pauline, and her poodle held court. The evaders ate and drank, thinking that this was great and the next move would be south to France.

Visitors posing as resistance workers arrived, planning the next move. Unfortunately for the airmen, the next move was to the Antwerp Gestapo HQ for interrogation. Because the evaders were in civilian clothes, they were greeted with "You are a spy; you will be shot."

Interrogation and then a move to

Begijenstraat prison for further interrogation. Most of the 177 spent the rest of the war as POWs.

Early in September 1944, when things warmed up in Antwerp, Van Muylem left for Germany. On May 6, 1945, he arrived in Paris, claiming he had been imprisoned in Germany. He found work in the bar of The Mayflower at the American Red Cross Centre in Francios Street.

It was here his career ended. Robert Hoke, an American airman whom Van Muylem had betrayed, recognized him.

But the French refused to arrest him because he was a Belgian, and the Belgians were unwilling to arrest him because of the huge workload their courts had with collaborators.

Eventually, he was turned over to Belgian authorities. He fully confessed, naming everyone who had helped him. He was sentenced to death and was shot in a baker's yard in Antwerp on May 29, 1948.

Pauline was sentenced to death, but escaped and later was caught, to be given a 12-year sentence.

AIR FORCES ESCAPE & EVASION SOCIETY FINANCIAL STATEMENT (Cash Receipts and Disbursements) For Year Ending Dec. 31, 1999

RECEIPTS:			
ANNUAL DUES			4,060.00
LIFE MEMBERSHIPS			2,000.00
GIFTS			3,084.91
POST EXCHANGE - RECEIPTS	1,800.80		
- DISBURSEMENTS	1,734.86	65.94	
INTEREST			531.62
RAFFLE - RECEIPTS	6,852.75		
- DISBURSEMENTS	1,050.00	5,802.75	
TOTAL RECEIPTS			15,545.22
DISBURSEMENTS:			
NEWS LETTER			3,522.74
MEMBERSHIP			614.98
POSTAGE			2,687.91
REUNION - DISBURSEMENTS	39,930.71		
- RECEIPTS	39,335.50	595.21	
MISCELLANEOUS			1,642.54
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS			9,063.38
EXCESS OF RECEIPTS (LOSS)			6,481.84
CASH BALANCE - BEGINNING			26,520.09
CASH BALANCE - ENDING			33,001.93
SUMMARY OF ENDING CASH BALANCE			
CHECKING ACCOUNT		20,557.79	
CERTIFICATES OF DEPOSIT		12,444.14	
TOTAL			33,001.93

Pulling together the memories

This collage is the work of Member John Nelson of Tampa, Fla.

It includes some of his memories from Sept. 2, 1944, the day his P-51 Mustang was downed in Yugoslavia.

For the story of how he was saved by the Chetniks after being downed, see Winter 1999-2000 issue of Communications.

MOON & I SHOT DOWN THE SAME DAY MEET 15 DAYS LATER - VERY SURPRISED -

SOME OF THE CHETNIKS / US & PILOTS (ME & MOON) SHOT DOWN FROM OUR SQUADRONS 12 PILOTS DOWN ON THAT MISSION STRAFING GERMANS OCCUPYING YUGOSLAVIA.

THIS WAGON PULLED BY OXEN

THIS COLLAGE BY JOHN NELSON AS I REMEMBER 55 YRS AGO

THIS WAGON PHOTO WAS FOLLOWED BY PATRAZAN SERBS BURSTING MORTAR SHELLS MEANT FOR CHETNIKS

WOMEN IN YUGOSLAVIA
WE THREE CADET BUDDIES - SOON IN THE 307TH FTR SQUADRON WILL GO DOWN ON COMBAT MISSIONS - THIS GERMAN TRIED TO JOIN ME WAS CAPTURED & SHOT BY GERMANS



Ralph speaks to Aero Club in Pittsburgh

From *The Aviator*, newsletter of
The Aero Club of Pittsburgh,

March-April 2000

BY ADAM LYNCH

It was a long time coming. Over 40 years in fact, since Captain Ralph Patton USAFR had been to the Aero Club of Pittsburgh. As it turned out, his visit to the Feb. 17 luncheon meeting at Poli's was as successful as his previous appearance on Aug. 28, 1958. That time, the late Cliff Ball had invited Patton to talk to the members about his war-time adventures of being shot down over France and how he was able to return to England.

Until Patton's career took him to New York State, he had been an Aero Club member.

Patton was a B-17 co-pilot whose plane was downed by flak and German fighters on Jan. 5, 1944. After bailing out, the young lieutenant, along with some of his fellow crew members, was taken in by the French Underground which started him on an involved and dangerous journey to freedom.

Patton vividly described that day his plane was shattered apart. He told how the tail of the B-17 actually broke away but somehow he was able to bail out. As the former flier told of the many brave French citizens who helped him, his affection and respect for them was obvious.

For an American who spoke no French, working with many Frenchmen who spoke no English, it was often a bewildering three-month experience of being moved from house to house and living in a Nazi-occupied land. His description of riding a train filled with German soldiers, while dressed in civilian clothes and carrying fake French identification papers, was especially gripping.

At the time, Patton did not know the extent of the sophisticated escape and evasion network that was operating, not only in France, but in Belgium and The Netherlands and other locations in occupied Europe to protect and eventually deliver back to England Allied fliers who



AFEES Chairman Ralph Patton makes a return appearance

were shot down.

More than 30 Aero Club members and guests listened intently to Patton's description of his final days on the freedom trail called "Shelburne" and how he and others clambered down a high cliff on the coast of France to be rescued by a British gunboat and returned across the channel to his 94th Bomb Group at Bury St. Edmonds.

After the war Patton spearheaded the organization that came to be known as "The Escape and Evasion Society" or AFEES. This remarkable organization has sponsored numerous reunions both in this country and in Europe with hundreds

of Allied airmen who were protected and transported during the war by brave citizens. These reunions were staged with many of those French, Belgian and Dutch volunteers who made up the various freedom trails at the risk of death by the German Army.

After serving many years as president of the society, Patton has surrendered some of his duties but still maintains an extensive library and research center in his Mt. Lebanon home.

He was accompanied in his Aero Club visit by his charming wife Bette who has actively participated in the society's projects over the years.

San Martino Trail walk set for May

The San Martino Freedom Trail, scheduled for May 17-20, 2001, will retrace the routes taken by many escapers in Italy between Sulmona and Castel di Sangro, through the Abruzzi and Maelia National Parks.

These mountain routes and villages gave shelter to hundreds of escapers in WW2, heading south to the Allied lines at the River Sangro. It is intended that the event take place each year during the month of May. The route will pass through villages that helped and hid escapers.

Commemorative services will take place, wreaths will be laid, and veterans will be able to meet former helpers.

The route, about 55 miles, will be led by local people, through villages formerly used to hide evaders. It will use roads and tracks, will pass through dense forest areas, and will cross mountains. It will follow valleys and lower ground which gave good cover to escapers, so walkers can experience conditions experienced by escapers, and a chance to meet local people in cooperation with the Alpini and veteran Partisans.

For information on the San Martino Freedom Trail, contact Roger Stanton, 5 Tansy Road, Harrogate, North Yorkshire HG3 2UJ; tel/fax 01423 508667 or Stephen Simms, 62 Rydale Gardens, Whitton, Middlesex, TW3 2JH, tel. 0181 8946036

Here it is! Mississippians in the Mighty 8th

**MISSISSIPPIANS IN THE
MIGHTY EIGHTH, Edited by N.
Kenneth Nail**

Here are the actual stories, poems and letters home by the young men from Mississippi who served in the Eighth Air Force during World War II. This highly acclaimed volume contains authentic accounts of what it was like in the skies over Europe in 1942-45.

It is all here -- the cold at high altitude, the bad weather flying, the enemy fighter attacks, the antiaircraft fire, the engine failures, the fires in the engine nacelles or in the bomb bay, the explosions, the narrow escape by parachute over enemy territory, escape and evasion, prison camp, wounds and loss of limbs, loss of friends and comrades who were closer than brothers.

It's all about Mississippians by Mississippians. Young men from Grenada, Jackson, Hattiesburg, Meridian, Natchez and Tupelo -- boys from farms, villages, towns and cities.

If you can't find *Mississippians in the Mighty Eighth* at your bookseller, you can write to: Mississippi Chapter, 8th AFHS, 214 N. Madison, Tupelo, MS 38804; phone 662-844-1553. Price is \$45, plus \$3 shipping & handling.

The Basques: a mysterious people

**THE BASQUE HISTORY OF
THE WORLD, by Mark
Kurlansky, Walker, \$25**

By SUE GRAUERHOLZ ELLISON

Some AFEES members who evaded on the Comet Line during World War II may remember the Hotel Eskualduna in St. Jean-de-Luz, France, a critical link in "la ligne," but they may not know the story of one of its heroic guests, Florentino Goikoetxea.

The story of Goikoetxea is only one of the fascinating tales of the amazing Basque people told by Mark Kurlansky in "The Basque History of the World." Kurlansky's new work has been named by Library Journal as one of the best books of 1999. It is sure to delight AFEES members who made Pyrenees crossings and other readers as well.

The Hotel Eskualduna's owner, Kattaline Aguirre, and her teenage daughter Josephine, who was called "Fifine," fed and provided a resting place for downed fliers. At the hotel's sidewalk cafe, Basque operatives of la ligne met, exchanged documents and information and received assistance from the Aguirre women.

Goikoetxea was an avid hunter whose knowledge of the woods led to a career in smuggling and later guiding Allied fliers through the Pyrenees passes. It was a grueling journey, along streambeds, up

steep climbs, through several passes and down along other creeks, all under cover of darkness.

Kurlansky tells about the night a German patrol opened fire with machine guns at shadows moving in the riverbed. The Germans captured a Basque smuggler, wounded in four places, and took him to a hospital in Bayonne. They did not know that their prisoner was Goikoetxea and they placed him under light guard.

Meanwhile, at the Hotel Eskualduna, Basque regulars were nervously whispering. "Would the Germans be able to identify Florentino? Would they interrogate him? Could they get him to talk?"

The operatives decided that the only solution was to free Florentino before the Germans grew suspicious. To communicate with him without the Germans knowing, the oldest of Basque tricks was used: Euskera (their mother tongue which is unrelated to any other language on the planet). An operative visited him in the hospital and said, "Florentino, bihar zure bila etorriko dira, arraltsaldean," a sentence that meant nothing to the guards, but means, "Tomorrow afternoon, they will come to get you."

"The next day it took three people and a truck exactly two minutes to get Florentino out of the hospital. He was taken through the back roads of Labourd to a safe house, where he remained until the Liberation. He had personally escorted 227 pilots, mostly Royal Air Force, to safety."

According to Kurlansky, between May 1941, the beginning of "Operation Comet," and the liberation of France in the summer of 1944, 1,700 agents had been involved in returning 700 British, Canadian and American fliers.

Any AFEES member who crossed the Pyrenees will relish "The Basque History of the World." Go ahead, read the book for its stories of wartime daring and cunning and then delight in stories about the origins of the red beret, why Basques refuse to eat Japanese eels, and why authentic Basque pastries are bread filled with cherries rather than the more common cakes filled with creme.

Kurlansky is a superb storyteller and historian; the Basques are a mysterious and enigmatic people with ancient roots.



Dee Harper, left, is shown with Richard Smith, Christian Richard and Clayton David at the Columbia reunion. Dee and Christian stopped en route from Christian's home in France to Dee's home in Las Vegas.

Down on the last 303rd BG mission

Condensed from a recent article in the 303rd Bomb Grp. newsletter.

The last 303BG crew to be lost on the last day of 8th Air Force operations on April 25, 1945, was against the Skoda armament works in Pilsen, Czechoslovakia. The plane was hit by AA fire immediately after "bombs away" and Pilot Warren Mauger ordered his crew to bail out. He spent 10 days evading. Here are highlights of his evasion story.

By WARREN MAUGER, Valrico, Fla.

As the farmer got closer, I could see that he was waving a white cloth. By gestures and words, I asked him the way to travel west to get to our lines. He told me the best he could and offered his old farm jacket for me to wear. The jacket not only helped me keep warm, but also made me appear as one of the local farmers.

It was 1 p.m. I crawled into a drainage ditch and pulled leaves over me. I moved out about 5 p.m. Once on the outskirts of a town, I started looking for a farm house. I got into a barn unnoticed, but as I climbed into the loft, on my heels was the farmer's dog. It barked and howled until the farmer got up. The farmer said I could not stay on his property for if the German police found me there, he and his family would be shot. He did show me a place to hide and left me some food.

Progress the second night heading west was pretty slow. When the sun rose, I was glad to bed down.

Early next morning, a farmer overtook me with his horse and wagon. He told me to hop aboard.

A half hour later, he pointed up the road. Through the trees was a military checkpoint. I jumped off the wagon and headed for the hills. The farmer slowly moved off and the soldiers did not see me or suspect anything.

About noon the next day, I came to a mountain stream and just beyond the bridge, I saw a small town. After crossing the bridge, I rapped on the door of a house. A lad about 12 years of age answered and let me in. It appeared that he was the only one home.

He offered me some sour milk soup. Then he told me he was a member of the Hitler Youth and showed me his uniform. He said that it was all but mandatory to belong. Somehow, I believed him and left feeling that he would not notify anyone of my being there.

Toward evening of the next day, I came upon a large river that could not be crossed except by the bridge. Again the

military checkpoint was there. I had not waited long when there approached a group of six men. I got on the road ahead of them and let them catch up with me. All seven of us walked by the guards without a hitch.

A couple days later, I was walking along the edge of some woods when I saw two farm hands working with hoes. As I approached, they moved to intercept my path. Both appeared to be friendly, judging by their gestures. This meeting proved to be one of the greatest pieces of good fortune in the whole adventure.

One was a young lad of about 15; the other a man in his 20s who introduced himself as Andre Vesille. He was to be my key to survival.

We walked to the crest of a small hill and saw a large haystack in the corner of a field. Upon getting to the stack, the two men began to pull out large clumps of straw and soon had hollowed out a sizable cave. They motioned for me to crawl in. Once I was in, they covered the opening, leaving me a small air hole.

The haystack was dry and warm.

At sundown, Andre was back and brought me a lunch. I learned that he was a Russian who had been captured at the front. He and his wife and child had been shipped to the village to help with the farm work. He was talkative and a joy to have around.

The next afternoon, I looked out the air hole and saw a stranger looking in at me. He was an older man with a cane, well dressed in a black suit and a gray hat, apparently someone of importance in the village.

When Andre came by at sundown, I told him what had happened. He told me the man was the burgermeister and that he was in the village because of his sympathetic feelings toward the Germans. He had the only telephone in the village and was to call the military if he sighted an enemy in the area.

So Andre rushed me off to another hiding place. My new refuge was a one-



Pilot Warren Mauger (standing, second from left) was the only member of his crew to evade capture after their B-17 went down April 25, 1945, the last day of 8th Air Force operations. Of the rest of the crew, three were KIA and four were taken prisoner.

man bomb shelter, a hole filled with straw and with logs on top.

When Andre arrived the next day, I told him that some small children had seen me in the bomb shelter. In a minute, Andre and his friend were pulling me to a new hiding place -- the same old haystack.

Andre explained that the previous day the burgermeister had called the authorities and that they had searched the haystack. When they found no trace of me, they assumed I had moved on. This was a good place to hide in again. That night the rumble of artillery was in the distance and growing louder.

Most of the next day I spent in my cave. The artillery bursts were so close that the ground shook. Sometime after midnight the machine-gun fire on both sides became intense. I could distinguish the American fire by its lower pitch and slower rate than that of the Germans.

Toward morning, I heard many voices of German soldiers. Teams of horses were moving equipment in retreat. The

army had no fuel; the bombing of the oil refineries had taken its toll.

Most of the day was filled with sporadic sounds of small arms fire, with an occasional report from heavy artillery. Tanks could be heard rumbling about.

I was happy to see Andre at my peephole. Excitedly, he told me the Americans were at the intersection of the village roads. We ran down the hill together. I couldn't keep up too well, so Andre helped me along.

At the intersection, three light tanks were firing down the road. Behind them were two Jeeps. I approached the last Jeep to identify myself when a G.I. spotted me and tossed me two packs of Camels. IT WAS ALL OVER!

I turned to Andre, but how do you thank a man who has probably saved your life? The words we exchanged were superfluous, but he somehow understood my feelings.

I gave him my watch, something he often had admired. What a small price to pay for his great service!

303rd Group vets treated as VIPs at Molesworth

More than 200 veterans of the 303rd Bomb Group and their families received special treatment on their recent visit to their WWII base at Molesworth in East Anglia.

The group was led by Maj. Gen. Lewis E. Lyle, their WWII commanding officer, and the prime mover in establishment of the Heritage Museum at Savannah.

General Lyle is a long-time friend of AFEES who has attended several of our reunions. He would have been with us in Columbia except that he was in England with his 303rd BG at the time.

Veterans of the 303rd arrived at Molesworth to a red-carpet reception put on by the men and women of the Air Force now stationed there. Molesworth is one of a few WWII bases still being used by the U.S. Air Force in England.

The Air Force treated the veterans as VIPs and the local populace treated them as heroes.

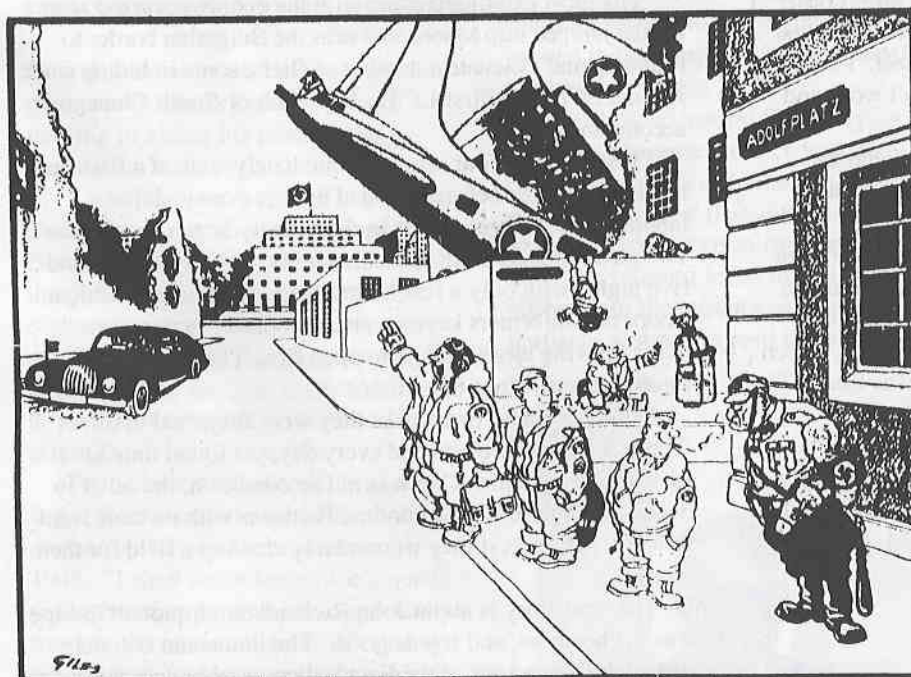
In a phone conversation with AFEES Chairman Ralph Patton, General Lyle related how pleased he was at being asked to present certificates of appreciation to a number of former members of the Dutch, Belgian and French undergrounds who had been invited to the ceremony by the organizing committee. These certificates, expertly done, carried many names familiar to our members.

During General Lyle's presentations and in subsequent conversations, it came through loud and clear how difficult it is to honor men and women of the Resistance; they always manage to inject a note of appreciation for us helping them to regain their freedom. General Lyle said he was greatly impressed with the loyalty and warmth of the friendships between AFEES and the 303rd's Helper guests.

-- Submitted by Ralph Patton

WINDOWS FOR REMY

Dedication ceremonies for the new stained glass windows in the Church of St. Denis in Remy, France, will be held on Saturday, July 29, at mid-morning. There will be a full schedule of events.



"TAXI!"

This newspaper cartoon, published in the London Sunday Express of April 23, 1944, was reproduced on the cover of the Fall 1997 issue of

Communications without proper credit. Since then, information concerning the origin of the cartoon has come from John Franklin, an ex-RAF wireless operator who was shot down in his Halifax in April 1944 and was able to escape across the Pyrenees Mountains near St. Giron. He was a member of 644 Squadron, as was the Halifax which crashed in 1945 on the Chemin de la Liberte route. Carl Giles was probably the best-loved cartoonist in Britain for many years.

Journalist Joe Morton battled censorship, his daughter reports

By MIMI GOSNEY, St. Joseph, Mo.
(Delivered May 26, 2000, in Columbia, Mo., at the AFEES banquet honoring wartime Helpers.)

My father, Joseph Morton, was a journalist. He worked for the Associated Press. During WWII he served as a war correspondent, first in India, and then in Europe.

He headed to Africa on a ship carrying American troops being sent in to construct air fields -- the military strategy being that from there, airplanes could be sent in to strike at the "Underbelly of Hitler."

My father loved airplanes, but a pilot he was not as he related in a story he told on himself: "My friends insist that my interest in learning to fly an airplane is 'deadly' but all of the pilots, except one, have been courteous and cooperative. I hold no malice against this one chap because I have learned since that his bomber is like a bumblebee -- on paper it won't fly.

"But I did feel a little bad the day he let me take the stick for a while, then suddenly grabbed it away and frightened me to death by screaming, 'What are you trying to do -- crash?' I told him I had my eye squarely on the horizon indicator and that we were sailing along at a perfectly even keel. I certainly had no way of knowing that the darn thing didn't work and that we had lost 300 feet in a few seconds."

After Africa, he moved to Bari, Italy. The search and rescue of downed pilots fascinated him, as did the Partisan uprisings that were beginning to take place.

His next visit was to Yugoslavia. He was in and out of that country several times. The story he wrote detailing an interview with Marshal Tito was put on hold because of government censorship. It became a significant issue, which questioned our right to a free press. The story was finally released.

While in Yugoslavia, he learned about Linn Farish. I would like to share part of that story with you. "Military censorship relaxed one of its most rigid restrictions today that public recognition might be given Major Linn M. Farish of

Sun-tan tie needed for Slovak museum

Member Roy Madsen has been supporting the Broken Heart Museum in Banska Bystrica, Slovakia, with money and with war-time military equipment and flight clothing.

He says the American exhibit there was nothing 10 years ago, but is now impressive and has grown to about 30 feet in width.

Roy has a dress uniform from a P-51 pilot to be displayed at the museum, but still needs a dress sun-tan necktie to complete it. He asks anyone who could furnish such a tie to contact him at 2214 Belaire Drive, Salt Lake City, UT 84109, phone 801-466-6832.

Woodland, California, a courageous officer who outfoxed the Germans 12 months in the Balkans, only to die in a plane crash.

"As an engineer he located and surveyed many of the secret airfields from which Allied airmen and others have been flown back to freedom. Anonymity cloaked his activities because he was a secret agent. Major Farish parachuted into Bosnia to join the Anglo-American mission to Marshal Tito. Shortly after his arrival he went to Tito for assistance in rescuing fliers bailing out of crippled bombers over the country. The Partisan leader responded by sending an order to every brigade headquarters -- American fliers must be rescued from enemy elements by force of arms if necessary.

"From this pledge of cooperation dated the return of hundreds of airmen. It also marked Farish among the Partisan leaders as a man who intended to get things done. The major spent three 90-day periods in the Yugoslav hinterland, entering each time by parachute. Then he undertook a series of survey trips by plane. He met his death on the third.

"His most exciting contact with the enemy occurred after he had jumped into Macedonia near the Bulgarian border to round up and evacuate a number of fliers, some in hiding since August of 1943. First Lt. Eli Popovich of South Chicago accompanied him.

"They located four airmen immediately, safe at a Partisan headquarters, but before they had time to even look for a landing strip, Bulgar troops in the vicinity began an offensive. The group moved north, marching and crawling six days and five nights with only a few hours sleep. German and Bulgar troops and informers kept a constant lookout, armed patrols twice drawing close enough to open fire. The men passed through enemy lines three times.

During the next two weeks they were subjected to direct 75mm fire and were bombed every day, yet found time to survey two airfields. One was in fair condition, the other in need of attention. Three hundred Partisans with ox carts went to work, acting as if they were merely clearing a field for their crops."

The next story is about John Richardson. I quote: "Escape was his business, and it was good. The lieutenant colonel, just back from a look at the East Balkan market, was taking a minute to add up the returns. From the prison camps of Bulgaria he had gotten 342 men. Two weeks earlier, 1,143 had been brought back from Romania. Before that he had done a big wholesale trade in Yugoslavia, among both the Partisans and Chetniks.

"There had been a good sprinkling of clients in Greece, Albania, Northern Italy and Southern France. All told, 2,940 American airmen missing in action had been restored to life.

"As head of the 15th Airborne escape section, John W. Richardson was pleased with the total -- even though he knew where there were a lot more men. Events in Romania and Bulgaria had been good signs. He had hopes of getting others.



Mimi Gosney displays gold wings honoring her father, Joe Morton, at AFEES meeting in Missouri. He was an Associated Press reporter executed by the Germans.

Columbia Daily Tribune Photo

On a day a man crash lands or bails out over enemy territory and is reported missing in action his name enters Richardson's active file.

"Over pipelines from the International Red Cross, Resistance elements, and British-Russian-American agents come the clues to his whereabouts. Unless captured, he is started along a carefully plotted underground railroad, winding up sooner or later at a gap in the lines or an airport built especially for men in his plight."

Then came Yugoslavia. Let me begin by sharing a letter written to my mother by Nelson Derarian, Sept. 4, 1945. "I shall never forget Joe's quiet, yet insistant requests for an opportunity to write the stories of some of our boys who were mixed up in pretty hazardous business, stories he felt the folks back home were entitled to know. He felt so strongly on the subject. We met when he became interested in the story of Major Farish, one of the officers in my unit.

"At the time I happened to be working on the arrangements for Banska Bystrica. Joe seemed to be fascinated with the prospects for that operation. He was very inquisitive about it and finally admitted that he would give anything to

go in with the men who were scheduled for the job. At first it was absolutely out of the question. The idea of a newspaper man going along with a secret military mission was almost unheard of, but that didn't deter Joe in the least. He kept right on insisting.

"Finally in October of last year, Joe had his wish. Joe, Colonel Ross and I were part of the baggage on the second flight to Banska Bystrica, Colonel Ross and I to interview leaders of the local resistance unit and Joe to stay awhile and do the job which he felt was so important.

"As we took off for the return trip to our base and safety, I could see Joe waving at us and grinning from ear to ear. He seemed so content. We were in radio contact with our unit for a while after that, then suddenly everything was quiet."

This would be the last group of American fliers to leave Slovakia via the 15th Airborne. The Germans started moving in. After the landing at Tri Duby on Oct. 7, 1944, the mission traveled to Banska Bystrica, to the headquarters located in Narodny Dom. Soon they had to leave.

They headed toward Donovaly. As conditions became more critical, they left Donovaly, taking only the clothing they could wear. They fled with the Partisans, trying to avoid German capture. A gruelling blizzard hit as the mission pushed into the mountains. One group of Partisans stopped to rest; these 80 men

would be found frozen to death.

Joseph Piontek recorded some of the events: "Nov. 1, north side of Low Tatra, think descent is impossible, but we're setting on -- shouting, rushing, men, horses, stones rolling, sometimes down, bones cracking, takes three hours, every step must be carefully secured."

Piontek left the group Nov. 16. The group moved to several locations. The American mission finally ended up in a hut on Homolka, a mountain above the village of Polonika. The English mission was close by at Velky Bok.

They survived until Dec. 26, 1944. That day the Germans surrounded their hut; only three would escape to tell the story. The group was taken to Banska Bystrica, Bratislava and finally to Mauthausen. In January 1945 they were executed.

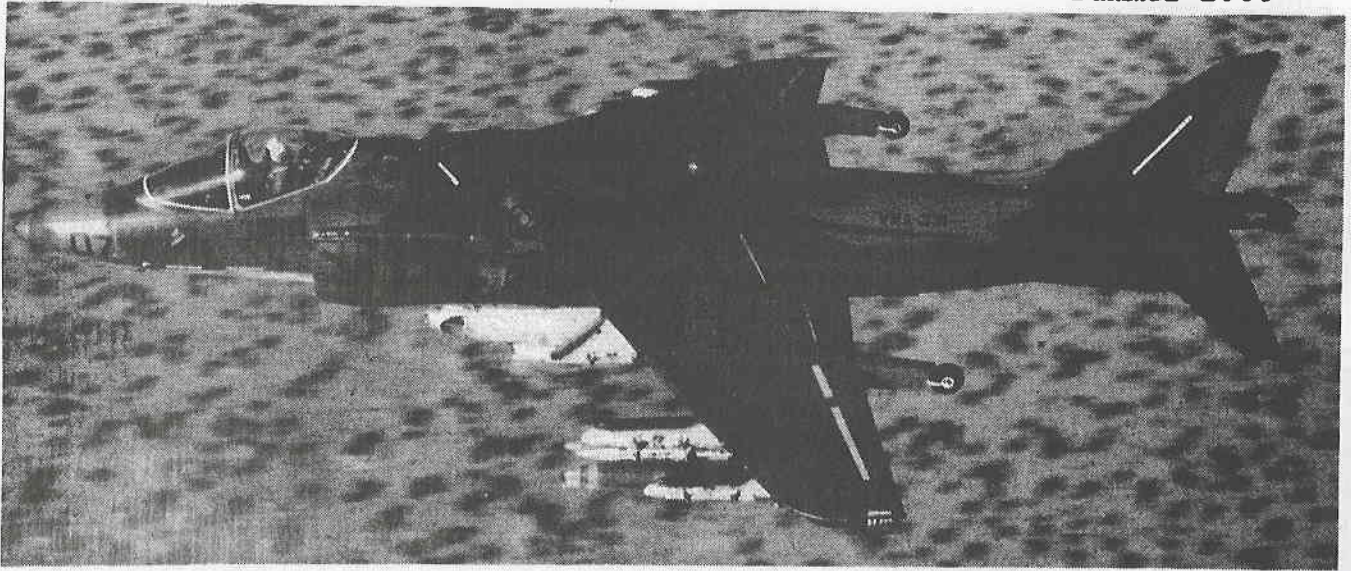
I have a hat that I would like to share with you. It says "Free Press, Free Speech, Free Spirit." It sums up my father perfectly.

It is fitting that I am standing in Columbia, Mo., telling this story. My father has now come full circle. He was a student at the University of Missouri. The Joseph Morton Scholarship is available through the School of Journalism here.

I think my father would be pleased, knowing that his story was shared with the Air Forces Escape & Evasion Society, for you know better than anyone else what freedom is all about.



Anne and Dr. Igor Nabelek of Knoxville, Tenn., are posed with Mimi Gosney at Columbia. The topic of conversation will surely turn to Czechoslovakia!



The U.S. Marine Corps AV-8B (Harrier) was the star of the Salute to Veterans airshow in Columbia over Memorial Day. The Harrier is best known for its maneuverability. The demonstration included a 90-degree climbing turn, a high-speed pass over the runway, and a vertical landing in front of the crowd. Designed to be operational both day and night, it was used extensively in Operation Desert Storm in 1991.

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A message from President Richard Smith . . .

BATTLE LAKE, Minn. -- From the sunny shores of Ottertail Lake:

Columbia is behind us. Spokane and Tampa are ahead of us. Seems that AFEES members are on the Go -- Going around the good old U.S.A.!

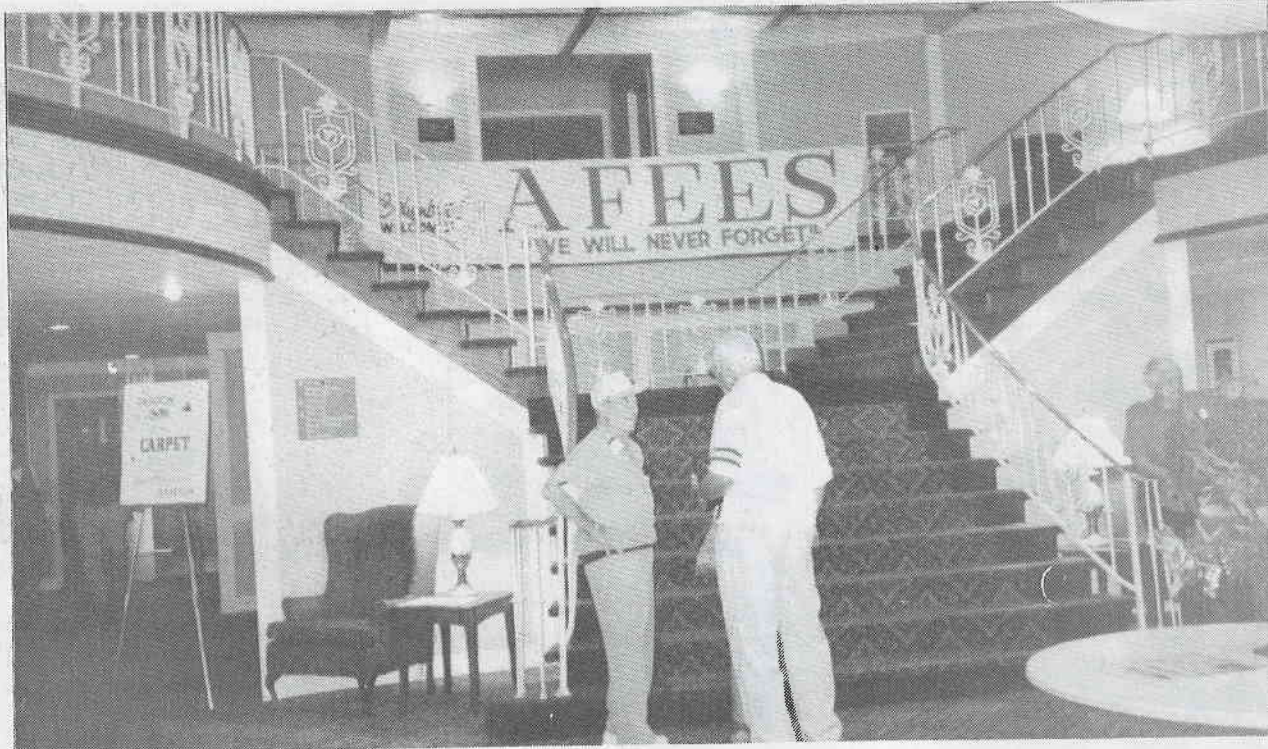
It appears that everyone had a fine time at our reunion in Columbia. We had a sloppy Saturday morning for the airshow, but the clouds broke at noon and Sunday was a good day. There were items of real interest at the airport, especially the vertical takeoff craft. (pictured above). What a bunch of noise, but what flexibility; straight up, straight down, 180-degree turns and tremendous level flight speed.

I must apologize to a few members. After we left Columbia, I learned that some of you were disappointed with your rooms for the reunion. Let me thank you for not making a major issue of it at the time! You AFEES people are a great group!

Those of us who did Branson (see story on page 16) had a great time. Five full-length shows, very diversified and with multi-talented entertainers. Also two short shows. All in all, a good time. I do believe that in the future, we will not try to do as much in three or four days.

Outstanding was the side trip to Fulton, Mo., to visit Westminster College and the Winston Churchill Museum. The lunch was super, and the meeting with the Dan'l Boone impersonator was a wonderful bonus. I learned more frontier history from Dan'l in 45 minutes than I did in all my schooling. Many interesting questions and answers.

The 2000 reunion was quite short of Helpers. We had two guests from France, two guests from Australia, two Helpers from Holland, two Helpers from the Balkans, and two Belgian Helpers now living in the U.S. It seems the French franc is weak and of course, many helpers (like us) are growing older and travel for them can become tedious. For all who made the effort to get to Columbia, I offer my heartiest thanks! Hope to see you in Spokane next year and on the cruise ship to Alaska. Details in a later newsletter.



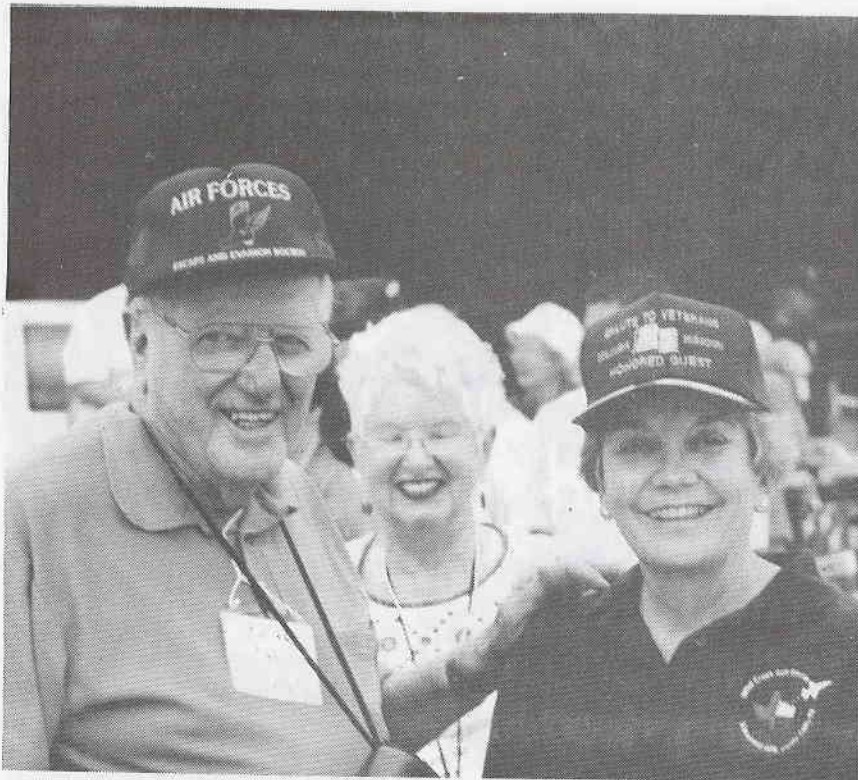
The double stairway of the Ramada Inn in Columbia was dominated by the huge banner welcoming AFEES to the 2000 reunion. The hotel management and staff seemed eager to please and the affair goes in the books as another great one.



Part of the group at the 2000 reunion toured the Winston Churchill Memorial in Fulton, Mo. The memorial is home to the Berlin Wall sculpture "Breakthrough."



Ralph Patton and Richard Smith place a wreath honoring AFEES Helpers as part of the Memorial Day observance in downtown Columbia.



Mr. and Mrs. Brian O'Connell of Queensland, Australia, became acquainted with Brig. Gen. Sharla Cook during the airshow segment of the 2000 AFEES reunion. One of the honored guests at the Salute to Veterans celebration, General Cook commands the 82nd Training Wing at Sheppard AFB, Tex.

Nice crowd at Columbia for reunion

The 2000 reunion in Columbia attracted about 175 members of AFEES, spouses, Helpers and guests. The list of persons registered includes:

Louie Albert, Eugene Anderson, A. Armbruster, Leslie Avery, Sylvia Beall, J. C. Bradbury, Clark Brandt, Thomas Brown, John Buckner, Milan Buros, David Butcher,

Joseph Cagle, Merrill Caldwell, Thomas Cannon, Roy Cheek, Clif Clifton, Bob Couture, William Cupp, Yvonne Daley, Clayton David, A. Del Guidice, Howard DeMallie, Lou Feingold, Philip Fink, Charles Fisher, Margarette Fraser,

John Goan, Ada Goldfeder, Larry Grauerholz, June Haines, Peter Hakim, Flamm Harper, R. Harrington, Howard Harris, Francis Heekin, Chauncey Hicks, Charles Holt, Cornelius Jasperse, Paul Kenney, Anthony Kosinski, Ray Kubly, John Kupsick,

Larry Lanning, Don Lasseter, Dale Lee, Mia Lelivelt, J.W. Lincoln, Ernest Lindell, R. P. Lindsay, Joseph McCann, Roy Madsen, Joseph Manos, Roy A. Martin, Lorn McQuarter, Edward Miller, Jacob Muller, Clare Musgrove,

Brian O'Connell, Ralph Patton, Mio Pesic, Paul Petersen, Jeffers Polk, Joel Punches, Christian Richards, Alvis Roberts, W. Roskey, John Rucigay, Charles Salivar, Frank Schaeffer, Leonard Schallehn, Mary Shandor, Raymond Sherk, Richard Smith, Edward Sabie, A.G. Stacey, Robert Starzynski, Stanley Stepnitz, Myrle Stinnett, Warren Sutor,

Tom C. Thomas, Jan Tickner, Bob Tucker, Howard Turlington, George Van Remmerden, Jay Williams, Robert Wilson.

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This list of persons registered at the Ramada Inn in Columbia, Mo., for the AFEES reunion in May was obtained from the hotel records. Generally, spouses and relatives are not included. There may be some late arrivals and others whose names are not included



President Richard Smith presents an AFEES lapel pin to new honorary Helper member, Tun Sheng Liu, now of Hacienda Heights, Calif., at the Salute to Veterans dinner during the Columbia reunion. After Doolittle Raider Travis Hoover's B-25 ran out of fuel and crashed in Japanese-occupied China in April 1942, young Tung Sheng Liu guided the crew to territory controlled by the friendly Chinese Nationalist government.



Toni and Tom Brown, managers of the AFEES PX, display some of the items they had for sale at the Columbia reunion.

There was plenty of action at the Columbia reunion

By LARRY GRAUERHOLZ
Communications Editor

Jack Kupsick called it a "wingdinger of a meeting."

Dee Harper called it a "great show, deeply appreciated by all."

What they are talking about is the AFEES reunion in Columbia, Mo., over Memorial Day weekend. About 170 members, spouses, Friends and Helpers converged on the central Missouri city for great fellowship, food and entertainment.

There were a few problems, but nothing that our valiant bunch couldn't handle. For example, the local tourism bureau failed to provide personnel for registration in the Ramada. But President Dick Smith quickly rounded up plenty of volunteers to handle the job.

The day trip to the Churchill memorial in nearby Fulton was an inspirational experience. And a surprise bonus was added to the luncheon program when Patrick Lee of Ashland, Mo., presented his interpretation of the life of Daniel Boone. Central Missouri has quite a claim on Dan 'ul and Lee emphasized Boone's fascination with learning what was beyond the next ridge.

Lee makes presentations to schools and various

groups on the lives of Boone, Thomas Jefferson and William Clark, co-leader of the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

Highlight of the reunion was the two-day airshow at the local airport. Threatening weather on the first day forced cancellation of the early performance of the Golden Knights, the U.S. Army Parachute Team. At noon, however, they did find a hole in the clouds and made their group jump on schedule.

Most branches of the military had recruiting booths at the airport. I told the Air Force recruiter that the last time I signed up, I soon got in a whole lot of trouble and didn't want to try it again.

It was a great airshow, and it is easy to see why the crowds get bigger every year.

After the Sunday airshow, AFEES members convened for the annual business meeting. There were the routine reports on finance, the annual raffle, membership, the newsletter, the PX and the greetings card program. You'll find official minutes of the meeting on Page 19 of this issue.

Yvonne Daley, daughter of Belgian Resistance worker Anne Brusselmans, was elected to complete the unexpired term of Russel Weyland on the Board of Directors. Yvonne lives in the Tampa area and is active in the Order of the Daedalians.

AFEES group treated royally in Branson, Mo.

By **THELMA and BUD LORING**

A post-reunion excursion to Branson, Mo., attracted 29 AFEES members and wives, who spent two days seeing seven shows!

After arrival in the entertainment capital of the Midwest, the group was warmly greeted by the motel manager, who thanked the men for their military service. Monday evening, we saw "Lost in the 50s," featuring music from that era.

Tuesday began at breakfast with a family group, "The Bretts of Branson." We then saw "Jennifer," an energetic woman whose show was composed of music ranging from Country to Broadway; the others acts were a baritone and a comic.

The afternoon show, "Spirit of the Dance," is loosely based on "Riverdance." If you have seen it, you know how true to Gaelic dancing it adheres. The show deviates from that by including a ballerina who portrays "Spirit of the Dance." The evening meal at the Golden Corral featured a show by Allen Edwards, a former Houston detective turned country Western singer. His show ended with a patriotic tribute.

Tuesday evening was the Shobi Tabuchi Show, a presentation featuring Shobi and his violins. He was trained as a classical violinist in Japan, but fell in love with country music. His father was quite upset when Shobi immigrated to the U.S., but lived long enough to see his son become one of the premier entertainers in Branson.

Wednesday morning ended our stay in Branson and what could be better than to see Yakow Smirnoff, the Russian comic. We spent two hours laughing, but nearly every joke had a moral to it. He ended his show with a patriotic tribute; he is so happy and so proud to be an American. Our lunch stop on the return trip to Columbia was at the Bass Pro Shop in Springfield, which features everything for hunting and fishing, including boats and RVs.

Our AFEES members received an extraordinary reception everywhere they were introduced. The audiences also were appreciative, as was shown by the many standing ovations.

The tour group included John and Betty Buckner, Howard and Nancy DeMallie, Lee and Lou Feingold, Betty Jean and Charles Fisher, Frank Heekin, Connie and Ernest Lindell, Bud and Thelma Loring, Ed Miller, Clare and Florence Musgrove, Betty and Brian O'Connell, Bette and Ralph Patton, Joel and Margaret Punches, Kenneth and Melba Shaver, Richard and Margaret Smith, Craig and Gordon Stacey, and Lillian Walker.

More Columbia reunion coverage in next issue of Communications



*Jan Tickner of Conroe, Tex., autographed copies of her new book, **Our Personal War**, at the Columbia reunion. Her late husband, Russ Tickner, a B-24 bombardier, went down June 2, 1944, over France and was one of the group sheltered in the Fretval Forest until liberation.*

Jan can be contacted at 2112 Tickner, Conroe, TX 77301, or by e-mail at: JTickner@compuserve.com



The U.S. Army Golden Knights "dropped in" on the Columbia Memorial Day parade.

Official Minutes

AIR FORCES ESCAPE & EVASION SOCIETY, Annual Membership Meeting, May 28, 2000

Meeting called to order at 2:14 p.m. by President Richard M. Smith, who declared a quorum present (67 members) to do business for AFEES.

Minutes of the previous annual meeting were distributed; motion made to accept the minutes as printed by Thomas Brown, second by Joseph Manos; motion carried.

President Smith introduced the directors: Ralph Patton, Larry Grauerholz, Francis Lashinsky, John Rucigay, Clayton David, Warren Loring, Paul Kenney and Thomas Brown. He announced that there is one vacancy on the board, as Russel Weyland, who passed away over the Easter weekend, had one year left on his term of office.

The Board of Directors had nominated Yvonne Daley-Brusselmans to serve out Russel Weyland's unexpired term. Larry Grauerholz commented that she will add class to the board. Howard Harris suggested asking Francene Weyland to fill out the term; the president said that he had talked to Francene and he thought she was not yet ready to take an active part in the society. Motion was made by Paul Kenney that Yvonne Daley-Brusselmans be elected, seconded by Francis Lashinsky; motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Nominating: President noted that he had placed a notice in the newsletter regarding serving on the board of directors. There was no response, so there will be a rollover of directors whose terms are expiring.

Finance: Paul Kenney announced that the report for the year ending Dec. 31, 1999, would be in the next issue of the newsletter, and he briefly went over the report.

Raffle: Francis Lashinsky mailed 840 letters; 487 responded (62%) and noted that many people made a donation. Average return per person was \$14.82. Net to the reunion was \$5,283.37; past experience is that there will be more returns in the mail when he returns home.

Membership: Clayton David reported that new members are still being found, but the *Folded Wings* section is growing. He explained that Life Memberships, which is a reserve, will help perpetuate the newsletter. In the past year, AFEES gained 13 new members and 6 new Friends and listed 35 *Folded Wings*. Eighth Air Force Historical Society is erecting a monument at Hill AFB, Utah, at their annual meeting, and asked for information about the number of evaders. Scotty David determined that there were 2,150.

President Smith expressed appreciation for the time spent by Clayton and Scotty on membership development.

Newsletter: Larry Grauerholz also thanked the Davids for their efforts. Next newsletter is planned for end of June. He always needs more stories. One member asked if the newsletter is sent to helpers. He was told to give Clayton the name and address. (Editor's Note: AFEES has quite a liberal policy on sending the newsletter overseas to anyone who comprehends English and makes a request.)

PX: President Smith introduced the new manager, Thomas Brown, who gave a report: 51 orders and about \$1500 gross. A member inquired about AFEES jackets he had seen; a couple from Florida had them made up for themselves.

Christmas Cards: Clayton David explained the system for preparation and mailing of the cards. Dorothy Kenney has done the artwork for many years.

OLD BUSINESS:

Ralph Patton reported on *Operation Home Run*, which was a great success last year, with 20+ people attending; 16 began the walk and 13 finished. We are not sponsoring anyone this year.

Ralph also reported on Eden Camp, 60 miles north of London, near York. It was an old POW camp and is now a museum, with one hut devoted to escape and evasion.

Clayton noted that the oldest and youngest persons to have ever made the trek over the mountains came from the Patton family last summer. He also announced that his son, Lynn, was first to have filmed the entire trip.

Intrepidus: President Smith has had no recent news regarding the project. It was reported that a possible book release might be next May.

Books: J. W. Bradbury announced that the second book by Herman Bodson has been delayed. Louis Delguidice said that a book titled *Bombers* by Philip Kaplan has been published and it includes his story. PX policy will be that authors are responsible for their books at reunions; they will not be carried in the PX inventory.

Television: Ralph Patton noted that the program *Ghost Train* on Discovery Channel had three of our members in it.

NEW BUSINESS:

2001 Reunion will be in Spokane, Wash., May 2-5 (first weekend) with an optional cruise/land tour to Alaska on the Inside Passageway, with return by air.

2002 Reunion: Florida, possibly in Tampa area.

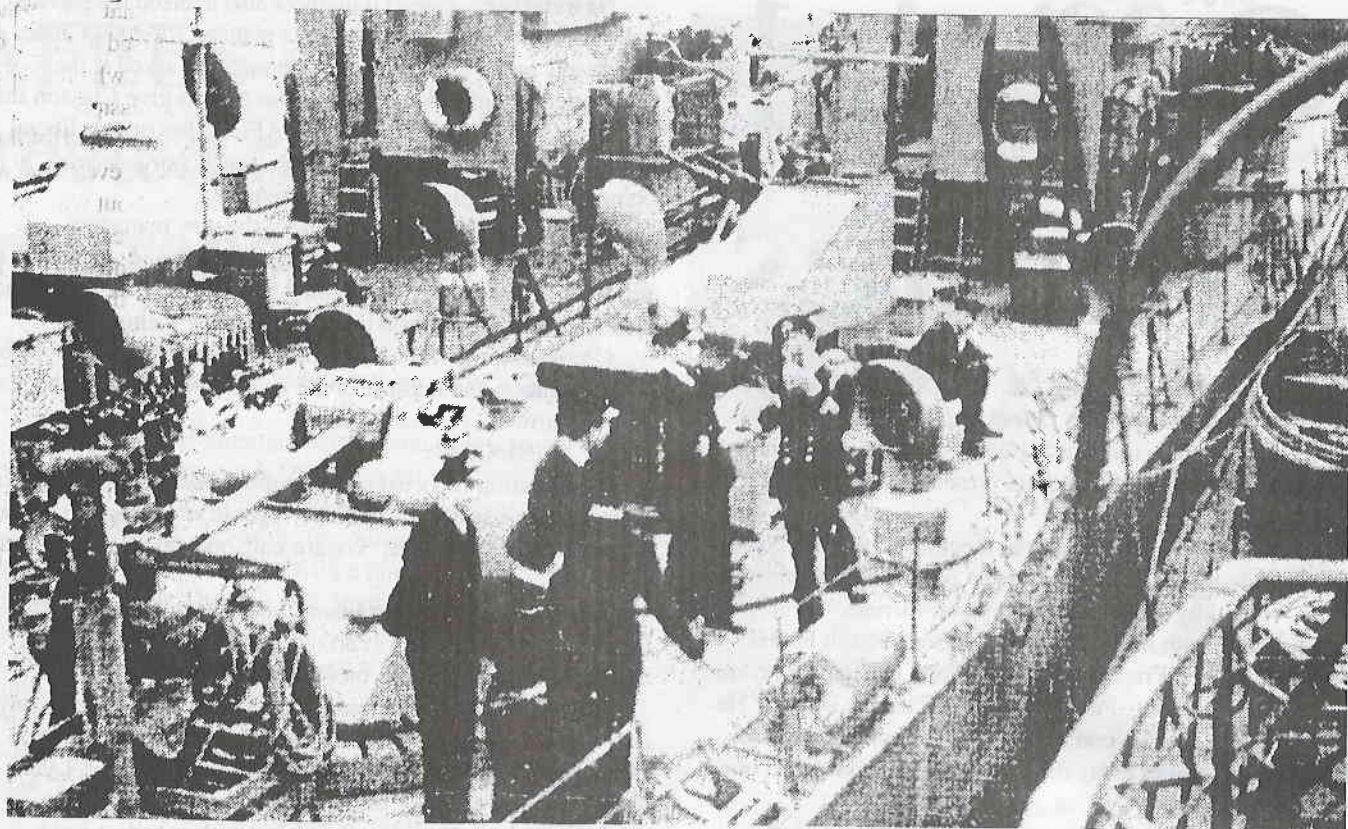
Board of Directors agreed to send \$500 to the World War II Memorial being erected in Washington, D.C. Last year, AFEES received a special donation of \$1000, of which \$500 was sent to the Monte San Martino Trust (see 1999 Minutes for details). It was felt that the memorial would be a good selection for the balance. Two letters were received in appreciation of last year's donation.

O. Vernon Roskey noted that Wal-Mart stores will match \$500 for our \$500 donation to the WWII memorial, if program is still in effect. (Editor's Note: It is).

President Smith has been honored as Parade Marshal. There will be two trolleys for 60 AFEES members. The parade route is less than a mile. A wreath-laying ceremony will take place at the courthouse square.

Tom Thomas made a motion to adjourn. It was seconded and motion carried; adjourned at 4 p.m.

WARREN E. LORING, Recording Secretary



SWORN TO SECRECY -- Kingswear was familiar with the MGBs, above, but crews were forbidden to reveal their real war-time role.

Kingswear keeps memory of gunboat teams alive

From the WESTERN MORNING NEWS, May 26, 1999

The third part of the series on the gunboat flotilla which operated out of the South Devon village of Kingswear reveals how residents had no idea of what was going on in their midst.

By COLIN BRADLEY

Residents in Kingswear are determined that the vital role played by a secret wartime unit which operated from the tiny riverside village will never be forgotten.

The four high-speed gunboats of the 15th flotilla which waged a clandestine war against the Germans in occupied France during 1943 and 1944, made over 100 "hush-hush" missions to ferry in agents gathering essential military intelligence and to bring back escaping Allied airmen who had been kept in safe

houses by the French Resistance.

Helped by the breaking of the top secret German Enigma coding machine which enabled the gunboats to be given vital enemy recognition signals in case they were spotted at sea, the 30-knot craft would lay up offshore from Brittany beaches while specially-made surfboats would silently row in to drop off their human charges and pick up waiting escapees.

The flotilla was one of five, including a Free French motor torpedo boat unit, to operate from the Dart village, but security surrounding the night-time activities of the special gunboat group was so tight that locals never knew what the Royal Navy sailors were up to.

Seven years ago former parish council chairman Dick Parkes, who had spent the war fighting in Burma, stumbled across the covert link between Kingswear and the gunboats while on holiday in Brittany

where he found a memorial paying tribute to the flotilla which had mounted a series of missions to Plouha, Beg-an-Fry and L'Aber Vrac'h.

He returned home determined to find out more and soon after, by co-incidence, an Australian veteran of the group got in touch by making a request to site a memorial alongside the River Dart.

Today a plaque stands proudly at the entrance to the ferry landing at Kingswear and a Friends of the 15th Association, comprising veterans of the unit together with villagers in Brittany and South Devon, has just been formed.

Its aim is to safeguard the memory of the extraordinary deeds of the secret unit, to organise the maintenance of the flotilla's memorials at Kingswear, Plouha and Beg-an-Fry and to place poppy wreaths on the memorials every November.

There are also plans to set up a link

between local children at Kingswear Primary School and a primary school in Plouha through an exchange of letters.

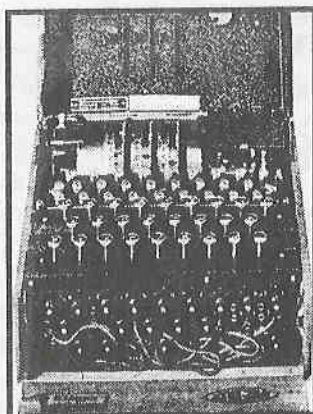
"It's important that our young people are made aware of what happened in Kingswear during the war, said Mr Parkes, who is the association's secretary. "We want to perpetuate the memory of what happened on both sides of the English Channel at the time and we are very lucky that the 13th Torbay Sea Scouts, which are based at Galmpton and Kingswear, have offered to maintain our memorial here."

Earlier this month -- exactly 54 years after the Allies celebrated VE Day -- the secret links were remembered at a special reunion when over 20 flotilla veterans met up with former French Resistance members who had travelled across from Brittany.

A parade took place through the village to the parish church where the local vicar, the Rev Robert Horner, gave a blessing both in French and in English, before the Brixham Royal British Legion Band played *La Marseillaise* and the National Anthem.

Over 100 officers and men served on the 15th Flotilla at Kingswear and over half of them went to Buckingham Palace later to receive medals. The group was the most highly decorated unit in the Navy during the war.

The agents they brought back carried vital information about German defences in the run-up to the D-Day Normandy



GERMAN CODE MACHINE ENIGMA

landings and plans of bunkers near Calais which contained the German V2 rocket sites.

But their night-time activities passed unknown to local villagers, one of whom is Reg Little, who was a teenage Civil Defence first-aider in Kingswear at the time.

"We knew about the Free French flotilla, but nothing about the 15th flotilla and what it got up to because we thought it was all part and parcel of the same thing," he said. "The 15th operated from the old paddle steamer Westward Ho which was their depot ship.

"We used to hear the boats going in and out at night when they started up their engines, but we thought they were just doing normal patrols.

"My father-in-law Ted Willing used to keep the bar at the Royal Dart Hotel and I

only found out recently that one of the chaps from the flotilla used to be given a cider bottle with gin in it which he sipped before going out on a mission.

"But everything about the flotilla was kept very hush-hush, even long after the war. We only found out what they had got up to about five years ago."

The crews used to spend most of their time in their gunboats as they were moored alongside the paddle-steamer, but they did go into local pubs to let their hair down -- with strict orders not to discuss their secret activities.

Teignmouth's Frank Jones, a petty office motor mechanic who carried out seven missions on MGB 502, said: "We slept on the boat with four of us sleeping to a cabin. The boats had crews of just over 30 men. The agents just looked like ordinary people and they would stay at local hotels and come on board about an hour before we set off. We were never allowed to talk to them."

The Royal Dart Hotel, built in Brunel on the Kingswear quayside when the railway arrived in 1864, had been used as the local headquarters for coastal forces during the war when it operated as HMS Cicala. Its upstairs rooms were out-of-bounds to outsiders, but the bar remained open to the public use.

Today only a photograph of one of the 15th Flotilla gunboats -- presented by veterans last year -- hangs in the bar to commemorate its link with the secret missions.



Members of the secret flotilla, above, leave Buckingham Palace after receiving their medals.

'Rescued by the bravest people I've ever known'

2d Lt. E. Robert Kelley (91BG) was shot down near Baslieux, France, on Sept. 5, 1944. He was a B-17 pilot.

By ROBERT KELLEY
Shasta Lake City, Calif.

I owe my life, or at least nine months of it that would otherwise have been spent as a POW in Nazi Germany, to some French farmers who loved liberty so much that they risked death to hide me and six members of my crew.

Shortly before the target (Ludwigshafen) No. 3 and 4 were hit and the squadron commander told us to abort. Then we were attacked by several Me-109s.

After a couple more hits on the wing near No. 3 we were down to 6,000 feet and there was still no sign of any opening in the ground cover. I rang the bell and told the co-pilot, navigator and engineer

to go. I put on a chute just as a big hit on the left wing shook the whole plane. I left "My Baby" by the same door as the others.

I entered a set of clouds and didn't see anything until I came out of the mist and rain about 300 feet off the ground.

I could see a farmer with a horse pulling a farm machine in a field and was headed for an area of dense woods. The woods were coming up fast so I closed my eyes and doubled up my arms and legs.

When I opened my eyes I was sitting in a hazelnut bush. My chute had hooked on a beech tree and swung me gently to the ground. I had no idea where I was.

I took off running as I could hear voices. I finally got close enough to see an elderly man and woman. I ran to them and said in French, "I'm the pilot." They quickly took me out of the woods to a meadow, across a foot bridge into another woods and up a path where I was met by Jeanne Jacob, wife of the chief of the Underground.



Lt. E.R. "Bob" Kelley, 1944

She stooped, crawled under a bush, and opened a trapdoor which led to an underground room. There I found my co-pilot and my navigator, plus two Russian soldiers who had escaped a year earlier from the mine at Bazailles where they had been forced to work as slave laborers. The French Underground had been hiding and feeding them for a year.

The Germans were bringing up troops to meet General Patton, who had taken Paris just nine days before and Roland Jacob warned us that the roads were swarming with Wehrmacht, so it was best for us to await the Americans who would eventually arrive.

On Sept. 9 all six of us stood in the meadow and watched the First Division of the 8th Air Force fly over on their way to Ludwigshafen again. Paul, one of the Russian soldiers, told me that all those aircraft were made in Russia and sent lend-lease to America, and I didn't know about it because the American government lied to us.

At first I assumed the underground room we were hiding in was small. On the third night, Paul made a hole in the straw wall and led me into a larger room.

I've been back five times since then



AFEES member Bob Kelley (center) with Henri and Pierre Francois, his Helper, at Mesa, Ariz., 1999

and as far as I can determine, the cave was built in 1936 in conjunction with the Maginot Line. It was used as a safe hiding place. Roland Jacob told me he hid there for 11 months while Jeanne told the police he had run out on her and the two boys. At great risk, she kept him fed.

Finally, Roland and Jeanne brought us our uniforms, watches and rings and told us the Americans were finally in Bastieux. We then caught a ride with a graves registration unit and taken to a staging area. We were given new field jackets and caught a ride through Verdun

to Paris, which was still celebrating the liberation of 12 days before. Thousands of French and American soldiers and the Parisians were socializing day and night.

Even though Paris was blacked out with no heat in most buildings and the Germans had stolen all the furniture in my hotel, I hated to leave such a beautiful city. In two days, we were taken to Orly and flown in a C-47 to London for interrogation.

Of my crew, two became POWs, two were KIA and seven (including a borrowed co-pilot) were saved due to the bravery of the French Patriots.



Roland Jacob, Chief of French Underground Bastieux, with his wife Jeanne and their two sons, September 1944

Raffle Winners 2000

*(Names of winners drawn at
Columbia reunion May 28)*

First Prize (\$500)
David Hessler,
Thousand Oaks, Calif.

Second (\$250)
George Van Remmerden,
Seal Beach, Calif.

Third (\$100)
William Cupp,
Northfield, Minn.

Fourth (\$75)
Benjamin St. John,
Palm Harbor, Fla.

Fifth (\$50)
Tom Carroll,
Tallahassee, Fla.

**Book, "The National Air & Space
Museum," donated by Anthony
Kosinski, Chicago, Ill., was won
by Stanley Stepnitz, Upper
Marlboro, Md.**

Canadian evaders to meet in September

The 2000 AGM of the RAFES (Canadian Branch) is scheduled for the Ramada Inn on the Bay, Belleville, Ontario, Tuesday and Wednesday, Sept. 19-20. Just as our Canadian friends are invited to AFEES reunions, our members are welcome at their annual meeting.

The meeting venue is located on the Bay of Quinte, with easy access from Highway 401. It is about a two-hour drive from the Toronto airport and about 45 minutes west of Kingston, Ont.

The convention rate is \$86 per night for a Parkside room and \$91 for a Bayside room.

For information and registration forms, contact W.J. Kelly, 1402 -- 177
Linus Road, Willowdale, Ontario, Canada
M2J 4S5.

Hard times gone, but not forgotten

From *The Dolphin*, Naval Submarine Base, New London, Conn., Thursday, Sept. 24, 1998

By JO3 PHILLIP HALL

Friday marked a day of recognition for Prisoners of War and those missing in action. SUBASE held a wreath-laying ceremony at the POW/MIA tree at Fort Griswold. This, and other observances, holds a meaning for anyone who has a friend or relative who was, or is, a POW or MIA.

But perhaps the ones who feel the impact most are the people who have experienced firsthand what it means to be missing in action and a prisoner of war.

One such individual, Frank Lashinsky, now resides in Old Lyme. Lashinsky spent time in the Army Air Corps during World War II. In that brief period, he was missing in action. During one of these occurrences, he was captured and held prisoner by the German army, leaving him with memories that will not fade.

Lashinsky grew up in a Pennsylvania reeling from the Great Depression. Despite his upbringing, he knew where his destiny lay -- he knew he wanted to fly. His opportunity came when he enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps in 1943.

At this point in the war, the corps was fighting its battles in German skies. Because of the push in the war effort, basic training was a hurried cram course. At completion, Lashinsky was an air crew tail gunner, and his first combat mission came in 1944.

The German force was on its last legs, having been driven from most of the territory it had conquered in years prior.

In the first couple months of his combat duty, Lashinsky's B-24J Liberator was shot down on a bombing mission, leaving the crew forced to bail out. Those who bail out of an aircraft and use a parachute may enter the Caterpillar Club (parachutes were made of silk at this time, and certain caterpillars are known to produce the material).

Luckily, he landed in the friendly Yugoslavian territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina. He was pronounced missing in action for weeks, but eventually was able to return to his base. Little did Lashinsky know, he would soon become a member of the Caterpillar Club a second time, less than a year after his first bailout.

Unfortunately, his second jump wouldn't land him in such a friendly place.

On March 12, 1945, Staff Sgt. Frank Lashinsky and the rest of the crew of the new B-24L bomber were among 42 planes tasked with destroying the Florisdorf oil refinery in Vienna, Austria. This was Lashinsky's 25th mission.

Lashinsky said because of his crew's experience, they were selected to lead the mission. To aid in this responsibility, his Liberator was outfitted with a new radar to help with navigation and bombing accuracy, in the event of obscured visibility.

He also recounts the preparation the crew received, "(The briefing prior to the mission) instructed us to land at the airfield at Pecs, Hungary -- which had been captured by the Soviets -- if we could not return to base." And with that, the

bombers were off.

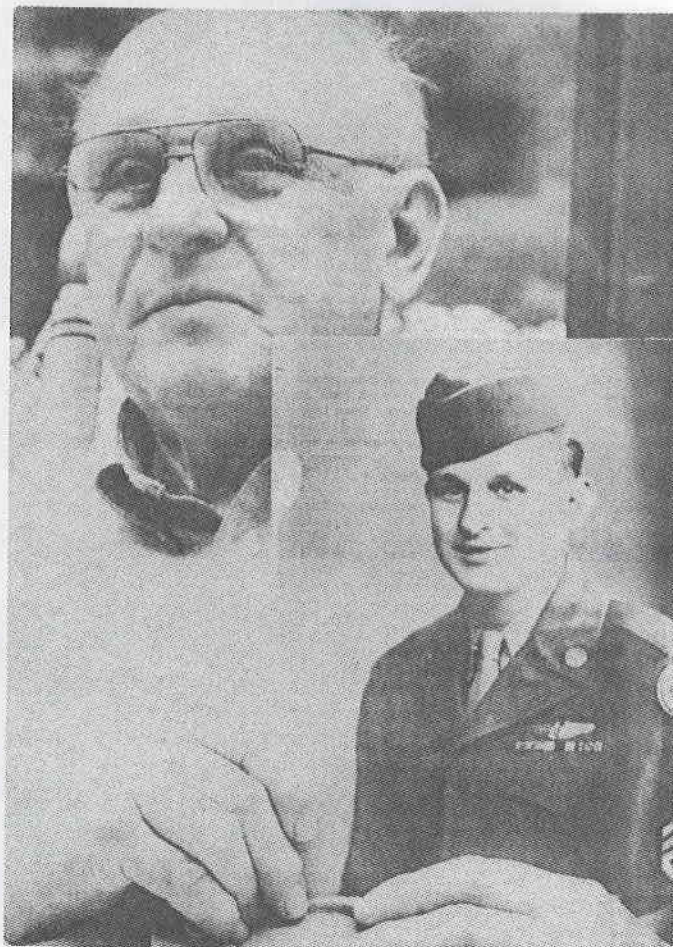
As usual, flak began to appear. This didn't seem too threatening because few shells burst at their altitude. The planes dropped their bombs on the target and began to exit the flak.

According to Lashinsky, as the plane turned around, the crew noticed No. 4 engine was damaged. It was shut down to prevent further damage and the pilot, Capt. Richard von Schriltz, turned command of the formation over to another crew. He then dropped from the formation.

The plane was losing altitude and, per the briefing, von Schriltz decided to head for the airfield in Pecs. To maintain altitude, he ordered the jettison of equipment. The bomber stopped losing altitude. However, the radar dome was damaged. Lashinsky stated, "Without radar, or visual references (because of the cloud coverage), our course was set by compass. Our ground speed and true heading were unknown."

When von Schriltz believed the plane was near the air strip, they began to descend. Visual contact with the ground was established when the plane reached 4,000 feet, but the strip was nowhere to be found.

Lashinsky stated, "We only learned later, around the



Frank Lashinsky holds a photograph of himself while on active duty in WW II.

late 1980s or early 1990s, that we had stumbled upon a battle between German forces and Soviet-Bulgarian forces. We must have added to the confusion that normally surrounds any battle. Our approach from cloud cover from behind German lines probably led the Soviets to believe we were hostile. The Germans, likewise, identifying the plane as a Liberator, must have also classified us hostile."

Anti-aircraft fire began to smother the plane, and three fighter planes were racing toward them. After assessing the situation and the damage to the plane, the order was given to bail out.

Lashinsky and the ball turret gunner left the plane. Lashinsky pulled his ripcord and the chute opened. No sooner did it open than he heard bullets flying past. His only chance was to spill air from his parachute to make him fall faster. The quick drop gave him a hard landing, giving him a swollen ankle.

Lashinsky described what he saw, "I was in a field of barbed wire. Twenty yards away, there was a trench. A bare head appeared above the parapet. He crooked his finger and beckoned for me to come his way. The head disappeared." Since there was no hostility, Lashinsky didn't think the person was an enemy.

Thinking the man to be friendly, he ran to the trench. "The next sight was the outstretched hand of the individual who welcomed me seconds earlier. It was not a handshake. He held it palm up and said, 'Pistol.' I raised my eyes and saw the Nazi eagle and swastika above the left tunic pocket."



AFEES director Frank Lashinsky, left, visits with Leonard Pogue in photo taken at 1999 reunion in Mesa, Ariz.

He noticed about 10 other German soldiers in the trench, so he slowly handed over his weapon.

Lashinsky soon was escorted to a small town. He was led to an officer in one of the larger buildings, and a strip search was ordered. With every question, Lashinsky responded with name, rank and serial number. Each response further infuriated the German officer. When the officer reached the end of his patience, he asked Lashinsky what his response would be when he found out he was to be executed. Lashinsky once again gave his name, rank and serial number. They returned his clothes and told him to get dressed.

Then he was led to a building across the street where he was reunited with five of his crew members. In this room, the six were imprisoned for four days, sustained only by four rye crackers per day.

The group was transported to the prison Dulag 161, and then moved into a railroad boxcar, where they would remain for the next six weeks. The train moved slowly because of Allied air attacks.

The prisoners finally were transported to Stalag VII-A in Moosberg, Germany. Shortly after they arrived, Gen. George Patton organized a tank force to liberate them, freeing some 27,000 Allied prisoners.

Lashinsky arrived home on Memorial Day 1945 after being a prisoner from March 12 to April 29, 1945.

Frank is a director of the Air Forces Escape and Evasion Society. As a member of the 455BG, 15th AF, he was shot down the first time Oct. 14, 1944, and was evacuated by a rescue plane on Nov. 10.

**From FAME'S FAVORED FEW, a WWII Flier
Evades Capture in German-occupied France
CONTINUED FROM LAST ISSUE
(The author and his fellow evader had taken
their first train ride, from Peronne to Ham)**

Chapter Five **OUR STAY IN LAGNEY**

**By KENNETH E. NEFF
Atwater, Calif.**

Our French helper escorted us to Lagnay, a town about five miles from where we got off the train and about 60 miles north of Paris. There was a larger town down the road about five miles named Lassigny, but we didn't get to visit there for about three more months.

The first place Earl and I were taken when we got to Lagnay was to a bar. Mr. Martin, the barkeeper, was also the owner and one of the leaders in the local Underground. We were turned over to him, and now we didn't have to follow the magazine any more.

Things were going to change a lot very soon. We arrived in Lagnay on 4 June 1944, two days before the deficit hit the oscillator down on the Normandy beaches. Now we could find out what our hosts' names were. With the invasion by the Allies, the Underground relaxed its

policy on evaders knowing helper's names.

Our stay in Lagney was very nice. Earl and I were taken in by Monsieur and Madame Maurice DeFrance, a charming couple. They had a daughter, Mauricette, who lived at home and who looked after us most of the time. She was about 19. Her brother Georges was in a work camp in Germany. Her cousin Paul lived in Paris and often visited.

Earl and I had the run of the place, inside the house, out in the yard, and in the barn. It was not long before we had the run of the town. Our best pal, next to Mauricette, was the family dog, Mascot. We would often play with him in the yard. None of us ever had to worry about a German sneaking up on us. If one were to walk down the street outside the fence, Mascot would go nuts.

Lagney was a small farming town, almost two blocks long and about the same in width. There were not many houses off the main street, at most I'd say two. One was the DeFrances's and one at the other end of town. Monsieur and Madame would leave the house just after sunup and go

work in the fields. They did all the work by hand.

I think Mauricette was glad Earl and I were there because she didn't have to go work in the fields. She had to stay home, so if somebody came, she was there to take care of whatever came up. By this time, my French was good enough that I could hold a conversation as long as the French didn't speak too fast.

One evening, Mr. DeFrance said his son had a small radio. He left the room and returned with a small crystal set with antenna. The next day, I went out to the fence behind the house and put up the antenna. The radio was put in Earl's and my bedroom. The DeFrances slept in one bedroom, Mauricette slept in another, and Earl and I had the third. The house was two stories, but the pigs took over the top floor.

Each evening around six o'clock, I would go into our bedroom and try to pick up the news on the BBC. If I could get it, I'd listen and then go into the kitchen-living room and tell the others the news. The first time I went into the kitchen with my news report, Mr. DeFrance came over to the table with a bottle of what looked like water. Mr. DeFrance picked up the bottle and poured enough of this clear liquid into the glass to just cover the sugar cubes. Earl and I watched to see what he was going to do. He picked one of the sugar cubes out of the glass, placed it in his mouth and let it dissolve. Earl and I followed suit.

When that sugar cube got into my mouth, I thought someone had poured liquid fire into it. When I could get my breath, I asked him what that liquid was. He said nonchalantly, "Calvados." We learned later that Calvados is 150-proof cider and a common drink in that part of France.

Head of the Underground in the area was an engineer. He would come down to the house occasionally to visit. The German reward for his capture was about ten times what it was for ours.

He stopped one day and said he had a visitor up at the bar. Mr. Martin's place was about a block from the DeFrance house. Earl and I walked up and found Mr. Martin digging up a bottle of good wine for the three of us. When the engineer's visitor showed up, we found he was an American fighter pilot who had been shot down. We sat, drank wine, and shared stories and eventually killed off the bottle. We told Mr. Martin that when the engineer came back, to tell him the three of us had gone down to the DeFrance place and would wait for him there.

After arriving back at the DeFrance house, Mauricette said she wanted to take a picture of the three of us and she did. (Picture shown in Summer 1999 Communications, page 26). I don't remember the fighter pilot's name or outfit, but I do remember he flew a P-47. The engineer showed up later, and we had to say goodbye to the pilot.

Usually on Sundays, we'd go for a walk. Earl and I were Paul's "friends from Paris" to everyone not in the Underground.

Being farmers, the DeFrances did not hurt for food. They had chickens running around the yard. We had chickens to eat as well as eggs about anytime. The family also had a cow so we got all the milk we wanted. There was a garden and we could go out and pick most anything we



Mauricette, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Maurice DeFrance, shown at her parent's home in this April 2000 photo. The family sheltered Ken Neff and Earl Broderick in 1944.

(Photo by Jan VanLaere)

wanted. It was a lot better deal than many evaders ever had.

One day the head of the Underground came to the door and said he had two visitors he wanted Earl and I to meet. We went with him up the street to the house next to the one he lived in. We went in and there was another Franchman and two fellows sitting there. The two men said they were Americans and we got to shooting the breeze with them. It did not take long to realize they were not Americans. One of them didn't speak at all. He had been wounded in the throat. The one doing the talking said he wanted to talk to me out in the backyard. We went out and the first thing he said was, "You know we are not Americans, don't you?" I replied, "Yes. I've been trying to figure out what nationality you are from your accent." His comment was, "We're Germans." I had about arrived at that conclusion.

He said to me, "We were political prisoners under arrest and when your fighters shot up the train we were being transported on, we escaped. For the past three days, we could not get any help. We decided the next people we met, we would tell them we were Americans. I realize that you have to tell the French that we are Germans, but would you make sure they understand that we are political prisoners and are strictly against the Nazi regime and everything it stands for?"

After that conversation, we re-entered the house and I told the head of the Underground who they were. He said, "I thought so." I asked him what would happen to them. "We'll take care of them," was his answer. He never explained how and I don't know what happened to them.

We were told by the French that two of our crew members were living on a farm near the town of Montdidier which was reasonably near. They were living about the same kind of life Earl and I were. Finally we learned the

two were Dale Howard, the radio operator, and Albert Monti, a waist gunner. We heard nothing about Guy Wallace, the copilot, or Oscar Rogers, the bombardier. Earl and I hadn't seen or heard of either of since we got off the train just before we were brought to Lagney.

As I say, we stayed in Lagney longer than any other place up until then. But all good things come to an end.

One day the head of the Underground showed up and told us we were going to move. He said there would be a truck there the next day to move Earl and me south. The Underground had received word to form evaders into groups of 20 to 25 and start moving them. This was so that when the Allied invading forces arrived, they would not have to go all over the place looking for us. After this news, it was a long evening, knowing this was to be the last one with our new and loved French family.

Nobody was happy the next morning. The DeFrances did not go to work in the field but stayed home with Mauricette to tell us goodbye. Even Mascot seemed sad when the truck pulled up. The vehicle looked like a small pickup. On top was a large cloth bag. The driver had a fire burning in the truck and the bag gathered the smoke and fed it into the engine to make the pickup move. This system was a wartime expedient used throughout France because there was little if any gas available. The pickup was closed in the back so it was opened for us to get in. And guess who was inside? Our crewmates, Guy, our copilot, and Oscar, the bombardier. They had been picked up first.

Earl and I then said our goodbyes to the DeFrance family. Another chapter of our evasion story had come to a close and we were one step closer to home.

**In the next Communications:
AT THE CHATEAU**



The railway station in Ham, as it appears today



Russel Weyland, left, holds up a key ring that he returned to his 1944 Helper, Maurice Costa, when they met in Toulouse on an AFEES tour several years ago.

Russ Weyland, AFEES officer

Russel S. Weyland, vice president of the Air Forces Escape & Evasion Society, died April 20, 2000, at his home in McHenry, Ill. He was 77.

Formerly of Chicago, he had spent every summer since 1923 at Griswold Lake and moved there permanently in 1949.

He was a veteran of World War II, serving in Italy as a first lieutenant with the 15th Air Force of the U.S. Army Air Corps.

His B-24 bomber was shot down over Toulon, France, on June 6, 1944. In France, he participated with the Underground in activities in the Pyrenees. In the town of Hyes, he masqueraded as a deaf mute of Italian descent. He was repatriated in southern France on Aug. 6, 1944, by a Free French Battalion. His French helper, Maurice Costa of Six Tours, France was still in contact with him.

In 1946, Russ and his brother Harold started Nu Metal Products Inc. in Chicago and later moved the company to Crystal Lake.

He was a member of the 15th Air Force Society, the 376th Heavy Bomb Veterans Group, the International B-24 Liberator Club, the Chanute Aerospace Museum Foundation and the Bombardier Alumni Association.

He also was a life member of McHenry VFW Post 4600, a 49-year member of American Legion Post 691, McHenry Country Club and Church of

Holy Apostles.

Survivors include his wife, Francene, two sons, two daughters and eight grandchildren.

James C. Cater

James C. Cater, 77, of Sun City, Ariz., died March 18, 2000, in Hospice of the Valley.

He was born in Chicago and was vice president of Command Airways in New York.

He was an Army Air Corps veteran of World War II and of the Korean War.

He was a B-17 pilot with the 91st Bomb Group when he was shot down over Avord, France, on April 27, 1944. He was picked up by the Underground and later joined the Maquis in Central France and the Haute Savoie region.

He was captured in Lyon in June, but escaped the next day and was flown out by a Special Missions C-47 in July 1944.

He moved to Arizona from New York in 1991. He was a Realtor with Prudential Preferred Properties.

He is survived by his wife Frances, a son, two daughters, eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

FOLDED WINGS

MEMBERS

- 15AF Ross C. Anderson, Edmond, Okla., Sp.GP,
Dec. 20, 1999
#827 James C. Cater, Sun City, Ariz., 91 BG, Mar. 18, 2000
#121 Edward F. Chonskie, Shenandoah, Pa., 303 BG,
Jan. 20, 1999
#437 Cloe R. Crutchfield, Manhattan Beach, Calif., 92 BG,
March 6, 2000
#2275 Robert J. Hannan, Healdsburg, Calif., 303 BG,
May 20, 2000
8AF Charles C. Harpin, Wolcott, Conn., 445 BG,
March 13, 2000
15AF Joseph E. Ripley, Perry, Okla., 376 BG
15AF Russel S. Weyland, McHenry, Ill., 376 BG,
April 20, 2000

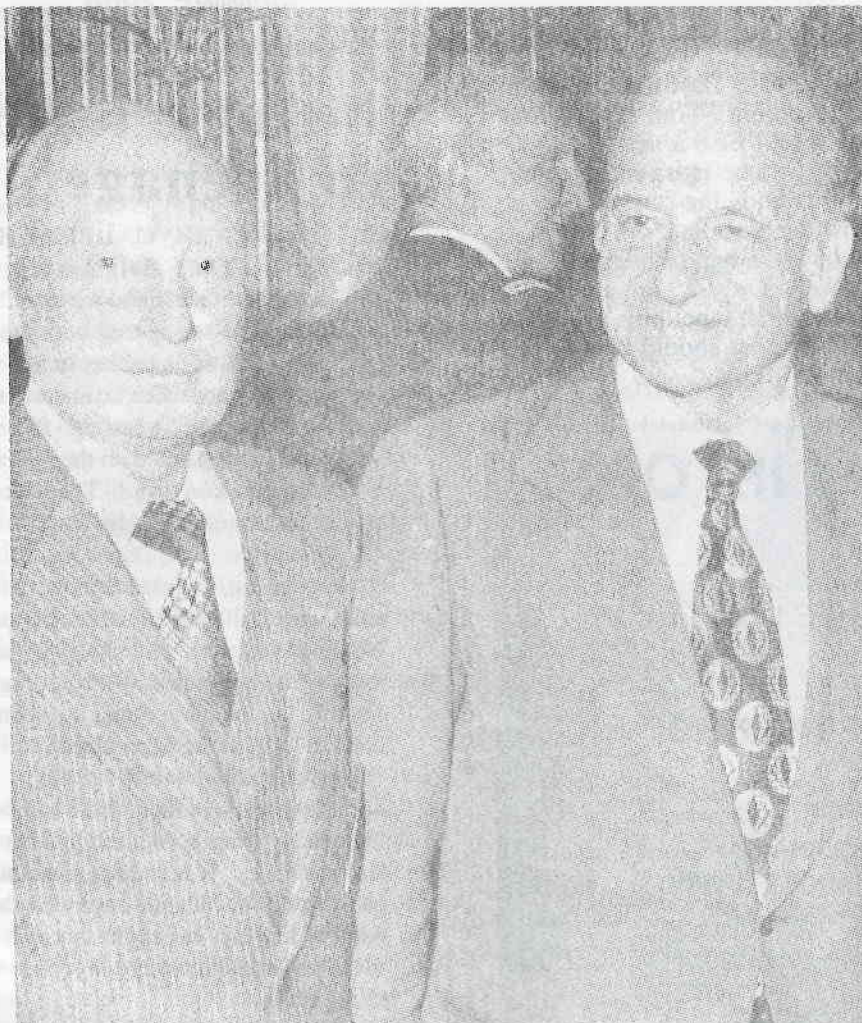
HELPERS

- M. Marcel DESIR, Etterbeek, Belgium, April 16, 2000
M. Roger HOUARDY, Nogent L'Artraud, France

Hitler ordered prisoners' death, British records show

The executions of 50 Allied airmen who fled a German prison camp -- immortalized in the film *The Great Escape* -- were personally ordered by Adolph Hitler, according to British intelligence records released recently.

About 80 Allied aircrew tunneled their way out of Stalag Luft III, a camp near Sagan in southeastern Germany, on March 24, 1944. Three managed to reach Britain, but the rest were recaptured. Fifty were chosen at random for execution as a warning to other prisoners.



Marcel Pasco (left) was welcomed to Washington, D.C., on Oct. 14, 1976, by French Ambassador Kosciusko-Morizet

Marcel Pasco aided group of 94BG airmen

Marcel Pasco, a primary French Helper of several U.S. airmen, passed away on March 5, 2000, after a lengthy illness. Marcel and his future wife Josephine (Jo) Veley were instrumental in sheltering five airmen from the 94th Bomb Group for more than five weeks in January-February 1944. Their B-17s had been shot down on January 5, 1944, after bombing the Merignac airfield at Bordeaux.

Eventually, Marcel and Jo's charges were fed into the Shelburne line and evacuated from Brittany by way of the British 15th Motor Gunboat Flotilla's 503. Helped by Marcel and Jo were Glen Johnson, pilot; Ralph Patton, co-pilot; Jack McGough, bombardier; Isadore Viola, waist gunner of the 331st Squadron of the 94BG, and Norman King, navigator from the 410th Squadron of the 94th.

After D-Day, Marcel joined the Maquis and fought to liberate Lorient. He was captured and sentenced to death, but General Patton's Third Army arrived in the nick of time while liberating most of the Brittany peninsula.

Marcel and Josephine lived their entire lives in the small village of Plouray in western France. They very much enjoyed their visit to the U.S.A. in 1976 as guests of AFEES. One son and one daughter survive.

The Pascos are typical of the courageous men and women of the occupied countries who risked their lives to come to the aid of fallen airmen. AFEES members were fortunate to have met such gutsy people during the war, but knowing them after the war was a special privilege that all too few of us have realized.

--- Contributed by Ralph Patton

NEW MEMBERS

ROBERT G. DONAHUE
461 Church Street
Wethersfield, CT 06109
Ph.: 860-529-6679
8AF, 493rd BG

DALE D. DORNING
124 Elma-McCleary Rd., Sp 11
Elma, WA 98541
Ph.: 360-482-6069
E&E # 1867
8AF, 379th BG
Wife: Patricia

DOUGLAS W. HOOTH
6708 East Mt. Hope Hwy.
Grand Ledge, MI 48837
Ph.: 517-627-7438
E&E # 1813
8AF, 493rd BG

L. WESLEY WAGER
5007 Ivanhoe Pl. NE
Seattle, WA 98105
Ph.: 206-522-1237
15AF, 461st BG
Wife: Mary Lou

NEW FRIEND

RANDY RIOTTO
153 Preston Drive
Gillette, NJ 07933-1615
Ph.: 908-647-1618
(WWII Historian)
Wife: Toni

These airmen were well fed!

In looking through some pictures which belonged to her deceased mother, Jacqueline Guy Kervizic came across a photo of an airman she believes was one of the 13 aviators the family hid in their apartment in Paris. His surname may have been Nichols.

The apartment was close to the Jardin des Plantes, a botanical garden where Jacqueline often took airmen to be picked up and sent south to Spain.

Jacqueline says the airmen were well fed, as her mother was an excellent cook and her father bought food and cigarets on the black market.

Jacqueline would like to hear from any of the airmen who stayed with her family in Paris. She can be reached at 449 Florian Drive, Kerrville, TX 78028; phone 830-895-2993.

The AFEES PX is here to serve you!

Toni and Tom Brown, managers of the AFEES Post Exchange, did a brisk business at the convention in Columbia. Tom reports that reunion sales amounted to \$829, giving AFEES a net profit of about \$360. The PX provides our society some extra income, but more importantly, allows members and friends the opportunity to purchase unique AFEES memorabilia.

New in the inventory is a 10-piece tool kit, a handy item for the automobile glove box or a kitchen drawer. Only 25 are available! Best sellers at the reunion were caps, tee shirts, lapel pins and bolo ties. If members have ideas on other items that should be stocked by the PX, Tom and Toni would like to know.

THE AFEES PX IS OPEN!

NEW ITEMS

10-piece TOOL KIT, with AFEES logo \$ 8.00
TEE SHIRTS (M-L-EXL-XXL). 12.00

WINGED BOOT EMBLEMS

Lapel Pin, 3/4 in. Pewter 6.00
Tie Tack, 3/4 in. Pewter, with Chain. 6.00
Lapel Pin, 1 in. blue shield with boot 7.50
Tie Tack, 1 in. blue shield with boot & chain 6.00
Cloth with metallic thread (dry clean only) 5.00
Cotton Sport Shirt Patch (can be laundered). 2.50

BLAZER PATCH

Royal Blue Only \$10.00

AFEES MERCHANDISE

Car License Plate Holder. \$12.00
Clock, Helping Hand logo (with battery) 15.00
Decals, exterior or interior 6 for 2.00
Southwestern Style Bolo Tie (postage paid). 5.00
Note Pad with Pen (Things to Do) 4.00
Lapel Pin (American Flag & AFEES). 2.00

OFFICIAL AFEES CAPS

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

Add \$2.00 per order for shipping & handling

Make checks payable to AFEES; mail to:

THOMAS H. BROWN JR., PX Manager

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Greenville, SC 29615-1506

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e-mail: tbrown104@cs.com

Frank gives history lesson to teenagers

By **FRANK CAUBERGH**
Vise, Belgium

Recently with a friend we were making a sight-seeing tour with the goal of visiting a Hitler's bunker in the Belgian Ardennes when I came to a road I once took almost 55 years ago in a van with a red cross painted on the roof and with 14 evaders on board. There were five or six Americans, plus English and Canadians.

Once again, I landed at a convent in a small quiet village on the French border. Nothing seemed to have changed; the same white building now a boarding school. On the playground the swings seemed to be at the same place.

I asked permission to see the dormitory and told them that I had been there many years before and in what circumstances. It was quite something to be there again. When we were on the point of leaving, one of the teachers came to me and asked if I could say a few words to his class.

I asked him what I could say more than what they could have learned from their own parents and grandparents. "Correct," he said, "but coming from a stranger, it will be more impressive and appreciated."

Soon I found myself in front of a number of boys of 16-17 years who were staring at me and wondering what that stranger was going to tell them. I started by saying, "I shall not speak much about the war; historians, books and films can do better than I can. Anyway, war is a nasty thing that is generally the beginning of the end for many and the beginning of a life of misery and pain for the others.

"I also think that guys of 20 -- my age at the time -- were in the same

DYERSBURG REUNION SET

Dyersburg (Tenn.) Army Air Base Reunion 2000 is scheduled for Friday-Sunday, Aug. 25-27, with headquarters at the Holiday Inn in Dyersburg.

Two B-17s are expected to be present.

You can get more information from: DAAB Reunion, 719 West Main, Halls, TN 38040; phone 901-836-7448.

situation in all the occupied countries. If you did not accept going to work in German industry, you were condemned to lead a life of running and hiding and danger.

"What I would like to tell you is a story in which this place became involved. In the years 1943-45 thousands and thousands of planes crossed the skies of France, Belgium and Holland with one purpose: liberate the occupied countries and destroy Nazi Germany. But if thousands of planes crossed our skies and night, many of them were blown out of the sky by the German aviation and flak."

One of the boys asked, "What is flak?" I answered, "It's German; the term means: Flieger Abwehr Kanonen (Flyer Defense Cannons). The planes came down in flames, the boys bailed out when they could; many of them were killed, badly injured, and taken to prisoner of war camps in Germany.

"Some were aided by local people and often taken prisoner afterward with their helpers. But some fortunate ones escaped and even evaded.

"Now, when you go to bed at night, think that 14 Allied aviators slept a week between those same walls. And before falling asleep, think that those young boys hardly a few years older than you, were courageous, had faith and practiced positive thinking.

"They had an ideal and stuck to it. Positive thinking, that's what you should do all the time; it will help you in your studies and in your future life.

"To close, let me tell you that all

those 14 men got safely home; the Americans through Switzerland and the others by hiding in a safe place in Belgium until they were liberated by American troops in September 1944.

Here I finished my lesson and they all said, "Thanks!"

Of those 14, many have passed on. The last I know of is Charlie Westerlund; he was my mate when we marched through the woods, two by two. Others are ill or handicapped. But every year I am happy to see some of them at the

AFEES meeting, such as Jim Goebel, Phil Solomon and Bob Tucker.

I consider myself one of the privileged few who once in an occupied country had the honor of shaking hands with these brave men.

As he has done for many years, Frank Caubergh represented AFEES May 27 by placing a wreath at the American Cemetery of the Ardennes on Memorial Day. He regrets that he was unable to attend the Columbia reunion.



Yvonne Daley-Brusselmans of Dunedin, Fla., seems to be teaching French to her new grandchild, Alexander Mitchell Daley, born March 24, 1999. The parents are Colin Andrew Daley and his wife Ginny of Knoxville, Tenn. The other proud grandparents are Mary Alice and David Nard of Asheville, N.C.

A gentle reminder: dues may be due!

Please complete and clip or copy this form to send dues or to report changes

(Dues are \$20 per year. Life Membership is \$100. Make check payable to AFEES)

Send checks and changes to Clayton David, 19 Oak Ridge Pond, Hannibal, MO 63401-6539.

Phone: 573-221-0441; e-mail: davidafe@dstream.net

Name	_____	Amount Paid	_____
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City and State	_____	ZIP	_____
Phone : (_____) _____	Comments _____		

The editor has the last word

By **LARRY GRAUERHOLZ**

afees44@hotmail.com

WICHITA FALLS, Tex. -- I drove away from Columbia feeling that AFEES reunions just keep on getting better and better.

Many WWII veterans groups are slowing down because of attrition and the difficulty of travel. My hope is that AFEES will continue annual meetings indefinitely.

My thanks to all who contributed Columbia photos to this issue (and to the next one), but especially folks like the ever-faithful Scotty David, Richard Shandor, Gil Shawn (who was there when I needed him), Ralph Patton, Charlie Patek, Yvonne Daley and Joe Manos.

At the Memorial Day parade in downtown Columbia, most of our group rode in a couple of trolleys. A few, including Ralph and Bette Patton, Clayton David and I worked the sidewalks, explaining to some of the puzzled spectators just what an "afees" is.

If you haven't seen a check in the mail yet from Treasurer Paul Kenney, you were not a winner in the 2000 raffle.

Raffle committee chair Francis Lashinsky would like to thank all those who participated in what was another successful fund-raiser. Since conducting the raffle was mostly a solo job by Frank, AFEES members owe him a great big vote of Thanks!

The Freedom Trail commemorative walk across the Pyrenees is scheduled for early July. This year, no AFEES members are involved.

The only Americans signed up are Harold and Marjorie Steinmetz of St. Louis, Mo. Marjorie was parachuted into France in 1944 as a British agent. She returned to England via boat.

Scott Goodall, the organizer, says that Dr. Gabriel Nahas of New York City (well-known to many of our members) plans to be in Spain for the celebration at the end of the walk.

RAF Squadron Leader Christopher Goss is leading a group of British airmen on the 2000 walk. Chris is also a writer/historian; his book *Bloody Biscay* is the history of a German night fighter group stationed at Bordeaux. The RAF lads plan to erect a memorial cross at the site in the Pyrenees where a Halifax crashed during the war.



The New Symbol

Adam Lynch of Monroeville, Pa., who is preparing a national magazine article on evaders, asked for "before pictures" in the last issue. Besides the now-famous photo of Joe Walters being led away after landing in an apple tree, Adam received two great photos from Bob Starzynski, who landed in France.

Dr. Milan Buros has attended the last two AFEES reunion and so is known to many of our members as a Helper guest.

In 1944 he was the 19-year-old leader of a 200-member Partisan group in Czechoslovakia. In September of that year he located four airmen, believed to be Canadian or possibly American, and perhaps members of the same crew, in the mountains between the towns of Ruzomberok and Mikulas.

Rescued by Milan Buros and his group, the airmen were taken to an airfield about 30 miles to the south, near Banska, and flown out, probably to Bari, Italy, in September of the same year.

Dr. Buros now lives at:
85598 Baldham, Brunnel Str. 23, Germany; phone, 08106/33201; Fax, 08106/301409.

He speaks English and is anxious to contact any evaders matching the above description.

And then was the 75-year-old woman who decided to walk 5 miles every day. She is 85 now and nobody knows just where the heck she is.

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